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Man kills brother's mother-in-law with electric shock in Mahabubabad

Mahabubabad: A man allegedly killed his brother's mother-in-law by giving her an electric shock during wee hours on Tuesday at Mangal thanda under Seethampet Gram Panchayat of Garla mandal in the district.

According to police, the 28-year-old accused, Rajesh, first gave an electric shock to his brother's father-in-law Daravath Ramdas using electric wires in the house. Assuming that he was dead, Rajesh later gave an electric shock to Ramdas' wife Daravath Kousalya, who died on the spot.

JNTU-Hyderabad PhD supervisor post gets price tag, sparks row

Hyderabad: The Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU) – Hyderabad, the first technological university in the country, has put a price tag for the PhD gideship, allowing private faculty members to mentor research scholars for Rs 5,000. The University's Research and Development Cell recently issued a web note seeking applications from principals, professors, associate professors and assistant professors for recognition or renewal of PhD gideship for allotment of research scholars.

Partisan conduct: Opposition submits notice to move no-trust motion against Speaker

New Delhi, Feb 10

The Congress and its allies in the INDIA bloc on Tuesday gave notice to move a motion for the removal of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, accusing him of "blatantly partisan" conduct and repeated denial of speaking opportunities in the House to members, including Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

The notice under Article 94(c) of the Constitution was submitted to Lok Sabha secretary general Utpal Kumar Singh by Congress deputy leader Gaurav Gogoi, chief whip K Suresh and whip Mohamed Jawed.

It carries the signatures of 118 MPs from the Congress, Samajwadi Party, DMK, Left parties, RJD, Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP-SP. The TMC has not signed the notice, nor has Rahul, since he is at the centre of one of the four cases the Opposition has made against Birla.

Lok Sabha secretariat sources said the discussion on the motion was likely to take place on March 9, the first day of the second part of the Budget session.

Birla will not preside over Lok Sabha proceedings until the notice for his removal is disposed of. Top sources said he had decided to step aside from House work on moral grounds.

"The Speaker has directed the Lok Sabha secretary general to carefully examine the notice and take appropriate action," a source said. Finalised at a meeting of INDIA bloc leaders at the residence of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday, the notice accuses the Speaker of consistently favouring the Treasury benches and undermining parliamentary conventions.

The notice lists instances of alleged bias. It says that on February 2, Rahul was not allowed to complete his speech on the motion of thanks to the President's ad-



dress, adding that such denial of opportunity "is not an isolated instance".

It further alleges that on February 3, eight Opposition MPs were "arbitrarily suspended for the entire Budget session" for exercising what the motion describes as

their democratic rights.

It also refers to an incident on February 4 when, according to the Opposition, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey was allowed to make personal attacks on two former PMs without reprimand. "In spite of our request, no action has been taken against this particular Member of Parliament,"

the notice said.

Opposition MPs also objected to remarks made by the Speaker on February 5 after the adoption of the motion of thanks, alleging his comments contained "blatantly false allegations" against Congress MPs and were "derogatory in nature", indicative of "an abuse of constitutional office".

Earlier in the day, Congress leaders KC Venugopal and Gogoi met Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju to discuss ways of breaking the logjam that had persisted in the House since February 2. The Congress is learnt to have conveyed that if Rahul was allowed to raise certain issues in the Lok Sabha, including revocation of the suspension of eight Opposition MPs, it would allow discussion on the Union Budget to proceed smoothly.

Rijiju, however, said no compromise was reached and the government had not accepted preconditions to run the House. He added that the House would function smoothly after the lunch break. Budget discussions commenced after the Congress submitted the notice against Birla.

TMC's Abhishek Banerjee earlier said the Opposition should first appeal to the Speaker for consideration of its demands and persist with the notice only if this concession was not granted. The Congress, however, went ahead and submitted the notice, with the government unwilling to accept preconditions to resume business.

The BJP, meanwhile, came out in support of Birla. Senior leader Sambit Patra said it was time to "impeach Rahul Gandhi". "Those who have been impeached of their conscience are the ones who want to impeach all the constitutional posts of India," Patra said.

Flagged AI content must go within 3 hrs: Govt tightens IT rules

New delhi, Feb 10

The Centre on Tuesday issued amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, requiring digital platforms to clearly label AI-generated content, including deepfake videos, synthetic material and altered visuals.

According to the Gazette notification dated February 10, social media platforms must now remove flagged AI-generated, deepfake or synthetic content within three hours of receiving a complaint from a competent authority or by court order.

The new regulation, notified by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITY), will come into effect from February 20.

Under the revised rules, the timeframe for resolving grievances has been shortened from 15 days to 7 days. For complaints requiring urgent action, intermediaries must respond within 36 hours, reduced from the earlier 72 hours. Additionally, platforms are required to act on specified content removal complaints within 2 hours, compared to the previous 24-hour window.

The notification states: "A significant social media intermediary which enables displaying, uploading or publishing any information on its computer resource shall, prior to such display, uploading or publication, require users to declare whether such information is synthetically generated information."

Where technically possible, such content must also



carry permanent metadata or provenance tools, including a unique identifier, to help identify the computer resource used to create or modify it. Intermediaries are barred from allowing these labels or metadata to be removed, hidden or altered.

The notification defines "synthetically generated information" as audio, visual or audio-visual content that is artificially or algorithmically created, generated, modified or altered using a computer resource, in a way that makes it appear real, authentic or true, and portrays any individual or event such that it may be perceived as indistinguishable from a real person or an actual event.

According to the Ministry notification, social media companies will have to deploy automated tools to detect and prevent the circulation of illegal, sexually exploitative or deceptive AI-generated content.

Harish Rao hits out at Congress govt's inaction as Andhra breaches Krishna water allocation



Hyderabad, FEb 10: BRS senior leader and former minister T Harish Rao on Tuesday said Andhra Pradesh was drawing 664 TMCft of Krishna river water, exceeding its permitted 512 TMCft share, while the Congress government in Telangana remained a mute spectator. He demanded immediate steps to safeguard Telangana's water needs ahead of summer.

Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Tuesday, Harish Rao cited a letter written by the Engineer-in-Chief of the Telangana Irrigation department to the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB).

According to the communication, Andhra Pradesh had already utilised nearly 80 per cent of the available Krishna water as of January 29, 2026, against the provisional 66:34 utilisation ratio, under which Andhra Pradesh was allowed 512 TMCft and Telangana 299 TMCft. Hyderabad city guide

"While Andhra Pradesh has already used 664 TMCft, which is nearly 80 per cent of the available water, what are the Chief Minister and the Irrigation Minister doing?" he asked, stating that Andhra Pradesh was drawing water from Srisailam and Nagarjuna Sagar projects without proper indents or approvals from KRMB.

Harish Rao questioned the State government's response, stating that failed to take timely action despite warnings from irrigation officials. He pointed out that the post of Engineer-in-Chief, who is a KRMB member, re-



mained vacant for a week after the official retired upon raising concerns over excess water drawal by Andhra Pradesh.

Telangana had utilised only about 20 per cent of its share, leaving around 174 TMCft unused, while Andhra Pradesh continues to draw nearly 1.5 TMCft daily, he said, warning that the situation could severely impact irrigation and drinking water supply in districts such as Mahabubnagar, Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy, particularly with summer approaching.

Harish Rao also criticised the State government for failing to convene an Apex Council meeting to address the issue and accused it of limiting its response to writing letters without enforcing water-sharing norms. He observed discrepancies in water usage figures, stating that while Telangana officials claimed Andhra Pradesh used 664 TMCft, KRMB records mentioned 555 TMCft.

BENGALURU, FEB 10

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar will go to New Delhi to meet party leaders on Tuesday.

"I will be meeting the party leaders who have called me to Delhi. During the visit, I will also meet Union Water Resource Minister C R Patil and legal counsels as well," he told reporters here on Monday.

Asked if top Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has called him to Delhi, Shivakumar said, "I can't disclose names of all the people I will be meeting. Why are you so curious? I am not just the Deputy CM but also the Congress state president. I will complete six years as the KPCC President on March 10 and it is my duty to meet party MPs and party leaders."

"I keep meeting my party leaders and share my difficulties, sorrows, joys and aspirations," Shivakumar added.

Asked about his Delhi visit when his department pre-budget meetings are scheduled, the Deputy CM said he will seek Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's permission.

He noted that the Chief Minister is also the Chairman of the Irrigation department.

He said the officials will meet Siddaramaiah on Mekedatu balancing reservoir that has been proposed on the Cauvery river at the Karnataka and Tamil Nadu border.

Shivakumar also said that he has ordered forming a Special Investigation Team in the Revenue Department against the nexus to loot the irrigation department in a planned way.

His visit comes amidst the leadership tussle involving him and Siddaramaiah re-surfacing.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Boost for India-Japan relations

The landslide victory for Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's ruling coalition in the snap general elections brings cheer to India as her policies are expected to boost bilateral relations. Takaichi, the first female Prime Minister of a country largely guided by a patriarchal value system, is a protégé of late Shinzo Abe, the longest-serving premier of the country and a great friend of India who passionately advocated closer India-Japan ties and sought to move beyond Tokyo's post-war pacifist worldview. Leader of the governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Takaichi, who is popular among the youth, has pledged to revive his "Abenomics" economic vision of high public spending and cheap borrowing. The LDP has secured a two-thirds majority in parliamentary elections, winning 316 seats in the 465-member Lower House —Diet. The resounding mandate will embolden her party to implement bold economic and security policies just months into her premiership. The landslide consolidates her control of the lower house and gives her significant legislative leverage to pursue her agenda. For India, Takaichi's firm posturing vis-à-vis China is helpful — she previously indicated that an attack on Taiwan may elicit a defence response from Japan. As a protégé of Shinzo Abe, Takaichi is a big supporter of Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) and has assured New Delhi of continued cooperation within this framework for a free and open Indo-Pacific, a counterweight against China. Armed with a strong political mandate, she can now push this case with Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a Quad leaders' summit. Once a drummer in a heavy metal band and a television host, Takaichi represents conservative politics. Before entering politics, Takaichi worked briefly as a television host. She joined the LDP in 1996. Since then, she has been elected as an MP 10 times and built a reputation as one of the party's most outspoken conservative voices. She has charted a course that mixes economic stimulus, tax reform and a stronger security posture amid rising regional tensions, particularly involving China. Her victory comes as Japan's voters endorsed her conservative platform despite economic headwinds and geopolitical uncertainties. Traditionally, India considers Japan as a "natural partner" in its quest for peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. The bilateral relations are anchored in shared democratic values, civilizational links and a mutual interest in a free and open Indo-Pacific. Under the 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership,' the two sides have steadily expanded cooperation in defence, infrastructure, technology and economic security over the past decade. Defence cooperation has included joint maritime exercises and participation in multilateral frameworks such as the Quad — a strategic dialogue that also brings in the United States and Australia — aimed at ensuring stability in the broader region. Over the years, economic and technological links have also grown manifold. Japan is one of India's top investors and has helped finance major infrastructure initiatives, including metro systems.

Kapra Social Activist Regalla Satish Reddy Receives Mahatma Gandhi National Award-2026

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):”The Mahatma Gandhi National Awards-2026 were organized at Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad, under the joint auspices of the Telangana State Disabled Association and Ayaan Foundation. In this event, Regalla Satish Reddy from Kapra was selected for the award in recognition of his services as a social activist and community service worker. The award was presented by popular singer Nalgonda Gaddar Narasanna and senior film actor Hasanuri Srinivas. Ayaan Foundation founder president M. Munna, state president Nayim, and state general secretary Monar Durga Prasad were present at the program. The event was attended by chief guests



Veeraboyina Rajitha, Jawahar Nagar corporator Niharika Goud, Bajireddy, film actors, social activists, Manasneham Kaveri, Sujatha Goud, and others. Around 400 persons with disabilities from various districts across the state participated in the program, making the event a grand success.



Representation Submitted Seeking New Underground Drainage System in Kushaiguda

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):”Residents of Kushaiguda are facing severe drainage problems due to the outdated drainage infrastructure in several streets, which was constructed nearly 30 years ago. The deteriorated condition of the existing system has led to frequent blockages, unhygienic conditions, and inconvenience to local residents. In view of the persistent issues, the Kushaiguda Welfare Association submitted a representation requesting the immediate construction of a new underground drainage system in the affected streets of Kushaiguda. The representation was submitted to Minister Sridhar Babu and local Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy under the leadership of the association president Singireddy Somashekhar Reddy and general secretary Panagatla Chakrapani Goud. The association urged the authorities to take swift action to address the long-standing drainage issues and improve sanitation and living conditions in the area. Prominent residents who participated in the program included Pandala Shivakumar Goud, Sappidi Srinivas Reddy, Challa Prabhakar, Gampa Krishna, Yavapuram Ravi, Venkateshwarlu, Kodakandla Dayaiah, Salla Venkatesh, Sara Anil Mudiraj, Pandala Ganesh Goud, Nalacheruvula Janardhan, Dayanand, Anjaneyulu Yadav, Puli Narendra, Anil Yadav, Nagaraju, and others.



Skanda International School Celebrates Its First Anniversary with Grand Cultural Fest



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):”Skanda International School celebrated its first annual day in a grand and vibrant manner, marked by colorful cultural performances by students. The event was held on the school premises with enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, and parents. Chairman Ashok Reddy and the school directors attended the programme as chief guests and inaugurated the event by lighting the ceremonial lamp. Speaking on the occasion, Ashok Reddy appreciated the school management for delivering quality education and achieving commendable results within a short span of time. The cultural programme featured a variety of performances including folk dances, classical dances, music segments, and skits presented by students. Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam dance performances, themed on environmental protection and patriotism, received special appreciation from the audience. The performances reflected the school's focus on holistic development by encouraging students not only in academics but also in sports and arts. Students who excelled academically during the 2025-26 academic year, along with winners of various sports competitions, were awarded prizes by the chief guests. The management stated that the school received an excellent response from parents within its first year of establishment. They reiterated that the institution's goal is to provide education of international standards at an affordable level. The management also expressed gratitude to the teaching staff and non-teaching staff for their contribution to the school's success. The event was attended by directors Chandrasekhar, Lokesha Reddy, Bhoumesh Yadav, Raju Reddy, Rajkumar Reddy, correspondent Sangeetha Reddy, principal Anita, vice principal Sujatha, teachers, students, and parents.

Ayushman Bharat Programme Conducted at Sai Baba Nagar



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):”As part of the Central Government's health initiative, the Ayushman Bharat Programme was conducted today at Sai Baba Nagar. The programme was organized under the supervision of Dr. Ramadevi from the PHC Centre, Kapra, along with Dr. Sirisha, Medical Officer. The event was supported by ANM Jhansi and ASHA worker staff Neelima, Kavitha, Annapurna, Sudharani, Jyothi, and Hema. Residents of the colony were encouraged to make full use of the benefits available under the Ayushman Bharat health scheme. The

programme was attended by contestant corporator Vinod, Shravan Kumar Goud, Parashuram, and D. Swamy.



Political Campaigns Conclude Across 33 Districts of Telangana

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):”With the conclusion of political party campaigns across all 33 districts of Telangana, a message is being conveyed to political leaders and party workers



alike: political interests should never come at the cost of sacrificing grassroots workers for personal gain. Salutations are extended to all movement activists who stand firmly with the people. Elections will come and go, but the bond of friendship, once broken, does not return. Even when opinions differ, people should remain capable of greeting one another with mutual understanding. Personal ego and rigid self-interest must be set aside, as the final decisions always rest with the voters. The public is urged not to distance friendships due to elections. Voters should exercise their franchise thoughtfully and responsibly. The vote is a powerful democratic weapon capable of steering the world toward development. Therefore, citizens must choose the right leadership with awareness and care. Elections are temporary, but social unity and human relationships must endure.”— Damaraju Verachary “Mali Dasha Telangana Udyama Karu

Two Held for Smuggling Ganja in Bhadrak Kothagudem

“Kranthikumar Dasari | Pinapaka Constancy | February 10 | Indian chronicle : Excise Enforcement officials on Tuesday arrested two persons on charges of smuggling ganja from the Mondikunda area of Aswapuram mandal in Bhadrak Kothagudem district. The accused were intercepted during a routine vehicle check while transporting ganja from the Malkan area of Odisha to Hyderabad. Officials seized seven kilograms of ganja, along with a motorcycle used for transportation and a mobile phone from their possession. Acting on specific information, the Excise Enforcement team conducted checks in the area, leading to the arrest of the suspects. A case has been registered, and efforts are underway to



identify the larger network involved in the drug trafficking operation. Further investigation is in progress.

Development and Welfare Are Our Goals; Special Focus on Sports and Playground Development: Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu

Rs 115.85 Crore Development Works Launched in Uppal Constituency

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 10 (Indian Chronicle):“State Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu stated that the government is firmly committed to development and welfare, with special emphasis on promoting sports and encouraging sportspersons. He said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, equal priority is being given to all sectors across the state.“The Minister, along with Government Chief Whip Patnam Mahender Reddy, Greater Hyderabad Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, Deputy Mayor Srilatha, and Uppal Congress In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, laid foundation stones for various development works worth ₹115.85 crore in the Uppal Assembly Constituency.“Speaking on the occasion, Minister Sridhar Babu said that development works worth hundreds of crores are already underway in the constituency. He highlighted



that Uppal Nalla Cheruvu is being developed and beautified at a cost of ₹20 crore. Additionally, sports complexes worth nearly ₹30 crore are being established to improve sports infrastructure and encourage young athletes.“Several key development projects were inaugurated in the Uppal Division, including:“Construction of ZPHS school building in Uppal at a cost of ₹2 crore“Construction of toilets at MRPS Uppal“RO Water Plant near Uppal Vegetable Market at a cost of ₹8 lakh Stormwater drain from Osmania University to Ramanthapur Cheruvu costing ₹12.61 crore Sewerage water drain from Nacharam HMT Nagar (Pedda Cheruvu) to Uppal Nalla Cheruvu costing ₹22.38

New Body Formed for Srihari Enclave Welfare Association; BUC Merged



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“A new governing body has been constituted for the Srihari Enclave Welfare Association (SEWA) following the completion of its internal elections. Along with the formation of the new body, the Bhagwan Usthava Committee (BUC) has been formally merged with SEWA, with effect from today, with the objective of ensuring better coordination and unified functioning for community activities. The elected office bearers are: President – Yedla Sravan Reddy; Vice President – Mamidisetty Ramakrishna; General Secretary – Syed Roshan; Joint Secretary – Nethula Sateesh; SEWA Treasurer – Sandeep Panday; BUC Treasurer – Pancherupula Srinivas. The Executive Committee members are Naresh Reddy, Hanumanth Rao, T. Girish Nair, S. G. Kinni, and N. Sairam. According to association members, the new body aims to focus on civic issues, infrastructure improvement, sanitation, water supply, and the overall welfare of residents. The leadership has stated that efforts will be made to work in coordination with local authorities to address public concerns and promote community development in Srihari Enclave Colony.

Uppal Congress Leaders Felicitate Minister Sridhar Babu

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 10 (Indian Chronicle):“Uppal Congress leaders felicitated State IT and Industries Minister and Rangareddy District In-charge Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu during his visit to the Uppal constituency. The Minister attended the constituency as the chief guest to inaugurate several development works.“On the occasion, senior Congress leaders from the Uppal constituency met the Minister courteously and expressed their gratitude for undertaking large-scale development programmes in Uppal. They also conveyed their best wishes to him.“Those who participated in the felicitation programme included Congress Party Uppal Constituency Habsiguda Division senior leader Janumpalli Venkateshwar Reddy, Ramanthapur (contested corporator) and Congress Party in-charge Tavideboyina Giribabu, Greater Hyderabad Vishwabrahmana Sangham President and Congress senior leader Pabboju Bishapathi Chary, along with several other Congress leaders and party workers.



Rs 126 Crore Development in Chilkanagar Division Over Five Years: Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Foundation Stones Laid for Development Works Worth Rs 4.48 Crore



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 10 (Indian Chronicle):“Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, along with Chilkanagar Division Corporator and former GHMC Standing Committee Member Bannala Geetha Praveen, laid foundation stones on Tuesday for various development works worth ₹4.48 crore in several colonies and bastis of Chilkanagar Division. The proposed works include the construction of CC roads, establishment of a new stormwater drain trunk line, and construction of community halls.“Key projects include:“₹26.75 lakh for the construction of a Community Hall at Ambedkar Nagar; ₹20 lakh for CC road construction from Bhaskar’s house to Ramalayam opposite Beerappagadda Temple; ₹11 lakh for the remaining works of the Beerappagadda Community Hall.“Additional foundation stone ceremonies were held in Sai Ram Nagar Colony, Chilkanagar, Adarsh Nagar, Prashanth Nagar, Azmath Nagar, and other localities.“Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy stated that development works worth ₹126 crore have been carried out in Chilkanagar Division over the last five years, making it the division that received the highest funds in the Uppal constituency. He appreciated Corporator Geetha Praveen for her constant engagement with the people and her planned approach in addressing public issues. Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, in her address, said

Strong Leadership, Accelerated Development – Bonthu Sridevi Yadav



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“Development works worth ₹19.36 crore proposed in the Cherlapally Division were inaugurated by the Minister for IT & Industries and In-charge Minister for Ranga Reddy District, Duddilla Sridhar Babu. The programme was attended by Uppal Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy and Cherlapally Division Corporator and GHMC Standing Committee Member Bonthu Sridevi Yadav. The major development works to be taken up under these funds include: Construction of an RCC box drain from D-Mart Road to Pochamma Temple and further up to Krishna Reddy Nagar Arch at a cost of ₹3.75 crore. Construction of an RCC box drain from Sainagar Arch to TIFR compound wall and up to Krishna Reddy Nagar Road No.1 and 2 at a cost of ₹2.85 lakh. Construction of CC roads in Sri Sai Venkat Enclave, Shiva Sai Nagar, Srinivasa Enclave, VN Reddy Nagar, Subodhaya Colony, Nagarjuna Nagar, Sonia Gandhi Nagar, Vaishnavi Enclave, Sai Krishna Nagar, Indira Nagar and Nehru Nagar at a cost of ₹3.13 crore. Construction of a 600 mm diameter RCC NP3 pipe drain

from JMR Apartments to Shiva Sai Gardens at a cost of ₹1.26 crore. Development of a model graveyard for Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities in Chinna Cherlapally Ward No.03 at a cost of ₹5.50 crore. Construction of CC roads in Lokamata Colony, Vidya Maruthi Colony, IG Colony, Shiva Sai Nagar, Ambedkar Nagar, Jyothi Nagar and Madhusudan Reddy Nagar at a cost of ₹2.87 crore. Division leaders expressed special appreciation for Corporator Bonthu Sridevi Yadav for consistently raising division-related issues in the Standing Council and working continuously for the overall development of the division. The programme was also attended by Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, Deputy Mayor Mothe Srilatha Reddy, MLC Patnam Mahender Reddy, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, party leaders and workers.

Community Centres Get a Major Boost in Uppal

Corporator Mandumula Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy



KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 10 (Indian Chronicle): "Uppal Corporator Mandumula Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy stated that community centres in the Uppal Division have been developed in an unprecedented manner, bringing a new lease of life to community infrastructure across all colonies in the division. She said that never before have community centres been renovated and expanded so extensively. As part of this initiative, foundation stone-laying ceremonies were conducted for several community centre projects in different colonies of the Uppal Division. The ceremonies were held by Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy along with Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy. The following projects were inaugurated: 'South Swaroop Nagar: Foundation stone laid for construction of an additional floor to the community hall at a cost of 20 lakh.' 'Hanuman Sai Nagar: Foundation stone laid for new community hall construction with an estimated cost of 15 lakh.' 'Sai Baba Colony: Foundation stone laid for construction of an additional

community hall building at a cost of 20 lakh.' Speaking on the occasion, Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy said that strengthening community centres will help residents conduct social, cultural, and welfare activities conveniently. She assured that development works would continue in all colonies without discrimination. The programme witnessed the participation of several local leaders, colony elders, Congress party members, women representatives, and residents from South Swaroop Nagar, Hanuman Sai Nagar, and Sai Baba Colony. Prominent attendees included Gajjala Venkata Reddy, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Gindi Pratap Reddy, Mandamurali Krishna Reddy, Dubba Laxma Reddy, Katta Krishna Reddy, Anwar Pasha, Bellankonda Ramesh, Bodega Mallesh, Budida Zangir Goud, Pasam Venkat Reddy, along with numerous community representatives, women leaders, and local residents. The event concluded with residents expressing appreciation for the developmental initiatives undertaken in the Uppal Division.

Rs 110 Crore Development Works Completed in Ramanthapur Division: Corporator Srivani Venkatrao



KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 10 (Indian Chronicle): "Ramanthapur Division has witnessed the completion of various development works worth approximately 110 crore over the past five years, funded by different government departments, said Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkatrao. Addressing the media on Tuesday, the last day of her tenure as corporator, she stated that with the support of officials, the Member of Parliament, and the MLA, several key infrastructure projects were successfully completed in colonies and bastis across the division. These included improvements in drinking water supply, drainage systems, roads, stormwater drains, culverts, street poles, electric lights, community halls, installation of open gyms, and other civic amenities. She highlighted that special focus was given to providing improved basic facilities in Bhagya Basti. Additionally, drainage pipelines and CC roads were laid in the Metla Veedhi area of Indira Nagar, an approach road was constructed in Pragathi Nagar, and theme parks were developed as part of the division's overall development. Srivani Venkatrao assured that even without holding an official position, she would continue to stand with the people and work towards resolving their issues. She also expressed her gratitude to the officials, residents of the division, welfare association representatives, and BJP leaders and workers who supported her throughout the past five years.



Election Preparedness Reviewed in Medchal–Malkajgiri Municipalities Ahead of 2026 Polls



NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal–Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 10, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "As part of the 2026 General Municipal and Municipal Corporation Elections, District Collector Manu Chowdary, along with General Election Observer Nirmal Kanti Wesley, inspected the election material distribution centers in Mudu Chintalapalli, Aliabad, and Ellampet municipalities of Medchal–Malkajgiri district. On Tuesday, the team reviewed the arrangements at the distribution centers, strong rooms, and counting centers in the respective municipalities. The Collector

instructed officials to ensure that election materials and polling staff reach the polling stations within the stipulated time. He emphasized that the election process should be conducted peacefully and smoothly and directed election personnel to carry out their duties responsibly. The Collector also stressed the need for tight security at strong rooms and counting centers. He instructed officials to install CCTV cameras at every counting table and ensure continuous monitoring throughout the counting process. Arrangements should be made to maintain transparency, security, and efficiency at all stages of the election process, he added.

State Minister Sridhar Babu Launches Rs 11 Crore Development Works in LB Nagar Constituency



INDIAN CHRONICLE, Tandur (Feb, 10) "State Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu, along with Government Chief Whip in Legislative Council Dr. Patnam Mahender Reddy, and Congress Party In-charge Madhu Yashki Goud, inaugurated development projects worth 11 crore across LB Nagar Constituency." "Hastinapuram Division: Construction of LB Nagar Circle & Ward Office Complex began with funds of 5.95 crore." "Vanasthalipuram: Pipeline construction in Nagarjuna Colony — 2.76 crore." "Pipeline construction in Srinivasapuram Colony — 1.87 crore." "BT Road construction from Sushma Theatre to Rythu Bazar & Guruvu Road (Ward 15) — 62 lakh." "Beauty Road construction near Police Station in MIG Colony — 62 lakh." "CC Road construction in Christian Colony — 39.50 lakh." "CC Road construction near Ganesh Temple (Ward 15) — 39.50 lakh." "Road construction in Vanasthalihills Colony — 19.80 lakh." "All works launched by Dr. Patnam Mahender Reddy (Govt Chief Whip, MLC), Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu (IT, Industries & Legislative Affairs), MLC Dayanand, Congress In-charge Madhu Yashki Goud.

Bengaluru fitness trainer dies after estranged girlfriend gets engaged to another man



GNS News Agency, Feb 10

A police officer said the incident came to light on Saturday night when the suicide victim's body was discovered inside his room. "He did not pick the calls and then, sus-

pecting something was wrong, his family members came and, upon breaking the door, his body was found," the officer added. The Mahalakshmi Layout police then arrived at the spot, and during the collection of evidence, they found a death note in which the victim had named his girlfriend and her mother.

A police officer said, "The two were in a relationship for more than six years, and Kiran was helping her financially and had disputes over her relationship with others." Speaking to the media, Kiran's sister Keerthana said her brother was a strong and brave man. "I need to know the reason behind my brother's death, and we want justice," she added. A police officer said the duo's relationship recently got strained, but Kiran thought they could patch things up again, and he was planning a Valentine's Day celebration. But he got upset after the woman allegedly turned up and showed him her wedding invitation card and saree.

Archaeologists discover 3,000-5,000-year-old skeletons in Karnataka's Tekkalakota; first in over 6 decades

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Fossilised human remains estimated to be 3,000-5,000 years old were found during excavation at Tekkalakota in Karnataka's Ballari district. One skeleton's remains are complete with teeth, while the other is a partial skeleton of the lower human body. These are the first human fossil remains found at Tekkalakota in over six decades. The panchayat town is a significant archaeological site due to evidence of continuous human habitation in the area from the Neolithic period (3,000-1200 BCE) up to the modern period, spanning over five millennia. Speaking to The Indian Express, Dr Shejeshwar R of the Department of Archaeology, Museums, and Heritage said the remains were found in one of the four spots currently being excavated near the town. "The last time human fossil remains were found at Tekkalakota was back in 1963-64," he said. Over the coming days, a research team will recover fossils from the site for further analysis. Shejeshwar estimated that removing the preserved skeleton would take three to four days. "Though we will know



the exact figures once a final report is out, preliminary estimates are that the bones belonged to humans buried around 3,000 to 5,000 years ago," he said. The excavation has been ongoing for close to a year now. The Department is assisting researchers from Hartwick College, USA, in carrying out archaeological studies at the site.

Manjusha Nagpure elected unopposed as Pune mayor after NCP, Congress withdraw nominations



GNS News Agency, Feb 10

The BJP's Manjusha Nagpure was declared elected unopposed as mayor of Pune city after NCP corporator Sheetal Sawant and Congress corporator Ashwini Landge withdrew from the election fray on Monday. It is after a gap of four years that the Pune Municipal Corporation will have a mayor, as the election had been postponed over legal issues since the previous term ended in 2022. "Manjusha Nagpure is being declared elected as mayor of Pune," said District Collector Jitendra Dudi, the officer designated to hold mayoral election. The mayor post is reserved for a woman corporator from the general category. BJP leader Ganesh Bidkar appealed to the NCP and the Congress to withdraw their nominations to pave the way for a unanimous election so that an immediate condolence meet could be held for Ajit Pawar and Congress leader Suresh Kalmadi, both of whom passed away in January. Both parties agreed to this and their candidates withdrew from the mayoral election.

Nagpure, 46, an MBA hailing from a family of staunch RSS supporters, is a third-time corporator who was elected

unopposed in the recent elections to the PMC. Nagpure was first elected to the PMC as a corporator in 2012 from the Anandnagar area on Sinhagad Road. In the January 15, 2026, civic elections, she was elected unopposed from the Suncity-Manikbaug ward on Sinhagad Road. Nagpure was preferred over other frontrunners, four-time corporator Varsha Tapkir and three-time corporator Mansi Deshpande. Incidentally, Nagpure represents a ward that is part of the Baramati Lok Sabha constituency, represented by NCP (SP) working president Supriya Sule. The BJP has been trying hard to win the constituency. Nagpure's husband Deepak is a BJP office-bearer. Nagpure is among the highly educated PMC corporators. The couple have a business with major income coming from the leasing of commercial property. Her overall assets are worth Rs 3.22 crore.

Nagpure completed her undergraduate studies at Savitribai Phule Pune University in 1999 and earned her Master's in Business Administration from ICFAI University in 2021. She was working with an IT firm but quit the job to contest civic elections at her family's insistence. She is the mother of two children aged 17 years and five years, respectively. During her election campaign, Nagpure said she would work to resolve Pune's traffic woes by improving traffic signals, widening roads, and strengthening the PMPML bus service. Representing the flood-prone area of Sinhagad Road, Nagpure said she planned to construct a retaining wall alongside the Mutha river and establish a flood alert system for early warning, adding that she also wanted to push the river improvement and beautification project undertaken by the PMC. Nagpure had also talked about the Swachh Ward, Beautiful Ward concept for the city to tackle the dumping of waste in open areas. She said she would work towards upgrading civic hospitals and introducing digital education in schools run by the civic body.

Delhi schools receive bomb threat emails in Punjabi; massive search underway

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

More than a dozen schools in Delhi, including DPS and Bal Bharati in Rohini and Sardar Patel Vidyalaya in Lodi Estate, received bomb threat emails prompting authorities to conduct checks in the premises Monday morning. The police said they have not found anything suspicious so far. According to an official of the Delhi Fire Service (DFS), they received calls from around 10 schools between 8.33 am and 9.17 am. Fire tenders, along with teams from the Bomb Detection Team (BDT), Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS), and Dog Squad, were sent to the respective schools, and searches were conducted. The police said the emails, sent via Gmail, were written in Punjabi and were suspected to have been sent via a Virtual Private Network (VPN). Meanwhile, the schools sent messages to parents

about the threat to avoid panic.

A message sent from Sardar Patel Vidyalaya stated, "This morning, the school received a security threat. As a precautionary measure, the authorities have been immediately informed, and the bomb squad is conducting a thorough inspection of the entire campus. All students have been evacuated safely." "Student safety remains our highest priority, and all necessary protocols are being followed. Once the school is declared safe, classes will be resumed. We appreciate your trust, cooperation, and understanding as we work to ensure a safe and secure environment for all our students," it added. On January 29, at least eight schools in Delhi received bomb threat emails from an unknown person, who used a VPN to send the emails. Most earlier email threats remain unsolved by the police.

Man leaps to death from 16th floor in Shaikpet

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Hyderabad: A 30-year-old man died by suicide after jumping from the 16th floor of a residential tower in the Tolichowki police station limits on Sunday. According to the police, the victim identified as N Praveen, a resident of Attapur had been suffering from prolonged health issues for the past three years and was also experiencing mental distress over the same. On Sunday, Praveen allegedly went to Aditya Empress Towers near the Shaikpet Nala and jumped from the 16th floor, resulting in his death on the spot. Police officials said that Praveen had earlier worked at the Passport Office located adjacent to the same building about two years ago.



Catch an airport bus right outside your nearest Namma Metro station in Bengaluru



GNS News Agency, Feb 10

To improve accessibility of public transport, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) have introduced stops for airport buses at all metro stations, according to a BMRCL statement Saturday. "For the convenience of Metro commuters travelling to Kempegowda International Airport, BMTC Vayavajra (Airport) bus stops have been provided at all Metro stations along the route," it said.

In addition to bus stops at metro stations for Bengaluru airport buses, the BMRCL, BMTC, and the Bengaluru traffic police have coordinated to add 10 new bus stops near metro stations in the city as part of an initiative to integrate public transport systems and make public transport more accessible and seamless. Since BMTC bus stops were earlier located far from metro stations, the BMRCL, BMTC, and Bengaluru traffic police conducted joint inspections to improve last-mile connectivity in the city. "Based on this, BMTC has introduced new bus stops close to Metro stations with effect from 05.02.2026 on the Purple Line (Whitefield to Challaghatta) and the Green Line (Madavara to Silk Institute)," the BMRCL said in the statement. "For all other Metro stations, BMTC bus stops are already available within 100 meters of the station, or new stops could not be provided due to space constraints," the BMRCL said.

1. Trinity Metro Station: Near the 'B' entrance (opposite Hotel Oberoi) for passengers travelling from M G Road towards Halasuru.

40 patients attempt to escape from govt de-addiction centre, guards block door

Security guards and police acted swiftly and no patient managed to escape. Around 40 patients tried to flee the Mohali Government De-addiction Centre during medication time on Sunday. According to information, the incident occurred around 3:15 pm when patients gathered at the time of medication and tried to force open a wooden door to flee. However, security guards stationed outside quickly sensed the situation and blocked the door from outside, preventing it from opening. Meanwhile, two police personnel deployed at the centre shifted the patients towards the rear ward and locked the iron gate from outside, bringing the situation under control. The matter was later reported to the police station, and the Phase 11 police has recorded a daily diary report (DDR) in the case. Fortunately, the wooden door had been latched from outside, which prevented it from opening despite repeated pushing by the patients. Doctors and staff were present outside at that time. Officials said that had the door opened, the patients could have escaped and possibly caused harm.

while fleeing. Staff members at the centre said several patients are NDPS Act accused undergoing treatment and often try to escape as they do not wish to stay at the facility. They warned that such attempts can also pose a threat to staff safety. Currently, only two police personnel are deployed for security at the centre. They added that a similar incident had occurred earlier when patients created a ruckus at night and even assaulted security guards, with two patients reportedly escaping through the roof. Earlier, patients were admitted to the de-addiction centre only with their consent, and anyone wishing to leave was allowed to go home. However, under the Punjab government's "War Against Drugs" campaign, drug addicts are now booked under Section 27 of the NDPS Act and, instead of being sent to jail, are admitted to de-addiction centres for treatment. Officials said such patients sometimes attempt to escape during treatment. "No patient has escaped; they only attempted to flee. During treatment, when the dosage of certain medicines is reduced, patients can become irritable. As far as staff security is concerned, police provide full support. Experienced and patient staff are essential to handle such cases."

Young adults in Delhi raise the bar, hang out with pros to learn, unwind



On one such evening at Social in Delhi's Hauz Khas, chairs were lined up, facing a projector screen. The seats gradually started filling. While one might be used to such an arrangement at bars during match screenings, this time it was for a lecture — being attended by young adults, mostly. A pamphlet listing "house rules" was also placed on each seat, asking attendees to put their phones on silent mode, avoid placing orders during lectures, and save conversations for breaks. Before the session began, the volume of the music was lowered and orders were paused.

Nerd Nite, unLecture and Pint of View are the events that have sparked a new rage in the NCR, featuring lectures — 20 minutes or longer — meant for ones looking to learn and unwind at the same time. Nerd Nite's Delhi chapter began last July, inspired by a series that originated in Boston, and the events are now being held in more than 100 cities. Each 18-20-minute lecture is followed by a question-answer round. "It is a passion project as of now. We slot it for a Thursday night once a month, because on weekends, a lot of people make other plans, while weekdays are generally all about work and post-work rest, with no intellectual stimulation. The aim is to wrap up our session by 9:30 pm so that it can be accommodated as a weekday affair which is unstructured and nourishing at the same time," said organiser Anandita Lidhoo from Centre for Social and Behaviour Change under Ashoka University. Her colleagues Gopikrishnan Nair and Bidisha Mahapatra are with her in this venture too.

Nerd Nite organisers said they currently do not have a business model, choosing instead to keep it "sustainable and fun" for now. Speakers do not charge a fee and are offered small tokens, such as a mug or sticker as "good-will". Feedback is collected through a QR code, shared with

On Thursday, professor and scientist Gautam Menon spoke at a Nerd Nite event at Social on pandemics and how bird flu could be the next one. Manu Joseph, who went next, performed a standup on the idiosyncrasies of the urban elite and poor which he personally refers to as "standup anthropology". "It is a very interesting space. Ideally, stream-

ing platforms or legacy media should be doing this," Joseph told The Indian Express after his session. Nair mentioned that speakers do not even charge. Meanwhile, at the Nerd Nite's event at Social, Mishka Lepps keenly listened to the lecture while working on the marketing of her company's next lecture. Unlike Nerd Nite, unLecture, which she runs with her St Stephen's batchmates Kezia Mammen and Sonalika Aggarwal, has a business model, with venue owners taking a portion of ticket sales. They have one speaker who speaks for 45 minutes before a question-answer round begins.

"We consider the others (in the space) friendly competition," she said. "We organised our first lecture on August 20 last year. Nerd Nite did inspire us... We knew there was definitely an audience for intellectual engagement beyond the classroom space." Attendees, meanwhile, attest to the popularity of the concept.

"I came to know about it from Instagram, and will come again. It is a good initiative as it is casual and less formal," said Srishti Khurana (27), a food technologist, after attending a Nerd Nite event at Fort City Brew Pub, Hauz Khas, such unLecture events have become popular. "It is a nice way to learn things... meeting new people... variety of the topics help. Helps professionals like me relax," Dr Jay, a 27-year-old psychiatrist, said.

Professor Ravikant Kisana, popular on social media as the Buffalo Intellectual, who delivered an unLecture talk last Saturday on Savarna modernity, said that for the social elites such events are cerebral leisure. "There is collective isolation and alienation as vitality has gone from public sphere where one is passive. These spaces will likely vanish once crowd-puller speakers are unavailable," Prof Kisana

Public policy scholar and former president-CEO of the Centre for Policy Research, Yamini Aiyar, who has spoken twice for unLecture, calls herself a "fan" of such spaces. "People come to deliberate on important issues and have insightful conversations... Creating a space for serious sombre dialogue that contributes to strengthening democracy is very welcome..."

Ashish Ranjan, co-founder & director, Fort City Brew Pub, where Prof Kisana delivered the talk, said: "The topics help both patrons and proprietors learn more about the world around them." He added that as of now, Fort City Brew Pub too takes a share from the money earned from ticket sales, and gives a part of it to patrons as cover charge they can use against the bill. Pint of View aims to offer a similar relaxed yet intellectually stimulating vibe, where experts deliver in-depth lectures on cutting-edge science, history, architecture, philosophy, or arts. Discussions that follow spill into lounges. Pint of View terms their sessions as "easy warmth" or simply "a room full of curious people". At the post-talk buzz, they say, ideas find shapes.



More monitoring stations, electric mobility, expansion of public transport: Delhi's action plan to fight air pollution



GNS News Agency, Feb 10

With an aim to cut PM2.5 levels by 15% and PM10 levels by 20% in the Capital, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) on Sunday made available the State Action Plan 2026 for the National Capital Region (NCR), outlining measurable targets across transport, waste management, road dust control and enforcement. It released city-wide plans drawn up for Noida, Greater Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad and Alwar. The NCR state governments prepared their action plans, including those for cities, and shared them recently with the CAQM.

Centre's flagship initiative to tackle severe air pollution. It managed only a 16% drop in PM 10 levels against a target of 22%. As far as PM 2.5 levels are concerned, the Capital ranked second most polluted in the country for the month of January at 169 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ after Ghaziabad at 184 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, as per the recent analysis by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA). The WHO 24-hour air quality guideline limits particulate matter to 15 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ for PM2.5 and 45 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ for PM10.

Strengthening air quality monitoring is a key component of the CAQM's 2026 plan. The number of Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) in Delhi will be increased from 40 to 46 by January 2026. Audits of existing monitoring stations have been initiated, while online

Newborn charred to death in NICU fire, family alleges negligence by Kanpur hospital

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

A newborn girl was charred to death after a sudden fire broke out in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) ward of a private nursing home in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur, alleged her family. The infant had been born at the same facility in the Brahm Nagar area of Kanpur just a few hours before her death. The Kanpur police Monday said it has launched an inquiry into the allegations. Ashok Kumar, Station House Officer of the Bithoor police station, said an inquiry is underway and no case has been registered so far. He added that the police are collecting details from the hospital management and staff, and have sent the baby's body for post-mortem examination.

According to the police, Arund Nishad, a resident of the Ramesh Nagar area, brought his wife Shalu to the hospital late Sunday evening after she complained of labour pains. Shalu delivered a baby girl later in the evening. Following the delivery, the newborn was admitted to the NICU for medical care.

The SHO said that the family alleged the infant was placed on a bed under a warmer machine in the NICU, which suddenly caught fire. They claimed that the newborn was

severely burnt and died on the spot. Following the incident, the victim's family staged a protest at the hospital, alleging that the death occurred due to the negligence of the hospital and its staff. They claimed that the staff tried to conceal the incident for an extended period and disclosed it only after repeated requests from the family. Demanding strict action against those responsible, the family created a commotion at the premises. The situation was brought under control after the police arrived and assured the family of a thorough investigation and appropriate action.

Tracing 2012 poll victory run, Akhilesh back in Dadri to launch campaign

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Planning ahead for the 2027 Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party (SP) national president, Akhilesh Yadav has decided to launch a poll campaign on March 29 with a rally — Samajwadi Samanta Bhaichara — in Dadri, a town in Gautam Buddha Nagar district. The venue has been selected with careful consideration of the party's success in the 2012 elections, when it had launched its campaign from the same district through a cycle rally that later proved to be politically significant. Party leaders believe that selecting Dadri as the starting point is a continuation of what they see as an "auspicious sign". They feel that launching the campaign from this location, which has earlier coincided with electoral success, could help generate political momentum and bring positive energy to the party's campaign.

In the 2012 Assembly elections, the Samajwadi Party registered a decisive victory by winning 224 out of 403 seats, defeating the ruling Bahujan Samaj Party and leaving other major parties behind. The win paved the way for SP president Akhilesh Yadav to assume office as Chief Minister, marking a political shift in Uttar Pradesh.

Party's national spokesperson and rally convenor Raj Kumar Bhati told The Indian Express that the rally was originally scheduled to be held in November. However, it was postponed due to the Bihar Assembly elections and later because of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process. He said that the party will now organise the rally on March 29 at a college ground in Dadri.

Bhati said that Akhilesh Yadav named the rally Samajwadi Samanta Bhaichara. Preparations for the event have been underway since August, and people from around 140 Assembly constituencies across the Saharanpur, Meerut, Agra, and Moradabad divisions are expected to participate. The party is anticipating a turnout of nearly 50,000 people. According to the party leaders, this rally will be one of the largest political gatherings ahead of the formal launch of the campaign for the 2027 Assembly elections, and is expected to play a key role in setting the tone for the party's electoral strategy.

Following the launch, similar rallies are likely to be organised across other districts, with the aim of reaching out to people and mobilising public support ahead of the elections.

SP chief spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary confirmed that the party's campaign for the 2012 Assembly elections was launched from Gautam Buddha Nagar through a cycle rally led by Akhilesh Yadav. He said that the campaign played a crucial role in building momentum across the state and eventually contributed to the party's electoral success. Another party leader said that the elec-

tion campaign would gain real momentum only after a final decision is taken on whether the panchayat elections will be held. He added that the party will also wait for the announcement of its candidates before formally intensifying its election outreach and holding rallies.

It is pertinent to mention that there has long been a political belief linked to Noida that any Chief Minister who visits the city loses power within six months. During the 2017 and 2022 Assembly elections, Akhilesh chose to launch his campaigns from other districts instead of Noida. However, despite this strategy, he was unable to return to power in both the elections. In the 2017 Assembly elections, the Samajwadi Party launched its campaign in Lucknow district by flagging off Rath Yatra, hoping to build momentum across the state. However, the strategy failed to deliver the desired results, as the party managed to win only 47 seats, marking a sharp decline from its 2012 performance. In contrast, the Bharatiya Janata Party won by a massive majority, leaving the Samajwadi Party far behind in the electoral race.

For the 2022 Assembly polls, the Samajwadi Party launched its campaign from Azamgarh, aiming to revive its political strength in the state. The party went on to win 111 out of the 403 seats in the Assembly, significantly improving its performance compared to the previous election. Although the party fell short of forming the government, it emerged as the principal opposition force and the main challenger to the ruling BJP.



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'Secure indoor ventilation standards, or we end up inhaling high carbon dioxide'



GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Paweł Wargoński, a Professor at Technical University of Denmark (DTU) and an authority on indoor air quality and environmental health, joined The Indian Express, Mumbai team for a free-wheeling conversation on the effects of indoor air quality. Previously, Wargoński has served as the President of the International Society of Indoor Air Quality and Climate, and has previously chaired key committees at ASHRAE and the Academy of Indoor Air Sciences. Also present as guests in the event were senior who is the additional municipal commissioner in the Brihanmumbai IAS officer Avinash Dhakane Municipal Corporation (BMC), and Dr. Indu Khosla, paediatric pulmonologist. Excerpts from the conversation:

Here in India, we are talking about outdoor air quality — smog and PM 2.5, given the current context for cities like Mumbai and Delhi, why should we be worried about indoor air quality?

Basically, instead of talking about indoor or outdoor separately, we should speak about one air since the air that we breathe outdoors is the same as the one we breathe that is indoor. Also, it is important to address the air as a single entity instead of labelling it as indoor or outdoor because then it can be easily framed as a public health issue. So in a way, we cannot separate the air that is indoor from the one that is outdoor. We cannot separate these two air unless we go inside a submarine or we board a space shuttle, then we will be completely separated from two different types of air, otherwise it's not possible not to be exposed to the outdoor air even if we are indoors. As a result, the quality of indoor air is as important as that of outdoor air.

So when do you speak of one air, how do you really differentiate between indoor and outdoor air?

The best authority here will be the World Health Organisation (WHO), which published the first air quality guidelines in 1989 and the second guidelines were published in 2000. Later, the guidelines were revised in 2005, 2010 and 2021. So in the earlier guidelines, the pollutants that cause pollution usually have outdoor origin where they are produced and later, they enter indoors. Later, in 2010 guidelines, it was listed that there were 14 different pollutants that are specifically emitted indoors. The WHO calls it selected pollutants and those pollutants are not as relevant, if you speak about them in the context of an outdoor environment. So, if we speak about particulate matter (PM) for example, their main sources would be outdoor activities like combustion, however, these pollutants also enter indoors of a house and gradually the lines of differences get blurred. Therefore, I personally propose a completely different definition of air quality, for me the sole quality of air is the one that promotes and affects health. Any quality of air or pollutant that is detrimental to our health should be avoided independently, whether they are exposed indoor or outdoor.

Your research focuses on proper ventilation for achieving right AQI standards. What are the effects of ventilation in terms of health recovery as per your research findings?

There are two different types of pollutants in the air — microbiological and gaseous. So if you talk about which is more harmful, then I would say that we have read and learnt a lot about PM 2.5 being one of the few hazardous pollutants that can harm our health which is generated outside. Therefore, in this context, ventilation is very important, since it plays in dispersing the pollutants of outdoor air when it travels indoor and if the indoor air is clean the adversity of the pollutants gets reduced. As a result, ventilation also plays a role in exposure to air quality. So now when the air indoors is getting filtered because of ventilation there are direct and indirect health benefits that one may feel, first of all clean air reduces stress and improves stress levels. This increases the productivity of people. On the contrary, inhaling pollutants also have potent effects, but these are not adverse and couldn't be felt immediately as they are much more long-term. For example, if you smoke cigarettes, you won't develop lung cancer immediately. Similarly, once you start inhaling pollutants, you won't develop any signs immediately, but after maybe 20 years down the line, you may end up developing Alzheimer's or dementia or maybe some lung disease. So in a way, proper ventilation is also a proxy to improved air quality.

A third wife, some odd habits: New findings in Ghaziabad sisters' suicide probe

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

When three minor sisters fell to their deaths from the ninth floor of a Ghaziabad high-rise earlier this week, speculation made rounds — that the girls were allegedly obsessed with a task-based Korean game. Grief-stricken, their father even urged the government to ban such games. But as the police investigation deepened, more details emerged — that of financial ruin, three marriages, shifting statements and a family history shadowed by unexplained deaths.

Chetan Kumar, the father of the three girls, lives in Bharat City Society in Ghaziabad with his three wives — Sujata, Heena and Tina. With Sujata, he told police, he has a daughter and a son, who is mentally-challenged. With her sister Heena, he has two daughters. It was Sujata's and Heena's daughters who allegedly jumped from the ninth floor of the building. His third wife, Tina, who is 22, has a three-year-old daughter with him. "She was a Muslim who agreed to convert to Hinduism for the marriage... The other two wives say they consented to the third marriage, which took place in 2023," said Atul Kumar Singh, ACP, Shalimar Garden. However, according to police, there are loopholes in the timeline shared by Chetan of his weddings. He had earlier told the police that he married Sujata in 2010 and Heena in 2013, claiming that he married the second time because Sujata was unable to conceive. But this claim raised questions on how his eldest daughter with Sujata is 16. He had also earlier claimed that Tina is not his wife, but his sister-in-law. Police are now trying to retrieve documents to establish the timeline. However, that task is proving to be difficult. "Both Sujata and Heena are uneducated. They cannot even recall their wedding dates and say they do not know anything about their official marriage documents," Singh said. Another detail that caught police's attention is

In the Indian context, when we are investing substantially on air quality purifiers, how should we consider this trade off between ventilation and air purifier?

We need to secure minimum ventilation standards, which needs to be a minimum marking of outdoor air that is circulated indoors or else we may end up inhaling high level carbon dioxide and other forms of pollutant that may have generated indoor as well. Therefore, we need to retrofit solutions in our homes and workplaces with the help of high efficient fans and filters so that in a way that it maintains a minimum standard of cross ventilation of air. Also the retrofitted objects should be serviced routinely to ensure their service delivery remains at the top. India has seen an uptake in air conditioner sales in the past few years, the government has also asked manufacturers to set a minimum temperature at 18 degrees. Does this have any role to play in terms of air quality management in India?

Firstly, an AC is not an air cleaner, they remove moisture and bring down temperature. There are solutions that can be retrofitted in an existing AC and by this way, the AC can become an air cleaner and you will not need a separate air purifier in place. In case if you happen to have another air purifier within the periphery of the AC, then it may affect the overall air distribution. Therefore, the solution is to have a retrofit. Which means, on one hand you have an air conditioner and you can retrofit a purifier on it which may give you the required service.

An air purifier is also very expensive. How can an average lower income group or middle class afford it?

We have equated this analogy with the theory of purchasing a vehicle. The purpose of buying a vehicle is to ensure there is mobility, some people purchase high-end vehicles, some people purchase a basic model of any car, while some purchase two-wheelers like scooters or bicycles. While the service of providing mobility is common in all the categories, however the quality of service in terms of comfort level is different in terms of each vehicle. Similarly, there are different kinds of air purifiers in the market. Some of them are fancy and are highly expensive, while some products would be affordable but wouldn't look as fancy. But the common function of these products is to ensure the air is cleaned.

In your research you have mentioned that carbon dioxide is a marker for indoor air pollution. So how is carbon dioxide different from PM 2.5 particles?

So PM 2.5 are particulate matters, while carbon dioxide is a gas. As a result these two matters will have different effects in our body. Mostly carbon dioxide is used as a marker for ventilation for spaces that don't have a mechanical ventilation system and is full of people, therefore you will need a separate marker for it, for which carbon dioxide is used as an alternate marker to identify ventilation levels. Also, the primary source of carbon dioxide is human metabolic air, unlike particulate matter which is emitted artificially. Post covid people have adapted the habit of wearing masks. Does wearing masks also have side effects?

There is some research that shows that wearing a mask can be harmful for people, so this is a trade off. But these are for mostly unhealthy people who have some lung problems or respiratory diseases. Even on healthy people, we have seen masks have affecting physiological effects. But for healthy people these effects could be recovered very quickly, however, there are no long term effects on health that may have been caused because of wearing masks.

In Mumbai, nearly 50 percent of the population reside in slums, in cramped situations and many of them are situated close to polluted zones. According to you, what can be some of the practical measures to protect them from air pollution?

These are extreme conditions and the fact that air quality and pollution are affecting the lifespan of the living in such situations is a secondary concern. There are issues related to malnutrition, then they have lousy conditions to live, poor sleep cycles, sanitation issues. These conditions are much more detrimental to them than air pollution. The issue of air pollution will only contribute to these problems. So removing air pollution will not make any big change. The only big change is to upgrade their lifestyle and that is how it can bring any change to their livelihood and improve their lifespan. For example, in Europe, part of the population is socially challenged. So we need to improve their lifestyle as well alongside improving indoor environment access to medication and healthcare is also improved. Indoor environment does play an important role, but all the other factors are also important. "Inhaling pollutants also have potent effects, but these are not adverse and couldn't be felt immediately as they are much more long term. For example, if you smoke cigarettes, you won't develop lung cancer immediately. Similarly, once you start inhaling pollutants, you won't develop any signs immediately, but after maybe 20 years down the line, you may end up developing Alzheimer's or dementia or maybe some lung disease."



that despite living in a three-bedroom flat, the entire family slept in a single room. When asked how no one noticed three girls leaving the room late at night, Singh said there was nothing unusual. "It was part of their routine. They stayed awake till late, talked, played games and always stayed together. No one noticed anything suspicious that night," he said. They had dropped out of school years ago after Chetan's financial collapse. The girls originally had two mobile phones. Both are now gone. Chetan, deep in debt, sold one phone six months ago and the second one just 15 days before the incident, police said. "We are trying to track the two phones," Singh said. "Once phones are sold, they are usually formatted. After formatting, the chances of recovering data are very low, but we are running the IMEI numbers." Speaking to the press, Vinod Kumar, the father of Sujata and Hina, recalled an earlier death in the family. On the birthday of Chetan's eldest daughter about six-seven years ago, one of Vinod's daughters had visited Chetan's home where she allegedly slipped while taking clothes off the balcony and fell to her death from the third floor.

New Zealand's Christchurch mosque attacks: killer appeals conviction



GNS News Agency, Feb 10

A white supremacist who shot and killed 51 people at two New Zealand mosques in 2019 launched an appeal seeking to overturn his conviction. Brenton Tarrant, an Australian former gym instructor, admitted carrying out New Zealand's deadliest modern-day mass shooting before being sentenced to life in jail in August 2020.

Now, the convicted killer argues that his "tortuous and inhumane" detention conditions during his trial made him incapable of making rational decisions when he pleaded guilty, according to a court synopsis of the case. Tarrant is being held in a specialist unit for prisoners of extreme risk at Auckland Prison, seldom interacting with inmates or other people. I did not have the mind frame or mental health required to be making informed decisions at that time, Tarrant told the court, according to the New Zealand Herald. Tarrant said his state of mind was such that he had considered trying to implicate President Donald Trump in the crime. Life without parole?

"What I said at the time is 'perhaps I could go out and say there was a second shooter on the roof, perhaps I could say it was Donald J. Trump,'" he said, according to national

broadcaster RNZ. If the Court of Appeal in Wellington upholds Tarrant's conviction, it would hold a separate hearing later in the year to consider an appeal against his sentence. His penalty of life imprisonment without parole was the stiffest in New Zealand history. Armed with an arsenal of semi-automatic weapons, Tarrant attacked worshippers at two mosques in Christchurch on March 15, 2019. He published an online manifesto before the attacks and then livestreamed the killings for 17 minutes. His victims were all Muslim and included children, women and the elderly.

'Not prepared' There are heavy restrictions on who can be in court during Monday's (February 9, 2026) appeal hearing, with only counsel, media and court officials allowed. Families and friends of those killed or wounded in the attacks have been invited to watch proceedings in Christchurch remotely by video with a one-hour delay. Members of the public are also able to watch the hearing by video link with a one-hour delay at a separate courtroom in Wellington. Aya Al-Umari, whose brother Hussein was killed by Tarrant inside the Linwood mosque, told Christchurch's The Press newspaper she had thought "this is the end of it" when Tarrant was sentenced. Little did you know that you are allowed to do this six years later. I was not prepared to do this, she said. The hearing is being held before three Court of Appeal judges. In most Court of Appeal hearings the judges reserve their decision to be published at a later date, meaning a verdict is unlikely this week. After Tarrant's livestream, Facebook said it removed 1.5 million videos that proliferated within the first 24 hours showing the harrowing viral footage. Then-Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern quickly moved to tighten gun laws in the aftermath and put pressure on social media giants to curb online extremism. In 2021, Tarrant's former lawyer, Tony Ellis, said his client had believed "the simplest way out was to plead guilty", arguing the plea was made under duress.

Awami League supporters adrift as Bangladesh heads for polls without ruling party

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Seventy-year-old Abu Bakkar has never cast his vote for any symbol other than the Awami League (AL)'s "Boat". A life-long supporter of the party, he never imagined a national election without it. Yet on February 12, Bangladesh will go to the polls with the Awami League (AL) barred from contesting, following a crackdown after the mass uprising that ousted party president and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and ended the party's 15-year rule.

"I have never cast my ballot for any symbol other than the AL's Boat in my lifetime," he said. "The party is barred from this election, but I still intend to vote. I don't know if I will be able to vote in the next election, as I am already old." Mr. Bakkar declined to say which party or candidate he would vote for, though he said several candidates had approached him seeking support. "I have not yet decided, but I will go and cast my vote," he said.

Following the dramatic fall of the Awami League, most of its senior leaders have either fled the country or remain in jail. With the party barred from the election, its traditional vote bank has been left politically adrift. In 2001, the AL won its lowest-ever tally of 62 seats in the 300-member parliament, despite securing more than two crore votes, when the electorate stood at just over seven crore. In the widely regarded free and fair 2008 election, the party won nearly 3.5 crore votes as part of the Grand Alliance, with just over eight crore registered voters. Bangladesh's current voter base exceeds 12.7 crore. With the Awami League out of the fray, a large segment of its former supporters remains undecided—a factor that could prove decisive as former allies Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami contest against each other.

Sources within the Awami League said the party remains uncertain about its election strategy. Although it announced a boycott, there has been little mobilisation on the ground. Grassroots activists said the absence of clear instructions has left supporters confused about whether the party wants the election to proceed and power to transfer from the interim government, which they accuse of carrying out a harsh crackdown over the past 18 months. A leader of the Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student wing of Awami League, and vice-president of a university unit, who requested anonymity citing fear of reprisal and has seven cases filed against him, told The Hindu from an African country where he has taken refuge that he received no instructions to discourage voting. "I did not vote by postal ballot while abroad," he said. "But I also did not tell my family members anything about participating in the election. I did not intervene because my party did not instruct us to obstruct the polls."

A nationwide survey conducted jointly by the Communication and Research Foundation and Bangladesh Election and Public Opinion Studies found that more than 90% of voters intend to vote in the upcoming election, while around 8% remain undecided. Among those who previously voted for the Awami League, 48.2% said they would now vote for the BNP, and 29.9% favoured Jamaat-e-Islami.

Political analysts say the Awami League currently



lacks the organisational strength to prevent the election. Most senior leaders are either jailed or in exile, while those remaining face multiple cases and are disorganised. Analysts also point to the party's loss of moral authority following the killing of protesters during the July 2024 uprising. However, they note that the party retains significant grassroots support, which could still influence the outcome. According to Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), 1,785 cases had been filed nationwide against AL activists and supporters as of November 19, 2025. Sheikh Hasina has been named as an accused in 663 cases, including 453 murder cases. Chargesheets have been submitted in 106 cases, including 31 murder cases, while at least 128 individuals, including former Ministers and MPs, have been arrested. In addition, 761 cases have been filed against police personnel, naming 1,168 officers as accused. The Awami League has long demanded the dissolution of the interim government and elections under a neutral, all-party administration. With polling only three days away, Sheikh Hasina reiterated her call for a boycott, echoed by five Awami League-aligned professional organisations. However, no large-scale public mobilisation in favour of the boycott or obstruction has been visible. AFM Bahauddin Nasim, joint general secretary of the Awami League, told The Hindu on Sunday (February 8, 2026) that the party has boycotted the election and instructed its supporters not to vote. He claimed that not only party supporters but also general voters would reject what he described as a "motivated and non-inclusive" election. Asked whether the party had instructed activists to obstruct polling on February 12, he said the Awami League does not believe in violence. He alleged that BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami activists were pressuring Awami League supporters to attend polling centres. These elections will not be accepted by the people or the international community, he said. Shahadat Shadhin, a political analyst and research scholar at South Asian University, told The Hindu that the absence of Awami League leaders from public life has weakened the party's control over its supporters. Even if the Awami League boycotts the election, many of its supporters will still vote, he said. He said that their votes are likely to be divided mainly between the BNP and Jamaat. Many citizens expect an elected government to stabilise Bangladesh's democratic trajectory. For the Awami League too, political engagement may be more feasible with an elected government than with a purely interim arrangement.

Nobel laureate Narges Mohammadi sentenced to seven more years by Iranian court



Iran has sentenced Nobel Peace Prize laureate Narges Mohammadi to over seven additional years in prison, alongside a two-year travel ban and internal exile, amid her ongoing hunger strike.

Supporters say Mohammadi has been on a hunger strike since February 2. She had been arrested in December at a ceremony honouring Khosrow Alikordi, a 46-year-old Iranian lawyer and human rights advocate who had been based in Mashhad. Footage from the demonstration showed her shouting, demanding justice for Alikordi and others.

Iran did not immediately acknowledge the sentence.

Bangladesh election and referendum may prolong instability, caution candidates and experts



GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Days ahead of the general election and popular referendum of February 12, candidates and experts questioned the wisdom of holding the referendum that aims to curtail power of the Prime Minister's post. They said there is very little understanding among the public about the idea and aims of the referendum and that there are chances that the outcomes of the two processes may lead to 'tension' that may prolong political instability in the country. The referendum is aimed at implementing the recommendations made by July Charter, a document created by the National Consensus Commission that was formed for constitutional reform after the overthrow of the Sheikh Hasina regime. Among its several recommendations, the July Charter seeks to enhance power of the President of Bangladesh which is largely a ceremonial position at the moment. It also recommends to remove the term 'Bengalee' from Article 6(2) of the present constitution and replace it with 'Bangladeshi'.

That apart, much of the focus of the Charter is aimed at curtailing power of the Prime Minister with the aim to ensure that no future Prime Minister would be able to abuse authority. These provisions have already given rise to concern among the candidates who are campaigning for the February 12 polling. The National Consensus Commission consulted political parties while drafting the July Charter but electoral candidates here said that they were not 'involved'

in the drafting of the July Charter. BNP-backed Andaleeb Rahman Partho who is contesting for Bholal-1 constituency in southern Bangladesh said, "Some of the political parties were consulted while making the July Charter, but we were not involved in the drafting process in the way that was necessary."

He further said that the prominence of the national parliament should not be diluted through means that fall outside the realm of electoral politics. He said that as a representative of young Bangladeshis, he "acknowledges" the sacrifices made in July-August to overthrow the Government of Sheikh Hasina but he does not want to make changes to the parliamentary process that is currently prevailing in Bangladesh as that system can not be blamed for the excesses committed by Sheikh Hasina. "I own and acknowledge the July Spirit, that emanated from the sacrifices of July 2024 but I do not want to make it into a Magna Carta of sorts. The recommendations of the July Charter should be passed by the next parliament as that is the best way forward," said Mr. Rahman Partho who is the leader of Bangladesh Jatiya Party which is being supported by Tarique Rahman-led Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). He argued that corruption depends on individuals and that it is not right to imagine that all future Prime Ministers will have a tendency to centralise power and become financially corrupt. He also said that people at large are unaware about the various aspects of the July Charter. "People are focused on the election, they want to elect the next members of the parliament. I am certain not even one tenth of my voters are actually aware of what the referendum is aiming to deliver," said Mr. Rahman Partho. Shafqat Munir, Senior Fellow at Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) also said the referendum may end up creating further difficulties before the country. "The questions asked in the referendum and the process of executing the referendum is complex and in some cases opaque. The electorate especially in the rural areas has scant understanding of what they are voting for. The interim government's initial handling of the referendum has raised several major questions," said Mr. Munir.

Community initiative in New Jersey raises alarm over scams targeting Indian Americans

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

New Jersey: In a modest hall in Maywood, New Jersey, seniors, students, and families gathered to confront a growing menace that has quietly reshaped lives across the Indian American community—scams that drain savings, shatter trust and, increasingly, pull young people into serious legal trouble. The awareness event, held on Sunday afternoon, marked the public launch of 'Help Before Scam (HBS)', a community initiative founded by Anil Mangukia, aimed at stopping fraud before irreversible damage is done. "Scams do not steal the money. They steal the trust, they steal the peace of mind and the family stability," Mangukia told the audience, urging families to talk openly about scam tactics and warning signs.

In the last year alone, dozens of such cases have been reported from across the country, with Indian American senior citizens and young students from India becoming victims of such a scam, resulting in many of them losing their life savings or ending up in jail. Much of the discussion focused on how scammers exploit fear and authority. Frances Nicotra, a New Jersey-based attorney, explained that seniors are often targeted precisely because they are conditioned to be respectful and responsive. "They could sound the sweetest, they could be the most charming," Nicotra said, warning that scammers rely on friendliness and urgency to extract personal information.

Nicotra stressed that urgency itself should raise suspicion. "Anything calling for your personal information, threatening an arrest, threatening something bad's going to happen to you, it's never that urgent, ever under any circumstance," she said, advising seniors to pause, refuse to share details and verify independently before responding. The event also addressed a disturbing trend involving students, particularly international students, who are being recruited as couriers in gold and cash scams. Speakers warned that offers of quick money often end with arrests and long prison sentences. "Anybody offers you that type of money, don't ever indulge in that," said Harold D'Souza, describing such offers as clear red flags.

D'Souza's remarks carried weight as he recounted his own experience of labour trafficking after arriving legally in the US in 2003. Describing the moment, he realised he was trapped, he said, "In one second, I lost four things. I lost my hope, I lost my courage, I lost my voice, and I lost my



freedom." Addressing students directly, D'Souza warned against shortcuts that promise fast returns. "A short-term pain is a long-term gain, but a short-term gain is a long-term pain," he said, adding that easy money schemes can devastate families that have invested heavily in education abroad.

Speakers repeatedly emphasised the importance of early reporting and intervention. Nicotra urged victims or potential victims to seek help immediately. "Nine one one is always, always the best," she said, while also advising calls to banks, Adult Protective Services and trusted family members if a suspicious call is received. Several speakers acknowledged that law enforcement often arrests low-level participants while those directing scams remain hidden. Calling scams a "criminal enterprise", Nicotra said agencies must push further up the chain to dismantle networks that prey on vulnerable populations rather than recycling arrests at the bottom.

Mangukia said HBS aims to bridge the gap between policing and prevention by spreading practical knowledge within families, community centres and student networks. "Knowledge is power", Nicotra added. "It helps you maintain your agency." US authorities have repeatedly warned of rising impersonation and courier scams, with billions of dollars lost nationwide in recent years. Community-driven efforts like the HBS initiative reflect a growing recognition that education and vigilance, especially within immigrant communities, may be the most effective first line of defence against an evolving threat.

Why a US strike on Iran is losing momentum

The past few weeks have seen a perceptible cooling of tensions between the United States and Iran after a brief but intense spike. While rhetoric remains sharp and mistrust deep, the immediate risk of American military action appears to be receding. This de-escalation, however, should not be misread as reconciliation. Instead, it reflects the hard strategic, political, and regional constraints that make a US military option against Iran increasingly unattractive.

The most visible signal of American preparedness was the redeployment of the USS Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group from the South China Sea to the Middle East, bringing it under the area of responsibility of US Central Command. Such movements are often interpreted as preludes to war. In reality, they more often serve as strategic posturing—demonstrations of capability intended to deter adversaries, reassure allies, and preserve bargaining leverage. In the present context, the carrier's movement appears less a prelude to imminent conflict and more a reminder of America's reach in a situation that Washington itself is reluctant to militarise.

First, there is the problem of the end-state. Unlike limited punitive strikes, which rarely alter political behaviour, any serious US operation against Iran would immediately raise the question: what does "success" look like? Regime change would imply long-term occupation or at least sustained coercion. Containment would require indefinite military pressure. Deterrence has already been in place for decades. None of these offers a politically or strategically clean exit. Second, Iran is not Iraq 2003. It is a large, mountainous country with a population of nearly 90 million, a strong nationalist identity, and a security architecture designed precisely to absorb and outlast external pressure.

Third, geography and logistics heavily favour the defender. Iran's distance from the US mainland, its depth of territory, and its proximity to vital maritime chokepoints make any sustained campaign operationally demanding. American bases in the Gulf are within range of Iranian missiles and drones. Energy infrastructure, shipping lanes, and partner militaries would all be exposed. Even a limited confrontation could rapidly escalate into a multi-theatre conflict involving Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen. Fourth, escalation control is deeply uncertain. Iran's network of allied militias gives it the capacity to retaliate asymmetrically and indirectly. Any US strike risks triggering a regional cascade rather than a bilateral exchange. Beyond the region, Iran's strategic ties with Russia and China introduce the possibility—even if remote—of great-power entanglement. In today's polarised international system, Washington must weigh not only Tehran's response but how others might exploit a widening conflict. Yet perhaps the most under-appreciated brake on American military action has been the clear reluctance of the Gulf states themselves. For decades, Saudi Arabia's rivalry with Iran—rooted in ideology, geopolitics, and competing regional visions—led many to assume Riyadh would welcome US pressure on Tehran. That assumption no longer holds.

Failure to count DNTs in 2027 Census could alienate over 10 crore people: G.N. Devy

As denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes (DNTs) across the country come together to demand a "separate column" for themselves in the 2027 Census forms, linguist and cultural scholar professor G.N. Devy has warned that India risks further alienating these communities—classified as "criminal" under the colonial-era 1871 Criminal Tribes Act and left uncounted since the formation of the Republic—if they are not explicitly counted.

In an exclusive interview with *The Hindu*, professor Devy—who headed the Ministry of Social Justice's Technical Advisory Group on DNTs in 2006, and co-founded the DNT-Rights Action Group (DNT-RAG) with author Mahasweta Devi—said that inclusion of the DNTs must begin with a declaration by the Census Commissioner that these communities will be counted explicitly. He added that the problem of alienating over 10 crore people could become much bigger than that of counting them.

What opportunity does the upcoming Census present for the welfare of DNTs, given that caste will be enumerated in 2027?

The census and the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) were both instituted in 1871. While the census has continued unbroken, except for this time, the plight of DNTs has also continued, with no proper count, except in 1931. The Iyengar Committee in 1950, the NHRC in the early 2000s, the Renke Commission in 2008, and the Idate Commission (2017) have all called for a census of DNTs. Yet questions such as 'Have you been a DNT? Have you been nomadic or semi-nomadic? Or denotified former criminal tribe?' have never been included in Census schedules. If that is not done this time, and if the DNTs are taken for a ride again with no specific data emerging at the end of the exercise, India will alienate close to 10 crore or more people from the mainstream. The problem can be much bigger than the problem of calculating, tabulating, and making a proper list. This should have been a primary question even in the household surveys. It would be of great interest to any household surveyor to account for nomadic communities. People without houses are counted as a general classification. That speaks about houseless people, but not about DNTs. This exclusion has been the worst. This is a motiveless malignity, and the census has no reason to exclude them. But the Census excludes them just because it did so earlier.

How can the government ensure the Census is truly inclusive of DNTs?

First, the census should declare that DNTs will be enumerated. That message will go around the communities across the country. Now, saying that "we will enumerate everybody, and therefore that will also include DNTs", is like saying that "we are not doing an independent and exclusive census of the DNTs". So that must be done. They do not need any special permission to introduce the question. Secondly, the technology used should be accessible. Where it is not, there must be a system for people to go to an office and declare their DNT status. Third, the Cen-



sus must avoid creating a long and unmanageable list of documents, because historically, even panchayats have refused to issue birth certificates to DNTs. And the fourth, after the census gets its data on DNTs, they must quickly consult the Anthropological Survey of India and get that data verified. And this data must be open for scrutiny by scholars as far as the DNTs issue is concerned.

There is a resentment among many DNT communities over their misclassification into SC/ST/OBC lists when they seek a list of their own. Must the DNT classification be exclusive of these identities?

The question of identity is never singular. The DNT identity is not exclusive of other identities. There is intersectionality. This is a complexity in the bureaucratic process. I accept that. But that is no fault of the DNTs. We cannot tell them that we have already messed up our bureaucratic processes, and therefore, we can no longer think of you. That's not a good justification. These processes can be improved. Fortunately, with the help of technology, multiple classifications and multiple classificatory tags can be sorted out easily.

Amidst calls for separate quotas for DNTs, exclusive of SC, ST, and OBC identities (where they might exist), how can these reservations account for this intersectionality?

The demands for reservations, DNT reservations, and DNT representation in the Assembly, Panchayat or Parliament have been around for quite a while. But there are two different issues: the first is just to count the DNTs and create a factual report on who they are, where they are, and how many they are. The second question is whether they should be given reservations or not. That will depend on the results of the Census. The political decisions on whether to give reservations to DNTs or not and whether it should be aligned with the SC or ST reservation, or independent, are the next step. But in the absence of credible data, no such decision can be taken at all. To fear that such a decision will have to be taken, and therefore not to do enumeration, is not a logical line of action. Let the count take place first. Governments can then decide, and the people themselves will also know whether to demand reservations or drop the demand.

The hidden risk in hospitalisation renewals



Recently, I came across multiple cases of insureds being left exposed at precisely the moment they believed they were protected. The insurer already received the proposal and the premium, only to later reject the proposal or offer a cover so materially altered it bore little resemblance to what was originally proposed and accepted. These are not isolated service failures but a trending operating procedure undermining the trust in insurance. Insurance is a contract. There is a proposal, an acceptance, a defined set of conditions under which compensation will be due and a computed consideration to be paid. The conditions are the risks you are insured for and the consideration is the premium. A proposal form is filled with personal data and coverage needs, the risk is underwritten (evaluated) and premium decided. When premium is paid, the insurer assumes the risk.

The small but critical twist in the cases is this: a quote is offered by an intermediary (agent, bank, or broker), the proposal form, supporting documents and the premium are all collected though formal underwriting and acceptance are still pending. In principle, premium collection should follow acceptance, not precede it. When that sequence is reversed, the risk silently remains with the customer. What does this look like in real life? A colleague of mine had a family hospitalisation policy coming up for renewal. She was approached by a different insurer offering a higher sum insured at a very attractive premium. Reassured, she paid the premium and assumed her family cover was secure.

Days later, she was informed one family member could not be covered due to a medical reason, one which alarmed her and which their treating family doctor simply could not accept as a valid medical concern.

Continuity at riskOn another dimension, the timing of the rejection placed the family's cover continuity at risk. In proceeding with the new insurer, she had missed the renewal date of existing policy which was in the final days of the grace period. With Pongal holidays intervening, the only practical advice I could give her was to immediately renew the old policy within the grace period.

The intermediary was fully aware the existing policy was due for renewal. In fact, it is closest to the renewal date policyholders are bombarded with calls, WhatsApps and SMS urging them to switch insurers or 'upgrade' coverage. Yet, the intermediary allowed the process to drift past the renewal deadline. The insurer's eventual rejection created a cliff-edge situation, pressuring my colleague to accept the modified and inferior terms now being offered. She must now

pursue a refund of the premium. With family hospitalisation premiums easily touching ₹1 lakh or more, who compensates her for the opportunity cost of funds lying with the insurer? More importantly, had the old policy become unavailable due to this delay and reversal, would the new insurer/intermediary have stepped in to compensate for the loss of lifelong guaranteed renewal on original terms?

The IRDAI's portability framework for hospitalisation cover is designed to protect policyholders and ensure continuity of cover. Requirements such as initiating the process at least two months before renewal reflect that intent. However, the framework is silent on the consequences of post-premium rejection. There is no explicit deterrent against collecting premiums before underwriting is completed nor clear accountability when such practices jeopardise continuity of cover. This is a regulatory gap deserving urgent attention. At least, insurers should not be allowed to collect premiums before underwriting decisions are final. Where premiums are collected and proposals rejected, timelines for refunds, compensation for delay and responsibility for loss of continuity must be defined. Intermediaries must be held accountable when their actions/advice expose clients to avoidable risk. Until such safeguards are firmly embedded, consumer awareness remains the first—and often only—line of defence.

Here are tips to avoid such heartburn: Start renewal/portioning process in advance. Follow up persistently with the intermediary and the insurer, preferably in writing. Above all, do not allow existing policy to lapse until the new cover is formally issued. In case of doubts, renewing the current policy preserves certainty—and buys you a full year to thoughtfully reassess coverage, insurer and the fine print that too often shows its sting only when it is already too late.

Manipur district issued prohibitory orders over Kuki-Naga tension

Administration of Manipur's Ukhrul district on Sunday (February 8, 2026) imposed prohibitory orders in Litan area of the district "until further notice", following tension between Naga and Kuki-Zo villagers over an assault case.

District Magistrate Asish Das said the restrictions, under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, were imposed on apprehension of breach of peace and public tranquillity in the area. The restrictions came into force from 7 p.m.

The district administration also requisitioned the services of the Army and paramilitary forces, including the Assam Rifles, as a preventive measure. According to reports, a Kuki-Zo group allegedly assaulted a Tangkhul Naga man at Litan on Saturday (February 7, 2026) night. The situation turned tense on Sunday (February 8, 2026) afternoon when Naga villagers approached the chief of a Kuki village and asked him to produce the culprits before them.

The district authorities stepped in after people in several Naga villages called for action against those who thrashed the Naga man. Earlier, the Kuki Students' Organisation (KSO) issued a statement saying that the "incident originated from a minor altercation involving a few intoxicated individuals from both villages". It also said that the matter was being addressed peacefully and customarily through the established authority of the Litan Sareikhang village "in consultation with the family of the injured person". The Katho Katamnao Long (KKL), a Tangkhul students' organisation, asked the KSO to retract the statement as "no such step had been taken to rectify the situation". The KKL said Sterling, a Tangkhul youth, was beaten up after he switched on his torch after hearing some voices in the dark. It said the group of people, who turned out to be from Kuki-Zo community, beat him up grievously "on the pretext that the light fell on their faces".

When institutional reliability matters: the story of di-ethylene glycol

The government of Tamil Nadu's Directorate of Drug Control recently issued a public notice against a specific batch of Almond Kit syrup, after laboratory tests detected adulteration with ethylene glycol. This finding emerged during routine surveillance. It comes barely five months after India lost over 20 children in Madhya Pradesh last year due to contaminated cough syrups. Together, these episodes underline the fact that India faces a long battle against adulterations to protect patients from avoidable deaths, bringing to the fore, the inability of the public to rely on governmental institutions meant to protect them.

The rise of the world's most influential drug regulator, the United States' Food and Drug Administration (FDA), is linked to the same chemical, Di-Ethylene Glycol (DEG) that caused the deaths last year, and its origin story is one of tragedy. In 1937, sulfanilamide was a wonder drug. It was one of the first antibiotics to be made, and had saved countless lives from deadly bacterial infections. Yet, it posed a practical challenge: it did not dissolve easily in water. In liquid medicines such as syrups, a solvent plays a central role in making the drug usable and reliable. Many active drug substances do not dissolve in plain water, and without a suitable solvent, they would settle unevenly, leading to inaccurate dosing with each spoonful. A proper solvent keeps the drug uniformly distributed, improves stability during storage, and allows the medicine to be absorbed predictably in the body. Solvents also influence taste, texture, and shelf life, making them essential components in the design of safe and effective liquid formulations.

A pharmaceutical company in the USA decided to solve this by dissolving it in a seemingly harmless solvent, DEG. Within weeks, more than 100 people died across the country, many of them children. The solvent was the killer, not the drug. At the time, the company had broken no law. There was no legal requirement to test drugs for safety before marketing. The tragedy shocked the nation and led to a historic shift. In 1938, the United States passed the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, mandating pre-market safety testing for medicines. This transformed the FDA from a modest office into a scientific regulatory authority with the power to inspect, test, approve, and recall drugs.

DEG is a simple organic chemical belonging to the glycol family, with the formula $(HOCH_2CH_2)_2O$. It is a colourless, odourless, slightly viscous liquid with a faintly sweet taste. It mixes easily with water and alcohol, does not evaporate quickly, remains stable over a wide temperature range, and is inexpensive to manufacture. These properties make it an excellent industrial solvent. DEG mimics safer pharmaceutical solvents such as glycerine or propylene glycol. From an unscrupulous manufacturer's perspective, DEG is far cheaper than glycerine or propylene glycol, which costs more, requires better sourcing, and demands quality control. In poorly-regulated environments, DEG becomes a convenient substitute that reduces production costs without visibly altering the final product.

The exact mechanism of DEG toxicity remains unclear. Once ingested, it is absorbed from the gut and metabolised in the liver by enzymes such as alcohol dehydrogenase. It is converted into toxic acidic metabolites, particularly diglycolic acid, which is the principal agent responsible for organ damage. Diglycolic acid has a direct toxic effect on the proximal renal tubules of the kidneys. These tubules are responsible for filtering and reabsorbing essential substances from the blood. When they are damaged, the kidneys abruptly fail. This leads to acute kidney injury, accumulation of toxins in the blood, electrolyte disturbances, and severe metabolic acidosis. Clinically, this



explains the typical pattern seen in DEG poisoning: early nausea and vomiting, followed after a deceptive period of apparent improvement followed by rapid deterioration, kidney failure, reduced urine output, confusion, seizures, and, in severe cases, death.

DEG cannot be banned altogether, as its legitimate uses are numerous and essential. It is used in antifreeze and brake fluids, where it prevents freezing and ensures mechanical reliability. It plays a role in the manufacture of resins, plasticisers, inks, adhesives, and dyes. In the textile industry, it helps produce polyester fibres. In natural gas processing, it removes moisture from pipelines. In all these applications, DEG performs efficiently and safely. The chemical is not the villain. Its migration into medicines is.

DEG has been linked to deaths across multiple countries for nearly a century, since 1937 in the USA. In Spain in 1985, contaminated topical preparations caused five deaths. In Nigeria in 1990, contaminated paracetamol syrup caused 47 child deaths, followed by another outbreak in 2008 that resulted in 84 child deaths. In Bangladesh between 1990 and 1992, DEG in paracetamol syrups was associated with the deaths of more than 300 children. In Argentina in 1992, contaminated propolis syrup caused 29 deaths. In Haiti in 1996, contaminated acetaminophen syrups led to around 88 child deaths. In Panama in 2006, DEG in medicines were linked to 365 deaths. In The Gambia in 2022, cough syrups were associated with 70 child deaths, followed by Uzbekistan and Indonesia in the same year, where contaminated syrups were linked to about 20 and nearly 100 child deaths, respectively. India's encounter with DEG has occurred at multiple points over the past four decades. In 1986, a glycerin batch contaminated with DEG used in hospitals in Mumbai led to the deaths of at least 21 patients due to acute kidney failure. More recently, in 2022 and 2023, Indian-manufactured cough syrups containing DEG were linked to child deaths in several countries abroad. The lesson for India from the United States here, is in replicating its institutional courage. The FDA was not built because America loved regulation; it was built because America learnt, painfully, that without strong institutions, the nation can't prosper. If India truly wants to become self-reliant, then it must ensure its institutions are strong, reliable and safeguard public health. Without this, we will simply be reacting to tragedy, not averting it.

Are you tax aware?



You are a tax-aware investor if you actively integrate the impact of taxes into all investment decisions. Should you? In this article, we discuss what it takes to be a tax-aware investor.

HNWIs vs. mass affluent The rich are typically tax-aware investors. The asset management industry refers to them as High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs), which include Very HNWIs and Ultra HNWIs. The middle-class spans a wide range of wealth, where the top-end of the spectrum could be tax-aware investors. So, a large part may not be tax-aware investors. The middle-class is typically referred to as mass-affluent investors.

The investment process starts with the asset allocation decision. This involves deciding how much of your expected annual savings should be allocated to each asset class you intend to invest to achieve life goals. The next

step is the asset location decision. This refers to deciding how to invest in a tax-efficient way to achieve the asset allocation decision. This is based on three locations: taxable, tax-deferred and tax-exempt. The tax-exempt location includes provident fund, public provident fund and national pension scheme. All capital appreciation products fall into the tax-deferred location, where tax liability arises only when you sell the investment. The rest falls into the taxable location.

Most mass-affluent investors must choose from the three locations. Some mass-affluent investors typically all HNWIs create tax shelters, in addition to using investments that directly fall into these three locations. Setting up tax shelters may be optimal only beyond a wealth level. So, for most mass-affluent investors, the goal must be to align asset allocation to achieve their goals even if some investments are taxable. If you want capital appreciation along with stable income, invest in equity funds and bank deposits. The former will fit into tax-deferred location and latter, the taxable location. While tax on accrued interest will hit the bond exposure in portfolio, there is the benefit of diversifying source of returns. Most mass-affluent investors may not have the choices available to HNWIs. The decision to invest tax-efficiently is nevertheless crucial. So, they should first decide on asset allocation. Then, check if bond asset-class exposure can be in a tax-exempt location, given the objective to earn income returns with minimal reinvestment risk. If not, they may have to choose the taxable location. The trade-off is the tax incurred for lowering the reinvestment risk.

Moody's projects India's GDP to grow 6.4% in FY'27, fastest among G20 economies

Moody's Ratings on Monday (February 9, 2026) projected India's GDP to grow at 6.4% in the next fiscal, the fastest pace among G-20 economies, driven by strong domestic consumption, policy measures, and a stable banking system. In its banking system outlook report, Moody's said their asset quality will remain resilient, with some stress among micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Regardless, banks have sufficient reserves to absorb loan losses, it said.

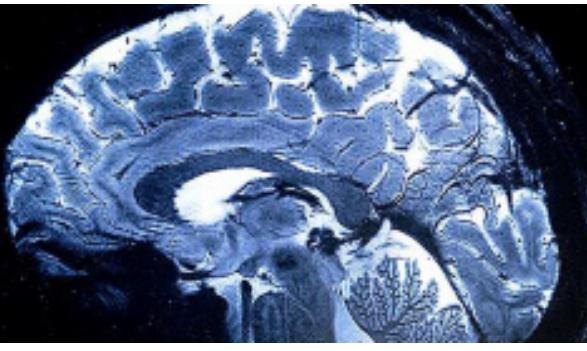
The operating environment for banks will remain strong in 2026, supported by robust macroeconomic conditions and structural reforms, it said. "We forecast India's real GDP will grow 6.4% for fiscal 2026-27, the fastest pace among G-20 economies, driven by strong domestic consumption and policy measures.

"The rationalization of the goods and services tax (GST) in September 2025 and an earlier increase in personal income tax thresholds will help improve affordability for consumers and support consumption-led growth," Moody's said. The FY'27 GDP growth estimates by Moody's are lower than the 6.8-7.2% range projected by the Finance Ministry's Economic Survey tabled in Parliament last



month. As per official estimates, India is likely to grow at a faster pace of 7.4% in the current fiscal (2025-26), higher than 6.5% per cent growth clocked in 2024-25. Moody's said with inflation under control and growth momentum remaining strong, Moody's anticipates RBI will further ease monetary policy in fiscal 2026-27 only if there are signs of a slowdown in economic activity. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has lowered its policy rate by a total of 125 basis points to 5.25% in 2025.

Brain enzyme discovery may open new path to treat neurodegenerative disease



Scientists have uncovered a previously unknown molecular mechanism that helps explain why aging and neurological disease are so often accompanied by sleep disturbances, mood disorders, and cognitive decline -- and, crucially, how those effects may be reversed. Metabolic imbalance in ageing brains

The study, published in the peer-reviewed journal *Nature Communications*, identified a longevity-linked enzyme as an active metabolic switch in the brain rather than a passive marker of ageing. The research centered on tryptophan, an essential amino acid commonly associated with sleep because it is a precursor to serotonin and melatonin. But researchers say that view is incomplete. Tryptophan also fuels a separate metabolic route that produces cellular energy, and the balance between these pathways is critical for brain health.

For years, scientists have observed that this balance becomes disrupted in ageing brains and even more severely in neurodegenerative and psychiatric disorders, contributing to impaired mood, learning, and sleep. Until now, the molecular cause of that disruption was unknown. "This imbalance has been documented repeatedly, but the mechanism behind it remained a mystery," said Prof. Debra Toiber of Ben-Gurion University's Department of Life Sciences, who led the research. Using human cell lines alongside mouse and fruit fly models, Toiber's team identified the enzyme sirtuin 6, or SIRT6, as the central regulator. SIRT6 is known for its role in longevity, but the study shows it also functions as a gatekeeper of tryptophan metabolism. When SIRT6 activity is intact, tryptophan is properly distributed between pathways that generate energy and those that produce serotonin and melatonin, neurotransmitters that protect the brain and regulate mood and sleep. When SIRT6 activity declines -- a hallmark of aging -- that balance shifts dramatically. Tryptophan is diverted toward the kynurenone

pathway, which supports energy production but also generates byproducts the researchers found to be toxic to nerve cells. At the same time, production of serotonin and melatonin drops, depriving the brain of compounds essential for neural stability. "This is not just a gradual decline," Toiber said. "It is an active metabolic rerouting that damages the nervous system." The scientists also demonstrated that the damage is not inevitable. In fruit fly models lacking SIRT6, the team inhibited a second enzyme, TDO2, which plays a key role in pushing tryptophan into the kynurenone pathway. Blocking TDO2 significantly prevented neurodegeneration and reduced pathological changes in brain tissue, pointing to a clear therapeutic opportunity. "Our research positions the enzyme SIRT6 as a critical and primary drug target to combat degenerative brain pathology," Toiber said.

"These findings change the way we understand the relationship between aging and brain function. It is not simply wear and tear, but a specific metabolic malfunction that can be corrected." She added that the results open the door to the development of drugs that inhibit TDO2 or interventions, including nutritional strategies, that restore balance between tryptophan pathways. Rather than managing symptoms of sleep disorders, depression, or neurodegeneration, future therapies could aim to correct the underlying metabolic imbalance in tryptophan utilisation. Compounds that enhance SIRT6 activity or selectively inhibit TDO2 could reduce the buildup of neurotoxic metabolites while restoring the production of serotonin and melatonin. The study also raises the possibility of repurposing existing compounds. TDO2 has already been investigated in other fields, including cancer and immunology, meaning that experimental inhibitors and partial safety data may already exist. Redirecting or refining such compounds for neurological indications could significantly shorten development timelines compared to entirely new drugs. Beyond treatment, the work suggests a path toward earlier diagnosis. Alterations in tryptophan metabolites or reduced SIRT6 activity could serve as biomarkers detectable in blood or cerebrospinal fluid, allowing clinicians to identify individuals at risk of cognitive decline, mood disorders, or sleep disturbances before symptoms become severe. Such biomarkers could also be used to more precisely monitor disease progression or response to therapy. The international collaboration included researchers from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, KU Leuven's VIB Center for Cancer Biology in Belgium, the Skolkovo Institute of Science and Technology in Russia, and the University of South Bohemia in the Czech Republic.

Putin's visit to India and the aftermath



Ukraine, and other aspects. However, this has been belied, as the optics of the latest visit indicate. The West, especially the U.S. and countries of the European Union, are certain to be disappointed at the outcome. Apart from the public display of warmth by the Indian Prime Minister and the Russian President on the latter's arrival in Delhi, the relationship between the two countries, often touted as a relationship carved in stone, remains unaffected. The Joint Statement issued following the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit makes this clear. Support for a further strengthening of the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia (marking the 25th Anniversary of the Declaration of Strategic Partnership between India and Russia), for instance, remains unchanged. The statement reiterates the special nature of the longstanding time-tested relationship characterised by mutual trust and respect for each other's core national interests. The Joint Statement further envisages exploring new avenues for cooperation, while strengthening cooperation in traditional areas. The optics of the visit were, hence, excellent. The media coverage exceeded expectations. The body language demonstrated by the two principals left nothing to be desired. There were more than the usual references to connectivity, and cooperation on transport corridors, especially on the Northern Sea route through the Arctic, and the Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor. Technology and industrial collaboration also found prominent mention.

Leaving out defence matters yet, defence matters, which had so far provided the main spark as far as the relationship was concerned, were conspicuously absent from the Joint Statement. This has been a core item during the Putin era — and unless there was a deliberate decision to maintain diplomatic silence on supposedly controversial aspects and subjects, it would appear that the essence of the India-Russia relationship was changing. The reasons for this have yet to be explained, and give room for deep thought, especially during a period of global flux. The defence relationship and cooperation had always been seen and accepted as the bedrock of India-Russia relations; in this instance, however, it has been pushed into the background as of now. This is not merely significant, but could mark a shift in India's attitude and approach, which has so far been (at least in defence matters) largely pro-Russia in outlook.

India has, of late, diversified its defence purchases to include countries such as Israel and France. Nevertheless, Russia has over the years provided the main sinews for India's defence. It has been India's most consistent ally in conflicts with countries such as Pakistan, with the latter being consistently backed by the West. It is not merely the consistency of Russian support, but also the quality of many of the items that Russia has been willing to supply India that has added a great deal of heft to India's defence capabilities. At present, as was amply proved during Operation Sindoora in May 2025, Russia's S-400 air and missile defence system (which has acquired a near mythical status and is widely credited with India's success during the conflict), the Brahmos missile that India has jointly developed with Russia, and is a critical part of India's arsenal, apart from items such as the Sukhoi SU-30 MKI, the T-90 Tanks, and transport helicopters, form an integral part of India's defence structure. Considerable advances have also been made with regard to joint manufacturing and future collaboration between India and Russia in the arcane area of defence. While India, no doubt, has certain new options to enlarge its military stockpile, Russia has historically been its largest most reliable and significant supplier of state-of-the-art weaponry on land, sea, and air. Of late, Russia has offered more of the same. A shift towards Western sources, given the current state of global politics, could therefore prove detrimental to India's interests. While this might bring about greater European and U.S. endorsement of India's policies, the actual costs need to be weighed carefully. It should be evident that little scope for a change exists, given that the West has never been a reliable partner while Russia has

been. Relations between Russia and the West have, if anything, deteriorated further ever since. Some in the West were possibly anticipating a shift in the content of the India-Russia relationship given the current flux in global politics. U.S. President Trump's heightened tariffs on India for continuing to purchase Russian oil in the wake of the conflict in

How climate change is driving an increase of vaginal yeast infections in India



Most women have heard of, if not contracted a vaginal yeast infection (vaginal candidiasis) during their lifetime. This fungal infection caused by the fungus Candida is a common ailment, but experts now say that climate change in India is behind the increased emergence of fungal infections in India, changing patterns are spiking risks and making them harder to treat.

What are vaginal yeast infections?

Vaginal yeast infections cause itching and irritation around the vaginal area, a burning sensation and lead to changes in the vaginal discharge, often including a cakewalk discharge. The fungus Candida generally lives in the body, and when there is a balance maintained, it does not cause issues. But if this balance is affected, it can multiply rapidly and too much of it can cause a yeast infection. Though it is commonly seen in women, men can also get them, say doctors. Women can contract these infections from their male partners through sexual contact -- however, the infection can also be contracted in the absence of sex. Doctors note that many women suffer from repeated infections. This can be attributed to a number of reasons including unwarranted antibiotic use, a weak immune system, uncontrolled diabetes or the use of any pills that increase oestrogen levels. Pregnancy can also increase the risk due to hormonal changes. Primarily however, vaginal yeast infections come back repeatedly due to poor personal hygiene, the use of synthetic underwear, and lack of proper treatment, emphasise doctors.

Over the past decade or so, climate change events have become a reality globally and in India. Rising temperatures: longer stretches of more extreme heat are one of the manifestations of climate change in the country. Doctors now say that the rising temperatures, combined with high levels of humidity in many parts of India are causing a spike in vaginal yeast infections in women. "Rising temperatures and increasing humidity create an ideal environment for fungal organisms, especially Candida, to thrive. Warm and moist conditions promote rapid fungal growth on the skin and mucosal surfaces, increasing the likelihood of vaginal yeast overgrowth," Hernant Deshpande, professor and head of obstetrics/gynaecology, DPU Super Specialty Hospital, Pimpri Pune says. High humidity, he adds, leads to sweating, which keeps the vaginal area damp for a pro-

longed period, reduces air circulation, and disrupts the natural vaginal microbiome helping yeast infections thrive. Over 75% of women experience at least one episode of vaginal yeast infection in their life, Dr. Deshpande said. "Studies from tropical and monsoon-prone regions consistently report higher rates of fungal infections during hot, humid months... climate-driven temperature rise, and sustained humidity significantly increase both the incidence and recurrence of vaginal yeast infections," he points out. For Meghna (name changed on request), an IT professional in her late 20s, recurrent yeast infections impacted her physically and mentally. "The first and second time, I was badly affected mentally, because I didn't know what was happening and why. Sexually also it was painful, but my husband was caring and patient about it," she says. Antibiotic use led to repeated infections. She was finally advised by a doctor to wear loose clothing and keep the genital area dry and ventilated to avoid further infections. Sreha (name change on request), a media consultant in her 30s, believes that the weather at the place where she lives contributed to her infections. "I have lived in Kolkata and Chennai, both very hot and humid places for the past two years and I have been getting yeast infections every few months. Even though I took care of my personal hygiene, it did not stop. Finally, I started taking medicines. There is so much stigma around it that I did not seek medical help sooner," she says. Men need treatment too.

Parnamita Bhattacharya, gynaecologist, CMRI Hospital, Kolkata, said that when a woman comes in with a vaginal yeast infection, it is also important to treat their partner, otherwise infections keep recurring. "There is a stereotype that this is a woman's problem, and the men sometimes do not want to take the medicines because they may not have symptoms, but quite often the infection might be latent in them. So even if the woman seeks treatment, there is a high chance she will have a repeated infection after sexual intercourse with her partner," Dr. Bhattacharya states. Medical adherence is key, point out doctors. Antibiotics do not work with yeast infections as they are caused by a fungus; in fact antibiotics can kill the 'good' bacteria in the vagina, thereby causing an imbalance in fungus levels. Dr. Bhattacharya says that patients and their partners, if any, have to take the antifungal medications prescribed. With climate change-caused rising temperatures and high humidity levels now a reality that many parts of India have to deal with, some steps, doctors say, can be taken to avoid yeast infections. "Women should not use synthetic underwear on an everyday basis and should not use any scented vaginal cleaning products. Improper menstrual hygiene is also a cause of vaginal yeast infections because sometimes women do not change their sanitary pads frequently, and the blood keeps the area moist for long hours, leading to infections. Proper hygiene is important. Finally, no antibiotics must be taken without a prescription," Dr. Bhattacharya says, adding that the stigma around accessing care for vaginal infections needs to be broken as access to early treatment is crucial.

Will SHANTI Act aid India's nuclear development? | Explained



SHANTI encourages private companies to participate and, potentially, allow foreign funding to flow in India's nuclear sector. Currently, only public sector enterprises can build and operate nuclear power plants in the country. India has plans to increase its current nuclear capacity from 8.8 GW (or about 1.5% of the total installed) to 100 GW by 2047 and thereby increase the contribution of nuclear power to generated electricity from the current 3%. State-owned nuclear power utilities have projected that they will add about 54 GW with the rest, presumably, from private companies.

What are the major differences in SHANTI?

The heart of nuclear power plant operations is safety. Given nuclear energy's chequered history with atom bombs, there is tight scrutiny of the movement of nuclear fuel (uranium) because of the possibility of it being diverted for producing weapons-grade plutonium. Accidents such as the Three Mile Island disaster in 1979, Chernobyl nuclear meltdown in 1986, and the Fukushima core meltdown following the tsunami in 2011 have contributed to extreme caution and restrictions in all aspects of nuclear plant operations. Currently, the global consensus is that in case of an accident, a plant operator must compensate victims commensurate with the level of damage. Damage can often exceed projections, as has been the case with Fukushima most recently. The agreement is that victims must be compensated immediately without waiting for ascertaining the causes and those responsible for the accident. Following this, however, the plant operator — if it can establish that it was not its management but rather faulty equipment, provided by a supplier, that led to the catastrophe — can claim recourse. The erstwhile CNLD allowed operators to claim recourse from

a supplier of equipment under three instances: if (a) the supplier and an operator have an explicit agreement; (b) the nuclear incident has proved to be due to the supplier or their equipment's fault; or (c) the nuclear incident has resulted from deliberate intent to cause nuclear damage. In SHANTI, clause (b) has been done away with. Despite the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal of 2008 that allowed India access to uranium and international nuclear technology (restricted because of its nuclear tests of 1974 and 1998), American and French makers of reactors were hesitant because as 'suppliers' they could in theory be held liable for billions of dollars. With the elimination of clause (b) and even the deletion of the word 'supplier,' this problem vanishes. Ironically, in 2010, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was in the Opposition, it insisted on such a clause and Congress parliamentarians pointed this out during the debate. The BJP-led government's laconic response to this was that nuclear technology had changed and "changing times" required adapting to new realities. Does SHANTI load the dice against operators? The earlier laws enabled those affected by a nuclear accident to claim compensation from a nuclear plant operator for an amount up to ₹1,500 crore. Were nuclear damage to exceed this, the Centre would chip in through an insurance pool up to ₹4,000 crore. SHANTI goes for a graded approach. Only operators of plants above 3,600 MW (thermal power) are liable for a ₹3,000 crore penalty; from 3,600 MW to 1,500 MW, the amount is ₹1,500 crore; from 1,500 MW-750 MW, it is ₹750 crore; from 750 MW-150 MW, it is ₹300 crore; and it is ₹100 crore for plants under 150 MW. All India's plants are currently 3,000 MW or lower. Science Minister Jitendra Singh, who piloted the legislation in Parliament, said this gradation was meant to "not scare off" potential private sector participants. During the debates, it was pointed out that the costs of reparations often went into billions of dollars, much more than what these caps suggested. The Act also gives a statutory form to the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, though the Centre still controls functions such as appointing a chairman and providing major licences to an aspirant power plant operator.

Will SHANTI spur India's nuclear vision? The original vision of Homi Bhabha, the father of India's atomic energy programme, was to provide for India's energy security through nuclear power as well as make up for India's scarcity of uranium through the use of thorium. This involves, in Stage 1, building and making

No sunset date for old tax regime, 95% of refunds disbursed, says CBDT chair



The Income-Tax department has no "sunset" date in mind for the old tax regime, even though 88% of individuals had moved to the new system in Assessment Year 2025-26, Ravi Agrawal, Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said. In an interview with The Indian Express, Agrawal also said that delays in issuing refunds is not intended to push people to the new regime. "We have already disbursed 95% of refunds. In February, we should be able to clear (most of what remains)," Agrawal also discussed the tax proposals in the 2026-27 Union Budget, widening of the tax base, and the Securities and Transaction Tax hike for futures and options. Edited excerpts:

What has been the feedback like to the Budget proposals?

This time, the proposals have been different and the focus has also been different. As against the past, there are fundamental changes here which are going to have a long-term impact. So, it is not a question of just tweaking the rate a bit somewhere or bringing in a specific provision, it's about fundamental changes: decriminalisation, minimisation of litigation, conceptual concerns such as buybacks, MAT (Minimum Alternate Tax), and data centres. It should not be seen as giving an exemption to data centres, but providing certainty. There was a question of whether global income would be taxed. We are maintaining the concept of business connection and saying that global income would not be taxed. But that does not mean domestic income would not be taxed. APA (Advance Pricing Agreement) processes is another, where we have made a commitment that we will complete it in a specific amount of time. These are all fundamental changes that will help in tax administration and the taxpayer because multiplicity of proceedings is ending. That is a big statement from the tax department. Another area was expanding the scope of updated returns and rationalising the due date for filing returns: we have spread it out so there is no unnecessary congestion. The AIS (Annual Information Statement) of business entities might get more time to mature, which can reduce the need for multiple revisions of returns.

TCS on overseas travel has been cut from 20% to 2%, which now seems to be the standard rate for most categories. What prompted this change?

Earlier, there was no data. Now we have information. So, you do analytics on that and decide whether it should only be for tracking the transaction or if it should also be for ensuring the return is filed. TCS (Tax Collection at Source) and Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) serve two purposes: tracking the transaction and ensuring the corresponding return is filed. We have seen that tracking the transaction itself would be helpful. On an expenditure of Rs 1 lakh, 2% is Rs 2,000, but 20% is Rs 20,000, which blocks liquidity. Even if you make the refund process efficient, the person still has to wait for a few months before it is issued. That is why reviews should happen periodically: whether it is yielding results, if there is a need for course correction. People had generally accepted it. But yes, there were certain representations, though it was not so aggressive. We took that call on our own to rationalise it. What's your take on the reaction to the hike in the STT on futures and options (F&O)? Collections are seen just Rs 10,000 crore or so higher. That (revenues from STT) is not the thought. Ultimately, if it results in lower numbers (F&O trading volume), then the resultant tax will be lower; if there is no impact, it will be higher. This was an attempt from the tax department to address the issue. Ultimately, it is up to the regulator to see how to take it forward. I don't have any advice for the regulator.

How many taxpayers have moved to the New Tax Regime?

About 86% of taxpayers are in the new tax regime across the board, which is 11% more than Assessment Year 2024-25. When you talk about individuals — ITR 1, 2,

India's GPU capacity may triple to 100,000 by 2026-end: IndiaAI Mission CEO



Computing is one of the most crucial layers of modern day AI applications. It enables training massive neural networks on enormous datasets, running complex algorithms, and processing real-time predictions — transforming theoretical models into practical applications that are looking to reshape industries worldwide.

India's installed graphics processing unit (GPU) capacity could triple by the end of 2026 from 38,000 to touch 1,00,000 such devices, with the government also looking to build a sovereign compute capacity of its own, a top government official told. "The fresh tenders have just been opened and the number of GPUs installed will go up significantly from the current 38,000... by the end of the year, we should have roughly a 100,000 GPUs," Abhishek Singh, additional secretary, Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), and CEO of IndiaAI Mission, told during an interaction.

Computing is one of the most crucial layers of modern day AI applications. It enables training massive neural networks on enormous datasets, running complex algorithms, and processing real-time predictions — transform-

3, and 4 — then it is 88% compared to 76% last year. If you look only at ITR-4, the people in the new regime are at 97%. People are coming to the new tax regime in a big way. And with the revised slab rates, I believe for Assessment Year 2026-27, this figure will really go up.

What purpose is the old tax regime serving then? Are you looking at phasing it out?

The option is available. We are not imposing anything. But we hope and are sure taxpayers will find value in the new regime and move on to it. Then we will see at what point in time, whether this old tax regime is relevant or not. But the choice is always there for the taxpayer. We don't have a sunset (date) in mind. Taxpayers have their own reasons to be in the old regime, such as certain deductions that they find more beneficial, even if the new slabs are more attractive.

Pendency of refunds is a critical issue. These cases would mostly be under the old regime. Can this pendency nudge people toward the new regime?

That is not the intention at all. What we found through analytics was that in certain scenarios, refund or deduction claims were erroneous. We identified such cases and ran the NUDGE campaign and as much as Rs 1,750 crore of refund claims were reduced in revised returns. Overall, Rs 8,800 crore of additional tax came out of that exercise over a period of two years and 1.11 crore updated and revised returns were filed. The NUDGE campaign was done in November-December of 2024 and 2025. We have already disbursed 95% of refunds. In February, we should be able to clear (most of what remains). Taxpayers see a 20% fall in refunds and perceive it as refunds not going out. But that is not the case because rates and TDS were rationalised and more people are in the new regime now, so refund claims have gone down compared to last year. So, naturally, there will be lower refunds.

Last year's I-T slab changes and the Goods and Services Tax cuts reduced the number of people who pay tax. Doesn't it then become harder to widen the tax base?

Ultimately what we have to consider is who should pay, how much they should pay. If the tax slab is raised and a person is not required to pay, that is fine. But it is not that a person earning Rs 12 lakh is not required to file a return; a return has to be filed, only then it is applicable. That is not denting the widening of the tax base because ultimately the person is subjecting himself or herself to the jurisdiction and filing a return. There would be people who are paying the tax and are not filing the return. A person who is filing the return may not be paying, a person who is paying but not filing, and a person who is neither paying nor filing — but you have information. If a person is filing and not paying and if he ought to pay, that is deepening (the tax base). If a person has paid and is not filing, you do a NUDGE and a new person comes (into the base); about 60% of the 1.11 crore people in the NUDGE campaign were non-filers who then filed. For those who don't file or pay, there the role of tracking, TDS as a tracking tool, becomes handy. In the previous category, too.

Is rationalisation of penalties going to be an ongoing exercise?

The thought is to bring clarity and certainty, but the attempt is frequent changes should not be there. We have brought these amendments with the intent that when we are moving with the new Income Tax Act, we should bring in all the changes in one go itself.

What is the status of the new rules and the backend systems?

They will be out in February itself. It will be a phased rollout as and when the need arises. Since FY26 returns are governed by the 1961 Act, that pressure isn't there yet. So, it has to be a phased rollout so that it's easy for the taxpayer and the tax department because the software changes are substantial. There has been demand for tax treatment parity for, say, bank deposits and equity mutual fund investments, with banks facing trouble in raising deposits. Debt mutual funds, too. These are areas of research and analysis which need to be seen in the overall context and not just one player, the overall impact, to what extent the tax department should pitch in, or a remedy lies somewhere else. This is a continuous process. As times change, context changes. I am not suggesting that we are looking at this right now, but it is an ongoing process where we discuss with stakeholders and take calls at the appropriate time.

How many taxpayers have moved to the New Tax Regime?

About 86% of taxpayers are in the new tax regime across the board, which is 11% more than Assessment Year 2024-25. When you talk about individuals — ITR 1, 2,

ing theoretical models into practical applications that are looking to reshape industries worldwide. Under the Rs 10,370 crore IndiaAI Mission, the government is subsidising the usage of GPUs of Indian startups and researchers who are building AI solutions, given that computing costs without such subsidy (roughly around Rs 65 an hour) could be prohibitively expensive for smaller companies. To be sure, the government is not funding the procurement of such GPUs, but is only offering a discount to companies that are using the infrastructure that private players have built in India. The government will itself also become a user of some GPUs for its own activities and that could also add to the installed capacity of such devices, however, in that case, the government will own the underlying hardware. "We are trying to augment a sovereign capacity (for GPUs). There is a lot of need for using GPUs for government work, wherein the AI loads will have to remain in a government-owned infrastructure. We are augmenting the GPU capability of National Informatics Centre's (NIC's) Meghraj, we have recently floated a tender for that," he said.

Singh, who is also spearheading the upcoming IndiaAI Impact Summit, said that through the event, India would look to address "every dimension of AI". "Almost every topic that one can think of across the AI stack including regulation, child safety, etc. everything will be covered. Compared to the previous three summits, this is much more comprehensive, bigger in scale, and will also put up the agenda of the Global South at the forefront," he added.

Explaining the government's focus on developing AI-led solutions to on-ground problems, Singh said, "Our pitch is: build AI in India, for India, and once these solutions have scaled up, we will give an example to the whole world of how AI can be used for solving societal problems". On the recent Budget announcement of a tax holiday to foreign companies setting up data centres in India, Singh said that the main rationale was to position India as the data centre capital of the world. "We are trying to position India as the inferencing capital for the world. We are trying to move AI workloads to India that will ultimately give a strategic advantage of becoming the AI capital of the world," he said.

'Just can't be a mum': Rani Mukerji reveals husband Aditya Chopra reminded her to return to work after motherhood; why partner support shapes women's careers



indianexpress.com, "Partner support is critical because returning to work after motherhood is rarely a purely professional decision — it is deeply psychological. Many women are carrying internalised guilt, cultural messaging around 'ideal motherhood,' and the fear of being judged for choosing themselves alongside their child. When a partner actively validates her professional identity, it counters the unspoken belief that her ambitions must now take a back seat." He adds that this validation has a direct impact on mental health, reducing chronic guilt, emotional overload and identity conflict. Shared responsibility at home also lowers burnout and resentment. Job satisfaction improves when work feels integrated into life rather than something done at the cost of family. Couples need to shift from assumption-driven roles to conscious decision-making. Raj notes, "This begins with honest, ongoing conversations about ambitions, capacity and fatigue, instead of relying on traditional gender scripts. The division of labour must include invisible work—planning, anticipating needs, and emotional regulation — not just physical tasks. Regular check-ins help recalibrate expectations as both careers and parenting demands evolve." Verbal acknowledgement is essential, he says, feeling seen matters as much as practical support. Equally important is setting boundaries with extended family and social norms that often place disproportionate expectations on mothers. When couples protect each other's aspirations and present a united front, ambition stops being a source of friction and becomes a shared investment in the family's future. Long-term benefits for parents who actively maintain their career identity

Maintaining a career identity alongside parenting has profound long-term benefits. Raj states that it preserves self-worth and prevents the gradual erosion of identity that many parents — especially women — experience over time. This significantly reduces the risk of burnout, resentment and late-stage regret. "Professionally, continuity ensures skills, confidence and professional relevance are retained, making careers more resilient. Children also gain from seeing balanced role models, where caregiving and ambition are not positioned as opposites," concludes Raj.

How important is partner support in helping mothers return to work after having a child?

Counselling psychologist Athul Raj tells

'My blood pressure was 116-71. Can I still have a heart attack? I've been so nervous about it'



A Quora user wanted to know: "My blood pressure was 116-71. Can I still have a heart attack? I've been so nervous about it," so we reached out to experts who said that a blood pressure reading of 116/71 mmHg is actually normal and healthy. "It means your heart is pumping blood at a good pressure and there's no immediate reason to worry. A normal range is usually between 90/60 and 120/80 mmHg, so you are doing well in that area," said Dr Swarup Swaraj Pal, Chief CVTS surgeon, Cardiovascular and Thoracic, MICS, Trauma and Transplant surgeon, Gleneagles Hospital, Parel, Mumbai. However, it's important to know that heart attacks don't always depend on blood

pressure. "They can happen due to blockages in heart arteries, high cholesterol, smoking, stress, diabetes, or family history. Even people with normal blood pressure can have heart issues if other risk factors are present," added Dr Pal.

As such, experts recommend monitoring cholesterol, blood sugar, waist circumference, and stress levels. "Unmanaged stress, sleep deprivation, or any other form of emotional burnout can increase the levels of stress hormones like cortisol, which can affect the heart indirectly. Subtle symptoms in women might include fatigue, pain in the jaw or back rather than classic chest pain," said Dr Parin Sangi, Consultant Interventional Cardiologist, Wockhardt Hospitals, Mumbai Central. Focus on simple preventative habits, including eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; avoiding fried or oily foods; exercising regularly; sleeping well; and managing stress through deep breathing or meditation. "If you ever feel chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, or pain in your arm or jaw, seek medical help immediately. Otherwise, keep calm and continue with healthy habits. Anxiety can also make your heart race or cause chest discomfort, but it's not the same as a heart attack. You're doing fine, just stay active and get regular check-ups for peace of mind," said Dr Pal.

Aditi Rao Hydari, Archana Puran Singh, Navjot Singh Sidhu vouch for desi ghee: 'If you are starting your day with turmeric and...'



support gut health. It is also free of lactose and casein, making it easier for many people to digest than butter, Sheikh shared. Since ghee helps you feel full sooner and stay satisfied longer, it can "cut down on mindless snacking and sugar cravings", said Sheikh. "Using a small amount of ghee can also improve the taste of meals, which makes healthy food more enjoyable and sustainable," said Sheikh. Archana Navjot and Kapil Archana Puran Singh and Navjot Singh Sidhu spoke about ghee on The Kapil Sharma Show (Photo: Netflix India/Instagram) For most healthy adults, one to two teaspoons a day is enough. This includes ghee used in cooking or added to meals. The important part is to measure it rather than pour it freely, said Sheikh.

Is ghee suitable for people with cholesterol or heart concerns?

Ghee is high in saturated fat, so portion control is crucial. People with high cholesterol or heart disease should consume ghee occasionally, as part of a diet rich in vegetables, fibre, and unsaturated fats, Sheikh said.

What to note?

Many assume that "natural" means they can use unlimited amounts. "Ghee can be beneficial, but only when used thoughtfully. Balance, portion control, and overall diet quality matter more than the ingredient itself," said Sheikh.

Cybersecurity breaches top risk for India Inc: FICCI-EY survey

New Delhi: About 51 per cent of India Inc rank cybersecurity breaches as the top risk to organisational performance, a survey showed on Sunday. This is followed closely by changing customer demands and expectations at 49 per cent, while 48 per cent point to geopolitical events as a key risk factor, according to the FICCI-EY 'Risk Survey'. The report draws on inputs from senior leaders across sectors, on factors affecting pricing, supply chains, talent strategies and technology investments, making risk management central to business strategy.

'Don't boycott tournament but don't play India match' Rashid Latif reverses stance on Pakistan T20 World Cup boycott

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Former Pakistan captain Rashid Latif has shifted his position on boycotting the upcoming T20 World Cup, saying the window for such action has closed. However, the former wicketkeeper-batsman suggested an alternative protest: Pakistan could participate in the tournament but refuse to play matches against India specifically, though he acknowledged such a decision rests with the Pakistani government, not the cricket board.

"If the government says we won't play against India, the ICC will have to accept it," Latif said. "If they don't, that's where the real confrontation begins." When the host asked what would happen if India and Pakistan reach final, then Latif said, "nahi khelenge" (we won't play (in that protest plan))." Latif, who previously advocated for a boycott to challenge what he called India's dominance over global cricket governance, acknowledged Wednesday the opportunity passed when Pakistan Cricket Board failed to act immediately after Bangladesh's exclusion from the tournament. "The time for a strike has passed," Latif said on the YouTube channel CaughtBehind. "Every decision has a timing. When the iron is hot, that's when you strike. That time was last week during the ICC meeting." The comments mark a reversal from Latif's earlier calls for Pakistan to withdraw from the World Cup to expose flaws in international cricket administration. Bangladesh was replaced by Scotland after receiving 14 votes against their participation, with the ICC



citing logistical and contractual concerns. Pakistan voted in support of Bangladesh but ultimately accepted the decision.

Latif said Pakistan demonstrated solidarity by voting for Bangladesh but maintained that boycotting now would be ineffective. "We showed our support. We voted for them. That chapter is over," he said. "If we boycott now, it won't have the same impact." Pakistan chairman Mohsin Naqvi had indicated three days ago that the board might take a principled stance similar to Bangladesh's position, but no formal boycott announcement has materialised. The T20 World Cup proceeds with Pakistan participating under a hybrid model that allows matches involving India to be played at neutral venues through 2027.

Novak Djokovic vs Jannik Sinner Australian Open 2026 semifinal: One number that could give the Serb an edge

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Novak Djokovic takes on Jannik Sinner in the Australian Open semifinal on Friday, and starts as the distinct underdog. He was massively fortunate to reach the final four thanks to a fourth-round walkover and Lorenzo Musetti's retirement from their quarterfinal with injury despite leading by two sets. Additionally, this is a matchup that really does not favour the Serb; he has lost each of the last five meetings against Sinner and failed to win a set in the last three. But there is one area where Djokovic's prowess is still elite. And Sinner has shown a slight weakness. Across four completed matches that Djokovic has played at the Australian Open so far, he has won 58.5% of all the points that he has played while returning second serves. Meanwhile, through the five matches that he has played at this tournament, Sinner has won 55.4% of the points behind his won second serve.

Second serve factorThe minuscule edge is simple reading: Djokovic wins a shade more than half the second serves he returns, Sinner wins a shade more than half the second serves he plays in. But the slight edge could have an outsized impact on their semifinal on Friday if the Italian doesn't get his serves right on Friday.

Sinner's serve is not a weakness; its reliability has often been a strength. But he has shown slight tentativeness in making first serves over the past few months; his first-serve success rate stands at 65.4% in the tournament.



That is average but nothing to write home about. And when he does continually miss it and has to throw in second serves, they are often safe and predictable enough for opponents to latch onto them and make him pay. It's not a mere coincidence that in the only match in which he visibly struggled in Melbourne this week, due to heat and cramping and a spirited opponent in American Elliot Spizziri in a four-setter in the third round, he won just 43% of the points behind his second serve. In last year's US Open final, which he lost in four sets to Carlos Alcaraz, he won only 48% of the points behind his second serve.

Age and a weakened physicality may have led to a slight drop off in other parts of his game, but Djokovic still remains a razor-sharp returner. He will be ready to take advantage of any lapses in that area of Sinner's usually consistent and high-level game.

Norway Chess: Divya Deshmukh to be youngest player to compete in women's tournament

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

One of the brightest talents in women's chess today, Divya Deshmukh arrives in Oslo following a breakthrough season in 2025 that has firmly established her among the world's elite. (Photo: Norway Chess) One of the brightest talents in women's chess today, Divya Deshmukh arrives in Oslo following a breakthrough season in 2025 that has firmly established her among the world's elite. Thanks to a high-flying 2025, Divya Deshmukh has been invited to play at the super-elite Norway Chess women's event in Oslo in May-June this year, thus becoming the youngest player to compete in the women's tournament since its launch in 2024. So far the organisers of Norway Chess have announced that Bibisara Assaubayeva and last year's winner Anna Muzychuk will be part of the six-player field. The remaining three players will be announced soon.

In 2025, Deshmukh won the FIDE Women's World Cup, earned the Grandmaster title and qualified for the 2026 Women's Candidates Tournament. At just 19 years old, she became the fourth Indian woman in history to achieve the GM title. In the open section, Magnus Carlsen, Praggnanandhaa R and Vincent Keymer are the three players announced by the organisers to be competing. Over the last decade, Norway Chess has emerged as one of the world's premier chess tournaments, particularly since it's a rare classical event that Magnus Carlsen plays each year. Over the past couple of years, many of India's top players have featured in Norway Chess, with Praggnanandhaa competing in the 2024 edition and defeating Magnus Carlsen for the first time in classical chess, while world champion Gukesh D and Arjun Erigaisi were invited for the 2025 edition, where Gukesh defeated Carlsen for the first time in classical chess. Vaishali Rameshbabu was part of the 2024 and 2025 editions while Koneru Humpy played last year.

The event has a distinctive six-player double round-robin format. Norway Chess 2026 will take place from May 25 to 5 June at Deichman Bjørvika in Oslo. "I'm incredibly



excited to be competing in Norway Chess. It's my first time in the country, and I'm really looking forward to seeing what Norway is like. I can't wait to experience this unique format and compete in such a prestigious tournament. To all the fans rooting for me, thank you for the love and encouragement, see you all there!" Deshmukh was quoted as saying by a statement released by Norway Chess. "India continues to produce outstanding young chess talent, and Divya is a great example of that momentum," says Benedicta Westre Skog, COO of Norway Chess. "We're delighted to welcome her to Norway Chess Women and look forward to engaging a growing Indian chess audience as she makes her debut in Oslo." What is Norway Chess Women?

Launched in 2024, Norway Chess Women is the world's first fully equal super tournament for women in chess, staged in parallel with the main Norway Chess event. The tournament features the same format, number of players, playing conditions and prize fund as the open event, setting a new benchmark for gender equality in professional chess. Now entering its third edition, Norway Chess Women has quickly established itself as one of the most prestigious platforms for elite women's chess, bringing together the world's strongest female players in a highly competitive and internationally visible setting.

Mindset improving, working hard on skills: Shivam Dube

Hyderabad: Shivam Dube, who scored a brilliant half-century (65, 23b, 3x4, 7x6) against New Zealand in a lost cause in the fourth T-20 international at the ACA-VDCA Stadium here on Wednesday night, said that he was getting better with his mindset and had been really working hard for that.

"I am batting in that situation. So, all those things I know that now what's gonna happen, what are the main thing which bowlers gonna come to me, that's the key point for my batting and bowling as well," said the Indian all-rounder, expected to be one of the key members of India's campaign in the forthcoming T-20 World Cup said. "I am bowling thanks to Gautibhai (head coach Gautam Gambhir) and Surya (cap-

tain Suryakumar Yadav). They have given me the bowling opportunity. So, when you bowl, you become a little smart. So, I am working on that as well and yes, I am trying to develop some more skills," Dube said in a post-match briefing. "There is one thing when you work really hard behind in the nets, but there is something which you have to apply in the match. Yes, I have worked really hard, but there is something I have got an opportunity to bowl and bat, do everything in the match," Dube said. "I feel that my experience is going in the right direction. For me also, upgrading is important as I can't be the same player as I was earlier," he said. "I always try to hit not just the spinners but the fast bowlers as well."

From cleaning toilets at mental hospital to football coach: The unbreakable Giuseppe Sannino

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

Giuseppe Sannino wakes at dawn in Bellinzona, Switzerland, ready for what he calls "yet another miracle" in the country's second division. But the 68-year-old coach has already lived several lifetimes worth of them. "I used to clean toilets in a mental hospital," Sannino told Gazzetta dello Sport. "Now I've worked my way up to Serie A." The journey between those two points is filled with sawdust floors and cockroaches, six promotions and nine resignations, a Neapolitan childhood in flip-flops and a father who once burned his soccer shoes as punishment.

Sannino doesn't do things halfway. At Watford, he walked away from £550,000 after winning four of his first five matches because he couldn't be anyone but himself. "I speak to your face," he explained. "I resigned for dignity, leaving behind money." Born in Naples and raised in Turin, young Sannino earned the nickname "cobbler" for wandering the streets in shorts and sandals. School was optional. Soccer was everything. His playing career peaked in Serie C before ending at 31, when he transitioned to coaching Vogherese's youth team while secretly studying Arrigo Sacchi's AC Milan. And working. Always working. "Wake up at 5 a.m., shift at dawn, seven hours there and then back on the field," he recalled. For a decade he mopped psychiatric hospital floors with sawdust, battled cockroaches, and helped patients. "I experienced real suffering there. I remember a brilliant painter who sat there painting, and you wondered why she was in that place." The Breakthrough

The turning point arrived with Südtirol's Serie D championship in 1999-2000. He quit the hospital specifically to take that job. In 2008, an agent suggested he watch a Serie C2 match where both coaches were at risk. Como won 3-2. Sannino went to Varese. "The story of my heart," he said of three years without a home defeat and attendance swell-



ing from 500 to 10,000. He invited players to curse each other out freely. It became the rallying cry for two promotions. In 2011, they barely missed Serie A. He left in tears.

Serie A and walking away Siena brought him to the top flight. At the Olimpico against Roma, watching Francesco Totti emerge from beneath the Curva Sud, Sannino whispered to his assistant: "How many will they score today?" It finished 1-1. "One of the most beautiful matches I ever coached," he told the newspaper. At Palermo, he fought with Maurizio Zamparini before a 1-1 draw with Cagliari. "Who does he think he is?" Zamparini said. Sannino recounted. "The next day we drew and he fired me. But he was a generous man." The Watford resignation remains his only regret. "I have to be myself. If I'd continued, I would have clashed with everyone," he said. The team reached the Premier League that season. The real championship holds too many clichés now, Sannino says. He won't return. "At my age, I don't want to get into that centrifuge," he told Gazzetta. "I'm someone who started from nothing and made it on my own."

'Job not done yet': Aryna Sabalenka reacts to reaching her 4th Australian Open final after beating Elina Svitolina in the semis

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka was cautious about not getting carried away after entering the 2026 Australian Open final with a 6-2 6-3 straight sets win over Elina Svitolina on Thursday. The 27-year-old Belarusian, who lost to Madison Keys in the 2025 final, admitted that she found it hard to believe that she had become the first player since Martina Hingis in 2002 to reach four consecutive Australian Open finals.

"I cannot believe that, it is an incredible achievement. But the job is not done yet. I am super happy with the win, she (Svitolina) is a great opponent and was playing incredible tennis throughout the week. I am super happy to get through this tough match." "I have been watching her game and I felt like I had to step in and put as much pressure as I could today. I'm glad that the level was there today. I am happy to get this win in straight sets," Sabalenka said after the win on Thursday. Ahead of the final, though, Sabalenka will look to unwind by watching the second season of Homeland on Netflix. "I am on season two of Homeland, the plan is for me and my boyfriend to finish the season! It has been forever since we started watching it and we are only on season two. First of all a little bit of a hit, [after that] it's Netflix, maybe dinner with the team and I'm ready to go," she said.



said. Sabalenka won the Australian Open in 2023 and 2024 but could not complete the three-peat in 2025, losing in three sets. She had thrown her racket, draped a white towel over her head, and briefly stepped off the court before returning for the post-match ceremony. "I just needed ... that time for myself to kind of switch off and forget and ... be respectful. There definitely was a bit of frustration because I was so close to achieve something crazy. When you're out there, you're fighting, but it seems like everything going not the way you really want to go," she had said after the defeat last year.

Mourinho admits tactical confusion before Trubin's dramatic winner

GNS News Agency, Feb 10

José Mourinho revealed he was unaware Benfica needed a fourth goal against Real Madrid until the final moments, leading to an accidental tactical shift that produced one of the Champions League's most dramatic finishes. The Benfica manager initially substituted two forwards for defensive reinforcements while protecting a 3-2 lead Tuesday night, only to learn his team required another goal to advance to the playoff round.

"When I substituted António Silva and Ivanovic, I had no idea if 3-2 was enough. I just wanted to close the door," Mourinho said after the match. "When I was told we needed one more goal, honestly I was upset. I was thinking, 'Why was I not told a few seconds before?'" Realizing the situation with Madrid down to nine men after two late red cards, Mourinho pushed center-back Nicolas Otamendi forward before sending goalkeeper Anatoliy Trubin into the attacking area for a stoppage-time free kick. Trubin headed home to complete a 4-2 victory and secure Benfica's Champions League survival, sparking celebrations at Estádio da Luz.

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola, whose team's automatic qualification could have been threatened by a Madrid comeback, acknowledged his rival's gamble succeeded. "We didn't know Benfica needed a goal to qualify," Guardiola said Wednesday. "When we saw the goalkeeper coming up we asked, 'Why are you coming up?'



But it was a good strategy from José, wasn't it?" Mourinho defended his approach, saying he had challenged players to win regardless of qualification implications. That was the pride behind the attitude," he said. "I would be happy the same, winning the way we did against Real Madrid and being out." The keeper's first career goal came after Raul Asensio and Rodrygo received red cards in stoppage time. Kylian Mbappé had twice given Madrid the lead before Andreas Schüderup's brace and Vangelis Pavlidis' penalty put Benfica ahead. Both clubs advance to the playoff round after missing automatic qualification for the round of 16.

WTA defends players amid privacy row over cameras at Australian Open: 'Human and fair demand'

The WTA has moved swiftly to address growing concerns over player privacy at the Australian Open, issuing a strong response after several top players criticised the presence of cameras in off-court, player-only areas.

"The WTA supports its players and takes their concerns about privacy and cameras at the Australian Open very seriously," the organisation said in a statement. "Players deserve spaces away from competition where they can rest in complete privacy." The governing body emphasised that it has already taken steps at WTA events to reduce camera presence in non-competition areas and called on tournament organisers and broadcast partners to establish "clear and respectful boundaries." The WTA added that it would engage in dialogue with players and tournaments to find an appropriate solution. The statement follows a wave of criticism sparked by Coco Gauff's quarter-final loss to Elina Svitolina in Melbourne. Frustrated after her elimination, Gauff was filmed smashing a racket in the tunnels of Melbourne Park, footage that quickly circulated online. The incident echoed a similar moment involving Aryna Sabalenka during the 2023 US Open final and reignited de-

bate about how much access cameras should have beyond the court.

Iga Swiatek of Poland plays a forehand return to Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan during their quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026. (AP Photo) Iga Swiatek of Poland plays a forehand return to Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan during their quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026. (AP Photo) Several players spoke candidly about the issue in press conferences. Gauff expressed discomfort with the lack of privacy in locker room and tunnel areas, while Jessica Pegula described the situation as a "violation of privacy." World No. 2 Iga Swiatek offered a stark comparison, saying players sometimes feel like "animals in the zoo," constantly observed even in moments of vulnerability. WTA President Valerie Camillo reinforced the organisation's stance, calling the players' concerns "completely legitimate." "This is a very human and fair demand," Camillo said. "Athletes need spaces where they can rest without feeling constantly watched. Providing them this space is part of our responsibilities as a sport."



Why Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hain! outsmarts big-budget comedies



Vidisha Tripathi, playing Anita Mishra, is let down by a thinly written role; despite her screen presence, the character is reduced largely to repetitive introductions, leaving her character underutilised. Ravi Kishan and Mukesh Tiwari inject freshness into the narrative, their banter adding weight and texture, while Ravi's self-aware humour lands with surprising subtlety. A special sequence featuring Ravi, Rohitashv Gour, and Aasif Sheikh stands out, when Ravi's character Shakti aggressively pushes the idea of killing them. The humour peaks in their wildly exaggerated imagination and, more importantly, in Ravi's distinctive reaction to it, which delivers the film's loudest and most organic laugh.

What truly distinguishes Bhabhiji from its big-budget contemporaries is its use of small, clever nuances. A visual gag like "Child Beer" standing in for chilled beer, or the film's timely commentary on how dependent people have become on DIY YouTube videos during moments of crisis, reflects an observational humour rooted in lived reality. These jokes may not land every single time, but more often than not, they hit the right spots—tickling the audience instead of bullying them into laughter.

In contrast, Housefull 5 and Son of Sardaar 2 rely on chaos, noise, and repetition. Their humour is loud, often juvenile, and exhausting, built on the assumption that vulgarity automatically equals comedy. Despite their scale and star power, they frequently feel tone-deaf and desperate, pushing discomfort as entertainment. Bhabhiji, with far fewer resources, understands restraint—and that restraint becomes its biggest strength. That said, the film is not entirely free of flaws. Its opening stretch unnecessarily sexualises both the bhabhis, objectifying them through awkward angles and intrusive camera work. These moments feel regressive and uncomfortable, briefly aligning the film with the very brand of humour it otherwise avoids. However, what works in the film's favour is its willingness to correct course. As the narrative progresses, the cheap zoom-ins disappear, replaced by confidence in dialogue and writing—proof that the makers trust their material rather than leaning on visual discomfort.

The film also slows down in the second half, losing some momentum and leaning too heavily on familiarity instead of fresh comic situations. A tighter edit could have sustained its energy till the end. Yet even in its weaker moments, Bhabhiji remains more controlled and self-aware than many of its louder peers. Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hain! may not be flawless, and it certainly isn't trying to be revolutionary. But it understands its identity. It proves that humour does not lie in how far one can push vulgarity, but in knowing the right space, the right moment, and the right note to strike. In a landscape crowded with overproduced, tone-deaf comedies, this modest film's clarity of purpose makes it not just tolerable—but surprisingly satisfying.

Sometimes you walk into a theatre expecting disappointment, only to be pleasantly surprised. Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hain! is one such film. Given the track record of television shows transitioning to the big screen—and the recent spate of loud, exhausting slapstick comedies—expectations were modest. Yet, in a cinematic space dominated by inflated budgets, star power, and forced humour, Bhabhiji quietly emerges as a more self-aware and, surprisingly, smarter comedy.

Unlike recent big-ticket entertainers such as Housefull 5 and Son of Sardaar 2, which seem to mistake vulgarity for wit, Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hain! understands a basic but often ignored principle of comedy: timing matters more than excess. Where larger films desperately hunt for laughs—zooming into cleavage, lingering between women's legs, groping female bodies in dark frames and passing it off as "mulayam" humour—Bhabhiji largely resists that temptation. It does not scream for attention. Instead, it waits, observes, and allows humour to emerge from character and situation.

Backed by the show's original producers, the film reunites its core creative team—writers Raghuvir Shekhwat, Shashank Bali, and Sanjay Kohli, with Bali also directing. This continuity is crucial. The movie feels less like a cinematic reinvention and more like an extended episode that knows exactly what it is and whom it is speaking to. There is no attempt to over-glamorise the cast or artificially inflate the narrative. The innocence of the characters, the familiar misunderstandings, and the everyday chaos remain intact.

At its best, Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hain! proves that comedy does not require characters to be dumbed down to work. The banter between Vibhuti Mishra (Aasif Sheikh) and Angoori (Shubhangi Atre) remains its strongest pillar. Angoori's innocence—especially her habitual confusion with words—continues to deliver some of the film's most effective moments. The anticipation of her next verbal slip becomes a gag in itself. Rohitashv Gour's Mammothi Tiwari lands occasionally and adds value, but his impact never quite matches Vibhuti's sharp timing and screen presence.

'Vinod Khanna asked, are you crazy?': Akshaye Khanna was leaving Mumbai, Nidhi Dutta reveals how a 'farewell' dinner turned him into actor

Akshaye Khanna is enjoying a resurgence in his stardom after his role as Rehman Dakait in Aditya Dhar's Dhurandhar went viral. Apart from Dhurandhar, Akshaye also made headlines for making a cameo in Border 2, the sequel to his 1997 film Border, which was directed by J. P. Dutta. In a recent interaction, Border 2 producer Nidhi Dutta, daughter of J. P. Dutta, spoke about how Akshaye was initially reluctant to become an actor until her father offered him Border. Speaking to News18, Nidhi spoke about her years-long connection to Akshaye, thanks to the close bond that Akshaye's father Vinod Khanna and her father J. P. Dutta shared. "He was very excited. Much before this wave had happened, he has always been Dharanvir (character Akshaye played in Border). His history with my family goes way back because Vinod Khanna and my father were best friends. Because of the amount of work that they have done together. This is why Vinod was always more than family, even if he is not with us, he still is."

Nidhi also shared an interesting insight into Akshaye's career and revealed how he initially did not want to be an actor. "Akshaye was actually leaving for studies abroad, and he never wanted to be an actor, and he was having dinner with my father and Vinod uncle at Vinod uncle's house, that's what I have been told, and dad asked him, 'will you act in a war film? Akshaye was to leave in two days and that's why they were having this farewell dinner. Akshaye said 'Yes, I will do it.' Vinod was like, 'Are you crazy? You want to be an actor you never told me this.' Akshaye said, 'I'm telling you now. I will be an actor.' Nidhi further shared that since Border was a multi-starrer, Vinod Khanna decided to launch Akshaye in Himalay Putra (1997) first, and Border eventually became his second film. "Then you know what happened it was a multi-starrer, so Vinod uncle decided to make Himalay Putra at that point," she said. She added, "It's a different feeling to see him wear that uniform again and walk onto set after so many years. It was special for him and for us."

"J. P. Dutta sahab jo the woh mere pitaji ke ghar pe aaye the khaane ke liye. Main uss wakt boarding school mein the aur meri umar kuchh 18 saal ki thi. Toh unhone mujhe kaha, woh ek kone mein baithe the, unhone kaha, 'Main ek picture bana raha hun, Border. Tu kaam karna chahega? Ek aisa hai mere paas ek role.' (J. P. Dutta Sahab had come over to my father's house for a meal. At that time, I was in boarding school and was about 18 years old. He was sitting in a corner and he said to me, 'I am making a film called Border. Would you like to work in it? I have a role like that for you.')." he had told Prabhu Chawla in a an old interview.

Akshaye accepted that he was scared to reveal his acting ambitions to his father but this gave him a chance to reveal them. Toh, kyunki main bolna chahta tha apne pitaji se, thodi si ghabrahat hoti thi main kab bolu, kaise bolu ki main kaam karna chahta hun filmon mein. Toh yeh mujhe laga ki sabse sahi mauka hai, isko aap matlab dono haath se pakad lo. Toh maine kaha ki, 'Haan, main karunga kaam. Kab shuru ho rahi hai picture?' Ek saal ke baad. Toh tab tak main chhootne waala tha school se. (Now, because I had been wanting to tell my father—but was a bit nervous about when and how to say that I wanted to work in films—I felt



this was the perfect opportunity. I thought, 'I should grab this with both hands.' So I said, 'Yes, I'll do it. When does the film start?' He said in a year's time. By then, I was due to finish school." Vinod Khanna was taken aback by Akshaye's declaration. "Toh mere pitaji ne kaha, 'Kya? Filmon mein kaam karna chahta ho?' Maina bola, 'Haan, dekhte hain. Ek chhota sa role hai, multi-star cast film hai. J. P. sahab ne pocha toh maine bola chalo main koshish karta hun.' Toh wahan se unkho pata chala. Toh unhone kaha, 'Nahi, agar tu karna chahta hai toh mujhe bol.' Maina kaha, 'Haan, main karna chahta hun.' Toh he's like, 'Phir main ek picture banata hun tere liye.' (My father was shocked and asked, 'What? You want to work in films?' I replied, 'Yes, let's see. It's a small role in a multi-starrer; J. P. Sahab asked, so I thought I'd give it a try.' That's how he found out. He then said, 'No, if you want to do this, tell me.' I said, 'Yes, I want to.' So he was like, 'In that case, I will make a film for you.'")

Priyanka Chopra takes a piece of Hyderabad home as she wraps up film shoot

Mumbai: Global star Priyanka Chopra decided to take back a piece of Hyderabad with her as she was headed back to L.A. after completing the latest schedule of her forthcoming drama, "Varanasi".

She took to the Stories section of her official Instagram handle and shared a picture of the famous bun maska from Hyderabad, which PeeCee was carrying with her on the flight. "Taking a piece of Hyderabad with me..see you soon..xx (sic)," she added the text.

Prior to this, Priyanka informed through another social media post that it was her last working day in Hyderabad for the month for the S.S. Rajamouli's directorial. She added that she will soon be going back to Los Angeles to promote her English action thriller "The Bluff".

Arijit Singh returns to stage in Kolkata with Anoushka Shankar after playback retirement: 'I am so nervous'.



Arijit then came together with Anoushka and Bickram Ghosh for a powerful rendition of "Maya Bhora Raati", a Bengali composition originally sung by Lakshmi Shankar and composed by the legendary Pandit Ravi Shankar. Arijit also talked about visiting Anoushka at her home in London and the creative moments they had spent making music together. The set also featured a duet on "Traces of You", the haunting track composed by Anoushka and originally performed with Norah Jones. Anoushka later shared a glimpse from the evening on Instagram, expressing her own emotions. "So much more to say later, but for now, my heart!!!! Hearing the one and only @arjisingsh bringing my father's rarely heard Bengali song to life and then sharing our new music with Kolkata, was truly one for the books," she wrote. Fans were quick to flood the comment section with their reactions. "Godly! This avatar I always wanted to see," one user wrote, while another commented, "I hope he goes back into pure classical singing, though it's a difficult path." Another user commented, "The audience was stunned when Anoushka Shankar announced her surprise guest—the one and only Arijit Singh." Others wrote, "This is what Arijit is all about... pure talent," and "Still dreaming of what I just witnessed today." Arijit had announced his decision to stop taking on new playback singing assignments on January 27 through a heartfelt message on Instagram. Thanking listeners for years of unwavering support, he called the journey "wonderful" while signalling a pause on film music commitments. Soon after, posts believed to be from his personal X account offered more clarity on the decision. The 38-year-old singer explained that it was not a sudden move but the result of prolonged introspection. Admitting that he tends to get creatively restless, Arijit shared that he now feels the need to explore different musical spaces to stay inspired. He also spoke about making room for fresh voices in the industry, expressing hope that new talent would, in turn, inspire him. Despite stepping away from playback singing, Arijit reassured fans that music remains at the heart of his life. He plans to focus on creating original compositions and reconnecting with Indian classical music.

Amitabh Bachchan was the real villain of Baghban: Samir Soni loves 'the new generation' for redeeming his character as a 'green flag' after 23 years



in the living room, he patiently and politely asks his dad to take that to his bedroom or save it for the morning because his wife has to wake up early in the morning, send their son to school, make breakfast for all of them before going to work herself. But Bachchan's character gets rather offended, not even paying heed to a request by his grandson to use a laptop instead for the sake of a quieter environment. The third argument in favour of Samir Soni's character is that of the Karva Chauth scene, when his hungry wife assumes her father-in-law would eat at the cafe he frequents like he does everyday, so they head out for dinner. But that's the day Bachchan's character chooses to skip dinner at the cafe, despite the insistence of the owner (Lillete Dubey) only to find no food left for him at home. "Baghban has not traumatized any other generation more than how much it has traumatized us," said the influencer. Samir Soni shared the Instagram Reel on his feed and wrote in the caption, "(Laughing with tears emoji) Finally some redemption after 20 years. Just love the new generation." Produced by BR Chopra's BR Films, Baghban also starred Salman Khan, Mahima Chaudhry, Aman Verma, Divya Dutta, Rimi Sen, and Paresh Rawal among others.

In an earlier interview with SCREEEN, Samir Soni had recalled the response he received after the film became a success. "When the film released, I was just happy but the response we got was so unbelievable. I remember once an old lady coming up to me, in a mall, and I thought she recognised me after the movie and would say something nice but she came and scolded me for being a 'very bad son, you've misbehaved!' People were relating to Amit ji and Hema ji so much that we turned the bad guys overnight but that shows the success of the film, to have such a huge impact," he had said. He also said that it was the point of view of the parents. "The film was made from the point of view of the parents. It was not as much about showing that the sons are bad, which they are, but they are showing the life from the perspective of the parents. If it was shown from the point of view of the sons and the responsibilities they have (in their personal and professional lives) then it would have been a different film."

'Hardik Pandya roz Paro change karta hai': Ashish Nehra takes a playful dig at cricketer's love life

Hardik Pandya has remained in the news for his personal life as much as for his victories on the cricket field. The cricketer was married to model Natasha Stankovic. However, the two got divorced, after which the cricketer was linked to Jasmin Walia, before he made his relationship with Mahieka Sharma official. Recently, former cricketer Ashish Nehra took a playful dig at Hardik over the same.

Ashish Nehra and Rushma Nehra recently appeared with Geeta Basra and Harbhajan Singh on the podcast Who's The Boss? During the interaction, the couple played a game in which Harbhajan Singh and Ashish Nehra had to relate a film's name to a cricketer. When given the name of the film 'Khiladi Number One' in the department of girls before marriage. To this, Geeta reacted, saying, "This even I know that he is not Khiladi Number One of the field." Harbhajan then shared another instance when Ashish went wild while partying at a club in the UK. "I looked back and Ashish was sitting on that bald guy's shoulder and playing on his head. That guy is also enjoying." When asked to name a cricketer with the film 'Devdas', Harbhajan said, "Hardik Pandya." Ashish didn't agree with Harbhajan's choice and asked, "Why?" He then added, "I have heard woh toh roz Paro change karta hai (He changes Paro everyday)."

Hardik Pandya and Natasha Stankovic got married on May 31, 2020, during the Covid-19 lockdown. They



welcomed their son Agastya two months after their wedding, in July 2020. The couple later renewed their wedding vows in a lavish ceremony in Udaipur, Rajasthan, on February 14, 2023. However, just a year after that, they announced their separation in July 2024. After his divorce from Natasha, Hardik was seen vacationing with British singer Jasmin Walia.