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Groundwater degradation threatens soil health

HARYANA's groundwater crisis has entered a dangerous new phase. For years, the debate revolved around the rapidly falling water table caused by excessive extraction for the paddy-wheat cycle. Now, a study by Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University has revealed an equally alarming reality: barely 32% of the state's groundwater remains suitable for high-quality irrigation. The problem is no longer just about the quantity of water available underground, but also about its deteriorating quality. Large parts of Haryana are now confronting salinity, sodicity and chemical imbalances that gradually reduce soil fertility and agricultural productivity. In some districts, over-extraction has drained aquifers; in others, canal seepage and poor drainage have produced water-logging and salt accumulation. Together, these twin crises expose the ecological limits of Haryana's Green Revolution model.

The state's dependence on water-intensive paddy cultivation remains at the centre of the problem. Subsidised electricity, assured procurement and MSP incentives continue to encourage indiscriminate groundwater pumping. Farmers cannot be blamed entirely for responding rationally to the economic signals created by policy. Yet the long-term consequences are becoming increasingly visible beneath the fields themselves.

Crop diversification must move from policy rhetoric to economic reality. Farmers require assured procurement and market support for less water-intensive crops such as maize, pulses and oilseeds. Techniques like direct-seeded rice, micro-irrigation and groundwater recharge need wider implementation, while canal systems require better drainage management.

Bakrid Symbolises Brotherhood and Spirit of Sacrifice: Mufti Mahaboob, Sheikh Javid



“Narsampet/Warangal, May 28 (Indian Chronicle) : Bakrid celebrations were observed with religious fervour and devotion on Thursday at the Eidgah located on Madannapeta Road in Narsampet town, where special Eid prayers were conducted in the morning. “Religious scholar Mufti Mahaboob led the special prayers, while the Jama Masjid Committee made elaborate arrangements for the smooth conduct of the festival celebrations. “Speaking on the occasion, Mufti Mahaboob said that Bakrid stands as a symbol of sacrifice, humanity and brotherhood. He urged people to stay away from negative thoughts, deceitful practices and false promises, and instead follow the path of honesty, righteousness and moral values. He called upon the public to reject evil and actively participate in social service by promoting goodness and compassion in society. “Later, Telangana Jana Samithi Party President Sheikh Javid stated that every Muslim should uphold the values of humanity, kindness and mutual respect. He emphasised that people must work for the welfare of society beyond caste and religious differences while fostering communal harmony through service-mindedness. He remarked that peace and unity can prevail in society only when people reject hatred and embrace noble values. “Following the Namaz, members of the Muslim community visited the Kabristan and offered floral tributes and special prayers at the graves of their departed relatives. Later, people exchanged Bakrid greetings warmly, embracing one another as a mark of brotherhood and harmony. The faithful subsequently returned to their homes to perform the traditional Qurbani rituals. “Among those who participated in the programme were Jama Masjid Committee President Mirza Masood Ali Beg, Councillor K. Salauddin, Ayub Khan, Secretary Yaqoob Pasha, Vice Presidents Akhil Jalil Khalil, committee members and several prominent personalities from the town.

Bakrid Celebrations in Bowenpally



“Secunderabad . MAY .28 (Indian Chronicle). “Bakrid, the festival symbolizing sacrifice, was celebrated grandly in Boinpally. Muslims observed the festival with great devotion and enthusiasm. On the occasion of the festival, devotees gathered in large numbers from early morning at mosques and Eidgahs located in Wards 1 to 6 under the Cantonment Board limits.

They participated in special prayers and celebrated the festive atmosphere wearing new clothes. “On this occasion, former Cantonment Board Vice Chairman Jampana Pratap reached Boinpally crossroads and extended Bakrid greetings to Muslims by warmly embracing them. A large number of Muslim devotees attended the special prayers held at the Bowenpally Eidgah Grounds. Bandi Srinivas, Karan Singh, Suleman and others also participated in the celebrations

Congress Committed to NTR's Ideals and Welfare Governance Under CM Revanth Reddy



Uppal Congress In-Charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy“UPPAL, MAY 28 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy paid rich tributes to former Chief Minister and legendary actor Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR) by garlanding his statue at HB Colony in Meerpet on Thursday morning. The tribute program was organized under the aegis of Kakatiya Seva Samithi. “Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy said that NTR was a great leader who stood as a symbol of Telugu self-respect. He stated that while NTR earned worldwide fame as an iconic actor in the film industry, he also created history in politics

as a champion of the poor and a pioneer of welfare governance. “He recalled that NTR introduced revolutionary welfare schemes such as rice at Rs. 2 per kilogram, housing for the poor, and equal property rights for women, which earned him a permanent place in the hearts of common people. He further said that NTR founded a political party to uphold the self-respect of Telugu people and empowered the weaker sections politically. “Parameshwar Reddy stated that the Congress Party remains committed to fulfilling the ideals of NTR and ensuring welfare-oriented governance. He added that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the government is working with the objective of prioritizing the welfare of the poor in line with NTR's vision. “The program was attended by Kakatiya Seva Samithi members G. Uma Maheshwara Rao and G. Sai Sudheer, Division President Polepaka Anjaiah, Kapar Sai Goud, Sare Kittu, Rayani Uday Kiran, Anil Gupta, Srikanth, Gemini, Sammaiah, Venu, Besta Ramesh, Krishna Naik, Rupinder Reddy, Nikki, Koyagura Balaraj, Parvathalu, Tillu Mudiraj, Naveen, Jayanth, Vijay Reddy, Shankar, Pradeep, Balakrishna, Rani, Suresh Goud, Mallikarjun, Yadagiri, Shravan Goud, Pala Prasad, Sambasiva Rao, Veerabhadra Rao, Amar Kumar, Kishore, Congress leaders, party workers, and a large number of local residents who participated and paid floral tributes to NTR.

Everyone Should Strive to Fulfil the Ideals of Late NTR, Symbol of Telugu Self-Respect:



Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy“KAPRA, MAY 28 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): “On the occasion of the 103rd birth anniversary celebrations of legendary leader and actor late Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR), Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy participated as the chief guest in various commemorative events organized across the constituency on Wednesday. “The celebrations were organized by Kammavari Seva Samithi at High Tension Road under Dr. A.S. Rao Nagar Division, by NTR Fans Association at Jammigadda, and by NTR Fans Association in Meerpet Housing Board Division. The MLA paid floral tributes to NTR's statue and remembered his remarkable contributions to society. “Speaking on the occasion, Bandari



Lakshma Reddy said that NTR was a great leader who became a symbol of self-respect for Telugu people and left an indelible mark not only in politics but also in the film industry. He stated that NTR introduced several welfare schemes for the poor and earned a permanent place in the hearts of the people. “The MLA called upon the youth to take inspiration from the ideals of NTR, describing him as a personality every Telugu person should be proud of. He said NTR's commitment towards public welfare and social service continues to inspire generations. “Former MLA Subhash Reddy, former MLC Janardhan Reddy, former corporator Kotha Ramarao, BRS state leader Soma Shekhar Reddy, along with TDP and BRS party leaders, activists, and NTR admirers participated in the programme.

Grand Celebrations of NTR's 103rd Birth Anniversary Held in Manthani Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR) is the only

Peddapalli District, “Manthani” (INDIAN CHRONICLE), “MEDAGONI VENKATESH” is the only great leader revered by the Telugu community. “NTR Jayanti” is celebrated as a festival day by Telugu people across the world. “Though the Telugu Desam Party is a regional party, it has a history of influencing national politics. “The services rendered by NTR to the nation are unforgettable, and he deserves the Bharat Ratna award. “TDP Manthani In-charge Ande Bhaskarachari at the NTR Jayanti celebrations. “The 103rd birth anniversary celebrations of Telugu Desam Party founder, former Chief Minister of united Andhra Pradesh, and symbol of Telugu self-respect, late Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR), were held grandly at the Manthani constituency headquarters in Peddapalli district. “The program was organized under the leadership of Manthani Mandal Telugu Desam Party President Madharaveni Odel. TDP Manthani constituency in-charge Ande Bhaskarachari attended the event as the chief guest and addressed the gathering. Former ITDP State Secretary Vadlakonda Rajasekhara also participated as a special guest. “On this occasion, party leaders and supporters paid floral tributes to the NTR statue in the center of Manthani town. Later, a cake-cutting ceremony was held, followed by the hoisting of the Telugu Desam Party flag near the party flag pedestal opposite the Junior College in an enthusiastic atmosphere. “Party leaders, workers, and supporters participated in large numbers, raising slogans such as “Jai NTR – Jai Telugu Desam” and “Johar NTR,” making



the entire Manthani town echo with enthusiasm. “A large number of NTR admirers attended the celebrations, adding special significance to the event. Former Manthani MLA Putt Madhu and several other leaders also participated and paid rich tributes to NTR. “Among those present were former Telugu Yuvatha Peddapalli District President Badugu Mahesh, Ramagiri Mandal Party President Kantipudi Ramakrishna, Kamanpur Mandal Party President Keerthi Satyanarayana, along with leaders from various mandals, youth members, women leaders, party workers, and supporters in huge numbers. “Party leaders and workers expressed happiness over the successful conduct of the program.

Demand to Grant SC Status to Dalit Christians



Peddapalli District, “Manthani” (INDIAN CHRONICLE), “MEDAGONI VENKATESH” – Manthani Division Pastors Association Vice President Kampalli Das“Manthani Division Pastors Association Vice President Kampalli Das demanded that the religious restrictions mentioned in Clause 3 of the Scheduled Castes Order, 1950 under Article 341 of the Indian Constitution be immediately removed and Scheduled Caste (SC) status be granted to Dalit Christians. “A special meeting was organized on Thursday at Zion Church in Manthani town under the leadership of the Manthani Mandal United Pastors Fellowship to discuss the rights of Dalit Christians. “Speaking on the occasion, Kampalli Das said that cancelling SC status merely because a person changes religion is completely against the principles of justice. He stated that removing people from the SC list on the basis of religion violates fundamental rights and goes against the spirit of the Constitution. “He urged both the Central and

State governments to respond immediately and ensure that SC individuals do not lose their SC status regardless of the religion they practice. He demanded the removal of religious restrictions in the Scheduled Castes Order, 1950 and called for equal rights for all citizens under Articles 14, 15, 17, 21, and 25 of the Constitution. “He further stated that Scheduled Castes should enjoy the same equal rights that are available to OC, BC, and ST communities in the country. “The meeting was attended by Manthani Mandal United Pastors Fellowship President Reverend Kaluvula Samuel, General Secretary Reverend Siripuram Abraham, Treasurer Reverend Manthani Mark, pastors Dooda Mahesh, Ajmeera Dayaraju, Kannuri Krupavaram, Elisha, along with church elders and believers.

Telangana sizzles as temperatures cross 46°C in multiple districts

GNS News Agency, May 28

Hyderabad: After a brief respite that lasted for a day, the heatwave conditions have returned across Hyderabad and districts of Telangana. The India Meteorological Department (IMD), Hyderabad, in its forecast on Thursday indicated that heat wave conditions are likely to last for three more days until May 31, before the mercury starts to drop.

UCC NOT AGAINST RELIGION AND CASTE; BJP

Hyderabad, May 28: BJP State President N Ramchander Rao today emphasised that Uniform Civil Code (UCC) should also be implemented in Telangana state as this law would provide legal property rights and adoption rights to women and children in the country. “Rao was speaking as chief guest at the party's cadre training camp organized under the “Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Shikshan Maha Abhiyan” at Moinaba in Ranga Reddy district. He said that these training sessions are being conducted to provide workers with a complete understanding of the party's ideology and policies alongside changing times. “UCC was not against any religion or caste. Because of this law women and children in the country will get legal property rights and adoption rights. While exempting the culture and traditions of Scheduled Tribes (Tribals), a single civil law would apply to everyone else in the country. Women across the nation have welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who delivered justice to Muslim women by abolishing Triple Talaq,” Rao reminded. “BJP state chief clarified that just as they achieved the abolition of Article 370 which was part of the BJP's ideology and manifesto, the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is equally necessary for the country. He noted that states like Uttarakhand, Goa, and Assam have already brought in this law and lauded the decision taken by the Assam government as highly commendable. “Rao welcomed the verdict of the Apex court on Special Intensive Revision (SIR) and alleged that opposition parties have carried malicious propaganda over Voters' List Purification (SIR). He lashed out at the Congress, BRS, and Majlis parties for spreading false propaganda against the decision taken by the Election Commission of India to remove fake and deceased voters. He mocked that those who remained silent when this purification happened 10 times during the previous Congress regimes were now searching for excuses in EVMs and SIRs out of fear of defeat. “He further alleged that the mentality of both Congress and BRS was the same accusing leaders of both parties of supporting disruptive forces that instigate youth to burn down railway stations and government properties. “Rao criticized that while the previous BRS government deceived the unemployed and students, the current Congress government is also playing with the future of students and youth by not providing jobs and failing to pay fee reimbursement dues. He slammed the Congress government for failing to properly deliver the promised Rs 15,000 Rythu Bharosa to farmers, adding that the government was in an incompetent state which was unable to disburse salaries on the first of the month, fails to give pensions and benefits to employees and retired staff. “He expressed grief that due to recent unseasonal rains, the paddy, maize, and jowar of farmers at various purchase centers were completely soaked and farmers are weeping with no one to buy their produce. “Rao criticized the Congress government for breaking its promise of “buying until the last grain” and shifting its incompetence onto the Center. “BJP state chief warned that although the BJP's ‘Rythu Gosa - BJP Bharosa’ yatra for farmers' rights concluded in Nirmal (Sarangapur), the BJP's struggle will not stop until justice is done to the farmers. He warned that they would not tolerate attempts to scare BJP leaders and workers with false cases and house arrests. “He praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for creating a new record by delivering corruption-free and pro-people welfare governance in this country. He expressed optimism that despite the global economic crisis, India was surging ahead economically and would soon reach the third position and with PM Modi's vision, we will achieve ‘Viksit Bharat’ and stand first in the world. “He pointed out that the Center has allocated around Rs 13 lakh crore to Telangana over the last 12 years. He noted that 5 kg of free rice every month, National Highways, the Central Tribal University in Mulugu, AIIMS in Bibinagar, Warangal-Adilabad airports,

Goodness Personified yellanki Vasantham Remembered

Peddapalli District, “Manthani” (INDIAN CHRONICLE), “MEDAGONI VENKATESH” “Cooler Donated to Anganwadi School by Family Members” — Manthani Municipal Chairman vodnala Srinivas “Vodnala Srinivas said that late yellanki Vasantham was known everywhere — in his profession, on the streets, and in the village — as a symbol of kindness and humanity. “On Thursday, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of late yellanki Vasantham, his sons, 13th Ward Councillor yellanki Vamsidhar and Vasudev, donated a water cooler to the Masjid Wada Anganwadi School in Manthani for the convenience of small children during the summer season. “Participating as the chief guest, Municipal Chairman vodnala Srinivas praised Vamsidhar and Vasudev for carrying forward their father's legacy of service and compassion. He appreciated their thoughtful gesture of donating the cooler in memory of their father to provide relief to children from the scorching summer heat. “Family members including yellanki Radhika, yellanki Sriatha, Anirudh, Akshaya, leaders MS Reddy and Aleem, Anganwadi teacher Jawahari Kumari, and several others participated in the programme.

NOTICE FOR REGISTRATION OF NEW POLITICAL PARTY

(Published as per the directions of Telangana State Election Commission)

Dated : 29-05-2026

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Sri Vaddi Srinivas Reddy President of **Praja Sainyam Party** Telangana State intends to register a political party without reserved symbol with the State Election Commission, Telangana, under the name and style of **Praja Sainyam Party** with location of its Head office: Flat No. C2, 2nd Floor, Sukhmani Apartments, P & T Officers Colony, Lakdikapul, Hyderabad, Telangana-500004, under the registration of political parties and allotment of symbols order, 2018. The main office bearers of the party are 1). **Sri Vaddi Srinivas Reddy, President, 2) Sri Vaddi SaiKrishna Reddy, General Secretary, 3) Smt. Vaddi Manjula Reddy, Treasurer.** Objections, if any, for such registration from the general public, shall be sent to the Secretary, State Election Commission, Telangana, 1st Floor, DTCP Building, Opp: PTI Building, A.C. Guards, Hyderabad-500 004 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. If no objections are received within the time stipulated, the Commission will process to register **Praja Sainyam Party** as a Political Party to contest elections to Local Bodies (Sthanika Samsthalu) held on party basis in Telangana State.

Sd/- President, Praja Sainyam Party

Bakrid Symbolises Sacrifice, Love and Faith : Minister Konda Surekha



Konda Muralidhar Rao""-Congress People's Government Committed to Minority Welfare""Warangal, May 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE) : State Minister Konda Surekha and former MLC Konda Muralidhar Rao participated in the special Bakrid prayers held with religious fervour at various Eidgahs across Warangal city on Thursday, marking the auspicious occasion of Bakrid.""The ministerial couple attended the prayer gatherings organised at LB Nagar, Mattewada and Fort Warangal Eidgahs, where Muslim religious leaders and Eidgah committee members extended a warm welcome and felicitated them with shawls.""Speaking on the occasion, Minister Konda Surekha stated that Bakrid symbolises sacrifice, love, faith and devotion to Allah. She expressed gratitude to the Muslim elders, Eidgah committee members and the public for affectionately inviting them to participate in the sacred prayer ceremonies as members of their own family.""The Minister affirmed that the Congress People's Government is firmly committed to the

welfare and upliftment of minorities. Recalling the initiatives introduced during the tenure of former Chief Minister Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, she said the reservations provided to Muslim minorities had significantly improved the socio-economic conditions of many families.""She further stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the State Government is giving renewed priority to minority welfare and implementing several schemes in the fields of education, employment and healthcare for the advancement of the Muslim community.""Minister Surekha assured that the government would make every possible effort to bring the issues faced by Muslims in various sectors to the attention of the Chief Minister and work towards their resolution.""Praying for peace, communal harmony and prosperity in society, the Minister conveyed Bakrid greetings to Muslim brothers and sisters across Telangana and the erstwhile Warangal district, wishing everyone a life filled with happiness, health and well-being.

Bakrid Symbolises Communal Harmony : MLA KR Nagaraju



--Special Eid Prayers Held at Ainavolu Eidgah""Hanumakonda, May 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE) : On the occasion of Bakrid (Eid-ul-Adha), celebrated as a symbol of the sacrifice and devotion of Hazrat Ibrahim, Vardhannapet Constituency MLA and retired IPS officer KR Nagaraju participated in the special prayers held on Thursday at the Eidgah in Ainavolu mandal headquarters of Hanumakonda district. He extended heartfelt Eid Mubarak greetings to the Muslim brothers and sisters on the festive occasion.""Following the prayers, members of the Muslim community submitted a representation to the MLA highlighting several issues pertaining to their locality. Responding to their concerns, KR Nagaraju assured that he would make sincere efforts towards resolving the public issues at the earliest.""Speaking on the occasion, the MLA stated that the festival of Bakrid conveys a noble message of sacrifice, humanity and harmony by encouraging people to rise above

selfishness, jealousy and hatred. He observed that only those who possess true devotion, selflessness and a spirit of sacrifice become worthy of divine blessings.""KR Nagaraju further remarked that in today's modern society, those who love fellow human beings and extend support to the needy are the true devotees of God. He called upon people to draw inspiration from the sacrifice of Hazrat Ibrahim and move forward with mutual love, compassion, brotherhood and human values.""Praying for peace and communal harmony in society, the MLA wished that people should lead healthy, happy and prosperous lives. He once again conveyed Bakrid greetings to the people of Telangana State and the residents of Vardhannapet constituency.""The programme was attended by public representatives, former public representatives, Congress Party leaders from the state, district, mandal and village levels, Muslim religious elders, youth and members of the community from Ainavolu mandal.

Minister Sridhar Babu Stands Firmly with Farmers"Welfare of Farmers is the State Government's Main Objective"Allegations by BJP Leaders are Baseless DCC Spokesperson Seggem Rajesh.Peddapalli District,



"Manthani"(INDIAN CHRONICLE), "MEDAGONI VENKATESH""Seggem Rajesh stated that the Congress government is working with the sole objective of ensuring the welfare of farmers across the state."He strongly condemned the allegations made by BJP leaders during their "Rythu Bharosa Yatra" visit to Manthani against State Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu and the Congress government.

Rajesh said the accusations made by BJP leaders were false and politically motivated, aimed only at gaining political relevance."He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and IT Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu are continuously striving for the welfare of farmers not only in the Manthani constituency but across the entire state. He added that the government has been ensuring the availability of fertilizers, seeds, and irrigation water to support farmers."Rajesh further stated that along with providing Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops, the government is also extending an additional bonus of Rs. 500 to benefit farmers. He said that even discoloured paddy affected by untimely rains and natural calamities would be procured at support price, as already announced by Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao and Minister Sridhar Babu."

He expressed disappointment that BJP leaders were unaware of these announcements. Rajesh said the government has established paddy procurement centres in villages and provided all necessary facilities for farmers. He accused BJP leaders of exaggerating minor issues for political gain."He further alleged that BJP leaders have never genuinely stood by farmers or supported them in history and advised them to stop maligning the government for political purposes.

Provide Efficient and Transparent Public Services : MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy

""Hanamkonda, May 28 (Indian Chronicle) : Warangal West MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy stated that government officials must work with dedication and a sense of responsibility to provide transparent and efficient administrative services to the public.""Venkatesh, the newly appointed Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) for Hanamkonda, paid a courtesy visit to the MLA at his camp office located in Balasamudram, Hanamkonda, on Thursday. Venkatesh, who recently assumed charge as RDO, conveyed his greetings to the MLA on this occasion and presented him with a floral bouquet.""Speaking during the meeting, MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy emphasized that the administrative machinery must work with mutual coordination to effectively implement and deliver government welfare and development programs to the people. He advised officials to remain accessible to the public at all times and to respond responsibly in resolving civic issues.""The MLA expressed



the view that strong coordination between public representatives and government officials would significantly contribute to the comprehensive development of the Hanamkonda region. Congratulating Venkatesh on assuming his new responsibilities, the MLA wished him success in effectively discharging his duties.

Bakrid Symbolises Peace, Brotherhood and Sacrifice



MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy""Hanumakonda, May 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE) : Warangal West Constituency MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy extended heartfelt Bakrid greetings to Muslim brothers and sisters on the auspicious occasion of the festival.""As part of the celebrations, the MLA visited the Eidgah grounds at Bokkalagadda on Thursday morning and participated in the special prayers along with members of the Muslim community. Interacting warmly with the devotees and local residents present on the occasion,

he stated that the festival of Bakrid stands as a symbol of peace, brotherhood and the spirit of sacrifice.""The MLA expressed hope that people from all sections of society would continue to live in harmony, mutual affection and communal unity. He wished that happiness and prosperity flourish in every household and that people be blessed with good health, peace and well-being.""Nayini Rajender Reddy further observed that Bakrid strengthens the values of unity, humanity, tolerance and social harmony in society.

Bakrid festival fosters devotion, sacrifice, compassion, and faith among people..

Tandur MLA Buyyani Manohar Reddy stated... ? United Rangareddy District MLC Patnam Mahender Reddy, Tandur MLA Buyyani Manohar Reddy, Congress Party District President Darasingh, BRS Party In-charge leaders Shrishail Reddy, Shubhpradh Patel conveyed greetings to Muslim brothers.""Indian Chronicle "Vikarabad (May 28)""MLA Manohar Reddy stated that the Bakrid festival fosters the qualities of devotion, sacrifice, compassion, and faith among people. On the occasion of Bakrid festival celebrations held in Tandur town on Thursday, United Rangareddy District MLC Patnam Mahender Reddy, Tandur MLA Buyyani Manohar Reddy, Congress Party District President Darasingh, BRS Party In-charge leaders Shrishail Reddy, Agriculture Market Committee Chairman Patlolla Narsimlu, former Chairman Patlolla Bal Reddy, councilors, and leaders conveyed greetings to Muslims. ""They participated in the special Bakrid prayers held at Eidgahs near Khanapur, Murshad Dargah, and Chengespur in Tandur. They embraced Muslim religious elders and Muslim brothers, wished them Eid Mubarak, and conveyed greetings. Speaking on the occasion, the chief guests said that Bakrid is a festival of devotion, sacrifice, compassion, and faith, and such a great festival instills those qualities in people. They prayed for Allah's blessings on everyone. They praised Bakrid as a great festival celebrated together in brotherhood.""The chief guests embraced and conveyed greetings to MIM leader Abdul Hadi Shehri at Murshad Dargah Eidgah, Eidgah Kabrastan Committee President Yusuf Khan at the Eidgah near Chengespur, and Municipal Vice Chairman Abdul Razak and leader Abdul Raoof at the Eidgah near Khanapur.""United Rangareddy District MLC Patnam Mahender Reddy, Tandur MLA Buyyani Manohar Reddy, State TPCC Campaign Coordinator Karanam



Purushottam Rao, Vikarabad District Congress Party President Dharasingh, TRS Party Tandur In-charge leaders Shrishail Reddy, Shubhpradh Patel, Congress Party Town President Bathula Nagu, Municipal Councilors Ramakrishna, Bantu Venugopal, Allapuram Srikanth, Juntupalli Venkat, Balakrishna Reddy, Diviti Yellappa, Vaishali Raju Goud, senior leaders Mallesh, Prabhakar Goud, Beerkat Raghu, Agganur Sanket, Siddlu, leaders, activists, and Muslims participated in this program.

Devotees are requested to attend the Maa Vaishno Devi Jagaran in large numbers.



"" Bowenpally MAY .28 (Indian Chronicle):""BN Srinivas, Secretary of the Maa Vaishno Devi Jagaran Mandal, appealed to the public, stating that the Jagaran is being organized with the aim of uniting Hindus and spreading Sanatana Dharma among more people."Addressing a media conference organized on Thursday at Gymkhana Grounds in Secunderabad under the aegis of the Maa Vaishno Devi Jagaran Mandal, BN Srinivas said that the 22nd Maa Rani Devi Maa Vaishno Devi Jagaran will be held on a grand scale this year as well, beginning on Satur-

day night at 8 PM."He informed that renowned singer Sainaz Akhtar, who embraced Hinduism after belonging to the Muslim community, will be the chief guest and will perform a special devotional bhajan program along with Falguni Bhajans."He further stated that the organization Maa Family is arranging the Sri Vaishno Devi Jagaran program with utmost devotion and reverence. He invited devotees, along with their family members and friends, to participate in the divine chanting of the Goddess' name, bhajans, and pooja programs, and receive the blessings of the Divine Mother."He also mentioned that Teertha Prasad will be distributed to devotees after the Jagaran. Speaking on the occasion, the organizers said that such programs reflect the unity of Hindus and appealed to the public to make the event a grand success, showcase the power of the Goddess, and seek her blessings."Among those present at the event were Vinod Poddar, Ashish Agarwal, Surender Joshi, Sanjay Agarwal, Kailash Chand Agarwal, Sandeep Singh, Rajesh Goyal, Adarsh Poddar, Harihom Gharji, Amit Joshi, Rajender Agarwal, Lakshminarayana Agarwal, Sanjay Kumar, Shravan Agarwal, and others.

International Makeover Planned for Nelakondapalli Buddhist Stupa

"Khammam ,Nelakondapalli ,May 28 (Indian chronicle):""The government has accelerated efforts to develop the Nelakondapalli Buddhist Mahastupa into an international tourist destination. It is already known that Telangana Revenue, Housing, Information, and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy has taken special initiative in sanctioning ?2.50 crore for the development of this historic site."Following the minister's directions to prepare a comprehensive project report detailing the additional expenditure required and the works needed to provide international-standard facilities, a high-level team from the Heritage Department conducted a field inspection at the site on Thursday."High-Level Team for DPR Preparation"A team of senior officials and archaeological experts led by Telangana Heritage Department Director Professor Arjun Rao Kutati and Buddhavanam Project Mentor C. Anjaneya Reddy extensively inspected the Nelakondapalli Buddhist Stupa. The experts reviewed the utilization of the sanctioned ?2.50 crore, future funding requirements, landscaping plans, and tourism infrastructure development during their field visit."Underground Survey with NGRI Support"As part of the master plan, authorities decided to conduct a geophysical underground survey with the support of the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), instead of limiting exploration only to surface excavations. Through this scientific survey, hidden historical remains beneath the ground will be identified and preserved."Additionally, officials resolved to acquire nearly four acres of land to expand tourism facilities around the site."Modern Tourism Facilities Planned"The proposed report will include several modern tourism amenities such as:"A 3D Interpretation Centre reflecting the site's history"Audio-visual galleries"An open-air amphitheatre"International-standard walking tracks"Advanced lighting and other infrastructure



facilities"The Heritage Department Director stated that, as per Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy's instructions, the comprehensive report with full expenditure estimates will be submitted to the government within the next two months.

Madhira Constituency to Be Developed as a Model Constituency in the State Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka



“Foundation Stones Laid for Development Works Worth Crores”“Government committed to improving roads, electricity, and infrastructure in rural areas”“Funds allocated for internal CC roads in SC colonies”“Deputy CM inaugurates multiple development projects during extensive tour in Errupalem Mandal”“Khammam ,Yerrupalem, May 28 (Indian chronicle)”:“State Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu stated that the government’s goal is to develop the Madira constituency into a model constituency at the state level.”During his extensive tour of Errupalem Mandal on Thursday, the Deputy CM, along with NPDCL CMD Varun Reddy and District Collector Divakar TS, laid foundation stones for several road projects, power substations, and temple reconstruction works.”Development Works in Gosaveedu Village”“At Gosaveedu village in Errupalem Mandal, the Deputy CM inaugurated:“BT road construction from Gosaveedu to Ramakrishnapuram costing ₹2.80 crore”Internal CC roads in the SC colony with an allocation of ₹35 lakh”BT road construction from Ramannapalem to Katleru Cheruvu costing ₹2 crore”Projects in Inagali Village”“In Inagali village, foundation stones were laid for:“BT road from Inagali to Saidellipuram at a cost of ₹6.75 crore”BT road from Inagali to Siddinenigudem costing ₹3.75 crore”Internal CC roads in the SC colony with ₹31 lakh allocation”Development in Mulugumadu Village”“In Mulugumadu village, the Deputy CM inaugurated:“Reconstruction works of Sri Bhaktanjaneya Swamy Temple costing 1.29 crore”BT road from Mulugumadu to Nagavarappadu costing ₹3.75 crore”BT road from Mulugumadu to Saidellipuram costing ₹3.50 crore”Internal CC roads in the SC colony costing 63



lakh”Works in Takkellapadu Village”“At Takkellapadu village, the following projects were launched:“BT road from Takkellapadu to Madira R&B Road costing ₹4.50 crore”Internal CC roads in the SC colony costing ₹69 lakh”Power Infrastructure Projects”“Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka also laid foundation stones for:“132/33 KV Errupalem Substation at Pedda Gopavaram village”33/11 KV Substation at Jamalapuram village”Deputy CM’s Remarks”Speaking on the occasion, Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka said the people’s government is committed to fulfilling promises and providing world-class infrastructure to every village in the constituency. He assured that development works would be completed quickly without any shortage of funds.”He emphasized that the government is giving top priority to connecting remote villages through better roads and improving rural infrastructure, electricity supply, and public facilities to enhance living standards.”The Deputy CM further stated that the government is strengthening power infrastructure to meet future electricity demands. Under the Indira Mahila Shakti programme, solar power plants are also being established through women self-help groups.”He added that along with development, the government is also focusing on the development of spiritual centers. The establishment of new substations will ensure quality power supply to farmers and domestic consumers.”SUDA Chairman Puvvalla Durgaprasad, State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao, District Congress Party President Nuthi Satyanarayana, DCC Vice President Vemireddy Sudhakar Reddy, local leaders, and senior officials participated in the programme.”Issued by the District Public Relations Officer’s Office, Khammam.

Bonakal Tahsildar Promoted as Special Deputy Collector in Nalgonda

“Khammam Bonakal May 28 (Indian chronicle):“Maddela Ramadevi, who has been serving as the Tahsildar of Bonakal Mandal, received a promotion on Wednesday. As part of the promotion, she will assume charge as Special Deputy Collector in Nalgonda.”During her tenure in Bonakal Mandal, Ramadevi earned appreciation from many for carrying out her duties with coordination, responsibility, and dedication. She was particularly recognized for her prompt handling of revenue department-related issues.”“She gave importance to transparency in administration and dealt responsibly with several land-related matters, including resolving farmers’ passbook issues and other revenue concerns. Her services received praise from the people of the mandal.”“Public representatives, local residents, and government employees extended their congratulations and best wishes to her on taking up the higher responsibility.



State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao and SUDA Chairman Puvvalla Durgaprasad Visit Jamalapuram Temple



“Khammam ,Yerrupalem May28 (Indian chronicle)”:“State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao and SUDA Chairman Puvvalla Durgaprasad visited the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Jamalapuram in Errupalem Mandal of Madira constituency, Khammam district, and offered special prayers.”The temple priests welcomed the dignitaries with traditional

Purna Kumbham honors and presented them with Theertha Prasadam.”Among those who participated in the programme were OBC Cell District President Puchakayala Veerabhadram, Kisan Congress District President Mokka Sekhar Goud, State Youth Congress Secretary Jerripothula Anjani, District Youth Congress President Vejjandla Sai, Cherukumalli Ravi, Srinivas, and others.

India's First Claw Entertainment Destination Opens in Hyderabad

“Hyderabad, May 28 (Indian Chronicle) : Claw Culture, India’s first dedicated claw entertainment brand, has launched its flagship destination at Sharath City Capital Mall in Hyderabad, according to a statement released on Thursday by Claw Culture CEO Silvio Leidtke.

He said the entertainment center features more than 70 premium claw machines, a special prize wall, a digital game card system, and rare trophies for collectors. Designed as a social-first entertainment space targeting Gen Z, millennials, families, and pop culture enthusiasts, the venue promises to offer a new and immersive entertainment experience.



NTR Symbolized Telugu Self-Respect

“Khammam, May28 (Indian chronicle):“The 103rd birth anniversary celebrations of legendary leader and former Chief Minister Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR), who showcased the self-respect of the Telugu people to the world, were grandly organized under the aegis of the Kamma Mahajana Sangham at Swarna Bharathi Kammavari Kalyana Mandapam.”On the occasion, leaders paid floral tributes to NTR’s statue and remembered his remarkable services.”Speaking at the meeting held later, the leaders stated that NTR’s contributions to the film and political fields remain unforgettable. They said his efforts for the welfare of the poor, social justice, and the self-respect of Telugu people continue to inspire generations.”The speakers praised the welfare schemes implemented by NTR, stating that many of them still serve as ideals in public administration today. Later, members also garlanded the NTR statue at NTR Circle and paid their respects.”The programme was attended by Sangham President Kollu Raghu Satyanarayana, General Secretary Chava Ramu, Vice President Karnati Ramadevi, Assistant Secretary Vajja Srinivasa Rao, Treasurer Tulluri Nirmala Kumari, executive members Mothukuri Satyanarayana, Tummalapalli Nageswara Rao, Nallamala Anand, Medarametla Swaroopa Rani, Pothineni Bhoomeswara Rao, Koleti Naveen, Namburi Prasad, Talluri Muralikrishna, Bandi Ravi Kumar, Bathineni Prakash, and others.



CPI Membership Means Participation in a Historic People’s Movement



CPI Membership Drive Successfully Conducted in Brahmanapalli”“Khammam Bonakal,May28 (Indian chronicle):“CPI District Executive Committee Member Enugu Gandhi stated that membership in the Communist Party of India (CPI) is not merely a political affiliation, but participation in a historic movement fighting for the rights of workers, farmers, and oppressed sections of society.”The CPI membership enrollment programme held in Brahmanapalli village of Bonakal Mandal was successfully concluded on Thursday under the leadership of CPI Mandal Secretary Yangala Ananda Rao.”Speaking on the occasion, Enugu Gandhi said that inspired by the victories achieved through the people’s struggles carried out during CPI’s hundred-year journey, the party would continue fighting for public rights in the future as well.”He explained that CPI was founded on the principles of Marxism and Leninism and has played a significant role in Indian history. He recalled that

land reforms, labour rights, and several welfare measures in the country were achieved through communist struggles.”Gandhi said CPI has been continuously fighting for the welfare of the poor, Dalits, minorities, weaker sections, and for the protection of people’s rights. He alleged that the constitutional rights guaranteed to citizens are still not being fully implemented and criticized that the Constitution itself has come under threat after Narendra Modi became Prime Minister.”He also criticized the repeated hikes in petrol and diesel prices before and after the elections in five states, stating that they have burdened common people. He alleged that attacks on women and minorities are increasing and accused the BJP of promoting divisive and hate politics that threaten national unity.”Gandhi further stated that the weakening of public sector institutions and the growing dominance of corporate companies are leading the nation’s wealth into corporate hands. He clarified that CPI would continue constructive people’s movements on these issues.”He added that becoming a member of a party with a century-long history of struggles helps individuals gain clarity on ideology, principles, and social transformation.”The programme was attended by Branch Secretary Gudida Krishna, Vice-Sarpanch Eluri Ramesh, Assistant Secretary Chava Gopalakrishna, former MPTC Kongara Ramarao, CPI Mandal leaders Madupalli Venkateswarlu, Mandadapu Krishnaiah, Vangala Hanumantha Rao, Parupalli Narasimha Rao, Parupalli Jogarao, Gudida Satyam, and others.

Remove Illegal Votes, Let Us All Work Together: Former Uppal MLA NVSS Prabhakar

UPPAL, MAY 28(INDIAN CHRONICAL): A Bharatiya Janata Party voter list special intensive revision (SIR) action meeting was held in Ramanthapur Division under the leadership of Ramanthapur Division President Vangala Santosh Gupta. Former Uppal MLA NVSS Prabhakar attended the meeting as the chief guest.Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakar said that fake, deceased, and migrated voters in the electoral rolls should be identified and removed through accurate mapping. He urged BJP BLA-2 members to actively participate in the door-to-door survey conducted by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) on behalf of the Election Commission.”He emphasized the need for coordinated efforts to ensure timely digitization of voter enrollment and correction forms such as Form-6, Form-7, and Form-8 in every booth jurisdiction. He also alleged that opposition parties may attempt to illegally include favorable voters in the electoral rolls and directed party workers to immediately raise objections against such additions.”Prabhakar further instructed leaders and workers to identify illegal voters, especially in border and sensitive areas where proper verification documents are unavailable, and work towards taking necessary action against them.”Former Ramanthapur Division Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkatrao, RSS senior leader Chennam Raju, BLA-1 Pothagani Gopal Goud, Gorige Krishna, Shakti Kendra in-



charges, BLA-2 members, booth presidents, BJP leaders, women leaders, and party workers participated in the program.

A Great Leader Forever Etched in the Hearts of Telugu People



in the program and paid rich tributes to NTR were Sriram Mallesh Yadav, Imam, Krishna Reddy, Bazaar Hemanth Goud, Shankarayya, Madhusudan Reddy, Raju, Ellayya, Shiva, Kannayya, and others.

Sunstroke claims two lives in Mancherial, one in Adilabad

Mancherial: The scorching heat wave continues to take a toll on people. In separate incidents, three persons died of sunstroke in the district in the last 24 hours. In the first incident, Samala Rajaiah (75) of Devapur collapsed in the afternoon. He was rushed to a hospital in Mancherial town where doctors declared him brought dead. In the second incident, Gaguri Durga Prasad (32), a differently abled person from Ashok Road in Mancherial town, lost consciousness on Wednesday afternoon. He was immediately shifted to a hospital, where doctors declared that he was brought dead. He was working at a hotel. In yet another incident, Sakipelli Vinod (34), a hamali from Jainath, fell ill while lifting bags at the market yard.

Calcutta High Court acquits professor who was sentenced to 20 years in jail in POCSO case, slams probe, asks govt to compensate

GNS News Agency, May 28

professor acquitted in POCSO case, professor POCSO case, Calcutta High Court, professor 20 years in jail in POCSO case, POCSO Act, POCSO cases, Kolkata news, West Bengal news, Indian express, current affairsThe prosecution adduced as many as seven witnesses, and the trial court judge convicted the professor under IPC sections 376(2)(f)/506 and section 6 of the POCSO Act and sentenced him to 20 years of imprisonment.Slamming the police for “total ignorance of basic investigative protocols,” the Calcutta High Court has overturned the conviction of a college professor, who was sentenced to 20 years in prison by a lower court under the POCSO Act in July 2024.Setting aside the conviction, the Division Bench of Justice Arijit Banerjee and Justice Apurba Sinha Ray, in their judgment on May 22 this year, ordered the state government to pay the professor Rs 10 lakh as compensation within the next three months, saying he faced social defamation and spent four years in jail.The High Court also allowed the West Bengal government to recover the compensation amount from the police officers Nibedita Koley and Joydeep Mukherjee, who were involved in the probe.

“We must express our profound dismay at the investigation conducted by S-I Nibedita Koley. Her handling of these gave charges—under Sections 376(2)(f), 328, and 506 of the IPC and Section 6 of the POCSO Act—reveals a total ignorance of basic investigative protocols. While children are indeed “supremely important national assets”, the stringent provisions of the POCSO Act cannot be weaponized to settle personal scores. The Investigating Officer (IO) failed to take even rudimentary steps to verify the allegations against Professor Pratap Digal. Instead, she allowed herself to be swayed by biased and unreliable witnesses, completely ignoring neutral residents,” the High Court said.Picking out the holes in the investigation, the High

Salaries of 1,000 doctors, healthcare workers at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs pending for 3 months

GNS News Agency, May 28

Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs salaries pending, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs doctors salaries pending, healthcare workers salaries pending, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsCurrently, 371 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs are operational in Delhi. The government plans to increase this number to 1,139 centres eventually to scale up its primary healthcare network.At least 1,000 doctors and healthcare workers deployed at Delhi’s Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have not received salaries for the last three months, with the staff attributing the delay to non-sanction of funds under the Pradhan Mantri-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), under which they were hired.Ayushman Arogya Mandirs consist of medical officers, pharmacists and support staff appointed under National Health Mission (NHM) and PM-ABHIM. Sources said the delay has impacted employees hired under both NHM and PM-ABHIM.“While salaries of around 275 doctors hired under NHM and pending for three months were recently disbursed, staff recruited under PM-ABHIM are yet to receive payments due to non-sanction of funds under the

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Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs salaries pending, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs doctors salaries pending, healthcare workers salaries pending, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsCurrently, 371 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs are operational in Delhi. The government plans to increase this number to 1,139 centres eventually to scale up its primary healthcare network.At least 1,000 doctors and healthcare workers deployed at Delhi’s Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have not received salaries for the last three months, with the staff attributing the delay to non-sanction of funds under the Pradhan Mantri-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), under which they were hired.Ayushman Arogya Mandirs consist of medical officers, pharmacists and support staff appointed under National Health Mission (NHM) and PM-ABHIM. Sources said the delay has impacted employees hired under both NHM and PM-ABHIM.“While salaries of around 275 doctors hired under NHM and pending for three months were recently disbursed, staff recruited under PM-ABHIM are yet to receive payments due to non-sanction of funds under the

Sports infrastructure in spotlight as Sabarmati Riverfront facelift gains momentum

Sabarmati Riverfront, Sabarmati Riverfront facelift, Sabarmati Riverfront facelift gains momentum, Sports infrastructure, Sports infrastructure in spotlight, Ahmedabad news, Gujarat news, Indian express, current affairsThe master plan for Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave (SVP Sports Enclave) designed keeping the long-term legacy in consideration is proposed to be ready within the three years.WITH AHMEDABAD to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games and preparations with an eye on the 2036 Olympics in full swing, sports infrastructure is set to take the centre stage on the Sabarmati Riverfront – connecting Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar.The entire 14-km stretch of Sabarmati Riverfront, to be developed under its phases 2 to 4 among the total length of nearly 40 km of the Riverfront, has been totally reserved for sports infrastructure, has learnt.Along with these phases that are under different stages of development, the 5-km stretch under phase 5 adjoining the Gujarat International Finance Tec (GIFT) City-from PDEU bridge to Shahpur for which the Riverfront development work is around 60 per cent complete – has been prioritised for the GIFT City in Gandhinagar.

“From phases 2 till 4, which is nearly 14 km, are reserved for sports infrastructure and phase 5 for GIFT City while phase 2 is entirely for sports facilities. The entire land adjoining Motera and Indira Bridge has been reserved for sports infrastructure development. The Sabarmati Riverfront Development Corporation Limited (SRFDCL) will only develop roads and the riverfront infrastructure, such as embankments and retaining walls,” a senior government offi-

Court said, “Most glaringly, a vaginal swab was collected but never sent for forensic examination, and key witnesses were omitted from the chargesheet. Such incompetence puts innocent lives at risk,” the Division Bench said, directing the Director General of Police to immediately consider initiating disciplinary proceedings against the S-I.The court has also sought a compliance report that must be submitted to the Registrar General of the High Court, Calcutta, within 15 days of receiving this judgment.The case dates back to March 2022, when a woman got an FIR registered in Serampore, alleging that her teenage sister was raped by the professor who was asked to keep her by their father. According to the FIR, the father had left the girl in the care of the professor as her stepmother was torturing her. According to the FIR, the professor drugged her, established a sexual relationship with her, and used to threaten her against disclosing anything about their. According to the complaint, the girl tried to flee, but could not succeed. Subsequently, she informed her elder sister over the phone and was rescued.

The prosecution adduced as many as seven witnesses, and the trial court judge convicted the professor under IPC sections 376(2)(f)/506 and section 6 of the POCSO Act and sentenced him to 20 years of imprisonment.The bench questioned the appointment of Joydeep Mukherjee as the Special Public Prosecutor, given his ties to the professor’s ex-wife. The Bench expressed dissatisfaction and raised questions regarding 13 serious issues, including the truth of the victim’s allegations, the police investigation process, the statements of witnesses, the preservation of forensic data, and the trial process of the lower court. The High Court also granted permission to the professor to take legal action against his ex-wife and son for framing him in a false case and giving false statements.

scheme,” a Health department official said.

Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, formerly known as Mohalla Clinics under the AAP regime, were launched in Delhi last June after the BJP government came to power in the Capital last year.Currently, 371 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs are operational in Delhi. The government plans to increase this number to 1,139 centres eventually to scale up its primary healthcare network.Officials said that for NHM staff, the delay in salary payment was largely linked to technical issues involving

Aadhaar-linked bank accounts. “Around 50 employees were found to have bank accounts that were either not properly Aadhaar-seeded or were showing an inactive status on the SNA SPARSH portal, which is used for salary processing,” said the official.“In a communication to employees, the administration said verification of all employees’ bank accounts had been completed and Aadhaar seeding status had been checked. However, some accounts continued to show an inactive status...,” said the official. Pending salaries of around 275 employees have now been processed through the SNA SPARSH system, the official added.

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cial told The on Wednesday.The official said that all land belonging to Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation (GMC), Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), Gandhinagar Urban Development Authority (GUDA), Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority (AUDA) and Government of Gujarat along the Riverfront has been reserved for sports infrastructure.Rahul Gupta, Secretary Sports, Youth and Cultural Activities Department told this newspaper, “Most of the area along Motera – Karai apart – is a part of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave (SVP Sports Enclave). Sports facilities are being planned as per the master plan.”“Even the master plan for the riverfront has been shared with the sports authorities. Only after sports infrastructure and related activities is complete only then SRFDCL will develop further amenities and plans. Priority is given to the sports department,” the official privy to the development said.The master plan for Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave (SVP Sports Enclave) designed keeping the long-term legacy in consideration is proposed to be ready within the three years.Along with venues carefully designed in line with global benchmarks claimed to revolutionise the sporting infrastructure landscape in India, with planned, integrated retail and hospitality infrastructure will provide unmatched fan experience.“The focus of the master plan is on strengthening connections between the SVP Sports Enclave and the riverfront. The enclave has over two km long riverfront frontage and shall house an International Dining District, commercial and retail facilities, outdoor play areas among others.

Mayor, civic officials review drainage projects in east Ahmedabad

GNS News Agency, May 28

drainage projects in east Ahmedabad, east Ahmedabad drainage projects, Ahmedabad Mayor Hitesh Barot, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, Indian express news, current affairsThe AMC added that it would be easier to cross the canal and pass various utility lines such as water lines, street lights, gas lines, telephone lines and fire lines.A DAY after taking charge as Ahmedabad Mayor, Hitesh Barot, along with his team of Deputy Mayor Anjuben Shah, Standing Committee Chairman Kamlesh Patel, Ruling Party Leader Jashu Thakor and Whip Atul Mishra and other officials, inspected the ongoing development work of the Khariicut Canal in east Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

The Mayor also reviewed the project of interlinking of lakes in the eastern areas undertaken by the Drainage Project Department of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC). Khariicut Canal and interlinking of lakes is aimed at scientifically resolving the issue of urban flooding in the city’s eastern parts.

The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation has undertaken a large-scale project to interlink several lakes in the eastern areas including Nikol, Vastral, Ramol Hathijan, keeping in mind the urban flooding situation. Under this project, Kanjiyu Lake, Ratanpura Lake, Saat Talawadi, Ramol Talawadi, Thekdi Talawadi, Betla Talawadi, Vadu Talawadi and Vastral Gam lakes will be interlinked and taken to the stream near Vinjol through overflow gravity lines and stormwater drainage. It is estimated that nearly three lakh people will get relief from this project.As part of the project, a total of 24.62 km of stormwater lines ranging from 300 mm diameter to 2,400 mm diameter and a total of 0.58 km of 3.5 x 2.0 metre reinforced cement concrete (RCC) boxes have been planned. So far, the work of around 1,300 metres long of 2,400 mm diameter and 135 running meters of RCC Box Drain have been completed.The redevelopment project for one of the oldest irrigation systems of the country-nearly 140 year old Khariicut Canal – is funded by the state

IAF’s Sarang Team upgrades signature manoeuvres from four to five helicopters

GNS News Agency, May 28

Sarang Helicopter Display Team, Indian Air Force (IAF), Sarang Helicopter Display Team upgrades signature manoeuvres, iaf Team upgrades signature manoeuvres, Indian express news, current affairsThe team operates the indigenously designed and developed Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) Dhruv, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. An all-weather, multi-mission capable helicopter, the ALH Dhruv reflects India’s growing aerospace capability and embodies the spirit of ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’.The Sarang Helicopter Display Team of the Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to perform in Pune during the passing out parade of the landmark 150th course of the National Defence Academy. The team will execute signature manoeuvres such as the diamond formation, crossover and the iconic “Sarang Split” with five helicopters — an expansion from its earlier four-helicopter formation — that significantly increases the complexity and precision required for the display.

Sarang Helicopter Display Team is set to mesmerise audiences with a spectacular aerial display over the iconic NDA as part of the celebrations for the Passing Out Parade of its landmark 150th course. The event assumes special significance as it features the third graduating batch of women cadets from the NDA. The team will perform over the Iconic Sudan Block and Salaria square on May 29 from after the convocation of the 150th batch is held.Some members of the Sarang team interacted with the media on Wednesday ahead of the performance in Pune. Squadron Leader Nishank Awasthi, a Mi17 V5 and ALH pilot who flies at Position 4 in Sarang, said, “We started as an Advanced Light helicopter (ALH) evaluation flight in 2003. In 2004 it was rechristened as Sarang. The name Sarang, which is a Sanskrit word for peacock, signifies the grace and elegance of our displays. We have performed all around the world and across India. One of the major landmarks for us was in the Dubai airshow when we performed with the Suryakiran team — one of a kind integrated display.”

The Sarang team, regarded as the brand ambassadors of the Indian Air Force, has earned acclaim through its

13-year-old killed in fire, short circuit suspected in electric scooter that was being charged

GNS News Agency, May 28

13-year-old killed in fire, delhi teen killed in fire, electric scooter short circuit suspected, electric scooter fire, electric scooter fire kills delhi teen, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsPolice said Yashpreet, a student of Class 8, was sleeping in a room on the ground floor with his uncle Gurjit Singh at the time of the blaze.A 13-year-old boy died while his grandmother sustained injuries in a fire that is suspected to have erupted in an electric scooter, which was being charged, at their house in West Delhi’s Khayala early Wednesday.

The incident occurred around 2.43 am in Vishnu Garden, where the family lives in a two-storey house. The ground floor has a shop and the parking area.Police said the electric scooter was parked behind the shop when the fire started, suspected from a short circuit.Both Sharanjeet Kaur (65) and her grandson Yashpreet Singh received burns and were rushed to Guru Gobind Singh Hospital, where doctors declared the boy dead on arrival. Sharanjeet was discharged after treatment on Wednesday.Police said Yashpreet, a student of Class 8, was sleeping in a room on the ground floor with his uncle Gurjit Singh at the time of the

government’s Irrigation department and executed by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC). Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation has completed 80 percent of the canal development work in the first phase covering a length of 12.75 km. Of the total project cost of Rs 1,338 crore, Rs 1,192 crore is for the civil and construction of the canal and remaining for beautification and other purposes. So far, more than Rs 700 crore has been spent.The pre-Independence era open canal is being covered as the open canal caused problems such as safety issues, traffic congestion, utility connectivity and delay in rainwater disposal.“After the completion of the canal development work, the movement of irrigation and rainwater will become more effective and impurities mixed in the irrigation water will be prevented. Closed RCC canal covers will reduce water loss and provide relief in health related issues. Effective disposal of rainwater will be possible in low-lying areas such as Naroda, Noblenagar, Odhav, Nikol, Krishnanagar, Thakkarbapanagar, Viratnagar, Aburdanagar, Ramol Hathijan, Indrapuri areas. With the creation of direct connectivity between the town planning areas on both sides of the canal, all TP roads will get connected and road transport will become easier,” AMC authorities said.

The AMC added that it would be easier to cross the canal and pass various utility lines such as water lines, street lights, gas lines, telephone lines and fire lines. The problem of canal overflow during heavy rains will be reduced and the problem of rainwater inundation in the surrounding low-lying areas will also be solved.Keeping in mind the increasing traffic load in the eastern area of the city, a four-lane road with a wider width will be available, due to which the development of the eastern area would get further momentum.Ahmedabad city has been included among the seven most populous cities of the country for the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) under the “National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of the Centre, as part of which the extensive work of interlinking of lakes in the eastern areas of the city and renovation of the Khariicut Canal is being implemented.a

rich legacy of spectacular performances in India and abroad. The team has carried out more than 1,200 displays across over 390 venues worldwide, enthraling audiences with professionalism, precision and skill.Captain of Sarang 5, Squadron Leader Ajeet Singh, a Chetak and ALH pilot said, “As you know, we were a four-helicopter team and now we have five. Till two to three months ago, we were settling down with the five-helicopter profile. We will now be performing some signature maneuvers with all five helicopters. So now the diamond formation will have all five helicopters. Our crossover maneuver earlier had four helicopters used to cross each other with pinpoint accuracy and now there will be five. We also have a Sarang heart maneuver, where Sarang 1 and Sarag 2 draw a heart in the sky and it is then pierced by another helicopter. The concluding signature maneuver of the Sarang split used to have four helicopters and it will now have five. All these five helicopter maneuvers have been added over the last few months.”Squadron leader Nidarshana Sharma, a Mi17 V5 and ALH pilot, who flies as the copilot for Sarang 1, said, “The selection process is two-fold. First is, you have to volunteer for the team after which your flying skills are tested, whether or not you can fly in close quarters with other aircraft. Then there is a written exam too. The second part of the process is, the whole team has to select you. The training is very rigorous and so is the evaluation at every stage. Every maneuver that we perform, is recorded, played before us. We undergo detailed briefings.” During the interaction, Squadron Leader Ujwal Singh, a Mi17 V5, Chetak and ALH pilot who is the safety officer and Lieutenant Colonel Varun, Sarang Team Engineering Officer shared details of the training, safety standards, preparedness and technical aspects of the displays. The team operates the indigenously designed and developed Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) Dhruv, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. An all-weather, multi-mission capable helicopter, the ALH Dhruv reflects India’s growing aerospace capability and embodies the spirit of ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’. Sarang flies the highly manoeuvrable ALH Mk I variant, proudly showcasing indigenous aviation excellence on the national stage.

blaze.Speaking to PTI, Jaspreet’s father Baljeet Singh said he had asked his son to sleep upstairs with the family, but the boy chose not to. “I had told him to sleep on the upper floor with us, but he said he had to go to play in the morning, so he slept downstairs,” Baljeet said.He added that around 2.30 am, his uncle tried to wake Jaspreet up. “But he must not have realised because he was in deep sleep. His uncle then came upstairs and informed us. I asked everyone to move upstairs... Then we realised my son was still downstairs. We broke down the door and pulled him out, but by then his breathing was almost gone,” he said.“The scooter’s battery and tyre reportedly exploded during the blaze. Gurjit escaped and the family members evacuated from the first and second floors,” a police officer said.According to the officer, at least four fire tenders were pressed into service and the fire was brought under control in an hour.Police said Baljeet, who makes dyes, had suffered a motorcycle accident about two months ago and cannot walk properly. According to a relative, the child’s mother lives separately.Jaspreet’s body was handed over to the family after postmortem examination, police said, adding that they are trying to establish the exact cause of the fire.

India steps in with emergency aid as Ebola spreads in Congo

Johannesburg: India has sent emergency pharmaceutical supplies to support efforts to contain the Ebola outbreak in Congo, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said on Wednesday. In a social media post, Ethiopia-headquartered Africa CDC said the consignment, donated by India, was received in Uganda by its Eastern Africa Regional Coordinating Centre. The supplies include essential diagnostics, therapeutics, infection prevention and control materials, and case management support, which will be deployed to affected communities in eastern DR Congo, it said.

“Africa CDC welcomes the arrival of emergency pharmaceutical supplies generously donated by the Government and people of India to support the ongoing response to the Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak in the DRC,” the continental public health agency said.It thanked India for its “continued support and commitment to protecting lives and advancing health security across the continent”.The Bundibugyo strain is one of the six known species of the Ebola virus and has caused periodic outbreaks in parts of Africa since it was first identified in Uganda in 2007.According to the World Health Organisation (WHO).



Thunderstorm breaks Pune’s heat spell as dark skies, lightning and rain sweep across city



GNS News Agency, May 28

Thunder, lightning and rain lashed parts of Pune on Friday after the skies started darkening in the late afternoon and gusting winds of 30-40 kmph swept through the streets. By 6 pm, Shivajinagar and Pashan had received 13.1 mm of rain. Chinchwad recorded the highest rainfall at 60 mm, followed by Hadapsar with 37.5 mm, NDA 29.5 mm, Koregaon Park 9.5 mm and Lavale 4.5 mm. In meteorological parlance, this was classified as “light to moderate” rain, but the city was not complaining. The sudden cool breeze and the warm smell of wet earth came as a welcome relief after days of intense heat, even if temperatures were slightly lower than those recorded last week. “We had noticed significant heating, with the maximum temperature in Shivajinagar rising to 37°C. At the same time, there was moisture incursion from the Arabian Sea. When there is high temperature along with sufficient moisture over a region, conditions become favourable for the formation of cumulonimbus clouds, which are associated with thunder,

lightning and rain,” said SD Sanap, a scientist with the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Pune.

Since daytime temperatures played a role in triggering the rainfall, the weather office pointed out that Magarpatta, the warmest part of the city on Friday, recorded a maximum temperature of 41.5°C. In Pashan, the maximum temperature dropped marginally from 38.5°C on Thursday to 37.6°C on Friday. In Lohegaon, which has reeled under heatwave-like conditions for much of this month, the daytime temperature on Friday stood at 39.2°C, or 2.6 degrees above normal. However, it offered slight relief compared to the 40°C recorded 24 hours earlier. Chinchwad ended the week with a maximum temperature of 35.4°C, cooler than Koregaon Park, which recorded 37.3°C during the day.

The IMD has issued a yellow alert — indicating that people should remain informed but that conditions are not severe — for parts of Central Maharashtra and Marathwada on May 23, warning of thunderstorms, lightning and squalls. Sanap added that the rain was unrelated to the monsoon. While the monsoon has set in over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, it has yet to reach Kerala, after which it will gradually advance northwards towards Maharashtra. For Pune, the IMD has forecast a maximum temperature of 40°C in Shivajinagar and Pashan over the next two days. Lohegaon, Koregaon Park and Magarpatta are expected to witness maximum temperatures of 42°C on May 23 and 24. The city’s minimum temperature is expected to remain between 23°C and 27°C. Meanwhile, a red alert for severe heatwave conditions and warm nights has been issued for Vidarbha and is expected to remain in force till May 24. On Friday, Bramhapuri in Vidarbha recorded the highest maximum temperature in Maharashtra at 47°C, which was 4.6 degrees above normal.

Inside the Rs 200 crore Punjab land ‘scam’: Fake farmers, flying cash, and a major arrest by ED

GNS News Agency, May 28

The Jalandhar unit of the Enforcement Directorate Friday arrested Ajay Sehgal, secretary of the Indian Cooperative House Building Society, in connection with a money laundering case linked to the alleged submission of fake consent letters to fraudulently obtain permission for land for the Suntec City project in Punjab. According to ED, Sehgal was arrested under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The agency said the investigation was initiated on the basis of an FIR registered by the Punjab Police following complaints from farmers alleging that their consent had been forged to obtain a Change of Land Use (CLU). CLU is an approval given by the government to convert the designated use of land from one category to another, including converting agricultural land to non-agricultural purposes, as well as residential, industrial or commercial use.

ED conducted searches on May 7 at eight premises linked to the Indian Cooperative House Building Society and ABS Township Private Limited. During the searches, the agency claimed cash amounting to Rs 21 lakh was thrown from the balcony of businessman Nitin Gohel, scattering onto the road below. The cash was later recovered by ED officials. ED stated that its investigation found Sehgal prepared fake consent letters concerning 30.5 acres of land owned by 15 landowners. Based on these alleged forged consent letters, CLU permission was granted for developing the real estate mega project ‘Suntec City’. The agency also claimed that the consent letters bore forged signatures and thumbprints of the landowners. It also claimed that, besides residential plots, Sehgal developed the La Canela residential multi-storey complex and the District 7 commercial complex using CLUs obtained through fake consent letters.

According to the agency, it also found that units in these projects were allegedly sold even before registration and approval from the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA).



It claimed that sales exceeding Rs 200 crore had been made from these “illegal unauthorised projects”. The agency further claimed that Sehgal had not, to date, transferred plots meant for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) to the Estate Officer, Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA). ED also claimed that, contrary to discussions held before the Punjab and Haryana High Court, only a partial CLU for 30 acres of land had been revoked. The agency alleged that action under Section 85 of the Punjab Regional and Town Planning and Development Act was initiated instead of Section 90 to help Suntec City liquidate its remaining stock. According to ED, the ongoing investigation has revealed alleged large-scale irregularities in GMADA and the Department of Town and Country Planning in granting approvals to Suntec City and other developers for illegal gratification, allegedly benefiting real estate developers at the cost of farmers and landowners. It said the role of other senior officials and government authorities in the Department of Town and Country Planning (DTCP) and GMADA was under investigation. The agency said it was in the process of making more arrests and probing the alleged involvement of senior GMADA officials and other public servants who may have supported the fraud and received kickbacks.

Good news, bad news for Indians eyeing Canada: Work permits faster, PR and citizenship stuck

GNS News Agency, May 28

For thousands of Indians planning a move to Canada, the latest immigration processing data has delivered both hope and anxiety. Fresh figures released by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) between May 20 and 22 show a sharp divide in how quickly different applications are being processed. While some categories such as work permits and parents’ Super Visas have become significantly faster, others including citizenship applications and visitor record extensions are getting buried under mounting backlogs.

The latest numbers are based on the time IRCC took to process 80 per cent of complete applications and experts say the fluctuations are among the sharpest seen this year. Relief for workers and families There is encouraging news for Indians seeking temporary entry into Canada. Processing time for inland work permits, including extensions filed within Canada, has dropped sharply over the past few months. Compared to late March, applicants are now waiting roughly 47 days less, with average timelines currently hovering around 206 to 212 days.

For Indians applying for work permits from outside Canada, the wait remains relatively stable at about nine weeks, offering some comfort to professionals looking for opportunities in sectors facing labour shortages. One of the biggest improvements has come in Super Visas, the long-term multiple-entry visas issued to parents and grandparents of Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

For Indian applicants, processing timelines have fallen by nearly 97 days since January. In some recent updates, the wait has come down to around 138 days, much lower than earlier peaks that had crossed 200 days. The improvement is significant for Indian families as the Super Visa allows parents to stay in Canada for up to two years at a stretch, provided medical insurance and financial support requirements are met. Citizenship and PR pathways slowing down However, the picture is far from rosy across all immigration streams. Citizenship certificate applications are facing severe delays, with more than 14,000 additional applicants reportedly added to the queue within a month. Processing timelines are now stretching to nearly a year in several categories, used by people already in Canada who want to extend their stay, are also approaching the one-year mark. The delays are affecting tourists, students and temporary workers whose plans often depend on timely approvals. The Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), one of the most sought-after permanent residency path-



ways under Express Entry, is also witnessing growing backlogs. Immigration observers say the swelling inventory could spell longer waits for skilled Indian professionals in sectors such as IT, healthcare and engineering. Several family sponsorship and humanitarian categories have shown only marginal improvement, while some remain virtually stagnant.

Why are timelines changing so dramatically?

Canadian immigration authorities have linked the fluctuations to changing application volumes, staffing adjustments, digital processing upgrades and policy changes aimed at controlling immigration targets. Canada has recently tightened rules around temporary residents and international students even as it continues to deal with labour shortages in several industries.

Priest father-son duo die by suicide in Jangaon

Hyderabad: In a tragic incident, a priest father-son duo died by suicide in Telangana’s Jangaon district on Friday. The incident occurred in Bandlagudem village of Lingala Ghanpur mandal. Lakshminarasimha Charyulu and his son, Pawan Kumar Charyulu, who were working as priests at the Lakshminarasimha Swamy temple, allegedly died by suicide by jumping into the temple pond. Locals who spotted their bodies in the pond alerted the police. The bodies were pulled out and shifted to a government hospital for autopsy. Preliminary investigation by the police indicated that the priests took the extreme step due to financial and family problems.

Ludhiana police warn against viral Cockroach Janta Party WhatsApp links



GNS News Agency, May 28

The police in Punjab’s Ludhiana issued a public advisory Friday, warning people about possible cyber fraud being carried out in the name of the trending Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), and said that many scammers have been circulating phishing links on WhatsApp under the guise of joining the party. In a video message, Amrinder Singh, an employee of the cyber cell of the Punjab Police, said that the Cockroach Janta Party has become a major talking point across the country, and many people, especially youngsters, are showing enthusiasm towards it. However, Singh said, many cyber fraudsters are exploiting the trend by sending suspicious links and asking recipients to join by clicking on them. Singh warned that in many cases, these are phishing links and clicking on them can compromise a user’s mobile phone and personal data. “The moment a person clicks on such a link, the phone may get hacked and important information, including bank account details

Delhi Police arrest Govindpuri mother-son double murder accused after brief encounter

GNS News Agency, May 28

The Delhi Police on Saturday arrested a man after a brief exchange of fire in connection with the murder of a woman and her teenage son in Southeast Delhi’s Govindpuri on May 20, officers said. The accused, identified as Saurabh, was intercepted by the Anti-Narcotics Squad in the Ghati Park area, where he was allegedly consuming drugs. The police said that when the team had surrounded the accused and asked him to surrender, he allegedly opened fire at the police party. The arrest comes two days after Sharda Sahu, 38, and her son, Kushal, 13, were found dead with multiple stab injuries inside their house in Govindpuri’s Gali No. 10. The bodies were discovered early on May 21 after Sharda’s husband, Vishnu Sahu, returned home from work and found the front door latched from the outside. Cash and jewellery worth several lakhs were missing from the house, prompting investigators to probe the case as a suspected robbery-cum-murder. “During the encounter, the accused allegedly fired four rounds at the police team. In retaliatory action, the



police shot him in the leg before overpowering and arresting him,” a senior police officer said. Crime and forensic teams had examined the crime scene, while multiple police teams were formed to trace the accused, the officer said. The police said further investigation is underway to establish the sequence of events and the motive behind the killings.

What Raga, chef Gaggan Anand’s upcoming restaurant, stands for — and why phones are banned at Gaggan Bangkok



GNS News Agency, May 28

For 14 years, chef Rydo Anton has cooked in Gaggan Anand’s restaurants. Raga, the upcoming restaurant is chef Gaggan Anand’s way of making sure he stays. “Raga stands for Rydo Anton and Gaggan Anand,” Anand said on Friday afternoon in Mumbai at the debut session of ‘Khatta Meetha’, an IP he has launched with Masque and Culinary Culture in his bid to ‘unite India’ and ‘showcase it to the world’. “When I made him the head chef, he proved everything I thought about him,” Anand said of Anton, who is of Indonesian origin. “Then there was a point when I thought he might leave me. I have a co-dependency issue. So I thought — what should I do?” The two considered opening something in Indonesia, even travelled there, but it didn’t take. When conversations with restaurateur Zorawar Kalra of Masala Library and Farzi Cafe among other restaurants began, Anand turned to Anton: “Let’s open a restaurant and we will be equal partners.” Anton will be the face of the restaurant, he shared and then explained: “Jiro Ono’s son will make better sushi but you would like to take a selfie with Jiro. It is a legacy issue.”

In a panel moderated by Raaj Sanghvi at Bar Paradox, Kalra sketched out what Raga will look like: 40 seats, tasting menu only, a fully open kitchen on the ground floor, a private dining room above, dinner-only at the beginning. “The DNA of Gaggan will be there. The entire focus will be on the chefs, who are the rockstars, and the food on the table.” The restaurant is likely to open in July. On its pricing — Aditi Dugar’s Masque charges Rs 8,000++ and is arguably India’s most expensive restaurant; Gaggan Bangkok has been known to go up to the equivalent of Rs 50,000 — Kalra deferred to Gaggan. “You can’t value a brand like Gaggan. It is invaluable. He will take a lead on how we price the seat.” But added that the restaurant will sit on Janpath, the prime real estate that’s five minutes away from the Prime Minister’s residence and has embassies at a stone’s throw distance. “The kind of stuff we are doing there is incredible. We travelled to Japan together and met artisans creating the finest crockery and brought them to Raga, the cost of equipment exceeded most restaurants’ entire refurbishment budgets,” he said.

In a separate panel, Vir Sanghvi asked whether the industry is overestimating the importance of chefs. Anand reached back to his early days in Delhi, when kitchens ran on hierarchy and silence. “Chefs were like slaves. Most of us were flunks — not educated enough to be a doctor or engineer. What has changed in 26 years is that we became somebody. We become who we want to be. We as chefs were so underrated and so manipulated that we could never put our thoughts on a plate. And that was the beginning of Gaggan,” he shared. When pressed on banning phones at his Bangkok restaurant, a decision that sits awkwardly

against the reality of influencers and award panels, he explained: “When I started Gaggan at 32, I was desperate. I wanted people to come and belong to that space. It was like going to a concert. But now when you go to a concert, there’s a camera, there’s a phone... you can’t see the artists for whom you went. You would rather watch them on YouTube. That’s what I want to change. I wanted one restaurant in the world, at my stature, who happens to be an Indian who says no to phones.”

When asked if he is not worried about it impacting the sales, he said, “Do you know how many people will come when you ask them not to use their phone? This is anti-marketing. When they can’t, they will feel deprived. So they will come for that, and that’s when I will give them an experience. Because the experience is about a memory. Like I’ve been to Soam. I have a memory. I don’t have a photo to prove it.” Fame, he said, arrived fast and became difficult to manage. “It grew like cancer. I couldn’t handle it. There were so many cameras, I couldn’t be myself. When I was younger, I was greedy. I wanted Vir to write about me. I wanted everyone to post about me. But now my stomach is a little full.” At his residency at Masque Lab the previous evening, Aditya Chopra and Rani Mukherjee had attended. Chopra, he noted, appreciated the no-phone rule. “He is not social media friendly. Rani and I exchanged numbers. When I said I will WhatsApp you, she said she doesn’t have WhatsApp. I thought — should I quit WhatsApp too?” he laughed, adding that he’s already in 15 Raga groups. When asked for his top three Indian chefs working in Indian cuisine today, he named four: Chef Pradeep Sharma, who taught him many things, including how to sear a duck. Apart from him, it’s chef Manish Mehrotra, Prateek Sadhu and Niyati Rao.

NTA activates refund process for cancelled NEET-UG 2026 exam candidates

New Delhi: The National Testing Agency (NTA) has activated the refund facility for candidates who appeared in the cancelled NEET-UG 2026 examination held on May 3. Students can now submit their bank account details through the official website to claim a refund of the examination fee.

According to the official notification, the refund option has been made available on the NEET-UG 2026 registration portal. Candidates who had registered for the examination can log in using their application credentials and access the dedicated refund link to complete the process.

To receive the refund, applicants are required to provide essential banking details, including the account holder’s name, bank name, account number, and IFSC code. Candidates also have the option to upload a scanned copy of a cancelled cheque to help ensure the accuracy of the submitted information.

The NTA clarified that once the bank details are submitted, they will be treated as final, and no corrections or modifications will be allowed afterwards. Candidates have been advised to carefully verify all information before submission.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrives in India for four-day visit



GNS News Agency, May 28

Washington/New Delhi: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio landed in Kolkata on Saturday morning to begin his four-day visit to India, marking his first trip to the country since assuming office last year. Rubio was received by senior officials upon arrival and is expected to travel across multiple Indian cities, including Agra and Jaipur, during the visit. According to US Ambassador Sergio Gor, Rubio is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi later in the day in New Delhi. The visit comes at a time when Washington and New Delhi are seeking to deepen cooperation on strategic and economic issues amid evolving global geopolitical challenges.

Taking to social media platform X , Gor posted: "Honored to welcome my friend Sec Rubio to India! We have an ambitious agenda ahead, including the Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting, focused on advancing POTUS' vision for an even stronger US-India partnership. Looking forward to great conversations and making real progress together!" The

New US Green Card rule sparks outrage among immigrants

GNS News Agency, May 28

Washington: The Trump administration has unveiled a new immigration policy that could force many immigrants already living legally in the United States to leave the country and apply for permanent residency from abroad, triggering sharp criticism from immigrant advocates, Democratic lawmakers and local officials. The new policy memo issued by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) reiterates that adjustment of status — the process through which eligible immigrants apply for Green Cards while remaining inside the United States — is "a matter of discretion and administrative grace" and not intended to replace regular consular processing abroad.

USCIS said officers must consider applications on a "case-by-case basis" and weigh whether applicants deserve what the agency described as an "extraordinary form of relief." "We're returning to the original intent of the law to ensure aliens navigate our nation's immigration system properly," USCIS spokesman Zach Kahler said. "From now on, an alien who is in the US temporarily and wants a Green Card must return to their home country to apply, except in extraordinary circumstances," he said. Kahler said the policy would help reduce overstays and allow USCIS to focus on "visas for victims of violent crime and human trafficking, naturalization applications, and other priorities." The policy could have significant implications for temporary visa holders, including students, researchers, tourists and H-1B workers, many of whom traditionally adjust their status inside the United States after obtaining employer or family sponsorship. The USCIS memo argues that adjustment of status was "not designed to supersede the regular consular visa-issuing process." It further states that aliens admitted temporarily are generally expected to depart the country once the purpose of their stay ends. Immigration advocacy group FWD.us condemned the move.

"Today's announcement is a stark, deeply harmful, upheaval of more than 70 years of legislative, administrative, and judicial precedent," said FWD.us President Todd Schulte. "It will create chaos and impose massive costs on immigrants who have lived and worked legally in the United States for many years," he said. Schulte accused the ad-

Tulsi Gabbard steps down as US Intelligence chief



GNS News Agency, May 28

Washington: Tulsi Gabbard, the US Director of National Intelligence, on Friday resigned from her position, citing her husband's ill-health. "I am deeply grateful for the trust President Trump placed in me and for the opportunity to lead Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) for the last year-and-a-half. Unfortunately, I must submit my resignation effective from June 30. My husband, Abraham, has recently been diagnosed with an extremely rare form of bone cancer. He faces major challenges in the coming weeks and months. At this time, I must step away from public service to be by his side and fully support him through this battle." Gabbard said in her resignation letter addressed to the US President Donald Trump.

She said that while significant progress has been made at the ODNI in advancing "unprecedented transparency and restoring integrity to the intelligence community", there is still important work to be done. She noted that she is fully committed to ensuring a smooth and thorough transition over the coming weeks to avoid any disruptions for the US President and his team in leadership or momentum. Gabbard praised her husband for his support through her deployment to East Africa on Joint Special Operations mission political campaigns and her service in the role of Director of National Intelligence. "I cannot in good conscience ask him (my husband) to face this fight alone while I continue in this demanding time-consuming position," she elaborated on her decision to step aside as the US Director of National Intelligence. Trump responded to

top US diplomat will also hold bilateral talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Sunday and is set to attend Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Delhi on Tuesday. Discussions are expected to focus on the Indo-Pacific, defence cooperation, trade, energy security and regional stability. India is set to host the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi on May 26. At the invitation of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Marco Rubio, Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi will visit India to attend the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Ahead of his visit to India, Rubio said that Washington wants to expand energy ties with New Delhi and deepen coordination through the Quad, while describing India as a "great ally" and "great partner" amid global supply disruptions linked to the Strait of Hormuz. Leaving for India, with a stopover in Europe, Rubio told reporters in Miami that the US was ready to increase energy exports to India as concerns grow over disruptions to global oil and gas supplies following tensions in West Asia.

"We wanna sell them as much energy as they'll buy," Rubio said when asked about India being "deeply affected" by the energy supply situation and the shutting of the Strait of Hormuz. "Obviously, you've seen, I think we're at historic levels of US production and US export. We wanna be able to do more." Rubio said discussions with India on energy cooperation were already underway and would continue during his visit. "We were already in talks with them to do more. We want next week as well. So there are opportunities," he said. The Secretary of State described India as an increasingly important strategic partner for the United States. "There's a lot to work on with India. They're a great ally, a great partner. We do a lot of good work with them," Rubio said. "It is an important trip. I'm glad we're able to do it because I think there'll be a lot for us to talk about."



ministration of trying to "make America a cruel place for immigrants" and said the policy would "massively disrupt our legal immigration system." "The majority of people who are approved for green cards each year adjust their status from within the U.S., as provided under law since the 1950s," he said. "The Trump administration is once again proving that they are not going after the 'worst of the worst.' Instead, they are blatantly attacking legal immigration, with family separation at the center of its agenda," Meng said. She warned that immigrants from more than 100 countries affected by Trump-era travel and immigrant visa restrictions could face separations lasting "for years, if not indefinitely." Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich said the policy would create fear and uncertainty among immigrant families and skilled workers. "These are our neighbors, coworkers, business owners, researchers, health care workers, teachers, and entrepreneurs," Elrich said. "When the federal government treats legal immigrants as disposable or unwelcome, it weakens our ability to attract and retain the people who help drive innovation, create jobs, and strengthen our economy," he added. Indian technology professionals have historically relied heavily on adjustment of status provisions because of long Green Card backlogs and country-specific visa caps. Immigration lawyers and advocacy groups have repeatedly warned that forcing applicants to leave the country during processing could disrupt jobs, family stability and long-term residency plans for thousands of Indian-origin families.

Gabbard's resignation on social media platform Truth Social, saying, "Tulsi has done an incredible job, and we will miss her. Her highly respected Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence, Aaron Lukas, will serve as Acting Director of National Intelligence." Her (Tulsi Gabbard's) wonderful husband, Abraham, has been recently diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer, and she, rightfully, wants to be with him, bringing him back to good health as they currently fight a tough battle together. I have no doubt he will soon be better than ever," the US President said.

India achieves milestone in UAV-launched missile system

New Delhi: In a major boost to India's defence capabilities, the DRDO has successfully completed the final development trials of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 in both air-to-ground and air-to-air modes, officials said on Tuesday. The trials were conducted at a DRDO test range near Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh using an integrated ground control system (GCS) to command and control the ULPGM weapon system, the defence ministry said. The GCS features state-of-the-art technologies to automate readiness and launch operations, it said. "The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully completed the final deliverable configuration development trials of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 in air-to-ground and air-to-air modes," the ministry said. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO, PSUs, defence-cum-production partners and industry stakeholders for the successful development trials of the ULPGM-V3 in air-to-ground mode for anti-tank role and air-to-air mode for drone, helicopter and other air-borne targets. He termed it a strategic milestone achieved towards 'aatmanirbharta' in defence. According to officials, the DRDO partnered with two production agencies — Bharat Dynamics Limited, Hyderabad and Adani Defence Systems & Technologies Limited, Hyderabad, for the development and production of the missiles.

India blocks China's WTO dispute panel bid



New Delhi: India has blocked China's request to set up a dispute panel at the WTO in a case that Beijing has filed against New Delhi's support measures for the solar cells, modules, and information technology sectors, an official said. Earlier this month, China made this request to the WTO's (World Trade Organization) dispute settlement body. The request follows the failure of bilateral consultations on reaching a mutually-agreed solution on the dispute filed by China in December last year. The Geneva-based official said that India has blocked the first request of China for the establishment of a panel. China has alleged that India's tariff or import duty on certain technology products, and measures like the use of domestic products over imported goods, discriminate against Chinese goods.

Beijing, which is a major exporter of goods under these sectors, had claimed that these support measures and incentives infringe rules pertaining to the WTO's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994, Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures. Refuting China's allegations, India has stated the measures are completely consistent with the WTO rules. India also said it was ironic that, despite acknowledging the importance of a respon-

Three months in, is Trumplosing the Iran war?

WASHINGTON, GNS News Agency, May 28 U.S. President Donald Trump may have won just about every battle against Iran, but three months after attacking the Islamic Republic he now faces a bigger question: Is he losing the war? With Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, its resistance to nuclear concessions and its theocratic government largely intact, doubts are growing that Trump can translate the U.S. military's tactical successes into an outcome he can frame convincingly as a geopolitical win. The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. His repeated claims of complete victory ring hollow, some analysts say, as the two sides teeter between uncertain diplomacy and his on-again-off-again threats to resume strikes, which would be sure to draw Iranian retaliation across the region.

Trump is now at risk of seeing the U.S. ?and its Gulf Arab allies emerge from the conflict worse off while Iran, though battered militarily and economically, could end up with greater leverage, having shown it can throttle one-fifth of the world's oil and gas supplies. The crisis is not yet over, and some experts leave open the possibility Trump might still find a face-saving way out if negotiations break in his favor. But others predict a grim post-war outlook for Trump.

"We're three months in, and it's looking like a war that was designed to be a short-term romp for Trump is turning into a long-term strategic failure," said Aaron David Miller, a former Middle East negotiator for Republican and Democratic administrations. For Trump, that matters, especially given his famous sensitivity to being perceived as a loser, an insult he ?has often lobbied at opponents. In the Iran crisis, he finds himself commander-in-chief of the world's mightiest military pitted against a second-tier power seemingly convinced it has the upper hand.

And this predicament could make Trump, who has yet to define a clear endgame, more likely to resist any compromise ?that looks like a retreat from his maximalist positions or a repetition of the 2015 Obama-era nuclear deal with Iran that he scrapped in his first term, analysts say. White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales said the U.S. has "met or surpassed all ?of our military objectives in 'Operation Epic Fury'." "President Trump holds all the cards and wisely keeps all options on the table," she added.

PRESSURE AND FRUSTRATION Trump campaigned for a second term promising no unnecessary military interventions but has brought the U.S. into an entanglement that could do lasting damage to his foreign policy record and credibility ?abroad.

The continuing standoff comes as he faces domestic pressure over high U.S. gasoline prices and low approval ratings after he embarked on the unpopular war ahead of November's midterm elections. His Republican Party is struggling to maintain control of Congress. As a result, more than six weeks into a ceasefire, some analysts believe Trump faces a ?stark choice: to accept a potentially flawed deal as an off-ramp or escalate militarily and risk an even longer crisis. Among his options if diplomacy collapses, they say, would be to launch a round of sharp but limited strikes, frame it as a final victory and move on. Another possibility, analysts say, is that Trump could attempt to shift focus to Cuba, as he has suggested, in hopes of changing the subject and trying to score a potentially easier win. If so, he might end up misjudging the challenges posed by Havana, much as some Trump aides privately acknowledge that he mistakenly thought the Iran operation would resemble the January 3 raid that captured Venezuela's president and led to his replacement.

Even so, Trump is not without his defenders. Alexander ?Gray, a former senior adviser in Trump's first term and now chief executive officer of the American Global Strategies consultancy, rejected the notion that the president's Iran campaign was on the ropes. He said that the heavy blow to Iranian military capabilities was in itself a "strategic success," that the war had drawn Gulf states closer ?to the U.S. and away from China, and that the fate of Iran's nuclear program was still to be determined. There are signs, however, of Trump's frustration with his inability to control the narrative. He has torn into his critics and accused the news media of "treason." The conflict has lasted twice the maximum six-week timeframe that Trump laid out when he joined ?with Israel in ?starting the war on February 28. Since then, though his MAGA political base has stood by him on the war, cracks have appeared in his once almost unanimous backing from Republican lawmakers. At the outset, waves of airstrikes quickly degraded Iran's ballistic missile stockpile, sank much of its navy and killed many top leaders. But Tehran responded by blocking the strait, which sent energy prices soaring, and attacking Israel and Gulf neighbors. Trump then ordered a blockade of Iran's ports but

sible and diversified supply chain, a country estimated to control over 80 per cent of the global solar module value chain still finds it necessary to take measures that hinder the legitimate growth of the industry in other countries. The request was blocked at the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) meeting on May 22 in Geneva.

As per norms, China can renew its request at the next DSB meeting. When consultations have failed, member governments are entitled to ask for a panel to be set up to examine the dispute. According to the rules, the respondent can reject the first request. At the second request, a panel is automatically established. The panel will determine whether import duties applied by India on certain imported high-tech goods, as well as certain incentive measures for solar energy products, are consistent with India's WTO commitments. Both India and China are members of the WTO. If a member country believes that a support measure under a policy or scheme of another member nation is harming its exports of certain goods, it can file a complaint under the dispute settlement mechanism of the 166-member multilateral body.

India has rolled out a series of measures to promote domestic manufacturing in the solar sector. These include imposing duties on imported solar cells and modules, mandating the use of locally manufactured solar equipment in certain government-backed projects. It has also introduced the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) to encourage procurement from domestic producers, besides a production-linked incentive scheme for the sector. China is also pursuing a separate dispute against India in the organisation over India's measures in the automotive and renewable energy sectors. China has overtaken the US to emerge as India's largest trading partner in 2025-26, with bilateral trade reaching USD 151.1 billion, while the country's trade deficit with Beijing widened to USD 112.16 billion during the period.



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that has also failed to bend Tehran to his will. Iran's leaders have matched Trump's triumphalist claims with their own propaganda depicting his campaign as a "crushing defeat," though it is clear that Iranian officials have overstated their own military prowess.

SHIFTING GOALS STILL UNACHIEVED Trump had said his objectives in going to war were to close off Iran's path to a nuclear weapon, end its ability to threaten the region and U.S. interests and make it easier for Iranians to overthrow their rulers. There is no sign that his often-shifting goals have been ?achieved, and many analysts say it is unlikely that they will be. Jonathan Panikoff, a ?former deputy national intelligence officer for the Middle East, said that ?while Iran has taken devastating hits, its rulers consider it a success simply to have survived the U.S. assault and learned how much control they can exert over Gulf shipping. "What they discovered is they can exercise that leverage and with few consequences for them," said Panikoff, now at the Atlantic Council think tank, adding that Iran appeared confident it could tolerate more economic pain than Trump and outlast him. Trump's main stated war aim — Iran's denuclearization — also remains unfulfilled, and Tehran has shown little ?willingness to significantly rein in its program. A stockpile of highly enriched uranium is believed to remain buried following U.S. and Israeli airstrikes last June and could be recovered and further processed to bomb grade. Iran says it wants ?the U.S. to recognize its right to enrich ?uranium for what it says are peaceful purposes.

Further complicating matters, Iran's supreme leader has issued a directive that the country's near-weapons-grade uranium cannot be sent abroad, two senior Iranian officials told Reuters. Some analysts have suggested that the war could make Iran more, not less, likely to ramp up efforts to develop a nuclear weapon to shield itself like nuclear-armed North Korea.

Another of Trump's declared goals — forcing Iran to halt support for armed proxy groups — also remains unmet. Adding to Trump's challenges, he is now dealing with new Iranian leaders considered even more hardline than their slain predecessors. Post-war, they are widely expected still to have ongoing remaining missiles and drones to pose a continued danger to their neighbors. He is ?also facing fallout with ?further erosion of relations with traditional European allies, which have mostly refused his calls for assistance in a war they were not consulted about.

China and Russia, meanwhile, have drawn lessons about the ?U.S. military's shortcomings against asymmetric Iranian tactics and how some of its weapons supplies have become depleted, analysts said. Robert Kagan, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution think tank, has argued that the outcome will be even more of a decisive setback to U.S. standing than its humiliating withdrawals from much longer, bloodier conflicts in Vietnam and Afghanistan because those countries "were far from the main theaters of ?global competition." "There will be no return to the status quo ante, no ultimate American triumph that will undo or overcome the harm done," he wrote in a recent commentary entitled "Checkmate in Iran" on the Atlantic magazine's website.

A tale of two NEET coaching cities

‘We back science and tech moonshots others overlook’: Renaissance Philanthropy’s Kumar Garg



Around 9 am at Udyog Bhavan in Latur city, small groups of students carrying spiral-bound notes walk past giant banners, counselling offices and hostel buildings. This is the city’s ‘Tuition Area’, the coaching hub that’s sold as the starting block for the race of a lifetime: a seat in one of the premier engineering and medical colleges in the country. Now, in the midst of one of the worst scandals to rock the town — the paper leak of the National Eligibility and Entrance Test or NEET exam for entry into medical colleges — the race stands disrupted. For the first time since NEET began in 2016, the exam had to be cancelled and rescheduled. The probe took the CBI investigators from Sikar, where the case first unravelled, to Latur, which is emerging as a key node in the scandal. So far, two of the 10 arrested are from Latur — Shivraj Maotegaonkar, the founder of a coaching institute, and retired chemistry lecturer Pralhad Kulkarni. But as is evident in Latur, it won’t be long before the coaching hub gets back on track.

NEET UG 2026 paper leak, National Testing Agency NTA, NEET UG 2026 cancellation, NEET paper leak Rajasthan, NTA NEET re-exam date 2026, NEET investigation, WhatsApp guess paper leak, CBI probe NEET leak, WhatsApp paper leak syndicate, Nashik medical student Shubham Kharinar, Private Mafia WhatsApp group, NEET guess paper controversy, exam paper leak India, Sikar NEET coaching hub, multi-state exam scam India, NEET chemistry paper leak Sikar, CBI probe NEET 2026, medical entrance exam cancelled India, 22 lakh students NEET re-test, Indian express Students after a session at RCC Classes, whose founder Shivraj Maotegaonkar is among those arrested in the NEET paper case.

May, the period after the NEET examinations, is usually a quieter period in the city. This time, though, some institutes have resumed classes for ReNEET, the reexamination scheduled for June 21. As parents and students make enquiries for the next academic cycle, one prominent absence stands out — the building of ‘RCC Classes’, once among the busiest centres in the area, is now shut following the arrest of founder Motegaonkar. Yet, the ecosystem in Latur continues to function. Mess kitchens remain active; hostels house “repeater students” and those attending ReNEET-related sessions; flex boards with all-India toppers and faculty advertisements hang across narrow lanes lined with stationery shops, libraries and food stalls. Through all this, the students move — some wearing black shirts with red collars, others in blue T-shirts with institute logos, their backpacks hanging from tired shoulders. Some walk towards giant coaching complexes promising NEET ranks and IIT success, others emerge from hostel buildings built over homes.

A success storyUnlike Rajasthan’s Kota, which started as a coaching hub for competitive exams, Latur’s story began in the 1970s and 80s, inside the classrooms of its old junior colleges such as Rajarshi Shahu College and Dayanand Science College. Here, teachers didn’t tailor their teaching to the entrance exam system but were driven by something far more egalitarian — identifying poor students with promise and working on their fundamentals to prepare them for the Maharashtra Board exams.

This model, centred around repeated testing, revision sessions, close teacher monitoring and hostel-linked academic supervision, soon came to be known as ‘Latur Pattern’. NEET UG 2026 paper leak, National Testing Agency NTA, NEET UG 2026 cancellation, NEET paper leak Rajasthan, NTA NEET re-exam date 2026, NEET investigation, WhatsApp guess paper leak, CBI probe NEET leak, WhatsApp paper leak syndicate, Nashik medical student Shubham Kharinar, Private Mafia WhatsApp group, NEET guess paper controversy, exam paper leak India, Sikar NEET coaching hub, multi-state exam scam India, NEET chemistry paper leak Sikar, CBI probe NEET 2026, medical entrance exam cancelled India, 22 lakh students NEET re-test, Indian express Latur’s Rajarshi Shahu Science College integrates its Class 11 and 12 education with NEET and JEE preparation.

The results began to show by the 1990s and early 2000s, when students from Latur began appearing on merit lists of Class 10 and 12 state Board examinations. The district became particularly known for its science education, with students from rural Marathwada securing admissions into engineering and medical colleges. Babruwan Kishanrao Gomsale counts himself as a product of that system. Gomsale, who later worked in engineering services at ONGC, says he had dropped out after Class 10 because his family could not afford his further education. “Then, one day, two teachers from Shahu College came looking for me in our village and took me to the college. I initially refused because we had no money. But they told me I could study under the ‘earn and learn’ system — stay at the college, do small jobs like preparing food for students, fetching water, etc. and study as well,” he says. “Our teachers guided us continuously through tests, revision, counselling and personal mentoring.”

Dr Sopan Jatal, who owns a hospital in Latur, recalls a similar experience. “The foundation of the Latur Pattern was not coaching classes. It was the culture of continuous study, discipline and personal attention created by schools and colleges,” Jatal says. But today, the ‘Latur Pattern’ stands at a crossroads, caught between its legacy of educational excellence and an aggressive coaching economy worth hundreds of crores. NEET UG 2026 paper leak, National Testing Agency NTA, NEET UG 2026 cancellation, NEET paper leak Rajasthan, NTA NEET re-exam date 2026, NEET investigation, WhatsApp guess paper leak, CBI probe NEET leak, WhatsApp paper leak syndicate, Nashik medical student Shubham Kharinar, Private Mafia WhatsApp group, NEET guess paper controversy, exam paper leak India, Sikar NEET coaching hub, multi-state exam scam India, NEET chemistry paper leak Sikar, CBI probe NEET 2026, medical entrance exam cancelled India, 22 lakh students NEET re-test, Indian express After school hours, students of Rajarshi Shahu Science College stay back for CET, NEET and JEE coaching

NEET disrupted the patternThe transformation started around 2000, coinciding with the rise of the state Common Entrance Tests (CET) for admission to medical and engineering, followed by NEET and other NCERT-based entrance examinations that started in 2012-13.

“The teaching in junior colleges focused mostly on the Maharashtra Board examinations and the state CET, but NEET and JEE increasingly became NCERT-based and concept-oriented, with multiple choice questions. That gap

created space for private coaching institutes. Until then, students here were not merely coached for examinations, they were shaped academically and personally,” says Sachin Bangad, an educational counsellor in Latur. Madhur Chitte, a resident of Latur who earlier ran a study room for students, says the city changed rapidly after 2000.

“Earlier, there were traditional subject-based tuitions. Students would go to separate teachers for specific subjects. Students would come to my study room to sit and study and we would counsel them,” he says. That changed, says Chitte, with a full-fledged organised coaching system taking over, where everything from hostel accommodation to mess facilities are coordinated by the institute.

Latur’s Rajarshi Shahu College, which once focused on the state Board exams, adapted to the change by integrating its Class 11 and 12 education with NEET and JEE preparation. The Science wing of the college, with 1,200 students, is housed in a separate building. Students stay on campus and, after school hours, spend time on CET, NEET and JEE coaching. Around 10.30 pm on a weekday, as students and teachers sat in one of the classrooms on campus, poring over sample papers and worksheets, there is evidence of the older ‘Latur Pattern’ — continuous testing systems, CET-focused academic cells, hostel-linked mentoring and supervised study routines.

D K Deshmukh, coordinator of the CET Cell at Shahu College, says, “Our focus has never been only on marks. Teachers monitor students closely, repeatedly test concepts and build study-discipline.” A student, who spoke on condition of anonymity, says the institution’s integrated system offers a different environment compared to the large coaching centres. “Here, we are continuously in touch with the teachers; there are no fixed timings. We live here and also study here. After the ReNEET announcement, teachers counselled and motivated us. They told us to treat the earlier exam as a mock test and prepare again with the same focus,” she said.

Deshmukh says the college receives applications several times higher than its intake capacity of 2,100 students. Gradually, a parallel structure emerged as students who failed to secure admission to the more prominent junior colleges opted for private coaching institutes. They would, on paper, take admission in a junior college while spending all their time preparing for NEET-JEE inside coaching institutes.

Like elsewhere in Kota and Sikar, it’s a machine that has delivered results. In the first round of MBBS admissions in Maharashtra in 2025, 1,203 candidates were from Latur, the highest in the state. A city built for studentsLocal educators estimate that around 40,000 students arrive in Latur every year for Class 11-12, NEET and JEE preparation. Like Kota, entire neighbourhoods in Latur have reorganised themselves around coaching institutes and student housing. In several lanes of the Tuition Area, residential buildings have been partially or fully converted into student hostels that charge anywhere between Rs 25,000 and Rs 2 lakh annually per student. Local estimates place the annual turnover of Latur’s student economy at over Rs 500 crore. As the stakes expanded, so did the business of the coaching institutes. Many of them have expanded to provide hostels, mess facilities and other services centred around students. It’s an ecosystem marketed as “end-to-end service”, but for students, this has meant a life that revolves almost entirely around ranks, mock tests and selection lists.

The students arrive here, from nearly every district of Maharashtra and neighbouring states, some as young as 12. They live in cramped hostels, away from their families, and are told to focus on a single goal — a seat in a medical or engineering college. Students attend classes from early morning till late evening, followed by compulsory study hours, and appear for weekly ranking tests. Around 5.30 pm, a group of students crowd outside a fast food outlet in the Tuition Area. Many of them are from villages in Marathwada and are now back in Latur for ReNEET.

They talk about life back home and how cracking NEET seems like the only future they have — and the only one they know. “Most of our families own agricultural land, but because of water scarcity, agriculture alone is not enough. That is why education is important for us,” says one of them. “Many people say coaching here is expensive, but compared to bigger cities, Latur is still affordable. I pay around

Rs 60,000 a year, while in bigger cities, the fee is much higher. We all come from poor families, so all these things matter to us,” says a student from Hingoli district. He pays Rs 25,000 annually as hostel fee. “Four of us stay in one room. Since all of us are preparing for NEET, we help each other with revision, studying and problem-solving,” he says. As evening falls, around them, giant NEET and IIT-JEE signboards, promising “100% success”, begin glowing brighter. Sikar: From ‘safer’ alternative to the eye of the NEET leak stormAfter completing his BTech from Kota’s Engineering College in 1996, Shrawan Choudhary decided to launch Career Line Coaching (CLC) in Sikar. As Sikar grew, so did CLC. In one of his interviews, Choudhary, speaking about what led him to start his institute in Sikar, said Kota’s coaching industry was missing “parental care”. “Sikar has people from rural backgrounds, jo bacche ko tok dete hain (where they pull up a child). If a student comes late to his PG, the owner would pull him up, while Kota has a city culture,” Choudhary said. CLC’s tagline is ‘Shiksha Sanskar, Suraksha, Safalta’, or ‘education, culture, safety and success’, where the road from education to success passes through culture and safety.

As more centres came up here over the next three decades, this culture of “individual care” became its most advertised USP, setting it apart from Kota, the other giant of India’s coaching industry. Now, as the NEET-UG leak controversy unfolds, Sikar finds itself at the centre of uncomfortable questions about its vast coaching machinery.

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The emerging hubHistorically, the Shekhawati region was known for sending youth to the armed forces. Pradeep Budania from Sikar’s Gurukripa coaching classes says there was a time “when a government job here meant a job in the Army”. “First, families sent their children in droves to the Army. Then teaching came up and families pushed their children towards it,” Budania says. The region was also home to Marwari businessman and industrialist families who, wanting to give back to society, set up trusts to open educational institutions. Around the turn of the millennium, aspirations rose and families gravitated towards MBBS, and by the 2010s, Sikar had emerged as a coaching hub, powered by IITians who had gone through the Kota system.



Kumar Garg is the President at Renaissance Philanthropy, a US-based non-profit that, within its first two years, catalysed more than \$500 million in philanthropic funding globally for science, technology, and innovation. The organisation has launched 22 time-bound, thesis-driven philanthropic funds and programmes addressing global challenges. These include advanced research to tackle climate emergencies, supporting breakthrough ideas for student success, responsibly and rapidly scaling geologic hydrogen and providing seed funding to researchers and technologists for improving social service delivery.

Prior to joining Renaissance Philanthropy, Garg worked with Schmidt Futures, where he helped design and launch moonshot initiatives in education. Before that, he helped set budget and policy priorities for the Obama Administration as part of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Kumar holds a BA from Dartmouth College and a law degree from Yale Law School. In an interview with indianexpress.com, Garg speaks about the goals and the structure of Renaissance Philanthropy, the moonshot ideas the organisation funds, the hard-to-solve problems in tech, and the impact they have created. Edited excerpts: Venkatesh Kannaiah: Tell us about your journey to Renaissance Philanthropy. Kumar Garg: I studied political science and computer science in college and was interested in government, so after graduate school, I ended up serving in the Obama administration. I worked for President Barack Obama’s science advisor and got exposure to how science and technology policy is developed across a wide range of areas — space, commercialisation, advanced manufacturing and math and science education.

After that, I went to work for Eric Schmidt of Google and helped build the Science and Tech Foundation, Schmidt Futures. It focused on how philanthropic capital could advance different fields of research and apply them to the public good. Renaissance Philanthropy was essentially a spinout. The core team came from working directly with Eric Schmidt. Venkatesh Kannaiah: What was the idea behind Renaissance Philanthropy?

Kumar Garg: The idea came from recognising that the big challenges like climate, AI, education, and economic mobility are problems we need to address today and not later. So the question became: could Renaissance build high-quality science and technology programmes — accelerating middle school math with AI, developing new vaccine platforms, identifying new energy sources like geologic hydrogen — and structure them more like investment funds, but for philanthropy?

The model was to build technical programmes and philanthropic funds around specific sectors, and then go to donors and say: Rather than building all of this internally, you can participate almost like a Limited Partner in a venture fund. If we want more capital deployed toward hard problems, we need more vehicles that make it easier for people to participate. That was the basic idea. In two years, we’ve helped move about half a billion dollars — roughly \$250 million directly and another \$250 million through advisory support. Venkatesh Kannaiah: How do you design your programmes?

Kumar Garg: Our starting point is that philanthropy is only one small part of a much larger system. So the question for us is: what kind of intervention can make a substantial impact within three to five years, in a way that the broader field can eventually sustain and build upon? A lot of the way we design our programmes comes down to identifying really hard problems in science or education where focused R&D and technological innovation could make a meaningful difference.

Venkatesh Kannaiah: Tell us about some of your programmes which are creating an impact. Kumar Garg: For example, in middle school math, we looked at a 2012 J-PAL study that showed intensive, close tutoring support could double the rate of learning. The challenge was cost. The study found it cost around \$4,000 per student. That’s expensive even in the United States. We are looking at whether we can bring it down to \$500. It is a five-year programme involving multiple teams, all working towards the goal. They’re using AI, combining it with established tutoring science, and integrating different tools and methods into a coherent system.

It is very difficult to fund the R&D needed to make this kind of work possible. These projects require applying emerging technologies, running hundreds of pilot studies, and testing different implementation models. We also have an initiative focused on early reading. Here, AI is used for screening and assessment. One of the major challenges is that educators don’t know a child’s actual reading level, or whether the child may have undiagnosed reading difficulties such as dyslexia or speech-related issues. Those screenings are currently expensive and difficult to administer at scale, which means many children never get assessed properly. Without that information, it’s hard to know what intervention is needed. AI systems are already very good at automated speech recognition for adults, but far fewer people have focused on building speech recognition systems that work well for children. Another area is tooling for mathematical research using AI. We awarded over \$18 million to researchers globally to build tools that make it easier for mathematicians to use AI in their work. We are already seeing some of the tools spread quickly within the research community. For example, Lean is a programming language which allows mathematical proofs to be written in a computationally verifiable form. Some of the early grants we supported are already influencing how mathematicians collaborate and the kinds of tools they use in their day-to-day work. There is the Public Benefit Innovation Fund. The idea is to improve one of the major functions of government, like delivering benefits and services to citizens. In the US, estimates suggest that nearly a trillion dollars in benefits go undelivered because of administrative inefficiencies and system complexity. So we asked whether emerg-

ing technologies like AI could improve how these systems operate. A simple example is call centres. Many government agencies struggle to answer all incoming calls, even for basic questions like confirming whether an application has been received or whether someone qualifies for a programme.

Some of the grants we supported have led to deployments in US states, where new tools now help with eligibility checks, automate routine support tasks, and track policy or code changes more effectively. We’re particularly interested in helping governments adopt AI in a more experimental and evidence-driven way. Venkatesh Kannaiah: Tell us about your accelerator programme. Kumar Garg: We run a programme called the Big If True Science Accelerator. The idea behind it is that ambitious researchers often don’t receive much coaching on developing a truly transformative idea. They’re usually focused on running their labs and applying for grants.

So in our accelerator, we offer 15 weeks of coaching and introduce them to governments, donors, and other potential supporters. Our broader goal is to increase the ambition of both donors and scientists. We’re currently on our third cohort, with around 45 scientists having gone through the programme so far. Venkatesh Kannaiah: Tell us about moonshot ideas that you are funding or looking to fund. Kumar Garg: One, which I already mentioned, is literacy work, whether we can cut in half the number of children struggling with reading by third grade through better identification of early reading difficulties using AI.

Another area is the role of hidden health burdens in learning outcomes. One example is air quality in schools. Research shows that cleaner air in classrooms has a meaningful impact on both learning and health outcomes. Even relatively simple interventions, like better air purification systems, can have very high returns. So we’ve been exploring a programme on building cheaper, more deployable air purification technologies and making sure they’re actually used in schools. We’re exploring that both in the US and globally. Another area we’re interested in is lead pollution. Lead exposure can have major impacts on IQ and long-term health outcomes. One idea we’ve been looking at is whether we can build a much better blood test for detecting lead exposure. The test widely used today was developed roughly 40 years ago and is not precise. We’re looking at where AI can transform scientific research itself. We already have a programme in mathematics, but we’re interested in other domains as well. One area I find very compelling is monsoon prediction. The Indian government has spoken about this challenge, but I think there’s still room for a much more focused push around advanced prediction models.

We’ve spoken with researchers who have modelled the social benefits of improved monsoon prediction. We’ve also begun conversations with donors and governments about whether there could be support for a more concentrated effort in this area. It is still at an exploratory stage, but it’s something I’m personally very interested in because of the scale of potential impact. We’ve been doing work around geologic hydrogen — the idea that instead of manufacturing hydrogen through industrial processes, you could extract naturally occurring hydrogen directly from underground sources. If it proves viable, it could become an important tool for decarbonising sectors that are otherwise very difficult to transition. The conversation now is about building better subsurface maps, identifying pilot opportunities, and understanding where the resource potential may exist.

We have also been exploring the idea of potassium-enriched salt. There’s already strong randomised controlled trial evidence suggesting that a significant share of cardiovascular disease may be linked to potassium deficiency. By slightly increasing the potassium content in salt — without changing the taste — you may be able to meaningfully improve population-level health outcomes. That could be especially important in countries with high rates of hypertension, including both India and the United States. One of our programmes looks at whether it’s possible to build a new generation of space-based telescopes that generate vastly more data at a fraction of the cost of traditional systems. Venkatesh Kannaiah: Tell us about science and tech ideas which you think are very hard to crack.

Kumar Garg: I think biology is extremely hard. People often say, “If we can just figure out this one thing, then AI will solve the rest,” or that once a particular breakthrough happens, everything else becomes straightforward. But what we keep finding is that the deeper you go, the more complex the system turns out to be. Take cancer, for example. Globally, we’ve made enormous progress, and that progress is continuing. But the more we learn, the more we realise it’s not one disease — it’s thousands of different subtypes and biological pathways. So even as advances in biology accelerate, it remains a deeply complex, wicked problem that will require many smart people working on it from multiple angles.

Another challenge is making sure we think about science and technology problems in terms of bottlenecks. People often assume that solving one immediate issue will unlock everything else. But in practice, innovation systems are usually constrained in multiple ways at once. For example, we’ve been exploring a programme around clinical trials — specifically, how to accelerate their pace. Most people don’t immediately think of that as a science and technology challenge. They think science means inventing the next drug or therapy. But if the clinical trial system itself is slow or inefficient, then all of that innovation gets bottlenecked because new treatments can’t reach the market. We have a fellow on our team based in India who has been working on how India could modernise its Phase 1 clinical trial system. Right now, the process has become increasingly slow, while countries like China are moving much faster. As a result, many promising ideas and companies simply go elsewhere because they can’t get trials started efficiently. That’s one of the key lessons we try to emphasise: when thinking about difficult science and technology problems, you have to think carefully about bottlenecks. Sometimes the bottleneck is regulation. Sometimes it’s a shortage of talent. Sometimes it’s that two different scientific fields aren’t communicating effectively with each other. Sometimes it’s funding. But people often mistake the most visible or immediate challenge for the only challenge. Venkatesh Kannaiah: Do you work with startups? And if so, how do you engage with them? Kumar Garg: So the way our model works is that we raise money philanthropically. The donors who support us are writing cheques without expecting financial returns. The capital comes into the organisation and is then allocated to specific funds or programmes. Once money enters a particular programme, the fund leader has broad discretion over how it should be deployed. That could mean issuing a grant, making a gift, funding a contract, or even using tools like loans or mission-related investments. Venkatesh Kannaiah: How do you engage with governments and local innovation ecosystems? Kumar Garg: We have a number of government partnerships, most of them with national governments.



Despite objections, open school body spent Rs 247 crore on new office — didn’t move in



Despite a senior official's caution against “extravagant expenditure on fancy offices,” the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) — mandated to educate underprivileged children — spent Rs 247 crore in 2021 to acquire two floors in NBCC’s World Trade Centre in Delhi. It received possession in March 2024 but has never moved in and is now scouting for a tenant, The Indian Express has learnt. The sum is striking in context. NIOS receives no budgetary support from the Centre. It funds itself entirely through admission and examination fees. According to its last publicly available annual report, for 2022-23, NIOS generated a total income of Rs 288.65 crore that year, of which Rs 183 crore came from admission and exam fees, against total expenditure of Rs 157.89 crore. Official records show the proposal to buy 61,000 square feet of commercial space, and relocate NIOS headquarters from its current office in Noida to the capital, was discussed and approved at a Finance Committee meeting of the NIOS Society on October 8, 2021, under then Chairperson Prof Saroj Sharma.

The Ministry’s own Joint Secretary and Financial Adviser then had cautioned against the move before that meeting. The Joint Secretary had reportedly highlighted the mandate of NIOS to help educate “un(der)privileged, poor children of the society who could not pursue formal education in schools.” And that the revenue earned by NIOS comes mainly from these sections of the society. “It is therefore necessary that NIOS must refrain from making any extravagant expenditure on fancy offices at very costly places,” the JS is learnt to have said. The committee set those objections aside. Sharma reportedly told the committee that

NIOS was empowered to locate its office anywhere in the Union Territory of Delhi and “learners of NIOS face difficulties in reaching NIOS office, as no Regional Centre is located in Delhi.” Those in favour of the purchase also cited the National Education Policy’s emphasis on digital infrastructure, arguing that the “newly constructed building in the said premises will have all modern facilities for the learners for making them at par to other boards.”

The committee further noted that other government bodies and public sector undertakings had established offices in NBCC-designed buildings at Kidwai Nagar and Nauroji Nagar, and that the space would be “allotted as per fixed rate in a transparent manner.” On those grounds, the Finance Committee approved the acquisition, recording that “other members of the Finance Committee have given their consent on the agenda.” An official later said the decision was “not a single person’s decision but unanimously taken by the academic council.”

The cost, however, did not stop at Rs 247 crore. At a meeting on January 13, 2025, held under then Chairperson Pankaj Arora — who held additional charge of NIOS from October 2024 to July 2025 while also serving as chairperson of the National Council for Teacher Education — the Society approved further expenditure: Rs 18.82 lakh as stamp duty and e-registration fee, and Rs 70 lakh as GST on maintenance services. Asked about the spending and the need for the space, Arora said there was “no progress on that front” during his tenure. By July last year, NIOS had estimated that actually moving in would require a one-time interior development cost of Rs 37 crore, followed by annual recurring expenses of roughly Rs 2.13 crore for maintenance, and Rs 7 lakh in property tax. Faced with that arithmetic, the institution formed a committee to assess the WTC premises and recommend “optimal utilization.” The committee has since suggested leasing out one floor to reduce the financial burden.

When contacted, current NIOS chief Akhilesh Mishra declined to comment. A senior NIOS official, however, said that according to a proposal in the works, one floor will be rented out and the other will be used “as a space for digital schooling, where we will broadcast our classes live, and another part for the ‘Learn One More Bharatiya Bhasha’ initiative.”

From worst-affected by Maoism to highest class 10 pass percentage: The Bijapur turnaround

GNS News Agency, May 28

Bijapur, the Chhattisgarh district that was the worst-affected by Maoism, has jumped to first place among the state’s 33 districts for pass percentage in class 10 board exams and second place in class 12 exams. Last year, the district stood ninth in class 10 pass percentage and 23rd in class 12 pass percentage. The pass percentage for class 10 boards has increased from 85.40% last year to 96.06% this year, and for class 12 boards, it increased from 80.35% to 95.63%.

The district was once infamous for school students dropping out and allegedly joining Maoist ranks, officials said. In the last two years, security forces stepped up operations against Maoists in the Bastar region, which includes Bijapur. Since 2024, as many as 234 Maoists have been killed in encounters, while 1,191 have been arrested and another 1,003 have surrendered, severely weakening the rebel movement. How Bijapur Moved from Maoist Violence to Top Class 10 Results How Bijapur Moved from Maoist Violence to Top Class 10 Results Starting from a survey

Last year, District Collector Sambit Mishra conducted a survey to find out how many school children were dropping out and why. The survey revealed that nearly 10,000 children had dropped out of school. Mishra then set out to ensure that of those that remain, the maximum number of students clear the 10th and 12th board exams. “Soon after the results last year (in May), we took a meeting with all school teachers and principals, where we found out the issues. We learnt that faculty members were not present in many instances. We also took a basic test of all children and identified those who were weak in their studies. We learnt that there were learning gaps, due to which personal attention was needed for students. We then took four major steps,” he said. First was finding out which subjects needed more teachers, and we recruited 68 new teachers, called “Shiksha Mitans”, using District Monetary Foundation (DMF) funds. The other three steps taken were conducting pre-board exams every two months with regular performance reviews. The teachers were asked to identify weaker students and take remedial classes and extra teaching sessions. A district-level exam cell prepared blueprint-based question papers for students so they are well-prepared. Another initiative was teaching students Artificial Intelligence prompts, which helped some of them clear their doubts, though several others could not use it due to a lack of mobile network. How Bijapur Moved from Maoist Violence to Top Class 10 Results How Bijapur Moved from Maoist Violence to Top Class 10 Results The authorities also worked



on ensuring that attendance at schools was over 90%.

District Zilla Panchayat CEO Namrata Choubey’s active involvement in monitoring was critical. She used to hold monthly meetings with all subject teachers where students were performing poorly in pre-boards and our centralised test. This helped us address the gaps and ensure better results,” said Mishra. The education department’s assistant programme coordinator, Zakir Khan, said, “We had eight months to prepare students for the exams, and the results were very pleasing. Last year, 3,940 students appeared for SSC (10th) and HSC (12th), of which 3,279 passed. This year, 4,111 students appeared for SSC and HSC, of which 3,942 passed.” It was not only pass percentage, but the number of students securing first-class marks also doubled this year. “This year, 2,805 students got first-class in SSC and HSC, while last year the number was 1,441. Girls were ahead of boys in both exams,” said District Education Officer Lakhanlal Dhanelia. The results also brought a cheer to the face of Satyanarayan Tokal, 57, who has been teaching in a government school in Pamed, once a Naxal stronghold over 100 km away from Bijapur district headquarters. “Till last year, there was no proper road to our school, and to go to Bijapur town, we used to travel via Telangana. Until 2008, it was a middle school and then it became a high school. The initiative has made a big impact. In 2012, it became a higher secondary school, and since then, it is the first time that two girls have scored above 80% marks. Archana Gundi scored 82% in HSC science and Sandhya Sabka scored 80% in SSC,” said Tokal proudly. Khan said, “In Tarlaguda porta cabin school near the Telangana border, all 28 children passed. One of them, Divya Micha, got 87.84%. She is from a remote village named Metlacheru, about 16 km from Bhopalpatnam, where there is no electricity or network.”

Hot showers may harm your skin, dermatologists warn

Hyderabad: Love turning the shower knob all the way to hot? Your skin probably doesn’t. That steamy, relaxing shower might feel like the best part of your day, but frequent exposure to hot water can quietly weaken your skin over time. The heat disrupts your skin’s natural protective barrier, the layer that helps retain moisture and keep irritants out. As this barrier gets affected, your skin becomes more sensitive and prone to issues like irritation, redness and that tight, uncomfortable feeling after a shower. Over time, this can also make your skin appear dull and less healthy. Long, hot showers can further aggravate existing conditions like dryness or eczema, making flare-ups more likely. The higher the temperature and the longer the exposure, the greater the impact on your skin. Dermatologists often recommend switching to lukewarm water and keeping showers short. It may not feel as indulgent, but it helps maintain your skin’s natural balance. A simple fix? Apply a moisturiser immediately after stepping out, while your skin is still slightly damp, to lock in hydration and support the skin barrier. You don’t have to give up hot showers completely, but turning down the heat and cutting down the time can make a noticeable difference. Sometimes, small changes in routine are all it takes to protect your skin in the long run.



You don’t have to give up hot showers completely, but turning down the heat and cutting down the time can make a noticeable difference. Sometimes, small changes in routine are all it takes to protect your skin in the long run.

After the Hormuz disruption, Asia should build an energy security alliance



After Hormuz disruption, Asia should build an energy security alliance The closure has alerted countries to their vulnerability to other nautical chokepoints. Aside from the Strait of Hormuz, their energy supplies have to cross the Strait of Malacca, the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea. Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), said last month that “we are facing the biggest energy security threat in history”, worse than the aggregate impact of the crises sparked by the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the Russia-Ukraine conflict that began in 2022. He should know, as the organisation he heads was established as a result of the Yom Kippur War. The latter triggered the quadrupling of crude oil prices (\$2.90/bbl in October 1973 to \$11.90 in January 1974) and a global recession. In its aftermath in January 1974, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger invited the leaders of the Western world to a conference in Washington, DC. Kissinger’s objective was to create a mechanism by which Western countries could counter the cartel of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) and manage and mitigate future supply disruptions. The IEA was the outcome of this conference.

Fifty-two years on, in the wake of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, India should lead a call for the petroleum-importing countries of Asia to create a similar institution, but with a broader threefold purpose. One, to safeguard the rights of individual member countries to free and unencumbered navigation passage through the maritime straits in Asia; two, to counter the pricing power of Middle East exporters through the lever of their aggregate purchasing strength; and three, to harness the complementary technical, financial and human assets of members to accelerate the pace of the green energy transition. Such an institution could be called the Asian Energy Collaborative Compact (AECC).

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has had a dual impact on Asian oil-import-dependent countries. It has led to an energy shortage and highlighted the risks of exposure to maritime chokepoints. The closure has trapped 13 million barrels of petroleum (and its derivatives) in the straits. The bulk of this quantity (approximately 85 per cent) is destined for the Asian markets. As a result, a number of Asian countries are currently facing an energy-supply crisis. The Philippines has declared a national energy emergency; Japan has cut back on ferry and bus services, and India has rationed the supply of LPG to commercial establishments. China has also put the brakes on domestic consumption, although the impact has been buffered by substitute supplies from Russia and a drawdown of stocks from its strategic reserves. Beyond this physical constraint, the closure

AI in top colleges: Is it helping students or adding to stress? A professor explains

The launch of ChatGPT in November 2022 accelerated the adoption of Generative AI (GenAI) across domains. It is now widely used in education, research, and industry to improve productivity and work quality, and is increasingly treated as an assistive technology. While concerns remain about its impact on jobs, GenAI has quickly become embedded in everyday academic and professional workflows. In academia, adoption has been particularly rapid in India’s premier technical institutions (TIs), such as Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS) Pilani, and National Institutes of Technology (NITs). GenAI tools provide on-demand access to explanations, problem-solving support, and coding assistance, effectively functioning as 24x7 tutors at students’ fingertips. While this improves access to guidance and reduces dependence on institutional resources, it raises a key question: Is GenAI reducing academic stress or intensifying it? The question is especially relevant given the high number of student suicides reported in these colleges, owing to a variety of factors. The recent proliferation of Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning (AI/ML) has penetrated academia’s teaching and learning (T&L) more rapidly than the earlier cycles of AI development. While AI has evolved since the late 1950s, its direct integration into daily life accelerated with the rise of conversational systems such as the Google Assistant in the mid-2010s. A decisive shift followed the public release of ChatGPT in November 2022, marking the widespread adoption of large language models (LLMs). These systems generate text, code, images, and other content from large datasets, fundamentally altering how information is accessed and processed, and are called GenAI. Within academia, GenAI tools are now embedded in routine workflows. From coding assistance and problem-solving to report drafting and assignment preparation, students increasingly rely on tools such as Google Gemini, DeepSeek, and GitHub Copilot. These tools function as assistive technologies, enhancing productivity and reducing time spent on routine tasks. At the same time, they are shifting learning from deep engagement with problems to effective querying, placing greater emphasis on prompt formulation than on independent reasoning. LLMs are probabilistic systems and can produce errors, inconsistencies, or misleading outputs. Over-reliance without verification may affect conceptual understanding and academic rigour. This evolving ecosystem brings both efficiency gains and new challenges in education. What is missing in GenAI Ecosystem?

Traditionally, teaching and learning in premier TIs focused on analysis, design, and application of knowledge rather than rote memorisation. Given concepts and mathematical formulations, students were expected to apply them to solve engineering problems. Many examinations were open-book, allowing the use of reference material while assessing analytical and problem-solving ability. Preparation involved selecting relevant material, organising notes, and developing approaches—processes that ensured deep engagement. With the advent of LLMs, this mode of learning is changing. The effort invested in reading, organising material, and working independently through problems has declined. Students increasingly rely on querying AI systems for solutions and explanations. As a result, emphasis shifts from internalising concepts to retrieving answers on demand. While they could be efficient, this reduces sustained think-

has alerted countries to their vulnerability to other nautical chokepoints. Aside from the Strait of Hormuz, their energy supplies have to cross the Strait of Malacca and, further east, the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea. These maritime passages are in the high seas and under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, also referred to as the “constitution of the oceans”, all ships are assured the right of “innocent passage”. The Iranian action has breached this right and created a precedent that compels reflection on the counterfactual. What if the Strait of Malacca (through which 60 per cent of all seaborne trade to and from East Asia passes) were choked? What if the flow of merchandise traffic through the Taiwan Strait and/or the South China Sea were impeded by regulatory restrictions and/or tolls? What pipeline configurations, over land and under water, might enable countries to create supply lines that avoid exposure to such blocks?

These concerns are common to most Asian countries irrespective of their political system, ideology or stage of economic development. They can and should therefore be discussed conjointly. The AECC could provide a forum for such discussions. The “Asian Premium” (the price differential between the price paid for crude oil by Asian countries to Middle Eastern exporters and the North Sea benchmark price) ranged between \$3 and \$6 per barrel before the start of the conflict. It widened to \$60 per barrel after the start of the bombing. It has come down since, but the initial increase warrants the question: Was the steepness of the hike in prices, freight rates and insurance premiums due entirely to tightening supply and inelastic demand? Or was it also because of asymmetric bargaining, that is, the fact that Asian importers failed to leverage their aggregate purchasing power? Kissinger convened the leadership of the Western world in January 1974 to counter OAPEC. My suggestion is that AECC should be set up to secure a similar objective. It should develop mechanisms that, whilst not impeding a country’s ability to trade independently, enable the members to negotiate collectively to secure better supply terms and reduced freight and insurance costs. In addition, AECC should provide real-time market intelligence on supply disruptions, infrastructure incidents and geopolitics. This information is currently provided by the IEA, but Asia should have its own bespoke agency. IEA has a Western skew as it works under the OECD’s umbrella. The exit of the UAE from OPEC is further evidence of the fractured relationships amongst the Gulf oil exporters and the terminal volatility of the international petroleum market. It deepens the urgency for Asia to shift away from fossils towards renewables. Most, if not all, Asian countries have a green energy strategy in place, and some have made impressive progress. But no country has successfully scaled up renewables to dominance in its energy consumption basket. The question arises: How can this shift be accelerated? One proposition that prima facie seems fanciful would be for Asian countries to leverage their green assets (technology, finance, mineral and metal resources, human talent) to identify and tackle areas of overlapping interests regarding the green transition. The proposition is fanciful because, unlike the IEA, Asian countries do not share a common political ideology or system. But the region does have a common purpose in decarbonisation and energy security. So, in its third role as an energy think tank, AECC should research how best the complementary assets of its members can be combined to generate a positive-sum green outcome.



ing, weakens problem-solving depth, and limits the development of independent analytical skills.

How can GenAI reshape academic stress?

The widespread adoption of GenAI is introducing a set of specific though interlinked stress intensifiers in academic environments: Dependence and reduced confidence: Frequent reliance on AI-generated solutions shifts competence from self to system, weakening confidence in unaided problem-solving. Over time, this reduces persistence in tackling complex problems independently and shifts learning from deep engagement to effective querying. AI-driven benchmarking: Student performance is increasingly measured—directly or indirectly—against AI-generated outputs that are faster, more structured, and often appear near-ideal. It raises evaluation standards, leaves little room for iterative thinking or minor errors, and fosters constant comparison with peers and machine outputs, intensifying performance pressure. Competitive pressure driven by Fear of Missing Out (FOMO): With all-time access to GenAI, students feel compelled to use these tools to avoid falling behind. It creates continuous pressure to match AI-augmented productivity, often prioritising speed and output over deep understanding. This approach may not sustain for long-term knowledge acquisition and skill development. Learning-evaluation mismatch: While GenAI is widely used for coursework and preparation, it is typically restricted in examinations and interviews. It creates a dual environment, forcing abrupt shifts to unaided performance, leading to anxiety, self-doubt, and a sense of unpreparedness during high-stakes assessments. Ethics undefined: The absence of clear norms on acceptable AI use creates uncertainty and internal conflict. Students must constantly decide how much reliance is appropriate, increasing stress while raising concerns about academic integrity. Addressing the rise in suicides requires a shift to integrate mental health support, academic reform, and a policy on the use of GenAI in teaching, learning, and evaluation (TLE). Despite widespread use of GenAI, none of the TIs has a policy framework to address its impact on academic use. Policy efforts should aim to detect stress early through continuous assessment. Counselling systems must be strengthened with early-warning mechanisms and greater faculty sensitisation. Preventing further loss of life must be treated as a national priority, requiring coordinated action by institutions, regulators, and policymakers to ensure that technological ad

Gross FDI into India hit new record of \$95 billion in FY26, but net inflows only \$7.7 billion



At \$94.53 billion, the gross FDI inflows last year comfortably exceeded the previous record of \$84.84 billion posted in 2021-22. At \$94.53 billion, the gross FDI inflows last year comfortably exceeded the previous record of \$84.84 billion posted in 2021-22. India saw gross Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows rise to a new record high of \$94.53 billion in 2025-26, up 17% from the previous year, although the net figure was a mere \$7.65 billion, data released on Friday by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed. At \$94.53 billion, the gross FDI inflows last year comfortably exceeded the previous record of \$84.84 billion posted in 2021-22. And while the net FDI inflow in 2025-26 was higher than the \$959 million received in 2024-25, it remains below previous years.

Net FDI is calculated after adjusting gross FDI for investments that are repatriated by foreign companies and overseas investments made by Indian companies. Despite record gross FDI inflows, the net figure has been low in the past two years due to foreign investors taking back money they had previously invested in India. This repatriation can be in the form of profits, dividend, or sale of assets. Meanwhile, Indian companies have also invested more abroad. In 2025-26, foreigners' repatriations stood at \$53.58 billion, up from \$51.49 billion in 2024-25 and \$44.47 billion in 2023-24. Meanwhile, overseas FDI by Indian companies rose to

\$33.29 billion last year. In 2024-25 and 2023-24, it was \$28.17 billion and \$16.68 billion, respectively.

The weak net FDI inflows have contributed to the ongoing pressure on the rupee's exchange rate, which came close to breaching the 97-per-dollar earlier this week. It ended at 95.69 per dollar on Friday, appreciating sharply thanks to the RBI's interventions in the forex market. The rupee is down 5% since the war in West Asia started. Data released on Friday showed the extent of the central bank's intervention in March was almost \$30 billion on a gross basis, the most since it sold \$46.65 billion in February 2025. In 2025-26 as a whole, the RBI sold \$195.38 billion of foreign currency on a gross basis, less than half the \$398.71 billion it had sold in 2024-25. However, in net terms, the RBI's forex sales in the last fiscal were to the tune of \$53.13 billion as against \$34.51 billion in 2024-25. In addition, the central bank also intervened far more heavily in the forward market last year. The RBI's gross forex sales of \$29.6 billion in March was the highest in 13 months and occurred even as net FDI during the month was in positive territory for the second month running. After net FDI inflows in February had surged to a near four-year high of \$4.44 billion – revised down from \$4.62 initially – following six consecutive months of net FDI outflows, March saw the net figure declining to \$1.57 billion, dragged down by a 31% month-on-month fall in gross FDI inflows to \$6.23 billion. Compared to the final month of 2024-25, gross FDI inflows in March were up 6%. Inflows had risen sharply in February on the back of global investor sentiment reversing in the wake of the signing of an interim trade deal between India and the US early that month, which eliminated the penal 25% tariff and reduced the reciprocal tariff to 18% from 25%. Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) had also net bought Indian financial assets in February to the tune of \$4.17 billion. However, once the West Asia war began at the end of February, foreign capital has exited Indian shores in droves: \$13.6 billion in March, \$7.56 billion in April, and \$2.62 billion so far in May.

Supply side pressures clouding India's near-term outlook: RBI's State of Economy report

It said the global economy continued to be shadowed by uncertainties in West Asia. It said the global economy continued to be shadowed by uncertainties in West Asia. The near-term outlook for the economy is "somewhat clouded by supply side pressures" even as domestic demand continues to be the main driver of economic growth, the Reserve Bank of India said in its State of the Economy article. The central bank noted that while headline inflation remains comfortably within its tolerance band, the pass-through of underlying cost pressures to domestic prices requires close and ongoing monitoring.

"The financial conditions, crude oil prices and capital flows continue to pose challenges to the external sector outlook," the report authored by RBI researchers and economists said. "Views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India," it said. It said global economic conditions remained fragile, shaped by heightened geopolitical tensions, elevated energy costs and persistent uncertainty surrounding the growth and inflation outlook. "The conflict in West Asia continued to exert pressure on commodity markets, global trade flows and supply chains, contributing to the volatility in financial markets," the article, published in the RBI Bulletin, said.

"India has entered this phase from a position of macroeconomic strength. Nevertheless, robust services exports, positive net FDI flows, foreign exchange reserve buffers and a number of proactive policy measures undertaken by the government and the Reserve Bank of India are likely to cushion the Indian economy against external headwinds," it said. It said the global economy continued to be shadowed by uncertainties in West Asia. Domestic economic activity exhibited resilience in April, with industrial and services sectors maintaining strength across several segments, the article said. In agriculture, summer sowing progressed well, supported by above normal pre-monsoon rainfall and comfortable reservoir levels. CPI inflation rose to 3.5% in April,



driven mainly by food inflation, while core inflation remained steady. "In March, net foreign direct investment remained positive for the second consecutive month. Foreign portfolio investors continued to remain net sellers in April and May, though the pace of outflows moderated," the article said. It said India is witnessing a trade reconfiguration amidst the emerging geopolitical situation. Its trade through Strait of Hormuz, which had declined sequentially in March, went up in April 2026. India's exports to China continued to grow in double digits (y-o-y) since April 2025.

The country's exports to the US grew in April 2026, reversing the contractionary trend witnessed since September 2025 (except in November), it said. India's foreign exchange reserves remain comfortable, extending cover for goods imports for around 11 months and about 90% of the external debt outstanding by the end-December 2025. High-frequency food prices data up to May 19 point towards a marginal uptick in both wheat and rice prices, the article said. Reflecting price pressures from West Asian conflict, Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation rose to 8.3% in April from 3.9% in March, recording a 42-month high. The sharp increase in WPI inflation in April was largely driven by fuel and power, though other groups also witnessed a price rise, it said.

RBI Board okays record surplus transfer of Rs 2.86 lakh crore to government for FY26

At a time when the West Asia conflict and the surge in crude oil prices are weighing heavy on the fisc, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Central Board Friday approved a record surplus transfer of Rs 2,86,588 crore to the Central Government for the accounting year 2025–26, offering a significant boost to the Centre's finances. The higher dividend could help improve the government's overall fiscal position and provide greater flexibility in policy spending during an increasingly tough year ahead.

The dividend payout is approximately 6.7 per cent, or Rs 17,998 crore, higher than the Rs 2,68,590 crore transferred by the RBI in 2024–25, marking the highest-ever surplus transfer by the central bank. The RBI had paid Rs 2,10,874 crore in FY2023-24 and Rs 87,416 crore in FY2022-23. The sharp increase in dividend payouts was supported by the RBI's strong earnings during the year. At the same time, the RBI raised the contingency risk buffer (CRB) to Rs 109,379 crore to create a safeguard in case geopolitical tensions escalate or crude oil prices worsen. A significant contributor to higher surplus was the central bank's large-scale sale of US dollars in the foreign exchange market to support the rupee amid persistent depreciation pressures, leading to substantial trading gains for the RBI. "The transfer would have been Rs 64,518 crore higher had the RBI limited contingency risk buffer (CRB) to the last year level of Rs 44,862 crore. Transferring higher amount to the CRB will help in RBI intervening in the financial market as per the evolving domestic and global macroeconomic conditions," said Devendra Kumar Pant, Chief Economist, India Ratings & Research. The ongoing geopolitical tensions, conflict in West Asia, risks to energy prices, and volatility in bond and currency markets may have led the RBI to favour building a stronger CRB, analysts said. In addition, the RBI benefited from higher returns on its foreign currency assets as global interest rates remained elevated across major advanced economies. The increase in yields on overseas securities and investments strengthened the central bank's income position, enabling it to transfer a larger surplus to the government while maintaining adequate risk buffers. The amount transferred to the government could have crossed Rs 3.5 lakh crore had the RBI limited the contingency risk buffer to last year's level. But transfers to the buffer will help the central bank intervene in the financial market as per evolving macro conditions. The record transfer is expected



to provide the government, which has been facing a fiscal strain, with additional fiscal space, helping it to manage expenditure commitments, support infrastructure spending, and contain the fiscal deficit without significantly increasing borrowing. "Surplus transfer by RBI is 90.8 per cent of budgeted non-tax revenue under 'dividend/surplus of Reserve Bank of India, Nationalised Banks & Financial Institutions' head for FY27 (BE). Higher transfer will reduce some pressure on the fiscal deficit due to the geopolitical situation," Pant said. The enhanced inflow will provide the government with greater flexibility to increase infrastructure and capital expenditure, particularly in sectors such as transportation, energy, urban development and public logistics, which are seen as key drivers of long-term economic growth. The higher dividend payout is expected to ease concerns surrounding the government's borrowing programme by lowering the need for additional market borrowing during the financial year. This could help contain bond yield – 10-year benchmark yield is at 7.09 per cent now – and reduce upward pressure on interest rates, thereby supporting overall financial stability. The RBI Central Board decided to transfer a higher amount of Rs 109,379.64 crore towards the Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB) for FY 2025-26 as against Rs 44,861.70 crore in the previous year. CRB serves as the RBI's financial safety cushion, consisting of funds reserved to absorb unexpected risks arising from currency volatility, interest-rate shocks, financial crises, market losses and operational risks. The continuing geopolitical tensions, particularly the conflict in West Asia, along with the associated risks of sudden spikes in global energy prices.

Daisy Shah on dealing with intoxicated fans; expert weighs in



Celebrity events may look glamorous from the outside, but being surrounded by thousands of strangers can also come with moments of genuine discomfort. Actor Daisy Shah, in a conversation with Bollywood Bubble, opened up about the less glamorous side of public appearances, recalling how some fans can get uncomfortably close.

Shah recalled how, sometimes, when an event is very crowded, many people request a selfie. Sometimes, fans would get "offended" that she didn't click with them, even though there was a high chance she couldn't hear them in a crowd of 3,000-4,000. Sometimes, the interactions get deeply unsettling. "And there have been instances where I have gone to certain events and, you know, it's proximity pe there are like two or three people who are... like I can smell that they are reeking of alcohol. And I'm like, I don't want to associate with... like, I don't even want to engage with this person. But you can't get rude because there are

Experts call moong dal the traditional Indian superfood: 'Desi ghee daalo isme'

Sharing his thoughts, Goyal said, "Duniya mei agar koi super food hai, woh hai peeli daal. Moong daal. Koi aisa mineral, vitamin pending nahi hai jo isme nahi hai... sabse easy banti bhi hai, desi ghee daalo isme... aapki body ko tandurust rakhne ke liye sabse bada superfood hai. muscle strong rehethe hein, aur sabse badi baat hai ki woh aapki nadiyon ka poshan karti hai... aapke pachantantra se..." While terms like quinoa, chia seeds, and kale often dominate modern wellness conversations, nutrition experts say moong dal has quietly remained one of the most balanced and gut-friendly foods for generations.

According to Dt Ginni Kalra, Aakash Healthcare, moong dal absolutely deserves recognition as a traditional Indian superfood. "It is nutrient-dense owing to its presence of plant protein, fibre, antioxidants, potassium, and essential micronutrients," says Dt Kalra. "It is also inexpensive, culturally relevant, and has been consumed consistently for generations." She explains that the value of a food should not be determined by its expense or trendiness, but by how balanced, accessible, and sustainable it remains over time. Why moong dal is considered easy on the gut? Moong dal is considered gentler on digestion partly because it contains lower amounts of complex carbohydrates that can produce gas and bloating," Dt Kalra explains. "It also becomes even easier to digest when soaked overnight and cooked properly."

Because of this, moong dal is frequently advised for people recovering from illness or digestive discomfort. "Both Ayurveda and modern nutrition suggest moong dal because it nourishes the body without significantly burdening the digestive system," she says. Stuti Ashok Gupta, Co-Founder of Amrutam, adds that Ayurveda has valued moong dal for centuries not only for its nutritional value but also for how efficiently the body can absorb it. "In Ayurveda, health is not



only about what looks good on a nutrition chart," Gupta says. "A truly nourishing food is one your body can actually process, assimilate, and benefit from." She explains that moong dal provides protein, fibre, warmth, and nourishment "without overwhelming digestion," making it especially suited to the Indian body, climate, and lifestyle. Dt Kalra explains that moong dal contains plant-based protein that supports muscle maintenance, soluble fibre that helps digestion and blood sugar balance, and antioxidants that may help reduce inflammation. "It is nutrient-dense without containing excessive fat or empty calories," she says. "While moong dal should not be viewed as a miracle food, regular consumption as part of a balanced diet can certainly contribute positively to overall health." A return to traditional eating As more people move toward sustainable and gut-friendly eating habits, nutritionists believe traditional Indian staples are finally receiving the recognition they deserve. "There is something beautiful about recognising the value of foods that have quietly existed in our kitchens for centuries," says Gupta. "Sometimes the most powerful foods are not exotic. They are the ones our grandmothers kept returning to."

'Loyalty, got royalty inside my DNA': Ishaan Khatter reveals the secret sauce to his bulging biceps

A perfect workout is incomplete without the right soundtrack to pump you up and help you get the most out of yourself. And Ishaan Khatter's latest gym session — where he is seen doing dumbbell lateral raises — was powered by Kendrick Lamar's DNA. Quoting the lyrics of the song, "Loyalty, got royalty inside my DNA, Quarter piece, got war, and peace inside my DNA, I got hustle, though, ambition flow inside my..... ??," the actor shared the motivational score for his power-packed session in the caption of his Instagram post.

But what are the benefits of this exercise? According to Amit Dahiya, Fitness Coach and Co-Founder of 626 Fitness, dumbbell lateral raises are done to increase shoulder strength. "They also help build a more aesthetic shoulder," the expert tells indianexpress.com. Dhruva Sivakumar, fitness expert, Cult adds that the lateral raise is an isolation exercise that targets the lateral deltoid, the muscle responsible for the width and shape of the shoulders. It is often known for its aesthetic benefits, but the exercise is critical in improving the function of the glenohumeral joint.

The glenohumeral joint is also known as the shoulder's Ball and Socket joint which is responsible for moving the arm in multiple directions. "The lateral raise is basically the abduction of the shoulder in the frontal plane which refers to the action of moving the arms away from the body in a controlled stable manner," he explains. Functionally, Sivakumar elaborates that the lateral raise is good for the shoulder be-



cause it encourages a proper scapulohumeral rhythm, which is a coordinated movement between the upper arm and the shoulder blades. This is how the humerus and scapula work together as a team. The lateral deltoid is also responsible in functional day to day activities like lifting a baby or pet or carrying groceries or taking a book or jar from a high cabinet," he points out. This translates into greater physical independence and ease of movement as we age, preventing strain or injury during routine activities. What to note But before starting out with dumbbell lateral raises, here are a few precautions to note as per Dahiya: "Start with lighter weights and gradually build them up," says the expert, adding that bracing the core while performing this exercise is crucial so that you do not end up putting extra load on your lower back. To add to that, he advises keeping your elbows bent while performing the exercise to get the best out of it.

No cosmetic permitted to be used as injection: CDSCO

New Delhi: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) said that cosmetic products are not permitted to be used through injections and warned that such practices violate provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and Cosmetics Rules, 2020, according to a notice released on Tuesday. In a public notice, the CDSCO said products supplied in injectable form do not fall under the definition of cosmetics and cannot be used by consumers, professionals or aesthetic clinics. "No cosmetic is permitted to be used for injection by consumers, professionals or aesthetic clinics. Cosmetics are only intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled or sprayed on the human body," the notice stated. The regulator clarified that cosmetics are legally defined as products intended for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness or altering the appearance of the human body or any part thereof. "Cosmetic means any article intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled or sprayed on, or introduced into, or otherwise applied to, the human body or any part thereof for cleansing, beautifying,

promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance, and includes any article intended for use as a component of cosmetic," the regulatory stated in the notice. It further stated that cosmetics are not permitted to be used for treatment purposes by professionals or individuals. The CDSCO also warned against misleading claims and use of prohibited ingredients in cosmetic products, stating that such violations attract action under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and related rules. "As per the provisions of labelling, no cosmetic may purport or claim to convey any idea which is false or misleading to the intending user," the notice said. The regulator added that no person is allowed to alter, obliterate or deface any inscription or mark made by the manufacturer on the container, label or wrapper of a cosmetic product. The CDSCO noted that the list of Generally Not Recognized as Safe (GNRAS) and restricted ingredients is published by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The health regulator urged the public to report any such violations or suspicious activities to the regulatory authority or the respective state licensing authorities.

For Virat Kohli, the home stretch to the 2027 World Cup isn't feeling very homely



First Virat Kohli lets his bat do the talking and then he speaks his mind. Be it when playing for India or RCB – this has been a recent trend. Few months back, he had a lengthy heart-to-heart chat at the award ceremony under Ranchi's night sky after his ODI ton against South Africa. Now, after carrying RCB to the IPL play-offs he sat down for a long podcast. When you have the weight of runs behind you, your words carry heft and the world believes you. On both occasions, as always, he was articulate, analytical and also unusually angry. Kohli, all through his captaincy, made it an Us vs World battle to fuel his team and get sparkling results. This time the battle seems more personal. One doesn't need to read between the lines; connecting the dots is enough to get a drift of Kohli's statements. Without naming anyone in the team management or selection committee, he has been making a few telling points.

Kohli's public remarks give a hint about the rather prickly relationship with head coach Gautam Gambhir and chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar – the two men during whose tenure he had retired from Tests. They also give off a whiff of mistrust. Suddenly, it seems there is some truth in the nudge-and-wink stories floating around Indian cricket – the ones about the team management and selectors still being undecided about including Virat and even Rohit Sharma in the 2027 ODI World Cup squad. Both Ro and Ko have been around long enough to know that they aren't in the safe zone. It is this uncertainty that fosters the many thinly-veiled gripes that one has been hearing. Those in the know say that a few voices in the selection committee were keen to rest the seniors for the Afghanistan series as it was days after the hectic IPL series. Not just the pacer Jasprit Bumrah but even Kohli and Rohit. But that didn't quite materialise. Rohit and Virat were named in the squad. Having retired from both T20 and Tests, they showed their eagerness to scoop the limited opportunity for international outings they were getting.

In the RCB podcast, Virat gets asked about the 2027 World Cup and he doesn't dodge the question. "My per-

spective is very clear. If I can add value to the environment that I'm a part of and the environment feels like I can add value I'll be seen ... If I'm made to feel like I need to prove my worth and my value ..." he says and shakes his head vigorously. "I'm not in that space." Was Virat taking an important stand? And in case "the environment" – read team management headed by Gambhir – do feel he doesn't add value to the team, will he say goodbye to the 2027 World Cup? In the months ahead, intrigue around the ODI squad would be at a new high. Later he would talk about the work atmosphere that was far from ideal – once again he keeps it vague with no names. But somehow it is easy to make guesses. "I want to play because I love playing. I just love batting ... I could not care ... This is not about anyone else. This is about me and the game and that's what it's going to be. The moment I feel like, you know, people are trying to complicate," he says. "If people say we believe in your abilities and then a week later they start questioning the way you operate, it's like why? Either tell me on day one I'm not good enough or I'm not needed or if you've said I'm good enough ... Then be quiet." The answer leaves little to imagination. As if to present a contrast, he would go on to praise the other coaches he has worked with, those who gave him an atmosphere he liked and to whom he is eternally obliged. In another recent RCB chat show, he mentioned his incredible 2023 season and the role the India coaches – Rahul Dravid and Vikram Rathour – had in his success. "Whenever I meet them I always thank them from the bottom of my heart because they really took care of me in a way that made me feel like I wanted to play for them. I want to do the hard work for them because they were so caring and nurturing," he said. This was revelatory, even the seemingly uber confident need caring and nurturing. "It's a very thin line between being cautious and being insecure. You always feel like you're never good enough and that's the impostor syndrome. Even if I go to the nets today. I feel like at this stage like these youngsters are watching and if I have a bad net session, they're going to be like this is the guy who's been playing for 20 years ... So that's always at the back of your mind like you have to keep up with your own standards you know." How times change, the mighty talk about their own frailties. Those who once ruled the dressing room, now have doubts. They worry about the opinion of the environment. The 2027 World Cup is still many months away and the once untouchable now navigate a long period of scrutiny.

'Virat Kohli may be angry but you also win even after losing': Sehwag defends RCB loss to SRH

GNS News Agency, May 28

Former India opener Virender Sehwag defended Royal Challengers Bengaluru despite their stinging 55-run defeat to the Sunrisers Hyderabad in their final IPL 2026 league-stage game in Hyderabad on Friday. Stepping out to safeguard their top spot in the standings and not concede a defeat in excess of 90 runs to lose a Qualifier 1 spot to SRH, RCB played out a 256-run chase in a unique fashion. Barring the Powerplay, RCB did not ever press into top gear during the chase. A quickfire 44 from Venkatesh Iyer set the innings in motion even when star batter Virat Kohli fell cheaply on 15. On the back of skipper Rajat Patidar's half-century, RCB finished on 200 in 20 overs, despite only losing four wickets. Despite the spectacular batting, hosts Hyderabad then settled for third spot on Net Run Rate.

"What difference does it even make for RCB? They probably knew that they wouldn't be able to chase 255, but they did try. Virat Kohli must have been angry with the way he played. RCB just assured themselves of reaching 160-170, then they started hitting. Sometimes you win even after losing, and today was that case for RCB," Sehwag said on Cricbuzz. Speaking after the match, RCB head coach Andy Flower also spoke about their partly defensive ap-



proach in the match. "We were in a position to keep pushing to chase down 255, but ultimately we got the job done and topped the league. It's quite a tricky situation when you've got these conflicting things. We wanted the batsmen to get a feel of the game out there and make a decision about whether they wanted to take on the 255 or the 180," Flower said. With RCB and SRH locked at 18 points along side Gujarat Titans, the defending champions took the spot on the back of a +0.783 NRR. They will take on second-placed GT in the Qualifier 1 match in Dharamsala on Tuesday.

'I've got a lot of respect for Venkatesh Iyer': RCB head coach Andy Flower

GNS News Agency, May 28 Since joining the Royal Challengers Bengaluru, opportunities in the starting XI have been scarce for Venkatesh Iyer. RCB were a champion side last season, and successful teams tend not to tinker with the combination. Iyer was benched through the early stages of the season before making an impact as a substitute against the Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad. Due to injuries and in an attempt to tweak combinations for the Raipur conditions, RCB later drafted Iyer in as a starter. On Friday against Sunrisers Hyderabad, Iyer smashed a 19-ball 44 as an opener, albeit in a defeat, pursuing a tall 256-run target. In their previous game against the Punjab Kings, Iyer played in the middle order, replacing the injured skipper Rajat Patidar and smashed 73 off 40 balls to win Player of the Match.

"Look, I've got a lot of respect for Venky," said RCB head coach Andy Flower after a 55-run loss to SRH on Friday. "He's had to wait for his chance. And every time he's had a chance, either as an impact player when we've needed the extra batsmen because we've got ourselves into some trouble in the innings or in the last two matches when he's been given a chance, first at number four in Dharamsala and then today opening the batting, he's taken all of those chances. So, his attitude through the season has been outstanding," Flower added.

The waiting game has been particularly frustrating for the Madhya Pradesh all-rounder. "I'd lie if I said that I was not frustrated or did not want to play. I really wanted to go out there and play because for players like us, it's the opportunity to play in the IPL. We want to play, we want to do well," Iyer had said earlier. Despite the limited game time, Iyer's work ethic received rich praise from Flower. "He's played a lot of IPL cricket, played for India and was sitting on the sidelines waiting for his chance. He's been in that dugout. He's had a big smile on his face all the time." "He's practised hard every single practise session. He's worked hard. He's worked hard at his bowling, his fielding and his batting. And he's been exemplary, to be honest. So, a lot of respect for him. Thank you so much for your questions," Flower added. Iyer had gone for a monumental Rs 23.75 crores last year to the Kolkata Knight Riders, a franchise with whom he shot into the limelight in 2021 and played an important role in their title-winning campaign in 2024. The massive price did take its toll on him last year, before RCB snapped him up for Rs 7 crore. "They've welcomed me very well. Obviously, it's a very professional setup and the cricket part of it, the management, is just unbelievable. All credit to Mo Bobat and DK, the way they have taken care of the boys, it's just unbelievable. On top of that, the brand of cricket



that RCB plays is something that excites me a lot," Iyer said.

Sreenidi Deccan hold Dempo 1-1 to finish second in league table

Hyderabad: Sreenidi Deccan FC ended their Indian Football League 2025-26 season with a 1-1 draw against Dempo SC at the PJN Stadium in Fatorda (Goa) on Friday. Marcus Joseph opened the scoring for the hosts in the 5th minute, while Hadi Idrissou netted the equaliser in the 71st minute. Going into the final game of the season, head coach Carlos Vaz Pinto made two changes to his starting XI. Suspended Ajay Chhetri was replaced by Lalthankhuma, while Lalchungnunga came in as a late inclusion after Fabrice Kah sustained an injury during the warm-up. The hosts began with attacking intent and were rewarded early when Marcus Joseph headed home from a corner. Having fallen behind, the Deccan Warriors pressed hard for the equaliser and came close on multiple occasions through set-pieces and wing play. Their best chance came via Romawia's header, which was parried over the bar by the opposition goalkeeper. The first half ended with the Deccan Warriors trailing 1-0. After the break, the Deccan Warriors showed greater attacking intent. Pape Gassama was introduced in the 57th minute to add more presence in midfield. The equaliser finally arrived in the 71st minute when a cross from Lalchungnunga was headed back across goal by Deepak DP, allowing defensive partner Hadi Idrissou to nod home.

Gurindervir (10.17s) – Animesh (10.15s) rumble in Ranchi as 100m NR falls twice



First came a stunning run from former NR holder Gurindervir Singh, who clocked 10.17s, but as he posed for the pictures, the second heat of 100m semi-final commenced with current NR holder Animesh Kujur, gearing up for history. The 22-year-old from Chhatisgarh saw his training partner breaking the NR and thought, 'If you can do it, I can do it too.' He blazed to the finish line in 10.15s breaking the NR again and breaching the qualification mark for Commonwealth Games 2026. "You know they are trying to kill each other on the track but are best buddies off track," quipped their coach James Hillier who was gushing at his two wards creating history. "These two lads are in very good shape but honestly, I was not thinking about the records, not in the semis." "I just told them to run the race like you want to run in the final," he told The Indian Express on the sidelines.

This is the fourth time the duo has lowered the national record in past two years. At the start of 2025 in March, Gurindervir clocked 10.20s at Indian Grand Prix in Bengaluru to lower the previous national record of 10.23s of Manikanta Hoblidhar. Animesh equalled it with 10.20s and then broke it in Greece last July, to clock 10.18s. The cooler evening session of the Ranchi event was in complete contrast to the morning session when athletes struggled with heat and performances were sub-optimal. So the finals on Saturday evening at 7.10 pm, will be a cracker. When the national record fell for the first time, the photo on the finish line showed Gurindervir leaning backwards as if he was holding himself back. "I just ran for the 80m mark," said Gurindervir before rushing for an ice bath session and soft tissue recovery. Later coach Hillier clari-

fied what he meant. "Since, he was running in the semis, I think he went all-in for the first 80m before just holding himself back. Now, I wish he didn't do that but it's fine because the final is also important for us," he explained. But as Gurindervir reined himself in for a bit, he missed the Commonwealth Games qualification mark by 0.01s though he will have a chance again when he runs tomorrow in the 100m final. Animesh blazes again While Gurindervir rationed his effort, Animesh decided to go all out and just glided on the track after a superb start off the blocks. Animesh, who had troubles with his starts in the 100m, was quickly off the blocks and finished in a flash leaving the rest of the field and the onlookers in awe. "You have to give it to Animesh. He is such a fierce competitor. He saw Guri doing the NR and said, 'I'll do it again. For Animesh, we had one target in mind and we have got it, the qualification for CWG," said Hillier. Gurindervir who was also amazed at his compatriot's performance, gave him a hug and posed for couple of pictures before wheeling off. "Me and Guri (Gurindervir) just laughed it off after Animesh's result. I mean Guri did what he had to but you can't top this. Important thing for both of them is to take rest, recover mentally and focus on the finals tomorrow," said Hillier. Sprint scene improving James Hillier believes that the rise of this group of sprinters has pushed the competition in the event to a different level. To put it in context, it took nine years for the Indian sprinters to improve the national record from 10.26s to 10.20s. But in the space of less than 12 months, the record has gone further down to 10.15s.

"When you have a group of competitors who are regularly doing well at both national and international level, I think it pushes the envelope further. That is exactly what the group of these four (Gurindervir, Animesh, Manikanta, and Amlan) has done in the past two years," said Hillier. With Gurindervir dipping below 10.20s, India has two sprinters below 10.20s for the first time in history. While the achievement doesn't look mammoth as compared to world levels, it is significant for a country that has barely known sprinters breaking national records so frequently. "Both of them need to perform tomorrow. There is no point if you don't have a blazing 100m final," concluded Hillier. As the sun would rise over Birs Munda Stadium in Ranchi tomorrow, the spotlight will shift to the showdown between two of India's fastest men. Whether the national record falls yet again or not, one thing is certain—there will be drama, a sprinting dra-

CSK need a facelift, but it requires looking beyond their very face, MS Dhoni

GNS News Agency, May 28

Sometime last year, an India coach – a big name with close ties with the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) old-timers – explored the possibility of a coaching role with the five-time champions. The timing seemed apt. The franchise had finished at the bottom, and all signs pointed to a major overhaul. Instead, he was told to wait.

Now that CSK has missed the play-off qualification for the third straight year, there is clamour for total revamp again. But the extent of it depends on the future of MS Dhoni, the club's face and heartbeat. As long as he is around, coaches would remain hesitant to assume charges, fearing their powers would be curtailed. According to reliable sources, at least one interested candidate seemed convinced that until Dhoni is around, there is no way he will throw his hat in the ring. The coming weeks will give a clear picture. This much is certain. The five-time champions are under immense pressure to ring in the changes. There is uncertainty over Stephen Fleming, who has been the coach since 2009. He revealed that the management would decide whether he leaves or not, and they haven't had a conversation yet.

But the bigger puzzle is around Dhoni's future. He missed all 14 games, the first time since the league's inception; the soul of the franchise came to the stadium just once—for the final home game. When CSK played their last league game in Ahmedabad, Dhoni was in Ranchi, carrying the suspense around his future with him. The question on Dhoni's future came up, after CSK suffered their worst-ever defeat, in Ahmedabad. "You and I will get to know it next year," captain Ruturaj Gaikwad would say. MS Dhoni CSK MS Dhoni of Chennai Super Kings during thank you lap post Match 63 of the TATA Indian Premier League 2026 between Chennai Super Kings and Sunrisers Hyderabad at MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai, India, on May 18, 2026. (CREIMAS) This suspense is doing no favours to anyone. What Dhoni decides from here should be irrelevant. At 44, he has overstayed as a player. For a long time, as CSK's majority shareholder N Srinivasan once said, "CSK means Dhoni and Dhoni means CSK". But it has come to a point where they need to look beyond him. If he has a future at the franchise, it is as support staff, not as a player. Should they decide to look beyond Fleming, then they have to take a call on Dhoni and not leave it to the former captain himself. The example is in Royal Challengers Bengaluru. After years of underachievement, when they wanted to start fresh, Andy Flower spoke to Virat Kohli and made him fit to the team's needs. RCB was not going to fit into their most powerful player's needs. At CSK, the story is opposite with Dhoni.

The word from within the camp is that since the 2025 season, Dhoni has detached himself from the planning and preparation. This season was largely the same – until differences emerged over the use of Shivam Dube as a finisher. The left-hander's career kick-started at CSK, where his six-hitting made him a valuable asset in India's twin T20 World Cup wins. Pushed into an unfamiliar finishing role, he



managed fewer than the 21 sixes he hit last season. The numbers said what the dressing room could not. When the squad assembled in the first week of March, there was optimism of at least making the playoffs. Having started building mid-way through last season, there was genuine belief—Sanju Samson's arrival, a batting unit that showed intent. Instead, there was chaos. Three straight losses, a mini-recovery, another stutter, a comeback that promised something before the gas fizzled out.

Five players who would have been regulars were lost along the way, which did not help. But the problems ran deeper than injuries. Their six wins all came against teams that finished below them. Their defeats against the top three were all huge. There are broader questions about Fleming, too. With the IPL increasingly dictated by Indian talent, his familiarity with India's domestic players outside the established names is limited to scout reports and videos. Last season, he flew to Chennai during the off-season for a week of trials – a genuine effort. But Sakib Hussain, passed over, went to Sunrisers Hyderabad and thrived. He skipped Priyansh Arya, who found his feet at Punjab Kings. CSK went into the season without a single Indian frontline spinner, having not pursued Ravi Bishnoi at the auctions. Gaikwad has not been able to assert himself either. Filling into the huge shoes of Dhoni, there is space behind his heel as well as wriggle room in front of his toes. IPL is not a three-month gig anymore. Other franchises have camps even in the off-season, and there is constant tracking across the year. The top-rung of CSK's support staff all happen to be overseas and they don't spend time in India during off-season. If local players need a camp, they only have Sriharan Sriram and Rajiv Kumar to turn to. And should Dhoni begin a role in the support staff, then it requires him to dedicate more time. With Fleming still having plenty of admirers in the franchise management, he could be given a wider role – like using his expertise in the overseas leagues CSK run, the SA20 and MLC – and free him up for IPL to bring in an Indian coach. With the MLC starting soon, there are indications that once it concludes, there will be a discussion about the way forward. Any new coach would need the off-season to prepare for the mini-auction, identify the core, and begin the longer rebuild that leads to the bigger auctions at the end of next season. So the quicker Dhoni decides, the better for the franchise.

What makes Jannik Sinner the undisputed favourite for the 2026 French Open

In the injury-induced absence of Carlos Alcaraz, his only equal at the summit of present-day men's tennis, Jannik Sinner has been on a generational run. By becoming the first Italian to win their national open in 50 years last week in Rome, Sinner extended his winning streak to 29 matches. He joined Novak Djokovic in making history, becoming only the second player to have won each of the nine Masters 1000 events. Sinner has beaten anyone and everyone – including Alcaraz in a final on clay – who have come his way with a ruthlessness that suggests he is razor sharp heading into the French Open, starting Sunday. In Paris, he is hoping to become just the eighth man in history to complete the Grand Slam (winning each of the four Major tournaments) in the Open Era.

While Alcaraz beat him to the feat at the Australian Open, becoming the youngest to do so, victory at Roland

Garros will allow Sinner to pip him to what is arguably a greater achievement in their series of one-upmanship. He is aiming to become only the second player, once again after Djokovic, to win each of the 14 most significant tournaments in a tennis calendar: the nine Masters, the four Majors, and the year-end Finals. All at the ripe age of 24! The achievements are staggering; Sinner has already gone places that eluded greats like Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. Yet as he mounts his ascent to history at the French Open this fortnight, the object of equal fascination is his stark lack of competition. According to the pre-French Open rankings, Sinner is 9,000 points ahead of second seed Alexander Zverev. For context, winning a Major awards 2,000 points. It is a gulf that illustrates Sinner's dominance as much as it tells the story of a chasing pack that dithered and failed to take their opportunities during the establishment of the Sinner-Alcaraz duopoly.

Desi Bling Review: Tejasswi Prakash hams through a show that can't even do trashy right



There is a scene in Desi Bling where chef Ranveer Brar stands in a kitchen, cooking for Tejasswi Prakash and her girl gang while they dissect the personal lives of women who aren't in the room over a menu tasting session. Chef Ranveer stands there, entirely clueless, masquerading his sheer embarrassment with a frozen smile. His eyes practically scream how, exactly, his career arrived at this particular point. You will feel secondhand embarrassment for him. In fact, that is the exact emotion the audience experiences for the entire show.

Desi Bling follows Indian TV couple Karan Kundrra and Tejasswi Prakash as they enter Dubai's ultra-wealthy Indian expat circuit. The cast includes billionaire couple Satish and Tabinda Sanpal; the Sajjan family, Rizwan, Adel, and Sana; Dyuti Parruck and wife Iryna Kinakh; and sisters Alizey and Lailli Mirza and Pamela Serena. The bling is very much present. Tabinda owns 40 kilograms of gold and buys three more every Dhanteras. Her daughter got a custom pink Rolls-Royce on her first birthday and wore a 24-carat gold dress to the party.

Nobody watches shows like this for depth or nuance, you watch for the high-octane cringe, the gloriously staged drama. The KRA of the guilty-pleasure reality show is simple: be entertainingly awful. Desi Bling agrees to this but unfortunately, it doesn't even know how to be trashy properly. The scriptwriters (and let's not pretend this isn't scripted) clearly didn't try very hard. From the very first episode, every confrontation feels painfully staged. No one in this friend group can keep a secret for a single day. The moment one person hears gossip, they sprint toward the next person to reveal it, often in the middle of public events with absolutely no awareness of their surroundings. Every fight feels less like reality and more like badly rehearsed improv theatre. The show's most delusional attempt at "reality" is the scene where the men gather to discuss their deepest personal struggles, offering each other careful, considered, emotionally attuned advice. As women, we know, we have always known, that this is not how men operate in a room together. Not Indian men, not Dubai men, not men of any nationality, income bracket. Men do not sit in a circle and carefully counsel each other through their marriage problems. They talk about cricket, change the subject, and order another drink. We did not buy a single second of it. Front and centre of the show's problems is Tejasswi Prakash, who decides to ham her way through the entire series. In a genre where people are supposed to pretend to be real, she stands out as a glaringly bad actor. Her entire vibe is a throwback to her viral Naagin 6 meme. If that was "Walk karte hain to time nahi dekhte," her motto on Desi Bling is, "Reality show karte hain to real nahi dikhte, confrontation karte hain to situation nahi dekhte." She pokes her nose into everyone's business, demands instant gossip under the guise of "concern," screechingly yells "SHUT UPPP!" at the end of every sentence. She inserts herself freely into other people's fights and issues. But when the tables turn

she becomes defensive, angry and loud. In one episode, after a massive fight with Karan, she turns to the camera before an event and says, "I started faking so the guests wouldn't know." Girl, please. We could see you faking through the entire series, not just there. Throughout the show she and others take pointed digs at Pamela for "living off her ex's money" — which, even if true, raises the obvious question of what precisely that has to do with Tejasswi, who just arrived from Mumbai and has opinions about everyone already. The proposal sequence at season's end deserves special mention. Tejasswi walks into heavily production-managed setup. Karan stands under an arch. The guests are standing there. Any person with a negative IQ would read this room correctly within four seconds. And yet Tejasswi keeps on asking "what is happening, what is happening?" Her crying scene afterwards makes you wonder how she is an actor.

Karan Kundrra, to his genuine credit, maintains a quiet steadiness throughout. His wardrobe, however, appears to have been sourced entirely from a drama company's costume inventory. Then comes the endlessly exhausting marriage drama between Dyuti Parruck and Iryna Kinakh. Within a few episodes, it becomes painfully obvious why the relationship is falling apart. Dyuti carries the classic patriarchal mindset where parenting appears to be solely the mother's responsibility, constantly criticising Iryna for going out and not being a "good mother" while conveniently ignoring his own behaviour. Iryna, on the other hand, spends most of the season discussing the problems in her marriage without doing much to address them. By the end, viewers are simply tired of hearing the same arguments recycled in different luxury settings. Interestingly, the people who initially come across as "mean girls" — Pamela and the Mirza sisters — slowly emerge as some of the more emotionally honest cast members. During Pamela's birthday party, her ex gifts her a Chanel bag. Pamela tells the camera: "I wanted this bag, I don't know how he got to know this!" Cut immediately to the ex's solo interview, where he says: "I took her to the store, asked her to pick a gift, and she chose this." It looks as if the makers are trying too hard to show us how unscripted the show is. The Sajjan family, Rizwan, Adel, and Sana, are the most subdued of the lot, never involved in any confrontation or gossip session. They appear to be on the show to use it as a giant, glorified billboard for Danube Properties. Then there are things said on the show that no amount of bling can distract you from.

Tabinda believes a second child will stop her husband from partying and mentions this plan throughout the show. When she brings this up, Satish responds with the kind of tone-deaf billionaire banter that makes you want to turn off your TV. "Let's go to London, wahaan humare 70 embryo pade hain (we have 70 embryos lying there)... Mera bas chale main 70 surrogate leke 70 bacche kar lun." When Binda oversteps her boundaries and tells Karan that Tejasswi isn't right for him, Karan handles this with considerable grace and politeness. But in his piece to camera afterwards, he says: "I only take advice from people who have achieved something in life, and Binda bhabhi's only identity is that she is Satish's wife." One supposes that standing by your husband through the building of a business empire, raising a family, and opening your own company counts for nothing. But sure, Karan. No achievements. The celebrity guests, Ranveer Brar, Sania Mirza, Shilpa Shetty, Tiger Shroff, Tamannah Bhatia, Sunny Leone, Vivek Oberoi, each wear the expression of someone who has just realised the exit is much further than it appeared. We feel for them. Here is the thing about reality shows, everyone knows they are scripted. The audience knows, the cast knows, the production knows. The agreement is that everyone pretends, and in return the show delivers entertainment compelling enough to justify the pretence. Desi Bling cannot hold up its end of this bargain.

Deepika Padukone, Kriti Sanon's skincare brands 'not a very good idea', says Shark Tank India judge



Bollywood celebrities have broadened their revenue stream and are now actively pursuing entrepreneurship as their side hustle. Actors like Deepika Padukone and Kriti Sanon have their skincare brands, and they have been actively promoting them since launch. But, contrary to what a layperson might think, celebrity-led brands can't just be successful because the founder is widely known. Shark Tank India judge Shailly Mehrotra, who also has a skincare brand, said that it's not a very good idea for celebrities to enter the skincare space as the consumer is more interested in reading labels than looking at whose picture is on the packaging.

In a chat with Soha Ali Khan on her YouTube channel, Shailly was asked about the skincare lines of Deepika, Kriti and Mira Kapoor. She said, "I don't think it's a very good idea. The brand is associated with their name; it might sell... It won't happen now. The customer is very different right now. 15 years ago, the customer was very different. They were really attracted by celebrities and their faces but right now, they are reading the label, they want to understand the formulation, the ingredients, how it is going to work on their skin. The awareness is on a different level."

Soha then asked Shailly if consumers actually buy products after seeing celebrity endorsements and to this, she shared that a consumer in tier 2 or tier 3 city might be attracted to it, but the awareness in a tier 1 city is quite

elevated. "I think that would work in tier 2 cities or tier 3 cities where they aspire to look like a celebrity but in tier 1 cities, Mumbai and Delhi, actually they want the product to perform," she said. Shailly Mehrotra then spoke about Mira's brand and said that people won't buy it because she is associated with it, but if the products perform well, then it will find its takers. "For example, with Mira, they know it's her brand. They will not buy it because it's her brand, they will buy it because the performance is good. I am talking about only tier 1 cities where the awareness is on a different level," she said. The recently concluded season of Shark Tank India was Shailly's first attempt at television. In a chat with Nitin Joshi on his podcast, Shailly said that when she joined the show, she faced a lot of pressure as she "feared" whether the OG judges will let her speak her thoughts freely. "All of us were staying in the same hotel when one of the sharks told me that the OG sharks bully newcomers a lot. They don't let them speak," she said. However, she took matters into her own hands and decided to speak to the judges before she joined them on the panel. "When I met all of them, I told them beforehand that one of you told me that you all bully newcomers and don't let them speak. They were stunned. They were like, 'This is bad. You think we are capable of doing that?' I said, how would I know? I'll only know later. But I think they understood this, and it worked for me. In every pitch, Anupam would turn towards me and say, 'Ab aap bolo!' So that felt nice. They were nice to me. It was super entertaining — I have laughed the most on this show. It was also super tiring. We would shoot for 12–13 hours at a stretch," she said.

Prakash Raj wraps up shoot for Ajay Devgn-starrer Drishyam 3

Mumbai: Actor Prakash Raj has wrapped up a "fantastic" shoot for the upcoming film "Drishyam 3" starring Ajay Devgn and Tabu. Prakash shared a glimpse of the shoot. He posted a picture featuring himself. In the image, the actor's back is towards the camera, and a clapboard with "Drishyam 3" written is seen. The makers of the upcoming film 'Drishyam 3' had started shooting in December in Goa. Actor Jaideep Ahlawat has also joined the franchise. Jaideep is known for his intense screen presence and nuanced performances and brings a compelling new energy to the 'Drishyam' universe, promising a fresh, unpredictable dynamic as the story unfolds. It also stars Ishita Dutt, Tabu, Shriya Saran, and Rajat Kapoor returning for this edge-of-the-seat family thriller.

Amid Salman Khan's Maatrubhumi uncertainty, another film on Galwan gets shelved: 'Can't bash China'



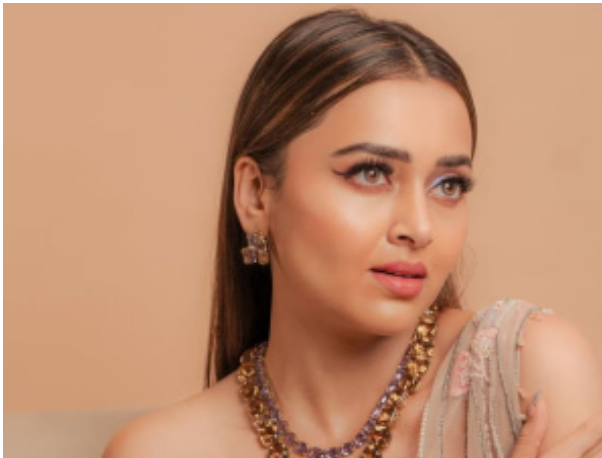
Salman Khan's upcoming film Maatrubhumi: May War Rest in Peace has been stuck in limbo for quite some time now. Originally slated for an April 17 release, the film is yet to see the light of day. Interestingly, it appears that several films centred around the Indo-China conflict have met a similar fate. According to a report by Mid-day, actor Bhagyashree's husband and producer Himalay Dassani had also planned a film titled The Lion of Galwan with his son, actor Abhimanyu Dassani. The film was based on Vir Chakra awardee Sepoy Gurtej Singh, who was martyred during the 2020 Galwan Valley clash between Indian and Chinese troops. However, the project has now been shelved indefinitely. 'There cannot be China bashing'

Speaking to the publication, Himalay said, "The India-China relationship is much better today. So, we will have to revisit the story idea. After we complete the script, we will have to submit it to the Ministry of Defence of India before we begin shooting. Also, we have received a directive from them that there cannot be China-bashing. So, we need to revisit that angle." He further added, "If we are not going to get clearance from the Defence Ministry, there will be no point in telling the story of the Galwan battle as we can't show the correct angle. If the fight and the reasons behind the clash are non-existent, what is the use of making a movie on it? So, we have kept it on the backburner."

Is Salman Khan reshooting Maatrubhumi?

Amid the uncertainty surrounding Maatrubhumi, reports have suggested that portions of the film are being re-shot. Salman had first teased the project around his birthday last December, announcing an April 17 release date. The teaser featured the actor playing a soldier leading the military standoff in eastern Ladakh during the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, in which 20 Indian Army personnel lost their lives, severely straining India-China ties. Soon,

Bling people in India call Jennifer Lopez, Beyonce to perform at weddings, says Tejasswi Prakash



Netflix recently premiered its latest original reality show Desi Bling, offering viewers a glimpse into the extravagant lives of some of Dubai's wealthiest desis, with Karan Kundrra and Tejasswi Prakash attempting to navigate that ultra-luxurious world. The show highlights the lavish lifestyle of businessman Satish Sanpal and his wife Tabinda Sanpal, popularly referred to as Binda. From reportedly owning over 40 kgs of gold to buying a Rolls-Royce for a toddler, their world left Karan and Tejasswi stunned. 'Bling people in India call Beyonce to perform at weddings'

Speaking to Pinkvilla, the couple admitted they were fascinated by the experience. "We were amused," they said together. Tejasswi elaborated, "We have heard of a lot of crazy things in India as well. We have a lot of bling people here too. We have seen global stars like Jennifer Lopez and Beyonce perform at weddings in India. I don't think that happens in their own countries. That's the power of money. We kind of saw that here too."

Beyonce had visited India in 2018 to perform at the

Prakash Raj wraps shoot of Ajay Devgn-starrer, eyes October release

Prakash Raj confirmed on Friday that he has finished shooting his portion of Drishyam 3's Hindi version, the third instalment of Ajay Devgn's crime thriller franchise, which is being directed by Abhishek Pathak. Sharing a photograph of himself on set with a clapboard bearing the film's title, he wrote: "Just wrapped up a fantastic shoot with a wonderful team... thoroughly enjoyed being a part of this film. I'm sure you'll love it too... on to the next one."

Prakash Raj joined the cast of Drishyam 3 in February 2026, when he announced the start of his shoot on social media. At the time, he was quick to address speculation around replacing Akshaye Khanna in the film, writing that he was "not replacing anyone." His role in the film has not been disclosed publicly. The Panorama Studios production, presented by Star Studio18, is directed by Abhishek Pathak and written by Pathak alongside Aamil Keeyan Khan and Parveez Shaikh. It is produced by Alok Jain, Ajit Andhare, Kumar Mangat Pathak and Abhishek Pathak, and is scheduled to release theatrically in October.

The road to Drishyam 3 Hindi has been anything but smooth. Akshaye Khanna, who played IG Tarun Ahlawat in Drishyam 2, was expected to return for the third instal-

ment. His exit became a public dispute when producer Kumar Mangat Pathak alleged that Khanna had signed the film, accepted an advance, and then pulled out ten days before his shoot was scheduled to begin.

the teaser drew criticism from China's Global Times, which accused the makers of distorting facts. In January, India's Ministry of External Affairs clarified that it had "no role" in such cinematic ventures. Battle of Galwan was retitled as Maatrubhumi: May War Rest in Peace. On March 16, Battle of Galwan was officially retitled Maatrubhumi: May War Rest in Peace. Reports now claim the film is eyeing an August 14 release. Directed by Apoorva Lakhia, the film sees Salman essaying the role of Colonel Bikkumalla Santosh Babu, who sacrificed his life along with 19 soldiers of the 16 Bihar Regiment during the clash. A source close to the development told SCREEN, "Since the mention of the Battle of Galwan has ruffled many feathers, the aim is now to avoid any more such controversy. So, there's no direct mention of China. It's like how Pakistan was referred to as 'padosi mulk' back when relations between the two neighbouring nations were improving. Unlike Dhurandhar, which openly tackled Pakistan, Salman's film can't afford that because China isn't viewed the same way diplomatically." The source also revealed that the film is still far from receiving certification from the CBFC. "It's a long road ahead, but the team is determined to bring the film to theatres instead of opting for an OTT release. In any case, even films releasing on OTT platforms require CBFC certification. So, the makers are sticking to the theatrical plan." Given the geopolitical sensitivity of the subject, the makers will also need approvals from the Indian Army and the Ministry of Defence before applying for certification. Meanwhile, Salman recently grabbed headlines after losing his cool at paparazzi outside a hospital, where he had gone to visit a friend. Irritated by repeated questions about his film, the actor later shared multiple Instagram posts criticising the media's behaviour. He wrote, "If I see any press at a hospital enjoying my pain. The press that I have stood for, interacted with, taken care of, made sure that they also earn their bread and butter. But if they wanna make money from my losses... keep quiet, don't enjoy. Bhai bhai bhai, matrabhumi picture ki maa ki aankh, pic imp hai ya life." When Salman Khan shared the challenges of shooting Maatrubhumi. Earlier, while speaking to PTI, Salman had opened up about the physical challenges of shooting the film. "Of course, it is physically demanding in every year, month, day and hour. I have to give a lot more time now. Earlier, I used to finish all this in a week or two. Now, it takes more time. I have been running, working out, kicking and punching. In this film, all these things are required. For Sikandar, the action and character were different. But for Galwan, everything is different," he said. The actor also spoke about the demanding Ladakh schedule. "Shooting in Ladakh, at high altitude, is extremely difficult. It can't be like 'action karte karte behosh ho gaya' (I can't blackout while performing). For it, I have to take proper training. We have to shoot in freezing cold water there. When I signed the film, it felt amazing, but it is a very difficult film to do. Out of the 20-day Ladakh schedule, I have to shoot for at least eight days in that icy water."

grand wedding celebrations of Isha Ambani and Anand Piramal in Udaipur. Her performance at the pre-wedding festivities became one of the biggest highlights of the lavish ceremony. Meanwhile, Jennifer Lopez first came to India in 2015 to perform at the wedding of businessman Sanjay Hinduja and designer Anu Mahtani. She later returned to the country in 2025 to perform at the wedding celebrations of Netra Mantena and Vamsi Gadiraju. Hinting at one of Binda's remarks on the show, Tejasswi added, "When people say, 'We don't go to Bollywood, we call Bollywood to our house,' you really understand the kind of influence money brings."

Karan also reflected on the experience, saying, "We are actors and we do events. We have always seen life from the stage — someone hosting, someone performing. But we never crossed that stage to see how the people who invite us actually live. There is unimaginable wealth there, and all of them are desi people. They are hardworking and self-made, but when you have that much money, your life becomes completely different." When asked whether money plays a big role in their own lives, Tejasswi replied with a laugh, "Money matters to us, but not as much as it matters to Binda." Asked if the people featured on the show were genuinely happy, Tejasswi quickly responded, "They are 100 percent happy." However, Karan disagreed, saying, "Eventually, people do feel low and lonely. We are human beings, and life is not just about money." Recalling one of the show's lighter moments, Tejasswi shared, "Binda once said that she massages Satish's feet every morning. Then she told us about a time when she went to a Chanel showroom and felt they didn't show her the best bags. So, just for an ego trip, she bought five Chanel bags to prove what she could afford. After hearing that, I joked and told Karan, 'I will massage your feet too if you buy me five Chanel bags, a Birkin, and 40 kgs of gold.'" The couple also confirmed that the extravagant claims made on the show were genuine. "Everything they said on the show is real. They really do have 40 kgs of gold. They haven't lied about anything. They also don't have tax issues there," they said.



ment. His exit became a public dispute when producer Kumar Mangat Pathak alleged that Khanna had signed the film, accepted an advance, and then pulled out ten days before his shoot was scheduled to begin.