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Farming couple struck dead by lightning in Asifabad

Kumram Bheem Asifabad: In a tragic incident, a farmer and his wife were killed in a lightning strike, while another person sustained injuries when they were standing under a tree at Kairiguda village in Rebbena mandal on Sunday. Locals and family members said that Tekam Bheemu (50) and his wife Raju Bai (45) of the village died on the spot when lightning struck them. Athram Gangu, another farmer, sustained minor injuries. He was shifted to a hospital in Asifabad. His condition is stated to be stable.

TTGDA opposes 1.5 percent pay cut, seeks clarity on health scheme

Hyderabad: The members of Telangana Teaching Government Doctors Association (TTGDA) condemned the deduction of 1.5 percent of the basic pay from the salary of employees starting the month of May without first releasing comprehensive EHS guidelines, including details regarding tariffs, treatment packages, empanelled hospitals, eligibility criteria, and implementation mechanisms. Geographic ReferenceA deduction of 1.5 percent of the basic pay translates to a contribution ranging from approximately Rs 195 per month for an employee at the lowest level of State RPS 2020 to nearly Rs 3,750 per month for an officer in the HAG scale under the 7th UGC Pay Revision, resulting in a wide variation of more than Rs 3,500 per month between contributors, TTGDA on Sunday said.

Revanth Reddy to Review Employees Health Scheme Rollout today

Hyderabad, May 31

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will conduct a review meeting with officials tomorrow regarding the implementation of the Employees Health Scheme, which the government is bringing into effect for the health security of Telangana employees and pensioners.

This scheme will be implemented through the

Employee Health Care Trust. Six representatives from employee unions and two from pensioners will serve as members of this trust. One state government employee will be appointed as the CEO of this trust. This committee is likely to be announced tomorrow.

The collection of necessary details for the implementation of this scheme has already begun. To gather de-

tails of government employees, pensioners, and their family members, the Finance Department has already issued a circular to all departments.

It has been specified that the data must be uploaded by May 31. Based on these details, the government will take steps to provide digital health cards and cashless treatment services.



TPCC chief's meeting with Kharge fuels speculation in Congress circles

Hyderabad, May 31

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president Mahesh Kumar Goud's meeting with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday has sparked speculation within Congress circles, particularly in the wake of a controversy surrounding a television channel's report that described him as a "disaster leader."

The report, aired by a news channel perceived to be supportive of the Congress party, triggered intense discussions both in political circles and within Gandhi Bhavan.

Though Mahesh Kumar Goud attempted to downplay the controversy, he remarked that "everyone will get answers at an appropriate time," a statement that further fueled curiosity among party leaders and cadre. City & Local Guides

Against this backdrop, his closed-door meeting with Kharge at Hotel Novotel in Hyderabad assumed significance. Notably, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, along with several Cabinet ministers, received the AICC chief at Shamshabad airport.

Officially, party leaders maintained that the TPCC

president briefed Kharge on the recent Political Affairs Committee meeting and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) awareness programmes being conducted for party workers. However, many within the party believe that other sensitive issues may also have figured in the discussions.

"The report aired by the television channel not only defamed the TPCC president but also amounted to an attack on the entire Backward Classes community within the Congress. Mahesh Kumar would certainly have brought these developments and possible conspiracies to the notice of the AICC chief," a senior Congress leader said.

"As TPCC president, it is his responsibility to inform the party high command about such attacks on the BC community," the leader added.

Meanwhile, Telangana Assembly Speaker G. Prasad Kumar's meeting with Kharge in New Delhi on Saturday has also generated considerable interest within the party. With speculation continuing over a possible Cabinet expansion or reshuffle, the Speaker's interaction with the Congress president has added another layer of intrigue to the ongoing political discussions.

India-Oman trade pact to kick in from June 1: What CEPA means for trade, jobs and markets

New Delhi, May 31

India and Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will come into force from June 1. The two countries will formally announce the decision on Monday.

This will be the fifth free trade agreement (FTA) implemented under the Modi government. Since 2014, India has implemented four trade pacts with Å Mauritius (April 2021 implemented), Australia (December 2022 implemented), UAE (May 2022 implemented), and EFTA (implemented in October 2025 – Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway).

India has signed similar deals with the UK (July 2025) and New Zealand (April 2026). It has announced the conclusion of talks with the European Union (27-nation bloc) on January 27 this year.

Both abbreviations are often used interchangeably. Modern trade agreements typically comprise around 20 chapters covering areas such as trade in goods, trade in services, investment, intellectual property rights, customs procedures, and dispute settlement mechanisms.

Other abbreviations commonly used for such trade agreements include Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA), and Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA).

During 2025-26, the bilateral trade was USD 11.18 billion (exports USD 4.02 billion and imports 7.16 billion) as compared to USD 10.61 billion in 2024-25.

Services exports to Oman rose from USD 397 Million in 2020 to USD 665 Million in 2024. The top sectors of export have been telecommunications, computer, and information, transport and travel. The imports grew from USD 101 Million in 2020 to USD 197.7 Million in 2024. The top sectors of import have been transport, travel, telecom, and other business services.

India gets 100% duty-free market access for its exports to Oman, covering 98.08% of Oman's tariff lines (or product categories) covering 99.38% of the trade value (average of 2022-23).

Exports from India to Oman that currently face a 5% duty on goods worth USD 3.64 billion. The pact will give a boost to India's price competitiveness.

Key sectors poised for strong gains include textiles, agricultural goods, transport equipment, precision instruments, processed food and gems & jewellery.

All zero-duty concessions kick in from "Day One" of the agreement's entry into force.

Presently, only 15.33% of India's export value



(11.34% of tariff lines) based on the 2022-2024 average, enters the Oman at zero duty under the MFN (most favoured nation) regime.

CEPA will create new export opportunities in minerals, chemicals, base metals, machinery, plastic/rubber, transport/auto, instruments/clocks, glass/ceramic/marble, paper.

Zero duty access will be granted by Oman to host of Indian sectors such as Iron and steel, electric machinery, marine products, industrial machinery and copper goods.

Removal of the 5% tariff will improve the competitiveness of Indian vehicles. The pact will grant binding zero duty access for key finished medicines and vaccines.

India has placed 2,789 tariff lines in the exclusion list under the CEPA, protecting key domestic sectors such as transport equipment, major chemicals, cereals, fruits and vegetables, spices, coffee and tea, and animal- 'origin products.

Sensitive value chain industries including rubber, leather, textiles, footwear, petroleum oils, and mineral-based products are also shielded to safeguard manufacturing competitiveness and farmer interests. Strategic agricultural segments including dairy products, meat, cereals, oilseeds, vegetable oils, sugar, and residues of the food-processing industry remain excluded.

Time for mangoes, not students?: Rahul Gandhi attacks Modi over CBSE OSM controversy

New Delhi, May 31

Rahul Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of ignoring concerns surrounding the CBSE On-Screen Marking controversy, alleging flaws in answer-sheet scanning and evaluation. He questioned the government's response and said affected students deserved accountability and justice

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday lashed out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the CBSE OSM row, saying he had the time to speak about mangoes during his monthly radio address, but not about 18.5 lakh children whose answer sheets were scanned with phones.

The leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha said Prime Minister Modi's silence on the Central Board of Secondary Education's (CBSE) On-Screen Marking (OSM) issue is no longer indifference, it is "complicity". In his 'Mann Ki Baat' radio broadcast on Sunday morning, Modi referred to the king of fruits, saying there is hardly a home where mangoes are not talked about in the summer season.

"The tender re-issued in August quietly removed all of it. 'Scanners' became generic. The resolution dropped to 200 DPI. Now we know what that meant in

practice. It has been exposed that COEMPT scanned the answer sheets using mobile phones," the former Congress chief said.

"The blurred copies, the missing pages, the unscanned books — they are not 'errors'. They are the predictable outcome of a contract written to fit a vendor," Gandhi said.

This is fraud and every child whose marks were wrongly evaluated is a victim of it, he said. "This morning, the Prime Minister had time to speak about mangoes. He has not had time to speak about 18.5 lakh children whose answer sheets were scanned with phones. Dharmendra Pradhan ji still sits in office. Modi ji's silence is no longer indifference. It is complicity," Gandhi said.

In his 'Mann Ki Baat' broadcast, Modi noted that every region has its own mango and its own aroma. "Hapus or alphonso of Maharashtra, Kesar of Gujarat — these are the lifeblood of 'aamras'; Dussehri of Uttar Pradesh and Langra of Kashi. There are mangoes from Bihar, whose aroma can be smelt from far. Chausa, Malda — memories of people are tied to every name," he said.

The prime minister said if someone goes to south

India, people will find other varieties like Banganapalli, Totapuri, Neelam, Malgova; there is Himsagar in Bengal; Suvarnaksha of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. "In other words, the place changes, and so does the mango's form, colour, and taste... This journey of the mango is now reaching from villages to the global market," he said.

Gandhi on Sunday targeted the Centre over the CBSE's OSM row, sharing a video of his interaction with a group of students and describing them as brave young Indians who asked the Modi government simple questions but received "insults instead of answers". Asserting that the students deserved a bright future, Gandhi said, "We will make sure they get it."



Indian Chronicle

English Daily

What Telangana failed to learn from Finland's education system

A 40-member delegation from Telangana, led by Principal Secretary for Education Yogita Rana, recently undertook a study tour to Finland to examine its acclaimed education system. The team, comprising around 12 senior officials and 28 educators and stakeholders, was expected to draw insights to strengthen vocational education in the State.

While such international exposure visits are often projected as opportunities for transformative learning, a closer look at the outcomes raises an important question: has the tour produced meaningful new directions, or merely reiterated ideas already present in Telangana's own education policy framework? Media reports on the Finland study tour present an optimistic narrative: vocational education must become flexible, modular, and closely linked to employment. It recommends credit transfer systems, integration with higher education, industry-linked learning, and efforts to remove the social stigma attached to vocational streams. At first glance, these appear progressive. However, many of these ideas are neither new nor transformative. More importantly, they remain disconnected from the deeper foundations that make Finland's education system successful.

Media reports highlight key features of Finland's vocational model: modular curricula, student-paced progression, seamless movement between vocational and academic streams, strong industry integration, and high employability. It contrasts this with Telangana's system, described as rigid, socially stigmatised, and weakly linked to employment. To address these gaps, it proposes short-term measures like modularisation and bridge courses, medium-term plans such as a TVET excellence blueprint and credit frameworks, and long-term strategies, including integration of vocational and general education. However, when these recommendations are compared with the Telangana Education Policy 2026, a clear overlap emerges. The policy already emphasises employability skills, apprenticeships, industry linkages, student-centred learning, and strengthening vocational pathways. It is based on extensive consultations, field visits, and comparative studies. In essence, many of the "new" insights from Finland are already embedded in the State's policy vision. This raises a critical question: if the policy already contains these ideas, what additional value did the Finland tour provide? Moreover, Finland's education system has been the subject of global discussion for more than two decades. Anyone with even a minimal interest in educational reform is today familiar with the broad features of the Finnish model, especially in the age of social media and widespread policy discourse. The ideas associated with Finland's success are neither inaccessible nor unknown. If Telangana is serious about strengthening vocational education, it must invest in teacher preparation, strengthen public institutions, regulate private players, and create genuine pathways for social mobility through vocational routes. In fact, more than a decade ago, Finnish education scholar Pasi Sahlberg systematically documented these experiences in his widely discussed book Finnish Lessons, which explained in detail the philosophical, institutional, and pedagogic foundations of Finland's educational transformation. Much of what is now being highlighted through the study tour has, therefore, long been available in the public domain and extensively debated in educational circles. The answer is uncomfortable. The tour appears to have reinforced existing knowledge rather than generating fresh, context-specific insights. Its recommendations remain largely at the level of structural adjustments—curriculum flexibility, credit systems, and institutional linkages.

MLC Tata Madhusudan's Birthday Celebrated Grandly at Tirumalayapalem

Khammam Tirumalayapalem, May 31. "The birthday celebrations of MLC and BRS Party State Secretary Mr. Tata Madhusudan were held grandly at the Tirumalayapalem mandal headquarters under the leadership of BRS Mandal President Mr. Bhashaboyina Veeranna. "On the occasion, party leaders and workers cut a cake and conveyed their birthday wishes to Mr. Tata Madhusudan. Sweets were distributed, and the celebrations were conducted in a festive atmosphere. "Speaking



on the occasion, several leaders praised Mr. Tata Madhusudan for his dedication to public service and his significant contribution to the development of the erstwhile Khammam district. They stated that he has earned a special reputation as a leader who continuously works for strengthening the party and addressing public issues. They wished him good health, happiness, and many more years of service to the people. "Among those who participated in the celebrations were BRS Mandal President Bhashaboyina Veeranna, former PACS Chairman and DCCB Director Krishna, Shuddhavagu Thanda Sarpanch Army Ravi, Gol Thanda Deputy Sarpanch Chandu Shaik, Balaji Nagar Thanda Sarpanch Badru, and party leaders Polepongu Venkateswarlu, Polepongu Ramachandru, Vanavasam Venkat Reddy, Sandeep Reddy, Bollikonda Ramesh, Malliah, Banoth Ramesh, Ashok, and Shankaraboyina Ellaiah, among others. "A large number of party workers and supporters attended the event and made the celebrations a success.

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Launches Development Works Worth Rs 4 Crore in Kapra Division

""KAPRA , MAY 31 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): In a major boost to civic infrastructure, Uppal Constituency MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy on Sunday laid the foundation stone and inaugurated several development works worth approximately Rs 4 crore in Kapra and Vampuguda divisions. "Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that providing better basic amenities to residents remains a top priority. He stated that special emphasis is being given to the development of roads, drainage systems, parks, open gyms, and other essential infrastructure across the constituency. He added that the government is committed to improving living standards by ensuring quality civic facilities in every colony. "The development works inaugurated include: "Underground Drainage (UGD) works in Senior Citizen Colony – Rs 40 lakh "Open Gym and Children's Play Equipment in Saket Colony – ?25 lakh "CC Road Construction in Vorla Enclave – Rs 60 lakh Storm Water Drain Construction from Kapra Nala to Sai Suma T-Junction – Rs 2.50 crore "CC Road Construction in Gandhinagar – ?20 lakh "The MLA said that upon completion, these projects will significantly improve infrastructure and provide long-term benefits to residents of Kapra Division. "Senior BRS leader Bair Naveen Goud, Badruddin, Indiraiah, Gilbert, Mahesh, Malla Reddy, Ravinder Rao, Kondal Goud,



Praveen, Macha Prasad Goud, Srinivas, Krishna Goud, Pili Sairam, Gouse, Raffique, Kittu, shiva , and several

others. " representatives of colony welfare associations, government officials, party leaders, activists, and a large number of local residents participated in the programme.

Drainage Works Worth Rs 60 Lakh Underway in Vinayak Nagar, Uppal; Inspected by Former Corporator RAJITHA PARAMESWAR REDDY

""UPPAL , MAY 31 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Former Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameswar Reddy on Sunday inspected the ongoing underground drainage construction works being carried out in Vinayak Nagar of Uppal Division at a cost of ?60 lakh. "The drainage project is being executed in line with the assurance given by Rajitha Parameswar Reddy during her recent visits to the colony, where residents had raised concerns regarding drainage and road infrastructure. The works are currently progressing at a rapid pace and are expected to significantly improve civic amenities in the area. "Speaking on the occasion, Rajitha Parameswar Reddy said, "We inspected the ongoing works along with local residents. We have requested the concerned officials to ensure that the drainage works are completed before the onset of the monsoon season. CC road construction works will also commence shortly. As promised, we are committed to transforming Vinayak Nagar into a model colony. "She further stated that the development of the colony remains a top priority and reaffirmed her commitment to fulfilling the promises made to the residents. "Among those present during the inspection were Uppal Division President Bakaram Laxman, Block SC Cell President Lingampally Ramakrishna, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Alugula Anil Kumar, Thokata Raju, Kancharla Srinu, Nagaraju, Kundanapalli Balaraju, Kundanapalli Raju, Singaram Venkatesh, Kundanapalli Bhagya, Singaram Andal, Mamilla Pushpa, Mamilla Madhu, Kundanapalli Narendra, Yakari Srinu, and several local residents.



Welfare and Development Are the Two Eyes of the People's Government: Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy

We have supported 2.5 million farmers by waiving Rs 21,000 crore in farm loans

Second phase of Indiramma Housing Scheme to begin from June 1

Minister Ponguleti lays foundation stone for Kondapuram–Ponnekallu BT Road works worth Rs 5.20 crore



""Khammam Rural, May 31 indian Chronicle: ""State Revenue, Housing, Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy said that the people's government, formed with the blessings of the public, is moving forward with welfare and development as its two eyes. "On Sunday, the Minister, along with MP Rama Sahayam Raghuram Reddy and District Collector T.S. Divakar, laid the foundation stone for the construction of the Ponnekallu–Kondapuram BT Road in Khammam Rural Mandal. The project will be undertaken at a cost of ?5.20 crore. "Addressing the gathering, Minister Ponguleti stated that despite challenging financial conditions, the government has not stepped back from implementing the promises made to the people. He said the government is efficiently implementing welfare schemes while simultaneously allocating substantial funds for infrastructure development across the state. "The Minister said that with the objective of making farmers prosperous, the government waived farm loans up to ?2 lakh for 25 lakh farmers, amounting to ?21,000 crore, within the first year of its tenure. He noted that while the Central Government announces Minimum Support Prices (MSP), the State Government goes a step further by procuring all types of crops at support prices. "He further stated that in addition to MSP, the government is providing a ?500 bonus per quintal for fine paddy varieties. Within the first two years of the government's tenure, appointment letters were issued to 72,000 unemployed youth, he added. "The Minister highlighted the successful implementation of key welfare measures, including free electricity up to 200 units for poor families, free bus travel for women in RTC buses, issuance of new ration cards, and distribution of fine rice to ration card holders. "Under the Indiramma Housing

Scheme, the government has already sanctioned 4.5 lakh houses, and funds are being credited to beneficiaries' accounts every Monday. He announced that the second phase of the scheme will commence on June 1, under which another 2.5 lakh houses will be sanctioned. "The Minister said that 2,000 houses will be allotted to each Assembly constituency, and the government is committed to providing permanent housing to every eligible poor family with financial assistance of ?5 lakh in four installments. "He emphasized that the construction of quality roads in rural areas not only improves transportation facilities for residents but also facilitates the movement of agricultural produce. "Upon completion of the Kondapuram–Ponnekallu BT Road, the people of the region will have access to a more convenient and efficient transportation network, he said. "The programme was attended by State Irrigation Development Corporation Chairman Muva Vijay Babu, RDO Srinivas, Panchayat Raj Engineering Department officials, public representatives, local leaders, sarpanches, villagers, and other officials.

Dr. Gogula Rana Pratap Reddy Stands in Support of the Deceased's Family

""Narsampet/Warangal, May 31 (Indian Chronicle): Dr. Gogula Rana Pratap Reddy, General Secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for Warangal District, visited the family members of the late Manda Veerayya—a resident of Sarvapuram, 6th Ward—and conveyed his deepest condolences on his passing. ""Upon learning the news of Veerayya's death, Dr. Rana Pratap Reddy visited the bereaved family on Sunday to offer them solace and express his profound sympathy. Advising the family members not to lose heart, he reassured them that they should face this difficult period with courage and mental fortitude. Subsequently, he paid tribute to the deceased by garlanding his portrait. ""Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rana Pratap Reddy remarked that Manda Veerayya was not merely an ordinary individual; rather, he stood as a highly respected figure in society—a noble soul who had earned the affection and admiration of the people. He opined that Veerayya's demise has created an irreparable void, not only for his immediate family but for the entire village as well. ""He assured the family members that, during this time of grief, the Bharatiya Janata Party would stand firmly by their side and extend every possible assistance and support. Praying for the soul of the deceased to rest in peace, he expressed his hope that the Almighty would grant the family the necessary strength, courage, and mental resilience to withstand this tragedy. Parliament Co-convenor Katla Ramachander Reddy, constituency leader Juluri Manish Goud, BJYM District Vice President Konkisa Vignesh Goud, BJP leaders Samala Praveen Kumar, Manda Rakesh, and Manda Rahul, as well as party workers, village elders, and local residents, participated in this program.

State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao Attends Traditional Family Ceremony

""Khammam, May 31 indian Chronicle: ""State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao attended the Pushpalankarana (flower decoration ceremony) and Panchekattu (traditional attire ceremony) held at Koratlagudem village in Nelakondapalli mandal of



Palair constituency, Khammam district. "The ceremonies were organized for Karthika, daughter of Bachalakuri Nageswara Rao and Sunitha, and Karthik, their son. On the occasion, Rayala Nageswara Rao extended his blessings and best wishes to the children. "Among those present were State Youth Congress Secretary Jerripothula Anjani, Khammam District Congress Party Official Spokesperson Bachalakuri Nagaraju, and several other local leaders and well-wishers.

CHANGE OF NAME

I. SAHANALATHA NAGULA W/O NAGULA PARUSHARAM (old name) born on 01-07-1967 at Hanamkonda earlier was Holding **Passport No. W7878755** DT: 07-11-2022 hereby changing my Name and henceforth in future I would be known as **NARSETTI SAHANALATHA W/O NAGULA PARUSHARAM** (new name) HNo. 2-6-1422/1 Bhavani nagar, Hanumakonda-506001 Telangana State.

Place: Hanumakonda Date: 01-06-2026

DECLARANT.
NARSETTI SAHANALATHA
W/O NAGULA PARUSHARAM

Religious Harmony Is the Policy of the People's Government: Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy

**Government committed to protecting the dignity and culture of all religions
Development works in Bhadrachalam to be completed before Godavari Pushkaralu
Minister lays foundation stone for reconstruction and development of Sri Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple (Ganapeswaralayam) in Kusumanchi**

“Khammam ,Kusumanchi, May 31 indian Chronicle:“State Revenue, Housing, Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy stated that religious harmony is the guiding principle of the people's government.“On Sunday, the Minister, along with MP Rama Sahayam Raghuram Reddy and District Collector Divakara T.S., laid the foundation stone for reconstruction and development works worth ₹3.30 crore at the Sri Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple (Ganapeswaralayam) in Kusumanchi. The dignitaries also participated in special religious rituals at the temple.“Addressing the gathering, Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy said that since the formation of the people's government, development activities have been progressing rapidly across all sectors in the state. He criticized certain political parties for indulging in politics in the name of religion, while emphasizing that the present government respects all faiths equally and serves as a symbol of communal harmony.“The Minister stated that the government is committed to preserving the dignity, culture, and traditions of every religion and is extending all necessary support for their protection. He noted that the recent Sammakka Saralamma Jatara was organized on a grand scale and that extensive preparations are underway for the upcoming Godavari Pushkaralu.“Critiquing the previous government, he alleged that despite announcing ₹100 crore for the development of the Bhadrachalam Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple, not a single rupee was released. In contrast, he said the present Chief Minister has already laid the foundation stone for development works worth ₹350 crore at Bhadrachalam and that construction activities will commence within the next week to ten days.“He further stated that the government is determined to complete these works on a war footing before the Godavari Pushkaralu. Around ₹68 crore has already been spent on land acquisition around the temple area, he added.“The Minister also announced that the government has sanctioned ₹1,000 crore for the development of temples along the Godavari region from Basara to Bhadrachalam. As part of this initiative, development works at Ganapeswaralayam are being undertaken. He emphasized that the government is extending equal importance to the development of temples, churches, and mosques.“Speaking on the occasion, MP Rama Sahayam Raghuram Reddy described Ganapeswaralayam as a spiritual center deeply rooted in the faith of local people. He urged officials to ensure the speedy completion of the ₹3.30 crore development project so that the inauguration



can be conducted by Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy. He said the project would not only improve facilities for devotees but also promote spiritual tourism in the region.“District Collector Divakara T.S. stated that development activities in roads, education, temples, hospitals, and other sectors are progressing rapidly across the Palair constituency. He said that just as the development works for the Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara were completed successfully within a short period, the Ganapeswaralayam project would also be completed within the stipulated timeframe while maintaining quality standards. He assured that the implementation of the works would be continuously monitored to ensure that devotees face no inconvenience.“The event was attended by State Irrigation Development Corporation Chairman Muvva Vijay Babu, officials from the Endowments Department, RDO Srinivas, Tahsildar Saidulu, local public representatives, village sarpanches, priests, community leaders, and devotees.

No Citizen Should Lose Their Voting Right; Public Must Remain Vigilant: TJS District President Sheikh Javid

“Narsampet, May 31 (Indian Chronicle) : Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) Warangal District President Sheikh Javid has urged the public and political party cadres to remain fully aware of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls scheduled to commence across the state from June 25, emphasizing that every effort must be made to ensure that no eligible citizen loses their right to vote.“Speaking as the chief guest at an SIR awareness programme organized by the Jama Masjid Committee at the Muslim Shadi Khana in Narsampet on Sunday, Sheikh Javid highlighted the significance of the voter list revision exercise and called for active public participation.“On the occasion, Revenue Department officials, supervisors, and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) briefed attendees on various aspects of the electoral roll revision process. As part of the programme, voter-list mapping activities were conducted. Officials verified and mapped voters whose names appeared in the 2002 electoral rolls, while individuals whose names were absent were mapped using parental details, thereby instilling confidence among the public.“Sheikh Javid stated that the door-to-door SIR survey would begin on June 25. He appealed to citizens not to believe rumours suggesting that the exercise was intended to remove the names of Muslim voters alone. Clarifying the issue, he said the survey would be conducted uniformly among all sections of society and aimed solely at ensuring the accuracy and inclusiveness of the electoral rolls.“He further explained



on the 2002 electoral rolls, while details of other age groups would be collected during the house-to-house survey. Citizens were advised to accurately furnish the required information in the application forms distributed by survey officials.“Appealing to the public not to succumb to fear or anxiety regarding the SIR exercise, Sheikh Javid advised residents to approach the local MRO office for any further information or clarification.“The programme was attended by Jama Masjid Committee President Mirza Masood Ali Beg, General Secretary Yakooob Pasha, Riyaz, committee members, local councillor Salahuddin Ayyub, SIR Supervisor and Revenue Inspector Yusuf Ali, and BLOs Kasani Padma, Ramagiri Madhavi, Rama, Chaitanya, Anuradha, Nayini Satish, Sunitha, along with several others.

Tobacco Addiction is a Dangerous Gamble with Life: Dr. Anita Reddy

“Hanumakonda, May 31 (Indian Chronicle): Tobacco consumption is nothing short of a dangerous gamble with one's life, and it continues to claim millions of lives every year, said Dr. Anita Reddy, Chairperson of Anurag Society and Member of the Kakatiya University Governing Council.“Speaking at an awareness programme organized on Sunday for auto-rickshaw drivers and residents of slum areas to mark World No Tobacco Day, Dr. Anita Reddy emphasized the urgent need to create widespread awareness



about the harmful effects of tobacco use.“She stated that protecting children and youth from the influence of the tobacco industry is one of society's foremost responsibilities. Highlighting the grave health consequences of tobacco consumption, she noted that millions of people across the globe succumb to tobacco-related illnesses every year, with cancer being one of the most common and life-threatening outcomes.“Dr. Anita Reddy stressed that effective tobacco control requires the collective efforts of governments, voluntary organizations, healthcare professionals, teachers, social activists, and the public. She underscored that only through coordinated action and sustained awareness campaigns can tobacco use be significantly reduced.“Describing tobacco addiction as not merely a public health issue but also a social responsibility, she observed that its adverse effects extend beyond individual users and deeply impact the economic and social well-being of their families. She appealed to people not to endanger their lives or jeopardize their families' future by falling prey to tobacco addiction.“Among those present at the programme were Venkanna, Manga, Raghava, residents of slum communities, auto-rickshaw drivers, and oth-

‘Rudrama’ Brand Marks the Dawn of a New Chapter in Women's Empowerment and Self-Respect: MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy



“Skill Development and Mini Manufacturing Hub Inaugurated in Ladella Village“Damera/Parkal, May 31 (Indian Chronicle) : Parkal MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy stated that the food processing unit, along with the Skill Development and Mini Manufacturing Hub established under the ‘Rudrama’ brand in Ladella village, marks the beginning of a new era in women's empowerment and stands as a symbol of economic self-reliance and self-respect for women across Telangana.“As part of the ‘Mahila Shakti’ (Women's Power) Week celebrations, MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy, accompanied by WE Hub CEO Deepthi Ravula, inaugurated the Parkal Skill Development and Mini Manufacturing Hub on Sunday. On this occasion, they also laid the foundation stones for the Self-Help Group (SHG) Village Organization (VO) office, a workshop, a GM Dairy unit, and a community meeting hall.“Addressing a gathering of women members from the Self-Help Groups, Revuri Prakash Reddy remarked that this center would play a transformative role in improving the socio-economic conditions of rural women. He noted that the primary objective of this initiative is to enhance women's skills while simultaneously creating sustainable local employment opportunities. Describing the ‘Rudrama’ brand as a symbol of self-confidence, dignity, and financial independence for the women of Telangana, he urged women entrepreneurs to manufacture high-quality products capable of achieving nationwide recognition. He emphasized that while the government, the district administration, and WE Hub have provided the necessary

infrastructure and opportunities, it is now the responsibility of the women to utilize them effectively through dedication and hard work.“The MLA explained that WE Hub and the district administration are jointly implementing this project with the twin objectives of providing skill development training to rural women and generating employment through micro-manufacturing units. He expressed his delight that launching this initiative during the state's prestigious ‘Mahila Shakti Utsav’ (Women's Empowerment Festival) has made the occasion even more meaningful.“He further observed that women possess remarkable qualities such as commitment, perseverance, and resilience—attributes that serve as a driving force for social progress. Citing the legacy of Queen Rudramadevi—who courageously overcame numerous challenges to leave an indelible mark on history—he remarked that naming the products after the ‘Rudrama’ brand was a fitting and inspiring decision. Assuring his full support for the initiative, Revuri Prakash Reddy stated that all necessary assistance and cooperation would be extended to create extensive marketing opportunities for the products manufactured by these women. He urged ‘WE Hub’ officials to formulate effective strategies to enhance the market reach and competitiveness of their products.“With the aim of strengthening women's economic empowerment, the MLA announced that the ‘Parkal Indra Women Milk Producers Cooperative Society Limited’ would be established upon the strong foundations of integrity, dedication, and collective effort.“Representatives from ‘WE Hub’, district officials, leaders of women's associations, members of Self-Help Groups, and local residents participated in large numbers in this event.

NTR Symbolized the Self-Respect of the Telugu People: Tummala

“Khammam, May 31 indian Chronicle:“State Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said that the legendary leader Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao showcased the self-respect of the Telugu people to the world and that organizing service-oriented programs inspired by his ideals is highly commendable.“Speaking at a free mega medical camp organized by the Khammam Kamma Mahajana Sangham at Swarna Bharathi Kamma Vari Kalyana Mandapam in Khammam on the occasion of NTR's 103rd birth anniversary, the minister stated that NTR was not merely an individual but a symbol of the self-respect and pride of the Telugu community. He noted that the welfare schemes introduced by NTR with a vision of public welfare continue to serve as an inspiration even today.“The minister said that such free medical camps play a vital role in protecting public health and appreciated the Kamma Mahajana Sangham for undertaking the initiative as part of its social responsibility. He added that conducting service activities in line with NTR's ideals would contribute significantly to the welfare of society.“The camp offered medical services in various specialties, including cancer care, general medicine, orthopedics, dermatology, ophthalmology, gynecology, pediatrics, ENT, urology, and neurology. Free diagnostic services such as blood tests, sugar tests, blood pressure checks, ECGs, X-rays, and mammograms were also provided.“For women's cancer screening, valuable diagnostic vehicles and equipment were arranged by Battineni Prakash. A large number of people attended the camp and benefited from the medi-



cal services.“The minister praised the support extended by the Khammam branch of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), the Chemists and Druggists Association, doctors, donors, and volunteers in making the camp a success. He congratulated the representatives of the Kamma Mahajana Sangham for organizing the event and expressed gratitude to everyone who contributed to its successful conduct.“Among those present were Rayala Nageswara Rao, Puvvalla Durgaprasad, former Mayor Neeraja, Tummala Yugandhar, Kamma Mahajana Sangham President Kollu Raghunath Satyanarayana, General Secretary Chava Ramu, Vice President Karnati Ramadevi, Assistant Secretary Vajja Srinivasa Rao, Treasurer Thulluri Nirmala Kumari, executive members, doctors, and several other dignitaries.

New Executive Committee of Warangal District Wushu Association Elected

“R. Koteswar Elected President, Chippa Venkateshwarlu Vice-President, and Syed Yakooob General Secretary“Warangal, May 31 (Indian Chronicle): The new executive committee of the Warangal District Wushu Association for the 2026–2030 term was unanimously elected at a meeting held on Sunday at the O-City Indoor Stadium, Warangal.“The election process was conducted under the chairmanship of Abdul Umar, Secretary of the Telangana Wushu Association. District Youth and Sports Officer Anil and United Warangal District Olympic Association Secretary B. Kailash Yadav served as members of the election committee. Vemula Satish acted as Observer, while Manda Vijender Patel functioned as the Returning Officer and supervised the election proceedings.“In the newly elected committee, former corporator Basavaraj Kumar was chosen as Chairman, R. Koteswar as President, Chippa Venkateshwarlu as Vice-President, Syed Yakooob as General Secretary, and R. Anita as Treasurer.“Speaking on the occasion, District Youth and Sports Officer Anil assured that all necessary infrastructure and facilities required for the development of Wushu in the district would be provided. He also pledged support in supplying sports equipment to athletes.“Addressing the gathering, Chairman-elect Basavaraj Kumar and Vice-President Chippa Venkateshwarlu stated that they would extend all possible support to students and athletes selected to represent the sport at the state, national, and international levels.“Among those present were Wushu coaches S.D. Riyaz, R. Rakshitha, Rohith, Chanti, Kranthi, Anwar, Ramakrishna, P. Dinesh, D. Krishna, Khadeer, G. Raju, Azeem, and Bandi Santosh, along with several others.“The details of the newly elected committee were announced by Warangal District Wushu Association General Secretary Syed Yakooob.



No One Has the Power to Prevent Pawan Kalyan from Visiting Telangana: Jana Sena Leader Shivakoti Yadav



“Narsampet, May 31 (Indian Chronicle): Jana Sena Party Narsampet Constituency In-charge Merugu Shivakoti Yadav strongly condemned the personal attacks, defamatory remarks, and allegations being made against Jana Sena Party chief and Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan by certain individuals under the guise of intellectuals and journalists.” Addressing a meeting of key party leaders held at the Jana Sena Party office in Narsampet on Sunday, Shivakoti Yadav stated that the Constitution of India guarantees every citizen the right to reside and move freely in any part of the country. He said that attempting to incite regional animosity by disregarding these constitutional rights was both irresponsible and unacceptable. “Recalling the Telangana movement, he noted that it was carried forward under the slogan, “Let us separate as states, but remain united as people.” He also urged people to remember the spirit of goodwill and brotherhood expressed by Telangana movement leader K. Chandrashekar Rao towards the people of Andhra Pradesh. “He emphasized that while freedom of expression is a democratic right, it should not be misused to

create divisions or hostility among people and regions. Condemning statements suggesting that Pawan Kalyan would be prevented from entering Telangana, he asserted that Jana Sena leaders and supporters in Telangana were equally committed to the ideals and aspirations of the Telangana movement. “Shivakoti Yadav remarked that genuine intellectuals and journalists would engage in constructive debate rather than resorting to personal attacks. Instead of targeting individuals, he said, those claiming to represent public interests should focus on addressing the numerous issues faced by the people of Telangana and hold those in power accountable. “He further alleged that certain individuals aligned with specific political parties and leaders were targeting Pawan Kalyan merely to gain attention and maintain their relevance. Describing Pawan Kalyan as a leader who transcends regional, religious, and social boundaries, he said that his vision and work are dedicated to the welfare of the nation as a whole. “Among those present at the meeting were Jana Sena leaders Gangula Ranjith, Bobba Prithviraj, Elaboyina David, Rodd Srikanth, Gandla Arun, Madarapu Krishna, Ravi, Varun, Rajender, and others.

Service Roads Needed on Greenfield Highway; Self-Employment Loans and Free Borewells for SCs and STs Sought

BJP Khammam District President Nelluri Koteswara Rao Submits Memorandum to Union Minister Kishan Reddy

“Khammam, May 31 Indian Chronicle: “Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Khammam District President Nelluri



Koteswara Rao has urged the Central Government to address key issues related to the Greenfield Highway project in Khammam district, farmers' concerns, and the welfare of weaker sections of society. He met Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy at his Hyderabad camp office on Sunday and submitted a comprehensive memorandum outlining these demands. “Koteswara Rao requested the construction of service roads along the Khammam-Devarapalli Greenfield Highway, stating that the absence of service roads has caused severe difficulties for local residents and farmers. He explained that the highway stretch between Nagpur-Amaravati Cross and Wyrā Exit, covering 19,600 km to 33,200 km, passes through agricultural lands, dividing many farms into two parts. “As a result, farmers are facing challenges in moving tractors, harvesters, and transporting harvested crops. He also pointed out that these lands fall under the command area

of the Nagarjuna Sagar Project, and the highway construction has made it difficult for farmers and villagers to cross streams and canals or take their livestock for grazing. He urged the Union Minister to provide immediate relief by constructing service roads on both sides of the highway. “The BJP leader also appealed for special self-employment loans for economically disadvantaged Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) families. He requested that Central Government welfare schemes be extended to unemployed youth from poor backgrounds to help them establish self-employment ventures. “Koteswara Rao submitted applications seeking self-employment loans of ₹2 lakh each for unemployed SC and ST candidates from Madharam village in Singareni Mandal of Khammam district, Oddugudem village in Yellandu Mandal of Bhadradi Kothagudem district, and Balaji Thanda in Garla Mandal of Mahabubabad district. “He further requested irrigation support for poor SC and ST farmers in Madharam village. He noted that many farmers are unable to cultivate their lands effectively due to the lack of irrigation facilities and the financial inability to drill borewells on their own. “He urged the Central Government to provide free borewells and pump sets to eligible farmers under schemes such as PM-KUSUM and PMKSY. Koteswara Rao informed the minister that he had personally verified the applications at the field level and stated that Central Government assistance would significantly improve the socio-economic conditions of these families. “According to sources, Union Minister Kishan Reddy responded positively to the requests and assured that the issues would be examined.

Congress Leader Eega Damodar Extends Support to the Family of Late Chandu Ailaiah

Financial Assistance and Essential Commodities Provided to the Bereaved Family

“Wardhannapet/Warangal, May 31 (Indian Chronicle) : Congress leaders Eega Damodar and Animireddy Ramachandra Reddy visited the family of late Chandu Ailaiah, a resident of the 9th Division, and conveyed their heartfelt condolences over his demise. “During their visit on Sunday, the leaders met the deceased's three sons, offering them comfort and moral support during their difficult time. They also extended financial assistance and provided essential commodities, including rice and cooking oil, to help the family meet its immediate needs. “Speaking on the occasion, Eega Damodar said that extending support to families facing hardship, irrespective of political affiliations, is a social responsibility that everyone should uphold. He emphasized that standing by people in times of distress is a true reflection of humanity and compassion. “The programme was attended by former councillor Manchala Ramakrishna, Rakhi Mudiraj, Babulal, Mohammed Sohail, Venkat Vilasaru, Congress Party leaders from the 9th Division, local youth, and residents.



SUDA to showcase two years of infrastructure development

Fortnight-long programme from June 1 to 15 will feature inaugurations, foundation stone-laying ceremonies and the release of a progress report on June 15..

KARIMNAGAR May 31 (Correspondent): The Satavahana Urban Development Authority (SUDA) will organise a series of programmes from June 1 to 15 to highlight the developmental works undertaken during the past two years, SUDA Chairman Komatireddy Narendra Reddy said on Sunday.

Addressing a press conference here, Mr. Narendra Reddy said the authority had taken up infrastructure projects aimed at improving urban amenities across its jurisdiction. The programmes will include foundation stone-laying ceremonies, inaugurations and the release of a report on the authority's achievements on June 15.

He said works relating to roads, drainage networks, streetlights, high-mast lighting and junction beautification had been undertaken under 183 projects during the past two years. Development works worth about ₹30 crore had been completed as part of these initiatives, he added.

Mr. Narendra Reddy said a commercial complex was being constructed at a cost of ₹5 crore on land owned by the authority. He also announced that the renovated IDSMT complex, which had remained unused for several years, would soon be opened for public use.

The facility is expected to provide parking space for nearly 100 cars and 300 two-wheelers in the Tower Circle area. Forty commercial units in the complex have been modernised and will be leased out. Tenders have also been invited for the construction of a food court at an estimated cost of ₹1.2 crore.

Referring to urban beautification measures, the Chairman said Rajiv Chowk had been upgraded and a



bronze statue of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi installed at the junction. He added that steps were being taken to provide civic infrastructure and amenities in Angarika Township.

Mr. Narendra Reddy said tenders had been invited for additional development works worth ₹7.5 crore and that the projects would be grounded shortly. He expressed confidence that the authority would continue to focus on infrastructure development and urban improvement in the coming years.

Several public representatives and stakeholders attended the press conference.

Awareness Seminar on Higher Education and Felicitation of Class 10 Merit Students Held by Prajavani Voluntary Organization



“UPPAL, MAY 31 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Prajavani Voluntary Organization organized an awareness seminar on higher education and a felicitation program for Class 10 merit students from 15 schools at Ramanthapur on Sunday. “Students who secured First, Second, and Third ranks in their respective schools were honored during the event. Dr. Shravan Kumar, Ph.D., Director of New Era College, attended as the chief guest and felicitated the students. “Addressing the gathering, Dr. Shravan Kumar emphasized the importance of higher education and advised students to stay away from bad habits to achieve success in life. He said that this is the right time for students to decide their future goals and choose their



educational paths accordingly. He encouraged them to select good friends, clarify academic doubts immediately, and make productive use of their time by reading books and learning through digital resources. “He further stated that students should take successful individuals as role models and work diligently to achieve their ambitions. As a special initiative, Dr. Shravan Kumar announced that meritorious students would be offered free admission to Intermediate courses. “School teacher Sukanya, Organization President Erram Srinivas, T. Ravinder Rao, Raghu Prakash, District Coordinator Kiran Kumar, Siddagani Raju, Goli Krishnaiah, Suresh Gupta, Kumaraswamy, and others participated in the program.

Kavitha's arrival on the 7th of this month....!

“Sangareddy Indian Chronicle Correspondent” “TRS party chief Kavitha will visit Sangareddy district on the 7th of this month. Patancheru, Sangareddy Zaheerabad. TRS party flag will be unveiled at constituency centers. It is reported that many people will join TRS in the presence of Kavitha on this occasion.



World No Tobacco Day Observed at Khammam Pavilion Ground

“Khammam, May 31

Indian Chronicle: “On the occasion of World No Tobacco Day, members of the Pavilion Ground Walkers Committee organized a unique awareness program at the Pavilion Ground in Khammam on Sunday, highlighting the harmful effects of tobacco on human health. “Speaking on the occasion, Pavilion Ground Walkers Association President Vadde Ramanatham and Secretary Rakam Shyam Babu said that tobacco, derived from a small plant, got its name because it produces smoke when processed and is used in products such as cigarettes and chewing tobacco. They noted that tobacco has been used by people since ancient times, dating back to around 1400 BC, but its devastating impact on human life was not fully understood then. “They emphasized that tobacco has now become a major public health threat. To demonstrate society's opposition to tobacco use, members of the committee created and symbolically burned a 10-foot giant cigarette model at the Pavilion Ground. Participants raised slogans against tobacco and tobacco-based products. “Walkers, youth, women, and fitness enthusiasts took part in the event and pledged to keep themselves, their family members, friends, and relatives away from tobacco products. Speakers expressed concern that many young people are becoming addicted to tobacco and other intoxicants, leading to serious health problems and loss of life. “The committee members stated that while the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant casualties, tobacco-related diseases continue to affect millions of people and push many families into financial hardship every year. They urged governments to take immediate steps toward banning tobacco products. “Among those who participated in the program were trade union leaders and senior walkers Manda Venkateswarlu, Vijay, Srinivas, Narasimha Rao, Murali, retired teachers Talluri Venu and Veerababu, Dr. Ramakrishna, Pasha, Satyam, Shankar, Venkat, Rama, Rama Sekharam, Madhavi, Padma, and several others.



Rubio says US will find 'another way' if Iran talks fail



WASHINGTON/ISLAMABAD, GNS News Agency, May 31 The United States will either have a good agreement with Iran or deal with the country "another way," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said ?on Monday, as Washington played down hopes for an imminent breakthrough in the three-month-old war.Rubio told reporters in New Delhi that the U.S. would give diplomacy every chance to succeed before ?exploring "alternatives", after President Donald Trump said on Sunday he had told his representatives not to rush into any Iran deal.The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.

There was a "pretty solid thing on the table in terms of their ability to open up the strait, get the strait open, enter into a very real, significant, time-limited negotiation on the nuclear matter, and hopefully we can pull it off," Rubio said.A day earlier, Trump wrote on Truth Social that the U.S. blockade on Iranian ships in the Strait of Hormuz would "remain in ?full force and effect until an agreement is reached, certified, and signed". "Both sides must take their time and get it right," he added. There was no immediate response from Iran's government. But the ?Tasnim news agency, linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guards, said the U.S. was still obstructing parts of a potential deal, including Tehran's demand for the release of frozen funds.During military conflict Iran's tactic was "an eye for an eye," and in diplomatic conflict it is "action for action", Ebrahim Rezaei, the spokesperson of the Iranian parliament, said on Monday.Iran would not yield to pressure ?or threats, and if the United States wanted an agreement it should negotiate, but if it wanted \$6-gasoline it could continue bluffing, he added on X.

Oil prices fell 6% to two-week lows as optimism grew that the ?United States and Iran were moving closer to a peace deal.Trump raised expectations of an imminent deal on Saturday when he said Washington and Tehran had "largely negotiated" a memorandum of understanding on a peace agreement that would reopen the Strait of

Hormuz.Before the conflict, the critical waterway had carried a fifth of global shipments of oil and liquefied natural gas.The two sides remain at odds on several difficult issues, such as Iran's nuclear ambitions, Israel's war in Lebanon with the Iranian-backed Hezbollah militia ?and Tehran's demands for the lifting of sanctions and the release of tens of billions of dollars of Iranian oil revenues frozen in foreign banks.STICKING POINTSA senior Trump administration official outlined what he said were ?the latest contours of issues being negotiated.Speaking on the condition of anonymity, the official said Iran had agreed "in principle" to open the Strait of Hormuz, in exchange for the United States lifting its naval blockade, and to dispose of ?Tehran's highly enriched ?uranium.The U.S. understood Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei had endorsed the broad template of the deal, he added.There was no immediate confirmation from Iran or elaboration on what an "in principle" agreement meant.The U.S. official said Washington envisioned first re-opening the strait and lifting the U.S. naval blockade. Negotiating the details of the nuclear measures would take more time.The official pushed back on suggestions that Iran had not accepted disposing of its stockpiled enriched uranium. "It's a question about how," the official said.A second senior administration official said on Sunday the proposed framework would give negotiators 60 days to reach a final deal.Iranian sources had told Reuters that in future ?stages, "feasible formulas" could be found to resolve the dispute ?over its highly enriched uranium stockpile, including ?diluting the material under the supervision of the U.N. nuclear watchdog.Iran has long denied U.S. and Israeli accusations that it is pursuing nuclear weapons and says it has a right to enrich uranium for civilian purposes, although the purity it has achieved far exceeds that needed for power generation.Trump, whose approval rating have been hit ?by the war's impact on U.S. energy prices, and who has faced congressional efforts to curb his war powers, has repeatedly played up the prospect of ?a deal to end the conflict ?started by the U.S. and Israel on February 28.A tenuous ceasefire has held since early April.The president hit back at critics of his handling of the negotiations and his willingness to compromise with Iran."If I make a deal with Iran, it will be a good and proper one ... So don't listen to the losers, who are critical about something they know nothing about," Trump posted on Sunday.Any deal reinforcing the current fragile ceasefire would bring relief ?to markets but ?not immediately defuse a global energy crisis, which has driven up costs of fuel, fertiliser and food.The U.S.-Israeli bombing of Iran ?killed thousands of people in Iran before it was suspended in early April.Israel has also killed thousands more and driven hundreds of thousands from their homes in Lebanon, which it invaded in pursuit of militant group Hezbollah. Iranian strikes on Israel and neighbouring Gulf ?states have killed dozens.

Oil slips 6% as US, Iran seen moving closer to peace deal

SINGAPORE, GNS News Agency, May 31 Oil prices fell 6% ?to two-week lows on Monday, as optimism grew that the United States and Iran were moving closer to a peace deal, even though they remain at odds over key issues, such as blockades on the Strait of Hormuz.Brent crude futures fell \$5.85, or 5.7%, to \$97.69 a barrel by 0343 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate were at \$90.85 a barrel, down \$5.75, or 6%. Both contracts touched their lowest ?since May 7 earlier in the session.The Reuters Power Up newsletter provides everything you need to know about the global energy industry. Sign up here.

On Saturday, U.S. President Donald Trump said Washington and Iran had "largely negotiated" an understanding on a peace deal that would reopen the Strait ?of Hormuz, which had carried a fifth of global shipments of oil and liquefied natural gas ?before the conflict."Notwithstanding all the caveats and risks that remain to the peace deal and Strait of Hormuz, there is now some light at the end of the tunnel, which will bring some near-term oil price relief," said ?MST Marquee analyst Saul Kavonic.However, the two sides remain at odds on several difficult issues, with Trump saying on Sunday he had told his representatives not to rush into any deal with Iran."We've been at ?this stage before, only for talks to break down. Therefore, the market will likely be more cautious about overreacting," said Warren Patterson, head of commodities strategy at ING.Analysts expect a re-



turn to normal oil flows through the strait will take months, while damaged oil and gas facilities are repaired."The longer the ?crisis stretches, the more debatable it becomes whether ?world leaders genuinely want a quick end to disruptions," said Phillip Nova analyst Priyanka Sachdeva.U.S. energy firms responded to higher local energy prices by adding oil and natural gas rigs for the fifth week in a ?row, for the first time since February 2025.

The rig count, an early indicator of future output, rose by seven to 558 in the week to May 22, its highest since June 2025. Even so, Baker Hughes said the ?total count was still down eight rigs, or 1% below this time last year.Momentum indicators suggest markets are attempting to stabilise after last week's aggressive selloff, but conviction remains weak," Sachdeva said.

Microsoft cuts Claude Code access as AI coding costs surge



GNS News Agency, May 31 New Delhi: US-based technology firm Microsoft has begun scaling back access to Anthropic's Claude Code among its employees and is redirecting engineers towards GitHub Copilot CLI as surging AI usage drives up enterprise computing costs, according to multiple reports.Reports said the technology company had earlier expanded access to Claude Code across thousands of employees, including developers, project managers and designers, to encourage experimentation with AI-assisted coding tools.

However, the rapid adoption of the platform is now said to have significantly increased operational expenses. Despite the rollback, Microsoft's broader partnership with Anthropic remains intact.The company continues to maintain its multibillion-dollar Foundry agreement, which includes cloud infrastructure support and access to Claude models through Azure services.The development comes as several technology companies grapple with the rising costs associated with large-scale deployment of generative AI tools.In addition, Uber Chief Technology Officer Praveen Neppalli Naga had reportedly said that the company exhausted its entire 2026 budget for AI coding tools within the first four months of the year due to heavy employee usage.The growing cost burden stems from the token-based

pricing structure used by large language models, where companies are charged based on the volume of text processed and generated by AI systems.Goldman Sachs has estimated that agentic AI systems could drive a massive increase in token usage by 2030 as businesses deploy AI agents at scale across operations.Research firm Gartner projected that while the cost of running advanced AI models may decline significantly over time, enterprise spending on AI could still rise because newer agentic systems require substantially higher token consumption per task.Earlier this month, several leading technology firms — including Meta Platforms, Oracle and Cloudflare — announced job cuts and restructuring measures as part of efforts to accelerate their shift towards artificial intelligence.

Burning of leftover paddy stalks creates havoc in Karimnagar

Karimnagar: Never before in recent years, such a number of fire accidents have taken place as they did in the last few days in the composite Karimangar district. Though it is a common thing for fire accidents to take place during the summer season, the intensity is high this time around.Burning of leftover paddy stalks is the main reason for fire accidents which caused huge damage to mango orchards, date palm tree orchards, haystacks and others.Despite agricultural and fire service department officials warning against the burning of leftover paddy straws, farmers are continuing the practice.Though the farmers are setting fire to leftover stalks, fire is spreading to nearby areas due to strong winds and heat wave conditions in the state during the last few days.

Three months in, is Trump losing the Iran war?



WASHINGTON, GNS News Agency, May 31 U.S. President Donald Trump may have won just about every battle against Iran, but three months after attacking the Islamic Republic he now faces a bigger question: Is he losing the war?With Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, its resistance to nuclear concessions and its theocratic government largely intact, doubts are growing that Trump can translate the U.S. military's tactical successes into an outcome he can frame convincingly as a geopolitical ?win.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.His repeated claims of complete victory ring hollow, some analysts say, as the two sides teeter between uncertain diplomacy and his on-again-off-again threats to resume strikes, which would be sure to draw Iranian retaliation across the region.Trump is now at risk of seeing the U.S. ?and its Gulf Arab allies emerge from the conflict worse off while Iran, though battered militarily and economically, could end up with greater leverage, having shown it can throttle one-fifth of the world's oil and gas supplies.

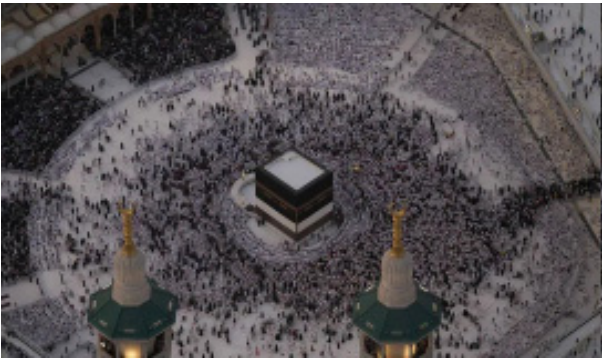
The crisis is not yet over, and some experts leave open the possibility Trump might still find a face-saving way out if negotiations break in his favor.But others predict a grim post-war outlook for Trump."We're three months in, and it's looking like a war that was designed to be a short-term romp for Trump is turning into a long-term strategic failure," said Aaron David Miller, a former Middle East negotiator for Republican and Democratic administrations.For Trump, that matters, especially given his famous sensitivity to being perceived as a loser, an insult he ?has often lobbed at opponents. In the Iran crisis, he finds himself commander-in-chief of the world's mightiest military pitted against a second-tier power seemingly convinced it has the upper hand.And this predicament could make Trump, who has yet to define a clear endgame, more likely to resist any compromise ?that looks like a retreat from his maximalist positions or a repetition of the 2015 Obama-era nuclear deal with Iran that he scrapped in his first term, analysts say.White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales said the U.S. has "met or surpassed all ?of our military objectives in 'Operation Epic Fury'.""President Trump holds all the cards and wisely keeps all options on the table," she added.PRESSURE AND FRUSTRATIONTrump campaigned for a second term promising no unnecessary military interventions but has brought the U.S. into an entanglement that could do lasting damage to his foreign policy record and credibility ?abroad.The continuing standoff comes as he faces domestic pressure over high U.S. gasoline prices and low approval ratings after he embarked on the unpopular war ahead of November's midterm elections. His Republican Party is struggling to maintain control of Congress.As a result, more than six weeks into a ceasefire, some analysts believe Trump faces a ?stark choice: to accept a potentially flawed deal as an off-ramp or escalate militarily and risk an even longer crisis. Among his options if diplomacy collapses, they say, would be to launch a round of sharp but limited strikes, frame it as a final victory and move on.Another possibility, analysts say, is that Trump could attempt to shift focus to Cuba, as he has suggested, in hopes of changing the subject and trying to score a potentially easier win.If so, he might end up misjudging the challenges posed by Havana, much as some Trump aides privately acknowledge that he mistakenly thought the Iran operation would resemble the January 3 raid that captured

Venezuela's president and led to his replacement.Even so, Trump is not without his defenders.

Alexander ?Gray, a former senior adviser in Trump's first term and now chief executive officer of the American Global Strategies consultancy, rejected the notion that the president's Iran campaign was on the ropes.He said that the heavy blow to Iranian military capabilities was in itself a "strategic success," that the war had drawn Gulf states closer ?to the U.S. and away from China, and that the fate of Iran's nuclear program was still to be determined. There are signs, however, of Trump's frustration with his inability to control the narrative. He has torn into his critics and accused the news media of "treason."The conflict has lasted twice the maximum six-week timeframe that Trump laid out when he joined with Israel in ?starting the war on February 28. Since then, though his MAGA political base has stood by him on the war, cracks have appeared in his once almost unanimous backing from Republican lawmakers.At the outset, waves of airstrikes quickly degraded Iran's ballistic missile stockpile, sank much of its navy and killed many top leaders.But Tehran responded by blocking the strait, which sent energy prices soaring, and attacking Israel and Gulf neighbors. Trump then ordered a blockade of Iran's ports but that has also failed to bend Tehran to his will.Iran's leaders have matched Trump's triumphalist claims with their own propaganda depicting his campaign as a "crushing defeat," though it is clear that Iranian officials have overstated their own military prowess.SHIFTING GOALS STILL UNACHIEVED

Trump had said his objectives in going to war were to close off Iran's path to a nuclear weapon, end its ability to threaten the region and U.S. interests and make it easier for Iranians to overthrow their rulers.There is no sign that his often-shifting goals have been achieved, and many analysts say it is unlikely that they will be.Jonathan Panikoff, a ?former deputy national intelligence officer for the Middle East, said that ?while Iran has taken devastating hits, its rulers consider it a success simply to have survived the U.S. assault and learned how much control they can exert over Gulf shipping."What they discovered is they can exercise that leverage and with few consequences for them," said Panikoff, now at the Atlantic Council think tank, adding that Iran appeared confident it could tolerate more economic pain than Trump and outlast him.Trump's main stated war aim — Iran's denuclearization — also remains unfulfilled, and Tehran has shown little ?willingness to significantly rein in its program.A stockpile of highly enriched uranium is believed to remain buried following U.S. and Israeli airstrikes last June and could be recovered and further processed to bomb grade. Iran says it wants ?the U.S. to recognize its right to enrich ?uranium for what it says are peaceful purposes.Further complicating matters, Iran's supreme leader has issued a directive that the country's near-weapons-grade uranium cannot be sent abroad, two senior Iranian officials told Reuters.Some analysts have suggested that the war could make Iran more, not less, likely to ramp up efforts to develop a nuclear weapon to shield itself like nuclear-armed North Korea.Another of Trump's declared goals — forcing Iran to halt support for armed proxy groups - also remains unmet.Adding to Trump's challenges, he is now dealing with new Iranian leaders considered even more hardline than their slain predecessors. Post-war, they are widely expected still to have enough remaining missiles and drones to pose a continued danger to their neighbors.He is ?also facing fallout with ?further erosion of relations with traditional European allies, which have mostly refused his calls for assistance in a war they were not consulted about.China and Russia, meanwhile, have drawn lessons about the U.S. military's shortcomings against asymmetric Iranian tactics and how some of its weapons supplies have become depleted, analysts said.Robert Kagan, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution think tank, has argued that the outcome will be even more of a decisive setback to U.S. standing than its humiliating withdrawals from much longer, bloodier conflicts in Vietnam and Afghanistan because those countries "were far from the main theaters of ?global competition.""There will be no return to the status quo ante, no ultimate American triumph that will undo or overcome the harm done," he wrote in a recent commentary entitled "Checkmate in Iran" on the Atlantic magazine's website.

Muslims begin annual Hajj in sweltering heat against backdrop of war concerns



Hajj 2026 began in Mecca with over 1.5 million pilgrims arriving despite regional tensions and a fragile Iran ceasefire. Pilgrims braved intense heat, circling the Kaaba, camping in Mina, and preparing for Arafat prayers amid global energy concerns

Mecca: The annual Hajj pilgrimage, one of the Five Pillars of Islam, officially began Monday. More than 1.5 million pilgrims have arrived in Saudi Arabia from outside the country, Saleh bin Saad Al-Murabba, commander of the Hajj passport forces, said Friday.The faithful have been pouring into the country for the Hajj against the backdrop of a tenuous ceasefire in the Iran war and related regional tensions and uncertainty.

Egyptian pilgrim Samya Abdul Moneim said she was grateful to God that she made it to the Hajj, which is required once in a lifetime of every Muslim who can afford it and is physically able to make it."I am in a state of blessing and happiness," she said in Mecca on Sunday. "It's an indescribable feeling, truly. I mean, thank God, I am in a blessing."Typically on the first day, many pilgrims in Mecca converge on a vast tent camp in the nearby desert. Ahead of that, pilgrims have been circling the cube-shaped Kaaba in the Grand Mosque in sweltering temperatures.For pilgrims, Hajj can be a deeply moving spiritual experience and a chance to seek God's forgiveness and the erasure of past sins. Pilgrims perform the Hajj rituals over several days.

Some spend many years hoping and praying to one

day perform the Hajj or saving up money and waiting for a permit to embark on the trip.As they brave the intense heat to perform religious rituals, many pilgrims have been using umbrellas for shade and carrying handheld fans. Volunteers hand out water bottles to help them stay hydrated and large fans spray fine mists of water.On Saturday, US President Donald Trump said a deal with Iran on the war, including opening the Strait of Hormuz, has been "largely negotiated" after calls with Israel and other allies in the region.He described it as a "Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to PEACE" that still must be finalized by the United States, Iran and the other countries that participated in the calls. That capped a week in which the US weighed a new round of attacks on Iran.Ahead of the trip for Hajj, some have said they were leaning on their faith as they embark on the journey amid the tensions and that they were feeling immense gratitude for the opportunity to go.Hajj brings together large numbers of Muslims of diverse races, ethnicities, languages and economic classes, creating a sense of unity for many.Regional tensions and Hajj travel plansWith uncertainty and global concerns high, authorities in Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, have in the run-up to the Hajj season emphasized contingency planning for the pilgrimage and issued instructions to ensure that additional travel costs not be passed on to Indonesian pilgrims.In India, home to a large Muslim minority, pilgrimage planning has proceeded largely as normal, but high fuel prices have pushed up travel costs for pilgrims. A reopening of the strait would begin to ease a worldwide energy crisis sparked by the US and Israeli attacks on Iran on February 28, which led Tehran to effectively close the waterway. Prices have spiked for oil, gas and several related products, jolting the world economy.The US has blockaded Iranian ports for over a month, and Trump on Sunday said the blockade "will remain in full force and effect until an agreement is reached, certified, and signed." In response to the US-Israeli attacks, Iran has launched retaliatory strikes and the conflict widened; a fragile ceasefire was then reached in April.In Saudi Arabia, pilgrims have been doing the ritual circuit around the Kaaba since arriving in Mecca over recent days. Pilgrims who make their way to Mina will camp in the vast tent city and pray and worship.On Tuesday, in what is considered the pinnacle of the pilgrimage, the pilgrims will stand on the plain of Arafat, where they praise God, plead for forgiveness and make supplications. Many carry prayer requests from loved ones and raise their hands in worship with tears streaming down their faces.

BCCI president Mithun Manhas: ‘I don’t see India-Pakistan players shaking hands, as of now ... our tradition is namaste’



This has been an extremely demanding and packed year. The women’s World Cup, followed by the Women’s Premier League, then the men’s T20 World Cup and finally the IPL. While I’m relatively new to this role, I have been fortunate to receive excellent support from my colleagues at the BCCI. I also benefited from the guidance of Mr Jay Shah, the ICC president who was the BCCI chief back then. His insight and support have been very valuable. Not just BCCI, even when I joined the Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) in 2021 and even now, he has guided me.

Sriram Veera: You got into cricket administration in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The year you became BCCI president, J&K made history by winning the Ranji Trophy. The victory can be a turning point for cricket in J&K and Ladakh. We were always rich in talent but it was just about channeling the potential in the right direction. When I joined, my idea was: we play to win, and even if we lose while doing that, it doesn’t matter.

In the 67 years of J&K cricket history, we have never done anything particularly special. But we have always shown glimpses of talent. This time, eight of our teams qualified for the knockout stage in various domestic competitions. Our effort was to be very transparent and honest in our approach. You will be surprised to know that the JKCA in Jammu still holds matches at a college ground. They don’t have a stadium, even after 67 years. In Kashmir, they have a stadium, but it’s in poor condition. Jay Shah bhai was the first from the BCCI to visit our region in our 67-year history. After that, there was no looking back. Now, we don’t need to go outside our state to play cricket. We have the best red soil and black soil wickets. The SG Test and Kookaburra balls that are used in national tournaments are used for training at our camps as well. We start early, and before the season begins, the age-group teams and the senior teams each play about 40 to 50 games. Ajay Sharma has been around since I started my cricket. I believe in him and have worked very closely with him. I understand how he operates. He’s a demanding coach who knows the fine nuances of batting. We have been struggling with our batting — bowling has always been our strength. He’s also very disciplined and firm. I’m very happy for him. He’s got his due. ON WHY AHMEDABAD GETS BIG GAMES | ‘It is the rotation policy... also about generating revenue. Ahmedabad is our biggest stadium and BCCI benefits from that. If we generate a lot of revenue from one stadium and can accommodate more fans, why not?’

Nihal Koshie: Ajay Sharma is a Delhi cricketer and comes from a different culture. Did he take time to adjust?

Everything takes time. If you want to do something good, it takes time — kharab karne ke liye do minute hi lagte hain. (to spoil something it takes two minutes)?It is all about understanding their point of view and where they were coming from. Coach and players need to gel. If they don’t trust each other, players wouldn’t talk about their faults. It’s like going to a doctor. Unless you tell him what the problem is, he can’t help. Or he will continue doing the tests and nothing will happen. It takes time. It was not about me or Ajay bhai or anyone — it was all about maximising their potential.

Sandeep Dwivedi: What has been the impact of the Ranji Trophy win beyond the sporting field in J&K? What does this win mean to the people of the region?

When we were playing the final, bazaars were empty as everyone was glued to their television sets. There was not a home where the final was not being watched. This win will help us not just in cricket but will be very beneficial for the youth as well. There is a lot of struggle here. Every boy and girl has a story. I think this win means something very special to us. Now they’ve started believing that boys and girls from JK can move ahead in life because of cricket. Parents from remote areas are sending their children to cricket centres. Imagine, today we have a girl from Gurez who wants to be a trainer. Players from Ladakh, Kargil, Gurez, Chenab Valley, Poonch, Rajouri and border areas want to play cricket. It is a wave that has swept the whole of JK. Special credit goes to Jay bhai because he was the one man who believed that we could do it. Whatever we asked of him, he provided. And here we are, Ranji Trophy champions in 2026, only the 11th association to do so.

Sandeep Dwivedi: Has cricket been able to drop the hyphen that connected Jammu and Kashmir?

Back in the day, there used to be an 8-8 quota for Jammu cricketers and those from the Kashmir valley. I never believed in it. For me, it doesn’t matter which religion you follow. My religion is cricket and that should come to the fore. Whenever I speak, I call it JK, never J&K. On the change in J&K team | ‘Back in the day, there used to be an 8-8 quota for Jammu cricketers and those from the Kashmir valley. I never believed in it. For me, it doesn’t matter which religion you follow. My religion is cricket.’Sandeep Dwivedi: India’s presence in world cricket keeps spreading. Indian or Indian-origin cricket entrepreneurs own teams in most leagues around the world. Do you think Indian players also need to be allowed to play in these leagues?

It is a very pertinent question but there are a lot of factors. The international cricketing calendar is extremely demanding, followed by a long domestic season and the high-intensity IPL. In addition, many states have their own T20 leagues, which means players are engaged in cricket almost throughout the year. Our focus is that the domestic system remains strong. This can be achieved only if our established players are playing with young talent in domestic leagues — they transfer their experience and that’s how the system grows. So at this time it will be challenging to permit our players to participate in overseas T20 leagues. It is also about their mental and physical health and keeping them fresh whenever they play for India. Mihir Vasavda: How can the BCCI improve the fan experience? There are complaints about ticket availability, poor stadium conditions, unhygienic toilets and overpriced water at nearly every venue. Enhancing the fan experience is a key priority. It is extremely important and we are actively working on it. Whenever incidents are reported, we look into them seriously and make amends. We are in constant dialogue with our member associations to identify gaps and implement improvements across stadiums. We are also in the process of ap-

pointing a professional agency to assess some of our major venues and provide detailed recommendations on areas that require attention.

Mihir Vasavda: Given what is happening with FIFA World Cup media rights, do you fear IPL rights could stagnate or even decline in value?

No, not really. I don’t agree with that assessment, although it is something we need to remain mindful of. The IPL and Indian cricket continue to be extremely strong properties with a robust fan base in India and across the world. The growth over the past decade has been phenomenal. The IPL continues to offer unmatched reach and consistently high-quality cricket. Engagement across platforms remains strong and we are also seeing evolving consumption patterns, especially on digital, which are opening up new avenues for value creation. Our focus remains on maintaining the quality and competitiveness of the tournament because that is what ultimately drives value. Given those factors, we are confident the value of the rights will continue to grow.

Shankar Narayan: Almost every year, Test matches in north India are scheduled in October or November despite an obvious pollution issue. Have any measures been taken to ensure avoiding this in the future?

There are a lot of factors that go into allocating matches. The BCCI broadly follows a rotation policy to ensure fair distribution across venues. We are also very careful about external factors — weather conditions, logistical requirements and pollution in northern regions during certain times of the year. We take these very seriously. We try to plan the schedule in a way that avoids hosting matches in such conditions, and we have done that in the past. If you look at the Ranji Trophy season, breaks have been deliberately created so that we play fewer matches in the north when conditions are bad — fog, smog, pollution — which would cause health issues. Shankar Narayan: Grounds like Ahmedabad and Guwahati are getting Border-Gavaskar Trophy games but traditional venues like Wankhede and Eden Gardens haven’t hosted Australia for a very long time...It is the rotation policy. It is also about generating revenue. If you look at Ahmedabad, that’s our biggest stadium and the BCCI benefits from that. If we generate a lot of revenue from one stadium and can accommodate more fans, why not? That has been done in consultation with our respective state associations.

Nihal Koshie: What is the BCCI’s policy on India playing Pakistan? And if India plays Pakistan, will we see players shake hands?

The BCCI has always consistently maintained that any decision regarding bilateral series with Pakistan is subject to Government of India’s policy. We fully respect and abide by that position. Any future engagements will entirely depend on the prevailing situation.

Nihal Koshie: What about handshakes?

I don’t see it happening as of now. Though it’s the prerogative of players — if they don’t feel like doing it, they won’t. As Indians, our tradition is to do namaste. We were never a hand-shaking nation.

Venkata Krishna B: How important is it to send a strong team to the 2028 Olympics?

I can talk about it from an organisational standpoint, because I don’t get into selections as such. But I can assure you that we will leave no stone unturned in ensuring that India sends its strongest possible team to the 2028 Olympics. Proper planning and preparation will be put in place well in advance. It’s about winning gold, not just participation. So we assure you that we aim to have the best team representing the country at that stage. And it’s very important for us.

Venkata Krishna B: With the international calendar packed, is player fatigue becoming a concern?

Not really. Test cricket is something we are very mindful of. Though it is the selectors’ job, we keep a watch on the load. There is a lot of cricket happening and that’s why we don’t allow our players to play foreign leagues. We also follow a rotation policy. So the team management is constantly in touch with the selection committee and that’s how they operate. Players’ fitness and mental health is of paramount importance to us.

Venkata Krishna B: Given recent Test setbacks against New Zealand and South Africa at home, what is being done to improve performance?

We always get back to the drawing board. We want more senior players to play domestic cricket — not just the one-day format but the days format too. We need preparatory camps before Test series like we used to have in the past — a 10-15 day camp before a series. Before the next series, you will get to see that.

Nitin Sharma: You played with Virat Kohli and Gautam Gambhir in Delhi. Any memories?

Well, I not just played with Virat, but with Gautam too — the Indian team coach. I had also coached them (laughs). So to comment on just them and not others won’t make any sense. They are all equal to me.

How lighting choices at home influence mood, focus and daily lifestyle

Hyderabad: Lighting has become more than just a practical element in homes. From warm bedside lamps to bright white LEDs, the kind of lighting people prefer often reflects their emotional state, daily habits and even energy levels. Soft yellow-toned lighting is often linked with feelings of ease and relaxation. Many people prefer warm lights in bedrooms or living spaces because they create a calming atmosphere after long hours of work or screen time. This kind of lighting can make spaces feel more personal, peaceful and emotionally comforting, which is why it is commonly used during moments of rest or social gatherings. Cool-toned white lighting is usually associated with alertness and concentration. It is commonly preferred in study areas, offices and workspaces because it helps people stay active and mentally engaged. While brighter lighting can improve productivity and energy during the day, constantly being exposed to harsh lighting may also feel overwhelming or mentally draining for some people. Fairy lights, LED strips and aesthetic lamps have become increasingly popular among young adults. Beyond their visual appeal, these lighting choices often help create a sense of comfort and emotional escape. Many people use softer decorative lighting while relaxing, journaling, listening to music or winding down at night.

Why road dust is emerging as Delhi’s biggest pollution threat



It is persistent, it lingers in the air. It is inhaled deep into the lungs, it even enters the bloodstream. And it carries toxic metals that can trigger disease, damage lungs, and raise cancer risk, especially among children. A January 2026 report by a panel of top experts constituted by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) identified road dust as a major pollution source in Delhi because it acts as “both a primary emission and a persistent source”. The panel defined road dust broadly to include airborne dust from roads and shoulders, vehicle movement, dry soil, and road wear. It said poor road surfaces, potholes, broken edges, unpaved stretches, road-tyre-brake wear, and debris falling from the transport of construction and demolition (C&D) material all contribute to the dust load. The report also underlined the mechanism that makes road dust difficult to control: dust deposited on road surfaces is resuspended by vehicular movement, particularly during dry conditions. This keeps pollution levels elevated even in the absence of active dust-generating activities.

Mohammed Rafiuddin, Programme Lead for Clean Air at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), said, “Scientifically, road dust is a very different kind of source compared to C&D dust. It is a line source (spread along a corridor), but at a construction site, the dust generated is from a point source.” In other words, road dust requires corridor-wide, routine removal and surface management, while construction dust depends on site-level containment and enforcement. Why it persists A road-dust committee set up by the CAQM last year said resuspension is driven by continuous dust deposits along road edges and medians, unsuitable road infrastructure design, poor maintenance, and inadequate dust-management practices. The committee noted that dust from unpaved medians frequently blows onto carriageways. Irrigation practices can further worsen the problem, as thick hose pipes used for watering median and footpath plantations often spill soil onto roads, which later dries and adds to dust levels. Encroachments and unauthorised parking were also flagged as operational barriers that obstruct cleaning and allow dust to accumulate.

Local roads and secondary streets, the report said, are often excluded from regular maintenance schedules. “Maintenance is often carried out after significant road damage, leading to prolonged dust emissions,” it noted. A separate joint study by CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) and CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CRRI), submitted to the CAQM on February 7, 2025, noted: “The re-suspension of road dust is influenced by continuous dust deposition at the edges of road medians, poor road design or condition and its maintenance, limited dust management practices.” The study also noted how few road stretches in the capital reported “alarmingly high levels” with PM10 emissions as high as 1700 µg/m3 up to 10 m distance from the road — the permissible limit is 100 µg/m3 (24 hours) and 60 µg/m3 (annual). Arpan Patra, Programme Associate at CEEW, said three elements need to be distinguished when assessing road dust: the sources of dust, the share that is wind-blown versus anthropogenic (including construction-related), and the amount of loose material available on road surfaces for resuspension. Evidence suggests that road dust is becoming relatively more important as exhaust emissions decline. A multi-city 2023 study led by researchers from IIT Delhi found that even as tailpipe emissions fall with cleaner fuels,

Heated to 45°C and soaked for 3 days: Inside India’s Bullet train track slab factory in Surat



Around 56 kilometers far from Surat in Gujarat, at a 14-acres factory, over 200 workers are manufacturing a part of a track system being used for the first time in the country. Arjun Yadav, a site worker from Uttar Pradesh, slides out his digital depth caliper and fixes it to one side of a 4.5 tonnes track slab — which looks roughly like a double-edged razor blade. The machine reads 191 mm. Relieved, he marks “OK” on its surface. This is the 36,112th number of the track slab manufactured at the Kim, one of the two facilities in Gujarat for the 508-km Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail project. What Yadav measured was the thickness of the track slab, which was prepared after more than 12 hours of the rigorous work. Even a minor error could have marked it redundant.

The country’s high-speed dreams are now being expedited with faster laying of track slabs, which is among the last works before bullet trains will run, as the 48-km Surat-Bilimora stretch of the 508-km project is scheduled to be completed by August 2027. The entire corridor from Ahmedabad to Mumbai is targeted to be made operational by 2029. According to the National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd, the government agency behind the implementation of bullet train projects, a total of 2.05 lakh track slabs is required for the entire project. Out of this, 75,473 track slabs have been casted in two units, another one is in Anand, and 35,327 slabs have been laid over track bed on the viaduct. The track slab is one of the most unique features of the Japanese high speed system, so much so that even the word Shinkansen is derived from it. This is different from the ballasted track system that the Indian Railways uses for its projects. “In Japanese, Shin means new, Kansen means track. It is, quite literally, a new track,” said an official of NHSRCL.

The Kim facility is the largest one, which will provide track slabs for Vapi to Vadodara section of the project. It

non-exhaust sources such as “resuspendable road dust, tyre wear and brake wear” are gaining significance.

The study showed that Delhi’s higher silt load is driven by construction activity, heavy traffic, and dust storms during April and May. Across 32 cities, silt loads ranged from 0.2 g/m² to 111.2 g/m², with Delhi averaging 14.47 g/m². Researchers also pointed out that the degradation of the Aravalli range has weakened a natural dust barrier around Delhi, allowing more wind-blown dust to enter the city. Nationwide, the study said, exposure to road dust is linked to more than 10,207 premature deaths annually.

What Delhi is doing Along with the clearing of dust by Mechanical Road Sweeping Machines (MRSMs), the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) deploys a total of 57,000 sanitation workers, sweeping areas where the machines can’t enter. But the NEERI-CRRI report flags that mechanised sweeping needs to become more scientific, not just more frequent. “There is a need to prepare a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the operation of mechanical road sweepers on a particular type of road based on scientific study,” it said. The frequency and efficiency of application, and particle-size analysis of lifted dust during and after use, should be studied, it said. Other measures include water sprinklers, mobile anti-smog guns (ASGs), and repair of roads and potholes. The MCD, for instance, has a total of 167 water sprinklers and 63 ASGs installed at roads. There are also processing facilities for construction and demolition waste, Sanitary Landfill Facilities for residual ash and Waste-To-Energy plants to treat non-recyclable waste.

What can be fixed — what can’t Experts say Delhi’s natural environment places it at a disadvantage. Rafiuddin said that even with improved road conditions, “there is bound to be some amount of dust always”, which then needs to be actively removed and managed. This is due to the city’s natural baseline for dust from dry summers, frequent dust storms, loose alluvial soil, and relatively low rainfall. Some commonly used mitigation measures offer limited benefits. Dipankar Saha, former head of the air laboratory at the Central Pollution Control Board, who led a 2017 pilot study on the efficacy of anti-smog guns, said such measures are ineffective for dust control. “There should not be a reliance on water sprinklers or mist guns. They only transport dust from one area to another. Once the particles settle and the surface dries, the dust is re-suspended again. It also leads to humidification,” he said.

The CAQM-appointed road-dust committee said in its 2025 report that anti-smog guns “should be deployed selectively on high priority situations”, recommending their use only in emergencies and describing them as “a lower priority for dust control on roads”. Instead, the committee called for a standardised framework that combines paving, greening within the right-of-way, and improved maintenance practices, explicitly stating that solutions must go beyond sweeping alone. On greening, the report said vegetation helps by arresting airborne dust and preventing resuspension from unpaved areas. It recommended roadside planting with drought-resilient species that are better at trapping dust, such as those with wide canopies and rough or large leaf surfaces. It also suggested practical design measures, including leaving an 8-12 inch gap between soil level and the top of kerb stones to reduce soil blow-over during windy periods. This was also echoed by the 2025 CSIR-NEERI joint study, as it flagged poor maintenance and visible dust accumulation along major road stretches, particularly at edges and medians. It called for improved road design, vegetative barriers, and greening using drip-irrigation methods from wastewater alongside metro infra, and a three-tier plantation system to stabilise loose soil and act as dust filters. Road dust is a major source of PM2.5 and PM10, the fine particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream. Inhaling these particles can cause lung irritation and inflammation, and worsen pre-existing conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, often leading to persistent coughing and wheezing. Long-term exposure to PM2.5 has been linked to premature death, particularly among people with chronic heart or lung disease, and to reduced lung function growth in children.

was started in September 2023. Out of the 96,000 slabs, 36,000 have been supplied. Its peak capacity is to cast 120 slabs in a day. Inside the cavernous factory, the Italian bar cutting machine of schnell group runs at a full flow. It cuts 11 types of bars in different dimensions (shape and size) with the smallest one of 4.84 meters and the longest of 106 meters. In one minute, it cuts 30 bars, and in a day it cuts over 10,000 bars.

The steel cage for this has arrived from Japan, there cannot be even a millimeter of error. The cage is created with 11 types of bars and then it is put in the Japanese moulds. One cage weighs 300 kg. The spreader bucket moves vertically and horizontally with the concrete aggregate-cement admixture. The four vibrators are deployed in the mould for concrete compaction. The steam pipe from a boiler outside runs down the mould which heats up the concrete for 12 hours at 40-45 degree Celsius. Then it is submerged in treated water for three days for curing. A total of 4.5 tonnes of concrete is poured into one slab. After this process, there are a total of nine gauges which are used to check the properties. There are two pages of a checklist to check 16 items and over 50 points. Manu Maheshwani, lab incharge and Deputy Manager of IRCON, works at the compressor testing machine. He said the sample for each track slab is collected during the moulding. To check its strength, it should achieve a minimum 50 mpa (megapascal). It is checked two times, first after three days, second after 28 days. Along with this, a cement cube is tested for quality, aggregate test, water test of its PH and TDS. In total more than 30 tests are done to verify that a particular track slab can be used for the Bullet train. He said a particular electrical resistance test is conducted to check that the signals are not passed from the track to the slab. “A 6 volt current is passed through the rail for checking the rail fracture. The current should only pass through the rail, not the slab,” said the man. This is a unique system for high speed rail. Indian Railways does not have it, but the metro performs the same function. Railways only have it in the yard area. Sanchit Garg, overall incharge and Joint General Manager of IRCON, said 16 engineers came from Japan to give the training. “The factory area, the shed part, is 200 meters. For the lab test, the machines used are Indian made only,” he said. Ravindra Singhal, Senior Track Expert, says three types of machinery have been deployed at the site — Japanese, Italian and Indian. “In Japan, this kind of factory is for 20-30 slab casting in a day. This is a much larger factory than theirs. They have a factory every 20-30 kilometers. Around 1,000 people have been trained for it. They were taught under the 15 courses conducted with JARTS (Japan Railway Technical Service),” said

Dietitian suggests how and what to drink from morning to night



As the mercury keeps spiralling, hydration becomes a priority if you want to stay healthy and keep your energy steady without feeling wiped out. Good hydration is not just about gulping water. It's also about eating the right kind of foods and taking the right fluids regularly from morning till night. After six to eight hours of sleep, the body wakes up mildly dehydrated. Begin the day with one or two glasses of plain water before reaching out for tea or coffee. This helps restore fluid balance and gently restarts metabolism. Add cooling ingredients such as lemon, mint, cucumber slices or soaked basil seeds to morning water during peak summer. Coconut water early in the day can also help replenish potassium and natural electrolytes lost through sweat.

Breakfast itself should support hydration rather than burden digestion. Heavy oily meals increase heat production inside the body and often leave people sluggish through the afternoon. Instead, have light breakfasts built around water-rich foods such as watermelon, papaya, muskmelon and oranges. Traditional Indian summer breakfasts like poha with vegetables, idli with coconut chutney, curd rice, smoothies, oats and yoghurt-based dishes are easier to digest during intense heat. Curd is especially useful because it replenishes gut bacteria while also supplying fluid and sodium.

Why tea, coffee and packaged drinks can backfire One of the most common summer mistakes is relying heavily on tea, coffee, fizzy drinks or packaged fruit juices. While they may provide temporary relief, excess caffeine and sugar can worsen dehydration and lead to sudden fatigue later in the day. Buttermilk, lemon water, sattu, aam panna and homemade fruit-infused water help maintain electrolyte balance more effectively than sugary commercial beverages. Very cold drinks may also create only a short-lived cooling sensation without actually improving hydration meaningfully. Mid-morning is when dehydration quietly begins. Between 10 am and noon, the body begins losing water rapidly, especially for people commuting, travelling, exercising or sitting for long hours in air-conditioned offices. Experts say air-conditioning can sometimes worsen dehydration because people sweat less visibly and therefore underestimate fluid loss. That's why small sips of water every 30 to 40 minutes are usually more effective than suddenly

drinking large amounts at once. This is also a good time for coconut water, seasonal fruits or lightly salted drinks that replace potassium and sodium lost through sweat. Water-rich fruits such as cucumber, sweet lime and melon help the body retain hydration more efficiently while also supplying micronutrients.

Lunch should cool the body, not exhaust it By afternoon, the body is already expending enormous energy regulating temperature. Heavy lunches force digestion to work harder and often worsen fatigue. A summer lunch ideally needs to be lighter, water-balanced and easier on the stomach. Salads with cucumber, tomatoes and seasonal vegetables, combined with curd, dal, rice or millets, help maintain hydration while supplying steady energy. Excessively spicy, salty or deep-fried foods increase thirst, bloating and lethargy. While protein remains important, nutritionists say very heavy meat-based lunches during severe heat can leave people feeling sluggish because digestion itself generates additional body heat. Heat fatigue peaks between 2 pm and 5 pm. The most dangerous hydration window in Indian summers is often between mid-afternoon and early evening, when temperatures and fluid loss peak simultaneously. This is when many people begin developing headaches, dizziness, irritability, muscle cramps or unusual fatigue — all early warning signs of dehydration and electrolyte imbalance. People spending time outdoors during these hours require more than plain water. Home-made drinks such as lemon water with salt, chaas, coconut water, sattu and aam panna help restore sodium and potassium gradually. For office-goers, the cumulative fluid deficit starts showing up as exhaustion, headaches and poor concentration. Evenings should focus on recovery

After sunset, many people compensate for daytime exhaustion with fried snacks, repeated cups of tea or alcohol. But doctors warn that evenings are when the body requires recovery and restoration. Tea and coffee are acceptable in moderation, but excessive caffeine can increase fluid loss in already dehydrated individuals. Alcohol is particularly risky during heat waves because it dehydrates the body further while impairing temperature regulation. Lighter evening foods such as fruit bowls, sprouts, yoghurt-based snacks or vegetable sandwiches help replenish nutrients without creating digestive heaviness. People exercising after work should hydrate before, during and after physical activity instead of waiting until they feel exhausted. Dinner should remain simple and water-balanced. Heavy dinners rich in oil, spice or red meat can worsen dehydration and disturb sleep. Have khichdi, soups, lightly cooked vegetables, dal, curd-based dishes and lighter rice preparations. These are easier on the stomach while also helping the body maintain hydration overnight. Avoid excessive overhydration immediately before sleep. One of the biggest misunderstandings during Indian summers is that hydration depends only on drinking more water. In reality, the body also loses essential minerals such as sodium and potassium through sweat, particularly during extreme heat. Replacing only water while ignoring electrolytes can sometimes worsen weakness, dizziness and fatigue.

pitations or dangerous arrhythmias. Blood vessels may also constrict in an attempt to conserve fluid, leading to a rise in blood pressure. Combined with thicker blood and narrowed vessels, these changes can increase the risk of a coronary blockage during intense physical activity. Why preventive care is a must

General fitness tests mostly assess physical conditioning and lung capacity, but they are not designed to detect hidden cardiac disorders. This is why sports cardiologists increasingly emphasise dedicated cardiovascular screening for athletes and highly active individuals. There's the 12-lead ECG, which records the heart's electrical activity and helps identify abnormal rhythms, inherited electrical disorders and early warning signs of structural disease. An echocardiogram, or ultrasound scan of the heart, provides detailed images of the heart's chambers, valves and pumping function. Of course there is calcium scoring, which measures plaque deposits in arteries. Some doctors recommend a cardiac MRI, which reveals detailed three-dimensional pictures of the heart muscle and can reveal subtle abnormalities, tissue scarring or early inflammation that may not appear on ultrasound. Athletes may also undergo an exercise stress test, in which the heart's electrical activity is monitored while the individual runs on a treadmill or cycles. Some cardiologists use ambulatory ECG monitoring through Holter or event monitors, portable devices worn continuously for 24 hours or longer. These help detect intermittent rhythm disturbances that may not occur during a short hospital examination. When it comes to the heart, preventive check-ups should be priority.

Strength training and cardiovascular exercise are often treated as separate worlds. One is associated with muscle, power and appearance; the other with endurance, heart health and stamina. In reality, the human body does not function in isolated systems. Muscles cannot perform well without efficient circulation, and the cardiovascular system cannot remain strong without muscular support. True fitness emerges when both systems work together. Strength training gives the body structure. It strengthens muscles, protects joints, improves bone density, stabilises posture and supports metabolic health. But strength alone is incomplete if the body lacks the ability to efficiently transport oxygen, regulate energy and recover from effort. This is where cardiovascular training becomes essential. A healthy cardiovascular system allows the heart, lungs, blood vessels, and muscles to work together with less strain. When circulation improves, recovery improves. When oxygen delivery improves, endurance improves. When endurance improves, strength training itself becomes more sustainable and effective. Why cardio is misunderstood

The Liver Doc diagnoses India's fatty liver crisis: Fight misinformation and get tested for Hepatitis viruses



"I remember every patient I have lost and I have always put myself in their position, swapped their families with mine and visualised how they would react in similar conditions. And I have seen the good fight from ordinary patients, seen how their minds never give up till the end. Each of them has taught me more than just science — humanism," says Dr Cyriac Abby Philips, the Kerala-based hepatologist, better known online as "The Liver Doc." Few doctors in India inspire as much admiration and irritation in equal measure as him.

On social media, he has built a formidable reputation as a crusader of scientific medicine, dismantling wellness fads, calling out dubious supplements, questioning Ayurveda's unchecked claims and taking on an industry far larger than himself with the solidity of a data analyst and the aggression of a street fighter. Often considered a maverick, Dr Philips says, "On social media, you need to be loud to be heard so that real science has an audience. It's sad that what I say is what any doctor and man of science would say." But in the real world, as a student of the classical history of medicine, he goes back to the original meaning of the word 'doctor' — an instructor. And that's what he does by the patient's bedside, helping them and their families beat death, understand it, endure it and sometimes, even find dignity within it, stories of which have made up his new book, *The Liver Doctor: Stories of Love, Loss and Regeneration*. That's why, despite being trained at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences in Delhi, he chose to return to Kochi where he works at the Rajagiri Hospital so that he can save ordinary lives from what is becoming the top 10 causes of death nationwide — liver disease. Yet it is silent and very few understand it. "There is a huge challenge in medicine and healthcare today, both for doctors and patients. I call it the loss of the true heart of medicine, which is humanism. The heart of medicine is empathy, and that is what medical training is actually supposed to offer. Now medicine is mostly business. I want to teach people how to live life," he says.

What modern medicine should be With the burden of healthcare being shouldered by the private sector rather than the public sector and patients feeling like commodities, Dr Philips says he wants to reclaim that space where medicine feels the way it is supposed to feel — deeply caring, empathetic and compassionate. "There are very few diseases that doctors can truly cure. Infections are one example because we have antimicrobials. But beyond that, what can we cure completely? Most diseases we can only reverse, slow down, halt, manage, or improve life expectancy for. That is where the true practice of medicine shines. Treating a patient is not just diagnosing and prescribing medicines. It is about going on a journey with them. In my field, chronic liver disease patients stay with you for years — sometimes for life, until they die or undergo liver transplantation," he says.

The second reason for writing was personal. "The book became a way of decompressing emotionally. As a doctor, one of the hardest things is understanding limits. Patients come with expectations, but there are limits to what medicine can do. Sometimes you know the patient is not going to survive. First, you have to accept that yourself, and then you have to help the patient and family accept it too. That is how clinical medicine works for many diseases. For me, this book became a way to depersonalize all those emotions I had internalised over the years," says Dr Philips.

Why does the liver seem fickle? Its sudden deterioration something unique to the liver? Someone can seem perfectly healthy and yet collapse suddenly. "This is what we call acute liver failure — where a perfectly healthy person suddenly develops severe liver failure and may even require ventilation support. Because the liver is the most resilient organ, has huge functional reserves or backup tissue and masks early distress, a person seems healthy until vital functions — detoxification and blood clotting — collapse, triggering sudden, life-threatening complications. This is triggered by sudden, severe damage rather than long-term wear and tear as a result of drug toxicity, viral infections and autoimmune disorders," says Dr Philips. The second is acute-on-chronic liver failure, where someone already has chronic liver disease or cirrhosis (scarred liver because of hepatitis or alcohol use) and then suffers another injury or insult that pushes the liver into failure. "The first category of patients finds it harder to reconcile emotionally because they are otherwise healthy individuals who suddenly become critically ill," he adds.

Which hepatitis virus is most harmful?

Dr Philips sees a geographic pattern. "In north India, Hepatitis E is one of the commonest causes of acute liver failure followed by drug-induced liver injury. In south India, Hepatitis A is more common. Meanwhile, chronic viral hepatitis patterns differ geographically. Chronic Hepatitis B is very common in north India, whereas in Kerala, where I

work, chronic Hepatitis B and C are less common," he says.

Misinformation is bigger than the disease

Many liver diseases are actually preventable which, Dr Philips believes, become serious because of misinformation and lack of awareness. That's because the liver is the only organ capable of regenerating itself and even a slight lifestyle modification in the early stages of damage — such as mild fatty liver or early-stage hepatitis — is enough. "People think only alcoholics develop liver disease, but that is not true. I have seen patients who drank only socially or two to three times a week developing cirrhosis. That's because even a safe amount of alcohol can be an accelerator if liver disease runs in the family. And Indians are predisposed genetically," says Dr Philips. That's the reason why food and lifestyle matter too, topped with exercise. Dr Philips says that exercise doesn't mean signing up at a gym but 150 minutes of simple brisk walking, jogging, cycling or swimming a week. Obesity, diabetes, hypertension, hypothyroidism, and metabolic disorders increase liver risk too. "Some factors are modifiable — sleep, exercise, diet, weight management. Genetics is not. If you control the modifiable factors, you reduce your risk significantly," says Dr Philips.

Why LFT is more misleading than accurate He also warns against being content with just a Liver Function Test (LFT). "It is actually a misleading term. The liver has more than 500 functions and a LFT only provides limited information about inflammation or severe dysfunction. It does not measure liver performance. People need to pay attention to silent metabolic risk factors. Family history is extremely important because liver disease can skip generations. We have identified multiple families where cirrhosis appeared across generations due to genetic mutations combined with metabolic disorders. So, watch out for diabetes, obesity, hypertension, high cholesterol, high uric acid and thyroid disorders. If these are present, the minimum screening should include blood count, LFT and ultrasound. If platelets are low, LFT is abnormal, or ultrasound shows fatty liver, further evaluation is needed, including Fibroscan." "Everyone should test for Hepatitis B and C at least once in their lifetime. North India has a high burden of chronic Hepatitis B. While Hepatitis B is preventable through vaccination, Hepatitis C is treatable with proper medications. When it comes to drug-induced liver injury, Dr Philips cites several instances of paracetamol abuse. "It is actually one of the safest medicines available for pain and fever when used properly. Problems arise only when people take extremely large doses at one time — usually 8 to 10 grams or more — often in cases of poisoning or suicide attempts. That is how it damages the liver. In the UK, paracetamol overdose is one of the commonest reasons for liver transplantation. Sometimes parents accidentally overdose children because they panic when a fever doesn't come down," says Dr Philips.

For a healthy adult, a dose of about 4–6 grams per day for 3–4 days is generally safe. For someone with chronic liver disease, the intake should be around 2–3 grams per day for 3–4 days. "Most people never come close to dangerous levels. A standard tablet is 500 mg. Even during a fever, most people only take four or five tablets a day, which is usually safe. The danger comes from consuming very large doses," he explains.

Supplements and wellness culture Dr Philips admits to being at the receiving end of bullying, harassment, trolling and enormous pressure for upholding science and taking on unproven efficacies of herbal supplements and unregulated concoctions. "I begin the book with the case of a woman who died after having unregulated protein powder supplements thinking they would supplement her diet. She was just caught unawares. Ever since blind faith in herbalists has been waning over the past five or six years because we now have data to prove everything. Data is the only way to fight belief systems. The challenge is that alternative medicine is tied to culture, religion, politics, and tradition. So, when you criticise it, people think you are attacking identity itself," says Dr Philips. He has often been asked that if modern drugs originate from plants and natural compounds, why criticise ayurveda? However, drug makers use scientific methods to isolate beneficial compounds, determine safe doses, study side effects and test efficacy rigorously. "People lack critical thinking and some doctors do too. Critical thinking should be taught in schools and also be part of MBBS education. My biggest hurdle was not just fighting alternative medicine promoters, but dealing with members of my own profession who endorse it. Integrative medicine is just business, not patient care and functional medicine is nothing but sophisticated packaging of fringe medicine," he says. Dr Philips rates alcohol and alternative medicine as equal risks for liver health, the only difference being people know that alcohol is a known poison and carcinogen while supplements are marketed as beneficial, healthy, and natural — often without evidence. "Nowadays makers even quote very small studies which aren't even peer-reviewed. This false sense of safety is dangerous." From a liver toxicity perspective, he has seen abuse of ashwagandha, giloy and turmeric supplements. "Turmeric in food is fine because absorption is naturally low. But the supplement industry modifies formulations using pepper extracts or nano-formulations to increase absorption dramatically — and that can become hepatotoxic. Italy has actually banned turmeric supplements because of liver injury cases," says Dr Philips. India's liver crisis is not merely about alcohol, Hepatitis or obesity but about a society increasingly vulnerable to misinformation, commercialised wellness and delayed diagnosis.

How to combine cardio and strength training: Here is a 7-day plan

Many people misunderstand cardio because they associate it only with exhausting workouts that leave them breathless and depleted. However, the most beneficial form of cardiovascular training for long-term health is often moderate, rhythmic and sustainable. Walking briskly, cycling at a conversational pace, swimming, rowing, light jogging or dancing can strengthen the cardiovascular system without overwhelming the nervous system. This type of cardio has profound effects on the body. It improves mitochondrial efficiency (how cells convert oxygen and nutrients into usable energy for the body) supports heart rate, enhances oxygen utilisation and reduces systemic inflammation. It also influences emotional health. Rhythmic movement has a calming effect on the nervous system, often reducing anxiety, improving mood and increasing mental clarity. Unlike overstimulating forms of exercise that leave the body fatigued for hours, properly dosed cardio creates energy rather than draining it. The key is understanding how to combine the two intelligently. Cardio should support strength training, not compete with it. The mistake many people make is

treating every workout as a test of exhaustion. Use cardio strategically. A short duration of low-to-moderate intensity cardio before strength training can serve as an excellent preparation tool. Gentle cycling, brisk walking, rowing, or light jogging increases body temperature, improves blood flow, lubricates joints, and activates the nervous system without exhausting the body. In this role, cardio becomes preparation rather than punishment. Strength training can then follow with better mobility, improved coordination and greater readiness. Moderate cardio can also be performed separately on non-lifting days to improve endurance and recovery without interfering with muscular adaptation. In fact, low-intensity cardio on recovery days often helps reduce stiffness and improve circulation better than complete inactivity. On Day 1, begin with 10–15 minutes of brisk walking or cycling followed by upper body strength training. Focus on controlled pushing and pulling movements such as presses, rows, shoulder exercises, and core stability work. Day 2 can emphasise active recovery through walking, yoga, stretching, mobility exercises and breathing practices.

Tracing the history of Sarai Kale Khan: Gujar stronghold to Bhagwan Birsa Munda Chowk



A bastion of Gujar-dominated villages boasting fierce warriors, with land spread out from Purana Qila in the North-west to Taimoor Nagar in the South of what is now Delhi. Or a place of rest and recuperation for weary travellers? — Sarai Kale Khan is famous for many things but finding a mention of it in official government records is a tough task.On Friday, the Sarai Kale Khan Chowk was renamed ‘Bhagwan Birsa Munda Chowk’, with Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurating the tribal cultural icon’s statue on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary year.

Zafar Hasan, in his exhaustive work, List of Muham-madan and Hindu Monuments, Volume IV, mentions Sarai Kale Khan being situated in a village named Bahlolpur Bangar. He wrote, “The sarai of Kale Khan which is constructed of rubble masonry was originally surrounded by arched cells, with their outer walls crowned by battlements. Most of these cells have now fallen down, and the rest which stand are used by villagers as residential houses. It is said to have contained a gateway on the north and west, but both of them have disappeared.”sarai kale khan In the present day, the urban village of Sarai Kale Khan is still dominated by Gujjars. (Express Photo by Praveen Khanna)Maulvi Hasan also mentioned a tomb 150 yards from the sarai, constructed of plaster and rubble, which was in a dilapidated condition and contained no grave.Who is the mysterious Kale Khan though? To unravel this, one must first understand where the sarai system came from.In the chapter, Caravanserais Along the Grand Trunk Road in Pakistan, Saifur Rahman Dar points out in the book, The Silk Roads: Highways of Culture and Commerce, that no one knows when exactly the Grand Trunk Road was built. Precursor forms of the road existed during the time of Panini and Chandragupta Maurya, and repairs were undertaken under Sher Shah Suri’s rule.During the arterial road’s re-construction, Sher Shah Suri would emphasise the need to build rest stops for travellers. In his article, Sarais in Mughal

India, history professor Nazer Aziz Anjum writes, “(Sher Shah Suri) initiated building of sarais on a large scale on routes basically for the need of state and partially for the need of wayfarers... it was during the Mughal period that work of building sarais was carried out on an extensive scale.”Meanwhile, history presents three possibilities for the person behind the name — Mubarak Khan Lohani, whose eternal resting place in South Extension is named Kale Khan Gumbad; Kale Khan, a Sufi saint from the reign of Sher Shah Suri, whose tomb now rests near Delhi Airport’s Terminal 2; and Kale Khan, the spiritual advisor and friend of Mirza Ghalib, whose house Ahata Kale Khan still stands in Ballimaran’s Gali Qasim Jan.

Delhi chronicler and journalist R V Smith seemed to be equally baffled by the three men who shared the same name. However, he agreed that Sarai Kale Khan was likely named after Ghalib’s friend. “Kale Khan who built a sarai in Southeast Delhi was probably born in the early nineteenth century and lived on to see the Mutiny of 1857 and its aftermath,” writes Smith in his book, Delhi: Unknown Tales of a City.Sarai kale khan According to local Vicky Choudhary, Kale Khan was a peer and a sant, a devout Gaud Brahmin forced to convert to Islam to save his life. He explains further that Khan was probably born with another name, but received the nickname ‘Kale Khan’ because of his dark complexion.

Smith also mentions that Kale Khan would have probably witnessed the 1857 Mutiny since a snippet of history does emerge from the area just after the violence had died down. Gujjars pastoralists and farmers have long been settled in the area since the land near the Yamuna provided rolling grasslands for their cattle to graze on. However, in the short duration of lawlessness after the Mutiny, many local Gujjars from Sarai Kale Khan formed raiding parties and wreaked havoc on neighbouring villages.In the present day, the urban village of Sarai Kale Khan is still dominated by Gujjars. But their version of the area’s history differs. According to local Vicky Choudhary, Kale Khan was a peer and a sant, a devout Gaud Brahmin forced to convert to Islam to save his life. “He was the one who made the sarai for travellers... in 1650, the Gujar community from Khanpur shifted near the sarai... land was good and there were vast fields for the cattle to graze in,” he said.Another popular folktale from the area goes that the Gujjars of Khanpur saved a royal retinue from being attacked by highwaymen on the way to Nizamuddin dargah from Mehrauli. Impressed by their act of bravery, the king awarded them land near the dargah to protect all those who travelled on the route and ensure the safety of those who spent the night in the sarai.

How gangs and gangsters are inching closer to the heart of Delhi



Shootouts and extortion bids are no longer limited to the zones outside the heavily policed areas of Delhi. Gangs are increasingly trying to breach the red line to strike fear in the heart of the Capital.

— September 13: Greater Kailash, 10.30 pm: Show-ered with bullets, gym owner, businessman and police in-formant Nadir Shah is killed, allegedly by jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi’s associates.— September 20: Greater Kailash: Music composer Aman Batra receives an extortion call from gangster Rohit Godara, an associate of Lawrence Bishnoi, demanding Rs 5 crore.— September: Sainik Farms: Godara calls a builder in Sainik Farms, threat-ening him with dire consequences if he did not pay him Rs 5 crore.— September 30: Vasant Vihar: Real estate devel-op-er gets a WhatsApp call from a man claiming to be US–based gangster and Lawrence Bishnoi associate Goldy Brar, who demands Rs 2 crore from him.— September 26: Naraina: Twenty rounds of bullets are fired at a luxury car showroom. The shooters leave behind a note: ‘Bhau Gang, Since 2020’– June 18: Burger King at Rajouri Garden, 9.30 pm: Three men on a bike walk up the stairs of the popular eat-ing joint, fire 39 rounds at Aman Joon, killing him. Gang-ster Himanshu Bhau, Lawrence Bishnoi’s rival, claims re-sponsibility for the killing.— January 22: Sarai Kale Khan: Over a dozen shots ring out as a team of the Delhi Police pursue two men allegedly associated with the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, wanted for the murder of an Air India crew member in Noida a week earlier.A decade ago, Neeraj Bawana and Tillu Tajpuriya were among Delhi’s most wanted gangsters. They took on the names of their villages in North West Delhi and Haryana. These monikers not only declared their regional loyalties but also the areas they dominated.Gangsters of today, in whose names extortion calls are made and to whom several young men swear al-legiance, have little to do with the city. They have tran-scended the limits of rural Delhi and are closing in on the heart of the National Capital.While Lawrence Bishnoi is lodged in the Sabarmati Jail in Ahmedabad, Himanshu Bhau is believed to be in the US. Bhau, police said, formed an association with gangster Navin Bali, a close associate of Neeraj Bawana. Bawana has an alliance with the Punjab-based Bambiha gang.Police investigation has shown that the number of extortion and shooting cases in Delhi is ris-ing, even as the shots are being called from inside jail and other countries.Rise in Shootings, Extortion CallsIt was Nadir Shah’s killing in September, in the upmarket Greater Kailash neighbourhood, that shook Delhi. It was a crime scene that most in Delhi would previously have seen only in movies or in CCTV camera footage of a crime that occurred in parts of Outer Delhi.It is 10.30 pm. Shah — who ran a gym called Sharx in the E block of this posh neighbourhood — is talk-ing to another man standing next to a black SUV on the road, 300 m away from the GK police station. Another man enters the frame and pumps several bullets into his tall frame. Seconds later, the assassin hops onto a motorcycle and flees.The hit, police said, was ordered by jailed gang-ster Lawrence Bishnoi.Extortion calls in Greater Kailash and Sainik Farms that followed the incident were allegedly made by gangster Rohit Godara, an associate of Bishnoi.Reports of shootouts, encounters and complaints of extortion have trickled in regularly from Bawana, Narela and Alipur in outer and outer north Delhi over the years. The gangs, however, are now expanding their activities to areas like Vasant Vihar, Greater Kailash, Rajouri Garden and Pitampura too.

According to Delhi Police data, 144 cases of extortion have been reported in the city till August this year, much like 2023, when 147 cases were registered. In 2022, how-ever, the number was 119. In South Delhi, 14 cases were reported this year and 16 last year, as compared to 10 in 2022.With men allegedly affiliated with Lawrence Bishnoi and his internationally-based aides Godara and Brar recruit-ing young men who are looking to make a name for them-selves in the world of crime, there is no limit to their area of influence either.On the night of October 12, Madhur alias Mota Armaan, accused of killing Shah in Greater Kailash, was chased by the Delhi Police Special Cell sleuths in Narela. He was shot in both legs and arrested, the police said. A few hours later, three men shot dead former MLA and NCP leader Baba Siddique in Mumbai. The common thread connecting these two incidents was Lawrence Bishnoi. Both the shooters allegedly belonged to his gang.In September, a Delhi businessman whose son, a bookie, was arrested in the 2013 IPL spot-fixing scandal, allegedly received a threat from Godara. On Diwali, the businessman’s associate Akash Sharma and his nephew were gunned down in Shahdara’s Farsh Bazar.Motive, modus operandiThe aim of the gang to inch closer to the heart of Delhi, according to the police, mostly is extortion. They target businessmen and indulge in violence when they don’t comply. The Lawrence Bishnoi gang is not alone.Besides Lawrence Bishnoi, Godara and Brar, the police said that gangs like UK-based gangster Kapil Sangwan’s Nandu gang and Jitendra Gogi gang, among others, are following similar modus operandi in Delhi, resulting in an increase in cases of extortion being reported in the city.An officer of the Special Cell said the members of the gangs usually fire a couple of rounds out-side a home or a shop to threaten major businessmen of an area.As per the police, it is not that the ground presence of these gangs has increased. There are more “shooters-for-hire” juveniles being approached and used by them.According to the National Investigation Agency’s (NIA) chargesheet against Bishnoi, his gang hires shooters and new members using social media. “They upload posts on criminal/terrorist activities on social media, attracting new members, who (send requests seeking) to join the gang... The gangs then scrutinise their requests and shortlist mem-bers,” it alleged.

“The activities of gangs in Delhi have increased be-cause they no longer rely on traditional shooters for hire or even gang members. They target people who are either from low-income groups or are juveniles, and provide them with ammunition for one-off shootings. The price is anywhere in the range of Rs 5,000 to Rs 20,000 for a warning shot, de-pending on the expertise of the shooter,” said a senior of-ficer with the Delhi Police.“Lawrence Bishnoi isn’t in contact with any of these shooters, and operates via Brar and

Godara. They are both international fugitives. Their pres-ence outside the country and lack of any regular link with hired shooters makes these shootings difficult to control,” the officer added.However, no one gang continues to rule without a challenger. In the case of Lawrence Bishnoi, it is the Bambiha gang.The Bambiha gang, named after its founder and slain gangster Davinder Bambiha — who was gunned down in 2016 — has been active mostly in Punjab and Haryana. This gang was never directly operating in the Capital, a Special Cell officer said.This, a Delhi Police of-ficer said, changed after the death of Davinder. The gang was taken over by gangster Kaushal Chaudhary and his associate Amit Dagar. Their rivalry with the Lawrence Bishnoi syndicate, which led to the Bambiha gang allegedly killing Akali Dal leader Vicky Middukheda in 2021, started their association with his rivals in Delhi, the Neeraj Bawana-Navin Bali-Himanshu Bhau syndicate, a police officer said.On October 26, two members of the Bambiha gang opened fire outside a businessman’s house in Pitampura, and demanded Rs 10 crore. The shooters were arrested on October 29.“Usually, Bambiha gang members are not di-rectly involved in extortion demands in Delhi. However, they have started to operate through the Bhau and Bawana alli-ance,” an officer said.

Encryption appsA major tool for jailed or fugitive gang-sters to hire and direct shooters are end-to-end encryption apps. On August 23, shots were fired by alleged shooters of Kapil Sangwan’s Nandu gang outside Singla sweet shop in Tilak Nagar. The police said the gangsters had demanded Rs 2 crore. “Sangwan was in touch with shooters through-out via an app, instructing them from the UK. He was telling them when and how to open fire,” an officer said.According to the police, juvenile shooters are usually arranged for the gangs by middlemen and financiers, who also arrange for the weapons. “We are trying to track the financiers and sec-ond and third rung men in the hierarchy of these gangs... We have been able to identify some,” said a senior officer.A senior officer further said that the juveniles are a major hin-drance in controlling such crime. “The gang leaders con-vince juveniles that because of their age, they won’t be pros-ecuted like adults. They would rather be celebrated,” he added.The officer insisted that there “has been an overall reduction in arms distribution networks over the years”.

On Tuesday, in a major crackdown on gangs and their operations, the Delhi Police apprehended over 1,200 people with alleged associations to notorious gangs. Among them, around 700 were arrested. An officer had said those detained and arrested were associated with multiple gangs including those led by Lawrence Bishnoi, Neeraj Bawana, Kaushal Chaudhary, Tillu Tajpuriya, Kala Jathari, Manjeet Mahal and Kapil Sangwan.Reliance on juveniles, youthsA senior officer said that with the right-hand men of gangsters going in and out of hiding or operating from abroad, their reliance on juve-niles and youngsters in awe of them would continue to in-crease. “The glamorisation of weapons on social media and the ability of gangsters to make contacts from jails are the major challenges,” the officer added.Former additional com-missioner of police (Crime Branch) Ashok Chand said, “Ev-ery gang lord begins his career with activities that do not immediately attract harsh police action. Once they amass wealth, they use it to protect themselves and their associates.”In response to a detailed questionnaire on the rising threat of gangs, particularly to South Delhi business-men, operating out of jails and abroad, Special Commis-sioner (Perception Cell) of Police, Sagar Preet Hooda said: “Delhi Police is cognizant of all these issues and is com-mitted to work towards keeping Delhi safe... detection of all reported crimes and sincere prosecution of the involved criminals.”Another feature of the recent gang-related activi-ties has been alliances forged between gangs, the police said, mostly inside the jail. One of the reasons is to maintain control and avoid rebellions. Abdul Nasir, a dreaded gang-ster in Delhi-NCR, saw his gang being taken over by one of his trusted lieutenants, Hashim Baba. Similar fear plagues most jailed gangsters, said police.

“Since Lawrence Bishnoi and Hashim Baba joined forces, after meeting in Tihar in 2021, gangsters Neeraj Bawana, Cheenu Pehelwan and Himanshu Bhau have also come together. This has helped them get a wider reach and demand extortions from across Delhi,” an officer said.Sunil Kumar Gupta, who served as a jailer, legal adviser and spokesperson at Tihar, said gangsters are able to maintain their contacts despite being held in maximum security prison. “All notorious gangsters, who are maximum security prisoners, get a time slot for meeting family and friends... We aren’t allowed to record their conversations,” Gupta said. “They also talk in code language to send out information to their associates”.Gupta claimed the connivance between the prison staff and the gangsters in jail is also a factor because contraband — such as cellphones, weapons, and other com-munication devices — is smuggled to them from outside jail premises. “No matter how hard you try, the phones will reach the gangsters somehow,” he added.Gupta also pointed out that threats from gangs create fear among jail staff. “The Tamil Nadu Special Police (TNSP), as far as I know, is equally scared for their families and their lives.

Thus, they turn a blind eye.” The TNSP is a security agency that guards inmates at Tihar Jail.A Tihar Jail spokes-person, in response to Gupta’s observations, said, “The Tamil Nadu Special Police team does regular checks of the jail staff, cells, and inmates for mobile devices. If we receive any information on jail staff helping the inmates, we take strict action against them. Our staff also keeps a vigilant eye out for any contraband that may have entered the jail premises.

Every jail staff member is thoroughly checked before they enter the jail compound.”On how high-security inmates are able to convey their messages to their associates out-side Tihar Jail, the spokesperson said, “Inmates in Tihar are allowed to visit and talk to their family and friends twice a week. They are also given phone call privileges, subject to good conduct. As per rules, jail authorities cannot record or listen to these conversations.

“Tihar jail officials categorically denied that the prover-bial call was coming from inside the house. “We have jam-mers on the ground floor and also a tower jammer that blocks all phone signals... it would be impossible for inmates to relay orders to the outside world, even if they managed to smuggle in phones,” said a senior jail official.“If calls were made from inside Tihar, we ask the police to provide us with call record details... the time and location from where the call was made, who they called... The absence of such records and the fact that the police haven’t yet come to us for any action, says a lot,” he added.We conduct regular checks of the jail staff, we also check inmates’ cells... of course there have been instances of connivance, but we have taken strict action in such cases,” he said.The official gave details of alternative methods jailed gangsters could use to relay their messages. “...when prisoners go out of the premises for court hearings, they can relay their mes-sage through the people they know. They could also ask another prisoner who is going for a court hearing to pass on their message... there are countless ways this can hap-pen,” he said.

Why are women missing from the factory floors in India? | Data



One of the drivers of Viksit Bharat will be manufactur-ing. One of the pillars of Viksit Bharat is ‘nari (women)’. How-ever, women are missing from the factory floors. The share of women in India’s formal manufacturing sector fell from 20.9% in 2015-16 to 18.9% in 2022-23 (1.57 million out of 8.34 million formal workers). What is even more striking is that of all the women working in manufacturing, Tamil Nadu alone is employing 41%.In informal manufacturing, women form 43% of the workforce. Therefore, it is not the case that women are not working, but that they are not getting the “better” jobs. This again points to informalisation and the low paying nature of jobs held by women.

Manufacturing contributes almost one-fifth of India’s GDP. It is poised to be a key growth driver for India. Yet the participation of women in this sector remains low. Compared to other developing economies such as Bangladesh and Vietnam, India lags behind.Tamil Nadu, which employs the largest chunk of the formal female workforce, and four other States make up almost three-quarters of India’s total. This implies that five States are responsible for most of the formal female manufacturing workforce (Chart 1a).Similarly, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra contribute close to 50% of the informal women workforce in the manufacturing sector (Chart 1b).

Bihar, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Haryana have the highest gender gap (Chart 2) in the formal manufactur-ing workforce, with women making up less than 6% of the workforce.Chart 2: Gender gap in formal and informal manu-facturing. In the graph, the higher the positive number, the higher the gender gap, the lower the positive number, the lower the gender gap. Negative numbers correspond to more women working in the sector than menMoreover, even highly industrialised States such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, and U.P. have a high gender disparity in the formal manufacturing sector. Women make up less than 15% of the workforce in these States. There is significant homogeneity across indus-tries in which women are employed within the formal and informal sector. For instance, within the formal sector, 60% are employed in textile, wearing apparel, and food process-ing (Chart 3A). Within the informal sector, wearing apparel and tobacco sectors are the major employers of women (Chart 3B).Within the formal sector, tobacco is the only in-dustry where more women than men are employed. In the informal tobacco industry, more than 90% are women.Thus, women in India are mostly concentrated in the informOal sector, which is low paying and offers a poor standard of working. Therefore, it is important to transition women from the informal to the formal sector to ensure a decent pay and work environment.Given the high degree of informality, and

lack of heterogeneity in the manufacturing workforce for women, the first step to boost participation is skill training. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, about 6% of women in the sector have either formal vocational train-ing or training on the job. Hence, upskilling women is im-perative to improve both participation and productivity.Second, it is essential that women complete their higher education, which could improve their chances of be-ing employed in manufacturing. Nearly 47% of men in manu-facturing have completed secondary education or higher, compared to just 30% of women.Third, there is an immedi-ate need for greater sectoral diversification. Lastly, it is sal-ient to make work environments safe to improve workforce participation.For instance, Tamil Nadu initiated the ‘Thozhi’ scheme under which it built working women hostels. Such specific interventions are needed in each State to address their unique challenges.

Mexico sends diplomatic note to US over possible new military base near border

Mexico City: Mexico has delivered a diplomatic note to the US after reports emerged that Washington is consid-ering establishing a new military base near the shared border to deter irregular migration, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said.Speaking at her daily press briefing on Wednesday, Sheinbaum acknowledged that the decision is a sovereign matter for the US on its own territory, but emphasised that it must not impact Mexico or cross into its jurisdiction, Xinhua news agency reported.“We respect their autonomy, but we expect the same coordination and coop-eration on security that we’ve had so far,” she said. A re-porter asked the Mexican President about the US’ reported plan to establish a military base on its southern border with Mexico.The question came after US Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum travelled to New Mexico on Tuesday to “announce the emergency withdrawal and transfer” to the US Army “of administrative jurisdiction over nearly 109,651 acres of federal land along the US-Mexico border,” accord-ing to an Interior Department statement.“The Department of the Army requested the withdrawal and transfer of these lands on an emergency basis to allow for the increase in regular patrols by federal personnel, construction of infra-structure to prevent unlawful entry.

Using phone while in bed increases risk of insomnia by 59 per cent



New Delhi: Love to scroll your phone while in bed? Scientists have found that using a screen in bed can drive your risk of insomnia by 59 per cent. While sleep is critical to mental and physical health, an increasing number of people are accustomed to using screens in bed. The study by researchers from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health in Norway showed it may be associated with poor sleep.

While social media is seen to be more associated with poorer sleep because of its interactive nature and potential for emotional stimulation, a survey of 45,202 young adults, aged between 18-28 years old, in Norway showed that the type of screen activity did not matter. "We found no signifi-

cant differences between social media and other screen activities, suggesting that screen use itself is the key factor in sleep disruption — likely due to time displacement, where screen use delays sleep by taking up time that would otherwise be spent resting," said lead author Dr. Gunnhild Johnsen Hjetland, from the Institute. The study showed that screen use in bed can reduce sleep time by 24 minutes. Notably, sleep problems were found to be highly prevalent among students. This may "have significant implications for mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being", said Hjetland. The study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, shows screens reduce sleep time because they displace rest, not because they increase wakefulness: different activities would be expected to affect wakefulness differently.

"If you struggle with sleep and suspect that screen time may be a factor, try to reduce screen use in bed, ideally stopping at least 30-60 minutes before sleep," Hjetland said. "If you do use screens, consider disabling notifications to minimise disruptions during the night," Hjetland added, while calling for further studies to understand the relationship between screen use and sleep globally. A recent study by researchers from Pennsylvania State University in the US showed that young adults who do not get the right amount of sleep may be at an increased risk for high blood pressure or hypertension — a common risk factor for cardiovascular diseases.

There's probably an ant near you right now

Ants are among nature's greatest success stories, with an estimated 22,000 species worldwide. Tropics in particular are the global hotspots for ant diversity. But if ants are so successful out in nature, why do they so often turn up in our homes and even upper-level apartments? And what can we do to keep them out? Ants dominate the planet in terms of sheer abundance. At any given moment, there are an estimated 20 quadrillion ants alive — that's 20 followed by 15 zeros. In fact, for every human being, there are roughly 2.5 million ants.

Ants owe much of their success to their highly social nature. Within the colony, some individuals (female queens and male drones) are responsible for reproduction, while others (workers) are busy caring for the young, cleaning or foraging for food. Workers ants are always female. Ant colonies do not have leaders. They are an excellent example of collective behaviour and swarm intelligence, where individuals following relatively simple rules can collectively achieve far more than any individual could alone. Colonies of co-operating ants are capable of amazingly sophisticated behaviours such as: building efficient trail networks, building living bridges with their bodies, and farming fungi and aphids (small, sap-sucking insects that feed on plants).

Ants even outperform humans on some cooperative cognition tasks. The highly social nature of ants is a big part of their success — and a key reason why they are so good at finding their way into our homes. Each colony contains thousands of intrepid workers, many of which are constantly searching for new food sources. If even a single ant discovers a valuable resource in your home, it can quickly share that information with its nest mates. Different ant species use different methods of communication, but the ones that most often invade our homes tend to use "pheromone trails". When an ant finds a food source, she returns to her nest leaving little drops of pheromones as she goes; this trail guides other ants from their nest directly to the food source. This highly efficient communication system means a single ant can rapidly recruit thousands of its nest mates to any food it finds. Ants may also come inside in search of water, particularly when the weather is hot. Some species prefer to build their nests in humid environments, which might explain why they are often found in bathrooms. On the flip side, heavy rains can flood ant nests, prompting colonies to seek drier ground — sometimes leading them straight into our homes. Many ant species are exceptional climbers, thanks to tiny adhesive pads and fine hairs on their feet.



These specialised structures allow ants to stick to walls and find footholds even on surfaces that appear smooth to the human eye. Remarkably, some canopy-dwelling ants have evolved a behaviour known as "controlled descent" which protects them when they fall. By adjusting the position of their abdomens, falling ants can steer their trajectory, directing themselves back toward the tree trunk and safety.

How do I keep ants out of my house?

No matter what you do, ants will probably enter your house at one time or another. Finding a few ants in your home doesn't mean your house is dirty. We simply live on a planet that is absolutely teeming with ants. To minimise unwanted ant visits, start by eliminating any potential food sources that could feed a hungry ant. Store all food in sealed airtight containers, clean behind the fridge and inside/under the toaster, avoid leaving pet food out longer than needed and make sure your bins are securely sealed. Ants have tiny stomachs, so even small crumbs or the residue from spilled sugary drinks can be enough to entice them back. If ants seem to be following each other in a line, try disrupting their chemical trail using vinegar or bleach. However, ants are very good at repairing broken trail networks. Seal any small cracks or entrance points that might allow ants to get into your home and make sure your windows and doors have well-fitting fly screens. Insecticidal baits can kill ant colonies, but before you deploy the nuclear option, ask yourself: what harm are the ants really doing? Most common home-invading ants do not sting and are pretty harmless. They can usually be redirected simply by removing their food source. Ants are nature's clean-up crew, tirelessly scavenging waste and helping to maintain a healthy, balanced ecosystem. They also play

Can amla bust LDL cholesterol? Here's how much you should have daily



Of all the natural dietary interventions that can help reduce low-density lipoprotein (LDL), what we call bad cholesterol and one that accelerates plaques and blocks in the heart's arteries, amla is a good bet. Also known as Indian gooseberry, this fruit is a powerhouse of nutrients and bioactive compounds. It is rich in antioxidants, polyphenols and vitamin C. How Amla Lowers LDL cholesterol Amla is packed with vitamin C, flavonoids and polyphenols that combat oxidative stress or cell damage, which oxidises LDL particles, making them more likely to build plaque in arteries. Research suggests that amla inhibits the same enzyme targeted by statin drugs to lower cholesterol. By naturally reducing the production of cholesterol in the liver, amla helps maintain healthy cholesterol levels. It helps remove excess cholesterol from the bloodstream, increases the activity of enzymes that facilitate the conversion of cholesterol into bile acids, which are then excreted. Clinical studies have shown that regular consumption of amla significantly lowers LDL cholesterol while increasing HDL (high-density lipoprotein) cholesterol, commonly known as the "good" cholesterol. HDL helps filter LDL from the bloodstream, further reducing the risk of heart disease. Amla's anti-inflammatory properties help reduce arterial inflammation.

How Much Amla Should You Take Daily?

The ideal dosage of amla for cholesterol management varies depending on the form in which it is consumed:

Fresh Amla: 1-2 whole amlas per day.

Amla Juice: 20-30 ml (about 2 tablespoons) mixed with water, taken in the morning on an empty stomach.

Amla Powder: 1-2 teaspoons (3-6 grams) mixed with warm water or honey, once or twice a day. Consistency is key. Regular consumption over a few months yields the best results for cholesterol control. Best Ways to Consume Amla for LDL Reduction Despite its tartness, eating fresh amla is the most effective way to get its full spectrum of nutrients. Diluting amla juice in water and drinking it on an empty stomach enhances absorption and maximizes its cholesterol-lowering effects. Mixing amla powder with warm water or honey is a convenient way to consume it. You can also add it to

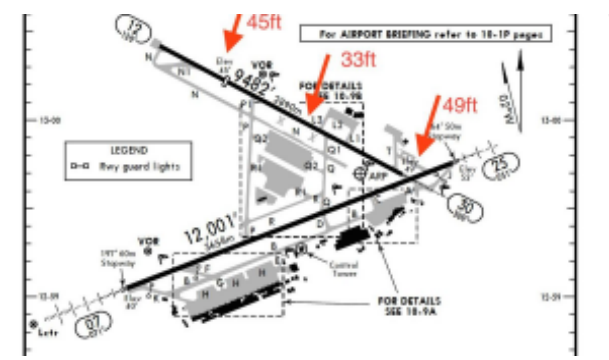
smoothies or herbal teas. Amla murabba is a traditional preparation of amla soaked in honey or sugar syrup but should be avoided by diabetics. As a pickle or chutney, it can additionally support gut health. While amla is generally safe, excessive consumption may cause acidity or stomach discomfort and acid reflux in those with sensitive gut. People with diabetes should monitor their sugar levels if consuming amla regularly. Amla has mild blood-thinning properties, so individuals on blood thinners should consult a doctor before regular use.

Odyssey Technologies Limited launches two critical software products for mail and smartphone users



Hyderabad: Odyssey Technologies Limited, a company specialising in information security products and services, released two software products — xorkeesign Mail and xorkeesign Spot. The products address a critical and global problem faced today and could potentially help 200 million email users and over a billion xorkeesign Mail is a browser or mail client extension software that provides for senders to digitally sign their mails and for verifiers to verify the signatures, a press release said. Odyssey offers the verification functionality absolutely free so that the entire emailing population can arm themselves against mail-based phishing attacks and other scams, it said. xorkeesign Spot.

A point to ponder while solving the Chennai airport conundrum



The heart and soul of an airport is the runway. Unfortunately, there appears to be a drift away from safety and more of political bombast. A recent video I received, showing corrosion cracks on the underside of the secondary runway bridge at the Chennai airport and the rhetoric about pushing ahead with an environmental disaster, called the Parandur airport project, is something that should worry people of Chennai. During an inspection in 2012 by me, as a member of the Civil Aviation Safety Advisory Council (CASAC), I had documented several portions of the underside of the bridge showing corrosion and cracks. I had warned that, with time, the poor construction would result in a disaster. The Chennai airport was flooded on October 27, 2005, owing to heavy rain, but the main runway was above water and flight operations were not affected. The terrain sloping down towards the Adyar and no obstacles on the path of the river ensured free flow of water into the sea. Only low-lying areas on either side of the Adyar were affected

The Tamil Nadu PWD had informed Airports Authority of India (AAI) that the maximum flood level was 10.5 metres, and with free board of 0.5 metres, it would amount to 11 metres. When AAI applied for environmental clearance for building the runway bridge across the Adyar, it was allowed to build above 12.4 metres. This would mean that the pier cap would be 1.65m above this, the girder of 1m and the runway surface concrete of 1m thickness. This would make the elevation of the runway surface on top of the bridge 15.5m, which will be 50.5 feet. The threshold of the secondary runway, before the bridge was built, was 36 feet. The Ministry of Environment and Forests had permitted a bridge of 200m by 415m, but AAI built a bridge of 200m x 462.5m in violation of the stipulations. What was worse was the pillars that were to be of 1.2m diameter were only 0.86m. The runway surface elevation on top of the bridge was only 42 feet as per the Type A Obstacle chart issued by AAI in 2010, 4m short and 47m wider than the permitted level. It had also built an embankment wall of 12 feet height. The destruction caused by the 2015 floods was made worse by this. The main runway elevation at the intersection was 46 feet and the bridge was 42 feet and the mid-section was only 33 feet, the area through which the floodwaters rushed, destroying everything on the way. The December 2015 flood level was 13.4m, well above the secondary runway bridge. The floodwaters were not only from the Chembarambakkam lake (which contributed a mere 30%) but also from all the

waterbodies west of Chennai: Mudichur, Sriperumbudur, and Parandur. We survived the 2015 floods, but if the waterbodies at Parandur are filled with concrete, it is unlikely that the bridge will survive severe floods. The fact is that even after 13 years, very few flights operate out of the secondary runway and no wide-body aircraft will use it as it does not have Instrument Landing System (ILS). AAI has been misleading the Tamil Nadu government to get land allotted for building a Approach Light System for the two ends. Without an ILS, the runway will only be a non-precision runway and all that you need is a Simple Approach Light System, and the land AAI is asking for is not needed at all. It must be more for commercial reasons than for operational reasons. How to increase capacity The Chennai airport's runway capacity can be increased by building a parallel runway with a separation of 200m, north of the main runway. AAI could negotiate with the Defence Ministry for the Army and Coast Guard land. The areas occupied by them around the airport will meet the requirement for infrastructure. We have the Metro Rail and the GST Road in place and the Central and State governments should consider this option. Take the London Gatwick Airport as an example. The parallel runway can be used for the aircraft, like A320 and B737 family, to take off and it could also be used for landing from the Pallavaram-end, as is being done at Port Blair, Leh, and Bagdogra. Of late, there seems to be an effort by AAI to convince the State government to allot land for use of the secondary runway by wide-body aircraft. No wide-body aircraft will use a non-precision runway, especially at night. An ILS Localiser requires clear space behind the antenna array; it has to be located in a vibration-free area. Owing to the Metro Rail and heavy traffic on the GST Road, the vibration levels are too high for an ILS Localiser. The aircraft movement on main runways and taxiways will also cause deflection of Localiser beams and they can never install an ILS for Runway 12. Similarly, the position of Localiser for Runway 30 is not possible owing to the beams getting deflected from the Coast Guard hangar and other structures. Late touchdown If one goes through airport charts issued by AAI from the time the secondary runway bridge was constructed, one would see figures ranging from 32 feet to 46 feet as the runway threshold for Runway 12. This is dangerous as the landing distances are based on crossing the threshold at 50 above the runway surface. This could result in a late touchdown and late landing. We should also consider the landing overrun if an aircraft lands late on Runway 12. One should remember that beyond the compound wall is the Metro Rail roof holding 25,000-volt cables and the crowded GST Road traffic. We also have two petrol stations across the road. Is it worth the risk to push for operations from a dangerously unsafe runway? If Chennai has to regain lost traffic, this is the best solution. Demolish the bridge across the river before the next floods. The old secondary runway was working perfectly well for smaller aircraft and one does not need more than 8,000 feet of runway. Build the parallel runway and use it for smaller aircraft and wide-body aircraft from the main runway. The government would save crores of taxpayers' money — and also lives in the event of a disaster.

Has Mounjaro cracked the weight loss code? Experts find answers to obesity epidemic

While Mounjaro has been shown to reduce weight loss by about 20 per cent in tests, studies have shown that those that discontinue after six months regain 14 per cent of their body weight. While Mounjaro has been shown to reduce weight loss by about 20 per cent in tests, studies have shown that those that discontinue after six months regain 14 per cent of their body weight. Mounjaro in India: There was a time when patients weighing over 100 kg were few and far between at the clinic of Dr Mala Dharmalingam, senior endocrinologist at the Bangalore Endocrinology and Diabetes Research Centre. "Not any more. Obesity is not just a bystander, it is a disease itself and a precursor of other conditions. In addition, Indians are at a higher risk because of visceral obesity — excessive fat accumulation around the abdominal organs. If diabetes was an epidemic a decade ago, it is obesity now," she says.

Mounjaro, now in India, is the latest among a new class of weight loss drugs, which are being used globally and arose from the need to address obesity as a clinical condition and a public health challenge. Body weight is no longer a cosmetic issue but about minimising the burden of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, fatty liver and even cancer. It is a nudge tool when no amount of will power, diet and exercise work to wear out your stubborn fat. It comprises molecules which mimic gut hormones that regulate both blood sugar, digestion and appetite, the key to controlling weight. Since the original hormones cannot work effectively, these do the job, helping a patient lose up to 20 per cent of body weight, the equivalent of a bariatric surgery.

HOW MOUNJARO CONTROLS WEIGHT Explaining why Mounjaro is a weight loss accelerator, Dr Dharmalingam says, "When you put in your best effort and lose a kilo, your body goes against you. It starts releasing stress hormones because it thinks you are starving. So, most people attempting to lose weight are suddenly unable to follow their diet one day and give in to their hunger pangs. These drugs, however, suppress the hunger right in the brain, in the hypothalamus, making it easier for people to stick to their diets." Dr Dharmalingam, whose centre also participated in one of the clinical trials of the drug in India, has

seen a very good response but admits that the monthly cost of the injectable drug is certainly a challenge for long-term continuity. However, she sees a silver lining too. "The growing awareness around obesity means many may weigh the monthly cost of Rs 17,000 against several conditions triggered by obesity," she says, implying that people might just be more keen to take preventive health seriously. MOUNJARO FOR WOMEN The drug gives a push to those who are already trying to lose weight and getting over the yo-yo effect, when crash dieting slows down your metabolism and leads to weight regain. "I see a lot of obese women in their 30s, who are advised to lose weight if they want to conceive. In these cases the drugs can give a leg-up, especially in those dealing with the yo-yo effect," says Dr Dharmalingam. Dose escalation must be done under a doctor's supervision. "Patients need education. They cannot be taken by those with pancreatitis or gallbladder disorders apart from regular contraindications. One has also to adjust doses to avoid hypoglycemia or low blood sugar," says Mumbai-based endocrinologist Prof Shashank Joshi. According to the journal *Second Nature*, Mounjaro supports weight loss of around four per cent of body weight after one month, and around six per cent after two months. While Mounjaro has been shown to reduce weight loss by about 20 per cent in tests, studies have shown that those that discontinue after six months regain 14 per cent of their body weight. While the residual effect of Mounjaro may be the longest among this class of weight loss drugs, con-



tinuing it for a longer time period has shown that 90 per cent of people could keep the weight off. So diet and exercise must be key pillars of the weight loss journey along with the drug.

"Weight loss drugs are just another option in our armament to address obesity. Once you start using them, you cannot stop. The weight simply comes back. With affordability a deterrent, a disciplined lifestyle works better long-term. Besides, we need to address what's causing obesity rather than just tackling weight," says Dr RM Anjana, president of Madras Diabetes Research Foundation. Currently working on a study of obesity subtypes, Dr Anjana would much rather address the reasons for hidden obesity and junks the BMI formula. "People who may not look obese and have a normal BMI may also be metabolically unhealthy and living with conditions such as diabetes," she says. Then there are concerns about muscle mass preservation. "Indians have a thin fat phenotype, so we have to ensure that with weight or fat loss, muscle mass preservation is done by strength training exercises and proteins under medical supervision," says Prof Joshi. For long, Dr Dharmalingam has been arguing for policy interventions to ensure discipline where it is needed most — our diet and eating habits. She insists guidelines that stipulate junk foods should not be sold in and around schools be strictly followed. There should be warning labels on foods in grocery stores and children should be taught about healthy eating practices from a young age. "

Four-member chain snatching gang busted in Cyberabad

GNS News Agency, May 31

Hyderabad: The Cyberabad police on Saturday arrested four members of a notorious gang of chain snatchers who were involved in gold chain snatching cases and recovered property worth Rs 5 lakh from them. Acting on information, the sleuths of Jeedimetla Police and CCS Qutbullapur arrested Govind Singh, Karan Singh, Hardeep Singh, Rohith Singh and a juvenile. The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Qutbullapur, N Koti Reddy said that gang members forcibly snatched gold chains and mobile phones from innocent women during morning walks. Following an incident of chain snatching on Tuesday, where the gang members travelling in an auto rickshaw flicked away a gold chain weighing two tolas from a woman, the police registered a case.

RBI should access US Fed facility to stabilise rupee: ex-DG Patra



With the rupee falling rapidly and the country's foreign exchange reserves being depleted, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) should lean on a US Federal Reserve facility to ensure US dollars are "flushed continuously in and out of the market", Michael Patra, former deputy governor of the Indian central bank, says.

Under the Foreign and International Monetary Authorities (FIMA) Repo Facility, central banks such as the RBI can place their holdings of US Treasuries with the Fed for one or seven days and get dollars in return. At the end of this period, the dollars must be returned to the Fed, along with some interest, and foreign central banks get back the securities. The use of the facility would have a "stabilising influence" on the market, economise the RBI's use of its forex reserves, and give it time to rebuild them, the former central banker said. "Faced with a storm, it is wise to get on to the biggest ship," Patra, who retired from the RBI in January 2025 after four decades, said in an interview with Siddharth Upasani. Edited excerpts:

The exchange rate has been called by economists as a shock absorber. But with the rupee going from 89-per-dollar to 95 in a few months, is it performing the role of a shock absorber as it should?

I think it was Milton Friedman, the winner of the 1976 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, who was among the first prominent voices propounding the equilibrating properties of floating exchange rates in his 1953 essay 'The Case for Flexible Exchange Rates.' Since the advent of floating exchange rates, however, the experience has been quite the opposite. Exchange rate behaviour has been characterised by overshoots, self-fulfilling expectations, band-wagon effects, multiple disequilibria and several generations of currency crises.Hence, all central banks monitor exchange rate movements closely and continuously and intervene in various ways to ensure orderly outcomes, because exchange rate volatility can have real economy consequences as well as financial instability.

Last week, the RBI capped banks' daily open positions in the rupee at \$100 million. Yet, the rupee breached 95-per-dollar. Has this measure failed?

The RBI has a distinct information and analytics advantage relative to all other stakeholders in the foreign exchange market. It also tends to act pre-emptively rather than reactively to market developments. Hence, my hunch is that the build-up of disproportionately large arbitrage positions was detected and had to be curbed, so that markets remain liquid and function normally, especially in the context of the troubled geopolitical environment. The success or failure of any measure has to be assessed in the context of the objective it seeks to achieve. In this case, it is the unwinding of large arbitrage positions. Let us see how that happens within the time limit given by the RBI.You want the RBI to use the US Federal Reserve's FIMA Repo Facility, akin to the RBI's own repurchase facility for Indian banks. Can the use of FIMA — or even public knowledge of its availability — put an end to speculation against the rupee, which the RBI tried to do last week?

The objective of proposing access to the FIMA is to ensure that dollars are flushed continuously in and out of the market, so that market is liquid and deep with all regular

demands for foreign exchange being satisfied. It would also economise on the use of the RBI's foreign exchange reserves and, in fact, provide space to rebuild them. There is also some evidence from countries that have availed it that it has brought about reductions in foreign exchange swap basis spreads as well as in the sensitivity of the latter to daily changes in risk sentiment proxied by the VIX index. Some central banks have also reported stabilisation of capital flows to their economies on announcement effects.

Why has the RBI never used FIMA?

The FIMA was established in March 2020 as a pandemic response and in July 2021, it was made into a standing facility. In the period from 2020-21 to 2023-24, there were very large accretions to the foreign exchange reserves except in some months of 2022-23. In fact, high levels of reserves — the fourth largest in the world then — were maintained even in early 2024-25 up to July. Hence, the need for access to FIMA did not arise.On February 28 — the day the West Asia war began — India and Japan renewed their \$75 billion Bilateral Swap Arrangement. Are more such swap lines needed or can their usage signal some sort of desperation?

Since the global financial crisis, the lack of a truly global, democratically accessible financial safety net has been acutely felt. It has also been recognised that while crises can be global, the responsibility for financial stability is national. For many emerging economies, national holdings of foreign exchange reserves turned out to be the only resource, especially in the context of managing global spillovers. Accordingly, apart from seeking governance reforms in multilateral institutions, these countries have sought to reinforce their crisis wherewithal with secondary buffers such as swap lines. It has been the experience that the existence of these swap lines has provided confidence to markets and discouraged speculative attacks on the exchange rate.

In my view, getting access to FIMA and using it would demonstrate that uninterrupted provision of dollar liquidity to the foreign exchange market in India has a stabilising influence and it precludes precautionary sales of US Treasury securities in New York which can be destabilising for the markets there. In time, this can pave the way for the establishment of a regular swap line. Faced with a storm, it is wise to get on to the biggest ship.

The RBI has always said the exchange rate is not a consideration while setting interest rates. Is it now?

The RBI has followed a clear assignment rule in which monetary policy is assigned the objectives of price stability and growth, while exchange rate stability is assigned to foreign exchange interventions, macroprudential measures and capital flow management. In my view, this assignment rule has worked well and should be persevered with. In fact, there are only two rare data points of monetary policy being deployed to defend the exchange rate – during the global financial crisis, and during the taper tantrum. We have come a long way since then in strengthening our policy frameworks, building buffers, and in securing macroeconomic and financial stability.

Is the inflationary impact from the war's energy supply shock being underestimated? Apart from maybe a couple of economists, no one really seems to be predicting an interest rate hike by the RBI anytime soon.As part of the preparations for the meeting of the MPC, teams in the RBI will simulate various scenarios in order to assess the balance of risks around the projections of inflation and growth. The impact of the geopolitical situation in terms of upside risks to inflation and downside risks to growth is too big an imponderable not to be simulated. Other related spillovers will also be taken into account, including the headroom provided by excise duty cuts on key inflation-sensitive petroleum products by the government. After that, the monetary policy decision is best left to the judgment of the MPC, which has wisely kept powder dry.

Protein alone is not enough: This is the missing piece of nutrition for your peak health



Just like you cannot get through a gruelling day without ranting to your work bestie, a high-protein diet alone cannot guarantee long-term health. You need to pair protein with carbohydrates to maximise its efficiency in the body. During a recent episode of The Masoom Minawala Show, health coach Luke Coutinho revealed that if you've been relying on dal as your only source of protein, this might change how you build your meals. "Dal alone is not the protein. Dal is a carbohydrate. It's got amino acids that have to combine with a cereal to complete the amino acid profile so that it becomes a complete protein."

Why is protein alone not enough?

Dr Samrat Shah, a consultant physician at Ruby Hall Clinic, Pune, explains that without carbs, the body will lack glucose to use as fuel. "In several days, it can start transitioning to burning fat and producing ketones, an experience that can accumulate to producing so-called low-carb flu symptoms of fatigue, headache, irritability, or brain fog as the shift progresses," explains Dr Shah.If you are on a high-protein diet, consuming carbs becomes even more essential. "Protein, by nature, is very satiating and causes a

natural drop in calorie consumption. It also exhibits a greater thermic effect, aka, your body burns up more calories in order to break down the protein compared to the perspective of fats or carbohydrates," he further elaborates. This is generally why there is a link between high-protein diets and rapid weight loss."But, pairing protein with carbohydrates and healthy fats is crucial as this helps stabilise blood sugar and keeps you fuller for longer," he points out.So, while carbs are important, the type of carbs consumed is also very important.

According to him, minimally processed and whole-some carbs are always preferred. "Ultra processed carbs with little to no nutritional benefits are best consumed minimally. Rather than cutting out carbs, the idea is to eat a balanced diet with complex carbohydrates, sufficient protein and fat as well as plenty of fruits and vegetables," says Shah.

Make protein work for youDr Dipak Bhangale Consultant Gastroenterology, Hepatology, Interventional Endoscopy, Liver Transplantation, Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, Navi Mumbai also notes that the body can "absorb" protein at once, but the real issue isn't digestion. Our gut easily handles large amino-acid loads, but how much protein meaningfully supports muscle growth before returns fade."Research suggests about 0.3–0.4 g/kg per meal (roughly 20–40 g for most adults) maximizes muscle protein synthesis, spread across 3–4 meals to reach 1.6 g/kg/day," he said. Larger doses aren't wasted. They extend the anabolic response or are used for repair and energy," he illustrates.Finally, it is essential to distribute your protein intake evenly through the day. "Choosing high-quality proteins (milk, eggs, fish, lean meats, or complementary plant sources), and ensuring each meal supplies ~2.5–3 g leucine, a key amino acid that triggers muscle building, would help in this regard. "Combine this with resistance exercise, proper recovery, and spaced meals rather than constant snacking to "re-sensitize" the system," he added.

Harshvardhan Rane has gained 12kg in 6 months for Force 3: ‘Cutting starts tomo!’



Harshvardhan Rane is busy preparing for his upcoming movie release, Force 3, and the actor recently took to Instagram to share a fitness update. "Gained 12 kg in 6 months for #FORCE3," he mentioned in the caption, adding that he "touched 93 kg today on my director's demand for the role. Cutting starts tomo!"Deepalakshmi, a registered dietitian at Shree Balaji Medical College, Chennai, explained that bulking and cutting are structured phases used in fitness to change body composition.

"Bulking refers to a planned period of eating more calories than the body needs to help build muscle, while cutting

is a phase where calorie intake is reduced to lose body fat while trying to maintain the muscle gained," she told indianexpress.com.These phases are commonly followed in strength training, but they are not necessary for everyone, especially those aiming for general health."During a bulking phase, the body gets extra energy, which supports muscle growth when combined with regular strength training. Protein intake plays an important role in this process," said Deepalakshmi.Harshvardhan Rane just finished bulking up During a bulking phase, the body gets extra energy, which supports muscle growth when combined with regular strength training. (Source: Instagram/@harshvardhanrane)However, not all the extra calories go into building muscle—some fat gain is expected. Overeating, especially through unhealthy foods, can lead to excessive fat gain and should be avoided.

According to her, in the cutting phase, the goal is to reduce body fat by eating fewer calories than the body needs. "While this helps the body use stored fat for energy, there is also a risk of losing muscle if the diet is too restrictive. To prevent this, it is important to continue strength training and maintain good protein intake," she shared, warning against extreme dieting or relying only on cardio as it can lead to tiredness, nutrient deficiencies, and slower metabolism.Deepalakshmi suggested that a safe approach to bulking is to increase calorie intake slightly, by about 250–500 kcal per day, along with adequate protein and a balanced diet. For cutting, a moderate calorie reduction of around 300–500 kcal per day is recommended, without compromising on nutrition.Including a mix of whole foods such as cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables, healthy fats, and protein-rich foods helps support overall health, she added.However, note that bulking and cutting may not be suitable for everyone.Deepalakshmi reiterated that adolescents, people with a history of disordered eating, or those with medical conditions should be cautious and seek professional advice. "For most people, a steady approach that includes regular exercise, balanced eating, and small calorie adjustments is more practical and sustainable for long-term health," she concluded.

Esha Deol brings Met Gala to ‘Aamchi Mumbai’ with a humourous twist



Mumbai: Actor Esha Deol brought her own playful version of the Met Gala red carpet to Mumbai as she shared a fun behind-the-scenes moment from a recent event of hers. The actress posted a picture on her social media account and jokingly called it as her "Met Gala moment in amchi Mumbai."In the picture, Esha was seen making a stylish red-carpet entry in a lavender mini outfit paired with high heels. Suddenly, things were seen taking an unexpected turn when a large air cooler placed near the entrance sent her outfit flying.Taking the moment sportingly, Esha turned into humorz and wrote a caption "My met gala moment in amchi Mumbai!". In another clip, she further joked, "When you least expect a cooler at the entrance... this is what you get... easy breezy!"Talking about Esha Deol, the actress is the daughter of legendary superstar late Dharmendra and Hema Malini, and made her Bollywood debut with Koi Mere Dil Se Poochhe in 2002. She later featured in films such as Dhoom, Yuva, No Entry, Dus, and Cash.

On the personal front, Esha was married to businessman Bharat Takhtani in 2012. The couple are parents to two daughters, Radhya and Miraya. The two announced their separation in 2024.For the uninitiated, in mid 2000s, Esha Deol's popularity reached another level with her song Dhoom Machale from the hit movie Dhoom. Esha who was

extremely close to her father late Dharmendra, was delighted and overwhelmed as he was honoured with the Padma Vibhushan award, the second-highest civilian award of the Republic of India, a few months ago.Expressing her joy, Esha had taken to her social media account to share the news and wrote, "Wishing everyone on Republic Day, Esha wrote on her official Instagram handle, "Happy Republic Day. Really happy that our papa is being conferred with the prestigious Padma Vibhushan Award (folded hands emoji) (sic)."

Sobhita Dhulipala's viral comment on authenticity and self-trust wins praise online

Hyderabad: Actress Sobhita Dhulipala's recent comment on trusting one's instincts, honouring oneself and living life with authenticity in response to a heartfelt appreciation post by Dubai-based Telugu influencer Srilata Adepalli has now gone viral.In her video, Dubai influencer Srilata spoke about powerful women with Telugu roots who are creating their own space across the world. From actress Sobhita Dhulipala to Chanel model Bhavitha Mandava, rapper Raja Kumari and beauty entrepreneur Deepika Mutyala, the post celebrated women who were confidently embracing their identity on a global stage and inspiring others along the way.But what truly caught everyone's attention was Sobhita Dhulipala's beautiful response in the comments section. Instead of a simple thank you, the actress shared a deeply personal note about trusting instincts, honouring oneself and living life with authenticity."Lean in to your essence, no matter what. My most meaningful moments have come when I did what my instinct told me to, even when it's totally illogical or unproductive. And every single time I did something otherwise, only I know how it backfired. Honour yourself. This life is a short sail across the river, cherish the breeze and the current," Sobhita Dhulipala had commented.

Cloudflare to cut over 1,100 jobs amid AI-led restructuring



New Delhi: US-based connectivity cloud company Cloudflare has announced that it plans to cut more than 1,100 jobs globally as the company restructures its operations around the growing adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), according to an internal memo sent to employees by the company.The company said that its internal use of AI has surged by more than 600 per cent over the last three months, with employees across engineering, finance, human resources and marketing increasingly relying on AI agents to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Cloudflare described the move as part of a broader organisational overhaul aimed at adapting to the 'agentic AI

era', rather than a conventional cost-cutting exercise or a performance-driven layoff programme. "This decision is not a reflection of the individual work or talent of those leaving us," the company said in the memo."We are reimagining every internal process, team and role across the company." The company further added that all employees would be informed directly about how the restructuring affects them, with notices being sent to both official and personal email addresses for impacted workers.

Cloudflare said the severance packages for departing employees would include full base pay through the end of 2026, continued healthcare support in the US through the end of the year and additional equity vesting benefits through August 15.The company noted that employees who had not yet completed their one-year vesting cliff would receive prorated equity vesting as part of the separation package.According to the memo, the company intends to complete the restructuring exercise in a single phase to avoid prolonged uncertainty and repeated rounds of layoffs. Cloudflare said it was reshaping its organisational structure to remain competitive as AI rapidly transforms business workflows and operating models across the technology industry.The company stated that its transformation strategy is aimed at making the organisation 'faster and more innovative' as it continues investing in AI-driven products and services.

Gold rises nearly 2 pc during week amid geopolitical tensions and volatile crude prices

New Delhi: Gold prices rose 1.83 per cent during the week over persistent geopolitical uncertainty and volatile crude prices.On Friday, MCX gold June futures gained 0.04 per cent while MCX silver May futures surged 1.34 per cent. Currently gold futures stand at Rs 1,52,589, while silver futures at Rs 2,61,999 per kg.The price of 10 grams of 24-carat gold was at Rs 1,51,078 on Friday up from Rs 1,48,357 seen on Monday market opening, according to data published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA).Precious metals continued to rise for four consecutive sessions as optimism over a potential US-Iran peace agreement and a softer US dollar outweighed a stronger-than-expected US jobs report.US jobs data showed that employment rose more than forecast in April while the unemployment rate held at 4.3 per cent, underscoring resilience in the labour market and reinforcing expectations that the Federal Reserve may keep interest rates higher for

longer.Central banks maintaining interest rates higher for longer, could pressure non-yielding assets like gold.In international markets, Comex gold climbed about \$50 to a session high of \$4,760 per troy ounce, posting a weekly gain near 1.5 per cent. Market participants said the prospect of easing regional tensions and a weaker dollar supported demand for non-yielding bullion.Gold and silver have fallen nearly 10 per cent since the US-Iran conflict began on February 28.The broader safe-haven structure remains intact, though the pace of the rally has moderated as the dollar steadies and broader risk sentiment shows tentative signs of improvement, market participants said.Despite commodities flow disruption in the Strait of Hormuz dominating the macro narrative, markets are also entering a phase of technical consolidation following the sharp swings witnessed in recent weeks, analysts said.Precious metals are witnessing mixed price action, near Rs 1,50,000–Rs 1,48,000, analysts said.

‘Slept whole day, got up, came to stadium, broke national record’ – Gurindervir, 100m champ



Gurindervir Singh, India’s fastest man, has captured the imagination of the nation with a blazing run of 10.09s at the Federation Cup yesterday. His run to the new NR had a very interesting background. On the first day of the tournament, he broke the national record but could only hold it for five minutes before Animesh Kujur lowered it further. After that, his coach James Hillier asked him to shut down the outside noise and it meant no smartphone and social media. But 24 hours later his record-breaking run became viral content. In an exclusive interview with The Indian Express, Gurindervir opened up about his struggles last year, the significance of his run, and what comes next for him.

Do you hope to inspire more youth to take up athletics given that Punjab is one of the states with a major drug problem?

It might have an impact on the next generation but not on the ones who are already involved in it (drugs). The ones who are involved don’t even know who Gurindervir Singh is, where Ranchi is or what Athletics is. But I think this race can tell the next generation which path to choose.

Punjab is known for producing throwers in recent years and quarter-milers back in history. What does it mean to be a sprinter from Punjab?

Earlier, there were throwers. There were 400m runners. They used to choose throw events more. Now, I have chosen to run 100m, 200m and I think people will look at me and say that if he will do it, I’ll also do it.

How many reels have you seen since last night since you were not allowed to touch the phone day before?

I have been seeing my reels only. Every second or third reel is about me. It feels good that the whole nation is talking about me. It will feel good for five days and then back to the same grind of training.

You broke the national record the day before also but Animesh quickly reclaimed it. How did you feel about that?

I was happy for Animesh and didn’t stress myself. I was in my full flow. I did my stretching and slept for four hours at night and then again slept the whole day. Got up, came to the stadium and broke the national record. During my 16 days, there were many over-age boys competing and I used to fear them. My mamaji said, “Sher eko hi hunda jungle vich, bakiyan bahut firdi, hun tu sher banke khel” (There is only one lion in the jungle while there are a lot of goats, you’re the lion).

Former MI coach picks his IPL 2026 winners: ‘Most complete side’

GNS News Agency, May 31

Former India all-rounder Robin Singh backed the Gujarat Titans as his favourites to win the IPL title this season, pointing to the side’s overall balance in both batting and bowling and highlighted GT’s pace attack, particularly the impact of Kagiso Rabada and Mohammed Siraj. “If I had to pick one team to lift the IPL trophy from here, it would be the Gujarat Titans. They just look the most complete side in the competition. Their bowling & batting is looking solid. Kagiso Rabada and Siraj have proved to be a lethal combination,” Robin wrote on X. If I had to pick one team to lift the IPL trophy from here, it would be Gujarat Titans. @gujarat_titans They just look the most complete side in the competition. Their Bowling & Batting is looking solid. @KagisoRabada25 and Siraj @mdsirajofficial have proved to be a lethal... Rabada has enjoyed an outstanding season with 24 wickets in 13 matches. The South African quick has consistently delivered breakthroughs for GT, both with the new ball and during the death overs.

Siraj, meanwhile, has picked up 17 wickets and has complemented Rabada effectively with the new ball. The pair have regularly troubled opposition batters with their pace and movement, giving GT an edge in crucial phases of matches. The combination of a stable top order and an in-form pace attack has made Gujarat one of the most balanced sides in the competition. Captain Shubman Gill and

‘Still India’s most unique T20 batter’: Suryakumar should remain T20I captain, says ex-selector

GNS News Agency, May 31

Suryakumar Yadav has endured a prolonged run of poor T20I form over the last two years, with his aggregates also plummeting in the IPL 2026 season. While he finished his season with a half-century against the Rajasthan Royals in Mumbai on Sunday, Suryakumar only amassed 270 runs in 13 innings, averaging 20.76 this season. Even as he powered India to their third T20 World Cup title as captain in March, Suryakumar the batter has coped intense scrutiny, with calls for his removal as skipper gaining pace through the IPL.

However, former chief national selector MSK Prasad cautioned against a hasty decision in axing Suryakumar. Prasad backed the 35-year-old to rediscover his touch, while also hailing him as the most versatile T20I batter India has produced. “In modern T20 cricket, matches are not won only through technique – they are won through intent, innovation, fearlessness, and the ability to change games within a few overs. That is exactly why Suryakumar Yadav remains one of the most valuable players in India’s T20 setup. Even when debates arise around form or consistency, removing a player like Suryakumar from the Indian T20 side would be a massive mistake,” Prasad wrote in a Cricbuzz column. “He is still India’s most unique T20 batter.

“There are very few batters in world cricket capable of playing 360-degree cricket as naturally as Suryakumar Yadav. His ability to access unconventional areas of the field makes him nearly impossible to bowl to once he settles,” remarked Prasad. Prasad added that India can take the next cycle of the T20 World Cup, starting June, to groom future

Gurindervir Singh poses for photographs after he recorded a 10.09s finish in the 100 meter event to shatter the national record at the Birs Munda Football Stadium in Ranchi. (PTI Photo) Gurindervir Singh poses for photographs after he recorded a 10.09s finish in the 100 meter event to shatter the national record at the Birs Munda Football Stadium in Ranchi.

This is not the first time that you broke the national record. You did it last year but after that you struggled, what happened?

Someone said something about my appearance and that too, to my face. I was disturbed last year. I stopped looking at myself in the mirror. I used to look down.

I stopped looking straight ahead. If I see myself in someone else’s eyes, I will think that he is also thinking the same. So, I lost a lot of confidence. I can’t tell you what those words were, but they were hurtful.

How did you bounce back from that feeling? Who helped you?

It was myself and coach Hillier. He had some good conversations with me. He taught me a lot of things.

When I was a little low, I told him that I was having a problem. He told me that I can’t run so slow. He asked me what happened. I told him that I am under a lot of pressure. I am not feeling light. He told me that no one will stand up for me. I will have to stand at the starting line. No one will come to motivate me. I will have to motivate myself on the starting line. I will have to motivate myself in life. Anyone can say anything to disturb me. You have to make yourself strong. No one can affect you. He taught me how to listen to people. He taught me how to ignore people. As I started to understand, I started improving. Gurindervir Singh said that coach James Hillier asked him to shut down the outside noise and it meant no smartphone and social media. But 24 hours later his record-breaking run became viral content. (@RFYouthSports/ANI Photo) Gurindervir Singh said that coach James Hillier asked him to shut down the outside noise and it meant no smartphone and social media. But 24 hours later his record-breaking run became viral content. (@RFYouthSports/ANI Photo)

When you started training with Hillier, you were bulky but your fat percentage has gone down now and you look leaner. What did you sacrifice?

I have left everything. I haven’t eaten anything for a long time. Now, summer has started. My family is eating pinni and Ras Malai. I like pinni and khoya a lot. When I see it, I feel like eating it but can’t due to the dream of becoming a world class sprinter.

Shoe is like a best friend for the athlete. What is your relation with your shoes?

I used to wear Stranger and Spartan spikes, the leather ones. Then my first spikes came from New Zealand and I used to keep it on the table and not let it touch the ground until I was running. I like buying new and colourful shoes. Currently, I have Nike Max Fly 2.

What next for India’s fastest man?

Nothing. Just go back, eat, exercise, train, and repeat.



Sai Sudharsan have also been at the centre of GT’s batting success this season. Sudharsan has scored 638 runs in 13 matches and is the leading run-getter of the tournament, heading into the Playoffs. The left-hander has provided consistency at the top while also accelerating when needed, giving GT solid starts in several matches. Gill has matched that consistency closely with 616 runs in 13 games. The GT skipper has led from the front throughout the campaign, playing a key role in building partnerships and controlling innings at the top of the order. GT finished the league phase in second place on the points table with 18 points in 14 matches and will take on Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in Qualifier 1 in Dharamshala



leaders under Suryakumar. “I feel the selectors and team management should now start grooming the next generation of T20 leaders under Suryakumar’s guidance. Players like Shreyas Iyer, Sanju Samson, Tilak Varma and Ishan Kishan can be developed as future T20 captains for India.” Prasad also reaffirmed Suryakumar’s unique strengths as a T20 bat. “Whether it is scoops over fine leg, inside-out lofts over cover, or flicks behind square off good-length balls, Suryakumar brings a skillset that very few Indian batters possess. “However, with a dip in form and his characteristic shots failing, questions have been raised over a purported wrist injury Suryakumar affecting his form since last year. Prior to the match against Rajasthan on Sunday, Suryakumar cleared the air and quashed rumours of such concerns. “First of all, I’d like to clear the air a little bit. The people talking about a wrist injury are either pure physios or people who don’t understand cricket.

‘Don’t make such statements’: Ex-India batter slams Riyan Parag’s ‘mental toughness’ remark



Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag faced harsh criticism from former India batter Manoj Tiwary for his comments on his and his teammates’ fitness after the crucial win over the Mumbai Indians on Sunday. After RR held fort at the Wankhede Stadium during a victory that sealed their qualification for the Play-offs, Parag was asked about fitness issues in the camp that have seen him and senior all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja being in and out of the XI in recent matches. Parag claimed that he was not fit to take the field against MI and endured the rigours of a hot day on the field due to his mental fortitude. ‘All mental toughness’

Gukesh on criticism from ex-world champions: ‘My performance is way below expectations’

A smile appears on Gukesh’s face when he is asked about the relentless criticism being hurled his way by multiple ex-world champions. These are men like Magnus Carlsen, Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov whose words carry immense gravitas in the sport. “Most of the criticism I don’t see,” says Gukesh with a smile, as Carlsen, one of those who has been unsparing in his assessment of Gukesh’s form over the last 18 months, sits a few inches to his left at the pre-tournament press conference of Norway Chess. But then, the 19-year-old offers some blunt self-assessment.

“There is some criticism that I have heard and I think the criticism is fair,” says Gukesh. “I have not been performing well in the last 18 months and even I would say (the same thing.) My performance is way below expectations. They have the right to say what they feel and I have the right to do my job as best as I can.” In six months from now, Gukesh will fight another world championship. But as compared to the one he fought in 2024, this 2026 one will be a different challenge. After all, last time around, the teenager was trying to dethrone Ding Liren. Now, he will be defending the crown that rests uneasily on his head. “There are different mindsets going into both situations. As many people have said, defending a world championship title is more difficult than actually winning it the first time. For sure, there’s a lot of expectation and pressure of not wanting to lose the title. But, I think, at the end of the day, the basic thing is to play

‘Sooryavanshi has rattled Jaiswal’: Ashwin compares RR pair to ‘Sehwag-Chopra’ situation

In the Vaibhav Sooryavanshi storm that has hit the IPL 2026 season, an unlikely casualty has been his senior opening partner and Rajasthan Royals vice-captain, Yashasvi Jaiswal. The India opener has endured a quiet season by his standards, with Sooryavanshi dominating their fast-scoring association, ranked the second-best among all IPL opening pairs. The 15-year-old has butchered bowling attacks with 53 sixes and 50 fours, aggregating 583 runs in 14 innings at a jaw-dropping 232.50 strike rate. Jaiswal’s shares dwindle in comparison: 397 runs at 159.43 with only 48 fours and 18 sixes. Former RR all-rounder R Ashwin said that Sooryavanshi’s surging presence has put unusual pressure on Jaiswal to succeed. While both openers failed to set up big scores during RR’s must-win match against the Mumbai Indians on Sunday, Jaiswal has struggled to temper his aggressive starts on most occasions this season. Ashwin expressed surprise with Jaiswal failing to recalibrate his batting flow with Sooryavanshi at the other end.

“It is slightly underwhelming and I am a bit surprised by Yashasvi Jaiswal’s performance in the Rajasthan Royals team. I am a little surprised because I expected a lot from him; I have high hopes. But I just have a slight inkling of a feeling that Vaibhav Sooryavanshi’s display has perhaps shaken Jaiswal a bit. It has rattled him,” Ashwin said on his YouTube channel. Ashwin likened the situation to the yesteryear Indian Test opening pair of Virender Sehwag and Aakash Chopra, where the younger Delhi batter dominated the stand. “If you remember the opening pair of Virender

“I am definitely not fit, I was not supposed to play tonight and not play another game as well, but it was all mental toughness. Jofra [Archer] is hard as a rock, Jaddu bhai has got a couple of niggles but he has got the sword and he should be fine,” Parag said during the post-match presentation. Tiwary, however, slammed Parag’s statements and questioned why the captain was required to make unclear statements. Last week in Delhi, Parag said that Jadeja was dropped from the XI due to workload management issues. However, batting coach Vikram Rathour would later reveal that the veteran India all-rounder was out of the side due to injury concerns. “I could not understand what he was trying to say through that statement.

Saying that he was injured, and he played through mental toughness, and even before this, he said that Ravindra Jadeja is being rested due to workload management, then the fielding coach is saying something else, so there are a lot of things here,” Tiwary said on Cricbuzz. “He can be happy that he has taken the team to the playoffs as a captain. So, enjoy, but while enjoying it, do not make such statements that no one understands,” added Tiwary. Parag’s side will now face Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Eliminator match on Wednesday in Mullanpur.



good chess,” he says. Carlsen, speaking later at the press conference, disagrees. Defending a title, Carlsen emphasises, is easier because the world champion just has to play one match while the challenger has to earn his spot after jumping through multiple hoops like the Candidates, the Norwegian World No 1 points out. Kasparov had also suggested that should Sindarov defeat Gukesh in December this year, Carlsen would be tempted to play in the world championship cycle again. “It’s not really about me, is it?” Carlsen says. “It’s about these two guys. They’re so young and really exciting players to watch. It’s going to be a fantastic match whatever happens. But whatever happens it’s not going to affect me. So I’m just going to follow that world championship as a chess fan.”



Sehwag and Aakash Chopra in Test matches, Aakash Chopra used to play really well, giving good starts of 30 or 40 runs. But the sheer style and manner in which Virender Sehwag batted used to make Aakash Chopra look almost invisible. Not that he was; Aakash Chopra did a great job on that Australian tour too. But I just have a feeling that because of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi’s fierce batting here, it has thrown Jaiswal off a little. In many games, Jaiswal got out trying to hit the ball too hard. “I want to see Yashasvi Jaiswal bat well because he has the ability. But this time, Rajasthan Royals’ story has been about Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, and on the day Jofra Archer was needed, he also stepped up. But all that said, Mumbai Indians have been very, very, very underwhelming this season. This score was chaseable,” Ashwin added.

Gukesh says playing World Championship at home would be ‘lot of fun’

In little less than a week from now, the window for prospective host cities to bid for hosting the World Chess Championship will shut. And D Gukesh, the boy who will defend his crown from Javokhir Sindarov in November-December, thinks that playing a world championship match on Indian soil would be “a lot of fun.” “A World Championship match, if it’s in India, it will be super cool,” Gukesh said at the pre-tournament press conference on Sunday ahead of the first round of Norway Chess. “It will attract a lot of energy around it. I will be very happy to play a World Championship match in India.”

Reports from Tamil Nadu have indicated that the state government is preparing to bid for the upcoming World Championship in six months’ time. FIDE has announced that the tentative slot for the 14-game battle royale will be from November 23 to December 17 later this year. Playing a World Championship at home is treacherous business, one that has made former world champions like Magnus Carlsen and Viswanathan Anand balk. Unlike other sports, many elite grandmasters do not believe that there’s anything like home advantage when it comes to being in the cauldron of pressure that is a World Championship match.

In fact, Carlsen was so opposed to the idea of playing a World Championship match on home soil that he famously forced Stavanger to pull out from bidding for the 2020 World Championship. “The pressure of playing at home can be almost inhumane. Contrary to most other sports, playing at home for Magnus is absolutely not an advantage,” Henrik Carlsen, Magnus’s father, had written in a Facebook post in 2019. “A World Championship match is by far the most de-

manding challenge for a chess player, and if the player at the same time feels the match must be won, the pressure is almost inhumane in the weeks that the match takes place, and before.” The man who lost the world champion’s throne to Carlsen, Vishy Anand, also revealed recently that he was not happy at having to play the 2013 World Championship in his backyard of Chennai. But it was at that world championship in Chennai where the ambitions of many of India’s current lot were sparked. Gukesh was one of those whose dream of becoming a world champion someday was fuelled by witnessing the 2013 World Championship games from close quarters. At the 2024 World Championship, where Gukesh was crowned the youngest world champion in chess history, India had two cities, New Delhi and Chennai, in the running to host the event before Singapore had prevailed. In his fledgling career, Gukesh has had mixed results at marquee tournaments played in India. At the 2022 Chess Olympiad in Mahabalipuram, Gukesh had shown imperious form but stumbled in the final round against Nodirbek Abdusattorov, a loss which cost India a team gold. At the FIDE World Cup in Goa last year, Gukesh had crashed out in the third round of the tournament after a defeat to Frederik Svane. Gukesh confirms Olympiad participation after enduring 18 months of wretched form since becoming world champion, Gukesh and his team made the decision to withdraw from some classical tournaments this year. Accordingly, some events from the Grand Chess Tour were struck off his calendar. That’s why, unlike Vincent Keymer, Praggnanandhaa, Wesley So and Alireza Firouzja, Gukesh was not in Bucharest to play in the Super Chess Classic Romania last week. On Sunday,

Chaos at Jalsa as fan faints amid Amitabh Bachchan’s first outing post-hospitalisation claims



Recent reports about megastar Amitabh Bachchan being hospitalised had left fans concerned. However, the veteran actor made sure to put all speculation to rest as he appeared for his weekly meet-and-greet with admirers outside his Mumbai residence, Jalsa. The veteran superstar Amitabh Bachchan greeted fans during his weekly Sunday darshan. He was seen with a warm smile on his face. Dressed in his signature casual attire, the actor waved at the massive crowd gathered outside his home, continuing a tradition that has remained special for fans over the years. Fan faints in front of Jalsa. However, the gathering briefly turned chaotic after a fan reportedly fainted and col-

lapsed amid the heavy crowd during the meet-and-greet session.

Amitabh Bachchan’s iconic weekly Sunday tradition turned into a chaotic and tense affair after an overwhelming crowd led to a stampede-like situation, resulting in a fan fainting and collapsing outside his residence, Jalsa. Videos circulating online showed security personnel and bystanders quickly stepping in to assist the individual as the situation caused momentary panic among those present. In another clip, a few fans of Amitabh Bachchan were seen standing atop a nearby building next to his residence to catch a glimpse of the superstar. Big B warmly acknowledged them and waved back, responding to their admiration. For decades, hundreds of admirers from different cities and states have gathered outside Jalsa every Sunday evening to catch a fleeting glimpse of Big B, wave at him, and take photographs. First outing post hospitalisation rumours

This specific Sunday appearance carried extra emotional weight for the veteran actor’s fandom. It marked Amitabh Bachchan’s very first public outing following a wave of intense online rumors claiming he had been admitted to Mumbai’s Lilavati Hospital. The Kalki 2898 AD actor had previously brushed aside the health scares by sharing a characteristically poetic and cryptic post on his social media accounts, with industry insiders reaffirming that he is “absolutely fine.” His appearance at the gates of Jalsa was meant to reassure his worried fans, though the sheer enthusiasm of the crowd ultimately led to the chaotic mishap. The 83-year-old cinema legend remains as busy as ever. Amitabh Bachchan is set to reprise his highly acclaimed role as the immortal Ashwatthama in the highly anticipated sequel to the sci-fi epic Kalki 2898 AD. Additionally, fans will soon see him in Section 84, an upcoming courtroom drama directed by Ribhu Dasgupta. The film, which has already wrapped up production and is awaiting an official release date, features an ensemble cast including Diana Penty, Nimrat Kaur, and Abhishek Banerjee.

‘In current world scenario, so much is manufactured’: Aishwarya Rai’s brutal advice to young actors

After days of making fans back home and around the world wait, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan finally walked the red carpet at Cannes Film Festival 2026 this past Friday. She once again graced the red carpet on Saturday for the closing ceremony of the prestigious film festival. At the festival, when Aishwarya was asked to offer advice to young, aspiring female actors of today, she smiled and responded, “As an artiste, honestly, I continue to feel each day is a new day. And you’re yourself on this road of discovery in this journey of creativity. So, to be put in a position, where a mic held is held to you and you’re asked for advice, it’s a bit exalting to be put on a pulpit, which in all humility, you’re still working and striving to earn that kind of adulation.”

“I’m grateful for the love and support. Thank you so much for the appreciation, but I truly feel your journey in the artistic world, or any world you choose, is individual. And your experiences are what will enrich you and help you discover what choices you can make. Because different strokes for different folks. So, you don’t know what’s going to work for you, what’s right or wrong,” she added in her interview with Brut India. Aishwarya Rai clarified that the binary of ‘right and wrong’ doesn’t exist, as “it’s all in the course of the journey of discovering.” “All I’d like to say is go out there, discover your passion, and be true to your choices. You have to be your best friend because you have to stand by yourself. What goes on around you isn’t something you can predict or you should be looking at manufacturing in the current world scenario, where so much that gets done is manufactured,” added the actor.

Aishwarya also lamented the fact that in the overtly “manufactured” world of today, young actors often tend to miss out on the spiritual fulfillment of discovering oneself through a creative journey. “There’s no fun, magic, and discovering of what all one can do in the journey of exploring.



You have to be alive and experience life, and then bring that to your art. So, be true to who you are. Be brutally honest to yourself,” she asserted. Aishwarya Rai Bachchan also advised aspiring actors to be curious like “a student of life.” “Everything else will find its place as it’s meant to be on the journey. But what’s important is to live your journey,” she concluded. Aishwarya Rai’s arrival at the Cannes film festival came after weeks of speculation that had begun on May 10, when L’

Oreal Paris posted a promotional video showing giant campaign visuals being mounted on a hotel façade in Cannes ahead of the festival. The short clip featured Alia Bhatt, Viola Davis, Eva Longoria and Helen Mirren, but not Aishwarya. Questions about her absence spread quickly across social media. When a follower tagged L’Oreal asking where Aishwarya was, noting that Cannes was the rare occasion many got to see her, the brand replied: “Year after year, Cannes after Cannes, she never misses.”

As Vijay exits cinema for CM’s chair, RJ Balaji says, ‘No void in Tamil film industry’

Two weeks have passed since Vijay walked off the political campaign trail and into the Chief Minister’s office, and Tamil cinema is already being asked a question it may not have a clean answer to: who fills the space he left behind? When this question was posed to RJ Balaji, whose latest film Karuppu is currently running to packed theatres across Tamil Nadu, addressed it head-on. “There’s nothing like that. Vijay sir becoming the Chief Minister makes me very happy,” he said, dismissing the idea that the industry is in any kind of trouble following Vijay’s full departure from screen to state government. Balaji went further, pointing to the roster of working stars who never went anywhere. Suriya, he said, is very much a part of the industry, and there are plenty of other heroes active in Tamil cinema. “There are plenty of heroes in the industry and there is no issue or void,” he said. The comments come at a moment when the question is being asked more seriously than before. Vijay was sworn in as Chief Minister on 10 May 2026, ending six decades of dominance by the Dravidian parties in Tamil Nadu. His party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), secured 108 seats in the 2026 assembly election, emerging as the single largest party, and formed a coalition government with the support of the Indian National Congress and several smaller parties. It was a watershed result, but it also meant that one of Tamil cinema’s biggest box office draws was now permanently out of the picture as an actor.

Vijay had announced his retirement from cinema and formal entry into politics back in February 2024, launching TVK as a secular alternative to the established Dravidian parties. For his fans and well wishers, there was stipulated period of time to prepare for the actor’s departure. But the finality of electoral victory has brought in the conversation about what Tamil cinema looks like without him at the top. The film and its director Balaji is perhaps better placed than most to speak to that question. In one of his recent interviews, he recounted that he had originally written the script for Karuppu with Vijay in mind. When that did not progress, Balaji met Suriya before the release of Kanguva in 2024 and narrated the same script to him. Suriya agreed to take on the role, and the film was produced under Dream Warrior Pictures. The result: Karuppu grossed Rs 150 crore worldwide in its first five days, becoming the highest-grossing film in Suriya’s



career and the highest-grossing Tamil film of 2026. Adding a different kind of complexity to the conversation is the fate of Vijay’s own final film. Jana Nayagan, the political action thriller directed by H. Vinoth and widely seen as Vijay’s swan song before politics, remains locked in an ongoing standoff with the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), five months after its original January 9, 2026 Pongal release was derailed. The film had initially cleared the examining committee stage, with the board leaning toward a U/A (16+) certificate with certain cuts. However, an internal objection by a board member, citing concerns over religious harmony, stalled the process entirely. The trouble did not stop there. On April 9, a high-definition print of the uncertified film was leaked online, spreading across Telegram channels and piracy networks within hours. The makers moved from the Madras High Court all the way to the Supreme Court in their efforts to clear the film for release. As of now, speculation is mounting that Jana Nayagan could release in upcoming weeks, though no official date has been confirmed. The connection between Tamil cinema and Tamil Nadu politics runs deep. Vijay joins a long list of actors who have entered politics in the state, starting with M G Ramachandran and J Jayalalithaa, followed by Sivaji Ganesan, Vijayakanth, and Kamal Haasan. Vijay has already gone further than most of them, winning a state election outright on his first attempt.

‘Make his parents judge’: Sunil Pal on Samay Raina returning with India’s Got Latent 2



It seemed like comedians Samay Raina and Sunil Pal had reconciled in the recent episode of The Kapil Sharma Show. However, soon after the special episode released of Netflix, Pal started badmouthing Raina publicly again. While the two engaged in a playful on-screen banter, the veteran comedian alleged that he was targeted by the organizers and Gen-Z comics like Samay Raina were favoured. After his show India’s Got Latent’s row last year, the YouTuber had announced the season 2 of the comedy special. Now, comedian Sunil Pal has reacted to the announcement. Recently, while speaking to the media at an event of the film September 21, Sunil was questioned about his opinion on Samay announcing the second season of India’s Got Latent. “Main khush hoon, main chahta hoon uss show mein, voh apne mata pita ko bethaye (I am happy. I want him to invite his parents to sit

on that show),” he replied.

When asked if he would like to go as a guest on the show, the veteran comedian said, “Main toh nahi jaunga kyunki voh itna bada show hai, mere layak nhi hai, main toh bahut chota artist hoon. Lekin Samay Raina jab yeh show banaye toh judge banake apne sage baap aur sagi maa ko aur sage baap ko bethaye jaise Kapil Sharma show mein Archana Puran Singh aur Navjot Singh hai. Apne mata pita ko bethaye aur unke saamne yeh show kare. Tab main manunga Samay hai (I won’t go because it’s such a big show and I’m not worthy of it. I’m just a very small artist. But when Samay Raina makes this show, he should make his own mother and father sit there as judges, like Archana Puran Singh and Navjot Singh Sidhu on The Kapil Sharma Show. He should seat his parents there and perform the show in front of them. Only then will I believe there is real courage in Samay).” The feud between Sunil Pal and Samay Raina started after the veteran comedian called Samay and podcaster Ranveer Allahbadia “terrorists” after they got trapped in a controversy in February last year. Ranveer’s distasteful comments about parents led to a lot of backlash, with multiple FIRs filed against them. On the special occasion of World Laughter Day earlier this month, Kapil Sharma reunited Samay and Sunil on his Netflix show. After Samay took playful digs at Sunil during the episode, the comedian accused Kapil and Samay of conspiring against him. He also claimed that he was actually invited to perform a stand-up piece, which did not happen. Meanwhile, a picture from the sets of India’s Got Latent season 2 emerged on social media. The viral photo appeared to show Alia Bhatt and Sharvari on the judge panel. However, neither Samay nor the actors have officially confirmed their appearance yet.

How Karan Johar changed the way a filmmaker is seen, judged, celebrated

Back in 1999, at the 44th Filmfare Awards, when a nerve-wrecked Karan Johar stepped up on the dais to receive his maiden Best Director honour for his 1998 directorial debut Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, he got the entire auditorium — and the entire nation watching the broadcast on Doordarshan — hooked to his speech. “Ever since I’ve dreamt of being here in front of all the people that I’ve grown up watching, I figured if I wanted my dream to come true, I’d have to be a compere. Because I never really thought I’d turn director,” he said. As he concluded his acceptance speech — a self-admittedly rehearsed script rendered with the command of a professional compere — the hearty applause was directed at not only his monumental achievement, but also his refreshing eloquence. He wasn’t the age-old director with a hangover from his pind, but a new-age one raised in the increasingly cosmopolitan South Mumbai. He was also not just a filmmaker good at calling the shots on set, but also a well-rounded personality, aptly representative of a generation embracing liberalisation.

A new millennium, a new talk show. At the turn of the new millennium, as Star World came to India, the channel was scouting for a face of its new chat show. The vibe was more irreverent and casual, and not Oprah-like as was the case with the reigning talk show queen, Simi Garewal. So, the obvious turned out to be a much younger, a more with it Karan Johar. Of course, unlike Garewal, he was a director, and that too one who’d just started out, with two blockbusters under his belt. He was warned by many well-wishers not to dilute the “dignity” of a filmmaker. But Karan later admitted he’s glad he didn’t listen to them, and went on to host a chat show — which literally and symbolically — became synonymous with him. Koffee with Karan was no Rendezvous with Simi Garewal. It wasn’t just candid, but often explosive. Not just ruminative, but also catty. And instead of being soothing and laid back like sipping tea in pristine porcelain, it was steamy, frothy, and stimulating like an espresso shot. To his credit, Karan has kept it brewing for eight seasons (and counting) and over 22 years. Even when the guests are more guarded and PR-trained, Karan has kept the mood of the show organic. He didn’t just dent the perception of the austere Indian filmmaker through his turn as the irreverent troublemaker, but also cut across demographics to venture into the more mainstream streams of Indian television. After hosting the one-off dance hunt Say Shava Shava alongside his former rival talk show host Simi Garewal in 2008, Karan made his presence felt even in the primetime slots of the Hindi GEC channels in 2012.

As a judge on Jhalak Dikhta Jaa alongside Madhuri Dixit and Remo D’Souza, he brought the dramatic fluency he’d mastered on Koffee with Karan, this time in another, more accessible language. And the riffing with his co-judges on India’s Got Talent — Kirron Kher and Malaika Arora (read: “Toodles!”) — made for content so malleable that it fit as well on television as on Instagram Reels. Karan didn’t just treat this expansion into the Hindi GECs as a cash-grabbing exercise, but also his personal creative release (remember how liberated he felt when he takes to the dance floor on Jhalak Dikhta Jaa) and a place of inspiration (he hailed India’s Got Talent as a thriving ground for budding talent across performance arts). Hosting duties continue to roll for Karan Johar in all shapes and sizes, from the scale of Traitors on Amazon Prime Video and Bigg Boss OTT season 1 (he and his mother Hiroo Johar are self-professed avid buffs) to the intimacy of playing the matchmaker on Netflix India reality show What The Love! and donning the love guru hat on late night radio show Calling Karan. “When you are not in a relationship of your own, you do have the bandwidth to analyse other people’s relationships. But you know, how they say a great acting coach may not be a great actor. So I may be a good adviser, but that doesn’t mean I’m great in a relationship,” Karan told this writer in a 2018 interview. It’s certainly the shroud of privacy Karan has maintained over his love life that’s also sustained his mystique in a saturated world where he, as per confessions time and again, is explicitly everywhere. So much so that Kareena Kapoor joked on Koffee with Karan that her mother Babita Kapoor can spot Karan Johar as soon as she switches on the television. Karan has embraced that multifaceted, multihyphenate persona with aplomb. The ‘diva’ image in this rather unconventional Punjabi munda is also shaped by his facility for high fashion.

Though he kicked off his career officially as an Assistant Director to Aditya Chopra on his 1995 blockbuster romantic comedy Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, that film also launched yet another career for the filmmaker-to-be. As recently as his debut on the Met Gala red carpet earlier this month, Karan credited Shah Rukh Khan for his secondary fashion career. All set to relocate overseas to study fashion, Karan was roped in by Chopra to help out on his direc-



torial debut, where he ended up grooming and styling the lead actor. That led to an enduring association of Karan not only as Shah Rukh’s frequent director, but also his go-to stylist on films like Dil To Pagal Hai (1997), Duplicate (1998), Mohabbatein (2000), Veer-Zaara (2004), and Main Hoon Na (2004). It also helped that Karan’s sprawling movies reflected the same brand of glamour, shaped in large part by Manish Malhotra, that eventually became his personal style statement in real life. But the filmmaker, who began with monochromes dominated largely by all-black suits, admitted that his turn to fur, candy-coated colours, and drapes was in fact an armour to protect his deep insecurities linked to his physique. Karan has detailed in his 2016 memoir An Unsuitable Boy that since he was bullied at school for being a “pansy”, he took classes for grooming, including fashion, body language, and even voice training to sound “more like a man.” With renewed confidence and assurance in his own skin, Karan has now returned to the familiar monochromes, except the occasional Met Gala-like red carpe, when he goes all out, but not without compromising on his core, classy style. Like fellow filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Karan has also kept the visual, kaleidoscopic extravagance to his movies, and retained the blacks for his personal wardrobe.

The occasional actor. The change in Karan Johar’s pop-culture perception is also reflected through the few appearances he’s made on the big screen. Though his career began with playing the sidekick oddball in Anand Mahendroo’s 1989 TV show Indradhanush and SRK’s pal Monty in DDLJ, the syntax of his acting gigs changed completely post his arrival on Koffee with Karan. His cameos in Madhur Bhandarkar’s Fashion (2008) and Zoya Akhtar’s Luck By Chance (2009) presented him as a suave starmaker who owns the front row to the fashion and film industry. Anurag Kashyap milked this persona to cast him as the flamboyant Parsi media mogul Kaizad Khambatta in his 2015 period crime drama Bombay Velvet. Although the fate of that film’s box office put a nail into the coffin of his acting career, Karan maintains that he’s still open to acting offers. While he doesn’t take the liberty to cast himself in any of the movies bankrolled by his banner Dharma Productions, he’s shown that he’s still got it in a show like Aryan Khan’s The Ba****d of Bollywood last year. Just watch him have a moment grooving to “Koi Mil Gaya” from his directorial debut when he’s assured that despite the casting changes, his next “will always be a Karan Johar film.” But unlike other filmmakers who became successful actors, like Farhan Akhtar and Anurag Kashyap, Karan Johar’s relevance also stems from his alternate image as controversy’s favourite child. Ever since Kangana Ranaut dubbed him as “the flag-bearer of nepotism”, with that narrative picking steam after the death of Sushant Singh Rajput in 2020, Karan hasn’t heard the end of it for eight years now. Every nepo baby’s lackluster performance is traced back to his mighty misfires, even though he continues to introduce new voices and faces who have no remote connection with the film industry. Karan has deleted his X account and even admitted to seek therapy to combat the incessant trolling targeted at him and his kids. But he maintains that he can still process love or hate in abundance, but can’t get himself to deal with indifference. But given the trajectory of his directorial career, Karan need not worry about that. Yes, he’s constantly challenged the way a filmmaker was conventionally perceived in India, but he’s managed to ground all the other dimensions of his personality — host, fashionista, actor, provocateur — in relevance only because he’s enjoyed 100% success as a writer-director. Right up till his latest directorial, Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani three years ago, Karan has kept indifference at bay because of relentless visibility, but also because he’s never showed the same indifference to what got him that visibility in the first place.