

Telangana PCB announces State Best Environmental Performance Awards

Hyderabad: The Telangana Pollution Control Board (TGPCB) on Thursday announced the State Best Environmental Performance Awards 2026, which will be presented on June 5 on the occasion of World Environment Day. The awards honour the efforts of institutions and industries that demonstrated achievements in pollution control measures, elimination of single-use plastics, and solid and plastic waste management. The awards will be presented in categories including Best Schools, Colleges, Urban Self-Help Groups, Rural Self-Help Groups, Gram Panchayats, Industries, Private Hospitals, Government Hospitals and Municipalities. In each category, first, second and third prizes will be distributed, the TG PCB said.

Two years on, Telangana’s 10 pharma villages remain on paper

GNS News Agency, May 7

Hyderabad: More than two-and-a-half years after scrapping the proposed Pharma City project, the Congress government’s plan to establish 10 pharma villages across Telangana has made little progress. The government had announced in February 2024 that the Pharma City project was being dropped. However, during court proceedings, it maintained that the project was still under consideration under a new name — Green Pharma City. At the same time, Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu had announced plans to develop 10 pharma villages as part of a decentralised growth model. The proposed clusters, spread across 1,000 to 2,000 acres each, were initially planned in Vikarabad, Medak and Nalgonda districts. However, there has been no significant movement on the proposal so far. The delay comes amid growing resistance from farmers and landowners against land acquisition for industrial parks, radial roads and other government projects. Opposition to the proposed pharma initiatives has also intensified in several areas.

Industry bodies too had expressed concerns over the government’s decentralised pharma village model. They argued that obtaining pollution control and environmental clearances for multiple smaller clusters would be more complicated than for a single integrated Pharma City project. Industry experts had pointed out that a unified Pharma City would make it easier for companies to establish units and begin operations. Meanwhile, the Anti Pharma



City Committee, comprising farmers and representatives of voluntary organisations, has been staging protests at different locations against the proposed pharma developments.

The government has also proposed integrated greenfield pharma clusters and industrial parks along the Outer Ring Road and Regional Ring Road corridors. For the current financial year, the Industries and Commerce Department allocated Rs 50 crore towards land acquisition for the first phase of these proposed industrial parks. However, with land prices rising and farmers demanding higher compensation, the allocation is being seen as inadequate and raising questions over the government’s seriousness in pursuing the pharma village plan.

India to be Suriname’s ‘fellow traveller’ in development: Jaishankar

GNS News Agency, May 7

Paramaribo: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday said India sees Suriname’s growth potential and assured the South American nation that New Delhi would be its “fellow traveller and partner” in its development journey. Addressing a press interaction after a Joint Commission meeting, Jaishankar said India and Suriname were taking forward cooperation across multiple sectors, including trade, tourism, digital capabilities and artificial intelligence. The meeting set out “more ambitious goals and targets” for bilateral ties, he said. The minister is on a three-nation tour to the Caribbean from May 2 to 10. He reached Suriname on Wednesday. Referring to development projects supported by India, he highlighted a passion fruit processing unit that has recently been completed and an “Early Warning Services Delivery Project” for flood management remote areas. The minister said trade between India and the Latin American and Caribbean region is currently in the ballpark of about USD 40 to 45 billion annually. On capacity building and technology cooperation, he said India was willing to share its experience in digital practices and capabilities as countries move into an “AI era”. “We had a participation from your (Suriname’s) government at the ministerial level at the recent AI Impact Sum-



mit (in New Delhi), and the discussion there was how we each adapt and deploy AI for our particular circumstances,” he said. “Suriname is on the move, we see your growth potential, we see the path ahead for you, and we, Minister, want to assure you, of your fellow traveller and your partner in that journey,” he said. Describing India and Suriname as “two nations with shared history and a common commitment to the Global South”, Jaishankar said the two countries worked closely at the United Nations and multilateral bodies.

BRS condemns BJP workers’ attacks on MLAs’ Offices in Karimnagar



GNS News Agency, May 7

Hyderabad: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) strongly condemned the attack by BJP workers on the camp office of Karimnagar MLA Gangula Kamalakara and on the vehicle of MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy, on Thursday. The party leadership charged union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar with instigating violence and damaging the democratic atmosphere in Karimnagar.

BRS working president KT Rama Rao termed the attack despicable and stated that BJP activists behaved like rowdies and entered the MLA’s camp office, vandalised vehicles and damaged property in broad daylight. He said police personnel remained passive spectators, calling it shameful. He stated that the union Minister had become a B-team for Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and indulging in intimidation and theatrics to shield the latter’s failure. Instead of answering to issued raised by BRS leaders, he said Bandi Sanjay encouraged his party cadre to attack the opposition leaders. “Despite being a union Minister responsible for internal security, he acted in utter disregard to his position and the democracy,” he added. BRS deputy leader T Harish Rao also condemned the incident and questioned whether law and order still existed in the State if even elected representatives’ offices were not safe. He demanded immediate action against those involved and warned that continued attacks could force people to take to the streets to safeguard democracy. Rajya Sabha MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra alleged that the police failed to inter-

vene despite BJP activists allegedly attacked the MLA’s office and vandalised the premises. He urged DGP CV Anand to register cases and ensure strict punishment for those responsible. At a press conference in Hyderabad separately, BRS Legislative Council deputy leader L Ramana accused Bandi Sanjay of disturbing the peaceful political atmosphere in Karimnagar and demanded invocation of the PD Act against those involved in the attack. He also pointed to deterioration of law and order, citing the recent daylight robbery at a jewellery store in Karimnagar and the alleged harassment of Malkajigiri police commissioner Sumathi in Hyderabad. BRS MLA K Sanjay alleged that the attacks took place in the presence of police. He demanded the resignation of both Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Bandi Sanjay if they were unable to even maintain basic law and order. Former MP Boinpally Vinod Kumar and former Minister S Niranjan Reddy also condemned the incident and demanded immediate arrest of those responsible.

Dasoju Sravan alleges corruption in Telangana education sector

Hyderabad: BRS MLC Dasoju Sravan alleged that the Revanth Reddy government was resorting to large-scale corruption in the education sector by inflating costs and favouring select companies. Citing the alleged bunker bed scam, he said tender estimates had been inflated by nearly Rs 100 crore and alleged that the government was attempting to award a Rs 1,200 crore contract to a company that had been blacklisted. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday, Sravan alleged that contracts were being handed over to Maharashtra and Gujarat-based firms, sidelining local small and medium enterprises that had previously supplied materials to schools. He accused the government of centralising procurement through TESCO and questioned the sharp increase in turnover criteria for companies participating in tenders.

GHMC installs compost pits at Indira park in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: Compost pits were set up at Indira Park and Kondareddy colony park in Kavadi Guda and Mettugadda circles to promote sustainable waste management and environmental conservation.

During the activity, awareness was created on the importance of converting wet waste into organic compost for maintaining greenery and reducing waste burden while also emphasising the role of eco-friendly practices in strengthening urban sanitation and beautification efforts, according to a press release.

Modi congratulates new Bihar ministers after Cabinet expansion

GNS News Agency, May 7

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Bihar’s newly appointed ministers who took oath on Thursday and said he was confident that their commitment to the all-round development will take the state to new heights of prosperity. In a major expansion of the Cabinet of Bihar’s first BJP-led government, JD(U) president Nitish Kumar’s son Nishant Kumar and 31 others took oath as ministers in the presence of Prime Minister Modi and several Union ministers.

“Heartiest congratulations and best wishes to all my colleagues who took oath as ministers in the Bihar’s NDA government! I am fully confident that your commitment to all-round development of the state will take our province to new heights of prosperity. Let us all together realise the resolve to build a strong Bihar and a developed India,” Modi said in a post on ‘X’ in Hindi. In another post, reacting to overwhelming public response to his roadshow in Patna, the prime minister said he was deeply grateful “to all of you from the bottom of my heart for this warm welcome”. “I am overwhelmed by the love and blessings of my family mem-



bers from Bihar in Patna! I am deeply grateful to all of you from the bottom of my heart for this warm welcome. Your unprecedented enthusiasm clearly shows that our resolve for development and public service is receiving full support from the people,” he said. A total of 32 leaders, drawn from all five constituents of the NDA in the state, were administered the oath of office by the Governor, Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain (retd), at a grand ceremony in Patna.

Harish Rao targets Congress govt over delay in paddy procurement

GNS News Agency, May 7

Hyderabad: BRS deputy floor leader T Harish Rao flayed the State government for its utter negligence in paddy procurement and failing to protect distressed farmers waiting at procurement centres across Telangana. He said Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was showing no compassion towards distressed farmers.

During his visit to the paddy procurement centre at Choutuppal Agricultural Market in Yadadri Bhongir district on Thursday, Harish Rao interacted with farmers who alleged that their produce had not been purchased even after several weeks and officials were deducting large quantities of paddy in the name of husk and moisture quality checks. Inspecting heaps of paddy damaged by unseasonal rains, Harish Rao said farmers were being forced to wait for days under extreme summer conditions. Referring to recent deaths of farmers near procurement centres, he said the government’s incompetence had pushed cultivators into severe distress.

He reminded that during the previous BRS regime, such conditions had never existed in procurement centres. He said farmers under the present Congress government were facing problems at every stage, including Rythu Bandhu assistance, seed and fertiliser supply, irrigation, electricity and sale of produce. Targeting Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy, the senior BRS leader challenged the Minister to step out of air-conditioned rooms and witness the ground reality at procurement centres. He said a woman farmer at the market brought her paddy 24 days ago and was still awaiting for the weighing process despite moisture clearance being completed eight days ago.

Harish Rao said the officials were taking nearly four weeks, leading to delay in procurement process at every



stage, including moisture testing, supply of gunny bags, weighing, transportation and milling. He observed that while the authorities were deducting 2-3 kg per bag (quintal) towards in the name of husk and moisture, another four to five bags per truckload was being deducted upon reaching rice mills. “The Chief Minister who once warned against deductions must now explain why such cuts are continuing,” he remarked. Harish Rao also criticised the government for celebrating “Rythu Bharosa Week” while allegedly failing to ensure procurement and fertiliser supply. He accused the government of imposing restrictions on urea sales to vegetable and oil palm farmers and alleged that payments to maize and sunflower farmers were still pending for months. Referring to recent farmer deaths linked to unseasonal rains and procurement delays in different districts, Harish Rao demanded that the government immediately send sufficient lorries and gunny bags to market yards and issue strict directions to millers to speed up procurement operations on a war footing.

BRS questions purpose of Congress govt’s ‘Rythu Mela’



Hyderabad: Senior BRS leaders criticised the Congress government for reducing three-day “Rythu Mela” to a political show, while farmers across Telangana continued to suffer due to delayed procurement and unfulfilled promises. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday, former Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao said the Congress government should have organised its “Rythu Mela” at procurement centres instead of air-conditioned venues filled with party workers. He said the government failed to procure even half of the harvested paddy.

He said farmers in Mahabubabad and Jayashankar Bhupalpally districts suffered heavy crop losses due to unseasonal rains, and demanded immediate compensation and support for affected families. “The Ministers are making false statements, instead of addressing farmers’ distress. If only they had organised Rythu Mela at procurement centres, farmers would have taught them a fitting lesson,” he said. Rajya Sabha MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra stated that the Congress government lacked even a basic mechanism to procure paddy. He said during the BRS regime, Ministers personally monitored procurement operations, whereas farmers are now forced to sleep near their farm produce awaiting its purchase and transportation. Former Minister Satyavathi Rathod said the massive turnout at BRS working president KT Rama Rao’s Rythu Sangrama Sadassu held in Warangal, indicated growing anger among

cultivators against the current Congress regime. She alleged that despite repeated visits by BRS leaders to threshing floors over the past month, procurement has not begun in several places. MLC Pochampally Srinivas Reddy accused the government of attempting to block the BRS farmers’ meeting and declared the Congress Rythu Mela as a flop show. Former MP Maloth Kavitha also criticised Congress leaders for allegedly targeting Rama Rao instead of addressing farmers’ grievances. She demanded immediate transportation and procurement of paddy lying at procurement centres across the State.

Two minors among women rescued in interstate trafficking case

Aizawl: Mizoram police and officials of the state Women and Child Development department, in coordination with Uttarakhand police, have recently rescued five Mizo women, including two minors, from an alleged sex trafficking racket operating under the guise of a spa business in Rudrapur in the northern state, a senior officer said on Thursday. Six people, including the alleged mastermind and spa owner, have been arrested in connection with the case, Mizoram Inspector General of Police (Headquarters) H Ramthlengliana said in a statement. He said that the alleged sex trafficking racket surfaced when a survivor escaped and filed an FIR at the All Women Police Station in Aizawl on May 1. The complainant alleged that she and her friend were lured to work at a salon and spa at Rudrapur in Uttarakhand with the promise of legitimate employment and a monthly salary of Rs 20,000. She said that they travelled to Uttarakhand in October last year after the spa owner arranged and financed their journey.

Ensure Eligible Beneficiaries Receive Government Scheme Benefits:

District Collector Divakar TS“Officials Told to Exercise Utmost Care in Verification of L-3 Applications”Comprehensive Report Sought on Under-Construction 2BHK Houses“



*District Collector Reviews 2BHK Housing, Praja Darbar Petitions, and Indiramma Housing Applications“Khammam, May 07(Indian Chronicle):“District Collector Divakar TS directed officials to expedite the resolution process related to 2BHK houses, Praja Darbar petitions, and Indiramma housing applications to ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive the benefits of government welfare schemes.“On Thursday, the District Collector reviewed matters related to 2BHK housing, Praja Darbar applications, and Indiramma housing schemes with concerned officials at the Collectorate.“Speaking on the occasion, Collector Divakar TS said that complete details relating to 78 Indiramma housing applications from the first seven clusters under the Praja Darbar programme were yet to be submitted. He instructed officials to furnish the complete information before the next review meeting.“He

directed officials to thoroughly examine the L-3 applications in the seven clusters and shift eligible applicants to the L-1 category. He emphasized that the L-3 verification process should be carried out with utmost care and stated that multiple families living in the same house and meeting BPL eligibility criteria should be considered eligible for sanction of new houses.“The Collector stated that out of the total Double Bedroom housing projects in Khammam district, 6,107 houses have been completed, 655 houses are under construction, and construction of 467 houses has not yet begun. He instructed officials to cancel the houses that have not been started. He further said that 6,094 beneficiaries have already been allotted houses after beneficiary selection.“Officials were instructed to take steps to allot the 655 under-construction Double Bedroom houses to landless poor beneficiaries. The Collector also directed officials to prepare and submit a comprehensive report detailing the total sanctioned amount, expenditure incurred so far, the number of G+1 type houses, and the number of individual houses currently under construction.“He observed that if the under-construction individual houses are directly handed over to beneficiaries, they may become eligible to receive the remaining funds under the Indiramma Housing Scheme. He also instructed officials to prepare an action plan for completing the G+1 housing projects and include details in the report on whether beneficiary selection has been completed.“PD Housing Srinivas, EDM Durgaprasad, Revenue Senior Assistant Jaheda, CLTC members B. Lavanya and K. Rahul, DE Jagaram, AEs Sneha, Yakesh, Venkatesh, and other officials attended the meeting.

Farmers should focus on cultivating crops that are in demand and profitable:



“District Collector Prateek Jain“Sangareddy, May 06:-“District Collector Prateek Jain suggested that farmers should cultivate crops that are in demand and profitable in accordance with the current changing agricultural conditions.““As part of the Public Administration-Progress Plan program, the Collector attended the awareness conference organized jointly by the Agriculture, Electricity and REDCO departments at the Pothireddypalli Rythu Vedika near the district center on Thursday as part of the Farmers' Week celebrations being held from the 4th of this month.““Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that if farmers select and cultivate crops suitable for their lands, they can get higher yields and better profits. He suggested that farmers should increase their awareness about modern agricultural methods, market needs and new technologies and practice agriculture according to the conditions.““He said that along with cultivating crops in agriculture, farmers should also focus on value-added products. He opined that there is a great need to make changes in agriculture.““The Collector said that the government is implementing many schemes for the welfare of farmers and suggested that they should be utilized to the fullest. He especially suggested that farmers should come forward to get continuous income by setting up solar power plants under the PM Kusum Component Scheme. He urged farmers to take steps towards efficient utilization of natural resources. Similarly, he said that oil palm cultivation is a good profitable crop and land and borehole facilities are enough. He

urged farmers to focus on cultivating this crop as the government is providing subsidy up to 90 percent for oil palm cultivation. He reminded that the government is providing various agricultural implements on subsidy as part of agricultural mechanization. He suggested that if farmers have any problems related to agriculture, they should bring them to the attention of the concerned authorities.““On this occasion, the Collector spoke face to face with some farmers. He inquired about which crops they were cultivating, how many acres they had, and whether they had borehole facilities. The farmer informed that he was cultivating paddy on five acres and suggested that he should focus on cultivating profitable alternative crops.““Some farmers requested to set up jowar purchase centers in Zaheerabad, Sadashivpet and Vatapally areas, and the Collector assured that steps would be taken in that direction.““Later, Agriculture Department officials held a demonstration on the use of agricultural mechanization equipment such as drones, cutters, sprayers and others provided to farmers on subsidy. Electricity Department officials made farmers aware of the steps being taken for quality power supply and the precautions to be taken at transformers and power lines. REDCO and Agriculture Department officials explained about the PM Kusum Component Scheme and the subsidies provided by the government through a power point presentation.““Electricity, REDCO, Agriculture Department officials, AOs, AEOs, farmers and others participated in the program.

Desilting Works Taken Up in Uppal Division at a Cost of Rs. 40 Lakhs



— Desilting works underway in all major drains— Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-Charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy“

“UPPAL, MAY 07(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-Charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy stated that desilting works are being carried out in all major drains across the constituency. He said the works were initiated as a precautionary measure to prevent low-lying areas from getting inundated during the upcoming monsoon season.On Thursday, Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, along with former corporator Mandumula Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy, inspected the

desilting works being undertaken in Uppal Division at an estimated cost of Rs. 40 lakhs.“Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy said that desilting operations are being taken up in all drains within the Uppal constituency keeping the rainy season in view. He informed that the works include desilting from Shesha Sai Nagar to Nallacheruvu, from Kaveri Nagar Colony to Nallacheruvu, and from Ramanthapur TV Colony to Sathyaganar Culvert under the Uppal Division with an allocation of Rs. 40 lakhs.“He instructed the officials to complete the works at the earliest to avoid inconvenience to the public during the monsoon. He also directed them to remove all accumulated sewage and garbage from the drains to ensure smooth flow of water without any obstruction.“Parameshwar Reddy said that improving basic civic infrastructure for the people is the main objective of the Congress Party. Local residents expressed satisfaction over the works and thanked him for taking initiative to resolve long-pending drainage issues.DE Venu Goud, AE Raj Kumar, Narasaiah, Prabhakar, Rakesh Naik, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Pawan, Srinivas, Venu, Mahesh, Satti Reddy, Soma Reddy, Jagan Reddy, Nagesh, Ranga Reddy, Gallaiah, Obul Reddy, Santosh, Sammaiah, Srinivas, Gopi Naik and others participated in the programme.“

Hyderabad Basketball Association to hold youth selection trials

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad District Basketball Association will conduct league-cum-selection trials for youth boys and girls born on or after January 1, 2010, and sub-juniors born on or after January 1, 2013.Participation in the selection trials is mandatory for players aspiring to represent Hyderabad in the Youth and Sub-Junior Inter-District Championship to be held later this year.Only players who are residents of Hyderabad district, as per the updated Aadhaar card status, are eligible to participate.Registration will commence on June 1, 2026. For further details, interested players may contact Norman Isaac.

CPM Central Committee Member S. Veeraiah Demands Stop Extorting 2.5 kg to 4.5 kg of paddy per quintal in the name of moisture, thallu and tarugu



“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...May 7):- Sheds, tarpaulins (covers) and drinking water should be provided for farmers to store their paddy in IKP centers and market centers... Veeraiah““... *The paddy received at IKP centers should be immediately bundled and transported to mills... Veeraiah““CPM Central Committee Member S. Veeraiah has demanded that the practice of charging farmers 2.5 kg to 4.5 kg of paddy per quintal in the name of moisture, thallu and tarugu be stopped. They suggested the government to provide sheds, tarpaulins (covers) and drinking water for farmers to store their paddy in IKP centers and market centers. After visiting the IKP center in Anajipuram village under Bhuvanagiri mandal on Thursday along with the CPM leadership and talking to the farmers there and learning about their problems, Veeraiah said that the state government is telling the farmers not to be afraid or worried and to be brave that they will buy without leaving a single grain. He also questioned why not a single minister visited the farmers' market centers when a large number of farmers were suffering due to the untimely rains yesterday. The officials are telling the farmers not to be afraid, but if the rice gets wet in the rain and sprouts, how can the farmers not be afraid or worried? He asked how the farmers will sit in their buckets from morning to evening in the scorching sun. He asked if the government should arrange a schedule to store the rice without getting wet and sprouting if it rains. They say IKP Center but where is the IKP Center? Farmers are piling up paddy on whose land it is. How can they name it IKP Center? He said that IKP Center will make sense only when a ground is set up and big sheds are constructed to provide the opportunity to store paddy and all the facilities are provided to the farmers. He said that when the paddy is brought to the market, the government does not provide tarpaulins (sheets) to cover it from above to store it, so each farmer is paying rent of three thousand to six thousand rupees for a single crop. He expressed his grief that if the paddy is brought once and piled up in the market, it takes more than a month for the cereal to arrive, and for those months, the farmers have to look at the sky and not know whether to laugh or

cry, and live in fear of when it will rain. But why is the government not immediately packing the grain that has reached the market, loading it into lorries and taking it to the mills, he said. He said that in many places, even the packed grain is being loaded into lorries and not taken to the mills, which has become a norm. He said that it is correct to say that the responsibility of protecting the grain until it reaches the mill lies with the farmer. He said that the farmers in the state have always been in the plight of cultivating the crop at the risk of their lives. He said that when the problems of the farmers are resolved, then our state will improve. He questioned the government as to when the farmers in the state will emerge from the whirlpool of problems. He said that the farmer families are facing hardships today because they are only saying that they are providing assurance to the farmers and ignoring the remaining problems. He criticized the government for acting irresponsibly towards the farmers. He said that the government should show action instead of talking. He questioned that in today's modern society, where there are enough lorries and mills, farmers would have to wait for 30 to 40 days to buy their paddy. He demanded that the government take responsibility to get out of this situation and provide complete security to the farmers. He suggested that the government should take responsibility to ensure that not a single rupee is lost by the farmer due to natural disasters and to provide all facilities to the farmers. Veeraiah warned the government that if the problems faced by farmers at IKP and market centers are not resolved, they will have to face large-scale struggles. CPM state committee member Kondamadugu Narasimha, mandal secretary Pallerla Anjaiah, mandal secretariat member Edunuri Malleshham, mandal leaders Gunuguntla Srinivas, village sarpanch Rayapuram Suresh, mandal leaders Pandala Maisayya, Jitta Anjireddy, department secretary Kodali Krishna, leaders Pittala Venkatesh, Yandi. Rapeek, Gangadari Bhanu, farmers Pannala Narender Reddy, Bollepalli Ramachandram, Gogu Poshayya, Boyapalli Damodar Reddy, Pittala Chandraiah, Gadusu Naresh, Sriram Chandrakala, Gogu Mangamma, Bollepalli Mangamma and others participated in this program.

Face-based identification introduced for old age pensions should be immediately canceled

Telangana Agricultural Workers Union District General Secretary Kondamadugu Narasimha Demands““(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...May 7):- Telangana Agricultural Workers Union District General Secretary Kondamadugu Narasimha has demanded that the facial-based identification of pensioners be canceled immediately, saying that the beneficiaries, especially the elderly, are facing many difficulties due to the facial-based identification process introduced for old age pensions. After learning about the problems of pensioners in Muthireddygudem and Baswapuram villages of Bhuvanagiri mandal, Narasimha said that in Telangana, elderly people and disabled people whose fingerprints do not match are facing difficulties in getting pensions. On the pretext that facial-based identification is not working properly, the elderly are facing difficulties due to the introduction of facial recognition. He said that it is not right for the state government to trouble all pensioners by citing corruption in



the distribution of pensions as an excuse. The elderly are suffering in the scorching sun for pensions and are getting tired of going back and forth to the office many times because they do not have facial recognition on their phones. Narasimha urged that the facial recognition be removed and pensioners be given pensions in the old way.

Chalimendra Inaugurated at Srinagar Colony by Uppal Congress In-Charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy



“UPPAL, MAY 07(INDIAN CHRONICAL):“Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-Charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy on Thursday inaugurated a summer water distribution centre (Chalimendra) set up by senior Congress leader Balayya Babu Kuruma at Srinagar Colony in Venkat Reddy Nagar Division.“Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy appreciated Balayya Babu Kuruma for taking the initiative to provide drinking water to the public during the summer season. He said arranging a Chalimendra to quench the thirst of people in the scorching heat was a commendable service.“He further stated that setting up such facilities during summer was a noble cause and advised the residents of Venkat Reddy Nagar to make good use of the Chalimendra. He also called upon party leaders and workers to come forward and establish similar facilities at places where people are in need during the summer season.Among those present were DCC General Secretary Jalil Pasha, Sandeep, Bhaskar, Upender Reddy, Vanjari Anjaiah, Chenchulu, Anjaiah, Venkateshwarlu, Ramu, Kuruma Sangham President Gotika Sathayya, General Secretary Siddala Suresh, Treasurer Budapatta Ellayya, Repu Parandhama, Venkateshwarlu, Shabbir, Shankar Master, Ramu, Sara Srinivas Goud, Sridhar, Chigulla Ramulu, Gaddam Narasimha, Venkataiah, Mestri Golusu Swamy, Gooti Swamy, Narasimha Chary, Chakali Anjaiah, Brahmachari Ravi Kumar, Putta Krishna, Allam Komuriah, Guduguntla Satyanarayana, Chetkuri Kumar, Allam Mallesh, Meesa Narasimha, Doodala Malliah, Jogu Srinu, Gummula Ashok, Gaddam Suresh, Gummula Bhanu, Bhaskar, Gaddam Ramesh, Srisailam, Guntila Srisailam,

Chetkuri Rajashekhar, Pochayya, Guduguntla Ramachander, Gottike Srisailam, Meesa Venkatesh and others.

Inspection of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Help Desk Centers for Voter Verification

Help Desk Centers Set Up Booth-wise Across Polling Stations“Indian Chronicle / Secunderabad, May 07:“BJP senior leader Marri Pururava Reddy inspected the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Help Desk centers established in the Sanath Nagar constituency for voter verification and revision.“On Thursday, he visited the SIR Help Desk center set up at SP College in Padmarao Nagar and reviewed the functioning of Booth Level Officers (BLOs) working under the supervision of the Election Commission.“Speaking to the staff on the occasion, Marri Pururava Reddy advised them to discharge their duties impartially without succumbing to any pressure or fear. He stressed that the process of removing duplicate votes should be carried out transparently while safeguarding the rights of genuine voters.“Local BJP leaders Rajesh, Sheelam Shivalingam, Kiran, Gundu Raghuram, Nainish Srikanth, Gunti Satyanarayana, Chandrapal Reddy and others participated in the programme.

Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah has expressed special gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for setting up Kuruma Corporation



“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...May 7):- Telangana State Government Whip

Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah has stated that the decision taken by the state government to set up Kuruma Corporation is historic in order to uphold the self-respect of the Kuruma community in Telangana State. He said that it is gratifying that the government and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy took a decision immediately, respecting the Kuruma caste, when he, as the sole MLA of Kuruma, asked for the request that the Kuruma community has been seeking for many years. On this occasion, MLA Beerla Ayilaiah expressed special thanks to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the state government and the concerned cabinet. When his voice was heard on behalf of the Kuruma community in Telangana, he said that the immediate response and establishment of the Kuruma Corporation is a testament to the government's sincerity. He said that this decision taken keeping in mind the development, welfare and economic progress of Kuruma has given new confidence to the community. He also said that he was even more happy when the government announced that a leader who serves the Kuruma community will soon be appointed as the chairman of the corporation. MLA Beerla Ayilaiah praised that this people's government is moving forward towards social justice by respecting all castes equally and giving priority to the development of BCs. Finally, on behalf of the Kuruma community, MLA Beerla Ayilayya once again expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the state government, the Chief Minister, and the cabinet.

Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy requests that about 20 thousand houses and house plots belonging to poor and middle class families registered in the prohibited list under 22A in Yadadri district be removed from the prohibited list

Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...May 7):- Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy held a review meeting on revenue and housing issues related to the joint Nalgonda district today at the Telangana State Housing Corporation Limited Conference Hall in Hyderabad. Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah participated in this meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah said that about 20 thousand houses and house plots belonging to poor and middle class families registered in the prohibited list under 22A in Yadagirigutta and Aleru areas of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, which were mentioned in the previous assembly meetings, will be removed from the prohibited list. He said that he had requested Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy to remove it from the list. The Minister responded positively to this and issued instructions to the CCLA officials and the District Collector to take immediate steps to resolve the issue. He also requested that a new building be sanctioned for the Yadagirigutta Registration Office, and the Minister responded positively to this as well. Similarly, he requested that another 50 Indiramma houses be sanctioned for Turkapalli Mandal, and the Minister assured that steps would be taken to sanction them.”He also brought to the attention of the Minister the fact that permissions for construction of new houses were stalled due to the recognition of previously constructed houses as forest lands in Malkapur village of Turkapalli Mandal, and he said that orders have been



issued to immediately remove the relevant lands from the forest list and grant permissions for construction of houses. Similarly, he requested that new ration shops be set up in various parts of the constituency in line with the increased number of ration cards, and the Minister responded positively to this as well.” Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy Yadadri said that he has instructed the officials of Bhuvanagiri district to purchase every grain harvested by farmers without any delay in the purchase of grain, and to take steps to ensure that the available vehicles are used without delay in the transportation of the purchased grain.

Mohammed Rafiq, Ramanthapur Division Congress Party President, Gets Road Potholes Filled in Gandhi Nagar

“UPPAL, MAY 07 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Responding to the problems faced by residents due to dangerous potholes in Gandhi Nagar of Ramanthapur, Ramanthapur Division Congress Party President Mohammed Rafiq spoke to the concerned officials and ensured that the potholes were repaired immediately.”After locals informed him that accidents were occurring because of the damaged roads, Mohammed Rafiq rushed to the spot, expressed anger over the negligence of officials, and personally supervised the repair work to provide a safer road for the public.”“On one side are leaders who appear only during elections, and on the other side is Mohammed Rafiq, who stands with the people and their problems,” locals remarked. Rafiq stated that his fight for the people would continue until every issue is resolved. He assured that he would continue to work tirelessly on public issues and coordinate with the concerned authorities to solve any problem brought to his notice. He further said that after the Congress Party came to power, efforts were being made to resolve public issues effectively. Mogali Lingam, Laghu Swamy, Srinivas Goud, Narasimha, Naresh, MD Shakeel, Suri Icon, and others participated in the program.



Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Meets Water Board MD Ashok Reddy Seeking Resolution of Drainage Problem in Cherlapally IG Colony

“UPPAL, MAY 07(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy on Thursday met Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) Managing Director K. Ashok Reddy and submitted a representation regarding the long-pending drainage problem faced by residents of Cherlapally IG Colony under Uppal constituency limits.”The MLA explained that around 1,200 houses were constructed in the IG Colony in 2009 under the JNNURM scheme and that the drainage system installed at that time has now completely deteriorated. As a result, sewage water is overflowing onto the roads, causing severe inconvenience to residents and leading to health-related concerns.”He further stated that despite residents repeatedly approaching GHMC and HMWSSB officials for a solution, no concrete action had been taken so far due to lack of clarity between departments regarding responsibility for the issue.”In this context, the MLA requested immediate approval for the installation of a new drainage system in the colony. Responding to the appeal, Water Board MD Ashok Reddy directed officials to treat the matter as urgent



and take necessary action. Later, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy also met Water Works ED Pankaja, who informed him that the works would soon be inspected and necessary approvals would be granted at the earliest.”BRS party leader Nemuri Mahesh Goud and others participated in the programme.

Education, Healthcare Infrastructure Works Must Be Completed Within Deadlines



District Collector Divakar TS“Officials asked to clearly mention project-wise issues in reports”KGBV works should be completed on time”“Khammam, May 7:(Indian Chronicle):““District Collector Divakar TS directed officials to expedite ongoing education and healthcare infrastructure development works in the district and ensure quality facilities are made available to the public within the stipulated timelines.”On Thursday, the Collector reviewed the progress of infrastructure construction works related to the education and medical sectors with officials of the concerned departments at the Collectorate.”Speaking at the meeting, the Collector said that the construction of the Medical College under the Roads & Buildings (R&B) Department is progress-

ing in Khammam and instructed officials to complete the works swiftly while maintaining quality standards.”He stated that the Panchayat Raj Department is carrying out repair works in 15 junior colleges and implementing Amma Adarsha School projects across the district.”The Collector instructed officials to clearly include project-wise problems and challenges in reports submitted during future review meetings. He assured that any issues affecting education and healthcare infrastructure projects brought to his notice would be resolved promptly.”He noted that 11 projects worth over ₹50 lakh are being implemented under TGMIDC, including the expansion of the 30-bed Community Health Centre at Thirumalayapalem into a 50-bed facility. Officials were directed to continuously monitor the ongoing construction of 100-bed hospitals in the district and complete them within the prescribed deadlines.”The Collector further stated that 24 projects worth over ₹50 lakh are being executed through TGEWIDC and directed officials to speed up the construction of Young India Integrated Schools. He instructed that all Bhavita Kendras be completed by the end of this month and that the tender process for additional classrooms at the Wyra Junior College be finalized quickly.”He also stressed the importance of completing KGBV works on time and ensuring proper utilization of funds. Since NABARD funds have been sanctioned for 14 KGBV projects, officials were instructed to complete the works at the earliest.”Officials including PR SE Y. Venkat Reddy, R&B SE M. Yacob, TGEWIDC EE Buggayya, TGMIDC EE T. Uma Mahesh, R&B EE M.A. Basheer, and PR EE U. Mahesh Babu participated in the meeting.

First New Drinking Water Tap Connection Launched at Uppal Bhagayat HMDA Layout West Side

“UPPAL, MAY 07(INDIAN CHRONICAL): “The first new drinking water tap connection was inaugurated on Thursday at Green Ridge Apartments in the west side of Uppal Bhagayat HMDA Layout, in the presence of HMWSSB GM Santosh Kumar.”Residents of the west side expressed happiness on the occasion. Apartment residents who participated in the program thanked the association members for their efforts in ensuring drinking water supply to the west side area.”Later, the team visited the temple premises in the colony and stated that they would work towards the development of the temple with the support of colony residents in the future.”HMWSSB GM Santosh Kumar, Deputy GM Supriya, Uppal Bhagayat Welfare Association President Mekala Madhusudan Reddy, Shivaprasad, Vishnuvardhan Reddy, Kamal, Madhav Reddy, Swapna, TVSS Krishna, Govardhan, Sandeep, and several apartment residents participated in the program.”



What connection do you have with the High Court case

That case is related to TWJF“- Basavapunnaiah and Ramchander have no connection with TWJF”“Khammam, May 07 indian Chronicle:““Mamidi Somaiah, founder and state president of the Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF), clarified that the case he filed in the High Court regarding the State and District Media Accreditation Committees is related only to the TWJF union. He stated that no one had expelled him from the union and that, as the founder and state president of TWJF, he had approached the court.”In a statement, Somaiah said that individuals named Pilli Ramchander and Basavapunnaiah, who claim they have no connection with the case, actually have no relation to TWJF itself and are not leaders of their organization.”He explained that he filed the case against the government because TWJF was not given representation in the accreditation committees, which, according to him, was causing injustice to many journalists as the union's voice was not being heard in the committees. He clarified that the case was not intended to harm journalists.”Somaiah alleged that certain individuals who were removed from the union were spreading false propaganda against him in collusion with the government for their personal and newspaper-related interests. He said that he had established the journalists' union and had been fighting for journalists' issues for the past 20 years, but some people conspired to remove him from the organization. However, he claimed that the majority of journalists supporting him did not allow their plans to succeed.”Referring to Government Order (GO) 252 issued by the state government on media accreditations, he demanded that members of TWJF be given representation in the State and District Media Accreditation Committees. Otherwise, he sought that the committee de-



cisions should not be implemented, which is why he approached the High Court.”He further stated that legal cases had been filed against Basavapunnaiah and Pilli Ramchander for allegedly making unlawful statements claiming that he had been expelled from TWJF. He also mentioned that a complaint had been lodged with the Labour Department.”Somaiah described as false the claims that the Labour Department had granted recognition to the TWJF faction led by others. He questioned how such recognition could be granted while the case he filed in court was still pending.

He accused them of misleading both journalists and the government through false propaganda.”He also alleged that they were trying to gain benefits through the union by influencing government officials with false promises and misleading statements. Somaiah warned that if any more false propaganda was spread against TWJF or its founders, legal action would be taken.

Indefinite Strike from May 18 if Issues Are Not Resolved



VOA Union Leader Parvathi Bai ““Khammam ,Nelakondapalli, May 7 indian Chronicle:““VOA Union JAC district leader Rajputh Parvathi Bai warned that they would launch direct protests if their genuine demands are not addressed by the government. On Thursday, the union submitted a strike notice to the IKP APM office in Nelakondapalli and began a pen-down protest. A demonstration was also held at the office premises.”Speaking on the occasion, Parvathi Bai demanded that VOAs be paid a minimum salary of Rs. 20,000 per month. She also urged the government to recognize them as SERP employees and provide promotions as CCs to eligible staff.”She further demanded a general health insurance facility worth Rs. 20 lakh, provision of tabs, and amendments to GO 58. She said the long-pending issues of VOAs should be resolved immediately.”Failing this, she warned that the union would launch an indefinite strike from May 18.”Union representatives Guttikonda Rani, P. Srilakshmi, C.H. Sudharani, S. Umamaheshwari, B. Renuka, Satyavathi, Prameela, Baja Vanaja, Krishnakumari, Shailaja, Sujatha, K. Pushpavathi,

Mariyamma, Bandela Roopa, Rajyalakshmi, Kotamma and others participated in the protest.

Coffin Donated to Panchayat

“Khammam,Nelakondapalli, May 7: indian Chronicle:““A coffin was donated to the village Panchayat by Electricity Department DEE Dheeravath Koteswara Rao, a resident of the village. The coffin was formally handed over to the Panchayat on Thursday in the presence of Sarpanch Dheeravath Ashokarani at the Panchayat office.”Speaking on the occasion, Cheruvumadharam Fisheries Cooperative Society Vice-President Dheeravath Radhakrishna Murthy said that Koteswara Rao had generously provided the coffin free of cost to ensure that bereaved families in the village do not face inconvenience during final rites. He appreciated the gesture of purchasing and donating the coffin to the Panchayat without seeking any public donations, keeping the convenience of villagers in mind.”He also appealed to everyone to cooperate in ensuring village development through government funds and facilities without depending on public collections.”Rajaram Peta Society President Dheeravath Balaji, Market Committee Director Seethya, village elders Bhukya Gobriya, Ramana, Mohan Rao, Koteswara Rao, Venkateswarlu, Somu and others participated in the programme.

Dead fish float in pond in Bengaluru’s Cubbon Park; activists blame drainage from Chinnaswamy Stadium and BMRCL



GNS News Agency, May 7

Dead fish found floating in the lotus pond at Bengaluru’s Cubbon Park have triggered concern. Members of the Cubbon Park Walkers Association allege that drainage water from Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) and the M Chinnaswamy Stadium is entering the park and affecting its ecosystem.Umesh, president of the Cubbon Park Walkers Association, said members of the group noticed large numbers of dead fish in the lotus pond on Tuesday morning. He alleged that drainage water flowing from the BMRCL underground area and the Chinnaswamy Stadium is responsible for the contamination.

Umesh claimed that a similar incident occurred in 2014, but the authorities ignored it. He alleged that the horticulture department has been negligent towards the upkeep and protection of Cubbon Park.Umesh said he had previously raised the issue with the then head of the Pollution Control Board and even taken officials around the park to point out the problems. However, according to him, no concrete ac-

tion was taken after the visit. He said he plans to meet pollution control officials again either on Friday or Saturday.According to information shared within the walkers’ group, a chemical was reportedly added to the pond on Wednesday as part of restoration efforts. Umesh said partial repair work had been carried out, the fountain had started functioning again, and the aerators in the pond that reportedly were not working might have been repaired.

Umesh warned that if the authorities fail to take necessary action, the walkers’ association would protest against BMRCL, Chinnaswamy Stadium authorities, and the horticulture department.However, G Kusuma, Deputy Director of Horticulture (Cubbon Park), stated that the water coming from BMRCL was “good water” and not contaminated. She said plastic waste near the Chinnaswamy Stadium could have contributed to pollution in certain areas.Kusuma said that oxygen depletion caused by heavy rain and hailstorms was the reason for the fish deaths. She explained that rainwater from surrounding areas had flowed into the lotus pond and that the mud entering the pond caused the aerators to stop functioning. The fisheries department and the Pollution Control Board have collected water samples, and results are expected within the next couple of days, she added.The recent hailstorm also caused extensive damage inside Cubbon Park, with more than 25 trees falling. Kusuma said even gardeners with nearly 40 years of experience in the park stated they had never seen such severe damage before. She added that restoration and cleanup efforts could take around 15 to 20 days, with the horticulture department, the civic body, and authorities carrying out necessary work.

Hundreds of students protest ‘strip search with criminal force’

GNS News Agency, May 7

Hundreds of students at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune, protested on May 5 and 6 against the alleged “strip searches” of women during examinations held in April, prompting the authorities to restructure their investigation process to include student representatives.In an email, the student association alleged that the incident occurred on April 24, when several first-year students were subjected to frisking and pat-downs during an examination. The alleged strip search reportedly occurred after a staff member noticed notes written on a woman student’s hand.

According to the mail, the woman housekeeping staff used criminal force to strip a student and “expose her breasts and genitalia despite clearly communicated non-consent and verbal protest.”“As students, we have a right to bodily autonomy and a safe campus environment as guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution and UGC regulations,” the association said in the mail.Students also questioned the functioning of IISER’s Internal Committee following the incident.In a statement shared with The Indian Express, the institute said, “The IISER Pune Administration is aware of the complaints by students about an incident of malpractice during the recent end-semester exams. A committee will investigate the incident fairly and follow all the existing protocols of investigation.”“Regarding your query related to IC, please note that the Internal Committee of the institute is conducting an inquiry. However, as per Section 16 of the 2013 PoSH Act, the details (including contents of the complaint, identities of the complainant and respondent)



are to be kept confidential.”

A student told that, during meetings held on May 6, the IISER administration agreed to include students in a separate fact-finding committee.“On the second day of the protest, the authorities came out to talk with us. They agreed to some of our demands, including having student representation on the fact-finding committee. There are no more protests planned as of now,” the student said on condition of anonymity.A summary of the discussions between student representatives and IISER authorities was later shared with students by the Dean of Student and Campus Activities via email on May 7.According to the summary, an initial fact-finding committee had already been formed about a week earlier. During the meeting, senior officials agreed to expand the committee to include four student representatives, four faculty members, and one non-teaching staff member.

Gurgaon’s Stilt+4 crackdown: 2,000 notices issued for violations, builder plot enquiries dip



GNS News Agency, May 7

A little over a month after the Punjab and Haryana High Court stayed stilt-plus-four (S+4) constructions in Gurgaon’s residential areas, authorities have intensified their crackdown on building norm violations. On Monday, the HC was informed that around 2,000 notices have been issued in the city for illegally repurposed stilt areas, with 500 restoration orders passed against alleged violators.“Enquiries from builders have dropped by 50%... bundled with a steep rise in circle rates, it has affected buyer sentiments. Older HSVP sectors (up to Sector 57) are still seeing interest in existing S+4 properties. But in newer sectors, S+3 is now being more favoured, which means the rates for individual floors will go up,” Nain explained.Abhishek Bhardwaj, founder of Kalpvriksha Realty, said there has been a freeze on enquiries for S+4 across the city, and agreed with Nain’s point about an increase in S+3 prices.“At older HSVP sectors, where the issue is somewhat less acute, enquiries are still coming in; otherwise, there is a freeze in activity. Buyers are present, but limited inventory is making a difference. Enquiries for builder floors have declined, and in the current scenario, owners of S+4 plots with approved maps and floor area ratios are sitting on a goldmine.”Bhawani Shankar Tripathi, a resident of Sector 23A (an open HSVP sector), said notices have not been issued in their area yet so far.Under existing building norms, stilt areas are mandated primarily for parking to alleviate street congestion. However, these spaces are frequently enclosed illegally by builders or property owners to create additional living or commercial quarters.The High Court has been hearing petitions challenging the S+4 policy, which permitted the construction of a fourth floor on residential plots, raising the earlier cap of stilt plus three floors.During previous hearings, the Bench heavily criticised the state government, observing that it had apparently prioritised revenue generation over public safety.The court pointed out that the state bypassed the crucial step of conducting an “infrastructure capacity audit” before rolling out the policy, ignoring Gurgaon’s desperate shortage of infrastructural requirements, including adequate sanitation, sewerage, and waste disposal systems.The Haryana government is now preparing to chal-

lenge the HC order. In the interim, an anti-encroachment and demolition drive by the Haryana Shahari Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP) across multiple sectors in Gurgaon has been put on hold.The HSVP had on April 24 announced a large-scale demolition drive scheduled from April 27 to July 1, targeting alleged encroachments in sectors 27, 43, 31, 32A, 24, 25A and 30.

Mullanpur stadium to host IPL play-offs on May 27, 29 for 2nd consecutive year

The Mullanpur stadium has so far hosted 15 IPL matches, with the stadium hosting five IPL matches in 2024, followed by six IPL matches last year, including the Qualifier 1 and Eliminator and four IPL matches this season.The Mullanpur stadium has so far hosted 15 IPL matches, with the stadium hosting five IPL matches in 2024, followed by six IPL matches last year, including the Qualifier 1 and Eliminator and four IPL matches this season.

The Punjab Cricket Association (PCA) will host the Indian Premier League (IPL) play-offs at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh PCA New International Stadium, Mullanpur, Mohali, for the second consecutive year.With the BCCI announcing the schedule and venues for the IPL play-offs on Tuesday, the Mullanpur stadium will host the Eliminator on May 27, followed by Qualifier 2 on May 29. The Qualifier 1 will be hosted by HPCA Stadium in Dharamshala on May 26, and the final of this year’s IPL will be hosted at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on May 31.Last year, the Mullanpur stadium played host to Qualifier 1 and Eliminator, apart from hosting four IPL matches.Terming it a huge responsibility given to the PCA by the BCCI and the IPL Organising Committee, PCA president Amarjeet Mehta told The Indian Express, “We are thankful to the BCCI and also Jay Shah, the ICC chairman, for considering PCA to host the play-off matches at the Mullanpur stadium. We were in regular touch with BCCI and IPL officials about hosting the matches, and like last year, the play-offs at Mullanpur will be a memorable experience for cricket fans. We will have discussions with the authorities concerned, too, including the Punjab government. We are also thankful to Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann for providing all support.”The Mullanpur stadium has so far hosted 15 IPL matches, with the stadium hosting five IPL matches in 2024, followed by six IPL matches last year.

Punjab expands maize push amid its heavy dependence on paddy



Even as Punjab battles a deepening groundwater crisis, the state government has decided to expand its maize promotion policy this kharif season — being seen as a progressive move, but still far from the scale required to shift the state away from its heavy dependence on paddy.In 2025, the government launched a pilot project to encourage farmers to shift from paddy to kharif maize on 12,000 hectares. It has now increased the target to around 20,000 hectares for the current season. The agriculture department has also set an overall target of bringing 1.25 lakh hectares under cotton, which is also an alternative to paddy — roughly 6,000 hectares more than the 2025-26 kharif season.

While the increase indicates policy continuity, experts argue that the numbers remain too small for any real impact in Punjab where paddy continues to dominate the agricultural landscape.Last year, Punjab recorded nearly 32.48 lakh hectares under paddy. Against this backdrop, even 20,000 hectares under an incentivised maize shift appears marginal.The state is offering an incentive of Rs 17,500 per hectare to farmers willing to diversify from paddy to maize. However, experts say this financial support is modest when compared to the economic backing paddy receives through free electricity and assured procurement. Punjab spends close to Rs 8,000 crore annually on power subsidy, enabling farmers to run tubewells for long hours to irrigate paddy — a crop that requires 25 to 30 irrigation cycles.

In contrast, maize requires just three to four irrigations, and largely depends on rainfall, making it far more water-efficient.In the 2026-27 Punjab budget, the government has allocated Rs 7,715 crore to maintain free power for the agriculture sector covering tubewell operations for farmers. Despite this advantage, maize cultivation in Punjab has re-

mained stagnant for years.The area under maize has fluctuated between around 95,000 hectares and 1.3 lakh hectares over the past two decades. The area has even dropped to nearly 80,000 hectares a couple of years back.

The new target may bring an area of 1.5 lakh hectares, though higher, still represents only a fraction of the total cropped area. Experts say that unless diversification efforts match the scale of the paddy economy, the impact will remain limited.The contrast becomes sharper when seen alongside other crops.Cotton, for instance, was cultivated on around 2.5 lakh hectares in 2021. It showed that farmers are willing to diversify with favourable conditions. However, fluctuating returns, pest attacks and lack of policy consistency have prevented sustained growth in alternative crops.Maize, on the other hand, offers ecological and economic advantages. Punjab’s productivity in maize is already 15-20 per cent higher than the national average. The crop has a strong demand across sectors like poultry feed, starch and processed foods. Yet, over 90 per cent of Punjab’s maize requirement is met through imports from other states.

The experts stress that diversification cannot rely solely on incentives. It requires a complete ecosystem including assured procurement, price stability, infrastructure like grain dryers and processing industries.Timing is another concern. Farmers often make sowing decisions in advance, experts said, adding that diversification schemes should be announced at least six months ahead for proper planning.Experts also think that the state must rethink its subsidy structure. Redirecting even a portion of the power subsidy towards farmers who adopt alternative crops could significantly accelerate diversification.A senior officer in Punjab agriculture department said, “Punjab has nearly 11 lakh farming households, if each paddy-growing farmer shifts even one acre to alternative crops... the state could bring nearly 9-10 lakh acres under diversification — enough to make a visible difference in groundwater conservation.” Such farmers can be incentivised by diverting paddy power subsidy amount towards the diversified area.For now, the government’s expanded maize push signals intent, but not transformation, the officer saidA Punjab agricultural University (PAU) scientist said, “With groundwater levels continuing to fall and input costs rising, the need for large-scale diversification is becoming more urgent than ever. The question is not whether Punjab should shift away from paddy — but whether it is willing to do so at the scale required.”

‘Take lessons from Bengal’: Maharashtra BJP targets 50 lakh ‘ineligible’ voters ahead of SIR

Maharashtra BJP SIR meetingMaharashtra BJP president Ravindra Chavan briefs more than 700 party members on the upcoming SIR exercise in the state.As Maharashtra struggles to complete the pre-Special Intensive Revision (SIR) mapping exercise, the state BJP unit held a meeting in Mumbai on Wednesday, where its cadre was directed to “take lessons from West Bengal”, where 64 lakh ineligible voter names were deleted from the electoral rolls.

The meeting, chaired by state party president Ravindra Chavan, saw more than 700 party members, including MPs, MLAs, and office bearers, being briefed on the SIR exercise, along with a broader template of dos and don’ts.Urging party workers to take the SIR seriously, senior BJP leaders called for greater participation to ensure no eligible voters were skipped and no ineligible voters made it to the list.“Maharashtra BJP should take SIR lessons from West Bengal, where 64 lakh ineligible voters were deleted. While Trinamool Congress may have blamed SIR for their defeat, the fact remains that our objections about illegal votes were upheld by both the Election Commission and the Supreme Court,” senior BJP leader Kirit Somaiyya said, addressing the gathering.

Somaiyya claimed that there were “at least 50 lakh ineligible voters” in the state. “There are several cases of duplicate and double names. Along with that, there are illegal Bangladeshis who have enrolled themselves as voters,” he added.Directing party workers to closely monitor



the SIR process in every Assembly constituency and booth—Maharashtra has 288 Assembly constituencies and 1.7 lakh booths—Somaiya cited the example of the neighbouring constituencies of Mulund and Mumbra. “The rise in voters in Mulund was from 2.96 lakh in 2009 to 3 lakh in 2024. Whereas Mumbra saw a steep rise from 2.81 lakh in 2009 to 4.87 lakh in 2024,” Somaiya alleged, adding, “The ineligible voters are dotted across Dhule, Malegaon, Sillod, Bhiwandi, Mumbra...etc.”Saying that party workers should shed complacency, at least two top BJP leaders stressed that they should use the SIR to take the party’s anti-Bangladeshi infiltration drive to its logical end. To achieve these targets, they should be armed with a proper list of voters across segments, the leaders added.

Bird flu at 3 more poultry farms in Maharashtra’s Navapur as culling operations reach 2.5 lakh



The avian influenza (bird flu) crisis in Maharashtra’s Navapur has intensified, with samples from three more poultry farms testing positive for the virus just days after the initial culling operation was completed. The ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD) in Bhopal confirmed the presence of the H5N1 virus in carcass and tissue samples sent from the region.Dr Sanjay Khachane, Deputy Commissioner of Animal Husbandry in the Nandurbar district, confirmed that the administration received the positive reports late Wednesday. “Samples sent from Navapur’s Palawala, Sakisma, and Ashraf poultry farms have tested positive for avian influenza,” Dr Khachane told The latest findings trigger a fresh round of containment measures. Just a week ago, authorities concluded a massive six-day operation that culled 2.47 lakh birds and destroyed 9.26 lakh eggs.

“We will now embark on the same process initiated last week,” Dr Khachane said. “The latest reports require concerted action to cull chickens at these new sites and redraw the containment zones accordingly.” Results from a fourth farm are still awaited. The initial outbreak was confirmed on April 30, following unusually high mortality rates at four farms. In response, the Nandurbar district administration established a 1-km radius around infected farms for immediate culling, declared a 3-km containment zone to monitor and restrict bird movement, and shifted its focus to backyard poultry to prevent the virus from spreading into local communities.Nandurbar District Collector Mittali Sethi said that active surveillance and “unusual mortality” alerts from other farms enabled the administration to act quickly before official reports arrived. Sethi added that the administration is prioritising the redrawing of boundaries to seal off

the new hotspots.“Efforts are also being made to ensure that affected farm owners are compensated as early as possible to mitigate the massive financial losses to the local poultry industry,” Sethi said.The Navapur region remains under high alert as central and state animal husbandry teams continue to monitor neighbouring clusters to prevent a broader regional spread.'Human-to-human transmission extremely rare'

The recent culling in Navapur has once again raised concerns about the possibility of human transmission. 'Dr Ishwar Gilada, secretary general of the People’s Health Organisation, noted that while human infection with highly pathogenic H5N1 can cause severe respiratory illness, carrying a high mortality rate globally, India has recorded only two confirmed human cases so far.“There is neither any treatment nor a vaccine. However, an important scientific reality must be emphasised: sustained human-to-human transmission of H5N1 remains extremely rare and has so far prevented the virus from evolving into a large-scale human disaster,” Dr Gilada said.Appealing for calm, Dr Gilada added that there is no evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission. “The media must exercise restraint and present scientific developments with balance and context. Governments and public health authorities should promptly issue clear, evidence-based advisories to reassure the public and prevent unnecessary panic,” he appealed.

Doctors advise eye protection for children using swimming pools

Hyderabad: With summer vacations in full swing, swimming pools in Hyderabad have emerged as the go-to destinations for children. Due to the heavy demand, a lot of private swimming pools have mushroomed across Hyderabad.While children look forward to beating the heat and mastering a vital life skill, parents and facility owners must take extreme precautions.In a study published early this year, researchers from Hyderabad-based LV Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) have cautioned that swimming pools can be breeding grounds for Acanthamoeba, a resilient, free-living organism found in water sources.

Maharashtra bird flu: 1.4 lakh chickens in Nandurbar to be culled in 5 days



GNS News Agency, May 7

The process of culling 1.40 lakh chickens at Navapur in Maharashtra's Nandurbar district is expected to be completed in five days, following the outbreak of bird flu in the region, officials said.As many as 11,000 chickens were culled on Friday and Saturday at Diamond poultry farm, the source of the outbreak, while two more adjoining farms — Tasleen and Sule farms — as well as four more nearby farms would also have their chickens culled, state animal husbandry officials told All seven farms are located within a one-km radius, and 25 rapid response teams have been set up to speed up the process.“We have started culling with scientific disposal. The second poultry farm is under progress now,” said Dr Mittali Sethi, Nandurbar district collector, noting that the birds are sedated before being culled.

Dr Sanjay Kachane, District Deputy Commissioner, Animal Husbandry and Dairy, Nandurbar, added that 6,000 eggs were destroyed as unusual bird mortality was detected as part of surveillance. The eggs would be buried in large pits, and egg trays would be counted and disposed of according to protocol.According to officials, each response team would have a veterinary officer, a livestock supervisor, and attendants. They would be administered Tamiflu pills as a preventive measure apart from being provided protective equipment.Meanwhile, to prevent the disease from spreading, authorities here have also directed culling chickens within a 1-km radius of the infected farm. This is in addition to declaring a 3-km containment zone.Instructions have been issued to immediately report any instances of unusual mortality or symptoms of illness among birds to the Animal Husbandry Department. Officials have been told to conduct regular surveillance of poultry blood samples and to increase monitoring within zoos.“In the event of large-scale bird mortality, citizens should not panic but instead immediately contact local veterinary officers or the revenue administration. It is crucial to strictly follow the guidelines issued by the administration to prevent the spread of the infection. If any unusual deaths among birds are observed anywhere, inform the local authorities instantly. Do not believe in rumors and adhere strictly to bio-safety protocols. The state government and the Department of Animal Husbandry are closely monitoring the situation, and all necessary steps are being taken for disease control,” a statement added.

Sessions court rejects anticipatory bail of Nida Khan, the only accused yet to be arrested

GNS News Agency, May 7

A sessions court in Nashik has rejected the anticipatory bail application of TCS employee Nida Khan, who is named as an accused in one case related to alleged sexual harassment and hurting religious sentiments. Her lawyers are likely to appeal the order in the High Court. The detailed order is yet to be made available.The court had earlier refused to grant any interim relief to Khan. Khan sought anticipatory bail on grounds that she is pregnant, that the allegations pertain to one case, and that she will cooperate with the police probe. Her lawyers argued that even if the allegations were taken at face value, there was no law in Maharashtra against conversion and at most she could be tried for hurting religious sentiments.

Khan, who worked at TCS's BPO office in Nashik, is one of eight accused named across nine FIRs registered by Nashik city police between March 26 and April 3 in connection with alleged sexual harassment and religious conversion. She is the only accused yet to be arrested. Other employees namely Danish Sheikh, Shafi Shaikh, Asif Ansari, Tausif Attar, Shahrukh Qureshi, Raza Memon and Ashwini Chainani, have all been taken into custody.The case came to light in February when a local political party worker approached Nashik police alleging that a Hindu woman working at the BPO had been influenced to follow Islamic practices at her workplace. Police deployed constables as undercover housekeeping staff inside the 147-employee BPO for several days, which, the police claim, provided the grounds for formal legal action.The first FIR,



registered at Deolali camp police station, alleged rape, hurting religious sentiments and sections of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Khan is named in this FIR. The prosecution alleged that she played a role in the religious conversion of a victim by giving her a burqa and religious books and installing religious apps on her phone. Police said they seized books from the victim's residence and found religious apps on her phone that Khan had allegedly helped install, and that her custody was needed to probe her role further.TCS has said it has adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards harassment and coercion of any form, and that the employees allegedly involved in sexual harassment at the Nashik office have been suspended. The company has engaged Deloitte and law firm Trilegal as independent counsel for its internal investigation, which is being led by COO Aarthi Subramanian.

‘He was assaulted, thrown off train’: Family of Bihar cleric found dead on Bareilly railway tracks



GNS News Agency, May 7

The death of a 30-year-old cleric from Bihar, whose body was found on the railway tracks in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly last week, has taken a fresh turn, with his family claiming to possess an audio clip in which he is allegedly heard saying he was being harassed inside the train. Police, who initially suspected he accidentally fell from the train, said they are probing the case afresh.The deceased, Maulana Tauseef Raza from Kishanganj district, was an imam at a mosque in Siwan. Police said the family is expected to arrive on Sunday to lodge a complaint.

Raza's uncle, Rizwan Alam, alleged: “We suspect he was assaulted inside the train and then thrown from it.”In the purported audio recording, the victim is heard telling his wife, Tabassum, that some people were harassing him inside the train and that he'd informed the police.In a video circulating on social media, Tabassum alleged that her husband had called her, saying some people had caught him and were assaulting him on the train. She said she urged him to seek help from fellow passengers, but he told her that they were accusing him of being a thief.Tabassum, in the video, said her husband was travelling to Siwan from Bareilly. She further claimed that police initially informed the family that he had slipped and fallen from the train, along

with his luggage.

Superintendent of Police, Bareilly, Manush Pareek, said when the body was handed over to the family after the post-mortem, no suspicion of foul play was raised and they agreed with the police's preliminary conclusion that the cleric had died after accidentally falling from a moving train. “We are in contact with the deceased's family and will take appropriate action in the matter soon,” said the SP.According to police, on the morning of April 27, they received information through the railway police about a body found lying near the tracks close to Palpur Fatak, under the Cantonment police station in Bareilly.During an initial examination, police said they recovered documents from the deceased's belongings, including an Aadhaar card, which helped establish his identity and contact his family.Police further stated that the post-mortem examination revealed a lacerated wound on the victim's head, which they earlier suspected may have been caused when he struck a pole after falling. The exact sequence of events remains under review as fresh allegations are examined, they said"... On the evening of April 26, he boarded the Muzaffarpur Special Fare Summer Special train from Bareilly for Siwan.” He claimed Raza was talking to his wife when a young man allegedly began misbehaving with him.“He told his wife during the call that someone was harassing him and that conversation was recorded on his phone. His wife also switched to a video call... but she was unable to capture the image of the person harassing Tauseef,” he claimed.Alam added that “the family has a 36-second audio recording and a 2.63-minute video call related to the incident. We are coming to Bareilly tomorrow to get a case lodged into the matter”. Asked why they didn't tell police initially that Raza was being harassed, Alam said: “Tabassum and the rest of the family were in shock and not in a condition to explain anything... Later, after returning to Bihar, we checked Tauseef's phone and found the recordings.”

Andhra youth dies by suicide in US over debt distress

Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh): A 26-year-old youth from this district allegedly died by suicide in the US recently due to distress over debt, sources said .Family members of the deceased requested that his identity be withheld, noting that his parents are senior citizens suffering from medical conditions.Reacting to the incident, Andhra Pradesh IT Minister Nara Lokesh expressed condolences and assured assistance for the repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased.“My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. I request Union Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu to ensure smooth and hassle-free transport of the mortal remains,” Lokesh said in a post on X.An NRI community member from the US posted on social media that one of their members from Kurnool, who was on Optional Practical Training (OPT), passed away in Chicago a few days ago.He said the Telugu Association of North America (TANA) had completed all necessary documentation and



formalities to send the mortal remains to India for final rites.He further requested assistance in expediting the cargo pickup, which is currently scheduled for Sunday, seeking an earlier arrangement considering the urgency.

Mumbai's Oval Maidan, Churchgate, Metro Cinema among BMC's flooding spots for 2026



Key areas across south Mumbai including Oval Maidan, Mantralaya, Kemps Corner, Churchgate, Metro Cinema and Hutatma Chowk which are VIP footfall zones, have found themselves in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) list of flooding spots for this year.With the number of flooding spots in the city seeing an increase by 10 per cent this year, these areas, which are not known to be flooded, were included in the list after the heavy waterlogging recorded on the first day of the monsoon outbreak last year. Several pockets in south Mumbai recorded 200 mm of rainfall within a 24 hour span.A flooding spot is identified by analysing the waterlogging patterns of the previous year, based on which mitigation measures are implemented. Since these spots recorded heavy flooding last year, the officials added them to this year's list.According to BMC data, all these areas had recorded waterlogging only three times in the past 20 years – during the infamous July 26 deluge in 2006, the August 2020 rains and a heavy monsoon spell that took place during May last year as a result of an early monsoon arrival.

This year, the BMC has identified 496 flooding spots in Mumbai, which are low-lying areas that are very much likely to record a significant period of water logging during a moderate or heavy spell of rainfall. Last year, the number

of flooding spots in Mumbai stood at 453.“Every year new low lying flooding spots emerge. This is a common pattern that is directly associated with the change in land use system and overall natural drainage pattern. The south Mumbai areas have seen enormous construction work in the past few years that have led to the choking of drains because of silt and construction debris, due to which these places are now getting waterlogged following a heavy spell of rainfall within a short period of time,” a civic official said.Around 150 such spots are located in the island city including the aforementioned areas. At present, 403 such spots have been tackled while the intervention measures for the remaining spots are being implemented, the official added.“As part of the intervention measure we have installed dewatering pumps in most of these areas. These pumps will channel out the accumulated rainfall water from these spots to the drains through which they will be discharged to the sea or natural water bodies via outfalls,” the official noted. The BMC is also removing floating waste and debris from the drains to allow smooth water flow.

Dewatering pumps at metro stationCivic officials said that they the BMC has also installed pumps in all the key metro stations which include the Marol Naka station, Acharya Atre chowk station (Worli) and Aarey. All the three stations are located in the Aqua line of Mumbai and the move came after last year's experience when rainwater entered these metro stations affecting services and bringing the entire line into halt.“Stations like Acharya Atre Chowk and Marol have slopes at the entry shafts, which causes water to run off from the surface easily. Therefore these high capacity pumps will not allow water to stagnate over there and will discharge them smoothly,” an official said.Earlier on April 28, BMC commissioner, Ashwini Bhide said that this year all the dewatering pumps will be placed in the chronic flooding spots by May 5 as a precautionary measure against early monsoon onset.

UP Census 2027: Phase 1 starts this month, here's what you need to know

Uttar Pradesh is set to kickstart the first phase of Census 2027: The Self-Enumeration exercise will run from May 7 to May 21 followed by the Houselisting and Housing Census (HLO) from May 22 to June 20, officials said.In April, officials said field staff were given training to conduct the census work. Sheetal Verma, Director and Chief Principal Census Officer, Uttar Pradesh, said: “The first phase focuses on enumeration at the household level; we do not cover details such as the number of people residing in a household or their individual characteristics. Those details fall under Phase Two (Population Enumeration)... which will be conducted simultaneously across the entire country in February 2027.”

Who's carrying out such a huge exercise?

Officials said over 5.25 lakh personnel are involved — 18 Divisional Commissioners as zonal census officers, District Magistrates of 75 districts as chief census officers, 17 Municipal Commissioners as additional chief census officers, 600 district-level officers, 1,195 charge officers (tehsildar and executive officers, etc), 285 master trainers, 6,939 field trainers and about 5 lakh enumerators and supervisors besides other officials.

Is there anything new this time?

Yes, this census is going digital. Data will be collected using mobile apps for the first time. That said, paper forms haven't been scrapped and will still be used where needed.

Can I fill in my own details?

You can. Before the houselisting phase begins, a 15-day time period has been fixed for self enumeration from May 7 to May 21. Through the Self Enumeration (SE) digital platform, you'll be able to submit your details online on se.census.gov.in. After you fill in the details, an SE ID will be generated. An enumerator will later verify the information.

Will someone still come to my house?

Yes, don't be surprised if they knock. The enumerator will be visiting each house between May 22 and June 20. Residents have to share the SE ID with the official. The Houselisting and House Census work will be completed only after the enumerator verifies the details. The SE is



optional and not compulsory.

How will it be done?

The enumerator, while visiting each house, will record details based on 33 questions (as notified by the Centre) that they will ask the occupants: condition of the house building, facilities available to them and the assets.

Is my data safe?

According to officials, yes. The information collected will be kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes, not shared publicly. As per the regulations, this information cannot be used in the police or tax investigation or as evidence.

How big is this operation in UP?

It's massive. The census will cover 75 districts, 783 civic bodies, 1.04 lakh villages under 350 tehsils. To manage the census work, there are 350 charges in rural areas and 845 in urban areas of the state. Besides these charges, 3.90 lakh houselisting blocks have been made. The enumerators will carry out census work while visiting houses in these blocks.

How are people being informed about all this?

The government has already run over 1,800 awareness campaigns to spread the word and prepare citizens.

What do I need to do?

The department made an appeal to the citizens to cooperate in the census work, provide correct information, and ensure participation.

529 heritage trees vs. 45-metre road: Pune residents form human chain to save Ganeshkhind's green cover

About 200 citizens — from schoolchildren to senior citizens — gathered on Ganeshkhind Road in Pune on Friday to form a human chain against the planned removal of 529 heritage trees for road widening. They were united by a fight not just for trees, but for the city's future.The chain began at the trees near the Simla office — the spot where the first set of trees had been cut — and stretched all the way to the College of Agriculture.The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) is planning to increase the width of Ganeshkhind Road from 36 metres to 45 metres, putting the fate of the heritage trees at stake.“Quality of life is proportional to the quality of our air, water, and resources, not fancy appliances or money. We want eight trees for every person gathered here today. We've been protesting for 10 years and will continue to do so,” said Satya Natrajan, one of the organisers.The trees in question are flagged to be cleared for road widening — a project that demonstrators argue will do little to ease congestion.“You can always build around. People don't have a problem driving around the metro pillars in the middle of the road, what's wrong with the trees? You're not just transplanting trees, you're moving an entire habitat. Birds and animals also depend on these trees so heavily. Preserve what we have first; new trees are always welcome. Metro, overbridge, expansion: none of this will help congestion. Public transport is the key.” said Shailaja Deshpande, an environmentalist present at the protest. This issue has been taken to court previously, and some urge that it should be done again. Arpita Kotnis, a lawyer who has personally witnessed how government bodies utilise legal loopholes, mentioned that legal action could be taken. She pointed to the misenumeration of trees and their age by the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), which she described as clear evidence of data mismanagement of trees. “They should take this case to court again. We could file a writ or a PIL since this is an issue that directly affects the public,” she said.

A recurring sentiment throughout the demonstration was the disconnect of road-widening as a solution to congestion and the desperate need for better public transport. A protester, Pradeep Ghumre, stated: “One man sitting in a



huge SUV takes up the space of four scooters. Put people in buses and metros instead of expanding roads for one man taking out his huge car.”Yet even the metro drew criticism. Protesters noted that ridership remains low not because people don't want alternatives to private vehicles, but because the infrastructure around public transport has not kept up. Last-mile connectivity was cited repeatedly as the missing link. Poor walkability pushes people toward private vehicles and away from public transport stations, which drives congestion, becomes the justification for cutting trees — a vicious cycle that, demonstrators argued, road expansion only deepens.Urban designer and protestor Suhrd Joshi slammed the way in which the city is being designed. “If they want to build a wall-to-wall asphalt road, where are people supposed to walk or cycle? Basically, you are designing the city for people who drive Cretas and Toyota Fortuners. Do only people with an income over 12 lakh have a right to the road? Children cannot use the city. The elderly cannot use the city. Pregnant women, disabled people—they cannot use the city.”Determined to make their cause heard, the demonstrators said they would keep staging protests over the coming days.In 2024, the PMC was permitted to remove trees on Ganeshkhind Road for the construction of the flyover. Among the conditions were that trees must be transplanted rather than cut, and there must be compensatory plantation of 5,000 trees, with 95 per cent survival rate to be assured by PMC.

PGIMER vacation in 2 phases from May 16; 50% faculty to remain on duty at all times



The institute has designated June 15 as a working day, during which all faculty members will report for duty and formally hand over responsibilities to colleagues. The institute has designated June 15 as a working day, during which all faculty members will report for duty and formally hand over responsibilities to colleagues. PGIMER has released the summer vacation schedule for its teaching faculty in two phases with the first phase from May 16 to June 14, followed by the second one from June 16 to July 15.

As per the orders issued by the Establishment Branch-I (Faculty Section), the leave period was divided into phases with at least 50 per cent of the faculty required to remain on duty at any given time. This was to maintain hospital services and a clear focus on ensuring uninterrupted patient care.

However, the institute has designated June 15 as a

working day, during which all faculty members will report for duty and formally hand over responsibilities to colleagues. The PGI administration has directed all department heads to prepare duty rosters and submit them within 15 days. The rosters must ensure adequate staffing during both the phases. The order also states that no faculty member will be allowed to avail of leave in both phases simultaneously. Additionally, splitting the leave into smaller segments is also not permitted, as it could disrupt workflow and affect patient services. Only faculty members who have completed more than six months of service will be eligible for the summer vacation. Those with less than six months will not be entitled for the leave this year.

The administration has also imposed restrictions on combining leave with other forms of absence. The faculty members will not be allowed to take conference leave, LTC or any earned leave during the alternate phase after availing vacation in one phase. Participation in any national or international conferences will only be permitted during the period when the faculty member is officially on leave. The institute has also issued separate guidelines for faculty posted at the PGI satellite centre, Sangrur. They will be required to route their leave applications through their respective department heads in Chandigarh to ensure proper staffing arrangements. According to the administration, the structured vacation schedule aims to balance the need for faculty to rest with the institute's responsibility to provide uninterrupted healthcare services. The plan was designed like the previous years to ensure that patient care remains the top priority, even during the vacation period.

Delhi-NCR housing sales rise 30% in Q1 2026 amid premium demand boom

GNS News Agency, May 7

The National Capital Region's residential real estate market is pivoting from volume-driven affordable housing to value-driven premium supply, according to a market assessment report released by real estate services firm JLL on Thursday. Delhi-NCR recorded a massive 30% year-on-year growth in housing sales during the first quarter of 2026. The robust growth is largely supported by new infrastructure initiatives and accumulated buyer demand, experts said.

The region, which encompasses Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, and Sohna, remains a dominant force in the national real estate landscape. Along with Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Pune, it helped account for approximately 77% of all housing sales across India's top seven cities in Q1 2026. Sales: In Q1 2026, housing sales in Delhi-NCR reached 10,740 units, a 30% increase from the 8,290 units sold in Q1 2025. Launches: New project launches saw an exceptional 64% year-on-year surge, with 13,631 units introduced to the market in Q1 2026 compared to Q4 2025's 12,055 units.

Price appreciation: Driven by this premiumisation and underlying demand, Delhi-NCR led the year-on-year property price growth, recording a substantial 12-15% annual growth in capital values. Rahul Singla, Director of Mapsko Group, weighed in on these figures: "JLL's latest update has indicated the impressive performance of India's residential real estate sector, with Delhi-NCR registering an exceptional rise in sale numbers of 30%, putting it in one of the best-performing locations. It signifies the sustained investor optimism and increasing inclination towards high-quality housing schemes. With a strong development pipeline and efficient absorption of demand, the market is in equilibrium, making Delhi-NCR a highly favoured destination for both developers and investors alike."

The divergence between launch and sales growth represents developers' strategic focus on medium- to long-term demand projections, the report noted. Specifically, the market is witnessing a clear shift away from affordable housing. Nationally, the premium segment dominated Q1 2026, with apartments priced above Rs 1 crore accounting for 71% of total sales. Puspender Singh, Managing Director of JMS Group, noted: "The steady rise in housing sales across Delhi-NCR reflects a clear shift in buyer preference. Today's homebuyers are choosing larger homes and better communities. The Rs 1 crore-plus segment is seeing strong demand, especially in NCR. This is driven by higher incomes, lifestyle changes, and long-term investment confidence. Going forward, developers will focus more on premium and mid-premium offerings to match this evolving demand." Rajan Yadav, Director of Roots Developers, echoed this sentiment: "The rising growth in housing sales



shows that the market is becoming more quality focused. Buyers are willing to spend more, but they want better quality and location advantages. The Rs 1 crore-plus segment is expanding beyond core city areas. This trend is supported by advanced infrastructure and improved lifestyle. "The upward market trajectory is heavily intensified by enhanced infrastructure, such as expressways and Metro connectivity, which continue to open up micro-markets throughout the region, developers added. While Gurgaon and Noida have traditionally led the charge, new frontiers are rapidly emerging, they said.

Mohit Malhotra, Founder & CEO of NeoLiv, highlighted one such beneficiary: "Within this regional upswing, after Gurgaon and Noida, Faridabad has emerged as a high-potential micro-market, driven by accelerated infrastructure development and dramatically improved connectivity across the NCR. The opening of the Jewar Airport connecting Faridabad by the expressway, cutting travel time to just 30-45 minutes, along with the upcoming metro extensions, and the nearly completed FNG Expressway, has fundamentally repositioned the city on the region's realty map." In its concluding insights, the report noted that as the residential sector advances into 2026, the market is underpinned by rising affluence, ongoing urbanisation, and a sustained shift toward premiumisation. "While near-term economic uncertainties have led buyers to adopt a more measured approach, the substantial supply pipeline, particularly in the premium segment, is well-positioned to meet demand as confidence stabilises..." it said. Siva Krishnan, Senior Managing Director, JLL India, said the residential market is navigating a transitional phase where robust supply is meeting measured buyer sentiment. "This temporary divergence is not unusual and reflects a healthy market adjustment and not a structural concern. The strong performance of the premium segment... demonstrates that underlying demand fundamentals remain strong, particularly among affluent buyers who are less sensitive to short-term economic fluctuations," he said.

‘Neeta is behind this, not me’: US-based Khalistani activist denies role in Shambhu railway track blast

Days after Punjab police chief Gaurav Yadav named Pakistan-based Ranjeet Singh alias Neeta and US-based Khalistani activist Surinder Singh Thikriwala as accused in the Shambu railway track low-intensity blast in Patiala on April 27, Thikriwala has denied his role but confirmed the role of Neeta, the head of Khalistan Zindabad Force. While speaking to The Indian Express over the phone, Thikriwala, a staunch supporter of the Khalistan movement, however, labeled the charges against him in the Shambu blast case a "complete fabrication" and "entirely false".

The blast resulted in the death of one person, identified as Jagroop Singh, while he was attempting to plant an IED on the dedicated freight corridor railway track that apparently detonated prematurely. Thikriwala said that he had no information whether the Indian government had made any correspondence with the US government for his deportation. The US-based truck driver claimed that he had no contact with the deceased, Jagroop. Stating his relationship with the deceased, Thikriwala said that he posted photos of Jagroop Singh on social media as a gesture of sympathy, and he did not know the man personally.

"I had met him during the farmer agitation against the three farm laws. Otherwise, I was not in touch with him," he said. He, however, confirmed his relationship with one of the accused in the same case, Manpreet Singh of district Mansa, who was arrested on Friday. The police teams had already arrested four individuals identified as Pardeep Singh Khalsa, Kulwinder Singh, Satnam Singh alias Satta, and Gurpreet Singh alias Gopi in connection with the blast.

Thikriwala, who hailed from Barnala, went to the US after jumping bail in cases pending against him. He is very active on social media and often makes videos supporting



Khalistan. Despite his denial of this specific incident, Thikriwala admitted to a long history of criminal record. He said, "I face approximately 23 to 24 active cases in Punjab, including 12 Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) cases. No one else in Punjab has such a high number of UAPA cases. The first case against me dates back to 2006. Most of the cases are fake." He moved to the United States three to four years ago via an illegal "donkey" route while out on bail. On allegations of the deceased's link with Khadoor Sahib Member of Parliament, Amritpal Singh's election campaign, stating that while he initially supported Amritpal Singh's religious efforts, he distanced himself from Amritpal after he entered the Indian electoral political system. "KZF chief Ranjeet Singh Neeta has posted a video taking responsibility for the blast. So there is no doubt that Neeta is behind this attack. Some people who blame the blast on agencies are cowards. They themselves can do nothing and hide behind such conspiracy theories," said Thikriwala. Thikriwala is very active on social media. In one such video on Facebook,

‘Want to walk without fearing being run over’: Residents raise concerns over encroached footpaths near Pune’s Kamala Nehru Park



Residents near Kamala Nehru Park in Pune Thursday raised concerns over street vending, encroached footpaths, and inadequate enforcement by civic authorities, seeking action to improve pedestrian access and regulate stalls in the area. Highlighting RTI data, locals said while 17 to 18 stalls are officially authorised, the number on the stretch has risen to over 30. "From one end of Ketkar Road till the temple, there are about 32 to 35 tapris. Only 17 or 18 are authorised. The rest are illegal," said activist Kedar Paranjpye. He added that the situation has affected mobility, particularly during peak evening hours, with double parking and roadside activity reducing available space for vehicles and pedestrians. "After 6.30 pm, it is difficult to drive here because of double parking. Senior citizens have no place to walk. It is dangerous," Paranjpye further said.

Congestion throughout the day, with two-wheelers and rickshaws occupying parts of the road, has led to minor

accidents and increased noise levels. "Three times my car has been hit by two-wheelers taking turns from that stretch," said resident Mihir Jathar. "For us, it is a basic issue. I just want a footpath where I can walk without fear of being run over," said resident Falguni Gokhale. Concerns were also raised over sanitation and safety, with food waste and wastewater from stalls entering stormwater drains, contributing to foul smells, rodent presence, and strain on drainage infrastructure. "There is a constant stench, which attracts rodents and damages the drainage system," said Dr Anagha Bhat-Behere, who heads the Department of Foreign Languages at Savitribai Phule Pune University. Some residents questioned the effectiveness of enforcement drives, stating that the situation often returns to its earlier state after inspections.

Responding to the concerns, Dr Ramesh Shelar, Chief Security Officer, Pune Municipal Corporation, said the area falls within a designated vending zone established in 2017, with 37 listed vendors, including those relocated over time. "We have examined how this list was prepared and will present the details to all stakeholders," he said. He added that the issue will be taken up at the Town Vending Committee (TVC), where vendor representatives will also be invited to present their concerns, and will subsequently be placed before the General Body and Standing Committee for further deliberation. Officials said notices have been issued to vendors over violations related to stall size and the use of gas cylinders. Corporator Apoorva Khade suggested that a more structured approach, such as developing a designated food zone with proper drainage and lighting, may help address the issue, in place of unregulated expansion.

BJP alleges FIRs against former AAP MP Sandeep Pathak, accuses Punjab government of vendetta

Punjab BJP leaders have claimed that the Punjab Police have filed an FIR against former AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sandeep Pathak under non-bailable sections. Official sources are tight-lipped, neither confirming nor denying the claim. A Punjab Police team also allegedly reached Delhi on Saturday morning in connection with the FIRs. However, sources claimed that Pathak had left his residence through the rear exit before the police team arrived.

The development comes in the backdrop of seven AAP Rajya Sabha MPs – including Pathak and Trident Group emeritus chairman Rajinder Gupta – switching to the BJP. Days later, the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) raided the Dhaula-based unit of Trident Group on April 30. Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar said the party was still awaiting full details of the FIRs registered against Rajya Sabha MP Sandeep Pathak, but claimed that initial information pointed to two separate cases – one related to alleged threats and the other to corruption.

Talking with The Indian Express, Jakhar said, "The party would respond legally, alleging that the cases were politically motivated. We will deal with these FIRs, which are nothing but a political vendetta. It was expected of them. The party is not intimidated by FIRs filed by the AAP government; these actions are meant to divert attention from Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's alleged conduct of arriving in an inebriated state in the Assembly."

Reacting to the police action, Punjab BJP working president Ashwani Sharma, too, alleged a political vendetta. "The fear of Bhagwant Mann and Arvind Kejriwal has now come to the fore. As soon as Rajya Sabha MP Sandeep



Pathak left the AAP and joined the BJP, a non-bailable FIR was registered against him in Punjab. This clearly indicates that Kejriwal and Bhagwant Mann are using the police as a political weapon," he said. He further said, "This is not just one case – it reflects fear, panic, and politics driven by vendetta. Even earlier, the police were used to silence dissenting voices – and today, the same is being repeated." Sharma alleged that invoking non-bailable sections was an attempt to impose a political agenda. "The government led by Bhagwant Mann is gradually turning Punjab into a 'police state' – where dissent equals a case, and truth is punished. BJP Punjab will not tolerate this high-handedness and authoritarianism. Those who are turning the law into a weapon against political opponents will be challenged both legally and democratically. We will neither be afraid nor bow down," he said.

Eating out in Punjab to get 20% dearer from next weekend amid commercial LPG price hike

The proposed hike is expected to be an added burden on customers, as many eateries had already increased food prices in March and April during the LPG shortage. The proposed hike is expected to be an added burden on customers, as many eateries had already increased food prices in March and April during the LPG shortage. The sharp rise in commercial LPG cylinder prices from May 1 is set to have a double impact on consumers, particularly those who prefer eating out, as the Punjab Hotel and Restaurant Association has proposed a steep 20 per cent increase in food prices across the state. Association president Amarveer Singh said a meeting has been called on Monday to take a unanimous decision, after which the revised rate cards will be implemented from the next weekend. There are over 80,000 hotels and restaurants in Punjab. The development comes amid a sustained rise in commercial LPG prices. Amid rising global energy prices, state-run oil companies have hiked commercial cylinder prices by Rs 993 on May 1, just two days after the 5-state polls ended on April 29.

In Punjab, the cumulative increase since January 1 stands at Rs 1,491.50. In comparison, during the LPG crisis triggered by the West Asia conflict, the total hike from March 1 to May 1 alone has been Rs 1,331.50. Monthly revisions have contributed significantly to the surge, with prices rising by Rs 111 on January 1, Rs 49 on February 1, and Rs 30 on March 1. As the West Asia conflict escalated, a second hike of Rs 115 was implemented on March 7, followed by Rs 193.50 on April 1 and a steepest single increase of Rs 993 on May 1, pushing the price of a 19-kg commercial cylinder beyond Rs 3,000. The proposed hike



is expected to be an added burden on customers, as many eateries had already increased food prices in March and April during the LPG shortage, when commercial supplies were heavily curtailed by the Ministry of Petroleum amid the global fuel crisis. Consumers say the latest move amounts to a double blow. "Already restaurants increased the prices of food items in March itself when there was LPG shortage and now yet again... this sounds too unprofessional on their part... even a small roadside eatery had also increased prices... like Amritsari nan-chole which were priced at Rs 60 per plate were priced at Rs 70 a plate at many roadside eateries in March itself and now let's see the second hike," said a Ludhiana-based customer. Responding to concerns, Amarveer Singh said, "Most of the restaurants and hotels linked with our association have not increased prices of food items till now; they will be doing it next weekend only. If a few had already done it in the past... I am not aware of it, and it must have been just marginal only."

No adulteration in watermelon, says FDA, but cause still unclear

Days after four members of a Mumbai family died allegedly after eating watermelon, the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) preliminary tests on samples from their home—watermelon, biryani, water, and spices—have found no signs of adulteration, an official said. The police are now awaiting the report from the Kalina Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), which will determine whether the deaths were caused by food poisoning resulting from bacterial growth leading to food poisoning or by the ingestion of a toxic substance, the official added. A senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that while the FDA tests for adulteration in food items, determining bacterial contamination or poisoning falls under the purview of forensic analysis. "Only the FSL report will establish whether the deaths were due to bacterial growth causing food poisoning or due to poisoning," the official explained.

The deaths of Abdulla Dokadia, 44, his wife Nasreen, 35, and their daughters Ayesha, 16, and Zainab, 12, occurred within hours of each other on April 26, after the Pydhonie family reportedly developed vomiting and rapidly lost consciousness. According to Sir JJ Hospital records and doctors, the family consumed watermelon around 1-1.30 am on April 26 at home and soon after, they developed vomiting and sought treatment from a local doctor. By early morning, their condition had deteriorated sharply. Doctors said three of them were brought in a semi-conscious state, whereas the youngest daughter was brought dead. Earlier, Dr Sanjay Surase, medical superintendent of Sir JJ Hospital, said the family's condition did not match the symptoms of a typical foodborne illness. "If this were food poisoning, the clinical picture would be very different. It does not typically lead to such rapid and severe deterioration."

Iran standoff could leave Trump worse off than before he went to war



WASHINGTON, GNS News Agency, May 7More than two months into a conflict that has failed to deliver a decisive military or diplomatic win, President Donald Trump faces the risk that a standoff with Iran will drag on indefinitely and leave an even bigger problem for the U.S. and the world than before he launched the war. With both sides outwardly confident they hold the upper hand and their positions far apart, there is no obvious off-ramp in sight, even as Iran submitted a fresh proposal to restart negotiations. Trump quickly rejected it on Friday. The Reuters Power Up newsletter provides everything you need to know about the global energy industry. Sign up here.

For the U.S. president and his Republican Party, the implications of a continued impasse are grim. An unresolved conflict would likely mean the global economic fallout, including high U.S. gasoline prices, will persist, putting further pressure on Trump, whose poll numbers are falling, and darkening Republican candidates' prospects ahead of November's midterm congressional elections. Those costs highlight a deeper problem: the war has failed to achieve many of Trump's stated goals. While there is little doubt that waves of U.S. and Israeli strikes heavily degraded Iran's military capabilities, many of Trump's often-shifting war objectives - from regime change to shutting Iran's path to a nuclear weapon - remain unfulfilled. Fears for a more protracted deadlock have grown since Trump called off a trip by his negotiators to Islamabad last weekend and then dismissed an Iranian offer to halt the war, suspended since April 8 under a ceasefire agreement.

Tehran proposed setting aside discussion of its nuclear program until the conflict is formally ended and a deal is reached on reopening the Strait of Hormuz. That was a non-starter for Trump, who has demanded the nuclear issue be dealt with at the outset. There was a glimmer of hope on Friday when state news agency IRNA reported Tehran had sent a revised proposal through Pakistani mediators, causing a drop in global oil prices that had risen sharply since Iran effectively closed the strait. Trump told reporters he was "not satisfied" with the offer, though he said there were ongoing contacts by phone. A failure to wrest the vital oil-shipping waterway from Iranian control at the conclusion of the conflict would be a major blow to Trump's legacy. "He'd be remembered as the U.S. president who made the world less safe," said Laura Blumenfeld, a Middle East expert at Johns Hopkins University in Washington.

White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales said Iran's "desperation" is increasing due to military and economic pressure, and Trump "holds all the cards and has all the time he needs to make the best deal."

RESUMPTION OF HOSTILITIES?

With his next steps uncertain and no clear endgame, Trump has in private meetings raised the prospect of a prolonged naval blockade of Iran, possibly for months more, aimed at further squeezing off its oil exports and forcing it to reach a denuclearization agreement, a White House official said on condition of anonymity. At the same time, he has left the door open to resuming military action. The U.S. Central Command has prepared options for a "short and powerful" series of strikes as well as for taking over part of the strait to reopen it to shipping, Axios reported on Thursday. European diplomats said their governments, whose relations with Trump have been strained by the war, expect the current situation with Iran to persist. "It's hard to see how this will end soon," said one, speaking on condition of anonymity. It has exerted powerful leverage against the U.S. and its allies, triggering an unprecedented energy

Iranian proposal rejected by Trump would open strait before nuclear talks, Iran official says



An Iranian proposal so far rejected by U.S. President Donald Trump would open shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and end the U.S. blockade of Iran while leaving talks on Iran's nuclear programme for later, a senior Iranian official said on Saturday. Four weeks since the United States and Israel suspended their bombing campaign against Iran, no deal has been reached to end a war that has caused the biggest disruption ever to global energy supplies. The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.

Iran has been blocking nearly all shipping from the Gulf apart from its own for more than two months. Last month the U.S. imposed its own blockade of ships from Iranian ports. Trump said on Friday he was "not satisfied" with Iran's latest proposal, without spelling out in detail which elements he opposes. "They're asking for things that I can't agree to," he told reporters at the White House.

Washington has repeatedly said it will not end the war without a deal that prevents Iran from ever obtaining a nuclear weapon, the primary aim Trump cited when he launched the strikes in February in the midst of nuclear talks. Iran says its nuclear programme is peaceful. Speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss confidential diplomacy, the senior Iranian official said Tehran believed its latest proposal to shelve nuclear talks for a later stage was a significant shift aimed at facilitating an agreement. Under the proposal, the war would end with a guarantee that Israel and the United States would not attack again. Iran would open the strait, and the United States would lift its blockade. Future talks would then be held on curbs to Iran's nuclear programme in return for the lifting of sanctions, with Iran demanding Washington recognise its right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes, even if it agrees

supply shock by choking off shipping in the strait, where tanker traffic flowed freely before the war, carrying a fifth of the world's oil.

Analysts say Iran will be emboldened knowing that it will have this weapon at its disposal even after the war. "Iran has realized that, even in a weakened state, it can shut off the Strait at will," said Jon Alterman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. "That knowledge leaves Iran stronger than it was before the war."

URANIUM STOCKPILE REMAINSTrump - who took office promising to avoid entanglement in foreign interventions - has also failed to achieve his main stated aim in attacking Iran on February 28: to close off its path to a nuclear weapon. A stockpile of highly enriched uranium is believed to remain buried following U.S. and Israeli airstrikes last June and could be recovered and further processed into bomb-grade material. Iran says it wants the U.S. to recognize its right to enrich uranium for what it says are peaceful purposes. Wales, the White House spokeswoman, said Trump had "met or surpassed" all military objectives, including action "to ensure that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon." Another of Trump's declared war goals - forcing Iran to stop support for proxy groups such as Lebanon's Hezbollah, Yemen's Houthis and Palestinian Hamas - also remains unmet.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, in congressional testimony, denied the conflict had become a "quagmire," despite Trump having initially predicted it would be over in four to six weeks. Renewed peace talks are unlikely to yield a quick resolution, given the large gaps. Though Trump has said he will accept nothing less than a long-term solution to the threat posed by Iran, he has at times shown signs of seeking an exit plan from an unpopular conflict. At the request of Trump's aides, intelligence agencies are studying how Iran would respond if he declared a unilateral victory and pulled back, U.S. officials have told Reuters.

Independent analysts say Tehran would interpret that as its own strategic success for having survived the military onslaught. At the same time, European and Gulf Arab diplomats have expressed concern that Trump might eventually agree to a flawed deal that would allow a wounded Iran to remain a threat.

RISK OF 'FROZEN CONFLICT'With negotiations deadlocked, some analysts have suggested the war could devolve into a frozen conflict that would defy a permanent solution. That could prevent Trump from significantly scaling down forces in the Middle East. The U.S. is already paying new strategic costs. Those include fractures with traditional European allies, who were not consulted before Trump went to war.

He has harshly criticized NATO partners for not sending their navies to help open the strait, and in the past week spoke about possibly drawing down troops in Germany, Spain and Italy. Trump also must deal with a more hardline Iranian leadership, dominated by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, that took over after U.S.-Israeli strikes killed several figures, including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The president's call at the start of the conflict for the Iranian people to overthrow their rulers has gone unheeded. At home, Trump is under pressure to end a war that has dragged his approval rating to the lowest level of his term - 34%, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll - and spiked gasoline prices above \$4 a gallon ahead of the midterms, in which Republicans are at risk of losing control of Congress.

A second White House spokeswoman, Taylor Rogers, said Trump was committed to maintaining his party's congressional majority and that high gasoline prices were only "short-term disruptions" that would be overcome as the conflict subsides. The Iranians, however, are mindful of Trump's domestic troubles and may be prepared to wait him out, but the question remains how long they can stave off economic calamity. "Iran isn't fractured or folding, it's playing for time," Sina Toossi, a senior fellow at the Center for International Policy think tank in Washington, wrote on X. Reporting by Matt Spetalnick; Additional reporting by Andrea Shalal and Humeyra Pamuk; Writing by Matt Spetalnick; Editing by Don Durfee and Rod NickelOur Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles., opens new tab

to suspend it. "Under this framework, negotiations over the more complicated nuclear issue have been moved to the final stage to create a more conducive atmosphere," the official said. Reuters and other news organisations already reported over the past week that Tehran was proposing to reopen the strait before nuclear issues were resolved; the official confirmed that this new timeline had now been spelled out in a formal proposal conveyed to the United States through mediators.

India storm into Thomas Cup semifinals

Horsens (Denmark): Lakshya Sen saved two match points to beat world No. 6 Chou Tien Chen, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty added a gritty doubles win, before Ayush Shetty delivered the final blow as India registered a commanding 3-0 victory over Chinese Taipei to storm into the semifinals of the Thomas Cup Finals on Friday. Lakshya, who trailed for the better part of the contest, showed remarkable resilience to script an 18-21, 22-20, 21-17 victory in a marathon clash lasting one hour and 28 minutes.

World No. 4 Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, the Asian Games champions, then defeated Chiu Hsiang Chieh and Wang Chi-Lin 23-21, 19-21, 21-12 in one hour and 15 minutes to put India in a commanding position. The onus then shifted to Ayush Shetty, and the youngster delivered. The 20-year-old, who recently reached the final of the Badminton Asia Championships, produced a breathtaking display, blending disciplined defence with attacking flair to notch up a 21-16, 21-17 win over world No. 8 and reigning All England Open Badminton Championships champion Lin Chun-Yi in the second singles to seal the contest. "This is not just a win to celebrate - it is a performance to remember. One that reflects belief, preparation, and the growing strength of Indian badminton," former India coach Vimal Kumar said. India, the 2022 champions, will face either France or Japan in the semifinals. The victory also assured India a medal in the prestigious Thomas Cup Finals, regarded as the World Men's Team Championships. India had won the Thomas Cup in 2022, besides winning bronze medals in 1952, 1955, and 1979.

Trump says Iran war 'terminated,' as war powers deadline arrives



WASHINGTON, - U.S. President Donald Trump declared that a ceasefire had "terminated" hostilities against Iran, as he sought to bolster his argument that he does not need lawmakers' permission to continue the conflict. In a letter to congressional leaders on Friday, the deadline to come to Congress about the war, Trump said there has been no exchange of fire with Iran since the ceasefire. "The hostilities that began on February 28, 2026, have terminated," he said.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. Under the 1973 War Powers Resolution, a U.S. president can wage military action for only 60 days before ending it, asking Congress for authorization or seeking a 30-day extension due to "unavoidable military necessity regarding the safety of United States Armed Forces" while withdrawing forces. On Friday, Iranian state news agency IRNA said Tehran had sent its latest proposal for negotiations with the U.S. to Pakistani mediators. Trump swiftly rejected it. The president formally notified Congress of the conflict 48 hours after the first airstrikes two months ago, starting the 60-day clock that ends. As the date approached, congressional aides and analysts said they expected the Republican president to sidestep the deadline. A senior Trump administration official had said on Thursday the administration's view was that the war powers law deadline did not apply. Trump said he considered the war powers law unconstitutional. Both Republican and Democratic presidents have contended the measure violated the Constitution because it sets limits on the president's powers as commander-in-chief. Legal experts say the matter

Berkshire shareholders head to Greg Abel's first annual meeting, with Buffett expected in audience



OMAHA, Nebraska, Greg Abel will preside over his first Berkshire Hathaway (BRK.A.N), opens new tab annual meeting on Saturday, where shareholders hope to learn how the conglomerate built by Warren Buffett can evolve and grow - and resuscitate its severely underperforming stock. Abel, 763, who became chief executive in January, must earn the trust of investors increasingly focused on technology and artificial intelligence, unlike Berkshire's collection of insurers, retailers and hard-asset businesses in energy, industrials and manufacturing.

Make sense of the latest ESG trends affecting companies and governments with the Reuters Sustainable Switch newsletter. Sign up here. Though Berkshire is often considered a microcosm of the U.S. economy, its shares have lagged the Standard & Poor's 500 by 39 percentage points since Buffett announced at last year's meeting that he would step down. He remains chairman. Abel had been Buffett's designated successor since 2021, but the announcement was a surprise. The 95-year-old Buffett plans to watch from the audience of an arena in downtown Omaha, Nebraska, as Abel and other executives discuss Berkshire's operations and answer shareholders' questions.

"Greg has a formidable challenge, replacing the greatest investor who ever lived," said Paul Lountzis, a money manager attending his 34th Berkshire annual meeting. Berkshire, he added, "is not snazzy, it's not exciting ... It's not a fast-growing technology stock. That's what people are jumping on today." Indeed, AI-related investment was a key driver of the 2% gain in first-quarter U.S. gross domestic product, according to the Commerce Department's advance estimate. It is unclear how higher inflation and slumping consumer sentiment may have weighed on demand for products and services offered by Berkshire subsidiaries. Investors are also getting more details as the company reported first-quarter results before the start of the meeting. The meeting is the centerpiece of a weekend of shareholder events around Omaha, including investment conferences, private get-togethers, and shop-

Pakistan eyes big Kashmir strike to trigger global intervention

New Delhi: There is desperation drawn all over and Pakistan is attempting another audacious attack on Indian soil. It would once again look to target Jammu and Kashmir and then bring the United States (US) into the picture.

Considering the new-found ties with the US under President Donald Trump, Pakistan would hope for an external intervention. An official said that the intervention that Pakistan would be seeking would not just be restricted to the retaliation for the terror strike. This is a long planned goal of Pakistan to internationalise the Kashmir issue, the official said. India has always maintained that Kashmir is an internal issue. Even after the abrogation of Article 370, Pakistan had tried to raise the issue internationally. However, India made it clear that it remains an internal matter and the abrogation of the Article that gave Jammu and Kashmir special status was only meant to integrate it with the rest of India. For Field Marshal Asim Munir, there is a lot at stake. He tried to push for a peace deal between the US

has not been decided by the courts. "We had a ceasefire, so that gives you additional time," Trump said before leaving Washington for Florida.

NO WAY OUT: DEMOCRATIC SENATOR

Congressional Democrats, who have tried repeatedly to pass war powers legislation that would force Trump to end the war or come to Congress for authorization, dismissed that characterization, saying there was nothing in the 1973 law allowing for a ceasefire. Smoke rises in Habboush following Israeli strikes, as seen from Nabatieh, Lebanon, REUTERS/Stringer Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab They also said that the continuing deployment of U.S. ships blockading Iranian oil exports was evidence of continuing hostility, not a ceasefire. "After sixty days of conflict, President Trump still does not have a strategy or way out for this poorly planned war," Senator Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said in a statement calling the deadline "a clear legal threshold" for Trump to act. In his letter to Congress, Trump acknowledged that the conflict may not be resolved. He said Iran still poses "a significant" threat to the United States and its armed forces.

PARTY LOYALTY AS ELECTIONS LOOMTrump's fellow Republicans, who hold slim majorities in the Senate and House of Representatives and rarely break from Trump, have voted almost unanimously to block every resolution seeking to end the conflict. The Iran war has killed thousands, caused billions of dollars in damage and roiled world markets, disrupting energy shipments and boosting a wide range of consumer prices. Polls show the war is unpopular among Americans, six months before November elections that will determine who controls Congress next year. The U.S. Constitution says only Congress, not the president, can declare war, but that restriction does not apply to short-term operations or to counter an immediate threat. On Thursday, Trump received a briefing on plans for fresh military strikes to compel Iran to negotiate an end to the conflict. If fighting resumes, Trump can tell lawmakers he has started a new 60-day clock. Presidents from both parties have repeatedly done so when waging intermittent hostilities since Congress passed the war powers law in response to the Vietnam War. That conflict, widely unpopular with Americans, was also not authorized by Congress.

ping from Berkshire-owned businesses in a downtown exhibit hall. Prior to the meeting, thousands of people lined up outside a downtown arena before doors opened at 7 a.m., though the lines were considerably shorter than in recent years. Jobby Chin, a finance student from Singapore attending her first meeting, said she got in line at 2 a.m.

"I wanted to soak in the atmosphere, and network with finance professionals," she said. "We wanted to make the most of the opportunity." Michael DiDonna, a fashion photographer from Oyster Bay, New York, said he arrived at 3:10 a.m. for his fifth Berkshire meeting. "We like to sit in the same seat, to feel the energy," he said. "It's a really exciting time for Berkshire. I want to feel a part of the monumental shift at the company." CHALLENGES ON WHERE TO PUT CASH Abel inherits many challenges that bedeviled Buffett, perhaps none more than where to invest Berkshire's year-end \$373 billion cash pile. While Berkshire resumed stock repurchases in March after nearly two years with none, it has gone a decade without a needle-moving acquisition. Many businesses have also been sluggish, with overall operating profit falling 6% in 2025 and revenue growth nonexistent. Shareholders may also wonder how Abel can effectively manage Berkshire's stock portfolio.

Unlike Buffett, Abel has no professional history as a stock picker, yet by February he was overseeing 94% of Berkshire's stock investments, instead of giving more responsibility to investment manager Ted Weschler, who oversees the other 6%. Buffett's thinking about the handover changed over time, most notably in 2024 when he said someone like Abel who understands whole businesses can also understand stocks. Also answering questions will be insurance chief Ajit Jain and, for the first time, Katie Farmer and Adam Johnson, respectively CEO of the BNSF railroad and a Berkshire president overseeing the conglomerate's consumer, services and retail operations. "It's watching history unfold, a reset for the next generation," said Tom Russo, a money manager who said he began attending Berkshire shareholder meetings in 1985. The meeting is likely to focus far more on Berkshire than did meetings led by Buffett and late Vice Chairman Charlie Munger, which regularly addressed the economy, markets and lessons in life. Buffett's and Munger's lively repartee was unique in corporate America and is much missed by shareholders. But those who on Friday visited Berkshire's annual shareholder shopping day, buying mementos such as Squishmallows and spatulas that featured Abel's and Buffett's visages, expressed confidence in Berkshire's leadership transition. "Warren wouldn't turn it over to somebody who wasn't competent," said Lori Boyd, a retired special education teacher from Blue Springs, Missouri. After the question-and-answer session ends, shareholders will vote whether to grant non-binding approval of compensation for top Berkshire executives, whether to have similar votes every three years, and whether Berkshire should publish a report discussing oversight of its more than 387,000 employees.

and Iran. However, with that not going exactly as planned, he is bound to shift his focus back to India. There is a lot at stake for Field Marshal Munir and his reputation. The domestic pressure is growing and he has to attempt something big in India so that his image correction can take place, the official added. Another official went on to add that Field Marshal Munir is also making out a case for him to become the President of Pakistan. Although he can take that post by bullying any government in Pakistan, he would still want to make it seem as though he has earned it. What better than the Kashmir issue and internationalising it to make out a case for him to become the next President of Pakistan, the official pointed out. For now, the focus of Pakistan remains on rebuilding its terror network in Jammu and Kashmir. It has been pushing for more home-grown modules. This becomes important for Pakistan as these modules would continue to carry out attacks in the Valley. An Intelligence Bureau official said that it is a two-pronged strategy that Munir has planned.

Meta may cut 10 pc workforce next month as global tech layoffs surge



New Delhi: US tech giant Meta (formerly Facebook) is reportedly planning to lay off at least 10 per cent of its global workforce, or nearly 8,000 workers, next month.Further layoffs are planned in the second half of the year, according to a Reuters report. However, the details of those layoffs have not been known yet.The initial round in May is likely to reduce about 10 per cent of its global workforce.According to the report, the layoff plans may depend on the developments in the artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities.

Meta is reportedly planning to lay off 20 per cent or

Pulkit Samrat becomes the first Indian actor to step into the ring with a professional boxer



Mumbai: Actor Pulkit Samrat ended up creating history during the trailer launch event of his upcoming sports drama “Glory”.He became the first Indian actor to step into the ring with a professional boxer and the third to achieve this feat globally. Before him, only Tom Hardy and Jake Gyllenhaal have dared to box with a professional. On Friday, Pulkit participated in a powerful and unprecedented live boxing match against professional boxer Neeraj Goyat at the trailer launch of “Glory”.

Not just a promotional gimmick, it was a full-fledged,

more of its total workforce. If implemented at that level, the job cuts could affect roughly 16,000 employees, based on Meta’s workforce of nearly 79,000 people as of December 31,Meta has not confirmed the layoff plans yet. The Mark Zuckerberg-led company did not immediately comment on the report.Meanwhile, global tech layoffs are accelerating in 2026, with more than 80,000 jobs already cut in the first quarter and total losses likely to exceed 3 lakh this year, led by companies like Oracle, Amazon, and Meta, according to a latest report.The report by TradingPlatforms noted that the latest wave of layoffs builds on a broader post-pandemic correction, with over one million tech jobs lost globally since 2021 as companies recalibrate hiring after the Covid-era expansion.Artificial intelligence and automation have emerged as key drivers of this transformation, with nearly half of all layoffs in 2026 linked to AI-related restructuring.The US remains the worst-hit market, accounting for nearly 77 per cent of global layoffs so far this year, with over 61,000 job cuts across 62 companies.Among companies, Oracle has reported the highest number of layoffs globally in 2026, cutting more than 25,000 roles as part of a major restructuring tied to its AI infrastructure push.Amazon followed with around 16,000 job cuts amid efforts to streamline operations and improve efficiency.

high-impact bout, demonstrating intense preparation, discipline, and grit from Pulkit’s side for his next. In a display of sportsmanship and mutual respect, Neeraj spoke highly of Pulkit after the match — applauding his dedication, courage, and the sheer effort it takes for an actor to step into a real combat scenario.Earlier, Pulkit revealed what made him say yes to “Glory”. He said, “What pulled me into Glory was the truth of that world, it’s tough, it’s unforgiving, and that’s what makes it beautiful, because every win matters and every step is earned. Ravi doesn’t react, he absorbs, calm on the outside, the fire within, and that space between control and breaking is where real strength is built. Playing him reminded me that greatness is about showing up again and again, even when it hurts, because champions are made in everything they survive. Grateful for this journey, this is just a glimpse”.Created by Karan Anshuman and Karmanya Ahuja, “Glory” also stars Divyennu, Suvinder Vicky, Jannat Zubair, Ashutosh Rana, Sikandar Kher, Kunal Thakur, Sayani Gupta, Yashpal Sharma, and Kashmira Pardeshi in pivotal roles, along with others.Produced by Mohit Shah and Anshuman under the Atomic Films banner, the series has been written by Anshuman, Ahuja, and Vaibhav Vishal. Directed by Karan Anshuman and Kanishk Varma, “Glory” is expected to premiere on May 1.

Vijay Varma explores world of vintage cars during ‘Matka King’ shoot

Mumbai: Actor Vijay Varma, who essays the titular role in the recently released streaming series ‘Matka King’, has spoken about his rendezvous with the fleet of iconic cars used in the show. He said that once he stepped into the world of vintage cars used in the show, he was pulled in by the sheer intensity of his curiosity. He added that there are a lot of scenes of the race course. There were some very fancy cars on the racetrack. So, I went and clicked photos of the cars. I asked, where can I see them? The owner came; he was a very distinguished gentleman who had been collecting cars.

There are people who are car enthusiasts who have been saving and restoring these old cars, which have been around for like 100 years. Finding parts for them, importing parts from Germany, from somewhere, they take care of it. He further mentioned, If the oil is different, they ask for oil, and source it from places that no normal human being would be able to go. They themselves repair it enthusiastically. They find the tyres. And there is a community of car enthusiasts who are talking to each other and sharing knowledge and information. I got exposed to the whole world, it was very fascinating.Earlier, Vijay, who essays the role of a gambling lord in Matka King, said that his love for crunch-



ing numbers comes naturally to him given he belongs to the Marwadi community. When asked how comfortable he is with numbers, he earlier mentioned, a little bit, I am Marwadi. So, I can understand numbers. And I have also done graduation in accounting. So, I am a little fond of numbers. But I was more interested in the game. Understanding the game. I got a leaflet of 4 pages, in which the whole game was explained. But to understand 4 pages, it will take at least a month, if you want to understand it properly, he added. Matka King is available to stream on Prime Video.

Bhansali’s ‘Love and War’ postponed, now set for Jan 2027 release



New Delhi: Filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s much-awaited next feature film “Love & War” will be released in theatres on January 21, 2027, his production banner announced on Friday. Billed as an epic romance drama, the movie will feature actors Alia Bhatt, Vicky Kaushal and Ranbir Kapoor in lead roles.The director’s banner Bhansali Productions shared the new release date for the movie, which was earlier slated for March 20, 2026, debut, on its official social media pages.“#SanjayLeelaBhansali’s #LOVEandWAR starring #RanbirKapoor, @aliaabhatt & @vickykaushal09... In cinemas on 21st January 2027,” Bhansali Productions wrote on Instagram alongside a photo of the filmmaker with the three stars.

The film will be released in three languages — Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. “Mounted on a grand scale, ‘Love & War’ marks Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s most ambitious romantic drama yet. With its sweeping narrative and emotional intensity, it stands as India’s grandest love saga and one of the biggest romantic spectacles in Indian cinema,” the makers said in a press release.“Love & War” marks Ranbir’s

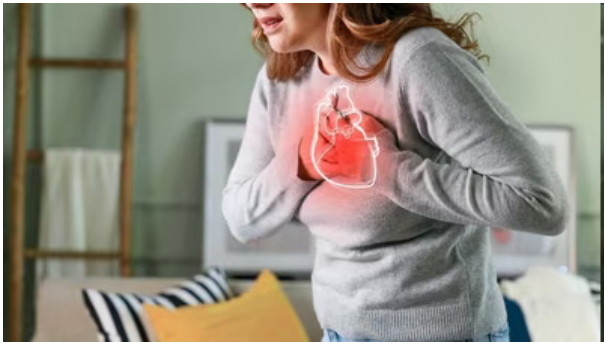
reunion with Bhansali, who gave the actor his debut project with the 2007 movie “Saawariya”, while it is for the first time that Vicky is working with the director.Alia had earlier collaborated with Bhansali for his critically-acclaimed 2022 directorial “Gangubai Kathiawadi”.

Gold may touch Rs 1.85 lakh amid strong macro trends:

New Delhi: As India gears up to celebrate Akshaya Tritiya on Sunday — an auspicious occasion for buying gold — macroeconomic trends are reinforcing the metal’s investment appeal alongside tradition, with analysts seeing prices rise up to Rs 1.85 lakh, according to a report on Saturday.

An analysis by Axis Direct said gold is well-positioned in the current global environment and could gain whether the economy weakens into stagflation or improves amid falling interest rates.“Whether the global economy faces stagflationary heat or rate-cut relief, the macroeconomic architecture provides a structural tailwind for gold,” the brokerage said.The report also noted that elevated crude oil prices, driven by geopolitical tensions could sustain inflation while slowing growth, a combination that typically boosts demand for bullion as a store of value.Analysts have set a COMEX gold target of \$5,300–\$5,500 per ounce in the near term.For the domestic market, they projected that yellow metal could rise to Rs 1.7 lakh-Rs 1.85 lakh per 10 grams, which indicates a potential upside of up to 15 per cent from current levels.

Think heart disease starts at 50 Heart surgeon reveals shocking truth: ‘Begins as early as age



Heart disease is often believed to be a middle-aged health problem. This belief can make people complacent, assuming they can start taking their health seriously later in life. However, the groundwork for heart-related issues is actually laid in childhood, making it important to care for your heart and overall health early on.Take it from a heart surgeon with 25 years of experience, Dr Jeremy London, a board-certified cardiothoracic surgeon, revealed the grim reality in an Instagram post on April 17. It comes as a rude awakening when he said, “What if I told you that heart disease did not start at 50 but as early as age 3.”

Heart diseases have an early start

Attributing this shocking revelation to multiple medical studies, that heart diseases begin in childhood. How? He explained, “There are multiple autopsy studies that show that young children as young as 3 have fatty streaks in their arteries, and these are the early beginning stages of atherosclerosis.”This challenges the common belief that heart disease is something you develop with age. Instead,

UK nutritionist warns 'wearing AirPods is slowly frying your brain'; shares hacks to reduce harm and what to use instead



A UK nutritionist has sparked a debate regarding the long-term safety of wireless earbuds, saying the constant proximity of Bluetooth devices to the skull is 'slowly frying your brain'. Zib Atkins took to Instagram on April 12 to demonstrate what he described as a significant health risk posed by electromagnetic fields (EMF). Also read | UK nutritionist warns iPhone17 users: 'Don't ignore these 3 things to protect your health'Using an EMF meter to compare ambient radiation to that of active AirPods, he warned his followers: "Wearing AirPods is slowly frying your brain. If you don't believe me, watch this. I'm going to show you what you can do to reduce the heart rate... now you see with Bluetooth headphones there, the number is really high, and that kind of radiation is going straight into your brain every time you're using these kinds of headphones."

The biological 'repetition' riskWhile regulatory bodies often focus on the immediate heat generated by devices, Zib argued that the true danger lies in the cumulative effect of low-level exposure. "Most people think exposure is about intensity. But in biology, it is often about repetition," Zib shared, adding, "Small signals, repeated thousands of times a day, can start to shape how cells behave. Especially when they are close to sensitive tissue like the brain."Zib further explained the vulnerability of the human head to these sig-

the surgeon explained that while these fatty streaks are naturally present, they evolve depending on your lifestyle habits.“Now, I can tell you that as a heart surgeon, atherosclerosis develops over multiple decades,” he remarked.What does it mean? It implies that your lifestyle habits build up and the consequences show up later in life, but you are already predisposed, making any heart disease a lifelong process instead of a late-life.This also means that if the disease process begins this early, active prevention cannot wait until adulthood. Do not rely on the common assumption, as a doctor noted, “Most of us assume that heart disease and hardening of the arteries is something we get. The truth is that it is something we have.” In other words, the risk is already built in - it just evolves with your lifestyle choices.Protection

Now, let’s look at what accelerates the process. The heart surgeon pointed out factors like poor diet, smoking, high blood pressure, high blood sugar and inactivity.“We have more control than you realise. It is our consistent daily choices that keep you off my operating room table,” he said. It is essential to understand that heart disease is not something you develop in middle age or later in life, but begins as a slow, cumulative process, with roots in your formative years of childhood. Prevention has to be taken much earlier in life, right from childhood, whether it is parents limiting junk food from their children’s diet to people twenties-thirties be more mindful of their habits- the ‘yolo’ approach won’t cut it anymore.Note to readers: This report is based on user-generated content from social media. HT.com has not independently verified the claims and does not endorse them. This article is for informational purposes only and not a substitute for professional medical advice.

nals: “Your brain is not just electrical. It is electrochemical. Meaning tiny changes in signalling, ion flow, and oxidative balance can compound over time. Not enough to notice in a day. But enough to matter over the years.”A ‘grade 2B carcinogen’

The nutritionist noted that concerns about radiofrequency (RF) radiation are not a modern fringe theory. "This kind of radio frequency has actually been listed as a grade 2b carcinogen since 2011," Zib noted, referring to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classification.He alleged that economic interests have delayed stricter regulations, stating, "Leading scientists have lobbied for the rules on EMF exposure to be tightened up. But you know, money speaks louder sometimes."Addressing critics who argue that existing research relies too heavily on animal models, Zib highlighted specific physiological concerns:If these kinds of things happen in animals, what are the chances that they're not happening to some degree in us?" Zib asked.For those concerned about the long-term 'electrochemical' impact, Zib provided a three-step harm-reduction protocol: Switch to wired tech: "Get rid of these kinds of headphones and go back to some corded style or even better, air tubes," he shared.The distance rule: "Whenever you're using your phone or on a call, keep it away from your body because the intensity of those EMFs drops off dramatically with distance," he added. Use shielding technology: For those 'insistent on using' wireless tech, Zib recommends specialised EMF-reducing stickers. "I don't use AirPods at all, but if I did, I would definitely use these kinds of stickers... they've been shown in lab tests to reduce [intensity] by over 80 percent," he said.Zib concluded with a call for a shift in how consumers view their daily tech habits: "Instead of asking 'Is this dangerous right now?' A better question is 'What does this do if I repeat it every day for the next 10 years?'"

LPG demand softens, moving towards normalcy with summer onset; daily cylinder demand now under 50 lakh

Demand for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from households has declined significantly from the peak levels seen during the phase of panic bookings last month amid the West Asia war, and is expected to come down with the onset of summer. Daily LPG bookings by households have been consistently lower than 50 lakh cylinders for most of this month; they were over 50 lakh a day throughout March, and peaked at 89 lakh on March 13. The seasonal dip in demand is likely to take some pressure off of LPG supplies. While the West Asia war has hit overall energy supplies to India, LPG has been the worst affected due to extreme reliance on imports from the Gulf states.

“Yes, LPG demand is expected to come down (in summer). Bookings have declined and now we are witnessing bookings in the range of 46 lakh to 50 lakh (per day), which was more than 50 lakh earlier. And the deliveries are normal,” Petroleum Ministry Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma said at the inter-ministerial press briefing on the West Asia crisis on Friday. She added that the lower LPG demand during the summer season is a “natural trend”. Consumption of the fuel is higher during winters when its use for heating increases in addition to a growth in use for cooking as well. The effective halt in vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz due to the West Asia war has hit India’s energy supplies, particularly those of LPG, given that India depends on imports to meet around 60% of the fuel’s needs and 90% of those imports came through the critical maritime chokepoint.

This means that around 54% of India’s LPG supplies were effectively disrupted, which forced the government to heavily cut supplies to commercial and industrial consumers in an effort to ensure uninterrupted supplies to crores of households that use the fuel for cooking. The government also ordered refiners to maximize LPG production, divert gas streams from petrochemical production to LPG production, and even increased the minimum booking intervals between LPG refills for households.With supplies to commercial and industrial consumers of LPG having been

stopped completely in the initial days of the conflict, panic gripped various parts of the country, and spilled over to household consumers of the fuel as well. This led to panic bookings for LPG cylinders; instances of hoarding and black-marketing were also reported from different parts of the country.

According to the government, the LPG supply situation has improved notably with additional domestic production of the fuel, along with additional LPG cargoes coming in from non-West Asian suppliers. Late March, it said that around one month of LPG supply was “firmly arranged” through imports from non-West Asian suppliers, and additional procurement was being tied up on a continuous basis. This is also evident from the fact that commercial LPG supplies have now been restored to up to 70% of the requirement. On Thursday, commercial LPG sales stood at 8,200 tonnes.On Friday, Sharma said that India’s domestic LPG production is currently fluctuating between 46,000 tonnes and 50,000 tonnes per day, or about 58% to 63% of the daily domestic demand of around 80,000 tonnes. According to industry insiders, the average daily LPG demand in the country was around 90,000 tonnes, but with commercial LPG supplies curtailed by the government, the daily requirement has fallen.According to the government, despite LPG supplies to India being affected by the West Asia war and the Strait of Hormuz closure, the OMCs are maintaining supplies to households at the pre-conflict level of over 50 lakh cylinders a day, and no dry-out has been reported at any of the 25,000-odd LPG distributorships across the country.The net daily import requirement has consequently come down to only 30 TMT (thousand metric tonnes) — meaning India is now producing much more than it needs to import. Over and above domestic production, 800 TMT of assured inbound LPG cargoes are already secured and en route from the United States, Russia, Australia, and other countries... Approximately one full month of supply is firmly arranged, with additional procurement being finalised continuously,” the Petroleum Ministry had said on March 26.

‘Not worried at all about remittances’ due to West Asia war: RBI Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta



Dismissing concerns about the impact of the West Asia war on the flow of remittances into India, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta on Friday said she is “not worried at all” and that the “numbers for March were better than before”. Speaking at Ashoka University’s Second Annual Isaac Centre for Public Policy Growth Conference, Gupta said a variety of factors meant that remittances had become a “very, very stable form of inflows” for India.

These include the pool of Indian migrants diversifying across geographies such that the share of those in West Asia has declined to around 40%. The same migrant pool also works across a variety of sectors such as IT, hospitality, health, education, and construction and have different skill sets, so even if a couple of sectors are cyclically impacted, other sectors remain.”...how West Asia is likely to impact remittances, the numbers for March were better than before. Some people are projecting...that perhaps it was a wealth effect that migrants who have returned brought their accumulated savings. It’s possible some of it is that,” Gupta said. “But I would also like to believe now that the conflict is more narrowed down to a stalemate in the Strait of Hormuz and the rest of the region is not being targeted or impacted, migrants if they have not already returned or would return back sooner. And as reconstruction efforts start, they will be employed more than before.”“One lesson is also drawn from COVID, when there was revenge spending. All of this means that I’m not worried at all about remittances continuing to do well,” the central banker added.According to RBI

data, India received \$132 billion of remittances in 2024-25, with the figure standing at \$108 billion in the first three quarters of 2025-26. Data for the final quarter — whose last month coincided with the start of the war — will be released by the end of June.According to findings from the RBI’s latest survey on remittances, inflows from the Gulf countries of UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain had declined to 38% of the overall figure in 2023-24 from 47% in 2016-17.Meanwhile, money being sent to India has risen from advanced countries such as the US and the UK.

Remittances are a key source of foreign exchange for India as it helps offset some part of the country’s trade deficit, which is under pressure due to a sharp rise in global energy prices and the rapid depreciation of the rupee.While India suffers from a large trade deficit (\$119 billion in 2025-26), foreign direct investment (FDI) and remittances help it to usually post a surplus in its overall Balance of Payments (BoP).However, economists have warned that the BoP could be in negative zone for the third year in a row in 2026-27 due to the ongoing war’s energy supply shock, which has led to massive outflows from Indian markets and hurt the rupee.On Thursday, the rupee hit a new all-time low of 95.34-per-dollar after fresh concerns about the war in West Asia propelled global crude oil prices to a four-year high. The rupee is now down more than 4% since the US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28, with Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) having dumped \$20.2 billion of Indian debt and stocks in the first four months of 2026 — almost double the \$11.8 billion they sold in all of 2025.However, Gupta on Friday expressed confidence about India’s BoP situation, saying it has “inherent strengths” in the form of stable and rising remittances, well-performing services exports, and FDI inflows.“These are not cyclical strengths; these are structural strengths. Which means shocks may happen, but these strengths would be there.”But yes, portfolio flows have been weaker than in the past, which have been countered by other parts of the Balance of Payments. So, I remain actually, for most part, quite confident that there might have been a year which seemed more challenging, but sooner or later, it will go back to the strengths it has exhibited in the past because of the structural nature of it,” Gupta said.

To insulate Indian flyers, jet fuel price for domestic flights kept unchanged; hiked for overseas flights

Public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) Friday kept the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, unchanged for scheduled domestic flights by airlines, while hiking the price for international flights and other non-scheduled operations.According to the country’s largest OMC Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the move is part of the fuel retailers’ effort to insulate domestic consumers from the surge in international oil and fuel prices due to the West Asia war.OMCs usually revise prices of ATF and some other fuels on the first of every month in line with international prices.On April 1, the government had announced that the OMCs were hiking the ATF price for scheduled domestic flights only partially — by 25% or Rs 15,000 per kilolitre (kl) — to Rs 1,04,927 per kl, at Delhi, the country’s largest and busiest airport. However, the full pass-through was announced for international flights, which translated to a steep hike of about Rs 73,000 per kl.

According to sources, the price of ATF for international flights has now been hiked by \$76.55 per kl to \$1,511.86 per kl from May 1, translating to a little over Rs 7 per litre.Major Indian airlines had urged the government for changes in the ATF pricing formula by reintroducing “crack spread bands” to limit how much OMCs can charge as margin on jet fuel, and to bring parity between prices for domestic and international flight operations.While the OMCs’ decision to not change ATF prices for domestic flights comes as a relief for Indian carriers, the significant price differential between prices for domestic and international flights persists. Usually, ATF accounts for about 40% of Indian airlines’ operational costs; the price surge has led to a further increase to 55-60%, according to an Indian airline association.IOC said that apart from ATF prices for domestic flights, it has also not touched prices of regular petrol and diesel for the general public, domestic LPG cylinders for use by households, and kerosene sold through the public distribution system.

The May price revisions have been limited to select segments — ATF for international and non-scheduled operations, bulk and commercial LPG, and bulk diesel.According to sources, commercial LPG price has been hiked by a steep Rs 993 per 19-kg cylinder; it now costs Rs 3,071.50 in Delhi.Commercial LPG accounts for less than 1% of the country’s total LPG consumption, and



most of the remaining consumption serves demand from households.“Overall, approximately 80% of petroleum products have witnessed no change in prices, ensuring stability for the majority of consumers. Price revisions have been limited to select industrial segments, which constitute a relatively small share of overall consumption and are subject to routine monthly adjustments based on prevailing international prices,” IOC said.“The above measures reflect the calibrated and balanced approach adopted by OMCs, under the guidance of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, to align with global market trends while protecting domestic consumers and ensuring economic stability,” it said.In a letter to the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) earlier this week, the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), which includes IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet, wrote that the current “ad hoc” pricing mechanism for ATF is “creating severe imbalance in domestic and international operations and rendering airline networks unviable and unsustainable”.The decision to not hike ATF prices for domestic flights brings at least partial relief to carriers, even as significantly higher prices of jet fuel for international flights continue to be a major headache for them as well as passengers.Sukalp Sharma is a Deputy Associate Editor with The Indian Express and writes on a host of subjects and sectors, notably energy and aviation. He has over 16 years of experience in journalism with a body of work spanning areas like politics, development, equity markets, corporates, trade, and economic policy. He considers himself an above-average photographer, which goes well with his love for travel.

Rupee breaches 95-mark amid fresh war concerns, spike in oil prices

Rupee breaches 95-mark amid fresh war concerns, spike in oil pricesMarket sentiment was also weighed down by cautious commentary by the US Federal Reserve, which late Wednesday left the federal funds rate target range unchanged at 3.5-3.75%.The rupee fell past the 95-per-dollar mark Thursday on its way to hitting a new all-time low of 95.34-per-dollar as fresh concerns about the war in West Asia propelled global crude oil prices to a four-year high. Having closed at 94.85 Wednesday, the rupee ended Thursday only slightly weaker at 94.92.Domestic stock markets also behaved similarly, with Nifty and Sensex falling as much as 1.6% during the day before closing 0.75% lower. However, for April as a whole, the two benchmark indices were up 7-8% — the biggest monthly gain in over two years — after falling more than 11% in March.Investor apprehension weighed heavy Thursday as Brent crude oil prices surged to \$126 per barrel, with worries mounting that the conflict in West Asia could escalate after American news website Axios reported that US President Donald Trump would be briefed on “new plans for potential military action” in Iran.Market sentiment was also weighed down by cautious commentary by the US Federal Reserve, which late Wednesday left the federal funds rate target range unchanged at 3.5-3.75%.”The Fed’s messaging has certainly turned more hawkish,” Madhavi Arora, Chief Economist at Emkay Global Financial Services, said. It is unlikely the central bank “will move on rates until there is greater clarity” on the conflict and evidence that effects of the US tariffs are fading, Arora said.The rupee is now down more than 4% since the US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28, with Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) continuing to leave Indian financial markets due to concerns about how exposed the country’s economy is to higher energy prices.

According to Barclays analysts, the rupee is “one of the more vulnerable currencies to an energy price shock”. “After breaking through the key psychologically important level of 95.0, risks of further INR weakness remain, with potential to hit our 2026 year-end forecast of 96.80 sooner than expected,” Barclays said Thursday.After selling \$12.7 billion of stocks in March, April has seen FPIs pull out to the tune of \$6.5 billion. So far in 2026, FPIs’ net equity sales have totalled \$20.7 billion — more than the \$18.9 billion they withdrew in all of 2025. Several foreign brokerages, including HSBC and Morgan Stanley, have downgraded their view on Indian equities in recent weeks... what we are witnessing is a textbook reflexive trade — rising oil prices triggering FII (Foreign Institutional Investors) outflows, FII outflows compounding the dollar demand from oil importers, and the combination overwhelming whatever defence the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is putting up,” said Anindya Banerjee, Head of Commodity and Currency Research at Kotak Securities.“The RBI is intervening and will continue to intervene. But the central bank’s strategy here is volatility management, not level defence,” Banerjee said.The rupee breaching the 95-mark marks a reversal of the gains made in late March and early April after the RBI acted to curb speculative bets against the currency. Economists have warned that India’s Balance of Payments — the balance of the trade deficit and capital inflows such as Foreign Direct Investment and remittances — could be in the negative zone for a third straight year in 2026-27 and requires structural solutions.“Exchange rate cannot be construed a shock absorbing mechanism in perpetuity, as increased levels of uncertainties and volatilities render it to transform into a pass-through mechanism of imported inflation seeping through multiple channels.”

The midnight myth: Why waking up between 1 AM and 3 AM doesn’t mean your liver is failing



Tap into the health side of the Instagram algorithm, and you’ll find an endless spree of videos giving away signs to spot any deficiency, disease, healing symptom, or maybe some other medical progress. A similar video titled “5 silent signs your liver is asking for help” made waves on Instagram recently. Dr Eric Berg, a US-based chiropractor and healthpreneur, posted a list of unexpected signs that indicate poor liver health.But how many of these actually point to liver trouble? Intrigued, we decided to reach out to Dr Naveen Ganjoo, Senior Consultant – Hepatology & Integrated Liver Care, Aster RV Hospital, Bangalore to separate fact from fiction.“Some of these medical signs exist in the realm of medicine while other signs either have weak connections to medical evidence or lack scientific validation,” Dr Ganjoo explains. He adds that early liver damage is often hard to spot, noting that it causes “minimal or extremely vague signs of injury”.This one is only “partially true.” While liver or gallbladder issues can cause referred pain, it’s uncommon. As Dr Ganjoo puts it, the link is “rare and indirect”. In most cases, shoulder pain is due to posture,

strain, or orthopedic causes.liver People who experience itching because of liver problems will typically feel it throughout their body (Image: Pexels)2. Itchy skinThis is a medically recognised sign. “Persistent itching (without a visible rash) can be a sign of liver dysfunction,” he explains, especially when bile salts build up in the bloodstream. It may be widespread and worse at night.“People who experience itching because of liver problems will typically feel it throughout their body, with the condition reaching its peak during nighttime. The condition occurs more frequently in cholestatic liver diseases which impede bile flow than in early-stage fatty liver disease.”There’s no scientific backing here. Dr. Ganjoo says “modern medical science has found no proof” of a link. Sleep disruptions are far more likely tied to stress, anxiety, poor sleep habits, or even metabolic disorders.

4. Bloating after eatingA very common complaint — but not a reliable early liver sign. The expert notes it “usually happens because of gut problems” like indigestion or intolerance. Liver-related swelling tends to show up only in advanced stages, when “abdominal fluid buildup” creates a feeling of fullness and abdominal swelling.

5. Not feeling satisfied after mealsThis has little connection to liver health. Dr Ganjoo calls it a “weak or unclear link”, often tied instead to diet, blood sugar, or hormonal factors. “People with liver disorders experience decreasing appetite because their condition reaches advanced stages.”To put it simple, such viral health lists can often blur the line between awareness and anxiety. While symptoms like unexplained itching deserve attention, many others on such lists are either exaggerated or unrelated. Understanding that difference is key to avoiding panic and focusing on real warning signs instead.

Janhvi Kapoor on struggling with alcohol dependence: ‘I felt the need to just get drunk’

Janhvi Kapoor, during a recent appearance on Figuring Out with Raj Shamani, provided a candid reflection on the subtle indicators that suggest it may be time to reevaluate one’s relationship with alcohol. During the conversation, she highlighted how sometimes, the wake-up call may not be a massive explosion, but a quiet, visceral realisation — be it a physical reaction or a smell that drags you back to the past you so wanted to avoid.In the episode, the Param Sundari actor said, “I would not say I was addicted or I was abusing alcohol, but I was drinking frequently. And this was after a very traumatic experience in my life. I felt the need to just like, ‘I need to get drunk’.”

She further elaborated, “I didn’t like what it was doing to my body. I didn’t like how I was feeling when I was waking up. That feeling of a hangover, it gives me such an ick. It started...it was so weird. I could smell on myself a smell very familiar to someone in my life who struggled with addiction, and I would associate that smell with, ‘Okay, it’s not a good day.”Dr Murali Krishna, Visiting Consultant, Psychiatry & Counselling Services, Aster RV Hospital, Bengaluru, explains that social drinking often begins as a bonding tool. “Alcohol can reduce social anxiety and make interactions feel easier, especially for people who draw energy from being around others. Over time, however, the brain may start linking alcohol with confidence, comfort, and connection,” he says, and that subtle association is where things can shift.

Most people like to take it easy and go with the flow, especially in social settings. But, Dr Krishna says that dependence does not always look like drinking alone at home. It can develop quietly when a person starts feeling that social situations are incomplete without alcohol.“People develop dependence when they consume alcohol to achieve relaxation, stress relief, or social confidence, or human connection. People depend on alcohol because of its emotional effects, not because of its surrounding environment,” elaborates Dr Krishna.Dr Shuchin Bajaj, founder-director of Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals, adds that factors such as per-



sonal health, individual circumstances, and potential family history of alcohol-related problems must be considered if you’re a regular drinker.

“If someone is experiencing negative effects on their physical or mental health, relationships, or overall well-being due to alcohol, they may want to consider giving it up or seeking professional advice,” he says, adding that in such a situation, contemplating leaving alcohol permanently is imperative.Dr Shrey Srivastav, Assistant Professor at the Department of Internal Medicine, Sharda Hospital, Greater Noida, says that alcohol suppresses a person’s REM sleep (Rapid Eye Movement sleep), and once you stop drinking, in the first week itself, you will start experiencing mental clarity and better sleep. This will also reduce your anxiety and enhance your overall mood. “Those struggling to lose weight may also experience a breakthrough after quitting alcohol, as it contributes to excessive calorie intake,” he adds.Dr Bajaj also lists out that some individuals may experience psychological benefits such as a sense of achievement, increased self-control, and a fresh perspective on their relationship with alcohol. According to him, taking a break from alcohol can offer an opportunity for individuals to reflect on their drinking habits, reevaluate their relationship with alcohol, and potentially make long-term positive changes.

No sponsor, no police clearance: Lakshadweep simplifies tourist entry rules



their hometowns or local police authorities before applying. Instead, background verification and security checks will now be conducted directly by the Lakshadweep Police after the application is submitted. The changes are intended to make travel planning smoother while still maintaining security protocols for the ecologically sensitive island territory.

What were the earlier permit rules?

Earlier, travelling to Lakshadweep involved multiple layers of paperwork and approvals. Since the islands are protected under special regulations, all non-islanders, including Indian citizens, require entry permits.Tourists no longer need someone from Lakshadweep to sponsor or verify their visit. This removes one of the biggest hurdles for independent travellers.2. No prior police clearance certificate neededApplicants are no longer required to visit local police stations in their hometowns for verification documents. Instead, the Lakshadweep administration and police will conduct internal security screening after receiving applications.This reduces paperwork, saves time and streamlines approvals.

‘Explanation for every food...’: Ajith Kumar’s nutritionist reveals the actor’s family secrets to disciplined eating

Tamil actor Ajith Kumar’s nutritionist, Divya K Purushotham, recently offered a glimpse into the family’s disciplined approach to food. Speaking on a podcast with fitness expert Arvind Suresh, she highlighted how deeply health-focused habits are ingrained at home.She said, “I’ve worked with a lot of celebrities, but then this is one family where I’ve always been amazed. Discipline is something...it runs in the family, not just sir. Ma’am, I would say ma’am... she’s like super organised, and she needs an explanation for every food that she puts into her mouth, her kids, even for her maids, for that matter. She’s more concerned about health. As in like, you know, food matters... like about how clean you should eat. It’s something you should learn from them.”But is this level of awareness ideal for everyone? Dt. Ginni Kalra explains that mindful eating does have clear benefits, but moderation is key.She adds, “Being careful about what you eat can improve health in the long run. When people think before eating, they avoid too much junk food,

sugar, and oily items.” However, she cautions against extremes:“Healthy eating is about simple, regular good choices, not checking every bite or being too strict all the time.”Dt. Kalra says, “Knowing what is in your food is good, especially when it comes to the amount of sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats.”But she adds an important caveat, “Checking every small ingredient all the time is not needed for most people. It can also cause stress and worry about food.” She further advises, “A simple rule is better—eat more home-cooked and fresh food and avoid too much packaged food.”The idea of clean eating is often misunderstood as expensive or restrictive. Dt. Kalra explains, “Clean eating means eating simple and natural foods like fruits, vegetables, pulses, grains, and fresh home-cooked meals. It does not mean expensive or fancy food. It also does not mean strict dieting.”At its core, she says, “The main idea is to avoid too much processed and junk food and keep your meals balanced and simple.

‘Never been so fearful of a 15-year-old’: Kyle Jamieson admits terror of teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi



GNS News Agency, May 7

New Zealand pacer Kyle Jamieson has admitted he was genuinely terrified of a 15-year-old, something he says has never happened to him before in his cricket career. The teenager in question is Rajasthan Royals' teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who has taken the IPL by storm since his debut last year. However, in Friday's match against Delhi Capitals, Sooryavanshi couldn't replicate his heroics. He was cleaned up by a snorter from Jamieson for just 4 runs in the second over. What followed the dismissal made headlines as Jamieson celebrated aggressively, clapping loudly and staring intently at the young batter in a fiery send-off that many deemed excessive for a contest with a 15-year-old.

"I don't think I've ever been so fearful of a 15-year-old kid in my life," Jamieson admitted. "But yeah, we have obviously done a little bit of planning leading into the game,

and it was just nice that it paid off," he said in a video released by IPL. Jamieson's in-your-face aggression, however, came at a cost. He was slapped with one demerit point and a warning for breaching Level 1 of the IPL Code of Conduct. The match referee found him guilty under Article 2.5, which penalises "using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from another player in the match." The incident occurred in the second over of the first innings when, after dismissing the 15-year-old Sooryavanshi, Jamieson was found to be close to him in an aggressive manner, which could have provoked an aggressive reaction from the batter. Delhi dismissed both openers by the second over as Mitchell Starc sent back Yashasvi Jaiswal after he was hit for a six, and then Jamieson castled Sooryavanshi. Jamieson said they all knew the value of the wickets of RR's openers. "For most teams looking at Rajasthan's side, it's their top two especially that have got them off to fliers. Starc got one with the old high full toss, and I got one with the yorker, so it was nice to get it away early and sort of, I guess, stem the flow a little in the powerplay," he said. Australia pacer Starc marked his return to competitive cricket after a gap of more than three months and shone with the ball, picking three wickets in DC's win over RR. On Starc's return and bowling in tandem with him, Jamieson said, "He's world class, right? So whenever you can have one of those guys in your squad, it's a huge benefit. He came at the right time. We needed to get a bit of a move on the points table, so it's nice to have him in, nice to share the new ball with him. Yeah, it's pretty surreal."

No Lakshya Sen for Thomas Cup semis; Ayush-Srikanth-Prannoy need two wins, before Satwik-Chirag play 5th rubber



GNS News Agency, May 7

Ayush Shetty will play first singles against World No 4 Christo Popov hoping to stop the French juggernaut, and keep his Thomas Cup record intact. Lakshya Sen will miss the semifinal tie. He had landed on his elbow and taken a thudding impact while going for a shot on Friday against Chinese Taipei. But it is yet unclear if his absence is owing to that. "Lakshya is dealing with a swollen playing arm—particularly around the elbow—after his fall in yesterday's match against Chou Tien Chen. He is also struggling with blisters on his feet. This is certainly a setback for India.

Let's hope we can still win two singles matches today," coach Vimal Kumar said.

Ayush last played the WTF champion Popov at Hylo Open and lost in the semis, earlier in the European swing. However his game and confidence have evolved since, and he will shoulder the burden of the singles start. Kidambi Srikanth will play Alex Lanier while HS Prannoy takes on Toma Jr Popov. The Indian has lost to the World No 17 Frenchman at last year's All England. India can realistically target to win 2/3 singles and then hope Satwik-Chirag can stay in contention in the fifth rubber, after Sen's withdrawal dented Indian hopes. The quirk with playing France is, all their three singles necessarily play first three rubbers, because Toma Jr and Christo are also France's first doubles pair. However with Toma lining up in third singles and a mandatory one match gap necessary, the French second pair, Eloi Adam and Leo Rossi play the fourth match. France defeated Japan in the quarters. Last year's World Tour Finals champion and World No 4 Christo Popov defeated No 9 Kodai Naraoka, 21-17, 21-17. While Alex Lanier breezed past Yushi Tanaka, 21-15, 21-17. In the third singles, Toma Jr Popov, older brother of Christo, won the battle of Top 20s, with Toma at No 17 and Koki Watanabe at No 20. Watanabe offered some resistance before losing 21-19, 23-21.

“He can take on any bowler at any time; it is just...”: Former IPL winner on KL Rahul’s batting approach



GNS News Agency, May 7

With his knock of 75 runs off 45 balls against hosts Rajasthan Royals at Jaipur on Friday night, Delhi Capitals and Indian batsman KL Rahul grabbed the purple cap taking his tally to 433 runs in nine matches this IPL. Rahul, who has scored one hundred in this IPL, scored his third fifty of this year's IPL on Friday night and was instrumental in setting up the Delhi Capitals chase first with his opening wicket partnership of 110 runs with Pathum Nissanka and then steadying the innings during the chase. Former Indian batsman Ambati Rayudu rated Rahul's knock highly and shared how a batsman like KL Rahul can take on any bowler at any time. "He (Rahul) has always had the game. He can take on any bowler at any time; it is just his mindset. Today we have seen a very, very good approach to his batting," Rayudu said on ESPNcricinfo.

In his IPL career since 2018, the first time when he crossed 500 runs in an IPL season, Rahul has scored more

than 500 runs seven times. While his tally of 659 runs in the 2018 IPL edition had come at a strike rate of 158.31, the last seven IPL seasons had seen Rahul scoring his runs at a strike rate below 150. His strike rate of 149.72 for his tally of 539 runs last IPL was his best strike rate since 2018. This IPL has seen Rahul scoring a total of 433 runs so far with a strike rate of 185.44. Prior to Friday, Rahul had faced spinner Ravi Bishnoi for 12 balls and had scored just eight runs. On Friday, Rahul scored 26 runs off the nine balls faced by him off Bishnoi. Rayudu lauded Rahul's ability to counter Bishnoi and the kind of confidence Rahul showed against Bishnoi in his innings. "He went through a couple of shots against Bishnoi because he was sure that Bishnoi had the pace, and he could just stand in the crease and still go through with the shot. That shot was still not on, a slightly good-length or short-of-a-length ball, which he hit straight for six. That shows that the wicket was good, and also KL's confidence in his batting and a change in the way he generally bats.

These are the balls that he generally does not take in and it is a great sign that he is taking on these lengths and deliveries against spin. That is why we are seeing him play at such higher strike-rates in this tournament compared to few other seasons," Rayudu added. Post the match, Rahul also spoke about his strike rate being the talking point for the past few years. The strike rate was a big talking point for a few years. That's something that I've really worked on. I'm happy that I've worked on that and I'm doing what's required for the team, number one, and doing what modern T20 cricket requires. And yeah, that's something that's pleasing for me," Rahul said in the post presentation.

he tried a few shots early on, but they were going straight to the boundary fielders and catches were being taken. So I felt that today his shot selection was much better, and the team was also under pressure. At the right time, he delivered," he added. However, despite the innings, the Royals could not get over the line as the Delhi Capitals chased down the score of 226 runs. "Unfortunately, it didn't come in a winning cause, but at least one box was ticked that Riyan Parag got runs.

He has always had the talent, there is no doubt about that. The confidence and skill are there. The only problem is consistency in his performances, and I think he needs to improve that," Jaffer added. KL Rahul smashed 40-ball 75 runs to navigate the chase for the Capitals. Pathum Nissanka at the top of the order too chipped in 33-ball 62 early on. Mitchell Starc who was playing his debut game of the season picked up 3/40 from his four overs.

Simon Doull dissects why captaincy has not worked for Hardik at MI after taking over from Rohit: ‘Tried to fight the king of the pride for the reigning job...did not work’



The disappointment among fans was visible when Rohit Sharma was replaced as captain by Hardik Pandya for the Mumbai Indians. Although the booing from the 2024 season to the 2026 season and social media backlash had calmed down, the performance from the side continues to be below par. They had a season to forget in 2024, in 2025, they reached the qualifier 2 and got undone by Shreyas Iyer's mavericks, and in the ongoing season, they are lining up at the ninth spot, having won two games from eight. Former New Zealand cricketer and broadcaster Simon Doull opined that the responsibility for the poor performances has to be taken right from the top of the food chain.

‘Even after the last match, when I was...’: Axar Patel on his message to Delhi Capitals after record lowest total against RCB



On Friday, the Axar Patel led Delhi Capitals were coming into the match against hosts Rajasthan Royals following the team's nine-wicket loss against Royal Challengers Bengaluru at Delhi on Monday. The team was bundled out for a total of 75 runs, the 12th lowest total in IPL history. It was a target which was surpassed by the Bengaluru side in 6.3 overs. As the Capitals scored a seven-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals on Friday night, it also meant that the Axar Patel led side stopped its three-match losing streak and posted their fourth win of the tournament to climb to the sixth spot in the points table with a total of eight points. Patel shared how he was telling his team post the loss against Royal Challengers Bengaluru that they can always turn things around and how he is glad to see the team win on Friday.

"Even after the last match, when I was giving interviews, I was saying the same thing — that you have to come every day and keep doing the same things. You can always turn things around now. So yes, very happy with the way the boys played today. The way they batted and bowled, I think both departments were excellent, and I'm

He explained why Hardik's captaincy has worked at the Gujarat Titans when he won in the 2022 season and has not worked at the Mumbai Indians.

"When they were in their pomp before the new teams came in, it was like a pride of lions, and Hardik was like a cub. He was a cub who played the role in the pride of lions that went away, and did a great job at GT with a franchise which he could own and control. He came back, basically tried to fight the king of the pride for the reigning job...for the king's job, and it did not work," Doull said on Cricbuzz after the loss against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

"There has to be some accountability from the very top; they made that decision. They made that call they allowed him back into what was a very successful team. And now in that dressing room...in that environment, you've got four blokes who could all be the king. Four guys have captained their country at different stages. It is a very difficult room; it is full of alphas. Everybody will be looking around. I wonder if he would do a better job...I could do a better job. It becomes a hard environment to control," he added. "Ownership manager, they have to take responsibility for what has happened over three years. One year can be a blip, but this has been the side that has won five titles in the 20 years of the tournament. They have won a quarter," Doull concluded.

very happy," Patel said in the post match presentation.

After Rajasthan Royals' skipper Riyan Parag won the toss and chose to bat first, Delhi Capitals pacer duo of Mitchell Starc and Kyle Jamieson were expected to give Royals' opening duo of teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Yashasvi Jaiswal a tough time. Starc removed Jaiswal off the third ball of the opening over after being hit for six off the first ball of the innings. Jamieson then removed Sooryavanshi after being hit for a boundary in the second over to reduce Royals to 12 for 2 in two overs. A 102-run partnership for the third wicket between Dhruv Jurel and Riyan Parag followed by a late cameo innings of 47 runs off 14 balls by Donavan Ferreira propelled Royals to a total of 225 for 6, a target which Capitals overhauled with half centuries by Pathum Nissanka and KL Rahul. Patel lauded the efforts of the pace duo of Starc and Jamieson in the power play. "The plan was executed exactly the way we wanted, and because of that, we got the results too. As a captain, you can't be happier than that. If you can get the wickets of the opposition's main batsman — the ones who can change the game in the powerplay — then at that moment there's nobody happier than me," said Patel. Starc returned to competitive cricket after a gap of more than four months and picked up three wickets for 40 runs in his four-over spell. This included wickets of opener Yashasvi Jaiswal, Riyan Parag and Ravindra Jadeja. Patel showered praise on the Australian pacer and shared his delight over the Aussie's return to the team in IPL. "The way he bowled today, that's why he's a legend of the game. After three months away, coming back and delivering a performance like this on a wicket like this — it tells you how big a player he is. Yes, I am very happy that Starc is back and now he is showing everyone why he's such a great bowler," said Patel.

Experts point to overusage of slower balls from Jasprit Bumrah as reason behind his poor form: ‘gone over the top’



with it," former South African cricketer Shaun Pollock said on Cricbuzz.

Reminding the strengths of Bumrah, Pollock said: "He still needs to understand that his speed deliveries, his different action, his ability to shape the ball, that still needs to go to. That'll be the stuff that strikes up front in particular. If you come on in the second spell and you bowl those slower balls, that's fine. I'm not saying he's gone over the top, but I think there's been a little bit more of a reliance on that delivery."

It is an unusually poor season for Jasprit Bumrah for the Mumbai Indians. The wickets have not been coming as Bumrah is accustomed, and strangely enough, the Mumbai ace-pacer has taken a bit of tapping in recent games. Experts have observed that there is a dip in the pace of Bumrah, and he has also been over-reliant on the slower ones, which is a byproduct of playing on slightly sluggish surfaces at the backend of the T20 World Cup 2026 that is causing his downfall. "I think it was also influenced a little bit by the back end of T20 World Cup. Because of the nature of surfaces, lots of games taken place, the slower ball became so effective. I think at the start of this tournament, it was kind of a hangover of that one was effective, let's stick

Another expert, Simon Doull, too concurred with Pollock's views and urged Bumrah to not to bowl a slower one in his first 12 deliveries. "I think he has gone over the top with the slower balls. I'd like to see him bowl the first 12 deliveries if he bowls two overs in the powerplay and not bowl his slow ball." Doull also expressed his concerns over Bumrah's fitness, "Just, you know, his pace is down and whether that's again a hangover of what's happening in that setup if he's not 100% fit, I don't know, obviously coming off the World Cup. But I'd just like to see him hit a good hard length. If batters are good enough to hit you off that good hard length, then think about changing it, but too often too many bowlers go to something different for the sake of going to something different. His slow ball is a surprise and it's a brilliant slow ball, but people are actually sitting there waiting for it a little bit this year."

Dinesh Karthik heaps praise on Mandhana, draws comparison with Dhoni

New Delhi: Former Indian cricketer Dinesh Karthik has heaped rich praise on India's charismatic batter and Royal Challengers Bengaluru Women captain Smriti Mandhana, praising her leadership qualities and composure, while drawing comparisons with former India captain MS Dhoni. Speaking about Mandhana, Karthik described RCB as one of his favourite players, highlighting not just her batting ability but also the calm authority and freedom she brings as a leader.

The way she carries herself and the clarity she has with what she is doing. She's very self-assured, he said in a video released by RCB on X. Karthik emphasised Mandhana's intuitive understanding of match situations,

noting that her ability to read the game sets her apart. He also praised her leadership style, pointing out how she empowers teammates by giving them the freedom to express themselves while remaining a dependable presence in moments of uncertainty. He also admitted that all these leadership traits are often associated with Dhoni as he drew comparisons between the two. "She knows what she is doing. Her ability to grasp situations very intuitively. She gives us the freedom to what we do to allow us to do what we want. At the same time, if you're in any doubt, she's there," he said. "And guess what? The last person I heard who players had a similar attribute about was MS Dhoni," he added. Under the leadership of Mandhana

Lifelong vegetarian Deven Bhojani once ate a chicken sandwich and loved it before realising his mistake



Actor-director Deven Bhojani—known for his memorable work in shows like Khichdi, Sarabhai vs Sarabhai (which he also directed), Baa Bahoo Aur Baby, and Scoop—has been a vegetarian all his life. However, there was one incident early in his career when he accidentally ate a chicken sandwich—and surprisingly, enjoyed it—before realising his mistake. Speaking on Khaane Mein Kya Hai with Kunal Vijayakar, the 56-year-old recalled his early days in the industry while working on Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar. At the time, apart from playing a small role in the film, he was also assisting the team behind the scenes. “We used to spend a lot of time at the Bandra office. There were four of

us assistants, and during breaks, we’d either go to Candies—which was quite new back then—or a small sandwich shop nearby,” he shared.

“One day, everyone ordered their sandwiches. When I got mine, I thought, ‘This tastes so different—and so good! We should come here more often. It’s cheaper and tastier.’ Then suddenly, one of my friends said, ‘Where is my chicken sandwich? I didn’t order a veg one.’ That’s when we realised I had eaten it,” he added. Despite enjoying the taste, the realisation left him shaken. “I loved that sandwich, but I felt terrible. I immediately apologised to God—it was completely unintentional. Bahut gadbad ho gaya tha,” he said with a laugh. In a recent conversation with SCREEN, Deven also reflected on how Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar played a pivotal role in shaping his career. “I had joined the film as an actor. Aamir Khan, who has been a close friend since college, suggested that I should assist as well to understand the technical aspects—like positioning and lighting. That’s how I began assisting Mansoor Khan when parts of the film were being re-shot,” he shared. The experience sparked his interest in direction. However, after the film’s release, acting opportunities took precedence. Over the years, Deven went on to direct popular projects like Ek Mahal Ho Sapno Ka, Sarabhai vs Sarabhai, Sumit Sambhal Lega, and the film Commando 2.

Karan Johar set for Met Gala debut, confirms Manish Malhotra

Karan Johar is all set to make his Met Gala debut, and the news has been confirmed by his close friend and celebrity designer Manish Malhotra. In a recent interview with Eyewitness News Morning, Manish spoke about the growing global acceptance of Indian fashion, which has been embraced by international icons like Rihanna, Kim and Khloe Kardashian, and Zayn Malik. Reflecting on his own Met Gala debut last year, Manish revealed that he will be styling Karan Johar for the prestigious event this time. “Last year was my first time, and it was an incredible experience—walking the red carpet and designing for Coco Jones and Natasha Poonawalla. This year, I’ll be designing for a very prominent director known for both his films and fashion—Karan Johar. He’s a close friend, and I’m excited to see what we bring to the red carpet. We also did some jewellery detailing for Rihanna last time, and there’s much more to come,” he said.

Speaking about the evolution of Indian fashion on the global stage, Manish added, “For years, major international fashion houses relied on Indian embroidery, but now it’s finally taking centre stage. What’s truly rewarding is that Indian craftsmen are receiving the recognition they deserve. People are now interested in the story behind a garment—the hours of work and the craftsmanship involved. Fashion is no longer superficial; storytelling has become central to it.” He also reflected on his own journey in the industry. “I



began as a costume designer for films, and as my work gained popularity, it naturally transitioned into a fashion brand. Starting with cinema and building a global label has been a fulfilling journey.” Manish Malhotra made his Met Gala debut last year at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, wearing a custom-designed black blazer adorned with intricate gold embroidery that showcased Indian craftsmanship on a global platform. Celebs Natasha Poonawalla and Coco Jones also wore his designs.

Archana Puran Singh to buy another property in Madh Island; sons Aaryamann, Ayushmaan to co-invest

Archana Puran Singh is eyeing another property in Madh Island, and this time, the journey is being documented by her son Aaryamann. The family recently stepped out on a house-hunting spree with their trusted broker, who also happens to be Parmeet Sethi’s cousin, and has helped them secure some of their best investments over the years. In the vlog, Aaryamann casually asked his mother, “Maa, have you come to buy a house?” Archana clarified, “We’re not buying yet—we’re just exploring investment options.” Husband Parmeet Sethi added with a laugh, “We don’t really have the money, but most of our purchases have happened like this only.”

Aaryamann then surprised his parents by saying, “This time, you have me to support you financially.” He added that he plans to invest with them, even if it means taking a loan. They shared in the video that Archana and Parmeet’s younger son Ayushmaan would also be investing in the property. The family toured several properties, including one that was used as a shooting location for Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon. Archana fondly recalled meeting Kapil Sharma there during the film’s shoot, but admitted the house was too expensive for them. At one point, Aaryamann asked her directly, “I know you want to buy, but can you really?” Archana responded with a story from her early days in Mumbai: “When I first came to this city, I had just Rs 5 in my pocket but bought things worth Rs 100. At the end of the day, all you need is a little money and a lot of courage.” After exploring multiple options, the family visited a sea-facing property that Archana had previously seen. “The last time I came here, the owner wasn’t willing to sell. But now, it’s on the market,” she shared. Archana also reminisced about buying two bungalows in Madh Island nearly



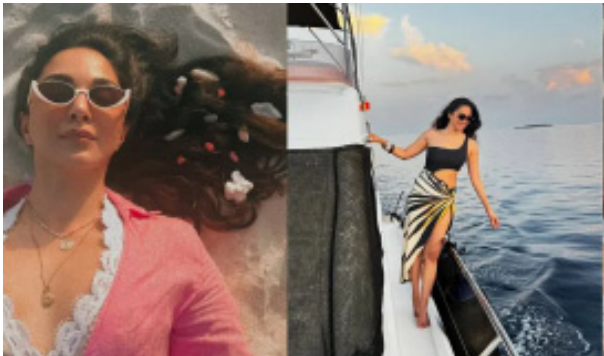
25 years ago. “I was very particular about the land size. I wanted a spacious bungalow, not just a small house,” she said. Earlier, on Bharti Singh and Harsh Limbachiya’s podcast, she had revealed how she insisted on buying two properties despite Parmeet’s initial hesitation. “I got quite a cheap deal back then, that’s how I ended up buying it. Parmeet is someone who was used to living in flats like any other Mumbai person and I was someone who had grown up in a bungalow in Dehradun. You have bigger houses in smaller cities. I was quite clear about it... I was like, if you want to buy a bungalow... it cannot be just three rooms in it. It is not even a bungalow if you don’t have at least six-seven huge rooms. He joked about divorcing me if I bought two, but I went ahead anyway.”

Kiara Advani shares Maldives holiday moments with Sidharth Malhotra and daughter

Mumbai: As she’s currently holidaying with the “loves” of her life Sidharth Malhotra and daughter Saraayah, actress Kiara Advani shared a glimpse into her “sun-kissed days” during her Maldivian holiday. Kiara shared a handful of pictures featuring her, Sidharth, and a peek at Saraayah’s tiny hands. The photographs included glimpses of Saraayah’s holiday outfits, Kiara looking every bit gorgeous in swimsuits, and the actress reading a book on sea animals to her daughter.

A few videos showed the actress swimming in the ocean and dancing with Sidharth. “Sun-kissed days, salty hair, and a heart full of peace with the loves of my life,” she wrote as the caption. Sidharth and Kiara fell in love with each other on the sets of their movie Shershaah in 2021. They tied the knot in February 2023 in a grand yet intimate ceremony in Rajasthan after dating for a few years. They welcomed their firstborn, a baby girl in June 2025.

The couple had announced the pregnancy earlier in 2025 with a joint social media post showing their hands holding baby socks. On the work front, Kiara has been associated with the much-anticipated film Toxic, whose release was earlier slated for June 5 but has now been pushed to a later, unannounced date. She was last seen in War 2. The film is the sixth instalment in the YRF Spy



Universe and a sequel to the 2019 film War. It stars Hrithik Roshan and NTR Jr. in the lead roles, alongside Ashutosh Rana and Anil Kapoor in pivotal roles. Sidharth’s latest release was Param Sundari with Janhvi Kapoor. The story follows Param, a North Indian boy from Delhi, who searches for his soulmate through an AI app, which leads him to Sundari, a South Indian girl from Kerala. He will next be seen in Vvan – Force of the Forrest with actress Tamannaah Bhatia. The film is set to explore the cultural folklore genre. ‘Vvan’ is written by Arunabh Kumar.

‘I’m not getting married, having kids’: Malaika Arora says son Arhaan asked her to ‘forget about grandkids’



Malaika Arora has long found her personal life under public scrutiny, often becoming the subject of widespread commentary. Despite this constant attention, she has remained steadfast, choosing not to alter her persona or be swayed by external opinions. Recently, she was once again asked about her views on relationships and life at this stage, to which she responded that her perspective continues to evolve. In a conversation with Times Entertainment, she said, “I think relationships are ever-changing. And I’m not a cynic. I am somebody who is... I believe in all of it, but I also feel there’s no guarantee. I mean, we’ve grown up with the idea of forever and ever, walking into the sunset. We’ve all grown up with

that idea because that’s the kind of movies we’ve watched and the books we’ve read. But I feel that’s not it. That’s not it.” She further added, “I don’t think that too many things are constant. I think things are ever-changing. You kind of make your peace with things. You kind of adapt to situations.”

During the same interaction, she also spoke about her son, Arhaan Khan, highlighting how his outlook often differs from hers. She shared that he frequently offers her advice, sometimes leaving her both surprised and reflective. Recalling one such conversation, she said, “He told me, ‘Mom, I’m not gonna get married, no?’ So please forget the fact that you’re gonna have grandkids.’ And I was like, ‘Why?’ He’s like, ‘Why would I want to bring kids into this world with the AQI at 500 and AQI at 1000? Why would I want to do that?’ He says, ‘It’s just not worth it.’ So we were just having this random conversation. He said that, and I was like, ‘Are you crazy?’ I was like, ‘No, you’ve got to experience all of it.’” Recently, Malaika also weighed in on self-love while speaking to Pinkvilla, saying, “I love myself. I will say that every day of my life, because I feel if I don’t say that to myself I am never going to be able to be better. I am never going to be able to do things the way I want to or enjoy life. I need to love myself first before I do anything else.” Malaika was previously married to Arbaaz Khan in 1998, after the two met during a coffee advertisement shoot. The couple divorced on 11 May 2017, and share a son, Arhaan. On the professional front, she was last seen making a special appearance in the song “Poi-son Baby” from the film Thamma.

Bharti Singh’s husband Harssh has rented another flat to escape household chaos: ‘Koi chinta nahi’

Bharti Singh and Harssh Limbachiya, who tied the knot in 2017, are now parents to two sons. However, Bharti recently opened up about how Harssh has rented a separate apartment in the same building just so he can escape his home life with his wife, two children, their nannies and other house help. On their podcast Bharti TV, while speaking with Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi, Bharti highlighted the challenges of motherhood and how, according to her, fathers often manage to sidestep the daily chaos. Recalling a recent moment, Bharti said, “Yesterday he told me, ‘Let me sleep for an hour—don’t let anyone disturb me.’ Can mothers ever say that?” Harssh proudly revealed that he has a separate house where he can be all by himself. “You know what I’ve done? I’ve rented an apartment in the same building. I go there in the morning to stay away from the chaos and focus on work. I haven’t kept a bed there yet.”

“That’s the best thing you can do,” Angad Bedi joked, while Neha Dhupia quickly challenged the idea. “But what’s the problem with staying at home? You’re relaxing in that flat because the women in your house are handling everything here.” Bharti immediately clapped in agreement, saying, “This should be the promo!” When Harssh argued, “We need mental peace,” Bharti quipped back, “What mental peace? And what about the ‘two pieces’ I’m handling for you?” Bharti went on to mimic him, adding, “He goes downstairs and keeps ordering—‘Send my food here, don’t disturb me, I’m in a meeting... and send it in a glass tiffin!’” The banter continued as Angad asked Harssh whether he was a “manny” (hands-on dad) or “main nahi” (not involved). Harssh laughed and admitted, “Main nahi (not involved).” Bharti then recalled moments from their travels, saying, “On flights, he says, ‘I want to read a book, you take care of the kids.’ And our children—just when you settle them, they’ll poop, and I have to handle everything till take-off.” Harssh added a humorous anecdote: “Once Bharti was travelling from Dubai with our son Gola on the same flight as Varun Dhawan and Tiger Shroff. The baby pooped, and



she was stuck handling it mid-flight while surrounded by celebrities.”

Bharti previously opened up about her love story with Harssh in a chat with SCREEN and shared, “Harssh never proposed to me for friendship or a relationship. While he told me that he loves me over a text message, we did not speak for 15-20 days after that. He assumed that I had got upset over his daring step (laughs). Harssh felt that since he is a writer and I was doing well for myself, I would be angry and so he did not bring up the topic, while I did not know how to react. And then one fine day, he told me that he wanted to marry me.” Before tying the knot, she said that she wants to cook for Harssh after they get married. She said, “I have decided that I will only take up limited work only catering to comedy. And on days when I will be home, I want to cook for Haarsh. He loves eating non-vegetarian food and aloo and gobi parathas and I will lovingly feed him with those. I am really excited for this new start and want to build a happy home with him. His cupboard is also very messy and I plan to sort it out so that every day, he doesn’t have trouble finding his things.”

Sanjay Dutt’s daughter Trishala wanted to join Bollywood ‘to be closer to dad’: ‘He’s been through hell’

Sanjay Dutt’s daughter, Trishala Dutt, has often spoken her mind and rarely shied away from expressing herself, even if it meant facing backlash. In a recent interview, Trishala opened up about wanting to pursue acting because she wanted to be around her father, even though it was never her passion. Trishala, born in 1988, is the daughter of Sanjay and his first wife Richa Sharma. Richa died in 1996, and Trishala grew up with her maternal grandparents in the US. “Wanted to be closer to my dad” In a conversation on the Inside Thoughts Out Loud Podcast, she was asked if she ever wanted to be a part of Bollywood and she said, “I did think about that when I was younger. I wasn’t thinking that I wanted to be an actor because acting is my passion. I just wanted to be closer to my dad.”

She further shared her father’s response when she discussed this with him. “He’s been through hell and back. And he said, ‘Is this your calling? Do you feel a pull to it?’ And I said, ‘I just want to spend more time with you.’ And he said, ‘Let’s talk about what you’re passionate about and get you on that track. Just because you are so-and-so’s daughter doesn’t mean that you’re going to be an A-list actress and that all these offers are going to come to you.’” Sanjay Dutt is the son of actors Sunil Dutt and Nargis Dutt. His debut film Rocky was produced and directed by his late father.

In the same conversation, she also spoke about her decision to become a therapist, explaining, “I have internal struggles just like everybody else. I became a therapist to let people know that it’s okay to struggle. You don’t always have to have it together, and you’re not alone in this journey. Also, coming from a Bollywood family, I haven’t seen anybody in the industry really speak on mental health too much. I just wanted to be relatable to people, to let them know that whether you’re in the industry or you’re not, it’s not all roses and sunshine. We’re humans just like you.” She also praised Deepika Padukone for speaking openly about mental health, saying, “When Deepika Padukone did speak out, I believe she had talked about depression. I found that to be so brave of her.”

Over the years, Trishala has also spoken about her relationship with her father publicly on social media. She was raised by her maternal grandparents in New York and lives away from her father, rarely visiting India. A few years ago, an Instagram user asked her, “How is it living without your parents?” She responded, “It’s fine, I guess. I never



lived with them to begin with (I did, but I was so young I don’t remember much), so I can’t really answer how it feels living without them.” In another interaction, when asked how it feels being Sanjay Dutt’s daughter, she said, “Honestly, it feels normal. He’s like any other father. When I’m with him, it feels like I’m with my dad. It doesn’t feel any different than what you probably feel when you are with your father.” Trishala Dutt is the daughter of Sanjay Dutt and his first wife, actress Richa Sharma, who passed away in 1996 after battling brain cancer. Sanjay married Rhea Pillai in 1998, and the marriage ended in 2008. He has been married to Maanayata Dutt since 2008. The couple welcomed twins—son Shahraan and daughter Iqra—in 2010.

Zayn Malik cancels all U.S. tour dates

Los Angeles: Singer-songwriter Zayn Malik has canceled all U.S. dates for the 2026 tour behind his ‘Konnakol’ album. The album was released on April 17, 2026. However, dates in the U.K. and Mexico later this month, which take place before the U.S. tour was scheduled to begin, are still for sale on his website. On Friday, the singer took to the Stories section of his Instagram, and shared a long note. He wrote, “To my fans, Thank you so much for all the support and love you’ve shown me on the album release and more importantly your love, prayers