

President Trump congratulates PM Modi on his ‘historic and decisive’ election victory

US President Donald Trump has congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his "historic and decisive" election victory, a White House spokesman said on Tuesday.

"Just last month on their phone call, President Trump expressed to Prime Minister Modi his admiration and how lucky India is to have him as its leader," White House Spokesman Kush Desai told PTL."The President congratulates Prime Minister Modi on this recent, historic, and decisive election victory," he added.

ORR accidents in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: A total of 33 percent of accidents on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) in the past four months were attributed to drowsiness/sleep deprivation, 25 per cent due to reckless driving, 15 percent due to speeding, and 14 per cent due to tyre bursts.

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police, VC Sajjanar, who held a meeting with different department officials on Tuesday, said that accidents on the ORR can be prevented by extensive awareness among motorists.

Supreme Court to get 4 more judges as Union Cabinet approves decision



New Delhi, May 5

In an important decision, the Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved a proposal to increase the number of judges in the Supreme Court from 34 to 38 (including the Chief Justice of India).

The decision was taken in a meeting of the Union Cabinet and the government has now decided to introduce 'The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026' in Parliament to amend 'The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956' for increasing the number of Judges of the Supreme Court of India by four from the present 33 to 37 (excluding the Chief Justice of India), an official release said.

The increase in the number of judges will allow the Supreme Court to function more efficiently and effectively, ensuring speedy justice, it added.

In 2019, the number of judges in the Supreme Court was increased from 31 to 33 (excluding the CJI).

According to Article 124 (1) in the Constitution, "There shall be a Supreme Court of India consisting of a Chief Justice of India and, until Parliament by law prescribes a larger number, of not more than seven other Judges...".

At its inception in 1950, the Supreme Court had only eight judges, including the CJI. The number of judges in the Supreme Court was first increased in 1956 to 11, including the CJI and then to 14 in 1960 and 18 in 1977.

The Supreme Court's judge-strength was increased from 18 to 26 in 1986 and further to 31 in 2009. It was increased to its present strength of 34 (including the CJI) in 2019.

As of March 31, 2026, the total pendency in the Supreme Court touched a record high of 93,143 cases.

Two killed, three injured as car rams stationary goods vehicle on NH-65 near Zaheerabad

A road accident on NH-65 near Zaheerabad killed two pilgrims and injured three others when a speeding car hit a stationary mini goods vehicle. Victims were returning from a temple visit; police have registered a case

Sangareddy, May 5

: Stopping of a vehicle on the busy NH-65 resulted in a road mishap as a speeding car rammed into the stationary mini goods vehicle on the by-pass road near Zaheerabad in the wee hours of Tuesday.

Two passengers died and three are injured in the incident.

Five persons from Chevella embarked on a pilgrimage to Tulja Bhavani Temple in Maharashtra. They were on their way back from pilgrimage when the accident resulted in the death of two of them.

The remaining three pilgrims also sustained serious injuries. The deceased were M Rohith (16) and K Mahesh Goud (26). The injured were M Athendra Sai, N Karthik and K Narsimhulu. They were rushed to the area hospital in Zaheerabad for treatment.

The condition of two of them is said to be critical. The police registered a case.



No Question of Me Resigning, Says Mamata; Alleges Conspiracy

Kolkata, May 6

: A day after suffering defeat in her home turf, Bhowanipore, and losing power in West Bengal, Trinamul Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee has refused to follow the tradition of resigning from the chief minister's post despite accepting the reality of not having "the chair" anymore.

Ms Banerjee also made clear that she would not even visit Lok Bhavan, erstwhile Raj Bhavan, to tender her resignation as a defeated CM to Governor RN Ravi as per custom because she still believes neither she nor her party has lost the battle to BJP in this Assembly Election.

Instead, the TMC chief made a bold claim of her party's "moral victory" against "forcible occupation" of power by BJP by brazenly looting more than 100 seats in its tally of 207 won with the help of a "villain" Election Commission during the counting of votes on Monday in

She added, "If anyone feels that a 'forcible occupation' will make me resign, it is not going to happen. All we want to say is that we didn't lose the election. It was their (BJP) forceful attempt to defeat us. They may or can defeat us officially through the EC. But morally, I am telling you, we won the election."

The former CM pointed out, "Earlier I was in the chair and digested all the atrocities of the BJP. Now I have no chair. I'm a free bird and a commoner. So I can go and fight anywhere. I was and will be on the street because I belong to the street. We will fight and bounce back."

Her vow against stepdown as the head of the previous government has not only sprang a surprise in the political circles and beyond but also sends a message to TMC ranks about her indomitable spirit of not to bow to the first ever BJP-rule in the state. It also coincides with the term of the existing assembly which ends on May 7.

Ms Banerjee then described the outcome of the polls as a 'black chapter' in the history and labelled Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar as a 'villain' and central forces as 'goons' for scripting it through the 'most atrocious acts.' She alleged that she was abused and assaulted during her visit to the counting centre at Shakhawat Memorial School.

Reaching out to INDIA bloc leaders, Ms Banerjee thanked Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi of Congress, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren and RJD leader Tejaswi Yadav— for calling her up since Monday night to offer their support to her.

The TMC chief however sounded defensive on the question about her MP nephew Abhishek Banerjee's role which is widely believed inside and outside their party for its downfall after 15 years and reminded the media that only she was addressing the presser. Ms Banerjee later announced a fact finding team of party MPs to look into the statewide atrocities unleashed by BJP on her party workers. She claimed that her party never targeted the opposition after coming to power for the first time in 2011.



the Assembly polls.

Asked about her resignation, Ms Banerjee said on Tuesday at her first press meet post TMC's whitewash, "Why? For what? If anyone thinks I will go to submit my resignation, it is not going to be the case. We didn't lose that we will go to resign. I would have tendered my resignation if I lost or had to take oath. Now the question does not arise also."

Vijay to be Sworn in as Tamil Nadu's New CM on May 7

Chennai, May 6

Tamil Nadu is set for a major political shift, with Vijay, the leader of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), scheduled to take the oath of office as the state's new Chief Minister on May 7, sources said.

The swearing-in ceremony is expected to take place at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai, they said. Vijay's political debut has been nothing short of spectacular, as TVK emerged as the single largest party in the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, winning 108 seats out of the 234-member legislature.

The party's performance is a significant upset to the long-standing dominance of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), with TVK falling just 10 seats short of the majority mark of 118. To form the government, TVK is expected to seek support from smaller parties, including Congress, PMK, Left parties, CPI(M), and VCK, which could push it past the majority threshold.

The election results also delivered a major setback for outgoing Chief Minister MK Stalin of the DMK, who lost in Kolathur to TVK's VS Babu by a margin of 8,795 votes. The DMK secured only 59 seats, a significant decline for the party.

Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar on Tuesday accepted the resignation of MK Stalin and his Council of Ministers, following the electoral result. The Governor has requested Stalin to continue in office until the new government takes charge. Vijay's rise to power marks



a historic moment, as Tamil Nadu will witness its first government outside the DMK and AIADMK dominance since June 1977.

His victory has shattered long-held perceptions about actors struggling to transition into politics, placing Vijay among the ranks of iconic actor-turned-leaders like NT Rama Rao, MG Ramachandran, and J Jayalalithaa.

Meanwhile, key alliance leaders, including Thol Thirumavalavan, CPI(M) State Secretary Shanmugam, and CPI State Secretary Veerapandian, are scheduled to meet Stalin on Wednesday to discuss the next steps.

Veteran Film Producer R.B. Choudary Passes Away in Rajasthan Road Accident

HYDERABAD: Veteran South Indian film producer R.B. Choudary died on Tuesday after sustaining severe injuries in a car accident in Udaipur. Details of the crash and the condition of others involved remain unclear.

Choudary, who began his journey in 1988 under the banner Super Good Films, rose to prominence with Pudhu Vasantham, directed by Vikraman, which won the Tamil Nadu State Film Award. He later backed K.S. Ravikumar's debut Puriyada Pudir and went on to produce a string of successful films including Cheran Pandiyan, Nattamai, Poove Unakkaga, Suryavamsam, Thullatha Manamum Thullum, Aanandham, Jilla, Godfather and most recently Maareesan.

In Telugu cinema, he delivered blockbusters with leading stars such as Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna, Venkatesh and Srikanth, producing hits like Raaja, Nuvvu Vasthavan, Sneham Kosam and Pandaga.

Producer N.V. Prasad, who co-produced Godfather with Chiranjeevi in 2022, expressed deep grief, calling Choudary "a godly figure" and "the most disciplined producer I have seen." He praised Choudary's professionalism, commitment and instinct for strong scripts, noting that



many of his films became blockbusters in both Tamil and Telugu.

Prasad said Choudary's passing was a huge loss to Indian cinema. "No words can express my grief. He will remain one of the most prominent and successful producers in Indian cinema," he said.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

BJP wrests Bengal, retains Assam

THE BJP has turned the tables on the ever-combative Mamata Banerjee with typical ruthlessness, ending her 15-year reign in West Bengal. The saffron party has not only breached a regional fortress with a landslide victory over the Trinamool Congress but also jolted the already vulnerable Opposition. Using every weapon in its formidable arsenal, the BJP invested heavily in cadre-building and outreach in rural areas, while its top brass — PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah in particular — went all out to persuade voters that the state direly needed poriborton (change). Mamata's campaign largely revolved around the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which saw the deletion of around 90 lakh names. The chaotic, contentious exercise, which she described as the Centre's ploy to reduce her voter base, influenced the outcome. The fact that Mamata chose to plough a lone furrow, having no truck with the Congress and Left parties, also worked in the BJP's favour.

The Bengal verdict marks a new high for the saffron party, even though it is still struggling to expand its footprint in South India. The BJP won three Assembly seats in Kerala (it had drawn a blank in the 2021 poll) and just one in Tamil Nadu.

However, the party would be pleased to see the back of DMK leader and outgoing Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin, who had been at loggerheads with the Centre over the past five years. Anti-incumbency played a key role in Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, but the BJP easily bucked this factor in Assam to retain power. The Congress-led United Democratic Front's victory in Kerala has given the grand old party something to celebrate, even as it has been routed yet again in Bengal.

Three accused involved in organized sand smuggling arrested by VM Banzara police: Kalluru ACP



“Khammam, Kalluru, May 05 (Indian Chronicle):” Kalluru ACP Vasundhara Yadav stated that three individuals involved in organized illegal activities have been arrested and sent to remand. These accused were allegedly exploiting the Andhra Pradesh government's free sand distribution policy meant for poor people by illegally transporting sand to Telangana and selling it at higher prices, causing significant loss to the Telangana state government's revenue. “She explained that on the 25th of last month, VM Banzara SI Venkatesh along with his staff was conducting vehicle checks at VM Banzara Ring Center. During the inspection, they noticed a tipper lorry (AP39WB0396) coming from the Tiruvuru side. Upon checking, they found it loaded with sand and shifted it to the police station, where a case was registered. “Police then focused on tracing the roots of the illegal sand transport network and arrested the main accused, who had been absconding, on Tuesday and sent them to remand. It was also revealed that a previous case (203/2025 under Section 318(4) BNS) had already been registered against the accused in the same police station involving the same lorry. “The arrested individuals have been identified as:” Pasupuleti Pavan Kumar (27), from Eluru district, Andhra Pradesh (tipper driver) “Vellanki Trinatha Ramakrishna (50), (tipper owner) “Abburu Raghu (33), (middleman) “ACP Vasundhara Yadav said that strict surveillance will continue in the Kalluru division and that police checks will be intensified to prevent any illegal transportation. She warned that those involved in such organized crimes for financial gain will not be spared and that suspect sheets will be opened against them.

Allegations of Manipulation in Population Data – Social Organization Leaders Criticize Government



“Khammam, May 05 (Indian Chronicle):” “Serious concerns are being raised over alleged manipulation of community-wise population data in Telangana. Social organizations have expressed anger, stating that while the population of certain communities is being shown as abnormally increased, others are being reported at the same levels for years, which they call unjust. “Leaders argue that showing the population of the Reddy community—estimated to be around 600,000 to 700,000—as three times higher is unlawful and goes against social justice and constitutional principles. They have demanded that the government provide a clear explanation if such discrepancies exist. “In this context, Jai Bheem Naramalla, founder president of the SC, ST, BC Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Seva Sangham, strongly reacted and challenged Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to present the truth. “He warned that no one remains permanent in power and criticized any attempt to mislead the public by manipulating population figures. He questioned how it is possible for communities that once had populations in the lakhs to suddenly be shown as more than double within a short period.

“He spoke about me... and hugged me. I can never forget that moment”



‘Thimmarajupalli TV’ actor Lathish “It’s known that the film ‘Thimmarajupalli TV’ turned out to be a good success. With this movie, Kiran Abbavaram introduced nearly 50 artists and technicians to the screen. Actor Lathish, who played the villain Siddaiah in the film, earned good recognition. Talking about this first success of his, he shared his happiness. Here’s what he said. “Tell us about your family background? “Mine is an agriculture-based, underprivileged family from Nagari. There were days we even stole salt to eat. My parents and elder brother worked hard to educate us. When I entered films, my brother stopped talking to me. But after watching this movie and my performance in it, he spoke to me. Among those who always stood by me in this journey, my sister Chamundeshwari

and brother-in-law Koteshwara Rao come first. “Tell us about your cinema journey? “I worked in Bengaluru for a few days. I came to Hyderabad in 2017. Since then, I tried to act in films. Everyone said my acting was good. But no one gave me a chance. I worked as an associate director for Mahipal Reddy garu for the film ‘Poster’. Then came a gap due to Corona. During that time, I directed and acted in a short film on YouTube. After that, I worked again in the direction department. “What challenges did you face in this journey? “I faced many hardships while making the short film. At that time, I had to ask my family for money to buy a camera. No one came forward to invest and produce it either. I didn’t have membership in any association. I got that story registered under another director. Even the producer asked me for money. Later, I took training under Dr. Shaik John Bashir garu. “Tell us about your journey at B Studio? “At B Studio, they asked for One Lakh rupees for personal training. I asked dejectedly, “Is acting only for those who have money?” Immediately, seeing my commitment, they gave me training for free without taking a single rupee from me. I performed dozens of plays there. While I was doing those plays, the associate directors of ‘Thimmarajupalli TV’ saw me. They auditioned all of us right there. “How did it feel to act as a villain? “In the past, those who acted as villains later became big heroes. When I was told it was a villain role, all those stars came to my mind. A villain is just as important to a film as the hero. For this movie, I gained weight. I gained a full thirty kilos. I worked really hard to fit the role of Siddaiah. When people who watched the film ask, “Was that really you?”, I feel so happy and content. “Tell us about the appreciation you received from the industry? “After watching the film, Kiran Abbavaram anna appreciated the entire team. Especially, he praised Pradeep anna and me a lot. “You’re so silent outside... how did you appear like that on screen?” he was surprised. “You did wonderfully,” Kiran anna complimented. Naresh Agastya garu also praised me a lot. My Bashir sir too appreciated me greatly. Bashir sir was happy that four of his students acted in the same film. After going to the institute, he spoke about me and hugged me. I can never forget that moment. “What are your current projects and what are you doing now? “I’m working part-time at B Studio. I’m getting calls from many people. I’m listening to a lot of stories. But nothing has been finalized yet. It looks like everything will fall into place soon.

The entire country is leaning towards Modi

“Communists are outdated” “Congress is playing politics with farmers’ lives” “Make the May 10 Secunderabad Parade Grounds meeting a success” — Medak MP M. Raghunandan Rao “Khammam, May 05 (Indian Chronicle):” “BJP national leader and Medak MP M. Raghunandan Rao stated that communists have become irrelevant across the country and called on people in Khammam district to drive away the red flag and raise the saffron flag on Kakatiya soil. “During his visit to Khammam city on Tuesday, he strongly criticized the Congress government in the state, alleging that it is playing with farmers’ lives by not implementing the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. He also personally painted wall posters in the city, urging people to make the massive public meeting—where Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate on May 10 at Secunderabad Parade Grounds—a grand success. “Speaking to the media, he made several remarks on national and state politics, as well as farmers’ issues. He said that wherever elections are held in the country, people are voting for development, trust, and good governance. He criticized parties driven by arrogance, family rule, and personality cults, saying people are rejecting such politics. He pointed to political developments from West Bengal to Tamil Nadu as evidence. “He accused Congress and communist parties of staging ‘drama’ under the INDIA alliance, noting that while they claim unity, they fight each other in Kerala, exposing their lack of real coordination. He added that people are rejecting both parties and cited BJP’s successes under Modi’s leadership in states like Gujarat, West Bengal, and Puducherry as proof. “Raghunandan Rao praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for treating all states equally and leading the country on a path of development without political vendetta. “He strongly criticized the Congress government in Telangana for its treatment of farmers. He said farmers are facing numerous difficulties, highlighting recent fire accidents in which about 200 acres of paddy crop were destroyed, leaving farmers in distress. He argued that if the crop insurance scheme had been



implemented, farmers in Khammam would have benefited, but due to the state government under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy not adopting it, they are suffering losses without compensation. “He advised the Congress government not to play politics with farmers’ lives or the state’s development, emphasizing that states prosper only when farmers are respected. “He called on party workers to focus on bringing the Bharatiya Janata Party to power in Telangana in the upcoming Legislative Assembly elections. He recalled that in 1980, when BJP had only two MPs nationwide, one was elected from Hanumakonda in Telangana, and urged workers to carry forward that spirit. “

He expressed confidence that after victories in other regions, BJP will also rise in Telangana. He urged people of Khammam to reject communist influence and support BJP for change and development. “Finally, he appealed to the public and party workers to attend in large numbers and make the May 10 public meeting at Secunderabad Parade Grounds, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi will speak, a grand success. “Several BJP leaders and workers participated in the event under the leadership of Khammam district BJP president Nelluri Koteswara Rao. “

Ensure Continuous Drinking Water Supply During Summer: District Collector T.S. Divakar



“Khammam, May 5 (Indian Chronicle):” “District Collector T. S. Divakar has directed officials to take advance measures to ensure that no drinking water problems arise during the summer season and that people do not face any inconvenience. “The Collector, along with Additional Collector Dr. P. Sreeja, reviewed the Drinking Water and Summer Action Plan with concerned officials at the Collectorate. “Speaking on the occasion, the Collector emphasized the need for strong coordination at the field level under the supervision of the Additional Collector of local bodies. He instructed officials to remain alert during peak summer and ensure staff availability on the ground. “He advised that officials should not remain confined to offices but must stay in the field, directly understand public issues, and resolve them promptly. He directed MPDOs and MPOs to conduct regular field visits, stressing that responsiveness is crucial in public service. “The Collector clarified that drinking water issues are not the sole responsibility of the Rural Water Supply (RWS) department, but also of Panchayat Secretaries, MPDOs, and MPOs. He warned that some areas may face water shortages in May and instructed officials to make alternative arrangements in advance. “He ordered immediate repair of pipeline leakages and damages, and stated that if pipelines are damaged during road works, the concerned contractor must bear the cost. “Reviewing mandal-wise water conditions, he suggested a phased approach: “First, ensure supply through the Mission Bhagiratha “Then utilize local water sources “If needed, arrange borewells “Finally, supply water through tankers “He also instructed that elevated villages should be



supplied water through tankers if required and that officials must respond immediately to any issues. Continuous monitoring is essential, and sufficient funds are available, which should be used effectively. “He directed that funds released by the state government for drinking water be utilized where needed in coordination with the ZP CEO. Houses without water supply should be identified and regularly monitored. “The Collector also highlighted that street animals and small birds suffer due to water scarcity in summer. He instructed local bodies in villages and municipalities to set up small water pits and ensure water availability for them. “Considering heatwave conditions, he directed that ORS packets be made available at police stations, through ASHA workers, Anganwadi centers, hospitals, and procurement centers. He also asked officials to collect details of sunstroke cases and ensure proper response and availability of ORS. “He suggested coordinating with the Labour Department to conduct awareness programs and advised coaching centers to take precautions. Special awareness should be created to prevent elderly people from sleeping outdoors. Drinking water and ORS should be made available at public places such as markets, bus stands, and railway stations. “The meeting was attended by Municipal Corporation Commissioner Abhishek Agastya, District Medical and Health Officer Dr. Rama Rao, DPO Rambabu, CPO, district agriculture officials, Mission Bhagiratha SE and EE, PH officials, groundwater department officials, municipal commissioners, APDs, MPDOs, MPOs, and other concerned officials.

District Collector T.S. Divakar Inspects EVM Godown



“Khammam, May05 (Indian Chronicle):” “As part of routine monthly inspections, District Collector T. S. Divakar inspected the EVM (Electronic Voting Machine) godown located at the Integrated District Collectorate on Tuesday. He was accompanied by Additional Collector P. Srinivas Reddy. “During the inspection, the Collector examined the seal of the godown room and instructed the security personnel to remain alert at all times. He also directed them to strictly follow duty schedules and maintain punctuality during their shifts. “Later, the District Collector signed the inspection register. “Election department supervisor Raju, Election Deputy Tahsildar Ansari, and other concerned officials were present during the inspection.

Disposal of chicken, mutton, and fish waste auctioned for 15 lakh in the open auction.



“Indian Chronicle Vikarabad (May 5)” “In Tandur Municipality, Mohammed Kaif secured the open auction for disposal of chicken, mutton, and fish waste for ₹15 lakh. “In the open auction held at the municipal office last month on the 7th, the first bidder, Md. Hameed, initially won it for ₹20 lakh but failed to pay the amount due to the municipality. Municipal officials then gave the opportunity to the second bidder, Abdul Rahim, who had bid ₹17.60 lakh. Since he too did not pay within the stipulated deadline, municipal officials declared both as defaulters and canceled that auction. They then conducted a fresh open auction for a period of one year on the 5th of this month. “At the open auction held Monday morning at the municipal commissioner’s office, four people from four agencies applied. Two were declared defaulters and removed from the bidding. The government auction for the remaining two, Mohammed Ejaz and Mohammed Kaif, began at ₹6.60 lakh. “In the competitive bidding, Mohammed Kaif reached ₹15 lakh. With no further scope, Mohammed Ejaz withdrew, and Commissioner Madhusudan Reddy announced that Mohammed Kaif had won it for ₹15 lakh. “Municipal Chairperson Neeraja Bal Reddy, Municipal Commissioner Madhusudan Reddy, Manager Narender Reddy, ward municipal councilors, municipal officials, and others participated in the auction process.

DFO Calls on District Collector, Reviews Forest Initiatives



“Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, May 5: District Forest Officer (DFO) CH. Balamani of Kumuram Bheem Asifabad District paid a courtesy visit to the District Collector on Monday. “During the meeting, various issues related to the Forest Department were discussed. The DFO briefed the Collector on forest conservation measures, implementation of afforestation programmes, and other administrative matters concerning the department.

Free scooties for the disabled – Distribution of smart phones to Anganwadi teachers



“Public Governance – A key step in the 99-day activity of the Pragati Plan” Sanga Reddy, May 05: “State Medical and Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha has made it clear that public welfare is the main goal of the government and that the government is committed to the comprehensive development of all sections of the people.” “As part of the 99-day activity of the Public Governance – Pragati Plan, the program organized by the District Women, Child, Disabled and Elderly Welfare Department on Tuesday at Sri Rama Garden under the Jogipet-Andol Municipality” “State Medical and Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha participated as the chief guest.” “Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the government is committed to further strengthening the Anganwadi system. He said that steps will be taken to construct their own buildings for all Anganwadi centers in the coming days. He advised Anganwadi teachers, supervisors and aayas to carry out their responsibilities effectively. He made it clear that the government will not ignore any negligence or irresponsibility anywhere.” “Similarly, the minister said that the vacant posts of Anganwadi teachers and Aayas will be filled. He assured that the government will always be at the forefront to resolve any problems faced by the people.” “Later, in this program, the minister distributed free scooties to 10 disabled people and smart phones to 286 Anganwadi teachers.” “District Library Chairman Anjaiah, Municipal Chairman, Vice Chairman, Additional Collector Pandu, District Women and Child Welfare Officer Lalita Kumari, CDPOs, Anganwadi supervisors, teachers, disabled people and others participated in this program.

Uppal Congress In-charge Parameshwar Reddy Participates in Sri Vijaya Ganapathi Annual Festival

“UPPAL, MAY 5 (INDIAN CHRONICAL):” Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge, Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, participated in the 25th annual celebrations of Sri Vijaya Ganapathi Temple held at Raghavendra Colony in Beerappa Gadda Division. On this occasion, he performed special puja (ritual prayers) at the temple. “The temple committee members extended a warm welcome to him and honored him with a shawl as a mark of respect.” Among those present at the event were Temple Committee President T.G. Goud, Chari, senior Congress leaders Akiti Aagam Reddy, Division President Rajesh Mudiraj, Mahender Mudiraj, Chaitanya, Amar, Palles Ramesh Goud, Jagadeesh, Jangaiah, Shankar, Satyam, Sonu Goud, Edla Anjaiah, Pittala Sailu, Ramu Goud, Faheem, Vamshi, and local residents of the colony.



Former Medchal–Malkajgiri District Youth Congress President Kandi Shravan Reddy inspects drain line works in Sai Chitra Nagar



“UPPAL, MAY 5 (INDIAN CHRONICAL):” Acting on the instructions of Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, former Medchal–Malkajgiri District Youth Congress President Kandi Shravan Reddy visited various stalls set up by the Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Technology departments, gaining insights into modern farming methods, agricultural machinery and government welfare schemes. “Addressing the gathering, the minister said the government has been implementing several significant initiatives for the welfare of farmers and agricultural development. He stated that, as promised, the government has implemented farm loan waivers up to ₹2 lakh, announced a support price along with a ₹500 bonus for fine varieties of paddy, is extending ₹12,000 per acre under the Rythu Bharosa scheme, and has launched the ‘Bhu Bharati’ programme to resolve long-pending land issues. He emphasized that the Congress government has always stood by the farming community.” The minister informed that during the farmers’ fair, scheduled to continue on May 5, 6 and 7, agricultural machinery will be provided to farmers at subsidized rates and urged them to make the best use of this opportunity. He also distributed certificates to officials who conducted soil testing. “Speaking on the occasion, KR Nagaraju, MLA, said that the welfare schemes being implemented by the government are strengthening the rural economy. Programmes such as Rythu Bharosa, loan waivers and support prices are directly benefiting farmers, he

concerned officials. With the monsoon season approaching, he urged officials to expedite the nala (drain) works and ensure that residents do not face any inconvenience.” He also stressed that the construction should be completed at the earliest to avoid problems for commuters and local residents. Habsiguda Division President Gannaram Vijay Kumar, along with Dharma Nayak, Kishan Nayak, Lakshma Reddy, Murali Mudiraj, Malu Nayak, Gundu Rajanna, Vasu Nayak, Suman Nayak, Sai Kiran, Shiva, and others participated in the program.

Government Committed to Farmers’ Welfare: Minister Ponguleti — MLA KR Nagaraju

“Hanumakonda, May 5 (Indian Chronicle) : Stating that the government is implementing several key schemes for the development of farmers, Revenue, Housing and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy said that farmers’ welfare remains a top priority. “The State-level Mega Farmers’ Fair was grandly inaugurated on Tuesday at the Arts and Science College grounds in Hanumakonda as part of the Praja Palana–Pragathi Pranaliika Rythu Varotsavulu. The programme was formally launched by Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, who attended as the chief guest. The ministers visited various stalls set up by the Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Technology departments, gaining insights into modern farming methods, agricultural machinery and government welfare schemes. “Addressing the gathering, the minister said the government has been implementing several significant initiatives for the welfare of farmers and agricultural development. He stated that, as promised, the government has implemented farm loan waivers up to ₹2 lakh, announced a support price along with a ₹500 bonus for fine varieties of paddy, is extending ₹12,000 per acre under the Rythu Bharosa scheme, and has launched the ‘Bhu Bharati’ programme to resolve long-pending land issues. He emphasized that the Congress government has always stood by the farming community.” The minister informed that during the farmers’ fair, scheduled to continue on May 5, 6 and 7, agricultural machinery will be provided to farmers at subsidized rates and urged them to make the best use of this opportunity. He also distributed certificates to officials who conducted soil testing. “Speaking on the occasion, KR Nagaraju, MLA, said that the welfare schemes being implemented by the government are strengthening the rural economy. Programmes such as Rythu Bharosa, loan waivers and support prices are directly benefiting farmers, he



noted. “He appealed to farmers to adopt modern agricultural practices to enhance productivity and to utilize the subsidized machinery and technological support provided by the government. He said farmers’ fairs play a vital role in creating awareness about new innovations and practices.

“Farmers’ development is the State’s development,” the MLA asserted. “Among those present were Ministers Danasari Anasuya Seethakka and Konda Surekha; Warangal MP Kadiyam Kavya; MLAs Kadiyam Srihari, Naini Rajender Reddy, Gandra Satyanarayana, Revuri Prakash Reddy; Mayor Gundu Sudharani; KUDA Chairman Inugala Venkatram Reddy; Agriculture Principal Secretary Surendra Mohan; Horticulture Secretary Yasmin Basha; District Collectors Satya Sharada and Chahat Bajpai of Warangal and Hanumakonda districts; public representatives, officials and a large number of farmers.

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Participates in 25th Anniversary Celebrations of Sri Vijaya Ganapathi Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple



“UPPAL, MAY 5 (INDIAN CHRONICAL):” The 25th annual celebrations of Sri Vijaya Ganapathi Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple, located in Rajarajeshwara Nagar Colony under Chiluka Nagar Division, were conducted with great devotion and grandeur. The program was held under the blessings of Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Hampi Virupaksha Vidyaranya Peetham, Sri Sri Sri Vidhyaranya Swamy, and under the guidance of Brahmasri Jakkri Krishnavadhani, a of over a thousand temples and a Vedic scholar associated with Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the event as the chief guest. He offered special prayers to the deities and received blessings. “On this occasion, the temple premises were beautifully decorated with flowers. From early morning, rituals such as Ganapathi

Homam, Abhishekam of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy, and special archana were performed amidst Vedic chanting by priests. Later, sacred offerings (theertha prasadam) were distributed to devotees. “Speaking at the event, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said, “Temples are symbols of our culture and traditions. Such annual celebrations help promote spiritual awareness among people. They also play a key role in strengthening unity and harmony in society.” He assured that he would always extend support for the development of the temple.”

BRS party leaders Praveen Mudiraj, Gudi Madhusudhan Reddy, former BRS president Palles Nursing Rao, Mahankali Narasimha, Kondal Reddy, Sathyagoud, along with temple committee members and others, participated in the program.

Free Mega Medical Camp at Old Age Home

– Corporates Must Step Forward for Social Service: Dr.K.Anita Reddy “Hanumakonda, May 5 (Indian Chronicle) : Every corporate organization should extend free services to the poor and society under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), said Dr. Anita Reddy, Chairperson of Anurag Society and Member of the Senior Citizens Tribunal Court. “A free mega medical camp was organized on Tuesday at Lord Old Age Home (Shelter Home for the Shelterless) located on Palivelpula Road, Bheemaram, under the aegis of Anurag Helping Society and Medicover Hospitals, Warangal. More than 100 elderly people and destitutes were provided with free medical services during the camp. “As part of the camp, BP, ECG, blood sugar, cardiac and joint pain tests were conducted. Free OP coupon cards, which can be utilized at Medicover Hospitals, Warangal, were also distributed to the needy. “Dr. Anita Reddy attended the program as the chief guest, inaugurated the camp, and appreciated the services being rendered to the elderly. Speaking on the occasion, she emphasized that corporates must actively participate in serving society through CSR initiatives. She praised the management of Medicover Hospitals for coming forward to provide medical services to orphaned elderly people and described it as an inspiration to others. “Dr. Ratna Karthik Reddy, Consultant Orthopedic and Joint Replacement Surgeon, along with the medical team, participated in the camp and conducted medical



examinations. “Doctors from Medicover Hospitals advised the elderly to take proper care of their health and make effective use of such medical camps. They assured that more such free medical camps would be organized in both rural and urban areas in the future to reach out to the elderly. “The medical team and staff of Medicover Hospitals, organizers of Lord Old Age Home Nagarani Nareish and Mamata, and a large number of local residents participated in the program.

Selfless Actions Lead to Peace and Contentment: Vinay Guruji

“ Indian chronicle, Secunderabad, May 05: “Vinay Guruji, founder of the Wisdom Foundation, stated that selfless actions lead to insecurity and fear, while selfless actions bring peace and satisfaction. “A three-day ‘Gita Jnana Yajna’ discourse program held at the NTPC Seminar Hall in Kavadiiguda concluded successfully. On this occasion, he explained the life lessons from verses 13 to 53 of the second chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. “He elaborated in English on the philosophy of karma as taught by Lord Krishna, the actions performed by humans in daily life, and the results they yield. He advised everyone to follow the path of righteousness and stated that self-realization is the ultimate goal of life. He emphasized living a life of service to fellow human beings. “He further stressed that one should not neglect their duties and should perform actions without expecting results. “NTPC Southern Region Executive Director Ajay Sharma, Chief General Manager (HR) Panigrahi, and other officials attended the program. Retired SP Suresh



Reddy felicitated Vinay Guruji. Usha Kaundinya delivered the commentary, and Wisdom Foundation representative Suresh proposed the vote of thanks.

Farmers' Welfare is the Government's Primary Objective

- MP Kadiyam Kavya at the Mega Farmers' Fair “Hanamkonda, May 5 (Indian Chronicle) : Warangal Member of Parliament, Dr. Kadiyam Kavya, affirmed that the Congress-led ‘Praja Government’ (People’s Government) is fully committed to the welfare of farmers. “On Tuesday, as part of the ‘Praja Palana – Pragathi Pranaliika’ (People’s Administration – Progress Plan) initiatives, she participated in a state-level ‘Mega Farmers’ Fair’ organized at the Arts College grounds in Subedari, Hanamkonda. She attended the event alongside Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Konda Surekha, and Danasari Anasuya (Seethakka). “Accompanied by the ministers, the MP visited various stalls set up by the Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, and Technology departments, where she interacted with the farmers present. She reviewed the information being provided by officials regarding modern farming methods, new technologies, and farmer welfare schemes. “Addressing the gathering, Dr. Kavya stated that this state-level ‘Mega Farmers’ Fair’ is a pivotal initiative designed to contribute to the development and progress of farmers. She noted that, under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the Congress government is moving forward with farmers’ welfare as its primary objective. “She emphasized that the government is working with utmost sincerity to ensure that farmers—who feed the nation—do not face any difficulties. She further explained that all welfare schemes, including the farm loan waiver, are being implemented without any interruptions. Furthermore, she specifically highlighted that financial security is being provided to farmers through schemes such as ‘Rythu Bharosa’ and ‘Rythu Bima’. Dr. Kavya stated that, in alignment with the specific needs of farmers, agricultural implements are being supplied at a 50 percent subsidy. She ad-



vised farmers to practice crop diversification—rather than relying solely on a single crop—in order to enhance their income.

She revealed that the government is placing special emphasis on women’s empowerment within the agricultural sector and on promoting the cultivation of fine-variety paddy. She urged farmers to fully utilize the benefits available through various government schemes. Participants in this program included Mayor Gundu Sudharani, MLC Sarayya, MLAs Kadiyam Srihari, Nayini Rajender Reddy, K.R. Nagaraju, and Revuri Prakash Reddy, KUDA Chairman Inugala Venkatram Reddy, Principal Secretary of Agriculture Surendra Mohan, Secretary of Horticulture Yasmin Basha, the Collectors of Warangal and Hanamkonda districts, public representatives, officials, and farmers.

focus on the quality, speed, and timely completion of AMRUT 2.0 works. :



“““ Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Khimya Nayak“““Wanaparthi correspondent May 5, (Indian Chronicle):“““ focus on the quality, speed, and timely completion of AMRUT 2.0 works. On Tuesday, Khimya Nayak inspected the ongoing AMRUT 2.0 works in Wanaparthi and Kothakota municipalities and reviewed the progress of development activities being carried out there.He



instructed officials to ensure that the works are completed quickly in a manner that benefits the public, while maintaining high standards of quality and adherence to timelines.He further emphasized that there should be no negligence in the execution of works and called for increased supervision at every stage.Municipality Chairperson Madhavi, Commissioner Venkateshwarlu, and others were present on the occasion.

Open gyms inaugurated in Karimnagar

MoS Bandi Sanjay Kumar says initiative aligns with ‘Fit India’; more facilities planned.



KARIMNAGAR May 5 (Correspondent): Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Sunday inaugurated two open gyms set up with corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds in different parts of the city, emphasising the need to prioritise public health and physi-

cal fitness.The facilities, funded by National Aluminium Company Limited, were inaugurated in Kharkhanagadda (53rd Division) and Durshed (4th Division) under the limits of the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation. Mayor Kolagani Srinivas, Deputy Mayor Yadagiri Sunil Rao, and local corporators were present.

Inspecting the equipment installed at the facilities, Mr. Sanjay said the initiative was in line with the ‘Fit India’ campaign advocated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He urged citizens, particularly the youth, to incorporate physical exercise into their daily routine and work towards improving overall well-being.Stating that the open gyms would be accessible to the public free of cost, the Minister called upon residents to make effective use of the infrastructure. He added that nearly 30 more such facilities were being developed across the city and would be made operational shortly.Highlighting ongoing urban development efforts, he said additional public amenities would be created to enhance the quality of life in the city.Several corporators, BJP leaders, party workers, and residents participated in the programme.

Khammam Police Commissioner Calls for Peaceful Bakrid Celebrations



“Khammam, May 05 (Indian Chronicle):““Khammam Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt has urged people to celebrate the upcoming Bakrid (Eid-ul-Adha) festival with communal harmony and mutual respect.“Ahead of the festival, a coordination meeting was held on Tuesday at the Police Commissioner’s Office with Muslim religious leaders, mosque committee members, and Qureshi representatives to ensure peaceful celebrations.“Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner advised that cow slaughter should be avoided and only permitted animals should be sacrificed,

strictly following legal guidelines.“He stated that 24-hour surveillance has been set up at inter-state check posts to prevent illegal transportation of cattle. It is mandatory to carry proper documentation while transporting animals, he added.“Special police security arrangements and continuous monitoring will be in place at prayer sites and mosques. The Commissioner also warned the public not to believe or spread provocative content or rumors on social media, stating that strict action will be taken against those responsible.“Citizens were requested to immediately report any suspicious persons or activities by dialing 100 or informing local police. Religious leaders were also asked to ensure that animal waste after sacrifice is not disposed of in public places, and to coordinate with municipal authorities for proper disposal.“He assured that strict security measures are in place across the district to prevent any untoward incidents. In case of any issues, people can contact the Command Control Cell at 8712659111, and necessary legal action will be taken.“ACP Ramanamurthy, Mahesh, CI Karunakar, Mohan Babu, Balakrishna, and SI Maulana were among the officials who attended the meeting.

Paddy Procurement Must Be Swift and Transparent: Additional Collector Vinod Kumar



““Wanaparthi correspondent May 5 (Indian Chronicle):““ Additional Collector (Revenue) Vinod Kumar has instructed officials to ensure that paddy brought by farmers to procurement centers is immediately transported to the allotted rice mills after weighing. On Tuesday, Vinod

Kumar visited several paddy procurement centers to review the ongoing procurement process. He inspected the Chitaly market yard in Wanaparthi mandal and centers located in Vadde Vata, Sankireddypalli, and Mummalapalle villages under Kothakota mandal.During his visit, he closely examined the procurement operations and reviewed the facilities being provided to farmers. He also checked records and advised officials on maintaining proper documentation.The Additional Collector directed officials to create awareness among farmers about using paddy cleaners installed at the centers to ensure the grain is free from husk, straw, and mud. He noted that in many places, paddy contains excessive impurities, which gives millers an opportunity to make deductions. Clean grain without impurities will help farmers avoid such losses, he said.He emphasized that procurement should be conducted in a transparent and efficient manner. Officials were instructed to ensure that farmers do not face any inconvenience. Moisture levels should be checked promptly, and procurement should be completed immediately after weighing. He also stressed the need for quick tab entry processes to avoid delays in payments and ensure timely disbursement to farmers.

Congress seeks action against KTR over remarks on CM

Complaint lodged with police alleging defamatory statements.

KARIMNAGAR May 5 (Correspondent): The Karimnagar City Congress on Monday lodged a complaint with the Two Town police seeking action against BRS leader K.T. Rama Rao for his alleged remarks against Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.In a representation submitted to the Circle Inspector, Corporation Congress president and 26th division corporator Vaidyula Anjan Kumar alleged that Mr. Rama Rao, at a press conference held here on May 4, made statements linking the Chief Minister to a recent robbery at a jewellery showroom in the town.

Describing the remarks as “baseless,” Mr. Anjan Kumar said they were intended to defame the Chief Minister and could erode public confidence in the government and the police.He urged the police to take action under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and conduct an inquiry into the matter.Stating that political criticism should remain within “acceptable limits,” he said personal allegations without evidence were not in keeping with democratic norms.



Shift to Oil Palm and Diversified Crops for Better Income, Farmers Told: Collector K. Haritha

“Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, May 5: District Collector K. Haritha has urged eligible farmers in the district to come forward for oil palm cultivation and directed officials to create awareness among farmers in this regard.“The Collector made these remarks during a constituency-level meeting held under the Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika 99-day programme as part of “Farmers’ Week” at the Integrated Collectorate conference hall on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by Additional Collector (Revenue) M. David, District Library Chairman Kande Anil, Agricultural Market Committee Chairpersons Irukulla Manga and Kudmeta Vishwanath, District Horticulture Officer Nadeem, and District Agriculture Officer Venkati, among others.“Speaking on the occasion, the Collector stated that the district has favourable climatic conditions for oil palm cultivation. Farmers with access to irrigation facilities were encouraged to adopt oil palm farming, noting that the government is also providing subsidies.“She explained that farmers can grow intercrops during the first four years of oil palm cultivation, enabling them to earn additional income. The Collector highlighted that oil palm farming can yield higher profits and is less prone to damage from pests, cattle, and monkeys.“Emphasizing crop diversification, she advised farmers to move beyond traditional crops such as cotton and paddy and explore alternative crops, including vegetables, which can generate better returns. She noted



that India currently imports edible oils from other countries, and increased oil palm cultivation could help ensure affordable cooking oil availability domestically.“The Collector also encouraged farmers to grow sufficient food and vegetables for their own families to promote better health and reduce the risk of illness. She urged farmers to actively participate in oil palm cultivation and to follow the guidance and suggestions provided by officials.“Later, farmers who have successfully adopted alternative cropping methods and set an example were felicitated with shawls.“Farmers and officials from various departments participated in the programme.

No Delay in Issuing Accreditations: WJI Urges Khammam Collector

““Khammam, May 05 (Indian Chronicle):““Representatives of the Working Journalists of India (WJI), Khammam district unit, have urged District Collector T.S. Diwakar to complete the process of issuing new accreditation cards without any delay.“On Tuesday, a delegation met the Collector in his chamber at the Khammam Collectorate. The delegation included State Secretary Nara Subramanyeswara Rao (N.S. Rao), District Convener Gantela Anand, Co-conveners M.A. Ansar Pasha and Amarani Ramakrishna, Khammam Assembly Constituency Convener K. Kalyan Chakravarthy, and district leaders Jabishetty Kutumba Rao and Enigandla Srinivasa Rao, among others.“They requested the Collector to speed up the issuance process so that journalists who have been waiting for accreditation cards for several years do not face further disappointment. They also appealed to ensure justice for all working journalists.“Responding to the request,



Collector T.S. Diwakar assured that the process would be completed smoothly, even if it takes a couple of extra days. He stated that there is no need for concern and promised that all eligible journalists will receive fair consideration.

Census 2027: Officials Urged to Perform Duties with Accuracy and Integrity



“Khammam ,Madhira May 05 (Indian Chronicle):““Tahsildar Rambabu has instructed all supervisors and enumerators involved in the Census 2027 to carry out their responsibilities with accuracy, impartiality, and honesty.“A 12-day training program for Census 2027 supervisors and enumerators was conducted in four batches at the local Girls High School in Madhira Rural and Madhira Municipality. Addressing participants at the valedictory session of the final batch, the Tahsildar emphasized the importance of maintaining professionalism during fieldwork. He advised officials to wear identification cards at all times, behave courteously, and clearly explain the purpose and significance of the census to respondents.“He assured that the information collected would remain confidential and stressed that there should be no negligence in performing census duties. He explained that Census 2027 will be conducted in two phases: the first phase, involving house listing and housing census, will take place from May 11 to June 10, while the second phase, the population enumeration, will be conducted in February 2027. He also noted that self-enumeration can be done until May 10.“Enumerators were instructed to cover all assigned house listing blocks completely, ensuring no building is missed or counted twice, and to conduct final reviews. In cases where households have completed self-enumeration, officials should verify the ID, check details, and make corrections if necessary.“Madhira Municipal Commissioner Sampath Kumar highlighted that each enumerator should prepare a house listing block map, num-

bering structures from northwest to southeast, and record the estimated number of buildings and households. He advised regular syncing of data through the mobile app and instructed supervisors to verify block boundaries, monitor enumerators’ progress, and ensure timely data synchronization.“It was also stated that data collection will be done digitally using the Census 2027 HLO mobile app. ASO Sai mentioned that the first phase will include only 34 questions, and respondents are not required to show any documents—providing truthful answers is sufficient.“Senior Assistant Nagalakshmi from Madhira Municipality advised enumerators to contact officials in case of any field issues and encouraged them to complete the house listing and housing census efficiently.

“District Field Trainers B. Gnaneshwara Chary and Jalla Viswanatham conducted sessions explaining the roles, responsibilities, legal provisions, rights, building numbering, preparation of layout maps, and guidelines for filling house listing forms. Role-play sessions were also conducted for better understanding.“Field Technician Kiran provided detailed guidance on using the mobile app, including installation and troubleshooting, and asked participants to reach out in case of technical issues.“A total of 140 participants attended the 12-day training program. At the end of the session, Tahsildar Rambabu and Municipal Commissioner Sampath Kumar distributed Census 2027 kits, order copies, and identity cards to the trainees.

Two Sheep Die Due to Electric Shock in Nelakondapalli

“Khammam ,Nelakondapalli May 05 (Indian Chronicle):““An incident of two sheep dying due to an electric shock occurred in Nelakondapalli mandal of Khammam district.“According to the victim’s account, a shepherd named Nasarla Venkatesh from Rajeswarapuram village in Nelakondapalli mandal had taken his sheep out for grazing on Tuesday. Unfortunately, two sheep came into contact with a live electric source and died on the spot due to electrocution.

The shepherd narrowly escaped the incident.“Local Sarpanch Danda Rangaiah visited the site and inspected the deceased sheep. He urged the government to provide financial assistance to the affected farmer.



Ahmedabad’s newly elected Congress corporator booked for filing ‘forged’ school documents during nomination



GNS News Agency, May 5

Ahmedabad's newly elected Congress corporator booked for filing 'forged' school documents during nominationThe FIR was filed on the basis of a complaint by Ashokkumar Kantilal Patel (68), the Managing Trustee of Bhavna Education Trust, which runs the Krushnanagar Vidyavihar High School. (Image generated using Google Gemini)Congress leader Kalpana Suraj Navlekar, elected as Corporator to the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) from the Kubernagar ward, was on Monday night booked on allegations of forgery and using forged documents as genuine, after it was claimed that she had, in her candidature affidavit, presented the School Leaving Certifi-

CM Siddaramaiah alleges criminal conspiracy after BJP snatches Sringeri seat in controversial recount



GNS News Agency, May 5

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Tuesday accused the BJP of a “criminal conspiracy” to steal votes following a controversial recount in the Sringeri Assembly constituency. He said the Congress will legally challenge the returning officer’s (RO) decision to declare BJP’s D N Jeevaraj the winner.The row erupted Sunday after 255 postal ballots previously polled for Congress’s T D Rajegowda were declared invalid during a court-ordered recount. This shift handed Jeevaraj a 52-vote lead, effectively erasing the 201-vote victory secured by the Congress

Akasa Air booked in Ahmedabad after Rs 2.5 crore gold parcel vanishes in transit

GNS News Agency, May 5

The Airport police in Gujarat’s Ahmedabad registered a First Information Report (FIR) against Akasa Air with regard to a missing consignment worth Rs 2.5 crore that never reached Bengaluru. The FIR was registered based on a complaint by Balveersingh Richpalsingh Rathod, security manager at Sequel Logistics.

“We have checked the CCTV footage here at Ahmedabad airport and found that the parcel was loaded onto the aircraft, but the recipients did not get it in Bengaluru. It could be someone took it there. We are taking statements of officials involved in the transport and handling of the parcel and have sent a team to Bengaluru to investigate as well,” A D Chavda, Inspector, Airport Police, said.Rathod stated that his company routinely sends Titan Limited’s gold and silver consignments through Akasa Air and has built a relationship of trust over time.According to the complaint, the firm received seven parcels from a jeweller, intended for Titan Ltd, on April 17. One parcel, weighing 13 kg and containing 2.107 kg of gold worth Rs 2.58 crore, went miss-

‘Crush him to death’: Wife of 65-year-old accused in Pune minor rape-murder case demands ‘cruel’ punishment

GNS News Agency, May 5

As public outrage continues to swell over the rape and murder of a three-year-old girl in the Pune district of Maharashtra, the family of the 65-year-old accused has come forward to disown him, demanding the most “stringent and cruel” punishment for his actions. The wife and son of the accused spoke to reporters in Pune Tuesday, stating that they have had no contact with him for a decade and want nothing to do with him. The wife said the standard legal punishment would not be sufficient to reflect the gravity of the crime.“He should be crushed to death at the same spot where he killed that child,” she said.“I will not attend his funeral, and no one should even come to inform me about it. We have not been in contact with him for 10 years. I don’t want to see his face. He should not just be hanged; he should be burnt alive. Still, it won’t cool down my raging soul.She added that the family now faces immense public ignominy due to his “inhuman act.”

Echoing his mother’s sentiments, the accused’s son also expressed his shame and shock. “I feel ashamed to call him my father. He has committed an inhuman act and deserves to be killed in the same manner in which he killed that toddler,” the son said.“That little girl was like my niece. She should get justice. I have 11 nieces and nephews of my own. I am deeply pained and shocked.”

“We live in the land of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, where we must protect our women and girls. The wrong-doer should be punished severely,” he added.The accused

cate of an institute, where she had never been a student.

Navlekar had won the seat with over 15,000 votes in the recently concluded local body polls and is among the 32 Congress corporators in a body of 192, the rest of the seats going to BJP. The FIR was filed on the basis of a complaint by Ashokkumar Kantilal Patel (68), the Managing Trustee of Bhavna Education Trust, which runs the Krushnanagar Vidyavihar High School.The FIR stated that the school had received a letter from the district education officer on the subject that an appellant named Chirag Pravinchandra Shah had on April 24, alleged that the Kalpana Suraj Navlekar, had attached a false Leaving Certificate(LC) to her election affidavit, and this, two officers had been assigned to carry out a preliminary inquiry of the same.The FIR stated, “When the two officers cross checked the GR number and the LC number against the school records, they found that the GR number and LC number were assigned to two different persons, none of whom were Kalpana Suraj Navlekar. There were also allegedly no records of her having left the school on June 27, 1988.”The Managing Trustee then filed the complaint. Navlekar was booked under sections 336(2) and 340(2) of the BNS at Krushnanagar police station.Police Inspector VH Joshi said, “We are currently collecting and studying the documents involved in the case. Once that is completed, we will send notices for the related persons to come and give their statements.”

in the 2023 Assembly elections.

Addressing a press conference, Siddaramaiah said he suspected that the postal ballots were tampered with long after the 2023 counting process was completed. He accused the BJP of conspiring with election staff who transported the trunk containing the ballots to tamper with the votes.Noting that the votes declared invalid two days ago were counted as valid in 2023, he said all 12 candidates or their agents signed off validating these votes. “The BJP should have raised an objection then, but it didn’t,” he said.“Due to the discovery of extra marks on the postal ballots, which were absent in 2023, the returning officer should have conducted a forensic analysis of these ballot papers before announcing the results,” he added.Siddaramaiah said that a central observer present during the recount submitted a report to the Election Commission, which highlighted a “serious criminal conspiracy.”Since the recounting was conducted based on court directives, the returning officer should have presented the results to the court for its decision and guidance, he said. Instead, the results were announced in haste, he alleged.“Our allegation is that it was declared to support the BJP. During the counting, which should be free and fair like the polls, all ethics were disregarded” he said.



ing. The consignment was handed over to the airline at 2.15 am on April 18 at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, with a receipt issued at the time.The Akasa Air flight reached Bengaluru, where the receiving team from a courier service was handed only six of the seven parcels. Despite follow-ups with the airline, the missing parcel remained untraceable, prompting the complaint.



The wife and son of the accused spoke to reporters in Pune Tuesday, stating that they have had no contact with him for a decade and want nothing to do with him. The wife said the standard legal punishment would not be sufficient to reflect the gravity of the crime.

is now in the custody of the Pune Rural police for the alleged kidnapping, rape, and murder of the girl on May 1. The Maharashtra government has formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Pune Rural police, comprising six officers led by a senior woman inspector, to probe the case.

Record Assembly bypoll victory under her belt, Suntera Pawar now faces challenges in ‘stabilising’ NCP



GNS News Agency, May 5

Three months after being sworn in as Maharashtra’s Deputy Chief Minister following the untimely death of her husband Ajit Pawar in an air crash, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sunetra Pawar faces the formidable challenge of stabilising her party and executing an internal organisational reshuffle. The task requires her to assert control while also not rubbing entrenched senior leaders the wrong way.On Monday, Sunetra registered a record victory in the Baramati Assembly bypoll, winning by a margin of around 2.18 lakh votes. Yet, her initial months in office have been anything but smooth in terms of organisational cohesion. From writing to the Election Commission (EC) to disregard party correspondence submitted before she assumed charge, to backing an unexpected candidate for the council elections, her decisions have been marked by unpredictability, unsettling many within the NCP.

Ajit was known for his accessibility to party workers and his firm grip over the bureaucracy — qualities that helped consolidate his authority. Sunetra, so far, has not demonstrated either attribute. While she has begun asserting her authority within the party structure, translating that influence into governance remains a key test in the months ahead.

Sunetra was sworn in as the state’s first woman Deputy CM on January 31, three days after Ajit’s death. Her appointment came amid ongoing tensions between factions of the NCP and the NCP (SP) over a possible merger — talks that had been initiated by her late husband.Complicating matters is the growing influence of her son, Rajiya Sabha MP Parth Pawar, who is increasingly seen as a power centre within the party. Her reliance on Parth and her younger son Jay for organisational decisions has caused discomfort among senior leaders, many of whom view the Pawar scions as politically inexperienced.The unease was evident during the Baramati bypoll. Senior leaders and ministers had advised approaching the Congress to secure an unopposed election. However, Parth’s remarks against the Congress prompted the

party to field a candidate instead. The development forced top leaders, including Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Sunetra herself, to intervene and appeal to the Congress leadership to withdraw.

Early signs of internal discord also emerged following Sunetra’s letter to the EC. She requested that any correspondence submitted between January 28 — the day of Ajit’s death — and February 26, when she formally took over as party president, be deemed invalid. The move raised concerns among senior leaders, including working president Praful Patel and state unit chief Sunil Tatkar, who were reportedly taken aback. Since then, they have urged her to consult them before making key organisational decisions.Parth’s reported veto over the party’s council poll candidate further underscored his growing role in decision-making. Sources indicate that a broader organisational overhaul is in the works, with Parth expected to play a central role in shaping the party’s future direction.

Beyond internal dynamics, the circumstances surrounding Ajit’s death continue to cast a shadow. Sunetra’s limited public response to the incident has not gone down well with sections of the party, particularly as NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar has been vocal in demanding a thorough probe. Whether she pushes for a deeper investigation remains to be seen and could become another test of her leadership.Her position within the state government also appears constrained. Three months into her tenure, the NCP has been unable to secure a major portfolio for her. The finance department, previously held by Ajit, remains with the CM. Sunetra currently oversees Excise, Minority Affairs, and Sports and Youth Welfare.Recent controversies have added to the party’s challenges. Fadnavis had to intervene and ask state women’s commission chief and NCP leader Rupali Chakankar to resign following allegations linked to an allegedly fraudulent godman. The episode was seen as an embarrassment for the NCP, which failed to act promptly. Additionally, two party ministers have already resigned amid controversies, while others, including Narhari Zirwal and Hasan Mushrif, continue to face scrutiny.Meanwhile, talks of a merger between the two NCP factions have been postponed indefinitely. The party now faces the dual challenge of maintaining internal stability while preparing for the 2029 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. Unlike its allies — the BJP and Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena — which are actively expanding their base by inducting new leaders, the NCP appears preoccupied with internal issues.For Sunetra, the road ahead is complex. She must not only consolidate her leadership within the party but also establish credibility in governance. With organisational tensions simmering and political rivals strengthening their position, her ability to navigate these challenges will determine the NCP’s trajectory in the coming years.

Mann and Chadha take AAP war to Rashtrapati Bhawan as allegations and threats fly

The internal crisis within the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) escalated into a full-blown constitutional confrontation Tuesday, as Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and rebel Rajiya Sabha MPs under Raghav Chadha separately approached President Droupadi Murmu, seeking action against each other.The standoff follows a dramatic split in the party, with a group of seven AAP MPs breaking away and aligning with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) last month, triggering a legal and political battle over defection, legitimacy, and control.

Chadha, along with three other MPs, Rajinder Gupta, Ashok Mittal and Sandeep Pathak, met Murmu and sought protection under the Constitution against “vendetta” being unleashed on them for switching over.On the other hand, Mann said he told Murmu that there should be an amendment in the Constitution to allow people to exercise the right to recall their elected representatives. He also said the AAP had moved court against these defections.Accompanied by 90 MLAs who waited outside Rashtrapati Bhavan as a show of strength, Mann said he met the President to tell her that the defection of seven MPs to the BJP was a “murder of democracy.”“Seven MPs broke away at will and said they became a different party. This is unconstitutional. How can they just walk over? The party should either pass a resolution stating that two-thirds of MPs have decided to join another party. What they have done is a mockery. In Punjab, the BJP now has two MLAs and six Rajiya Sabha members. Is this not a mockery of the Constitution?” he asked.

“She said she will speak to experts on the Constitution and she will come out with a solution. I told her that they are trying to change the Constitution. They scare other political parties by using ED, CBI, and other agencies,” Mann told reporters after meeting Murmu.He said the rebel MPs should have resigned before defecting and that the AAP would have chosen seven other members.“They should have been elected from the new party. Or there should be an option of recall. There should be an amendment to the Constitution. Already, many amendments have taken place. All our MLAs are with me. They were elected by the people. The MLAs, in turn, elected Rajiya Sabha members. The mandate of the people was with AAP. People of Punjab do not like traitors.”

Reacting to the rebel MPs’ allegations of vendetta being unleashed on them by the Punjab Government, Mann said, “If they have gone to the BJP, that does not mean they cannot be booked. They do not have a security shield. I told the President that the BJP-led Centre keeps inducting tainted and rebel leaders of other parties, and then cases are withdrawn.”“But this will not happen in Punjab. If we get a report of any misuse of power, then the Punjab Police will book them. If they have gone to the BJP, that does not mean they cannot be booked. They do not have an umbrella. They can hide anywhere, including other states, but not in Punjab. I was hearing him (Chadha) say they have police from 21 states. Are they trying to threaten us? Punjabis do not tolerate this.”



They are standing like a rock. I told Madam that they are standing outside. She said I am their representative and this letter has their signatures. She said this would suffice.”On his part, Chadha said he told the President that Punjab had unleashed vendetta on them after they switched over following a democratic process. “We made use of a Constitutional process. Then why are we being targeted? Sandeep Pathak is booked in two cases by the Punjab Police, the Pollution Board raided Rajinder Gupta, and I may be the next in line to be booked.”

“But at the same time, I want to tell the AAP government in Punjab that they are ruling only one state and have the police of only one state. The BJP is ruling 21 states and has the police of 21 states.”He said the President assured them that they would get protection from her as well as the Constitution.“The CM has the right to come here. But I want to say the way government machinery is being misused, it is unconstitutional. The business community is hurt. The way the Pollution Control Board conducted a raid on Gupta’s factory premises and issued him a notice has hurt the businessmen. Why would they stay put in Punjab amid this kind of environment?” Chadha asked.Chadha said several agencies were hired by misusing the funds of the Punjab Government to unleash social media terror on them. “There are agencies which are targeting us, our families. I had already said the AAP has a toxic environment. Those who go to Rajghat and take shelter under Mahatma Gandhi misuse the Punjab government machinery.”

Shilpa Shirodkar shares 90s throwback with Madhuri Dixit

Mumbai: Actress Shilpa Shirodkar used social media to rewind the clock and relive some precious moments from the 90s. Taking to her official Instagram handle, Shilpa dropped a couple of photographs of herself attending a live show in Indore. The pictures had Shilpa posing with the ‘Dhak Dhak’ girl, Madhuri Dixit. “Back in the 90s for a live show in Indore! #GoodOldDays (sic),” Shilpa penned on the photo-sharing app.

In one of the photos, both Shilpa and Madhuri are posing with bouquets in their hands. In the other one, the two are seen sharing a warm laugh. The ‘Bigg Boss 18’ contestant also dropped a couple of solo shots of herself from the event.

For those who do not know, Shilpa and Madhuri have shared screen space in multiple movies such as “Kishen Kanhaiya” (1990), “Mrityudand” (1997), and “Gaja Gamiini” (2000). Talking about Shilpa’s professional commitments, she will soon be seen in the forthcoming web series “Shankara The Revolutionary Man”.

Aditya Anand, accused in Apr 13 Noida workers’ protest, is now linked to Manesar violence of 4 days before



GNS News Agency, May 5

Aditya Anand, one of the accused in the April 13 workers’ protest in Noida, is to be produced before a court in Gurgaon on May 6 in relation to an FIR registered in connection with the protests in Manesar earlier this month.Judicial Magistrate Hunney Mittal directed the issuance of a production warrant to the jail superintendent of Luksar Jail, where the accused is lodged. Anand, a BTech graduate from NIT Jamshedpur, is currently in two-day Noida Police custody along with two other accused. He is accused of being the ‘mastermind’.Meanwhile, the National Human Rights Commission has received a complaint from an advocate, Subhash Chandran K R, alleging illegal detention of over 1,000 individuals, including around 350 juveniles, during the unrest in Noida. The complaint alleged that mass and arbitrary detentions were carried out without due

process, that the families were not informed or provided arrest documentation, and that many of those detained were not produced before magistrates within the legally mandated time.The Manesar FIR was lodged on April 9 at the Industrial Sector 7 police station by an HR personnel from Richa Global Exports Pvt. Ltd, where a workers’ protest over wage-related demands allegedly turned violent.The complainant alleged that around 200-250 protesters engaged in stone pelting, vandalism, and arson across at least three units of the company in IMT Manesar. “Vehicles belonging to both the company and police were damaged, and at least two female employees were assaulted,” the FIR claimed.Despite prohibitory orders under BNSS Section 163, demonstrations continued and escalated into violence on April 9. Authorities responded with lathicharge to disperse the crowd.

Following investigations, police arrested six men, describing them as “outsiders” who infiltrated the protests to incite violence. Officials cited WhatsApp chats detailing a “conspiracy” to use petrol bombs and commit arson. Concurrently, the administration ordered industrial units to ensure strict wage transparency.The FIR invokes multiple charges related to rioting, attempt to murder, unlawful assembly, assault on public servants, among others, of the BNS.The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) had condemned the police crackdown, accusing the administration of violently repressing a peaceful protest. The union claimed 55 workers, including 20 women, were jailed and demanded their immediate release.

How someone showed porn repeatedly during Delhi High Court proceedings

GNS News Agency, May 5

Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya subsequently said that the administrative arm of the court had been asked to take action as per the available existing mechanism.Additional Solicitor General of India (ASG) Chetan Sharma said that the extraordinary breach of the VC system had in fact taken place in not one, but several courts of the Delhi HC.

“A disconcerting breach happened in the pre-lunch session, in some courts, not just one court, that has the effect of damaging the sanctity and overall integrity of the institution,” ASG Sharma said.He requested the court to pass appropriate directions under the provisions of Sections 69A and 79(3)(d) of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000, to the appropriate government “for the immediate takedown and to stop the dissemination of the incriminating material”.CJ Upadhyaya responded: “Administratively, I’ve already instructed the RG (registrar general), we are making a request through the mechanism available for that.”ASG Sharma then informed the court that recordings of the incident were already circulating on the Internet.To this, CJ Upadhyaya said, “As per the rules, recording is prohibited. As per the norms if anything is being recorded against the rules, then the authorities are [enabled to take action].”The pornographic content was played multiple times during the proceedings in the court of Chief Justice Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia.

The VC was shut down – but as soon as it was resumed minutes later, the same user again shared the screen playing the obscene content. This resulted in the VC facility being shut again.When the VC was restarted, the user disrupted the proceedings for the third time, sharing the screen and playing the pornographic content. He also played an audio claiming that the disruption was a “hack from the United States”.He also reportedly said, “Shut the meeting right now. Never turn it on again. You have been hacked.”

When the VC resumed in the post-lunch session, the meeting settings were modified to “meeting is locked”. In the chatbox, the court staff warned everyone who had logged on: “Please show your name and item no. in which appearing, before your display stack else we will have no other option but to expel such participant.”According to sources in the Delhi Police, they will probe the incident once they receive a complaint and will then lodge a case.A ‘locked’ meeting on the Cisco Webex platform—which several High Courts including the High Courts of Delhi and Allahabad use for video conferencing – implies no one can enter the meeting until it is ‘unlocked’. Only the moderator of the meeting, who is among those signed in, controls entry to the meeting room.

Who can join the VC over the Internet?

Under normal circumstances, the Cisco Webex VC platform in Delhi HC allows any one with the court’s meeting link, to log on and witness the proceedings.The rules define two categories of users of the platform: “Participants” and “Viewers”.Participants’ include advocates appearing for the parties, litigants in person, senior advocates, other interested persons such as jail authorities, legal aid representatives, government officials, and any other persons who are permitted by the court to join the hearing as



‘Participant’‘Viewers’ include various categories of persons – including accredited journalists, reporters, members of the public, and any other persons whom the court may permit from time to time. A ‘Viewer’ is entitled to merely observe the proceedings, and is not allowed to take part in the VC hearings in any manner whatsoever. The sharing option for ‘Viewers’ is disabled in most courts, unless a presenter, host, or co-host in the meeting gives access to a user to share content, including sharing their screen.Under the High Court of Delhi Rules for Video Conferencing for Courts, 2021, and Electronic Evidence and Video Conferencing Rules, 2025, of the Delhi HC, recording court proceedings is prohibited without express permission from the court.

Has something like this happened in any other High Court?Yes. In 2023, the Karnataka High Court had to suspend live streaming of court proceedings after miscreants allegedly played pornographic content during court hearings in around six court halls.Following the incident, the video conference facilities were suspended for a few days across all Benches of the court in Bengaluru, Dharwad, and Kalaburagi.At the time, then Chief Justice of the HC Justice Prasanna B Varale, who is now a judge of the Supreme Court, had announced in open court “An unfortunate situation has arisen. We are stopping live-streaming and video-conferencing facilities.”Following the hacking, Suresh, Registrar (Computers) of the HC, had approached cyber crime police and lodged a complaint. He said that unknown people had joined the video conference when proceedings were underway, “misbehaved and showed obscene visuals”.The Karnataka HC started VC facilities after the Covid-19 pandemic. Initially, the court used an application named ‘Jitsi’, but due to security concerns it was discontinued, and the proceedings began to be live streamed on Zoom. Last year, the HC moved to the Vconsole platform.The court has mandated prior registration of advocates, litigants, media and the public on the platform before they are allowed entry.Earlier in 2021, Senior Advocate Indira Jaising had complained about a semi-naked man appearing during the VC proceedings in court hall 1. Jaising had brought the matter to the notice of a Bench headed by then Chief Justice of the Karnataka HC Ritu Raj Awasthi.Jaising told the court that she was “deeply disturbed”, called the breach a “gross contempt” of court, and sought contempt proceedings against the person involved.“I will send evidence”, she said, adding that “this should not happen ever again.”Following the complaint, the court ordered the collection of data of video proceedings in the court hall concerned.

After Kejriwal and Sisodia, AAP’s Durgesh Pathak latest to send letter to Delhi judge

GNS News Agency, May 5

Ahead of the hearing in the Delhi liquor policy case Wednesday, former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Durgesh Pathak followed in the footsteps of AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia in shooting off a letter to Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma saying he, too, will remain unrepresented in the cases being heard by the Delhi High Court judge.The three leaders are parties in Central Bureau of Investigation’s revision plea, challenging their discharge in the alleged liquor policy scam case that Justice Sharma is hearing. Justice Sharma last week refused to recuse herself from hearing CBI’s plea.

The CBI has challenged the discharge of 23 accused, including Kejriwal, Sisodia and Pathak, by a trial court in February in the case.In a letter dated April 28 reportedly sent to Justice Sharma, Pathak referred to Kejriwal’s April 27 letter and said, “I too have resolved not to participate further in the present proceedings, either personally or through legal representation. The vakalatnama, if any, executed in my favour in this matter may be treated as having been duly discharged.”Kejriwal, Sisodia, Pathak and three other accused in the alleged ‘scam’ had raised apprehensions of bias and made allegations of conflict of interest

against Justice Sharma. The judge, however, refused to recuse.

Both Kejriwal and Sisodia, in their letters, reiterated their concern over Justice Sharma’s “public association with the RSS’s legal front, Akhil Bharatiya Adhivakta Parishad”, and the fact that Justice Sharma’s children are on the Union of India’s advocates’ panels who are assigned cases by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta.Kejriwal, in his letter, said, “I have lost hope of getting justice from Justice Swarana Kanta. Therefore, I have decided to follow the path of Satyagraha as shown by Mahatma Gandhi.”Sisodia, too, in his letter on April 28, said that “there is no path left except Satyagraha,” while claiming that he does not “expect justice”.Sisodia further wrote, “My concern too, much like Mr Kejriwal’s, is not born out of hostility to the court. “It is born of a deep unease that if I continue to participate despite these circumstances, I would be acting against my own conscience too while pretending before my fellow countrymen that all doubts stand resolved,” he said in the letter posted on X.Kejriwal and the other accused have the right to file an appeal against Justice Sharma’s refusal to recuse from the case.On April 28, Kejriwal, accompanied by Sisodia, visited the samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, to emphasise their journey on the path of ‘Satyagraha’.

3 doctors arrested in Mandya for illegal pregnancy scans on minors; government gynaecologist absconding



Three doctors have been arrested in Karnataka’s Mandya district for allegedly conducting illegal scans on pregnant minors without informing the police or child welfare authorities, officials said on Wednesday.The arrested doctors are Dr Divya Chetana of Chetana Maternity Centre, Dr Harshit of Navi Diagnostic Centre, and Dr Harish of Kushal Diagnostic Centre, all operating in KR Pet taluk. Another accused, Dr Priyanka, a gynaecologist at a government hospital, remains absconding, and efforts are underway to trace her.

The arrested doctors have been remanded to judicial custody.The case came to light after Karnataka Upalokayukta Justice B Veerappa took suo motu cognisance of complaints regarding illegal scanning practices, including cases involving pregnant minor girls. Acting on this, the Lokayukta police traced the diagnostic centres in KR Pet town allegedly engaged in unlawful activities.According to investigators, the doctors violated pro-

visions of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act. However, allegations related to sex determination are currently under verification.Minor girls who approached these diagnostic centres were allegedly scanned, but the cases were not reported to the police or child welfare authorities, as mandated under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act.

Officials said further investigation is underway to determine the network’s full extent and identify other possible beneficiaries or facilitators.A Lokayukta officer told indianexpress.com that the illegal diagnostic racket is suspected to have operated since 2023, wherein pregnant minors were allegedly subjected to unauthorised scans at a private diagnostic centre.The arrests were made in connection with five FIRs registered at the KR Pet Town station. These are part of the 12 FIRs registered across Mandya’s urban and rural police stations in connection with the illegal diagnostic racket, naming 17 people, including a government doctor, private practitioners, a junior female health assistant, and an ASHA worker.According to the officer, Dr Priyanka, the government doctor who is absconding, is believed to have referred patients to this centre due to the absence of a radiologist and requisite scanning facilities at the government hospital.This alleged referral pattern is said to have contributed to minors approaching the private facility for such procedures. While the exact number of minors involved remains unclear, authorities have sought a detailed report from the health department on cases handled since 2023 and are awaiting further data.The officer said that mandatory legal protocols were not followed, as neither the police nor the Child Welfare Committee were informed, and no medico-legal cases were registered, which would have otherwise triggered FIRs.

Swipe right for friendship: how Pune youngsters are using dating apps for platonic companionship

GNS News Agency, May 5

In a world where swiping right is second nature, a growing number of young people in Pune are turning to dating apps not just for romance, but also for genuine friendship. Bumble’s BFF feature, which allows users to connect purely for platonic companionship, is quietly gaining traction among young users, offering an alternative to the often complicated social dynamics of college campuses and city life.The premise is simple. Create a profile, switch to BFF mode, and start connecting with people who are also looking for friendships. For many young adults navigating new cities, new colleges, or simply new chapters of life, the appeal is obvious.

Riddhi Sharma, a student at Maharashtra Institute of Technology World Peace University, put it plainly. “It’s low pressure to make friends online, more casual, you can choose to meet them if you like them. I like having that choice,” she said. That sense of control—the ability to opt in or out at any stage—is a recurring theme among users who find traditional social settings too rigid or rushed.For those new to a city, the platform can occasionally deliver on its promise in the most tangible way. Vani, a first-year student who recently moved to Pune, said the feature helped her settle in. “It’s a fun way to get to know people since I am new here,” she said. “I met a girl on the platform who was a local, and she and her friend showed me around town for a few weeks after I moved. It was a great experience, we still keep in touch,” she said. But such outcomes, as it turns out, are more the exception than the rule.Sarthak Joshi, a 21-year-old law student in the city, has been on the platform for three months and has yet to meet anyone in person. But this hasn’t dulled his enthusiasm for the concept. “Because this app matches people based on interests, it’s a good way to make like-minded friends. I love travelling, and if I can find people to plan a trip together on here, mis-



sion accomplished,” he said.It is a mission that, for now, remains a work in progress, and interest-based matchmaking is another draw.

The experience of Ekta Bhattacharjee, a 19-year-old psychology student, perhaps best captures the paradox at the heart of this trend. In just one month on the platform, she has spoken to nearly 30 people, yet she hasn’t met a single one of them offline. “Talking online is more comforting for me. Friend groups in schools and colleges come with a lot of strings attached, and here it’s easier; people don’t have many expectations,” she said. She also acknowledged that online connections may not carry the same weight or seriousness as those formed face-to-face.Piyush, a Pune resident studying management at Christ College, Lavasa, found himself turning to the app despite having lived in the city his entire life. “I have been in this city my whole life, but I wanted to meet new people. The only other way is college, but I didn’t quite like my options, so I got on here to meet fun people,” he said.The platform is lowering the barrier to conversation, but the leap from screen to real life remains difficult.

Pesticide residue behind watermelon deaths? What food safety watchdog said



The deaths of a couple and their two daughters in Mumbai’s Pydhonie area, reportedly after they ate a watermelon, have sparked panic surrounding the fruit, which is a favourite in Indian summers. The results of the laboratory analysis of food samples collected from the Dokadias’ home are expected today. The Food Safety Commissioner of Maharashtra has, meanwhile, said pesticide residue cannot lead to such a tragedy. “Watermelon is an agricultural product. It doesn’t come under our purview until it is harvested. But before that, it is sprayed with at least 14–15 different kinds of pesticides and insecticides. There is bound to be a pesticide residue. But, nobody dies from it,” Shridhar Dube-Patil, the food safety commissioner of the state’s Food and Drug Administration, said. He added that pesticide residue is found on many other fruits, such as grapes.

Dube-Patil said the food safety watchdog has collected samples of the watermelon at the family’s Pydhonie home and sent it for testing. “Police also enquired but couldn’t find a fruit vendor in the neighbourhood from whom it was purchased. They also asked the relatives, but nobody knows, and there’s no bill to verify where it was purchased from,” he said.Asked if any city-wide inspection of watermelons has been launched in the wake of the tragedy, he said, “We are running a campaign for mango, which can be harvested before it is fully ripened, and is later ripened using calcium carbide. We are trying to stop that. But watermelon is harvested only when it is ready. It isn’t plucked unripe. We are not conducting any checks as of now, but if we have a doubt, we will start.” Abdullah Dokadia (40), his wife Naseem (35) and their daughters Ayesha (16) and Zainab (13) died on Sunday. Their relatives have said they ate watermelon hours before being hospitalised. The four were hospitalised in a

semi-conscious state after they started vomiting and died within hours of each other.

“We collected samples of leftover food items found during our investigation at the residence. These include partially eaten watermelon pieces, leftover biryani and pulao from plates and vessels, raw rice from the kitchen, and spices kept on the kitchen slab such as biryani masala, turmeric, chilli powder and salt. We also collected partially consumed dates, drinking water left in glasses, and water mixed with cinnamon powder, among other items,” a senior FDA official said.“All the samples have been sent to our laboratory in Bandra for testing, and we have requested the findings on a priority basis. We are expecting the results today,” the official added.Officials clarified that the FDA analysis is only one part of the broader investigation to check for contamination, adulteration, or the presence of toxic substances. “The forensic and postmortem reports are crucial in this case. A combined assessment of all findings will help determine the exact cause of death. The FDA’s role is to assess whether the food samples meet FSSAI standards and are safe for consumption,” the official said.

Vanasthalipuram police book man for harassing woman

Hyderabad: The Vanasthalipuram police booked a case against a man identified as Shravan Reddy for allegedly harassing and threatening a young woman after she rejected his advances.

Shravan, who is reportedly a relative of the woman, had been persistently calling and pressuring her to accept his love proposal for the past six months.

The harassment escalated on April 30 when he allegedly intercepted her near her college and issued threats.

Later the same day, he allegedly went to her residence and warned her that he would kill her or take his own life if she did not agree to be in a relationship with him.Following a complaint lodged by the victim, police registered a case against him and are investigating the matter.

Life is Strange: Reunion review — Nostalgia fails to save weak story



GNS News Agency, May 5

2015's 'Life is Strange' is one of the most acclaimed narrative games of all time. Set in the fictional town of Arcadia Bay, the game focused on the journey of aspiring photographer Max Caulfield as she made her way through a prestigious photography school and discovered the ability to time-travel.By relying on a unique "butterfly effect" choice-based narrative system, the game was successful in inviting millions of players worldwide to empathise with the challenges of navigating the world of a teenage girl.Since the original game, we have received many titles in the franchise, but none has been as endearing as the original. With the Reunion game, Deck Nine aims to reignite that same passion by bringing back two of the franchise's most popular characters – Max and Chloe.This is a game for the fans, and the gameplay experience is equal parts nostalgia and fan service. However, that is not all that Reunion is; it is also the successor to last year's game, 'Double Exposure,' and it tries through its plot to cohesively bring together the events from Arcadia Bay with those from Caledon University, Vermont.Reunion begins with Max returning to Caledon from a trip to New York, only to find the university engulfed in flames. As she helplessly watches her friend Moses succumb to the fire, she relinquishes her promise to never again meddle with time; she focuses on a 3-day-old Polaroid image to rewind time and cancel her travel plans.

Throughout Reunion, the game's characters and their dialogue are laced with strong emotion, as the bonds and actions from previous games shape the overall experience.This also means, however, that this isn't a game for new entrants to the franchise; even for those who are ardent followers, this isn't a fair reflection of their older journeys, as the game reduces key decisions from prior titles into simple yes/no choices that seem counterintuitive.In terms of gameplay, not much has changed, as the game remains a "walking simulator" where players must engage with people and objects in order to progress. Max's ability to rewind time is key to solving problems, but you also get to play as Chloe, and it is interesting to see the world from her perspective.However, Chloe's "backtalk" ability isn't well-implemented, and the novelty of the two protagonists fades quickly because of the weak central premise. The weak central premise also means that throughout the game, you are overusing Max's ability to rewind time to find the right solution; consequently, there is little need to consider key choices carefully.Reunion does away with core franchise rules and essential lore in an instant, making the overall experience feel disjointed and unnecessarily convolutedThis is a game I simply cannot recommend because of how great the original game and True Colours were. Stay away from Reunion despite the obvious nostalgia trap.* This is the first Life is Strange playable from the perspective of two characters (Max and Chloe). The game has been designed quite well when it comes to the switching of standpoints.* The game's gorgeous visuals and wonderful background score and soundtrack are well up to the Life is Strange standard. The chapter structure and voice acting are of a very high caliber as well.* Decision-making and consequence systems are rendered almost redundant by the narrative here. Player decisions from past games seem to carry no bearing on the plot, and similarly, negative choices in this game feel unnecessary.* The central plot here is weak and only mildly interesting. For a narrative-centric game, there are numerous inconsistencies in terms of the plot, narrative, and character growth.

Mumbai-Pune Expressway missing link: Load testing begins, MSRDC outlines graded traffic plan

GNS News Agency, May 5

The Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) said Tuesday that it has commenced load testing on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway's long-awaited missing link and is running regular inspections across the fully connected stretch, signalling that the ambitious infrastructure project has entered its final operational phase before inauguration. "We regularly keep inspecting by testing with our inspection vehicles across the stretch. And now both stretches are fully connected, one can pass across the bridge to either side," said Rajesh Patil, Joint Managing Director, MSRDC. "The missing link is almost complete, 99 per cent, you could say, as only finishing work is currently ongoing. We expect all work to be wrapped up by the end of April."

Patil also confirmed that both decks are now joined. "Both corridors, the decks on both routes, have been connected," he said.When asked about how traffic will be phased in after the inauguration, Patil outlined a graded approach. "For the first three months, only light vehicles will be permitted. In the following three months, heavy and passenger vehicles will be allowed. After studying the traffic flow over the first six months, further decisions will be taken regarding the permission of commercial vehicles," he explained.In February, the Raigad highway traffic police said that vehicles carrying combustible substances such as petrol, diesel, LPG, CNG, and other chemicals will not be permitted to use the missing link. "As per Indian Road Congress (IRC) guidelines, long tunnels fall in the highest risk category. In the event of a fire in a tunnel, there is a serious risk of suffocation with catastrophic consequences. A similar accident in Japan resulted in casualties due to suffocation. And passenger safety is top priority," the officials had said.While the state government has floated May 1, Maharashtra Day, as a tentative inauguration date, MSRDC officials have clarified that the final call rests with the state leadership.



Bypassing ghat sectionThe project connects Khopoli and Kusgaon, bypassing the winding, steep Khandala-Lonavala ghat section that has long been one of the most persistent bottlenecks on one of India's busiest expressways. The existing route between the two points stretches nearly 19.8 km; the missing link trims that distance by over 6 km, saving commuters between 25 and 30 minutes of travel time.Executed by MSRDC at a cost of around Rs 6,695 crore, the alignment begins at the Khopoli exit with a 900-metre viaduct bridge standing roughly 60 metres above ground, leading into the first tunnel, 1.64 km long. This is followed by one of the project's most striking engineering achievements: a 650-metre cable-stayed bridge over Tiger Valley, held aloft by two pylons, each soaring 180 metres.The valley floor lies nearly 184 metres below. The pylons were deliberately designed to minimise the number of supports required, enhancing both structural stability and the integrity of the surrounding terrain.Beyond the bridge, vehicles enter the second and considerably longer tunnel, approximately 9 km, which carries traffic directly to Kusgaon on the Pune side. The link has four lanes, one more than the existing ghat section, which should ease the chronic congestion that has plagued the route for decades.

How BMC's new amnesty scheme for occupation certificates could finally legalise your Mumbai home

GNS News Agency, May 5

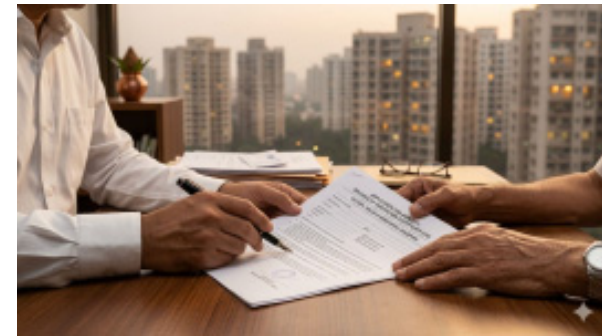
The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is set to present an amnesty proposal to the standing committee Wednesday, aiming to allow the issuance of occupation certificates (OC) for all residential buildings constructed before 2016. After several years of discussions, this initiative is expected to provide relief to around 12 lakh homeowners living in approximately 25,000 residential buildings across Mumbai.In December last year, the state government's Urban Development Department (UDD) approved a policy to grant OCs to all residential buildings. According to the BMC's proposal, this scheme will also extend benefits to schools and hospitals.

What is OC, and why is it important?

An OC is a legal document issued by civic authorities, confirming that a building is suitable for human occupancy. This applies to all types of buildings, including residential, commercial, schools, and hospitals. Before anyone can occupy a building, it must have an OC. Without this certificate, human occupancy is considered illegal, which allows civic authorities to evict occupants or disconnect water and electricity supplies to the premises.Citizens living in a building without an OC may be categorised as illegal occupants. Additionally, without a valid OC, a building or property cannot be registered, which often leads to significant challenges when residents try to sell their properties. Moreover, banks and financial institutions are usually reluctant to issue home loans for properties that lack an OC.Meanwhile, because so many buildings in Mumbai don't have an OC, the BMC has been supplying water and sewage services to them, citing humanitarian reasons. However, the property tax, which is levied on these buildings, is also higher than usual rates.

How is OC being issued?

Once a building is completed, civic authorities, along with local fire brigade officials, conduct an audit to ensure it meets the structural and safety requirements set by the BMC. This audit occurs after the builders apply for an OC. If the building is deemed compliant, the authorities issue



the certificate. However, if the inspection results are unsatisfactory, the certificate will be delayed.

Why don't so many buildings have OC in Mumbai?

The issue of BMC not issuing OC to residential building owners dates back to a decade. The primary reasons so many buildings don't have an OC are developer deviations from approved plans, unpaid fees, or structural, fire-safety, and technical lapses.Over time, several real estate developers, builders, and contractors have also initiated the premature sale of possession to avoid funding delays, leaving residents to manage illegal status, pay double property taxes, and face limited infrastructure services. Experts also stated that in Mumbai, nearly 50 per cent of buildings lack an OC.How will this scheme benefit Mumbai residents?

According to the BMC's proposal, the new amnesty scheme will allow OCs to be issued for residential buildings occupied by residents prior to November 2016. The scheme also proposes a 50 per cent concession on various charges, including regulatory fees, penalties, and application costs.Furthermore, the authorities also maintained that fresh applications submitted within six months of the scheme's rollout will receive a 100 per cent discount on the penalty amount, while those submitted after six months will also receive a concession. At present, alongside residential buildings, hospitals and schools, civic authorities have stated that a policy is being developed to include commercial buildings in this scheme.Pratap AcharyaPratap Acharya is a seasoned journalist based in Mumbai reporting for

Pune monsoon preparedness: PMC to raze nine civic quarters, 32 wadas declared unsafe

GNS News Agency, May 5

Municipal Commissioner Naval Kishore Ram said the season's first rain always creates havoc in any city but the PMC is gearing up to tackle the situation.Municipal Commissioner Naval Kishore Ram said the season's first rain always creates havoc in any city but the PMC is gearing up to tackle the situation.After the death of a woman, crushed after a tree uprooted and fell on her stall, during last week's heavy rain in the city, the Pune civic body has decided to pull down nine civic quarters and 32 private wadas declared unsafe by structural audits.Municipal Commissioner Naval Kishore Ram said the season's first rain always creates havoc in any city but the PMC is gearing up to tackle the situation. "There are nine buildings constructed 50 to 60 years ago for municipal employees in Wakdewadi. They are in a dilapidated state and unsafe for use. They will be vacated and demolished before the onset of the monsoon," he said.The municipal commissioner said the buildings can collapse due to rainfall as they are in a precarious condition and poses risk to the lives of the residents.

Also, the PMC has identified 32 'wadas', traditional

mansions in the heart of the city, that are in a dangerous state and will be demolished by the civic body, he said. The civic administration has issued notices to the owner and tenants of the 'wadas' to vacate so that they can be pulled down. "The PMC will take action with police assistance if residents fail to vacate the premises," he warned.Ram said the civic administration had undertaken a survey to identify unsafe buildings. The nine civic buildings were constructed on five-acre plots and are three-story structures with 288 residential flats. "As these buildings were constructed five to six decades ago. The corporation has decided to vacate them and construct new buildings in their place," he said.The occupants demanded temporary rehabilitation within the same locality before the demolition of these buildings, but the civic body is prepared to provide them with homes in Warje and Hadapsar area."Under the pretext of rehabilitation, the municipal corporation has failed to carry out any maintenance or repair work for the past 12 to 13 years. Although the corporation has issued notices to us, our demand is that our temporary rehabilitation be carried out within this very locality," said a resident employed with Pune civic body.

4th year UG guidelines released by Maharashtra government – All you need to know

GNS News Agency, May 5

The Maharashtra Higher and Technical Education Department on April 6 released the long-awaited guidelines for implementation of the fourth year programme in undergraduate courses in the state. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 made provisions for four-year undergraduate degrees. The Maharashtra State Academic and Research Council (MahaSARC) committee of Vice Chancellors of top universities in the state was tasked with forming the guidelines that have now been released. The lack of guidelines had till now left students and teachers in limbo.

Guidelines for non-technical coursesThe 4-year non-AICTE non-professional UG programme has been structured into eight semesters and offers two pathways: 4-Year UG Degree with Honours and 4-Year UG Degree Honours with Research.For the UG (Honours with Research) degree, students will be required to complete a research project or a dissertation for 12 credits in the fourth year in the major subject.

Which colleges will be able to offer 4th year?

The guidelines specify that the fourth year of the four-year UG programme will not be granted to any college as 'natural growth'.Colleges currently offering only three-year UG courses will have to seek approval to commence a fourth-year programme.The fourth year of the UG Honours programme will be identical to the first year of a two-year PG programme offered after a three-year UG programme.However, colleges already having permission and recognition for a postgraduate course in the same major will be automatically allowed to conduct the fourth-year UG Honours Degree. Similarly, colleges with an approved PG programme and a PhD Research Centre will be allowed to offer a fourth year of UG Honours with a research degree.For admission to the fourth year of UG (Honours) degree, students must have successfully earned the required credits, typically around 120-132 credits, by the end of their third year For admission to fourth year UG (Honours



with Research Program), students must typically obtain a specific CGPA of 7.5 and complete 120-132 credits.The sanctioned class strength for the UG (Honours with Research Program) fourth year will be equal to five times the number of recognised PhD guides. Students can also seek lateral entry to fourth year at a different college or university where approval for the same is already granted subject to conditions laid down by the university Universities will need to evolve mechanisms for approval of the fourth year in colleges that do not have a PG programme or a PhD research centre in the concerned major subjects.

UG (Honours) – Only colleges that have the necessary infrastructure and approved faculty for the concerned subject at the 400-level (Level 6.0) will be eligible to offer the fourth year. UG (Honours with Research) – Universities must come up with guidelines for approval which can include: minimum number of approved PhD guides, evidence of active research published in Indexed Journal lists of SciFinder, Web of Science and Scopus and/or ongoing or completed funded Research Projects, Dedicated Research Laboratories, plagiarism detection software, high-speed internet, software, tie-ups with recognised institutes, etc.The guidelines define three pathways for AICTE-governed professional engineering UG programmes:

‘No one goes hungry’: Pune gurudwaras become lifeline for students amid LPG crisis



GNS News Agency, May 5

Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar in Camp, Pune, has extended its langar facilities to support outstation students facing disruptions in meals due to the LPG crisis triggered by the West Asia conflict.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, the gurudwara delivered free langar to those in need across the city. Now, with restaurants, messes, dining halls, and canteens shuttered, students far from home are hit hardest, struggling for daily meals.Many SPPU students and other competitive exam students are coming to the gurudwara for meals because tiffin and mess rates are high, and the university has reduced its menu.According to a circular issued by Guru Nanak Darbar, the free langar is open to students. Meals are being served daily at the gurudwara premises, with lunch available from 12.30 pm to 2.30 pm and dinner from 8.30 pm to 10 pm.Sarang Kale, a student who came for langar at Guru Nanak Darbar, said, "Due to increasing LPG prices, the cost of food has risen sharply, making it hard for students from poor families to manage daily expenses. Once affordable meals are now out of reach for many. In such situations, the gurudwara langar plays a crucial role by providing free and respectful meals to everyone. I urge the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) to supply LPG cylinders regularly to support these services so they can continue helping students in need."Akash Kambale, an SPPU University student, said, "As a student at SPPU, I often visit the gurudwara in Khadki for langar. With rising LPG prices, even basic mess food has become expensive, and not everyone can afford it daily. For many of us, the langar is more than just a meal; it is support during difficult times. I truly believe such services should continue, and authorities should step in to support gurudwaras serving students like us."LPG shortage has hiked mess prices; tiffins jumped from Rs 50 to Rs 70. Not everyone can afford it. Sometimes I go for langar at Camp or Khadki with friends as it is far from my college, but even travel costs affect us," said Vishal Nikam, a student from the Film and Television Institute.

Colonel Siddhu Singh, manager of the gurudwara, said, "We will provide langar service to all outstation students. As long as this LPG crisis continues, we will ensure that no

student suffers or goes hungry. We stand committed to supporting them until normalcy returns."Maninder Singh Bindra, president of Aundh gurudwara, said, "There is a severe shortage of gas cylinders here, yet we are somehow managing to run the langar for students. We have reduced the menu, but we still want to help the students. Commercial gas is not available.""On Sundays, 400-500 people come, and 100-150 during the day. There is no shortage of ration; we can arrange it for the students, but there is a huge problem with gas cylinders. We are also submitting a written application to the PMC to provide cylinders; we are ready to pay any amount. There are no other options for students. We have never faced such a situation before. This is my humble request to the PMC to intervene in this serious issue."

Government may seek revised bids for IDBI Bank strategic sale

New Delhi: The government may ask for revised financial bids from two potential buyers of IDBI Bank as their original bid amounts were lower than the reserve price fixed for the strategic sale of the lender, sources said. "The IDBI Bank strategic sale is in the technical evaluation stage," a senior official said.

Amidst the West Asia crisis, the government is banking on disinvestment and asset monetisation to garner resources and create fiscal space for measures to shield the economy from the global uncertainty, officials said.

After over three years of pursuance, the strategic sale of IDBI Bank had reached the final stage of financial bid, and the government does not want to restart the process again to avoid further delay.The government and LIC were together looking to sell 60.72 per cent in IDBI Bank and had floated an Expression of Interest (Eoi) in October 2022. Financial bids came on February 6.

After that, the government set the reserve price for the strategic sale. The financial bids for the IDBI Bank strategic sale, however, came in lower than the reserve price set by the inter-ministerial group on disinvestment headed by secretaries in the finance ministry.Following that, the strategic sale of IDBI Bank hit a roadblock.Sources said that the government has now restarted work to take forward the IDBI Bank strategic sale to a logical conclusion.Prem Watsa-led Fairfax and Emirates NBD are reported to have put in bids for the strategic sale of IDBI Bank.

Iran rial crashes to record 1.8 million per dollar



TEHRAN: Iran's national rial currency hit a record low on Wednesday of 1.8 million to \$1 as a shaky ceasefire with the US and Israel still holds. The rial had remained stable for weeks during the war, which began Feb 28, in part because there was little trading or imports coming into

SLC chief Silva, executive committee members resign with immediate effect



GNS News Agency, May 5

Colombo: Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) President Shammi Silva has resigned with immediate effect, along with the board's executive committee. The resignations have been formally communicated to Sri Lanka President Anura Kumara Dissanayake. "The President of Sri Lanka Cricket,

the country. The rial began to slide two days ago, hitting the record low on Wednesday. Experts warn the fall of the rial is likely to further fuel inflation in a country where many imported goods, from food and medicine to electronics and raw materials, are affected by the dollar rate.

The war is now in a ceasefire, but a US blockade has continued to increase pressure on Iran's already-battered economy, cutting into a key source of government revenue and hard currency by stopping or intercepting oil shipments. The latest slide comes months after a previous currency shock helped fuel nationwide protests in January. At the time, the rial weakened from about 1.4 million to 1.6 million to the dollar in less than a week, deepening public anger over rising prices and fears about the country's economic future. Iran's economy has faced decades of sanctions, chronic inflation and a widening gap between official and open-market exchange rates. The war, which lasted weeks, added new strain to businesses, households and state finances.

Mr. Shammi Silva, has tendered his resignation from the post, effective today. Along with him, the office bearers and members of the Executive Committee of the SLC have also submitted their resignations.

"This decision has been formally communicated to His Excellency President Anura Kumara Dissanayake and the Honorable Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Mr. Sunil Kumara Gamage," said a statement from SLC on Wednesday. Silva, 65, had been SLC President since 2019, and his resignation comes amid mounting criticism of the national men's team's decline and allegations of mismanagement. He was re-elected as SLC President unopposed in 2021 and 2023 and 2025. Silva also served as the President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) in 2025, where he succeeded Jay Shah for being in the top role. Sri Lanka's failure to reach the Super Eights stage of this year's T20 World Cup, which they co-hosted with India, has been cited as a trigger for change in the SLC administration.

Sri Lanka's Sports Law of 1973 empowers the minister to dissolve sports federations, though such intervention in elected bodies runs counter to the International Cricket Council's (ICC) charter. It is understood the ICC has been briefed on the developments, though a timeline on fresh elections is yet to be clear. Silva was previously ousted as SLC chief in 2023 after the national team had a poor ODI World Cup campaign in 2023, prompting a suspension of the board by the ICC. It also led to relocation of the 2024 Men's Under-19 World Cup from Sri Lanka to South Africa. Silva returned as SLC chief in 2025, but his seven-year reign now appears to have ended for the good.

Humane World for Animals India releases summer safety guidelines

Hyderabad: As temperatures soar, Humane World for Animals India (formerly Humane Society International/India) has issued an advisory and urged citizens to take simple yet critical steps to protect companion and community animals, birds and urban wildlife from extreme heat, dehydration and life-threatening heatstroke.

Praveen Suresh, manager, Disaster Response, Humane World for Animals India, said: "Extreme heat is increasing stress, disease, and mortality in animals, while disrupting the livelihoods that depend on them." Dr Piyush Patel, veterinarian and director of the street animal programme at Humane World for Animals India, shared tips to help animals: "Keep bowls or earthen (mud) pots filled with clean, cool water outside homes or in areas where community animals gather.

* In summers, street animals often seek refuge under the vehicle. Always check before starting the vehicle.* Keep companion animals indoors: Dogs can only sweat through their footpads and rely mainly on panting to cool down* Never leave your companion animals in a parked car: Even on a mild 22°C day, the temperature inside a parked car can climb to 47°C within an hour.* Help fallen birds: Check them for signs of dehydration, such as sunken or dull eyes, leth-



argy, solid droppings, wrinkly skin, and rapid breathing. Spray some water on the bird. Do not dip them underwater, as it will put them under more stress* Fruits, such as cucumber slices, can help hydrate animals and provide a cooling treat during hot weather. Frozen fruit cubes could be given to pets.* Help animals suffering from heatstroke: Move them into the shade or an air-conditioned area. Apply ice packs or cold towels to their head, neck and chest or run cool (not cold) water over them.

Trump's court setbacks fail to blunt his campaign against media

GNS News Agency, May 5

NEW YORK, April 29 (Reuters) - President Donald Trump has suffered a string of courtroom setbacks in his battles with the American media, but the rulings have done little to blunt a broader campaign of pressure and retaliation that extends beyond the courts. Courts have consistently sided with news organizations, rejecting Trump's defamation lawsuits and blocking efforts by his administration to limit press access or defund public media, citing the robust free-speech protections guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. But slow-moving litigation and multi-layered appeals have worked in favor of an administration that acts quickly, tests legal boundaries and shifts tactics after defeats. Trump's clash with ABC late-night host Jimmy Kimmel reflects a pressure campaign that extends beyond the courts. Even as judges affirm media protections, Trump demands firings and urges regulatory scrutiny, pressing companies outside formal legal channels. "Trump can repeatedly lose individual court battles but still advance his broader agenda of weakening and destabilizing the press," said Christina Koningsor, a professor at UC Law San Francisco, citing what she described as Trump's strategy of slow-walking litigation. A spokesman for Trump's personal lawyers said the president would continue to pursue accountability for what he calls false reporting and defamatory claims. Separately, a White House spokesperson described Trump as the most open and accessible U.S. president ever, saying his administration has broadened press access in unprecedented ways. Trump has filed at least nine lawsuits against major media companies since 2020, seeking tens of billions of dollars in damages for what he alleges are false or misleading reports. Separately, his administration has acted to restrict

press access to government agencies and threatened to use regulatory powers against critical outlets, drawing legal challenges by media outlets. Trump's latest setback came on April 13, when a judge threw out his \$10 billion defamation lawsuit against the Wall Street Journal and its parent company Dow Jones over a story describing a birthday letter to disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein bearing Trump's signature. U.S. District Judge Darrin Gayles said the complaint fell "nowhere close" to plausibly alleging the Journal knowingly published false information or recklessly disregarded the truth — the "actual malice" standard that makes defamation claims by public figures difficult to win. Gayles nevertheless has allowed Trump to file a revised complaint, meaning Dow Jones could still face a costly and time-consuming court battle defending what it says was accurate reporting. Trump's lawyers say they will file a revised suit. Should the case survive another bid for dismissal, the subsequent discovery, trial and appeals could take years. Trump's 2022 lawsuit against CNN over its coverage of his false claims of election-rigging was tossed out in 2023. An appeals court upheld the ruling, but Trump could still seek Supreme Court review. "The way our legal system works, it can cost a lot of time and money, and the president is able to take advantage of that," said Tre Lovell, a defamation law specialist. Two media companies have settled defamation suits brought by Trump that were deemed meritless by legal experts but could have been costly to fight in court. ABC agreed to donate \$15 million to Trump's presidential library after he sued over inaccurate on-air comments about a civil case in which a jury found him liable for sexual abuse. CBS reached a similar settlement after Trump sued over edits to an interview with his 2024 election rival Kamala Harris. Neither company admitted wrongdoing, though ABC agreed to apologize and said it regretted anchor George Stephanopoulos' on-air description of the civil judgment. Critics of the CBS deal said

Under US law, Trump faces impending deadline to end Iran war. What happens if he ignores it?



Canberra: US President Donald Trump is quickly approaching a deadline to wrap up his war against Iran or he'll be in breach of US law. Under the 1973 War Powers Resolution, a US president can only launch a war without congressional approval for 60 days. After that, Congress either has to declare or authorize the war or the president must end the operations. Even though there is currently a ceasefire between the US and Iran, the resolution would still apply to the naval troops and ships responsible for maintaining the US blockade of Iranian ports.

So, what happens if the 60-day deadline passes and Trump refuses to pull out? What is the War Powers Resolution? The War Powers Resolution was passed by Congress over then-President Richard Nixon's veto in November 1973. It was a major piece of legislation designed to curb presidential usurpation of the congressional power to declare war. It came just after the withdrawal of US troops from the Vietnam War, which had not been authorized by Congress. The law hasn't been very successful since its passage because of its loose legal language, the numerous exceptions and qualifications, and the large number of loopholes that presidents and their advisers have discovered. Certainly, no president since Nixon has been significantly constrained by the law. Those who have initiated conflicts without congressional approval have paid little more than lip service to its provisions. Congress has also contributed to the failure of the War Powers Resolution through its reluctance to defend its constitutional and statutory rights to declare war. Notwithstanding its past ineffectiveness, it may be premature to write off the War Powers Resolution in the current conflict. The main reason: it provides a mechanism for wary Republican lawmakers to try to bring an end to an unpopular war.

What does the law say?

The statutory end-date for the war comes into effect by way of two sections of the War Powers Resolution. Under section 4, the president is required to submit a report to Congress within 48 hours of introducing US troops into "hostilities" and explain the constitutional and legislative authority under which the action was taken, the justification for the action, and the estimated scope and duration of the US involvement. This triggers a 60-day clock under section 5 of the law. If Congress has not declared or authorized the war by then or extended the deadline, the president must end the military action. The beauty of this provision, at least

Trump urges Iran to sign a deal after report suggests US may extend blockade

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DUBAI/WASHINGTON, April 29 (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump on Wednesday urged Iran to 'get smart soon' and sign a deal, following days of deadlock in efforts to end the conflict and a media report that the U.S. would extend its blockade of Iran's ports. In a post on Truth Social, Trump, who has said Iran can call if it wants to talk and has stressed repeatedly Tehran cannot have a nuclear weapon, said the country 'couldn't get its act together.' The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.

The Wall Street Journal cited U.S. officials as saying the president had instructed aides to prepare for an extended blockade of Iran's ports in a bid to force Tehran to capitulate. Officials said that Trump had opted to continue squeezing Iran's economy and oil exports with the blockade as his other options - resuming bombing or walking away from the conflict - carried more risk, according to the WSJ.

"They don't know how to sign a nonnuclear deal. They'd better get smart soon!" Trump said in the post on Wednesday, without explaining what such a deal would entail. Iran wants some kind of U.S. acknowledgment of its right to enrich uranium for what it says are peaceful, civilian purposes. It has a stockpile of roughly 440 kilograms (970 pounds) of uranium enriched to 60%, material that could be used for several nuclear weapons if further enriched. Iranian officials said on Tuesday the country could withstand the blockade as it was using alternative trade routes, and the Islamic Republic did not consider the war over. The conflict has killed thousands, thrown energy markets into turmoil and disrupted global trade routes. Iran's most recent offer for resolving the two-month war, suspended since April 8 under a ceasefire agreement, would set aside discussion of its nuclear programme until the conflict is formally ended and shipping issues resolved. That proposal did not meet Trump's demand to have the nuclear issue discussed from the outset, however.

U.S. intelligence agencies, at the request of senior administration officials, are studying how Iran would respond if Trump were to declare a unilateral victory in the two-month-old war that has become a political liability for the White House, two U.S. officials and a person familiar with the matter told Reuters. Tehran has largely blocked all shipping apart from its own from the Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint for global energy supplies, since the war began on February 28. This month, the U.S. began blockading Iranian ships. Trump's Truth Social post featured a mock-up image of himself in dark glasses and wielding a machine gun with the caption "No more Mr. Nice Guy."

Hopes of a swift resolution to the conflict have receded since Trump last weekend scrapped a visit by his special envoy Steve Witkoff and son-in-law Jared Kushner to mediator Pakistan. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi visited the country twice during the weekend. Since several senior Iranian political and military figures were killed in U.S.-Israeli strikes, Iran no longer has a single, undisputed clerical arbiter at the pinnacle of power, which may be hardening Tehran's negotiating stance. The killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on the first day of the war, and the elevation of his wounded son, Mojtaba, to replace him as supreme leader, has handed more power to hardline commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Iranian officials and analysts say. Trump is under domestic pressure

as far as members of Congress are concerned, is that it is automatic. Legislators don't have to do anything to implement it. And because no vote is necessary, they don't have to go on record opposing the president's military and national security policy.

Trump submitted his report on the war with Iran on March 2, which means the 60-day deadline expires on May 1. So far, Congress has not responded by declaring or authorising the war, though Republicans have blocked numerous Democratic legislative efforts to end the war or constrain Trump's ability to act without congressional approval. Congress also has the option of extending the 60-day limit for a maximum of 30 days. This would require a vote in both the House and Senate.

The major difference between this war against Iran and other wars of recent US presidents is that this one is going extremely badly for Trump. A new poll by Reuters and Ipsos this week found that just 34 per cent of Americans support the US conflict with Iran. This time, there has been no "rally-around-the-flag" effect supporting Trump's military incursion. Members of Congress, ultra-sensitive to their constituents' opinion, are not running scared of opposing Trump on this issue, either. Many would be risking electoral backlash by going on the record in support of the war. Republican Senator John Curtis of Utah, for example, has written an essay saying he will not support the war after the 60-day deadline passes without congressional approval. Other Republicans have echoed his sentiments. Given his general contempt for the Constitution and statute law, Trump will probably disregard the legal mandate to withdraw US troops. He is more likely to claim that the War Powers Resolution is unconstitutional, as Nixon did when he vetoed it in 1973. As such, he may seek to challenge the law through the courts. So, what happens if Trump does ignore the deadline?

This depends on how members of Congress react. Democrats are reportedly exploring a lawsuit against the administration, though this has proven difficult to do in the past. Trump could also claim the law doesn't apply because US forces are not currently engaged in direct hostilities in Iran, as then-President Barack Obama did when the 60-day clock lapsed during the US military operations in Libya in 2011. When Trump sent formal notification to Congress on March 2, he made a point of saying he was acting under his "constitutional authority as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive", neither of which give him the power to commit the US to war without congressional approval. He did not acknowledge the War Powers Resolution except to say that his report was "consistent with" it a standard form of wording used by his predecessors who have all demonstrated some reluctance to adhere to its provisions. In the past, when presidents and Congress have clashed over the War Powers Resolution, they have usually reached some accommodation, but it has depended on the circumstances and often favours the president. This time it could be different. Trump is badly managing an unpopular war with wafer-thin majorities in Congress, six months out from the midterm election. If US troops are still engaged in the Middle East on May 1, the War Powers Resolution could take on a relevance it hasn't had for more than 50 years.



to end a war for which he has given the U.S. public shifting rationales. His approval rating fell to the lowest level of his current term, as Americans increasingly soured on his handling of the cost of living and the unpopular war, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll. The poll showed 34% of Americans approve of Trump's performance, down from 36% in the prior survey. Oil prices rose nearly 3% on Wednesday, with the Brent contract hitting a one-month high, on concerns that an extended blockade of Iranian ports would prolong supply disruptions. The World Bank on Tuesday forecast energy prices would surge by 24% in 2026 to their highest level since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine four years ago, if the most acute disruptions caused by the Iran war end in May.

Why cold drinks feel more refreshing during summer heat

Ever noticed how a cold drink feels ten times better in the heat? There is a reason for that. There is something about summer that makes cold drinks feel extra satisfying. Whether it is iced coffee, chilled juices or fizzy sodas, the craving for something cold naturally increases as temperatures rise. What feels like a simple preference is actually a mix of how our body reacts to heat and how our mind associates comfort with certain habits. In hot weather, the body constantly works to regulate its temperature. Sweating leads to fluid loss, and as a result, we instinctively reach for something that feels cooling and refreshing. Cold drinks provide instant relief, helping to lower body temperature and offering a soothing sensation, especially after spending time outdoors.

"Cold drinks feel more refreshing in summer because the body is actively trying to cool itself down. Lower temperatures provide quick relief, especially when the body is overheated or dehydrated," says nutritionist Ritu Sharma. There is also a strong psychological element. Cold beverages are often linked to comfort during summer, from childhood memories of ice creams to that first sip of a chilled drink after being out in the sun. These associations make them feel even more enjoyable and satisfying.

Temperature also affects how we experience taste. Colder drinks tend to feel sharper and more refreshing, particularly when the body is overheated or slightly dehydrated. This enhances the overall experience, making them more appealing than room temperature options. "However, while cold drinks feel great in the moment, it is important to be mindful of your choices. Sugary or excessively chilled beverages may not always be the best for hydration.

Why the government has increased capital spending for the defence sector



For years, the Indian defence budget has been caught in a classic “guns versus butter” dilemma, attempting to balance the costs of human-power with the need for technological modernisation. If the figures released in the FY2026-27 Union Budget are any indication, the government seems to be turning the tanker. The FY2027 defence budget, hovering near the substantial ₹8 lakh crore mark, has the potential to meet the demands of a rapidly modernising military force and an expanding domestic defence industry. The capital outlayThe absolute figures are robust. The total Ministry of Defence (MoD) expenditure has touched a historic high, nearing ₹7,84,678 crore for FY27 (Budget Estimate). This allocation accounts for 14.7% of the Government’s total expenditure at the BE stage for FY27. While this percentage is a slight dip from the Revised Estimates (RE) of 14.8% in FY26, it marks a significant stabilisation compared to the lean years of FY21 and FY22, when the defence share had shrunk to nearly 13.2%. If New Delhi can continue to floor defence spending at 14-15% of the central spending pie, it would gradually insulate national security imperatives from the vagaries of fiscal consolidation

The spectre of ballooning revenue expenditure, specifically salaries and pensions, has haunted defence planners for decades. Because capital outlay is the fund that goes into modernisation and the purchases of big-ticket items such as armour, ships or aircraft, it is expected that revenue and capex components of a defence budget are at parity.

Utilising and diversifyingIn the FY27 BE, the share of capital outlay has risen to 27.9% of the total defence budget. This is a remarkable jump from the 24.9% figure for FY23 (Actuals) and the 24.5% figure for FY20 (Actuals). In absolute terms, the capital outlay for FY27 BE stands at a staggering ₹2,19,306 crore. To put this in perspective, just a year prior, the BE for FY26 had allocated ₹1,80,000 crore for capital expenses. A year-on-year leap of nearly ₹40,000 crore in the capital head is hence significant. Not to mention, at the RE stage in FY26, more capex has been demanded, which is a departure from previously observed trends wherein the BE is always higher than the RE, and the RE is nearly always higher than the Actuals (see Chart 2). However, to understand fully the urgency in these figures, one

must acknowledge three main aspects of capex utilisation and the geopolitical realities of the past few years. Firstly, this is the first full Union Budget presented after Operation Sindoor, and the financial footprint of that conflict is likely reflected in the demands for grants. The four-day intense aerial engagement following the Pahalgam terror attack exposed the need for a stockpile of armament such as precision-guided munitions (PGMs) and loitering munitions, especially if the Indian armed forces are to prepare for a two-front challenge involving both China and Pakistan. In that regard, it is possible that the 21.8% jump in capital outlay is not just for future-proofing, but also for the replenishment of the war wastage reserves depleted in May 2025.

Secondly, the expenditure trends may also signal that Emergency Procurement (EP) — once an adhoc measure after the Galwan incident — has now been effectively institutionalised. The rapid spike in capital spending suggests that the fast-track mechanism used to induct anti-drone systems and long-range vectors during Operation Sindoor could now be the standard operating procedure for critical technologies. Thirdly, a critical nuance often missed in headline numbers is the concept of committed liabilities. These are payments due in the upcoming FY for contracts signed in previous years. Historically, a major chunk of capex has been absorbed by past obligations, which could include, say, installments for S-400s, Rafales, or Akash missiles signed years ago, leaving less untied cash for new signings. The hope is that the capex hike breaks this cycle, given that for the Government to be able to sign contracts for the procurement of say, Advanced Medium Light Aircraft, or Project 751 diesel-electric submarines, funds worth at least 10-15% of the total contract amount must be free for the agreement to go through in FY27. Composition statistics

Finally, an assessment of the composition of the total MoD expenditure shows that the share of pensions in the total defence budget has contracted to 21.8% in FY27, down from 26% in FY20. Similarly, the salary component has moderated to 22.4%, a sharp decline from the 30% high seen in FY20. While the absolute pension bill remains high, its share of the pie is shrinking, likely a preliminary result of the Agnipath scheme and a deliberate policy to cap revenue expenditure. With ₹2.19 lakh crore in the kitty for capital expenditure, the pressure now shifts to the domestic industry. The government has reserved nearly 75% of the capital acquisition budget for the domestic industry under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The challenge, however, remains absorption capacity. Can defence public sector undertakings and private sector players deliver on time? The “Buy Indian-1DDM” (Indigenously Designed, Developed, and Manufactured) route of the Defence Acquisition Procedure is valuable, but recent operational urgencies dictate that delivery timelines cannot be flexible. The heavy allocation suggests that the government is confident in the maturity of the Indian defence industrial base, and so, business performance, too, should reflect commitment to the act.

The Budget and the imperative of fiscal consolidation



While presenting the Union Budget 2026-27, a considerable part of the Finance Minister’s Budget speech dealt with the expenditure programmes that will be launched to enable India to become developed by 2047. The emphasis on the advanced technology sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, biopharma, semiconductor and critical minerals among others, is well taken. The concern with these expenditure programmes is on how well they are going to be implemented and the pace at which they will enable the goal of Viksit Bharat to be achieved.

Expenditure priorities, revenue prospectsIn order to provide fiscal space for these changing priorities, the Government of India has been successfully undertaking a restructuring, particularly of its revenue expenditures. For more than a decade, the share of revenue expenditure to total expenditure has been going down, from 88% in 2014-15 to about 77% in 2026-27 (BE), that is a fall of 11% points. Within this, the fall in central subsidies was 7% points of total expenditure. Correspondingly, the share of capital expenditure in total expenditure has increased.

The Centre’s emphasis on capital expenditure has played an important role in supporting GDP growth. As a percentage of GDP, the Centre’s capital expenditure, in the post-COVID-19 years, has been at a high level. However, its annual growth rate has fallen over time. Thus, from a recent peak growth of 28.3% in 2023-24, it fell to 10.8% in 2024-25 and to 4.2% in 2025-26 (RE). It is budgeted to increase now to 11.5% in 2026-27 (BE), which is only marginally higher than the assumed nominal GDP growth of 10.0%. Thus, it will almost remain static at 3.1% of GDP in 2025-26 (RE) and 2026-27 (BE). It may be noted that the budgeted capital expenditure growth in 2025-26 was 10.1%, but a growth of only 4.2% was achieved as already noted.

The Government of India’s revenue receipts, particularly projections for 2026-27 (BE) of tax revenues are cautious and are likely to be achieved. But the concern is that the buoyancy of Centre’s gross tax revenues in 2026-27 (BE) has fallen to 0.8, well below the benchmark of 1. This consists of a buoyancy of 1.1 of direct taxes, which has a share of 61.2%, and a buoyancy of 0.3 of indirect taxes, which has a share of 38.8% in Centre’s gross tax revenues. The main reason for the lower overall buoyancy is linked to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections, which are not expected to keep pace with GDP growth in 2026-27 (BE). In view of the high pressure on increasing expenditure, both developmental and welfare, the government should take a good look at the indirect taxes structure and raise their buoyancy to 1. The recommendations of the Sixteenth Finance Commission (FC16) have not provided for any change in the share of States in the divisible pool of central taxes, keeping it at 41%. The assignment of taxes to the States, therefore, has remained the same at 3.9% of GDP in 2025-26 (RE) and 2026-27 (BE). Also, the FC16 did not recommend any revenue deficit grants or sector/State-specific grants. Because of discontinuation of revenue deficit grants, there would be a reduction in the overall trans-

fers to the States as compared to FC15. In fact, there has also been a reduction in other components of FC grants — the reason why total FC grants to the States have fallen from 0.43% of GDP in 2025-26 (RE) — the last year under the recommendations of FC15 — to 0.33% in 2026-27 (BE), the first year under the recommendations of the FC16. Usually, in the first year of an FC award period, there is a step jump in the volume of grants.

Pace of fiscal consolidationThe slowdown in the pace of fiscal consolidation is also a major concern. The pace of reduction in the fiscal deficit to GDP ratio has progressively fallen in the post-COVID-19 years. Considering the period from 2023-24, the annual reduction in this ratio in successive years was 0.7% points in 2024-25, 0.4% points in 2025-26 (RE) and only 0.1% point in 2026-27 (BE). The change in the targeting strategy from fiscal deficit to targeting the debt-GDP ratio also does not give much confidence. In fact, the debt-GDP ratio and fiscal deficit to GDP ratio are interdependent and move in tandem depending on the nominal GDP growth. A transparent strategy would be to give the glide path of debt-GDP ratio and fiscal deficit relative to GDP with an underlying assumption of nominal GDP growth for the next five years. It should also indicate as to when the respective targets committed to in the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act 2018, that is, of 40% for debt-GDP ratio and of 3% for fiscal deficit to GDP ratio are likely to be achieved.

It is also useful to note that maintaining an unduly high debt-GDP ratio leads to a high interest payment to revenue receipts ratio. The effective interest rate for central government debt is estimated at 7.12% in 2026-27 (BE). This rate has been rising progressively for the last three years. In fact, as per the 2026-27 (BE), the interest payment to revenue receipts ratio is close to 40%, thereby squeezing the space for the required primary expenditures. It must be stressed that the limit of fiscal deficit at 3% of GDP has a strong logic behind it. If the Centre and States take 8%-9% of GDP, the investible resources available for the private sector will come down strongly. In this situation, it is difficult to expect private investment to pick up.

A good frameworkTaken together, the Budget presents a good road map to achieve the status of a developed country by 2047. It has highlighted the critical areas where the government and country must focus on. Sustained growth needs monetary and fiscal stability. The path of fiscal consolidation requires a relook. C. Rangarajan is Chairman, Madras School of Economics, and a former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India. D.K. Srivastava is Member, Advisory Council to the Sixteenth Finance Commission, and a former Director of the Madras School of Economics. The views expressed are personal

Over 100 boxes of explosives seized from pick-up van in Kerala's Palakkad

An officer of the Palakkad Town South police station said they found over 100 boxes of gelatin sticks and more than 20 boxes of detonators in the vehicle. The boxes were hidden under a consignment of watermelons, he said, adding that the seizure occurred late on Wednesday (February 4, 2026).

Indian cities could see far higher temperature rise than projected, says study



Climate models may be underestimating — by anything from half to two degrees — how much hotter India’s non-metropolitan cities can get from global warming relative to rural areas, according to a study published Wednesday (February 4, 2026). The researchers, from the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom, analysed how temperatures would rise in 104 “medium-sized” cities in tropical and sub-tropical regions under a 2°C warming scenario, the emissions path that the globe is currently on. Rather than asking how hot regions become on average, the study asks a different question: how much faster do cities warm than their surrounding countryside?

For instance, it found that in Patiala, Punjab, land surface temperatures could rise at double the rate of warming projected by global climate models in comparison to its surrounding rural region — an extreme “outlier.” Karur, in Pakistan, was the only other place in the researchers’ analysis that showed as much differential warming. This means that if the models used in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s assessments predict a 2°C temperature rise in Patiala, the rise would actually be 4°C when urban heat-island effects are accounted for. An extra 2°C rise in temperature can have significant implications for susceptibility to heat strokes, water availability, and public expenditure on cooling.

Urban heat island effectThe study includes 18 Indian cities and finds that all of them warm faster than nearby rural areas. On average, Indian cities experience about 45%

more warming than what Earth System Models (ESMs) project for the broader region. In practical terms, this raises expected city warming from about 2.2°C, as suggested by climate models alone, to roughly 2.6-2.7 °C once urban-specific effects are included. The urban heat island effect is the tendency for cities to be hotter than nearby rural land. In the three largest cities by population, the greatest changes are seen in Jalandhar (India), Fuyang (China), and Kirkuk (Iraq), which experience 0.7-0.8°C additional change in temperature compared to their rural surroundings. However, other cities experience significantly greater warming, for example, Asyut (Egypt), and Shangqiu (China), which experience 1.5-2°C additional change, which is up to 100% more than their hinterlands.

Coarse resolution masks differencesThis difference, according to the report published in the peer-reviewed Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, is not because climate models underestimate regional warming but the degree to which models operating at coarse resolution can miss the differences in urban and rural land surfaces’ response to climate change. In most climate models used by the IPCC, cities are effectively blended into their surroundings, masking variations in urban and rural landscapes. The researchers measured these variations by combining satellite observations of land surface temperature from 2002 to 2020 with a machine-learning model. The model ‘learns’ how physical factors — particularly urban-rural differences in vegetation, moisture, and albedo (the proportion of solar heat reflected away from the ground) — control the surface urban heat island today. The authors then applied projected changes in these variables to estimate how the urban heat island itself evolves in a 2°C warmer world.

The dominant driver is vegetation-driven cooling of rural areas. In north India, climate models project increases in moisture and vegetation productivity in the countryside. Vegetated rural land cools efficiently through evapotranspiration, while cities, dominated by impervious surfaces and engineered drainage, cannot benefit to the same extent. As a result, rural areas cool or warm more slowly, and the temperature gap between cities and villages widens. “Urban heat stress under climate change is an increasing concern, as many cities in the tropics and subtropics can be warmer than their rural surroundings, heightening their vulnerability to rising temperatures,” co-author Manoj Joshi, from the Climatic Research Unit at UEA, said in a statement, “Our results suggest that several cities in North-East China and northern India are projected to warm by 3°C, despite Earth System Model projections of their hinterlands showing a warming of 1.5-2°C.”

End of U.S.-Russia nuclear pact a ‘grave moment’: UN chief



UN chief Antonio Guterres on urged the United States and Russia to quickly sign a new nuclear deal, as the existing treaty was set to expire in a “grave moment for international peace and security.” The New START agreement will end Thursday (February 5, 2026), formally releasing both

Moscow and Washington from a raft of restrictions on their nuclear arsenals. “For the first time in more than half a century, we face a world without any binding limits on the strategic nuclear arsenals of the Russian Federation and the United States of America,” Mr. Guterres said in a statement. The UN secretary-general added that New START and other arms control treaties had “drastically improved the security of all peoples.” “This dissolution of decades of achievement could not come at a worse time — the risk of a nuclear weapon being used is the highest in decades,” he said, without giving more details. Mr. Guterres urged Washington and Moscow “to return to the negotiating table without delay and to agree upon a successor framework.” Russia and the United States together control more than 80% of the world’s nuclear warheads, but arms agreements have been withering away. New START, first signed in 2010, limited each side’s nuclear arsenal to 1,550 deployed strategic warheads — a reduction of nearly 30% from the previous limit set in 2002.

She worked in AC all day. So why did her migraines get worse every afternoon?

These days, my clinic is full of patients with heat-induced migraines, a neurological condition causing severe, throbbing headaches, accompanied by nausea, dizziness and sensitivity to light. One of them told me that she used public transport on a daily basis. She didn’t spend all day out in the sun but instead moved swiftly from her air-conditioned office to the train station. But after a month of recurring headaches, she noticed a change. “I got them every day and they became more severe in the afternoons,” she said.

Her schedule had three unexpected triggers for headaches. She left her air-conditioned office and headed to the railway station during the afternoon when it is the hottest outside. In order to keep her skin safe from harmful rays, she tightly covered her head with a cotton dupatta. Although this shield kept her away from the sun’s rays, the trapped heat in addition to humidity led to a micro-sauna situation causing dilation of blood vessels in her head. In order to cope with drowsiness, she consumed three cups of tea per day. This caused dehydration, besides raising her heart-beat to high levels well before venturing out into the heat. Besides, she skipped lunch due to a feeling of nausea and only had some snacks in the afternoon. How heat affects the brain, even indoors

The fact is, the impact of a heat wave does not depend on whether the patient is sitting in direct sun rays or comfortably sitting at home. Heat often accompanies drops in barometric or atmospheric pressure. And such changes become a physical trigger for the nervous brain. Barometric pressure changes, particularly drops preceding storms, are common migraine triggers, causing headaches by creating pressure differences in the sinuses and inner ear. These affect over a third of migraine patients. Moreover, the heat triggers vasodilation, which means blood vessels widen in an effort by the body to try to lower its core temperature. This dilation occurs more frequently among those susceptible to migraines when it takes place in the blood vessels located around the brain, putting pressure on the brain’s sensitive nerves to launch an attack. Regardless of whether one is resting in a cooled environment, the body might still be undergoing the physical after effects of walking to the vehicle or even trying to adjust to the change in atmosphere despite the presence of the air conditioning. The summer surge: New cases or attacks?

A combination of both, although more likely the latter. When summer reaches its peak in Mumbai, the number of “secondary” headaches in patients, who normally do not



suffer from migraines due to heat exhaustion or dehydration, goes up significantly. But the major problem lies within the migraine patients, where the number of attacks goes up from two monthly to around eight or ten. Heat reduces the “migraine threshold.” In simple terms, it would be like a cup of hot liquid almost spilling due to being filled up 90 per cent of the time. The body is stressed out due to the strain of maintaining internal temperature, making the nervous system hyper-reactive to any stimulus.

The “invisible” summer triggersThough it is obvious that one must avoid the intense heat during noon, it is some of the other less considered triggers that contribute to summer migraines. One of them is what we call shower shock. It might be tempting to hop into a cold shower right after stepping out of the hot weather, but this sudden exposure to contrasting temperatures may trigger a “cold-stimulus headache” that will often lead to a migraine. It should be understood that air conditioners do not only reduce temperatures, they also reduce humidity levels. Due to the lack of visible sweat on the skin, dehydration, another trigger, is usually overlooked in such an environment. Caffeine is a common beverage consumed by people on hot days as it provides an immediate jolt of energy. But it is a diuretic. The addition of this to sweating during commuting leads to dehydration. Heat is often associated with a lack of appetite, which can be disastrous when coupled with low blood sugar. The changes we made for our patientThe young professional stopped using the tight head wrap and used an umbrella instead because this would help her air out her head during her walks. Second, she reduced two cups of tea with salty chaas (buttermilk) or fresh coconut water to help her replenish her electrolytes. Lastly, she ensured that she ate a nutritious snack with proteins before going to work.

Government plans monthly indicator for service sector output using GST data



Government plans monthly indicator for service sector output using GST dataThe index will cover sub-sectors such as wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, accommodation and food services, publishing, telecom, consultancy, computing infrastructure, finance and insurance, real estate, and arts, sports and recreation, among others. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) on Monday outlined its plan to measure the output of the formal services sector every month, with the Goods and Services Tax (GST) data set to be a crucial input in the indicator. Releasing an 'approach paper' on the same, the statistics ministry on Monday invited comments by May 5 on its plan to compile an Index of Service Production (ISP) for the economy's formal sector with 2024-25 as the base year.

The paper comes ahead of the revision of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) next month as part of MoSPI's overhaul of official statistics. Currently, there is no services counterpart to the IIP, which is one of the two monthly, or high-frequency data, published by the government, with the other being the Consumer Price Index (CPI), on whose basis the headline retail inflation number of the country is calculated. Both the IIP and CPI numbers are keenly eyed by policymakers to understand the trajectory of the economy and the underlying developments. To understand how India's services sector is performing, policymakers and economists currently refer to the S&P Global's HSBC Purchasing Managers' Index. However, the PMI is a survey-based sentiment index and does not measure actual output.

"The services sector is the most dynamic and rapidly expanding segment of the economy. In terms of economic significance, the services sector contributes more than half of India's GDP, generates millions of jobs and has been a major catalyst for the country's economic transformation in

the last few decades," MoSPI said on Monday.The index will cover sub-sectors such as wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, accommodation and food services, publishing, telecom, consultancy, computing infrastructure, finance and insurance, real estate, and arts, sports and recreation, among others.

The measurement of the service sector's output on a monthly basis is notoriously difficult for a variety of reasons. For one, there has been no "consistent high-frequency administrative data" available for real estate, professional services, retail trade, and health, among other major segments, MoSPI said on Monday. Further, for segments where output data was available – air and rail transport, banking, insurance, etc – their contribution in overall services was under 20%. Within these, data for banking and insurance services was in value terms. As a result, the diverse nature of the services sector made standardisation of output indicators and compilation "a challenging task". With GST Network data providing information on production and outward supplies across different sectors, MoSPI said it plans to use it to "monitor the progress of services sector". Since certain sectors such as health and education are exempt from GST, additional sources of data for them will have to be identified. As such, MoSPI also plans to use administrative data from specific ministries and organisations as well as its Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE), which is currently being conducted. All these three data sources exclude the services provided by the informal sector. "The exclusions due to lack of unavailability of data from the three sources under consideration...account for nearly 33% of the total GVA of services sector," MoSPI said, adding that the health and education sector – which will be excluded until the ASISSE results are available – accounts for nearly 10% of the Gross Value Added of the services sector. To adjust the output for prices, while a Producer Price Index would have been the preferred option, MoSPI plans to use a variety of measures including non-food Consumer Price Index and sub-sector specific CPI, among others. "The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)...is working towards revising the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and developing a Producer Price Index (PPI). The Working Group constituted for the purpose has recommended methodologies for compiling PPIs for the services sub sectors like Banking, Insurance, Securities, Pensions, Air Transport, Railway (Passenger), Railway (Goods) and Telecom. The Quarterly Indices/trial indices of the above sub-sectors are likely to be available in near future," MoSPI said.

Despite war-related input shortages, India's March industrial growth falls only slightly to 4.1%

India's industrial growth cooled only slightly in March to 4.1% year-on-year from 5.1% in February despite the disruptions caused by the war in West Asia, data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) showed on Tuesday. At 4.1%, while industrial growth as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is the lowest in five months, it has defied expectations somewhat.Economists, however, warned that the data for March reflects only a "part of the shock as uncertainty and weak producer sentiment have yet to fully manifest in production data". "The deeper impact is expected to show up down the road, particularly in the first quarter of this fiscal," said Dipti Deshpande, Principal Economist at Crisil.

The industrial production figures come days after commerce ministry data showed on April 20 that output of India's eight core industries – coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement, and electricity – contracted by 0.4% in March in what was one of the first signs of the impact of the West Asia war on economic activity in India, with production of fertiliser dropping 24.6% year-on-year – the largest decline on record. With the eight core industries making up around 40% of the IIP, the former's performance is usually seen as a lead indicator of the latter. However, at 4.1%, the March IIP growth is better than what several economists had expected.In 2025-26 as a whole, India's industrial production rose 4.1%, broadly unchanged from 4% in 2024-25.In March, the headline IIP growth was supported by a 5.5% rise in mining activity and 4.3% increase in manufacturing production. Electricity generation, on the other hand, rose only 0.8%, down from a growth of 2.3% seen in February.To be sure, there were some signs – albeit limited – of the war adversely impacting the manufacturing sector, which makes up more than three-fourths of the IIP.

We awaited March IP (industrial production) data to assess any immediate impact on industrial growth amid energy shortage in general and gas rationing in particular," Barclays economists Aastha Gudwani and Amruta Ghare



noted. "To that extent, only chemical and chemical products saw slower year-on-year and month-on-month growth rates in March. Apart from that, we do not see any early signs of sharply lower output growth in impacted sectors."In terms of the goods produced, capital goods posted the biggest year-on-year increase at 14.6%, with output of construction goods also rising robustly by 6.7%. These two classes of goods together make up about a fifth of the IIP.Meanwhile, production of primary goods was 2.2% higher in March, while that of intermediate goods rose 3.3% compared to the same month last year. On the consumer front, production of durable goods rose by 5.3%. Non-durables saw their output increase by 1.1%. "Going forward, urban consumption faces risks from uptick in inflation and subdued IT sector hiring. Furthermore, risks of below normal rainfall amid rising El Nino possibility pose a challenge for the rural demand scenario," said Rajani Sinha, Chief Economist at CareEdge Ratings.This is the last set of IIP numbers to be released with 2011-12 as the base year. On June 1, MoSPI will release the revised IIP series which will have 2022-23 as the base year. The new series is part of a broader overhaul of India's official statistics, with the new Consumer Price Index (CPI) and GDP series released earlier this year in February. As previously reported, in the new IIP series, MoSPI has proposed swapping factories that have shut down with new ones, among other changes.

Gold, silver trade on firm note ahead of US Fed decision



Gold and silver traded cautiously on the MCX ahead of the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision. While both metals opened higher, they faced resistance at key levels. International markets remained mildly positive as investors weighed global macroeconomic uncertainties

Mumbai: Gold and silver traded on a firm note on Wednesday ahead of the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision, with both precious metals trading in a narrow range. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for June 5 opened at Rs 1,50,720 per 10 grams, up Rs 693 or 0.46 per cent from the previous close of Rs 1,50,027. However, the yellow metal pared gains and was trading marginally lower by Rs 56 or 0.04 per cent to Rs

1,49,971 at 11:30 am. So far in the session, it touched an intraday low of Rs 1,49,720 — a decrease of 0.20 per cent or Rs 307 — and a high of Rs 1,51,527 — an increase of 1 per cent or Rs 1,500.

On the other hand, silver contracts for July 3 rose Rs 826 or 0.34 per cent to begin the session at Rs 2,43,589 per kg compared to the previous close of Rs 2,42,763. At the time of writing this story, the white metal was trading at Rs 2,38,738, up Rs 1393 or 0.6 per cent. During the session, silver hit a low of Rs 2,37,607 — a jump of 0.11 per cent or Rs 262 — and a high of Rs 2,38,750 — an increase of 0.59 per cent or Rs 1,405. Moreover, in international markets, both gold and silver were trading mildly positive.COMEX gold was up 0.19 per cent at \$4,616 per ounce, while COMEX silver gained 0.81 per cent to \$73.81 per ounce. According to a commodity market expert, MCX gold is facing resistance near the Rs 1,50,000–Rs 1,51,000 levels, with price action indicating limited upside unless it sustains above these levels. "A sustained move above Rs 1,51,000 could strengthen bullish momentum and push prices towards Rs 1,52,000–Rs 1,53,000, while on the downside, a break below Rs 1,49,000 may trigger profit booking and drag prices lower," the expert said.For silver, the expert said that the metal remains volatile, with immediate resistance seen in the Rs 2,44,000–Rs 2,46,000 range. "A decisive break below Rs 2,43,000 could accelerate declines towards Rs 2,41,000 levels, while a move above resistance may support a recovery," the expert said, adding that the near-term outlook for both metals remains cautious amid global macro uncertainty and geopolitical developments.

800 hours of handwork, 3,000 crystals each: Gaurav Gupta designs Lady Gaga, Doechee's sculptural bodysuits for 'Devil Wears Prada 2' music video



Indian designer Gaurav Gupta has yet again been making waves, this time for creating dramatic custom couture for Lady Gaga and Doechee for their Runway music video featured in The Devil Wears Prada 2, which stars Anne Hathaway, Meryl Streep, Emily Blunt, and Simone Ashley in key roles.The avant-garde video, which was released this week, has been trending on social media for its theatrical silhouettes.Lady Gaga, Doechee in Gaurav Gupta's sculptural bodysuits

Sharing the video on Instagram, Gupta shared that he created two sculptural bodysuits that reflected his futuristic

Soha Ali Khan learns why sleeping on the tummy could be ruining women's skin health: 'I find myself flat on my face most times'

Pulmonologist Dr Viny Kantroo recently mentioned in a conversation with actor Soha Ali Khan that while most people love to sleep on their tummy, for women, it may not reflect well on their skin health. "Sleeping on your belly may not be good for women because they have poorer skin health when they sleep on their tummy. You get puffy eyes because the level of circulation, which happens when you sleep on your tummy, is lower. You compare yourself to yourself sleeping on your tummy one night and on your back the other night. There is a marked difference which is seen on your face," she told Khan on her YouTube chat show.Soha also agreed with her observation and shared, "I have tried, but I find myself flat on my face most times."

While skincare routines are important, factors like pressure and fluid distribution during sleep also affect the skin, emphasised Dr Ajay Dodeja, junior consultant, dermatology, KIMS Hospitals, Thane."The way your face presses against a pillow for hours can influence puffiness, creasing, and the overall look of your skin," added Dr Dodeja.

Why is sleeping on the stomach linked to puffiness or dull-looking skin?

According to Dr Dodeja, sleeping face down puts constant pressure on the skin, which can block lymphatic drainage and cause fluid to build up, especially around the eyes. "This can lead to morning puffiness, mild swelling, and noticeable sleep lines or creases. Continuous pressure over time may make these lines more visible," described Dr Dodeja.

Is sleeping on the back or side a better option?

Sleeping on your back is typically the best position for your skin because it avoids directly pressing your face. "Side sleeping is better than stomach sleeping, but it can still create uneven pressure on one side of the face. Over

aesthetic. The Always Remember Us This Way singer donned a pearl-toned corseted ensemble, heavily hand-embellished with crystals and pearls that shimmered under the lights, giving the illusion of a luminous second skin.Doechee, on the other hand, appeared in a black version of the look, punctuated with spikes and metal studs layered over a sequined, crystal-studded base that added a sharper edge to the music video.800 hours of handwork

Both ensembles were designed as single-piece silhouettes with integrated face coverings that extended from head to toe. Gupta also shared that the couture pieces required more than 800 hours of meticulous handwork by a team of artisans and were adorned with over 3,000 crystals each. The video, directed by Parris Goebel, also showcases designs from celebrated labels including Robert Wun, Harris Reed and Viktor & Rolf. "Both looks are constructed as single-piece silhouettes with integrated face covering, extending from head to toe to merge body, garment, and mask. Realised over 800 hours of handwork by a team of artisans, each piece is embedded with over 3000 crystals, creating a dimensional, immersive surface," Gupta captioned the video.Gaurav Gupta had earlier dressed several international stars, including Shakira, Mindy Kaling, Beyoncé, Cardi B, Megan Thee Stallion, Jenna Ortega, and Fan Bingbing.



time, consistently sleeping on one side might cause fine lines or slight asymmetry."

Can sleeping position affect long-term skin ageing?

Yes, but the effect is gradual and subtle. "Ongoing pressure on the skin can lead to 'sleep lines', which are different from expression lines. As the skin loses elasticity with age, these lines may become more noticeable if the habit continues for years," said Dr Dodeja.

What can people do if they can't change their sleeping position easily?

Not everyone can change their sleep position right away, and that's okay. Small changes can help reduce the impact."Use a soft, clean pillowcase like satin or silk to lower friction."Keep the skin well-moisturized at night to support barrier function."Elevate the head slightly to reduce fluid buildup around the eyes."Practice good sleep hygiene and stick to a consistent sleep schedule.Are puffy eyes always linked to sleeping position?No, remarked Dr Dodeja, mentioning that under-eye puffiness can also come from factors like lack of sleep, high salt intake, allergies, sinus congestion, or dehydration. Sleeping position is just one of many factors.

'Why do some people with type 2 diabetes manage with just diet and exercise while others need insulin?'



Have you ever, like this Quora user, wondered why some people with type 2 diabetes manage with just diet and exercise, while others need insulin? To gain an insightful understanding, we reached out to Dr Vijay Negalur, HoD of Diabetology at KIMS Hospitals, Thane, who emphasised that type 2 diabetes isn't the same for everyone."Many people, especially in the early stages, still produce insulin but don't use it effectively. This issue is called insulin resistance. With a proper diet, regular exercise, and weight management, the body can respond better to insulin. This helps keep blood sugar levels stable without medication," said Dr Negalur.

Suspected West Nile fever cases raise alert: What you need to know about symptoms, spread, and prevention

Health authorities in Kerala have raised concern after five suspected cases of West Nile fever were reported in Ernakulam. According to The Hindu, the cases have emerged from multiple locations, including Elanjai, Eroor in Thrirunithura, Pallikkara in Kizhakkambalam, Ponekkara in Edappally, and Palluruthy. While confirmation is still pending, the development has prompted precautionary measures, especially given the seasonal rise in mosquito-borne illnesses in the state during the summer months.

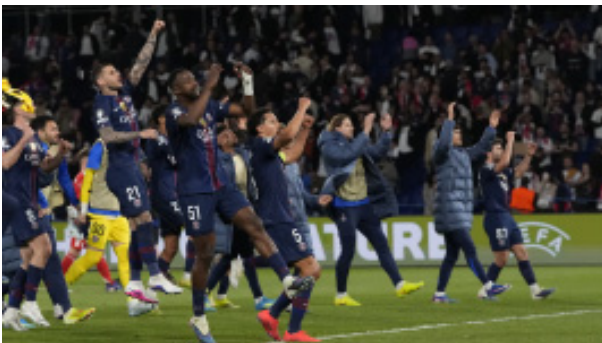
Clarifying the situation, the report stated that the District Medical Officer, Dr R. Shahirsha, said, "We haven't received any confirmation of WNF cases. These are suspected cases and can be confirmed only after tests are carried out." The samples have been sent for testing, and results are expected within 14 days. At present, officials have not identified any cluster of infections, but they are urging vigilance.With uncertainty around confirmation and growing concern about vector-borne diseases, the situation highlights the need to better understand West Nile fever, how it spreads, and what individuals and communities

can do to reduce risk.

What exactly is West Nile fever, and how does it spread in humans?

Dr Palleti Siva Karthik Reddy, MBBS MD general medicine, FAIG, Consultant physician at Elite Care Clinic, tells indianexpress.com, "West Nile fever is a mosquito-borne viral infection caused by the West Nile virus, which primarily circulates between birds and mosquitoes. Humans are incidental hosts and typically get infected through the bite of an infected mosquito, most commonly of the Culex species."He stresses that it does not spread through casual human contact. "In most cases, the infection is mild or asymptomatic, but a small proportion can develop neurological complications, particularly in older adults or those with weakened immunity."According to Dr Reddy, confirmation of West Nile fever "relies on laboratory testing, typically through detection of virus-specific IgM antibodies in blood or cerebrospinal fluid." In some cases, he states that PCR testing may be used in the early phase of infection."

PSG vs Bayern Munich: Nine goals on a night football forgot to be complicated



GNS News Agency, May 5

PSG's celebrate after the Champions League semi-final first leg soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich in Paris, Tuesday, April 28, 2026. (AP Photo) PSG's celebrate after the Champions League semi-final first leg soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich in Paris, What made Tuesday night at the Parc des Princes worth remembering wasn't the volume of goals but the manner of them — teams playing through each other rather than around each other, forward lines treating the space behind the defensive line as their natural habitat. When they were drawn together in the semis, the goals they had scored to get there suggested something like this. It still had to be lived through to be believed. Kane's penalty in the 17th minute was the opening statement — composed, inevitable, the kind of finish that carries no visible effort. Kvaratskhelia answered seven minutes later, bursting down the left and curling one past Neuer with the conviction of a man who had seen the gap before the ball arrived.

Joao Neves put PSG ahead with a header in the 33rd — arriving at the back post at exactly the right moment, the kind of run that defensive lines lose in the noise of a crowded box. Olise levelled it four minutes before half time. He had four PSG players around him when he received the ball, drifting inside from the right. Any one of them could have closed him down. None of them did it quickly enough. The shot was low, precise, and struck with the certainty of someone who had already decided where it was going before the ball reached his foot. Four defenders, one outcome. The penalty arrived on the stroke of half time. Whether it was

one or not depended on where you were sitting. Inside the Parc des Princes, nobody was arguing. Three-two at the break. The crowd had barely sat down all evening. They didn't sit down now.

The second half took about ten minutes to make five-two feel inevitable. Kvaratskhelia's second was timed perfectly to meet the cross; Dembele's, five minutes later, was the kind of finish that looks simple because the decision before it was not. Between them, Bayern barely touched the ball. At five-two, Bayern looked finished. The scoreline had the feel of something that was going to get worse before the final whistle. Then Upamecano headed one back in the 64th minute and something shifted inside the stadium. Not panic, not yet — but the first stirring of it. A headed goal from a set piece, the most unglamorous way to score, and suddenly the crowd that had been celebrating was checking the clock.

What followed were twenty minutes of the kind of football that reminds you why knockout matches at this stage of the Champions League occupy a category of their own. Bayern pressed. PSG tried to hold. The spaces that had been so freely available in the first hour began to close. And then Diaz happened. Liverpool let the Colombian go in January to fund new arrivals. Arne Slot's side sit fourth in the Premier League, already eliminated from the Champions League, the FA Cup and the EFL Cup. On Tuesday night, watching Diaz work under the floodlights of the Parc des Princes, that January decision would have been difficult to sit with. He had been a problem all evening — pressing the PSG backline until it buckled, winning the penalty that Kane converted in the 17th with a run that gave the defender no good options. His goal for five-four was the best of the night. Kane, playing provider from deep — a role that would have felt familiar from his Tottenham years — found Diaz's path. The first touch took out Marquinhos. The feint took him out again, the Brazilian's weight committed the wrong way, nothing left to do but watch. The finish was low and hard into the PSG net. Diaz didn't break stride. It was the 84th minute. Five-four. Bayern had come back from the dead and the Parc des Princes, which had been a place of celebration an hour earlier, was suddenly very quiet. That was how it ended. One leg played, one to go, everything still open. PSG and Bayern gave the game back to the people who watch it for reasons that have nothing to do with systems or set-pieces.

At FIFA World Cup, players who cover their mouths during confrontations could be red carded

GNS News Agency, May 5

The new rule on players receiving red cards for covering their mouths comes after Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni was accused of homophobic abuse of Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior during a Champions League game by covering his mouth with his jersey. The new rule on players receiving red cards for covering their mouths comes after Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni was accused of homophobic abuse of Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior during a Champions League game by covering his mouth with his jersey.

The sight of footballers covering their mouths while confronting players from the opposition team during games is a common sight. But now, at events like the upcoming FIFA World Cup, such acts might receive red cards from the refs. The International Football Association Board (IFAB) unanimously approved the rule at a special meeting in Vancouver, Canada along with another rule which states that players who leave the field in protest at a referee's decision may be red-carded. "As was agreed at The IFAB's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in February, these decisions follow thorough FIFA-led consultations with all key stakeholders," a statement read. "At the discretion of the competition organiser, any player covering their mouth in a confrontational situation with an opponent may be sanctioned with a red card," it said. Both of the FIFA-proposed laws were unanimously approved by IFAB at a special meeting in Vancouver, Canada and will be implemented for this year's World Cup. The new law comes after it was advocated for by FIFA president Gianni Infantino, who had said in February that any player "who covers their mouth



while speaking to opponents during confrontations should be sent off. Infantino's comments had come after Real Madrid's Vinicius Jr had accused Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni of saying discriminatory slurs in an ill-tempered Champions League game. Prestianni was accused of abusing Vinicius by covering his mouth with his shirt after the Brazil star had scored Real Madrid's winner.

Despite Prestianni and his club vehemently denying the accusations, he was slapped with a six-match suspension by UEFA for discriminatory conduct that was deemed homophobic. The second rule is an attempt by the governing body to prevent a repeat of the scenes witnessed at this year's Africa Cup of Nations final where Senegal's players had walked off the pitch in protest at a potentially decisive penalty awarded to hosts Morocco. "At the discretion of the competition organiser, the referee may sanction with a red card any player who leaves the field of play in protest at a referee's decision," IFAB said.

Most sixes in an IPL season: Why Vaibhav Sooryavanshi could break Chris Gayle's record in 2026



GNS News Agency, May 5

The IPL 2026 season has seen unprecedented levels of six-hitting just as the tournament has moved past the half-way stage. The previous season in 2025 was the greatest edition in terms of six-hitting with 1294 sixes hit in 73 matches. The individual striking has entered a whole new level this year, with the Indian batters leading the charts

with a bevy of maximums. Among them, teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has emerged as the six-hitting freak thus far, smoking a staggering 37 sixes in only nine innings, putting him already close to the Indian record in an edition. Sooryavanshi also tops the run-getters list with 400 runs and also broke the Indian record held by Murali Vijay for most sixes in an innings, having smashed 12 of them during his 36-ball hundred against SunRisers Hyderabad. Among Indian batters, Abhishek Sharma holds the record for the most sixes struck in a series, with 42 maximums in the 2024 edition.

Several big-hitting superstars have, over the years, notched up massive six-hitting streaks that have lit up the tournament. Chris Gayle, the highest six-hitter in the history of the IPL, remains on top of the charts even as newer power-hitters have emerged on the scene. Gayle remains the only batter to smash 50 sixes in a season twice, achieving the feat with RCB in successive years in 2012 and 2013. West Indies all-rounder Andre Russell is the only other batter to slam 50 sixes in a year, achieving it with Kolkata Knight Riders in 2019.

allegations of mismanagement. He was re-elected as SLC President unopposed in 2021 2023 and 2025. Silva also served as the President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) in 2025, where he succeeded Jay Shah for being in the top role. Sri Lanka's failure to reach the Super Eight's stage of this year's T20 World Cup, which they co-hosted with India, has been cited as a trigger for change in the SLC administration. Sri Lanka's Sports Law of 1973 empowers the minister to dissolve sports federations, though such intervention in elected bodies runs counter to the International Cricket Council's (ICC) charter. It is understood the ICC has been briefed on the developments, though a timeline on fresh elections is yet to be clear. Silva was previously ousted as SLC chief in 2023 after the national team had a poor ODI World Cup campaign in 2023, prompting a suspension of the board by the ICC.

'I'm not old, just that Vaibhav is really young': Yashasvi Jaiswal jokes



Yashasvi Jaiswal is only 24, but when batting with a teenager nearly a decade younger than him, he is made to look much older. So the question came during the presentation: "How is it being the older partner?" He laughed and quipped: "I don't think so, that I'm older. I'm still very young." On a solemn note, he said: "But of course, he (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi) is quite young. So, I don't know what to say about it, to be honest. Of course, it's amazing. I really enjoyed batting with him and he's playing amazing.

Kartik Karkera, one of India's top marathoners, on the advantage of a Super Shoe

The difference between an elite international athlete like Sebastian Sawa and an athlete like me is that he uses a prototype or development shoe made specifically for him by the brand (Adidas), which sponsors him. But I wear a pair of shoe that can be bought in the market. For the marathons in Mumbai and Delhi, I wore the ASICS Metaspeed Sky Tokyo. Its price range starts from Rs 25,000, but it is not the latest version. For an athlete like Sawa, or another elite athlete with a shoe sponsor, the shoe size won't be like a standard UK size 8 or 9 but will be the one that fits their leg perfectly. These prototype shoes are sometimes not released in the market at all.

At the Bengaluru 10K, I saw international athletes wearing a development shoe of ASICS — MS5 Type-P. I asked my ASICS manager if I could also get a pair, but I was told it would be very difficult. Only in the Olympic Games and the World Championships are runners not allowed to use the prototype or development shoe. Now, I have a sponsorship from ASICS. There is ASICS India and there is ASICS Global. So, the elite global athletes get the prototype. Before this year, I used to buy all my shoes. I used to buy Nike shoes, ASICS shoes, shoes from Anta, a Chinese company, which are very good and much cheaper. I have spent a lot on carbon-plated shoes.

Potential gain If I get a prototype shoe and have a good course to run, I can run a sub-2 hour, 10 minute time, while my personal best is 2:13:10 achieved at the Delhi marathon. Super Shoes give you an advantage when you run a longer distance, like in the 5K it won't be much, and it will be more in the 10K. But that said, Sawa deserves credit because you have to put in the hard work even while running with prototype shoes. If you can't hold the speed the shoes can take you, then you can't use that shoe. Sawa was capable of running at that speed and was able to break the world record.

Feeling faster! started professional running post COVID. I was using the Pegasus (Nike) and Adidas Adizero, which was a flat version. I didn't have access to a carbon-plated shoe. The first time I wore a carbon-plated shoe, it was the Nike Vaporfly in 2021. I wore it for one of my uni-

So it's always, I'm always happy seeing from the other end, the way he's hitting the ball," he said. As has been the pattern, both breezed away, rollicking to 51 runs in 3.1 overs. "We knew that it's a high scoring ground. So we have to keep the intent and we have to go whenever we feel like. So I was also thinking, okay, if it is in my range, I'm going to hit it. And of course, we needed a good start because we have to score more than 200 runs. So it was pretty clear that we are going to hit the ball if it is in our arc," he detailed.

Jaiswal has battled with a newfound freedom. "I think it's all about having fun in the middle. And of course, we know this game is like that also. We have to keep our intent and think to score runs as we all spread this into the dressing room," he said. After a couple of lowly seasons, Royals have shown signs of revival and sit third on the table. "I think it's been pretty good. Everyone trusts each other and of course, everyone is not going to perform on the same day. But of course, we have a very good team. So we are practising hard. We focus on the process and I think it will come on the right time whenever it has to. I think we all are enjoying it a lot. Very nice environment. Very happy, all the guys and we are loving it. So we are just very excited for all the games," he said.



versity races (in Russia), then I wore it for some half marathons there as well. The Nike Vaporfly was the version that Eliud Kipchoge wore in Monza (Nike Breaking2 project). It reduced a lot of load on my legs and I immediately felt faster. I ran 1 hour and 6 minutes (66 minutes) in a half marathon while wearing Super Shoes. Before that I was running the half marathon in 72 minutes. At that time, I would say the shoes helped me 50 percent at least and the rest was my hard work.

Being an orthopaedic doctor, I see a lot of cases of amateur runners, who have not trained enough, getting injured because of running in Super Shoes when their body is not ready for it. Amateur runners are having crazy knee issues and a lot of Achilles' tendon ruptures. It's because when they wear the Super Shoes, they are able to push more than their body is capable of. But when they remove the shoe, they are back to reality. They feel they have overrun. Not just shoes. Of course, it's not just the shoes. The science, nutrition, and talent of the runners also matter. I think Sawa is like a science project because of the research in a lab to help him run faster. They have a huge team behind him and lots of money has been put into the athlete. I don't have a private sponsor. They also have specialised pacers, so they are not shocked because they know the pace they are running at. In Mumbai and Delhi, I didn't have pacer. I was going with the guys in front of me.

FIFA and AFC enable Afghan women to compete in international matches

Vancouver: The FIFA Council on Wednesday approved an amendment to the FIFA Governance Regulations, which enables Afghan female players to compete in official international matches as part of FIFA competitions. The Afghanistan women team has not played an official competitive international since the Taliban returned to power in 2021. The historic decision's ultimate aim is to ensure that players are not excluded from international football due to situations beyond their control, in line with FIFA's statutory principles of universality, inclusion and non-discrimination.

"The FIFA Council today approved a momentous amendment to the FIFA Governance Regulations, which enables Afghan female players — including members of the FIFA-funded and FIFA-supported Afghan Women United squad — to represent their country in official international matches as part of FIFA competitions in agreement with the relevant local confederation, in this case the Asian Football Confederation," said FIFA president Gianni Infantino. The FIFA-funded and -supported team will hold their next training camp from 1 to 9 June in New Zealand, where they will also have the opportunity to face off against the Cook Islands. Although the amendment has immediate effect, FIFA will now lead the required administrative and preparatory steps, including team registration and the establishment of an operational and sporting structure.

"World football's governing body will provide all necessary resources — human, technical and financial — to ensure a safe, professional and sustainable pathway to official competition, FIFA said in a release. "Support packages for Afghan Women United players will continue throughout the transition phase for up to two years, allowing the new structure to evolve while maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding, performance and well-being," it added.



Former Afghanistan captain Khalida Popal welcomed the move as a transformative moment. "For these players, representing Afghanistan is about identity, dignity and hope. Thanks are due to the leadership of FIFA, which listened to their biggest request and delivered a solution that no other sport has ever achieved. This moment also shows that when we stand united, we can achieve more," he said.

This reform builds on the FIFA Strategy for Action for Afghan Women's Football, endorsed by the FIFA Council in May last year, and follows the creation of Afghan Women United as a FIFA-supported team providing structured playing opportunities for Afghan women footballers living outside the country. Now, for the first time, these Afghan female players will be able to represent their country in official matches with full sporting recognition. Last year, the Council approved the FIFA Strategy for Action for Afghan Women's Football, which foresees the establishment of the Afghan women's refugee team (AWRT) and provides the FIFA administration with a mandate to organise and facilitate its operations to start its activities as soon as possible.

FIFA chief Infantino applauds PM Modi's football session in Sikkim

New Delhi: FIFA President Gianni Infantino on Wednesday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's passion for sports, sharing a photograph of the PM engaging in a game of football with children in Sikkim. On Tuesday PM Modi joined his "young friends" in playing football in Gangtok, Sikkim, calling it a lovely morning and an "energising session". Sharing photos of his game session in a post on X, PM Modi said, "Nothing like playing some football with my young friends in Sikkim on a lovely Gangtok morning!"

In another post, PM Modi said, "Clearly, an energising football session with these youngsters!" The FIFA chief, known for his push to expand the game's footprint in South Asia, shared the image on his Instagram with a caption, "Football enjoys immense popularity in the northeastern region and stands as one of the area's most significant

sports interests, frequently competing with or even outshining cricket in states such as Sikkim, Mizoram, Manipur, and Meghalaya.

This isn't the first time the FIFA president has acknowledged PM Modi's influence. The two have met on several occasions on international forums. Their most notable meetings was in December 2018 at the G-20 summit in Argentina and again in December 2024 in Kuwait. During the meeting at the G-20 summit in Argentina, FIFA chief gifted a PM Modi a personalised football jersey with his name on its back. "Impossible to come to Argentina and not think about football. Argentinian players are tremendously popular in India. Today, received this jersey from @FIFACOM President Gianni Infantino. I thank him for the kind gesture," PM Modi had said.

Sidharth Bhardwaj says he ‘will marry’ Manisha Rani, confesses his feelings: ‘Will make it official if feelings are mutual’



Model-turned-actor Sidharth Bhardwaj was last seen on the reality show The 50. During his time on the show, Sidharth appeared to be someone who often spoke his mind, and his likes and dislikes towards fellow contestants were also quite strong. Carrying those feelings outside of the show, too, Sidharth recently confessed to being romantically inclined towards fellow contestant Manisha Rani. In an interview with Siddharth Kannan, Sidharth spoke about how he felt about her and even said that he would marry her if they got romantically involved.Sidharth Bhardwaj on Manisha Rani

Sharing his feelings for Manisha Rani, Sidharth Bhardwaj said, “Manisha Rani is an amazing girl, but she is scared of me. She likes me; had she not, she wouldn’t have spoken to me so much. She has also cried for me, so I know she likes me, and she also knows that I am a free will kind of man, and she cannot afford that. She has been heart-broken before, and so have I. I am aware she likes me romantically, and I like her too that way. We have discussed this.”

He further added, “She is a fantastic girl, I get worried

that if I get romantically involved with her and wrong her, I won’t be able to forgive myself. She is so full of life and genuine; if I get romantically involved with her, I will marry her. She knows, and that’s why girls like her like me, because they know that even though I am bad in people’s eyes, I am a good person from within, and she has seen that side of me. She fought for me on The 50 when I got eliminated, even after she knew I was not her vote bank. She gave a tough competition to girls who were stronger than her both physically and mentally. I find that very attractive.”Discussing why they haven’t put up a post together or hinted at these feelings on social media, Sidharth added, “We became friends on the show, we have been in touch, but we both are different personalities. Whenever we meet next and spend time together... if feelings are mutual, we will make it official; if not, we will stay friends. I will attend her wedding, but we won’t do this just because we did a show together; we should come together for the people.”So far, Manisha has not officially spoken about her feelings for Sidharth. In her exit interviews, she had maintained that they were friends.On The 50, Sidharth Bhardwaj often got into fights with fellow contestants when he took a stand against the groupism on the show. Sidharth had called out Prince Narula and Rajat Dalal for playing behind their alliances. Manisha also shared a similar thought after Sidharth’s exit from the game. While he and Manisha were cordial to each other in the game, they were never shown hanging out together. However, once during a task, Manisha took a stand for Sidharth and pointed out how, because he was so vocal about the groupism and dominating natures of Prince and Rajat, is why they evicted him from the show.

In March, Sidharth had exclusively spoken to SCREEN about how he shifted from India to Los Angeles in 2019 for his then-girlfriend. He even recalled his struggles there and shared how he had to drive an Uber since no acting projects were coming his way. “I moved to LA in 2019. At that time, I had a girlfriend, and I shifted there for her. I had thought I would act there, and I was in love. Unfortunately, COVID happened. At that time, America was very strict, but I had to run the house. As an actor, nobody was giving me work. I was not from there, so how would I work there? So I drove an Uber, but it wasn’t like you had to buy another taxi for it; any normal guy can register on the app and drive his personal car. No work is looked down upon there; in fact, the drivers and waiters there earn more money than the superstars in India,” Sidharth had shared.In his latest interview, Sidharth Bhardwaj also spoke about his traumatic childhood and growing up as a hitman’s son.

Rupali Ganguly calls out Alia Bhatt’s leather ensemble at Milan Fashion week

Nearly two months after Alia Bhatt’s appearance at Milan Fashion Week 2026, her look has once again made headlines after Anupamaa actor Rupali Ganguly shared an old video criticising the actor for allegedly wearing an outfit made entirely of animal leather. The video labels her a “hypo-crite” over weather after her public advocacy for animal welfare. The video, originally posted by animal rights activist Sai Lohit on March 8, claims that Alia’s car coat, Horsebit bag, and sharp kitten heels were all made from animal-derived leather, including calfskin and lambskin. It also criticises Gucci’s iconic Horsebit bag design, arguing that the horsebit symbol represents equipment historically used to dominate and control horses by placing metal bits in their mouths.Sai says in the video, “Gucci exploits snakes, crocodiles, silkworms, cows, and sheep. Is this what you stand for? Getting innocent animals murdered?”

The video resurfaced after Rupali Ganguly, known for being vocal about animal welfare, reposted it on her Instagram Stories without any caption.Sai Lohit has previously criticised several celebrities over animal-related issues, including Sreeleela for allegedly promoting camel milk skincare products, and Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna for using horses at wedding festivities.On March 21, Sai shared another video claiming, “Alia Bhatt is scared. She restricted my video.” He alleged that after his original post crossed 3 million views and people began tagging the actress demanding accountability, his account’s visibility on her page was restricted.“Any rational person would cut ties with Gucci after knowing their reality, but Alia Bhatt didn’t. Rather, she restricted my account so others can’t see my comments on her posts. She is scared. How many people can you block?” he said.‘My Gucci outfit is sharp, beautiful’Previously, while speaking to Vogue, Alia had described her Milan Fashion Week ensemble, saying, “My



outfit for the Gucci show is very sharp, structured and simple. But it is also really beautiful. It is just a trench—like a really sharp black trench. It is fully structured and with these amazing heels—also black with a bit of silver detailing—and a black and silver bag.”

Fashion publications including Elle and Vogue reported that Alia wore a leather ensemble for the event. Product details for the Gucci Horsebit bag she carried are also publicly available online, where it is described as being made from “100% Nappa Leather,” a full-grain leather commonly sourced from sheep, lamb, or calfskin. Her black kitten heels are similarly listed on Gucci’s official website as being crafted from “black nappa leather.”Alia Bhatt has not yet responded to the criticism or the claims made by the activist. Notably, the actor is also the founder of sustainable children’s clothing brand Ed-a-Mamma.

Yash’s Toxic postponed again, not to release on June 4: ‘We will release on globally aligned date’



Yash’s Toxic, one of the most anticipated films of the year, has been postponed from its previously scheduled June 4 release. The actor took to Instagram to confirm the delay, though a new release date is yet to be announced.Sharing a detailed note, Yash wrote, “There are films we make, and then there are films that remind us why we fell in love with cinema. Toxic has been one such journey. Presenting our film at CinemaCon and witnessing the overwhelming global response reaffirmed what we have always believed—that this film deserves to reach its fullest potential worldwide.”“Toxic is complete’He went on to explain that the film is complete but requires further alignment on a global scale before its release. “Toxic is complete, and

we are currently aligning global distribution and partnerships. In light of this, we have decided to recalibrate our release timeline. While we will not be releasing on June 4 as announced earlier, we will be releasing at a later, globally aligned date. Toxic will come to theatres across the world soon.”

Ram Charan’s ‘Peddi’ begins filming final song, makers promise chartbuster

Hyderabad: The makers of director Buchi Babu Sana’s eagerly awaited rural action drama ‘Peddi’, featuring Telugu star Ram Charan in the lead, have now begun filming the final song of the film.

Sources close to the unit of the film say that the number will be a sensational special song featuring Ram Charan. “The song is currently being shot in Hyderabad which is guaranteed to set theatres on fire,” says a source, who also informs that the song will contain a surprise element in it for audiences.“The tune, the dance, the grandeur set and a surprise in it will make the audience go berserk. The song, that has been set to tune by A R Rahman, will be another sure-shot chartbuster,” says the source.

Jason Sudeikis in Chak De! India mode, to coach a women’s football team



Ted Lasso season 4 teaser: When the third season of Apple TV’s popular sports dramedy show Ted Lasso concluded three years ago, everybody thought that would be it. But soon, the streamer announced that another season is on its way, with most of the primary cast reprising their memorable roles, including co-creator, executive producer, and lead actor Jason Sudeikis, who will return as the titular coach in the fourth instalment.

Apple TV on Tuesday dropped the first teaser of Ted Lasso season 4. It starts with an exhausted Ted waking up to action. Season 3 ended with him quitting his duties and returning home to the US. But season 4 marks his return, although that’s not played up like some triumphant comeback in the teaser.Instead, we just get glimpses of all the remaining and returning characters — Brett Goldstein as Roy Kent, Juno Temple as Keeley Jones, Brendan Hunt as Coach Willis Beard, Jeremy Swift as Leslie Higgins, and Hannah Waddingham as Rebecca Welton, the owner of the

football team AFC Richmond. Waddingham, who considered selling the stakes of her team at the end of season 3, still looks jaded as she falls flat on the bed, sporting a perturbed expression.

The teaser then introduces a new women’s football team, which Ted Lasso will be seen coaching this season. He’s surprised by their enthusiasm as they sprint across him as soon as the whistle is sounded, much to the elation of the audience in the stands. The teaser also features a familiar heckler who greets Ted before adding, “Too bad you’re coaching a bunch of gals, you w’nker!”Season 4 sees Ted coaching a women’s football team, drawing comparisons to Chak Del India, where Shah Rukh Khan played coach Kabir Khan leading a new women’s hockey team all the way to a historic world cup win, in Shimit Amin’s 2007 seminal Bollywood sports drama.The teaser ends with Ted surprising Rebecca and Keeley with his newfound command over internet slang and abbreviations, presumably thanks to more time spent with his kid back home. “The ETA is ASAP, PP,” he says, before spelling out the last two — As Soon As Possible, Pretty Please, much to their surprise.Season 4 has also been co-produced and co-written by Bill Lawrence, who, after his breakthrough with season 1, has built an impressive repertoire of shows for his banner Doozer Productions, including the Harrison Ford-starrer dramedy Shrinking on Apple TV and the ongoing Steve Carell-starrer Rooster on JioHotstar. Like the three seasons of Shrinking, Brett Goldstein is also part of the writers’ room of Ted Lasso season 4, which will premiere on Apple TV on August 5.

500 litres of fuel, real blasts, and Ranveer Singh, Arjun Rampal in the middle

It has been over 40 days since Dhurandhar: The Revenge released, but audiences still haven’t gotten over the jaw-dropping action and explosive sequences featured in the film. Recently, Dhurandhar’s SFX supervisor Vishal Tyagi broke down the making of the massive tanker explosion in the climax, revealing that the sequence was shot practically—with no CGI involved whatsoever. According to him, the scene required 500 litres of petrol and several kilos of explosives, all while an unfazed Ranveer Singh continued delivering his shot amid the chaos.Speaking to Hindi Rush, Vishal said, “Usually what happens is people say, ‘Give us a small explosion, we will make it look like a huge one.’ But in Dhurandhar, Aditya Dhar didn’t want to do CG—especially for the explosions. The instruction was clear, and we were given complete creative freedom.”Burnt 500 litres of petrol’

He further revealed, “The tanker blast in the climax was the toughest thing to create. The biggest safety concern we had was for this particular scene. Imagine burning 500 litres of petrol for real. There was no CG at all. Every tiny detail in the scene is real. We had concerns that while blasting the tankers, the flames should not reach Ranveer Singh, who was walking in close proximity. We did all the work and precisely told Ranveer Singh where he could start walking.”While the sequence involved both Arjun Rampal and Ranveer Singh, Vishal admitted that Ranveer faced the greater risk.

“Arjun Rampal was there in the shot and then we removed him before taking the explosion shot—obviously. I was majorly concerned for Ranveer, but he wasn’t as concerned himself. Mostly because he had seen our work and knew how precisely I briefed everyone about the explosions. After the shot, he would only say one thing—‘Faad diya tune!’



We had done Arjun Reddy’s pack-up, he could have gone back to his van, but everybody stayed back to watch the explosion.”Sharing the immense pressure behind executing the sequence, Vishal added, “I had a lot of production pressure on me. Real train base and containers were used for the explosion. It was very challenging, but we were confident. Production told me to use 250 litres, but I was adamant that at least 500 litres of fuel was required. To make that explode, I also had to add 25 kilos of explosive in each of these tanks to get the right effect. Maine suna sabki, ki apne mann ki.”Meanwhile, Dhurandhar 2 has emerged as one of the highest-grossing Hindi films of all time, shattering multiple box office records. Combined with its predecessor, the Dhurandhar franchise has now reportedly crossed Rs 3000 crore worldwide. Directed by Aditya Dhar, the film also stars Rakesh Bedi, Sanjay Dutt, and Sara Arjun in key roles.

‘Don’t zoom too much’: Karisma Kapoor confronts paparazzi over inappropriate camera angles



Actress Karisma Kapoor returned as a judge on India’s Best Dancer Season 5, marking her second year on the dance reality show. On Tuesday, Karisma joined fellow judges, Geeta Kapur, Terence Lewis, and Jaaved Jafferi as they posed for the paparazzi outside the sets. However, she soon grew wary of the photographers clicking inappropriate pictures and warned them against zooming in too much as she walked away, turning her back. Her reaction soon went viral, with Karisma receiving support from netizens.This isn’t the first time the paparazzi have been warned against such behavior. In the past, several actresses have expressed discomfort over their untoward pictures being clicked. Some have even confronted the paparazzi for photographing them inappropriately.Recently, on the sets of India’s Best Dancer 5, as the judges posed for the paparazzi, Karsima appeared quite cordial. But when the photo-op ended, and the actress was walking back inside, she sternly told the paparazzi, “Zyada zoom mat karna (Don’t zoom too much).”

The video soon went viral on Reddit, with many internet users supporting Karisma. One of them wrote, “Truly vile and disrespectful. These creeps deserve Jaya Bachchan treatment.” Another user wrote, “If women have to say it out loud, it shows the pathetic misogyny that is rampant.” A third user said, “It’s actually sad.” One of the netizens also wrote, “A mother of two kids, an established actress, and most importantly a woman asks grown @ss men to be decent and basic human beings having basic etiquette required to be in a society.”

Bollywood vs PaparazziWhile celebrities have often shared cordial relationships with the shutterbugs,

some have also lost their cool with the paps. In 2023, Karisma’s brother-in-law, Saif Ali Khan, lost his cool on the paparazzi after they followed him and Kareena to their building’s lobby at 2 am. An angry Saif had told a paparazzo back then, “Do one thing, come in our bedroom too.”In the past, actress Deepika Padukone has also slammed the paparazzi for taking inappropriate pictures of her, and Alia Bhatt has called them out for taking her pictures while she was at home.A day before Karisma Kapoor’s incident, actress Preity Zinta also spoke about the paparazzi culture on X. During a QnA session, the actress said, “I also don’t like paparazzi following me around & jumping at me out of nowhere. Sometimes it’s scary. I know a lot of the current crop of actors invite the paparazzi to come & photograph them, and I do understand their need to constantly be in the news, but it’s not how I operate, so it is a bit unnerving. I’m absolutely ok with them at events (cuz it’s their job), but when they show up outside my gym or hide outside my building, it’s a bit too much. I’m also human & I need to stay grounded and have my downtime! Having said that, I am extremely grateful for all the opportunities I have and the fact that people love me, so I’m not complaining, just being honest about how I feel.”Veteran actress Jaya Bachchan is often at loggerheads with the paparazzi; in fact, during a conversation with Barkha Dutt a few months back, she had said, “Who are these people? Are they trained to represent this country? Magar yeh jo bahar drainpipe tight, gande gande pant pehen ke, haath mein mobile leke... they think that because they have a mobile, they can take your picture and say what they want.

Kangana Ranaut clocks 20 years in films, recalls Gangster debut

Mumbai: Actress Kangana Ranaut completed 20 years in the entertainment industry on Tuesday.Commemorating the occasion, Kangana dropped a glimpse of her first portfolio shoot on the Stories section of her Instagram handle.Kangana revealed that it was these pictures that helped her land her role in her debut movie, “Gangster”.“Today I completed 20 years in the film industry, this is my first portfolio by @jatinkampani that landed me the role of Simran in Gangster,” wrote the ‘Queen’ actress on the photo-sharing app.Marking 2 decades of “Gangster” release, Kangana also uploaded a picture from her first magazine shoot.