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Khairatabad Ganesh Utsav Committee announces Karra Pooja on June 25

Hyderabad: Five months ahead of the Ganesh Chaturthi to be celebrated on September 14, the Khairatabad Ganesh Utsav Committee announced that the 'Karra Puja', symbolically commencing the work on city's popular towering idol, will be held on June 25.

S Raj Kumar, a member of the Khairatabad Ganesh Utsav Committee, said the puja will be held on June 25 at 5 pm. The height and theme of the idol will be announced on the same day.

Fuel, LPG Supply Stable In Telangana: OMCs

Hyderabad, May 18

: OMCs on Monday said that the availability of petrol, diesel, and LPG in Telangana is sufficient to meet current demand, and there is no shortage of these products anywhere in the state.The state-level coordinator for Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) stated that the public sector OMCs are closely monitoring the supply situation and are taking steps as required to streamline logistics and expedite deliveries even further.

During the first fortnight of May, the OMCs have registered a growth of 14.2 per cent in supplies of petrol and 15.7 per cent in supplies of diesel. Currently, the bookings of domestic LPG cylinders have also come down due to the high temperatures of summer and there is no panic bookings by the consumers, it said.

A total of 20.06 lakh doestic LPG cylinders have been delivered till May 17 in Telangana, which is completely normal for this season, it further said. LPG consumers were encouraged to book cylinders through SMS, missed call, IVRS and online platforms.

Customers were also requested to support and encourage the "Delivery Authentication Code" (DAC) sys-



tem, which is an OTP-based cylinder delivery mechanism to restrict diversion and to ensure delivery of LPG cylinders to the intended beneficiaries.

In Telangana, the DAC at present is over 95 per cent and OMCs and their agencies are requesting the support of all LPG consumers to reach 100 per cent DAC in the state.

Picture Of First Proposed Bullet Train Displayed At Railway Ministry



Hyderabad, May 18

A picture of the country's first proposed bullet train

has been displayed at the Ministry of Railways, according to reports shared on Tuesday. The picture has reportedly been installed at Gate Number 4 of the ministry building.

The image, shown in a framed display, features a sleek bullet train design in white, black and yellow tones on an elevated track. The posts did not specify when the picture was installed or whether it is linked to any official project milestone.

The move comes as India continues to expand work on high-speed rail infrastructure, with the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train corridor remaining the country's flagship project in the segment. However, the image displayed at the ministry appears to be a conceptual or representative visual rather than a confirmed operational train.

Couple Plotted To Murder 8 Lenders In Moinabad, 2 Dead, 6 Escape Dragnet

Hyderabad, May 18

: In a chilling revelation, the Cyberabad police investigating the Moinabad double murder case disclosed that a debt-ridden couple and their relative had scripted a sinister plot to murder eight women moneylenders to evade repayment.

While two women were brutally murdered and buried at a remote location, six others narrowly escaped a similar fate.

The victims, identified as Abeda Begum and Mahboob Bee from Tandur in Vikarabad district, had been constantly pressuring the accused—Karima Begum, her husband Abdul Rehman, and their relative Nayeem—to repay substantial loans.

Under the pretext of settling the dues, the trio lured

Mahboob Bee to an isolated spot near a farmhouse in Tolkatta, Moinabad, where she was strangled and buried. They repeated the horrific crime with Abeda Begum shortly after.

Following a missing person's investigation, a joint police team led by Tandur Rural CI Praveen Kumar Reddy tracked down the suspects.

Upon excavation at the crime scene, authorities recovered the skeletal remains of Mahboob Bee and the body of Abeda Begum.

During interrogation, the accused confessed that they had also summoned six other female creditors to the same spot to eliminate them, but the women survived because they did not turn up. Fearing for their safety, the six surviving women have now approached the police seeking protection.

Rahul Gandhi alleges PM Modi went to Israel complying with Trumps diktat

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Israel before war broke out in Iran complying with what he was told by US President Donald Trump.

Addressing an election rally here, targeting the BJP, Gandhi reiterated his allegation that "PM Modi will jump if Trump asks him to do so".

Further, he alleged that before the war in Iran, suddenly Modi was told to go to Israel, and he took plane, went there and came back. The reason for such behaviour was simple, "Epstein files and Adani," he alleged.



Car hits bike in Pidiched; son, daughter left orphaned

Siddipet: Reckless driving by a car driver led to the death of a couple at Pidiched in Gajwel mandal on Monday. The deceased, Athelli Praveen (48) and Jyothi, residents of Sheripally, were returning to their village after attending a function in Gajwel town when the accident occurred. A car coming from the opposite direction hit their bike.

The couple sustained serious injuries in the mishap and died while undergoing treatment at the Government ospital in Gajwel an hour later. Their son and daughter were left orphaned following the sudden demise of their parents. A case has been registered.

US Justice Dept drops all criminal charges against Adani, case closed permanently

New Delhi/New York, March 18

The US Department of Justice has permanently dropped all criminal charges against Indian tycoon Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar, bringing high-profile securities and wire fraud case in New York to a complete close after prosecutors concluded they could not sustain the allegations.

With this, multiple US regulatory and legal investigations involving the group have all closed in the last couple of days.

Last week, the US Securities and Exchange Commission settled civil allegations against the two men tied to disclosures made to investors in connection with solar energy projects in India. Court filings showed Gautam Adani agreed to pay USD 6 million and Sagar Adani

The dismissal was "with prejudice", preventing the case from being reopened.

Such dismissals are uncommon in US criminal proceedings and typically reflect a determination that pursuing the case is no longer warranted after extensive review.

The case turned in Adani's favour after prosecutors found no clear US linkages and insufficient evidence to sustain the allegations, according to people familiar with matter.

The anticipated decision follows months of aggressive engagement between US prosecutors and a formidable legal team assembled by the Adanis.

Five American legal counsel from Sullivan & Cromwell, alongside Nixon Peabody, Hecker Fink, Norton Rose Fulbright and Bracewell, made a series of submissions and presentations to US authorities as part of the review process. The review failed to produce findings capable of sustaining charges against Gautam and Sagar Adani, prompting the DoJ to move towards dismissal.

In submissions disclosed publicly on April 7, 2026, before the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, Adani's lawyers mounted a forceful challenge to the US SEC's fraud-related proceedings, calling them an "impermissibly extra-territorial application" of US securities laws. The defence argued the case involved, "Indian Defendants, an Indian issuer", securities not traded on US exchanges and alleged conduct occurring "exclusively in India".

The filings stated the SEC "lacked necessary jurisdiction", failed to establish actionable misstatements and could not tie either defendant to the bond offering. The lawyers asserted the SEC had "recast" unviable anti-bribery allegations into securities fraud claims. The submissions noted there were "no investor losses", all bond obligations were honoured and Gautam Adani "did not authorise the issuance of the bonds".

The case had faced mounting scrutiny from legal experts over whether prosecutors had stretched securities laws to pursue conduct centred overseas.

Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani and Vneet Jaain were charged only under securities and wire fraud statutes (counts 2, 3 and 4). They were not named in the more serious Foreign Corrupt Practices Act bribery charge or obstruction-related count (counts 1 and 5), which prosecutors brought against other defendants in the wider case.

The Adani Group has consistently rejected the allegations as meritless, defending its governance and compliance standards while pledging to contest the proceedings through legal channels.

That distinction, along with no US linkages, increasingly molded criticism of the government's legal approach. Former SEC commissioner Laura Unger argued that authorities had effectively attempted to predicate a securities fraud case on allegations of bribery that had neither been adjudicated nor formally pursued in India.

Arvind stokes controversy over Modi’s ‘Mujh Se Hi Jodo’ remark in Telangana

Nizamabad: Is there more than what meets the eye in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent comment, 'Mujh se hi jodo'?

Modi's remark directed at Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy during last week's public meeting had triggered a brief political debate. The debate has now been revived by BJP MP Arvind, who wondered whether Revanth Reddy was another Suvendu Adhikari in the making.

While asserting that he was unaware of Modi's intention behind the comment, Arvind said he did not know why Modi made the remark publicly, but made an enigmatic observation that he had no idea when Revanth Reddy would quit the Congress. "I have no idea if there is any link? Is there any such intention.. [like] Suvendu Adhikari," Arvind said. The BJP MP also added, "I have no idea when Revanth Reddy quits Congress."

Suvendu Adhikari, a senior BJP leader from West Bengal, was initially in the Congress and later joined the Trinamool Congress before shifting to the BJP. The comparison of Revanth Reddy with Suvendu Adhikari has not escaped the attention of political observers in the State. Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy sought to play down Modi's comment, saying it was nothing more than an invitation to work together for development.

However, political observers sensed something more than a routine call for joining hands for development, and this belief gained strength with the observations made by the BJP MP from Nizamabad.

Arvind also slammed the Chief Minister over his claim that he would continue as the CM till 2034. Citing the Congress party's poor performance in the 1995 and

1999 elections, the BJP MP said the Congress would



suffer a crushing defeat under Revanth Reddy's leadership in 2028-29.

The Congress high command should have made some other genuine leader the Chief Minister of Telangana. "My father served Congress for decades. The Congress should have appointed genuine leaders like Komatireddy Venkat Reddy or Sridhar Babu as the Chief Minister," Arvind opined. He also said that people like Revanth Reddy conduct campaigns and that he should have been offered a Cabinet berth.

Through his observations, the Chief Minister has openly admitted that the BJP would continue in power at the Centre till 2039. "Revanth Reddy declared that Rahul Gandhi will not become the Prime Minister till 2039," Arvind said.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

India needs an energy security policy

DAYS after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for reducing fuel consumption, the prices of petrol, diesel and CNG have been hiked — for the first time in more than four years. The increase had looked imminent amid surging global crude prices triggered by the war in West Asia. It's obvious that the Assembly elections in West Bengal and other states prompted the government to delay the inevitable. The writing was on the wall after the PM urged the people of the country to tighten their belts.

The government has defended the price hike by pointing to mounting losses faced by oil marketing companies. According to reports, public sector retailers were losing around Rs 1,000 crore daily while crude prices hovered above \$100 per barrel. However, this explanation alone cannot convince citizens already grappling with inflation and stagnant incomes. Economic decisions driven by electoral cycles rather than market realities don't inspire public confidence. For millions of middle-class families, farmers and people running small businesses, higher fuel rates quickly translate into costlier food, transport and essential goods.

The bigger concern is that India's heavy dependence on imported crude leaves the economy dangerously exposed to geopolitical shocks. New Delhi's attempt to secure discounted Russian crude has provided temporary relief, but even that avenue remains vulnerable to sanctions, shipping disruptions and diplomatic pressures. The crisis raises questions about India's long-term energy strategy. The government is insisting on reducing dependence on imported oil, yet progress in public transport expansion, electric mobility and renewable energy adoption remains uneven.

A blood donation camp organized under the aegis of the NTR Seva Samithi in Khammam district was successfully conducted.



“KHAMMAM, 18 MAY (INDIAN CHRONICLE) :” “On the occasion of the 43rd birthday of Junior NTR, the Khammam District NTR Seva Samithi organized its 40th blood donation camp on Sunday in support of children suffering from thalassemia. The camp was held at CVR Square Banquet Hall on Gollagudem Road near Mamata Hospital in Khammam. “Khammam Traffic S.I Tirumani Ravikumar attended the event as the chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, he conveyed birthday wishes to Junior NTR and stated that thalassemia is a hereditary disease. Keeping this in view, he advised pregnant women to undergo routine hemoglobin and electrophoresis tests. He explained that these tests help determine the type of hemoglobin a person has and are not very expensive. He also suggested that people should undergo screening before marriage. “He further stated that children suffering from thalassemia require blood transfusions once every 20 days. Normally, red blood cells (RBCs) in a healthy person regenerate once every 120 days. However, children affected by thalassemia need blood transfusions every 20 days, failing which they may suffer from several complications. Therefore, he appealed to everyone who is eligible to donate blood whenever such thalassemia blood donation camps are organized. “NTR Seva Samithi President Nunna Nageswara Rao said that fans, youth, and the public turned up in large numbers and donated blood, demonstrating their humanity and social responsibility. “He stated that the event was conducted with the objective of social service and was made successful through voluntary participation. He expressed happiness that people came forward to support children suffering from thalassemia through blood donation. He informed that 108 units of blood were collected during the camp. “Khammam District NTR Seva Samithi President Nunna Nageswara Rao and committee members extended special thanks to everyone who supported and contributed to the success of the program. “Dr. Narayanamurthy, social service organization organizer Anita, and others participated in the event.

Bonalu A Symbol of Telangana's Culture – MLA K.R. Nagaraju

“““Hanamkonda/Hasanparthy, May 18 (Indian Chronicle) : Vardhannapet MLA K.R. Nagaraju stated that the Bonalu festival—a living symbol of Telangana's culture and traditions—is a joyous occasion celebrated with great enthusiasm, bringing people from all walks of life together on a single platform. “On Monday, the MLA attended the Bonalu festivities held at the Sri Yellamma Tali Temple in Jayagiri village, located within the Hasanparthy Mandal, serving as the chief guest.

The women of the village offered Bonalu in the traditional manner, conducting the celebrations with immense

North Indian Trade Reminiscent of the East India Company

“Growing North Indian Dominance Over South Indian Markets“Business Networks Expanding From Small Shops to Large Enterprises“



Local Traders Concerned – “Our Markets Are Slipping Out of Our Hands”“Is Economic Influence Growing in the Name of Business?”“Concerns Over Declining Opportunities for Local Youth”“Increasing Investments in South Indian Cities”“Criticism That Markets Are Being Captured Through Financial Power”“Pressure Mounting on Regional Business Systems”“Demands Rising to Protect Local Traders”“Debate Intensifies Across Social and Political Circles”Manuguru, May 18 (Indian Chronicle): “The history of the British entering India through the East India Company in the name of trade, later gaining control over the country's wealth and eventually ruling India for nearly two centuries, is well known. Today, discussions are emerging in South India that certain patterns of expanding business influence are reminding people of that historical period. “From

small towns to metropolitan cities, investments by North Indian business groups are increasing across sectors such as grocery stores, textiles, jewelry, finance, real estate, hotels, wholesale markets, construction, and online trade. Local traders allege that strong financial networks and large-scale investments are helping these business groups steadily strengthen their position in South Indian markets. “Business associations claim that strategies such as operating on lower profit margins, investing heavily, and expanding through strong community support systems are creating intense competition for local traders. Many believe that markets once dominated by local businesses are gradually shifting into the hands of outside investors. “At a time when local youth are struggling with unemployment, criticism is growing that large profits earned in South India are being redirected elsewhere. Small and middle-class traders say they are facing increasing economic pressure and fear losing their place in their own regional markets. “Some observers warn that if this trend continues unchecked, local economic independence could weaken in the future. They argue that growing economic influence may eventually reduce opportunities for local communities and smaller regional businesses. “However, others point out that India is one nation, and every citizen has the constitutional right to do business anywhere in the country. They also argue that competition can bring better services, more investment, and lower prices for consumers. “The issue has now become a topic of debate across economic, social, and political circles. Various groups are demanding stronger policies to protect local businesses while also ensuring greater opportunities for local youth and regional entrepreneurs.

Review Meeting Held to Strengthen Congress Party from Booth Level in Uppal Constituency



Rajya Sabha MP Anil Kumar Yadav, District President Vajresh Yadav and Uppal Congress In-charge Parameshwar Reddy Attend”“UPPAL , MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): “A review meeting was held on Monday in Uppal constituency to strengthen the Congress Party from the booth level. The meeting was attended by Malkajgiri Parliament Coordinator and Rajya Sabha Member Anil Kumar Yadav, Medchal-Malkajgiri District Congress Committee President Vajresh Yadav, and Uppal Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy along with division presidents and district Congress executive members. “During the review meeting, discussions were held on speeding up the appointment process of booth-level agents and the selection of division presidents. Leaders also



discussed preparing party cadres for the upcoming local body elections and taking public welfare governance programs door-to-door among the people. “Speaking on the occasion, Anil Kumar Yadav said, “Under the leadership of Revanth Reddy, the people's government is functioning remarkably well. Every party worker must take the benefits of the government schemes to the people. From booth-level agents to division presidents, everyone should work like disciplined soldiers for the party. “Uppal Congress In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy stated, “It is certain that the Congress flag will fly high in Uppal. If the party remains organizationally strong, there will be no obstacles in elections. Justice will be done to every hardworking party worker. “Former corporators, division presidents, and district executive members also participated in the program.

Wishes Extended to Rafiq Ahead of Holy Mecca-Medina Pilgrimage

“Uppal Congress In-Charge Parameshwar Reddy Highlights Communal Harmony“

““UPPAL , MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-Charge M. Parameshwar Reddy met Ramanthapur Division Congress Party President Mohammed Rafiq, who is leaving for the holy pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and conveyed his heartfelt wishes. “Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy said, “May Rafiq complete the sacred pilgrimage successfully and return safely. I request him to pray for the peace and prosperity of the people of Uppal and for the success of Revanth Anna's government. May this pilgrimage bring blessings to all of us. “He stated that the Congress party stands as a symbol of communal harmony and reiterated that the welfare of all communities is the party's primary objective. “Parameshwar Reddy further wished that Rafiq's



Haji pilgrimage be auspicious and prayed that Allah's blessings remain with him always.

Responding to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's 7 appeals to the nation,



Telangana BJP President Shri N. Ramchander Rao garu drove an electric vehicle to state party office, taking forward the message of national responsibility under the “Mera Bharat, Mera Yogdan” campaign. “Shri Ramchander Rao garu called upon citizens and BJP karyakartas to actively follow the Prime Minister's appeals — saving petrol, diesel and gas, promoting public transport and carpooling, postponing unnecessary foreign travel, supporting Vocal for Local, avoiding gold purchases for a year, and encouraging natural and organic farming. “With the spirit of Mera Bharat, Mera Yogdan, Telangana BJP will take this message to every booth, every village, and every household.

Asha Workers' Issues Will Be Taken to Government for Resolution: Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy



““UPPAL, MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONIC): Asha workers met Bandari Lakshma Reddy at his residence in Sainikpuri on Sunday and submitted their grievances regarding the difficulties they are facing while discharging their duties. “During the meeting, the Asha workers explained their problems and sought the intervention of the MLA for their resolution. Responding to their concerns, the MLA assured them that he would bring the issues to the notice of the government and make efforts to ensure that they are resolved at the earliest. “Speaking on the occasion, Bandari Lakshma Reddy appreciated the services rendered by Asha workers and stated that they play a vital role in safeguarding public health. He said their contribution towards providing better healthcare services to the people is highly commendable. “Representatives of Asha workers, local leaders, and party activists were present during the programme.”

Road Works in Uppal's Sri Sri Nagar Launched at a Cost of Rs. 90 Lakhs



“Former Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy Fulfills Promise”“UPPAL , MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Road development works in Sri Sri Nagar of Uppal, sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 90 lakhs, were officially launched on Monday morning. The project was initiated following repeated requests from colony residents, who complained about the poor condition of the roads and the accidents being caused due to damaged stretches. “Last month, the residents of Sri Sri Nagar approached former Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy and Uppal Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, urging them to take immediate action for road repairs. Responding promptly, Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy succeeded in getting Rs. 90 lakhs sanctioned for the road development works. “Speaking on the occasion, Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy said that the road works were started on a war footing after discussions with municipal authorities. She assured residents that all colony-related issues brought to her notice would be resolved without delay. “Whether it is a suburban colony or a main road, there will be no discrimination in development,” she stated. “Residents expressed happiness over the commencement of the road works and thanked Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy for fulfilling the promise made to them. “Among those who participated in the programme were S. Nagaraju, Aruru Kishore Kumar, M. Bharat Raj Goud, Y. Sudhakar Rao, Appana Srinivas, M. Giri Babu, Dr. Praveen, YSN Murthy, Mallikarjuna Rao, Malla Reddy, Satyan, P. Satyanarayana, Shankar Goud, Aruru Pallavi, Appana Venkata Kumari, Hari Kumari, Radha, Swaroopa, Shobha, Anantha Padma, Jayamma, Veeramani, and several colony residents.

Delay in Kalyana Lakshmi, Shaadi Mubarak Aid Draws Protest: Activist Raises Concern



““Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, May 18: Social activist Afzal Hussain has expressed concern over delays in the clearance of Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak applications in Kagaznagar Division and submitted a representation to the Sub-Collector. “He alleged that several applications from 2024 and 2025 remain pending for months despite submission of all required documents, causing hardship to poor families waiting for financial assistance after conducting marriages through loans. “He also stated that applicants are facing difficulties due to the mandatory requirement of Gazetted Officer signatures on first marriage certificates, while many officials are reportedly refusing to sign them. “Afzal Hussain demanded immediate clearance of pending applications, clear written guidelines for authorised officials, and action against staff causing inconvenience to the public. “Others present included Mujahiddin, Abdul Azeem, Moin Khan, Munjam Anand Kumar, B Rajender and Abdul Raheman uz Zama.

BRS Running Campaign of Malice Against BJP Out of Fear, Asserts NRR

Hyderabad, May 18 : Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao today emphasized that every call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was solely aimed in the interest of the country and Mera Bharat – Mera Yogdaan (My Country-My Contribution) means every citizen fulfilling their responsibility toward the nation. Every call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is solely in the interest of the country.

Rao delivered a key address during a preparatory meeting held at the BJP state headquarters here to review upcoming party programs. He provided clear direction to party workers regarding strengthening the party organization, future courses of action, resolving public grievances, and the vital role of grassroots cadres. Several party leaders and workers attended the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, the BJP State President said Prime Minister Narendra Modi is soon completing 12 years of governance as the Prime Minister of the country. Coinciding with this milestone, nationwide awareness programs are being organized on the occasion of World Environment Day. Additionally, the central government has launched the "Mera Bharat – Mera Yogdaan" initiative focusing on energy conservation. Party leaders and workers must actively work on these three key areas. "The world is currently grappling with oil shortages. Many nations have steeply hiked fuel prices, and some have even resorted to rationing systems. However, the central government has ensured that no additional burden falls on the citizens. Nevertheless, keeping global conditions in mind, there is an urgent need to practice discipline in fuel consumption, he suggested."

Rao said due to international developments such as the Iran-US tensions and the Russia-Ukraine war, the oil crisis could worsen in the future and citizens must conserve fuel as much as possible. People should adopt carpooling, utilize public transport, and increasingly use the Metro and RTC buses. Electric vehicles must be promoted, and wherever feasible, work-from-home models should be adopted.

BJP state chief said he arrived office today in an electric car. This was not for publicity. But it was to send a message that we need to bring a change in our lifestyle for the nation's benefit and to practice what PM Narendra Modi has preached. Party workers should also follow these measures.

Stating that environmental protection is a collective responsibility, he said everyone must champion the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" (One Tree in the Name of Mother) initiative. "To preserve nature, local products should be used and indigenous (Swadeshi) goods must be promoted. Environmental conservation should be treated as a social responsibility. Under PM Modi's 12-year governance, the nation is marching toward the goals of Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) and Viksit Bharat (Developed India). Party workers must take these central schemes directly to the

public. " BJP state chief said the political environment in Telangana has deteriorated significantly due to the attitude of parties like the BRS which is resorting to defamation and personal attacks. The BRS leaders are specifically targeting the BJP with personal attacks, attempting to gain political mileage by targeting individuals and their families."

A coordinated effort is underway to defame the BJP by spending crores of rupees on posters, social media campaigns, and favorable media outlets. BRS leader KTR is spearheading this malicious campaign, Rao alleged.

If anyone commits a mistake, action under the law is inevitable. If Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar has done anything wrong, the party will take action. However, what happened here involves his family members. If his family members have committed any wrongdoing, the law will take its course, and the courts will decide. Legally, anyone can seek anticipatory bail, it is not "fleeing," but exercising a right available under the law, Rao who is also a senior lawyer said.

Before lecturing others, BRS leaders must answer for the incidents that took place during their own regime. It is absurd that those who approached the courts the moment investigations began into the irregularities and corruption of the Kaleshwaram project are now lecturing us on morality, he ridiculed.

Crimes against women rose sharply under the previous BRS regime, he said and quoted NCRB data stating that crimes registered against women in Telangana stood at 14,147 in 2014, but shot up to 23,679 by 2023, staggering increase of nearly 67 per cent. The BRS leadership must answer for this, Rao demanded. "He alleged that several BRS corporators, leaders, and ward members faced serious allegations in cases of rape, harassment, and assaults on minors during their tenure. Names of TRS (now BRS) leaders and associates surfaced in cases involving the drugging and kidnapping of young women, as well as the rape of a minor girl in Nirmal Municipality."

Launching a scathing attack at BRS Rao asked with asked such a dark history, what moral right does the BRS have to speak about women's rights and minor safety today? Did KCR resign when those incidents happened? Did KTR take responsibility? Did anyone show political morality then? Targeting the BJP now is nothing but a blatant attempt to mislead the public for political gains. "Raising the issue of Delhi liquor scam he said the BRS leadership did not resign even when serious allegations surfaced in the liquor scam involving KTR's family members. Now, they are peddling lies against the BJP. The public has already rejected the BRS. Fearing that they will be pinned down in investigations regarding the Kaleshwaram project and the Formula E-Race scam, KTR and other BRS leaders are running a malicious campaign against the BJP out of sheer panic.

Telangana State Government Whip MLA Beerla Ayilaiah launched an innovative protest against the hike in petrol and diesel prices



"Telangana State Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah embarked on a 27-kilometer cycle journey. "Strict action will be taken against the authorities no matter what difficulties farmers face... MLA Beerla Ayilaiah" (Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...May 18):- In Aleru constituency of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, Telangana State Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah launched an innovative program to protest the hike in petrol and diesel prices by the central government. To get a first-hand view of the increasing fuel burden on the people and the problems faced by farmers, a cycle yatra of about 27 kilometers was organized at 6 am on Monday from the foot of Sri Lakshminarasimhaswamy Devasthanam in Yadagirigutta to Someshwara Temple in Kolanupaka. As part of this cycle yatra, the MLA personally inspected a total of nine grain purchasing centers, including Aleru Market Yard, while traveling through villages such as Yadagiripalli, Vangapalli, Ramajipet, Pedda Kandukur, Chinna Kandukur, Bahupeta and others. He spoke directly to the farmers and inquired about issues such as grain purchasing conditions, transportation problems, shortage of porters, and availability of lorries. Noting that



there was a delay in the movement of grain at some of the purchase centers, the MLA immediately spoke to the District Collector and the concerned officials on the phone and ordered them to take immediate action. As per the MLA's orders, lorries were immediately provided to nine purchase centers and the grain transportation process was expedited. The farmers expressed their happiness and thanked the MLA. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Beerla Ayilaiah said that the welfare of farmers is the main goal of the government. He advised the officials to work vigilantly so that there is no difficulty in purchasing the grain harvested by the farmers. He warned that strict action will be taken against the concerned officials if they show negligence towards the problems of the farmers. He also said that the increased petrol and diesel prices by the central government are putting a heavy financial burden on the common people. He said that farmers, workers and the middle class people are facing severe difficulties due to the rising fuel prices. In protest against this, the MLA revealed that for the next month, he will not use official vehicles and escort vehicles during his tours of Aleru constituency and will only use electric scooters to travel among the people and understand their problems.

Government Whip MLA Beerla Ailaiah's tour on a bicycle

"(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...May 18):- Telangana State Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah, who traveled on a bicycle from Yadagirigutta to Aleru from 6 am on Monday, "expressed his concern that the poor and common people are facing a heavy burden due to the increasing prices of petrol and diesel day by day. He criticized that during the Modi government's rule, the common people have to travel on bicycles again. "Later, while traveling via Vangapalli, he visited the grain purchase center there and inspected the paddy purchase process. He suggested that the officials should take special steps to ensure that the farmers do not face any difficulties and that the grain purchase is done transparently and expeditiously. He instructed the officials to ensure that the government is committed to ensuring that the farmers get the right price for every grain they grow and to make facilities like lorries, scales and porters available



at the purchase centers on time. He warned that action would be taken against the relevant authorities if farmers face any difficulties.

Government Must Support Farmers – Ambati Srinivas



"Narsampet/Warangal, May 18 (Indian Chronicle) : Ambati Srinivas, State Vice President of the Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS), has urged the government to immediately open additional paddy procurement centers to accommodate the current crop yield. He addressed the media during a press conference held in the town on Monday. "He stated that farmers are being forced to wait for days on end due to

the unavailability of hamalis (loaders) at procurement centers on time, coupled with a shortage of transport vehicles. Consequently, he noted, some farmers—facing severe hardships—have been driven into the unfortunate situation of having to sell their produce to private traders at distressingly low prices. "Srinivas remarked that intermittent heatwaves and unseasonal rains are further compounding the difficulties faced by farmers. He advised the government to increase staff strength at procurement centers and ensure the uninterrupted availability of transport facilities. "Noting that maize farmers are already facing difficulties, and with the paddy harvest season fast approaching, he appealed to officials to establish a large number of paddy procurement centers to ensure that farmers do not face any inconvenience. "TJS Warangal District President Sheikh Javed, District Secretary Velishala Rajesh, State leaders Gunti Ramachander and Bonagani Ravinder, as well as District leaders Gunti Sanjeev, MD Sandhani, Solti Sai Kumar, Raju, and others participated in this event.

CITU Stages Unique Protest in Uppal Demanding Reduction in Petrol, Diesel Prices

"Leaders Pull Auto Rickshaw With Rope as Mark of Protest

UPPAL , MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Demanding an immediate rollback of the increased petrol and diesel prices, the CITU Uppal Circle Committee staged a unique protest at Uppal Ring Road on Monday. As part of the demonstration, leaders symbolically pulled an auto rickshaw with ropes to express their opposition to the fuel price hike. "Speaking on the occasion, CITU Uppal Circle Secretary J. Venkanna alleged that petrol prices, which were around Rs. 55 nearly 12 years ago, have now crossed Rs. 113 after the BJP government came to power at the Centre. He criticized the Central Government for increasing fuel prices immediately after the completion of elections in five states, despite repeatedly assuring the public that the country had sufficient oil reserves. "He demanded that the Central Government immediately reduce petrol and diesel prices, warning that the agitation would be intensified if the prices were not rolled back. "CITU leaders P. Raju, A.



Venkatesh, Malleesh, Prasad, Jilani, Balaswamy, Ramesh, Sampath, Ravi and others participated in the protest.

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Participates in Beerappa Kalyana Mahotsavam

"UPPAL , MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy participated in the Beerappa Kalyana Mahotsavam held at the Beerappa Temple in Ramanthapur. On this occasion, temple priests conducted special rituals, and the MLA offered special prayers after having darshan of the deity. "The MLA joined devotees in the Kalyana Mahotsavam celebrations and prayed for the peace, prosperity, and well-being of the people of Uppal. He stated that he would always extend his support for the development of the temple. "Temple committee members, local leaders, BRS party leaders, and a large number of devotees participated in the programme.



Clear Premium Water Launches 'Paani Ho Toh Clear' Campaign

"Hyderabad, May 18 (Indian Chronicle): Clear Premium Water has launched its flagship campaign, 'Paani Ho Toh Clear', according to a statement released on Monday by Clear Premium Water Founder and CEO Nayan Shah in Hyderabad. He said the campaign aims to encourage Indian consumers to choose authenticity and quality. The new television commercial, featuring brand ambassador Hrithik Roshan, uses humor, cultural nostalgia, and a strong message to highlight the issue of counterfeit bottled water in the Indian market. Shah stated that Clear Water has consistently demonstrated its commitment to quality over the past three years. He added that the company places the highest priority on consumer safety by providing safe drinking water to customers.



Youth Must Improve Their Fitness – DCC President 'Inagala'



"Hanamkonda, May 18 (Indian Chronicle) : As part of the Telangana government's "Praja Palana Pragathisheela Pranalika" (People's Administration Progressive Plan)—specifically the "99-Day Action Plan"—a 5K marathon was organized with great enthusiasm on Monday under the aegis of the District Department of Youth and Sports, centered on the theme "Youth and Sports." "Hanamkonda District Congress Committee President and KUDA Chairman

Inagala Venkatram Reddy, Warangal West MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy, and District Collector Chahat Bajpai attended as chief guests and flagged off the run. "Large numbers of young people participated in the run, which commenced at the JNS Stadium. The organizers stated that the primary objectives of this event were to promote sports, enhance physical fitness among the youth, and foster social awareness. "Speaking on the occasion, Inagala Venkatram Reddy remarked that the 99-Day Action Plan undertaken by the state government—with the aim of shaping the future of the youth—is a visionary initiative. He commended the organization of the 5K run under the theme "Youth & Sports." He further noted that sports are not merely for entertainment; they also serve to cultivate qualities such as physical strength, discipline, and social responsibility among the youth. He called upon the youth of Hanumakonda district to excel in all fields. He urged everyone to make fitness an integral part of their lives. He reiterated that the government is committed to providing the necessary infrastructure to encourage youth participation in sports.

"Congress People's Government Stands by the Poor



MLA Nayini "CMRF cheques worth 14.45 lakh distributed "Hanumakonda, May 18 (Indian Chronicle) : "Nayini Rajender Reddy, MLA of Warangal West, said the state government is delivering welfare governance by standing firmly with poor and middle-class families. "On Monday, at the MLA camp office in Balasamudram, he distributed CMRF (Chief Minister's Relief Fund) cheques worth a total of ₹14,45,500 to 48 beneficiaries from across the Warangal West constituency. "Speaking on the occasion, he said the government is extending emergency medical assistance through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to families facing financial distress due to illness, reflecting its humanitarian approach. He added that the government is making concerted efforts to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries receive the benefits of welfare schemes without exception. "He noted



(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...May 18):- BJP Kisan Morcha State General Secretary Padamati Jaganmohan Reddy, along with Padamati Shyam Sundar Reddy and Panduranga Reddy Jakka, who paid a courtesy call on BJP State President Ramachandra Rao, met him at his residence, presented him with a bouquet of flowers, honored him with a shawl and conveyed his best wishes.

Civic issues dominate Prajavani petitions in Karimnagar

Municipal Commissioner directs officials to resolve eligible grievances promptly.



KARIMNAGAR May 18 (Correspondent): Twelve petitions pertaining to civic issues were received during the weekly Prajavani grievance redressal programme organised by the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation at Kalabharati on Monday. Municipal Commissioner Praful

Desai received representations from residents of various divisions and directed officials to examine the complaints and resolve eligible grievances in accordance with rules.

Of the petitions received, five were related to the Town Planning wing, three to Revenue, two to Engineering, and one each to Sanitation and MEPMA departments. Complaints largely related to unauthorised constructions, revision of house tax assessments and drainage problems in different localities.

Mr. Desai said petitions received during the Prajavani programme were being forwarded to the respective departments for early disposal. Applications not falling within the prescribed rules would be rejected, he said, while directing officials to ensure prompt action on public grievances. Deputy Commissioner Khader Mohiuddin, DCP Basheeroddin, DE Lachireddy, ACP Sridhar, Superintendent Sunil, Shahida and other staff members were present.

Stand in Support of Education for Underprivileged Children – Dr. Anita Reddy



““Warangal, May 18 (Indian Chronicle) : Dr. Anita Reddy—President of the 'Anurag Helping Society' and National Vice President of 'World Wise Consumer Rights and Protection'—has called upon compassionate individuals and community leaders to extend their support toward the education of underprivileged children.”“On Monday, under the aegis of the 'Anurag Helping Society' and 'World Wise Consumer Rights and Protection,' a distribution program was organized under her leadership at the 'Don Bosco Home for Street Children,' located near the Warangal Railway Station. During this event, notebooks, fruits, and chocolates were distributed free of cost to orphans, semi-orphans, and street children.”“Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Anita Reddy stated that this program was organized with the firm resolve that poverty should never serve as a barrier to education. She noted that for the past 30 years, her organization has stood in support of underprivileged students by providing them with free books and covering their educational fees. Emphasizing that education serves as the foundation

for both personal and societal development—and reiterating the adage that “the gift of knowledge is the greatest of all gifts”—she urged everyone to play their part in assisting underprivileged children. Stating that focused discipline and hard work—pursued with the aim of achieving one’s goals—pave the way to success, she advised children to cultivate good conduct and a strong character alongside their academic studies. She emphasized that education serves not only as a source of knowledge but also as a pathway to economic upliftment. She encouraged students to pursue their studies with genuine interest rather than viewing them as a burden. She made it clear that no child of school-going age should be deprived of education.”“Dr. Anita Reddy commended the management of 'Don Bosco' for their special efforts in providing education—through engaging activities—to children who had dropped out during the summer holidays, as well as to those lagging behind in their studies.”“Santosh Kumar, Sarada, teachers, students, and staff members participated in this event.

Minister reviews paddy procurement in Karimnagar

Officials, millers and transporters urged to coordinate for timely completion of procurement operations.



KARIMNAGAR May 18 (Correspondent): Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Monday directed officials to expedite paddy procurement in Karimnagar district and ensure that farmers do not face inconvenience at procurement centres. Chairing a review meeting at the district Collectorate, the Minister said the administration was working on a war footing to complete procurement operations and transport the procured grain without delay. He called upon representatives of rice mills and lorry associations to extend full co-

operation to the government machinery.

MLAs Kavvampally Satyanarayana and Medipalli Satyam, District Collector Chitra Mishra, Police Commissioner Gaush Alam, officials from various departments, and representatives of the Rice Millers Association and Lorry Association attended the meeting. Mr. Prabhakar said the district had estimated procurement of three lakh metric tonnes of paddy and that arrivals had already reached the projected level at 314 procurement centres. Of the total target, procurement of 1.58 lakh metric tonnes had been completed so far, while payments amounting to ₹237.39 crore had been credited to farmers through banks.

The Minister instructed officials to complete procurement of the remaining stock within a week and ensure that transportation bottlenecks were removed immediately. He said additional lorries should be deployed in accordance with procurement volumes and rice mills should speed up unloading operations by engaging more hamalis. Expressing concern over delays at procurement centres, he said farmers were being forced to wait for days after bringing their produce and stressed the need to avoid shortage of labourers at procurement centres and mills. Mr. Prabhakar also underlined the importance of utilising local hamalis at village-level procurement centres instead of depending heavily on migrant workers. He directed district officials to closely monitor the functioning of IKP-managed centres and ensure adequate manpower at PACS centres where staff shortages were affecting operations. The Minister said police, transport, civil supplies, revenue and cooperative departments should work in coordination at all levels to ensure smooth procurement and transportation of paddy across the district.

Former Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj Congratulates Chilkanagar Student M. Rushi for Securing Telangana EAPCET State First Rank

““UPPAL , MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Former Chilkanagar Division Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, along with BRS party leaders, visited the residence of M. Rushi, a resident of Chilkanagar, who secured the State First Rank in the Telangana EAPCET Engineering results, and congratulated her on the remarkable achievement. She felicitated the student with a shawl and extended her wishes by offering sweets.”“Speaking on the occasion, former corporator Geetha Praveen said that M. Rushi, daughter of Kondal Reddy and Srilatha, had brought great recognition not only to her parents but also to the entire Chilkanagar area by securing the top rank in the state. She stated that the achievement had brought pride and prestige to Chilkanagar across Telangana.”“She further wished Rushi continued success in academics and hoped that she would achieve many more ranks and scale greater heights in the future. Geetha Praveen also assured her support and co-operation whenever needed and prayed for God’s blessings to always remain with the student. BRS state leader



Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, Eddula Kondal Reddy, Jalli Mohan, Masa Shekhar, Ashok Chary, Yadagiri, Pochayya, Shyam, Beerappa Gadda Balu, Banti Goud, Chinna, Srinagar Colony Association President Om Prakash, Anjaiah and others participated in the programme.

Support price for farmers.. Key decision-maker in the central cabinet..

Greetings to the farmer's brother, Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India..:



- BJP Kisan Morchā Telangana State General Secretary Padamati Jagannathan Reddy ““(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle..May 18):- Increase in minimum support price (MSP) for kharif crops..The central government has taken a key decision with the aim of welfare of farmers, who are the backbone of the country. The central cabinet’s approval of a huge increase in the minimum support prices of various crops for the 2026-27 Kharif season is very pleasing for farmers, said BJP Kisan Morchā Telangana State General Secretary Padamati Jagannathan Reddy. Kisan Morchā state leader Jagannathan Reddy

described it as very gratifying that the central government has approved the support price for the crops grown by farmers in this way in favor of the increased prices. This credit goes to the head of India, the great man, the great man, the farmer’s brother, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi. As part of this..Grains & Cereals.. Per quintal..Rice (Grade A): Rs.2,461..Maize: Rs.2,410 Sajja: Rs.2,900 Ragi: Rs.5,205 Hybrid Jowar: Rs.4,023 Maldandi Jowar: Rs.4,073..Pulses“Pesars: Rs.8,780 (Highest)“Kandul: Rs.8,450“Minum: Rs.8,200..Oilseeds & Other Crops..“Sesame: Rs.10,346..Odisha: Rs.10,052..Sunflower: Rs.8,343..Groundnut: Rs.7,517“Soybean: Rs.5,708“Cotton (Long variety): Rs.8,667“Pasta (medium grade): Rs.8,267“Main objective: These prices have been fixed with the aim of providing at least 50% additional profit to the farmer over the investment costs. He said that this will greatly contribute to the financial self-reliance of the food grains. With the announcement of the support price by the Prime Minister of India for the farmers, who are the backbone of the country, the farmers will develop further and lay the foundation for the future of the country, said BJP Kisan Morchā Telangana State General Secretary Padamati Jagannathan Reddy on this occasion. He said that the happiness in the eyes of the farmers can be seen after the central government announced the support price for the farmers and approved it in the cabinet.

Parameshwar Reddy Meets HMWSSB ED Pankaja Over Drinking Water and Drainage Issues

““UPPAL, MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy met HMWSSB Executive Director Pankaja on Monday and submitted a representation regarding drinking water and drainage issues in the Uppal constituency.”“During the meeting, he raised several key civic problems, including the construction of a new underground drainage system near Vakiti Buchi Reddy’s house at Beerappa Gadda, installation of new drinking water pipelines in the Ramalayam Galli area of Beerappa Gadda, and restoration of water supply in Kummari Kunta of Chilkanagar, where residents have reportedly been facing water supply disruption for the past two weeks.”“He also brought to the notice of officials the issue of water pollution in Srinagar Colony of Beerappa Gadda division and sought the laying of new drinking water pipelines. In Uppal division, residents of Old Village, Kuruma Nagar, Uppal Hills, and Vijayapuri Colony have been experiencing low water pressure for the last two weeks, he said.”“Parameshwar Reddy further appealed for immediate action to resolve water pollution problems in Ram Reddy Nagar under Venkat Reddy Nagar division by installing new pipelines. He also urged officials to expedite underground drainage works in Ramanthapur Baghat, where the tender process has already been completed.”“Speaking on the occasion,



Parameshwar Reddy said, “Drinking water and drainage problems in the Uppal constituency have become severe. People are suffering due to lack of water supply and contaminated drinking water. Officials must respond immediately and take up the works on a war footing. Projects where tenders have been completed should be accelerated without delay.”“Among those who participated in the programme were Akiti Agam Reddy, Rajesh Mudiraj, Srikanth Yadav, Arun Patel, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Sunku Shekhar Reddy, Manda Murali Krishna Reddy, Mahender Mudiraj, Jagadeesh, Ashok, Balachander, Anoop, and local colony members.

Khammam Flood Mock Exercise Successfully Conducted Ahead of Monsoon Season



“People must strictly follow officials’ instructions and cooperate during floods — District Collector TS Divakar”“Important documents should be kept safely in waterproof zip bags during emergencies”“Successful conduct of flood mock exercise as part of monsoon preparedness”“District Collector inspected mock drill and evacuation process at Munneru”“Khammam, May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“District Collector TS Divakar stated that people must strictly follow the instructions of officials and cooperate during flood situations. He said that a successful flood mock exercise was conducted to create awareness among the public about disaster management and to fully prepare the district administration for the monsoon season.”“On Monday, the District Collector inspected the flood hazard mock exercise conducted in the Munneru river basin area in accordance with the guidelines of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the directions of the State Government.”“Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that loss of life during disasters like floods can be prevented if officials and the public work in coordination. He noted that people generally do not vacate their homes until floodwaters become visible and stressed that this attitude needs to change. He advised people to cooperate immediately whenever officials issue evacuation orders.”“The Collector explained that the mock exercise was conducted step-by-step to demonstrate how various departments should respond immediately after receiving information from the Collectorate Control Room during monsoon emergencies, how people should be shifted to safer places, how rescue teams should function, and how relief camps should be managed.”“He said that officials from NDRF, SDRF, Revenue, Municipal, Medical & Health, Electricity, Police, TGSTDC, Fire Services, Animal Husbandry, and other departments jointly participated in the drill to practice disaster response measures. He added that such mock drills help identify shortcomings in the system and improve

future preparedness and efficiency.”“As part of the exercise, the District Control Room received information that areas along the Munneru river were likely to be flooded. Rescue teams and concerned officials were immediately alerted. With the support of Aapada Mithra volunteers, residents were evacuated to safer areas and shifted to a rehabilitation center set up at Ram Leela Function Hall.”“The District Collector also inspected the relief camp at Ram Leela Function Hall and instructed officials regarding the provision of food, drinking water, sanitation, electricity, medical services, and other essential facilities for flood victims.”“The Collector warned that during floods people are at high risk of losing important documents and valuables. He advised families to keep Aadhaar cards, ration cards, bank passbooks, land documents, jewelry, and other valuables ready in waterproof zip bags so they can be carried easily during emergencies. He urged every family to stay prepared with advance planning.”“He also directed officials to prepare awareness videos on disaster management and widely circulate them through various media platforms to educate the public.”“The Collector further stated that a mock exercise was also conducted at Khammam General Hospital to demonstrate how flood victims would be rescued and provided with medical treatment if trapped during floods.”“The program was attended by Municipal Commissioner Abhishek Agastya, Edulapuram Municipal Commissioner Srinivas Reddy, RDO Srinivas, SDRF 6th Battalion Assistant Commander B. Mariyadas, NDRF Inspector Pradeep Kumar, Transport Department AMVI officials, TGNPDCL officials, Medical & Health Department, Animal Husbandry Department, Municipal, Revenue, Civil Supplies, Police officials, rescue teams, Aapada Mithra volunteers, and officials from various departments.”“Issued by: District Public Relations Officer’s Office, Khammam.

Former Uppal MLA NVSS Prabhakar Participates in Sri Beerappa Swamy–Kamarathi Devi Kalyana Mahotsavam

““UPPAL , MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Former Uppal MLA Dr. NVSS Prabhakar attended the Sri Sri Beerappa Swamy – Kamarathi Devi Kalyana Mahotsavam celebrations held on Monday at the Beerappa Temple in Ramanthapur as the chief guest.”“Temple committee members and Oggu artists accorded him a grand welcome with Purna Kumbham. Later, he offered special prayers at the temple and received the blessings of Sri Beerappa Swamy.”“Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Prabhakar said that the Sri Beerappa Swamy–Kamarathi Devi Kalyana Mahotsavam symbolizes the unity of the Kuruma and Yadava communities. He stated that it is everyone’s responsibility to preserve and pass on Oggu folk traditions and cultural festivals in both urban and rural areas to future generations.”“Ramanthapur Division President Vangala Santosh Gupta, BJP senior leaders Vallapu Jagan Yadav, Thalla Balakrishna Goud, Shaga Ravi, Maheshwar Reddy, temple committee members, devotees, and others participated in the programme.”“

How a 5-gram bust blew the lid off a plan to build a mephedrone empire



GNS News Agency, May 18

When a team from Wagholi police station arrested two drug peddlers on April 16 this year with five grams of mephedrone, they had little idea how deep the investigation would run in the days ahead. As the probe gathered pace and arrests mounted, the police got a whiff of attempts by some suspects to procure a chemical. The tip-off ultimately helped investigators take down a plan hatched by a synthetic narcotics chemist and an alleged drug kingpin to set up a mephedrone manufacturing unit in Pune.

The police also discovered that the synthetic drug chemist arrested in the present case had earlier been nabbed in connection with a major mephedrone bust in Pune’s Kurkumbh area in 2016 and had secured bail in January 2025. The investigation into the latest case began after an input from the confidential informants on April 16 led a team from Wagholi police station to arrest two peddlers, Hari Uttam Ufade, 35, and Anis Shammu Sayyed, 27. In their search, the police recovered 5.5 grams of mephedrone worth Rs 1.1 lakh in the illegal market. Mephedrone is valued at Rs 2 crores per kilogram in the international illegal market. A coordinated probe was launched, monitored by Deputy Commissioner Somay Munde and led by Senior Inspector Nandkumar Gaikwad and Assistant Inspector Vijay Chandan. The investigation into the supply chain of the seized drugs led the police to three more suspects: Sumit Ghule , 41,, a notorious drugs kingpin arrested for smuggling rackets in the past and his aides Rushikesh Yanbhar,

29, and Pratik Hole, 32“While we were probing the transactions, movements and communication of these suspects, we received concrete inputs that Ghule and some other suspects were trying to procure a specific chemical from a place outside Maharashtra. This chemical is a key component in the synthesis of mephedrone. Leads from this aspect of the probe and more arrests we made, gave us the details on a plan these racketeers were planning something big,” said an officer who was part of the probe.

The return of the chemistIn the subsequent probe, the police arrested three key suspects: Ramniwas Bishnoi, 25, from whom 62.62 grams of mephedrone was seized, Ashok Dhawale, 26, from whom 159 grams of mephedrone was seized and Vipinkumar Shriramsagar Pandit, 54, an MSC in Chemistry who was arrested in the past for his involvement in a major mephedrone production and smuggling racket busted by the Customs Department in 2016 in Pune’s Kurkumbh area. He was released on bail in January 2025.

“Our investigation revealed that Ghule, Dhawale and Pandit were planning to set up a manufacturing unit for mephedrone synthesis. For this, they were searching for a place in a comparatively secluded area in rural Pune. They had even visited some places for this purpose. We have also learned that they planned to temporarily set up a mephedrone synthesis lab in a flat to begin their business. Thus, an input about the procurement of a chemical led us to bust a plan to set up a mephedrone factory in Pune,” said an officer. In August 2016, the Customs Department arrested several drug racketeers, including a British national of Indian origin, and seized 159 kilograms of mephedrone, valued at Rs 25 crore then, in a raid at a chemical factory in Kurkumbh industrial area. The plant was licensed for the production of industrial reagents. Mephedrone, also known as Meow Meow or White Magic, is a synthetically manufactured stimulant of the amphetamine and cathinone category. Till early 2010s, the drug was not included in the list of contrabands under the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. But after multiple seizures of large quantities of the drug and rising instances of its consumption as a narcotic in large cities, authorities included it in the list in 2015.

Young BJP leader stabbed on a street in Surat late night; Police probing motive

GNS News Agency, May 18

A 23-year-old restaurateur who is also a ward leader in the Surat City BJP, Jay Dalal, was allegedly stabbed to death in a public place after an altercation with “friends” late night, police said. Dalal who is vice president of the youth wing of Dindoli ward in Surat, his mother Jayshree Dalal is a member of the party’s Mahila Morcha. She is also the complainant in the case at Udhna police station where the FIR identifies three accused: Milan Koli, Pankaj Patil and Kishan Parmar, all residents of the Dindoli area in Surat, who have been charged of murder under the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita.

Kishan Parmar, the police said, has a number of cases pending against him. He had been recently released from PASA (Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act) detention. The incident took place in the Udhna area on Road number 6, where Dalal was in a group of around five-six youths of which the three accused got into an altercation with him, the reason for which is under investigation, police said. The men then took out knives from their pocket and stabbed him repeatedly. After Dalal fell on the ground, the trio escaped from the spot, while the two remaining persons immediately took Jay Dalal to Apple hospital at Udhna Darwaja, where he was declared dead on arrival by doctors. The hospital authorities informed police about the incident, while the parents of the deceased were informed by two of his friends who were present at the spot at 12.30 am on Monday. Udhna police inspector R M Thakore told



The Indian Express, “The deceased Jay Dalal runs a restaurant and hotel business in Dindoli and Vesu area, and he left home on Sunday night at around 8.30 pm, after he received a call from a friend. He reached Udhna Road No. 6, where he met his friends. Something had gone wrong among them, which led to the oral altercations. Angered by this, three youths took out a knife and stabbed him to death. The victim had five to six stab wounds, which had caused his death.” He added, “ We have identified three accused and have launched a hunt for them. The trio will be arrested soon. The reason behind the quarrel is not yet known.” Jay’s parents, Nagin Dalal and his wife, Jayshree along with several others including BJP leaders, reached the hospital after learning about the incident.

48 accident-prone zones in Mumbai to undergo makeover, BMC floats tender

GNS News Agency, May 18

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) Monday floated a Rs 22-crore tender to mitigate 48 accident-prone zones, popularly known as black spots, in the city. According to the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, a blind spot or black spot is a 500-metre stretch in a state or national highway or urban road where five serious road crashes are reported within a period of three years or any spot where 10 or more accident-related deaths were reported within a three-year period.

The 48 locations that have been identified by BMC are key areas that record heavy vehicular footfall, including the Amar Mahal Junction, intersection of Eastern Express Highway (EEH) and Jogeshwari Vikhroli Link Road (JVLR), Sion Circle Junction, King Circle Junction, Sakinaka Junction (Andheri East), Haji Ali Junction, Mith Chowky (Malad), Bindoo Madhav Thackeray Junction (Worli), Mahim Junction, and Chheda Nagar Junction, among other spots. During a survey, civic officials said, it was found that most of these roads had uneven surfaces and didn’t have adequate space for pedestrians to walk. For instance, at the Mahim Junction, several portions of the road surface are excavated and uneven, posing a serious threat to motorists. As a result, as part of the mitigation measure, the BMC will be laying concrete on the excavated portions of the road to make sure the surface is even and level. Furthermore, the mitigation measures also include applying thermoplastic road signage and yellow and black paint on the dividers as part of the road safety mechanism. Similarly, the roads at the



Sion and King Circle Junction will also be laid with strong concrete aggregate for an even surface. “Improving the existing condition of these locations is of utmost priority since they record a high number of deaths and injuries compared to other locations in the city. We are introducing design changes at these locations to reduce the number of crashes and save lives,” an official told The Indian Express. Furthermore, the officials also maintained that in order to reduce the number of crashes, fatalities, and serious injuries, and make the junctions safe to navigate, the civic body will be widening pedestrian crossings and sidewalks, and traffic rumbles and speed breakers will also be introduced in all 48 locations to keep a check on speeding vehicles, among others. “The transformation will make the existing roads safer for all users, reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, and streamline the flow of traffic,” the official added.

Karnataka Congress government to mark 3 years with Tumakuru event tomorrow; BJP says ‘achievements only visible on paper’

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara Monday said the revenue department will hand over title deeds to 1.52 lakh beneficiaries at the public event to be held in Tumakuru on Tuesday to commemorate the third anniversary of the formation of the Congress government in the state. “We had several assurances in our manifesto. We will convey to the public the assurances we fulfilled at the gathering,” he added. Asked if the party is using the occasion as a show of strength amid the alleged power tussle between CM Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D K Shivakumar, the home minister dismissed the suggestion and replied, “We are organising it to tell the people that we

walked the talk.” Meanwhile, the event, which has been named ‘Sadhana Samavesha’, has attracted criticism from the BJP. Leader of Opposition R Ashok slammed it as a Congress party convention. “For namesake, they have put my name in the invitation, along with that of Union Ministers (from Karnataka). Who will attend this?” he asked. The event, he said, was being held on the graves of farmers who died by suicide in the state. “They are misusing the tax money of the people,” Ashok added. BJP state president B Y Vijayendra asked what great achievement the state government was celebrating by organising the convention.

Mundhwa land scam case: Pune EOW files chargesheet against MP Parth Pawar’s partner Digvijay Patil



The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Pune city police last month filed a 180-page chargesheet at a local court against Amadea Enterprises LLP co-owner Digvijay Patil in the Mundhwa land deal scam. Late deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar’s son Parth Pawar, who is now a Member of Parliament (MP) in Rajya Sabha, and Digvijay Patil are partners in Amadea Enterprises LLP. A First Information Report (FIR) in this case was registered at Khadak police station.

Earlier, on January 27, the EOW, investigating the alleged irregularities in the Mundhwa land deal, had filed a 1,886-page chargesheet against accused Sheetal Tejwani, 44, a resident of Oxford Hallmark in the plush Koregaon Park area of Pune city. Tejwani was arrested in this case on December 3. The offence pertains to alleged irregularities involving two separate land parcels in Bopodi and Mundhwa, linked by a common factor: suspended tehsildar Suryakant Yewale, who is accused of issuing wrongful or-

ders in both cases. Yewale is also named as an accused in this case, but he obtained an interim anticipatory bail.

“Chargesheet against Yewale has not been filed yet. Supplementary probe against him and other accused is on,” a police officer said. The land parcel in Mundhwa, which was earlier a Mahar Watan – a hereditary land grant, had been in possession of the government and was leased to the Botanical Survey of India when its sale deed was executed in May last year with Amadea Enterprises LLP. It is alleged that the sale deed was executed without the mandatory approval of the state government, at a significantly lower price, and also with a waiver of stamp duty. The police have alleged that Tejwani, as a power of attorney holder for 272 watandars, allegedly sold the 40 acres of Mundhwa land in government possession to Amadea Enterprises LLP.

Meanwhile, following a complaint filed by the office of the Inspector General of Registration (IGR) in connection with allegations of graft and irregularities in a multi-crore land deal involving Amadea Enterprises LLP, an FIR of cheating and criminal breach of trust was lodged at Bavdhan police station on November 6, against Digvijay Patil, Tejwani, and Ravindra Taru, the now-suspended sub-registrar who registered the deal. The Pimpri Chinchwad police have charge sheets against Tejwani and Patil in this case. Tejwani was arrested for this offence on December 16. Later, on January 3 this year, she was arrested in connection with another FIR registered at Pimpri police station, for allegedly defaulting on Seva Vikas Co-operative Bank Limited loans of about Rs 20.49 crore. Last month, the Bombay High Court had declared Tejwani’s arrest in the two cases at Pimpri and Bavdhan police stations illegal.

‘Stone-pelting will end in Bengal like Kashmir’: Suvendu Adhikari’s warning after Park Circus violence

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari issued a stern warning to protesters Monday, asserting that just as stone-pelting was successfully ended in Jammu and Kashmir, it will soon be completely eliminated in Bengal. Adhikari visited police personnel who were injured during violent protests and stone-pelting at the busy Park Circus seven-point crossing “Anyone can protest. This is a democratic country. The lower-ranked police officers have been told that any individual, political group, or religious group can make a demand. They will give a representation and an officer in charge, and an inspector in charge at the police station will meet them. They will be heard, and their queries answered,” Adhikari told the media after meeting with the injured policemen near the office of the deputy commissioner of police (Southeast) in Park Circus.

“But a situation where people suddenly resort to stone-pelting while raising religious slogans will simply not be tolerated. Stone-pelting stopped in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370. I believe it is now time that stone-pelting is brought to an absolute halt in Kolkata and across West Bengal,” Adhikari said. “I came here to support our injured personnel as both the police minister and the chief minister. The days when policemen were left to get injured while the police minister sat back in an air-conditioned room are over,” he said, taking a swipe at the previous administration: “Zero tolerance for vandalism” “I appeal to those people, don’t do this. Please refrain from such activities. If you think, like in the previous government, that the hands of policemen are tied up, you are wrong. Zero tolerance for vandalism, rowdies. Zero tolerance for anti-nationals and criminals. This is the last time I am telling you, not only strong action, arrests will be made, but monitoring will be done until the criminals are convicted,” said Adhikari.

Adhikari said he had only asked the police to strictly enforce the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). “I have asked the police to act without looking at political affiliations, religious identities, or high-profile backers. I am highly satisfied with the swift intervention of the Kolkata police and the



central forces yesterday. Over 40 arrests have already been made, and the police commissioner is personally monitoring the situation.” He stated that within six months, the manpower, logistical, and other needs of the Kolkata police will be met. “We will restore the glory of the Kolkata police. Under the previous government, the Kolkata police became non-functional. We will also request the central government to maintain the presence of central forces here until an alternative plan is in place,” he added.

Adhikari alleged that Sunday’s flare-up was orchestrated. “The violence we witnessed yesterday at Park Circus was pre-planned. There were inciting social media posts circulating prior to the incident, and the police are actively investigating that digital trail,” he said. Tensions escalated at Park Circus when a mob began throwing stones at the police, who had to use lathi charges to disperse the crowd. The protests were against the ban on animal slaughter, restrictions on loudspeakers in religious places, and the government’s demolition of a factory in Tiljala, where three workers recently died in a fire. During the protests, demonstrators blocked the seven-point crossing in Park Circus. When the police arrived at the scene, bricks were thrown at them, prompting the police to use batons to control the situation. On Monday, a large contingent of police and CRPF personnel was deployed in the area.

Tamil Nadu woman crushed to death after elephant falls on her in Karnataka’s Dubare camp

GNS News Agency, May 18

A 33-year-old tourist from Tamil Nadu died after an elephant fell on her during a fight between two elephants at a wildlife camp in Karnataka’s Kodagu district. The deceased, identified as Tulasi, had come to the Dubare elephant camp with her husband and child. According to a local, the incident occurred in the morning, when tourists are allowed to watch elephants being scrubbed, bathed, and fed. Officials said captive elephants Kanchan and Martanda got into a fight while being bathed. Despite the mahouts’ attempts to control them, Kanchan charged and rammed into Martanda, knocking it off balance and sending it falling. “As Kanchan charged, in a bid to escape, Tulasi started running like others, but lost balance and fell down. Martanda fell on her,” a local said.

Meanwhile, Tulasi’s husband and her child, who were standing next to her, escaped unhurt. Karnataka Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar B Khandre described it as an unforeseeable incident and directed officials to conduct a thorough inquiry and take measures to prevent such accidents in the future. “No matter how well-trained elephants and other wild animals are, predicting their



behaviour at any given moment remains difficult,” Khandre said. Khandre also directed officials to prohibit tourists from touching elephants’ trunks, standing beside them for photographs, washing or feeding them jaggery, bananas, or other food. He also ordered that tourists maintain a safe distance from all wild animals at such sites. Dubare is known for its elephant camp on the banks of the Kaveri River. Many elephants caught in the forests are usually trained in the camp, and tourists and visitors are allowed there.

Haryana plans complete waiver on road tax, registration fees to boost EV adoption

In a major push towards sustainable transportation, the Haryana Government is preparing to offer complete exemption on registration fees and road tax for electric vehicles (EVs). The move, discussed during a six-hour-long high-level Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nayab Saini, aims to encourage the adoption of eco-friendly vehicles and strengthen the state’s green mobility infrastructure. According to government officials, the Transport Department has prepared a proposal to make registration completely free for electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and four-wheelers in Haryana. The move follows similar policies already implemented in neighbouring regions such as Chandigarh, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh. “The proposal has already received approval from Transport Minister Anil Vij and has been forwarded to the chief minister for final consideration. While several states currently provide direct purchase subsidies for EV buyers, Haryana’s proposal primarily focuses on eliminating registration-related costs,” an official said.

Officials said the decision is aimed at accelerating the transition to clean, sustainable transportation while reducing pollution in urban areas, especially in the National Capital Region (NCR). The Haryana Cabinet also discussed stricter vehicle regulations in NCR areas, where only CNG and electric vehicles may be permitted in the future. However, sources indicate that the state’s upcoming EV policy may also include subsidy provisions to further encourage electric vehicle adoption. The move comes amid growing pressure on the Haryana Government after many residents reportedly registered their vehicles in Chandigarh to benefit from its free EV registration policy introduced four years ago.

“Chandigarh’s EV policy, which waived registration fees and offered subsidies, led to a noticeable rise in EV registrations from neighbouring regions. In addition to the registration waiver proposal, the Haryana Government is also drafting a new EV policy through the Industry Department.

Computer scientist, eduator: Meet Prof Susan Elias, St Stephen’s College first woman principal



GNS News Agency, May 18When St Stephen’s College opens its gates this June, it will do so under new leadership — ending a prolonged administrative tussle and marking a historic first in the institution’s 145-year history.Professor Susan Elias, a computer scientist and academic administrator, is set to become the college’s first woman principal from June 1. She succeeds Professor John Varghese, whose continuation in office after the completion of his tenure had triggered years of conflict between the college and varsityUnlike many of her predecessors at Stephen’s, an institution historically associated with humanities, theology, politics, and the liberal arts, Elias is from a markedly different academic background with nearly three decades of experience in engineering education and interdisciplinary research.Professor Elias built her entire academic career in Chennai before moving into national-level university administration roles.

She completed her Bachelors of Engineering in Computer Science from Bharath Engineering College in 1991, Masters of Engineering in Multimedia Technology from Anna University, PhD in Computer Science from Anna University and was a Postdoctoral fellowship at Indian Institute of Technology Madras.Over the past three decades, she moved steadily through teaching, research administration, and institutional leadership positions.Before her appointment at St Stephen’s, Elias held senior leadership roles across several private universities and engineering institutions. She served as a Pro Vice Chancellor (Research) at Chandigarh

University and Director of Research and Head of the Digital Health & Bio-Innovations Centre at Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science.She was the Dean of the School of Electronics Engineering (SENSE) at Vellore Institute of Technology in Chennai. She was also the Deputy Director for the Centre of Advanced Data Sciences in the same institute.She was also a professor at Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering.Her later roles increasingly focused on interdisciplinary research administration, particularly AI applications in healthcare, electronics, and sustainability.Elias’s academic work spans machine learning, explainable AI, medical imaging, federated learning, robotics, and digital health. Much of her published research sits at the intersection of engineering and healthcare

Her research profile also includes externally funded projects supported by agencies such as DRDO, DST and MeitY.Elias’s appointment comes after years of uncertainty surrounding the office of the principal at St Stephen’s.The college administration and DU had sparred over the continuation of Professor Varghese beyond his original five-year term, which ended in March 2021.DU had repeatedly termed his continuation “illegal” and “non-statutory”, arguing that the extension violated the University Grants Commission’s (UGC) regulations requiring a fresh selection process and performance review involving university and UGC nominees.The dispute unfolded alongside another major confrontation between the university and the college over admissions policy after Stephen’s resisted DU’s insistence that non-minority admissions be conducted solely through CUET scores without interviews.In December, the college finally advertised the position publicly. Sources at the college told The Indian Express that Elias was one among the eight shortlisted candidates for the post.Speaking to The Indian Express, College Chairman Paul Swarup said Professor Elias came from a “computing and engineering background”, describing her appointment as a move that could bring “the cutting edge of technology hopefully at St Stephen’s”.Swarup said the appointment followed “the proper procedure”, with the post being publicly advertised, followed by interviews, shortlisting and candidate presentations before the final selection was made.

‘Wires, detonators’: Probe into PM Modi Bengaluru security scare widens as new details emerge

GNS News Agency, May 18

The probe into the recovery of suspected explosive materials near Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s convoy route Sunday on the outskirts of Bengaluru has widened, with investigators probing the possibility of a “larger conspiracy” behind the incident.According to the Bengaluru police, detonators, an electronic timer circuit, wires, camphor, and matchsticks were also found in the same box along with gelatin sticks, which were recovered from a vacant land near the route through which the Prime Minister’s convoy was scheduled to pass during his visit to an event organised by the Art of Living Foundation.

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara confirmed Tuesday that gelatin sticks were recovered near the route. “Immediately after the information was received, the police and security agencies rushed to the spot, secured the area, and detained one person in connection with the incident. Investigation is underway to determine how the explosives reached the location,” he told reporters.The police said the suspicious materials were recovered near Thathaguni in Kaggalipura on the outskirts of Bengaluru. “The electronic circuit may have included provisions to set a date and time, raising concerns that if detonators had been attached and activated, the materials could potentially have caused a blast,” said a source.According to a complaint filed by a police constable who was on duty in the area that day, officers noticed the suspicious package during bandobast duty near a mud path along Kanakapura Road, close to a forested stretch. The materials were allegedly found about “20 feet away from the road in an empty space adjacent to the forest area compound”, according to the First Information Report (FIR).On inspection, the police said they found a khaki-coloured cardboard box wrapped in tape inside a plastic cover. The box contained six stick-like objects resembling gelatin sticks, along with wires, tape, empty containers, and other suspicious materials.Authorities are yet to



officially confirm the exact nature, origin, and intended use of the recovered materials.

The police also revealed that a man had earlier made threat calls to the police control room, claiming explosions would occur near HAL and the Art of Living premises. Security teams subsequently conducted searches at both locations. While nothing suspicious was found near HAL, the suspected explosive materials were later recovered near Kaggalipura.A man identified as Lohith, 40, was detained from a house near Koramangala after police traced the threat calls. However, Mohammed Sujeetha, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southeast Division), said preliminary investigations have not established any direct connection between the detained man and the recovered materials.Seemant Kumar Singh, Commissioner, Bengaluru police, confirmed that the man is mentally unstable and is still under detention.Police sources added that the man had allegedly made similar hoax calls during previous VIP visits.The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has since visited the spot, collected preliminary information from Bengaluru South district police officers, and joined the probe. Teams from the National Security Guard (NSG) and central intelligence agencies have also inspected the site.

Why fewer Indian students are getting into colleges in US, UK and Canada this year

GNS News Agency, May 18

Several universities in the United States, United Kingdom and Canada have reported a drop in international student enrolment this year compared to 2025. The reason? Restrictive government policies and visa issues.Amid this churn, students are increasingly looking at European and Asia Pacific countries.These findings were part of a new Global Enrolment Benchmark Survey for the January-March 2026 intake. It is produced by the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (NAFSA), an association of International educators; Oxford Test of English; and Studyportals, is based on responses from 254 universities across 36 countries.

“Half of universities surveyed reported lower enrolments compared to the same intake last year,” the report stated.It also noted that 73% of universities surveyed said restrictive government policies or visa issues are a significant problem. And 67% said these issues had the biggest negative influence on enrolments.The report stated, “Many describe how policy volatility directly suppressed realised enrolments, converting offer-holders into deferrals, late arrivals, or losses to alternative destinations.”This sentence will feel familiar to many Indian students. For an Indian family, a study-abroad plan is rarely casual. It may involve years of preparation, an education loan, language tests, application fees and the hope that the student will eventually earn enough to justify the investment.A visa delay or rejection can throw everything into chaos. A student may miss the intake, lose money on deposits, defer admission, or switch countries entirely.

The decline is concentrated in the big English-speaking destinations. As the report puts it, “Australia, Canada, the UK and the US saw declines for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate enrolments.”In contrast, it said, “Institutions in European countries and in APAC (Asia Pacific Countries including Fiji, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan) excluding Australia, reported enrolment growth, particularly at undergraduate level.”As per the report, in the

United States, new international enrolments were down 20% at Bachelor’s level and 24% at Master’s level. In Canada, the decline was 24% for Bachelor’s and 19% for Master’s.The UK saw a fall of 11% and 15% in the two levels respectively, while Australia reported a small 1% fall at Bachelor’s level but a sharper 16% drop at Master’s level.According to the report, 62% of US institutions reported lower undergraduate enrolments for the January-March 2026 intake.Canada’s numbers are especially striking. The report stated that 69% of Canadian institutions reported lower undergraduate enrolments, and 80% reported lower postgraduate enrolments.The UK is also feeling pressure, especially in postgraduate education: 65% of UK institutions reported lower postgraduate enrolments. In Australia, 67% said postgraduate enrolments were down.

Meanwhile, European institutions reported average growth of 5% at Bachelor’s level and 1% at Master’s level. In APAC countries, excluding Australia, the reported increase was 16% for Bachelor’s and 5% for Master’s, though the sample size there was small.The report describes this as a split market: “APAC countries (excl. Australia) and European countries stand out as the exception to the prevailing downturn, with undergraduate enrolments rising sharply.”In other words, students are not giving up on international education. They are looking harder at where the risk is lowest and the value is clearest. The main reason for the turbulence is not a sudden collapse but policy uncertainty.Another major obstacle is money. The survey found that 49% of institutions see affordable tuition and cost of living as a significant issue, up from 46% in January to June in 2025. The pressure is visible across major destinations. In Australia, 56% of institutions cited affordability and cost of living as a significant issue. In the US, the figure was 52%. In Europe, 49%. In the UK, 46%.The report noted that universities often connect cost and policy uncertainty, saying “concerns about return on investment for students magnify the impact of uncertainty”.Housing is becoming a problem of its own.

Punjab Vigilance bribery case: CBI arrests 3; Reader to VB chief absconding



GNS News Agency, May 18

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Tuesday arrested three men in connection with a Rs 20 lakh bribery case involving the Punjab Vigilance Bureau. While the middlemen were apprehended after a high-speed chase, the Reader to the Chief Director of Vigilance remains at large.

The case was registered following a complaint by a Punjab state tax officer. According to a CBI statement, the accused, Vikas alias Vicky Goyal and his son Raghav Goyal, demanded Rs 20 lakh to secure the closure of a pending vigilance complaint against the officer.The agency alleged that the duo acted as intermediaries for senior Vigilance officials. Specifically, O P Rana, the Reader to the Chief Director (Vigilance), allegedly assured the complain-

2 children die in Bengaluru shed fire; police point to materials stored iside

GNS News Agency, May 18

A day after two children of migrant labourers died in a fire inside a shed in Bengaluru’s K Narayanapura area, the police on Tuesday said highly inflammable materials stored inside the structure and the possible spread of an open flame from outside were the likely cause of the blaze.The victims—Arjun, 5, and Asha, 3—children of migrant labourers from Devadurga taluk in Raichur district, died after a fire broke out in a shed on Monday afternoon. The Kothanur police have registered a case of unnatural death.

According to the police, the family had moved to Bengaluru around four months ago for work and were living in one of several sheds on a property belonging to a man identified as Krishnamurthy. The children were under the care of their grandmother after their parents left for work around 9 am.Investigators said the children had entered the vacant shed to play, something they reportedly did every day. “The shed contained several old clothes, mosquito nets, and other materials that can catch fire very easily,” a police officer said.

The police suspect that a fire lit by labourers behind the shed for daily use may have accidentally spread to the structure. They, however, ruled out an electrical short circuit as the cause of the blaze after inspections by the Scene of Crime Office (SOCO) and Bangalore Electricity Supply

ant that the matter would be settled once the “illegal gratification” was paid.Following a verification process, the bribe amount was allegedly reduced to Rs 13 lakh, and a Samsung Galaxy Z Fold7 mobile phone intended for Rana was provided.On May 11, CBI teams laid a trap in Chandigarh. Ankit Wadhwa, an associate, was caught red-handed while accepting the cash and the phone, according to the statement.Upon seeing CBI officials, the Goyals and Rana allegedly attempted to flee. The agency noted that the accused were alerted by armed gunmen present at the scene for surveillance.After a chase, the CBI team intercepted and apprehended the Goyals and two gunmen near Ambala at the Punjab-Haryana border. However, Rana evaded arrest and remains at large.Searches conducted at the residences of the Goyals in Malout and Rana’s home in Chandigarh led to the recovery of Rs 9 lakh in cash and incriminating documents, according to the CBI statement.

Further investigation revealed that the accused OP exchanged sensitive information related to ongoing Vigilance matters and private individuals. The broader conspiracy, including potential illegal gratification connections and the involvement of other persons, is still under investigation, the agency noted.“The accused private persons were given police gunman officially. The role and attachment of Punjab Police gunmen carrying AK-47 rifles with the private accused persons is also being examined. The accused will be produced before the designated court at Chandigarh,” the agency added.



Company (Bescom).Investigators also found kitchen-related items and matchboxes inside the shed that the family used regularly. The police said these materials might have accidentally triggered the fire while the children were playing inside.The police suspect the children died due to asphyxiation from dense smoke before sustaining burn injuries. One of the children died on the spot, while the other was declared dead at a hospital.The police said they received information about the incident around 2 pm. Investigators said there was no indication of foul play or any other external cause behind the fire.

‘I am not on the run’: Punjab Vigilance Bureau chief as CBI raids continue at Mohali headquarters

GNS News Agency, May 18

In a piquant situation, Sharad Satya Chauhan, Chief Director of Punjab Vigilance Bureau, attended office Tuesday even as teams of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) continued their raid at the bureau headquarters in Mohali in connection with a bribery racket involving his reader.Speaking to The Indian Express, Chauhan, the senior-most IPS officer in the state, said that, contrary to media reports, he was present in his office. “You people (media) are saying that I am on the run. I am not. I am sitting in my office since morning. Last evening too, I was in my office till 6 pm. The Bureau will cooperate with CBI in whatever action they are taking,” the 1994 batch Indian Police Service officer said.

A statement issued by the Chief Director and later by the Vigilance Bureau too said, “A private individual has been caught by CBI, and the investigation is ongoing. If the name of anyone from the Bureau arises, we will cooperate fully with CBI and let the law take its course”.Meanwhile, sources said Chauhan’s reader, Inspector O P Rana, who was nabbed red-handed Monday night at a Chandigarh five-star hotel while accepting Rs 14 lakh in cash, may be made an approver by CBI. Sources said the reader had not been

arrested, and only one alleged middleman from Malout, Raghav Goyal, had been arrested.The CBI probe, based on an FIR registered on May 11 in Chandigarh, centres on an alleged bribery scandal involving officials and middlemen demanding around Rs 20-25 lakh to settle cases. The role of a woman police officer of Punjab is also said to be under the scanner in the alleged deal.CBI first raided a five-star hotel in Chandigarh on Monday night, where Inspector O P Rana was allegedly involved in a bribe transaction with a complainant. The agency reportedly seized around Rs 13 lakh in cash, along with documents, mobile phones, and audio recordings.

The raid extended to the Vigilance Bureau office late Monday night and into Tuesday morning, where CBI questioned staff and conducted a detailed search.This development has raised serious questions about graft within Punjab’s anti-corruption body. The Bureau’s chief, Chauhan, a top contender for the post of director general of police (DGP) in Punjab, has come under scrutiny due to his proximity to the arrested reader.Political reactions have begun pouring in, with the Congress leadership highlighting the irony of the state’s Vigilance Bureau facing such allegations.Neither the Punjab Government nor the CBI has yet released a formal statement on the latest developments.

U-turn on Bengaluru civic polls: Karnataka SEC seeks 3-month extension from Supreme Court



GNS News Agency, May 18

In a reversal of its earlier stance, the Karnataka State Election Commission (SEC) Monday approached the Supreme Court seeking a 90-day extension to conduct the long-delayed Bengaluru civic polls. The move comes just days after State Election Commissioner G S Sangreshi had asserted that the elections for the five corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) would be held between June 14 and June 24.

In an interim application filed before the apex court, the SEC argued that the extension is necessary due to the overlapping timelines of the Census and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. Both exercises have reportedly exhausted the state’s administrative and logistical resources.“The concerns expressed by the State Government authorities prima facie appear to be genuine,” the

petition stated. It further noted that on May 8, GBA officials formally requested more time, citing that the same officials required for poll duty are currently mandated by the Union government for census and SIR work.When The Indian Express contacted Sangreshi for a response, his office stated that he was in a meeting and would reply later.Meanwhile, Congress sources indicated that top leadership, including Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D K Shivakumar, is split on whether to proceed with the June schedule.

“Many leaders are wary of holding elections so soon and prefer a delay to better align their campaign strategies,” a senior Congress leader told The Indian Express. Despite this, Shivakumar is expected to announce a “big guarantee” specifically for Bengaluru on May 13, signalling that the party is preparing for any outcome the Supreme Court decides.Bengaluru has been without an elected civic body since September 2020, when the term of the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) expired. The transition to the GBA structure, which splits the city into five corporations and 369 wards, has been fraught with legal and administrative hurdles.The GBA has announced that there are approximately 88.95 lakh voters across 369 wards. The electorate comprises around 45.7 lakh men, 43.2 lakh women, and 1,635 others. Last week, Sangreshi stated that they needed to submit a compliance report to the Supreme Court by June 30, contrary to the latest interim application plea.

PCOS has a new name: Here’s why experts say it matters for millions of women



In a landmark global effort led by Monash University, one of the world’s most common women’s health conditions has been renamed to better reflect its complex, multi-system nature. The condition, previously known as Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), will now be called Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS), a change experts say corrects decades of misunderstanding that reduced the disorder to just “ovarian cysts.” The re-naming, published in The Lancet, follows 14 years of global collaboration involving clinicians, researchers, patient groups and women living with the condition. Experts say the new name reflects the condition’s broader impact across the endocrine, metabolic and reproductive systems, and could improve how it is diagnosed, explained and treated.

What was known as PCOS affects around one in eight women globally, or more than 170 million women, and is associated with a wide spectrum of symptoms including irregular or absent menstrual cycles, infertility, pregnancy complications, excess hair growth, acne, anxiety, depression, weight gain, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. “For too long, the name reduced a complex, long-term endocrine disorder to a misunderstanding about ‘cysts’ and a narrow focus on the ovaries. This contributed to delayed diagnosis and inadequate treatment,” said Professor Helena Teede, Director of the Monash Centre for Health Research and Implementation and president of the International Society of Endocrinology. Prof Teede, who led the re-naming process, said decades of research have shown that the condition does not involve abnormal ovarian cysts. “What we now know is that there is no increase in abnormal cysts on the ovary. Instead, there are arrested follicles that may appear cyst-like on ultrasound. The previous name obscured the true complexity of the condition,” she said.

Normally, during each menstrual cycle, several follicles start growing in the ovary. One becomes the dominant follicle. It matures fully and releases an egg (ovulation). The remaining follicles naturally regress. In what was

traditionally called PCOS, that maturation process gets disrupted. Instead of one follicle fully developing, many follicles stall midway. They remain small and immature rather than progressing to ovulation. These are called arrested follicles. On an ultrasound, these immature follicles often appear as multiple small round fluid-filled structures around the ovary. For years, they were mistaken for “cysts,” which is one reason the term PCOS was misleading. “While Monash-led international guidelines have advanced care, changing the name was the next critical step toward improving long-term recognition and outcomes,” Prof Teede added. India was closely involved in the global consensus-building process. “India had significant engagement in this process,” Prof Teede told The Indian Express. Dr Madhuri Patil, president-elect of the Indian Society for Assisted Reproduction and one of the clinicians involved, said the renaming involved “more than 22,000 survey responses, multiple workshops, women with lived experience, health professionals and 56 patient and professional societies across the world.” She noted that the old name focussed narrowly on ovarian features while ignoring the condition’s endocrine, metabolic, reproductive and dermatological manifestations. “PMOS is more accurate because it reflects the genetic origins and diverse clinical features of the condition,” she said.

The naming process also considered cultural sensitivities across countries. “The term ‘reproductive’ was intentionally avoided after extensive global consultation, including women from different cultural contexts. In some societies, a strong focus on fertility can increase stigma or shame, particularly where a woman’s social value is closely tied to childbearing,” Dr Patil explained. The change carries particular significance for India, where experts estimate the prevalence of the condition to be between 16 and 18 per cent. Dr Patil said the inclusion of “metabolic” in the new name is especially relevant given India’s high rates of metabolic syndrome and insulin resistance. “Even adolescents with PCOS can show metabolic abnormalities, though the incidence rises with age,” she added. She pointed to the “thrifty genotype” hypothesis — the idea that populations historically exposed to cycles of food scarcity evolved to store energy more efficiently, increasing susceptibility to obesity and Type 2 diabetes in modern environments of calorie abundance. She added that the term polyendocrine better captures the condition’s effects beyond the ovaries, including disruptions involving the hypothalamus and pituitary gland, insulin regulation and pancreatic function, adipose tissue and obesity-related inflammation and adrenal hormone production. “PMOS reflects the dysfunction of multiple hormonal systems, not just irregular ovulation. It captures the full biological complexity of the disorder,” Dr Patil said.

Nearly 7 lakh TB cases in India could have been prevented in 2023: Lancet study flags the reason

Eliminating undernutrition could have prevented nearly seven lakh tuberculosis (TB) cases in India in 2023 alone, according to a major new modelling study that underscores what public health experts have long argued: India cannot eliminate tuberculosis without tackling hunger and poor nutrition. Published in The Lancet Global Health, the study estimates that if all adult undernutrition — defined as a body mass index (BMI) below 18.5, the threshold used to classify an adult as underweight — was eliminated, 28.6 per cent of adult TB episodes in India could have been avoided.

“With India’s huge population, this amounts to approximately 7,12,000 adult TB episodes in 2023,” Prof Pete Dodd, Professor of Mathematical Modelling and Epidemiology at the University of Sheffield, told The Indian Express. The study used mathematical modelling — a method that combines known disease patterns with population-level data to estimate how changing one risk factor affects overall disease burden. In this case, researchers modelled what would happen if undernutrition, one of the strongest known risk factors for tuberculosis, were reduced or eliminated. TB is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, but infection alone does not always lead to disease. Many people carry the bacterium without falling ill because their immune systems keep it in check. Undernutrition changes that equation. When the body lacks sufficient calories, protein and essential micronutrients, the immune system weakens, making it harder to contain latent TB infection and easier for active disease to develop. Their estimates suggest that globally, eliminating moderate-to-severe undernutrition could prevent 1.4 million TB cases, or about 15 per cent of adult tuberculosis worldwide. Eliminating all undernutrition could avert 2.3 million cases, equivalent to nearly a quarter of global adult TB incidence in 2023. Prof Dodd acknowledged that these represent best-case estimates. “This is the upper limit of what is theoretically possible, much like estimates for smoking or diabetes-related TB risk. But it allows us to compare risk factors, and these numbers show that undernutrition is an enormously important driver of TB in India,” he said.

“More than 40 per cent of TB in India is attributable to undernutrition,” said Dr Soumya Swaminathan, former chief scientist at the World Health Organization and currently Chairperson of the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, who was not associated with the present study.

Dr Swaminathan pointed to the landmark Indian Council of Medical Research-backed RATIONS trial — short for Reducing Activation of Tuberculosis by Improvement of



Nutritional Status — which offered some of the strongest real-world evidence yet. The study found that providing a modest monthly food basket containing pulses, oil, rice and micronutrients to household contacts of TB patients reduced the risk of developing active tuberculosis by 49 per cent. In the trial, adults with TB received food baskets providing approximately 1,200 calories and 52 grams of protein daily, along with micronutrient supplementation and the government’s direct benefit transfer support. The basket included rice, chickpea flour, milk powder and vegetable oil — simple staples designed to meet basic nutritional needs.

The evidence is now compelling,” Dr Swaminathan said. “We need to identify districts and families with high undernutrition burden and strengthen the Public Distribution System, both in terms of quality and quantity.” Dr Anurag Bhargava, who led the RATIONS trial at Kasturba Medical College, believes a strengthened PDS, particularly one that expands access to protein-rich pulses, could transform both TB prevention and broader public health outcomes. “TB deaths can be prevented by systematically assessing and addressing undernutrition in patients,” he said. Writing recently in PLOS Global Public Health, Dr Bhargava further argued that proper nutrition can function as a “vaccine” by preventing disease onset, reducing deaths during treatment and lowering recurrence after recovery. India carries the world’s largest TB burden, even as progress has accelerated. According to government data, annual new TB cases in India declined by 21 per cent between 2015 and 2024, while TB mortality fell by 28 per cent during the same period. Yet India still accounts for a substantial share of the global TB burden. “TB control has to move beyond the language of war against a bacterium,” Dr Bhargava wrote, “and towards improving the underlying health and social conditions that make people vulnerable in the first place.”

King on Punjabi rap songs objectifying women: Have you heard Bhojpuri songs?

Mumbai: Singer-rapper King recently addressed the long-debated issue of objectification of women in Punjabi music, especially that of the rap genre. When asked about the criticism often directed at Punjabi songs for allegedly promoting stereotypes and problematic representation of women, the artist chose to respond with honesty. He urged people to look at music as a subjective art form rather than boxing one industry into a stereotype.

Reacting to the debate, King said, “Have you listened to Bhojpuri songs? Have you listened to Bollywood songs? How much music have people actually heard while growing up? Music is a very subjective thing.” The singer further explained that artists evolve with time, experiences, and their surroundings.

According to him, the concept of music often reflects phases of life and personal journeys. “Artists are human beings too. What an artist experienced ten years ago, with certain people or in a certain environment, can show up in their music. Especially in hip-hop, sometimes experiences

are exaggerated, sometimes told in a raw way, and sometimes in a poetic manner.” King went on to add that listeners also have a responsibility to understand art in a broader sense. “I believe every artist should evolve, and every listener should also understand that music is subjective. If we pick one thing and say that this entire community or genre does this, then we are not really understanding art.” Speaking about songs that often become popular despite controversial lyrics, King said vibe often plays a major role. “Sometimes it’s not about words, it’s about the vibe. If you like a peppy number, you will listen to it. People enjoy things. It’s not always about selling or money. We tend to take music way more seriously than it actually is. We need to relax and enjoy the songs instead of putting so much thought to it.”

On the work front, King has delivered chartbusters like Tu Aake Dekhle, Maan Meri Jaan, and OOPS, building a loyal fanbase across the country. The singer recently also made his acting debut with the intense OTT drama Lukhe, where he shared screen space with Palak Tiwari, Raashii Khanna, and others.

Bengaluru man has heart blockage despite a clean CT 2 years ago, didn’t smoke, exercised daily: Here’s why



Sometimes we tend to ignore a family history of cholesterol as a significant risk for heart attacks. So I had a 37-year-old health-conscious executive with a family history of heart disease come to me with furrowed brows. At the age of 35, concerned because of his family history, he underwent a detailed heart evaluation. This included a treadmill stress test and a coronary CT angiogram — a sophisticated scan that looks directly at the arteries of the heart and can detect both hardened plaque and the softer, earlier fatty deposits that can eventually lead to blockages. His arteries appeared clean. There was no visible plaque. No sign of coronary artery disease. Despite clean reports, he stuck to discipline over the next two years. He remained physically active, walked between 7,000 and 10,000 steps daily, exercised regularly, maintained a healthy weight (his BMI was 24 or normal), did not smoke and generally ate well. Two years later, he had some chest discomfort. From zero, his plaque had crusted in two years although such a pileup is not seen before five years of an angiogram!

Cautious about family history, he did the treadmill stress test, which showed changes that can sometimes suggest reduced blood flow to the heart. Yet he also performed exceptionally well on the test, lasting about 13 minutes and reaching a level of exertion that reflects very strong fitness. Because of this mixed picture, doctors proceeded to an angiogram, an invasive test in which dye is injected directly into the heart’s arteries to look for narrowing. This test showed that one artery had a 60 percent narrowing and another had a smaller 30 percent narrowing. To determine whether the larger narrowing was seriously restricting blood flow, doctors performed an additional measurement. Think of it as checking water pressure across a partially narrowed pipe. The result showed blood was still flowing well enough and a stent was not needed. Instead, treatment began with baby aspirin and rosuvastatin, a powerful cholesterol-lowering medication. Knowing him to be meticulous, I checked his clinical history. Although low density lipoprotein (LDL) or bad cholesterol should be less than 100 mg/dL in Indians, given their genetic risk of early heart attack, his LDL had consistently run on the higher side since his early 20s, ranging between 140 and 159 mg/dL. He told me that his doctors had since told him to keep his body

weight and activity patterns constant and he had not bothered much, thinking these would keep his LDL in check. Except they didn’t.

How can arteries look completely clean at 35 and then show plaque at 37?

Plaque buildup is often far more complex and far less visible in its early stages than most people realise. Imagine rust slowly forming inside a pipe. For a long time, the inside may still look smooth enough that no scan can detect a problem. But beneath the surface, small changes are already taking place. Over time, enough material builds up so that it finally becomes visible., a “clean” heart scan means no plaque large enough to be seen at that moment. It does not always mean the underlying reason for plaque formation is absent. This is why a normal scan, while very reassuring, is not an absolute guarantee.

The biggest factor in this case is likely years of elevated cholesterol, which his clinical history showed was high from the 20s. If someone inherits a tendency to elevated LDL cholesterol from childhood or early adulthood, their arteries are essentially exposed to excess cholesterol for decades longer than average. This condition is called familial hypercholesterolemia, and it affects roughly one in 250 people, so it is not rare. If one parent carries a genetic tendency toward high cholesterol, there is roughly a 50% chance of it being passed down to a child. If untreated, it can dramatically increase the risk of early coronary artery disease because LDL cholesterol is elevated from birth. A person with this condition may have no symptoms at all until plaque has already built up. Many people inherit more subtle patterns, such as persistently above-average LDL, abnormal cholesterol particle types, elevated Lipoprotein(a), which is a type of lipid or fat in the body that is similar in structure to LDL and is more likely to stick to artery walls. These don’t always produce spectacular cholesterol numbers, but they can still substantially raise heart attack risk. Sometimes elevated triglycerides, another type of fat, may be a problem. When they stick around in the bloodstream for too long, fatty components invade the artery walls. And, like cholesterol, they can build up over time. When cholesterol enters the artery wall, the body reacts as though it is responding to an injury. That inflammatory response can accelerate plaque growth. Stress, poor sleep, certain medical conditions, and other hidden biological factors are other triggers. Two people can have exactly the same cholesterol number on a blood test, but one may have particles that are far more likely to settle into the artery wall and trigger plaque formation. This is why some outwardly healthy, active people still develop heart disease relatively young. Plaque growth is also rarely smooth and predictable. It can move in bursts. There may be years of very slow change followed by a period of faster progression. This can make it seem as though disease appeared suddenly, when in reality it had been quietly developing below the radar.

Malaria vaccine cuts child deaths by 13% in Africa, offering fresh hope: The Lancet

A landmark real-world study published in The Lancet has found that the world’s first approved malaria vaccine reduced overall child deaths by 13 per cent in parts of Africa, providing the strongest evidence yet that immunisation can significantly reduce mortality. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has hailed the findings as a major milestone in the global fight against malaria and a sign that eliminating the disease within this generation is an achievable goal. The study found that the RTS, S/AS01E malaria vaccine, introduced through routine childhood immunisation programmes in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi, led to a substantial decline in child mortality over four years.

Children who received the full four-dose course experienced a 13 per cent reduction in all-cause mortality compared to children in areas where the vaccine was introduced later — effectively preventing one in every eight child deaths in high-transmission regions. The Lancet study also found that the vaccine was safe, with no increase in serious adverse outcomes such as meningitis or cerebral malaria — concerns that had emerged during earlier clinical trials. The findings are based on data from more than 1.2 million children across 158 communities, making it one of the largest real-world assessments of a malaria vaccine to date.

Researchers used community-based death surveillance along with hospital monitoring to evaluate the vaccine’s impact. “This is powerful evidence that malaria vaccination can save thousands of young lives in endemic regions,” said Rafiq Okine, technical officer for malaria chemoprevention and vaccines at WHO’s Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases Department and co-author of the study. In an email response to The Indian Express, Okine said both RTS, S/AS01 and R21/Matrix-M are currently recommended by WHO for preventing Plasmodium falciparum malaria in children living in endemic areas. “The rollout of malaria vaccines in Africa reflects the high burden of P. falciparum malaria. The region continues to account for more than 90 per cent of global malaria cases and deaths,” he said. He added that there are currently no WHO-recommended vaccines for malaria caused by other Plasmodium species, including Plasmodium vivax, which remains more relevant in countries such as India. Professor V S Chauhan, former director of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, who was not



involved in the study, said the findings mark an important scientific breakthrough. “The development of a truly highly effective malaria vaccine remains a work in progress. However, these vaccines have successfully established proof of concept,” he said.

Dr Krishanpal Karmodiya, associate professor at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, said the study demonstrates that vaccine-based prevention against malaria is both feasible and impactful. “While malaria mortality in India is not as high as in many African countries, even a 13 per cent reduction in mortality in a highly endemic region is hugely significant because it translates directly into lives saved,” he said.

According to WHO, since 2000, global malaria control efforts have helped avert 2.3 billion cases and 14 million deaths worldwide, including an estimated one million lives saved in 2024 alone. reach. India, once among the countries with the world’s highest malaria burden, has recorded major gains in recent years. Between 2015 and 2023, the country reported an 80.5 per cent decline in malaria cases and a 78.3 per cent reduction in malaria-related deaths, with more than 122 districts reporting zero cases. A key milestone came in 2024, when India exited WHO’s High Burden to High Impact (HBHI) group. India is targeting zero indigenous malaria cases and deaths by 2027, with nationwide elimination planned by 2030. Experts caution, however, that these gains will only hold if surveillance, vector control and public health interventions remain robust. “India should continue prioritising and sustaining these interventions to address local transmission risks and ensure maximum long-term impact,” Chauhan said.

Tamannaah Bhatia, Pragma Kapoor visit Ujjain’s Mahakaleshwar Temple

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Tamannaah Bhatia and producer Pragma Kapoor have described their soulful visit to Ujjain’s Mahakaleshwar Temple, where they sought divine blessings, as “amazing”. The actress shared a picture and video on the stories section. In the first image, the actress is seen dressed in a vibrant orange traditional outfit and a saffron tilak across her forehead. For the caption, she wrote: “Jai shree Mahakaal.”

She then shared a video of herself along with Pragma Kapoor from inside an aircraft. The clip seems to have been taken after the visit to the temple. In the clip, the actress is seen asking the producer: “How was the trip?” To which Pragma said: “Amazing.” Tamannaah and Pragma attended the Bhasma Aarti and offered prayers at the revered temple. They participated in the early morning rituals and performed darshan of Lord Mahakal during her visit.

Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas. It is said to be the most sacred abodes of Shiva. The presiding deity, Shiva in the lingam form is believed to be Swayambhu, deriving currents of power from within itself as against the other images and lingams that are ritually established and invested with mantra-shakti. Madhya Pradesh has two Jyotirlingas, the second one, Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga, is situated about 140 km south of Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga. The actress will next be seen in Vvan — Force of the Forrest with actor Sidharth Malhotra. The film is set to explore the cultural folklore genre. ‘Vvan’ is written by Arunabh Kumar, directed by Deepak Mishra and Arunabh Kumar, with DOP and Visual Director Manu Anand; and produced by Shobha Kapoor, Ektaa R Kapoor, Arunabh Kumar and Niraj Kothari. ‘Vvan’ is set to release in theatres this year. ‘Vvan’ was initially slated to release around the festival of Chhatt in 2025.

Public grievances should be resolved promptly: District Collector Divakar T.S.



District Collector receives public petitions during Prajavani”Khammam, May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“District Collector Divakar T.S. instructed district officials to examine public grievances and resolve them at the earliest.”During the Prajavani program held on Monday at the Collectorate meeting hall, District Collector Divakar T.S., along with Additional Collectors Dr. P. Srija and P. Srinivas Reddy, received petitions from the public.”Bhima Reddy Pulla Reddy, former Director of the State Panchayat Raj Chamber from Marlapadu village of Vemsur mandal, submitted an application requesting the construction of a CC drainage canal from the R&B road to the house of M. Anjaiah in the village. The Collector directed the Panchayat Raj department to take necessary action.”T. Sunitha, B. Krishna, and



Satyanagendra from Rajya Thanda of Konijerla mandal jointly submitted a petition stating that they own land in Survey No. 46/U/2/1/2 under Gundrathimadugu revenue limits and requested a reduction in its market value, as it was currently very high. The Collector instructed the Additional Collector (Revenue) to take necessary action.”Mohammed Abdul Kareem from Khammam city submitted a petition stating that he had been removed from his duties as an outsourcing lab technician at T-Hub Diagnostic Center through a termination process and requested reinstatement in his job. The Collector directed the DM&HO to take appropriate action.”ZP CEO Deeksha Raina, district officials, Collectorate AO Srinivas, and others participated in the Prajavani program.”Issued by the District Public Relations Officer’s Office, Khammam.

AAP Party Complaints and Protests on Public Issues in



”Khammam, May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“In Khammam district, under the leadership of the Aam Aadmi Party district committee, several complaint submissions and protest programs were organized regarding public issues.”At the CP office, party leaders met the CP and the District Collector and submitted a complaint stating that people in Khammam district are facing severe problems due to DJ sound systems. Along with the victims from Lachagudem village in Chinthakani mandal, they explained that incidents like the one that occurred in Lachagudem are causing disturbances in many districts because of DJs. They requested strict control measures on DJs across the district.”At the Khammam Collectorate, AAP leaders submitted another grievance to the Collector regarding the lack of drainage facilities on the National Highway roadside areas. Due to the absence of proper drainage, rainwater is flowing into



agricultural lands and damaging crops. They requested the construction of drainage systems to protect farmers.”In another complaint, they urged officials to remove the excessive moss, weeds, and garbage accumulated in the NSP canals.”

The party also protested against the increased diesel and petrol prices imposed by the Central Government. They stated that rising diesel prices are causing serious difficulties for the public and farmers. The increase in diesel costs is also affecting businesses and leading to higher prices of essential goods. Women and party leaders participated in a protest program near the Collector’s office.”The program was attended by AAP District President Swarna Subbarao, Vice President Pasumarthi Srinivas, Treasurer Kanapudi Ravi Kumar, Paruchuri Narasimha Rao, and Naveen.

Former Corporator Bandaru Sreevani Venkata Rao Participates in Sri Beerappa Swamy Kalyana Mahotsavam

”UPPAL, MAY 18(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Former Corporator Bandaru Sreevani Venkata Rao participated in the divine Kalyana Mahotsavam of Sri Beerappa Swamy and Kamarathi Devi held at the Sri Sri Beerappa Swamy Temple in Ramanthapur.”On this occasion, the celestial wedding ceremony of the deity was conducted with great grandeur and devotion amid a spiritually vibrant atmosphere. Devotees from different parts of the state attended the celebrations and witnessed the holy rituals with immense faith and enthusiasm. The temple premises were filled with spiritual fervor throughout the event.”Prominent persons including Ravula Beerappa, Ravula Jangaiah, Sankoori Kumaraswamy, Vemula Tirupathiah, Vijayender Reddy,



Ashok, and Kalmakala Lingam also participated in the programme.

Sports Week Celebrations Launched



Khammam,Nelakondapalli, May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“As part of the 99-day “Praja Palana Pragathi

Pranalika” programme, Sports Week celebrations were inaugurated at the mandal headquarters on Monday. Various events will be conducted for a week, from Monday until the 23rd of this month.”The programme aims to encourage students to develop sportsmanship, culture, leadership qualities, social service, and patriotism through various activities. As part of the celebrations, a 2K run was organized in Nelakondapalli.”Market Committee Chairman Seetharamulu, MPDO M. Yarraiah, Mandal Panchayat Officer C.H. Shiva, leaders of various political parties including Jerripothula Anjini, Dosapati Shekhar, Jerripothula Satyanarayana, Gunda Brahman, Rayapudi Rohith, and Kadiyala Naresh, along with sarpanches of various panchayats and officials from different departments, participated in the programme.

Nationwide Medical Shops Shutdown on 20th“Khammam

Nelakondapalli, May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“Medical Shop Association representative Pasupuleti Upender stated that medical shops across the country will remain closed on the 20th of this month.”At the mandal headquarters, representatives submitted a memorandum regarding the shutdown to the local Tahsildar and SI. Later, they unveiled a pamphlet. Speaking on the occasion, he expressed concern that the exploitative pricing policies of corporate companies are having a severe impact on the established medicine distribution system.”He said that the protest is being organized to protect pharmacies and safeguard public health. They demanded an end to illegal activities in the pharmacy sector and urged large companies to stop unfair pricing practices.”He further stated that these practices are threatening not only the survival of small and large chemists but also posing serious risks to public health. For the fulfillment of several demands, medical shop owners announced that they would participate in the shutdown of



shops.”Medical shop representatives P. Venkateswara Rao, Suresh, Jagadish, Fareed Baba, Uday, Sai Baba, V. Narayana Rao, Ramprasad, Kailasapu Gopi, and others participated in the program.

Three Differently-Abled Participants Excel in State-Level Competitions

”Khammam,Nelakondapalli,May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“As part of the Prajapalana–Pragathi initiative and youth sports festivals for differently-abled persons, three participants from Nelakondapalli mandal showcased outstanding talent at the state-level competitions.”D. Prasanna Kumar from Ammagudem won two prizes at the state level and received a cash award of ₹10,000. Dantala Niharika achieved success in Shot Put, while Vasamshetty Charan Teja won in Chess at the state level.”On Monday, mandal-level officials felicitated the three winners at the mandal headquarters. Speaking on the occasion, the officials encouraged differently-abled individuals to excel in all fields. They specially congratulated those who brought recognition at the state level and urged them to uphold the mandal’s prestige at the national level as well.”Tahsildar P. Ram



Prasad, MPDO M. Yarraiah, Mandal Education Officer B. Chalapathi Rao, and others participated in the program.”

Vehicle Inspections by SIs at Border Check Posts



”Khammam,May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“In view of the upcoming Bakrid festival, Chintakani SI Veerender said that vehicle inspections are being conducted at the Baswapuram

road check post on the border to maintain law and order, following the instructions of Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt. He stated that the checks are aimed at preventing any untoward incidents.”He especially appealed to the public to immediately inform the police if they receive any information regarding illegal cattle transportation. He also warned that under no circumstances should people attack the accused directly or take the law into their own hands.”Vemsur Mandal – Hanumathanda Check Post:”Vemsur SI Kavitha is conducting vehicle inspections at the Hanumathanda check post set up to prevent illegal transportation during the Bakrid festival.”She said that there will be 24/7 surveillance on illegal cattle transportation. She also emphasized that proper verification and transport documents are mandatory while transporting cattle.”

Tourism Week Celebrations from May 18 to 23: District Collector T.S. Divakara

”Khammam, May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“As part of the Praja Palana Pragathi Pranalika program, District Collector T.S. Divakara stated that efforts should be made to successfully conduct the Tourism Week celebrations being held across the state from May 18 to May 23 in the district.”On Monday, the District Collector T.S. Divakara launched the posters of the Tourism Week celebrations in his chamber at the Collectorate.”On this occasion, District Collector T.S. Divakara said that a Heritage Walk will be conducted at Khammam Fort on May 20. He also mentioned that on May 21, tourism certificates will be presented by the District Collector to those who prepare YouTube video presentations on tourist places in the district. Further, on May 22, a cleanliness/sanitation program will be conducted at the Nelakondapalli Buddha Stupa.”In the poster launch event, District Youth and Sports Officer Sunil Reddy,



Telangana Tourism Assistant Engineer Naresh, Tourism employee Chandrasekhar Azad, and other concerned officials participated.

Medical shop owners of Bonakal Mandal Medical Association, along with members of Bonakal and Chintakani, submitted a petition to the Bonakal Tahsildar and SI.

”Khammam,Bonakal,May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“On the occasion of the nationwide medical shops bandh scheduled for the 20th of this month, medical shop owners of Bonakal Mandal submitted a representation to the Bonakal Tahsildar and SI. Speaking on the occasion, they expressed concern over the illegal operation of e-pharmacies, withdrawal of the 28.08.2018 GSR 817(E) notification, exploitative pricing by large corporate companies, and the unregulated growth of illegal e-pharmacies. They stated that these issues are severely affecting the established drug distribution system.”They added that these developments are not only threatening the survival of small and medium-sized chemists but are also posing serious risks to public health. They also informed that a nationwide medical shop bandh has been called on the 20th of this month in response to these issues.”Participants in the program included President of the medical shops association G. Saidulu (Sri Sai Medical Stores, Ravinutala), Treasurer Suggala Venkata



Veerabrahmanjaneyulu (Lakshmi Venkateswara Medical Stores, Bonakal), Bonakal Mandal Unit members G. Kondalu (Sri Venkateswara Medical Stores, Ravinutala), Venkateswar Rao (Sri Venkata Sai Medical Stores, Janakipuram), Sheikh Qasim (Sultan Medical Stores, Bonakal), and others.

Foundation Laid for 1 Crore Development Works in Hanuman Nagar – MLA Nayini



”Hanamkonda, May 18 (Indian Chronicle) : MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy on Monday laid the foundation stone for internal road and drainage construction works to be taken

up at an estimated cost of 1 crore in Hanuman Nagar, under the 5th Division of the Warangal West constituency.”Speaking on the occasion, the MLA stated that providing better basic infrastructure to the public remains a key priority of the State Government. He noted that special emphasis is being placed on the development of residential colonies and that essential civic amenities such as roads and drainage systems are being improved in a phased manner to ensure public convenience.”He expressed confidence that the proposed works would address long-pending issues faced by residents of the Hanuman Nagar area. The MLA also instructed the concerned officials to complete the works within the stipulated timeframe while maintaining quality standards.”Public representatives, local leaders, officials, and colony residents participated in the programme.

Are stories targeting Congress leaders political misinformation?

”Khammam,Bhonakal, May 18 (Indian Chronicle):”“Mandal Congress Party President Karnati Ramakoteswara Rao alleged that a section of the media is deliberately spreading misinformation against Congress leaders, based on recent incidents in the mandal area.”Speaking at a press conference held on Monday at the local party office, he said that an incident involving a youth named Pili Rahul from Chinna Bhiravalli village—who was taken into custody by police on suspicion of theft—was being given a political angle. He said publishing photographs of Rahul with Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka’s wife Mallu Nandini is being viewed by Congress cadres as a malicious act.”He stated that merely taking photographs with public representatives or leaders does not mean that every incident involving such individuals should

be linked politically. He added that hundreds of people take photographs with leaders during social and political events, and attempting to damage a party’s reputation based on such photos is unethical.”He further said that in relation to a murder case in Govindapuram L village, Congress leaders are being mentioned in media reports without any official confirmation, which is irresponsible. He criticized certain media outlets for giving premature judgments while police investigations are still ongoing, saying it misleads the public.”He alleged that in recent times, several reports have been published targeting Congress leaders in multiple villages, suggesting a political motive behind them. He added that instead of focusing on public issues, the media should not spoil the atmosphere with politically motivated reporting.”

Preventing further fall in rupee a key imperative of FY27: Chief Economic Advisor Nageswaran



Warning that the ongoing structural shifts in the global economic order were not going to reverse, Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran said on Tuesday that stopping the rupee from falling further is one of the “central macroeconomic imperatives” of the current fiscal. “Managing the current account credibly, financing it, and preventing further currency depreciation are the central macroeconomic imperatives of FY27,” Nageswaran said while speaking at the Confederation of Indian Industry’s (CII) annual business summit, adding that India’s exposure to West Asia crisis is “structural” and presented a “live Balance of Payments stress test, with direct consequences for inflation, the current account, and the exchange rate.”

The comments by the government’s top economist come the same day the Indian rupee hit another all-time low, falling to as much as 95.75 per dollar during the day before closing at 95.63 – the lowest it has ever ended a session. Since the war in West Asia began, the rupee has slumped by almost 5% against the US dollar and has been Asia’s worst performing currency so far in 2026 – a period in which it has fallen by 6%. The war has sent shockwaves through energy importing nations, especially those in Asia, with currencies weakening as foreign investors pull out money – although some countries have benefited due to sectors, particularly those related to Artificial Intelligence, performing well. India, which is widely considered to have low exposure to AI, has seen Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) exit domestic financial markets to the tune of \$23 billion since the start of the war, putting pressure on the Balance of Payments.

The Balance of Payments is the difference between the money Indians send abroad to pay for various things such as imports and investments and the money India receives from overseas for exports and in the form of remittances and capital flows. With the import bill widening due to sharply higher crude oil and gold prices, exports affected by weak global demand, Foreign Direct Investment inflows muted, and remittances from West Asia under threat, economists are warning India’s Balance of Payments could be in the negative zone for a third straight year in

FY27. “India’s current account deficit appears set to exceed ~2% of GDP – which the RBI has historically identified as the threshold level that India can finance sustainably over the long term. However, in recent years, even a 1% of GDP has been difficult to finance due to a confluence of factors in the capital and financial account leading to persistent weakness in the exchange rate,” BofA Securities economists Rahul Bajoria and Smriti Mehra said in a report on Tuesday. Pointing out that since the start of the US and Israel’s attack on Iran, Brent crude futures prices were up 51%, urea and ammonia prices 65%, and butane 51%, Nageswaran said on Tuesday that these numbers were not of a “temporary shock that will self-correct when the situation stabilises” and that it would be a “strategic error” for emerging economies to make plans for the future on the assumption that the pre-2020 global economic architecture will re-assert itself.

Nageswaran’s warnings come after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Sunday and again on Monday, called on the Indian public to change their consumption behaviour by reviving Covid-era measures such as work-from-home and virtual meetings, avoiding non-essential foreign travel and gold purchases for a year, and prioritising local goods, among others. These actions would help save the country’s foreign exchange reserves as most of these activities and purchases require import. The request for austerity has rattled markets, with analysts cautioning that Modi’s appeal is a sign of “potential policy shift ahead”. “PM Modi’s comments signal that the pressure on the government fiscal finances is reaching a tipping point, that there is less appetite for further rupee depreciation, and that the burden of adjustment may be incrementally shared with consumers,” Nomura economists Sonal Varma and Aurodeep Nandi said on Monday. While global energy prices have surged over the last two-and-a-half months, the Indian government has not increased the pump price of petrol and diesel in an effort to shield consumers. However, public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) have been bearing the losses by selling fuel below the market price, with their losses for April-June seen at Rs 1 lakh crore. Nageswaran identified four structural shifts in the global economy – geo-economic fragmentation in the form of trade wars and strategic decoupling, technology bifurcation, the energy transition premium, and geopolitical risk repricing – and said they are “not going to reverse”. While India’s macroeconomic foundations – fiscal consolidation, infrastructure investment, and reform record – provide a base from which the current global environment can be effectively navigated, Nageswaran said that while foundations are necessary, they are “not sufficient”. “What is also required is the strategic clarity to recognise that the window for repositioning in trade relationships, technology partnerships, supply-chain architecture, and the coalition building that will shape the next international economic order is real, but not permanent.”

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The comments by the government’s top economist come the same day the Indian rupee hit another all-time low, falling to as much as 95.75 per dollar during the day before closing at 95.63 – the lowest it has ever ended a session. Since the war in West Asia began, the rupee has slumped by almost 5% against the US dollar and has been Asia’s worst performing currency so far in 2026 – a period in which it has fallen by 6%. The war has sent shockwaves through energy importing nations, especially those in Asia, with currencies weakening as foreign investors pull out money – although some countries have benefited due to sectors, particularly those related to Artificial Intelligence, performing well. India, which is widely considered to have low exposure to AI, has seen Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) exit domestic financial markets to the tune of \$23 billion since the start of the war, putting pressure on the Balance of Payments.

The Balance of Payments is the difference between the money Indians send abroad to pay for various things such as imports and investments and the money India receives from overseas for exports and in the form of remittances and capital flows. With the import bill widening due to sharply higher crude oil and gold prices, exports affected by weak global demand, Foreign Direct Investment inflows muted, and remittances from West Asia under threat, economists are warning India’s Balance of Payments could be in the negative zone for a third straight year in FY27.

“India’s current account deficit appears set to exceed ~2% of GDP – which the RBI has historically identified as the threshold level that India can finance sustainably over the long term. However, in recent years, even a 1% of GDP has been difficult to finance due to a confluence of factors in the capital and financial account leading to persistent weakness in the exchange rate,” BofA Securities economists Rahul Bajoria and Smriti Mehra said in a report on Tuesday. Pointing out that since the start of the US and Israel’s attack on Iran, Brent crude futures prices were up 51%, urea and ammonia prices 65%, and butane 51%, Nageswaran said on Tuesday that these numbers were not of a “temporary shock that will self-correct when the situation stabilises” and that it would be a “strategic error” for emerging economies to make plans for the future on the assumption that the pre-2020 global economic architecture will re-assert itself.

Nageswaran’s warnings come after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Sunday and again on Monday, called on the Indian public to change their consumption behaviour by reviving Covid-era measures such as work-from-home and virtual meetings, avoiding non-essential foreign travel and gold purchases for a year, and prioritising local goods, among others. These actions would help save the country’s foreign exchange reserves as most of these activities and purchases require import. The request for austerity has rattled markets, with analysts cautioning that Modi’s appeal is a sign of “potential policy shift ahead”. “PM Modi’s comments signal that the pressure on the government fiscal finances is reaching a tipping point, that there is less appetite for further rupee depreciation, and that the burden of adjustment may be incrementally shared with consumers,” Nomura economists Sonal Varma and Aurodeep Nandi said



on Monday. While global energy prices have surged over the last two-and-a-half months, the Indian government has not increased the pump price of petrol and diesel in an effort to shield consumers. However, public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) have been bearing the losses by selling fuel below the market price, with their losses for April-June seen at Rs 1 lakh crore. Nageswaran identified four structural shifts in the global economy – geo-economic fragmentation in the form of trade wars and strategic decoupling, technology bifurcation, the energy transition premium, and geopolitical risk repricing – and said they are “not going to reverse”. While India’s macroeconomic foundations – fiscal consolidation, infrastructure investment, and reform record – provide a base from which the current global environment can be effectively navigated, Nageswaran said that while foundations are necessary, they are “not sufficient”. “What is also required is the strategic clarity to recognise that the window for repositioning in trade relationships, technology partnerships, supply-chain architecture, and the coalition building that will shape the next international economic order is real, but not permanent.”

Bajaj Finserv aims to reach every Indian household in 10 years

Mumbai: Seemingly unfazed by aggressive competition in the landscape, the largest private sector non-bank lender Bajaj Finserv is looking to gradually increase its market share and serve every Indian household in the next decade, a top company official said. Speaking on the occasion of the diversified Bajaj group’s centenary celebrations, Sanjiv Bajaj, the company’s Chairman and Managing Director, said inherent strengths in the ecosystem, including high economic growth and the digital public infrastructure (DPI) platform, will make such goals possible.

He, however, did not answer a specific question on whether the company, which carries out lending activities through its subsidiary Bajaj Finance, wishes to turn into a universal bank, pointing out that it has helped the cause of financial inclusion and also grown profitably in the last few years. At a time when many well-capitalised players are eyeing growth in the same segment that helped it become a formidable player in the financial services space, Bajaj seemed unfazed and pointed to three pillars while looking at the competitive landscape. These include growth in the economy, which will enlarge the pie and offer every entity a chance to grow, laziness that sets in because of the lack of competition, and the DPI that helps it create products and services. “As long as our teams continue innovating and continue transforming, we will stay a step ahead of the competition,” Bajaj told PTI. When asked whether he was confident of holding on to market share, Bajaj said, “Maintaining is no fun.

Oil companies may face Rs 1 lakh crore quarterly loss: Hardeep Singh Puri



New Delhi: With two months of fuel stockpiles, India faces no supply concerns despite disruptions to global energy flows, Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Tuesday, while warning that state-run fuel retailers could face losses of as much as Rs 1 lakh crore in a single quarter if elevated crude prices persist and retail fuel prices remain unchanged. He said that, at some stage, an assessment needs to be made on how long retailers can sustain losses from selling petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG below cost, but refused to speculate on whether rates would be raised anytime soon.

“We have no supply-side problems,” the minister said at CII’s Annual Business Summit here, adding that India began the crisis with “more than enough” crude oil and LPG inventories and had since ramped up domestic LPG production to 54,000 tonnes per day from about 36,000 tonnes earlier. At the same time, the minister acknowledged growing fiscal stress from keeping retail fuel prices unchanged.

“My oil companies are losing Rs 1,000 crore a day,” he said, adding that cumulative under-recoveries had climbed to nearly Rs 1.98 lakh crore and that a single quarter of losses of Rs 1 lakh crore could wipe out the sector’s annual profits. Since the war broke out in West Asia 10 weeks ago, state-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) have ensured uninterrupted supplies of petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG at rates far below cost, unlike many global energy systems that imposed rationing or passed on steep price increases. This has resulted in the three OMCs, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), recording record-high under-recoveries, which is the difference between benchmark international cost and retail selling price.

Puri said the combined under-recovery on petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG is about Rs 1.98 lakh crore for the current quarter, while the actual loss is about Rs 1 lakh crore. The losses in one quarter, he said, are enough to wipe out profits that oil companies earn in an entire year.

Without saying whether widening losses could result in a price increase anytime soon, he said, “How long will the oil companies be able to take it (losses)... frankly, that’s something that worries me.” Puri said there has been no increase in petrol and diesel prices in the last four years.

“Today, we are in a situation where we don’t know how long the blockades or counter-blockades will continue. But I can tell you categorically that today, we are in a situation where, unlike other countries in the world which have had to either face problems in terms of availability and supply or where prices have gone rampant, we have had stable prices and supplies.” Despite a 50 per cent surge in input crude oil prices, petrol and diesel continue to be priced at two-year-old rates of Rs 94.77 a litre and Rs 87.67 per litre, respectively. Domestic cooking gas LPG prices were raised in March by Rs 60 per cylinder, but they are still far lower than the actual cost.

The oil companies are currently losing Rs 14 per litre on petrol, Rs 42 per litre on diesel and Rs 674 per cylinder on cooking gas LPG. Puri termed Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s call for moderation in energy consumption a “visionary” long-term approach rather than a signal of imminent restrictions.

“It’s not that any lockdown is going to happen tomorrow,” he said.

Alia Bhatt makes a dreamy return to Cannes 2026 in corseted pastel ball gown

Following her electric debut last year, Alia Bhatt has made her first appearance at the 2026 Cannes International Film Festival in a dreamy printed ball gown. The Raazi actor chose to keep it fresh and minimal in a stunning sea foam green ensemble, featuring a corseted bodice and a billowy skirt. Side-swept hair pulled into a loose bun, and soft hints of pink on her cheeks and lips kept the look romantic and whimsical. Taking to Instagram, she shared some stunning images from the venue, captioning them: “Cannes 2026”.

Previously, the actor was spotted at the airport, jetting off to the French Riviera in an all-black look — a buttoned jacket from Carolina Herrera’s 2026 Spring collection, paired with capri pants, black sunglasses, and a classic Jackie 1961 shoulder bag from Gucci. Last year, Alia Bhatt turned heads in a custom outfit by Gucci, what many believed to be the luxury label’s first-ever sari — or at least something inspired by one. The shimmering outfit, covered in embroi-

row,” he said. “But if this disruption due to the war in West Asia continues, we have to start thinking about measures to lessen the fiscal strain.” He urged industries and households to accelerate the shift from LPG to piped natural gas wherever possible, saying India was rapidly expanding gas pipeline infrastructure and LNG availability. “We have no shortage of pipe gas,” he said. “It is cleaner, cheaper and helps us scale up the energy transition.”

The government is also reassessing strategic energy storage policies after the current crisis exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains, the minister said, adding that India would need to build larger reserves over time. “The experience since February 2026 means you have to re-think everything,” he pointed out. Modi had on Sunday urged fuel conservation and lower imports as surging global energy prices pressure India’s foreign exchange reserves, while also calling for restraint in gold purchases to ease external vulnerabilities. “The Prime Minister’s statement is very visionary. It looks to the future that if this war were to continue, we also have to see what we can do in terms of lifestyle changes,” Puri said. “There are certain activities which we can curtail.” This, he said, does not mean any drastic measures such as lockdown or rationing would happen.

“There is absolutely no cause for anxiety.” The minister said India has done well in managing the situation, considering the large dependence on Gulf supplies in the pre-war era. These were quickly replaced with sourcing from alternate locations without any disruption or shortages. “We have done very well, and I have no reason to believe that we will not do well in the future. But we should curtail certain activities that can help reduce consumption,” he said.

Puri said India had turned the crisis “into an opportunity”, ensuring uninterrupted fuel supplies even as geopolitical tensions raised concerns over the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 20 per cent of global energy supplies pass. India, the world’s third-largest oil consumer, is also the third-largest refiner and fourth-largest exporter of refined products, he said, rejecting what he described as “false narratives” around shortages, import disruptions and possible lockdowns. “There are no shortages anywhere,” he said. “Every petrol pump in the country has petrol and diesel. LPG supply is more than enough.” The minister said India had not raised fuel prices in the last four years despite global energy shocks and elevated crude prices, describing it as an unprecedented achievement among major energy-importing economies. “Tell me one country where prices have remained the same and there has been no shortage anywhere,” he said.

The remarks come as global crude prices surged amid uncertainty over shipping disruptions and escalating regional conflict. The minister said around 60 per cent of India’s LPG imports had previously moved through the Strait of Hormuz, while 88 per cent of the country’s crude oil requirement is imported. He said the government and state-owned oil companies had been conducting continuous “war-room” reviews of supply and refining operations, with officials monitoring the situation “hour by hour”.

India currently holds around 60 days of crude oil supplies, 60 days of LNG inventories and 45 days of LPG reserves, he said, adding that there was “absolutely no cause for anxiety”. Fuel demand has remained resilient during the crisis, with petrol consumption rising around 6 per cent, while LPG demand has moderated to about 75,000 tonnes per day from nearly 90,000 tonnes earlier, partly due to seasonal factors. The minister said refiners had increased LPG output while supplementing supplies through kerosene and biofuels, helping India reduce dependence on imported cooking gas. “We are no longer dependent on imports for our refineries, and that is where our strength has come from,” he said. India plans to expand refining capacity to 320 million metric tonnes annually by 2030 from around 260 million currently, positioning the country as one of the world’s major refining hubs, the minister said. He also signalled a more aggressive push towards domestic oil and gas exploration, saying the government has amended exploration rules, increased outreach to global oil majors and expanded acreage offered under exploration licensing rounds.



dered Swarovski crystals arranged in Gucci’s signature GG monogram, looked like a fusion between traditional Indian wear and a high-fashion gown. Fashion pages and fans were quick to label it as a sari-inspired moment, heavy critiquing the look.

All about the rare bird tied to scientist identified as ‘patient zero’ in hantavirus outbreak

Driven by a lifelong passion for rare birds, Dutch ornithologist Leo Schilperoord travelled to a landfill on the outskirts of Argentina’s Ushuaia city in hopes of spotting the elusive white-throated caracara, also known as Darwin’s caracara after naturalist Charles Darwin. According to a report by The New York Post, the 70-year-old scientist later became identified as “patient zero” in a deadly hantavirus outbreak linked to the cruise ship MV Hondius. Authorities suspect he may have inhaled virus particles from rat droppings at the landfill, which was reportedly known as a hotspot for the Andes strain of hantavirus, the only form known to spread between humans.

The incident has brought renewed attention not only to hantavirus risks in wildlife-heavy environments, but also to the fascinating, lesser-known bird that Schilperoord travelled to observe. Darwin’s caracara is a striking bird of prey found mainly in the Falkland Islands and parts of southern South America. Unlike many raptors, it is known for its unusual intelligence, curiosity, and scavenging behaviour. Its adaptability and opportunistic feeding habits have long intrigued bird researchers and wildlife enthusiasts alike.

Dr Deepraj Prajapati, Senior Veterinarian at RD Pet Hospital Ambeddkar Nagar, tells indianexpress.com,

“Darwin’s caracara stands out because it displays an exceptional level of curiosity and problem-solving behaviour that is uncommon among raptors. Unlike many birds of prey that remain cautious and distant, this species is known to actively approach humans, inspect unfamiliar objects, and adapt quickly to changing situations.” From a behavioural science perspective, he notes that such traits indicate high cognitive flexibility. Researchers and birdwatchers are fascinated by the species because it challenges traditional assumptions about predatory birds being purely instinct-driven and highlights how intelligence evolves in isolated ecosystems. Role of changing habitats, waste sites, and human activity in shaping the behaviour and survival of such birds “Human activity significantly influences scavenger species like Darwin’s caracara because these birds are highly opportunistic feeders,” explains Dr Prajapati, adding that expanding waste sites and altered landscapes can create easy food access, which may initially support population survival, but it also changes natural foraging behaviour and increases dependency on human-generated resources. “Over time, this can expose birds to toxins, plastic ingestion, disease transmission, and conflict with humans.

Brij Bhushan on Vinesh Phogat-WFI row: ‘If someone was stopped, must be reason’



GNS News Agency, May 18

Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh Former Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh on Tuesday reacted to the comments of wrestler Vinesh Phogat who on Monday said that she was not allowed to compete in the women's freestyle event by WFI. Former Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh on Tuesday reacted to the comments of wrestler Vinesh Phogat who on Monday said that she was not allowed to compete in the women's freestyle event by WFI. Singh, who was in 2023 accused of sexual harassment by six women wrestlers, including Vinesh, said that Monday's matters involving the wrestler does not concern him anymore.

"I am currently cleaning up the mess that madam left behind. Furthermore, the question of where a wrestling match will or will not take place is not a matter that concerns me. ...This is not my subject anymore. It is for the current WFI to decide where events will be held, who will compete and who will not. However, since I served as the president of the WFI for many years, I can say from my experience that the WFI never stops any athlete from competing because the federation exists for the players. If someone has been stopped, there must be a reason for it, and that reason would also have been communicated....," Singh

said to reporters as per a PTI video.

Two days after the WFI issued a show-cause notice to Vinesh levelling charges of anti-doping rule violations and disciplinary breaches, barring her from competition till June 26, she reached Gonda for the National Open Ranking tournament, an event for which she had registered before the April-end deadline. VIDEO | As tensions continue between wrestler Vinesh Phogat and the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), former WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh says, "...This is not my subject anymore. It is for the current WFI to decide where events will be held, who will compete and Looking to make her comeback after two years following the Paris Olympics heartbreak, Vinesh was issued a detailed show-cause notice by WFI, accusing her of indiscipline and anti-doping rule violations, while also declaring her ineligible to compete in domestic events till June 26. Vinesh had travelled to Gonda to verify for the women's freestyle event, but the WFI had asked her to first file a detailed reply to the show-cause notice issued on Saturday. The WFI said the 31-year-old failed to complete the mandatory six-month notice period required for athletes returning from retirement under UWW Anti-Doping Rules. Speaking to The Indian Express, WFI president Sanjay Singh said rules could not be bent, no matter a wrestler's stature. "There was no reason for Vinesh to come here, as she was barred. But when Vinesh came to Gonda yesterday, the WFI briefed her about the reasons for which she was issued a show cause notice. She told me that she will give a detailed reply. Once she replies, a disciplinary committee of the WFI will take a call within 10 days. For the Asian Games, she won't be able to make it because the trial is on May 30 for women wrestlers. Will she be able to give her detailed reply, and will the committee have time to take a call on her participation? I don't think so. When it comes to the trials for the World Championships, the WFI will take a call depending on what she mentions in her reply," Singh told this paper.

Rahul Dravid on being ETPL franchise owner: You certainly won't see me in dugout

GNS News Agency, May 18

Indian legend Rahul Dravid was on Monday announced as an owner of Dublin Guardians franchise in European T20 League (ETPL), the former cricketer opened up about how he would go about things when the league begins. The Guardians have appointed the veteran tweaker Ravichandran Ashwin as their captain and Dravid said that the spinner will have complete freedom while taking decisions.

"I think honestly, the plan is for me to not actually get involved in the cricketing side of things. So to put together a good team that can do the job on a day-to-day basis. You certainly won't see me in the dugout. And I'm not someone who's going to be there at every practice session. Or for that matter, not there for even every game," Dravid said in an interview with "But I will certainly be supportive. I think we're lucky to have signed on someone like Ashwin as a captain and a mentor. And we'll put a team around him that will allow him to lead the team and run the team in the way that he wants to. My job will really be to put together a team both on the field and of course there's a lot of work that needs to be done at a franchise level off the field. Which for me will be the priority and the focus. And sort of let Ashwin and the experts (support staff) that we pick, let them manage and run the cricket. So that is certainly the direction and the plan and the role that I see for myself," the former India head coach was very clear about how he wants to



operate," he added. There are way too many T20 franchise league cricket happening around the world at the moment but Dravid is confident that ETPL can make its own space. "There is a rich history and a culture and a tradition in this part of the world, in Ireland, Scotland and Netherlands and in parts of Europe. Cricket is played by the local population as well and has been played for a long time. There are a lot of clubs here in Ireland and including a lot of Indian professionals have come here and played in Ireland." "So there's already a captive audience. There's already a captive followership. There's already a captive talent pool that we can hope to sort of build on." The ETPL which includes three nations — Scotland, Ireland and the Netherlands provides them with a huge canvas, said Dravid.

Sakshi Malik seeks PM Modi intervention for Vinesh Phogat's participation in Gonda wrestling event



GNS News Agency, May 18

Urging the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) to allow Vinesh Phogat to give trials for this year's Asian Games, Olympic bronze medalist Sakshi Malik has come out in support of her fellow wrestler. Looking to make her comeback after two years following the Paris Olympics heartbreak, Vinesh was issued a detailed show-cause notice by WFI, accusing her of indiscipline and anti-doping rule violations, while also declaring her ineligible to compete in domestic events till June 26.

Vinesh had travelled to Gonda to verify for the women's freestyle event, but the WFI had asked her to first file a detailed reply to the show-cause notice issued on Satur-

day. The WFI said the 31-year-old failed to complete the mandatory six-month notice period required for athletes returning from retirement under UWW Anti-Doping Rules. "I can give many such examples, where the sports federations of other countries make the rules easier for their players," Sakshi said in a video posted on social media. "So that even after becoming a mother, women can play for the country and win medals. Whereas our federation implements such rules two days before, so that Vinesh cannot make a comeback," she added. "I request the honourable Prime Minister, the honourable Sports Minister, and the Wrestling Federation to take the trials for Vinesh so that they can also win medals for the country and make the country proud. And to set such an example, so that even after becoming a mother, women can play for their country, win medals, and make the country proud," said Malik. "There was no reason for Vinesh to come here, as she was barred. But when Vinesh came to Gonda yesterday, the WFI briefed her about the reasons for which she was issued a show cause notice. She told me that she will give a detailed reply. Once she replies, a disciplinary committee of the WFI will take a call within 10 days. For the Asian Games, she won't be able to make it because the trial is on May 30 for women wrestlers. Will she be able to give her detailed reply, and will the committee have time to take a call on her participation? I don't think so. When it comes to the trials for the World Championships, the WFI will take a call depending on what she mentions in her reply," Singh told this paper.

‘MS Dhoni’: Abhishek Bachchan on player he wants to see play in ETPL

With Mahendra Singh Dhoni yet to feature in this edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL), actor and European T20 Premier League (ETPL) co-founder Abhishek Bachchan said that he would love to see the former India captain playing in the brand new T20 league. Talking to PTI, Bachchan was asked which player he would want to see in the ETPL, he instantly replied with "Mahendra Singh Dhoni". "Do you need a reason why you want to see Mahendra Singh Dhoni in cricket?" he said from Dublin. Dhoni, who retired from international cricket in 2020, still retains his superstar aura with the ability to fill up stadiums on virtue his name alone. However, with the former Chennai Super Kings skipper now 44 years of age, there have been speculations on when he decides to call it a day.

Dhoni's absence was initially expected to be two-weeks long, but as the matches went on, it was prolonged, first due to the delay in his recovery and then about the



problem in accommodating him in the team. It even prompted batting coach Mike Hussey to observe that Dhoni's presence would be a distraction for the team "He's such a team-orientated guy, MS Dhoni. He always wants what's best for the team and he was worried that if he came,

‘Virat is very sensitive to criticism’: When Sanjay Manjrekar found a ‘cold’ Kohli at toss



Former Indian cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar believes Virat Kohli is extremely sensitive to criticism, claiming the star batter reads and hears everything said about him. Manjrekar shared incidents where he received a "cold" response from Kohli at the toss after making negative remarks about him. "Kohli is somebody who is also very sensitive to criticism. I think he gets to know what is being said about him because I have had an experience with him as a captain and as a player. Suddenly one day I would find him very cold at the toss or whatever, and I would think, perhaps he heard something that was said about him," Manjrekar said on Sportstar's Insight Edge Podcast.

Manjrekar said that while Kohli claims not to care about

what people say or think about him, the former India captain reacts to criticism or negativity through his performance on the field. "So he is one of those first guys who kept saying, 'We don't care about what people say and why.' But he is also very sensitive. Maybe it is a good thing as well, because if he hears that kind of criticism or something negative, it spurs him on to get that next big hundred," he added. Manjrekar praised Kohli's energy on the field, which he believes helped boost the team's morale. "The thing to like about him as captain was that when things went flat, when he knew he would not be able to get a wicket given the pitch or the bowling resources, he would still make sure the team was driven and that there was energy on the field. He made them believe that things would happen. I think that was his great strength," said Manjrekar. "I have always believed that the team wears the look of the captain. Under Virat Kohli, every player had to be like Virat Kohli. If anyone went out there and looked a little flat, they would not be playing the next Test match. So everyone responded to Virat's aggression," he added. For Manjrekar, the legacy Kohli left behind was the way he took on opponents, both with performance and verbally. "Taking on the opposition, not just verbally but with performances as well. After that, there was a clear indication that the more he got riled up, the better a player he became. That is the real legacy that Virat Kohli leaves for me," he said.

WFI chief on Vinesh Phogat missing Asian Games trials: ‘No special favour’

The doors have closed on wrestler Vinesh Phogat's chances of making it to the Asian Games trials on May 30 because of the paucity of time between her giving a detailed reply to a show cause notice and the Wrestling Federation of India's (WFI) disciplinary committee taking a call on her participation eligibility.

This, according to WFI president Sanjay Singh, who is at the Open National Ranking Tournament in Gonda. Speaking to The Indian Express on Tuesday, a day after the WFI dug in its heels and reiterated its stance to disallow Vinesh from competing in the ranking tournament, Singh said rules could not be bent, no matter a wrestler's stature. Despite missing the Asian Games trials window, there is still hope for her to compete in the trials for the World Championships to be held in Manama, Bahrain, in October-November.

"There was no reason for Vinesh to come here, as she was barred. But when Vinesh came to Gonda yesterday, the WFI briefed her about the reasons for which she was issued a show cause notice. She told me that she will give a detailed reply. Once she replies, a disciplinary committee of the WFI will take a call within 10 days. For the Asian Games, she won't be able to make it because the trial is on May 30 for women wrestlers. Will she be able to give her detailed reply, and will the committee have time to take a call on her participation? I don't think so. When it comes to the trials for the World Championships, the WFI will take a call depending on what she mentions in her reply," Singh told this paper. Karan Bhushan Singh (left) the Kaiserganj MP, UP wrestling chief and son for ex-WFI president Brij Bhushan Saran Singh being felicitated by WFI president Sanjay Singh in Gonda on Tuesday. Credit: Express Photo. Karan Bhushan Singh (left) the Kaiserganj MP, UP wrestling chief and son for ex-WFI president Brij Bhushan Saran Singh being felicitated by WFI president Sanjay Singh in Gonda on Tuesday. Vinesh had travelled to Gonda to verify for the women's freestyle event, but the WFI had asked her to first file a detailed reply to the show cause notice issued on Saturday, which had listed disciplinary issues, anti-doping rule violations and incomplete eligibility period. When asked if the WFI could have been lenient and allowed Vinesh to compete in Gonda and then take a call on her eligibility based on her reply to the show cause notice, the WFI president said that no wrestler will get special treatment. Moreover, the Open Ranking tournament in Gonda is not a qualifying tournament for the Asian Games trials, as per the WFI policy.

"It is not about how big or famous a wrestler is. No body is bigger than the WFI constitution. Aman Sehrawat, who is an Olympic medalist, could not maintain his weight during the World Championships (in 2025). He was also

‘If we hold crucial moments, we can win’: Axar Patel on Delhi Capitals' missed chances



GNS News Agency, May 18

Delhi Capitals keep themselves alive in the playoff race of IPL 2026 with a three-wicket win over Punjab Kings at Dharamshala on Monday night. The team currently has ten points after 12 games, and if the Axar Patel-led team can win their remaining matches, they can still qualify for the play-offs if other permutations and combinations go their way. Skipper Axar Patel sounded hopeful that the team can do well in the remaining matches and also hold it together in crucial moments. "I have been saying it since the last time as well: if we can hold crucial moments in matches, we can win. The team is very good, and we have been playing good cricket too. We lost one or two matches because we gave away crucial moments, and that's why we are here. But such things happen in a long tournament. Not all days are equal. I am very happy with the way the team played and hope that we will do well in the remaining matches," Patel said in the post-match presentation.

With Delhi Capitals winning the toss and deciding to bowl first, Punjab Kings raced to a breezy start as their openers Priyanshu Arya and Prabhsimran Singh amassed 51 runs in the first three overs. Delhi Capitals made a comeback in the next seven overs, giving away only 56 runs. With Punjab Kings eventually finishing at 210 for 5, the Axar Patel-led side had to chase the target on a pitch offering assistance to the pacers. After being 72 for 4 in 7.2 overs, Delhi Capitals' innings was given a push by a 64-run fifth-wicket partnership between Patel and David Miller, before some hard hitting by Miller, Ashutosh Sharma and Madhav



suspended by the WFI till he clarified about it. Rules can't be changed or bent for anyone, else we will set a precedent for it. No wrestler will get any special favour, and we told Vinesh the same thing," Singh added.

Delayed notice Though Vinesh registered for the Open Ranking tournament before the April-end deadline, it took the WFI another 10 days to issue her a show cause notice, raising questions about its timing as it came three days before the start of the women's freestyle event in Gonda. Singh claimed it was because of a procedural delay. Vinesh phogat Interview Vinesh Phogat speaks with media on being denied participation by the WFI in the National Open Ranking Tournament, in Ayodhya on Monday. (ANI Video Grab) "Yes, Vinesh registered on time. The WFI had to look at the entries of all the participants, and we checked everyone's data, including Vinesh's. We realized that there were three to four issues that she had to clarify about. We consulted our legal team and issued a notice. There is no conspiracy to this." Gonda is the home turf of former BJP Member of Parliament and ex WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who was accused of sexual harassment by six women wrestlers in 2023. On May 3, Vinesh had said that she was one of the complainants. "There is no security issue for Vinesh in Gonda. Yesterday, she came and toured the entire college campus. To say that girls are unsafe here is incorrect. Women wrestlers from around the country have come to Gonda, and everyone is safe. I had given Vinesh guarantee that she would be safe, and she returned without any safety issue." On Vinesh alleging that the WFI is creating hurdles in her return to competition, Singh dismissed it as a conspiracy theory. "There is no truth in that, and such things don't make any sense. These are all conspiracy theories."

Tiwari in the death overs steered the team home with one over to spare. Patel praised his team's bowlers as well as youngsters like Ashutosh Sharma and Madhav Tiwari for playing their part in the win. "The way we fought back to end the powerplay with 72 runs after giving away 51 runs in the first three overs was the defining moment of the match. The way Mukesh Kumar and Madhav Tiwari bowled in the middle overs, apart from the partnership between myself and David Miller, set the match for players like Ashutosh Sharma and Madhav Tiwari to finish it. Given the kind of wicket it was, where the ball swung and cut, it was crucial to utilise the conditions. The bowlers did not bowl the right length in the first two or three overs, but the way Madhav and Aquib Nabi swung the ball was crucial for us in making the comeback. The pitch was offering assistance to the pacers, and I did not feel the need to bowl spinners. I thought I have five fast bowlers, so let me use them," added Patel. Patel played a 30-ball knock of 56 runs, his highest score in this IPL. When asked about his knock and the way he batted on Monday, the two-time T20 World Cup winner shared how he had been following his process in earlier matches and it clicked on Monday.

TCA appeal to HCA top official seeking restraint

Hyderabad: The Telangana Cricket Association (TCA) has submitted an urgent legal representation to Justice (Retd.) P. Naveen Rao, Single Member Committee overseeing HCA affairs, and to the BCCI, seeking immediate restraint on the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) from proceeding with its widely publicised "TG20 League". The TCA stated that despite HCA facing serious allegations of financial irregularities, adverse justice committee observations and pending criminal cases for nearly two decades, HCA is attempting to conduct a high-value franchise-based commercial league through a self-declared "TG20 Governing Council", without mandatory approval of the HCA General Body and without producing

Shah Rukh's Ravi Singh to Salman Khan's Shera, how much Bollywood's top bodyguards really earn



Whenever a celebrity arrives at the airport terminal, their security team stands ground prior to them for protection. They monitor crowd movement and act as a shield between the artiste and adoring fans. Bollywood bodyguards like Ravi Singh (Shah Rukh Khan's security) and Shera (Salman Khan's bodyguard) are often subjected to rumours regarding their salaries, with claims that they earn in crores. While SRK's former bodyguard Yaseen Khan rubbished the speculations recently, the reports refused to die down. In this exclusive piece, we debunk popular myths, and decode how security agencies and bodyguards earn — with salaries being inconsequential, it's the perks that matter!

Celebrity bodyguards often become part of an artiste's inner circle, making fans curious about the hiring process and salary structure. Sameer, who handles the security of Bollywood celebs when they are in Delhi, says they communicate with artiste's managers and are hired by them. "The managers take care of agency hiring. However, this is done in consultation with artistes' themselves." Security personnel Zeeshan Qureshi, who primarily manages Sidharth Malhotra, explained the agency model. "Earlier, there were only a few prominent security agencies, including Ronit Roy's Ace Security and Protection, who provided services to all the A-listers — Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Salman Khan, Aamir Khan, and others. These companies used to employ 50-60 people on payroll, and give them monthly salaries," he said. He further continued, "These bodyguards used to provide security for 10-12 hours everyday to a celebrity. They only used to receive salaries, but no perks such as conveyance or other charges. When the company received a particular amount for a film shoot, they used to pay 10% to the security guard who is on the job. They used to eat food with the celebrity's team on set. But now, security guards have started connecting with the artistes personally, avoiding the agency route. Moreover, even if they are coming through an agency, they get 25% of the payment, along with the monthly salary." Actor Deepika Padukone's security is handled by her longtime bodyguard Jalaluddin Shaikh. According to several reports, Jalal's annual salary is estimated to be around Rs 1.2 crore per year. He often shares pictures with the Padmavat star on his social media handles.

Anushka Sharma's bodyguard Prakash Singh aka Sonu, has been with her for many years, even before her marriage to Virat Kohli in 2017. He is often seen travelling with both Anushka and Virat, protecting them in public spaces. Shera, who handles, Salman's security, has his own security agency called Tiger security, since 1995. He has been the superstar's trusted personal bodyguard since 1997. He travels with Salman to almost every private event, film set, or other shoots. His earning is again said to be in crores.

The bigger the celebrity, the more elaborate the security ecosystem becomes. Sameer debunked the myth that Salman Khan's bodyguard Shera or Shah Rukh Khan's personal security guard Ravi Singh get a salary of over Rs 2 crores. Having said that, he admitted that they do get certain privileges and their salaries are much higher than other bodyguards. "If we are getting 50 paise for a job, they would get paid Rs 1, because they are working with a big artiste. They have huge packages," he said. Yusuf Ibrahim, who handles the security for actor Alia Bhatt and has worked with Shah Rukh Khan and many other stars in the past, told

SCREEN that there is no way celebrity bodyguards are earning crores monthly. "All this isn't possible. They have a fixed salary but the rest depends on whatever they can make through different shoots. What you see about bodyguards making crores a month is not true." Zeeshan revealed that whoever operates social media, exaggerates the amount paid to bodyguards. "Case in point — Aamir Khan's staff only gets salary of Rs 25,000 per month. His bodyguards work in 3 shifts of 4 hours each. He has a total of 12 people, and there are 4 people with him at all times. They don't get any added per day or brand shoot payments," he stated.

The bodyguard added, "However, other stars like Shah Rukh, Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar, and Hrithik Roshan, have security guards working with them since several years. They don't belong to any company. If there's any shoot or visit planned, their security has a fixed amount that they always charge on daily basis, along with the salaries given by actors. The contract is drawn up that way so that the driver, hair-makeup artist and security is included." The payments for a film shoot, for instance, is paid by the producer. If the actor is doing an ad shoot, photo shoot or making an appearance at an event, the client pays for security along with other costs. For security, these costs can range anything from Rs 25,000 to Rs 1 lakh for a few hours or a day. In fact, Zeeshan admitted that most of these top celebrity bodyguards "don't prefer" taking salaries. "It is so minimal and a mere formality. When they are getting paid Rs 1-1.5 lacs for a single event, why would they care about Rs 30-40K? I have never charged any salary from them myself, and I have worked with Varun Dhawan, Alia, Ranbir Kapoor, and now with Siddharth." Film shoots, brands, and advertisements A celebrity's security team has to accompany him/her to every shoot assignment, be it for a film, ad or even appearances. While many may think that the artist pays for his own security, it is important to mention that the expenses are covered by the other party. For example, if an actor is travelling for a movie shoot with his entire team (including security and hair-makeup artists), then the producer will bear the costs of travel, hotel, food, and other miscellaneous expenses. The same rule is applied during photo or ad shoots as the brand pays. Talking about the per day payments for such assignments, Yusuf said, "These are decided between the managers and the production houses. We have no say in this, they decide the budget which is given to everybody. It keeps varying according to the budgets and stars. The travelling, hotel and food expenses, everything is taken care of by the promoters." Sameer agreed with Yusuf's assertion and said, "The expenses are taken care of by the production house. The artiste only pays if the security has been hired for any personal use, they don't pay anything during promotions. In the case of an ad shoot, they have a separate component for both hair-makeup and security. Around Rs 1.5 lakh is paid to HMU artists and around Rs 70-75K budget for security."

Elaborating the entire process behind providing security for various shoots of actors, Zeeshan shared, "Every actor has a WhatsApp group with their entire team. Their managers drop a message on the group, revealing the timings and days of shoot and send the remuneration on DM. There's mostly no need for negotiation from our side. The best part is that the actor's staff payments never get stalled, be it for a film or any other shoot. We even receive it in advance sometimes. This is the biggest plus point of working with actors." The security agents also tend to maintain a personal relationship with the artist, which in turn helps them with salary perks and benefits. The system is followed by most of the celebrities, including, Varun Dhawan, Alia Bhatt, Siddharth Malhotra. When asked about celebs covering various expenses like school fees of children, vacations, medical, etc, Yusuf shared, "Its there, its definitely there. They do take care of what is required by their staff, its internal and between them, jiska jitna dil ho (depending on what perks an individual wants to give)." To which Zeeshan added, sharing his experience with actor Taapsee Pannu. "Even if you are living in a rented house, they cover those charges as well. With Taapsee, she took care of schooling, medical, house rent, etc. Every artist has done this in my experience."

he was like, 'If you ever want to complain about your father, I'm just a phone call away.' And you have no idea, I will take you up on that, and then you'll regret it because I'll be constantly calling you." Recently, in the same conversation, Junaid also opened up about the debacle of his recent film Ek Din and said, "We were hopeful. But I guess, it didn't do well. It happens sometimes. It's a film that I really liked, I really enjoyed. I think we all really liked and enjoyed it, and I guess... a lot of people did really like it, but I guess most people didn't like it. That happens sometimes." When asked how Aamir was taking the film's performance, he explained that his father often becomes deeply attached to the films he produces and takes time to come to terms with their outcome. "He is still hopeful. Yeah, even after all these years, after seeing everything, it still really bothers him. But he keeps himself busy and gets back to it, and goes back out there and does it all over again." Aamir has also produced Ek Din.

From 15,000 steps to one-minute planks, Mandira Bedi shares her fitness routine'

Mumbai: Actress and fitness icon Mandira Bedi seems to be inspiring her fans with her disciplined lifestyle. The actress who is 53 years old, took to her social media account to share the fitness routine that keeps her physically and mentally strong, proving that age is just a number. According to Mandira, there are a few habits she follows dedicatedly every day and every week that help her stay on top of her health game. Sharing a glimpse of her workout session, Mandira wrote, "There are a few things I do every day or every week that work for me. The workout, every morning. The 15,000 steps a day. The one-minute plank daily, at any time of the day. And a message whenever I can fit one in. It works for me." She further engaged with her followers by asking about their own healthy habits. "Tell me, what are your non-negotiables? What are the things that make you happy or keep you going? I'd love to know and add some more healthy habits into the mix,"

Junaid Khan doesn't involve dad Aamir Khan with his films now: 'I made that mistake with Ek Din'



Junaid Khan has had a lukewarm career in films so far. While his first film Maharaj was critically appreciated, both his theatrical releases — Loveyapa and Ek Din — have failed to work at the box office. His recent release, Ek Din, was produced by his father Aamir Khan, failed to meet expectations. Aamir Khan is still hopeful. Amid the film's underperformance, Junaid spoke about its reception in a chat with Vicky Lalwani on his YouTube channel. He said, "We were hopeful. But I guess... It didn't do well. It happens sometimes. It's a film that I really liked, I really enjoyed. I think we all really liked and enjoyed it, and I guess... a lot of people did really like it, but I guess most people didn't like it. That happens sometimes."

When asked how his father was taking the film's debacle, he explained that Aamir often becomes deeply attached to the films he produces and takes time to come to terms with their outcome. "He is still hopeful. Yeah, even after all these years, after seeing everything, it still really bothers him. But he keeps himself busy and gets back to it, and goes back out there and does it all over again."

Recently, Sai Pallavi, who made her Bollywood debut with Ek Din, said that she felt perhaps she was miscast in the film. When Junaid was asked about the same, he clarified his stance: "She didn't say that. She was misquoted in the sense that when we were chatting, when she first saw the film and Sai Pallavi is the kind of person who is a little

diffident, so she was not very thrilled with her work. We all think she's spectacular in the film. But she is the kind of person who feels like, 'I could have done better,' or 'maybe somebody else should have been there.'"

In the same conversation, Junaid was also asked if he discuss his future projects with Aamir before accepting them. Junaid answered, "No, because I made that mistake with Ek Din." He recalled how the script of Ek Din was originally supposed to be backed by the director of Maharaj, Siddharth P Malhotra, and that shooting was planned to start soon after Maharaj. However, Junaid, who liked the script and wanted a second opinion, approached Aamir, which changed the course of the project. "I thought, 'Okay, shall I have a second opinion from dad? I really like it, but maybe I should get a second opinion from him.' So I set up a narration. And so when the narration happened, dad really loved it. And he was like, 'Siddharth, let me produce it.' Suddenly he was like, 'I want to make it. I really love it, sell it to me. I'm finally getting a chance to make a film for my son, everyone is making a film for him.' It was a rather emotional decision."

He added, "I think he's a fantastic producer, especially for a film like Ek Din. But what ends up happening is, then it takes five years to make. AKP (Aamir Khan Productions) is big production banner, it takes time. So then I realised, if I take it to dad and he loves it, then he'll be like, 'I'll produce it,' and then I'll have a film coming out once in five years. Which is great for him. He's at a stage in his career where he can do one film in five years,

I'm exaggerating a bit, I guess, but yeah, he can do one film in three years, four years, five years, and it's fine. But I'm just starting out. I need to have a steady stream of work. And dad's now dying to make another film with me, but I'm like, 'in a bit.'" Directed by Sunil Pandey, Ek Din is produced by Aamir Khan, Mansoor Khan, and Aparna Purohit. The film is a remake of the 2016 Thai romantic drama One Day, and follows the story of a young man who falls in love with his colleague but struggles to confess his feelings. His wish to spend just one day with her unexpectedly comes true, setting the story in motion. As per Sacnilk, Ek Din grossed Rs 5.4 crore worldwide in 11 days.

Madhavan gave no free time to son Vedant till he was 15: 'I learnt this rule at a wild Canadian town'



R Madhavan has often spoken proudly about parenting his son, Vedaant Madhavan, and the values he has instilled in him. While speaking to Radhika Gupta on the YouTube channel 100 Year Life Project by ACKO, the Dhurandhar actor took a moment to discuss parenting trends that concern him in contemporary times. He said, "What I'm seeing now is some of my friends' kids go to international schools, and I think their kids in LKG are paying more fees than I did for my entire engineering, which is actually a fact." In the same breath, he added, "They are people who spent a fortune on the first birthday of their child. It is such a big deal. Almost, I think I didn't spend as much on my marriage as they did on the first birthday of a child. And I'm sure, God bless them for having the money to do that, but I'm just saying, it's all these events. And, it's not just for the child. The child probably doesn't even realise."

He also explained what is causing stress among parents: "I know a lot of parents who are so conscious about the fact that they have to give return gifts, that they sometimes avoid going to birthday parties because they can't avoid it. You know, they are like, 'We will have to call them for our birthday.' And they say, you know, the child is busy or unwell or, you know, we have to travel someplace, because it's really such a responsibility to keep track of what they gave you as a return gift and what

you have to give back."

Speaking specifically about what he made sure to inculcate in Vedaant, he said, "I realised there are two things I needed to tell Vedaant. One is this attitude of gratitude, which is very, very important for them to know: that they are privileged because of somebody else's work, that has helped get you this. And therefore, sometimes just telling him the salary of my cook, saying, 'Hey, you know what? What a pair of shoes that have been gifted to you cost this much and this man has to work an entire year, living in that kitchen, to earn enough to afford a bit of that.'" He also emphasized respect towards people perhaps who are in lower hierarchies but are no less in any which way: "The second thing I made sure that Vedaant did was to acknowledge, maybe not as much as my friends, but most certainly acknowledge the liftman, the guard, the drivers, you know, and not call them aayas and stuff like that. Call them didis instead. And I made sure that if the watchman came and said, 'You are a very polite child, he always says namaste to me,' I thought my job was well done." Madhavan also recalled a parenting tip he received while studying abroad, which he has followed faithfully: "I lived in a town in Canada, which was pretty wild for those times because, you know, teenage pregnancy was rampant over there, and drugs and alcohol were part of that town, I found one family that I stayed with whose children were absolutely normal as can be, very well brought up, not into any of these issues. And so I happened to ask the lady of the household many years later, I said, 'How did you manage to do this?'" He recalled her response: "And she gave me an advice which I followed to the heart, and it really worked for my son. And she said, 'Don't give your child free time.' She said, 'You know, indulge him or her in whatever they want to do, as long as they're doing it with passion. The interests will change, the level of commitment will change, but make sure that they don't have free time till they're 15-16 years old. Make it a habit to make sure they go from one activity to the other. And it could be fun. It should be fun. It shouldn't be a chore, the child is going to hate it.'" He added, "But if he wants to play basketball and tennis and golf, and wants to play kabaddi and spend time

Nora Fatehi admits 'Body Roll' is 'inspired' by Love, Death & Robots' Jibaro, but fans call it a copy

Nora Fatehi and Yo Yo Honey Singh recently unveiled the music video for their new track "Body Roll." Soon after the music video dropped online, social media users began drawing comparisons between its visuals and Jibaro, the acclaimed episode from Love, Death & Robots. Released on YouTube over the weekend, "Body Roll" rapidly crossed over two million views within a short span. The fantasy-inspired video features Nora draped in elaborate golden jewellery and ornate costumes as she emerges from a lake in a mysterious forest, seemingly trying to lure a soldier-like character.

What's in Body Roll video?

The video opens with a man dressed in medieval-style clothing running through a forest before reaching a lake. Covered in tattoos and jewels, he notices Nora Fatehi rising dramatically from the water in shimmering gold attire and intricate headgear. The sequence eventually transitions into a high-energy dance performance featuring Nora and a troupe of backup dancers. Soon after the video dropped, several viewers began comparing its aesthetic and visual storytelling to Jibaro, the ninth episode from the third season of Love, Death & Robots, which premiered on Netflix in 2022.

Directed by Alberto Mielgo, the episode follows a lone conquistador encountering a mysterious siren-like entity deep within the jungle. The siren, covered in gold ornaments, also emerges from a lake, while the male character sports tattoos, piercings, and warrior-inspired styling, details many fans felt were too similar to ignore. As clips from the music video spread across social media, reactions poured in online. One YouTube user com-



mented, "It's giving 'Jibaro' from Love, Death and Robots... But love the twist!!!," while another wrote, "The visuals are copied from Love, Death and Robots from Netflix." Another comment read, "Copy cats can't create original." Nora Fatehi also appeared to acknowledge the comparisons after content creator Filmy Sonia shared side-by-side clips from both videos on Instagram. Responding to the reel, the actor commented, "Inspired and obsessed! Now we have a real life version." However, her use of the word "inspired" triggered further debate online, with many social media users questioning