

## Harish Rao follower marks leader's birthday with blood-painted portrait

Siddipet: Followers of politicians are known to exhibit their love for their leaders in myriad ways.

A staunch follower of former Minister T Harish Rao made such an attempt by getting a portrait of Harish Rao painted with his blood. Saiprem Samalla, a young BRS leader from Siddipet, wanted to celebrate Harish Rao's birthday in a unique way this year. Since Rao's birthday was to be celebrated on Wednesday, Saiprem roped in an artist to draw the portrait of the former minister using his blood. His blood was drawn by a qualified technician working at a blood bank in Siddipet. Saiprem planned to present the extraordinary portrait to Harish Rao on Wednesday.

## Govt rebuts borrowing report, but questions persist over CAG figures

Hyderabad: The Telangana government issued a rejoinder to a news report titled "Debt surges as Telangana spends double its income in 1st month", disputing the borrowing and revenue figures published for April 2026. However, the rejoinder raised more questions than clarifications. In the rejoinder, the Principal Secretary for the Finance Department maintained that the report incorrectly stated that the State raised debt of Rs 11,414 crore in April. According to the government, only Rs 6,900 crore was raised through Open Market Borrowings (OMBs) via the Reserve Bank of India.

## Godavari Pushkaralu should showcase Andhra's rich culture: CM Naidu

Amaravati, June 2

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday directed officials to organise the Godavari Pushkaralu-2027 on a grand scale, showcasing the state's rich cultural, historical and spiritual heritage.

Emphasising the importance of spiritual tourism, the Chief Minister noted that the Godavari river basin is home to numerous sacred temples and pilgrimage centres, making the Pushkaralu an excellent opportunity to promote spiritual tourism and boost economic activity across the region.

Naidu, reviewing arrangements with the Ministers' Committee and senior officials at the Secretariat, said all departments must work closely to ensure the prestigious event runs smoothly.

He also reviewed the Akhanda Godavari Development Project. He reiterated that the Polavaram Project would be completed and dedicated to the nation before the commencement of the Pushkaralu, creating an additional attraction for visitors.

The Chief Minister proposed developing the stretch from Dhavaleswaram to the Polavaram Project as an "Akhanda Godavari Corridor" and instructed officials to ensure that all infrastructure developed for the Pushkaralu becomes a lasting asset for the Godavari basin region. He expressed confidence that the event would significantly contribute to transforming Rajamahendravaram into a major metropolitan city.

Naidu directed officials to focus on highway and railway traffic management and make special arrangements for the large influx of pilgrims from rural areas. To ensure convenience and avoid confusion, he instructed that all Pushkar ghat be numbered systematically.

He called for improved road connectivity through national and state highways and enhanced railway services between Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada. He directed officials to write to Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw seeking additional special trains and financial assistance from the Centre.



He also suggested exploring the establishment of Kumbh Mela-style tent cities and homestay facilities to accommodate pilgrims and tourists. Referring to the recent field visit by Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Naidu instructed officials to incorporate his recommendations into the planning process.

The Chief Minister directed officials to construct roads on both sides of the Polavaram Project and undertake extensive beautification of the Godavari River embankments. He also suggested renovating the residence of social reformer Kandukuri Veeresalingam in Rajamahendravaram. Prominent spiritual leaders, heads of religious institutions, political leaders and film personalities will be invited to participate.

Naidu instructed officials to present a comprehensive action plan by June 24, after which the official countdown to the event will begin. He further directed APSAC, RTGS and TTD to jointly develop crowd management systems and launch a dedicated Akhanda Godavari Pushkaralu-2027 website.

He emphasised the uninterrupted conduct of Akhanda Harathi to the Godavari River and Pavitra Harathi to the Krishna River.

## Telangana HC rejects Jana Sena plea for Hyderabad meet



Hyderabad, June 2

Telangana High Court dismissed the House Motion petition filed by Jana Sena Party, headed by Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, for conducting a meeting in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

The Jana Sena had challenged the decision of Cyberabad Police to deny permission to Pawan Kalyan's 'Telangana Nava Nirmana Sankalpa Sabha', planned to be held on the occasion of Telangana Formation Day on June 2.

Jana Sena had earlier said that if the High Court denied permission for the meeting, its chief, Pawan Kalyan, would address the media at his residence in Jubilee Hills.

"I will address a press meet at my home in Jubilee Hills today between 4.30 to 5.30 p.m. I hope the Telangana Police Department at least gives me permission to do a press meet with JSP leaders. Let's see," Pawan Kalyan posted on X on Tuesday.

He also stated that Jana Sena took birth on the soil of Telangana and that it inherited and imbibed the spirit of struggle from this land.

Greeting people of Telangana on the occasion of Telangana Formation Day, he said the Jana Sena Party was fully committed to working with unwavering dedication towards realising the aspirations, upholding the self respect, and achieving the holistic development goals of

the people of Telangana. Cyberabad Police on Monday rejected Jana Sena's request for permission to hold the meeting.

Ch Srinivas, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Serilingampally Zone, Cyberabad Commissionerate, communicated to Talluri Ram, General Secretary, Jana Sena Party, that the request to conduct the proposed meeting was rejected to ensure law and order and public peace and tranquillity.

The Jana Sena had sought permission for a meeting at Sandhya Convention, Gachibowli, on June 2 from 3 pm to 9 pm, with an expected participation of about 2,000 persons. Jana Sena said the reasons cited for rejecting the permission raised more questions than they answered and appeared more like excuses than genuine concerns.

"How did the baseless remarks of an analyst and the counterarguments made against those baseless remarks suddenly become a threat to law and order across Telangana? Isn't that a lame excuse to stop the event?" asked the party in a statement posted on X.

Meanwhile, Jana Sena leaders in Telangana celebrated Telangana State Formation Day at the party's State office in Kukatpally. The leaders paid rich tributes to the immortal heroes of the Telangana movement and expressed their desire for the State to achieve further progress in all sectors. They extended heartfelt best wishes to the people of the State.

## Govt plans to privatize power sector on pretext of losses: KTR

**BRS working president KT Rama Rao alleged that the Telangana government was moving towards power sector privatisation through the proposed Rythu Discom. He also criticised the government over farmer welfare, crop procurement, Rythu Bandhu payments and the supply of agricultural inputs**

Rajanna-Sircilla, June 2 The BRS working president KT Rama Rao alleged that the state government was conspiring to privatise the power sector on the pre-



text of the discoms sustaining losses. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, who has begun a new drama in the name of Rythu Discom, was planning to install meters for transformers and agricultural motors under the Rythu Discom.

There was no mention of Rythu Discom among the 420 promises made to the public by the Congress party. Though no state in the country has such a discom, why has the state government introduced Rythu Discom in Telangana, the BRS leader sought to know. Rama Rao made these comments while admitting Veernapalli sarpanch Anil and others into the party at Telangana Bhavan in Sircilla on Tuesday.

The BRS working president expressed deep concern over the condition of the state. Telangana, which used to be like a 'Vaddinchina Vistari' (a platter of food already served) under the previous government, has turned into a 'Kukkalu Chimpina Vistari' (a leaf platter torn into pieces by dogs). Revanth Reddy borrowed Rs 4 lakh crore during the last two-and-a-half years. Had the Chief Minister done at least one good thing with that amount, Rama Rao questioned.

Terming Revanth Reddy a 'renewal CM', the BRS leader said that instead of farmers, Rythu Bandhu amounts had been deposited into the account of Rahul Gandhi. Though the entire country rejected the Congress

party, the people of Telangana elected it. Was Indiramma Rajyam meant to create troubles for farmers and dishonour all poll promises, he questioned.

Referring to farmers' troubles at procurement centres, the BRS leader called upon the farming community to question leaders over crop procurement instead of touching their feet. How could leaders who could not procure even the crop produced by farmers make them crorepatists, he questioned.

Leaders who approach farmers during elections were unable to provide Rythu Bandhu amounts at the time of paddy transplantation, he said, and found fault with the government for registering cases against BRS leaders who were fighting on behalf of farmers. Both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Revanth Reddy were not in a position to supply even urea to farmers, he alleged.

## Jaishankar, BJP leaders hold talks with Nepal's RSP chief Rabi Lamichhane in Delhi

New Delhi, June 2

Nepal's emerging political force, the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) on Monday held a series of high-level engagements here with party chairman Rabi Lamichhane meeting External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and BJP national president Nitin Nabin as part of efforts to deepen political and people-to-people ties between India and Nepal.

Jaishankar described his meeting with Lamichhane and his delegation as productive, saying discussions centred on the India-Nepal development partnership, and the close people-to-people connections that underpin bilateral ties.

"A pleasure to meet Nepal's RSP chairperson Rabi Lamichhane and his delegation today in Delhi. Our discussions focused on the India-Nepal development partnership and people-to-people ties. These have a crucial role in promoting growth and prosperity," Jaishankar said.

The visit was organised under BJP's "Know BJP" initiative, which seeks to familiarise foreign political leaders and parties with BJP's organisational structure, governance model and political outreach mechanisms.

During discussions at BJP headquarters, Nitin Nabin highlighted the deep-rooted civilisational, cultural and people-to-people links between India and Nepal and said such exchanges helped strengthen democratic dialogue and party-to-party engagement.

He briefed the Nepalese delegation on BJP's ideological foundations, organisational structure and grassroots mobilisation strategy, explaining how the party maintains a direct connect with citizens through its extensive cadre network.

## Life insurance, free breakfast scheme and more: Telangana Dy CM

Hyderabad, June 2

During Telangana State Formation Day celebrations in Khammam on Tuesday, June 2, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka announced the launch of the Indiramma Kutumba Jeevitha Bima Pathakam, which aims to provide free life insurance of Rs 5 lakh each to 1.15 crore families in Telangana.

Addressing a gathering after hoisting the national flag at the District Police Parade Ground, Bhatti said that the scheme is available to families of any income cat-

egory. "The Indiramma Kutumba Jeevitha Bima Pathakam aims to provide financial security during crises involving the death of a family's primary breadwinner," he said.

Bhatti, who is also the Finance Minister, said that as part of the state budget 2026-2027, the government will soon introduce a free breakfast programme for government students from pre-primary to Intermediate level in addition to the existing mid-day meal scheme. "The objective is to ensure that no child attends school on an empty stomach," he said.

According to data, in Khammam district alone, 61,065 students studying in 1,187 schools and 6,300 Intermediate students will benefit from the programme. The government will construct five Young India Int-



egrated Residential Schools in Khammam for Rs 200 crore each, he said.

Bhatti told the gathering that the government plans to set up 58 MW of solar panels on 2,718 government buildings in Khammam. "A 7.5 kW solar plant for agricultural pump sets was also launched in Garlapadu village," he said.

As part of the Congress government's commitment towards women's entrepreneurship, Bhatti said Rs 57.15 crore has been released as interest subsidy to 52,059 self-help groups (SHGs). He also said that for those belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Tribe, there is the Indira Mahila Dairy programme, where milch buffaloes are distributed with a subsidy of Rs 109 crore.

Indiramma Housing in Khammam

On the Indiramma Housing Scheme, Bhatti said that 16,243 houses were taken in the first phase in Khammam alone. "A total of 8,291 house-warming ceremonies have already been completed and Rs 441 crore has been credited directly into beneficiaries' accounts. The second phase, consisting of 2,000 houses, will begin soon," he said. Under the Rythu Bharsa

scheme, the Khammam Market Yard is being upgraded into a model market at a cost of Rs 155 crore. For road connectivity, 427 km of roads across the district will be developed with an investment of Rs 1,230 crore. A cable bridge over the Munneru River is under construction at a cost of Rs 180 crore. Underground drainage works worth Rs 250 crore are underway in Khammam Municipal Corporation, while another Rs 128 crore is being spent on drainage infrastructure in Madhira.

Telangana aims for USD 3 trillion economy by 2047

He reiterated his earlier statement that the state is heading for a USD 3 trillion economy by 2047 and said the government plans to achieve this goal by categorising its growth strategy into three sectors - Cure, Pure and Rare.

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## IPL showcases experience and youth

T20 sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi — all of 15 — was the brightest star of the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL), even as the old warhorse Virat Kohli made his presence felt with typical panache. The 37-year-old batting legend powered Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) to their second successive trophy with a quickfire fifty in the final. Such was Kohli's form and fitness during the two-month-long tournament that his participation in the 2027 ODI World Cup is now within the realm of possibility. Kohli admitted that he needed a change in mindset and a bit of pushing from "super young" players to reinvent his T20 game. This candid acknowledgment offers a glimpse of the healthy competition that is shaping Indian cricket. The just-concluded IPL season showed that cricketers from two generations can complement each other admirably. Kohli remains a dominant force, while players like Sooryavanshi are ensuring that the game continues to evolve.

Sooryavanshi, the Rajasthan Royals prodigy, walked away with most of the awards: Most Valuable Player, Emerging Player of the Season, Super Striker of the Season, Orange Cap winner and Super Sixes of the Season. His fearless batting and remarkable consistency represent the new generation's bold approach to the shortest format of cricket. Yet, what stands out is not merely his talent but his maturity at such a young age. Sooryavanshi's ability to perform under pressure mirrors the very quality that has defined Kohli's success over the years.

The vast pool of talent showcased by the IPL augurs well for India, the reigning T20 world champions. The inclusion of this sport in the 2028 Olympics and the 2030 Commonwealth Games implies that the cricket-crazy nation can expect more laurels in the years to come.

## Congress Government Must Immediately Fulfill Promises Made to Telangana Agitators: Former BRS State Secretary Nerdham Bhaskar Goud



UPPAL, JUNE 2 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): On the occasion of Telangana State Formation Day, former BRS State Secretary and BC JAC leader of Uppal Constituency, Nerdham Bhaskar Goud, attended the celebrations as the chief guest at Uppal Monda Market and near the Telangana Thalli statue in Chiluka Nagar. "He hoisted the national flag, garlanded the Telangana Thalli statue, and paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the Telangana movement. Participants raised slogans of "Jai Telangana" and remembered the sacrifices made during the struggle for statehood. "Speaking on the occasion, Bhaskar Goud urged the Congress government to immediately fulfill the promises made to Telangana movement activists, including the allotment of 250 square yards of house sites, identity cards, pensions for activists, and employment opportunities for the families of martyrs who lost their lives during the movement. "He stated that only by implementing these assurances can the government truly pay homage to the martyrs who sacrificed for the formation of Telangana. "Prominent Telangana movement activists and local leaders who participated in the programme included Gajjela Satyaraj Goud, Mohan Reddy, Nimmanagoti Nagaraju, Babu, Ramulu, Yadagiri, Anantha Reddy, Manoj, Venkatesh, Malliah, Yadaiah, Lakshman, Ravi, Ramireddy, Naveen Chary, Narasimha, and several others.

## Telangana Formation Day Celebrations Held Grandly



Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, June 2: "Telangana Formation Day celebrations were organized with great enthusiasm today at Nacharam X Road under the leadership of Nacharam Congress Party leader V.S. Prakash Reddy. On the occasion, the Telangana flag was ceremoniously hoisted. "Speaking at the event, V.S. Prakash Reddy said that the formation of Telangana was the result of numerous sacrifices, struggles, and the relentless efforts of martyrs. He called upon everyone to work towards the state's development, public welfare, and social justice in line with the aspirations of those who fought for Telangana. He also urged people to preserve Telangana's rich culture and traditions while contributing to the state's progress. "The program was attended by senior Congress leaders Ram Reddy, B. Srikanth Goud, Ashwathama Reddy, Fasiuddin, Sudhakar Reddy, Sharifuddin, Narasing Rao, Srinivas Reddy, Revanth, Firoz, S.K. Khayam, and Naresh. "Women Congress leaders Uma, Vijayamma, Yasmeen, and Mamatha also participated in the celebrations. A large number of Youth Congress, NSUI leaders, Congress party members, and supporters attended the event and extended their greetings on the occasion of Telangana Formation Day.

## "Telangana State Was Formed Due to Sonia Gandhi's Commitment"



Uppal Constituency In-Charge MANDUMULA PARAMESWAR REDDY, JUNE 2 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Telangana State Formation Day celebrations were held with great enthusiasm in the Uppal constituency on Tuesday. On the occasion, Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-Charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy unfurled the National Flag at the Indira Gandhi Statue. "Addressing the gathering, Parameswar Reddy said that Telangana was formed because of the commitment and support of Sonia Gandhi. He stated that the credit for granting Telangana statehood goes to Sonia Gandhi, while the credit for achieving it belongs to the Congress Party. "He further remarked that since the Congress came to power in Telangana, it has upheld the self-respect and aspirations of the people. He highlighted several initiatives undertaken by



the government, including the organization of the Godavari and Saraswati Pushkarams, the installation of the Telangana Thalli statue, honorariums for intellectuals, encouragement for artists, and recognition for writers and poets. "True people-centric governance is Congress governance," he asserted. "Parameswar Reddy emphasized that the Congress Party played a historic role in the formation of Telangana and called upon the people of the state to remain forever grateful to Sonia Gandhi for her contribution. "The event was attended by Congress Party presidents from Uppal, Ramanthapur, Habsiguda, Chilakanagar, Nacharam, and Mallapur divisions, along with district executive members, senior leaders, representatives of Mahila Congress, Youth Congress, SC Cell, BC Cell, and a large number of party workers.

## Telangana State Formation Day Celebrated Grandly at Uppal Zonal Office



Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Participates, UPPAL, JUNE 2 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Telangana State Formation Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the Uppal Zonal Office on Tuesday. As part of the celebrations, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy participated in the flag-hoisting ceremony organized at the

municipal office premises. "The event was attended by Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, Deputy Commissioner Shailaja, former Chiluka Nagar Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, government officials, and leaders from various political parties. "On the occasion, tributes were paid to the martyrs of the Telangana movement in recognition of their sacrifices for the formation of the state. "Addressing the gathering, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that Telangana, achieved after decades of struggle, is progressing steadily in all sectors. He called upon public representatives and citizens to remain committed to public service in line with the aspirations of the martyrs who laid down their lives for statehood. He described June 2 as a symbol of the self-respect and pride of the people of Telangana, noting that it marks the historic realization of the dream of a separate state and freedom from discrimination, neglect, and injustice. The MLA also recalled the contributions of all those who participated in the Telangana movement and expressed hope that everyone would work together for the continued growth and development of the state.

## Martyrs' sacrifices laid foundation for Telangana's progress: Minister Adluri Laxman Kumar says State has become a national benchmark in development and welfare.



KARIMNAGAR : State Minister for SC, ST Welfare, Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Senior Citizens and Transgender Persons Adluri Laxman Kumar on Tuesday said Karimnagar was making significant strides towards becoming a model district through sustained development and welfare initiatives.

Participating in the official Telangana Formation Day celebrations at the Police Parade Ground, the Minister unfurled the National Flag and received the ceremonial salute. Paying tributes to the martyrs of the Telangana movement, he said the State's formation was the outcome of their sacrifices and the aspirations of millions of people. Addressing the gathering, Mr. Laxman Kumar said Telangana had, over the past 12 years, emerged as a symbol of progress, welfare and self-respect. Under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the State government was committed to transparent governance and inclusive development, he said.

The Minister highlighted the government's long-term vision document, Telangana Rising-2047, aimed at transforming the State into a globally competitive economic hub through investment promotion, employment generation and wealth creation. Reviewing the district's performance, he said several flagship welfare schemes had yielded substantial benefits. Under the Mahalakshmi scheme, women in the district had undertaken 7.39 crore free bus journeys, while beneficiaries received subsidised LPG cylinders under the ?500 gas cylinder programme. Through the Gruha Jyothi scheme, eligible households were provided free electricity up to 200 units. The Minister said financial assistance under Rhythu Bharosa and compensation through Rhythu Bima had provided critical support to farmers. He also noted that thousands of beneficiaries had been covered under the Indiramma Housing Scheme, with a large number of houses either completed or under construction.

Referring to agricultural procurement, he said the district recorded substantial paddy procurement during the

Yasangi season, ensuring timely payments to farmers. He also highlighted progress in education, healthcare, social security pensions, scholarships, women's self-help group financing and nutrition programmes. Mr. Laxman Kumar commended the efforts of public representatives, officials, police personnel, Telangana movement activists and citizens in contributing to the district's development. Earlier, the Minister and elected representatives paid homage to Telangana martyrs at the Martyrs' Memorial. Families of martyrs were felicitated during the programme. Cultural performances by students and exhibitions by various government departments were among the highlights of the celebrations. Certificates of appreciation were presented to police personnel and government employees for meritorious service. Choppadandi MLA Medipalli Sathyam, Manakondur MLA Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, District Collector Chitra Mishra, Police Commissioner Gaush Alam and several public representatives and officials participated in the event. Separate Telangana Formation Day celebrations were also held at the District Collector's Camp Office and the Collectorate.

## People's Aspirations Remain Unfulfilled Even After Formation of Telangana State: Former Uppal MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar

UPPAL, JUNE 2 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): As part of the Telangana State Formation Day celebrations, former Uppal MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar unfurled the national flag at the Bharat Mata statue on Ramanthapur Mini Tank Bund on Tuesday. "Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakar alleged that despite the formation of a separate Telangana state, the aspirations of the people remain unfulfilled and there has been no significant improvement in the overall situation. He criticized the previous BRS government, stating that "during the last ten years, KCR's family completely looted Telangana, resulting in a severe deterioration of the state's financial condition. "He further accused the present Congress government of continuing the same trend, saying, "Earlier, the BRS looted the state, and now the Congress government is doing the same. "Prabhakar claimed that public dissatisfaction with the Congress government has already begun to grow across the state. "Recalling the Telangana movement, he alleged that the Congress party's stance during the agitation led to the sacrifice of nearly 1,400 innocent youth. The event was attended by Corporator Bandaru Sreevani Venkatrao, Devasani Balachander, Mutineni Jagadish, Vallapu Jagan Yadav, Santosh Gupta, Revu Narasimha, and several other party leaders and activists.

## BSP Committed to Fulfilling the Aspirations of Telangana Martyrs



Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, June 2: "State President Ibrahim Shekar" On the occasion of Telangana Formation Day, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Telangana State President Mr. Ibrahim Shekar, along with party leaders and activists, paid floral tributes to the Telangana martyrs at the Martyrs' Memorial located at Gun Park, Hyderabad. "Speaking to the media on the occasion, Mr. Ibrahim Shekar stated that Telangana was not formed due to the generosity of any individual or political party, but as a result of the sacrifices, struggles, and relentless efforts of thousands of students, youth, employees, farmers, and people from all sections of society. He paid heartfelt tributes on behalf of the BSP to all those who sacrificed their lives for the achievement of a separate Telangana state. "He recalled that under the visionary leadership of BSP supreme Ms. Mayawati, all 39 BSP Members of Parliament extended their full support to the Telangana Bill, and emphasized that the party's contribution to the formation of Telangana will remain a significant chapter in history. "However, he expressed concern that despite several years of statehood, the aspirations of the Telangana movement—social justice, equal opportunities, and the empowerment of Bahujan communities—have not been fully realized. He criticized successive governments, stating that while political power has changed hands, the lives of Bahujan communities have not witnessed the expected transformation. "Telangana martyrs did not sacrifice their lives for the rule of a few families. They dreamed of political empowerment for the Bahujan masses. BSP is the only party capable of fulfilling those aspirations and building a socially just Telangana. The true tribute to the martyrs is to ensure political power and representation for the Bahujan communities," Mr. Ibrahim Shekar asserted. "The programme was attended by State Vice President Sriram Krishna, Nalgonda Zone In-charge Banoth Ravinder Naik, Malkajigiri Parliament In-charge Mullangiri Srihari Chari, Parliament In-charge Kasukurthi Srihari, Medchal-Malkajigiri District President Mallepogu Vijay Raju, Uppal Assembly President Mindrala Narsingh Rao, district and assembly committee leaders, division-level leaders, and a large number of party workers.

## Telangana's 13th Formation Day Celebrations at DCC Bhavan

Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy Attends as Chief Guest; Senior Congress Leaders Honored, Hanamkonda, June 2 (Indian Chronicle) : Under the aegis of the Hanamkonda District Congress Committee (DCC), Telangana's 13th Formation Day was celebrated on Monday with immense enthusiasm and grandeur. Held at the DCC Bhavan under the chairmanship of DCC President Inagula Venkatram Reddy, the event featured Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy as the Chief Guest, who hoisted the flag. "He paid heartfelt tributes to the spirit of the Telangana movement and to the sacrifices of the countless martyrs who laid down their lives for the formation of the state. "As part of the celebrations, the national flag was formally unfurled. Rich tributes were paid to the sacrifices of the martyrs who paved the way for the inception of the Telangana state. The event reflected the collective pride, aspirations, and enduring legacy of the Telangana movement. "Joining Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy were Warangal MP Kadiyam Kavya, and MLAs Nayini Rajender Reddy and K.R. Nagaraju, MLC Basavaraju Saraiah, PCC members, elected representatives, and senior Congress leaders participated in the event and extended their greetings on the occasion of State Formation Day. Addressing the gathering, the leaders recalled the struggles of the people, the sacrifices made by Telangana activists, and the selfless services rendered by the youth, who played a pivotal role in the realization of the state. On this occasion, they also outlined the various initiatives undertaken by the government to accelerate Telangana's development and strengthen public welfare. "In recognition of their invaluable contributions to the Telangana movement and the Congress party, senior Congress leaders and long-serving party activists were felicitated during the event. Commending the dedication they have demonstrated over decades toward public service, party building, and social development, the elected representatives formally honored them by draping shawls over their shoulders. "Among those who received the felicitation were Bodireddy Prabhakar Reddy, Ravula Narasimha Reddy, Takkalapalli Ashok Rao, Gottimukkula Ratnakar Reddy, Hanumakonda Rajender, Mahmood Ali, Chidrala Sudhakar Reddy, Nallathegala Yellayya, and several other leaders. Expressing their gratitude for the honor bestowed upon them, the felicitated leaders reiterated their unwavering commitment to strengthening the party and serving society. Several speakers emphasized the need to effectively address the people's issues while simultaneously bringing the achievements of Telangana's development closer to the public. They stated that the government has focused its attention on key sectors such as rural development, youth employment, farmers' welfare, and social empowerment. He opined that Telangana Formation Day is not merely a celebration, but a historic occasion to commemorate the sacrifices made for the state's success, to honor the aspirations of the people, and to renew the commitment toward a prosperous and progressive Telangana. "TPCC representatives, elected representatives from various constituencies, PACS members, District Congress Committee members, presidents of affiliate organizations, senior party leaders, and Congress activists from the erstwhile Warangal district participated enthusiastically in these celebrations. The DCC Bhavan was packed with party workers and supporters, creating a vibrant atmosphere that reflected the spirit and pride of the struggle for the formation of the Telangana state.

## Health Card is the Right of Every Employee "Government Must Clarify Issues Related to Teachers and Employees"



utilized exclusively for healthcare services and not diverted to other purposes. He expressed concern that delays in implementing CPS matching grants have increased doubts among employees. "He urged the government to ensure cashless treatment and OP services in all corporate hospitals through a transparent online system. He also called for the release of a list of empanelled hospitals in advance and the provision of dedicated ambulance and toll-free services for medical emergencies. "Komaraiiah requested that the dependent age limit for unmarried youth be increased to 35 years, contributions be reduced for families with fewer beneficiaries, and a fixed contribution system be adopted instead of linking contributions to basic pay. "He also suggested establishing a dedicated helpline and toll-free number to resolve technical issues faced by employees and teachers and to facilitate regular updating of beneficiary details. "On the occasion, he demanded that the Congress Government fulfill the promises made to 2003 DSC teachers, release six pending Dearness Allowances (DAs), and immediately announce the PRC Committee report. He also called for the clearance of pending bills and the release of a White Paper on the ₹2,000 crore payments that the government claims to have made. "Referring to election promises, he urged the government to implement the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for Telangana employees and teachers. He also demanded the withdrawal of the practice of appointing Collectors as District Educational Officers (DEOs) and sought the replacement of the Collector currently functioning as DEO in Jangaon district. Additionally, he called upon the government to fill the vacant Mandal Educational Officer (MEO) and District Educational Officer (DEO) posts across the state. "Speaking at the meeting, TAPAS State President Vadnala Rajashekar said that the government should bear the cost of Health Card contributions instead of deducting money from employees' salaries. He stated that employees continue to work responsibly despite not receiving several allowances and emphasized that Health Cards are essential for ensuring their well-being. He warned that if the government fails to formulate policies in line with employees' expectations, large-scale protest programs would be launched. "Union General Secretary Pentaiah, Organization Secretary Hanumantha Rao, and other leaders were also present at the meeting.

"Vacant DEO and MEO Posts Should Be Filled: MLC Malka Komaraiiah" Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, June 2. "Teacher MLC Malka Komaraiiah demanded that the Telangana Government immediately clarify its policies regarding employee and teacher health security, salaries, pending issues, and the implementation of the Employees Health Care Trust (EHCT), and remove the doubts prevailing among employees and teachers. "He was the chief guest at a meeting organized by the TPUS Teachers' Union in Nacharam, Hyderabad. Speaking on the occasion, he stated that a Health Card is the right of every employee and that it is unfair to deduct contributions from employees' salaries for its implementation. He urged the government not to impose any additional financial burden on employees and teachers in the name of EHCT and to implement the scheme only after issuing comprehensive guidelines. "Komaraiiah suggested that employee contributions towards the scheme should be collected only after the implementation of the Pay Revision Commission (PRC) and that the government should bear the financial burden until then. "He also demanded that Health Cards be extended to permanent and temporary teachers and staff working in Model Schools, KGBVs, SSA, URS institutions, Tribal Ashram Schools, and Gurukul institutions. Considering their salary structure, the government should bear their contribution as well, he said. "The MLC further demanded a written assurance from the government that funds collected under EHCT would be

## Telangana Formation Day Celebrated Grandly at Chilukanagar Crossroads

— Organized Under the Leadership of Chilukanagar Congress President Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj

UPPAL, JUNE 2 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Telangana Formation Day celebrations were held with great enthusiasm at Chilukanagar Crossroads in Chilukanagar Division under the leadership of Chilukanagar Congress Party President Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj. "Speaking on the occasion, Rajesh Mudiraj said that the formation of Telangana State was the result of the sacrifices and relentless struggle of countless martyrs. He stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Telangana is progressing rapidly and emerging as a model state for the nation. "The celebrations were organized as per the directions of Uppal Congress Constituency In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, under the supervision of Chilukanagar Division In-charge Akkiti Agam Reddy and Division President Rajesh Mudiraj. Floral tributes were paid to the portraits of Telangana martyrs as a mark of respect for their sacrifices. "Addressing the gathering, Rajesh Mudiraj said that Telangana was achieved through the collective efforts and aspirations of the people. He noted that the self-sacrifice of martyr Srikanta Chary intensified the Telangana movement and inspired people across the region. He further stated that former Congress President Sonia Gandhi played a historic role in the formation of Telangana despite political challenges faced by the party. "He added that the people of Telangana are currently benefiting from the welfare-oriented governance of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and emphasized the need for citizens to continue support-



ing the Congress Party under the leadership of Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy in the Uppal constituency. "Among those who participated in the event were Akkiti Agam Reddy, Medchal DCC General Secretary Kompalli Balaraj, Amareshwari, Gandikota Ganesh, Manchala Raghu, Moinuddin Mamu, Dandugula Shankar, Palle Ramesh Goud, Amar, Chandraiah, Naroju Radhakrishna, Balaram, Jagadish, David, Sailu Mudiraj, Jangaiah, Sonu Goud, Bhaskar, Ramu Goud, B.M. Kiran, Tiju Thomas, Surrender, Sumalatha, P. Krishna, Anjaneyulu, Anup, Rahim, Raju Chichcha, Kiran, Sandeep, Kashi, Raju, and Ashraf Ali, along with several Congress Party workers and local residents.

## GUINNESS WORLD RECORD HONOUR FOR BHIMARAM STUDENTS



excellence and dedication. "Among the participants, 777 students demonstrating exceptional proficiency in keyboard performance were officially recognized as Guinness World Record achievers. Pastor Augustine Dandingi, founder of the music institution, personally presented certificates to the successful participants and congratulated them on their outstanding accomplishment. "Notably, Daniel Kripal Chowhan and Deborah Keerthi Chowhan from Bhimaram earned a distinguished place among the record holders. Daniel Kripal Chowhan is a Grade 5 student, while Deborah Keerthi Chowhan is studying in Grade 10 at Skill Stork International School. "The achievement has been widely appreciated by village elders, educationists, teachers, and the students' parents, Sujatha Chowhan and Jagadheer Chowhan.

They also lauded the school management and faculty members for their dedicated efforts in identifying, nurturing, and refining the students' talents. "Local residents expressed immense pride over the accomplishment, stating that the students have become a source of inspiration for aspiring young talents. They wished them greater success in future national and international competitions. By excelling not only in academics but also in the field of music, these young achievers have brought honour and recognition to Bhimaram and Hanamkonda district on the global stage.

— Exceptional Keyboard Performance Earns International Recognition "Hanamkonda, June 2, (Indian Chronicle) : Two young students from Bhimaram in Hanamkonda district have brought pride to their district and the state by securing a place in the prestigious Guinness World Records through their outstanding musical talent. "The "Guinness Achievers Meet," held at Victory Auditorium in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, drew widespread attention and participation.

Organized under the supervision of Guinness World Records representatives, the event featured nearly 2,000 keyboard players from 22 countries who performed continuously for one hour, showcasing remarkable musical

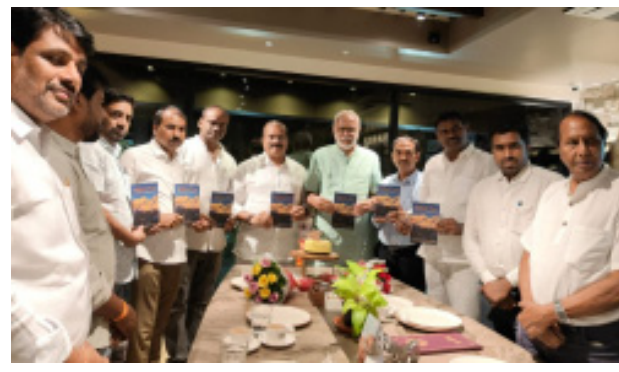


## Telangana Formation Day Celebrated Grandly at Manthani Municipal Office.

PEDDAPALLI DISTRICT, Manthani: On the occasion of Telangana State Formation Day, grand celebrations were held today at the Manthani Municipal Office. "As part of the celebrations, Manthani Municipal Chairman Vodnala Srinivas hoisted the national flag and paid rich tributes, recalling the sacrifices of the Telangana martyrs. "Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman stated that several development programs are being undertaken for the progress of Manthani town, with the support and cooperation of the Honorable Minister Sridhar Babu. "By the next Telangana Formation Day, we will strive to further transform the face of Manthani town and ensure better infrastructure and basic amenities for the public," the Chairman affirmed. "Dignitaries in Attendance? "The event saw active participation from local officials and public representatives, including: "Municipal Commissioner: N. Manohar, Municipal councillors? : Kurra Lingaiah, Nukala Kamal, Maddikatla Sravanthi, Jambhoju Srimathi, Laishetti Rajitha, Marupaka Niharika, Vemula Lakshmi, and Yellanki Vamshidhar. "Other public representatives, municipal officials, staff, and local residents.

## Grand Launch of 'Kashmir Tour: Essentials and Experiences'

Hyderabad, June 02 (Indian Chronicle) : The English book 'Kashmir Tour: Essentials and Experiences' authored by noted writer Dr. Dyavanapalli Satyanarayana was formally launched on Monday at a function held at Niloufer Café, Himayatnagar. The book was unveiled by Deccan Heritage Academy Trust Chairman Manikonda Vedakumar along with former corporator Mahalakshmi Raman Goud. Speaking on the occasion, Vedakumar appreciated Dr. Satyanarayana's efforts in documenting his experiences from Kashmir in book form. He noted that the author has already made significant contributions by highlighting various tourist destinations in Telangana through his writings. Mahalakshmi Raman Goud said that Dr. Satyanarayana's scholarly works in the fields of history and tourism would be highly beneficial to the younger generation and aspiring travelers. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Dyavanapalli Satyanarayana described Kashmir as 'Paradise on Earth' and encouraged everyone to visit the region at least once in their lifetime to experience its natural beauty and cultural



richness. Host of the event, Ravinder, expressed his happiness at celebrating his 40th birthday on the same occasion. Film lyricist Charan Arjun, lecturer Muttineni Satyam, and several other distinguished guests attended the book launch ceremony.

## Former Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy Inspects 40 Lakh Drainage Works in Kaveri Nagar

UPPAL, JUNE 2 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Former Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy on Tuesday inspected the underground drainage construction works being undertaken at a cost of ₹40 lakh in Kaveri Nagar, Uppal Division. "The drainage project is being executed in fulfillment of the assurance given by Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy during her recent visit to the colony, where residents had raised concerns regarding the need for drainage and CC road infrastructure. The drainage works are currently progressing at a brisk pace. "Speaking on the occasion, Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy urged officials to ensure the completion of the drainage works before the onset of the monsoon season. She also announced that the construction of CC roads in the locality would commence shortly. "We are committed to fulfilling the promises made to the residents. Kaveri Nagar will be developed into a model colony with improved civic infrastructure," she said. "Colony President N. Sudhakar Reddy, along with Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Y.K. Naidu, N. Srinivasa Reddy, Venkatesh Gupta,



K.V. Prasad, Raghupathi Reddy, Lakshmi Reddy, Naveen Chary, Appula Murali, Mohan Reddy, Pochayya, Khaseem, Bal Reddy, Venkat Reddy, Murali Chary, Praveen Goud, Ananthayya, D. Srujana Reddy and several other residents participated in the programme.

## Telangana BJP President Shri N. Ramchander Rao addresses Telangana Formation Day celebrations at Telangana Bhavan

New Delhi "New Delhi, June 2, 2026: Telangana BJP President Shri N. Ramchander Rao addressed the Telangana Formation Day celebrations held at Telangana Bhavan in New Delhi and extended warm greetings to the people of Telangana on the occasion of the State Formation Day. "In his brief opening remarks, Shri N. Ramchander Rao welcomed the Hon'ble National President of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Shri Nitin Nabin ji, and stated that his presence at the programme made the occasion even more special. "Shri Ramchander Rao paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the Telangana statehood movement, recalling that the formation of Telangana was the result of a historic people's movement in which youth, students, and people from all sections of society made immense sacrifices. "He said that more than 1,200 youth sacrificed their lives for the cause of Telangana, and it is because of their struggle and sacrifice that the long-cherished dream of statehood became a reality. "Telangana is not just another state. Behind its formation was a massive movement driven by the aspirations, self-respect, and sacrifices of the people of Telangana," Shri Ramchander Rao said. "He further stated that Telangana was achieved through a democratic and parliamentary process. He recalled the crucial role played by the Bharatiya Janata Party and paid heartfelt tributes to former Leader of Opposition Smt. Sushma Swaraj ji, who gave unconditional and unwavering support to the

Telangana statehood demand in Parliament. "If Sushma Swaraj ji had not stood firmly for Telangana, the voice of Telangana would not have been heard so powerfully in Parliament. The people of Telangana will always remember her contribution with gratitude" he said. "Shri Ramchander Rao said that while Telangana has achieved statehood, the journey must now move towards greater development and progress. He stated that the Central Government under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji is fully committed to the development of Telangana. "He called upon everyone to work collectively towards the goal of a Viksit Telangana, contributing to the larger vision of Viksit Bharat. "Highlighting the bond between the Telugu-speaking people of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Shri Ramchander Rao said that the two states must move forward with friendship and healthy competitive development. "We Telugu people have two states. There should be no hatred, but only healthy competition in development. With friendship between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, both states can progress together. Viksit Telangana and Viksit Andhra Pradesh together will strengthen the vision of Viksit Bharat," he said. "Shri Ramchander Rao once again welcomed and thanked BJP National President Shri Nitin Nabin ji for attending the celebrations. He also expressed his gratitude to Union Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy ji, MP Shri Raghunandan Rao ji, and all dignitaries and participants present at the programme.

## Pawan Kalyan vows Jana Sena will contest 2029 Telangana polls

Hyderabad: Political heat in Telangana went up by a few notches on Tuesday, after the Jana Sena Party (JSP) founder Pawan Kalyan declared that his party would contest the 2029 general elections in Telangana, declaring that the newly formed state was not anyone's 'fiefdom'. The actor-turned-politician literally stirred a hornet's nest by seeking to justify his comments on Telangana State formation with his argument that he had expressed his pain and fasted for 11 days over the way in which the united Andhra Pradesh was bifurcated, but his protest was not against Telangana.

His earlier statement that he had fasted for 11 days after Telangana was formed had hit a raw nerve among

people in Telangana and buttressed the feeling that the AP Deputy Chief Minister was against Telangana. Another statement of his that Telangana had cast an evil eye on Konaseema in AP was also detested by Telanganites.

political controversy with his decision to convene a meeting christened 'Telangana Nava nirmana Sankalpa Sabha' for which the Hyderabad police denied permission. Subsequently, the AP Deputy CM had called for a press conference at his house in Jubilee Hills even as a controversy surfaced over his land stretch on the city outskirts. His detractors claimed that the land was a water body and that it was encroached.

## A major political development is unfolding in Telangana as Jana Sena Party President and Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has once again turned the spotlight on Telangana politics.

"Addressing party leaders, workers, and supporters, Pawan Kalyan called for greater youth participation in politics and emphasized the need for transparent governance, accountability, and people-centric development." "The Jana Sena chief asserted that politics should serve as a platform for public welfare rather than personal gain. He stressed the importance of creating opportunities for the youth, supporting farmers, and ensuring quality education and employment for future generations." "Pawan Kalyan also reiterated his party's commitment to strengthening its organizational presence across Telangana and working closely with people at the grassroots level. His remarks come at a time when political equations in the state are witnessing significant changes, triggering fresh discussions among political

observers." "The speech generated considerable interest among party cadres and political circles, with many viewing it as a signal of Jana Sena's growing focus on Telangana." "In his address, Pawan Kalyan highlighted the need for clean politics and responsible leadership. He urged party workers to remain connected with the public and work towards addressing local issues affecting communities across Telangana." "The Jana Sena chief maintained that the aspirations of the youth, farmers, women, and economically weaker sections must remain at the center of policymaking and governance." "As Telangana's political landscape continues to evolve, Pawan Kalyan's renewed focus on the state is expected to add a new dimension to the political discourse in the coming months."

## Telangana Statehood Reflects the Collective Will and Sacrifice of the People: Ambati Srinivas

"Narsampet/Warangal, June 2 (Indian Chronicle) : Telangana State was not achieved through the efforts of any single individual; rather, it emerged as a result of the collective struggles, sacrifices, and selfless contributions made by all sections of society, said TJS State Vice President Ambati Srinivas." "Speaking as the chief guest at the flag-hoisting ceremony organized at the TJS Constituency Office on the occasion of Telangana Formation Day, Srinivas addressed party activists and Telangana movement participants." "He recalled that while many laid down their lives for the cause of Telangana, countless others fearlessly participated in the movement, endured police baton charges, faced imprisonment, and spent years battling legal cases. He emphasized that the formation of Telangana was built upon the dedication, hardships, and sacrifices of thousands of movement activists." "Critiquing former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, Srinivas alleged that while Telangana activists made immense sacrifices, the benefits were enjoyed by the KCR family. He stated that KCR came to power claiming sole credit for the formation of Telangana but failed to uphold the aspirations of the movement during his decade-long rule. He further alleged that those who had sacrificed everything for the Telangana cause were sidelined and neglected." "Srinivas also criticized the previous government for failing to adequately support Telangana activists and the families of martyrs during its tenure. While welcoming the initiative of the Revanth Reddy-led government to constitute a special committee for the identification



of Telangana movement activists, he stressed that the process must be expedited. He said the initiative would attain true significance only when eligible activists receive official identity cards and are provided with the recognition and support they deserve." "Among those who participated in the programme were TJS Warangal District President Shaik Javid, State Committee Members Gunti Ramachander, Dr. Jagadeeshwar, Bonagani Ravinder, District Leaders Solthi Sai Kumar, Md. Kuchaiyah, Sandhani, Parupati Raghotham Reddy, Md. Mahboob Ali, Mallesham, Ramakrishna, Ramagiri Madhavi, Kasani Padma, Akarapu Sarojana, Pedda Jo Aruna, Mullakuntla Lalitha, Botla Sarojana, and several others.

## Congress Rule Ends Past Misgovernance, Say Leaders at Telangana Formation Day Celebrations



Swamakumari, General Secretary of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee. "Speaking on the occasion, the leaders said that Telangana, which they claimed had been burdened with debt due to the previous government's corrupt administration, is now progressing on the path of welfare and development under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and the Congress government." "They highlighted the successful implementation of welfare schemes such as free bus travel for women and 200 units of free electricity for eligible households.

The leaders also stated that the Palair constituency, which they described as neglected over the past decade, is witnessing significant development under Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy through the construction of houses, roads, and side drains." "They further noted that the government is actively implementing the Indiramma Housing Scheme to provide homes for underprivileged families across the state who do not own houses." "The event was attended by Chava Shivarama Krishna, Chairman of the Palair Constituency ATMA Committee, along with Congress leaders, party workers, and supporters."

"Khammam, June 2 (Indian chronicle): "Telangana Formation Day celebrations were held with great enthusiasm on Tuesday at the camp office of Telangana Revenue, Housing, and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy in Khammam. The event was organized under the leadership of camp office in-charge Thumburu Dayakar Reddy, and the national flag was unfurled by Maddineni Baby

## Vedik Ojas is a new venture that brings together the unadulterated ideas of our ancestors

along with the unadulterated manufacturing company Vedik Ojas

Hyderabad, June 2: Vedik Ojas is a new venture that brings together the unadulterated ideas of our ancestors, along with the unadulterated manufacturing company Vedik Ojas. The founder of the company introduced herself to us and asked us to read the letter and encourage her." "I am Asha Rekha Koneru, founder of Vedicojas." "Vedicojas based natural wellness and personal care brand committed to bringing traditional herbal knowledge into modern lifestyles. Founded with a passion for natural living, Vedicojas specializes in handmade herbal soaps, bath powders, hair wash powders, face packs, herbal oils, and other nature-inspired personal care products." "The brand focuses on carefully

selected herbs, botanical ingredients, and skin-friendly formulations that promote healthy skin and hair care. Each product is handcrafted in small batches to ensure quality, freshness, and attention to detail." "Inspired by India's rich Vedic and herbal traditions, Vedicojas aims to offer products that are simple, effective, and environmentally conscious. The brand continues to develop innovative formulations while preserving the benefits of traditional wellness practices." "With the motto "Woven by Nature. Blessed by Veda.", Vedicojas strives to encourage healthier lifestyles through natural and sustainable self-care solutions." "For more information, contact: "VedicojasShadnagar, TelanganaMobile:

## Grand Telangana State Formation Day Celebrations Held at Ramanthapur Under the Leadership of BRS State Leader Gandham Nageswara Rao

"UPPAL, JUNE 2 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Telangana State Formation Day celebrations were held with great enthusiasm in Ramanthapur Division under the leadership of BRS State leader Gandham Nageswara Rao. On the occasion, the national flag was hoisted and tributes were paid to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the Telangana movement." "Speaking at the event, Gandham Nageswara Rao stated that the Congress government should extend support to the families of those who lost their lives during the Telangana agitation. He also urged the government to fulfill the promises made to Telangana movement activists." "Several BRS leaders and party workers participated in the celebrations, including Madhusudhan Reddy, Palakuri Srikanth, Ramasahayam Srinivas Reddy, Koppu Nursing Rao, Suram Shankar, Chand Pasha, Shankar Anna, Thut Narasimha, Vempati Srinu, Manish, Ramachandra Chary, Mohan Babu, Laxman, Mahender, Sagar, Muthyala Madhu, Chegurri Srinu, Vanampalli Srinivas, Sammad, Gopichari,



Nandu, Baburao, Maruthi, Apple Srinivas, Mallikarjun, Balaraju, Venkataramana, Raju, Sharath, Vamsi, Sriram, Laddu, Prem, Satish, Vinod, and Sharif." "Women participants including Sandhya, Kurna Lakshmi, Radhama, Lakshmi, Manjula, and Sabitha, along with several others, were also present at the event.

## Government striving for comprehensive development of Telangana people..



"State Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar revealed " Prasad Kumar received the police guard of honor at the District Collector's office and hoisted the national flag. Attended by District Collector Deepak Tiwari, District SP Sneha Mehra, Additional Collectors Uma Shankar Prasad, K. Venkatachari, Tandur and Pargi MLAs Manohar Reddy, Ram Mohan Reddy, District Library Organization Chairman Rajeshwar Reddy, Municipal Chairperson Ananya, Vice Chairman Sudhakar Reddy."

"Indian Chronicle Vikarabad (June 2)" "State Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar called upon everyone to work with dedication, leaving no stone unturned for the development of the district, to transparently implement the development and welfare schemes introduced for public welfare." "On the occasion of Telangana Formation Day, at the Collectorate premises, Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar received the police guard of honor and unfurled the national flag. Addressing the public on this occasion, State Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar said that in the two-and-a-half years since the formation of the people's government, many prestigious development and welfare programs have been undertaken. He said the government is moving forward by giving priority to rural and urban areas and achieving comprehensive development in line with the aspirations of all social groups." "He stated that Telangana faced brutal suppression and exploitation in the united state, and realizing that their destiny would not change unless a separate Telangana state was formed, people launched a massive movement and achieved a separate state. He paid rich tributes to all the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the cause of Telangana State." "He said that under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the people's government is moving forward with the vision of 'Telangana Rising-2047' to place Telangana State at the forefront in India and globally. He said that the 'Telangana Rising-2047' vision document has been formulated with exemplary goals in economic, social, and administrative sectors for the development of Telangana State, and the government is moving ahead with action and commitment." "He stated that the government has undertaken a 99-day "Praja Palana – Pragathi Pranaliika" with a special action plan focused on rural development, public services, welfare, and improvement of basic infrastructure from the mandal level to the state level." "He said the government is working with main goals including office cleanliness, file clearance, health, 'Arrive Alive', welfare, child safety and protection, staying away from narcotics, agriculture, education, youth and sports, women's empowerment, and environmental protection programs." "He noted that the census is conducted once every ten years in India, and the census that was to be held in 2021 was postponed due to the Corona pandemic. Therefore, after almost 16 years, the census will be conducted in 2026, and he advised all people to participate in this census program and get their details registered. He said that in the district so far, enumeration of a total of 3 lakh 27 thousand residences and 2 lakh 66 thousand houses has been completed, meaning 81.01 percent of the enumeration is done." "He stated that a total of 2 lakh 65 thousand Praja Palana applications were received in the district, and survey of 2 lakh 51 thousand applications has been completed so far." "He informed that last year, 13,464 Indiramma houses were allotted to the district, of which the District Collector approved 12,628 Indiramma beneficiaries. In addition to these, 521 for Chenchus and 540 for land losers, totaling 13,689 houses were sanctioned for the district. Of these, ground-breaking was done for 8,947 houses, 7,444 houses are in various stages of construction, and so far 1,240 beneficiaries have performed house-warming ceremonies in Indiramma houses. He said that 186 crore 63 lakh rupees have already been deposited into the beneficiaries' accounts." "He said that in the district so far, 5 crore 68 lakh women have utilized the free transport facility, through which women have benefited to the tune of 209 crore 33 lakh rupees." "He said the government has provided a subsidy of ten crore 43 lakh rupees for the supply of cooking gas at 500 rupees. Through the Gruha Jyothi scheme, the government has so far provided a subsidy of 85 crore 87 lakh rupees to a total of 1 lakh 45 thousand families in the district." "He said that by strengthening the Rajiv Aarogyasri scheme, the previous coverage of 5 lakh rupees was increased to 10 lakh rupees, and due to this scheme, 36,969 poor people in the district have received treatment so far, for which the government has paid 102 crore 77 lakh rupees."

"He said that in the district, 43,589 new ration cards were issued, and additional ration was sanctioned for 1 lakh 62 thousand units. In 2 lakh 85 thousand food security cards in the district, for 9 lakh 71 thousand units, 6,305 metric tonnes of fine rice are being distributed every month." "He said that in the district so far, loan waiver of 863 crore rupees has been done for 1 lakh 13 thousand farmers, freeing them from debt." "He said that under Rythu Bima, 2,894 farmers' insurance claims have been settled so far, and a total of 144 crore 70 lakh rupees, at 5 lakh each, has been deposited into the nominee accounts of deceased farmers." "For the 2026-27 Kharif season, 1,100 quintals of jute and 500 quintals of green manure are available to be provided to farmers at a 50 percent subsidy, he said." "He said that with the goal of making one crore women into millionaires, activities such as operation of solar power plants, petrol bunks, rice mill establishments, providing rental buses to RTC, procurement of paddy, establishment of Indira Shakti canteens, and awarding contracts for stitching uniforms for government school students are being undertaken." "He said that in the state, interest-free loans of twenty thousand crore rupees per year have been provided to DWCRAs women to enable them to conduct businesses and achieve economic self-reliance." "As part of the management of solar power plants by women's groups, he said that the construction of a solar power plant on 10 acres in Barwad village of Kothpally mandal has been completed and is ready for inauguration." "As part of the program to provide support price to farmers, in the 2025-26 Kharif season in the district, 87,734 metric tonnes of paddy were procured from 16,865 farmers, and 209 crore rupees related to this were directly credited to farmers' bank accounts. Also, to encourage the cultivation of fine variety paddy, a bonus of 500 rupees per quintal is being given, and in this process, a total of 7 crore rupees has been credited to the accounts of about two thousand farmers." "He said that in



the 2025-26 season, 14 CCI cotton procurement centers were set up in the district and 7 lakh 91 thousand quintals of cotton were purchased at support price from 48,643 farmers." "He said that four Young India Integrated Residential Schools have been sanctioned in Kodangal, Vikarabad, Tandur, and Pargi constituencies in the district with international standards where students from all sections can study together. Funds have been sanctioned to construct each at a cost of two hundred crore rupees on twenty acres of land, and works are in progress." "He said that 197 crores have been sanctioned for the construction of a new Medical Nursing and Physiotherapy College at Hakimpeta in Kodangal constituency and works are in progress. He said that construction works of the Veterinary College sanctioned at a cost of two hundred crore rupees in Hakimpeta are in progress. He said the government has sanctioned 255 crores for the construction of a 430-bed hospital in Kodangal." "He said that 73 crore 45 lakh rupees have been sanctioned for the construction of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule B.C. Boys Gurukul Schools in Gokul Phasalwad, Buranpur, and Kodangal, and works are in progress." "Under Amma Adarsha Pathashala Committees, out of 1,062 schools in the district, works have been completed in 924 schools, some are in progress, and 18 crore 80 lakh rupees have been sanctioned for these, he said." "For the 2026-27 academic year in the district, 6 lakh 79 thousand 854 textbooks and 2 sets of uniforms will be distributed to 85,157 students, and from the beginning of this academic year, workbooks, notebooks, and study material will be distributed to all students, he said." "Under the Mid-Day Meal scheme, nutritious food is being provided to 93,151 students in 1,011 schools from 1st to 10th class, he said." "In the year 2025-26, Vikarabad district achieved 91.24 percent pass rate in tenth class results, better than the previous year, and he congratulated the teachers who worked for this." "He said that out of 27,276 applications received so far under Bhu Bharati, 20,291 applications have been resolved, and the remaining applications are under examination." "He said that 135 Grama Palana officers have been appointed for administrative convenience at the village level." "Under Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak schemes in the year 2025-26 in the district, 32 crore rupees have been provided to 3,200 beneficiaries at 1 lakh 116 rupees each, he said." "Under Mission Bhagiratha scheme in the district so far, 1,429 OHSR tanks have been constructed, 1,920 kilometers of pipeline laid, and taps have been fixed to a total of 2 lakh 2 thousand houses, providing pure drinking water to every house, he said." "To avoid power problems in the district, 29 new 33/11 KV sub-stations have been sanctioned at an estimated cost of 85 crore rupees; some have been completed and others are in progress, he said." "From 2023-24 to 2025-26 in the district, farmers have newly taken up oil palm plantation on 2,653 acres, and so far 815 farmers have availed subsidy benefits, he said." "Through the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture scheme, plantation was done on 1,433 acres to increase the cultivation, production, productivity, and quality of fruit orchards, vegetables, flowers, and spices, and so far 8,392 farmers have benefited, he said." "Through the Micro Irrigation scheme, drip and sprinklers are being provided at 100 percent subsidy to SC, ST farmers, 90 percent to BC farmers, and 80 percent to other farmers. In the 2025-26 financial year so far, drip irrigation has been implemented on 7,950 acres benefiting 2,705 farmers. Also, sprinkler method has been implemented on 2,794 acres benefiting 1,533 farmers, he said." "He said that in the district, related to 20 mandals, 16,713 savings groups with 1 lakh 66 thousand women, 651 village organizations, 20 mandal federations, and the district federation are conducting various programs." "He said that 1,513 crore rupees have been distributed to 8,797 self-help groups through bank linkage." "Through Cheyutha pensions in the district, 1 lakh 6 thousand 687 beneficiaries are being paid 2,016 rupees per month each, and 4,016 rupees each for persons with disabilities, he said." "Through the Urban Poverty Eradication Organization, bank linkage of eighty crore rupees has been provided to 622 women's groups in all municipalities of the district, he said. As part of the Indra Mahila Shakti scheme, in the district, 157 women group members have individually set up various types of units with two crore ninety lakh rupees, he said." "He said that in the district, 40 doctor-level veterinary hospitals, 60 veterinary sub-centers, 30 self-employed Gopalmitras, and 4 mobile veterinary hospitals are functioning. In the last two years, 30 metric tonnes of fodder seeds were supplied to farmers in the district at 75 percent subsidy, he said." "For the year 2025-26, one crore 4 lakh fish seedlings have been released into 617 tanks in the district at 100 percent subsidy, he said." "He said that the construction of a 100-bed hospital in Pargi at 26 crores, a 30-bed Community Health Center in Bashirabad at ten crore fifty lakh, and a 240-bed hospital in Kodangal at 27 crores are in progress." "He said that a 50-bed Critical Care Hospital set up in Vikarabad at 23 crore 75 lakh is ready for inauguration, and works on a Central Drug Store being constructed at Ananthagiri at three crore six lakh rupees are in progress."

"He said that through the Panchayat Raj Engineering Department in the district, under various schemes, 588 crore rupees have been sanctioned for 2,575 works and works are ongoing." "In Kodangal constituency, under CAD and SDF funds, 543 crore rupees have been sanctioned for 528 works, and so far 203 works have been completed at a cost of 124 crore rupees and the remaining works are in progress, he said." "Under the Swadesh Darshan project, 38 crores have been sanctioned for Vikarabad, and as part of this, works have started to create infrastructure for tourism development in Ananthagiri and surrounding areas on 213 acres in a manner that provides employment to locals. He also said that an agreement has been reached with the Telangana State Government and MEGA organization to develop Ananthagiri hill as a world-class tourism and temple tourism project at a cost of one thousand crore rupees." "He said that there are 1,179 tanks in the district with a total ayacut of 78 thousand acres, and 90 crore rupees have been sanctioned for the modernization of Kothpally Vagu project, the largest irrigation project in the district, and works are progressing rapidly." "He said that a total of 5 check dams have been sanctioned on the Kagna river in Tandur constituency at a cost of 43 crore 45 lakh, and the construction of the Left Main Canal of Uddandapur, being built at a cost of 1,470 crore rupees, is in progress."

## 'Slap on the face of judiciary': Allahabad HC slams state officer for ignoring 2022 order



GNS News Agency, June 2

Expressing concern over non-compliance with its order, the Allahabad High Court observed that the moment litigants are permitted to treat judicial directions as optional, "the very foundation of constitutional governance begins to erode". The observation came while the court was hearing a contempt plea filed by Ghazipur resident Radhey Shyam Yadav, who alleged that despite a 2022 interim order directing payment of his current salary during the pendency of his writ petition, the Deputy Inspector of Schools (DIOS) failed to comply. The present DIOS sought to justify the non-compliance on the ground that a stay-vacation application against the interim order was pending, a contention the court rejected. Taking a strong stance on the non-compliance of the order, a single bench of Justice Kshiti Shailendra observed in its order dated May 19, "The dignity and authority of Constitutional Courts is inseparably connected with public confidence in the justice delivery system. When judicial orders are openly violated without consequence, the common citizen begins to lose faith in the efficacy of law itself." It added, "... The perception inevitably emerges that court orders are incapable of enforcement and may safely be ignored until the end of endless litigation. Such a situation would indeed amount to making a mockery of the legal system and symbolically placing a slap upon the face of the judiciary."

Yadav had filed a writ petition in 2017 seeking payment of his salary. On April 18, 2022, the writ court directed the then DIOS to ensure payment. A special appeal challenging the order was later dismissed as withdrawn. During the contempt proceedings, the present DIOS filed an affidavit stating that a stay-vacation application had been filed on behalf of the State on May 12, 2022, and that a listing application had been moved on May 13 this year. On that basis, a request was made to defer further proceedings in the contempt plea until the stay-vacation application was decided. The bench of Justice Shailendra, however, said four years had elapsed since the interim order was passed and

the contempt application has also been pending for the same period.

It said the facts of the present case and nature of the interim order are slightly different as it was directed that the petitioner shall be paid his current salary during pendency of the writ petition. The bench said, "There is nothing on record to indicate that the State ever pressed its stay vacation application since 2022... It is only on May 13, 2026, immediately after this court directed personal appearance of the DIOS in a case of non-compliance within a month from April 9, that a listing application was filed in the writ petition on behalf of the State."

The stay vacation application has been pending for the last four years and no effort was made to get it listed or argued, it added. Emphasising the importance of compliance with judicial orders, the court observed: "The majesty of law does not survive merely by passing of judicial orders. It survives because such orders command obedience. An order of a Constitutional Court is neither a mere advisory opinion nor a decorative piece of paper to be admired and ignored at convenience. It carries with it the full authority of the Constitution and the solemn mandate of the rule of law."

"If mere filing of an application were treated as a licence to violate court orders, every contemnor would conveniently avoid compliance by instituting repetitive applications and then taking shelter behind the pendency thereof," added the court. The bench also stated that the Allahabad High Court is burdened with cases, as "around 400, 500, 600 and sometimes more than 800 cases are listed every day before every judge and sometimes it takes... decades in disposing of the matters". "People all around may expect such overburdened judges to become ever-working super robots or super computers or super-human beings. If during such pendency, parties are permitted to openly defy operative directions, the administration of justice would descend into chaos and anarchy. The law does not countenance such audacity," observed the bench. It observed that contempt jurisdiction exists precisely to prevent such collapse of judicial authority. "Constitutional Courts are guardians of legality and their orders cannot be permitted to become dead letters awaiting uncertain fate for years or decades while parties continue to act in brazen violation thereof," the bench observed. The bench, in its order, stated that the "opposite party is guilty of committing contempt of the order dated April 18, 2022 so as to warrant further proceedings in this matter". The court listed the hearing for July 8 for framing of charges against the DIOS, directing him to be present in court personally. The court also said it is not inclined to defer proceedings as it is more than satisfied that "mere filing/pendency of the stay vacation application does not ipso facto (by the fact itself) amount to vacation of interim order".

## Seven years, three rejections: How an IPS officer took his fight to quit his job all the way to Supreme Court

GNS News Agency, June 2

After a nearly seven-year-long legal and administrative battle, Maharashtra-cadre IPS officer Abdur Rahman, 53, may finally be able to take voluntary retirement from service (VRS), the Supreme Court set aside a Central government order of 2019 rejecting Rahman's plea for VRS, which cited pending disciplinary action against him, including over participation in protests against the CAA. The apex court held that the government's refusal of the IPS officer's application suffered from "a non-application of mind". It directed the Union Home Ministry to re-examine Rahman's VRS notice afresh and pass appropriate orders within three months.

"No government should force an unwilling officer to continue working. Even when I moved applications stating that I did not wish to continue, the state kept manufacturing small issues to drag the matter," says Rahman, a 1997-batch officer and an IIT-Kanpur graduate in civil engineering. Originally from Bihar, Rahman has served in several senior administrative positions across Maharashtra, including as Assistant Superintendent of Police in Latur, Superintendent of Police in Dhule, Additional Commissioner of Police (Administration) in Pune City, and Inspector General of Police in the Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission.

Rahman, who briefly explored entering politics before deciding against it ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, believes the Centre's resistance to his VRS plea stemmed solely from his opposition to the CAA. "It was my anti-CAA statements that made me a target." However, it is not the first time Rahman filed for VRS. His first application was in 2017, two years after he wasn't made Special Inspector General of Police and felt he was overlooked. But, soon after, Rahman decided to pursue the matter with the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT), and withdrew his VRS plea. Then in March 2018, Rahman submitted a second VRS application. The Union Home Ministry rejected it on the ground that he didn't have Vigilance clearance, citing disciplinary proceedings going back to 2007. These proceedings stemmed from delay in providing RTI information on a FIR registered during Rahman's tenure as Yavatmal Superintendent of Police. Rahman maintained the information sought had been supplied twice through post, and that failure to communicate this was a clerk's lapse and not evidence of any misconduct on his part. He also alleged that the 'major penalty chargesheet' against him in the matter, in November 2015, was "manufactured" solely to block his promotion to Special Inspector General in 2017. The RTI-related proceedings were eventually closed and Rahman was promoted in 2019.

His third VRS application, submitted on August 1, 2019, was cleared by the Maharashtra government in October

2019. The state government said it had reviewed the complaints pending against him, and added: "... it is seen that chargesheet is not issued in any case & disciplinary proceedings are only contemplated. Also it seems to be (that) no major penalty will be imposed on the Officer." But, nine days later, the Centre again blocked VRS for Rahman, citing the disciplinary proceedings despite Maharashtra's go-ahead — over alleged violation of service rules in a family matter, and over a speech delivered by Rahman in March 2019 at the launch of his book 'Denial and Deprivation: Indian Muslims after the Sachar Committee and Rangnath Mishra Commission Reports'. Even as these matters were pending, Rahman publicly announced his decision to quit government service after the CAA was passed by Parliament in December 2019, calling it "against the basic features of the Constitution". He also participated in anti-CAA protests leading up to the passage of the Bill.

This led to the third chargesheet against Rahman, in April 2022, pertaining to allegedly unauthorised absence from duty, publishing information related to his VRS application on social media, and participating in protests against the CAA. Rahman first approached the CAT against the denial of VRS, but his plea was rejected in December 2023, with the tribunal citing pending complaints and possible disciplinary proceedings against him. He then moved the High Court, which also dismissed his challenge in July 2024, ruling that the Centre had the final authority to accept or reject VRS applications and that departmental proceedings against him were already under contemplation at the time. Rahman then approached the Supreme Court. In its order asking the Centre to clear his application, the apex court observed that when it rejected VRS for Rahman, there was no formal chargesheet against him, meaning no disciplinary proceedings were actually pending at the time. The Court also said that of the three complaints cited against him, only one was validly under contemplation and that the Centre had failed to properly consider the Maharashtra government's view that the complaint was unlikely to result in a major penalty. At the same time, the Court said that the authority to accept or reject VRS applications of IPS officers remained with the Centre. Rahman says he doesn't regret his actions, and intends to continue working on issues concerning the socio-economic condition of Muslims and other marginalised communities. "My emphasis is to create awareness among socially downtrodden groups, including Muslims." While he is relieved after the Supreme Court order, Rahman adds, he will rejoice only once his VRS is formally approved. "Life was comfortable in service, but at times you realise you can do far more for people outside the system. I am happy with the Supreme Court verdict asking the government to reconsider my VRS application. I would have been happier had the Court directly granted me VRS," he says.

## Doctor found dead in Chandigarh medical college washroom, probe underway



GNS News Agency, June 2

A doctor was found dead in a washroom of the Trauma Centre at Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), Sector 32, in Chandigarh. The deceased was identified as Dr Yogesh, a junior resident from the department of internal medicine. The hospital authorities informed the doctor's parents, who are on their way from their hometown, Jalandhar, to Chandigarh. According to preliminary information, the doctor was found dead inside the washroom during duty hours. Hospital authorities alerted the police, who rushed to the spot and initiated an investigation. The body was later shifted for a post-mortem examination. The police are probing the matter from all angles, and the circumstances leading to the death are yet to be established. The incident left his colleagues and staff members in shock, with many gathering outside the Trauma Centre after learning of his death. The police stated that statements from hospital staff and family members will be recorded as part of the investigation. Further details are awaited as the investigation is ongoing.

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## Thieves sneak into Bengaluru PG, steal 8 phones from sleeping residents

GNS News Agency, June 2

Two unidentified men allegedly walked into a men's paying guest (PG) accommodation in south Bengaluru early on May 29 and stole eight mobile phones that had been left charging beside sleeping residents, the police said on Monday. The theft was reported at Sai Aradhya Luxury PG for Gents on Kudlu Main Road in Hosapalya, under the Bandepalya police station limits. Investigators said the hostel did not have a security guard on duty at the time of the theft, making it easier for the suspects to enter and leave unnoticed.

According to the complaint filed by Darshan, a cab driver staying at the PG, he returned from work around 11 pm on May 28 and plugged in his two mobile phones for charging before going to sleep. Several other residents in his room and adjoining rooms had also left their phones on charge overnight. "When Darshan woke up around 6 am the next day, both his phones were missing. A check by other residents revealed that eight mobile phones had disappeared from different rooms in the hostel," said an officer. The police said CCTV footage from the building showed two men entering the premises during the night and moving through the hostel floors before leaving with the stolen devices. "The suspects appear to have targeted phones that were left

charging near the beds. Preliminary investigation suggests they moved from room to room and took advantage of doors that had not been locked from the inside. The residents were asleep, and most of them realised their phones were missing only in the morning. We are analysing CCTV footage and working to identify the accused," the officer added. A case has been registered at Bandepalya police station under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and further investigation is underway. The police said such thefts are common in PG accommodations, where residents often leave room doors unlocked to allow roommates or friends returning late at night to enter without disturbing others. "Many residents either keep the doors unlocked or leave spare keys near the entrance, under doormats, or in other easily accessible locations. Thieves often take advantage of these practices," a senior officer said. The police have advised PG residents to ensure that all occupants of a room have separate keys rather than relying on unlocked doors or shared spare keys. "If two people are sharing a room, both should ideally have a key. Residents should avoid leaving keys near doorsteps or in common hiding spots as these locations are usually the first places checked by offenders. Basic precautions such as locking doors from inside and securing valuables can significantly reduce the risk of theft," the officer added.

## Multivitamins, modified diets, and foggers: How this leopard rescue centre is caring for 2 ageing big cats

"Vishnu and Guru's lives at the centre highlight the importance of long-term rehabilitation for animals affected by conflict," says Smita Rajhans, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Junnar Forest Division, adding that the forest department's partnership with Wildlife SOS reflects a shared commitment to addressing human-wildlife conflict through science-based management, rescue, and long-term rehabilitation.

GNS News Agency, June 2

From specially designed enclosures and modified diets to continuous health check-ups and a regular dose of multivitamins, the Manikdoh Leopard Rescue Centre (MLRC) in Maharashtra has pulled out all the stops for its veteran residents—Vishnu and Guru, two male leopards who have completed a decade at the Junnar facility. Rescued from human-wildlife conflict situations in 2016, the leopards have been under the long-term care of the Maharashtra Forest Department and rescue organisation Wildlife SOS. "Vishnu and Guru's lives at the centre highlight the importance of long-term rehabilitation for animals affected by conflict," says Smita Rajhans, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Junnar Forest Division, adding that the forest department's partnership with Wildlife SOS reflects a shared commitment to addressing human-wildlife conflict through science-based management, rescue, and long-term rehabilitation.

Vishnu arrived from Khamundi village, followed by Guru from Dingore village, both as adult leopards after repeated conflict incidents. Due to their history, returning them to the wild was not considered a viable option, highlighting the increasing pressure on leopard habitats across Maharashtra as forests continue to shrink and human settlements expand. Now approximately 17 years old, Vishnu is known for his strict routines and shy personality. He spends his days running energetically through his enclosure and his nights resting atop his favourite wooden platform. Guru, approximately 16, is far bolder and commanding, often seen patrolling his enclosure, scent-marking and scratching logs, before indulging in his favourite post-meal ritual. "Since their relocation, they have been maintained in a protected facility under continuous care and supervision. With advancing age, their physical condition has gradually declined, and management practices have been adapted accordingly," Rajhans explains. "Their enclosures are designed with environmental enrichment features such as natural vegetation and shaded areas, and cooling systems, including foggers, are used to mitigate heat stress. Due to age-related dental wear and reduced bite strength, their diet is modified to include softer, easily consumable food items. The animals are also subjected to regular veterinary examinations to monitor their overall health and well-being,"

she adds. Kartick Satyanarayan, co-founder and CEO of Wildlife SOS, says that Vishnu's and Guru's journeys reflect the reality of increasing human-leopard conflict across India. "These are animals that could not be returned to the wild, and providing them with long-term care, safety and dignity remains our responsibility," he adds. Leopards Junnar rescue Maharashtra Guru, approximately 16 years old, is bold and commanding. He is often seen patrolling his enclosure, before indulging in his favourite post-meal ritual.

Geeta Seshamani, co-founder and secretary of Wildlife SOS, adds that what stands out most, watching Vishnu and Guru over the years, is how they have distinct personalities. "One is so devoted to his routine and the other fearless and confident. Over time, our team has learnt to understand their individual needs and ensure they receive the highest standard of care," Seshamani observes. As ageing big cats, both leopards now receive specialised geriatric care, including multivitamin supplements, regular veterinary monitoring and assessments for age-related conditions such as joint mobility and dental health. The leopard crisis in the Junnar Forest Division has intensified over the years, with both rescue numbers and human fatalities rising across the Manchar, Otur, Shirur and Junnar ranges. Forest department data in the last six months show that at least 175 leopards were rescued in the division, with the highest concentration in Shirur (75). Meanwhile, there have been 56 fatalities since 2001. Of these, 21 people died in the last two years due to the human-leopard conflict. The Manikdoh Leopard Rescue Centre, which was established by the Maharashtra Forest Department in collaboration with Wildlife SOS to provide long-term care and shelter to leopards orphaned, injured or displaced due to human-wildlife conflict, currently has the capacity to house 90 leopards. According to Rajhans, efforts are underway to expand the facility to accommodate an additional 46 leopards. "Twenty leopards have already been transferred to the Vantara Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Centre in Jamnagar, and another 30 are scheduled to be moved there. We have also received requests from zoos across the country, including those in Bihar and Arunachal Pradesh, and plan to send at least 17 leopards to these facilities. Until these transfers take place, the leopards are being housed in cages at smaller locations," explains Rajhans.

## He wanted to be a BARC scientist, had a good interview. Then a Delhi building fell

She then handed the phone to her uncle, Mukesh Lawaniya. "Desh ne ek scientist kho diya (Our country lost a scientist)," Mukesh said, breaking down. Mukesh, principal at a government school in Rajasthan, said he motivated Kapil to pursue a career in science. "In Class 12, he scored 85 per cent and then secured a 97.6 percentile in JEE after preparing in Kota. He later pursued a B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering in Jaipur. I encouraged him to prepare for GATE so that he could join organisations such as BARC and ISRO. He went to Delhi three months ago to prepare and qualified GATE with an All India Rank of 57," Mukesh said.

GNS News Agency, June 2

Kapil Lawaniya turned 25 on May 25. But this birthday was more special. This May 25, Kapil appeared for an interview for the position of a scientific officer at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). His family said the interview panel told Kapil that he would receive an offer letter soon. This joy, however, was short-lived. Kapil returned to Delhi, excited about his new role and eagerly waiting for the BARC letter. Five days after his interview, he met some friends at a makeshift eatery in Delhi's Saidulajab to celebrate his achievement. A short while later, a building next to the eatery collapsed, burying the popular food joint. Kapil was among six people who died in the tragedy. A B.Tech graduate from Bharatpur, Rajasthan, Kapil dreamt of serving the country as a scientist. He was overjoyed after the BARC interview in Mumbai. In Delhi, he lived as a paying guest at Saidulajab and planned to treat his friends.

Minutes before the building collapsed on the evening of May 30, Kapil called his younger sister Ritika and told her he was going out to celebrate with his friends. "He spoke to me around 7.23 pm. He was in his room. At 7.55 pm, he called again and said he was injured and was being taken to the hospital. We could not understand what happened within a few minutes," Ritika told The Indian Express over the phone, her voice choking.

She then handed the phone to her uncle, Mukesh Lawaniya. "Desh ne ek scientist kho diya (Our country lost a scientist)," Mukesh said, breaking down. Mukesh, principal at a government school in Rajasthan, said he motivated Kapil to pursue a career in science. "In Class 12, he scored 85 per cent and then secured a 97.6 percentile in JEE after preparing in Kota. He later pursued a B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering in Jaipur. I encouraged him to prepare for GATE

so that he could join organisations such as BARC and ISRO. He went to Delhi three months ago to prepare and qualified GATE with an All India Rank of 57," Mukesh said. Based on his GATE rank, Kapil was shortlisted for the BARC written examination. After clearing the test, he was called for an interview on May 25 in Mumbai. "He flew from Delhi to Mumbai and faced a panel interview that lasted nearly an hour. The panel appeared satisfied with his performance and indicated that he would likely receive an offer letter soon. Immediately after the interview, he called me and his father. We congratulated him. It was also his birthday; he turned 25," Mukesh said. Kapil's father, Rajesh Lawaniya, runs a fertiliser business in Bharatpur. "I have lost everything. My son was the hope of our entire family. No one in our family ever came close to becoming a scientist. He told us he had been selected for the post of Scientific Officer. The offer letter would have arrived in a few days," Rajesh said. "While he was being taken to the hospital, he told me, 'Papa, meri halat kharab hai, aap log aa jao' (Papa, my condition is serious, please come). We immediately left for Delhi." The family said Kapil was first taken to a nearby hospital. "We informed our relatives in Delhi. They rushed to the hospital and found him lying there without proper treatment for more than an hour." Later, Kapil was referred to Safdarjung Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival. "We reached the hospital around midnight, and the body was handed over. Is this why we sent our child to Delhi for studies?" he asked. Police have arrested the building's 71-year-old owner, Karambir Sejwal. Sejwal's family owns several properties in Saidulajab and has rented them out to businesses and individuals, police said. Structures in this area cannot have more than ground plus three storeys, but two additional floors were being built in the building that fell.

## Half-clad, handcuffed accused paraded through Howrah streets; videos go viral



GNS News Agency, June 2

In a crackdown that has sparked debate over policing methods, the Howrah police Monday publicly paraded a former Trinamool Congress leader accused in post-poll violence, a dismissed Home Guard arrested for extortion, and a local alleged gangster through the city streets. Shibpur TMC leader Shamim Ahmed alias Borey, former Home Guard Shahin Molla alias Sunny, and gangster Akash Singh alias Don were marched through their neighbourhood in handcuffs, with some of them tied with ropes and dressed only in undershirts and boxer shorts, in what officials said was part of crime scene reconstruction and a warning to criminals. However, the action has also raised questions about policing standards and due process, even as many local residents shared the videos widely on social media and expressed their support. Shahin Molla, a temporary Home Guard posted in Sankrail, was arrested on May 23 on extortion charges after he allegedly used his position to intimidate residents and collect money illegally. The police said he was later dismissed from service.

On Monday, after being produced before a local court, Molla was remanded in police custody for four days. A joint team of the local police and central forces then took him through several streets in Sankrail, with a rope tied around his waist. He continued to deny the allegations during the parade. In a separate action, Ahmed was paraded through the Shibpur area along G T Road and adjoining localities.

Borey, who was arrested in Mumbai last week and brought back on transit remand, has been accused of involvement in post-poll violence incidents, including bombing and firing in the Chowra Bustee area. The police also claimed that he misused political influence to run illegal construction and extortion networks. A Howrah court remanded him to police custody for eight days. His wife, Samima Banu, is a former councillor of the Trinamool Congress. The third accused, Singh, described by the police as a habitual offender with over 20 cases against him, was also taken through North Howrah areas during what officers said was a crime scene reconstruction exercise linked to multiple offences, including alleged firing at police personnel in the past. He was arrested earlier this month "I don't know why I am being paraded like this. The police told me I will be paraded on the way to the police station," he told reporters. Police sources said the three accused were paraded in public to "send a stern warning to criminals". "Videos were captured during reconstruction of crime scenes," a senior officer of the Howrah Police Commissionerate said. Ranjit Sur, general secretary of the Association for the Protection of Democratic Rights, told The Indian Express that they will file a complaint with the West Bengal Human Rights Commission, seeking its intervention in the case and demanding action against the policemen. "After the Park Circus incident, the CM played an aggressive role and gave a free hand to the police, in response to which a few incidents have taken place. This is a violation of human rights," Ranjit Sur, a prominent human rights activist and the Association's general secretary, said. Sur was referring to the Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari's remarks last week, which came a day after protests at Kolkata's Park Circus turned violent. Adhikari issued a strong warning to demonstrators, saying that just as "stone-pelting was brought to an end in Jammu and Kashmir, it will soon be completely eradicated in West Bengal as well". "They were accused and not even convicted. Even in the case of convicts, they are lawfully punished for their actions. We are submitting a complaint with the Human Rights Commission in this regard, seeking their intervention."

## Beautician, teacher, principal: 3 'Manishas' under scanner in NEET leak case

GNS News Agency, GNS News Agency, June 2

Among those arrested are three women who share their first name – Manisha – and an alleged role in the paper leak that has sparked nationwide outrage. (Special arrangement) Among those arrested are three women who share their first name – Manisha – and an alleged role in the paper leak that has sparked nationwide outrage. (Special arrangement/Enhanced with Gemini) The investigation into the paper leak of NEET-UG, which led to the cancellation of the nationwide entrance exam, has led to multiple arrests, most of them in Maharashtra. Among those arrested are three women who share their first name – Manisha – and an alleged role in the paper leak that has sparked nationwide outrage.

Manisha Waghmare, a 46-year-old beautician, was arrested on May 14. The CBI has described her as a "common link" who allegedly connected students with another accused, Manisha Mandhare, who has also been arrested. Both of them lived in the same housing society in Pune. Manisha Waghmare allegedly supplied the question paper to another accused, Dhananjay Lokhande. Manisha Mandhare, another 'Manisha' arrested in the case, was a senior biology teacher at the Pune Modern Junior College of Science, Arts and Commerce. She had been working with the college since 2002 and the National Testing Agency, which conducts NEET-UG exam, had named her an expert. The CBI arrested her on May 16. Manisha Mandhare, it is alleged, conducted special coaching classes at her residence. During these classes, she allegedly leaked several questions from the Botany and Zoology papers for the NEET-UG exam. The third 'Manisha' arrested in the case is Manisha Havaladar, principal of the Seth Hiralal Saraf Prashala in Pune's Budhwar Peth. A physics teacher who joined the school in 1992, she was set to retire in less than two months. The CBI arrested her on May 22. The NTA had appointed Manisha Havaladar as an expert, and she had access to the physics question papers for NEET-UG. She allegedly leaked questions from the physics paper. On May 12, the NTA cancelled the NEET-UG exam that over 22 lakh students took on May 3. The agency confirmed overlaps between the question paper and 'guess papers' doing the rounds before the test. The cancellation sparked na-



tionwide outrage as students complained that their hard work had come to naught. The investigation was handed over to the CBI, which has arrested 10 accused so far, most of them from Maharashtra.

The first person to be arrested in the case was Shubham Khairnar from Nashik. The 27-year-old was arrested for allegedly buying the papers for Rs 10 lakh and selling them for Rs 15 lakh per copy. Khairnar ran a medical education consultancy firm in Nashik and referred to himself as 'Dr' though he never completed his BAMS degree, according to the university. Another accused is Dhananjay Lokhande, a 30-year-old Ayurvedic practitioner from Ahilyanagar. The CBI has said Lokhande got the question papers from Manisha Waghmare and passed them on to Khairnar. Prahlad Vitthal Kulkarni, a retired chemistry teacher from Latur's Dayanand Science College (Junior), allegedly organised coaching sessions at his Pune home during which students were "taught the leaked material", the CBI has said. Another arrested accused is Shivraj Motegaonkar, founder of Renukai Coaching Centre, which runs from multiple locations in Maharashtra. The CBI has alleged that Motegaonkar was close to PV Kulkarni, and searches at his institute and residence had led to the recovery of a chemistry question bank with the same questions that appeared in the NEET exam. Motegaonkar started his coaching classes in 1999 and Kulkarni briefly taught at his coaching centre. In fact, Motegaonkar's son appeared for the NEET-UG paper on May 3. The CBI has also questioned his son and wife.

## NIA arrests 15 in Malda over blockade, detention of judicial officers during West Bengal SIR



GNS News Agency, June 2

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Monday arrested 15 people from West Bengal's Malda district in connection with the road blockades and illegal detention of judicial officers engaged in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise of electoral rolls ahead of the Assembly elections in the state. The central agency, which took over the probe following a directive from the Election Commission of India (ECI) after the Supreme Court took suo motu cognisance of the security breach which occurred on April 1, conducted widespread raids across the district. "A total of 15 persons were apprehended for their involvement in the blockade of roads and the illegal detention of judicial officers on duty in two separate cases," the agency said in a statement. In the first case, the agency arrested 12 people, including suspected main conspirators Joshim Sk and Asmaul Sk. They are accused of orchestrating an aggressive blockade that trapped a woman judicial officer inside her vehicle for approximately eight hours on the road linking Haibatola and Amtilola.

Three other accused, identified as Alamgir Sk, Nurul Islam, and Habibur Rahman, were apprehended in a separate case related to the complete blockade of the Bagmara Bridge in Malda's Mothabari block, which physically iso-

lated on-duty officials and disrupted local security reinforcement vectors. "Investigations to trace the others involved in the incidents are in progress. NIA is trying to unveil the larger conspiracy behind the coordinated blockades and judges' detentions," added the statement. The case was shifted to the central agency amid rising concerns over institutional intimidation and political mobilisation during the poll-preparedness phase. The Supreme Court slammed the West Bengal administration over the violence against judicial officers deputed in Malda.

## BSNL revenue rises to Rs 25,000 crore in two years

New Delhi: State-owned telecom firm Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited's revenue has increased by about 19 per cent to Rs 25,000 crore in two years due to improvement in infrastructure, an official statement said on Monday.

The statement, citing an interview of Minister of State for Communications Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani to public broadcaster Prasar Bharati, said the methodical approach adopted for the transformation of BSNL had led to improvement in its financial performance. "The financial turnaround is striking. BSNL's revenue has grown from Rs 21,000 crore to Rs 25,000 crore, a healthy 20 to 25 per cent increase in two years. More significantly, EBITDA has jumped dramatically from just Rs 50 crore to nearly Rs 7,000 crore, reflecting improved operational efficiency and a clear path to profitability," Pemmasani said. BSNL had reported a total income of Rs 23,427 crore in FY25 and Rs 21,302 crore in FY24. The minister said a systematic review of BSNL's performance by him and Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia led to a detailed analysis of issues affecting the state-owned firm.

## Visva-Bharati to set up AIIMS-standard medical college in Santiniketan, invites DPR bids



GNS News Agency, June 2

Visva Bharati university, VBU tree plantation programme, West Bengal's Santiniketan, VBU 'Briksha Ropan' programme, annual tree plantation programme, Bangladesh Bhavan, Indian express news Visva-Bharati was founded by Rabindranath Tagore in 1921. Medical science may soon be taught at Visva-Bharati, West Bengal's only central university and a UNESCO World Heritage institution. The university authorities have initiated plans to establish an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)-standard medical college and hospital on its Santiniketan campus. They have approached the Centre for necessary clearances for the institution slated to be named Visva-Bharati Medical College and Hospital. Granted UNESCO World Heritage status in September 2023, the university's expansion into medical education will mark a major milestone for the historic institution founded by Rabindranath Tagore. The university issued a notice inviting expressions of interest on May 22. The institution is seeking proposals from reputed consultancy firms, healthcare planning organisations, and medical education consultants to pro-

vide end-to-end services, including feasibility studies and the preparation of a detailed project report (DPR). According to the official notification, a pre-bid meeting is scheduled for May 29, with June 14 set as the final deadline for project submissions.

The acting Public Relations Officer of Visva-Bharati, Athig Ghosh, said, "The Vice-Chancellor of Visva-Bharati has expressed interest in establishing a medical college and hospital on our campus. Applications have been submitted where necessary, and invitations have been sent to various organisations to submit DPR. We will have to wait and see what happens. We are hopeful that the DPRs will be submitted, and once received, we can send them to the Central government for approval. If we receive the approval, we will be able to proceed with the medical college and hospital." Ghosh said the university faces no land constraints for the proposed project, which initially aims to accommodate a 100- to 200-bed hospital setup. "Once the medical college is operational, it will open up opportunities for aspiring medical students and significantly boost healthcare access for the local population," he added. Residents and ashram members have highlighted the lack of advanced healthcare services in the Bolpur-Santiniketan area. These issues became evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, when elderly individuals struggled to access emergency care. Sources indicate that Visva-Bharati's existing medical facilities, the Pearson Memorial Hospital and the Dinabandhu Andrews Memorial Hospital, are likely to be integrated into the new, expanded medical college framework to optimise resources. Bolpur's primary private medical institution has frequently been under the scanner, facing raids and investigations by central agencies, including the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), as well as questioning of its chairman, Malay Pit.

## 'This isn't my handwriting': Chaos, trauma as students hit by CBSE's digital evaluation

GNS News Agency, June 2

As the 18-year-old student from a private school in Delhi started looking at the scanned copy of her Class 12 chemistry answer sheet, she already suspected something was wrong. She had got 11 out of 70 in theory, a score that she found unbelievable. The first page looked familiar: it had her name, her roll number, and her handwriting. But then, the pages changed. "Every page appeared to be someone else's writing," the student, who said she would prefer to remain anonymous, told The Indian Express. "I expected much better marks. The handwriting is not even comparable to mine."

Thousands of students across India have found themselves trapped this month in a widening crisis triggered by the Central Board of Secondary Education's new On-Screen Marking system, or OSM, a fully digital evaluation process that was introduced for the Class 12 board examinations this year. Days after the controversy and confusion began, The Indian Express first reported on Monday (April 25) that a team from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras had visited the headquarters of CBSE to investigate the mounting complaints over the OSM system. The OSM system was intended to modernise India's largest school examination network. Instead, it has produced confusion and panic: answer sheets uploaded under the wrong roll numbers, missing scanned pages, visible answers left unchecked, and a grievance portal that has repeatedly crashed as students have raced against deadlines.

In Bhopal, 18-year-old Kanishka received a scanned Sanskrit answer booklet that had two pages missing. "CBSE did not scan two whole pages of my Sanskrit answer book. How can someone accidentally skip two pages?" she asked incredulously. And that isn't all – "In my English paper one whole answer remains unmarked," she added. In Delhi, Vedant, a Class 12 student, said the Physics paper uploaded by CBSE did not belong to him at all. "The handwriting style, letter formation, spacing, slant, sentence flow, everything is different," he wrote online. "If this is true, then what exactly was evaluated under my roll number? My paper? Or someone else's?" he asked. After Vedant's post went viral, CBSE responded publicly, accepting the mistake and saying that the "correct copy" of the answer sheet had been sent to him, and that action to update his result had been initiated. But for many educators, the larger concern is this: how many cases like Vedant's lie undetected, and how many cases never reached social media? The prin-



incipal of a private school in southwest Delhi said teachers at her school had begun to notice serious discrepancies while reviewing evaluated geography papers. "Many answers in the sheets were not evaluated," the principal said. "Answers that were clearly written, presented, and correctly formatted. [But they were left] simply unmarked." Teachers across schools in Delhi, several of whom spoke anonymously, said worried and upset parents had been calling until late at night asking whether the low marks of their wards could be trusted. Several educators told The Indian Express that they were unsure what guidance to offer. Delhi-based advocate Vineet Jindal said he had been receiving calls from students across the country – from Bihar, Haryana, Chennai, he said – all describing similar problems. "Most of them are affected with low marks... They gave correct answers, but they were not awarded the marks," Jindal said. There are other issues too. "The blank sheet has been marked on a page where there is written content," Jindal said. "Blurred sheets — this is a common issue." Jindal said several students were preparing to approach the Delhi High Court if CBSE failed to resolve their complaints in time. However, even at this time of understandable distress, he counselled restraint. "If you challenge OSM at this particular moment, it will harm the children more," he said. "Counselling will begin, college admissions will begin, but the poor child's career may be ruined," he said. Many plans have indeed been put in jeopardy. Jindal described a call from a parent in Chennai whose son had secured admission to King's College London, but he risked losing eligibility for a Singapore university because his CBSE aggregate had dropped below the required cutoff. "Three percentage points," Jindal said, "can change everything." The CBSE has said complaints are being addressed on "top priority." The re-evaluation window remains open until June 5.

## Chennai-based firm, contractor booked in Bowring Hospital wall collapse case



GNS News Agency, June 2

Nearly a month after seven people were killed after a wall collapsed in the Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital in Bengaluru, the police said Tuesday they have registered a case of negligence against a contractor and a Chennai-based company. The Commercial Street police registered the case against ASR Traders under Section 106 (causing death by negligence) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) on May 20, following the directions of the chief secretary.

Chandru, an executive engineer with the Health and Family Welfare Department, filed the complaint based on the report filed by the technical committee constituted by the state government. In its report, the committee recommended that criminal charges be filed against the contractor. The FIR also stated that an email was sent on May 14 to ASR Traders, requesting a response or appearance before the committee by May 18, but neither responded to the email nor appeared before the committee. According to the complaint, the ASR Traders was awarded a tender to demolish the old building within the hospital premises to build a new nursing college and research institute. The contract was awarded in 2017, but ASR Traders failed to clear and dispose of the debris in accordance with the contract agreement. While ASR Traders was supposed to dispose

of the debris, it illegally abandoned it on the site, leading to the wall's collapse, according to the committee's report. The Karnataka Lokayukta, which took up a suo motu case, published its report last week on the compound wall collapse, pointing to a series of structural violations, administrative negligence, and civic lapses.

## Congress questions Centre's finances after record RBI dividend

New Delhi: With the Reserve Bank announcing a record dividend of Rs 2.87 lakh crore to the government, the Congress on Tuesday claimed that the Centre's finances are not as rosy as is being made out to be by the fact that the RBI has "done it a favour" and given it a big bonus.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday announced a record dividend of Rs 2.87 lakh crore to the government for the year ended March 2026, providing a financial boost for the exchequer amid rising import bills and supply chain disruptions due to the West Asia conflict. The dividend is 6.7 per cent higher than Rs 2.69 lakh crore for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "That the Union government's finances are not as rosy as is being made out to be is proved by the fact that the RBI has done it a favour and given it a big bonus." "After increasing what is called the Contingency Risk Buffer maintained by it for three consecutive years, the RBI decided to lower it for the financial year 2025/26. This has resulted in a huge increase in its dividend to the Union government," he said. The Centre has got a bonanza of an additional Rs 92,000 crore over and above what it would have got had the 2024/25 Contingency Reserve Buffer not been reduced, Ramesh said.

## SC of India stays Delhi HC order on law students' attendance rules

be stayed.

"Does the judgment give a right to the students not to go to the classes," the bench said and issued notice to the BCI's plea, while tagging it with pending pleas raising similar issue. In its verdict, the high court had said, "No student enrolled in any recognised law college, university or institution in India shall be detained from taking examination or be prevented from further academic pursuits or career progression on the ground of lack of minimum attendance". The high court had also asked the BCI to undertake a re-evaluation of the mandatory attendance norms for the three-year and five-year LLB courses. On May 13, the top court agreed to hear a plea challenging the high court verdict.

The apex court had observed that if such a position were to be accepted, the hostels of NLUs and law colleges could become "just boarding and lodging facilities". The high court had said it was of the strong view that attendance norms for education in general and legal education in particular cannot be made so stringent that they lead to mental trauma, let alone the death of a student. It had delivered the judgment while disposing of a suo motu petition, initiated by the Supreme Court and transferred to the high court, in relation to the death of law student Sushant Rohilla by suicide in 2016 after allegedly being barred from sitting for the semester exams due to lack of requisite attendance. Rohilla, a third-year law student, had hanged himself at his home here on August 10, 2016, after his college allegedly barred him from sitting for the semester exams due to lack of requisite attendance. He left behind a note, saying he was a failure and did not wish to live. The high court had directed that it would be mandatory for all educational institutions and universities to constitute grievance redressal committees (GRCs) in terms of the University Grants Commission Regulations, 2023. Observing that GRCs were for safeguarding the interests of students, including their mental health, it had directed the UGC to initiate consultations and consider amending the UGC regulations. The high court had said the BCI should incorporate the modification of attendance norms to enable giving credit to moot courts, seminars, model parliament, debates and attending court hearings. It had added that no law college, university or institution should be permitted to mandate attendance norms over and above the minimum percentage prescribed by the BCI under the Legal Education Rules.

GNS News Agency, June 2

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the Delhi High Court order that prohibited law colleges and universities from barring students from appearing in exams for failing to meet the minimum attendance requirement, as it observed that all national law universities were "suffering". A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta passed the order while hearing pleas, including the one filed by the Bar Council of India (BCI), challenging the high court's November 2025 verdict. While posting the pleas for hearing on July 21, the bench said, "In the meantime, effect and operation of paragraph 249 of the impugned judgement shall remain stayed. However, the same shall be effective prospectively".

The high court had passed directions with respect to attendance norms in paragraph 249 of its verdict. The top court also made it clear that pendency of these pleas before it would not preclude the high courts, where similar petitions concerning attendance were pending, from deciding those matters. During the hearing, the bench asked senior advocate Manan Kumar Mishra, who is also the Chairman of the BCI, as to why it took them almost six months to challenge the high court judgment. "All the NLUs (National Law University) are suffering," the bench observed, adding that students do not want mandatory attendance. The bench said the Delhi High Court's judgment does not preclude students from attending classes. It observed that the teachers at NLUs and other universities would do if the students do not attend classes. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing in the matter, said the high court's verdict should

## Indian Army's K9 warriors shine at exercise PRAGATI 2026 in Meghalaya

GNS News Agency, May 31

Shillong: Amid high-intensity tactical drills and multinational military training during Exercise PRAGATI 2026 in Meghalaya, the Indian Army's highly trained canine warriors emerged as a distinctive force multiplier, showcasing their specialised skills alongside armed forces personnel from 12 friendly nations. Defence spokesman Lt Col Mahendra Rawat said that the army dogs trained alongside troops from friendly foreign countries, showcasing their role in modern military operations and enhancing interoperability in a multinational environment. From IED (Improvised Explosive Devices) detection and tracking to intervention operations, the K9 teams demonstrated how trained military dogs remain an invaluable asset in high-risk operational scenarios, he said.

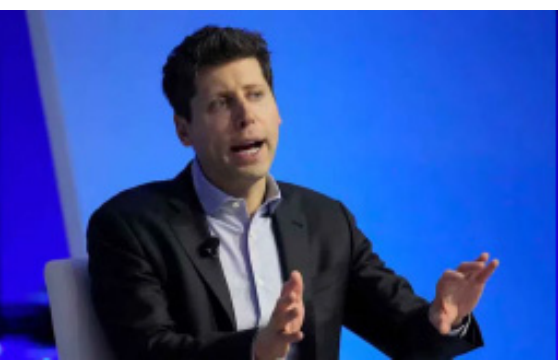
According to the official, the display included 'Alan', a Belgian 'Malinois' assault dog; 'Victor', a Rampur Hound tracker dog; and 'Deo', a Labrador explosive detection dog. Each showcased a specialised skill set, reflecting the versatility, discipline and mission readiness of Indian Army K9 teams. Lt Col Rawat said that a key highlight was the participation of India's indigenous breed, the 'Rampur Hound', represented by 'Victor'. Known for climatic adaptability, resilience and disease resistance, indigenous breeds are increasingly being integrated into operational roles, strengthening the Indian Army's move towards self-reliance under Atmanirbhar Bharat. The K9 warriors also demonstrated their operational relevance across varied terrains, from deserts to glaciers, underlining their adaptability and effectiveness in diverse conditions.

Whether detecting explosives, tracking hostile movement or supporting intervention teams, these dogs bring



speed, instinct, courage and loyalty to the battlefield, the spokesman pointed out. He said that the exercise also featured robotic dogs, highlighting the evolving interface between trained animals and emerging technology in future military operations. Together, the robotic platforms and K9 warriors presented a compelling picture of tradition and technology working in tandem to enhance operational effectiveness. At Exercise PRAGATI 2026, the K9 warriors stood out as silent force multipliers, embodying courage, loyalty and readiness, Lt Col Rawat said. Meanwhile, the multilateral military exercise, PRAGATI 2026, involving armed forces personnel from 12 friendly nations, commenced on May 20 at the Umroi Military Station in Meghalaya. The two-week-long exercise — PRAGATI 2026 — has brought together participants from Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Vietnam to strengthen regional cooperation, interoperability and strategic coordination among the participating countries.

## AI hasn't triggered white-collar jobs apocalypse, says Altman



GNS News Agency, June 2

New Delhi: OpenAI CEO Sam Altman on Tuesday said the rapid rise of artificial intelligence is unlikely to trigger the kind of global jobs apocalypse that many feared, admitting that his earlier concerns about massive white-collar job losses may have been overstated. Speaking at a conference hosted by Commonwealth Bank of Australia in Sydney, Altman said he had initially expected AI to eliminate a far greater number of entry-level white-collar jobs after the launch of ChatGPT in 2022.

However, he acknowledged that the impact on employment has so far been less severe than anticipated. I am delighted to be wrong about this, Altman said during a conversation with CBA Chief Executive Matt Comyn. I thought there would have been more impact on entry-level white-collar jobs being eliminated by now than has actually happened, he mentioned. Altman said OpenAI had been roughly right about the pace of technological progress in AI, but pretty wrong about the social and economic consequences. According to him, early fears around job destruction were driven by what appeared to be a genuine risk at the time. People are like oh you could have saved the world a lot of fear mongering and a lot of doom and gloom, but at the time I was like I see this is a real risk we should probably talk about it, and it still may, he said. His remarks come at a time when several global firms, including HSBC, Amazon, Standard Chartered and Commonwealth Bank of Australia, have acknowledged that some roles within their

organisations are being replaced or reshaped by AI-driven tools and automation. Altman, however, said he has increasingly realised that human interaction remains an essential part of many jobs and cannot easily be replicated by machines. He shared a personal example of experimenting with AI-generated replies for Slack and email messages before eventually returning to responding himself. I had it reply to messages, saying this is Sam's AI and it was an amazing example to me of we really do care about people, he said. We really do care about our interactions with people, Altman added.

## North Korea launches unidentified projectile over the sea

Seoul: North Korea launched an unidentified projectile off its west coast Tuesday, South Korea's military said, in what appeared to be the North's latest weapons test this year. A brief dispatch from South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff gave no further details. It followed another launch by the North on April 19, in which it fired multiple short-range missiles in what state-media described as a demonstration of cluster bomb warheads. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has focused on expanding his nuclear and missile arsenals since nuclear diplomacy with US President Donald Trump collapsed in 2019. Trump has repeatedly expressed his desire to resume talks with Kim, but Pyongyang has so far ignored the overtures and urged Washington to drop demands for the North's nuclear disarmament as a precondition for talks. Kim has taken an increasingly hardline stance toward South Korea, which he has declared his country's permanent and most hostile enemy while diplomacy is stalled and tensions rise over his nuclear ambitions. The launch came hours after South Korean President Lee Jae Myung during a Cabinet meeting called for stronger efforts to advance the country's military. He emphasised artificial intelligence and drone capabilities and the potential acquisition of a nuclear-powered submarine, an issue that has been part of his diplomacy with Washing-

## Manipur's new faultline: Why Kuki-Naga conflict needs a political solution



GNS News Agency, June 2 During my tenure as Deputy Inspector General of the 27 Sector in Churachandpur, Manipur, I had the opportunity to interact closely with both Naga and Kuki communities across the hill districts. Those interactions revealed that the tensions between the two communities are rooted not in isolated incidents but in decades of mistrust, competing territorial claims, political anxieties and the weakening presence of the state in the hills. The recent escalation between Kukis and Nagas is, therefore, not an abrupt development. It is the resurfacing of an unresolved historical faultline.

The latest tensions reportedly began in February this year after a local altercation in Litan in Ukhrul district. The situation deteriorated further following the killing of church leaders in Kangpokpi and Noney districts and subsequent retaliatory abductions in Senapati and Kangpokpi. What initially appeared to be localised incidents soon acquired an ethnic dimension. Significantly, the focus of conflict in Manipur has now shifted from the Meitei-Kuki confrontation to renewed Kuki-Naga hostility. To understand the present crisis, one must revisit the political history of Manipur's hills. Nagas constitute roughly a quarter of Manipur's population and are concentrated in districts such as Ukhrul, Senapati, Tamenglong, Chandel and Tengnoupal. Kukis are spread across Churachandpur, Kangpokpi and several mixed hill districts. The geography is deeply interlocked, with most districts containing both Naga and Kuki villages. This makes territorial assertions highly contentious. The roots of the conflict go back decades. Violent clashes between Naga and Kuki groups during the 1990s claimed more than a thousand lives and displaced entire villages. Historical grievances from that period continue to shape political mobilisation and community perceptions. The conflict sharpened with the rise of Naga nationalism and the demand for "Greater Nagalim", which sought to integrate Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur with Nagaland. Kukis living in these areas viewed the demand as a threat to their security and identity. The emergence of the NSCN(IM) further intensified tensions, with allegations of forced taxation, intimidation and displacement in several hill districts. In response, Kuki groups began demanding a

separate administrative arrangement for Kuki-dominated areas. At the heart of the conflict lies the issue of land. Nagas view themselves as the traditional custodians of large parts of the hills and often regard Kukis as later settlers. Kukis reject this narrative and point to their own historical presence and sacrifices.

The problem is compounded by overlapping customary claims and the absence of clearly demarcated ownership patterns in many hill areas. In reality, there is rarely any exclusive "Naga land" or "Kuki land". Villages and tribal settlements have coexisted for generations, often uneasily. Economic factors have also aggravated tensions. Control over trade and smuggling routes along the India-Myanmar border has altered local power equations. Instability in Myanmar has intensified competition over strategic corridors, while armed groups and vested interests continue to exploit ethnic divisions for influence and territorial control.

The deeper crisis, however, is political. Manipur today suffers from a collapse of trust between communities and the state. Security deployments can contain violence temporarily, but they cannot resolve conflicts rooted in identity, land and political exclusion. The Government of India must, therefore, move beyond episodic firefighting. First, there is an urgent need for sustained political dialogue involving Naga, Kuki and Meitei representatives under a credible institutional framework. Peace processes that engage only armed groups while excluding civil society cannot deliver durable solutions.

Second, the development of the hill and border districts must become a national priority. Roads, healthcare, education, digital connectivity, and employment generation are essential not only for welfare but also for reducing dependence on underground networks and illicit economies. In many hill areas, the absence of effective governance has allowed armed groups to fill the vacuum. Third, the nexus between politics, policing, and militant groups must be addressed with greater resolve. Selective enforcement and informal patronage networks have steadily weakened public confidence in state institutions. A professional and ethnically balanced administrative structure is critical for restoring trust. Finally, the Centre must address demands for greater local autonomy with sensitivity and constitutional clarity. Administrative decentralisation can improve governance in the hills, but it must not deepen ethnic fragmentation or trigger fresh territorial anxieties. Manipur's history demonstrates that ethnic conflicts rarely remain confined to one community or one district. Left unresolved, they spread across generations and harden into permanent hostility. The present Kuki-Naga tensions are, therefore, not merely another law-and-order challenge. They are a reminder that peace in Manipur will remain fragile unless the Indian state rebuilds trust through political dialogue, equitable governance, and credible state institutions.

## CBSE portal issues under review, IIT teams examine payment failures

New Delhi: IIT Madras Director V Kamakoti on Tuesday said a four-member team from the institute and IIT Kanpur has begun examining the recent glitches in the CBSE portal, including payment failures and allegations related to answer sheet uploads. In an exclusive interview with PTI, Kamakoti said the team started examining the issue on Monday evening, and the primary focus is to determine the exact cause of the disruption. "There was an issue for around two days. So what was the actual reason for the failure? Was it some development issue, a technical issue, or was it even a cyber attack? Because anything is possible. So that is what we want to basically find out so that it doesn't recur in future," he said. He also said the Central Board of Secondary Education's (CBSE) portal had remained stable for the last "72 hours-plus".

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday directed IIT Madras and IIT Kanpur to depute professors and technical experts to assist the CBSE in ensuring a glitch-free re-evaluation process. Kamakoti said the CBSE's move to introduce the On-Screen Marking (OMS) is aimed at increasing transparency by allowing students to view evaluated answer sheets and understand where their marks were deducted. "I think, from the CBSE's point of view, they tried to do something very good," he said, adding that the system "brings in a lot more transparency". "But somewhere, some payment or some gateway, something has failed," he said. The team will "go in depth" into the issue and examine "what could be a very robust platform that in future will not land us in this type of failure". The IIT Madras director said the team will first conduct a "full medical checkup" of the website and give suggestions and recommendations to the developers handling the platform, besides examining how the CBSE portal and payment systems interacted during fee transactions. "How do those two software talk to each other... how could you minimise those failures? This is what we will go into," he said. On the composition of the team, Kamakoti said IIT Madras has deputed two experts — a senior official experienced in large-scale deployment of software and another senior project staff member familiar with data analytics log. "Similarly, from IIT Kanpur, there are two faculty members," he said.

Asked about complaints by students that the uploaded answer sheets did not match their handwriting or appeared blurred, Kamakoti said, "We have not yet gone to that stage of analysing this." The team will examine the answer sheet scanning and uploading process from an IT perspective to see how the mistakes, if any, can be avoided. It will look into it completely and see where things could have gone wrong. It could have been a manual error, he said. "At some point, there is a manual, to start with. So you basically scan, and then you put the roll number, and then upload it. So there is a manual intervention of converting your physical answer script into a digital thing," he said. Kamakoti defended the broader idea behind the OMS system, saying it gives students and parents greater visibility into the evaluation process. "Today, there is an opportunity given by the CBSE to appeal. Now at least I know what has happened to my answer script," he said. Calling the system "a great step", he said it represents "the ultimate transparency you can bring to the system". "Any good thing will face some sort of initial issues and we will resolve them," he said. According to the IIT Madras director, increased public interest in accessing answer sheets could also have contributed to the portal issues. "More people would have started looking at it and so hence the bandwidth and internet bandwidth and other things would have become a choke point," he said. Drawing from his own experience, Kamakoti said students naturally remain curious about evaluation details. "I got 99 out of 100 in my 1985 exam. Till today, I am curious why I lost that one mark," he said. Kamakoti said access to answer scripts can help parents understand a child's



strengths and thought process better. "The entire thought process of the child can be understood from the way they have answered a public examination," he said.

At the same time, Kamakoti cautioned parents against putting additional pressure on students. "Parents should not do a post-mortem analysis on the paper. They should not say, 'I invested so much money in your education, can't you write this answer easily?' These types of things should not come," he said. Asked whether the glitches offered lessons for large-scale digital examinations and the proposed shift of NEET-UG to CBT (computer-based test) mode, Kamakoti said the two systems are different. "The CBSE is about dissemination of results... So there is a lot of difference between what you see on the CBSE website today and the conduct of a CBT examination," he said. "The CBT exam for JEE Mains and JEE Advanced and GATE has been going very well... In the last 10 years, we have been doing computer-based testing for both JEE Advanced and JEE Mains and GATE," he added. Kamakoti, however, said the main challenge in shifting NEET-UG to the CBT mode will be the scale of the examination. "The only challenge is 24 lakh (students) cannot write (an exam) in a single session and the maximum that we have handled so far is around 3 lakh," he said. "So if we want 24 lakh to write, then we need to have eight sessions spread over four days on two weekends. So, and then we normalise like how we do in JEE Mains, we normalise the results," he said.

## Govt gave up Rs 1 lakh crore in excise revenue to curb fuel inflation: FM

Mumbai: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said the government had foregone more than Rs 1 lakh crore annually in tax revenues through excise duty cuts on petrol and diesel to shield consumers from fuel inflation triggered by the West Asia conflict, while defending the latest retail fuel price hikes as market-driven revisions by oil marketing companies responding to soaring global crude oil prices.

Petrol and diesel prices have been hiked by almost Rs 7.5 per litre in four instalments since mid-May as oil companies moved to bridge the gap between cost and retail prices that had widened due to a surge in international oil prices. "The increases now are coming from oil marketing companies (OMCs) because they are the ones procuring (raw material crude oil) and selling (finished product - fuel)," Sitharaman said on the sidelines of the Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council export awards event. She said had the excise duty not been slashed earlier, an increase of Rs 10 would have happened.

## Rubio announces Quad initiatives on maritime security, ports, energy security, critical minerals



New Delhi: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Tuesday emphasised the economic and strategic importance of the Quad, stating that the member states, which are "vibrant democracies", represent a third of the world's GDP and share strong values. Addressing a joint press statement, along with Foreign Ministers of India, Australia and Japan, Rubio announced Quad initiatives on maritime security, port infrastructure and energy security.

He said, "To Ministers Jaishankar, Wong, and Motegi, thank you for this very productive discussion and the work that our teams have been doing leading up to this, as we continue to build out this partnership into something that is a partnership of action." "On the stage today are represented countries that collectively are about a third of the world's GDP, and almost 2 billion people. And these aren't just countries that have economic reach, a third of the world's GDP, 2 billion people, but countries that share strong values, strong, vibrant democracies, who also are committed to many of the same concepts with regards to economic development and have many aligned interests in those fields as well." "Sixteen months ago when I became Secretary of State and we began our conversations, we all agreed that we wanted this gathering, this partnership, to be more than just a place where we got together every now and then and discussed the problems of the world that we held in common," he said, adding that the goal is to turn the Quad in a "place of action." "And I'm very happy today that as a result of the work that our teams have been doing leading up to this conversation today, we have real concrete achievements that we can announce to our respective countries and to the world," he added. Rubio announced the Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Cooperation initiative and the expansion of the Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness initiative.

He thanked India for committing to hosting the next iteration of the Quad at Sea mission. "On the issue of maritime security, there are two big announcements. The first

is the launch of the Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Cooperation initiative, which is going to leverage each of our countries' maritime surveillance capabilities in the Indo-Pacific to enhance information sharing. Related to that is also the expansion of the Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness initiative, which provides and can provide near real-time commercial maritime domain awareness data to countries throughout the Indo-Pacific," he stated. "And last, I also want to thank India for committing to hosting the next iteration of the Quad at Sea mission, which brings together our respective coast guards, together in one place on one ship and the reason why maritime security is so important. Beyond the fact that current events remind us of what can happen when maritime security is impeded, is the fact that 60 per cent of global maritime trade passes through the Indo-Pacific, and it's a vital national interest, not just to the four countries represented here today, but to dozens and dozens of countries, countless countries around the world," he added. He announced that the Quad nations will work together on issues of port infrastructure. He announced that the Quad nations plan to work with Fiji to advance the country's port infrastructure.

"The third topic, which we hear a lot about these days, that we'll have some deliverables on today, is the issue of critical minerals. We'll announce the Quad Critical Minerals Framework, which will guide each of us to leverage economic policy tools and coordinate investment to strengthen critical mineral supply chains, including in mining and processing and in critical minerals recycling," the US Secretary of State said. Rubio announced the Quad Initiative on Indo-Pacific Energy Security to strengthen regional energy resilience. He stated that the US will host the Quad nations for a fuel security forum later this year.

On energy and fuel security, he said that the member states will be announcing the Quad Initiative on Indo-Pacific Energy Security that will help strengthen regional energy resilience. Through this initiative, he said that the partners will work to identify areas of cooperation in technology, in management and policy, in international market analysis and emergency response exercises. "We'll be releasing a stand-alone statement on this initiative, and the Department of Energy from the United States will be hosting Quad partners later this year for a fuel security forum to further expand on this. So, we are beginning to show real achievements and real accomplishments," Rubio said. "We are deeply committed to this partnership. It is a linchpin and a cornerstone of our global strategy as a nation in the United States. That's why we're so happy to be here today, and that's why we're excited about the initiatives that we're announcing, and we're even more excited about the initiatives we're going to be working together as these take life and new opportunities present themselves," he added.

## She ignored ovarian cancer warning: Why loss of appetite, feeling too full and bloating are red flags?



For nearly four months, a 51-year-old school teacher believed her symptoms were linked to age, stress and digestive trouble. She had gradually stopped enjoying meals because she felt unusually full after eating only a few bites. Her abdomen often felt bloated by evening. A cup of tea was followed by acidity. Dinner became uncomfortable. She began skipping meals, assuming menopause and erratic eating habits were upsetting her stomach. Her family noticed she had lost weight but she dismissed concerns casually. "I just don't feel hungry anymore," she told them. By the time she finally sought medical attention after persistent abdominal discomfort and fatigue, scans revealed advanced ovarian cancer. Doctors say this pattern is tragically common. Loss of appetite is rarely the first symptom people associate with cancer. Most women attribute it to indigestion, stress, gastritis, hormonal changes or temporary illness. Yet persistent appetite loss — especially when combined with bloating, abdominal heaviness or feeling full very quickly — can sometimes signal something far more serious. Among the cancers most notorious for hiding behind vague digestive complaints is ovarian cancer.

Ovarian cancer is frequently described as a "silent disease" not because symptoms are absent but because they are subtle, non-specific and easy to ignore. Unlike breast cancer, it does not usually begin with a visible lump. Unlike cervical cancer, it may not initially produce alarming bleeding. Instead, its earliest warnings often resemble everyday gastric discomfort. Women commonly report bloating, reduced appetite, pelvic heaviness, constipation, nausea, back pain or unexplained fatigue. Because these symptoms overlap with common gastrointestinal or hormonal problems, diagnosis is often delayed for months. This delay has serious consequences. Ovarian cancer remains one of the most difficult gynaecological cancers to detect early, and many patients are diagnosed only after the disease has already spread within the abdominal cavity. Why ovarian cancer spreads without you knowing

What makes ovarian cancer particularly dangerous is not only the disease itself, but the timing of diagnosis. Unlike cancers that can be identified through visible signs or routine screening tests, ovarian cancer often grows quietly inside the abdomen. The ovaries are located deep within the pelvic cavity, allowing tumours to expand without being easily detected physically. By the time symptoms become persistent enough to trigger medical investigations, the cancer has often already spread to nearby organs or the abdominal lining. A large proportion of ovarian cancer cases

are diagnosed at advanced stages — Stage III or Stage IV — when treatment becomes far more complex and survival rates decline significantly. The biology of the disease also contributes to its aggressiveness. Ovarian cancer cells can shed into the abdominal cavity and spread relatively early across surrounding tissues, including the intestines, liver surface and pelvic structures. Fluid accumulation inside the abdomen, known as ascites, is also common in advanced disease and contributes to bloating, heaviness and appetite loss. Another reason the cancer becomes deadly is symptom normalisation. Women frequently spend months treating themselves for "gastric trouble," acidity or menopause-related bloating before seeking specialist care. Many undergo repeated digestive treatments before gynaecological evaluation is even considered.

Unlike cervical cancer, which benefits from screening through Pap smears, ovarian cancer still lacks a reliable universal screening test for the general population. This makes symptom awareness critically important. The tragedy is that early-stage ovarian cancer is often highly treatable. But because early symptoms appear vague and ordinary, the disease is frequently discovered only after it has progressed extensively. Why appetite changes become an important clue? One of the lesser-recognised but clinically important warning signs of ovarian cancer is early satiety — a sensation of becoming full after eating very little. As tumours grow in or around the ovaries, they may begin affecting surrounding abdominal organs. Pressure on the stomach and intestines, fluid accumulation in the abdomen and inflammatory changes can interfere with normal digestion and hunger signals. Women often describe the sensation in remarkably similar ways. They feel "constantly heavy," "unable to finish meals," or "bloating all the time." Some begin eating smaller portions unintentionally because meals become uncomfortable. Cancer itself can also alter metabolism and inflammatory pathways inside the body, suppressing appetite and contributing to unexplained weight changes. When appetite loss continues for weeks, especially alongside bloating or abdominal discomfort, it deserves attention. The symptoms women commonly ignore? The challenge with ovarian cancer is that many symptoms appear deceptively ordinary. Other than persistent bloating mentioned above, frequent urination may be mistaken for urinary infections. Pelvic discomfort is often dismissed as muscular pain or menstrual irregularity. Fatigue becomes attributed to work stress or aging. Back pain is treated with painkillers. Appetite loss is blamed on acidity. Individually, none of these symptoms may appear alarming. But together — particularly when they persist beyond two or three weeks — they form a pattern doctors take seriously. Medical evaluation may include pelvic examinations, ultrasound imaging, CT scans and blood tests such as CA-125. While these tests are not used for routine population-wide screening, they become important when symptoms persist without explanation. Women over 40, particularly those with a family history of ovarian or breast cancer, are advised to pay closer attention to recurring abdominal and appetite-related symptoms. Do not panic. The concern arises when symptoms become frequent, persistent and noticeably different from a woman's usual health pattern.

## Ebola vaccine in 3 months, say Oxford researchers, Serum Institute of India to roll it out

GNS News Agency, May 31

"Animal studies for the Oxford vaccine candidate are already under way and will be progressing with partners around the world. As for timelines, Serum Institute of India is an organisation that goes far and fast. So we are hoping to have clinical grade vaccine doses ready within two to three months," Prof Teresa Lambe, Head of Vaccine Immunology, Oxford Vaccine Group, Pandemic Sciences Institute, University of Oxford, told a virtual meeting today. Co-designer of the Oxford AZ vaccine against Covid, Prof Lambe said that researchers are aiming for a single-dose vaccine, similar to the licensed Ebola Zaire vaccine. The vaccine effort builds on more than a decade of work with the ChAdOx platform, the same technology behind the Oxford COVID-19 vaccine. Scientists say this existing knowledge has allowed them to move unusually quickly. Oxford's manufacturing partners, including the Oxford Biomanufacturing Facility, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and the Serum Institute of India, are helping accelerate production and clinical preparation.

Oxford is also working with global partners to accelerate the generation of supportive pre-clinical data for the development and testing of the ChAdOx-based monovalent Bundibugyo Ebolavirus candidate vaccine ChAdOx1 BDBV in outbreak scenarios. The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda has been a fast-moving one according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. He recently said it was outpacing response efforts with the number of suspected deaths rising to 220. The current bout of Ebola, which causes haemorrhagic fever and high mortality, has been caused by the Bundibugyo strain of the virus. Currently, no vaccine or specific treatment has been approved to prevent or treat Ebola disease caused by the Bundibugyo virus strain.

Will a one-shot vaccine be effective?

Experts said that efforts were also under way towards prevention trials for healthcare workers and high-risk contacts of infected individuals. One strategy being explored is "ring vaccination," where people surrounding a confirmed case are vaccinated or given preventive treatment. "The aim is to produce a single-dose vaccine, similar to the licensed Ebola Zaire vaccine. Scientists believe both antibodies and T-cells (immune cells that identify and fight pathogens), will be important for protection, although there is still limited understanding of long-term immunity against the Bundibugyo strain," Prof Lambe told. "Pre-clinical models for these pathogens have already shown that a single-dose vaccine can protect animals. So, we are optimistic that a one-shot vaccine is achievable. Given the current outbreak, which appears to be relatively large at the moment, we are hopeful that the WHO and its partners will be able to contain it. A single-dose vaccine is our goal and many others in the field share that objective," he said. As for the immunological challenges involved in achieving long-lasting protection, he said details on the Bundibugyo virus were still scarce. "We still lack a detailed mechanistic understanding of what drives immunity against other filoviruses. What we do know is that both antibodies and T cells play important roles in protection. Our aim is, therefore, to develop a vaccine that can strengthen both antibody and T-cell responses against Bundibugyo. We hope the vaccine will be available within the next two to three months," Prof Lambe said. However Oxford scientists cautioned that the vaccine remains investigational and still needs rigorous testing for safety and effectiveness.

What about treatment?

Researchers have launched the PARTNERS trial, a multi-country adaptive randomized controlled trial for Ebola therapeutics. Designed during previous outbreaks and modelled on COVID-era clinical trials, the platform is designed to rapidly test and evaluate therapeutics such as monoclonal antibodies (MBP134) and antivirals (such as



Oxford is also working with global partners to accelerate the generation of supportive pre-clinical data for the development and testing of the ChAdOx-based monovalent Bundibugyo Ebolavirus candidate vaccine ChAdOx1 BDBV in outbreak scenarios

remdesivir) during sudden disease outbreaks in regions like the DRC and Uganda.

These were first tested during the 2024 Marburg outbreak in Rwanda and are now being adapted for the current Ebola emergency. Two drugs are currently included in the trial. According to Dr Amanda Rojek, Associate Professor of Health Emergencies, Pandemic Sciences Institute, University of Oxford, the priority however is to ensure that they are safe for human use. "Before these treatments can be used, they must undergo rigorous testing. The length of the trial will depend on how well the therapy performs during testing," Dr Rojek said. She also acknowledged that regulatory approvals were being fast-tracked in Uganda and the DRC. Teams on the ground are assessing whether treatment centres can safely support clinical studies in difficult security conditions. Scientists are evaluating post-exposure prophylaxis using beldesivir, an oral prodrug (this is an inactive or poorly active medication that is converted into its active, therapeutic form through natural metabolic processes after it is swallowed or administered) of remdesivir, which could help prevent disease in recently exposed contacts. Dr Richard Hatchett, CEO of CEPI, said that one of the things that really characterised this outbreak is the speed with which partners have come together. "Cases have now been identified across a vast region stretching from South Kivu to northern Atori and eastward as far as Kampala. The affected zone forms a rough triangle covering approximately 80,000 square kilometers and is home to an estimated 15 million people. This is a large, densely populated area," Dr Hatchett said. He also observed that while speed was essential as scientists were working on vaccines and therapeutics, scientific rigour cannot be compromised. "Even during an emergency, vaccines and treatments must still be proven safe and effective before they can be widely used outside clinical trials," he said.

Is reduced aid funding affecting research?

Meanwhile, Sir Andrew Pollard, Ashall Professor of Infection and Immunity, Pandemic Sciences Institute and Director of the Oxford Vaccine Group, cautioned against cuts to global health and research funding. "There is little doubt that reductions in aid funding weaken the capacity to detect outbreaks early. While I can't speak to the specific evidence in this particular case, fewer personnel on the ground are now connected to international aid networks, which clearly increases risk. For now, much of the funding that was approved in Europe before these reductions is still supporting ongoing work. However, cuts in US funding have already led to some research programmes being suspended, though not to my knowledge, any current Oxford-led activities," he said. Scientists also pointed out that even if the outbreak is controlled before vaccines are widely deployed, the work being done now will still shorten response times for future outbreaks.

## His BP hit 160/100 mmHg despite a no-salt diet: The trigger lay in his daily food habit

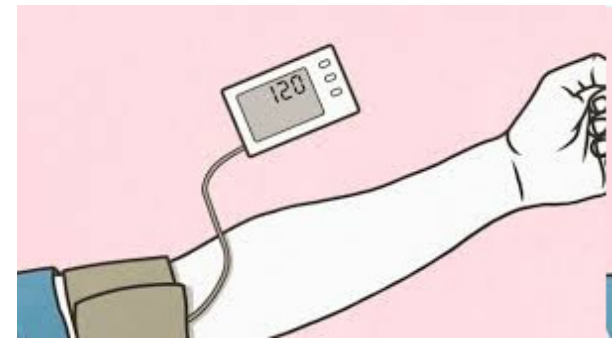
A 42-year-old marketing executive was convinced that stress was destroying his health as he came to see me with a high blood pressure of 160/100 mmHg. He said he slept poorly, travelled constantly, skipped meals and worked long corporate hours. Still, he made time for some exercise. But when I examined his eating habits, I found the trigger. His breakfast was usually packaged bread with ketchup. Lunch often came from food delivery apps — noodles, Chinese takeaways or sandwiches. Evening snacks included namkeen and chips. Dinner frequently involved ready-to-cook meals with gravy mixes, pickles and processed chicken. The only change he did, he said, was consciously reducing table salt after turning 40, believing that was enough to protect his heart. What he did not realise was that most of his sodium intake was no longer coming from visible salt. It was hidden inside preservatives, flavour enhancers and processed foods consumed throughout the day.

The new face of hypertension For decades, doctors warned Indians against eating too much salt. But the public conversation focused mainly on visible salt — the extra spoon added to dal, salads or fried snacks. Modern food processing has transformed sodium into an invisible industrial ingredient. It now enters Indian diets through preservatives, stabilisers, flavouring agents and shelf-life enhancers present in thousands of packaged foods. A major new study published in the European Heart Journal has intensified concerns over this hidden sodium burden. Researchers who tracked more than 112,000 people over nearly eight years found that those consuming the highest amounts of preservative additives faced a 29 per cent higher risk of hypertension and significantly increased risks of cardiovascular disease. Several preservatives specifically associated with elevated blood pressure were sodium-based compounds routinely used in processed foods. The findings are especially relevant for India because the country's eating habits are changing rapidly. Traditional fresh cooking is steadily giving way to packaged foods, frozen products and ready-made meals.

How much sodium is actually safe?

The World Health Organization (who) recommends that adults consume less than 2 grams of sodium daily. This translates to approximately 5 grams of salt — roughly one teaspoon in total for an entire day. A teaspoon of pickle will have a higher amount. So, imagine the sodium intake that you might be miscalculating. Most consumers, however, do not understand the difference between sodium and salt. Salt is sodium chloride. Sodium is the actual mineral linked to rising blood pressure. Once sodium enters the bloodstream in excessive quantities, the body retains more water, blood volume increases and pressure on artery walls rises gradually over time. That is why those who consciously "eat less salt" still develop hypertension. Over time, arteries become less flexible, the kidneys experience greater strain and the heart works harder continuously. The most worrying aspect of the problem is that hidden sodium now exists in foods Indians consume routinely and often consider harmless. Packaged bread contains sodium because preservatives and baking stabilisers are added during manufacturing. Tomato ketchup carries sodium not merely for taste but also for preservation. Commercial pickles contain extremely high sodium concentrations because salt acts as both flavour enhancer and preservative.

Instant noodles combine sodium in flavour sachets, preservatives and flavour enhancers such as monosodium glutamate, or MSG. Chinese fast food — now deeply inte-



grated into urban Indian eating habits — relies heavily on soy sauce, seasoning powders and MSG, all of which contribute substantial sodium loads. Even packaged spice mixes, soup cubes and ready masala pastes contain sodium compounds designed to preserve shelf life and intensify flavour. Processed meats such as sausages, salami, nuggets and frozen kebabs rely heavily on sodium nitrites and phosphates for colour retention and microbial control. Packaged fish and supermarket chicken products often contain sodium-rich preservation solutions to improve shelf stability. Processed cheese slices and packaged paneer similarly contain sodium-based stabilisers. Bakery products such as pav, buns, biscuits and rusks frequently use preservatives to maintain softness and shelf life. Even beverages contribute to sodium intake. Packaged fruit drinks, energy drinks and carbonated soft drinks often contain sodium compounds for acidity control and preservation. A person may consume bread in the morning, packaged namkeen in the afternoon, soft drinks during travel, instant soup in the evening and processed foods at night without ever eating food that tastes obviously salty. Yet sodium intake steadily crosses safe limits.

The biggest challenge is that sodium often hides behind unfamiliar chemical names. Consumers may not recognise ingredients such as sodium benzoate, sodium nitrite, sodium phosphate, sodium metabisulphite or monosodium glutamate as sodium sources at all. Many products marketed as "healthy," "lite," "multigrain" or "low-fat" still contain significant sodium because manufacturers compensate for reduced fat or sugar by increasing flavour enhancers and preservatives. Labelling practices also remain inconsistent and difficult for ordinary consumers to interpret quickly. The larger challenge lies in helping consumers understand that sodium has migrated into processed foods they no longer even perceive as risky.

## Rupee rises 35 paise to 95.25 as crude prices ease, equities jump

Mumbai: The rupee appreciated 35 paise to close at 95.25 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, registering the third straight session of gain, on optimism that the US and Iran were moving close to a peace deal even though they remained at odds over key issues, including blockades on the Strait of Hormuz. Forex traders said the rupee registered its third straight session of gain after RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, in a media interaction, said that the central bank will do "whatever is required" to ensure orderly price discovery in the forex market.

## How India's UAE gold trade deal may have made its import bill concerns worse



Anmaya Agarwal said.

The IIM paper pointed out that the fundamental supply-demand imbalance necessitates massive imports, chiefly as finished bullion (approximately 500 tonnes) and doré (essentially the semi-pure alloy of gold and silver created at mine sites; approximately 250 tonnes), though these proportions remain somewhat fluid. The import structure is heavily skewed toward finished products, significantly limiting domestic value addition opportunities. "Policy initiatives have sometimes exacerbated this challenge, as evidenced by the UAE trade deal agreement that inadvertently incentivised bullion imports over doré by creating a more favourable tariff structure for the former... the deal with the UAE has created unintended consequences by inverting the intended duty differential between bullion and doré," the report said. Giving concessions to the UAE for importing gold from the country under the deal has inflated the import bill, as India does not source gold from countries that offer prices cheaper than market value and lacks refining capacity. Certain countries, such as Argentina, Peru, and the Dominican Republic, supply gold at below-average import costs. But these countries collectively represent only 15% of India's total gold imports. "Alternative gold sources show promising development, with imports of gold ores and concentrates increasing (primarily from Colombia, with emerging volumes from Taiwan and Peru) and gold colloidal and compounds growing substantially (with Japan emerging as the dominant supplier)," the paper said.

Several countries, such as Switzerland, that do not produce gold have become gold trading hubs on the back of refining infrastructure. Using world-class London Bullion Market Association (LBMA) refineries, they have transformed low-cost gold doré into high-purity bullion for global distribution. This refining process generates approximately 40% value addition, neutralising trade deficit concerns through substantial high-value exports, the report pointed out. Japan, for instance, has 11 LBMA refineries which recycle roughly 500 tonnes of gold scrap annually to sustain massive export capacities. They exploit "urban mining" by recovering metals from electronic waste, which contains far higher gold concentrations than primary ore, the IIM paper pointed out. India has only one LBMA refinery. While global gold trading hubs have used refining capacity to close vulnerabilities around gold imports, India's gold refineries remain underutilised and lack the required policy support. A Niti Aayog report released last month found that, unlike established global hubs such as Switzerland and the UAE, which benefit from favourable policy regimes, large-scale operations, and deep integration with international markets, India's gold-refining ecosystem continues to face multiple bottlenecks. Historically, the duty structure has not sufficiently incentivised refining, with only a narrow differential between doré and refined gold. While a modest advantage existed between 2013 and 2016, subsequent duty rationalisation under GST and post-2021 adjustments shrank margins for refiners, leading to closures. At the same time, capacity remains fragmented, while the number of refineries increased from fewer than five in 2013 to about 33 in 2022, most remaining small operations under 50 tonnes annually, limiting economies of scale," the Trade Watch Quarterly report said. Global integration is also constrained by limited international accreditation, with only one LBMA-accredited refinery, restricting access to global financial markets and reducing India's ability to position itself within international supply chains, the report said. "These challenges are compounded by financial and operational constraints, including high working capital requirements, limited access to capital, regulatory complexities, and informal operations. Countries like Switzerland and Hong Kong are top gold exporters, with estimates stating that Switzerland alone refines 70% of the world's gold, and this position is the result of the top refineries and their role in finance. Similarly, Hong Kong is the primary conduit for gold flows in and out of China, along with being a centre for financial trading in Western markets," the Niti report said.

As the effects of an energy shock from the West Asian crisis, now in its third month, reverberate globally, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday asked citizens to take measures to reduce the consumption of petroleum products and conserve foreign exchange reserves. He suggested reviving COVID-era measures, such as work-from-home arrangements, and avoiding non-essential foreign travel and gold purchases for a year.

The Prime Minister's caution about gold purchases comes amid heightened risk of weakening macro fundamentals if the crisis drags on. The domestic currency, under pressure since late last year due to weakening foreign investment in the country in the backdrop of steep US tariffs, slipped to a record low of \$95.63 against the US dollar on Tuesday as crude prices remained above \$100 a barrel due to a standstill in traffic via the Strait of Hormuz. Oil prices have surged nearly 50% since before the Iran war. However, this is not the first instance when the citizens have been asked to voluntarily stop gold purchases. In 2013, the then Finance Minister P Chidambaram had made similar appeals, even raising the customs duty on gold imports from 6% to 10% between May and August 2013 in the middle of this rupee turmoil after the "taper tantrum" in the backdrop of the 2008 global financial crisis. The duty on gold is currently at 6%.

Economists point out that India's heavy reliance on imported gold, close to 750 tonnes every year with negligible export offsets, has repeatedly emerged as a macro-economic concern, especially during external shocks. Since gold accounts for a substantial share of the country's import bill, any sharp rise in purchases tends to widen the Current Account Deficit (CAD), put pressure on foreign exchange reserves and complicate the management of the rupee and inflation, especially during periods of external uncertainty. Offering concessions to the UAE as part of a trade deal seems to have catalysed a spurt in imports of gold from that country, according to experts. Structural challenges in the gold supply chain

India's gold import in FY26 had jumped by nearly 25% to \$71.97 billion, compared to \$58 billion in the previous financial year. This was largely due to the value of gold prices, with gold imports in FY26 falling to 721.04 tonnes compared to 757.09 tonnes in the previous financial year, data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry showed. Gold prices have surged over 40% in the last year, inflating the import bill. A working paper by IIM Ahmedabad titled 'Strategic Acquisition and Value Addition of Gold Resources for India' said that with an annual demand of approximately 750 tonnes, India stands as one of the world's largest gold consumers. However, India's domestic production capabilities, a mere 1.5 tonnes annually, create one of the country's most persistent macroeconomic challenges. "Despite these challenges, India's approach to gold management has remained largely unchanged for decades, focusing primarily on demand-side interventions with limited success. Import duty adjustments have inadvertently fueled smuggling and prompted trade diversions through countries with preferential tariff structures, particularly Least Developed Countries," the report authored by Sundaravalli Narayanaswami and

## Anatomy of a NEET leak: A paid WhatsApp group, a whistleblower under cloud, and a 'guess paper' that spread like wildfire

The unravelling of a suspected leak in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG), 2026, in Rajasthan began with an automated fine print on a WhatsApp message: "Forwarded many times." When investigators following the trail of a "guess paper" stumbled upon this WhatsApp message, they realised that what they hoped was an isolated leak was much larger in scale.

Officials of the Rajasthan Special Operations Group (SOG), which had been investigating the case before the CBI took charge on Tuesday, said that they found a WhatsApp group named 'Private Mafia', where the said paper was being circulated and had members who had paid various amounts, beginning from around Rs 5,000, to join the group. However, despite strict "instructions" from the group administrators not to share the paper, it was circulated far and wide. Officials said that preliminary investigation had indicated that the paper may have leaked from Nashik, Maharashtra. Nashik police officials said they have picked up a medical student, identified as Shubham Khairnar (30), who allegedly managed to obtain the question paper days before the exam and shared it further. Kishor Kale, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Nashik City, said that Shubham's questioning indicates that he "got the question paper from one of his associates in Pune". "He received a physical copy of the question paper and transferred it to others as a soft copy," Kale said, adding that it is being investigated whether this soft copy was the "guess paper" or the actual question paper. "He was a student of Bachelor of Ayurveda, Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) in Bhopal last year and stays in Nashik with his family. We received information from the Rajasthan SOG early Tuesday morning about taking him into custody. We apprehended him and brought him to the crime branch office. As per the preliminary inquiry, he was also a part of the (paper leak) syndicate. We are now transferring him to the CBI," Kale said. But he insisted that "rumours of paper leaking from Nashik are baseless" and that "the paper wasn't printed here." Kirankumar Chauhan, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Nashik, said, "The accused had changed his appearance by cutting his hair, making identification difficult. However, based on technical analysis and police investigation, the Crime Branch team managed to trace and detain him." Officials suspect he purchased the paper for Rs 10 lakh and later sold it for Rs 15 lakh.

Shubham is alleged to have shared the paper with people in Gurgaon and elsewhere, with copies eventually

reaching Rajasthan, Kerala, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, and possibly other states. Those who received it included students and career counsellors. One paper, many trails SOG officials also reached Sikar on Tuesday as part of their investigation, putting the spotlight on the district that has recently emerged as an alternative to Kota, especially for NEET coaching. SOG officials said their investigation also indicated that an MBBS student from Rajasthan's Shekhawati, who is studying in Kerala, allegedly shared the paper with their father, who runs a paying-guest accommodation in Shekhawati, before the examination. This was shared further, spreading the leaked paper. Ajay Pal Lamba, the SOG Inspector General, said that more than 150 candidates, their friends and parents have been questioned so far. The SOG has also submitted a list of 150 students and about 70 parents, who allegedly received the paper, to the CBI. Additionally, two dozen key suspects have been handed over to the CBI, Lamba said. He said that the investigation has revealed that the accused allegedly conspired to sell the genuine question paper as "guess papers". "Questioning several persons has pointed to an organised group. All these suspicious persons are being questioned by the CBI now. It is wrong to say that Rajasthan is the epicentre; it reached the state via other states. Before Rajasthan, it had reached a person near Gurgaon. It did not originate in Rajasthan," he claimed, adding that so far, there is no link to gangs in Rajasthan that had earlier been linked to other paper leaks in the state. Before the messages circulating on WhatsApp blew the lid off the lead, sources said that a whistleblower in Rajasthan had approached the local police but did not get a positive response. He then wrote to the National Testing Agency, which verified the complaint, and the Rajasthan SOG eventually initiated a probe. Sources said that the whistleblower himself is now under scrutiny for allegedly receiving and sharing the question paper, and that he may have complained to avoid arrest once the leak became widespread. NTA Director General Abhishek Singh on Tuesday said the whistleblower had said he received a WhatsApp message before the exam in which a few questions matched those in the actual examination. Addressing journalists in Jaipur, Vishal Bansal, Additional Director General of Police, SOG, had earlier said that the "guess paper" had over 400 questions, of which around 120 appeared in the actual examination. "And this guess paper was with students' weeks before the examination, as far back as a month," he said, adding that it was being shared "as a .pdf file of about 150 pages with over 400 questions."



Now, as parallel investigations by the SIT and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) continue, the scam has emerged as one of the largest land grabs in the state. At the heart of the investigation are 117 properties spanning nearly 1.5 lakh sqm across North Goa, an area equivalent to 21 football fields.

On a Sunday morning in April 2022, a hurried meeting was called at Our Lady of Miracles, a church on a small hillock in Badem village, a close-knit community of 45 houses in Assagao, in North Goa's Bardez taluka. After Mass, the priest asked the parishioners to settle down. Christina Dias, 53, a lawyer and local resident, then laid bare an elaborate plot that had been quietly unfolding around them. Badem was the target of a criminal conspiracy, she said, one of the many villages across North Goa where vast tracts of land had allegedly been grabbed by real-estate agents in connivance with government officials. But it was what Dias told them next that shook the gathering: the dead had been signing sale deeds in the village for years, and over half of its properties had already changed hands.

As complaints poured in from Calangute, Parra, Anjuna, Pileme, Nerul and other villages in Bardez taluka, on June 15, 2022, the Goa government formed a seven-member Special Investigation Team (SIT), headed by the Superintendent of Police (Crime). According to land deeds, revenue documents and case and court records reviewed by The Indian Express, the land grab was part of a plot allegedly hatched by a group of real-estate brokers who used a trove of 500-year-old Portuguese-era land records to allegedly forge property titles. Goa Land Grab case The church in Badem where villagers were alerted of the scam in 2022. (Express photo by Pavneet Singh Chadha)

Now, as parallel investigations by the SIT and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) continue, the scam has emerged as one of the largest land grabs in the state. At the heart of the investigation are 117 properties spanning nearly 1.5 lakh sqm across North Goa, an area equivalent to 21 football fields. The scam was spun through three key loopholes: a largely Catholic population whose members had migrated over generations, leaving homes empty and unguarded; a real-estate boom that sent land prices in villages soaring; and an Archives department with poorly monitored and maintained records. In 2022, constituting an SIT in the state "for the first time ever to investigate matters of illegal land grabbing", Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said, "This has been happening for the last 20 years and it's happening more over the last 15-20 years. Some people live abroad. Their properties are being illegally transferred to someone else... Goa, being one of the most sought-after destinations, has been the target of such criminals involved in illegal land grabbing."

It was in early 2022 that residents in Badem started spotting "outsiders" surveying properties in the village: labourers fencing and clearing land, and contractors "threatening" owners. Speaking to The Indian Express, Dias, the local lawyer, pointed to property 78/2, where, in 2022, bouncers had allegedly set up sheds on a 18,500 sqm plot. Case records show the property was originally owned by Domingos Vincente De Souza and Maria Quitera De Souza. After their deaths, it had passed on to their children. The revenue records, however, told a different story. A sale deed purportedly executed on February 19, 1934, claimed the original owners sold the property to a couple, Antonio Martinho Diniz and Antonia Francisca Pereira. The document showed Domingos to be unmarried at the time. Except, in 1934, Domingos had been married for years. His youngest child Mary was born in June that year. Goa Land Grab case As news of the scam spread, boards went up across Badem. (Express photo by Pavneet Singh Chadha) Another deed claimed the property was sold, bizarrely, to the same couple again in 1951.

Dias also spoke about property 39/6, co-owned by her relative Anacleto Vincent Monteiro. Revenue records, however, reflected a mutation proceeding with a new set of owners. Dias filed an objection and obtained certified copies of the mutation proceedings through RTI. The documents claimed Dias's relative Monteiro, Miguel Arcanjo de Souza and other co-owners had executed a sale deed on November 26, 1951, in favour of the ancestors of the new owners. But, as Dias pointed out, Miguel had died in April 1951, nearly six months before "signing" the deed. Monteiro was 15 years old in 1951 and only became a co-owner through inventory proceedings in 2000, she said. "It was shocking to learn that my dead relative Miguel returned from his grave to execute this deed of sale," Dias said. Anacleto Monteiro's son Ashley, 50, remembers attending the church meeting. "Everyone was concerned. We were told that a set of people were trying to grab our ancestral properties through fraudulent means. The property was bequeathed to my father through inventory proceedings. It was shocking to hear that it had been sold by some third party, based on a forged sale deed. When the sale deed was supposedly executed, some co-owners were dead. How did the dead sign deeds?" he asked. Then, there is the case of "Aframento or Quinze Adicoes", a property in Badem spanning 2,942.5 square metres co-owned by Matilda Leopoldina Coutinho on the western portion and Eliterio Anthony Carvalho on the eastern portion. The western portion had been gifted to Matilda's husband Simon Paul Coutinho by Jose Pedro Coutinho and his wife Maria Anton D'Souza via a deed of gift in 1974. The eastern portion was recorded in the name of Maria Joaquina Carvalho and Pascoal Carvalho. Yet, a sale deed dated June 25, 1996, claimed the two women — Maria Anton D'Souza and Maria Joaquina Carvalho — were "married to each other" and had jointly sold the property to one Diago Roberto Rodrigues. Maria Joaquina Carvalho had died in 1991, five years before the purported transaction.

Advocate Augustus Monteiro, who was helping villagers compile the list of targeted properties, learnt that his own family property in Anjuna was on the radar. A purported sale deed from 1951 showed his wife, mother-in-law and sister-in-law as joint owners of eight properties in Anjuna and that they had "sold" them to one Antonio Pereira. His mother-in-law, Esperanca Oliveira, was 12 years old in 1951 and had been listed in the deed as the daughter of her father-in-law. His wife and sister-in-law were not even born that year.

Tucked in a valley between Anjuna and Siolim, Badem

## Goa land grab case: 'How did the dead sign sale deeds?'

is a largely Catholic village with old houses bearing Goan balcaos (covered front porches), courtyards and laterite stone walls. Over the years, as many residents migrated abroad, their homes remained vacant. Paddy fields have given way to large villas, driven partly by an urban elite relocating to Goa after the pandemic and the resulting real estate boom.

After the church meeting, Dias asked every resident of the village to check the occupants' column in Form 1 and XIV (documents with details of property ownership) in the revenue records on the Goa government's Directorate of Settlement and Land Records website. Her team of eight then began quietly conducting inquiries at the offices of the mamlatdar and sub-registrar. They rushed to the Department of Archives and Archaeology in Panaji and found that more than half of Badem's properties had allegedly been sold off by 'dead ancestors' to fictitious people using forged deeds and fraudulent mutation proceedings. Soon, boards went up across Badem: "Private Property, Not For Sale. Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted." According to Dias, inquiries at the Department of Archives and Archaeology revealed that records had been tampered with. Pages 13 to 19 in book number 551, volume 328 of 1951, had been inserted and loosely bound with string; they were also shorter than the rest of the pages. An internal inquiry by the Archives department found that two genuine sale deeds had been removed from the register and four fake ones inserted, through which 45 properties had been targeted across Bardez taluka. "The dates of the deeds were not in chronological order, the pages of some deeds were shorter than the other pages in the books. There was a difference in handwriting. The paper quality, the shade of ink were different, there was a mismatch in the signature of the notary," Dias said. With the scam exposed, the SIT made its first major arrest a week after it was formed in June 2022 — Vikrant Shetty, a 48-year-old real-estate broker. More arrests followed, including of Mohammed Suhail alias Michael, who is named in at least 13 FIRs and identified as the 'mastermind', and Rajkumar Maithi. While Suhail is in jail, Shetty and Maithi are out on bail. The ED, meanwhile, initiated a money laundering probe in July 2022, filing a prosecution complaint against 36 accused in 2024 and attaching properties worth over Rs 535 crore. Subsequently, the ED has filed four more prosecution complaints. In a disclosure statement, Suhail, the ED claimed, allegedly admitted to illegally acquiring more than 100 properties in Goa in the names of friends and associates over the last 15 years. Born in Chitradurga, Karnataka, the 49-year-old had dropped out after the third year of a BE programme in Honnavar and worked in his father's tailoring business before turning to real-estate brokerage. Dismissing the ED's allegations, Advocate Ritesh Rawal, who is representing Suhail, the main accused, said, "The matter is sub judice. Whether these statements [disclosures] are valid or not, or whether they can be corroborated, is a matter of trial. The ED proceedings are dependent on trial in the predicate offence. If the accused is proved to be innocent in the predicate offence, then there can be no PMLA conviction that can be attracted."

Advocate Vibhav Amonkar, who has represented Suhail's co-accused Shetty and Maithi, said, "The material at this juncture is highly insufficient to call anyone a mastermind. The investigation is ongoing and the trial will take its own course." According to a senior police officer who was part of the SIT, the accused first identified vacant, unattended or dilapidated ancestral properties owned by people with common Goan surnames such as Fernandes, Rodrigues and D'Souza. The gang then allegedly obtained ownership and title information of properties from government offices, websites and the Registo de Agrimensor, a register maintained by Portuguese-era land surveyors. During the Portuguese regime, and for some time after Goa's liberation in 1961, land deeds of all kinds were registered with notaries under the continental system of registration. In 1963, the powers of registration were transferred to sub-registrars and notary ex-officios under the Law Department, who took over the registers of deeds and wills from the old notaries. These books were subsequently handed over to the Department of Archives and Archaeology, which is today the custodian of archival records. The department holds over 3.2 lakh bound volumes, files and loose manuscripts containing approximately 3 crore folios, with the earliest record dating back to 1498.

Suhail allegedly told the ED that two sorters in the Archives department were paid Rs 15 lakh each to provide documents and pages of notarial books. The sorters would allegedly tear the original pages from the notarial books, and insert the new documents, showing forged sale deeds, in their place.

But the forgery required skill of a rare kind. The notarial deeds were typically in Portuguese and the forged pages, with details of the property changing hands, had to resemble the original script. According to the ED prosecution complaint, Suhail allegedly roped in his nephew Denver D'Souza, who was proficient in Portuguese, to reproduce the script. D'Souza also allegedly translated the Portuguese documents that were then used to draw succession deeds at sub-registrar offices, charging around Rs 15,000 per page. D'Souza is yet to be arrested. According to the ED, the main accused allegedly approached three Goan residents — Royson Rodrigues, Sandric Fernandes and Caetano Fernandes — and collected their personal documents, along with that of their ancestors, to forge succession records and land documents. The fabricated documents allegedly showed that the actual owners had long since sold the properties to the ancestors of the Goan residents. The mastermind then approached the sub-registrar offices at Canacona and Ponda to get succession certificates. Suhail also told investigators that three mamlatdars assisted him and were paid Rs 8 lakh in cash per property mutation. Advocate Anoop Gaoker, who is representing Royson, Sandric and Caetano, said, "The matter is sub judice before the courts." While the investigation continues, back in Badem, the ordeal is far from over for Ashley Monteiro and other residents. "Though the properties are attached, the names of the original owners are still not reflecting in the revenue records. We are now forced to run from pillar to post to restore ownership and possession of properties which were snatched from us. I lost my father in 2024. He was a heart patient and all this stress took a toll on him," he said. Across the village, the boards are still up: "Private Property, Not For Sale. Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted." Target properties: Identify vacant properties, mainly with absentee or foreign-based owners; collect title details from govt offices, surveyor registers; Forge land deeds: Fabricate Portuguese-era sale deeds, showing original owners selling to accused's ancestors. Bribe Archives department staff to insert fake pages into notarial books, supply certified copies. Establish inheritance: Use forged deeds to obtain fraudulent succession certificates from sub-registrar offices, impersonating legal heirs of fictional buyers. Fudge & sell: Bribe local revenue officials to delete original owners' names from revenue records and substitute the accused's associates. Execute nominal first sale deed to legalise the title, sell to unsuspecting buyers

## SEBI currently mulling changes to deepen debt markets, make it more accessible: Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey



The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is currently exploring a host of measures to deepen the debt markets and improve the market architecture to make it more accessible for the retail audience, Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Tuesday. Labeling the corporate bond market as the economy's "second engine" for credit, Pandey said a deeper bond market is essential for financing economic growth. "India's financing model for businesses is still predominantly bank-led. A growing economy needs patient debt capital — for infrastructure, capacity expansion, refinancing, and long-gestation projects. It needs price discovery across tenures and credit profiles. That is why the corporate debt market is central to India's journey of sustained economic growth," said Pandey. He was speaking at CareEdge Ratings' Debt Summit in Mumbai.

SEBI is mulling a host of changes to the debt-market architecture to simplify it and make it more accessible. The regulator is currently exploring a pilot to tokenize corporate bonds, which would involve converting traditional corporate bonds into smaller and more accessible digital tokens. "The pilot will test whether tokenization can deliver faster settlement, better traceability, automated servicing, and greater transparency. We must move carefully — but we must remain open to useful innovation," the SEBI chair said. SEBI is also exploring a distinct regulatory classification for debt brokers, which could lower costs, reduce entry barriers, and encourage dedicated intermediaries for the debt market. The regulator is also working to further develop bond exchange-traded funds and derivatives on corporate bond indices, which could help in improving liquidity, allow retail investors with smaller ticket sizes to explore the market, and help institutions hedge against interest-rate risks.

As the war in West Asia has dragged on, market par-

ticipants have increasingly dived into the debt markets in order to hedge against heightened geopolitical risks. Overnight index swaps, a type of interest rate derivative, have particularly helped market participants hedge against interest rate risks as inflationary pressures due to the ongoing war have revved up discussions of potential hikes in interest rates by the central bank in the upcoming months. "There is also a need to review whether debt-only listed entities need the same rigour under LODR regulations as equity-listed companies. We will take up this review in due course," Pandey added. Alongside these, Pandey said the regulator is also looking to run bond market awareness campaigns for retail audiences, work to widen the base of bond issuers, and deepen the municipal bond market. "The way ahead is not one road. It is a network of reforms — market making, municipal bonds, securitization, bond ETFs and derivatives, tokenization, and investor education. Together, these reforms can build a bond market that finances India's growth at scale — with transparency and trust," Pandey said.

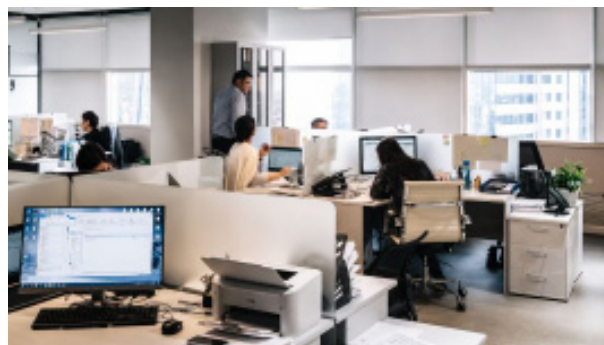
However, he also underlined the need for caution while implementing these changes. "SEBI will facilitate market development, support innovation, and simplify where possible. But we will not compromise on investor protection or market integrity. Our goal is not merely a bigger bond market.

Our goal is a better bond market — one that finances growth, supports resilience, protects trust, and serves Viksit Bharat," said Pandey. He also reiterated the potential risks for investors delving into the bond market. "For investors, corporate bonds can offer income and diversification. But they are not risk-free. They carry credit risk, interest-rate risk, and liquidity risk. Growth must therefore be anchored in transparency, suitability, and investor education," he said.

## Corporate margins in FY27 may fall by 200 bps due to West Asia crisis: Crisil

The prolonged supply-chain disruptions triggered by the ongoing West Asia conflict are expected to significantly dent corporate profitability this fiscal year, according to a report from rating agency Crisil. Operating profitability of Indian companies could decline by nearly 200 basis points from the pre-conflict estimate of 12%, with some sectors seeing a more pronounced impact, it said. The protracted conflict in West Asia has been goading domestic companies to realign supply chains, navigate pricing issues, manage higher fuel and freight costs and contend with a depreciating rupee, the rating firm said in a report. The decline in profitability reflects the mounting pressure from higher logistics costs, delayed shipments and volatile commodity prices.

"For companies, managing costs and profitability will be a bigger challenge than achieving topline growth. Of the 34 sectors stress-tested, 22 would see operating profitability being culled more than 10% due to higher inventory costs and inability to fully pass on the burden to consumers immediately," said Subodh Rai, Managing Director, Crisil Ratings. With the conflict and disruptions into their third month and the situation still evolving, Crisil conducted a stress test of 34 sectors, which account for 65% of its rated corporate debt. "We have assumed supply-chain disruptions could last for nine months this fiscal (compared with six months in our base case), with crude oil prices averaging \$110 per barrel for this fiscal (versus a base case assumption of \$95)," Crisil said. Crisil said it assessed the impact on sectoral revenue, operating profitability and the resilience provided by balance-sheet strength to determine the impact on credit quality. From a credit-quality perspective, however, Crisil analysis shows India Inc will remain resilient on the back of strong balance sheets, steady domestic demand and government-led capital expenditure, enabling it to navigate profitability pressures stemming from the lingering geopolitical uncertainties. On the other hand, even a partial pass-through can drive up realisations, re-



sulting in a lower impact on revenue growth for most sectors. Further, credit profiles will be cushioned by controlled gearing levels and sustained domestic demand, it said.

"Consequently, we foresee the credit quality of only eight sectors, accounting for 10% of our rated corporate debt, being materially impacted," Rai said. Over the past decade, corporate India's median gearing has halved to 0.5 times as of March 2026, while interest coverage has doubled to over 5 times. Consequently, robust balance-sheets are providing sufficient headroom for India Inc to navigate the profitability pressures emanating from the West Asia conflict, thereby keeping credit profiles resilient. Balance-sheet strength should sustain this fiscal, even as working capital needs inch up, Crisil said. Credit quality has been supported by policy interventions in times of non-linear events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the tariff tribulations last year. The recently announced Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0 is timely in supporting MSMEs — characterised by limited balance-sheet buffers and consequently higher vulnerability to the West Asia conflict — by alleviating credit quality pressures. "Our overall outlook for India Inc's credit quality remains stable but cautious," Crisil said.

## Salman Khan doesn't 'touch rotis,' completes protein alongside 'one tablespoon of rice'

Salman Khan, 60, who recently shared a glimpse of his chiselled physique, has now opened up about his meals, saying he completes his protein intake with a tablespoon of rice. "Every day is a cheat day for me. I'd rather spend that extra 20 minutes in the gym or the extra one hour in the gym, but I'll eat what I'll eat. I don't do steamed," he told Variety India on their YouTube channel. The Sultan actor continued, "The amount of protein that I need to eat, I just eat... no matter how tasty the food is... I will take one tablespoon of rice. I don't touch rotis. That's it. And then whatever protein I need, I try to finish it with that one tablespoon of rice."

Salman Khan's statement reflects a reality many fitness-conscious people relate to: sustainability matters more than strict dieting. What stands out is not the cheat meal confession but the portion control and protein-rich eating pattern that he described. "Limiting refined carbohydrates, like large portions of rice or rotis, while focusing on protein can help with fullness, blood sugar stability, and muscle maintenance, especially for active individuals," said Dr Vijay Negalur, HoD diabetology, KIMS Hospitals, Thane. However, what works for a highly active celebrity with intense workout routines may not directly apply to the average person with a sedentary lifestyle, stress, poor sleep, or metabolic issues, he contended.

Is cutting carbs entirely a healthy strategy?

Carbohydrates are often misunderstood. The body still

needs good-quality carbs for energy, gut health, and hormonal balance. "The issue usually lies in the excess quantity and poor-quality carbs — refined flour, sugary foods, oversized portions, and frequent snacking. For people at risk of diabetes or insulin resistance, reducing carb intake can improve glucose control, but eliminating carbs is rarely necessary. In Indian diets, especially, balance is more practical than restriction.

Smaller portions of rice or roti paired with protein, fibre, and healthy fats usually work better long-term than complete avoidance," said Dr Negalur. Can exercise offset indulgences to some extent?

Physical activity does improve insulin sensitivity and helps the body use glucose more effectively. However, there is a common misconception today that intense workouts can completely "cancel out" unhealthy eating patterns. "Nutrition and exercise work together; one cannot fully take the place of the other," said Dr Negalur.

What to note?

The biggest lesson is consistency, not perfection. "Sustainable eating habits, enough protein, portion awareness, regular movement, and enjoying food without guilt are much healthier than constantly cycling between crash diets and binge eating. Celebrity routines can inspire people, but they should not serve as a template without considering individual health needs, age, activity level, and metabolic profile."

## First India-bound LNG tanker via Strait of Hormuz arrives in Gujarat

A liquefied natural gas (LNG) tanker that crossed the Strait of Hormuz over the weekend arrived at Gujarat's Dahej on Tuesday, marking the first LNG cargo to reach India from the Persian Gulf in over two-and-a-half months of the strait's effective closure due to the West Asia war, ship tracking data shows. The Liberia-flagged tanker Al Hamra, carrying about 62,000 tonnes of LNG from Abu Dhabi National Oil Company's (ADNOC) Das Island export facility in the Persian Gulf will be discharging its cargo at Petronet LNG's Dahej terminal, the largest LNG import terminal in India. As of 2 pm Tuesday, the tanker was stationed at one of the LNG discharge jetties of the Dahej terminal, according to data and visuals from ship tracking and maritime intelligence firm MarineTraffic.

As per trade sources, the cargo belongs to government-owned gas major GAIL. The tanker is owned and operated by an ADNOC arm—ADNOC Logistics and Services—as per global shipping databases. While the cargo is equivalent to about a day's worth of India's LNG imports, Al Hamra's arrival has built hopes of more LNG supplies coming to India from the Persian Gulf, which lies to the west of the Strait of Hormuz.

Trade sources indicated that Al Hamra was not transmitting its location for days by turning off its transponder. In shipping parlance, this behaviour is referred to as "going dark" and is used by vessels to avoid detection. Many of the vessels that have successfully crossed the Strait of Hormuz since early March have done so by going dark for varying periods, with only a few transmitting their location while passing through the chokepoint. According to commodity market analytics firm Kpler, Al Hamra is one of three LNG tankers that crossed the critical maritime chokepoint over the weekend despite elevated geopolitical risk. The other two tankers—Fuwairit and Al Rayyan—carried QatarEnergy cargoes bound for Pakistan and China, respectively. In the nearly three months of the West Asia conflict, which began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran, only seven vessels laden with LNG are estimated to have transited the fraught waters of the Strait of Hormuz. While about one-and-a-half dozen liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and oil tankers have made their way to India from the Persian Gulf since early March, Al Hamra is the first LNG tanker to have arrived from there. New Delhi has been engaged with Tehran to get safe passage for India-bound vessels, particularly energy cargoes. Vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz—the narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea—are all but halted due to the West Asia conflict. The Strait is a major chokepoint for global energy flows, accounting for a fifth of international oil and LNG shipments.

India depends on LNG imports to meet about half of its natural gas requirement, and about 60% of those imports come through the strait, primarily from Qatar and the UAE. The two Gulf countries are major LNG exporters at the global level as well. With hardly any LNG cargoes from the Persian Gulf making their way to India, importers have been scrambling for LNG from alternative geographies amid



a global price surge. India's LNG imports rebounded a bit in April after faltering in March, as importers turned to suppliers that don't depend on the Strait of Hormuz to secure emergency spot cargoes. As a result, while not one LNG cargo reached Indian shores in March from the country's largest supplier Qatar and another major supplier, the UAE, the likes of Oman, Nigeria, Angola, and the United States (US) stepped in to partially bridge the gap.

According to Kpler data, LNG imports in April were 1.95 million tonnes, up from 1.67 million tonnes in March. The country's 2025 average monthly LNG imports stood at 2.08 million tonnes. On a year-on-year basis, April LNG imports were down 9.3% from 2.15 million tonnes in the year-ago period, which reflects that the supply shock was not fully offset and market conditions remained tight. In 2025, the average monthly LNG import volumes from Qatar stood at 0.95 million tonnes, followed by imports from the UAE at 0.27 million tonnes. In March-April, the Strait of Hormuz closure meant that just 0.06 million tonnes came from Qatar and 0.13 from the UAE during the two months. These were cargoes that had transited the strait before the West Asia war broke out. Supplies from Oman, which was the fourth largest supplier of LNG to India in 2025 with an average monthly flow of 0.18 million tonnes, jumped to 1.2 million in March-April, or 0.6 million tonnes a month on average. While Oman is located in West Asia, it has a sizable coastline facing the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman, and doesn't depend on the Strait of Hormuz for the transit of its cargoes. Imports from the US, India's third-largest LNG supplier in 2025, rose to 0.31 million tonnes a month on average in March-April. The average monthly LNG imports from the US in 2025 were at 0.24 million tonnes. Average monthly imports from Nigeria and Angola jumped to 0.41 million tonnes and 0.24 million tonnes in March-April, respectively; the monthly average of imports from the two suppliers in 2025 was 0.14 million tonnes apiece. The month-over-month growth in LNG imports in April over March was likely due to higher gas use in a few sectors, particularly fertilisers. Following the disruption in LNG supplies due to Strait of Hormuz closure, the government had initially reduced gas allocation to the fertiliser sector to 70% of average consumption over the previous six months. It was part of a larger effort to manage natural gas supplies in order to prioritise the most critical sectors.

## Why heart is among the most cancer-resistant organs: 'Highly vulnerable to...'

The heart is often viewed through the lens of disease risk — high blood pressure, heart attacks, blocked arteries, or heart failure. But according to cardiologist Dr Dmitry Yaranov, the heart has a surprisingly unusual characteristic: despite its importance and constant workload, it is among the organs least likely to develop cancer. In an Instagram post, Dr Yaranov, who specialises in heart failure, advanced heart failure, heart transplantation, and mechanical circulatory support, highlighted how uncommon primary heart cancers actually are. He stated, "The heart is actually one of the most cancer-resistant organs in the human body. Why? Unlike many tissues in the body, heart muscle cells divide very little after early life." He further explained that primary heart cancer is so rare that many cardiologists may never encounter a genuine case during their entire professional careers. According to Dr Yaranov, one of the key reasons may lie in the way heart cells function differently from those in many other organs. Fewer cell divisions may reduce the opportunities for cancer-causing mutations to occur. He also pointed to the heart's unique environment, noting that its constantly active, high-energy nature appears less favourable for tumour development. "That's why cancers of the lung, colon, breast, and prostate are dramatically more common than cancers that actually start in the heart," he added. However, resistance to cancer does not necessarily translate into complete protection. Dr Yaranov stressed that many of the same habits that raise cancer risk can also significantly affect heart health, including: Highlighting this overlap, he cautioned, "So while the heart may naturally resist cancer better than many organs, it remains highly vulnerable to the way we live. Protecting your heart and lowering cancer risk often starts with the exact same decisions." Why some organs appear naturally more resistant to cancer than others

Dr CM Nagesh, Senior Consultant Cardiologist and Medical Director Cardea Superspeciality Hospital, tells indianexpress.com, "Cancer is essentially a disease of uncontrolled cell growth. The more frequently cells divide, the greater the chance that genetic errors and mutations may occur." "Tissues such as the skin, lungs, and digestive tract are constantly renewing themselves, which means their cells divide more often. That repeated cycle increases the possibility of cancer-causing mutations," he explained. The heart behaves very differently. Its main functional cells, called cardiomyocytes, largely stop dividing soon after birth. "When the heart grows or adapts to stress, it typically does so by enlarging existing cells rather than creating many new ones," he said. Because these cells rarely replicate, the opportunity for DNA-copying errors becomes much smaller, helping explain why primary heart cancers are exceptionally rare. Dr Nagesh also noted that the heart's highly oxygenated environment and constant blood flow may reduce prolonged exposure of its tissues to potentially harmful substances. Symptoms or signs that could potentially indicate a problem involving the heart. Although heart tumours are rare, Dr Nagesh said symptoms can develop because growths inside the heart may obstruct blood flow, interfere with electrical activity, or release fragments into the circulation. Position-related shortness of breath: Severe breathlessness that noticeably changes with posture, such as worsening when lying down. Unexplained fainting or dizziness: Sudden episodes without an obvious cause could suggest a temporary disruption of blood flow. New-onset irregular heartbeats or palpitations: Unexpected racing, fluttering, or skipped heartbeats may indicate interference with the heart's electrical system. Stroke-like symptoms or circulation problems: Fragments from certain tumours can travel through the bloodstream and block blood vessels. Persistent general symptoms: Ongoing fatigue, low-



grade fever, unexplained weight loss, or joint pain may occasionally occur because some tumours trigger inflammatory responses. These symptoms are not specific to heart tumours and can be caused by many more common conditions," he noted, "but persistent or unexplained symptoms deserve medical attention."

Dr Nagesh said cardiovascular disease and cancer often share common biological pathways. "One of the biggest connections is chronic inflammation," he explained. Excess visceral fat, poor dietary habits, and inactivity can create a persistent inflammatory state in the body. Over time, this can damage blood vessels, contribute to plaque buildup, and increase cardiovascular risk. The same inflammatory environment may also affect immune function and create conditions that support abnormal cell growth. He added that metabolic changes also play a role. Obesity and poor diet can lead to insulin resistance and higher levels of growth-related hormones such as insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1), which may encourage both vascular changes and abnormal cell survival. Smoking and environmental toxins further increase risk through oxidative stress. "These harmful molecules can damage DNA and blood vessels simultaneously," he said. "The same biological processes that contribute to cancer development can also contribute to heart disease." His broader point: lifestyle habits do not simply increase the risk of one disease at a time — they can alter the body in ways that affect multiple systems simultaneously.

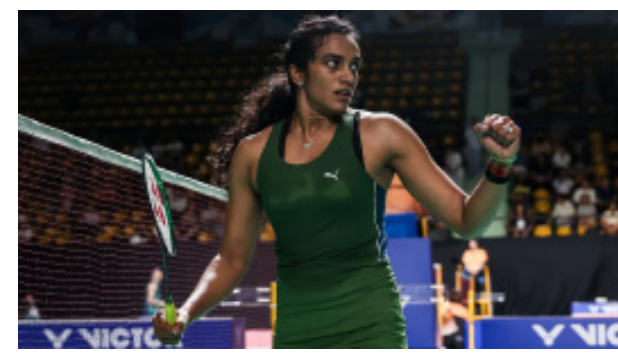
## Govt says adequate fuel stocks available amid panic buying in several states

New Delhi: The government is monitoring fuel supplies across the country on a daily basis and taking immediate corrective steps to ensure adequate stocks are available, a senior official said on Monday, citing panic buying at petrol pumps in parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said the country has enough stocks of petrol, diesel and domestic cooking gas LPG and dryouts at a few pumps was a result of a 20-30 per surge in demand due to a combination of factors, such as increased consumption in agriculture and bulk users tapping petrol pumps for their needs because of the price difference.

Also, private pumps selling petrol and diesel at rates that are at least Rs 5 and Rs 3 per litre higher than PSUs led to a shift to retail outlets of oil marketing companies, resulting in dryouts in some parts.

## Sindhu wards off World No 6 Wardani with gritty net play in Singapore



She clearly could hit through Wardani, and pushed the accelerator at perfectly timed break-aways. The 5-1 early lead in Set 1 was doused down by the Indonesian who has won her 3 matches against Sindhu, by being unafraid of the Indian's attack. Where Sindhu scored with forcing Wardani to play from the back court by storming the net was from 8-13 down to 15-all. Sindhu won 6 of the next 8 points. It needed gritting out, picking the Indonesian's drops that fall quite accurately at the net. So the lunges were summoned continually. Sindhu stayed strong on the defense, and at the first opportunity intercepted the shuttle and switched to attack which rattled Wardani.

Things got tricky at 13-10 and 18-16 in the second set. But Sindhu was far too driven and alert to avoid errors, to allow any dramatics from so close to closing it out. Wardani was forced to send smashes to the lines, as Sindhu's defense didn't falter, and the fifth seed ended up sending shuttles wide to lose in straight sets. Sindhu's periodisation for the Super 750s and Super 1000s has been spot-on this year, except at the All England. And she plays another 23-year-old Rinko Gunji of Japan in Round 2 at Singapore, before a possible run-in with An Se-young in quarters. When rankings didn't matter to her, she could've backed herself to beat the World No 1 each time they met. But the Japanese will be her immediate target. Ranked No 19, she's been under the radar, and Sindhu will need to parry off any surprises she brings. Victor Lai might not boast of the steeping smash and the shuttle control of his famous namesake Axelsen. But the Canadian has wheels on his feet and shuttle fluency that helps him cross the bird in several ways. When the drift decided that Ayush Shetty would race away to win the opening set, and then Lai would claim the second, it needed the ability to play cross shots with precision to decide the decider.

Lai, batchmate of Ayush boasts of that proficiency. Not only can he squeeze energy out of rivals in long rallies, when the court conditions don't permit that, he whizzes around like he's on roller skates, and keeps the shuttle in play. Lai used the crosses cannily to win the third set, as his footspeed and Ayush's contrasting lead feet put the Indian in a corner. With loads to work on his endurance for the third set, Ayush will need to figure a way to stub out Lai, or he could pose a perennial problem. He's quite Viktor-esque in his shrewd tactics. Also joining Sindhu in Round 2 were Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty who made heavy weather of the fast-improving threat of Americans, winning 26-28, 21-15, 21-13. For a second week in a row, the duo got into extra points, and couldn't convert 3 set points. They also fought back on 7 set points in the opener, before eventually losing the set. It was easy sailing in the second and third, making you wonder what the fuss was all about in the opener. But a slow start, wasn't one of their problems. They meet Lee Je-Hyui and Yang Po-hsuan on Thursday. On Wednesday, HS Prannoy faces Jonatan Christie, Srikanth runs into Loh Kean Yew and Lakshya Sen, back in the Top 10, needs to beat Lu Guangzu.

So, nine years after the 30-year-old reached the pinnacle of her ranking at World No 2, in April of 2017, a clamor back into the Top 10s, can be viewed from two different lenses. The flattering way to see it, is her longevity and drive to stay in the mix, even as a generational transition is stuttering towards permanence in women's singles.

Avenging her loss to Indonesian Putri Kusuma Wardani from last year's World Championship, Sindhu defeated the 23-year-old 21-17, 21-18 quite comfortably at the Super 750 Singapore Open. It gives her a second chance to cement her place in Top 10 this year after a brief week in March. Besides seedings leading up to World Championships at home, there's no material edge a Top 10 spot offers. But at this stage of her career, a good seeding at the home event could be make-or-break for Sindhu to avoid top 3 early. These things didn't use to matter to the tall shuttler earlier in her pomp — she could land up at a tournament at any stage and dancy her chances of beating anyone once, when she was at the top herself. But Top 10 scalps matter mightily now. Settling scores, like from the World's last year, where her end-game faltered against Wardani, now assume importance of the sharpening of a knife on the whetstone.

On Tuesday, Sindhu was determined to get her first win over Wardani since 2022. She has twice lost to the upcoming player, now a World No 6. The quality of women's singles Top 10 isn't particularly strong beyond An Se-young, Wang Zhi Yi and Akane Yamaguchi. Chen Yufei, Sindhu and Nozomi Okuhara (who's back to No 12) have needed serious second winds. But Wardani posed a specific needle to Sindhu, given how the losses were more a reflection of Sindhu struggling, than the Indonesian playing extraordinarily. At the Singapore Indoor Stadium, Sindhu set that bit right. The importance of winning this was evident given coach Irwansyah needed to stay put till the very end to ensure Sindhu got this done. Ayush Shetty was playing a drift-dictated match against Victor Lai on the adjoining court, and eventually lost a topsy-turvy match 11-21, 21-14, 21-12 where ridiculous starts of 11-2, 11-3, and 11-5 decided the result, based on how the wind swept the shuttle. On Sindhu's court though, she dictated the tempo and the rallies with precise strategy fed to her. Sindhu's had a reasonably decent net game all her life — you don't win Olympic medals without the net game. But Irwansyah has brought belligerence to her net attack now.

## 'RCB will do what Peshawar Zalmi did': Basit Ali predicts Qualifier 1 winner

The reference to Zalmi's 2026 PSL triumph was made in the context of a dominant, consistent playoff run, where they beat Islamabad United in Qualifier 1 and reached the final. (BCCI/AP Photo) The reference to Zalmi's 2026 PSL triumph was made in the context of a dominant, consistent playoff run, where they beat Islamabad United in Qualifier 1 and reached the final. Former Pakistan batsman Basit Ali has backed the Royal Challengers Bengaluru to beat the Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 1 and enter the final of IPL 2026, drawing a comparison with Peshawar Zalmi's 2026 Pakistan Super League title-winning campaign. The reference to Zalmi's 2026 PSL triumph was made in the context of a dominant, consistent playoff run, where they beat Islamabad United in Qualifier 1 and reached the final. "RCB will do exactly what Peshawar Zalmi did—straightforward domination. If anyone can challenge RCB, it is Sunrisers Hyderabad. Otherwise, no one else has a chance," he said on the 'Game Plan' podcast. The reigning champions had qualified for the IPL 2025 final after beating Punjab Kings in Qualifier 1 in New Chandigarh. They finished on top of the points table in IPL 2026, with 18 points in 14 matches. Former Pakistan wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal referred to a recent match involving Sunrisers Hyderabad and Virat Kohli, highlighting a brief post-match moment that drew attention. "In the last match between Sunrisers Hyderabad, Travis Head, and Virat Kohli, there was that handshake moment—no handshake happened," Akmal said. "Something felt off. Otherwise, Virat is not that kind of person," he said, without suggesting any deeper context," Ali added. Akmal also picked RCB to win Qualifier 1, admitting that they had more depth in their squad.



"I feel RCB are very dangerous on that ground. Their top three batters—Shubman Gill, Sudarshan, and Jos Buttler—are very strong. RCB's batting goes very deep till 7 or 8. Their bowling is also very strong. It will be a high-scoring match. I feel it will go beyond 200, maybe even 220-225," he added. Basit criticised Mumbai Indians, claiming their results in the closing phase of the season had a direct impact on the playoff race and altered the fate of multiple teams. He suggested that MI's defeat in a key match against the Rajasthan Royals effectively eliminated the Punjab Kings, while also affecting the qualification hopes of Kolkata Knight Riders and Delhi Capitals. "For me, the biggest thing is that Mumbai Indians have done an injustice to three teams. They lost a winning match, knocked Punjab out, knocked KKR out, and also ruined Delhi's chances. Basically, they have completely changed the situation," Basit said, reflecting his frustration with how the late-season results unfolded.

## 'Everything does not hinge on Virat Kohli': Former India batter warns RCB ahead of GT Qualifier 1 match



trouble if their star batter and senior opener Virat Kohli tends to shoulder excessive responsibility in high-pressure matches all by himself. While Kohli has been in top scoring form through another reason with his scoring rates up in the 160s, RCB are entering the Playoffs match on the back of a 55-run defeat to the SunRisers Hyderabad. There is also uncertainty looming over Kohli's opening partner in the contest, with Jacob Bethell ruled out of the tournament and availability of fellow Englishman Phil Salt still hanging under a cloud. Manjrekar urged that RCB should be able to stick to the template where Kohli will not assume the anchor's role with a sacrifice on the strike rate to play a longer innings. "The approach of RCB must remain the same. Virat Kohli is a key player, but everything does not hinge on him, that is how they have become such a good team. It is important for Virat to keep playing in the same fashion, because he has a tendency in the final stages to take too much of the onus on himself, and if he does that, that is dangerous territory for RCB to be in. So, I think they should keep the same template," Manjrekar said in a Sportstar podcast.

Kohli's IPL 2026 season and Playoffs record in 14 innings, Kohli has aggregated 557 runs at 50.63 with a century and four half-centuries. The 37-year-old's strike rate stands at 163.82 — his highest across any edition of the IPL since 2008. While he enjoys a supreme record against the Titans in particular — averaging 76.66 and SR of 152.31 — the former RCB captain's overall Playoffs batting record is a tad underwhelming, averaging 26.4 with a sub-par 121.1 strike rate across 17 games.

Former India batter Sanjay Manjrekar has raised an unusual warning for the defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru ahead of their Qualifier 1 match against the Gujarat Titans at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala on Tuesday. According to Manjrekar, RCB could be in for some trouble if their star batter and senior opener Virat Kohli tends to shoulder excessive responsibility in high-pressure matches all by himself.

GNS News Agency, May 31

Former India batter Sanjay Manjrekar has raised an unusual warning for the defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru ahead of their Qualifier 1 match against the Gujarat Titans at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala on Tuesday. According to Manjrekar, RCB could be in for some

## Norway Chess' confessional booth has a new star: Divya Deshmukh



After she's waited a long while for her opponent, reigning women's world champion Ju Wenjun, to make a move, Divya Deshmukh drifts off to the confessional booth. It's her first-ever appearance at the Norway Chess Women's tournament. And Deshmukh has some unfiltered thoughts she wants to share. "I saw that there are some people sleeping while sitting in the first row," she quips with a cheeky grin. "Honestly, I don't blame them. It's what I would have done too." She proceeds to drop another nugget. "I'm actually getting a bit hungry," she says wistfully. "There's a packet of dried mango kept on the table (in the player's lounge). But I am unsure if we can eat it. It might be kept there for promotional causes." An innovation of the Norway Chess tournament, the confessional booth is a special, sound-proof room near the playing hall that players are encouraged to walk into in the middle of their game, and without being asked by anyone, bare their unfiltered thoughts for live broadcast viewers. It's an introverted chess player's worst nightmare. Deshmukh, at the opposite end of the spectrum from being introverted, decides to ace it. So much so that she makes two trips to the confessional before her game against Ju on Monday has even entered the middlegame phase. As it turns out, Deshmukh is the only female player to visit the confessional booth on Monday.

Players like Magnus Carlsen and Hikaru Nakamura (who was here last year) cannot get enough of the confessional booth. The Indians, on the other hand, have traditionally wanted to be nowhere near it. At last year's edition, R

Vaishali had said that the organisers had to nudge her to give the booth a try. Deshmukh, the youngest player ever to be invited to play in the Norway Chess tournament, needs no such nudges. One of the most candid players on the circuit, the confessional booth seems like it was made for a player of Deshmukh's presence. In the second visit to the confessional, she decides to show off her analytical nous. She explains why she hates her pawn structure on the queen-side against Ju. She speaks of why she would hate it if her opponent's 'bishop came out to play'. She throws up some ideas of what she could play, examines them under a microscope, and then discards them to the rubbish bin one by one as horrible ones.

After a while, she shrugs and admits: "I'm yet to find a good move. But hopefully when she plays, I'll miraculously find one." It's like having a grandmaster's brain being examined in real-time under an X-ray. When the time comes to find good moves over the board, she does find them, neutralizing the attack of the reigning women's world champion in a 52-move draw before she wins the Armageddon contest with black pieces. In Armageddon, the player with black pieces only needs a draw to be declared the winner of the contest while their opponent using white pieces has to win. So a draw would have sufficed for Deshmukh. But she won the game by getting a resignation out of Ju after a stunning hop of the knight that would have led to her pocketing Ju's all-powerful queen.

Players like Koneru Humpy and Anna Muzychuk believe that this year's Norway Chess Women tournament features the strongest field ever assembled in a women's chess tournament. The pre-tournament win percentage calculations by noted game theoretician Mehmet Mars Seven gave Deshmukh bleak chances of winning the event. Mars Seven gave the Indian prodigy a 7.3 per cent chance of winning this year's Norway Chess Women, the worst among the six female players. Her opponent in the opening round, as per the same estimate, had a 28.3 per cent chance of winning this year's tournament, the highest chances among anyone else. After her win over Ju, Deshmukh's opponent on Tuesday will be Koneru Humpy, India's first woman to become a grandmaster. The tournament will just get harder. But expect Deshmukh to rely on the confessional as a strategy when things get hairy. "It was very fun (going to the confessional booth). It's a great stress relief especially after you have been playing for so many hours you cannot talk,

## Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa earn hard-fought Armageddon wins in Norway Chess

Oslo: D Gukesh emerged victorious after a bruising, nerve-jangling marathon battle against Vincent Keymer, and R Praggnanandhaa outplayed Alireza Firouzja but world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen suffered a rare opening-round defeat at Norway Chess, which began amid towering bookshelves at the historic Deichman Bjorvika public library here. Thanks to his Armageddon triumph after a draining 144-move slugfest that lasted nearly five hours, Gukesh pocketed 1.5 points, while Keymer settled for one after the classical game had ended in a stalemate.

The marathon encounter saw the Indian world champion visibly rattled in the closing stages, even seeking clarification from the arbiter over the move count as the game drifted towards an inevitable draw despite Keymer being a pawn up. The German, however, remained ice-cool throughout the classical battle, continuing to press on before eventually losing the Armageddon decider. But the tie-break itself ended swiftly, with Gukesh unleashing the decisive 15.Bh6, a move that sealed Keymer's fate.

Praggnanandhaa and American Grandmaster Wesley So produced a hard-fought classical draw in a finely balanced contest before the Indian No. 2 prevailed in the Armageddon tie-break with a sharp attacking display to pocket the extra point. However, the biggest talking point of the day was defending champion Carlsen suffering a rare defeat in classical chess to Firouzja, who claimed all three points. The Frenchman, confined to a wheelchair after recently injuring his ankle at the Superbet Chess Classic Romania and with his foot firmly strapped in a protective "moon shoe", showed remarkable grit and composure to stun home favourite and world No. 1 Carlsen on his own turf.

Carlsen looked in control for large parts of the contest, but crippling time trouble led to a costly blunder that handed the initiative to Firouzja. The French grandmaster capitalised with clinical precision, securing a statement victory over the hometown favourite and surging to the top of the



standings. With three points, Firouzja grabbed the early lead in the 10-round tournament, while Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa were joint second with 1.5 points apiece. Wesley So and Keymer trailed on one point each, while Carlsen is yet to open his account. In the women's section, the tournament also began with fighting chess and an early upset as Bibisara Assaubayeva scored an impressive classical victory over Indian No. 1 Humpy Koneru. The Kazakh star handled the complications confidently, capitalised on her middlegame chances and converted her advantage with precision to make an excellent start to the tournament.

Defending champion Anna Muzychuk and Zhu Jiner played out a closely fought classical draw before Zhu prevailed in the Armageddon tie-break to secure the extra half point. Reigning women's world champion Ju Wenjun and Divya Deshmukh also shared the honours in classical chess after a tense battle in which the Chinese pressed hard for victory. Divya, however, produced a spirited display in Armageddon to clinch the tie-break win. After the opening round, Bibisara leads the women's standings, while Divya and Zhu are joint second on 1.5 points each. Muzychuk and Wenjun have one point apiece, while Humpy is yet to open her account.

## India wins three gold medals at U23 Asian Championships



Hyderabad: India's impressive run continued at the U23 Asian Championships as Mansi Lather, Kajal and Sumit clinched gold medals to headline a dominant showing on the second day of the competition at the Tien Son Sport Center in Da Nang, Vietnam. Mansi put up a dominant display in the 68kg gold medal bout, registering a comprehensive 14-1 win over Uzbekistan's Firuza Esenbaeva. Kajal was equally impressive in the 76kg final, blanking Kyrgyzstan's Aizharkyn Zhanybekova 10-0, while Greco-Roman grappler Sumit secured the 63kg title with a 12-2 victory over Uzbekistan's Ozodbek Khalilboev. Alongside the three gold medals, the Indian contingent also secured two silver and three bronze medals. Sweetie fought hard in her final but narrowly went down 5-7 against Vietnam's Ngoc L Do to settle for the silver medal. Neha also put up a spirited fight in the 59kg title clash before suffering a 9-5 defeat at the hands of Uzbekistan's Laylokhon Sobirova, bringing home India's second silver medal of the day. "Our young

wrestlers have made us exceptionally proud today with their performances on the mat. Winning gold medals and adding several more medals at a prestigious continental event shows the depth, determination and discipline of Indian wrestling. I extend my congratulations to Mansi, Kajal, Sumit, Sweetie, Neha, Ahilya, Neeraj and Rohit for their medals. Their hard work has paid off, and I hope the rest of the team continues this positive momentum in the upcoming bouts," said Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) President Sanjay Singh. Meanwhile, Ahilya S Shinde impressed in her bronze medal playoff, securing a comprehensive 13-2 win over Kyrgyzstan's Aruke Kadyrbek Kyzy. In the Greco-Roman category that carried over from the opening day, Neeraj Patel showcased brilliant technique in his 55kg match, blanking Kazakhstan's Rauan Bekimov 8-0 to comfortably claim the bronze medal. Adding to the tally, Rohit Bura delivered a commanding performance in his 87kg bronze medal bout, defeating Kyrgyzstan's Artykbek Alymbek Uulu with a clinical 9-0 victory to finish on the podium.

## Sports Ministry notifies rules for NSB, NST

New Delhi: The Sports Ministry on Tuesday notified the rules of operation for the soon-to-be-formed National Sports Tribunal (NST) and the National Sports Board (NSB), stating that a dedicated portal would be set up for submission of disputes and maintenance of legal records.

In separate notifications addressing the roles of the two bodies, which will be formed under the National Sports Governance Act passed last year, the Sports Ministry reiterated that a search-cum-selection committee is in the process of being formed under the cabinet secretary.

## FWICE's selective outrage: Ban on Ranveer Singh, but no action on 242 editors' 2023 plea



Hours after the Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) announced its ban on Ranveer Singh on Monday, Shweta Venkat called out their selective outrage. The editor, best known for films like Gangs of Wasseypur (2012), Newton (2017), and Haseen Dillruba (2021), has claimed that the FWICE has taken swift action against Ranveer, acting on a complaint by Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani's Excel Entertainment, but is still conveniently sitting on what 242 editors' joint grievance from three years ago. FWICE sitting on editors' grievance from 2023

"It has been a while since industry editors have been trying to sort issues like pay slabs, pending dues, and working conditions. We needed a dialogue with the producers," Shweta tells SCREEN. A few of them got together to meet the FWICE, and were assured of a meeting with the producers body. This was in 2023, but no progress on the same has materialized so far. "There was also a letter sent to them, signed by 242 editors working in the industry, outlining the issues. But there has been no communication or revert post

that meeting," adds Shweta. She also called the FWICE's ban on Ranveer "cute" on her Instagram Stories, and asked why no action has been taken yet on their plea from three years ago. "When film editors had come to you for help setting up a dialogue with producers, where was this efficiency? It has been 3 years. Or maybe we weren't cool enough. Basically producer ya actor bano (become either a producer or an actor)," she wrote. SCREEN also reached out to FWICE President BN Tiwari, but hasn't received a response yet.

Why has FWICE banned Ranveer Singh?

FWICE issued a non-cooperation directive to all its members, which go up to over 5 lakh, to not work with Ranveer Singh in any capacity until he personally meets them to amicably resolve the issue. This past December, the actor allegedly walked out of Don 3 three weeks before the commencement of the shoot overseas. Excel Entertainment has demanded damages of Rs 45 crore from the actor to indemnify them of all the pre-production costs incurred after he agreed to do the film. The FWICE also claimed that despite sending three periodical reminders every 10 days to him, Ranveer hasn't appeared before them. His representative argued that the FWICE doesn't enjoy any jurisdiction over the matter, prompting the film body to take a strong stand against the actor. It also sought the cooperation of producers body to not employ Ranveer in any capacity till the issue is resolved. Ranveer's team issued a statement in response on Monday evening. "Throughout the recent developments surrounding Don 3, he has consciously chosen to maintain silence, believing that professional discussions and personal equations are best handled with dignity, maturity and mutual respect. While several narratives and speculations have surfaced over time, Ranveer has never considered it necessary to respond publicly or contribute to conjecture. His focus remains firmly on his work and the commitments ahead," it stated.

## Chunky Panday defends Ananya Panday as Bharatanatyam dancers slam her 'catastrophic' moves

GNS News Agency, May 31

Chunky Panday defends daughter Ananya Panday as Bharatanatyam dancers troll her moves in Chand Mera Dil. Videos of Ananya Panday performing fusion Bharatanatyam in her latest release Chand Mera Dil have been going viral on social media. However, the actor has once again found herself at the receiving end of online trolling, with several netizens and dance enthusiasts criticising her performance and dance moves. While Ananya has chosen not to respond to the backlash, her father Chunky Panday has reacted to the trolling. Meanwhile, the assistant choreographer associated with the performance was all praise for Ananya's efforts and screen presence.

During an interview with Etimes, Chunky mentioned that he feels people completely misunderstood Ananya's dance because it was never meant to be pure Bharatanatyam, but actually a fusion performance. Calling it a kind of experimental dance, he said that it is what we see college students performing at social or cultural events. Chunky requested people to stop assuming and view the dance from another lens. He also acknowledged the fact that pure Bharatanatyam takes years of rigorous training, discipline, and precision. The actor further added, "This is a fusion of futuristic, advanced dance forms with elements of traditional dance. It's a creative blend, not a classical recital. I would request people to watch the film and understand the context before reacting." Chand Mera Dil choreographer defends Ananya Panday

Ananya R Kurup, the assistant choreographer who choreographed Ananya Panday's Bharatanatyam fusion dance, also shared a BTS glimpse on her Instagram handle. Along with her picture with Ananya and a video of her name in the credits, she wrote, "@ananyapanday you are truly one of the sweetest person I know!! It was such a lovely experience teaching you Bharatanatyam, and you've absolutely nailed your performance in Chand Mera Dil." Ananya responded to her with heart emoticons in the comments section. Ananya Panday trolled for Bharatanatyam moves in Chand Mera Dil, Ananya Panday plays the role of Chandni, the daughter of a Bharatanatyam dancer. In a scene, she is seen performing a fusion act on the stage, blending Bharatanatyam with hip-hop and locking. Many dancers called out her 'disrespect' to the art form on X. Popular dancer and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award recipient Anita R Ratnam, known for her Neo Bharatam dance



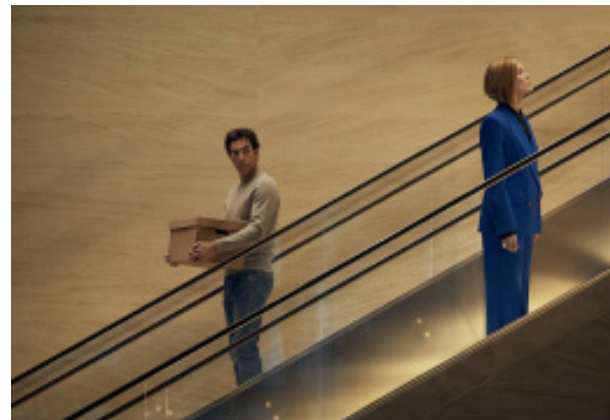
form, wrote, "Watching this clip felt like Bharatanatyam being held hostage by a catastrophic misunderstanding of the form. Somewhere between the flailing arms and random camera moves, the dance quietly packed its bags and exited the building."

Another dancer Krithika Sivaswamy tweeted, "Ananya Panday's 'Bharatanatyam' shows how the industry is insensitive to classical arts, how they mock it and the audacity to put it up publicly on a screen. Unfortunately in India there is no mechanism to sue those who mock classical arts. Its very fluid which makes anyone do any crap with it." Ananya Panday's "Bharatanatyam" shows how the industry is insensitive to classical arts, how they mock it and the audacity to put it up publicly on a screen. Unfortunately in India there is no mechanism to sue those who mock classical arts. Its very fluid which makes anyone do... Chand Mera Dil is directed by Vivek Soni and co-written by Soni and Tushar Paranjape. Along with Ananya Panday, the romantic drama also features Lakshya in the lead role. It is produced by Dharma Productions, and released in theatres

## Ladies First movie review: Gender-flipped workplace comedy with dated ideas

Ladies First movie review: First things first, this comedy drama about a misogynistic corporate honcho being made to navigate sexist treatment and mindset when he finds himself in a set-up that is ruled by women is not new. What adds spark to the remake of the French title, I Am Not an Easy Man, is the presence of Rosamund Pike as Alex Fox, a hardworking and talented executive who is picked as one of the company's creative directors because it looks good for the optics. Some minutes into the movie, things seem to have turned upside down. Sacha Baron Cohen, who plays Alex's boss Damien Sachs, finds himself in a parallel alternative world dominated by women. He struggles to adapt to this new world order, where he is objectified and not given opportunities to be heard. Somehow, being a man works as an impediment for him in getting promoted.

As the dude vibe is replaced in the movie with feminine toxicity, which can be equally discriminatory, Cohen grapples to find his place in this comedy. Cohen plays a suave man with perfect biceps and looks dapper. But the Borat actor fails to make the misadventures of a man trapped in women's world funny. Even when he is trying to entertain a predatory older woman at a high post by dressing up as a fetching cowboy, it does not get the laughs. On the other hand, Pike, who has proven in David Fincher's Gone Girl and I Care a Lot that she can be inscrutable, puts up an impressive act as his formidable adversary as they fight tooth and nail for the post of CEO. While the performances of this impressive ensemble cast remain compelling, Ladies First could have benefitted from some more lighter moments added to this battle-of-the-sexes drama. The French original was written and directed by



Eléonore Pourriat. This remake should have gone for some fresh approaches to look at how the patriarchal mindset is difficult to dislodge. The answer to this age-old problem can't lie in making women behave exactly the same way men do. The prevalence of patriarchy or misogyny can't be countered by creating clones of men. It is also churlish to think that men will have a change of heart when they are subjected to the similar sexist attitude that they are known to dole out. Years after Mel Gibson- and Helen Hunt-starrer What Women Want (2002) was released, such a wishful narrative about fixing gender-based discrimination at workplace should have factored in contemporary realities instead of packaging old wine, or, should we say Guinness (since the lead characters work on its marketing campaign), in a new bottle.

## Devoleena Bhattacharjee reacts to Desi Bling's Tabinda Sanpal normalising infidelity



Karan Kundrra and Tejaswi Prakash's latest reality show Desi Bling is making headlines for all the wrong reasons. Besides the criticism online over the show's cringe-worthy moments and Karan-Tejaswi's over-the-top outfits and dramatic reactions, much of the backlash has been directed at Satish and Tabinda Sanpal. In particular, one of Tabinda's remarks suggesting that she was okay with infidelity appears to have sparked widespread

debate on social media. Desi Bling's Satish and Tabinda Sanpal receive backlash in one of the episodes, Tabinda Sanpal said, "Satish goes out partying, I know that he goes out with girls. When there's a different girl every time, it's okay. But if it's the same girl every time, then you think it's a problem. If this is Satish's party, it can't be without girls." Soon, social media users began reacting to Tabinda's statement. An Instagram user wrote, "Wait, so now wives are normalising husbands having girlfriends?" Another user commented, "What kind of shows is Netflix making in 2026? So weird... Stop normalising this behaviour." A third user wrote, "The way Binda behaves on the show honestly screams deep-rooted insecurity more than concern. Your entire personality cannot revolve around being someone's wife and then acting threatened by every confident woman around your husband or around other happy couples." Another comment read, "So we are normalising this nonsense?" while someone else wrote, "It's disgusting to even think that women have normalised this." One netizen said, "Feels deeply sad to see society normalising and Netflix making such absolute BS," while another commented, "Glorifying infidelity (eyeroll emoji)." Not just netizens, even people from the film and TV industry have discouraged this behavior. Filmmaker Lakshmi R Iyer shared a post on Instagram that read, "Saw a clip from a reality show where a wife said she is okay with her husband cheating as long as the woman isn't repeated. Stop normalizing this bullshit. Stop setting terrible examples in the name of being modern or cool. Being loyal and honest is still attractive, stop letting social media convince you otherwise." In the caption Lakshmi wrote, "Cheat, just don't repeat. Imagine how low the standards have fallen for this to sound acceptable on OTT."

## Is Ranveer Singh ban legal? Its impact on his next Pralay, and why Farhan didn't go to court

"A superstar is not above the law," declared BN Tiwari, the president of the Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE), while addressing the media in Mumbai on Monday over Ranveer Singh's unceremonious exit from Farhan Akhtar's directorial Don 3 this past December. The film body has now asked its 4 lakh-plus members — including technicians and workers — from working with Ranveer until he appears before them personally to resolve the issue. Ranveer is all set to roll out his next, Pralay, in the months to come and the directive can make the process of assembling crew extremely complicated, making it akin to a ban.

Can FWICE really ban Ranveer Singh?

But the question is, does the FWICE really have the legal authority to issue a "non-cooperation directive" to its members and prohibit them from collaborating with Ranveer in any professional capacity? "FWICE is a federation of craft associations, not a statutory regulator. Its authority is consensual and confined to its members," Sanjay Vasudevan, a media and entertainment lawyer, tells SCREEN. He argues that since Ranveer is not even a member of the FWICE, he "is outside its jurisdiction, and the directive has no binding force against him or third parties".

Does Ranveer need to engage with the FWICE?

For the same reason, Ranveer isn't even legally bound to engage with the FWICE for discussions. The film body stated that as per its rules, it sent three periodical reminders to the actor every 10 days, inviting to present his side of the story. But it's exactly that — an invitation — and by no stretch, any form of summons. "Its invitation is a request, and declining a request from a non-authoritative body attracts no liability. Ranveer is well within his rights to not indulge in the conversations," argues Vasudevan. "Having said that, it's always more prudent to engage with the other side. The reality is there are so many competing stakeholders. When indifference seeps in, then there tends to be such a reactive response. Selective, controlled engagement may shorten the dispute, but it's a commercial choice, and not a legal duty. The 'no one is above the law' framing is rhetorical, not legal," he adds.

Do FWICE members need to cooperate with the film body?

"Essentially, the trade union in question is seeking its members to not cooperate with the person because he's acted adversely in the interests of not only the producers, but also the workmen working on the film. This doesn't come as much from legal authority as from a union which has a certain leverage," explains Vasudevan. He adds that while there are members within the union who can choose not to act in tandem with the union, their repercussions at the most would be rejection of membership from taking an adverse position. "Outside of that, there's no legal sanctity per se," asserts Vasudevan. However, he also adds that the FWICE can benefit from reconsideration of such a directive because it's an "ethical dilemma" for the workers to comply with their union's ask despite their livelihood depending on working in a film headlined by Ranveer Singh. "Ultimately, all these unions are here to fight the good fight for their workers, but their reactions can't be disproportionate to the actual harm caused," states Vasudevan, adding, "Such a directive should be issued in a way that in the event that the workmen, in the event of working with him to earn their livelihood, should not face any ramifications for doing so. They should not be disqualified because the membership offers them certain privileges. That's something to be sensitive about as well."

Can the ban impact Ranveer Singh's next, Pralay?

Ranveer has already committed to his next project, Jai Mehta's zombie apocalypse thriller Pralay. The film, mounted on a huge budget, is expected to go on floors this year. Would then the producers — Applause Entertainment and Hansal Mehta and Sahil Saigal's True Story Films — be liable to follow the directive issued by the FWICE? "The risk is operational (technicians and crew declining to service the shoot), not legal. There is no statutory mechanism to penalize producers for engaging the actor," points out Vasudevan. "The reality with how a union operates is all basis cooperation. If they elect to not cooperate, they can do so legally. But again, the union can be reactive. There could be some ramifications that Applause and True Story Films may also face," he adds. While the FWICE warned the producers that they may face losses if they go ahead with Ranveer's projects, Vasudevan claims "the statement is just a warning, not a legal prohibition". But he also underlines the other side of the coin. "While one has the right, the other may not be under the obligation to work with you. It's a little bit of a matrix," adds Vasudevan.



Why has Farhan Akhtar not gone to court?

The usual remedy, as one has witnessed with similar cases in the past, is when an actor walks out of a project (for instance, Sara Ali Khan in Kedarnath), the producers usually send them a legal notice. However, since Farhan Akhtar-Ritesh Sidhwani-led Excel Entertainment hasn't taken that route yet, there's reason to suspect that they may not have a strong case given how their contract with Ranveer was shaped. "Contractually, when Excel and Ranveer entered into an agreement, there might be clauses which excluded the intervention of trade unions and other such bodies. We encourage parties to cooperate with the respective trade unions, but sometimes there's a caveat that waives the interference of any such union. I anticipate there was such language in the contract, but we'd be able to arrive at that only once the contract is made public," states Vasudevan. He also hints at the possibility of the absence of an indemnity clause, which is an actor saying they'll make good of the loss the production house suffered due to a breach. "Now, the problem might be their lack of fortitude from a legal standpoint to envision such a walkout. They might have had loosely defined termination rights," argued Vasudevan. Excel Entertainment has previously collaborated with Ranveer on two successful projects — Zoya Akhtar's Dil Dhadakne Do (2015) and Gully Boy (2019) — and had also signed a three-film deal with the actor. "The indemnity provision is sometimes subjected to a cap of liability. Now, if the liability was capped for Ranveer to a certain amount, regardless of what happened, you can't quite make a claim beyond that," says Vasudevan, highlighting another contentious clause. "There's generally an exclusion of indirect damages. Have the parties contracted in way that tried to account for such a situation? If they had not, then they might be on a stickier wicket. And that's perhaps why they're not immediately legally enforcing it," he adds. But he's confident that despite the possible disadvantage, Excel Entertainment could still go to court. "What a good lawyer would argue is to enforce not just the letter, but the spirit of the contract. That's the more challenging case to make if the contract reads in any other kind of way," he argues. "It's not the first time an actor has walked out of a film. You can see there's a rhetoric throughout that he was always satisfied with the script. The reason they're trying to build that narrative to make a case that he's left the film out of convenience and for frivolous reasons rather than something substantive. Ranveer might make the case there was a cause, but we can't extrapolate that unless there's further comment," adds Vasudevan.

Can Ranveer Singh take FWICE to court?

Speaking of taking to court, even if Excel Entertainment chooses not to go down that path, Vasudevan feels Ranveer has "some remedies" when it comes to the ban imposed by the FWICE. "You have the constitutional right to be able to carry out any trade of your choice, so long as it's legal. Right now, the film body is more of a toothless tiger. But when it gains teeth to the point where it restricts him to engage with more producers, I'd imagine he'd challenge the union's directive or at least get them to modify the terms so that his right to work is protected," says Vasudevan. If he wishes, Ranveer could seek legal remedies under Section 3(3)(b) of the Competition Act, Article 19(1)(g) of the Indian Constitution, and Section 27, Contract Act.

Has there been a precedent like this?

Vasudevan claims that at least in India, there haven't been precedents as peculiar as these. "The present matter may, for the first time, test the practical scope of federation authority against the formal competition-law framework," he says, adding, "