

KTR warns of agitation over delay in paddy procurement

Rajanna-Sircilla: Blaming the State government for not commencing paddy procurement so far, the BRS working president KT Rama Rao warned of waging an agitation at all paddy procurement centres across the State if the government failed to start the procurement process immediately. Rama Rao visited a paddy procurement centre in Baddenapalli of Thangallapalli mandal on Saturday. Interacting with farmers, the BRS leader enquired about their problems.

Kavitha Launches New Political Party, Attacks KCR and BJP

New Delhi, April 25

In a major development in Telangana politics, Kalvakuntla Kavitha today announced the formation of her new political party, the Telangana Rashtra Sena (TRS), unveiling the party flag during a public event.

Addressing the gathering, Kavitha proclaimed that a new revolution has begun in Telangana, emerging as a fresh political force born out of immense struggle. She described this day as unforgettable and called for collective participation to secure the state's future. Kavitha reflected on the hardships endured and the fierce battles fought for Telangana's cause, highlighting the sacrifices made, including lives lost during the movement.

She recounted her efforts during the movement, travelling from village to village with the cultural symbol Bathukamma, which she credited with helping gain momentum for the movement. She criticised the fact that, de-

spite 12 years since Telangana's formation, the dreams of its people remain unfulfilled. Kavitha lamented that the movement's "chariot," led by KCR, has lost its way, and expressed disappointment that the poor continue to suffer while expectations of emancipation remain unmet.

She also criticised the ruling family of Telangana, stating she was ashamed to be part of the family that ruled the state for ten years, and promised to make amends by stepping before the public with the TRS. Kavitha asserted that the BRS has lost the soul of Telangana and expressed her desire to serve as a maternal figure to the people, working towards a socially just Telangana.

Kavitha also took aim at the BJP, accusing the party of opposing Telangana's formation and comparing the bifurcation to the partition of Pakistan. She condemned

Telangana govt acquires 100 percent stake in Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-I

Hyderabad: Following recommendations of a cabinet sub-committee, the State government issued orders formally approving the acquisition of 100 per cent equity stake held by the Larsen & Toubro (L&T) in L&T Metro Rail (Hyderabad) Limited (L&TMRHL) of Hyderabad Metro Rail project phase-1.



BJP MPs in the state as obedient to the Central government and demanded the return of five villages merged into Andhra Pradesh.

She criticised KCR, claiming he failed to realise the vision of a "Social Telangana" and accused him of

betraying the movement, describing him as a "robot" who is absent when the public faces hardships. Kavitha questioned why KCR remains silent while the homes of the poor are demolished, asserting that he has lost his political maturity.

Governor clears Azharuddin, Kodandaram nominations as MLCs

Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla approved the nomination of Mohd Azharuddin and prof M Kodandaram as MLCs under the Governor's quota, ending uncertainty. Azharuddin needed to secure membership within six months of becoming Minister.

Hyderabad, April 25

Drawing curtains on the uncertainty, Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Saturday approved the nomination of Minorities Welfare Minister Mohd Azharuddin and TJS president prof M Kodandaram as MLCs under the Governor's quota.

The former cricketer had taken oath as Minister in October last. As per rules, it was mandatory for him to be a Member of either the Legislative Assembly or Council within six months and the deadline would elapse by April 30.

Tourist Destinations

There was a lot of buzz and uncertainty in political circles over Azharuddin's political future. Last week, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Legislative Affairs Minister D Sridhar Babu met the Governor and urged him to consider the nomination of Mohd Azharuddin and prof M Kodandaram as MLCs under the Governor's quota.

Their nominations were earlier approved by the State Cabinet but remained pending with the Lok Bhavan since the last Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, who has now been



transferred to Maharashtra.

Transport Minister Ponnampallabharathi congratulated Azharuddin and prof Kodandaram on being approved as MLCs under the Governor's quota.

Their vast experience in public service would help in boosting the development of the State, he stated.

47 Maoist cadres surrender in Telangana with 32 weapons

Hyderabad, April 25

A total of 47 underground CPI (Maoist) cadres of various ranks surrendered before the Telangana DGP, B Shivadhar Reddy, on Saturday.

The cadres also surrendered 32 firearms, including a light machine gun and four AK-47 rifles, and 515 live ammunition of various calibres.

Among those who surrendered are Hemla lythu alias

and armed cadres from the South Bastar Divisional Committee of Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee, including its secretary, have now been neutralised, leaving the South Bastar Divisional Committee on the brink of collapse.

Between 2024 and April 2026, a total of 818 CPI (Maoist) of different ranks have surrendered to the police.

"During this year, a total of 260 underground CPI (Maoist) cadres have surrendered in Telangana, reflecting the growing trust in the government's rehabilitation policies and the sustained pressure created by security forces. The surrender of top and mid-level leadership clearly indicates a decisive blow to the organisational structure of CPI (Maoist)," said DGP B Shivadhar Reddy.

The DGP said that now only four active underground cadres from Telangana remain active in various formations outside Telangana.

All four UG cadres are operating in other States, including Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, two (02) among them are Central Committee Members of CPI (Maoist).

"With Ganapathi away from active CPI (Maoist) activity since 2007, though a nominal Central Committee Member, considering history of People's War /CPI (Maoist), he is the only significant cadre left from Telangana," said the DGP, who appealed to the four CPI (Maoist) leaders Muppala Laxman Rao alias Ganapathi; Pasanuri Narahari alias Santhosh; Jade Ratna Bai alias Sujatha and Vartha Shekhar alias Mangthu, SCM to lay down armed struggle and join the mainstream.



Vijja, DKSZC Member and in charge of South Bastar, Podium Lachu alias Manoj, DVCM and Commander of 9th platoon.

Tourist Destinations

All the 47 cadres are natives of Chhattisgarh State. An interim relief of Rs 25,000 each has been handed over to all the surrendered cadres.

Director General of Police, B Shivadhar Reddy, said that following the surrender of all key leaders of the CPI (Maoist), almost all remaining underground key leaders



Election Commission tightens security for second phase of Bengal polls

The Election Commission of India has directed enhanced security measures for the second phase of Assembly elections in West Bengal on April 29. Over 2,300 companies of central forces will be deployed, with the highest concentration in North and South 24 Parganas.

Kolkata, April 25

Following instructions from the Election Commission of India (ECI), special scanning is being carried out at unfenced stretches along the international border with Bangladesh in districts of West Bengal that will go to the polls in the second phase of the two-phase Assembly elections in the state on April 29.

"Special checking is taking place near the unfenced borders ahead of the polls. The Border Security Force is on high alert. The intensity of naka checking is also very high in these areas. All precautions have been taken to ensure free, fair and peaceful polls," Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), West Bengal, Manoj Kumar Agarwal, said.

He added that since the number of Assembly constituencies going to polls in the second phase, the geographical spread and the number of polling booths are lower than in the first phase on April 23, surveillance and security arrangements will be tighter in the second phase.

In the first phase, polling was held at 45,000 booths across 152 Assembly constituencies spread over 16 districts. In the second phase, polling will be held at 40,000 booths across 142 constituencies spread over six districts and Kolkata.

Moreover, the number of police observers in the second phase is 95, which is 11 more than the 84 deployed in the first phase.

"So naturally, the extent of security coverage and surveillance will be higher in the second phase than in the first phase," the CEO said.

A total of 2,348 companies of central forces — including the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), India Reserve Battalion (IRB) and armed police units from other states — will be deployed in the second phase, in addition to personnel from West Bengal Police and Kolkata Police.

The highest deployment of central forces will be in North 24 Parganas district with 507 companies, followed by South 24 Parganas with 409 companies.

Meanwhile, an insider from the CEO's office said coastal patrolling has been intensified in the Sundarbans region spread across South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas districts due to the extensive coastal boundary with Bangladesh.

People object to Minister Vivek's Kaleshwaram remark

Medak, April 25

: Labour Minister G Vivek Venkat Swamy had to face embarrassing moments on Saturday when people objected to his comments on the Kaleshwaram project being totally useless and that the former BRS government had spent one lakh crore rupees on a futile project. The BRS legislator V Sunitha Laxma Reddy took serious objection to his comments and buttonholed the minister about the failure of the Congress government in fulfilling its electoral promises.

Pandemonium prevailed in the meeting hall where the Minister was to distribute Kalyan Laxmi scheme cheques, as supporters of both the minister and the legislator raised slogans and counter slogans. Uniformed policemen moved into the hall to control what appeared to be an explosive situation. The minister and the MLA were locked in a verbal duel on the stage over the failure of the government in implementing its electoral promises.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Banks missing glaring red flags

TWO recent headline-grabbing frauds — the Rs 20-crore crypto con in Ludhiana and the Rs 22.9-crore digital arrest scam in Delhi — clearly indicate that India's cybercrime problem is systemic, scalable and increasingly sophisticated. In Ludhiana, an industrialist was lured through a fake crypto ecosystem and drained of Rs 19.84 crore, routed through 76 forged accounts across 15 banks. In the digital arrest case, fraudsters impersonating law enforcement officials weaponised fear, isolating the victim, coercing compliance and extracting Rs 22.9 crore through staged urgency and intimidation. In a rare intervention, the Reserve Bank of India ombudsman directed five banks to pay Rs 1.3 crore for lapses in due diligence in the digital arrest case.

Significantly, both cases expose a common fault line: banking channels that fail to detect the abnormal. The scale alone raises uncomfortable questions. How do dozens of fraudulent and mule accounts slip through multiple banks' KYC filters? How does a network sustain itself long enough to move unusually large, rapid transfers without triggering red flags? Compensation, when it comes, is partial and belated. It is hardly a deterrent in a high-reward fraud economy. Today's scams are behavioural operations. Fake dashboards simulate profits; fake officials simulate authority. Victims are not just deceived; they are managed, monitored and manipulated over time. Cryptocurrencies sit in a grey zone. Coercion-based frauds lack clear response protocols. Inter-bank coordination is weak. Enforcement chases money already dispersed across layered accounts. These cases once more underscore the reality that cyber fraud in India has evolved into an organised enterprise.

MLA Beerla Ayilaiah performed the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of the Kuruma Sangam building “



“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...April 25):- Telangana State Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah participated as the chief guest and solemnly performed the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of the new Kuruma Sangam building in Vangapalli village of Yadagirigutta mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. “Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that the government is taking special care for the development of the Kuruma Sangam. He said that the construction of the Sangha building will provide a stable platform for the Kuruma community and it will be useful for social and cultural programs. He said that such Sangha buildings play a key role in promoting community unity in rural areas. He said that after the construction of this building is completed, a comfortable platform will be available for the people of the village to hold meetings and programs. The MLA clarified that the government will always stand by the people in terms of development works and that every community will move forward with the goal of development. Local public representatives, Kuruma Sangam leaders, village elders, youth, and women participated in this program in large numbers. The program was held in an enthusiastic atmosphere in the village.

Unidentified Person's Dead Body Found

D. Vishweshwar, CI, Geesugonda “Geesugonda, April 25 (Indian Chronicle) : The dead body of an unidentified person was found on Saturday under a neem tree in a maize field belonging to Sirisha Baburao, located on the outskirts of Konayamakula village in Geesugonda mandal. “According to CI D. Vishweshwar, the deceased is estimated to be between 30 and 35 years of age. He was wearing a red full shirt, a white banyan, a blue drawer, and black jeans pants. The jeans had red patches and he was wearing a brown belt. A red thread was tied around his neck, right wrist, and waist. His height is approximately 5 feet 6 inches and he is of wheatish complexion. A panchanama was conducted at the scene. “Based on a complaint lodged by the Gram Panchayat Secretary, a case has been registered. The body has been shifted to the mortuary of Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital for preservation. “CI Vishweshwar requested that the information be widely shared through WhatsApp groups and social media platforms so that the relatives of the deceased may be traced. Anyone with information about the deceased is requested to contact Geesugonda Police Station immediately. “Contact Numbers: “8712685240 — CI “8712685250 — SI “8712685031

Board Exams for Young Students... Lotus Lap Achieves International Recognition

“Enters Genius Book of Records – Around 400 Students Showcase Excellence



Hyderabad, April 24: “Lotus Lap Public Schools (Dilsukhnagar, Boduppal, Badangpet), known for their innovative approach in the field of education, have achieved another significant milestone. During the academic year 2025–26, special SSC-pattern public examinations were conducted in March–April, in which around 400 students from Grades 4 to 9 participated and demonstrated remarkable performance. With this achievement, the institution has been recognized by the prestigious “Genius Book of Records International. “What makes this achievement even more remarkable is the participation of students from lower grades. Grade 1 students – Master E. Nikshith, Master Deekshith Nandan, T. Ruthvi, and Grade 2 students – Baby T. Aadhyaa and Master M. Vaidik also appeared for SSC-level examinations, drawing wide appreciation. “Examinations in Four Core Subjects “With the objective of developing analytical skills, language proficiency, and a competitive mindset at an early age, the school management designed this unique program. Students from Grades 4 to 9 were assessed in Telugu, Hindi, English,

and Social Studies following the SSC board pattern. This initiative not only prepares students for higher-level examinations but also helps in eliminating exam fear from an early stage. “From Wonder Book to Genius Book of Records “In the previous academic year (April 2025), Lotus Lap students appeared for SSC English, Social Studies, and Intermediate First Year English examinations and secured a place in the “Wonder Book of Records International. “Building upon that success, this year the inclusion of additional language subjects led to achieving recognition in the “Genius Book of Records International,” marking a significant progression. “Parents as Invigilators – A Unique Initiative “Another notable feature of this program was the involvement of parents as invigilators during the examinations. This initiative enhanced transparency and strengthened parental participation in the academic process. Educators consider this a progressive and innovative practice in the education system. “Chairman's Remarks “Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, Chairman of Lotus Lap Group of Schools, said: “Every year, our institutions strive to move forward with innovative ideas. Our goal is to develop students' skills, language abilities, and self-reliance. At a time when reports indicate declining reading abilities among students across the country, we are implementing a ‘New Era Education System’ that enables children to attempt board-level exams at an early age. This builds confidence and prepares them strongly for the future. “Director's View “Director Komatireddy Abhishek Reddy stated: “Only when parents, teachers, and students evolve together can society truly progress. It is essential for all stakeholders to stay updated with changing times. Lotus Lap Schools are consistently working in this direction. “Participants “The event saw participation from: “Vice Principals – Madhavi Sangi (Dilsukhnagar), Gangadharan (Boduppal), Shrutilaya Reddy (Badangpet); “Administrative Officers – Swamalatha, Swathi Reddy; “along with teachers and parents, who congratulated the students. “A Result of Collective Effort “The management attributed this achievement to the hard work of students, dedication of teachers, trust of parents, and the institution's visionary approach. Educationists opined that such innovative initiatives will serve as a model for future education systems by enhancing confidence and competencies among students. “By introducing board-level examinations at an early stage, Lotus Lap Public Schools are setting a new direction in education—building confidence, reducing fear, and preparing students for future challenges.

Minister Vivek's visit to Medak district, Telangana



“The Indiramma house scheme is one of the 6 guarantees that the state government has taken very ambitiously. “Minister Vivek Venkataswamy said. “Minister Vivek Ventaswamy visited Narsapur constituency of Medak dis-

trict. “The minister along with the beneficiaries inaugurated two newly constructed Indiramma Houses in Narsapur Municipality. “In those days, Indira Gandhi built assigned lands and Indiramma House with the slogan of Garibi Hatao for the poor people. In 2009, the Congress government said to build Indiramma Houses and gave lakhs of rupees to the beneficiaries. “

“He said that when the Congress government comes to power again, Indiramma's house will be given. “He said that the previous BRS party had cheated for 10 years by saying that they would give double bedroom houses to the poor...but the Congress government took a historic decision to build Indiramma's house as one of the six guarantees. “As a part of that, 3500 houses will be built in Narsapur constituency today, he said. “On this occasion, he said that the construction of 192 houses is going on.. 100 Indiramma houses are ready... Soon all will be started... “The next year is for those who do not come to Indiramma's house in the first dapa

Grand Oath-Taking Ceremony of the New Committee at Habsiguda Mahankali Sri Rama Temple

Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy Attends as Chief Guest— Large participation from Habsiguda and Ramanthapur leaders along with Kandi Shravan Reddy“



UPPAL, APRIL 25 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): “The oath-taking ceremony of the newly elected committee of the Mahankali Sri Rama Temple, located at Street No. 1, Habsiguda, was held with great grandeur. The event was attended by Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy as the chief guest. On this occasion, Temple Inspector Praneeth and Executive Officer Venkanna administered the oath to the newly elected committee members, including Temple Chairman Chintala Baburao and trustees Dr. Malyadri Ramakanth Reddy, Singamaneni Raghu, Peddolla Vijayalakshmi, Vipin Kumar Agarwal, Rameshwaram Dharma Raju, and Meka Amaravani. “Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy extended his congratulations to the new chairman Chintala Baburao and the executive committee. He urged everyone to work to-



gether for the development of the temple and assured his full support for its progress. “Former District Youth Congress President Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy also attended the event and conveyed his best wishes to the newly formed committee. “Several senior Congress leaders and local leaders participated in this spiritual program, including former Floor Leader Kandi Aagi Reddy, DCC Vice President Boppanapalli Sudhakar Reddy, Division President Gannaram Vijay Kumar, Ramanthapur Congress Working President Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, Manda Murali Reddy, District ST Cell President Ganesh Naik, General Secretary Dharma Naik, and other leaders such as Lakshma Reddy, Ramesh Naik, Hamu Naik, Krishna Reddy, Damodar Reddy, Saga Sridhar, Kishan Naik, Murali Mudiraj, Malu Naik, Ganga Yadav, Vasu Naik, Suman Naik, Sai Kiran, Shiva, Vinod Naik, and Mekala Shiva.

Accreditation Cards to Eligible Journalists Under GO252:CollectorHaritha

“Indian Chronicle, Jade Srinivas. April, 25. “Komaram Bheem Asifabad District Collector Haritha stated that accreditation cards would be issued to eligible journalists as per GO 252. She participated in the District Media Accreditation Committee meeting held on Saturday at the Integrated Collectorate meeting hall. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that in the first phase for the year 2026, 94 new accreditation cards were approved under the committee's supervision. She added that the issuance of accreditation cards is a continuous process and applicants must submit all required documents mentioned in GO 252. “Later, addressing the media on Census-2027, Collector Haritha said that the first phase of population census in

the district will begin from May 11, 2027. The self-enumeration process will be conducted from April 26 to May 10. She urged employees, public representatives, educated persons, and voluntary organizations to register their details and make the programme successful. “She also requested print and electronic media representatives to create awareness among the public regarding self-enumeration. For smooth conduct of the process, 994 enumerators, 174 supervisors, and 1,689 house blocks have been identified across the district. People can log in to the official portal <https://se.census.gov.in/> and easily register their details, she said. District Public Relations Officer Sampath Kumar and others attended the meeting.

KL Deemed to be University Begins Counselling for 2026 Admissions Across Vijayawada & Hyderabad Campuses

“Hyderabad, 24 April 2026; KL Deemed to be University has begun its counselling process for 2026 admissions across its campuses at Vijayawada (Vaddeswaram) and Hyderabad—including KLH Aziznagar, KLH Bachupally, and KLH Global Business School, Kondapur—providing students with a comprehensive and structured pathway to secure admissions across diverse undergraduate programmes. “The counselling sessions are scheduled from April 26 to April 30, 2026, and are being conducted in two slots each day—Morning Session and Afternoon Session—to ensure smooth participation of candidates across categories. “Admissions are open for programmes including B.Tech, BBA, B.Com (ACCA), BBA-LLB, BCA, BA (Economics with IAS Orientation), B.Pharmacy, Pharm D, B.Sc (Hons.) Agriculture, B.Sc (Animation & Gaming), Food Technology, and Lateral Entry into B.Tech, among others. The process accommodates students based on KLEE, KLHAT, KLSAT, KLECET ranks, as well as JEE Mains percentile and Intermediate (10+2) performance. “Speaking on the occasion, Dr. JSR, Director – Admissions, KL Deemed to be University, said, “Our counselling process is designed to guide students at every step, ensuring clarity, transparency, and the right academic choices. With multiple entry pathways, scholarships, and strong academic support systems, we aim to make quality education accessible while helping students align their aspirations with the right programme and campus. “The university has ensured inclusive access by extending special fee concessions to SC/ST/OBC candidates, differently abled students, sports quota applicants, and other eligible categories. In addition, bank counters at counselling centres are facilitating on-the-spot education loan assistance, making the admission process more convenient for students and parents. “Interested candidates can check their scholarship details, reservation eligibility, and admission call letters through the official website and attend counselling as per their rank and eligibility schedule. “With its strong academic ecosystem, industry-aligned curriculum, and multi-campus presence, KL Deemed to be University remains a preferred destination for students aspiring for quality higher education.



(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...April 25):-The happiness of the farmer...is possible only under the leadership of the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi..Under his leadership, Jaganmohan Reddy was once again appointed as the State General Secretary of the BJP Kisan Morcha..Jaganmohan Reddy thanked BJP State President Ramachandra Rao, state leaders..our district leaders, BJP leaders..fellow workers...and fans by name.

Telangana's cute baby girl who climbed the world's six highest Everests.. Rohini Anvita Reddy.. MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy felicitated

Bhuvanagiri's baby girl Anvita Reddy will climb Mount Denali in America on June 2, completing her 7th challenge “(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...April 25):-“Mountaineer Rohini Anvita Reddy (mountaineer) from Errambelli village of Bhuvanagiri mandal, who climbed the world's six highest Everest peaks..She will be leaving for America on June 2 to complete her 7th challenge. On the auspicious occasion, she was greeted with a shawl at her camp office in Pedda Amberpet, Hyderabad. He honored her. He said that he will always provide full support to Parvatha Rohini Anvita Reddy (mountaineer), currently residing in Bhuvanagiri town, and that he will work on behalf of the government to provide her with various concessions with the cooperation of Telangana State Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.



Parvatha Rohini Anvita Reddy (mountaineer) from Bhuvanagiri town has so far climbed a total of 6 mountains including Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world, and received an award from the Governor of Telangana. On the occasion of her 7th challenge, Mount Denali in America on June 2nd, Bhuvanagiri Member of Parliament Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy honored her at his camp office in Pedda Amberpet. Congress leaders Mohammed Atahar and others participated in the program.

Uppal MLA BLR Meets HYDRAA Commissioner for Sanction of Ramanthapur Mini Tank Beautification Works



“UPPAL, APRIL 25(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy met HYDRAA Commissioner Ranganath on Saturday once again to seek sanction for the beautification works of the Ramanthapur mini tank. “Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that the development and beautification of lakes was aimed at providing a pleasant and refreshing environment for the public. He emphasized that the water bodies should be developed into attractive public spaces where people can spend time during evenings and on holidays. “He proposed the creation of essential amenities around the tank, including bund expansion, greenery, decorative lighting, benches, and flower plants, to transform the area into a lush green recreational space. The MLA specifically requested the Commissioner to sanction and initiate the beautification works for the Indira Nagar mini tank in Ramanthapur Division at the earliest. Responding positively, HYDRAA Commissioner Ranganath assured that the works would be taken up as soon as possible. BRS leaders, including Gandam Nageswara Rao, and others were also present during the meeting.

It is a pleasure that the RTC workers' strike has been called off.. Congress government ministers have assured that they will stand by the workers

Government's whip.. Aleru MLA.. Beerla Ailaiah



Yadagirigutta town of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ilayya celebrated with RTC workers by anointing them with milk. Later, he himself drove the RTC bus and stood by the RTC workers. After that, he distributed buttermilk to the RTC workers and spoke to the passengers in the travel area and said that the buses are starting from now and they will have the opportunity to reach their destinations for free. Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka and Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Goud said that they are very happy that the talks held by RTC workers during the three-day RTC strike in Telangana State were successful. They said that the RTC was completely taken into losses by ignoring the 50-day strike of RTC workers during the previous KCR government. He said that he was very happy that the same public administration was successful in the three-day talks held under the rule of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He expressed special gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, RTC strike Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka, and Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Goud on behalf of the RTC workers for ending the strike due to the success of these talks. He said that the approval of 11% fitment has fulfilled the long-standing demand of the workers. He said that the buses are on the road after the successful talks to reduce the problems of the people. He said that the government is committed to resolving the 31 demands of the workers. Paying tribute to Shankar Goud, who died during the strike, the humanity of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to provide financial assistance to his family, Indiramma's house, and a job is an example of public administration. He praised the RTC workers for playing a key role in public service in the state and said that the government will consider their problems positively and work to resolve their demands. He said that the government will focus on issues like job security and wages. He assured that the government will take necessary steps for the welfare of the workers. He said that everyone should work together so that the people do not face any difficulties.



“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle... April 25):- Government's whip Beerla Ailaiah said that it is a pleasure that the talks held between RTC strike Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka and Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Goud have been successful. “On this occasion, Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah anointed the portraits of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the concerned ministers with milk. On this occasion, Government Whip MLA Beerla Ailaiah, who drove an RTC bus and assured that the government will stand by the RTC workers, said. “ At the RTC depot in

District SP Nithika Panth IPS Launches Free Tailoring Training Program for Tribal Women



“““Calls on Women to Move Towards Financial Independence““Indian Chronicle,Jade Srinivas.April,25.““As part of the “Police Meekosam” initiative, District SP Nithika Panth IPS inaugurated a free sewing machine training program for tribal women near the Police Station at Jainoor Mandal headquarters, with the support of Vasudha Foundation voluntary organization. “Addressing the women attending the training, the SP said such free skill development programs should be utilized effectively by everyone.

She stated that this is a good opportunity for women to become self-employed, support their families, and live independently without depending on others. “She encouraged women to achieve economic self-reliance and earn a respectable place in society. The SP also expressed special thanks to Vasudha Foundation for extending support to this social service initiative. Jainoor CI Ramesh, SIs Ravi Kumar and Vikram, village Sarpanch Kodapa Prakash and others participated in the program. Around 40 women attended the training session.

Students urged to make best use of Summer Coaching Camp-2026: MMC Commissioner T. Vinay Krishna Reddy

-Training in 12 sports disciplines at 78 centres across five circles in Uppal Zone“

UPPAL, APRIL 25(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“The Summer Coaching Camp-2026, being organised under the aegis of the Uppal Zone of Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation (MMC), was inaugurated on Saturday at the Uppal Municipal Stadium (Uppal Circle Office) with much enthusiasm and participation from students. “The camp was formally launched by MMC Commissioner T. Vinay Krishna Reddy, who attended the programme as the chief guest. Other dignitaries present on the occasion included Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, Boduppal Deputy Commissioner and Uppal In-charge Commissioner A. Shailaja, and Uppal Zone In-charge Games Inspector B.M. Vignesh Yadav. “A large number of students aspiring to participate in various sports disciplines attended the inaugural event and took part enthusiastically. “Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Vinay Krishna Reddy said that the summer coaching camps would be conducted from April 25 to May 31 across all five circles of Uppal Zone. He stated that training would be provided in 12 sports disciplines at 78 centres, including volleyball, yoga,



karate, cricket, carroms, football, gymnastics, kickboxing, roller skating, shuttle badminton, boxing, and tennis. “He urged students to make the best use of the opportunity to enhance their sporting skills, physical fitness, and spirit of sportsmanship. “Games In-charge B.M. Vignesh Yadav said that the initiative aims to encourage young students to actively participate in sports during the summer vacation and develop their talent under expert guidance. “The inaugural programme was held in an enthusiastic and inspiring atmosphere and concluded successfully.

Government should provide minimum facilities to the laborers sweating in the scorching sun

Telangana Agricultural Labor Union District General Secretary Kondamadugu Narasimha****Face-to-face attendance at the workplace twice a day should be abolished.



. Kondamadugu Narasimha****(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle..April 25):- Telangana Agricultural Labor Union District General Secretary Kondamadugu Narasimha criticized the rulers and officials for failing miserably in providing even minimum facilities to the laborers sweating in the scorching sun. They demanded that the government immediately cancel the face-based attendance system, saying that workers are facing many problems due to technical issues due to taking photos twice a day through the face-based NMMS app at the workplace. On Saturday, a “dharna” program was organized in front of the Bibinagar MPDO office under the auspices of the Telangana Agricultural Workers' Union Mandal Committee to resolve the problems of employment guarantee workers. Narasimha participated as the chief guest of this program and said that since the Modi government at the center came to power, it has been making many conspiracies to lift the employment guarantee and bringing new and new JIOs, repealing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and bringing the G Ram Ji scheme, which has hurt the workers. He criticized that the law has been changed to beg for work that is a right. He said that the workers are facing many problems due to not receiving wages on time for the work done and not paying arrears for months. On the other hand, he criticized that the workers working mainly in the sun in harsh weather conditions are

not getting even the minimum wage. The Modi government has increased the mechanization policy and given work to machines, so that the workers are not given work. He said that the scheme is being watered down. He demanded that at least minimum facilities like drinking water, tent for shade, and medical kit for first aid should be provided at the workplace. He said that 200 working days should be provided in a year and a daily wage of 800 should be given. He demanded that if workers are injured at the workplace, the entire medical expenses should be borne by the government and accident insurance should also be provided. Narasimha demanded that the government immediately release the salary arrears of APOs, technical assistants, and field assistants who play a key role in the implementation of the employment guarantee scheme and recognize all of them as government employees. Later, a memorandum with demands was presented to Superintendent Ravi Sivakumar and APO Kalavathi along with the workers. In this program, Agricultural Workers' Union Mandal President Kolichelame Prasanna, Mandal Secretary Gadi Srinivas, CITU Mandal Convener Bandari Shraavan, Mandal leaders S.D. Umar, Field Assistants, Agricultural Workers' Union Mandal leaders N. Narasimha, O. Latha, B. Narasimha, B. Sivakumar, Bandari Sriramulu, Satyalakshmi, Sabita, Lavanya, Deepika, Chitra, Krishnaveni, Sapna, Renuka, Mamata and others participated. “?

People’s Welfare Beyond Politics: Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy Assures Swift Grievance Redressal

Khammam ,Nelakondapalli April 25 (Indian Chronicle):““Nelakondapalli (Rayigudem): Telangana Revenue, Housing, and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy stated that the primary objective of the people’s government is to ensure citizens do not have to run around government offices for resolving their issues. “As part of the Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika initiative, a unique Praja Darbar program was organized on Saturday in the Rayigudem cluster of the Paleru constituency. The minister interacted directly with residents from several ?????????s, including Rayigudem, Ajay Thanda, Cheruvumadaram, Mangapuram Thanda, Appalanarasimhapuram, Buddaram, Kattukacharam, Kongara, Rajarampet, and Bhairavunipalli. ““Transparent Governance at People’s Doorstep”“The minister noted that in the past, people struggled to find platforms to voice their grievances. Now, officials are reaching out directly to the public. “This is not a one-day program but a continuous process. Our government has the sincerity to listen to your problems, which is why we are confidently coming to you,” he said. ““Cluster-Based Approach for Effective Solutions”“He explained that the Praja Darbar is not just a public meeting. Instead, officials are assigned to specific ???????s like classrooms to study issues in detail. Problems that can be resolved immediately are addressed on the spot, while others are given deadlines of one week, one month, or three months for resolution. ““Development Beyond Political Lines”“Politics ends with elections. Once elected, the government belongs to everyone. If a request is genuine and beneficial to the public, it will definitely be fulfilled,” the minister assured. He expressed hope that this model in the constituency would serve as a blueprint for implementation across the state. ““Statewide Reviews from April 27”“The minister announced that from April 27, special review meetings will be conducted across the state with collectors and public representatives, focusing on revenue and housing departments. Issues related to Indiramma housing and land matters will be resolved transparently and



efficiently. ““People’s Blessings Are My Strength”“You elected me with your wholehearted blessings. As the elder son of your family, it is my responsibility to address your problems. I will not make impossible promises, but if your demand is fair, it is my duty to fulfill it,” he said. ““Senior district officials, representatives from various departments, and public representatives attended the program and received petitions from the public.

Lives Crushed Between Stones: Nomadic Muslim Community Displaced from Hill Livelihoods, Urgent Government Support Demanded

“Khammam April 25,(Indian Chronicle):““Sheikh Jameel, State Vice President of the Telangana State Nomadic Muslim Tribes Association (BC-E 1-14), expressed deep concern over the worsening conditions of the Pathar Podu (nomadic Muslim) community, who have traditionally depended on hill-based stone work for survival. “Addressing a media conference, he highlighted the severe hardships faced by the community: ““Childhood to Old Age Trapped in Stone Labor”“For generations, community members have manually carved granite stones using basic tools, supplying foundational materials for construction. Today, their own lives lack stability. With no access to education or proper nutrition, even children and elderly people are forced to work in stone quarries under harsh conditions. ““Hills Handed Over to Corporates, Livelihoods Lost”“The government has reportedly leased out hill areas to large granite companies, displacing local workers who depended on them for decades. Mechanization has replaced manual labor, leaving many without jobs or shelter, forcing families into migration and poverty. ““400,000 Population, Yet Ignored in Records”“Despite having an estimated population of over 400,000 across the state, official caste census data shows their numbers in mere thousands. Due to lack of awareness and literacy, many in the community are unable to register their identity, resulting in denial of welfare schemes and reservation benefits. ““Key Demands from the Community”“Share in Mining Leases: The government must ensure employment opportunities for local Pathar Podu workers in quarry lease areas. “Special Financial Package: Immediate financial assistance of ?0 lakh for each affected family. “Educational Support: Establish residential schools and provide special scholarships for children under prom-



ised schemes. “Revised Caste Census: Update official records to reflect the true population and ensure rightful benefits. “In a strong warning, Sheikh Jameel stated, “Our hammer can break stones, but when our hunger rises, it can shake governments. If our voices are ignored now, we will launch statewide protests. ““

Voter Mapping Must Be Conducted Transparently: Additional Collector T. Vinod Kumar



“Wanaparthy correspondent, April 25,(Indian Chronicle):”“Additional Collector (Revenue) T. Vinod Kumar

has directed officials to carry out the voter mapping process meticulously as part of the Special Intensive Revision in the district.On Saturday, he made a surprise visit to Peddagudem village in Wanaparthy mandal and reviewed the voter mapping process. He instructed village-level officials to give special attention and complete the mapping on a war footing.He also directed the Tahsildar and concerned staff to promptly scrutinize applications received under the Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak schemes and ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive financial assistance without delay.Further, he instructed officials to expedite the verification of pending Sada Bainama and Bhu Bharati applications and submit reports at the earliest. He emphasized quick disposal of all service-related applications pending at the Tahsildar’s office.On this occasion, he reviewed the progress of voter mapping works through a video conference with Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors, and village-level officers, urging all departments to coordinate and complete the process efficiently.”

RTC merger, 11% PRC ‘significant step’, say Congress leaders

Leaders felicitate Transport Minister; credit talks for addressing long-pending demands.



Karimnagar April 25 (Correspondent) : Congress leaders on Friday described the State government’s decision to merge the Road Transport Corporation (RTC) with the gov-

ernment and announce an 11% Pay Revision Commission (PRC) as a significant step towards addressing long-pending demands of employees.Choppadandi MLA and Karimnagar District Congress Committee president Medipalli Satyam, along with Manakondur MLA and Telangana Congress SC Cell chairman Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, met Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar at his camp office here and felicitated him.

They said discussions between the government and RTC employees’ unions had led to the decisions, which also include consideration of other pending demands and permission for union elections.The leaders termed the developments an important milestone for RTC employees and expressed gratitude to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, and Mr. Prabhakar.They alleged that earlier governments had not resolved the issues despite assurances, and said the present government had acted on them.”

Municipal Chairperson Neeraja Balreddy inaugurated the new branch of Master Mind School in Tandur



“ Indian Chronicle Vikarabad (April 25) ”“In Tandur town of Vikarabad district, under the aegis of corporate giant Master Mind organization, its new branch was inaugurated near TRC Club in the town on Saturday by Municipal Chairperson Neeraja Balreddy and the organization’s Chairman Raju sangani. ““Municipal Chairperson Neeraja Balreddy along with Master Mind Chairman Raju Sangani, councilors, and leaders attended as chief guests for the new school inauguration program. Later, the cultural programs organized greatly entertained the audience. ““Speaking on the occasion, the chief guests appreciated the schools striving to develop education in Tandur. They requested that students of Tandur be molded to not only receive quality education

but also be prepared for competitive exams. Chairperson Neeraja Balreddy urged that schools should work to provide quality education here itself for exams like IIT, JEE, NEET so that students don’t have to go to the capital for a seat. ““She said that such new schools will greatly contribute to developing education in Tandur. Chairman Raju Sangani said that Master Mind schools have been established with 150 branches in the state. ““Municipal Chairperson Neeraja Balreddy, Master Mind Group Chairman Raju Sangani, former Municipal Chairman Lakshmareddy, Councillor Srikanth, leaders Uppuri Mallesham, Lonka Narsimlu, Bathula Nagu, Principal Pooja and Directors Prabhakar, District Zonal Director Khaja, parents, and students participated in this program.

Let Us Eliminate Malaria – Build a Healthy Society:

Medchal-Malkajgiri District DMHO Dr. Uma Gowri

““UPPAL, APRIL 25(INDIAN CHRONICAL):““Medchal-Malkajgiri District DMHO Dr. Uma Gowri said that it is extremely important to create public awareness about the eradication of malaria.“On the occasion of World Malaria Day, an awareness rally was organized on Saturday under the aegis of the Uppal Primary Health Centre. Dr. Uma Gowri attended the event as the chief guest, flagged off the rally, and formally inaugurated it.“Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Uma Gowri stated that World Malaria Day, observed every year on April 25, aims to focus government and public attention on the prevention, control, and eradication of malaria.“She explained that malaria is a life-threatening infectious disease caused by a parasite known as Plasmodium, and that it spreads through the bite of an infected female Anopheles mosquito. She warned that if timely treatment is not provided, the disease may lead to serious health complications.“She advised the public to ensure that water does not stagnate in and around their homes, to use mosquito nets to avoid mosquito bites, and to make use of mosquito repellents and sprays.“She also appealed to people to consult the nearest health centre immediately if symptoms such as fever appear.“Dr. Uma Gowri further stated that the World Health Organization has announced the theme



for 2026 as “Driven to End Malaria: Now We Can, Now We Must.” She emphasized that everyone’s participation is crucial in the fight against malaria.“She noted that malaria can be completely prevented if people maintain cleanliness and take precautionary measures in advance.““Prevent malaria – build a healthy society,” she said.“Among those who participated in the programme were Programme Officer Dr. Nagaraju, Uppal Primary Health Centre Medical Officer Dr. Sousheelya Rani, and the PHC staff.”

District Legal Services Authority holds awareness programme on child marriage prevention.



Karimnagar April 25 (Correspondent) : The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) organised a legal awareness seminar on preventing child marriages, emphasising the need for stronger social awareness and strict enforcement of laws to protect the future of girl children.The programme focused on the “ASHA–2025” (Awareness, Support, Help, Action) guidelines formulated by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). Conducted under the directions of K. Rani, Secretary, DLSA, and Senior Civil Judge,

the seminar was part of an ongoing legal literacy initiative.

Members of the DLSA and panel advocates said child marriage was not merely a legal violation but a grave social issue that undermined the aspirations and development of girls. They stressed that eliminating the practice required both legal intervention and community participation.

Explaining the ASHA framework, the speakers described it as a structured mechanism aimed at spreading awareness, providing support to victims, enabling timely intervention through helplines, and ensuring prompt legal action. They noted that the initiative was being implemented nationwide through standard operating procedures to strengthen grassroots-level response.The speakers highlighted the adverse consequences of child marriages, including health risks due to early pregnancies, threat to life, and loss of educational opportunities. They reiterated that, under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, marriages involving girls below 18 years and boys below 21 years are punishable offences, with stringent action against those facilitating such unions.Calling for greater societal responsibility, they urged parents and community members to prioritise education and empowerment of girls instead of early marriages.Participants were informed that incidents of child marriage could be reported through toll-free helplines 1098 (Childline) and 15100 (Legal Aid), with assurances of confidentiality for informants. Free legal services are also available at the DLSA office in the district court.Advocates A. Kiran Kumar, Peruku Rangaiah, and Chitti Chandraprakash Reddy, along with MEPMA Project Director G. Swarooparani, attended the programme. Over 100 women participated.

Former Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj Inspects CC Road Works Worth 36 Lakh at Beerappa Gadda

“I gave my word... and I ensured the road work was completed,” says former corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj on Saturday inspected the ongoing CC road construction works being taken up at Beerappa Gadda with an estimated cost of ₹36 lakh.“The road is being laid from Thene Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple to Bank Colony Park. During the inspection, Geetha Praveen stated that GHMC officials must closely monitor the construction works and ensure that the contractor strictly follows all quality standards.“She also instructed that all necessary measures be taken to ensure that the public does not face any inconvenience during the execution of the road work.“Speaking on the occasion, she said that the road works were taken up on a war footing following a request from the temple committee members, particularly in view of the upcoming Kalyana Mahotsavam of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy scheduled for April 30.“She further appreciated the contractor for carrying out the works at a fast pace and ensuring timely completion.“Among those present were BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, senior party leaders Kokkonda Jagan, Edulla Kondal Reddy, Bingi Srinivas, Govu Anand, Muddam Srinivas Yadav, Indrasena Reddy, Balakrishna Goud, Shyam, Banti Goud, Beerappa Gadda Balu, Maisalu, Bommak Srinivas, Moothukupalli Raju, along with local women residents of the basti.



Graduation Day and Nutrition Exhibition at Anganwadi Centre

““Narsampet/Warangal, April 25 (Indian Chronicle) : Graduation Day and a Nutrition Exhibition were organized at the 4th Anganwadi Centre under the Narsampet Project limits to mark the conclusion of the academic year and Poshan Pakhwada. The meeting held on Saturday was presided over by Narsampet Project CDPO Madhurima.“Municipal Chairman Pendem Srilakshmi Ramanand attended the programme as the chief guest and stated that the State Government is providing one full meal along with milk and eggs to safeguard the health of pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children. He advised beneficiaries to utilize these services effectively and appreciated the Anganwadi centre for functioning as a model unit.“CDPO Madhurima said that Anganwadi centres are preparing children for formal schooling through play-based learning and that children who have completed five years are being enrolled in schools. She explained that Graduation Day is being conducted as part of this process.“Local Councillor and ALMSC Committee Chairperson Roja Rani stated that due to the large number of beneficiaries, difficulties are being faced in the existing two-room school building. She requested the Municipal Chairman to take steps, in consultation with MLA Madhav Reddy, for the construction of a separate building for the Anganwadi centre.“Ward 19 Councillor Elakanti Vijay Kumar said that quality services are being provided through this Anganwadi centre for the residents of Wards 19 and 20 and advised mothers to make the best use of Anganwadi services.“Sector Supervisor Aruna, Poshan Abhiyaan Coordinator Srilatha, and Anganwadi Teacher Nalla Bharati informed that as per government orders, Take Home Ration (THR) will be distributed during the May holidays. They advised mothers to



ensure proper nutrition for children and to take special care during the summer by keeping them in a cool environment.“Later, the Municipal Chairman, CDPO, and Councillors extended Graduation Day wishes to the children.“Those present included Municipal Chairman Pendem Srilakshmi Ramanand, CDPO Madhurima, Councillors Roja Rani, Elakanti Vijay Kumar, Manisha, Supervisor Aruna, Poshan Abhiyaan Coordinator Srilatha, Anganwadi teachers Nalla Bharati, MD Gausia, Aya Sunitha, Education Committee Chairperson Kyatham Tejasri, ASHA workers Rajamani and Rama, RPs Rajitha and Uma, ALMSC committee members, along with mothers and children.

94 New Media Accreditation Cards Issued in First Phase: Dist Collector

“Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, K.B. Asifabad, April 25: District Collector Haritha announced that accreditation cards will be issued to eligible journalists in accordance with GO 252.“Chairing the District Media Accreditation Committee meeting held at the Integrated Collectorate on Saturday, the Collector informed that 94 new accreditation cards have been sanctioned in the first phase for the year 2026.“She emphasized that the accreditation process is ongoing and urged applicants to submit all necessary documents as prescribed under GO 252.“The meeting was attended by DPR Officer S. Sampath Kumar and committee members including Abdul Rahman, Ravi Naik, Tukaram,

Santosh, Prakash Goud, Chandu, Abid Ahmed, Vinay



Kumar, B. Raju, Avinash, among others.

Bus Stop for Warangal, Hanamkonda and Yadagirigutta Routes Shifted at Uppal Crossroads

--Temporary stop moved near Nalla Cheruvu bund: Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta



““UPPAL, APRIL 25 (INDIAN CHRONICAL):“In view of the rapid progress of the elevated corridor construction works in the Uppal area, the existing bus stop for Warangal, Hanamkonda and Yadagirigutta-bound buses, located be-

side the Uppal Zonal Office, has been temporarily shifted to the vicinity of the Nalla Cheruvu bund, said Malkajigiri Municipal Corporation Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, IAS.“She stated that the decision was taken after a field-level inspection conducted along with the concerned officials regarding the relocation of the bus stop.“The Commissioner appealed to all passengers travelling towards Warangal, Hanamkonda and Yadagirigutta to use the temporary bus stop near the Nalla Cheruvu bund to reach their respective destinations.“She further informed that, from Sunday morning, April 26, the road on the Uppal Ring Road leading towards Warangal will be temporarily closed.“As traffic diversions are likely due to this closure, motorists and commuters have been advised to plan their journeys in advance and opt for alternative routes.“She also requested the public to cooperate with the police department and follow the instructions of the concerned authorities in the interest of public convenience and smooth traffic regulation.

Make Best Use of Summer Training Camp: District Collector Haritha

Indian Chronicle, Jade Srinivas.April,25.““District Collector Haritha urged tribal sportspersons of the united district to make the best use of the summer training camp and improve their skills. On Saturday, she inaugurated the Summer Sports Training Camp organized for tribal students at the Tribal Model Sports School in the district headquarters along with District Tribal Welfare Officer Ramadevi.“Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that students from tribal and rural areas possess great natural talent in sports, and with proper training, guidance, and encouragement, they can excel at state and national levels. She stated that the government is conducting special summer coaching camps to help students utilize their holidays productively and develop their sporting abilities.She informed that expert coaching is being provided in Handball, Kabaddi, and Athletics during the camp. Students were

advised to participate with discipline and dedication, improve their physical fitness, mental strength, and team spirit, and aim for higher achievements in sports. She added that sports not only help maintain good health but also create career opportunities in the future.The Collector also advised students to stay away from unnecessary distractions and use their time for sports, studies, and personality development. She appealed to parents to encourage their children and support them in pursuing sports.On this occasion, sports uniforms and shoes were distributed to the trainees. The Collector interacted with the students, learned about their goals, and motivated them to work hard and succeed.“District Tribal Sports Officer Madari Shekhu, GCDO Shakunthala, MCO Uddhav, School Headmaster Sai Baba, physical education teachers, staff members, and students participated in the programme. The event was held in an enthusiastic atmosphere.

AI Short-Term Certificate Courses Create Awareness on Technology and Employment Opportunities:

Uppal Government Degree College Principal Dr K. Vijay Kumar““UPPAL, APRIL 25(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“The short-term certificate course titled “AI in Business”, jointly organised by the Department of Commerce and the Departments of Computer Science and Applications at Uppal Government Degree College, concluded successfully.“Through this course, students gained valuable insights into the application of Artificial Intelligence in the business sector, including areas such as data analysis, the role of AI in digital marketing, smart automation, and the latest technological developments.“The course was coordinated by Dr C.H. Satyanarayana from the Department of Commerce and Dr S. Yamuna Rani from the Department of Computer Science. Faculty members C.H. Suraj, M. Sravanti, and L. Anusha, among others, conducted the sessions and provided training through practical demonstrations, case studies, and interactive sessions.“Speaking at the valedictory programme, the college principal Dr K. Vijay Kumar congratulated the students and said, “Such courses create awareness among students not only about technological knowledge but also about employment opportunities. AI is the guiding force for the future of the business sector. The knowledge gained through this course will open new avenues in your careers.”“Later, certificates were distributed to the students who successfully



completed the course. Sharing their experiences, the students stated that the programme had enhanced their practical skills and technical confidence.“Faculty members K. Geetha, Dr G. Tirupathaiah, J. Vishwanath Kumar, Dr V. Srinivasa Rao, and Dr R. Chandrasagar, along with students, NSS volunteers, and members from other departments, participated in the programme.

In self-enumeration, everyone should pay special attention to self-enumeration responsibly



- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Anurag Jayanti““Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle... April 25):- In self-enumeration as part of Census-2027, everyone should pay special attention to self-enumeration responsibly, District Collector Anurag Jayanti said in a statement. He said that the census will be conducted in two phases, in the first phase, house enumeration will be conducted from May 11 to June 9, and in the second phase, the census program will be conducted. He said that a quality and clear list will be prepared using digital technology, and for this, suitable training will be provided to

enumerators and supervisors. He said that a wide campaign will be conducted through public representatives, government employees, prominent people, census officers, youth and self-help groups in conducting the self-enumeration program. He said that the self-enumeration portal will be available from 26th of this month to 10th of May, and the district-level census officers should update the self-enumeration details every day. He said that a wide campaign should be organized in all the mandals, gram panchayats, municipal corporations/municipalities of the district so that all the people are aware of the self-enumeration. He said that the district officers and municipal commissioners should strictly implement the self-enumeration program. He said that the implementation of welfare schemes and development programs of the central and state governments will be carried out on the basis of population, and in this order, the people of the district should cooperate in preparing a clear list. He said that from 26th of this month to 10th of May, self-enumeration can be done online through the website <https://sc.census.gov.in>, and when the officials come to the house as part of the census, they can provide the self-enumeration ID. He said that the people should provide actual information when the officials come for the census. He said that a wide campaign should be organized to make the public aware of the event through dailies, local cable channels, WhatsApp groups, social media, and exhibitions in offices.

Collective Efforts Needed to Eliminate Child Marriages

Lok Adalat Member Adepu Venu.

Rajanna Sircilla, April 25(Indian Chronical): Lok Adalat member and advocate Adepu Venu emphasized that child marriages severely impact the education, health, and future of children, and called for collective action to eradicate this social issue.He stated that only through the combined efforts of the government, officials, parents, and society—and by extending timely support to victims—can child marriages be completely prevented. Speaking at a legal awareness seminar held on Saturday at Jai Sevalal Bhukya Reddy Thanda (Vattimalla) in Konaraopet mandal, he highlighted the importance of awareness and community participation.The program was organized under the aegis of the District Legal Services Authority, following the directions of District Principal Judge and DLSA Chairperson P. Neeraja, and coordinated by Senior Civil Judge and DLSA Secretary P. Lakshmana Chary.Adepu Venu further noted that the ASHA-2025 (Awareness, Support, Help and Ac-



tion) initiative is being implemented effectively in the district to curb child marriages. He urged the public to immediately inform concerned authorities if they become aware of any impending child marriage.Lok Adalat member Gurram Anjaneyulu, advocate Tavutu Madhusudan, village Sarpanch Banoth Naresh Naik, Vice-Sarpanch Lakavath Raju, ASI N. Tirumala Babu, Constable Jagan, and local villagers participated in the seminar.

Collector Inspects Paddy Procurement Centre at Peddur in Sircilla Municipality



“Rajanna Sircilla, April 25 (Indian Chronical) : District Collector Garima Agrawal instructed officials to ensure smooth and hassle-free paddy procurement for farmers. On Saturday, she inspected the procurement centre set up under MEPMa in Peddur, within the Sircilla municipal

limits.During her visit, the Collector examined paddy stocks, infrastructure, and facilities available at the centre. She enquired about the availability of tarpaulins, gunny bags, drinking water, and ORS packets. She also reviewed the quantity of paddy procured so far and checked whether fine varieties of paddy were being received.The Collector sought details regarding the allocation of rice mills and the process of online data entry. Addressing the officials, she emphasized that farmers bringing paddy to procurement centres should make use of paddy cleaners to maintain quality standards.She directed the staff to strictly adhere to quality norms while procuring paddy and ensure that the collected stock is promptly transported to the allotted rice mills. She also instructed that all arrangements at the procurement centres should be made efficiently to avoid any inconvenience to farmers.Further, she stressed the importance of updating procurement details online on a regular basis and directed officials to follow a proper plan to ensure the smooth functioning of the procurement process. She also advised farmers to cultivate fine varieties of paddy.District Civil Supplies Officer Buchibabu, Manager Narasimha, MEPMa AO Mirza Fasahat Ali Beg, Tahsildar Mahesh Kumar, Agriculture Department officials, and others were present during the inspection.

Maintaining environmental cleanliness can prevent mosquito bites:

Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao““Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle... April 25):- On Saturday, on the occasion of World Malaria Day, an awareness meeting was organized at GGH Hospital Bhuvanagiri under the auspices of the District Medical and Health Department. The meeting, chaired by District Medical and Health Department Officer Dr. M Manohar, was attended by Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao. Speaking on the occasion, the Additional Collector suggested that the spread of mosquitoes can be prevented by keeping the surroundings around us clean and by ensuring that there are no water reservoirs. He said that old tires, coolers, and drunken bins in residential areas should not become a habitat for mosquitoes. He called on officials of all departments to participate in the Friday.. Dry Day program organized every Friday under the auspices of the Health Department. District Medical and Health Officer Dr. M Manohar said that mosquito bites can cause death due to minor negligence. He reminded the story of Alexander the Great, who conquered the world, who died due to mosquito bites. He advised to take proper precautions to prevent mosquitoes from breeding and biting. District General Hospital Superintendent Dr. Pandu Nayak, RMO Dr. Kiran Kumar, program officers Dr. N Vamsi



Krishna, Dr. Ramakrishna, Dr. Veena, Nursing College Principal Swaraja Lakshmi, Medical Officer Dr. Nirosha, sub-unit officers, nursing students and others participated in this program.

Grain Procurement Process Must Proceed Smoothly, Without Causing Hardship to Farmers



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Anurag Jayanti““Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... April 25):-“District Collector Anurag Jayanti stated that the grain procurement process must proceed smoothly, ensuring that farmers do not face any difficulties. On Saturday, the District Collector inspected the grain procurement center located within the market yard at the Valigonda Mandal headquarters.““He inquired about the number of procurement centers currently operational within the market yard. He sought details regarding the total quantity of grain that has arrived at the market yard so far, the number of days since procurement operations began, and the



total quantity of grain procured to date. He also ascertained the remaining stock of grain yet to be procured. Furthermore, he inquired whether a sufficient number of lorries were arriving on a daily basis to facilitate transport. He directed officials to expedite the grain procurement process, stating that additional laborers (hamalis) should be engaged to ensure that grain meeting the prescribed moisture standards is weighed immediately. He urged farmers not to incur losses by selling their produce at lower prices; instead, he advised them to sell their grain exclusively at government-designated procurement centers. He also instructed officials to register the details of all procured grain online. Concerned officials participated in this program.

Youth should be careful not to get addicted to drugs.. Let's build a drug-free society.. Everyone should work to protect the youth

Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar ““Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle... April 25):- Under the auspices of Inner Wheel Club of Bhuvanagiri, District Chairman Swarnalatha Bhuvanagiri President Lavanya Inner Wheel Club of Secunderabad President Jayanthi Kannan, from Gandhi Park in Bhuvanagiri town to Vinayaka Chaurasta, "Say No to Drugs" Let's build a drug-free society and protect the youth from getting addicted to intoxicants and drugs. District 315 Chairman Swarnalatha Say No Drugs Stickers The rally program was launched by waving the green flag. Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Thangalapalli Srivani and Vice Chairman Pothamsetty Manjula participated in the rally. Speaking on the occasion, Municipal Chairman Thangalapalli Srivani Ravikumar said that the youth are becoming addicted to drugs like water under the mat in the society. She said that the youth should be careful not to get addicted to drugs. She congratulated the Inner Wheel Club for undertaking such a good social program. Club President Lavanya, Secretary Venkamma Sister, Treasurer Pendum Swathi, Editor Sravanthi Uma, Past President Dr. Jayashree, CWC Chairman Bandaru Jayashree, Human Rights Bonagiri Division members, Traffic Police officers, Red Cross members, Rotary members, Action Aid members participated. This program was undertaken with the slogan of "Let's eradicate drug use". Subsequently, the official chairman of Bhuvanagiri Inner Wheel Club organized a visit program at the old Vivera Hotel at Maskunta. The welcome program was entertained with a children's dance performance. On this occasion, the Dis-

trict Chairman presented a sound system to the Kasturba Girls' Hostel under the joint auspices of the Inner Wheel Club of Bhuvanagiri Secunderabad. A winter camp was inaugurated at the college ground gate opposite the Bhuvanagiri bus stand. Many good programs have been organized under the auspices of the Inner Wheel Club of Bhuvanagiri in the past. Similarly, he said that he was very happy to be a partner in setting up a cold storage center under his auspices on Saturday, organizing a rally for the drug eradication program, and installing a sound system



and microphone for the girls' hostel. He suggested that this club should take up more programs like this and work for the upliftment of women and girls. Kalyani Anitha Saritha Varalakshmi and Suma were given new membership by the District Chairman.

Eco-sensitive zone around Himachal Pradesh national park quashed: What the high court said and why it matters



GNS News Agency, April 25

On April 16, the Himachal Pradesh High Court quashed a 2022 notification that had declared areas around Col Sher Jung National Park, also known as Simbalwara National Park, in Sirmour district as eco-sensitive zones (ESZs). The court held that both the state and central governments had “miserably failed to follow the procedure” required for issuing such a notification. The notification had been issued in January 2022 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC), on recommendations of the Himachal Pradesh government. Here’s a look at what the notification said, the activities it prohibited, regulated and promoted, the issues raised against it, the high court ruling, and what it means going forward. Col Sher Jung National Park and its history

Col Sher Jung National Park is located in Himachal Pradesh’s Sirmour district, next to the Kala Amb-Paonta Sahib-Dehradun National Highway-7. It is spread over an area of 27.88 sq km. Initially a protected forest and later a wildlife sanctuary, it was notified as a national park on June 7, 2013. The park holds ecological significance due to its strategic location at the confluence of three major biogeographic zones—the Himalayan region, the Gangetic plains, and semi-arid areas. As per a 10-year management plan for this national park, its unique positioning results in a rich mix of flora and fauna, reflecting characteristics of the Western Himalayas, the Punjab plains, and the Upper Gangetic plains. Geographically, the park is defined by the Shivalik Hill ranges, forming a bowl-shaped valley intersected by seasonal streams locally known as “khala” or “rau”. The main stream system is the Nimbuwala khala and its tributaries. Vegetation in the park is dominated by species such as sal, sain, mahua, jamun, amla, and amaltas. The park supports diverse wildlife, including leopard, sambar, barking deer, nilgai, wild boar, jackal, and langur. It also hosts rich birdlife typical of the Shivalik and Himalayan regions, along with around 70 species of butterflies. Historically, the area was part of elephant migratory routes, though such movement has now reduced due to habitat fragmentation caused by infrastructure projects such as the Yamuna barrage.

In January 2022, the MoEFCC issued a notification declaring an area around Col Sher Jung National Park as an ESZ. The ESZ covered an area of 31.24 sq km, encompassing 19 villages across three Gram Panchayats, Bhatanwali, Patalia, and Behral. The objective was to create a buffer zone to protect the park’s fragile ecosystem by regulating human activities. The notification imposed a ban on several environmentally harmful activities, including commercial mining, stone quarrying, and crushing units; establishment of polluting industries (red category); hydroelectric projects; brick kilns and saw mills; use or handling of hazardous substances; discharge of untreated waste into natural water bodies, etc. However, limited extraction of resources for local domestic needs was permitted. Certain activities were allowed but subject to strict regulation: Construction activities, especially near the park boundary; establishment of hotels and resorts; tree felling (with prior permission); and small-scale industries. No new commercial construction or hotels were allowed within 1 km of the park boundary, except for limited eco-tourism structures. The demand for exclusion from the ESZ came primarily from residents and elected representatives of areas falling within the notified zone. Representatives of Bhatanwali, Patalia, and Behral approached the Himachal Pradesh High Court,

seeking exclusion from the ESZ. They argued that it adversely affected residential, agricultural, and livelihood activities, and no proper procedure was followed for declaring the area as an ESZ.

The demand was also supported by local Congress MLA Ajay Solanki from Nahan and BJP MLA Sukhram Chaudhary from Paonta Sahib. In their representations to the state government, they sought implementation of a reduced ESZ boundary of 1 km in line with the Supreme Court’s 2022 directions, along with the application of the 2023 provision allowing site-specific relaxation. A key concern highlighted was the industrial importance of the Paonta Sahib sub-division, which hosts several industries providing employment and contributing significantly to state revenue. Some industrial units, including stone crushers, also sought relaxation or extension, citing a lack of clarity regarding ESZ boundaries at the time of their establishment. In November, 2025, Mohkam Singh, proprietor of Mohkam Singh Stone Crusher at Surajpur village, submitted a representation to the state government demanding a three-year extension, stating that at the time of granting permission, neither the unit nor the officials concerned appeared to be aware of the precise ESZ boundary and its overlap with the unit’s location. In its April 16 order, a division bench of the Himachal Pradesh High Court highlighted serious procedural lapses, possibly including inadequate stakeholder consultation, improper demarcation, or non-compliance with statutory requirements.

Many villages were included in the ESZ when the recommendations were prepared in 2012, but many were later excluded when a draft notification was issued in 2015—without any reasons cited for the exclusion and inclusion of villages. The court also took cognisance of the record placed by MoEFCC that the draft ESZ notification was considered in the 18th meeting of the Expert Committee for Eco-Sensitive Zones, where the committee requested the state government to provide a detailed justification for the proposed zero ESZ extent and to submit a revised proposal. The state government, however, did not submit the information sought or a revised proposal. The notification could not be finalised within the stipulated 725 days and lapsed. Thereafter, the state government submitted a fresh proposal and a new draft notification was issued on December 24, 2020. The court said no committee, comprising the wildlife warden, an ecologist, an official from local self-government, and the revenue department of the concerned area, was ever formed to reinstate the process after the previous notification lapsed in 2015. There was a complete disregard of the procedure prescribed for declaring the Eco-Sensitive Zone, the court noted. The immediate impact of the judgment is that the ESZ notification ceases to operate, effectively removing the regulatory restrictions imposed around the park. A senior wildlife officer attached to the national park said, requesting anonymity, “Industries will not come out within a day or two. Our main concern is the mining-related activity and the possibility of rampant construction around the national park. Many rivulets, etc., pass through the national park. Mining cannot take place inside the park, but if mining takes place outside and near the park, that too will have an adverse impact.” The withdrawal of the notification has also increased the risk of unregulated development around the park, potential threats to wildlife habitat and ecological balance, and possible disruption of wildlife corridors connecting nearby protected areas.

What next?

“We are studying the judgment. We will definitely take a decision on it shortly,” Sanjay Sood, Himachal Principal Chief Conservator of Forests-cum-Head of Forest Force, said. Senior Advocate Deepak Kaushal, who represented the Gram Panchayats, said, “At present, the notification declaring the area as ESZ has been quashed and set aside. The government will need to follow the entire process laid down for declaring an area as an ESZ. It is the responsibility of the state government to follow the procedure.” “The MoEFCC only constitutes an Eco-Sensitive Zone Committee. Consultation with local representatives, field inspections, etc., is the work of the state government. The state and central governments are at liberty to challenge the decision before the appropriate forum,” he added.

Crowds swell for pind clinic vacancies in state, spotlight on Punjab’s job crisis

GNS News Agency, April 25

Many candidates turned up at the Civil Surgeon office in Punjab’s Sangrur Monday for just 117 ‘pind clinic in-charge’ vacancies underlining the prevailing unemployment and highlighting the stark gap between demand and supply of jobs in the state. The rush was particularly striking because the job is temporary and the candidates will only be paid Rs 620 per day. The candidates at the venue, meanwhile, alleged lack of basic arrangements such as drinking water despite the scorching heat. Looking at the heavy turnout, Civil Surgeon (Sangrur) Dr Amarjeet Kaur said, “Hundreds have turned up for the vacancies of pind clinic in-charge and we are busy attending to them... we will continue tomorrow... (as we could not attend all the candidates today).” As per the eligibility criteria, candidates must have one of these: a B.Sc in Nursing, a diploma in General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM), Auxiliary Nursing and Midwifery (ANM), be a pharmacist with a diploma or degree in pharmacy. Preference will be given to GNM/B.Sc Nursing candidates, followed by ANM candidates and then pharmacists. Similar scenes also took place on April 17 reported from other districts.

In Mansa, around 500 candidates turned up for just 11 posts of pind clinic in-charge and nearly 450 appeared for interviews. Sources said many also left due to the heavy rush. In Ludhiana, nearly 1,500 candidates reportedly appeared for around 200 temporary posts. Reacting to the situation, Union Minister of State Ravneet Singh Bittu posted on X, “The Real face of ‘Badlav’ — Punjab’s youth forced onto the streets... The massive flood of unemployed youth is a stinging reality check for the Punjab government’s hollow claims of providing jobs. When thousands of qualified candidates are forced to scramble for a mere 117 posts, it exposes the dire state of unemployment in the state. Where are the tall promises of ‘Har Ghar Naukri’? Is this the ‘Rangla Punjab’ you envisioned — where our youth are left to despair?”

The ‘pind clinic’ initiative is an extension of the state government’s Aam Aadmi Clinics aimed at expanding primary healthcare coverage in rural areas. On January 23, the Chief Minister’s Office had made the formal announcement of pind clinics. The post on social media said: “Punjab Government, led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann,



The ‘pind clinic’ initiative is an extension of the state government’s Aam Aadmi Clinics aimed at expanding primary healthcare coverage in rural areas.

has announced the launch of 2,500 ‘pind clinics’ to ensure that no villager has to travel to the city for primary healthcare. These clinics will be opened across every corner of rural Punjab within the next 4 to 5 months.”

In the first phase, the government plans to open 1,100 pind clinics, which will later be expanded to 2,500. At present, the state has already operationalised 881 Aam Aadmi Clinics, where doctors, nurses and pharmacists are engaged on a per-day wage basis depending on patient footfall. Under the model, one pind clinic in-charge will cater to two clinics — operating from 8 am to 11 am at one location and from 12 noon to 3 pm at another nearby clinic. Rs 120 per day will be the travel allowance as well to commute between two clinics on working days. Officials said the Punjab health department advertises these posts online district-wise, following which candidates report directly to the respective Civil Surgeon offices for interviews. The selection process is still underway, with the health department expected to prepare a merit list after interviews to declare results, they said.

As poor-quality wheat piles up, procurement agencies seek waiver of storage gain norms



GNS News Agency, April 25

The committee pointed out that the Centre, through the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, has already relaxed procurement norms for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) wheat. The committee pointed out that the Centre, through the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, has already relaxed procurement norms for Fair Average Quality Flagging serious concerns over the quality of wheat, the Joint Coordination Committee of State Procurement Agencies, Punjab, has written to the state Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs urging it to take up the matter with the Centre for a complete waiver of ‘storage gain’ norms for the 2026-27 procurement season.

In its letter, a copy of which is with The Indian Express, addressed to the Secretary of the department, the committee said that extreme weather conditions—including heatwaves during February-March and unseasonal rains and hailstorms during harvesting—have severely damaged wheat crop. As a result, the state is witnessing a sharp rise in shrivelled and broken grains, damaged kernels, and loss of lustre, along with higher moisture content. The committee pointed out that the Centre, through the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, has already relaxed procurement norms for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) wheat. The permissible limits have been increased to 15%

NRI woman says IDFC First Bank scam ‘mastermind’ Ribhav Rishi defrauded her of Rs 2.5 cr



GNS News Agency, April 25

In January–February 2025, when the complainant requested the transfer of Rs 1 crore to the UK, the accused allegedly kept delaying the process and continued to mislead her until May 2025. In January–February 2025, when the complainant requested the transfer of Rs 1 crore to the UK, the accused allegedly kept delaying the process and continued to mislead her until May 2025. One of the main accused in the IDFC First Bank scam, Ribhav Rishi, has found himself in another case after a 77-year-old NRI woman alleged that he duped her of around Rs 2.5 crore. According to the police, an FIR has been registered at the Sector 17 police station in Chandigarh, under Sections 316(5), 318(4), 338, 336(3), 340(2), and 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) on the complaint of a woman residing in the UK. The accused include Ribhav, former manager at IDFC First Bank, Sector-22/B, Chandigarh, along with other bank officials. The investigation is currently in progress.

The complainant, Taranjit Kaur Bains, said that she and her husband reside in Greater London. She came in contact with retired Punjab National Bank officer R K Rishi in 2020 during the sale of her house, who later introduced her to his son, Ribhav. At the time, Ribhav was working as a manager at IDFC First Bank. He allegedly persuaded her to open an NRI account by promising attractive returns and subsequently convinced her to deposit large sums of money.

Climate change reshaping carbon storage in India’s forests: IITM-Pune study

GNS News Agency, April 25

India’s forests are an important carbon sink, helping remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in living vegetation such as trunks, branches, leaves, and roots. But how this carbon storage will change in a warming world has remained unclear. A new study at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune shows how climate change is reshaping carbon storage across India’s forests. The study led by Fitha Fathima, Mareena Mathew, and Roxy Mathew Koll from IITM-Pune has been published in Environmental Research: Climate and explores how forest carbon may change across the recent past, near future, mid-century, and late century under low, medium, and high fossil fuel emissions pathways.

The study finds that the carbon stored in India’s living forest vegetation is projected to increase across all major forest regions of the country, but not evenly. The largest gains are projected in the Desert and Semi-Arid zones followed by the Trans-Himalaya, Indo-Gangetic forest belt and the Deccan Peninsula, while the Western Ghats, Northeast, and Himalayan forests also increase, but more modestly. Across India’s forested regions, the study projects that average living forest carbon rises from 7.74 kilograms of carbon per square metre in the historical period to 10.24 under low emissions, 11.76 under medium emissions, and 13.67 under high emissions by the late 21st century. That corresponds to increases of about 35%, 62%, and 97% by 2100. The three futures remain broadly similar until around 2030, then begin to separate, with the divergence becoming clear by about 2050. It also shows that rainfall variability plays a stronger national-scale role than temperature in shaping changes in forest carbon, with rainfall effects often unfolding over several years rather than instantly.

Fitha Fathima, lead author of the study said that climate change is not just about rising temperatures — it is

for shrivelled and broken grains and up to 70% for lustre loss, while damaged grains have been allowed up to 6%.

However, it added that even with these relaxations, the wheat being procured falls under Uniform Relaxed Specifications (URS) and is of significantly inferior quality compared to normal FAQ wheat. “Applying the existing storage gain formula, which is based on ideal FAQ conditions, to such substandard wheat is neither scientific nor practical,” the letter mentioned. Citing a study by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, the committee said that storage gain norms are derived from wheat stored under ideal conditions, which is not the case this year. Instead of gaining weight during storage, the current crop is likely to lose weight due to moisture evaporation, grain damage, and structural deterioration.

The letter also highlighted that the situation is worse than the 2015-16 crop, when the Centre had reduced storage gain norms by 50%. This year, however, the extent of damage is higher, warranting a complete waiver rather than partial relief. Another major concern flagged was the acute shortage of scientific storage space in Punjab. With state godowns already filled with previous stocks of wheat and rice, agencies may be forced to store the new crop in open and substandard conditions, increasing the risk of infestation, spoilage, and further quality loss. The committee warned that enforcing current norms could lead to financial losses and operational difficulties for procurement agencies, as they would be held accountable for weight variations that are beyond their control. Calling the situation unprecedented, the committee urged the government to act swiftly. “The current wheat crop is neither comparable to standard FAQ wheat nor suitable for application of conventional storage norms. A complete waiver of storage gain is essential to ensure fair handling of this year’s crop,” the letter stated. The issue comes at a time when Punjab is expecting over 120 lakh tonnes of wheat procurement, making it critical to address storage and handling challenges in a timely manner. It has been signed by the officials of state procurement agencies, including Markfed, PUNSUP Pungrain, and Ware-house.

The complainant returned to the UK in June 2020 during the Covid-19 period and visited India only once in 2023. During this period, Rishi and other bank officials remained in regular contact and allegedly induced her to invest in various bank schemes and IPOs. However, she later discovered that the funds were not invested in official bank products but were instead transferred to private companies and third-party accounts, without her consent. In January–February 2025, when the complainant requested the transfer of Rs 1 crore to the UK, the accused allegedly kept delaying the process and continued to mislead her until May 2025. The fraud came to light after media reports in February highlighted a large-scale banking scam involving approximately Rs 2,590 crore. Upon verification of her accounts, the complainant found that her funds had reportedly been diverted to entities such as Capco Fintech Services. On February 22, she also received an email from the bank informing her about a lien of Rs 2.5 crore on her account. In the Rs 590-crore IDFC First Bank and AU Small Finance Bank scam, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) secured two-day custody of alleged mastermind Ribhav till April 22, after seeking his three-day remand to examine digital evidence and financial links. The development came as the agency informed the court of Special CBI Judge Rajeev Goyal that its probe has uncovered over 200 suspected illegal transactions and pointed to alleged procedural lapses in certain Haryana government departments. The CBI submitted that due process was allegedly not followed in opening some bank accounts and routing funds, while verification of documents was inadequate. It also flagged alleged violations of Haryana Finance Department norms regarding the empanelment of banks for conducting government business. The court also sent five accused — Abhay Kumar, Swati Singla, Abhishek Singla, Naresh Kumar and Manish Jindal — to judicial custody, citing concerns that they could influence witnesses or tamper with evidence. The agency said the role of public servants, bank officials and other persons is still under investigation, and the trail of alleged misappropriation of government funds is yet to be fully established.

FBI Director Kash patel sues Atlantic for \$250 million in defamation



GNS News Agency, April 25

Washington: FBI Director Kash Patel has filed a \$250 million defamation lawsuit against The Atlantic and one of its journalists, alleging the magazine published a “sweeping, malicious, and defamatory hit piece” aimed at damaging his reputation and forcing him from office.In his complaint, filed in the US District Court for the District of Columbia, Indian American Patel accuses The Atlantic Monthly Group LLC and staff writer Sarah Fitzpatrick of publishing false claims about Patel's conduct, including allegations of “excessive drinking” and “unexplained absences” while leading the Federal Bureau of Investigation.Patel’s legal filing states the article was “replete with false and obviously fabricated allegations designed to destroy Director Patel’s reputation and drive him from office.” The lawsuit seeks at least \$250 million in damages, along with other relief.

According to reporting by The Washington Post, the article relied on accounts “attributed to anonymous people” who alleged Patel engaged in inappropriate conduct during his tenure. The Post noted it “has not independently verified the Atlantic’s reporting.” Patel's complaint disputes those

claims, asserting that several incidents described in the article — including allegations that meetings were rescheduled due to drinking or that security staff requested “breaching equipment” to access him — “are false.”The filing further argues that the publication acted with “actual malice,” a legal standard required in defamation cases involving public officials. It states the claims were “so demonstrably and obviously false, or easily refuted,” that publishing them was reckless.

Patel’s lawyer, Jesse Binnall, said: “Defamatory speech is not free speech, and it is an honour to represent Kash Patel in this lawsuit seeking accountability for The Atlantic article’s malicious falsehoods.” In response, The Atlantic defended its reporting.Anna Bross, a spokeswoman for the publication, said: “We stand by our reporting on Kash Patel, and we will vigorously defend The Atlantic and our journalists against this meritless lawsuit.” The dispute comes amid heightened scrutiny of Patel's leadership.

Separate reporting cited by Newsweek noted that nearly 30,000 people had signed an online petition calling for an investigation into his conduct, following allegations raised in recent media reports. Patel has denied the allegations and maintains that the article relied on anonymous sources “with axes to grind and are not in a position to know the facts.”Under US law, public officials must prove that a publication acted with “actual malice” — meaning it knowingly published false information or acted with reckless disregard for the truth — a standard established in the landmark Supreme Court case New York Times v. Sullivan.Patel, who has led the FBI since February 2025, is not new to litigation over media coverage. His current lawsuit is at least the second defamation claim he has filed since taking office, including a separate case linked to statements made on a television news programme. The case is expected to proceed in federal court in Washington.

Vance likely to travel to Islamabad

GNS News Agency, April 25Washington: US Vice President J D Vance is likely to travel to Islamabad on Tuesday for peace talks with Iran to end the seven-week war, according to a media report.On Monday, US President Donald Trump told The New York Post that the Vance-led delegation was already en route to Islamabad, while other media outlets reported that the vice president was very much in Washington.Vance is expected to reach Islamabad as the two-week ceasefire, agreed to between the US and Iran on April 8, ends amid threats by Trump to bomb bridges and power plants in Iran if both sides fail to reach a deal.With Vance expected to reach Islamabad late Tuesday, Trump has effectively extended the ceasefire by a day till Wednesday

“Vice President Vance is expected to depart for Islamabad by Tuesday morning for talks with Iran over a potential deal to end the war,” American news outlet Axios reported, quoting three US sources.Special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner are expected to join Vance.The fragile ceasefire between the US and Iran was tested once again on Sunday when a US guided-missile destroyer fired on and seized an Iranian cargo ship after it tried to get past the US naval blockade in the Gulf of Oman, further angering the Iranians.The Iranian team was urged to join the meeting by mediators from Pakistan, Egypt, and Turkiye, Axios reported, but, according to the source, didn’t leave until they received approval from Iran’s supreme leader.The Iranian delegation’s plan to travel to Islamabad was also reported earlier on Monday by the New York Times, citing two Iranian officials.Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammed-Bagher Ghalibaf is expected to lead the delegation.Axios, quoting a source with knowledge, said the Iranians were stalling amid apparent pressure from the Revolutionary



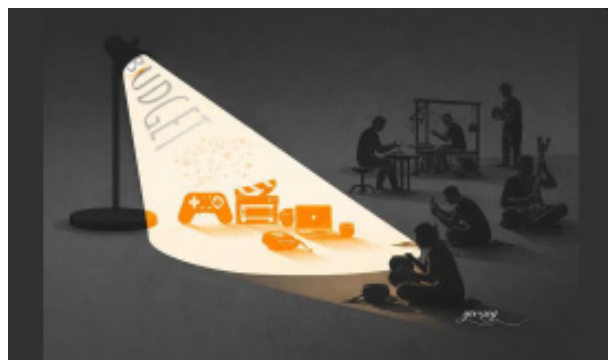
Guards on the negotiators to hold a firmer line â€” “no talks without an end to the US blockade.”The United States has never been closer to a good deal with Iran, unlike the horrible deal made by the Obama Administration, thanks to President Trump’s negotiating ability,” White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told Fox News.“Anyone who cannot see President Trump’s tactics to play the long game is either stupid or willfully ignorant,” she said Monday night.During the first round of talks on April 11, American negotiators proposed a 20-year pause on Iran’s enrichment of uranium, a source familiar with the discussions was quoted as saying by CNN.Iran responded with a proposal for a five-year suspension, which the US has rejected, according to a US official.Trump insisted Monday he wasn’t feeling pressure to reach a deal, despite the war’s rising unpopularity among the American public and the role it’s played in higher gas prices.“I am under no pressure whatsoever, although it will all happen relatively quickly!” he wrote on Truth Social.

India’s Budget still undervalues orange economy

All Union Budgets speak the language of growth, innovation and jobs. The 2026 Union Budget has gone further by explicitly mentioning the so-called orange economy. This is a unique occasion when culture, creativity, and content creation are recognised as economic forces rather than ornamental accessories. However, more broadly, India’s fiscal policy still underestimates the creative economy as a legitimate source of growth and job creation (Government of India, 2026). Previously regarded as soft power or leisure activity, creative industries are now being marketed, at least rhetorically, as engines of growth, jobs and global competitiveness.

The orange economy broadly encompasses domains in which value is created through creativity and intellectual property: film, music, animation, gaming, design, fashion, publishing, advertising, and digital content (UNESCO, 2022; UNCTAD, 2024). Globally, these industries have proven to be resilient and fast-growing, especially in digitally networked economies. The promise is particularly high for India, given its demographic dividend and rich cultural capital.The cultural and creative industries, including arts and crafts, design, media, heritage, fashion, gaming, and digital content, employ millions silently, generate soft power, and sustain local economies. Yet, they continue to remain on the margins of fiscal policy and economic planning. As India emerges as a global cultural and digital powerhouse, there is a striking lack of a coherent vision for the creative economy in the Budget. The orange economy is no soft sector, but a serious economic force, which should be supported with hard policy.

Unemployment and automation-induced disruptions are putting pressure on India’s growth (Government of India, 2025). In contrast, creative industries are labour-intensive and youth-driven. They offer employment across a wide range of skills — from artists and writers to coders, editors, sound engineers, designers and platform managers. These industries rely on talent, ideas and networks, unlike capital-intensive manufacturing.The prioritisation of Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) in Budget 2026-27, including the development of creative technology labs in schools and colleges, indicates the efforts to build a future-ready talent pipeline (Government of India, 2026; FICCI-EY, 2023). Government projections suggest that the AVGC sector alone may require about two million professionals by the end of the decade. Creativity, therefore, is no longer a niche aspiration but a mainstream employment strategy.The orange economy also generates significant spillover effects. Tourism depends on film and music, manufacturing and export benefit from design, and platform economies and advertising revenues depend on digital content. Cities with thriving creative clusters often experience ur-



ban regeneration and enhanced global visibility. Creative industries thus can be seen as economic infrastructure, less visible than a road or a port, but equally catalytic.Besides, cultural exports promote India globally in ways traditional trade cannot. Creativity in the form of soft power, with real economic payoff, can be seen in the cinema and streaming content, and even gaming stories rooted in local mythology.The 2026 Budget is only a beginning. Without credit access, social protection, IP safeguards, and export support, India’s creative workforce will remain economically insecureHowever, this potential cannot be realised through budgetary recognition alone (UNCTAD, 2024; UNESCO, 2022). Much of India’s creative workforce is informal, lacking contracts and social security as well as regular income. Access to funding remains limited, as creative projects do not conform to the standard lending procedures. Regulatory complexities, fragmented data and inadequate measurement systems imply that the real contribution of the orange economy has been underrated in national accounts.The threat of over-concentration also exists: prioritising the most noticeable industries such as gaming and digital content over traditional arts, local crafts, publishing, and local cultural ecosystems that support livelihood beyond metropolitan centres.Recent Union Budgets have acknowledged culture and creativity more through visibility-driven interventions than structural economic planning. For example, the 2024-25 Budget increased allocations for museum development, cultural digitisation and heritage tourism, while the 2025-26 Budget continued investments in tourism circuits and global cultural showcases.Broader initiatives, such as increased investment in digital public infrastructure, the PM Vishwakarma scheme for traditional artisans, and MSME credit programmes, indirectly support the creative industries. However, a key gap remains: the lack of clear recognition of creative work as productive labour, situated at the intersection of culture, business, and technology.

5 things to know as massive blast, fire shake Nacogdoches County near Etoile; videos emerge



Authorities in Nacogdoches County, Texas, are responding to a reported explosion and fire at an oil well site. The Nacogdoches County Sheriff's Office has confirmed the explosion in a Facebook post. Details are also emerging on social media. “Deputies along with numerous other first responders are arriving on scene in the 15000 block of FM 226 just north of Etoile. There is currently a fire at an oil well site. Early reports indicate that all workers at the site

are accounted for and have been evacuated. First responders are still arriving on the scene to evaluate the totality of the situation. We are evacuating residents on Cr. 561 as a precaution and will further evaluate the situation as it develop,” the Nacogdoches County Sheriff's Office's Facebook post reads.Here are five things we know about Etoile, Texas, oil rig explosion: The location of the explosion is along the 15000 block of FM 226, just north of Etoile. Emergency crews, including deputies and several first responders, have been arriving at the scene. Efforts are underway to assess the situation.According to initial reports, all workers at the site have been safely accounted for and evacuated.Meanwhile, residents along County Road 561 are being evacuated too as a precaution Shocking videos of the scene have surfaced on social media, showing the sky lighting up in orange flames.The cause of the explosion remains unknown.Etoile is an unincorporated community in Nacogdoches County, Texas, located in East Texas. It is located about 20 miles south of Nacogdoches and 19 miles east of Lufkin. It is located near the Angelina and Attoyac rivers, and is known for its proximity to lake recreation, including Jackson Hill Marina.

From ancient legend to K-pop: Modi highlights India-Korea connect

GNS News Agency, April 25

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday invoked the legend of Ayodhya princess, Suriratna, and Korean king Kim Suro to emphasise the ancient cultural links between India and South Korea.In his remarks at a joint press meet after wide-ranging talks with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung at the Hyderabad House here, Modi said K-pop and K-drama are becoming very popular in India today, and similarly, in South Korea, Indian cinema and culture are getting more recognised. “The story of Princess Suriratna of Ayodhya and King Kim Suro of Korea, dating back two millennia, is a part of our shared heritage,” he said.



The official website of ‘Incredible India’ carries a descriptive piece on this ancient cultural link. In her adopted land in Korea, she was known as Queen Heo Hwang-ok, and a memorial to her, built in 2001 through a collaborative effort between the Uttar Pradesh government and South Korea’s Gimhae city, stands as a living testament to the enduring bonds forged by Queen Heo Hwang-ok’s legendary journey.“As chronicled in the venerable Korean text Samguk Yusa, this daughter of Ayodhya — known in her adopted land as Queen Heo Hwang-ok, embarked on a perilous sea voyage guided by divine decree,” reads the piece on the ‘Incredible India’ website.

“The Gods themselves, it is said, orchestrated her union with King Kim Suro of the Karak Clan, making her the first queen of Geumgwan Gaya. This ethereal command, delivered through dreams, set in motion a remarkable saga of cross-cultural unity, forever intertwining the destinies of Ayodhya and Korea in a tale of shared heritage and royal legacy,” it adds.Many members of the Karak clan visit Ayodhya every year to pay tribute at the Queen Heo Memorial Park, which was set up on the banks of Sarayu river in the holy city.

“When you stand in front of the Memorial of Heo Hwang-ok, you are transported to an era of legendary unions and transcontinental journeys. This serene sanctu-

ary pays homage to a remarkable tale that spans centuries and continents. Legend speaks of Princess Suriratna, a young maiden whose extraordinary journey from the banks of the Sarayu to the shores of Korea would forever alter the course of history,” the piece reads. In November 2018, the then First Lady Kim Jung-sook visited Ayodhya and celebrated Diwali in the holy city. Kim had begun her tour of Ayodhya by offering tributes at the Queen Heo Memorial.Accompanied by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, she attended the ground-breaking ceremony for the upgrade and beautification of the memorial dedicated to the legendary Ayodhya princess, who went to Korea and married the king there in 48 AD.On Monday, India and South Korea also signed several MoUs, including on cooperation in cultural and creative industries, in the presence of the two leaders. “In culture and creative industry, through mutual cooperation, we will establish new avenues in areas of film, animation, and in gaming too,” Modi said.“We are delighted that President Lee himself is an admirer of Indian cinema. To further strengthen this cultural connect, we will organise the India-Korea Friendship Festival in 2028,” he said. He added that to boost people-to-people ties, education, research cooperation and tourism will be promoted. “We are laying the foundation stone of the success stories of the next decade.”

India steps up Gulf diplomacy as Doval visits Riyadh amid Strait of Hormuz tensions, firing at vessels -

India has stepped up high-level diplomatic outreach in the Gulf, with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval visiting Riyadh amid escalating tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and growing concerns over maritime security.On the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of External Affairs said engagement with key regional partners had been intensified.

According to the MEA, during his April 19 visit, Doval held talks with Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and National Security Adviser Musaed Al-Aiban, focusing on bilateral ties and the evolving regional situation.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said India was “deeply disturbed” by the firing at Indian-flagged vessels and had taken up the matter with Iranian authorities. He underscored the need to uphold maritime security and ensure unimpeded passage through international waterways.“We have very, very clearly maintained that international waterways must remain free and open for all categories of shipping, including energy trade and commercial traffic,” Misri said, pointing to the wider economic implications. He warned that the impact of the ongoing West Asia tensions was already being felt beyond the immediate conflict zone, particularly in energy availability, even as India closely monitors the safety of its diaspora—nearly 10 million citizens living and working



across the Gulf.India has also pressed for de-escalation, with Misri reiterating the need to respect sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to avoid targeting civilian infrastructure.Doval’s visit is being seen as part of a calibrated strategy to reinforce regional partnerships while navigating the fallout of the crisis, with India positioning itself to secure its strategic and economic interests amid a rapidly evolving security landscape.

Apple’s Tim Cook to step down as CEO in September

Tim Cook will step down as Chief Executive Officer of Apple Inc. and take over as executive chairman of the company's board, with John Ternus set to become the new CEO from September 1, the company announced on Monday.The decision was approved by Apple's Board of Directors as part of a long-planned leadership transition. Cook will continue as CEO through the summer and work closely with Ternus to ensure a smooth handover.

Currently serving as Senior Vice President of Hardware Engineering, Ternus has been a key figure in developing Apple's major products and will now take charge of leading the company.After stepping into his new role as executive chairman, Cook will continue to support the company, including engaging with policymakers around the world.In a community letter to the company, Cook wrote, “For the past 15 years I’ve started just about every morning the same way. I open my email and I read notes I received the day before from Apple’s users all over the world. You share little pieces of your lives with me and tell me things you want me to know about how Apple has touched you. About the moment your mom was saved by her Apple Watch. About the perfect selfie you captured at the summit

of a mountain that seemed impossible to climb. You thank me for the ways Mac has changed what you can do at work and sometimes give me a hard time because something you care about isn't working like it should.”“Today we announced that I'm taking the next step in my journey at Apple. Over the coming months I will be transitioning into a new role, leaving the CEO job behind in September and becoming Apple's executive chairman. A new person will be stepping into what I know in my heart is the best job in the world. That leader is John Ternus, a brilliant engineer and thinker who has spent the past 25 years building the Apple products our users love so much, obsessed with every detail, focused on every possible way we can make something better, bolder, more beautiful, and more meaningful. He is the perfect person for the job,” the letter read.Tim Cook joined Apple in 1998. He became CEO in 2011 and has overseen the introduction of numerous products and services, including new categories like Apple Watch, AirPods, and Apple Vision Pro, and services ranging from iCloud and Apple Pay to Apple TV and Apple Music. He was also instrumental in expanding existing product lines.

Lost in the glow: navigating the crisis of light and wildlife



For most of human history, sunset was the hard boundary after a day of activity. The night was not at all a void; it was a velvet curtain that signalled the body to rest and the nocturnal world to wake up. Today, that boundary has blurred. From glaring intense white streetlights and headlights to the persistent blue glow of handheld devices, people are living in a permanent artificial noon. So the quest to banish the shadows have inadvertently led to an environmental crisis — light pollution.Light pollution is an ecological pollutant caused by the inappropriate use of artificial light outdoors. In the past 20 years, the use of LEDs exploded, as it became so cheap and energy-efficient. Since 2010, earth’s lit surface has been increasing in both intensity and extent by approximately 2-6% per year. Dark skies over the forests of the Western Ghats are rapidly disappearing as unnecessary high-intensity lighting spreads near forests.

Physiological tollLife on Earth evolved over millions of years under stable day-night and seasonal cycles. So any sudden disruptions to this rhythms is catastrophic. Human eyes regulate sleep through cells that are highly sensitive to blue light. Many common white lights (4,000-6,500 kelvin), emit strong blue wavelengths, mimicking daylight, leading to reduced night vision acuity, suppressed melatonin and disrupted sleep. Similar negative effects are observed in animals as well.The eyes of many animals, especially nocturnal animals, are most sensitive to blue and ultraviolet light, which at high energy can damage photoreceptor cells. Slightest levels of illumination can alter behaviours, affecting waking cycle, foraging and food intake, and disrupts reproduction.Impact on wildlife

The night time is a critical ecological niche necessary for the survival of a majority of living organisms. Artificial light at night (ALAN) disrupts wildlife across taxa by altering behaviour, physiology, movement, and reproduction. Migrating birds become disoriented by city lights, leading to fatal collisions and exhaustion in photic trap events. Sea turtle hatchlings, guided by the brightest horizon, are misled by ALAN and move away from the ocean, while adult females avoid nesting on illuminated beaches. Insects are drawn to lights in large numbers, causing mass mortality, disrupting pollination and collapsing ecological balance, with cascading effects on predators; fireflies fail to communicate and reproduce; and moth-mediated pollination declines. Light also alters circadian rhythms, extending activity in diurnal species and even affecting neural physiology. Amphibians reduce or stop calling and mating under slightest artificial illumination, impairing their behaviour and reproduction.Light-adapted predators, like leopards or bats or spotted owlets, gain an advantage, while dark-dependent species decline. Even very low light levels can delay activity and reduce foraging in nocturnal mammals and forest-floor species. Artificial light disrupts aquatic life by altering vertical migration of zooplankton, triggering trophic cascades, causing algal blooms, reduced oxygen, and degraded water quality. It also affects soil, altering microbial communities, reducing nutrient cycling, and destabilising food webs.

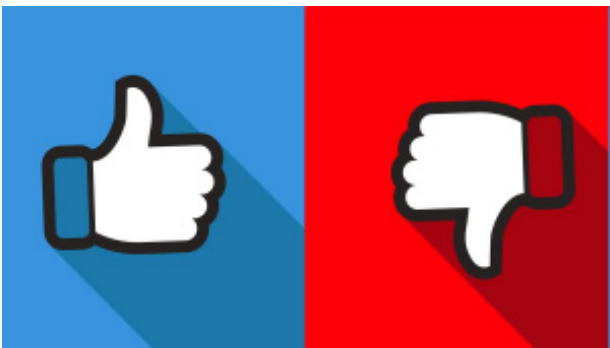
Glow trapIlluminated linear infrastructure such as roads acts as a psychological barriers for many mammals. While some species such as elephants become light-habituated, others such as leopards avoid brightly lit areas and shift to darker routes through villages or agricultural lands, increasing the risk of human-wildlife conflict.Repeated exposure to light can reduce an animal’s natural aversion to light, caus-

ing them to associate light with high-energy food sources. Habituated elephants, for instance, may be attracted to night glows/halos originating from distant towns and cultivated fields, increasing the likelihood of negative interactions with people. High-beam headlights from vehicles can also startle animals, escalating stress and conflict. Such incidents are routinely observed on roads that pass through our forests. Growing light pollution is likely contributing to human-wildlife negative interactions in landscapes such as Wayanad.

Light pollution policyFor a sustainable transition to a “low glow” Kerala, a comprehensive state policy on light pollution is essential, as no regulations currently mandates correlated colour temperature (CCT) limits based on ecological sensitivity.Regulations supported by a mix of mandates and incentives, can bring about systematic reduction in CCTs, and promote the use of full-cut-off, shielded, and low-intensity lighting for outdoor applications, including streetlights and public illumination. Establishing ecological lighting standards (ELS) by zone-based limits and prescribing appropriate spectral quality standards (in CCTs) based on ecological sensitivity offer a practical way to address this issue, from protected areas to urban centres.In general, regulations requiring downward-facing, low-kelvin LED lights, and light curfews, particularly on commercial advertisements, can significantly reduce sky glow and glare. Additionally, innovations such as adaptive dimming, midnight intensity reduction, and motion-triggered lighting systems using passive infrared or advanced microwave sensors, while reducing power consumption, also improve the quality of ecosystems around them.Regular monitoring using light meters and Sky Quality Meters, remote sensing, ecological surveys, and citizen science initiatives is essential to track progress and compliance.Critical ecological zones, from protected areas to high-value biodiversity areas, must shift to deep amber (1,800 K), amber (2,200 K) lights and reduce unnecessary illuminations. In surrounding interface zones, warm lighting (up to 2,700 K) is recommended. Across the rest of the state, wherever possible, lighting should be limited up to 3,000 K or warmer, favouring dim, low-intensity white light to reduce ecological impact.Establishing dark corridors can help reconnect fragmented forests by reducing lighting durations, dimming or switching them off after midnight, thereby facilitating the movement of wildlife, from elephants to tiny moths. A single brightly lit road cutting through a traditional migratory path can cause fragmentation. Without the corridors, these patches become biological prisons, leading to inbreeding and local extinction.Creating dark zones around high-value biodiversity areas can prevent sky glow that otherwise spills into the night and acts like welcome sign for habituated wildlife. By doing so, they can preserve true darkness as an asset, supporting conservation while attracting niche, high-value tourism. At the same time, targeted incentives for individuals, LSGDs and government agencies that comply with these standards can accelerate its adoption and acceptance. Introducing these measures also reduce the likelihood of light-induced behavioural changes in wildlife that contribute to human-wildlife conflict.

It is time to recognise ALAN as a legally defined form of disturbance in the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, and mandate light impact assessment for all development activities in and around key ecological zones as well as high value biodiversity areas.Individual habits, culture and preferences are driving this problem. People celebrate with light, often turning night into day and illuminating the surroundings with artificial brightness, from buildings to towering trees. In doing so, they are reshaping the natural world, without realising the cost. The solution to this crisis is simple, and does not require a massive budget or decades of efforts. It takes only the humility to admit that not everything needs to be seen all the time. The night is not a void to be filled; it is a heritage to be protected. Preserving its sanctity safeguards human health, while allowing wilderness and wildlife to remain truly wild.Nafin K.S. is a conservation biologist at the Periyar Tiger Conservation Foundation, Kerala Forest Department; and Pramod G. Krishnan is the Chief Wildlife Warden of the Kerala Forest Department. The views expressed are personal.

Thumbing through emojis



I did not realise when my thumb acquired a mind of its own, even a philosophy. Perhaps it followed a simple rule of thumb and moved ahead without consulting me. The revelation struck me one morning. I had sent a long, carefully worded message. It contained context, sincerity, perhaps even literary ambition. I pressed send and waited with reasonable optimism. The reply arrived in seconds — a solitary “thumbs-up emoji”.

Calm and confidentYes, no words, no explanation, no sentence. Just a yellow thumb standing upright, calm and confident, and as if by some universal thumb rule, the matter stood concluded.A psychological marvel of our age, and perhaps its most misunderstood gesture, the emoji offers validation without the onus of involvement. The brain accepts it the way a ticket checker nods after a brief glance. Message sent. Response received. Job done. Dopamine released. For the sender, it says, “I acknowledge you.” For the receiver, it quietly adds, “Please do not ask me to elaborate.”

Emotionally, the thumb works like a multi-signal junction. It can mean agreement, support, approval, dismissal, or silent judgment. Context does the heavy lifting. When my boss sends it, my shoulders relax. When a close friend sends it after I pour my heart out, my pulse quickens. Same thumb. Entirely different blood pressure.Our ancestors read omens in the skies. We read meaning in a pixel.Escape hatchSocially, the thumbs-up has become a polite escape hatch. In family WhatsApp groups, it dodges arguments without sounding rude. In office groups, it avoids commitment while looking professional. In school parent groups, it replaces attendance. “Tomorrow is fancy dress day.” Twenty thumbs appear, five wake up at midnight wondering what on earth their child is supposed to dress as. There is a generational comedy at play. For many elders, the thumb is warm and respectful. For younger users, it can feel cold,

sarcastic, or faintly hostile. One thumb can trigger an overthinking marathon. Did they mean okay-okay, okay-noted, or okay-stop-texting-me... Emoji study truly merits a Ph.D. and a research grant.The thumb itself has a longer story. In the Mahabharata, Ekalavya gave up his thumb as an offering to his unseen guru. Today, we give ours away freely, multiple times a day, to unseen audiences, as if devotion has been replaced by convenience. I once tried an experiment. For one full day, I replied to every message with just the thumb. By evening, one friend asked if I was upset, another if my phone had failed, and my brother if I was unwell. The thumb had spoken. Loudly.The thumbs-up is efficient, not lazy. It saves time and emotional exposure. Yet, by simple thumb rule, it should supplement, not supplant, words. Still, I tap it often. On certain days, my thumb seems wiser than my vocabulary, quietly handling life one gesture at a time.

Lessons from the Mahabharata

“What is found in the Mahabharata can be found elsewhere, but what is not found in the epic can seldom be found in the universe.”This line perhaps had me hooked to the epic for a lifetime. I have read it several times and listened to many great scholars speak on the subject. I have marvelled at the plethora of situations in the epic which have served as reference points to various aspects of life across time and space. My involvement with the epic grew to a point where I started sensitising young and not so young audience to the relevance of the classic. It began with a series of talks and later on I started conducting sessions where people would call out a random word and I would connect it to one of the episodes of the epic.With each passing session, the words got quirkier and were mostly sourced from contemporary lingo. To keep it short, I would like to recollect the ones that captured my imagination the most.For instance, once a young man came up with addiction and I narrated the instances from Yudhishtira’s life where his love for gambling led to crisis every single time he succumbed to his addiction.Then there was this time when someone gave the word “Face Time” and I drew the attention of the seeker to the famous scene in a famous South Indian movie called Maya Bazaar where Abhimanyu and his lady love would have a rendezvous by talking to each other on a mirror which would transform into a screen.

The courage to ask



Of all the memories from my schooldays, one regret stands out sharply: I did not ask enough questions. Like most of my classmates, I listened quietly, scribbled notes, and accepted whatever was taught as settled truth. We were obedient learners, not curious ones. At the time, silence felt like discipline. With hindsight, it was a missed opportunity.This realisation returned to me recently at a seminar on the India-Pakistan war of 1947-48 — the first major military operation fought by the Indian Army after Independence. I had prepared thoroughly, revisiting books and archival accounts. Yet, despite extensive reading, several doubts lingered in my mind. I was looking forward to the interactive session mentioned in the programme — a rare opportunity to engage eminent panellists and seek clarity.

The schedule clearly allotted 30 minutes for questions and answers. On the day of the event, I listened intently, waiting for that session. To my surprise, it was quietly dropped. During the tea break, when I asked the organiser about it, he casually replied that it was not really required; it had merely been included in the printed programme as a formality.That moment was disappointing, but it was also revealing. It underlined a deeper issue in our culture — we often undervalue inquiry. We speak, we lecture, we deliver presentations. But we rarely encourage dialogue.I have noticed a curious pattern in many gatherings. After a lecture, when someone gathers the courage to ask a question, the entire audience shifts in their seats, craning their necks to see who is speaking. The attention shifts from the substance of the question to the identity of the questioner. It betrays a subtle discomfort with curiosity.Yet questions are the lifeblood of progress. Without them, knowledge becomes static.

Groaning under information overload



A significant yet rarely acknowledged downside of social media is the overconsumption of information. We are not an information starved society any more, and in ideal terms, this should have been a great victory for humanity, but social media has somehow managed to spoon-feed opinions. Our ideas, standards, opinions and taste are dictated by reels. Short-form content is ruling our lives, and we are slaves to endless scrolling. Our time holds less value than it has ever held before, and instead of remedying it, we are rather happily sinking ourselves.For the longest duration, society has struggled with scarcity of knowledge, information and opportunity. Today this anxiety has shifted, replaced by an excess of information, its instantaneousness, and aggressive and infinite availability.

We as a society have become gluttons for content. We have trained ourselves to reach for our phones and scroll in hopes of filling a void, we are stuck in this endless loop where even the slightest form of inconvenience pushes us to chase this dopamine high. More often than not, this content stays with us long after we have already consumed it. Our lives are full of opinions, rants, preachings and commentaries, we are rarely uninformed, yet one has to ask if we are truly informed or just inundated?

This short-form content feels rewarding to watch; one does not have to put in any form of mental labour to reach the point. Our ideas are formed for us, our opinions dictated,

Never stop asking why



Over time, children learn something dangerous. Knowledge is something others decide, not something they can explore themselves. Asking questions becomes hesitation. Curiosity feels inconvenient.I noticed the aftermath in university.

From the very first day of school, we are taught certainties. Cars have four wheels. Chairs have four legs. The sun rises in the east. Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius. Facts go into notebooks in neat lines. But somewhere in this long parade of correct answers, one thing quietly disappears: the habit of asking why.Why four wheels? Why not three or five? Why is a chair shaped this way? If a child dares to ask, the answer is often: It is like that. And just like that, curiosity is shut down.

Over time, children learn something dangerous. Knowledge is something others decide, not something they can explore themselves. Asking questions becomes hesitation. Curiosity feels inconvenient.I noticed the aftermath in university. In school, memorising earned marks and praise. In

With them, it evolves.In every profession — be it education, the armed forces, medicine, or administration — learning does not end with instruction. It deepens through discussion. Particularly in the military, lessons from past operations must be examined threadbare within the system. While operational secrecy must always be preserved, critical analysis and candid questioning strengthen institutions. They prevent complacency.Open discussion

I witnessed this culture first-hand during my tenure in Lebanon in 2007 while commanding 15 Punjab. I attended a military seminar in Israel, and what struck me most was not the sophistication of the presentations, but the openness of the discussion. Junior officers — men and women — confidently questioned senior Generals. Their queries were sharp, thoughtful, and sometimes challenging. No one looked around to identify who was speaking. All ears were tuned to the merit of the idea. Rank did not silence curiosity, but welcomed it.That experience left a lasting impression. It showed me that professional excellence thrives in an environment where questioning is not seen as defiance but as engagement.We, too, must cultivate that spirit — beginning at home and in schools. Curiosity should not be mistaken for indiscipline. Children who ask questions are not being difficult; they are learning to think. Parents must resist the temptation to silence persistent queries with impatience. Teachers must tolerate even the so-called “irritating” questions. Often, those are the ones that push boundaries.The habit of questioning should extend beyond classrooms. In daily life, we must ask why things are done a certain way, whether there is a better alternative, whether established practices still serve their purpose. Progress comes not from blind agreement but from thoughtful examination.There is a simple metaphor that captures this idea. We can choose to be like a pond — still, contained, and eventually stagnant. Or we can be like the ocean — constantly moving, renewing itself with fresh currents. Questions are those currents. They keep institutions vibrant and individuals intellectually alive.The courage to ask is as important as the ability to answer. It begins in childhood but must be nurtured throughout life. When we encourage enquiry, we cultivate independent thinkers rather than passive recipients of information.In the end, societies that question grow stronger. Those that remain silent risk stagnation. The choice, like the question, is ours.

we are merely told what to think. This content also governs a huge part of our social life, it decides what is chic and what is cringe, what one should have, to fit in and what makes one odd. We react before we understand. Here the distinction between what nourishes our mind and what merely stimulates it, becomes blurred.Social media pumps us up with dopamine while failing to add any value in our lives. Much of the digital space revolves around four main spheres: gossip, memes, politics, and influencing. Gossip offers fleeting amusement, memes generally reduce complex issues into instantly digestible fragments, political content instead of cultivating civic understanding rewards outrage, and influencing packages consumption as aspiration. None of this content is inherently harmful, yet when these forms dominate our intellectual intake our mind starts to mirror it making us restless, reactive, and fragmented. It shifts our thoughts and opinions of self; we simply need to have an aesthetic picture-ready house, we have to buy this expensive Korean skincare, we need to try this new drink, and we simply need to post about it and communicate to the world that finally we are a part of the cool club. Yet after all this overconsumption and overexertion, we are left with a void, we fall in this consumption and comparison cycle that rarely keeps up with us — by the time we complete one trend, five others pop up and we are left with the feeling of inadequacy.Hence in a world that is obsessed with counting calories, count your thoughts and ideas and when you do, remember to hold on to them. So put yourself in an information diet, and be intentional about your content consumption. Just like a balanced diet that includes variety, moderation and quality, your information diet should prioritise depth over immediacy, substance over stimulation.I started my information diet in the beginning of this year and I can attest that I have been calmer. In addition to being mindful about content consumption, I have also managed to reduce my screen time. Something that has worked for me is always asking myself why I am opening a certain app and just sticking to that one task. In the end, I can vouch for the fact that this diet will not disappoint.

college, the same approach often fails. Textbooks are full of abstract concepts. Students are expected to understand, analyse, and apply them, but we were never trained to question or explore on our own. Most of the time, we follow instructions in books. Any attempt to think beyond them is ignored or unrewarded. The system rewards what is written, not what is understood.The world hides questions everywhere. Why do we still use QWERTY keyboards when ABCDEF might make more sense? It was designed for typewriters, but we keep using it today simply because no one stopped to ask. Most of us never notice. Curiosity allows us to see the hidden logic behind ordinary things.Even technical concepts can seem frightening. A textbook might say: Encryption ensures confidentiality by transforming plaintext into ciphertext using cryptographic algorithms and keys. In simple terms, it just means you lock a message with a secret password so only the right person can read it. The idea is simple. The language makes it intimidating.

This gap between simplicity and understanding is no accident. It is cultivated over years of education that prioritises memorisation over comprehension. Should practical learning not come first? If students see how things work in real life, theory follows naturally. When you watch electricity flow through a circuit, Ohm’s law is no longer a formula to memorise. It becomes a story you already know.Even beyond science and technology, the pattern persists. History is taught as dates and events. India gained independence in 1947. But how often are students encouraged to ask why not earlier? What conditions made it possible then? What if certain movements had failed? History becomes dates instead of dilemmas.Education should not just give facts. It should make children curious, restless, and eager to understand the world. A child who asks why is not being difficult. That child is rehearsing for innovation. Every discovery, every breakthrough, every reform began with someone refusing to accept it is like that.The day children stop asking questions is the day learning quietly turns into obedience. The world has never changed because people accepted things as they were. It changes because somewhere, someone refused to accept them.

Gradual depreciation preferable to burning reserves to defend a level, says former RBI Governor Duvvuri Subbarao



Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Duvvuri Subbarao says that while the RBI has adequate reserves to address excessive volatility, there is a strong case for minimal intervention in the forex market. “A 5% depreciation in the rupee could add roughly 40 basis points (bps) to inflation and shave off 25 bps from growth. With uncertainty around both input costs and demand, firms are likely to defer investment decisions, even if they do not cancel them outright,” he told The Indian Express in an interview. “Going forward, RBI is likely to remain on hold over the next few policy cycles,” he says.

What’s the impact of West Asia conflict on various sectors, investment and margins?

The shock is largely cost-driven and uneven across sectors. Input-intensive industries — fertilisers, textiles, chemicals and MSMEs — are facing margin compression due to higher freight and raw material costs. This comes at a time when private capex was beginning to gain traction. With uncertainty around both input costs and demand, firms are likely to defer investment decisions, even if they do not cancel them outright. Stronger corporates may be able to absorb the shock and even consolidate market share, but smaller firms are more exposed to working-capital stress. Overall, the investment cycle remains intact, but momentum could soften in the near term due to profitability pressures.

Given the current uncertainties, what policy options does the government have?

The government has already reduced excise duties on petrol and diesel to cushion the impact on consumers. Going forward, it faces a difficult trade-off. One option is to continue absorbing higher oil prices, thereby protecting consumers. However, this would worsen the fiscal position, tighten financial conditions, and eventually weigh on consumption and investment thereby hurting growth. The alternative is to allow prices to pass through to consumers. This would raise inflation but impose a relatively smaller drag on growth. Neither option is benign. However, from a balance-of-payments perspective, there is a stronger case for allowing greater pass-through. Higher prices would dampen demand and help contain pressures on the current account deficit. Some price pass-through may actually be the more sustainable option.

Do you foresee interest rate action by the RBI to tackle an expected rise in inflation?

At its April meeting, the Monetary Policy Committee kept the repo rate unchanged at 5.25% and maintained a neutral stance. The policy signals suggest that the RBI is balancing growth risks against emerging inflation pressures. India entered this episode with relatively strong macro fundamentals — robust growth, moderate inflation, a manageable external account, and healthy bank and corporate balance sheets. This provides some policy space. Going forward, the RBI is likely to remain on hold over the next few policy cycles. The case for rate cuts is limited due to upside risks to inflation from oil prices and potential weather-related food shocks. At the same time, the case for rate hikes is also weak, as inflation remains within the target band. Additionally, premature easing could widen interest rate differentials with the US and add pressure on the rupee. Overall, policy is likely to remain data-dependent with a cautious bias towards checking inflation. The bar for both rate cuts and hikes is high: expect an extended pause.

Will external sector, rupee stay under pressure as

capital outflows continue, and markets remain battered?

The rupee briefly crossed 95 to the dollar before recovering, aided in part by RBI measures to curb arbitrage opportunities in the offshore NDF market. Beyond oil prices, several other factors are exerting pressure on the currency — tightened fiscal conditions, RBI’s liquidity operations, and relatively low domestic interest rates. Importantly, the rupee had been weakening even before the Iran conflict, driven by capital outflows. Going forward, additional pressure may come from a widening current account deficit due to higher crude prices, lower remittances and weaker exports. The current account deficit, which was around 1% of GDP in FY26, could plausibly widen to around 2% this year. While the RBI has adequate reserves to address excessive volatility, there is a strong case for minimalist intervention.

Allowing a gradual real depreciation would improve export competitiveness and apportion the burden of adjustment across sectors, giving greater flexibility to both fiscal and monetary policy. A gradual, managed depreciation is preferable to burning reserves to defend a level. There has been some discussion around issuing NRI bonds to bolster reserves. This appears premature. Such a move could send adverse signals about external stability. Besides, it may not be effective given low interest differentials, unless offered at a significant cost.

What’s your overall assessment on the economy and growth outlook?

India imports about 80-85% of its crude requirement, making it highly vulnerable to oil shocks. RBI estimates suggest that every 10% increase in oil prices could raise inflation by about 50 basis points and reduce growth by 25 bps. Similarly, a 5% depreciation in the rupee could add roughly 40 bps to inflation and shave off 25 bps from growth. This is essentially a supply shock that simultaneously affects growth and inflation. As higher oil prices percolate through supply chains, stress will spread across a wide range of sectors. On baseline assumptions of crude at \$85 per barrel and an exchange rate of ₹94 per dollar, RBI projects GDP growth for this fiscal year at 6.9%. Outcomes could worsen if the conflict is prolonged or intensifies. Importantly, if disruptions force business closures, restarting activity could entail disproportionate costs, amplifying the growth impact.

With the conflict in West Asia continuing, what do you think is the outlook for energy prices and crude oil?

Crude oil is likely to remain elevated and volatile, even with a temporary ceasefire. The geopolitical risk premium — particularly around the Strait of Hormuz — is unlikely to dissipate quickly. For India, this is a critical vulnerability. Sustained high crude prices would widen the current account deficit and feed directly into inflation. Even without an actual supply disruption, uncertainty alone can keep prices elevated. The more realistic scenario is one of moderately high and volatile oil prices, rather than a return to earlier benign levels.

What are the risks to the banking system as several sectors are facing headwinds?

The banking system is in a stronger position than in previous cycles, with improved asset quality and capital buffers. The risks now are more sector-specific than systemic. Stress could emerge in MSMEs due to cost pressures, while rising yields may lead to mark-to-market losses on bond portfolios. If growth slows, asset quality risks could re-emerge at the margin. The appropriate response is continued vigilance through stress testing, close supervision and ensuring adequate liquidity, rather than broad-based intervention. What macroeconomic strategies and policy measures are necessary for India to effectively manage external shocks while sustaining investor confidence and long-term economic stability? Managing shocks of this nature requires strong macro buffers — stable growth, contained inflation and adequate foreign exchange reserves. India’s current position reflects some of this preparedness. Going forward, reducing dependence on imported energy, diversifying supply chains and maintaining policy flexibility will be critical. A coordinated fiscal and monetary response, along with clear communication, will be essential to anchor expectations and sustain investor confidence.

Output of key industries fell 0.4% in March, fertiliser production slumped 25%



War impact: Output of key industries fell 0.4% in March, fertiliser production slumped 25%. Production of fertiliser suffered the most, dropping 24.6% compared to the same month last year. In one of the first signs of the impact of the West Asia war on Indian industries, the output of the eight core industries contracted by 0.4% in March, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry said on Monday. Production of fertiliser suffered the most, dropping 24.6% compared to the same month last year. This is the first time since October 2025 that the output of the eight core industries has fallen compared to a year ago, with the fall in output being the most since August 2024, when it had declined by 1.5%. In February, output of the eight core industries had risen 2.8%.

For 2025-26 as a whole, the output of India’s eight core industries rose a mere 2.6%, marking the worst performance since the pandemic-hit year of 2020-21, when production had fallen 6.4%. Of the eight core industries — coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement, and electricity — half of them witnessed lower production in March compared to a year ago. Apart from fertilisers, crude oil output fell 5.7% — the seventh month in a row it was down on a year-on-year basis. Meanwhile, coal production declined 4%, the first such fall in five months. This is the first time in data going back till April 2012 that India’s coal output has fallen on a year-on-year basis in March. The 24.6% fall in fertiliser output in March is the largest on record, with the US and Israel’s war with Iran and the latter’s subsequent retaliation, including the closure of the

Strait of Hormuz and attacks on Gulf nations, having led to sharply higher energy prices and disruptions in the supply of key inputs for the petrochemicals sector. Data released last week showed the wholesale price of ammonia gas in India was 22% higher in March compared to February — the highest month-on-month rise as per data going back till 2012. Ammonia is used to make fertilisers.

The fourth industry to see lower production in March was electricity, with its output down 0.5%. Coal output and electricity generation in March likely suffered due to the above-normal rains during the month. Data from the India Meteorological Department shows that, in March, the country as a whole saw 14% more rainfall than normal. Of the four eight core industries that reported a rise in production, petroleum refinery products posted a minor year-on-year increase of 0.1%. Steel and cement output rose 2.2% and 4%, respectively. However, the production of natural gas surged 6.4%, the most in 22 months. This is the first time since June 2024 that India’s natural gas production has increased.

Mega steel project set to boost India’s manufacturing push

Seoul: South Korea’s POSCO Group said on Monday it has signed a final agreement with India’s JSW Steel to jointly invest 10.7 trillion won (\$7.3 billion) to build a steel plant in India, as part of its strategy to establish a production hub in the South Asian country and strengthen its global supply chain.

The two companies signed a joint venture agreement in India, attended by POSCO Group Chairman Chang In-hwa and JSW Steel Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Jayant Acharya, according to POSCO Group, reports Yonhap news agency.

Under the agreement, POSCO and JSW Steel will each hold a 50 percent stake in the project to build an integrated steel mill encompassing the entire production process at a single site.

‘What are the potential risks of taking high-dose vitamin D supplements for an extended period of time?’



A Quora user recently asked, “What are the potential risks of taking high-dose vitamin D supplements for an extended period of time? How long can one safely take high-dose vitamin D before experiencing negative side effects?” It’s a relevant question, especially in India, where vitamin D deficiency is rampant and self-supplementation is common. To clear the confusion, we spoke to Dr Vyankatesh Shivane, Consultant Diabetologist and Metabolic Physician, Department of Endocrinology, Jaslok Hospital & Research Centre, Mumbai, and Dr Vimal Pahuja, Associate Director, Internal Medicine and Metabolic Physician, Dr LH Hiranandani Hospital, Powai.

What counts as a “high dose” and when does it become toxic?

“Vitamin D is also called the Sunshine Vitamin, as it is available in abundance in sunlight. India, in spite of being a sunny country, most of the Indian population is either Vitamin D insufficient or deficient,” says Dr Pahuja. “Normally, a level of Vitamin D more than 30 ng/mL is considered a sufficient level, as at this level, the level of Parathyroid hormone is stable without causing any harm to the bones.” He explains that vitamin D levels above 100–150 ng/mL are considered harmful to the body. “At these levels, more calcium is excreted in the urine, making someone at risk of kidney stones. Vitamin D supplements of more than 50,000 IU per day for many weeks are considered to be toxic,” he says. According to Dr Shivane, “In India, vitamin D deficiency is widespread, but excess supplementation has become a new concern.” He notes that the Endocrine Society of India (ESI) and ICMR-NIN recommend 600–800 IU/day for adults, with an upper safe limit of 4,000 IU/day. “For optimal bone and muscle health, the adequate serum 25(OH)D range is

20–40 ng/mL. Levels above 40 ng/mL provide no added benefit and may raise calcium levels.”

What are the risks of taking high-dose vitamin D long-term?

“High-dose, long-term use can cause hypercalcaemia, kidney stones, vascular calcification, and even cardiac arrhythmias,” warns Dr Shivane. “Since vitamin D is fat-soluble, toxicity develops gradually and presents with nausea, thirst, muscle weakness, and confusion.” Dr Pahuja agrees, adding that toxicity often happens unintentionally. “It is not always the case, but inadvertently, a few patients keep on taking daily supplements rather than weekly. Or they may continue it for a longer duration than prescribed, as they may feel ‘better’ with supplements.”

How long can one safely take high-dose vitamin D?

“One should take Vitamin D supplements only as per their Doctor’s advice. Do not continue these supplements for longer than as advised,” says Dr Pahuja. “Once low levels of Vitamin D has been normalised, ask the doctor for regular maintenance dose of Vitamin D. Usually in India we need 1000 IU to 1500 IU per day as maintenance dose for Vitamin D.”

What are the early signs of vitamin D toxicity?

“As stated above increase frequency of urine, increase thirst, pain in abdomen, Bone and body pains may the early signs of toxic levels of vitamin D,” says Dr Pahuja. “One should check and confirm these levels at earliest and in some cases concomitant tests of Blood Calcium and Phosphorus are required to detect excess of calcium in the blood.”

How often should vitamin D levels be tested?

Dr Shivane recommends, “Testing is advised before starting supplements and again after 8–12 weeks; once stable, annual monitoring is adequate.” Dr Pahuja adds that after initial correction with weekly 60,000 IU doses for 10–12 weeks, one can continue with a maintenance dose and “Annually you can check whether these supplements are optimum enough to maintain your Vitamin D in normal ranges.” He also highlights the role of sunlight: “Daily sunlight exposure of 45–60 minutes between 10 am to 12 pm may be helpful. Sunlight should be available to maximum body surface area like both hands below elbows, both legs below knee, neck and face etc. It is advised not to apply sunscreen or lotions on these parts to get maximum benefit of sunlight.”

Trainer shares glimpse of Hardik Pandya doing Pilates, says ‘most men think it is easy’



Trainer Yasmin Karachiwala recently shared a glimpse of Hardik Pandya doing Pilates on the reformer. “Most men think Pilates is easy, until they try it,” she wrote on Instagram Stories. Taking a leaf out of the cricketer’s wellness diary, we asked an expert why Pilates is not just for women. Affirming that it’s “so true”, consultant dietitian and fitness expert Garima Goyal said, while Pilates looks slow, controlled, almost effortless, with no heavy weights, no loud grunts, no sweat-dripping intensity like a typical gym session, the reality is completely different. “The kind of strength Pilates demands is deep, internal, and brutally honest,” said Goyal.

What Hardik is working on here is core control, stability, and muscle coordination. “Pilates doesn’t just target visible abs; it activates the deeper core muscles that support your spine, posture, and overall movement. That’s why even elite athletes include it in their routine,” shared Goyal. The biggest shock for most men is that Pilates exposes their weak links. “Tight hips, poor balance, weak lower back, lack of flexibility... everything shows up within minutes. And since the movements are slow and controlled, you can’t cheat your way through reps,” Goyal continued.

Unlike high-impact or heavy-weight-lifting routines, Pilates emphasises controlled movement, core engagement, alignment, and spine stabilisation. Over time, it helps strengthen deep muscles around the back and pelvis, improve posture, correct movement patterns, and reduce compensatory stress that aggravates pain. “Because the exercises focus on precision and slow muscle activation, they’re less likely to trigger flare-ups yet offer meaningful improvement in functional strength,” said Goyal. From a fitness and recovery perspective, Pilates improves mobility, reduces injury risk, and enhances performance. “For someone like Hardik, who needs explosive power on the field, this kind of training actually helps him move better, not just look strong,” said Goyal. So, Pilates is not easy. “It’s just a different kind of hard. The kind that builds real strength from the inside out,” said Goyal.

Kriti Sanon discusses embarking on a calorie-deficit diet for the first time in her life for Cocktail 2 shoot: ‘Imagine being in Italy...’



Kriti Sanon, 35, recently revealed that she went on a calorie-deficient diet for the first time in her life for Cocktail 2, also starring Shahid Kapoor and Rashmika Mandanna. “Cocktail was the only time when I have been on a very strict diet and consistent workout. It was the first time I went on a calorie-deficient diet, which had never happened in my life. Imagine being in Italy with pasta, pizza, and I couldn’t,” she told singer and actor Sophie Choudry, on Famously Fit with Sophie talk show.

Dt Amreen Sheikh, chief dietitian, KIMS Hospitals, Thane, said a calorie deficit, where you consume fewer calories than your body burns, is a key principle of weight loss. “When done correctly, it can be effective and sustainable. However, how you create the deficit matters. Extreme restrictions can lead to fatigue, poor focus, hormonal imbalances, and even muscle loss. A well-planned calorie deficit should be moderate, nutritionally balanced, and suited to an individual’s lifestyle and energy needs rather than being overly restrictive,” she said.

What to consider?

One of the biggest mistakes is mixing up ‘eating less’ with ‘eating right’. “People often cut calories significantly without considering nutrient intake. Skipping meals, cutting out entire food groups like carbohydrates, or following fad diets can backfire. Another common mistake is inconsis-

tency, being very strict for a short time and then going back to old habits. This pattern can slow down metabolism and complicate long-term weight management. Hydration, sleep, and stress management are often overlooked but are important for overall results,” said Sheikh. Consistency doesn’t mean perfection. It means making mindful choices most of the time. “In situations where tempting food is readily available, portion control and balance are crucial. For instance, enjoying a small portion of a favourite dish instead of avoiding it completely can help prevent feelings of deprivation. Planning meals, keeping healthy snacks on hand, and sticking to a regular eating schedule can also support consistency. Most importantly, flexibility is vital; occasional treats won’t hinder progress if overall habits stay in check,” shared Sheikh. Sustainable weight loss isn’t about restriction; it’s about building a healthy relationship with food, where enjoyment and nutrition go hand in hand.

Samsung chief clicks selfie with Modi, S. Korean President at Noida

New Delhi: Lee Jae-yong, Executive Chairman of Samsung Electronics, on Monday took a selfie with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, during a state luncheon at the company’s Noida facility.

The gesture highlighted Samsung’s local manufacturing capabilities in India and came after the bilateral summit between the two leaders. Lee and Modi also interacted with business leaders from both countries, according to a statement from the South Korean presidential office. Ahead of the luncheon, the leaders posed for a group photograph with industry representatives, with the gathering serving as a platform for continued economic dialogue.

Kapil Dev: ‘Had I played golf with cricket, I would have scored another 2,000 runs’



Considered one of the greatest all-rounders of all time, Kapil Dev has turned to golf after ending his illustrious cricketing career. Considered one of the greatest all-rounders of all time, Kapil Dev has turned to golf after ending his illustrious cricketing career. After a glittering career in which he led India to victory in the 1983 World Cup as captain and a champion all-rounder, Kapil Dev is also an avid golfer post-retirement and currently the president of the Professional Golf Tour of India. India's OG golfing cricketer, or cricketing golfer, talks about the similarities.

Timing: ?The most crucial common link

The timing and grip is most important in cricket and golf. If you don't have timing, you end up hitting the ball too hard. If your grip is proper, then the impact is beautiful, and things change. The second most important thing is the belief within the players that they can do that (hit sixes). In our time, the belief wasn't there. A 15-year-old boy doesn't have that much strength to do that (hit sixes), but he has belief. Their equipment is ready, and then on top of that, timing is important. You don't have to be Chris Gayle to hit very big sixes. Today, because of technology, bats have become much more refined.

Body balance crucial when making impact In golf, it's much more technical because it's a stationary ball. I played cricket, and I played golf. The balance of the body is very important. When you make an impact, your body should be ready. There are some players who hit through cover, but their legs are in the air. But Virender Sehwag could hit with ease and Sachin Tendulkar too, because their base was very strong. For a cricketer or a golfer, if the base is strong, the impact is much harder. If there is balance of the feet, then the hips, shoulders, arms everything comes into play. Some people's arm swing is bigger, some people's body swing is bigger. Yashasvi Jaiswal has a full body swing.

‘World of difference between PSL and international cricket’: Basit Ali puts Babar Azam’s century in context

GNS News Agency, April 25

Peshawar Zalmi's commanding 118-run victory, built on a Babar Azam century, drew warm praise from former Pakistan cricketers Basit Ali and Kamran Akmal on YouTube channel Game Plan — but both men were equally firm that the performance should not be used to settle debates about Babar's international record. Basit called the innings among the finest in PSL history, citing the quality of the attack Babar had dismantled. "He faced two spinners and Alzarri Joseph — and Joseph is no ordinary spinner, he is a mystery spinner who has kept every batter under pressure in this tournament. That is the kind of century this was." He added simply: "I was loving watching that batting." The pair were particularly enthusiastic about Babar's partnership with Kusal Mendis, which they said had transformed how Babar plays in the format. "When Mendis scored his hundred, Babar gave him big support. This time Babar scored the hundred and Mendis gave him big support," Kamran said. "This combination is suiting Peshawar Zalmi very well."

Basit went further, arguing that the partnership had unlocked a version of Babar fans had long wanted to see. "In the last two or three years, there was no batter alongside him, the team was not built in a way that allowed him to play his own game, to take himself towards the modern-day style of batting. Mendis has made a big difference." He also credited Harris Rauf's explosive starts at the top of the order, saying that within the first over or two, "he releases all the pressure of batting first." But when fans on social media pointed to the performance as proof that Babar had silenced his critics, both analysts pushed back firmly. "There is a world of difference between international cricket and PSL," Basit said. "What has happened to Pakistan cricket over the last six or seven years — that is the conversation." He added: "If Babar shows even fifty percent of this standard

Follow through not essential in cricket There has to be a follow-through in cricket and golf. But some cricketers can hit without a full follow-through, too. Yuvraj (Singh) played two types of shots, one in which he stops his bat after impact and one with the full follow-through. If your hip, body and shoulder are in rhythm, then controlling the bigger muscles is easier. The hip, the shoulder and the back are all big muscles. The forearm is a smaller muscle. In golf, you need a full swing, but they also say the point of impact is important. The two games are different, but eye-hand co-ordination is important in both. Over the years, when you play cricket, your hand-eye coordination improves. You don't need to be Dara Singh. See Hardik Pandya hit the ball, and you know he has strength and hand-eye coordination. Hockey players have a swing that is closer to golf than a cricketer. Because the hockey ball is also on the ground and so is the golf ball. Benefits for a cricketer I played golf after I stopped playing cricket. But even cricketers in the past would play golf. Gary Sobers used to play all the time. Don Bradman used to play golf. There is a photograph of Bradman playing golf. Indians never used to play, I don't know why. They liked to sit in the room. Golf can 100 percent help a cricketer. Had I played golf when playing cricket, I would have scored another 2,000 runs minimum. Because it improves focus, coordination and timing. I don't have words to express the amount of pleasure golf has given me. Challenges for a cricketer playing golf Hitting accurately is a very big challenge in golf. Because in golf, your target is very small and you have to hit towards the target. So you have to be very steady with your body, your mind, your hand-eye coordination, all the time. Everybody can hit a stationary ball if they have the timing and the right swing. But hitting where you exactly intend it to go becomes difficult in golf. In cricket, you can hit 360 degrees, if not over cover then over mid-off. Golf is not about 360-degree hitting. You have to hit it perfectly. Heavy cricket bat, lighter golf club You have to adjust to the weights but I don't think it is a very big challenge. Certain people can write well in Hindi and English or certain people can sing well, be it Classical or rock music. Certain people have the ability to play different sports well and it depends on your natural ability. The one challenge I see is that if you have played cricket for India and think you will play golf in the same manner it is not going to happen. Your mindset is that 'I represented the country in cricket' but if you take up golf and think you will do the similar thing, it is not possible.



in international cricket, we will praise him. The problem is our ICC event performances in 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026 — where did we stand? You cannot mix PSL with that. This is not top bowling. These are not top teams." File image of Babar Azam playing for Pakistan national team. (AP photo) File image of Babar Azam playing for Pakistan national team. Kamran echoed the point, tracing the problem back to team composition rather than Babar alone. "In the Pakistan team there is no batting lineup like this. Sometimes they send him at four, sometimes at three — it hurts him and it hurts the team." He noted that at Zalmi, Babar always had cover: "If Mendis gets out, Bracewell is there. Samad is there. Faran Yousuf is there. That support is what any good player needs." On the broader tournament picture, Basit said he saw very few teams capable of living with Zalmi in their current form. "In my view, only Multan or Islamabad can give them a fight — and they already beat Multan in a one-sided match." He then raised eyebrows by suggesting Zalmi's form was so dominant they would arguably test Punjab Kings, currently setting the IPL alight, if the two sides were somehow to meet.

From Vaibhav Sooryavanshi to Priyansh Arya: Six IPL batters who play cricket like golf



The power required to clear boundaries in the T20 cricket has resulted in batters using bat swing instead of footwork to achieve the desired result. Here are six batters in IPL who use the bat swing like golf to hit sixes.

GNS News Agency, April 25

In modern-day T20 cricket and specially a league like IPL, batters are increasingly generating power through bat swing instead of using footwork to clear boundaries. A stable base and a clean extension of the hands are allowing them to access various scoring zones and score four and sixes at will, without needing to step down the pitch often. Here are six IPL batters who have been successful using more bat swing than footwork: India and SRH opener Abhishek Sharma's six-hitting has evolved, with help from Yuvraj Singh

and Brian Lara, with the left-hander altering his grip and hitting shape. Sharma swings freely across the line, with most of his maximums coming towards long-on and down the ground, while also accessing lofted drives over cover without excessive footwork.

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi RR opening batsman Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's power comes more from his bat speed than movement. The left-hander uses a free swing to generate power, while staying balanced at the crease. The 15-year-old has largely hit sixes in the long-on to square leg arc with a clean downswing of the bat rather than expansive footwork. Heinrich Klaasen Klaasen's six-hitting technique is based on a repeatable bat swing and a strong base. He uses hand speed and hip drive to generate power, staying deep in his crease and hitting through the line against spin. Most of his sixes come between long-on and midwicket, where his extension allows him to hit good length balls consistently.

Priyansh Arya The PBKS opener's method is built on a clean bat swing, which allows him to hit through the line without the need for big strides. He generally hits sixes on the on-side, consistently looking to clear square leg and mid-wicket regions of the ground and occasionally uses the pick-up flick, relying more on his extension over footwork. The RR opener's six-hitting is based on early reading of length and bat flow. Jaiswal relies on a high backlift and powerful downswing to stay balanced and hit through the line, with his strong backfoot game allowing him to get back quickly and pull over midwicket. Samson's improved game, especially against spin, is based on a method involving minimal movement and maximum bat speed. The right-hander trusts his base and lets his hands dominate, generating power without over-committing forward. Samson can hit sixes on both sides of the ground, clearing boundaries with timing and a free-flowing swing.

Prince Yadav: The ‘bigda hua’ son his father tried to stop



GNS News Agency, April 25

"Mayank Yadav ek Indian player hai. Avesh Khan Indian player hai. Mohsin Khan, woh bhi India khel sakta hai. Sachin Tendulkar ka ladka Arjun bhi hai. Tera number kaise padega?" The extended pace pack at the Lucknow Super Giants camp had rattled Ram Niwas Yadav in ways his son's IPL contract the previous year had not. He'd counted the names aloud. He knew what each one meant.

Sitting in the corner of the living room on a rainy April afternoon, Ram Niwas holds his chai without the weight he used to carry. His cousins Surender and Vikram have settled in around him—the family punctuated by his long absences at work. "Ab khush hai," he says quietly, as if checking the truth of it by speaking. There had been reasons not to be. A former ASI from the Railway Protection Special Force, Ram Niwas had spent his career away from home. He knew what absence did. He knew what it meant to miss the small days. And when Prince told him, at eighteen, that he would bowl instead of taking a job—"Agar 145-150 kph main ball daalta, toh kaun mujhe rorega?"—Ram Niwas had wanted to shake him. "I didn't know what to do with him after school," Ram Niwas says, setting his cup down slowly. "He had this junoon for cricket. But we were from Dariyapur Khurd. No academies. No one in the family had done it before. I couldn't give him money to chase something that might never come. I told him, force, police, something solid. He passed the Delhi Police physical. He wouldn't take the written exam."

The phrase that returns to him, even now, is the one he said to Prince's mother months ago: Tum Prince ko bigaad rahe ho. You're ruining him by letting him play. I didn't know what to do with him after school," Ram Niwas tells The Indian Express. "He had this junoon for cricket. But we were from Dariyapur Khurd. No academies. No one in the family had done it before. I couldn't give him money to chase something that might never come." Santosh heard that phrase many times. She had never stopped believing. She'd watched Prince wake before dawn, cross half the city on public transport, return exhausted and go again the next morning. Her husband had the doubts. She kept count of the years. A young Prince Yadav with his father, Ram Niwas Yadav. (Special Arrangement) A young Prince Yadav with his father, Ram Niwas Yadav. (Special Arrangement) Her husband would lie awake, the insomnia particular and precise. His son was twenty, twenty-one, bowling in a village while other boys his age were in uniform or climbing bureaucratic ladders. The safety Ram Niwas had built his entire life around—railway pension, government structure, the fixed

thing—was slipping away. In tennis-ball cricket. In stories of three-hour journeys to coaching grounds in northwest Delhi. In a coach named Amit Vashisht who kept saying the boy had something.

Vikram had been the one to name him Prince. The first in the family to study in an English medium school, he'd wanted something different for his nephew—a name that didn't fit the village. "While I struggled to study by travelling all that distance," Vikram recalls, "Prince would later struggle with the game itself." Vashisht's academy sat walled by jamun trees, a cosy ground where Prince bowled for hours. Despite his tennis-ball background, the coach saw it immediately—a born talent who just needed to switch mentally from rubber to leather. "His talent stood out from the start. He had all the skills up front," Vashisht would say.

Then came 2019. Prince had fudged his age to play Delhi U-19s. Over four years off his papers. The BCCI banned him for two years. No matches. Nothing. "I remember thinking, Bas, iska khel khatam. His cricket is finished," Ram Niwas says. "Why would anyone give him another chance?" The lockdown came and swallowed those years. When Prince returned in 2023, he was a net bowler. A net bowler. Ram Niwas had spent his career watching men work their entire lives and retire with small pensions. A net bowler seemed like the ceiling now.

Prince Yadav of Lucknow Super Giants bowls against Gujarat Titans at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow. (Photo by Surjeet Yadav / CREIMAS for IPL) Prince Yadav of Lucknow Super Giants bowls against Gujarat Titans at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow.

"Then the Delhi Premier League started in 2024," Ram Niwas says, and something shifts in his voice. "DPL. If not for that tournament, he would still be playing in the village. Khel raha hota. That was his future." The tournament became the doorway. Prince took thirteen wickets for Purani Dill-6—Rishabh Pant's side. The first-ever hat-trick in DPL history was his. In November, LSG bid for him. Rs 30 lakh. "The family was in front of the television," Ram Niwas says. "Entire family. When the auctioneer called his name, another face came on the screen. A batter. From Ghaziabad. We thought—" He pauses. "We thought it was a mistake. Someone else's son." The confusion lasted two phone calls. First, Sanjeev Goenka calling Prince directly. Then the call home. Vikram, sitting nearby, fills the silence: "That night, Dariyapur will not forget. The entire village knew by midnight." But Ram Niwas is quiet. He's thinking about the moment before the auction. The two years of no matches. The three-hour journeys his son made alone. The scooter they didn't have. The father who told him he was ruining him. This IPL season, Prince emerged as LSG's seam lieutenant. 11 wickets in six games. Ahead of Mohammad Shami in the franchise's wicket-taker list. "I was wrong," Ram Niwas says simply. "I told him cricket would leave him with nothing. I didn't believe the dream was possible from a village like ours." Last month, Prince was called up for India A for the T20 World Cup warm-ups in February. He had to forfeit due to a knee injury. Ram Niwas knows this. He watches the trophies that line the living room wall now—a collection that didn't exist three years ago. "An India shirt," he says. "That's what I want for him now. I want him in an India shirt." His wife Santosh moves past him toward the kitchen. She doesn't say anything. She doesn't need to—she'd been saying it for years. Ram Niwas sets down his empty cup. The trophies line the wall.

From training in canvas shoes to repeating IPL heroics, Mumbai Indians’ pacer Ashwani Kumar restarts once again



Last year, when Punjab pacer Ashwani Kumar had played in his maiden IPL match for Mumbai Indians, the pacer from Jhanjhari village near Mohali had ended up with four wickets including wickets of Kolkata Knight Riders captain Ajinkya Rahane, Rinku Singh, Manish Pandey and Andre Russell in the match against the Kolkata side. On Monday evening, the 24-year-old once again ended up with four wickets in an IPL match with his spell of four for 24 during Mumbai Indians' 99-run win over Gujarat Titans, Monday's match was Kumar's first match of this IPL season for the Mumbai side Kumar removed Titans' batsmen Shubman Gill, Rahul Tewatia, Rashid Khan and Shahrukh Khan in his spell and Kumar spoke about how he was thinking big ahead of his first match this IPL season and how he had the same performance last season too.

"I was thinking of doing big in this match too. My thought was whatever match I will get, I will do better. Last year also, I did the same and this year too I have done the same. It feels good," Kumar said post the match while speaking with commentator Ravi Shastri. Last season, Kumar had hogged limelight with his four wickets in his maiden match for Mumbai Indians against Kolkata Knight Riders at Wankhede Stadium. The pacer would often cycle or take shared autos to practice at the 11 Km far IS Bindra PCA International Stadium in Mohali early in his career. "Rain or hot sun, Ashwani would never hesitate to go to PCA at Mohali or later at the new stadium at Mullanpur. Sometimes, he would cycle to PCA academy or take lifts or would go in shared autos. I remember he would take Rs 30 from me for the fare and when he was picked up for Rs 30 lakh by Mumbai Indians in the mega auction, I knew his worth was every penny. After each wicket today, I would think about those days when he would return at 10 pm after his training and again wake up the next day at 5 am to head back" Kumar's father Harkesh Kumar had told

The pacer, who had played with Abhishek Sharma, Arshdeep Singh and Ramandeep Singh in his earlier days, would play often with canvas shoes in local tournaments before he made his senior debut for Punjab in 2019. His brother Shiv Rana had shared how Ashwani would spend hours playing club cricket and would also be supported by his friends from the village in his dream. "Ashwani would tell me and other youth of the village to reach early in the morning at the school ground no matter what and most of

us would bat against him at the school ground. Sometimes, he would go to other cricket grounds near the village to play for local teams and would again call us in the evening to play. He would bowl pace wearing normal canvas shoes and friends like Chahat Rana, who is now in Italy, and others would support him with cricket balls and spikes. His passion was to play cricket and make us proud and today he has done that for all of us," Kumar's elder brother Shiv Rana had told Kumar, who was picked up for Rs 30 lakh by Mumbai Indians in the IPL mega auction in 2024, did not get the chance to play in Indian's first five matches in this year's IPL. With the Indians losing four matches out of five matches prior to Monday, the Indians' management opted for the pace of Kumar in Monday's match against Shubman Gill led Gujarat Titans at the Narendra Modi Stadium at Ahmedabad. With Jasprit Bumrah removing Sri Sudarshan off the first ball of the innings and Hardik Pandya removing Jos Butler in the second over, Kumar bowled his first over of the match in the fifth over of Titans' innings. The Punjab pacer picked up the wicket of Titans' captain Shubman Gill off the second ball of his first over with a length ball with Naman Dhir taking a catch at deep square leg. Kumar then removed Rahul Tewatia with a length ball pitched outside off with wicket-keeper Quinton de Kock taking an easy catch before he removed Rashid Khan and Shahrukh Khan in the third over of his spell. Kumar later spoke about how he had planned for this wicket in consultation with captain Hardik Pandya. "When we entered the ground, the thought was the length ball is better on this kind of pitch and we were backing that. I was planning with Hardik Bhaiya about bowling. And the plan was to bowl according to the wicket and that the situation demanded. The planning was good. The wicket of Shahrukh Khan was with a short ball and it was the wickets demand," shared Kumar.

Sunrisers Hyderabad look to use home advantage against inconsistent Delhi Capitals

Hyderabad: Sunrisers Hyderabad will look to make home advantage count when they take on inconsistent Delhi Capitals in a mid-table clash of the Indian Premier League here. Both teams sit on six points, though fourth-placed Sunrisers Hyderabad are marginally ahead, having played a game more and boasting a superior net run rate. For SRH, the narrative has been one of gradual correction. In the absence of skipper Pat Cummins, who has linked up with the squad but remains unavailable for this game, their bowling unit initially looked thin. But over the last two games, a relatively unheralded group has stepped up. Names like Praful Hinge, Sakib Husain and Shivang Kumar have seized their opportunity, injecting both energy and control into the attack.

When Mohanlal and Mammootty made us believe they would take a bullet for each other



A jovial, fun-loving, and mischievous guy interacts with a laconic, commanding, and distinguished man who exudes a big brother persona. While we could easily be talking about an occasion when Mohanlal and Mammootty were together in real life, this can also be seen as a description of any scene in which the two share the screen in legendary director Joshiy's No 20 Madras Mail (1990).A comedy-thriller revolving around the murder of a young woman on a Chennai-bound train from Kerala, No 20 Madras Mail remains one of the most celebrated Malayalam films where the two superstars appeared together. With a slight Agatha Christie touch, veteran screenwriter Dennis Joseph wrote the film, placing equal emphasis on comedy, mystery, and thrills. However, what stood out the most was its brilliant utilisation of Mohanlal and Mammootty's on-screen chemistry, which almost felt like an extension of their real-life selves and camaraderie.

Although the movie isn't extraordinary, it stands as a testament to both actors' individual and combined capabilities, as well as how far a movie can soar if the cast and crew share a solid bond. The high rewatch value of No 20 Madras Mail isn't just due to Mohanlal and Mammootty, but also to Joshiy's master craftsmanship, Dennis' remarkable screenwriting, Jayanan Vincent's impeccable cinematography, Ouseppachan's hit songs, SP Venkatesh's impressive background score, the other cast members' exceptional acting talent, and, above all, the rapport they all share.

With the aim of watching a cricket match live in Madras (now Chennai), Tony Kurishingal and his two friends — local politician Kumbalam Hari (Jagadish) and detective novelist "Hitchcock" Kanjikkuzhi (Maniyanpilla Raju) — board the No 20 Madras Mail (now known as the Thiruvananthapuram—Chennai Superfast Mail). On board, they come across a young woman, Devi (Suchitra), who is travelling to Madras with her parents, Geetha (Jayabharathi) and RK Nair (MG Soman). Ever since then, a drunk Tony has been disturbing the family, constantly trying to woo Devi and harassing her.On the way, film actor Mammootty (the actor playing a fictionalised version of himself here) boards the train, and Tony starts pestering him from that point on. However, Mammootty finds him adorable and tolerates him and his friends. But they are all left shocked upon reaching Madras when they discover Devi's body in the washroom. As all fingers point to Tony and his friends, they flee the scene. The remainder of No 20 Madras Mail follows their efforts to prove their innocence and find the culprit.

The character of Tony Kurishingal, a spoiled young brat who lives by the philosophy of "celebrate every moment to the fullest (with liquor)," appears tailor-made for Mohanlal even now. While he comes across as annoying, prying, and irreverent to others, those who love him find Tony's antics cute. Only an actor capable of making even Tony's most irksome behaviours seem endearing could pull it off. And, even today, there's no one quite like Mohanlal who can achieve that effortlessly.Hailing from an affluent family, Tony mostly spends his time with Hari and Kanjikkuzhi, living a carefree life. The main reason he has nested between them is that he belongs to a dysfunctional family in which his stepmother loathes him. Once the movie reveals this, we feel extra sympathy and affection for Tony, realising that all his shenanigans are to conceal his scarred self.Since Mohanlal can ace layered performances and ensure that the emotions his characters experience hit the audience square in the chest with minimalist acting, Tony is a cakewalk for him. From Tony's naughtiness and playfulness to his emotional, tense, and recalibrating moments, the actor nails it in No 20 Madras Mail.

What adds to the brilliance of the performance is his mind-blowing ability to act drunk on screen. Without sticking to a single metre throughout the first half, mapping his journey from Kottayam to Madras, Mohanlal pays proper attention to Tony's buzz level at different junctures and switches accordingly. When he leaves the bar for the railway station at the start, Tony is heavily blitzed. But by the time he arrives at the railway station, he has slightly sobered up. As soon as Tony and his friends enter the train, they start drinking again, and Mohanlal increases the drunkenness and decibel level in his performance accordingly.

On the other hand, Mammootty maintains restraint throughout the movie. Although he enjoys Tony's high spir- its and smiles with joy at all his naughtiness, he doesn't let go of his big brother persona and even looks out for the gang after a certain point. From his body language and responses, it's clear that he, too, once celebrated life the same way but has since matured and would rather lie back and see kids having fun now.Mammootty knows Tony is jealous of no longer being everyone's centre of attention. He knows Tony's ego is slightly hurt when all others start talking only about him after he enters the train. Hence, he gives Tony the attention he yearns for, and here a brotherly bond between Mohanlal and Mammootty becomes all the more evident through their interactions. When Tony asks to touch Mammootty and then kisses his cheek, Mammootty smiles warmly, almost as if Tony were his younger brother he once raised.

Writer Dennis Joseph and director Joshiy utilised not just aspects of Mohanlal and Mammootty's public personas in No 20 Madras Mail but also amplified certain facets of their actual selves. Mohanlal and Mammootty in director Fazil's Harikrishnans. When RK Nair finally loses his cool and lashes out at Tony, it's Mammootty who steps in to diffuse the situation, reminding the former, "Weren't we too once their age?" After Tony and his friends be- come embroiled in the Devi murder case, Mammootty goes above and beyond to help them prove their inno- cence, even though he knows his involvement could af- fect his public image.Towards the end, Mammootty even embraces his Vallyettan persona for Tony and his friends and negotiates with the actual murderer, without even considering his own safety. In the climax, he also lets go of his calm, composed demeanour, embraces his braveheart self, and even gets into a physical altercation

with the villain and his gang for his little brother.Thus, writer Dennis and director Joshiy utilised not just aspects of Mohanlal and Mammootty's public personas but also amplified certain facets of their actual selves, thereby authentically fictionalising the real. The 'cute' Mohanlal and 'caring' Mammootty gelled so well on screen that it almost made one feel they would even take a bullet for each other in real life.Although No 20 Madras Mail be- came a massive success, Dennis Joseph completed its script under immense pressure. Firstly, he was fixed as the writer just one day before Joshiy and the team had to commence filming, as the project the director had planned for this period had to be postponed for various reasons. Furthermore, Dennis had to write the scenes set in Chennai first, which begin only towards the middle of the movie, and complete writing the second half before mov- ing to the former.Interestingly, Dennis and Joshiy's initial idea was to cast a smaller star like Jagathy Sreekumar as the celebrity who helped Tony and his friends, since it was just a cameo role and the narrative was clearly head- lined by Mohanlal's character. But as the scripting pro- gressed, Mohanlal suggested to Dennis that they con- sider Mammootty for the role. Although impressed by the idea, Dennis felt it would be too much to ask Mammootty, an equally strong superstar in Malayalam cinema as Mohanlal, to play an extended cameo in the latter's movie. While Joshiy also liked the idea of casting Mammootty, he too felt it would be a big ask, Dennis revealed during an appearance on Safari TV's "Charithram Enniloode" programme.Nonetheless, Dennis gathered courage and approached Mammootty, who agreed immediately, much to everyone's surprise.

Aneet Padda pens moving note as grandfather passes away after Alzheimer's battle: 'You held on to love'



Dealing a major heartbreak to Aneet Padda, her grandfather, whom the actor refers to as "the only love of my life," passed away recently. He had been battling Alzheimer's disease for quite some time. Following his demise, the Saiyaara star took to social media to share a monochrome picture of them holding hands, accompa- nished by a heartfelt message that highlighted just how much he meant to her.

"You were drifting away, but you didn't forget makhhan

(his nickname for her). You held on to love, even when you couldn't hold on to memory," Aneet wrote, adding that she, however, will hold on to both: the love and the memories they shared. The actor continued, "I will carry all our years together. I will be a good person. I will carry your jokes and repeat them every chance I get. I will carry your kindness and your light into every dark room. I will carry your stories and tell them to the world. I will carry your love; you taught me the purest, most unconditional kind."Mentioning that she will carry him within her for- ever, Aneet shared that after his departure, she spotted the brightest star in the sky, thus choosing to believe that it was him looking after her even from far beyond. "I love you, Dadu. I love you so much. Always, beyond what time can hold," she concluded the note.In an interview last year, Aneet had opened up about her grandfather's battle with Alzheimer's, painfully revealing that he had even forgotten her name. However, when he watched scenes from her musical romantic drama Saiyaara, he recognised her, much to her delight. For the unversed, Aneet's char- acter in Saiyaara, Vaani Batra, also deals with the same condition, connecting the movie even closer to her heart.

"My Dadu has Alzheimer's, which is why the film was even more emotional for me. He's at a point now where he doesn't remember most things, but I believed in this story because it says, 'Dimaag bhoool jaata hai par dil kabhi nahi bhoolta (the mind forgets, but the heart never does).' That's very true for my dadu," she shared during a conversation with The Hollywood Reporter India.Aneet added, "He doesn't remember my name; he doesn't remember much. But he still calls me 'Heeraput' or 'Makkhan.'



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