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Banks need smarter shields & monitoring

BANKS have always faced the threat of cybercrime, but artificial intelligence has raised the danger to a new level. The recent concern over Anthropic's AI model, Mythos, has shown why banks and financial institutions are deeply worried. Mythos is not an ordinary chatbot. It is described as a powerful "cyber genius" that can independently search for weaknesses in software systems and even suggest ways to exploit them. In simple terms, it can do in hours what human hackers might take weeks to achieve. That is what makes it so alarming. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has rightly called the threat "unprecedented." She warned that such advanced AI requires greater vigilance and better coordination among banks. The Finance Ministry has also asked banks to work closely with agencies like CERT-In so that risks can be identified and tackled without delay.

The fear is real because India's banking system still depends heavily on old technology. Many banks run on legacy software, delayed updates and complicated vendor networks. If an AI tool like Mythos finds a weak point, it could trigger data theft, payment failures, ATM disruptions or even panic among customers. A cyberattack on one major bank can quickly shake confidence in the entire financial system. This is not just India's concern. Even at the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings, global leaders discussed whether cyber risks are now becoming too big for humans alone to manage. Yet AI can also be a shield. The same technology can help banks detect fraud, identify weak spots and strengthen security faster. The need is to prepare for AI. Banks must update old systems, improve real-time monitoring and share threat information globally.

Grand Idol Installation Ceremony of Goddess Held in Ramanthapur — Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Parameshwar Reddy Attends as Chief Guest



"UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):"The idol installation ceremony of Sri Sri Sri Mahankalamma Temple was held grandly in Ramanthapur on Tuesday. "Uppal constituency Congress Party in-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy attended the idol installation ????? as the chief guest. On the occasion, he participated in special prayers along with the representatives of the temple committee. "Temple committee members and other participants present at the event included Bhishma Goud, Sanjeev Reddy, Nagender, Taufiq, Rafiq, Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, Ganesh Nayak, Arun Patel, Sandeep, Bhaskar, Shaga Sridhar, Muthyala Babu, S. Jangaiah, Krishna, M. Jangaiah, Satti Anna, Sachin, Nayeem, and Yogi Vishal.

KCR Should Become Telangana Chief Minister Again



— Former Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Prays to Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala""UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):"Former Chilkanaagar Division Corporator and GHMC Standing Committee member Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, along with her family members, visited Tirumala Venkateswara Temple for darshan. "Speaking on the occasion, she said that it was a great blessing to have the opportunity to offer prayers to Lord Venkateswara on Wednesday along with her family. She prayed that all the people of Telangana should live in prosperity and happiness. "She further stated that she prayed to Lord Venkateswara for K. Chandrashekar Rao to once again become the Chief Minister of Telangana, expressing that the people of all sections of the state should continue to live in peace, happiness, and well-being.

Governance at People's Doorstep Resolving Issues is the Goal



— Action plan to clear applications within 3 months"— Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy at Paleru Praja Darbar"

"Khammam ,Kusumanchi APRIL 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""Telangana Revenue, Housing, and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy stated that the government's objective is to resolve people's issues right at their doorstep. He participated in a "Praja Darbar" held on Wednesday at the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya premises in Paleru. ""Key points highlighted by the minister: ""Deadline for grievances: A clear action plan has been prepared to resolve all legitimate applications received from the public within three months. "Cluster system: In the Paleru constituency, each mandal has been divided into three clusters to ensure accountability and effective action on every application. "Bhoodhar" for land: To provide a permanent solution to land-related issues, a unique "Bhoodhar" number—similar to Aadhaar for individuals—is being assigned to each land parcel. This is being implemented as a pilot project in Kusumanchi mandal. "Indiramma Housing: Houses will be sanctioned to all eligible beneficiaries. Payments are being directly credited to beneficiaries' accounts every Monday based on construction progress. "Mega Job Mela: A large job fair will be organized in Khammam on May 4 for unemployed youth, with participation from over 80 companies. Youth are encouraged to make use of this opportunity. "Support for farmers: Paddy and maize crops are being procured at Minimum Support Price (MSP), and payments are being deposited into farmers' accounts in record time. "Directions to officials: Officials have been instructed to resolve pending issues such as land acquisition within a week. "District Collector Divakar T.S., Additional Collector P. Srinivas Reddy, other district officials, and local public representatives attended the program.

Spiritual Splendor at Kokyatanda

Grand consecration of Kodanda Rama Temple flagstaff— Special rituals performed by Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy amid Vedic chants



"Khammam ,Kusumanchi APRIL 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""A wave of spiritual fervor filled Kokyatanda village in the mandal on Wednesday. The consecration ceremonies of the newly constructed Sri Kodanda Rama Temple—including the installation of the flagstaff (Dwajasthambam), Nabhi Shila, Bodrai, and Mutyalamma temples—were conducted with great devotion and grandeur. "Telangana Revenue, Housing, and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy attended the event as



the chief guest and took part in the special worship rituals. "Village resonates with Vedic chants"From early morning, the village was immersed in a festive atmosphere with Vedic scholars chanting hymns and traditional musical instruments adding to the spiritual ambiance. Villagers extended a warm and grand welcome to Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy upon his arrival at the temple premises. He participated in the rituals conducted as per traditional scriptures and offered prayers to the deity.

State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao conducted a surprise inspection of the corporation godowns located in Pedda Thanda village of Khammam district

"KHAMMAM APRIL 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""During the visit, he examined the rice stocks stored in the warehouse and reviewed various aspects including stock maintenance, safety measures, and overall management. As part of the inspection, he thoroughly verified the stock register and staff register. "The Chairman warned officials that negligence in duties will not be tolerated and instructed them to ensure proper maintenance and accountability."



Public Administration Awareness Seminar Held in Uppal Government Offices

— Organized Under the Supervision of Uppal Police Station Officials"

"UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):""Following the directions of the Malkajgiri Police Commissioner and under the guidance of Malkajgiri Women Safety DCP T. Usha Rani, an awareness seminar on public administration and safety was organized by the Malkajgiri AHTU and Uppal Police Station in various government offices under the Uppal Police Station limits, including GHMC, MRO, and RTO offices. "On this occasion, Malkajgiri AHTU SI M.D. Khaleel Ahmed, Uppal Women SI Samatha, ASI Venkat Reddy, Women ASI N. Meena Kumari, Head Constable Murali, Constable Bhanu Prasad, and Women Constable Rajitha conducted the awareness session addressing the employees. "During the seminar, SI M.D. Khaleel Ahmed explained several important issues to the staff, including the POSH Act 2013, workplace sexual harassment, inappropriate behavior, sharing obscene content, and gender discrimination. "He also created awareness on crimes against women and children, such as trafficking of women through deception or force for prostitution, atrocities against children, child selling, forcing children into begging, harassment of girl children, and the illegal use of people for organ trafficking. "The officials further educated participants about the use of the T-Safe application for women's safety during travel, road safety measures, the dangers of drug abuse,



and newly introduced laws such as the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA). "Awareness was also provided regarding cyber threats and cyber frauds. Citizens were advised to contact the following helpline numbers in case of emergencies: "Cyber fraud helpline: 1930 "Women helpline: 1091 / 181 "Child helpline: 1098 / 112 "Police emergency: 100 / 112 "Uppal Tahsildar Pool Singh Chauhan, staff members, and police officials participated in the seminar.

Telangana SSC results: Four students share top mark of 597

Hyderabad: The SSC Public Examinations 2026 results, declared on Wednesday, witnessed exceptionally high scores, with top score being 597 out of 600 marks. Four students — Kunchala Virithika Krishna (Khammam), Medhansh Sirrama (Rangareddy), Entenuka Shashank (Sangareddy) and Muddayipet Madhu (Sangareddy) — shared the top mark of 597 and topped examinations. As per the information released by the School Education department, except for three marks in languages, these four students secured perfect scores in all subjects. Similarly,

Kilari Lalit (Rangareddy), Nagadasari Thiya Sathvik (Hyderabad), Dasari Rithvika (Suryapet), Gopalam Sai Kavita (Medchal), Manne Chandrasahas (Medchal) and Tumula Nischay Pranav (Medchal) shared second top mark of 596. This year, Mulugu district recorded the highest pass percentage at 99.30 per cent, whereas Hyderabad district recorded the lowest at 89.23 per cent in the State. Among the managements, Social Welfare residential schools achieved the highest pass percentage of 99.1.

Ward Councillor Vemula Sandhya Visits Victims of Dog Bite Incident

10 lakh sanctioned for two RO water plants at hospital: Vemula Sambaiah Goud



Narsampet/Warangal, April 29 (Indian Chronicle) : Sixteen residents from the town's 29th Division and nearby areas were injured after being bitten by stray dogs and were admitted to the Narsampet District Hospital for treatment. Among them, one person sustained serious injuries and remains under medical care.

On Wednesday, Ward Councillor Vemula Sandhya, former Floor Leader Vemula Sambaiah Goud, and Congress party leaders visited the hospital to inquire about the health condition of the victims. They met Sundaragiri Pushpaneela, who is undergoing treatment for severe injuries, and extended their support.

The leaders also met Hospital Superintendent Dr. B. Kishan and urged him to ensure the best possible medical care for the victims. Dr. Kishan stated that all 16 patients had been administered the necessary anti-rabies vaccines and injections. Fifteen of them were discharged after treatment, while one patient with serious injuries is being kept under observation. Responding to the issue of drinking water facilities at the hospital, Vemula Sambaiah Goud announced that two RO water plants have been sanctioned at a cost of ₹10 lakh. He assured that steps would be taken to provide safe and quality drinking water to patients and visitors within a week. Senior Congress leaders Nampalli Venkateswarlu Goud, Dandem Ratan Kumar, NSUI President Katari Uttam Kumar, Town Committee Member Tallapalli Srinivas Goud, and 29th Division youth leader Jizula Karthik, among others, were present during the visit.

Centre main objective to elevate nation's youth from job seeker to job provider

Hyderabad, Apr 29 : The NDA government's objective was to elevate the nation's youth from a level of waiting for jobs to level where they provide jobs to others, said BJP state president N Ramchander Rao here today. "He was speaking to media after participating a 'Job Mela' which was organized under the aegis of the Dr. Shobha Foundation to provide reassurance and hope to unemployed youth. He commended the efforts the foundation stating that it was heartening to see hundreds of young people finding employment opportunities through this initiative. " He said our youth should not depend solely on government jobs or the public sector. With their talent, they must transform into job providers through startups, he said adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is shaping the youth into entrepreneurs through schemes like 'Startup India' and 'Stand-Up India. " ? Rao further stated that the Modi government has created immense opportunities for women entrepreneurs also through the 'Mudra Yojana. " ? Unemployed youth from various sectors including Engineering, Graduation, Pharmacy, and Para-medical—participated in large numbers. "Eligible candidates who applied were presented with offer letters directly on the spot. " He said instead of searching for jobs this event provided a single platform where both the youth and recruiting companies found their solutions. " BJP state chief asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has clearly stated that the bill to provide reservations for women will be introduced in Parliament once again and will certainly be implemented.

DSP Waheeddin Leads Safety Awareness Program for Students



"Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, April 29: An awareness programme on the safety of women and children was conducted by the She Team under the leadership of DSP Waheeddin in Kagaznagar town. "As part of the Praja Palana — Pragati Palana initiative, and under the directions of District SP Neethika Panth, an awareness programme was organized at the Polytechnic Free Coaching Centre in Kagaznagar. "During the programme, officials created awareness among students on women's safety and child protection.

They explained in detail about the newly introduced Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and covered key topics including gender equality, cyber crimes, prevention of child marriages, and safety measures."

Students were advised to seek immediate police assistance during emergencies by dialing 100 or 112, and to make use of helpline numbers such as 1930 (cyber fraud helpline) and 1098 (Child Helpline). "Kagaznagar Town SHO K. Prem Kumar, SI K. Raju, MEO Prabhakar, She Team In-charge D. Sunitha, and others participated in the programme.

Free EAPCET training program successfully concluded under the auspices of Hindu Dharmika Parishad

Students in our Tandur should make use of NEET and EAPCET training by skilled teachers.. Let's make Tandur an education hub for future generations.



“Indian Chronicle Tandur(April 29)““The 40-day free EAPCET training program conducted under the auspices of Hindu Dharmika Parishad concluded today at Siddhartha College in Tandur town, Vikarabad district. RBOL Chairman Buyyani Sarala Srinivas Reddy and Shishu Mandir School Principal Umadevi attended the program as chief guests. ““Speaking on the occasion, they said that every year, under the auspices of Hindu Dharmika Parishad, free

training is provided by expert teachers to help students in the Tandur constituency qualify in the EAPCET exam. They expressed hope that students studying in Tandur should utilize this opportunity and secure ranks. They mentioned that students are proving their mettle as good teachers are teaching here, better than in corporate coaching. ““They urged to make Tandur an education hub by achieving state-level ranks along with quality education. They said that along with patriotism, students should cultivate good values. Later, the chief guests presented prizes to students who achieved excellent results in Intermediate this year. Teachers and staff who provided free training for 40 days were felicitated grandly. ““Hindu Dharmika Parishad Tandur Honorary President Gajula Basavaraj, Hindu Dharmika Parishad executive committee members, Siddhartha College Principal Narendar, Somani, Vinod Kumar Jain, Vijay Kumar, Paryada Ramakrishna, councilors Bantu Venu, Allapuram Srikanth, and leaders Bathula Nagu, representatives of various colleges, students, and their parents participated in this program.

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Participates in Goddess Idol Consecration Ceremony at Ramanthapur

““UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“The idol consecration ceremony of the Goddess was held with great devotion and grandeur at the Sri Sri Sri Mahankalamma Temple in Ramanthapur.“Uppal MLA Mr. Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the sacred event as the chief guest and took part in the special prayers and ???? rituals.“Speaking on the occasion, the MLA wished that, with the blessings of the Goddess, all people should live with peace, prosperity, good health, and long life. He stated that temples are symbols of our culture and traditions, and that such spiritual events help strengthen unity in society.“The special homams and pujas conducted by Vedic scholars during the festival attracted the devotees. A large number of devotees attended the event, had darshan of the Goddess, and offered special prayers.“Leaders and devotees participated in the program in large numbers.



Drive Intensified to Make District Drug-Free



“Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, April 29: District Collector Hariatha has called for a stringent crackdown on the use, cultivation, and illegal transportation of narcotic substances in the district.“Addressing the District Narcotics Control Bureau meeting held on Wednesday (April 29) at the Integrated Collectorate Complex, the Collector participated along with Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Yuvaraj Mormath, Additional SP (Admin) Chitra Ranjan, and Kagaznagar Sub-Collector Shradha Shukla.“Speaking on the occasion, the Collector directed officials to identify individuals involved in ganja cultivation, consumption, and illegal transportation and initiate strict legal action against them. She warned that substance abuse severely damages health, leads to financial distress for families, and often results in criminal activities.“The Collector further instructed that welfare scheme benefits should be cancelled for those involved

in ganja cultivation. She emphasized the need to create widespread awareness about the harmful effects of drug use among the public.“Special focus was laid on school and college students, highlighting that drug consumption can ruin their future. Officials were directed to conduct awareness programs in educational institutions regarding the dangers of narcotic substances.“She also ordered strict surveillance on pan shops and grocery stores located near schools and colleges, and directed installation of CCTV cameras in toddy compounds. Awareness campaigns should also target auto drivers, bus drivers, and daily wage workers.“The Collector instructed authorities to conduct daily vehicle inspections, particularly autos and other transport vehicles, and to intensify checks to prevent drug trafficking from neighboring states.“Awareness programs should be conducted in government hostels and residential schools, while cultural teams (Kalajatha) should be deployed in villages to spread awareness that strict action will be taken against those involved in drug-related activities.“She stressed that coordinated efforts by all departments are essential to transform the district into a drug-free and healthy district. As part of government public outreach programs, awareness about the ill effects of substance abuse must reach every citizen.“Medical teams were instructed to visit schools and colleges regularly to assess students' mental health and behavioral patterns. Additionally, strict monitoring of high-dose medicines sold in medical shops was also directed.“Officials from various departments attended the meeting.“Issued by the District Public Relations Officer.

Aadhaar Mandatory for All: Collector Hariatha “Biometric Exams at Risk Without Aadhaar Update

““Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, April 29: District Collector Hariatha has emphasized that every individual must possess an Aadhaar card, as it is mandatory to avail government welfare schemes.“Speaking at the District-Level Aadhaar Monitoring Committee meeting held on Wednesday (April 29) at the Integrated Collectorate Complex, the Collector participated along with Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Yuvaraj Marmat, Additional SP (Admin) Chitta Ranjan, Kagaznagar Sub-Collector Shradha Shukla, and UIDAI State Assistant Manager Naresh.“On the occasion, the Collector stated that Aadhaar enrollment is compulsory for all residents in the district. She stressed that children aged 0 to 5



years must also be enrolled for Aadhaar.“It was noted that 13,781 students aged between 5 and 15 years have not yet updated their Aadhaar details, while 5,130 students above 15 years also remain pending for updates. The Collector urged all concerned to complete the Aadhaar update process without delay.“She further highlighted that biometric at-

tendance is mandatory for competitive examinations such as NEET and EAMCET, and failure to update Aadhaar may lead to issues during biometric verification.“The Collector also advised linking Aadhaar at the time of birth registration. She directed officials to organize special Aadhaar enrollment camps in PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable

Tribal Group) villages to ensure 100% coverage.“For individuals aged above 100 years whose Aadhaar details require correction, the Collector instructed them to approach their respective Tahsiladar offices.“Currently, 87 Aadhaar enrollment centers are operational in the district, and the public has been urged to utilize these facilities effectively.“

Slate High School Creates a Sensation in Jagtial...

““Slate High School Rocks with 100 Percent Results““Errojula Rishitha Tops School with 571 Marks““19 Students Score Above 500 Marks““Jagtial Correspondent, April 29 (Indian Chronicle): “Slate High School in Jagtial created a sensation in the 10th class results with 100% pass rate. Out of 33 students who appeared for the exams, all 33 passed, making Slate High School dominate in “10th”. “

“Among them, 19 students scored more than 500 marks and enhanced the school's reputation.““Errojula Rishitha set a new record by securing the first position in the school with 571/600



marks. S. Varun and Tikka Varshitha stood in second place with 570 marks.““Achieving 100 percent results for the third consecutive year, along with students securing the highest marks, Slate High School



has earned a special recognition in the district.““School Correspondent Edamala Jagannathan Reddy, Principal Swapna, Directors Tirupati Reddy, Rajyalakshmi, School In-charge Mallikarjun, and the



teaching staff expressed their happiness over the students' success.“

“Slate High School management congratulated the toppers and wished them to reach even greater heights in the future.

Irshad Khan Submits Petition on Beerappagadda Division Issues – Parameshwar Reddy Assures Resolution

“UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“Congress Party Minority Cell leader Irshad Khan (Uppal Khan) on Wednesday met Uppal constituency Congress Party in-charge M. Parameshwar Reddy in a courtesy meeting and brought to his attention various public issues prevailing in the Beerappagadda Division.“On this occasion, Parameshwar Reddy listened carefully to the concerns and assured that the issues would be resolved in a phased manner. He stated that he is committed to working towards the resolution of public grievances.“Expressing his gratitude for the prompt response, Irshad Khan thanked Parameshwar Reddy and expressed hope that under his leadership, development activities in the Beerappagadda Division would progress at a faster pace.“



Telangana's singing cuckoo Belli Lalitha's 52nd birth anniversary celebrations

-Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar““Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..

Indian Chronicle...April 29):- The 52nd birth anniversary celebrations of Telangana's singing cuckoo Belli Lalitha were organized on Wednesday at the Martyrs' Stupa in Bhuvanagiri town under the auspices of the Telangana's singing cuckoo Belli Lalitha Statue Committee, Belli Lalitha's son Surya Prakash and Janni Vennela as coordinators, and public organizations. Regardless of political parties, castes and religions, the town's public representatives, public associations, and leaders of various associations came out in large numbers to pay tribute to her. On this occasion, Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar, Vice Chairman Pothamsetty Manjula Venkateswarlu, Sri Krishna Yadava Sangam District President Putta Veeresh Yadav leaders said that we will always support the Telangana Gana Kokila Belli Lalithakka Statue Committee in every way until the statue is installed. They stated that everyone should work hard to achieve their dreams and that her struggle for social change will never be forgotten. They said that everyone, regardless of politics, came together to celebrate her birth anniversary as a testament to their respect for her. The program was attended by Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar, Vice Chairman Manjula Venkateshwarlu, Battu Ramachandraiah, Mallareddy, Kura Venkatesh, Sri Krishna Yadava Sangam District President Putta Veeresh Yadav, former Municipal Chairman Barre Jahangir, Kanuntla Baburao, Rikukula Venkatesh, Srinivas Neta, Thotakura Venkatesh, Tummeti



Pandu Yadav, Gurrula Srinivas, Jaligam Vignesh, Kutadi Suresh, Hamid, Marri Pandu, Ryakala Ramesh, Gundeboyina Suresh, Harinath, Dandeboyina Srisailem, Ramulu, Chinnam Srinivas, Gandu Basavayya, Parvatham Dasharatha, Kasapaka Mahesh, Paka Raju, Sriram Muralikrishna, Chilukala Ramesh, Udari Rama Raju, Kotta Bharat, Ratnapuram Praveen, Rasala Narasimha, Sriram Sarath Yadav, Tummeti Srisailem, Balaswamy, Rasala Naveen, Barre Karunakar, Mekala Anjaneyulu, Rasala Narasimha, Uday, Machhagiri Krantidhal, Udari Balaraju Yadav, Edumekala Lakshman, Enugu Mallareddy etc. participated.

Action should be taken against the delay in the third tranche of funds for the beneficiaries who were given slabs due to negligence in geo-tagging in the release of funds



““Former Municipal Chairman Barre Jahangir““Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle... April 29):- Beneficiaries of the Indiramma Indla Scheme should be taken against the delay in the third tranche of funds for the beneficiaries who were given slabs due to negligence in geo-tagging in the release of funds“Barre Jahangir Former Municipal Chairman“Former Municipal Chairman Barre Jahangir stated that the situation in the implementation of the Indiramma Indla Scheme being implemented in the Bhuvanagiri Municipal Town is becoming evident. On Wednesday, the District Planning Director handed over a memorandum to the Housing Department officials. Speaking on the occasion, he said that a total of 521 beneficiaries have been sanctioned houses under the Indiramma Manjaya Scheme, which the state government has undertaken with the aim of providing houses to the poor, out of which 345 are under BL, 294 under RL, and 263 under RC, out of which 99 have been completed. The state government is providing financial assistance of Rs. 5 lakh to each beneficiary in installments. However, the sanction of funds is being seriously delayed due to the authorities not completing the geotagging process in PMAY (U) 2.0, which is required for the release of central funds, on time.“He expressed his concern that many houses under construction are still facing difficulties and the beneficiaries are facing difficulties. He expressed his concern that the negligence of the authorities is bringing disrepute to the state govern-

ment. He urged that steps be taken to immediately geotag the houses under construction in all the wards of Bhuvanagiri Municipal Town and release the central funds.“Also, Barre Jahangir demanded strict action against the officials who are showing negligence in this matter. He was accompanied by 22nd Ward Councilor Jaligam Vignesh, 8th Ward Councilor Tahara Mazhar (Bablu), Kutadi Suresh, and Itikala Devender Madiga.

TGCHE warns colleges against withholding hall tickets over fees

Hyderabad: The Telangana Council of Higher Education (TGCHE) on Wednesday warned institutions of stringent disciplinary action if they are found to be withholding hall tickets and preventing students from appearing for examinations on the grounds that tuition fee reimbursement has not yet been received from the State government.

In a statement, TGCHE Secretary Dr Sriram Venkatesh directed institutions to ensure that no student is denied the opportunity to appear for examinations on the pretext of fee reimbursement. “Any institution found indulging in such practices will face stringent disciplinary action as per applicable rules and regulations,” he said.

Further, Dr Venkatesh cautioned students and parents to exercise due diligence before seeking admission to any institution. He said admissions secured in unauthorised institutions will be entirely at the risk and responsibility of the students and parents concerned. Students and parents have been advised not to be misled by false advertisements, exaggerated claims or unauthorised assurances made by such institutions.

“Institutions found admitting students without due authorisation will be liable for stringent legal and disciplinary action as per the rules in force,” he said.

Triveni’s Grand Victory“SSC Results in Telangana State.

“KHAMMAM,29 APRIL (INDIAN CHRONICLE) :“In the TS SSC 2026 results announced today, students of Triveni have showcased their excellence by securing top marks. Triveni has created a sensational record with outstanding results across Telangana, marking a remarkable achievement in the state’s educational progress.“In the Class 10 results released today across Telangana, Triveni students have achieved resounding success. On this occasion, the Director of Triveni Educational Institutions, “Dr.Gollapudi Veerendra Chowdary, issued a statement to the press.“He stated that students from all Triveni branches secured top positions, with the highest score being 595 out of 600. Several students achieved top scores such as 595, 592, 591, 591, 587, 586 (multiple students), 585 (multiple students), 584, 583 (multiple students), 582 (multiple students), 581 (multiple students), and 580.“A total of:“33 students scored above 580 marks“81 students scored above 570 marks“268 students scored above 550 marks“750 students scored above 500 marks“He further stated that whether under the previous grading system or the current marks-based grading system, Triveni continues to excel without competition. Many branches achieved a 100% pass percentage, once again establishing Triveni as the No.1 institution in Telangana.“He attributed this success to well-designed academic plans aligned with changing times, evolving educational methods, and the demands of today’s competitive world. He also emphasized that the dedication and experience of the teaching staff played a crucial role in achieving these outstanding results.“He added that Triveni not only focuses on achieving top grades in SSC but also lays a strong foundation for national-level competitive exams such as IIT, NEET, JSO, NTSE, and Olympiads, ensuring a bright future for students.“These achievements were accomplished by Triveni branches in Hyderabad,



Khammam, and Kothagudem. He congratulated the students who succeeded in SSC, their supportive parents, and both teaching and non-teaching staff for their contributions.

Outstanding Performance by Chiluka Nagar Government MPHS Students in Class 10 Results – 87% Pass Percentage



““UPPAL , APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“The Class 10 students of Chiluka Nagar Government MPHS School have delivered an impressive performance in the 2025–26 academic year results.“A total of 47 students appeared for the examinations, out of which 41 students passed, achieving an overall 87% pass percentage for the

school.“The top individual scores are as follows:“P. Akshaya – 541 marks“K. Sriram – 525 marks“B. Ashwini – 524 marks“Former Chiluka Nagar Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen congratulated the students for achieving better results compared to the previous year. She also expressed special thanks to the parents, teachers, and everyone who contributed and supported the students’ success.

Uppal Degree College Students Selected for State-Level Competitions



““UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“Four projects from the Government Degree College, Uppal, have been selected for the state-level Jignasa Vidyarthi Adhyayana Yojana competitions, which are being organized under the auspices of the Telangana Department of Collegiate Education.“Speaking at a program held at the college on Monday, Principal Dr. Vijay Kumar stated that the selected projects were supervised by faculty members from different departments: Dr. C.H. Satyanarayana (Commerce



and Vice Principal), K. Geetha (Chemistry and Academic Coordinator), Dr. V. Srinivasa Rao (Physics), and Dr. R. Chandra Sagar (Botany).“He expressed hope that students would develop greater interest in field-level research and academic studies.“During the event, speakers including Dr. G. Tirupatayya, P. Vijay Kumar, J. Viswanath Kumar, and Dr. S. Yamuna Rani congratulated Dr. R. Chandra Sagar, the coordinator of the Jignasa projects, along with the supervisors and students for their achievement.

Former MLA NVSS Prabhakar Participates in Goddess Idol Consecration Ceremony



““UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“The idol consecration ceremony of the Goddess was conducted with great devotion and grandeur at the Sri Sri Sri Mahankalamma Temple in Ramanthapur.“Former Uppal MLA NVSS Prabhakar attended the ceremony along with leaders Vallapu Jagan Yadav, Burra Rajeshwar, Santosh



Gupta, Upender, Anand, and Beerappa Shiva, among others. They took part in the special puja rituals organized as part of the consecration celebrations.“Speaking on the occasion, NVSS Prabhakar expressed his wish that, with the blessings of the Goddess, all people should live in peace, prosperity, and good health. He stated that temples are symbols of our culture and traditions, and that such spiritual events help strengthen unity in society.“The special homams and pujas conducted by Vedic priests during the festival attracted devotees. A large number of attended the event, offered special prayers, and had darshan of the Goddess.“Leaders and devotees participated in the program in large numbers.

Awareness Program on Free Legal Aid



“UPPAL, APRIL 29(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“As part of the service activities of the National Human Rights Commission, an awareness program on “Free Legal Aid and Services” was organized at the Government Degree College, Uppal by students of Keshav Memorial Law College under the banner of the Bharatiya Manava Hakkula Parishad NGO.“The program was inaugurated by the college principal, Dr. K. Vijay Kumar, while J. Vishwanath Kumar coordinated the event on behalf of the NSS.“Speaking on the occasion, the principal said, “Legal awareness is essential for every student. Legal aid plays a crucial role in upholding equality and justice in society.”“The law students who participated in the awareness session included:“D. Amulya –



Women’s Rights“G. Sai Vinuthna – Children’s Rights“V. Nithin Kumar – Consumer Rights“Nithin Vinod – Fundamental Rights and Motor Vehicle Rights“Varun Sai – Digital Rights“Sushank Varma“G. Lokesh Yadav“This team educated the volunteers and students about the importance of legal aid and related rights.

District Police Office“Medak jilla.



Cyber and drug awareness for students in Ramayampet“Role of students is crucial in prevention of cyber crime.“Youth participation is essential for building a drug-free society“Students should be at the forefront in the fight against cyber and drugs““Medak District Additional SP Vikram Kumar Singh IPS“As part of the 99-day special program organized as part of Public Governance Progress Plan, Medak District Police Department organized an awareness program for students on cyber crimes and side effects of drugs in Ramayampet town area. “Medak District



Additional SP Vikram Kumar Singh IPS attended the program as the chief guest.““Speaking on the occasion, he said that cyber crimes are increasing day by day in the modern age of technology. “In particular, students are advised to be vigilant in the use of social media, online games and digital transactions. “He warned not to trust phone calls, messages, e-mails, links from strangers and not to share confidential details like personal information, bank account details, OTP to anyone. “In case of cyber fraud, it is advised to immediately call the 1930 helpline or contact the nearest police station.““Similarly, intoxication is aimed at the youth

Gayathri Vidyanikethan Triumphs in Class 10 Results: New Record with 100% Pass Rate!

INDIAN CHRONICLE, “Medagoni Venkatesh,“Peddapalli District:“Peddapalli:Students of the Gayathri Vidyanikethan High School have achieved a sensational victory in the Class 10 results. In the results released on Wednesday,the school’s students secured a 100% pass rate, bringing great pride to Peddapalli town.Out of the 61 students who appeared for the exams this year,all 61 passed,marking a grand success.“Top Performers” B.Veekshith scored 583 marks (School Topper),“ Noor Fatima scored 582 marks.“ P.Subikshan scored 581 marks.“Other notable high scorers include:“B.Geethika (579), Ameema Tahreen (578),J.Sahithi Priya (575), G.Ashwith Koundinya (575), N. Harini (572),U.Chakrika (571)and Ch.Layavardhini (571).Subject-wise Achievements“The school set a record in Mathematics,with three students scoring a perfect 100/100.Additionally, 25 students secured over 90% marks.The management specifically highlighted Bhusarapu Veekshith, who achieved a perfect 100/100 in Telugu,calling it a moment of great pride for the institution.School Chairman Allenki Srinivas stated,



“The fact that 36 students scored over 500 marks is a testament to the hard work of our teaching staff and our disciplined approach to education.“ He extended his heartfelt congratulations to the successful students and their parents.“The celebration saw the participation of Correspondent Rajani Devi, Principal Vijay, Vice-Principal Priyanka and teachers Srujana,Gousiya, Lingeshwar,Raj Kumar,Sadanandam, Sanyuktha,Mahesh, Rizwan, and others, who congratulated the students and distributed sweets.

Kakatiya High School Sweeps SSC Results in Manthani

Kakatiya High School Sweeps SSC ReMANTHANI: Kakatiya High School has created a sensation in the Class 10 (SSC) results. In the results released by the Telangana government on Wednesday, the school achieved outstanding success, with 29 students scoring over 500 marks.“Top Performers“The school’s students showcased exceptional academic prowess, led by Duddilla Aradhya, who secured 577 out of 600 marks. Other notable high achievers include:“?Vineetha: 576“?Harsha Sri: 572“Gayatri: 572“Srinidhi: 562“Alekhyia: 555“Sai Chandu: 555“?Dhanasri: 553“?Dhanush Chandra: 553“Notably, nine students scored above 550 marks, and the school achieved a 100% pass rate.“Celebration of Success“The School Principal, Pradeep Reddy, honored the top achievers by felicitating them with shawls. Speaking on the occasion, he attributed this magnificent victory to the students’ hard work, the dedication of the teaching staff, and the unwavering support of the parents.“It has become a tradition for Kakatiya School to



secure top marks year after year. I wish these talented students reach even greater heights in their future endeavors,” said Principal Reddy.“?The event was attended by the school directors, staff members, and proud parents who gathered to celebrate the students’ excellence.

Congress Leaders Protest and Conduct Shramdaan in Bansilalpet

“Deepak John Demands MP and MLA Respond to Public Issues ““Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, April 29:“Congress leaders staged a protest and carried out a shramdaan (voluntary cleanliness drive) under the leadership of Secunderabad DCC President and Telangana Christian Minority Finance Corporation Chairman Deepak John at the Boiguda Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) in the Bansilalpet division.“Speaking on the occasion, Deepak John said that although Primary Health Centres functioned better during the Congress government, people are now facing serious difficulties due to the negligence of the local MP and MLA. He stated that during their recent visit to the health centre, people expressed satisfaction with the services, but issues like poor sanitation in the surrounding areas were clearly observed.“He criticized Union Minister and MP G. Kishan Reddy and local MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav for allegedly ignoring public issues. As a mark of protest against their irresponsibility, Congress workers themselves undertook a cleanliness drive and cleaned the surroundings, he said.“Deepak John emphasized that public representatives were elected to serve the people and



warned that if they fail to change their attitude, they will face defeat in the “people’s court.” He reaffirmed that the Congress Party will continue to fight for public issues.“He also expressed anger over the functioning of GHMC officials, warning that issues brought to their notice by Congress leaders or workers must be resolved promptly.

Himachal Gram Panchayat elections to be held in 3 phases from May 26

GNS News Agency, April 29

The Himachal Pradesh State Election Commission Tuesday announced a three-phase schedule for the high-stakes Gram Panchayat polls across the state, with polling slated for May 26, May 28 and May 30. State Election Commissioner Anil Khachi said the elections will be conducted in a staggered manner to ensure smooth management and adequate deployment of security and polling staff.

The first phase of Himachal Gram Panchayat polls will be held on May 26, followed by the second on May 28, and the final on May 30. Counting of votes will be undertaken immediately after polling at the respective booths, while the results for Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads will be formally declared on May 31. The Commission will issue a detailed notification for the Himachal Gram Panchayat polls on April 29, outlining the election process and timelines. Filing of nomination papers will take place on May 7, May 8 and May 11. Scrutiny of nominations has been scheduled for May 12, while candidates may withdraw their nominations on May 14 and May 15. The allotment of election symbols will take place on May 15. The Commission will publish the final list of polling stations on May 7. 52,349 first-time voters, special arrangements

Gram Panchayat elections will be held in 3,754 of the 3,758 panchayats. State Election Commissioner Khachi said 1,900 Gram Panchayat Pradhan posts are reserved for women candidates. The State Election Commission said 50,79,048 voters, including 25,67,770 men and 25,11,249 women, are eligible to cast their votes. Khachi said at least 52,349 first-time voters will exercise their franchise in these elections. Special arrangements are being made to facilitate voters, including the setting up of separate polling booths for women in various parts of the state to encourage greater participation. Special logistical arrangements are being put in place to ensure the smooth conduct of polling in remote, high-altitude areas. Highlighting the geographical



challenges, officials said that one of the polling stations will be set up at Kaza in the Lahaul and Spiti district at an altitude of 4,579 metres, making it among the highest polling booths in the country. Elections will be held for five different posts at the Panchayati Raj level, and each voter will cast a vote for all five categories. The Commission has also specified colour-coded ballot papers for different posts to avoid voter confusion. White ballot papers will be used for Panchayat members, while separate colours, including light pink, will be used for Panchayat Samiti members and other posts such as vice-president and Zila Parishad members. The State Election Commission has urged voters to participate actively in the democratic process and assured that all necessary arrangements are being made to ensure free, fair and transparent elections across Himachal Pradesh. The tenure of the previous panchayats ended on January 31. The government has faced criticism over the reported delay in conducting the elections. On January 9, the Himachal Pradesh High Court directed the state government and the State Election Commission to hold the rural local body elections within the stipulated timeframe, emphasising compliance with constitutional provisions on Panchayati Raj institutions and democratic decentralisation. The court ordered that the polls be conducted before April 30.

Detonation attempt on Punjab railway track: Patiala police bust pro-Khalistani module, arrest 4 under stringent UAPA



GNS News Agency, April 29

Hours after a low-intensity blast on the main railway line near Shambhu railway station in Punjab's Patiala district triggered security concerns, the police on Tuesday claimed to have solved the case by arresting four members of a pro-Khalistani terror module and recovering a significant cache of arms and explosives. "The module responsible for the attempted detonation on the railway track has been unearthed with the arrest of four 'highly radicalised habitual criminals'," Kuldeep Chahal, Deputy Inspector General, Patiala Range, said, addressing a press conference with Varun Sharma, Senior Superintendent of Police, Patiala. The arrested accused were identified as Pardeep Singh Khalsa of Mansa, Kulwinder Singh alias Bagga of Bappiana village in Mansa, Satnam Singh alias Satta of Panjwarh village in Tarn Taran, and Gurpreet Singh alias Gopi of Goindwal bypass in Tarn Taran.

The person who died on the tracks was identified as Jagrup Singh of Panjwarh village in Tarn Taran. The police said the accused had multiple criminal cases registered against them. On Tuesday morning, the police detained Jagrup's younger brother, Satnam Singh, from his house in Panjwarh village of Tarn Taran district for interrogation. Jagrup was married and had two minor daughters. "Pardeep Singh Khalsa was the kingpin of the module. He was close to a Malaysia-based pro-Khalistani terrorist and maintained links with Pakistan-based arms suppliers. He used to send radicalised youth to Malaysia for terror training and then assign them tasks of terror activities. He had also formed a radical organisation named 'Chalda Vaheer Chakarwari, Attariye'," DIG Chahal said. The police said they recovered a hand grenade, two .30 bore pistols along with ammunition, sophisticated communication devices intended for use in further detonations, and laptops used to communicate

with handlers based abroad. "During initial interrogation, it has come to light that the accused were responsible for carrying out the low-intensity IED blast on the main line near Shambhu railway station on Monday night. They were planning further attacks on public infrastructure and properties," the DIG added. A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered at Kotwali Patiala police station under stringent provisions, including Section 111 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (organised crime), sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Explosive Substances Act, Section 25 of the Arms Act, and sections 13, 16, 18 and 20 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), highlighting the seriousness of the case. Punjab railway scare The Patiala police said they recovered a hand grenade, two .30 bore pistols along with ammunition, sophisticated communication devices, and laptops allegedly used to communicate with handlers based abroad. (Express Photo) Loco pilot sounded alert The low-intensity blast on the Rajpura-Ambala stretch of the railway track near Shambhu, part of a key freight corridor, was reported on Monday night. The incident occurred between 8.30 pm and 8.45 pm when a goods train was passing through the track. According to officials, the loco pilot felt an impact as the train crossed the spot but the train did not sustain any damage. The driver immediately alerted railway authorities, following which police teams rushed to the site. A body was found on the tracks at the scene, leading investigators to suspect that the deceased was the person attempting to plant or fix the detonator when it exploded prematurely. Police sources said the deceased was wearing attire typically associated with Nihang Sikhs. Further inputs suggested that he had been involved in campaigning during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Khadoor Sahib in support of MP Amritpal Singh, who is currently lodged in Dibrugarh jail since April 2023. 'No direct Pakistan angle so far' Shashi Prabha Dwivedi, Special DGP, Railways, visited the site on Tuesday and highlighted the vulnerability of the freight corridor. "This is the second such incident on the freight corridor in less than four months. A similar blast had occurred near Sirhind railway station earlier, but at that time, we did not get any clue, as there are no CCTV cameras on the stretch. We will be taking up the issue with higher authorities to install surveillance on this corridor," she said. Dwivedi added that crucial evidence had been recovered in the present case. "We have found a body, a SIM card, and a motorcycle. After identifying the person, it was found that he had parked the motorcycle in Amritsar before travelling via train or bus to Sirhind and then moving towards Rajpura. A ticket was also recovered from his pocket," she said.

400 residents block demolition of 120 homes in Mumbai's Darukhana



GNS News Agency, April 29 At 10 am on Tuesday, Shanti Tai and her neighbours knew what was coming. The police presence on New Tank Bunder Road in Darukhana was growing, and they had been warned that their homes were to be demolished on April 28 and 29. So they came out. All of them. By the time the Mumbai Port Authority (MbPA) officials arrived, 400 residents, women and children among them, had formed a human wall. There was no way through.

The standoff was the culmination of a notice served on April 17 to around 120 households across two settlements — of 98 and 20 homes — on New Tank Bunder

Road. The MbPA, citing recent court directives, gave residents seven days to vacate, characterising their homes as "unauthorized and illegal encroachment" and a "security threat." The notice warned that if residents failed to comply, the MbPA would demolish the structures and sell their valuables to recover the cost.

On April 22, the Sewri police followed up with another notice confirming the demolition dates and imposing a prohibitory order banning the assembly of five or more persons. The residents, many of whom say they have lived in the area since 1995 or earlier and are on the voter rolls, refused to budge. "All of us collected as a crowd from 10 am, ensuring there was no way for the police or officials to get through," said Shanti Tai, a resident and member of the Mumbai Port Ghat Hakk Sangharsh Samiti. Many residents are workers who settled near the workshops and factories of the area over decades. "Recent court orders have created an insecurity that all residents will be kicked out with no recourse to rehabilitation," said Pia, an activist from the Jan Haqq Sangharsh Samiti, which was present in support. The MbPA's lack of a housing policy means residents have no formal avenue to seek alternative accommodation. With the residents no dispersing for over two hours straight, the police officials and MbPA officials left Darukhana at around 1 pm, asking the residents to obtain a stay against the demolition from the courts.

Inquiry ordered after viral video of rowdy-sheeter honouring cop inside Bengaluru police station

GNS News Agency, April 29

The Bengaluru police Tuesday ordered an inquiry after a video surfaced on social media allegedly showing a rowdy-sheeter and his associates felicitating a police inspector of the RT Nagar police station inside the station premises. In the video, the inspector is seen being honoured by the rowdy-sheeter and members of his group within the police station premises. However, there is no clarity on when the alleged incident occurred, and it has yet to be officially verified.

B S Nemagoud, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North), said the probe has been assigned to the assistant commissioner of police (ACP) of Yeshwantpur sub-division, who has been directed to conduct a detailed inquiry and submit a report. "Based on the findings, appropriate action will be taken," he said. Sources, however, indicated that the clip may be old and may have been circulated with malicious intent. There is also speculation within the department that it could be part of an attempt to have the inspector transferred from the station. The development comes days after



a protest was held against an inspector in Devanahalli earlier this month, during which a pro-Kannada organisation alleged bribery and interference in civil disputes. Following a similar incident in the past, M A Saleem, Director General and Inspector General of Police, issued a circular directing personnel to refrain from associating with anti-social elements and habitual offenders.

AAP taps sports stardom after MPs exit, inducts wrestler Jassa Patti

GNS News Agency, April 29

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann inducted wrestler-turned-public figure Jaskanwar Singh Patti, popularly known as Jassa Patti, into the AAP's fold Tuesday, as the party continues to grapple with the recent exit of seven of its Members of Parliament. The induction took place at the official residence of Mann. Calling Patti "a source of pride for Punjab and the country," Mann said, "When achievers from sports join public life, it inspires youth and strengthens governance," he said, framing the move as part of a broader effort to bring "grounded, hardworking" faces into the party.

The induction comes days after a significant churn in the Aam Aadmi Party's ranks, with seven Rajya Sabha MPs walking out, an exodus that has raised questions about internal cohesion. The AAP was accused of giving Rajya Sabha seats to industrialists and other responsibilities to leaders of other parties. Now, the AAP's strategy is to induct non-political faces.

Party insiders suggest more such inductions are in the pipeline, especially from sports and civil society, as AAP looks to consolidate its base in Punjab ahead of the next elections. The emphasis will be on grassroots appeal. Patti, who carries the tag of 'Rustam-e-Hind' and has a following



in rural Punjab, expressed faith in Mann's leadership and the party's policies. "I will work to strengthen the party and serve society with the same dedication I showed in sports," he said. With new entrants to the party, the AAP is being watched as it tries to establish a connection with Punjab's youth, particularly in the rural belt, where wrestling akharas still command cultural influence. At the same time, it is seeking to counter the narrative of drift triggered by the MPs' exit by bringing in fresh entrants and local faces into the party fold.

‘Focus on strengthening healthcare system’: KEM resident doctors oppose renaming of iconic Mumbai hospital

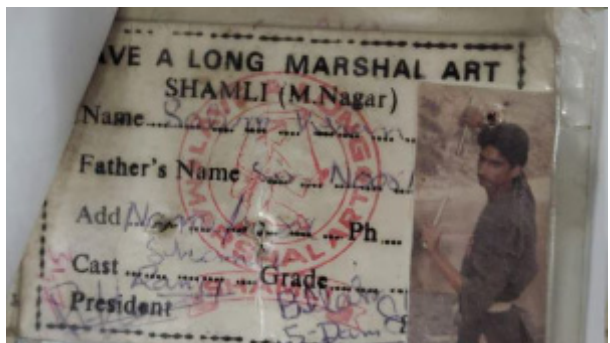


GNS News Agency, April 29

Resident doctors at King Edward Memorial (KEM) Hospital in Mumbai's Parel have strongly opposed the move to rename the century-old public hospital, calling it a move that undermines its legacy and fails to address pressing issues faced by healthcare workers. Last week, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) health committee unanimously passed a resolution to change its name to Kaushalyashreshtha Eklavya Memorial.

The Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD) at KEM said the institution's name carries decades of trust, academic excellence, and public service, and should not be altered without consulting those who work there. "KEM Hospital is not just a name, but a historic institution with immense academic, clinical, and public value," said Dr Shubham Solanke, president of MARD. "For decades, it has stood as a symbol of excellence in public healthcare and medical education, and is recognised not just across India but internationally."

Bollywood director had planned biopic on ‘ex-Muslim’ Salim Wastik. Then cops showed up



The man who kidnapped and killed a 13-year-old boy in 1995 and then hid in plain sight as an "ex-Muslim" provocateur on YouTube, had been approached by a Bollywood film director who wanted to make a biopic on his life, police sources told The Indian Express. The director had apparently offered him Rs 15 lakh as signing amount and had begun talks on the film. Unfortunately for Wastik however, the Delhi Police Special Cell barged in on the plan — and ruined it for both him and the director. Wastik was arrested from his home in Loni, Ghaziabad, four days ago and has since been returned to Tihar Jail, where he was until he came out on bail and vanished 26 years ago. He changed his name — became Salim Ahmed from Salim Khan, and finally Salim Wastik — and after having ensured he was "dead" in official records, gave himself a new life on the

Internet. There, he posted content attacking Islam, and quickly gained a viewership. He also attracted criticism — and two of his critics were apparently angered enough to break into his home and slash him with a razor. Uttar Pradesh Police described these attackers as "fanatics", and within days shot both men — brother Zeeshan and Gulfam — dead in separate night-time encounters in Ghaziabad. All this happened between February 27 and March 3. And then — less than two months later — a dramatic backstory was revealed. Delhi Police revealed on April 25 that "ex-Muslim" Salim Wastik was in fact a kung fu instructor who had been convicted and sentenced to life in jail for murder in 1997, and who had, during the pendency of his appeal against the conviction, jumped bail in 2000. In 2011, his conviction was upheld — but no one knew where he was at that time, or even whether he was alive. After he was rearrested, Wastik is learned to have told interrogators that a Bollywood director had approached him for a biopic based on his life, including his transformation into a YouTuber identifying as an "ex-Muslim", and his survival after the alleged attack by the two brothers, who were later killed in a police encounter in Uttar Pradesh.

The film would apparently have shown his current lifestyle, including the security provided to him by the Uttar Pradesh Police due to the threats to his life. It may be assumed that this planned reel story would have stayed clear of the real story of Salim's life from three decades ago. Wastik is learned to have told police that he had revealed nothing of that story to the purported Bollywood director.

‘Study permits to money mules’: Canada’s FINTRAC exposes extortion rackets targeting Punjabi diaspora



GNS News Agency, 29

In a stark warning for thousands of Punjabi families in India and Canada, Canada’s financial intelligence agency, FINTRAC, released a special bulletin Friday exposing how transnational criminal networks, many with links to India, are laundering millions of dollars through extortion schemes. The FINTRAC bulletin highlights how these networks target the South Asian diaspora, particularly Indian-origin communities in cities such as Surrey, British Columbia, and Brampton, Ontario. The bulletin said organised crime groups are increasingly recruiting financially vulnerable young Indian nationals, typically male international students aged 17-28 on study permits, often enrolled in colleges rather than universities, to act as money mules, enforcers, or transaction processors in these schemes.

These rackets have evolved into a “sustained campaign of coercion” involving threats, intimidation, opportunistic violence and cross-provincial coordination, affecting businesses and families with deep ties to Punjab and other parts of India. Some perpetrators have even identified themselves as members of the Bishnoi gang, designated as a terrorist organisation in Canada. Extortion proceeds are frequently laundered through the Canadian financial system via email money transfers, cheques, cash deposits, and ATM transactions before potentially being funnelled back through informal channels like hawala. The federal government recently convened high-level summits on extortion in Surrey, BC and Brampton, Ontario, bringing together leaders from all levels of government and law enforcement, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Canada Border Services Agency. Surrey, in particular, has seen a local state of emergency declared earlier this year amid repeated incidents, including shootings at businesses

linked to the community. This also comes amid broader concerns in India about the safety of its diaspora and international students. Punjab has long been a major source of students heading to Canada, and reports indicate that some are being lured or coerced into these criminal networks due to financial pressures. Canadian authorities have already deported several Punjab-origin individuals linked to such cases, while Indian authorities continue to monitor the situation.

Since the start of 2026, FINTRAC has issued more than 100 financial intelligence disclosures related to extortion, already exceeding the total from the previous two years combined. These cases involve over 300 individuals and more than 63,000 transactions. The surge highlights a growing threat that has left many Punjabi business owners fearful, with some reportedly scaling back operations or considering returning to India. FINTRAC’s latest data underscores the scale of the problem. In the 2024–25 fiscal year, it produced over 6,200 intelligence reports supporting investigations into money laundering, terrorist financing, and related crimes, assisting agencies at all levels. “Extortion is a rising threat to the safety of Canadians, impacting more and more families and businesses,” said François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Finance and National Revenue. “To detect, disrupt and defeat the networks behind these crimes, we launched a follow-the-money strategy that mobilises federal resources, local police and the private sector. Through our new Countering Extortion Partnership, we’re also sharpening our information sharing and intelligence, supporting these efforts to ensure that Canadians feel safe in their communities.”

Sarah Paquet, Director and Chief Executive Officer, FINTRAC, added that the agency is supporting law enforcement by providing financial intelligence, operational expertise, and guidance to help businesses detect suspicious activity. “By following the money and leveraging the power of financial intelligence, we can effectively target, disrupt and dismantle the organised criminal networks that profit from this illicit activity and threaten the safety of Canadians.” The bulletin is aimed at helping banks, credit unions, and other businesses subject to Canada’s Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act spot red flags, such as unusual transactions by young Indian passport holders, and file suspicious transaction reports. FINTRAC has also deployed financial intelligence officers to work directly with police across the country and is sharing new systems with major financial institutions.

Delhi man killed on Holi: Police to provide protection to victim’s family after HC steps in

GNS News Agency, 29

The Delhi High Court Thursday closed a plea seeking police protection by the family members of the 26-year-old killed in Uttam Nagar on Holi, with an instruction to the police to provide them a direct line to the local SHO to contact when in distress. Justice Girish Kathpalia requested the additional DCP to direct the SHO concerned to provide his personal mobile phone number to the petitioners “so that they may contact him at the time of distress”. Tarun Kumar was killed in March after a fight over a water balloon escalated, and his murder had taken a communal turn.

The court was informed by one of the petitioners, Laxmi Devi, a family member of Tarun, that on April 13, “few unknown women with faces covered” threatened her. It was alleged that the husband of one of them allegedly broke the lock of the gate of a house and took away the belongings on April 9. Dwarka Police, on the other hand, told the court that CCTV cameras have been installed in the lane where the petitioners live as well as in surrounding blocks, and police pickets have been created to ensure communal harmony, including a picket in front of the petitioner’s house. Police informed the court that for the complaint pertaining to the threat on April 13, the local police has already collected relevant material, including video footage, which is being “examined for appropriate action”. They also said an officer of ACP rank is carrying out an inquiry.



The petition also sought that communally provocative videos pertaining to the incident be taken down from all social media platforms. In this regard, the Additional DCP of Dwarka informed the court that they have already pulled down “more than 250 inflammatory videos contents from social media platforms”. On March 19, the Delhi HC, acting on a PIL expressing fear of communal incidents ahead of Eid in the backdrop of the Uttam Nagar murder, had directed the police and civil administration “to take all required action permissible under law” to ensure that the situation in Uttam Nagar “does not take any ugly turn”, and that “an atmosphere is created of peaceful and dignified celebration of Eid”. The PIL had flagged that there are hateful and provocative speeches being made targeting Muslims ahead of Eid.

Worker booked for murder after newborn’s body found in Foxconn toilet in Bengaluru

GNS News Agency, 29

A day after a 19-year-old woman allegedly killed her newborn minutes after delivering the baby inside a Foxconn toilet, the police in the Devanahalli taluk under Bengaluru district Thursday charged her with murder. According to the police, the woman, an operator at the Foxconn facility, gave birth to a premature baby boy following a seven-month pregnancy while she had gone to use the restroom. Investigators said she slit the infant’s throat and attempted to dispose of the body.



“Foxconn is aware of the situation and has been closely cooperating with local authorities in their investigation. The well-being of our employees is our foremost concern and we are providing additional support to all of our team members in Bengaluru. Due to the sensitive nature of the matter and to protect the privacy of those involved, we are unable to provide further comments,” the iPhone said in a statement Thursday. According to the complaint filed by a Foxconn senior engineer in its security department, the incident was reported to the senior management on April 22 at around 11 am. The complaint states that the housekeeping staff noticed a blockage in a women’s toilet on the second floor of a building at about 9.15 pm on April 21.

The issue was reported internally but could not be addressed immediately due to shift timings, it said. The cleaning staff at Foxconn checked the toilet at around 9 am the next day and found that the blockage was a fetus. Senior management then alerted the police. Police teams reached the site and identified the woman using CCTV footage from the premises. Initial findings suggest the delivery was sudden. The police believe the woman, who is unmarried, may have acted out of fear of social stigma; however, they

said the exact motive has not yet been confirmed. The woman developed complications after the delivery and is currently receiving treatment at a hospital, the police said. She will be taken into custody for questioning once her condition stabilises.

Gold and silver prices slip nearly 1 pc amid geopolitical tensions

Mumbai: Gold and silver prices started the session on a weaker note on Friday, with both precious metals declining by nearly 1 per cent in early trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). Gold futures for June 5 opened 0.39 per cent or Rs 594 lower at Rs 1,51,167 per 10 grams compared to the previous close of Rs 1,51,761. Later, the yellow metal touched an intra-day low of Rs 1,50,750, down 0.66 per cent or Rs 1,011.

At the last count, it was trading at Rs 1,51,449, a decrease of Rs 312 or 0.21 per cent. During the session so far, gold has touched an intra-day high of Rs 1,51,457. On the other hand, silver futures for May 5 declined as much as 0.95 per cent or Rs 2,313 to Rs 2,39,200, an intraday low. The white metal was trading at Rs 2,41,345, down Rs 168 or 0.07 per cent. It recorded an intraday high of Rs 2,41,382, down 0.05 per cent or Rs 131. In the international market, precious metals also witnessed selling pressure. COMEX gold was down nearly 1 per cent at \$4,684 per ounce, while COMEX silver also slipped around 1 per cent to \$74.81 per ounce. According to commodity analysts, gold and silver prices are under pressure due to a stronger US dollar, rising bond yields, and uncertainty over geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. They further said that crude oil moving back above \$100 per barrel has raised inflation concerns, adding to pressure on precious metals. Moreover, Brent crude was trading at more than \$100 per barrel or 2 per cent higher.

MMRDA set to become Asia’s largest landowner, eyes land bank to drive ‘Third Mumbai’



GNS News Agency, 29

Set to become one of Asia’s largest landowners with over 83,000 acres under its control, Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authorities Metropolitan Commissioner Sanjay Mukherjee tells SABAH VIRANI how the regional planning authority is planning to leverage its vast land bank to drive the next phase of urban expansion in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region

Q) After almost three years at the helm of MMRDA, how do you see its evolving role, and what key changes have you driven?

After a gradual pickup, the MMRDA has finally stepped into its role as an area and city developer, just as the Act dictates. Securing our finances has been a crucial part of this equation; in the last two years at Davos, we have secured investments worth over \$272 billion. We have also secured a line of ₹4.07 lakh crore in loans from different government agencies, such as the Power Finance Corporation and the Indian Railway Finance Corporation. In addition, we need our own equity, which we have built through land acquisitions. Once procedures for the handover of land are complete, the MMRDA will be the largest landowner in Asia, with 83,000 acres of land under it.

Q) What is the next step for Third Mumbai?

Of the total 323.44 sq km of Third Mumbai, 104 sq km is land available for development, at an FSI of 2. The rest comprises mangroves and forest areas, which we will not touch. The plan is to attract a range of industries to the area, including semiconductors, data centres, logistics, artificial intelligence, as well as international hubs such as a Swiss hub and a Japan hub. We have already secured interest and investment. We have now called upon landowners in Third Mumbai to come forward if they are willing to give us their land. The process is entirely online. For those who do not wish to part with their land, there is no compulsion. The process will be gradual; BKC, despite being five decades old, still has 37 out of 165 hectares unsold. We are in no hurry to turn it into a concrete jungle—the growth will be organic.

Simultaneously, the first stage of planning the area—the existing land use plan—is being prepared. Preliminary engineering work, such as hydrological studies and soil testing, has begun.

Q) What is the vision the MMRDA is developing for the MMR?

The idea behind developing the entire MMR is to improve quality of life. People will be able to live farther from the main city in larger homes amid open spaces, while seamless connectivity ensures that daily travel is not a problem. This is also the idea behind developing the entire metro network.

Q) What metro lines will be functional this year?

This year, we aim to operationalise the entire Line 9 (Dahisar East to Mira-Bhayandar). Phases 1 and 2 of Line

4 (Wadala to Kasarvadavali) which run from Cadbury Junction to Gaimukh, are also expected to open. Another stretch of Line 2B (DN Nagar Andheri West to Mandale Mankhurd), between ESIC Nagar and Saraswat, will be commissioned. The first phase of Line 5 (Thane, Bhiwandi, and Kalyan) will also become operational. While efforts are underway to begin Line 6 (Swami Samarth Nagar in Andheri to Vikhroli), it is likely to be opened in early 2027, as it depends on the Kanjurmarg depot, though work on pit lines is ongoing. Tunnelling work on Line 7A (Andheri East to the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport T2 terminal) has been completed, while other works are still in progress.

Can we expect any other infrastructure project completions this year?

Yes, several projects are in the pipeline. The final stretch of the SCLR extension will be operational before the monsoon. Tunnelling will begin on the second tunnel of the Orange Gate project, and all four tunnel boring machines (TBMs) for the Thane-Borivali twin tunnels will begin excavation. DPRs for Metro Lines 10, 13, and 14 are currently awaiting approval from the Urban Development Department; once approved, the tendering process will begin.

When will the monorail resume operations after stopping in September last year?

The monorail will resume soon, along with the opening of Chembur station on Line 2B. The delay occurred because we decided to obtain safety approvals from the Independent Safety Assessor (ISA) and a retired CMRS officer, which is not typically required for monorails.

Will you think the pod taxi will be successful or turn out like the monorail project?

The pod taxi, while as experimental as the monorail, will be quite different. No funds from MMRDA are being invested in it. Another initiative we are pursuing in BKC is to improve walkability by encouraging offices and buildings to remove compound walls that were built after 26/11. If these walls are removed, pedestrians will have more space instead of being forced onto the roads. However, since permissions were granted earlier, we can only appeal to them to take these walls down.

What is the broader plan for the ‘Pataal Lok’ tunnel network?

The tunnel network has been under development for a long time. The first is the Coastal Road tunnel, followed by the Thane-Borivali twin tunnels, then the Orange Gate to Marine Drive tunnel, the Goregaon-Mulund Link Road tunnel, the Gaimukh tunnel, and finally the BKC tunnel.

Will these tunnels and other infrastructure projects be tolled?

These projects will be funded through various models. Where possible, land monetisation will be used. Tolling is another option, and hybrid models are also being considered. However, the principle is that the user must pay, as MMRDA raises debt to fund these projects and lenders evaluate repayment models before approving loans. Therefore, tolls are likely.

In light of the Mulund incident, how much control does MMRDA have over subcontractors?

MMRDA does not have direct control over subcontractors. In fact, the welder who cut the interlocks on a metro slab the night before the Mulund incident was employed by a contractor below the subcontractor level. However, MMRDA has been strictly monitoring contractors and imposing heavy penalties. For instance, in last week’s incident where a crane toppled in BKC during work on Line 2B, we fined contractor J Kumar ₹1 crore. Few authorities enforce such penalties with this level of consistency.

Filter coffee softy, city’s new summer obsession



GNS News Agency, 29

Coffee lovers, this one is for you. After a wave of gelatos and boba teas, Pune has rekindled its relationship with filter coffee—only this time, it comes swirled as a soft serve, also known as a softy. Cold, creamy, and unapologetically bold, filter coffee ice cream is the summer treat you did not know you needed. A few South Indian eateries across Pune are now cashing in on the trend, and it is quickly becoming the season’s most satisfying discovery. The trend traces its roots to The Filter Coffee House in Bengaluru, where the dessert first went viral for its strong, authentic coffee flavour. It later gained traction in Mumbai when the famous The Rameshwaram Cafe further amplified its popularity with its own version, drawing large crowds. And when The Rameshwaram Cafe arrived in Viman Nagar, it predictably drew great footfall, particularly younger diners and social media-driven crowds curious to try the viral favourite. “We sell over 100-200 scoops daily,” said a manager.

At the Bangalore Canteen outlets in Viman Nagar and

Karve Road, the filter coffee softy has emerged as a consistent favourite. “The coffee softy has been a hit since we started. People from all age groups have liked it,” a representative from the restaurant said. “The response has been encouraging—people who enjoy filter coffee are especially drawn to it, and many come back for repeats.” Unlike overly sweet softies, the filter coffee version leans into a more mature flavour profile—slightly bitter, aromatic, and less sugary. For some customers, that’s exactly the appeal. “It’s not your typical dessert,” said Riya Sharma, a 24-year-old marketing professional who tried it at Viman Nagar. “It actually tastes like real filter coffee, just creamier. I liked it.”

A similar response is seen at Dakshin Tiffin Room on Bund Garden Road, where the softy has been pulling in evening crowds. “I ordered it just to try something new, and I liked the strong coffee flavour and creamy cold texture, it’s a must try,” said Kadambari, a visitor. Others say the novelty factor plays a big role. “I saw it all over Instagram and wanted to try it here,” said college student Aditya Kulkarni. “It’s different from the usual softy—less sweet, more flavour. It’s a good dessert to end with.” For a brief period, Le Méridien Pune on FC Road also introduced the dessert at its food and beverage outlets, offering a more premium take on the trend. However, it has since been taken off the menu to make way for seasonal offerings, particularly mango-based desserts. The filter coffee softy, however, could return once the summer menu cycle changes. The rise of filter coffee ice cream reflects a broader shift in Pune’s food culture—where traditional flavours are being reimaged in contemporary formats. Much like the city’s embrace of fusion dosas and artisanal chai blends, this dessert sits at the intersection of comfort and novelty.

Rupee falls for fifth straight day to 94.25 amid strong dollar, oil volatility

Mumbai: The rupee stayed on a downward track for the fifth straight day, losing 24 paise to 94.25 against the US dollar in early trade on Friday, weighed by volatile crude oil prices and an elevated US dollar, with prospects of West Asia peace talks turning hazier. Analysts said that despite a ceasefire in place between the United States and Iran, ship movement through the Strait of Hormuz remained uncertain after the US military on Thursday seized another Iranian oil tanker, intensifying the standoff and unsettling the fuel prices worldwide.

President Donald Trump has also ordered the US military to “shoot and kill” small Iranian boats that deploy mines to choke traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. Unabated withdrawal of foreign funds from domestic stock markets also added to investors’ worries, triggering a massive sell-off in

equities and further dragging down the local currency, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.25 and stayed at the same level in early deals, registering a loss of 24 paise from the previous closing level. Extended its losing streak for the fourth consecutive session on Thursday, the rupee settled 23 paise lower at 94.01. In the past four sessions, the domestic unit has lost nearly 1.4 per cent, since the closing level of 92.91 recorded on April 17. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength against a basket of six currencies, was 0.12 per cent higher at 98.71. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.86 per cent higher at USD 105.97 per barrel in futures trade. In the domestic equity markets the 30-share Sensex was trading 547.02 points or 0.70 per cent down from 77,116.98 in early trade,

Thousands of IT jobs set to disappear as Meta, Microsoft restructure workforce in AI era



New Delhi: Tech giants Meta Platforms and Microsoft may cut thousands of jobs and offer voluntary buyouts, as the technology firms step up efforts to streamline operations amid heavy investments in artificial intelligence (AI), according to multiple reports.Geographic ReferenceMeta reportedly told employees in an internal memo that it plans to cut about 10 per cent of its workforce or roughly 8,000 jobs, starting May 20. The Mark Zuckerberg-backed firm has also decided not to fill around 6,000 open positions as part of its broader restructuring exercise.

Meanwhile, Microsoft has offered voluntary buyouts to a section of its US workforce. As per reports, about 7 per cent of US employees eligible for the programme, which could impact around 8,750 workers based on current staff-

ing levels.The restructuring comes as both companies accelerate spending on AI infrastructure, including data centres and related technologies.Moreover, Microsoft is expanding its global data centre footprint, with recent AI-related investments announced in markets such as Japan and Australia.

Similarly, Meta has projected record capital expenditure this year and has signed multiple multi-billion-dollar deals with AI partners in recent months. In addition, both companies have undertaken several rounds of workforce reductions over the past two years as they recalibrate cost structures alongside rising AI investments.Meta’s internal memo, attributed to Chief People Officer Janelle Gale, linked the move to efficiency measures and investment balancing. “We are doing this as part of our continued effort to run the company more efficiently and to allow us to offset the other investments we are making,” she was quoted as saying.Microsoft Chief People Officer Amy Coleman, in a memo to staff, said the company was moving with urgency as it adapts to evolving priorities. “To sustain this pace, we have to stay focused on doing great work, trusting and empowering our managers and simplifying to support everyone,” she said.Both Meta and Microsoft are scheduled to report their quarterly earnings at the end of April. Meanwhile, another report said that KPMG is trimming its US audit partner ranks by about 10 per cent as part of a long-running effort to encourage voluntary early retirements.

560-day protest ends in 10 minutes: Gurjeet Singh Khalsa brought down from BSNL tower in Patiala

GNS News Agency, 29

Bringing an end to a dramatic 560-day-long protest over the demand for stricter laws against sacrilege incidents, 43-year-old farmer Gurjeet Singh Khalsa was safely brought down from a 400-foot-high BSNL tower in Punjab’s Patiala district on Friday morning.Khalsa was brought down in a swift 10-minute operation carried out by teams of the Punjab fire service department, the police, and the civil administration. A day ago, Army personnel had conducted a dry run of the operation, but they were absent from the site on Friday.



The operation began around 7.25 am and was completed by 7.35 am. Khalsa, who had been living in a small 8-10 ft cubicle atop the tower since October 12, 2024, initially descended manually up to nearly 200 feet. Trained fire brigade personnel were positioned above and below him to ensure his safety, and a harness was used to minimise pressure on his feet during the descent.Within five minutes, he reached the point where a turntable ladder had been positioned. He was quickly shifted onto it at 200 ft. After taking 2-3 minutes to stabilise him, the extension was gradually lowered, bringing him safely to the ground.

Khalsa’s wife, Gurpreet Kaur, expressed relief after days of anxiety. “While he was atop the tower, we could neither eat nor sleep properly. Initially, I was very worried, but gradually I realised he was doing this for a greater cause,” she said, turning emotional.Khalsa had climbed the tower demanding stricter laws against sacrilege incidents. “When he climbed, no one knew him. We thought it would end in a few days, but it lasted 560 days. The Sikh community is known for its struggles, especially for the sake of the Guru,” said Jagdeep Singh Bhullar, a granthi who left his duties in Hoshiarpur and joined the protest in Samana last year.Gurjeet Singh Khalsa Farmer Gurjeet Singh Khalsa was brought down a BSNL tower by 7.35 am. He exited the premises at around 8.10 am in an ambulance that was showered with petals by supporters gathered outside. (Express Photo by Gurmeet Singh)As Khalsa descended, hundreds of supporters gathered at the Children Memorial Park behind the tower, chanting religious slogans. Nihang Singhs from Baba Budha Dal also performed gatka.According to Gurpreet Singh, coordinator of the Dharam Yudh Morcha, a group of Khalsa supporters, he will first pay obeisance at the Garhi Sahib Gurdwara following his medical examination and later visit Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Chowk, where an Akhand Path bhog (concluding ritual after the continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib) is scheduled. The Morcha has been staging a protest at the chowk since February 24 in support of Khalsa’s demands.

“I am thankful to Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Samana Sub-Divisional Magistrate Richa Goel, Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan, and all the officials of the Patiala administration. They supported me throughout. I am doing fine and in good health... Waheguru ji ka Khalsa .. Waheguru ji ki Fateh,” Khalsa said after his descent.Gurjeet Singh Khalsa Gurjeet Singh Khalsa, had climbed a BSNL tower demanding stricter laws against sacrilege incidents, was greeted by hundreds of supporters on his descent. (Express Photo by Gurmeet Singh)The BSNL tower is located inside the BSNL office complex, which had remained sealed since morning, with only authorised personnel allowed inside. Though Khalsa was brought down by 7.35 am, he exited the premises at around 8.10 am in an ambulance that was showered with flower petals by supporters gathered outside.Sources said a team of doctors conducted a preliminary medical examination, and he proceeded to his aunt’s place, where doctors conducted a detailed check-up.

Arrested suspect in Delhi murder case ordered chicken curry & rotis right after hotel check-in

GNS News Agency, 29

Accused in IRS Officer’s Daughter Murder Case Brought to Saket CourtRahul Meena, the primary suspect in the murder of an Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer’s daughter, is being taken by Police to be produced before Delhi’s Saket Court, in New Delhi on Thursday. Hours after allegedly raping and killing the 22-year-old daughter of an Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer in Southeast Delhi, 23-year-old Rahul Meena checked into a hotel in Dwarka. He had booked a room for Rs 2,000 and first ordered a T-shirt via a quick commerce app, followed by chicken curry and rotis, sources said.During questioning, he told the police that after the crime and robbing the victim, he exited her building, entered Astha Kunj park, dumped her iPhone in a dustbin, and decided to hire a cab.



He hired a private cab for the Palam railway station, and the driver asked him to pay Rs 600. “At around 8.17 am, he reached the station, but till that time, he missed his train. He later hired an auto-rickshaw and reached a hotel in Dwarka where he had booked a room for Rs 2,000 till 6.30 pm. He told police that while the room rental was Rs 1,500, the hotel staff took Rs 500 more, because he did not have any identification documents,” the source added.After check-in, he first ordered a T-shirt from a quick commerce app for cash on delivery and later ordered chicken curry with rotis. “He was carrying a mobile phone with a dual SIM

card, which he had stolen from the victim’s house in Alwar after raping her. He was using the phone over a WiFi connection of the hotel and was in constant touch with his cousin, who lives in Gurgaon, and was speaking to him over Instagram messenger,” the source said.During questioning, he told the police that his cousin was sending messages to him on Instagram as he came to Delhi without intimidating his family members, so family members were worried for him. “He asked him to reassure family that he was fine and would return with money. But in the meantime, a team of southeast district police reached and nabbed him,” the source added.

‘BSNL uniforms, local link’: How an inter-state gang stole cables in Bengaluru

Posing as telecom staff, an inter-state gang allegedly stripped Bengaluru’s roadside communication infrastructure of copper cables and modules before being arrested by the police, officers said Thursday.The case came to light after a Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) employee filed a complaint on April 19 about thefts that occurred between April 17 and 19. The thefts also caused temporary disruptions in BSNL services in parts of the city, affecting connectivity in several localities. Acting on a tip-off, the police tracked down and arrested the three men in Mathikere the same day.The Bengaluru police have arrested Ravi, 23, Sandeep, 32, and Syed Jahed, 40, for targeting BSNL infrastructure, while a fourth accused, Shoyaz from Uttar Pradesh, remains absconding.According to the police, two

of the arrested men are from Uttar Pradesh, while Jahed, a resident of Kalaburagi, operated locally and facilitated the gang’s movement in the city. The group is believed to have prior links and operated in a coordinated manner.

Investigators said the accused travelled from Uttar Pradesh to Delhi by flight, then to Kalaburagi, before reaching Bengaluru in Jahed’s car. They allegedly targeted telecom installations in areas including Yeshwanthpur, Mathikere, Malleswaram, and Sadashivanagar.To avoid suspicion, the accused wore uniforms and helmets resembling BSNL staff and operated both during the day and at night. “When questioned by residents, they would say they were BSNL staff carrying out inspection work,” a police officer said.Using tools such as cutters, hammers, pickaxes,

How farmers can earn more from chillies than wheat: Punjab’s Ferozepur shows the way, exports green chilli to Dubai



GNS News Agency, 29

With Punjab’s groundwater depleting at an astonishing rate, and farmers caught in wheat-paddy cycle, the export of chillies from the border district has emerged as a ray of hope and a viable example of how crop diversification can save the state’s water and soil, both.Ferozepur deputy commissioner Deepshikha Sharma said more farmers should adopt chilli cultivation, as it brings better income and yield. Sharma said that as per the statistics compiled by the district administration, the per-acre economics comparison shows that chilli requires higher investment but brings higher yield and income too. “Chilli generates at least three times more income per acre compared to wheat,” she said. “As per our estimated calculations, the per acre cultivation cost for wheat is Rs 13,610 and for chilli Rs 76,000 including seed, fertilizer, land preparation, insecticide/fungicide, picking/harvesting etc. But when it comes to average yield, wheat gives 24 quintal/acre produce and chilli 110 quintal/acre. Farmers income stands at Rs 58,200 per acre from wheat but from chilli it is nearly Rs 2 lakh per acre, which is almost three times higher,” says the deputy commissioner.How the first consignment was exported to Dubai

“The process was anchored by the District Level Export Promotion Committee (DLEPC), which convened a focused meeting with the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to position chilli as a priority export product for Ferozepur. The district administration initiated structured engagement with export houses and aggregators, leading to tie-ups with exporters for assured off-take and compli-

ance with international specifications,” said Sharma.Carefully selected fields in the Makhu belt-particularly villages such as Hakumat Singh Wala and adjoining clusters-were used for sample cultivation under controlled agronomic practices. These samples were grown with a focus on uniform size, colour, moisture content, and low residue levels, aligning with export quality requirements. The product was then tested, graded, and matched with buyer specifications before moving to bulk aggregation-ensuring that the first export consignment would meet international benchmarks.Field visits by teams from the Department of Science and Technology enabled on-ground problem-solving, while large-scale mobilisation under GRIP 3.0 (Grassroot Innovator Programme).

“Parallely, the district strengthened its forward linkages by engaging with the state’s horticulture department and creating value-addition infrastructure, critical for scaling exports beyond raw produce,” she said.“While chilli requires higher upfront investment, it offers access to multiple markets-fresh, dried, processed, and now export-unlike wheat, which remains largely confined to MSP procurement. Moreover, chilli provides six to eight harvest cycles in a single season, ensuring steady cash flow rather than a single annual payout,” said Sharma.“What began as a diversification experiment has now reached critical mass: area under chilli expanded from 2,000 to 12,000 hectares (2017–2025), production has crossed 20,000 tonnes annually, 4,500–5,000 farmers directly engaged and 40,000–45,000 livelihoods supported,” she added.“Ferozepur grows chilli as a winter (Rabi) crop under greenhouse-like conditions, which naturally reduces pest and fungal attacks. The result is lower toxin residue production, potentially improving export competitiveness. In effect, the model aligns with at least 12 Sustainable Development Goals, including poverty reduction, gender equality, climate action, and responsible production,” said the DC.Chilli cultivation in Ferozepur has also become a major driver of women-led employment. Unlike wheat, which is largely mechanised, chilli harvesting is labour-intensive and carried out predominantly by women across multiple picking cycles (6–8 times per season). With output-based wages (per kg picked) instead of fixed daily rates, women are able to earn more based on their effort, leading to higher and more consistent incomes-even during lean agricultural periods.

Day later, HP govt withdraws notification increasing room tariff for public

GNS News Agency, 29

Day later introducing the revised structure, the Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu-led Himachal Pradesh government has withdrawn the modified room tariffs at four government-run circuit houses with immediate effect after facing mounting criticism over the steep hike. The four circuit houses include Himachal Bhawan and Himachal Sadan in Delhi; Himachal Bhawan in Chandigarh and Willy’s Park Circuit House in Shimla. While the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (HPTDC) manages the house, the General Administration Department (GAD) of the state also has stakes in these four properties. Himachal Bhawan (Delhi) has a capacity of 39 rooms, Himachal Sadan in Delhi has a capacity of 19 rooms, Himachal Bhawan (Chandigarh) has 46 rooms and Willy’s Park has 49 rooms.



The rates for the general public for booking a room in these properties were proposed to increase from Rs 1,200 to Rs 4,000 on April 18. The notification was withdrawn on April 22. The tourism department charges Rs 1,200 from a domicile Himachali and Rs 2,000 from a non-Himachali.A senior GAD officer told The Indian Express, “Indeed the properties are under the control of HPTDC as almost all the employees deployed there are from the tourism department. There are certain specific rooms which are open for the general public and these rooms can be booked only through online with the approval of GAD. There were many complaints and suggestions from the side of the general public that they can’t get booking in these four government circuit houses. We reserved almost 24 rooms in these four circuit houses which can be booked online through ‘Himathithi’ portal. We also proposed to increase the room tariff up to Rs 4,000 but withdrew it on the technical issues.”

The officer claimed that the move to increase the tariff

couldn’t be portrayed as an effort to increase the revenue at the time when the state is facing the financial crisis. “The move was only for the 24 shortlisted rooms in Himachal Bhawan at Delhi in the first phase.”Managing Director, HPTDC, Rajiv Kumar, said, “These are circuit houses, which are run on the basis of no-profit and no-loss. These four properties always remain in heavy demand.”According to an official communication issued on April 22, the government has decided to keep the existing room tariffs unchanged until further notice. The letter clarifies that the implementation has been put on hold as necessary updates to the Himatithi online booking portal are still under process.The order also says all rooms across the identified government accommodations will be available at the previously notified rates, as per the February 5, 2025 notification, until the proposed revisions are fully processed and implemented in the online system.In February this year, a team of Delhi police had ‘raided’ Himachal Bhawan in Delhi in connection with a protest held by the All India Youth Congress (AIYC) workers during the AI Summit in Delhi.

AAP seeks disclosure of Rs 202 crore for clearing Dadumajra garbage site

GNS News Agency, 29

Questioning the administration, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) sought full disclosure of Rs 202 crore spent on ‘clearing’ the Dadumajra garbage dump, at a press meet held at the party office in Sector-39, on Thursday. On this occasion, Councillor Hardeep Singh Buterla, former Mayor Kuldeep Kumar Dhalor, party spokesperson Yogesh Dhingra and State Media In-Charge Vikrant A Tanwar were present.Addressing the press, the councillor raised serious concerns regarding the issue of garbage disposal and the waste management system in the city. He also questions the functioning of the Chandigarh administration and the BJP-led Municipal Corporation.Referring to a recent report submitted to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), he said the administration claims to process 286 metric tonnes of waste daily.However, there is no clear account of nearly 96 metric tonnes, he said. “Where is this 96 metric tonnes of waste going?” he asked.He also said a few days ago, trucks carrying waste towards Punjab were stopped by Sunny Ahluwalia, AAP leader and Chandigarh co-incharge. The administration had initially denied this, the councillor claimed. However, the report indicates that the waste is not being properly processed but is instead being dumped at various locations.He asked, “Is the BJP-led corporation dumping Chandigarh’s waste in other states to evade responsibility?”



Buterla also questioned the expenditure of crores of rupees on this project. He pointed out that the compost being produced contains heavy metals, making it toxic — posing serious health risks such as cancer and skin diseases.“If the compost is toxic, who allowed its use among the public, and who will take responsibility?” He also highlighted the worsening environmental crisis resulting from the 121 metric tonnes of unprocessed waste dumped daily at the dumping ground.Party spokesperson Dhingra said the people of Chandigarh were promised for years that the

garbage mountain would be eliminated. However, despite BJP mayors ruling for the past 12 years, there has been no substantial improvement.Dhingra asked where is the rest of the waste going when the report says only 190 tonnes of waste is reaching the site. He alleged that waste is being dumped in low-lying areas across Punjab, Haryana and nearby regions of Chandigarh. He termed this as a blatant misuse of public funds and questioned the justification of spending crores if waste is simply being dumped elsewhere.

Terming this a blatant use of public funds, Dhingra questioned the justification of spending crores if waste is dumped elsewhere.While Indore eliminated its garbage mountain within a year at a cost of Rs 16 crore, the problem remains unresolved in Chandigarh despite spending Rs 202 crore between 2024 and 2026.Former Mayor Kuldeep Kumar Dhalor also addressed the press and said his residence is near the dumping ground. He alleged that a 20-foot-high wall has been constructed to hide the garbage mountain instead of eliminating it.For the past 40 years, residents have demanded the removal of the dumping ground but the civic body and the administration misled the High Court and the public, the ex-mayor said. He also mentioned that the court has directed that the waste disposal must be completed by May, 2026.

Intelligence signals turmoil in Jaish-e-Mohammad as mystery around Masood Azhar deepens



GNS News Agency, 29

New Delhi: The mystery around Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar is growing with each passing day. His own cadres have been questioning the top leadership about his whereabouts. There are claims within the JeM that their chief is on his deathbed. The terror group's leadership has been fighting such rumours and has been asking the cadres to calm down and stay hopeful. The Indian agencies, however, confirm that Azhar is not nearing his death. However, they add that his health is fragile, and he is not facing any life-threatening condition. He is unwell and mentally down. The top leadership has intentionally kept him behind closed doors, as they do not want the cadres to see him in the condition that he is in, the official also added. Another official said that Azhar would never be able to fully lead the outfit again. He lost a lot of his close family members during Operation Sindoor, and this has upset him a lot. He has refused to come out and even speak with the members of his outfit since then.

Another official said that before Operation Sindoor, Azhar was alright. He had health issues, but he did make

public appearances and met with his people regularly. All this has stopped now, and he confines himself to his home and only meets with a select few, the official said. An Intelligence Bureau official said that this is the first time that Azhar appears to be vulnerable. He is known to be fiery when he talks, and the attacks that he plans against India are lethal in nature. His speeches and the manner in which he conducted himself are what made him so popular among his cadre. All these aspects are missing in him, and this has, in turn, made the cadres demoralised, the official also added.

The agencies have also picked up information that prayers for Azhar are being held regularly. They pray for his good health and hope that he will come out in the open once again. The number of prayer meetings that are being held is what set off rumours about his health condition. Many within the Jaish-e-Mohammad feel that the leadership is hiding something big from them. The recruitments into the Jaish-e-Mohammad are ongoing, but at a very small scale. Azhar would meet with all the recruits and give them a pep talk once they joined the outfit. The few recruits who have joined the JeM were spoken to by other leaders and not Azhar. An official said that for all recruits, meeting with Azhar was a big deal. They look up to him as a hero and a father figure, and he is the reason why many even decided to be part of the Jaish-e-Mohammad, the official said. For a few months after Operation Sindoor, the Jaish-e-Mohammad managed to keep the cadres quiet by circulating old videos and audio clips of Azhar. However, their patience began to run out, and questions about Azhar became louder. Further within the outfit, there is too much discussion about their chief. The top leadership is finding it hard to keep the cadres calm and is clearly aware that the situation may blow up soon. Officials say that the cadres would sooner or later have to be told about Azhar and his real condition. The official also added that they are likely to push this some more until they find a new leader. The hunt for a new leader is on, and once that takes place, the real picture about Azhar would become clear for all the cadres of the Jaish-e-Mohammad, the official added.

China to send giant pandas to Atlanta again

GNS News Agency, 29

Beijing: Atlanta will have giant pandas again. China on Friday announced it will send two giant pandas to Zoo Atlanta in the US, in Beijing's latest efforts of panda diplomacy despite tensions with Washington, and less than a month before a much-anticipated visit by US President Donald Trump to Beijing. The China Wildlife Conservation Association said in a statement that male panda Ping Ping and female panda Fu Shuang, from the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding, will kick off a decade-long conservation cooperation under an agreement it signed with the zoo last year.

The association did not specify their departure date but said the US side was actively carrying out facility upgrades, among other preparation work, to create a more comfortable and safer environment for the pair. In the meantime, Chinese experts were providing technical guidance on the upgrades, it said. The announcement came weeks ahead of Trump's planned visit to China in mid-May, during which he is expected to discuss various issues, including trade, with his counterpart Xi Jinping. Zoo Atlanta said in a statement Thursday that it was delighted and honored to be trusted as stewards of the pandas and to partner with the association.

"We can't wait to meet Ping Ping and Fu Shuang and to welcome our members, guests, city, and community back to the wonder and joy of giant pandas," the zoo's president, Raymond B. King, said. During an earlier giant panda agreement between the zoo and China that concluded in



2024, pandas Lun Lun and Yang Yang gave birth to seven bears, the zoo said. Lun Lun and Yang Yan and their two youngest offspring left Atlanta for China in October 2024, where the rest of their offspring reside, it said. China's giant panda loan program has long been known as a tool of Beijing's soft-power diplomacy, but its conservation significance could have been an important reason Beijing is renewing its cooperation with US zoos at a time of otherwise sour relations. The association said Friday that the new round of cooperation will help China and the US to yield more results in areas ranging from disease prevention and treatment to scientific exchanges. Giant pandas have long been a symbol of the US-China friendship, ever since Beijing gifted a pair of pandas to the National Zoo in Washington in 1972. In 2024, the National Zoo in Washington and the San Diego Zoo also received pandas from China.

Georgia blaze shows how climate change has led to more wildfires in East

GNS News Agency, 29

Washington: Often considered more a problem for Western North America, wildfires are becoming more intense, frequent and damaging in the East, such as this week's blaze that destroyed more than 50 homes in Georgia, fire scientists said. Researchers blame a number of factors, including climate change, causing fuel to dry out and be more flammable, a record drought, tens of millions of tons of dead trees from Hurricane Helene and just the large area where dense forests and high numbers of people try to coexist. So far this year, 2,802 square miles (7,258 square kilometres) of the United States have burned in wildfires — much of it in Nebraska, an unusual area for massive wildfires — that's 88 per cent more than the 10-year average for this time of year, according to the National Interagency Fire Centre. That's happening as significant chunks of the country set records for the warmest winter and March and April drought.

"The warmer we get, the more fire we see. Longer fire seasons, more lightning possibly, and drier fuels," said fire scientist Mike Flannigan of Thompson Rivers University in British Columbia, Canada. "I think we're going to see more fire in the East. We're seeing more intense fires." The number of large fires, the likelihood of them happening, and the amount of land burned have increased in most of the Southeast United States from 1984 to 2020, according to a 2023 study by University of Florida fire ecologists Victoria Donovan and Carissa Wonkka.

"The fires in the East, historically and today, are a lot smaller than in the Western United States, so they might not always grab as much attention as those out West. But we're starting to see now this shift in dynamics in the East, we're starting to quantify it," Donovan said on Thursday. "Even though the changes that we're seeing in the East are much smaller than we're quantifying out West, we think it's extremely important to start to get ahead of this problem now." Three months ago, Donovan, Wonkka and other fire scientists created a new network for fire researchers to study Eastern fires because some of the issues that experts have learned out West may not apply in the East, Wonkka said. Even though the West has bigger and more noticeable fast-spreading fires, the East has more people in the way of flames in something scientists call the wildland-urban interface or WUI. "We found that 45 per cent of all large wildfires in the East burn some portion of the wildland-urban interface and 55 per cent of the area burned, so that a lot of these large wildfires are associated with WUI fires," Donovan said. Add to that the forests in the East are denser and less likely to be thinned out than those in the West, Donovan said. Hurricane Helene created a ticking time



bomb. A week ago, federal and state officials looked at the drought, the weather and the millions of dead trees from Hurricane Helene in 2024 and issued an advisory to watch out for fires, said Nick Nauslar, a National Weather Service fire science and operations officer at the National Interagency Fire Centre in Boise, Idaho. "They are thinking, you know, they could see more fires, more resistance to control with the fires that they get," Nauslar said. "It has been warmer and drier than normal across many of the areas where Helene caused damage. So there's the potential there. You have an excess of fuel available because now (the trees are) dead and at the mercy of the weather and climate. And then if you get dry and windy conditions, if you get an ignition, it's more likely to ignite and spread." In Georgia alone, 13,954 square miles (36,142 square kilometres) of forest land was hit by Hurricane Helene, downing more than 26 million tons of pine and 30 million tons of hardwood, according to a November 2024 University of Georgia and Georgia Forestry Commission timber damage assessment. "Many of us have worried about fuel buildup post-Helene. It's a ticking time bomb," University of Georgia meteorology professor Marshall Shepherd said.

But it's not just downed trees — it's also dry air, increasing the likelihood of fires. It's not just a lack of rain, but the air itself is less humid, which causes problems, Nauslar and Flannigan said. "As we warm â€¦ the atmosphere's ability to suck moisture out of dead fuel, not live fuel, but dead fuel, increases almost exponentially as temperature increases," Flannigan said. "The drier the fuel, the easier it is for a fire to start, which means more fuel is dried and available to burn, which leads to higher intensity fires that are difficult to impossible to extinguish." That's what we're seeing now, starting to make inroads into the East," Flannigan said. Human-caused climate change is clearly playing a role, he said.

Israel, Lebanon extend ceasefire as Trump seeks 'best deal' with Iran



DUBAI/WASHINGTON, GNS News Agency, 29

Israel and Lebanon extended their ceasefire for three weeks at a meeting at the White House brokered by President Donald Trump, who said he "was prepared to wait for "the best deal" to end his conflict with Iran. Fighting between Israel and Iranian-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon has been one of a number of sticking points to resolving the wider eight-week regional conflict, along with Iran's nuclear ambitions and control of the crucial Strait of Hormuz.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. Trump said he was in no rush to reach a peace agreement and wanted it to be "everlasting," while continuing to assert that the U.S. had a clear upper hand in the naval stand-off in the strait. A day after Iran flaunted its tightened grip over the key shipping corridor, Trump dismissed the threat posed by Iran's "little wise-guy ships" and said he believed Tehran "was hamstrung from making a deal because its leadership was in turmoil. On Thursday, he said the U.S. could knock out in a day any refurbishing of weapons that Iran may have made during a ceasefire in place since April 8.

But navigation in the passage remained effectively blocked, and the Iranian capture of two huge cargo ships was a reminder that the U.S. struggles to keep control of the strait and Tehran continued to cause trouble for oil markets and pose major strains to the global economy. The Philippine government said 15 Filipinos were on the two vessels and believed to be safe and that it expected the ships to be cleared soon. Oil prices resumed their rise on Friday as the ceasefire remained shaky with the blockade of the strait unresolved. The U.S. dollar was moving closely with oil prices, on track for its first weekly gain in three weeks, with dampened hopes for an immediate easing of tensions leading to increased safe-haven demand. IRANIAN UNITY Iran's use of a swarm of small, fast boats to seize the container ships cast doubt on Trump's suggestions that U.S. forces have disabled its naval threats and underscored Tehran's evolving tactics in the strait as it countered U.S. interception of Iran-linked oil tankers and other vessels.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei

Lebanon-Israel ceasefire extended by three weeks after Oval Office meeting



WASHINGTON/BEIRUT/JERUSA (Reuters) - Lebanon and Israel extended their ceasefire for three weeks after a high-level meeting at the White House, U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday. Trump hosted Israel's ambassador to Washington Yechiel Leiter and Lebanese ambassador to the U.S. Nada Moawad in the Oval Office for a second round of U.S.-facilitated talks, a day after Israeli strikes killed at least five people including a journalist. The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. "The Meeting went very well! The United States is going to work with Lebanon in order to help it protect itself from Hezbollah," Trump wrote on Truth Social. Hezbollah, the Iran-aligned armed group that is fighting Israel, was not present at the talks. It says it has "the right to resist" occupying forces.

Trump added that he looked forward to hosting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Lebanese President Joseph Aoun in the near future. Trump also spoke to reporters in the Oval Office alongside the participants in the meeting, saying he hoped the leaders would meet during the three-week cessation of hostilities. He said there was "a great chance" the two countries would reach a peace agreement this year. Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee and U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michel Issa also attended the meeting. The ceasefire, reached after talks between the two nations' ambassadors to Washington last week, was set to expire on Sunday. It has yielded a significant reduction in violence, but attacks have continued in southern Lebanon, where Israeli troops have seized a self-declared buffer zone. Ambassador Moawad, who went into the meeting seeking an extension of the ceasefire, thanked Trump for hosting the talks. "I think with your help, with your support, we can make Lebanon great again," she said. A Lebanese official earlier said Beirut would push for an Israeli withdrawal, the return of Lebanese detained in Israel and a delineation of the land border in a next phase of negotiations. Israel has sought to make common cause with Lebanon's government over Hezbollah, which was founded by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and which Beirut has been seeking to disarm peacefully for the past year.

Israeli ambassador Leiter said during the meeting that the talks must focus on rooting out Hezbollah rather than on Israel withdrawing its forces. "If Hezbollah and IRGC operatives continue to be treated with kid gloves, a real process of achieving our mutual goal will remain unachievable," Leiter said, according to remarks shared by

on Thursday rejected Trump's claim of disarray in the leadership, describing it as "the enemy's media operations" to maliciously undermine Iranian unity and security. "Unity will become stronger and more solid, and enemies will become weaker and more humiliated," he said in a post on X, as he remained out of the public eye since taking over from his father, the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei who was killed by U.S. strikes in the early days of the war that began on February 28. The prolonged conflict has deepened the fissure between the U.S. and NATO, with Trump repeatedly criticising members for failing to support U.S. operations. Washington is now weighing punishing "difficult" countries, such as Spain, according to policy options being reviewed on the bloc, a U.S. official told Reuters.

Item 1 of 5 A boy stands in his neighbour's apartment in a building damaged by an Israeli strike, amid a temporary ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel, in Tyre, southern Lebanon, April 23, 2026. REUTERS/Zohra Bensemra[1/5] A boy stands in his neighbour's apartment in a building damaged by an Israeli strike, amid a temporary ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel, in Tyre, southern Lebanon, April 23, 2026. REUTERS/Zohra Bensemra Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab The options are detailed in a note expressing frustration at some allies' perceived reluctance or refusal to grant the U.S. access, basing and overflight rights for the Iran war, the official said on the condition of anonymity. Trump said this week he would indefinitely extend what had been a two-week ceasefire with Iran to allow for further peace talks, which have yet to be scheduled. "Don't rush me," he said when asked how long he was willing to wait for a long-term peace deal. "I want to make the best deal ... I want to have it everlasting." He ruled out the use of nuclear weapons, telling reporters they were unnecessary because the U.S. had "decimated" Iran with conventional arms. "No, I wouldn't use it. A nuclear weapon should never be allowed to be used by anybody," Trump said when asked by a reporter at the White House.

DEADLY WEEK Despite the extension of their ceasefire, fighting continued in southern Lebanon on Thursday as Israeli forces pounded Iranian-backed Hezbollah targets following some of the deadliest days since their earlier deal on April 16 to halt fighting. The Israeli military said Hezbollah militants attacked its troops in southern Lebanon on Thursday with rockets and a drone and fired rockets towards northern Israel. Israeli forces carried out a number of strikes in response, killing three Hezbollah militants and targeting the group's infrastructure used to launch the attacks, it said. Israel has sought to make common cause with Lebanon's government over Hezbollah, which was founded by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and which Beirut has been seeking to disarm peacefully for the past year. The group was not present at the ceasefire talks in Washington. Before the announcement in Washington on Thursday, Israel warned it was ready to restart attacks on Iran and was waiting for a "green light" from the U.S. Defense Minister Israel Katz said if it did, it would begin by targeting Khamenei and "return Iran to a dark age."

the Israeli embassy in Washington. Asked how the U.S. would help Lebanon to fight Hezbollah, Trump did not provide details but said the U.S. had "a great relationship with Lebanon." Trump said Israel had to be able to defend itself against attacks from Hezbollah. Trump also called for Lebanon to abolish laws against engagement with Israel. "It's a crime to talk with Israel?" he responded when asked about the statutes known as anti-normalization laws, which he did not appear to be aware of. "Well, I'm pretty sure that that will be ended very quickly. I'll make sure of that," Trump said.

Item 1 of 12 Women react as they hug each other while protesters, including members of the media, attend a vigil to condemn the killing of journalists, a day after journalist Amal Khalil was killed in an Israeli strike, in Martyrs' Square, Beirut, Lebanon April 23, 2026. REUTERS/Marko Djurica[1/12] Women react as they hug each other while protesters, including members of the media, attend a vigil to condemn the killing of journalists, a day after journalist Amal Khalil was killed in an Israeli strike, in Martyrs' Square, Beirut, Lebanon April 23, 2026. REUTERS/Marko Djurica Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab DEADLIEST DAY SINCE CEASEFIRE

The Israeli military said that Hezbollah militants fired a missile at an Israeli military aircraft on Thursday, while also targeting Israeli soldiers operating in southern Lebanon with rockets and a drone, in separate incidents. The militant group also fired rockets toward northern Israel, it said. No injuries were reported in any of the incidents. Israel's military said it carried out a number of strikes in response, killing three Hezbollah militants and targeting the group's infrastructure that was used to launch the attacks. Lebanon's health ministry had earlier said an Israeli air strike had killed three people and artillery shelling wounded two others, including a child. Wednesday was Lebanon's deadliest day since the ceasefire took effect on April 16. Those killed by Israeli strikes included Lebanese journalist Amal Khalil, according to a senior Lebanese military official and her employer, Al-Akhbar newspaper.

Israel's military said on Wednesday it was reviewing an incident in which it had received reports that two journalists were wounded by strikes it said were aimed at vehicles departing a military structure used by Hezbollah. It said Israel does not target journalists. Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah said the group wanted the ceasefire to continue but "on the basis of full compliance by the Israeli enemy". At a televised press conference, he reiterated Hezbollah's objections to the face-to-face talks and urged the government to cancel all forms of direct contact with Israel. Hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel reignited on March 2, when the group opened fire in support of Iran in the regional war. The ceasefire in Lebanon emerged separately from Washington's efforts to resolve its conflict with Tehran, though Iran had called for Lebanon to be included in any broader truce. Hezbollah said it carried out four operations in south Lebanon on Wednesday in response to Israeli strikes. Nearly 2,500 people have been killed in Lebanon since Israel went on the offensive following Hezbollah's March 2 attack, according to Lebanese authorities. Israel is occupying a belt of the south that extends 5 to 10 km (3 to 6 miles) into Lebanon, saying it aims to shield northern Israel from attacks by Hezbollah, which has fired hundreds of rockets during the war. Israel's military reiterated a warning to residents of south Lebanon not to cross into the area. Reporting by Maya Gebeily and Tom Perry in Beirut; Jana Choukeir in Dubai; Steve Holland, Simon Lewis

Indian Navy makes history, takes global Maritime Command



GNS News Agency, April 29

Washington: The Indian Navy has assumed command of Combined Task Force 154, marking the first time it is leading the multinational training task force under the Combined Maritime Forces. The change of command ceremony was held on Feb. 11 at the CMF headquarters in Manama, Bahrain. The event was presided over by Vice Admiral Curt A. Renshaw, Commander, CMF, US NAVCENT and US Fifth Fleet.

Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff of the Indian Navy, attended the ceremony. Senior military leaders from member nations were also present. Commodore Milind M. Mokashi, Shaurya Chakra, formally took over as Commander of CTF-154 from the outgoing commander of the Italian Navy. CTF-154 focuses on training and capacity building for member nations of the 47-nation Combined Maritime Forces. The development underscores India's commitment to collaborative maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. The task force

was established in May 2023. It is dedicated to enhancing maritime security through multinational training programs across the Middle East and the wider region. The training framework is built around five pillars. These are Maritime Domain Awareness, Law of the Sea, Maritime Interdiction Operations, Maritime Rescue and Assistance, and Leadership Development.

CTF-154 conducts regular Maritime Security Enhancement Training events. It also carries out exercises such as Compass Rose and Northern and Southern Readiness. These programs aim to strengthen partner nations' capabilities against common threats. These include illegal trafficking, piracy and irregular migration. CTF-154 operates alongside other CMF task forces. CTF-150 focuses on maritime security. CTF-151 handles counter-piracy operations. CTF-152 is responsible for maritime security in the Arabian Gulf. CTF-153 oversees maritime security in the Red Sea. India's assumption of command reflects growing trust in its professional expertise and operational experience. It also signals recognition of India's role as a preferred security partner among CMF nations. The Indian Navy said it looks forward to a productive tenure. It plans to deliver high-impact training initiatives. It also aims to reinforce global maritime partnerships for peace, prosperity and security. The Combined Maritime Forces is a multinational naval partnership headquartered in Bahrain. It brings together 47 nations to promote security and stability across key international waters in the Middle East and nearby regions. India has expanded its maritime engagement in recent years. The Indian Navy has increased joint exercises, anti-piracy patrols and humanitarian missions across the Indian Ocean. It has positioned itself as a net security provider in the region, working with partners to secure sea lanes vital for global trade and energy supplies.

BNP claims victory in Bangladesh's election, set to return to power after 20 years

GNS News Agency, April 29

Dhaka: Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on Friday claimed victory in the crucial general elections, marred by sporadic incidents of violence, to elect a new government to replace the interim administration, which took charge after the fall of the Awami League regime in August 2024. A "The Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP is set to form the government after victory in the majority of seats," BNP's media cell posted on x. The Election Commission (EC) is yet to make a formal announcement.

According to multiple media reports, EC is expected to declare BNP the winner in the general elections with tallies in predawn hours on Friday, suggesting it got majority seats in parliament. Different media tallies suggested BNP received more than 151 seats in the 300-seat parliament on Thursday's daylong voting, fair enough to form the next government, ending the 18-month rule of Muhammad Yunus-led interim government.



If the party wins, Rahman will be Bangladesh's first male prime minister in 35 years. "We are confident of forming the government by winning more than two-thirds of seats," BNP's central election steering committee spokesman Mahdi Amin told a media briefing in the early hours of Friday. Rahman, who returned to Bangladesh in December last year after over 17 years in self-exile, asked party leaders and activists to offer special prayers across the country after mid-day 'Juma' prayers instead of holding victory rallies. The EC was yet to announce the voter turnout figure. It dismissed allegations of manipulation regarding voters' appearances in polling centres. "There were debates over turnout percentages in past elections as well. Please don't question it now," Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasur Uddin told a reporter on Thursday evening. He said variations were natural as results from several thousand polling centres arrived at different times. EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed on Thursday said 47.91 per cent of voters had cast ballots by 2 pm on Thursday at 36,031 of the 42,651 polling centres. More than 2,000 candidates, including a number of independents, were in the fray for 299 of the 300 parliamentary constituencies that went to the polls. A Polling for one seat was postponed due to the death of a candidate. The Election Commission made elaborate security arrangements for the elections, deploying nearly 1 million security personnel — the largest-ever in the country's electoral history.

US prepares to send second aircraft carrier to Middle East



GNS News Agency, April 29

Washington: The world's largest aircraft carrier has been ordered to sail from the Caribbean Sea to the Middle East, a person familiar with the plans said Thursday, as US President Donald Trump considers whether to take possible military action against Iran. The move by the USS Gerald R. Ford, first reported by The New York Times, will

put two carriers and their accompanying warships in the region as Trump increases pressure on Iran to make a deal over its nuclear programme. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military movements.

The USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and three guided-missile destroyers arrived in the Middle East more than two weeks ago. It marks a quick turnaround for the USS Ford, which Trump sent from the Mediterranean Sea to the Caribbean last October as the administration build up a huge military presence in the leadup to the surprise raid last month that captured then-Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. It also appears to be at odds with Trump's national security strategy, which put an emphasis on the Western Hemisphere over other parts of the world. Trump told Axios earlier in the week that he was considering sending a second carrier strike group to the Middle East. The USS Ford set out on deployment in late June 2025, which means the crew will have been deployed for eight months in two weeks time. While it is unclear how long the ship will remain in the Middle East, the move sets the crew up for an usually long deployment.

Bangladeshi voters endorse sweeping democratic reforms in national referendum

GNS News Agency, April 29 Bangladeshi voters have endorsed sweeping democratic reforms in a national referendum, the Election Commission said a key pillar of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus's post-uprising transition agenda. The referendum took place alongside parliamentary elections on Thursday (February 12) that marked the first vote since a 2024 uprising ended Sheikh Hasina's iron-fisted 15-year rule. The lengthy document, known as the "July Charter" after the month when the uprising that toppled Ms. Hasina began, proposes term limits for prime ministers, the creation of an upper house of parliament, stronger presidential powers and greater judicial independence. It also includes increased representation of women in parliament and the election of the deputy speaker

and parliamentary committee chairs from the opposition. Mr. Yunus, who took charge as interim leader after what he described as a "completely broken" political system, championed the reform blueprint as essential to preventing a return to authoritarianism. The referendum question noted that approval would make the charter "binding on the parties that win" the election, obliging them to endorse it. However, several parties raised notes of dissent before the vote, and the reforms will still require ratification by the new parliament. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) secured a landslide victory in the elections, winning a majority of more than two-thirds of the available seats. Senior BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said the party will implement the parts of the charter it agreed on.

Pakistan hockey team faces embarrassment in Australia over unpaid bills



Karachi: The players of the Pakistan hockey team were forced to spend several hours on the road upon reaching Canberra, as their hotel bookings in the Australian capital were cancelled after the Pakistan Hockey Federation failed to pay the bill due to lack of funds. They are in Australia for the second leg of the FIH Pro League event in Hobart. According to sources close to the team, the players and officials were left with no option but to "roam on the roads" before finding accommodation.

"Apparently the players and officials were booked in a four star hotel in Canberra and were told that the Pakistan Sports Board and Pakistan Hockey Federation had made all upfront payments for their stay in Canberra," a source said on Thursday. "But when they reached Canberra last week, they found no bookings for them at the designated hotel. The team's head coach Tahir Zaman faced problems getting in touch with PSB and PHF officials back home be-

cause of the time difference," he added. "Tahir messaged them about the awkward situation the players were facing and had no place to stay and rest after a long journey from Lahore," the source said.

The incident has been seen as a major source of embarrassment for Pakistan's national sport, with the team struggling to compete against top ranked sides like Australia and Germany in the Hobart leg of the Pro League. The source said that after waiting outside for several hours, the hotel management was eventually convinced and gave the players some rooms. "Because of unavailability of required rooms the players and officials were accommodated in a lesser number of rooms than they were told. As a result two-three players occupied one room and next day they went straight to the ground to play their first match against Australia, which they lost 3-2," the source said.

This is not the first time the Pakistan hockey players have faced such situations in recent past. During the first phase of the FIH Pro League held in Argentina, the players were not paid their daily allowances, putting them in a tight financial situation in a foreign country. The team is without a manager in Canberra after the regular manager, former Olympian Anjum Saeed, was removed by the PHF and not sent with the team this time. Anjum was removed after he was caught smoking on the flight while returning home and got into an altercation with airport security officials who held him back for a day, as the team resumed its onward journey to Dubai and Lahore. Before the team left for Canberra, the PSB had increased the daily allowances to USD 115 for each player. "Some local Pakistani people were contacted in Canberra who came to their rescue at the hotel after players spent time on the roads," the source said.

India overpower Namibia ahead of Pakistan clash

GNS News Agency, April 29

New Delhi: Sanju Samson disappointed again, Ishan Kishan dazzled and his mentor Hardik Pandya entertained, but India's 93-run victory over Namibia here on Thursday was not exactly the box office hit one expected ahead of a tense T20 World Cup face-off against Pakistan. The victory felt less like an assurance and more like the calm before the cricketing tempest with Pakistan lying in wait.

The margin of victory, India's highest in a T20 World Cup, did not depict the entire picture as little-known Namibian captain Gerhard Erasmus came out as a surprise package by taking 4 for 20 in India's final total of 209 for 9, despite Kishan's smashing 24-ball 61 and Pandya's 52 off 28 balls. In reply, the Namibian batting unit struggled against the kind of attack that they hardly get to play, as the innings ended on 116 in 18.2 overs. Varun Chakravarthy (3/7 in 2 overs) and Pandya (2/21 in 4 overs) shared the bulk of the spoils and India now need just one more win in their next two games to qualify for the Super Eights.



Why India's batting show, despite a 200-plus score, would be considered below par is because of the Namibian skipper. Erasmus' side-arm action created considerable discomfort for the Indian batters, including Kishan, Pandya and Tilak Varma, as he also bowled from behind the crease at times. The 24 deliveries that Erasmus bowled were certainly an eye opener for the Indian batters as to what they can expect from Pakistan's Usman Tariq, who would pose even more probing questions on a tackier Premadasa track in Colombo. When Namibia batted, they used the long handle to good effect but one always knew that it was just a matter of time before Chakravarthy and Axar Patel (2/20) came and demolished them in unison. Earlier, Samson's three-sixes innings was akin to a short-lived Instagram reel but Kishan's batting was a gripping web series, full of drama, action and anticipation. Kishan muscled five sixes and half a dozen boundaries for a 20-ball 50 that set the foundation for a marauding Pandya (52 off 28 balls) to take the team to a total that looked beyond the reach of this Namibian batting line-up.

However, Erasmus gave a fantastic account of himself and would certainly keep Pakistan's Tariq interested come Sunday. Erasmus bowled side-arm deliveries in between the stock ball which is round arm. As a variation, he also bowled from behind the crease to shorten the length, as a set Tilak Varma (25) could not reach the pitch of the delivery. It was a flat Kotla deck but Samson (22 off 8 balls) and skipper Suryakumar Yadav, with a run-a-ball 12, missed out on scoring big with the African side making some sort of a comeback with the ball during the middle overs. Surya certainly got the best delivery of the innings from left-arm spinner Bernard Scholtz, who got one to dip and turn as the skipper gave the charge, missed, and was duly stumped.

It was a golden opportunity for Samson to make it count. The three sixes — one down the ground and the other two a product of sinewy wrists — sent the capacity crowd into raptures. But another flick did not have the wings to clear the fielder at cow corner. Samson's knock was full of intent but fell short in effectiveness. The difference between Kishan and Samson over the past one month has been consistency and understanding the value of a second chance. The Namibian pacers did not stand any chance against Kishan and the moment they erred in length, his willow came down like a sledgehammer at tremendous bat speed and the sixes soared into the stands. During the back-10, India's Pandya took charge as his four sixes and four boundaries kept the momentum going, with Shivam Dube (23 off 16 balls) giving him good support in an 81-run stand off just 6.3 overs.

From sociology to journalism: A lesson from André Béteille



GNS News Agency, April 29

The passing of André Béteille, renowned sociologist and public intellectual, reminded me of an exchange I had with him that shaped my approach to journalism in later years. As a Master's student, I had applied for a scholarship at the Centre for Advanced Study in Sociological Research for the academic year 1997-99. Besides the head of the department, Anand Chakravarti, the panel included many other stalwarts, including Professor Béteille. I anticipated questions on thinkers such as Émile Durkheim, Louis Dumont, and Claude Lévi-Strauss. And sure enough, Prof. Béteille asked me about Durkheim's comparative method and urged me to point out what I thought were the shortcomings of that approach. Obituary | André Béteille: A sociologist with rigorous scholarship who laid emphasis on importance of fieldwork I thought I was well prepared. I rattled off points I had picked up from commentaries on Durkheim. "And you think Durkheim did not know this? You must always think for yourself and not just rely on what others have said about an issue," he responded. Prof. Virginius Xaxa came to my rescue and I managed to secure the scholarship. That brief exchange stayed with me. Both scholarship and journalism require independent judgment, not borrowed opinions. Prof. Béteille's own academic journey reveals this approach. Born in 1934 to a Bengali mother and a French father, his growing years reflected the confluence of cultures that defines India's pluralism. Starting out as a student of Physics, he moved to Anthropology. After completing an M.Sc. in the subject from

the University of Calcutta, he moved to Delhi.

Béteille did his doctoral research under the legendary M.N. Srinivas, who had set up the Department of Sociology at the Delhi School of Economics. Prof. Srinivas had given the concept of Sanskritisation to Indian sociology — the process through which castes placed low in the traditional hierarchy seek to move up by adopting the rituals and dietary habits of those above them. Prof. Béteille made caste, often understood in terms of one's hereditary status, a dynamic concept. His book Caste, Class and Power (1965), based on his fieldwork in Sripuram village of Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur district, demonstrated how land ownership, political authority, and economic change reshaped caste relations. It is a classic work in understanding social stratification in the modern Indian context and continues to be a model of how empirical research can illuminate broader theoretical questions. Prof. Béteille was a quintessential old-school professor: he wore a tweed jacket with a matching tie during Delhi winters, bush shirts in summer, and occasionally, a dhoti-kurta in the Bengali style. Walking into the classroom, he would remove his leather-strapped wrist-watch and place it on the table. Then, he would recap what had been taught earlier before continuing from where he had left off. More than any other scholar of his generation, he helped establish sociology as a rigorous, empirically grounded discipline — one that was capable of engaging with India's social complexity without being captive to ideology. His work constantly reminded readers that society could not be reduced to slogans or theories alone; it had to be observed, measured, and understood in its contradictions. His approach was not very different from what a reporter ought to do — go to the field, listen carefully, check facts, and resist the temptation to fit reality into preconceived frameworks. Prof. Béteille took academic writing beyond esoteric circles without ever compromising on meticulous research. And his approach teaches journalists to follow academic rigour in our writings. Reporting is not merely repeating; it is asking one's own questions and testing every claim against evidence. I have to thank my professor for instilling a fundamental principle of journalism in me.

After CWG, Olympics pitch, India now targets 2038 Asian Games



2036 Olympics, 2030 Commonwealth Games (CWG), Asian Games, commonwealth games, India targets 2038 Asian Games, Indian Olympic Association (IOA), Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), Indian express news, current affairs Earlier this month, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) wrote to the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) expressing interest in hosting the Asiad in 2038 — the next available slot as the 2026 edition will take place in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, 2030 in Doha and 2034 in Riyadh. AFTER MAKING an aggressive pitch for the 2036 Olympics and securing the hosting rights for the 2030 Commonwealth Games (CWG), India has set its sights on the Asian Games.

Earlier this month, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) wrote to the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) expressing interest in hosting the Asiad in 2038 — the next available slot as the 2026 edition will take place in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, 2030 in Doha and 2034 in Riyadh. India's proposal was discussed at the continental body's Executive Board meeting in Sanya, China, on Thursday, and it was decided that the OCA's evaluation team would visit the country to assess the bid.

IOA CEO Raghuram Iyer confirmed India's interest and said the Olympic body had written to OCA president Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar earlier this month. "We are interested in bringing the Asian Games to India. We are in touch with the OCA and have written to them expressing our interest. We will be in dialogue with the OCA," Iyer Apart from India, South Korea and Mongolia are the other countries that have so far shown interest in

hosting the 2038 Asian Games. India hosted the first-ever Asian Games in 1951. The mega event was last held in the country in 1982. On both occasions, the Games were held in New Delhi. The 2038 bid, like the 2036 Olympics pitch, is centred around Ahmedabad — the city that will host the 2030 CWG as well.

The Asian Games are considered larger than the Olympics in terms of the number of participating athletes, often featuring roughly 12,000 athletes compared to the around 10,500 at the Olympics. It also has a much bigger sports programme — the last Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, had 40 sports, whereas the 2024 Paris Olympics featured 32 sports. An official, requesting anonymity, said hosting the Asian Games in 2038 was a logical step as the costs would be significantly reduced, given the ongoing investment in sporting and civic infrastructure in Ahmedabad and other parts of Gujarat. "Ahmedabad will already have a lot of venues ready in the next three to four years. These venues are being built to foster a sporting culture. If India wins the bid to host the 2036 Olympics, the Asian Games will be the perfect legacy event as most of the venues can be reused for that," the official said. "And, by any chance, if India does not get the 2036 Olympics, hosting the 2038 Asiad would mean that the infrastructure would be put to good use, and at the same time, the country can gain enough hosting experience to aim for future Olympics." The Gujarat government has begun large-scale construction of sports venues in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, largely as a part of the 2036 Olympics bid. The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (SVP) Sports Enclave, a 355-acre area adjacent to the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, and Karai Sports Hub, with a site area of 143 acres augmented by the reclaimed riverfront in Gandhinagar, are likely to be the main Games hubs as per the proposal. The SVP Sports Enclave will house the Narendra Modi Stadium, a multi-purpose indoor arena, aquatics and tennis centres as permanent venues. In Karai, an athletics stadium is being constructed along with a shooting complex and an indoor arena. The 2030 CWG, meanwhile, will take place across multiple other venues, including the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Eka Arena and the Narendra Modi Stadium. Some sports are expected to take place in Vadodra, Gandhinagar and Ekta Nagar.

Satwik-Chirag get India first point at Thomas Cup after Lakshya Sen loses first singles to Victor Lai 18-21, 21-19, 21-10; India 1-1 Canada

GNS News Agency, April 29

India started horrendously against Canada as Victory Lai put up the expected resistance to Lakshya Sen, and exacted revenge for the All England semifinals defeat. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty levelled the scores 1-1 after defeating Jonathan Bing Tsan Lai and Kevin Lee, 21-10, 21-11 in 29 minutes. A flashy, fancy backhand pirouette jump flick from Sen landed in the net underwhelmingly midway through first set, and was an early indicator that India might start with a stutter against tricky Canada. The north American team's first two singles were bound to be dicey for Sen and Ayush Shetty who will face Brian Yang. But Sen had taken his first set lead to take the opener 21-18 using his net drops. However, when Lai pulled back from 14-18 to 18-19, it was apparent, that the compulsive retriever won't be shrugged off easily. Sen once again got into the high work rate — low returns style, where he allows games to drift into deciders. The Indian trailed 2-7 in the second and was 7-12 down around the interval. Sen did well to level at 12, but was two steps behind as Lai increased his attacking speed holding onto the lead dearly. Sen scrambled to make it 19-all, but Lai was not to be denied a decider. The Indian was nowhere in the third set, sluggish and dragging his feet, and the Canadian had his revenge after losing at



Birmingham. Four years ago, India had faced off against a much weaker Canada, with Priyanshu Rajawat downing Lai easily in third singles. But he has since risen to Top 20 and is a formidable opponent. It is now upto Ayush Shetty, Hari-Arjun and Srikanth to wrap up the tie after Satwik-Chirag were clinical against Lai-Lee. Ayush will take on Yang and hope to settle a score from Swiss Open. Hariharan Amsakuranan and MR Arjun are key in the Canada tie against Alexander Ty-Yakura Nyl. Kidambi Srikanth will need to play Joshua Nguyen in third singles, for all possible points.

Why does PV Sindhu need to play doubles at Uber Cup? For determining match order



GNS News Agency, April 29

Cometh the Uber Cup, and the questions erupt on why PV Sindhu gets suddenly drafted into playing doubles. With Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand not available after Treesa freakishly injured herself, India were once again forced into shuffling their resources and using their MVP to try tilt a match order that might help Indians against Denmark. Sindhu will play with Tanisha Crasto against Alexandra Boje, ranked No 7 in mixed doubles and Christine Busch, No 19 again in mixed. Knowing that it was the singles where Indians stand their best chance against Denmark, India needed to stack up all 3 singles within the first 4 matches. The only way to get that order WS1, WS2, WD1, WS3, WD2 was to draft Sindhu in as second doubles, so the WD2 could be pushed to the fifth rubber. Rules dictate that for team members playing both singles and doubles, an adequate break is necessary.

So if Sindhu (WR 13) takes on Line Christophersen (ranked 21) in first singles WS1, she cannot slot in at fourth rubber like the normal match order says — WS1, WD1, WS2, WD2, WS3. So to invert the fourth and fifth match order, Sindhu will now play the last match, second doubles with Tanisha Crasto.

Unnati Hooda is assigned to play second singles against Line Hojmark Kjarsfeldt, followed by Priya Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra taking on Amalie Cecilie-Mette Werge, while Tanvi Sharma gets to seal the tie against Amalie Schulz, assuming Sindhu and Unnati get the job done. 2-2 could put pressure on Tanvi though, so she's better off playing the fourth match, knowing Tanisha Crasto can be depended upon to bring her energy and guts to the last match, with Sindhu's formidable presence. India in fact fielded Saina-Sindhu pairing often when winning their two Uber Cup bronzes. Denmark's two doubles are considered stronger in matchups, though they are mostly scratch pairs

How Fernando Mendoza, NFL Draft's top pick, was shaped by his mother, who is fighting multiple sclerosis



GNS News Agency, April 29

Fernando Mendoza could be the next big thing in the NFL. At least the Las Vegas Raiders believe so. Which is why, in a field of 257 available players, the Raiders snapped up Mendoza as their first pick night. It was a remarkable journey for Mendoza who was ranked 2,149th player in the class of 2022 when it emerged from high school. Even in that list, Mendoza was the 140th quarterback.

Unlike other players known to be picked first in the NFL Draft, Mendoza was not at the venue in Pittsburgh for the NFL Draft. He stayed at home in Miami with his family. To be alongside his mother, Elsa Mendoza, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) 19 years ago, but only told her sons about the diagnosis a decade later. To understand what Elsa means to Fernando, one has to travel back in time to the day when his fate as the first Draft pick was more or less sealed: when he led Indiana to its first national championship. After winning the Heisman Trophy, Fernando thanked his mother in an emotional speech. "Mami, This is your trophy as much as it is mine," Fernando said from the podium looking at his mom in the crowd, his voice cracking under the weight of emotion. "You've always been my biggest fan. You're my light, you're my why. You're my biggest supporter."

"Mami, this is your trophy as much as it is mine... Your sacrifice, courage, love those have been my first playbook, and the playbook that I'm gonna carry through my side through my life. He continued: "You taught me that toughness doesn't need to be loud. It can be quiet and strong. It is believing in yourself when the world doesn't give you much reason to. Together, you and I, are rewriting what people think is possible."

Indiana quarterback Fernando Mendoza throws out the ceremonial first pitch at the start of a baseball game between the Miami Marlins and the St. Louis Cardinals, Tuesday, April 21, 2026, in Miami. (AP Photo) Indiana quarterback Fernando Mendoza throws out the ceremonial first pitch at the start of a baseball game between the Miami Marlins and the St. Louis Cardinals, Fernando has credited his mother, who used to play tennis in her university days, with teaching him how to throw the ball, a bread-and-butter skill for a quarterback. It's been a whole year since US President Donald Trump let out a rant from his Truth Social handle with an angry "are they STUPID?" in there underlining his exasperation. This time, his tirade was not aimed at either his political opponents or his geo-political rivals. Trump was miffed by National Football League (NFL) teams not picking Shedeur Sanders in the first round of the NFL Draft. Sanders was a prospective top pick in last year's NFL Draft class. He ended up getting picked in the fifth round as the 144th overall pick. But Trump's post highlighted just how much people, even those holding the highest offices, can be emotionally invested in the NFL Draft. A top pick — or even a pick in the first round — is not a guarantee for excellence. Neither does getting picked in the fifth round mean you cannot be great. Ask NFL legend Tom Brady, who was selected by the New England Patriots in the sixth round of the 2000 NFL Draft as the 199th overall pick, who went on to become the seven-time Super Bowl champion

Unlike an IPL auction (where teams bid for a player when their name comes up), the Draft is where each of the 32 NFL teams have an assigned order when they can pick a player who they want for their team. The NFL Draft takes place over seven rounds which are held over three days (Thursday through Saturday). The first round is held on Thursday. The second and third rounds are on Friday; rounds 4-7 are

Each team has only eight minutes to make its pick in the first round. Teams get seven minutes to make picks in the second round, five minutes for regular or compensatory picks in rounds 3-6 and four minutes in round 7. To be eligible for the draft, players must have been out of high school for at least three years. Currently, each of the 32 clubs receives one pick in each of the seven rounds of the NFL Draft. The order of selection is determined by the reverse order of finish in the previous season. This means the team which finished with the worst record last season, gets the first pick in the Draft. (This only changes if teams have traded their Draft pick spots). The NFL champion, the team that wins the Super Bowl, has the last pick among the 32 teams. Teams that didn't qualify for the playoffs are assigned draft slots 1-20. The order is determined by the standings at the end of the regular season: The club with the worst record will pick first, and the one with the best record will pick 20th. The team that lost the Super Bowl has the 31st pick in the draft. The two teams that lost in the conference championships pick in the 29th and 30th spots in the reverse order of their final regular season records. The four teams eliminated in the divisional round pick in slots 25-28 in the reverse order of their final regular season records. The four teams eliminated in the wild card round pick in slots 21-24 in the reverse order of their final regular season records. "My dream was for you to play tennis like I did. And at University of Miami there was this drill they'd run us through, where we'd practice throwing a ball across the net, to work on our serve. 'Step and throw, step and throw.' So that's what I'd tell you... And now of course every quarterback coach jokes with me, 'That's the WORST thing you could have told them.' But you made it work," Elsa wrote "My gentle giant. My darling son. My buddy. My teammate. I believe in you with every part of me."

"One of the biggest issues I had to overcome as my condition first worsened wasn't just the condition itself. It was the embarrassment," Elsa wrote in The Players' Tribune letter. "I started to have to walk with a crutch ... then for a while I had to do chemo ... and then Covid added this whole other layer of concern about me getting sick. And I think I started to feel a mental toll from all of that of like, 'Oh my God. I'm your mom!!! You're my kids!!! I'm not YOUR responsibility, you're MINE!!!' It wasn't easy."

She continued: "But you've made it so much easier. And you've done that in the sweetest, strongest, most Fernando way possible — by making me feel the exact opposite of embarrassed. You've made me feel seen. Whether it was giving me full debriefs of your college visits, what you liked and disliked (pictures included) ... or it was calling me before some big game I had to miss while in treatment ... or it's being so vocal and passionate about MS fundraising ... or it's even something as silly as joking, 'Wait, did you put on a few pounds???' when you have to carry me up the stairs ... you've always kept that same spark in your eye. "No matter what kind of state I've been in, or day I've been having — you've never once looked away. You've never once treated me like I'm embarrassing, or deficient, or anything other than someone you love and are standing by. And even as my condition has gotten worse, and as our lives continue to change around that fact: You manage to make me feel like I'm still every part of myself. Like I'm still that same person you've been teammates with since we got through our first Boston winter together. Like I'm still that same mom."

Ashwin slams Hardik Pandya for giving Krish Bhagat the death overs against CSK: 'If you bowled the 2024 T20 World Cup final over...'



Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has criticised Mumbai Indians (MI) captain Hardik Pandya for handing the ball to rookie pacer Krish Bhagat to bowl the end overs during the IPL 2026 clash against Chennai Super Kings. Bhagat bowled the 16th and 20th over of the innings, where he conceded a combined 31 runs and ensured the CSK ended their innings on a high. The pacer was introduced in the attack, despite Pandya himself having two overs under his belt.

"With Hardik Pandya, I don't have any personal relationship with him, but I always feel that he is a box office player. It is easy to say things about Hardik Pandya now, but today, when he gave Krish Bhagat the final over, I admit

that Pandya went for 38 runs in two overs. But if a player can bowl the final over of the 2024 T20 World Cup against David Miller, you can bowl this too, right?" Ashwin said on his YouTube channel. "Krish Bhagat does not have that much experience, I like how he bowled, he did not do too badly, but Pandya can take up that pressure. What's the worst that will happen?" he added. The 106-Test veteran felt that Pandya was perhaps feeling the pressure of taking over the captaincy reign from Rohit Sharma, who has led MI to five titles.

"What happened to Hardik Pandya after he came to MI after the trade, was too much for an individual to handle. You replaced a great like Rohit Sharma, and got booed by his own fans in his own stadium. That is a lot to deal with emotionally. You are only as good as your team as a captain," he said. Pandya has had a tough time with both bat and ball in IPL 2026, scoring a mere 97 runs and taking six wickets. Despite the lean run, head coach Mahela Jayawardene said in the post-match presentation that the all-rounder's form had taken a dip after a positive start to the season. "I don't think, to be honest. It is not a concern. He started well. In the first few games with the ball, he bowled really well. Overall, as a unit, we haven't been consistent. But we haven't picked up early wickets, we haven't managed to control things in the way conditions and stuff like that, so that's an overall thing," Jayawardene said.

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that much experience, I like how he bowled, he did not do too badly, but Pandya can take up that pressure. What's the worst that will happen?" he added. The 106-Test veteran felt that Pandya was perhaps feeling the pressure of taking over the captaincy reign from Rohit Sharma, who has led MI to five titles. "What happened to Hardik Pandya after he came to MI after the trade, was too much for an individual to handle. You replaced a great like Rohit Sharma, and got booed by his own fans in his own stadium. That is a lot to deal with emotionally. You are only as good as your team as a captain," he said. Pandya has had a tough time with both bat and ball in IPL 2026, scoring a mere 97 runs and taking six wickets. Despite the lean run, head coach Mahela Jayawardene said in the post-match presentation that the all-rounder's form had taken a dip after a positive start to the season. "I don't think, to be honest.

Michael Jackson biopic never takes a peek at the dark side



For, this film about one of the greatest entertainers and pop stars of all time exists happily in his Neverland, to never take a peek at the dark side. Director Antoine Fuqua known for his action films, and screenwriter John Logan whose range includes Gladiator and Skyfall, deliver you Michael Jackson the sequinned performer, and barely touch upon Michael the child who never had a childhood, Michael the adult who never grew up, Michael the alleged child abuser who could not shake off the charges, and Michael the man who unravelled and died too young. (Though a second part is promised.)

The eponymous character is played by Michael's real-life nephew Jaafar as an adult (with a remarkable likeness to his uncle) and by Valdi as a child. Neither can break free of the check-boxed boundaries within which the film moves, no doubt because it bears the imprimatur of the Michael Jackson estate, with several family members credited as producers. (Which means one has doubts about the second part.)

In a strictly linear format, the film tracks Michael from

the time he first tasted fame as just a 10-year-old, as the lead singer of The Jackson 5 group comprising his brothers, through his gradual break from his father's stranglehold, to his emergence as an artist who filled stadiums and sent fans into frenzy. Domingo single-handedly lifts the film on the acting front with his portrayal of Joseph, Michael's pushy and exploitatively brute father, even as Long as the mother is a complete wallflower. The few supposedly "deep" dialogues she has with Michael, after some particularly painful episodes, are pathetically empty.

Teller, for some reason, takes up a two-bit role of Michael's counsel John Branca, who helps him get out of Joseph's shackles. The only possible explanation is that Branca also is one of the film's producers. After his parents and maybe his brothers (who barely get a dialogue in), Michael has the closest relationship with his security guy, Billy (Jones). Besides of course, his chimp, llama, rat, snake and giraffe, who Michael holds close in lieu of the friends he never had. The closest he gets to children in the movie is when he visits them beatifically in cancer wards, reads stories to them (Yes, Peter Pan keeps popping up), signs autographs, or drops in at stores to scoop up the latest toys. No one in his inner circle seems to worry about his lack of interest in adults and the other gender, or the amount of time he spends cooped up in his room overflowing with toys and albums. So what did Michael dip into, to come out with those songs, those moves, that spectacle that were his performances? You won't come away any wiser. However, you won't come away unimpressed either, for the star that Michael Jackson was only has to take the stage for people across the world to feel the music (Jaafar channels that energy beautifully) – especially in your feet. Let your head be. "Just beat it." Michael movie cast: Jaafar Jackson, Colman Domingo, Nia Long, Julian Valdi, Miles Teller, Kendrick Sampson, KeiLyn Durrell Jones

Annu Kapoor defends 'milky body' remark on Tamannaah Bhatia, says he's ready to touch her feet

Actor Annu Kapoor, who found himself at the centre of a controversy last year after commenting on Tamannaah Bhatia's appearance, has now offered a clarification and shared the context in which the remark was made. The controversy began during an earlier interaction with Shubhankar Mishra, where Annu reacted to Tamannaah's performance in Aaj Ki Raat by saying, "Mashallah kya dudhiya badan hai (Oh my god, what milky body she has)," a comment that quickly went viral and divided opinion online.

"Last year I had shows in America. I told our creative team that the contestants are good, so suggest a googly-type song. Then they played this song 'Aaj Ki Raat'. I said the composition is very good. They said the song is very popular but contestants won't be able to score in it, so it can be a googly song because the 'mukhda' doesn't fully land. I asked them to show me the video. I watched it and said she is dancing very well. That's all that happened." "Some people abused me over it, and some said that in English 'milky body' is also used. If you say it in English, it's fine, but in Hindi it becomes a problem. Abuse in our own language hits harder, but if you say the same thing in English, no one has an issue. If I had said 'milky body', there would have been no problem. What age would she be—28, 30? My children are that age. Just because I said 'dudhiya badan', people started calling me an old man and trolling me."

He then drew a line between appreciation and intent stressing that appreciating someone's appearance should not automatically be equated with desire or inappropriate intent. "Even if I have noticed someone's body, I appreciate the physique, but I do not desire her. I do not have lust for that person. These are different things. I can appreciate your Rolls Royce, but it's not necessary that I desire it or feel greedy for it." "If you felt bad, I will touch your feet." Annu also said he has no issue acknowledging his words and apologising if needed. "If she asks me whether I said it, I will say yes, I did. If you felt bad, I will touch your feet. If a 71-year-old man touches her feet, what will she say? Noth-



ing, because I am not doing it with any wrong intention." What Annu Kapoor said earlier During the same interaction on Shubhankar Mishra's podcast, immediately after Annu Kapoor's "dudhiya badan" remark on Tamannaah Bhatia, the host brought up Tamannaah's statement about children falling asleep to her song Aaj Ki Raat, further extending the conversation. Responding to that, Annu Kapoor said, "Kids of which age sleep? A 70-year-old can also be a kid. I would have asked this question to her." He then continued in the same vein, adding, "Our sister is making kids sleep with her song, with her milky face and body, if she is making our children sleep sweetly, it's very good, man... It will be a great blessing for this country that our children get a good and healthy night's sleep. If she has any other wishes, may God give her the capability to fulfil her wishes. That's my blessing for her."

Jackky Bhagnani says he's in a 'situationship' with wife Rakul Preet Singh: 'But we are exclusive'

The actors were in conversation with the YouTube channel Zingabab, as they were asked about how they decided to marry each other. Jackky shared, "We told each other that we are not 20-21 years old anymore. We have both seen many ups and downs. Individually, I am a happy person. I am not looking for anyone to fill that void because if I am a depressed person, no matter who comes into my life, I will be depressed. And individually, you are happy too. Together, we are happier." Rakul added, "We are not filling a void in each other's lives. It's not like you didn't take me for a holiday, so I am unhappy. I can go on that holiday by myself. I think there are more important things in life to talk about."

The couple was then asked about modern-day relationships where many opt to be in a situationship, as opposed to getting married. Jackky said that the younger lot wants situationships because "they don't want that pressure of expectations. They don't want restrictions." He then added that while he and Rakul are married, they can describe their relationship as a situationship. "Rakul and I are married, but we are like in a situationship, which is, of course, we are exclusive to each other because that's why we are married. But the most important thing is that I can talk to her about anything," he said. A situationship is often described as an undefined romantic or sexual relationship that is somewhere between casual dating and a fling. Jackky takes ex-girlfriend's calls on speaker when Rakul is around

Jackky explained that if he gets a call from an ex-girlfriend, and Rakul happens to be sitting beside him, he can take that call on a speaker phone, as he does not keep things from his wife. "The ex-girlfriend might feel awkward about it. Rakul knows everything about me. So if she knows everything, then I don't need to hide anything," he said as Rakul added, "We are best friends."

Jackky continued that since he isn't hiding anything, he doesn't feel "suffocated." He added that if he tells Rakul



that he wants to spend time with his friends, she will encourage him to do so. Rakul says they are 'equal in every sense'. Rakul said that the traditional idea of marriage involves women changing their schedules around their male partners, but they are "equals in every sense." "In a lot of marriages, what's happening is that men want something and the women have surrendered, and that's how it has been happening for years. Women make plans according to their husbands' schedules. We are equals in every sense," she said. Rakul said that when people talk about changing dynamics after getting married, it only happens because the partners might find it "claustrophobic," but in their case, "We look forward to spending time with each other." Jackky also said that the filmy notion suggests that 'opposites attract', in real life, relationships of that nature might fail. "In the long run, it will fail because if your thought process, ethics, likes and dislikes don't match, that's where differences start. Because then I start keeping information from you as a partner and vice versa," he said.

Prabhas' 2010 hit Darling stuns with Rs 7.59 crore re-release opening; only Baahubali stays ahead



16 years after it first ran in cinemas, Prabhas and Kajal Aggarwal's Darling is back on the big screen and doing business that most new releases would envy. The 4K remastered version of the 2010 romantic comedy hit theatres on Thursday and, according to industry tracker Sacnilk, sold over 2 lakh tickets, earning Rs 7.59 crore on Day 1. This places it second among all Telugu re-releases in terms of opening-day collections. The only film to record a higher opening day for a Telugu re-release is Baahubali: The Beginning, which earned Rs 19.65 crore. Darling has also performed well internationally. According to data reported by Venky Box Office, Darling 4K registered a Day 1 overseas gross of \$32,093. North America was the biggest contributor, bringing in \$20,962 from 82 locations. The United Kingdom collected £7,708,

and Australia added around A\$1,000.

Darling also left behind recent high-profile re-releases in the Telugu market. According to Sacnilk, the film's opening day collections were better than what Gabbar Singh 4K and Khaleja 4K managed during their respective re-release runs, further cementing Prabhas' standing as the foremost box office draw in Telugu cinema right now.

The re-release wave in Telugu cinema picked up serious pace around 2024. Pawan Kalyan's Gabbar Singh 4K, which originally released in 2012, earned Rs 6.25 crore in India on its opening day, including previews, making it the biggest re-release domestic opener at the time, ahead of Mahesh Babu's Murari. Khaleja 4K, another Mahesh starrer, opened to Rs 6.85 crore on Day 1 worldwide and went on to cross Rs 10 crore in its total run, according to industry tracker Koimoi. Then came Baahubali: The Epic in October 2025, SS Rajamouli's combined, remastered cut of both Baahubali films, released as a single 3-hour-45-minute experience, which grossed around Rs 12.50 crore on its opening day in India, with overseas collections estimated at Rs 6-7 crore, taking the worldwide total to roughly Rs 19-20 crore. Its final tally of over Rs 51 crore worldwide made Baahubali: The Epic the highest-grossing Telugu re-release title, Sacnilk reported. Several factors came together to make Darling's re-release work where others either struggled or hit a ceiling. The Prabhas-Kajal Aggarwal chemistry feels fresh to audiences revisiting the film, and the pull of his pre-Baahubali work remains strong.

'Doctor ke liye paisa chahiye': Dinesh Hingoo, 86, still working; says character artists don't get paid much

If you are a movie buff, you would likely remember the hilarious phone conversation between Johnny Lever and Dinesh Hingoo in Baazigar or Paresh Rawal and Hingoo's scene in Hera Pheri. Known for his impeccable comic timing, Dinesh Hingoo, who has appeared in nearly 300 films, once made audiences laugh effortlessly. Today, at 86, he continues to work, because life, as he says, still comes with financial demands.

A recent video of a fan interacting with the veteran actor has gone viral on social media. In the clip, Hingoo speaks about taking up work whenever opportunities come his way and the need to earn for medical expenses. He said, "Jaata hoon kabhi kabhi, bulaya aaya toh. Doctor ke paas jaane ke liye maal chahiye. Doctor kabhi Rs 5000 mangte hai kabhi Rs 6000 (I go sometimes, if I'm called. You need money to go to the doctor. Sometimes the doctor asks for Rs 5,000, sometimes Rs 6,000)." When the fan praised his body of work, Hingoo spoke about the financial struggles faced by character actors in the industry.

"Character artists ko lekin paise milte nahi hain zaada. I worked with black and white films with Bharat Bhushan. I started getting work after Qurbani. I have worked in Gujarati and Rajasthani movies (But character artists don't get paid much. I worked in black-and-white films with Bharat Bhushan. I started getting work after Qurbani. I have worked in Gujarati and Rajasthani movies.)"

As the video spread online, it prompted a wave of reactions across social media. One user wrote, "Time plays such strange games, doesn't it? Someone who once made the world laugh, it's painful to see him grow old like this." Another highlighted the harsh financial reality behind long careers in cinema, "It's so sad—after doing so many films, if a person is still saying they aren't paid enough." A third comment read, "Character artists are often left only with stories, not money." Others expressed both admiration and sadness. "Respect... it breaks your heart to see such great artists suffer financially." "Even after working in so many films, he doesn't have enough money to go to the doctor—it feels bad. Such a fine artist." "It's something to think about—an artist works in 300 films, yet there's no guarantee of a secure future. They can't save enough to live their old age comfortably. Side actors in the film indus-



try don't earn as much as we think," read another comment. Born on April 13, 1940, in Baroda, Gujarat, Dinesh Hingoo, whose real name is Dinesh Hingorani, comes from a Parsi family. His journey into acting began during his college years, where he started performing in plays. Driven by his passion, he moved to Mumbai to pursue a career in films.

The early years in the city were far from easy. Hingoo faced significant struggles before finding his footing with a Gujarati theatre company. It was here that he met noted playwright Chandravadan Bhatt, and together they worked on several stage productions. He made his film debut with Taqdeer under Rajshri Productions, interestingly starting out not as a comedian but in a negative role. Across decades, Hingoo worked in multiple languages, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Bhojpuri, and appeared in over 300 films. His filmography includes memorable titles such as Namak Halaal, Karan Arjun, Hum Aapke Hain Koun..!, Coolie No. 1, Gupt, Baazigar, Humraaz, Saajan, and No Entry. He also remained active in the 2000s with films like Phir Hera Pheri.

'Sidharth Malhotra was afraid': Bodyguard recalls heated clash after fan tried to hug a 7-month pregnant Kiara Advani

Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani have always kept their personal life away from public glare, be it their 2023 wedding or parenthood. The actor couple, who got blessed with a baby girl last year, got married in Jaisalmer three years ago. With high-level security guarding the premises, they had a private wedding at the Suryagarh Hotel. Now, during an exclusive interview with SCREEN, Sidharth's bodyguard Zeeshan Qureshi opened up about planning the duo's wedding security. He also recalled how a fan tried to hug Kiara on set, when she was seven months pregnant.

Revealing how the Param Sundari actor asked him to take care of his wife while travelling, he shared, "Kiara already has a bodyguard with her. But, when she was seven months pregnant, Sidharth had informed me that she has a brand shoot for 2-3 days, and asked me to accompany and take care of her. I had to be very careful, Sidharth was afraid of sending her. So, I had to take more precaution than usual."

However, when she was stepping out of the van, a decently dressed person from Reliance team approached her for a selfie, and was trying to hug her. "But, when she was getting out of the vanity van, a person came. Kiara and Isha (Ambani) are friends, so sometimes there's a team from Reliance as well. When that person from their team tried to approach Kiara, I got into a heated argument with him. He was wearing a suit, I thought he is a decent man," he said.

The bodyguard revealed that he had to call Isha's brother Akash Ambani's manager to diffuse the situation. He continued, "This happens, they try to say that we are from the corporate world, I am from here and there, how

can you talk to me like that? But, that's my job. I had already barricaded, put curtains, but this person was roaming inside and trying to come near again and again. I got angry, so I called Akash Ambani's manager to get this sorted out. Many fans lose control when they see actors for real." When asked about how Kiara and Sidharth's wedding details were kept tight-lipped, Zeeshan laughed and said, "We went for recce around 2-3 times in those 4 months before the wedding. We had to keep it confidential, it is a personal choice for everyone. An actor has to behave properly with everyone, no matter what mood they are in, but when a person is getting married, they wouldn't want people running behind them or causing disturbance. So, all of this was planned very well in advance. Its not like they spoke on the phone to book everything and went to get married." He further added, "Sidharth took care of every little detail himself, he planned how everything would be kept under wraps. I had to handle all the responsibility to cover it and keep everything in control. There were no fans outside, but we were surrounded by media from all sides at the Jaisalmer venue. We also had drone security. It was a huge mahal, so we didn't face any security issue as such." Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani tied the knot on February 7, 2023, in an intimate wedding ceremony at the Suryagarh Palace, Jaisalmer. The couple got blessed with their first child, a baby girl named Saraayah Malhotra, on July 15, 2025. Navya Kharbanda is an Entertainment Journalist and Cinematic Commentator at The Indian Express, where she specializes in bridging the gap between classic Bollywood heritage and contemporary Gen-Z perspectives