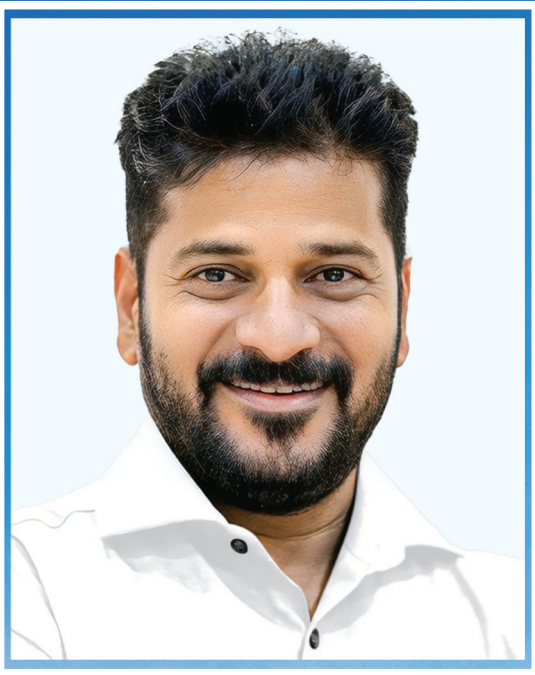


INDIAN CHRONICLE

Jaya Jayahe Telangana ! Janani Jayaketanam !!



Best wishes on Telangana Formation Day

Path of Progress... Welfare of all People... Our People's Government...

Indian Chronicle

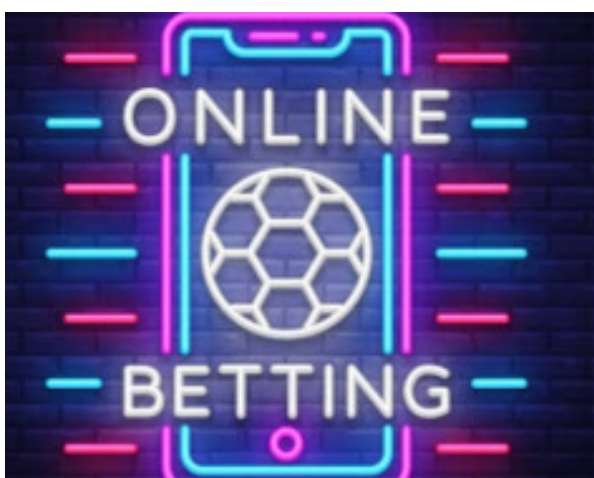
English Daily

Entire testing ecosystem under scanner

NEET, CBSE, CUET — the alphabet soup is becoming more unpalatable by the day. The disruption of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET-UG) has again exposed the fragility of India's digital exam infrastructure. A technical glitch delayed the start of the test, forcing more than 3,700 candidates to leave their centres. Left red-faced for the second time in a month, the National Testing Agency (NTA) has announced that these examinees would get a one-time opportunity to reappear. Even though about 95 per cent of the candidates eventually completed the exam, the distressing incident raises questions about preparedness during a high-stakes national test. It's obvious that over-reliance on complex outsourced digital systems without sufficient on-ground safeguards can be perilous.

The NTA is already under fire after a question paper leak led to the cancellation of the May 3 NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test). The matter is being probed by the CBI, while the NTA has decided to conduct the exam in the computer-based mode from next year. Ironically, the leak happened even though paper-setting took place in a "highly secure" premises where phones/laptops and other electronic devices were not supposed to be allowed and there was mandatory shredding of all notes. Even "trusted" insiders are under suspicion — this shows that the rot runs very deep. Another national-level academic body, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), is in a spot over the on-screen marking system. An embarrassing mix-up of answer sheets has been flagged by several students. These back-to-back controversies indicate that transparency and accountability have taken a big hit in the education sector.

Online Market Betting Ruining Families.



“KHAMMAM, NELAKONDAPALLI, 01 JUNE (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “According to reports, there are a large number of victims in the Nelakondapalli mandal who have fallen prey to online share market betting and investment scams. What started in Nelakondapalli has now spread to Anasagaram, and tomorrow it could affect another village. “People are being lured through social media contacts and false promises of quick profits. Driven by hope and greed, many are investing huge amounts of money, believing that if returns do not come today, they will come tomorrow. However, instead of profits, they are losing their principal investments. Many have lost lakhs and even crores of rupees, forcing them to sell their properties and face financial ruin. “Once families discover the extent of these losses, disputes arise among spouses, relatives, and community elders over financial responsibilities. In some cases, people are leaving their homes after settling accounts. Some individuals are neglecting their families altogether, while others are taking loans in the names of their wives and their wives' family members, causing them severe hardship. “Many young people are being misled by the desire to earn money quickly and easily. Despite repeated awareness campaigns by the government and authorities, the problem continues. Local residents have urged officials to conduct another round of awareness programs, as there may be many more affected families who have not yet come forward.”

Buttermilk Distributed to Passengers at Manthani RTC Bus Stand



“PEDDAPALLI DISTRICT, 2nd MANTHANI: As per the instructions of former MLA Putta Madhukar, buttermilk was distributed to passengers at the Manthani RTC Bus Stand under the auspices of the Putta Lingamma Charitable Trust. The initiative was supported by BRS party leader Pili Sattaiah. “Speaking on the occasion, BRS Mandal President vegolapu Shankar Goud highlighted the long-standing community services of the trust. “Years ago, under the leadership of Putta Madhukar, the Putta Lingamma Charitable Trust set up a special private room at this bus stand for nursing mothers to feed their infants. It is heartening to see that we are now distributing refreshing buttermilk right in front of that facility to help passengers beat the summer heat,” Shankar Goud said. “Key Attendees “The event saw active participation from several BRS leaders and local dignitaries, including: Tagaram Shankar Lal (BRS Leader), Arepalli Kumar (Former Municipal Vice Chairman), Kayithi Sammaiah (Former Councillor), Kanaveni Srinivas, Puppala Tirupati, Ambati Narsing, Polu Kanakaraju, SK Javed, among others.”

Telangana Innovator Varun Anish Reddy Earns Patent for AI-Based Workflow Management System



“Hyderabad, June 1 (Indian Chronicle): Varun Anish Reddy Yeruva, an IT professional working at Amazon in the United States, has achieved a significant milestone by securing a patent titled “Adaptive Workflow Execution Control System Using Hybrid Rule-Based and Artificial Intelligence Decision Fusion with Dynamic Weighting.” A native of Telangana, Varun Anish Reddy is the son of Vijay Kumar

Reddy Yeruva and Jayanthi Reddy. He completed his schooling at Delhi Public School (DPS), Gachibowli, Hyderabad, and earned his engineering degree from GITAM University, Hyderabad. He later obtained a Master's degree in Computer Science and Engineering from Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, USA. “The patented innovation introduces an advanced workflow execution control system designed to improve workflow management in distributed computing environments. The system integrates traditional rule-based decision-making mechanisms with AI-driven predictive analytics to enhance workflow execution, resource allocation, task scheduling, and the management of interdependent processes. “A key feature of the invention is its Meta-Decision Controller, which combines outputs from rule-based systems and AI-generated predictions through a dynamic weighting mechanism. This enables continuous monitoring of workflow performance, resolution of decision conflicts, and automatic adjustment of execution parameters to ensure maximum efficiency, reliability, and stability. “The technology aims to improve workflow consistency, reduce performance fluctuations, and strengthen the enforcement of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) across large-scale computing infrastructures. It holds significant potential for applications in cloud computing, enterprise automation, artificial intelligence systems, and next-generation distributed computing platforms. “This achievement reflects Varun Anish Reddy Yeruva's dedication to research, innovation, and technological advancement. His accomplishment is a matter of pride for Telangana and serves as an inspiration to young engineers, researchers, and innovators aspiring to make meaningful contributions to the field of technology. “The Indian Chronicle extends its heartfelt congratulations to Varun Anish Reddy Yeruva on this remarkable achievement and wishes him continued success in his future endeavors.”

Steps Initiated for Road Widening Near ICT, Nacharam: Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy

“UPPAL, JUNE 1 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Significant steps have been initiated to resolve the bottleneck road issue between the ICT Institute and ICT Quarters on the main Nacharam Road stretch connecting Habsiguda and Nacharam. The development comes as a result of the continuous efforts of Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, who has been pursuing the matter for some time. “Speaking on the issue, ICT Director Srinivas Reddy stated that the institute is positively considering providing approximately 20 feet of land on either side of the existing road to facilitate its widening. However, with the rapid growth in population, increasing traffic from educational institutions, and the estab-

lishment of the Cheralapally Railway Station, traffic congestion in the area has been steadily rising. “Keeping future requirements in mind, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy urged the ICT Director to implement a comprehensive road expansion as per the Master Plan, ensuring adequate width from the center of the road to accommodate long-term traffic demands. “Responding to the proposal, Director Srinivas Reddy assured that a detailed report would be submitted to the central authorities for further consideration and necessary action. “The MLA reiterated his commitment to resolving public commuting difficulties and transforming the Nacharam-Habsiguda corridor into a smoother, congestion-free route for commuters.”

'Akhari Majili' (The Final Journey)... A Heart as Vast as the Sky



“---Initiative Launched to Provide Dignified Funeral Facilities for the Poor” Hanamkonda, June 1 (Indian Chronicle): Efforts are gaining momentum to provide dignified and affordable funeral facilities to economically disadvantaged families, ensuring they face no hardships during the difficult times when they lose their loved ones. This initiative stands as a testament to the compassionate response shown by social service organizations, public representatives, and government officials in addressing this long-neglected humanitarian issue. “Dr. Anita Reddy—Chairperson of the Anurag Helping Society and a member of the Kakatiya University Governing Body—identified this critical issue and brought it to the attention of the local MLA. In this context, she highlighted the difficulties faced by numerous migrant and low-income families residing in rented accommodations across Warangal city. She noted that many families, having migrated from distant regions in search of livelihood opportunities, frequently struggle to

perform funeral rites for their loved ones due to a lack of proper funeral infrastructure. “Recognizing the gravity of the situation, Warangal West MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy immediately brought the matter to the attention of District Collector Chahat Bajpai, requesting her to intervene promptly and take the necessary remedial measures. As part of this initiative, MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy, KUDA Chairman Inagala Venkatram Reddy, District Collector Chahat Bajpai, KUDA officials, and Dr. Anita Reddy visited the Padmakshi Shiva Mukti Dham on Monday to review the existing facilities and explore opportunities for infrastructure development. “During this inspection, the MLA directed officials to prioritize the provision of essential amenities, including rest rooms, drinking water facilities, sanitation infrastructure, shelter sheds, and other support services. It is anticipated that these facilities will assist underprivileged families and migrant workers in conducting the final rites of their loved ones with dignity and respect. Representatives of the Pulluri Narasayya Charitable Trust, prominent social worker Dr. Anita Reddy, and members of various voluntary organizations participated in this event, expressing their willingness to contribute to this initiative and thereby reinforcing the spirit of collective social responsibility. “Dr. Anita Reddy extended her heartfelt gratitude to MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy, District Collector Chahat Bajpai, and the KUDA officials for their immediate response and for addressing this matter with a humanitarian approach. She expressed confidence that the proposed facilities would provide significant relief to economically disadvantaged families, while simultaneously ensuring that their departed loved ones receive a dignified farewell during their time of grief. P.N. Murthy, Mahendra Kapoor, officials from various departments, and representatives of social service organizations participated in this event.”

Former Municipal Commissioner Ella Reddy's Services to Kamalanagar Senior Citizen Welfare Association Unforgettable: Rajeshwar



“UPPAL, JUNE (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The services rendered by former President of the Kamalanagar Senior Citizen Welfare Association and retired Municipal Commissioner Ella Reddy will always be remembered, said Association Vice President Rajeshwar. “Ella Reddy passed away due to a heart attack on Monday. Members and representatives of the association paid rich tributes to him and expressed deep condolences over his demise. “Speaking on the occasion, association representatives stated that his dedicated efforts for the welfare of senior citizens and his valuable contribution to the growth and development of the association would remain etched in their memories forever. “Rajeshwar said that Ella Reddy actively participated

in various social and service-oriented activities organized by the association and worked tirelessly to address the concerns of its members. He praised Ella Reddy's service-minded approach and leadership qualities, noting that they greatly benefited the organization. “He further remarked that Ella Reddy's commitment to public service would continue to inspire association members and that his memories would always remain with them. Rajeshwar added that the people of Kamalanagar would remember his contributions to society for years to come. “Among those who paid tributes were Parthasarathi, Dasarath, Ramesh Yadav, Venkateswarlu, and Chari.”

Malkajgiri civic body prepares action plan to curb sewage pollution

Hyderabad: To prevent sewage accumulation, flood risk and environmental pollution in areas surrounding the Gurranguda Reserve Forest, officials of the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) have decided to prepare a comprehensive action plan.

On Monday, MMC Commissioner T Vinay Krishna Reddy convened a meeting with officials of the concerned departments to discuss various issues.

Malkajgiri CP B. Sumathi IPS Inspects Keesara Police Station



“KEESARA, JUNE 1 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): B. Sumathi, Commissioner of Police, Malkajgiri, visited Keesara Police Station on Monday and reviewed various aspects of police station administration and public service delivery. During the inspection, the Commissioner examined the functioning of CCTV cameras, station records, cleanliness, infrastructure, and the overall maintenance of different sections within the police station. She also reviewed the facilities available for both police personnel and visitors. Interacting with crime wing personnel, reception staff, and officials from various departments, the Commissioner assessed their understanding of duties and responsibilities. She advised officers to make effective use of technology to ensure faster and more efficient services to the public. Expressing satisfaction with the cleanliness and greenery maintained within the police station premises, she encouraged the staff to continue maintaining high standards. Later, the Commissioner held a meeting with station officers and staff, directing them to enhance efficiency in their duties. She also stressed the importance of effective utilization of technological applications, prompt investigation of NPDS cases, increasing public participation in the Mee Suraksha application, and ensuring regular updating of relevant data. The Commissioner emphasized that all personnel should work responsibly to provide safe, transparent, and citizen-friendly policing services. Keesara Inspector Anjaneyulu, Sub-Inspectors, and other station staff were present during the visit.”

Real Active Natural Coconut Water Promoted as a Hydration Solution for Summer



“Hyderabad, June 01 (Indian Chronicle): Amid rising temperatures across the country, Dabur has introduced its Real Active Coconut Water as a natural hydration beverage for the summer season, according to a statement released in Hyderabad on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, Mayank Kumar, Vice President-Marketing, Dabur India Limited, along with Monisha Prasher, General Manager-Foods Marketing, said the beverage contains natural electrolytes and no added sugar, making it an ideal option to help maintain hydration during hot weather. They stated that Real Active Coconut Water helps reduce fatigue, supports hydration, and contributes to better digestion and skin health. The product is positioned as a healthier alternative to sugary carbonated drinks, offering the benefits of 100 percent coconut water in a convenient packaged form. Dabur said the launch reflects the growing demand among consumers for natural and nutritious beverages, especially during the summer months when maintaining hydration is essential.”

13 Grievances Received During Prajavani Programme at Uppal Zone



“UPPAL, JUNE 1 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A Prajavani grievance redressal programme was conducted on Monday at the Uppal Zonal Office under the supervision of Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta. During the programme, citizens submitted petitions regarding various public issues. A total of 13 applications were received, including 7 related to Town Planning, 4 concerning Engineering, and 2 pertaining to Underground Drainage (UGD). “All petitions received were duly registered and forwarded to the respective departments for immediate action. Speaking on the occasion, Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta directed the concerned officials to prioritize the resolution of public grievances and ensure that appropriate action is taken within the stipulated timeframe. “The programme was attended by the Zonal Commissioner, departmental heads, and staff members of the zone.”

INDIAN CHRONICLE

2 June 2026 | Tuesday | Volume No:14 | Issue No: 105

Pages: 12+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)

₹ 1/-

Karimnagar police arrested most wanted criminal absconding ten years

Karimnagar: Karimnagar Rural Police arrested a most wanted criminal, Mohammed Abdul Wajid alias Dhoom Khalid, who had been absconding for the last 10 years.

As he had been missing for many years, many believed that Khalid was dead. However, Karimnagar Rural Police arrested him and produced him before a court.

Inebriated man slips into open well in Medak, rescued

Medak: An inebriated man slipped and fell into an open abandoned well in Chinna Shankarampet on Sunday night. Bhaskar Manda (59), who remained unconscious throughout the night, regained consciousness on Monday morning and cried for help.

Bhaskar, a native of Andhra Pradesh, is currently working in a local industry. Fire department personnel rescued him and shifted him to a hospital. His condition is said to be critical.

Revanth Reddy warns Fadnavis of Telangana Adivasi rebellion on Tummidihatti barrage

Hyderabad, June 1

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has warned Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis that if the latter didn't come for negotiations regarding the state government's ambition to construct Tummidihatti barrage on the Godavari river, there will be a large-scale Adivasi agitation that will erupt from Telangana.

While addressing a public meeting in Kagaznagar town of Kumram Bheem Asifabad district on Monday, June 1, Revanth Reddy announced that his government was willing to bear the entire cost of compensating the farmers on the Maharashtra side, for the submergence of around 2,000 acres of land for the construction of Tummidihatti barrage.

Revanth Reddy recalled how 7 mandals of Telangana in the undivided Khammam district of Telangana were merged with Andhra Pradesh for Polavaram Lift Irrigation Scheme and lakhs of Adivasis in Telangana were forcefully shifted to AP by the Na-

tional Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) after the formation of Telangana in 2014- through an ordinance.

"An year has passed since we have been requesting Devendra Fadnavis to come to the negotiation table. I don't know whether he doesn't like me, or if he has a shady relationship with his friend KCR. Is the Telangana CM so cheap for you," he asked, pointing his guns at the BJP, noting that Fadnavis has not responded even once to multiple letters written by him.

He also questioned why Union Minister for Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy was not doing anything to facilitate the negotiations between the two states.

"I don't care about Kishan Reddy or Devendra Fadnavis. The farmers of Telangana are important to me," he asserted, noting that 2 lakh acre of land in the undivided Adilabad district will be irrigated if Tummidihatti barrage is constructed, which will also irrigate the lands in the undivided Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Medak districts as well.



Warns Kishan Reddy on procurement of paddy, other crops

Revanth Reddy also warned Kishan Reddy on the occasion, that if the Centre failed to procure 75 lakh tonne paddy, 20 lakh tonne maize, and other crops like Jowar and sunflower seeds from Telangana by June 15; the state government will dump the produce in front of the BJP office in Nampally, or Kishan Reddy's house at Barkatpura Chaman.

"The Centre can't just wash its hands by declaring the minimum support price (MSP). We have met the Union Minister for Food and Public Distribution Prahlad Joshi multiple times on the issue, but there has been no favourable assurance," Revanth Reddy said. He declared that a war will be declared against the Centre if his "demand" was not addressed, adding that Kishan Reddy will also find it difficult to roam on the streets if he failed to intervene immediately.

Nomination Filing for 27 Rajya Sabha Seats Begins

New Delhi, June 1

Filing of nominations for elections of 27 seats in Rajya Sabha began on Monday. While three seats, each belonging to Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Odisha will witness bye-elections, 24 seats covering ten states will see biennial elections. These ten states

are Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Mizoram.

The Election Commission of India had earlier announced elections to 27 seats in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) including biennial and bye-elections

and for the State Legislative Councils (by MLAs) in Bihar and Karnataka.

The last date for filing of nominations is June 8 till 3 PM. The scrutiny of nominations will be taken up by the Returning Officers (ROs) on June 9 and the last date for withdrawal of candidatures is June 11. In case of contested elections, the polling will be held on June 18 from 8 AM to 4 PM, followed by the counting of votes at 5 PM.



Indiramma houses are for all, including tribals: CM Revanth launches Phase 2

Hyderabad, June 1

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy instructed the chief secretary and all district collectors that there shouldn't be a single hut in any Adivasi or Lambada hamlet in a year, and that Indiramma houses should be constructed to cover all the tribals across the state.

He directed that a special drive has to be conducted to ensure that no tribal is left without a pukka house by this time next year, and that Indiramma houses should be sanctioned on a war-footing for tribals across the state.

He also said that the tribals should be allowed to build Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) roofs for Indiramma houses that were built a couple of decades ago, where the walls were intact, but the roofs had become damaged.

The chief minister performed a housewarming ceremony of 28 Indiramma houses built for Adivasis belonging to the Kolam tribe in Kothari gram panchayat of Kerameri mandal on Monday, June 1.

Revanth Reddy, accompanied by Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, Women and Child Welfare Minister Danasari Anasuya alias Seethakka, Labour Minister G Vivek Venkatswamy and Tourism and Culture Minister Jupally Krishna Rao and Asifabad MLA Kova Laxmi, tasted the rotis prepared by the Adivasis at their newly constructed Indiramma houses.

A total of 226 houses were sanctioned for Kothari (Kolam Penta), out of which 28 houses have been constructed as of Monday.

The chief minister interacted with the members



of the Kalam tribe, which is among the Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

Atram Susheela said that the Anganwadi centre in her village had no teacher or helper. She also brought to the notice of the chief minister that there was a drinking water problem in the village. He immediately instructed the Kumram Bheem Asifabad District Collector to address the issues.

Addressing a public meeting in Kagaznagar later, Revanth Reddy reminded that 21,000 Indiramma

houses were sanctioned exclusively for tribals in the state in the first phase, in addition to 4.5 lakh houses that were sanctioned during the first phase of the Indiramma housing scheme.

He also urged all the MLAs in the 10 assembly constituencies of the erstwhile Adilabad district that, irrespective of political party affiliations, they needed to give data on all the tribals not having pukka houses, so that Indiramma houses could be constructed for them.

Hard work, not sycophancy, will help party; reconnect with grassroots: Rahul tells Congress leaders

Jaipur, June 1

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday told the party's district presidents that hard work and public engagement, rather than sycophancy, will help the party rise, as he called on them to reconnect with the people at the grassroots level, party sources said.

Gandhi was addressing the concluding session of a 10-day training camp for Congress district presidents from Rajasthan and Delhi in Pushkar.

During the session, Gandhi praised the coordination between Rajasthan Congress leaders and described the working relationship between the Pradesh Congress Committee leadership and the Leader of Opposition as a positive example for the party, according to Congress leaders.

He described Rajasthan Congress chief Govind Dotasra and Leader of Opposition in the state assembly, Tikaram Jolly, as "Jai-Veeru ki jodi".

The Congress had seen intense infighting in Rajasthan involving the camps of Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot before its defeat in the 2023 Assembly elections.

Gandhi said party workers must remain connected to public issues and stand with the poor and marginalised whenever injustice occurs.

He spent more than five hours at the camp and held interactive sessions on organisational strengthening, teamwork, ideology and public outreach, the sources said.

Gandhi urged district presidents not to confine themselves to organisational structures but to establish direct contact with citizens. Rebuilding public trust was essential for strengthening the Congress and expanding its support base, he said.

He said growth within the Congress should be based on commitment and service rather than personal loyalty to senior leaders. Gandhi also asked party leaders to focus on issue-based politics and actively engage with people to counter what he described as the BJP's narrative.



MLA Nayini Lays Foundation for Development Works Worth 1.03 Crore



in the Warangal West constituency, MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy laid the foundation for several development works on Monday. "The MLA inaugurated a box drain construction project worth ₹71 lakh in the Vehicle Shed area of Balasamudram, under the 30th Division. Subsequently, he launched CC road and drainage works worth ₹32 lakh in Srinivasa Colony by performing a ceremonial coconut-breaking ritual. "Speaking on the occasion,

MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy stated that providing improved civic amenities remains a key priority of the state government. He emphasized that long-standing issues related to drainage systems and road infrastructure in various colonies are being addressed with a focused and long-term resolution approach. "He further noted that development activities are being carried out in alignment with public needs, with the objective of transforming every locality into a well-developed model colony equipped with comprehensive civic infrastructure. "The MLA added that the total ₹1.03 crore worth of works will significantly enhance transportation connectivity and strengthen sanitation systems once completed, thereby ensuring lasting relief to local residents. "Local representatives, Congress party leaders, officials, and residents of the area participated in the programme.

"Hanamkonda, June 1 (Indian Chronicle) : In a concerted effort to accelerate civic infrastructure development

Suresh Reddy Mandadi Assumes Charge as Uppal RTO

"UPPAL , JUNE 1(INDIAN CHRONICAL): Suresh Reddy Mandadi officially assumed charge as the Regional Transport Officer (RTO) of Uppal on Monday. Prior to his appointment, he served as a Motor Vehicle Inspector (MVI) in various Regional Transport Authority (RTA) offices, including Khairatabad and Nalgonda. Speaking on the occasion, Suresh Reddy stated that he would discharge his duties with dedication while remaining accessible to both the public and department employees. "He assured that every effort would be made to ensure that citizens visiting the RTO office for official work do not face any inconvenience. He also encouraged the public to approach him directly if they encounter any difficulties. "Suresh Reddy said he would issue necessary instructions and guidance to officials and staff to ensure that services are delivered efficiently and that people are not made to run around the office unnecessarily. He emphasized the importance of completing public-related work promptly and transparently. Having served in the Transport Department for the past 33 years, Suresh Reddy has earned the respect and goodwill of colleagues and the public alike. On the occasion of his taking charge,



officials and staff members of the office extended their congratulations and felicitated him warmly."

Education is the Only Way to Reach Great Heights in Life: Cantonment MLA Sri Ganesh

"BOWENPALLY/JUNE 01/(INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Felicitation Ceremony at Mudfort School Under the Auspices of Sri Ganesh Foundation" On behalf of the Sri Ganesh Foundation, Cantonment MLA Sri Ganesh organized a felicitation ceremony on Monday at Mudfort School for 45 meritorious male and female students from government schools and junior colleges in the constituency who demonstrated exceptional academic excellence. During the event, merit scholarships and certificates of appreciation were distributed to the students. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Sri Ganesh said, "All of you, who studied in government educational institutions and achieved top results, are a matter of great pride for our constituency. Students should scale even greater heights in the future and bring a good name to their parents, teachers, and the Cantonment area. My support for your educational development will always be there. "He further added that the Congress government, under the leadership of Honorable Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, is giving top priority to government education, and the establishment of the Skill University is a testament to that. He emphasized that the Congress government's ultimate goal is to ensure that no poor stu-



dent has to stop their education due to financial constraints, and promised that he would personally make efforts to help underprivileged students secure admissions in reputed colleges. "Attendees "The event saw the participation of: "Deputy EO: Vishnu Vardhan "Coordinator: Shredrak "Educators: Government school teachers and college lecturers "Families: Parents and students "Political Dignitaries: Key leaders and workers of the Cantonment Congress Party

Division-Level Incharges Appointed for Warangal West Constituency



— MLA Nayini "Hanamkonda, June 1 (Indian Chronicle) : To ensure more efficient implementation of government welfare schemes and development programmes in the Warangal West constituency, MLA Nayani Rajender Reddy announced the appointment of new division-level incharges. "He stated that the primary objective of these appointments is to ensure faster and more effective delivery of welfare schemes, along with timely resolution of public issues across all divisions. "The MLA said that the newly appointed incharges should actively engage with residents in their respective divisions, monitor the implementation of government schemes and development works, and work towards resolving public grievances efficiently. He emphasized that they will play a key role in strengthening coordination between party cadres, public representatives, officials, and the general public. "The appointed incharges are as follows: "4th Division – Tudi Chandar "5th Division – Kura Venkat "6th Division – Naini Amarender Reddy "7th Division – Anand "8th Division – Boddireddy Prabhakar Reddy "9th Division – Aluvala Karthik "10th Division – Samee "11th Division – Boda Anna "29th Division – Ashok Rao "30th Division – Jagan Mohan Reddy "31st Division – Battini Srinivas Rao "47th Division – Vishnuvardhan Reddy "49th Division – Dr. Shravan "50th Division – Kautil Reddy "51st Division –

Gottumukkala Ramana Reddy "53rd Division – Mark Vijay Goud "54th Division – Tadishetti Vidyasagar "57th Division – E.V. Srinivas Rao "58th Division – Shravan "59th Division – Varada Rajeshwar Rao "60th Division – Perumandla Ramakrishna "61st Division – Thota Rajkumar "62nd Division – Toutam Ravinder "63rd Division – Aziz Khan "The MLA expressed confidence that the appointed incharges will work with dedication, remain closely connected with the public, and contribute to the overall development of the constituency.

Telangana Medical Council detects unethical practices at Banjara Hills skin clinic

Hyderabad: During a surprise inspection, the Telangana Medical Council (TGMC) detected that a skin care facility at Road No. 1, Banjara Hills, was indulging in unethical practices. The Council, in a press release issued on Monday, said it inspected the premises of V Care Clinic, Banjara Hills, and found that skin-related treatments were being performed by three dental doctors and two homeopathy doctors. It added that a case had been filed under NMC Sections 34 and 54. Registered Medical Practitioners found promoting such unethical practices will be subjected to further investigation. Such doctors could potentially face suspension of their medical licences for violating medical ethics regulations, it said.

The Medical Council has also recommended to the Hyderabad District Collector and the District Medical and Health Officer (DM&HO) that the clinic be immediately seized and legal action initiated against the management for engaging in such activities, the press release said. The inspecting team of the TGMC consisted of Dr Vishnu Kadali (TGMC member), Dr Kiran Kumar Thotawar (Vice Chairman, TGMC), and Dr Jalagam Vijay (HRDA member).

Struggle for the rights of Telangana activists.. Former Chairman of State SC Corporation, Pidamarthi Ravi.



"Indian Chronicle Vikarabad (June 1) "A district-level preparatory meeting of activists was held in Tandur, Vikarabad district. Former State SC Cell President Pidamarthi Ravi participated as the chief guest in this program. "Speaking on the occasion, several speakers recalled the struggle and the glory of the sacrifices of the activists in the Telangana movement. They lamented that no government has recognized the activists who fought fearlessly for Telangana for the past 12 years. They remarked, "The struggle was ours... the posts are theirs. "They alleged that even the cases filed against activists during the



movement have not been withdrawn to this day. They also expressed anguish that they are not being given recognition even in government welfare schemes. Through these preparatory programs, they gave a call to prepare for a struggle that would awaken the government. "Pidamarthi Ravi stated that he would tour villages and unite all the activists until the government recognizes the activists and resolves their demands. "Later, Kanjarla Vijayalakshmi Yadav extended her support to the activists and felicitated them grandly. District movement leaders along with leaders from various mandals participated in this program.

Vikarabad District SP Sneha Mehra, Inspects Telangana Formation Day Parade Rehearsals.

"Indian Chronicle Vikarabad (June 1) "On the occasion of Telangana State Formation Day celebrations, Vikarabad District SP Sneha Mehra, today inspected the parade rehearsals being conducted by the Police Department at the field level for the official programs to be held at the District Collectorate office on June 2. "On this occasion, the SP, who closely observed the parade performance, instructed the officials to conduct the celebrations in a highly prestigious and disciplined manner. She made it clear that tight security arrangements must be made and no laxity in duties would be tolerated. "Speaking after the rehearsals, the SP said, "Telangana Formation Day is a very sacred and proud day for all the people of the state. The parade conducted on behalf of the Police Department during these celebrations should be highly attractive and honorable. Every police officer and staff member participating in the march should display their professional skills and discipline. They should work with dedication while maintaining punctuality to make the parade a success. On behalf of Vikarabad District Police, we have completed all kinds of security arrangements to conduct these celebrations grandly. "Subsequently, the SP inspected the areas around the venue and traffic control routes and issued several key suggestions to the officials. She stated that advance security measures should be taken so that public representatives, VIPs, and the public attending the celebrations do not



face any inconvenience, and special attention should be paid to vehicle parking. "The SP instructed officials to make tight security arrangements at the Martyrs' Memorial, where tributes are paid to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the formation of Telangana State, as there is a possibility that prominent persons, public representatives, and the public may arrive in large numbers. She suggested that barricades be set up there to prevent any inconvenience. She added that along with security, care should be taken to ensure that no traffic problems arise. "Vikarabad DSP Anjaiah, AR DSP Veeresh, Vikarabad Town Inspector Raghu Kumar, RI Nagaraju, and other officials participated in this program.

52 Families Join Congress in the Presence of MLA 'Donthi

---Congress Base Strengthens with the Inclusion of Key Sections "Narsampet/Warangal, June 1 (Indian Chronicle) : A significant political development unfolded in Rajupeta village of Narsampet Mandal, marking a notable shift in the local political landscape. Approximately 52 families—including members of the Gouda community—resigned from the BRS party and formally joined the Congress party on Monday, in the presence of MLA Donthi Madhava Reddy. "The induction ceremony was conducted under the leadership of Mandal Congress President Katti Kiran. During the event, several key leaders and party activists—including BRS Village President Tanda Venkateshwarlu and Treasurer Koti Bhaskar—formally joined Congress by donning the party's scarves. The MLA extended a warm welcome to all the new members joining the party. "Speaking on the occasion, the leaders who joined Congress stated that they were deeply impressed by the party's development-oriented governance, welfare programs, its leadership that stands firmly with the people, and the rapid developmental works currently underway in the constituency. "Addressing the gathering, MLA Donthi Madhava Reddy affirmed that he is continuously striving for the development of the constituency. He emphasized that the government's primary objective is the transparent implementation of welfare schemes for the benefit of the people. He remarked that during the administration of the past ten years, no substantial development took place in Rajupeta village, and welfare schemes—such as those for



double-bedroom houses and ration cards—were not implemented effectively. He stated that after the Congress party assumed power, 30 'Indiramma' houses were sanctioned for Rajupeta village in the first phase—along with the issuance of ration cards—and added that additional houses would be sanctioned in the second phase. "He further noted that the Congress government is fulfilling its election promises, which include free bus travel for women, health coverage of ₹10 lakhs under the Aarogyasri scheme, LPG cylinders for just ₹500, 200 units of free electricity, new ration cards, and the Indiramma housing scheme. He specifically highlighted that the loan waiver of ₹2 lakhs has been implemented, and that the distribution of fine-quality rice through the Public Distribution System is being carried out in a unique manner—a model unparalleled elsewhere in the country. Local representatives, including the Sarpanch, Deputy Sarpanch, village elders, and party workers, participated in this event.

Uppal Congress In-Charge Parameshwar Reddy Pays Tributes to Former Municipal Commissioner Ella Reddy



"UPPAL , JUNE 1 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): Former Municipal Commissioner and former President of Kamalanagar, Ella Reddy, a resident of Kamalanagar in A.S. Rao Nagar Division, passed away unexpectedly. "Upon learning of his demise, Uppal Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy visited the deceased leader's residence and paid his last respects. He also conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family members and offered them words of comfort during this difficult time. "Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy said that Ella Reddy's death is an irreparable loss to his family and the community. He recalled the invaluable services rendered by Ella Reddy to the Kamalanagar Senior Citizen Welfare Association, stating that his contributions towards the welfare of senior citizens and the development of the association would always be remembered. "He noted that Ella Reddy's service-oriented approach and leadership qualities served as an inspiration to many members of the association. "His memories will remain with us forever, and

the people of Kamalanagar will cherish and remember his services for years to come," he said. Parameshwar Reddy prayed for the departed soul to rest in peace and for the bereaved family to be blessed with strength and courage to overcome their loss.

BRS and Congress Have Turned Telangana into a Debt-Ridden State: Former MLA Prabhakar

— BRS and Congress Are Alike in Corruption, Alleges BJP Leader "HYDERABAD , JUNE 1 (INDIAN CHRONICAL): BJP senior leader and former MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar strongly criticized the Congress government, alleging that it is following the same path of corruption and irregularities as the previous BRS administration, pushing the people of Telangana into a deep crisis. "He accused the Congress government of continuing the same mistakes and mismanagement in key sectors such as irrigation, power, municipal administration, and civil supplies that were witnessed during the BRS regime. Prabhakar said that although paddy procurement is a continuous process, government negligence has allowed middlemen to exploit farmers, leaving cultivators at a loss. He further alleged that despite the threat of unseasonal rains, the state government has failed to respond adequately. "Criticizing the power sector, Prabhakar stated that power distribution companies (DISCOMs) have accumulated losses exceeding ₹69,000 crore, yet successive governments have acted irresponsibly.

THE MAN WHO SHOOK THE UNITED ANDHRA PRADESH POLICE

TELANGANA MOVEMENT STALWART: PONUGOTI SAMPATH



toral success of the TRS and helped draw national attention towards the Telangana movement. When elections were held again two years later, Sampath successfully repeated the feat, ensuring another decisive victory. "Recognizing the need for his services in Hyderabad, KCR encouraged Sampath to pursue higher education at the prestigious Nizam College, Osmania University. With the support of Prof. M. Kodandaram, Sampath entered campus politics and soon emerged as a student leader. Despite facing opposition, physical attacks, and multiple criminal cases from rival student organizations, he successfully strengthened the Telangana student movement in the State capital. "His efforts significantly contributed to mobilizing students for major Telangana agitation programmes, including Assembly sieges and mass protests. Senior leaders such as Nayani Narasimha Reddy and T. Harish Rao consistently encouraged and supported his activism. "Following the formation of the Telangana Joint Action Committee (TJAC), KCR appointed Prof. Kodandaram as its Chairman. Within minutes of the formation of the TJAC, Sampath was appointed as the Personal Secretary to Prof. Kodandaram. Having a deep understanding of student mobilization and grassroots activism, he worked tirelessly alongside Kodandaram, travelling extensively across Telangana and participating in countless programmes aimed at achieving statehood. "As the movement intensified, Sampath shifted his focus back to the erstwhile Khammam district, where pro-Andhra forces remained influential. During KCR's indefinite hunger strike for Telangana, which led to his arrest and detention in Khammam Jail, Sampath was named as the second accused in the same case. While KCR was listed as the principal accused, Sampath's inclusion as the second accused reflected his growing influence within the movement. "The case itself reportedly underwent extensive deliberation within the police hierarchy for nearly 48 hours before registration. At the time, authorities allegedly identified Sampath as the district-level face of the movement, resulting in his name being prominently included in the FIR. "What followed was a series of legal battles. Sampath faced hundreds of criminal cases, including Public Property Damage cases, the opening of rowdy sheets, and allegations related to various agitation programmes. He actively participated in major Telangana movement events such as Sagaraharam, Million March, Rasta Rokos, and anti-government protests. His activities attracted the attention of intelligence agencies, forcing him to remain underground for certain periods. "According to movement associates, intelligence and special branch personnel maintained round-the-clock surveillance on him. There were even instances where he was allegedly threatened with dire consequences if he failed to alter the course of his activism. "Following the formation of Telangana, Sampath openly criticized the then TRS government for failing to adequately recognize and rehabilitate movement activists. His criticism reportedly drew the attention of present Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. Senior Congress leaders Tummala Nageswara Rao and Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy are said to have personally approached him multiple times, eventually leading to his induction into the Indian National Congress in the presence of Revanth Reddy. "Subsequently, Sampath actively advocated for the welfare of Telangana movement activists and participated in several consultations with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. His efforts contributed to the inclusion of welfare measures for movement activists in the Congress manifesto. "Though implementation was delayed, the Congress government eventually constituted a committee under senior leader K. Keshava Rao (K.K.) to formulate welfare policies for Telangana movement activists. Sampath, drawing upon his extensive experience and understanding of the movement, has reportedly offered several recommendations in consultation with Prof. Kodandaram regarding the identification and rehabilitation of activists. "As Telangana marks another anniversary of statehood, Ponugoti Sampath's journey remains a testament to the sacrifices, struggles, and unwavering commitment of countless activists who dedicated their lives to the realization of the Telangana dream.

"KCR AS THE FIRST ACCUSED-SAMPATH AS THE SECOND" A JOURNEY OF SACRIFICE FOR TELANGANA "KHAMMAM JUNE 01 INDIAN CHRONICLE: "A relentless fighter who dedicated his life to the cause of a separate Telangana State, enduring unlawful detentions, hundreds of criminal cases, and constant surveillance, Ponugoti Sampath emerged as one of the most prominent grassroots leaders of the Telangana movement. As Telangana celebrates its State Formation Day, this special feature highlights the remarkable journey of the former Telangana Students Joint Action Committee (JAC) leader and State Spokesperson of Telangana Movement Activists Welfare Associations. "Born and raised in the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh, Sampath witnessed firsthand the discrimination faced by the people of Telangana in the allocation of water resources, financial investments, and employment opportunities. Inspired by the vision of a separate Telangana State, he joined the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) in 2001 as a founding member under the leadership of the then Khammam District President, Dr. M.F. Gopinath, in the presence of party founder K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR). "During his formative years in the movement, Sampath worked closely with eminent Telangana ideologues including Prof. K. Jayashankar, Keshava Rao Jadhav, Balagopal, Haragopal, and Gade Innayya. Understanding the extent of Telangana's socio-economic and political marginalization, he conceptualized and implemented the "Palle Bata" (Village Outreach) programme, which played a pivotal role in spreading Telangana consciousness among millions across the region. "Recognizing his dedication and organizational abilities, KCR entrusted Sampath with the responsibility of strengthening the student movement. His recommendations eventually contributed to the formation of the TRS Student Wing. In 2002, Sampath was appointed State Honorary Secretary of the student wing and later became the District President of the TRS Students Wing in the then undivided Khammam district, a region considered a stronghold of pro-united Andhra sentiment. "For nearly twelve years, he served as District President before being elevated as State Vice-President. Under his leadership, the student movement gained significant momentum and became a powerful force in advancing the Telangana cause. "A major turning point came during the Legislative Council Graduates' Constituency elections covering Khammam, Warangal, and Nalgonda districts. Though KCR initially encouraged Sampath to contest, he instead recommended the name of IFS officer Kapilavai Dilip Kumar. KCR accepted the suggestion and appointed Sampath as the election in-charge for the three districts. "Through innovative campaigning and strategic mobilization of graduates and youth, Sampath played a crucial role in securing a historic victory for Kapilavai Dilip Kumar, breaking the previous majority record associated with former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The victory marked the first major elec-

Precautionary Measures Underway to Prevent Electrical Accidents in Manthani

"PEDDAPALLI DISTRICT, MANTHANI: In a proactive move to ensure public safety ahead of the upcoming monsoon season, Manthani Municipal Chairman Vodnala Srinivas inspected ongoing electrical safety works in the 9th ward of Manthani Municipality. "Accompanied by local Councillor Smt. Marupaka Niharika and Municipal Commissioner Sri N. Manohar, the Chairman reviewed the progress of replacing hazardous electrical infrastructure. The initiative focuses on removing old electrical equipment, dilapidated iron poles, and low-hanging power lines passing over residential rooftops. Additionally, dangerously positioned transformers are being relocated to safer areas. "Commitment to Public Safety" Speaking during the inspection, Chairman vodnala Srinivas emphasized that these precautionary measures are vital to prevent electrical mishaps during the rainy season. "Public safety is our topmost priority. We are working in close coordination with all relevant departments to eliminate electrical hazards and ensure smooth operations without causing inconvenience to the residents," the Chairman stated, reaffirming his com-



mitment to being accessible to the people of Manthani and resolving their grievances promptly. "Officials Present" The inspection team included several public representatives and electricity department officials who are monitoring the execution of the safety works: councillor Yellanki Vamshidhar, Vangala Venkata Narayana (Assistant Director, Electricity Dept.), Koduri Sai (Assistant Engineer, Electricity Dept.), Congress leader Bandari Prasad and "Local public representatives and other municipal officials.

Vemula Laxmi Prasad Assumes Charge as Additional Public Prosecutor of Manthani Court



"PEDDAPALLI DISTRICT, MANTHANI: Vemula Laxmi Prasad officially assumed charge as the Additional Public Prosecutor (APP) of the Manthani Additional Sessions Court on Monday. "Professional Background and Career Profile" Originally hailing from Yellareddypet in Sircilla district, Laxmi Prasad has a long and distinguished career in the legal field. "1996: Commenced his career as a

practicing advocate. "1998: Selected as an Assistant Public Prosecutor (APP). "Previous Roles: Served with distinction as the Additional Public Prosecutor at the Sircilla District Additional Sessions Court and the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Court. "Laxmi Prasad has been posted to the Manthani Court following routine general transfers. Upon taking charge, he expressed his commitment to executing his duties with dedication.

Inebriated man slips into open well in Medak, rescued

Medak: An inebriated man slipped and fell into an open abandoned well in Chinna Shankarampet on Sunday night. Bhaskar Manda (59), who remained unconscious throughout the night, regained consciousness on Monday morning and cried for help. Bhaskar, a native of Andhra Pradesh, is currently working in a local industry. Fire department personnel rescued him and shifted him to a hospital.

Agriculture Dept Conducts Awareness Program in Manthani: Farmers Urged Not to Burn Paddy Stubble



"PEDDAPALLI DISTRICT, MANTHANI: Under the supervision of the Manthani Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), the Agriculture Department organized an awareness program for local officials and farmers in Manthani mandal, urging them to halt the practice of burning paddy stubble. "During the event, officials unveiled informational pamphlets against stubble burning and held extensive discussions on maintaining soil health and the "Kheti Bachao Abhiyan" (Save the Farm Campaign). "Severe Environmental and Financial Risks" Speaking at the meeting, Assistant Director of Agriculture Anjani Mishra highlighted that burning paddy stubble accelerates environmental pollution and destroys beneficial soil microorganisms. "Burning stubble

causes severe long-term losses to farmers. Furthermore, the resulting fires pose a massive risk of damaging critical infrastructure like electrical wires, motor starters, and pump sets," Mishra warned. "As an eco-friendly alternative, she explained that if farmers till the stubble back into the soil using a cultivator, water the field, and apply Single Super Phosphate (SSP) or a waste decomposer, the stubble will decay within 15 days. This turns the crop residue into organic matter, significantly boosting soil fertility. "Echoing her thoughts, Agricultural Officer Dr. Navya advised farmers to completely abandon stubble burning and adopt sustainable organic farming practices instead. "Legal and Safety Warning Issued" The Revenue Divisional Officer issued a strict warning to violators, stating that anyone caught setting fire to paddy stubble could face heavy penalties ranging from ₹5,000 to ₹25,000. "Mandal Parishad Development Officer (MPDO) Srija Reddy pointed out the immediate dangers of the practice: "Spreading Fires: Stubble fires can quickly spiral out of control, threatening nearby villages. "Threat to Life: It poses a direct danger to residents and domestic animals/livestock. "MPDO Srija Reddy instructed all village Sarpanches in the mandal to pass official resolutions against paddy stubble burning in their respective villages. Various other mandal-level officials participated in the awareness program.

Implement Chevella Declaration Immediately: Dalit Bandhu Division State President



"PEDDAPALLI DISTRICT, MANTHANI: Dalit Bandhu Division State President Koila Mahesh has demanded that the Congress government immediately implement the 'Chevella Declaration', which was promised during the elections. "A press conference was organized at the Manthani Press Club on Monday under the leadership of Dalit Bandhu State Disciplinary Convenor Gaddala Shankar and Manthani Division President Utla Srinu, with Koila Mahesh attending as the chief guest. "Political Parties Using Dalits Only as Voters" Speaking at the press meet, Mahesh strongly criticized political parties for viewing Dalits merely as a vote bank. He accused the Congress government of showing "fake affection" toward the Dalit community. "It is highly questionable that even the Dalit

Ministers in the current Congress cabinet are showing absolute apathy toward the issues faced by Dalits," Mahesh remarked. "Warning of State-Wide Padayatra (Foot March)" The leaders issued a stern warning to the state government, threatening to launch a massive state-wide Padayatra (foot march) if Dalit Bandhu funds are not released immediately. "Call to Minister Sridhar Babu: The leaders urged Manistha Committee Chairman and Minister D. Sridhar Babu to intervene in the matter, take initiative regarding the release of Dalit Bandhu funds, and discuss the issue directly with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. "Route of Protest: If the government fails to respond, the Padayatra will officially kick off from Kamanpur in the Manthani constituency. The march will systematically cover all constituencies in the state, starting specifically with those represented by Dalit Ministers. "Attendees" The press conference saw the participation of several key leaders, including: "Arla Swamy (General Secretary)" "Puli Ramanna (Bhupalpally District Dalit Bandhu Vice President)" "Manthana Sammaiah (State Secretary)" "Dubasi Srinu (Peddapalli District Cultural Wing President)" "Mekala Venkataswamy, Madipalli Shankar, Joola Ramesh, Nallala Mallesh, Vaddeppalli Ramesh, Ratna Ramesh, and Ilaiah (Division Leaders).

New Milestone in Warangal Healthcare Sector: Super Multi-Specialty Hospital - MLA Nayini

"80-90% Works Completed; State-of-the-Art Medical Services to Begin Soon" Warangal, June 1 (Indian Chronicle): The construction of the Warangal Super Multi-Specialty Hospital, envisioned to provide advanced medical services to people across the erstwhile Warangal district and other parts of the state, is progressing at a rapid pace. Warangal West MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy inspected the ongoing works on Monday as part of a field-level review of the prestigious project. "The MLA conducted a comprehensive assessment of the hospital's construction progress, installation of medical equipment, infrastructure development, and patient-care facilities in coordination with concerned officials. He also inspected the first and second floors of the facility to evaluate the on-ground progress. "Spanning approximately 19.65 lakh square feet, the massive healthcare infrastructure project is poised to emerge as one of the most significant and prestigious medical institutions in the state, the MLA noted. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy stated that although the project was launched in 2022, its initial progress did not meet expectations. However, following the formation of the present government, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy took special initiative by sanctioning additional funds, which significantly accelerated the pace of construction. He informed that nearly 80 to 90 percent of the works have now been completed. "He further revealed that almost all advanced medical equipment, except the MRI scanner, has already been procured, and installation works are currently underway in multiple departments. Interior works are also in the final stages, and the hospital is expected to be fully ready soon. "As per the directions of the Chief Minister, Minister Konda Surekha, district collectors, and public representatives are continuously monitoring the project and conducting periodic reviews. The MLA emphasized that there is no compromise on construction quality, and regular coordination meetings are being held with contractors to ensure strict adherence to standards. "Once operational, the hospital is expected to make high-quality and advanced healthcare services accessible to economically weaker sections. Patients will no longer need to travel to metropolitan cities like Hyderabad for specialized treatment, as such services will be available locally in Warangal. The facility will



serve not only the erstwhile Warangal district but also patients from other districts of Telangana and neighboring states. "The MLA further highlighted that the project will generate significant employment opportunities for local youth in both medical and allied sectors. Recruitment of highly qualified doctors is underway, and efforts are being made to ensure preference for local candidates in lower-level job opportunities. "Referring to the historical significance of the site, the MLA noted that the hospital is being constructed on land that once housed a historic prison. While the transformation of the site for public welfare is commendable, he also acknowledged that concerns were previously raised regarding the financial management of the project. "He added that after the Congress government came to power, additional funds were allocated with a strong focus on strengthening public healthcare infrastructure and ensuring quality medical services for the underprivileged. The government, he said, remains committed to delivering accessible and affordable healthcare to all sections of society. "The MLA expressed confidence that once fully operational, the Warangal Super Multi-Specialty Hospital will mark a new chapter in the region's healthcare history and stand as a premier centre for world-class medical services. "Local leaders and officials participated in the inspection programme.

21 Lakh Sanctioned for Additional Facilities at Bharat Nagar Community Hall: Congress Constituency In-Charge Parameshwar Reddy

Vallapu Srikanth Yadav Inspects Proposed Development Works with Officials" UPPAL, JUNE 1 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Residents of Bharat Nagar in Ramanthapur are set to benefit from improved amenities at the local Community Hall. Recognizing the need for additional infrastructure and public facilities at the venue, Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Parameshwar Reddy had earlier taken up the matter with concerned officials and successfully secured a sanction of ₹21 lakh for the proposed works. "As part of the development initiative, Ramanthapur Division Congress Party Working President Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, along with government officials, visited the Bharat Nagar Community Hall on Monday to inspect the site and review the proposed construction

plans. "During the inspection, Srikanth Yadav urged officials to commence the works without delay, stating that further postponement would cause inconvenience to local residents. In response, officials assured that the construction activities would begin within a week and would be completed at the earliest.

"Among those present on the occasion were Bharat Nagar Colony President Laxman, Shyam Goud, Raj Kumar, Ravinder Rao, Jogula Venkatesh, Vasu, Nagi Reddy, Aravind Swamy, Muthyala Reddy, Tripathi, Balaraj, Naveen, Satyanarayana, Suniki Reddy, and Congress leaders Samuel, Jangaiah, Sridhar, Bullet Ashok, Rajkumar, Shankar, Chintu, along with several other party activists and local residents."

Absconding TMC MLA Dilip Mondal arrested from Puri hotel in BJP workers' threat case



GNS News Agency, June 1

Dilip Mondal's arrest comes days after his son, Arghya, was arrested along with five others for allegedly possessing firearms. The West Bengal Special Task Force (STF) on Wednesday arrested Trinamool Congress MLA Dilip Mondal from Puri in Odisha in connection with cases registered against him for allegedly threatening BJP workers at a rally. The Bishnupur MLA had been on the run after the police had raided his Pailan residence. Multiple FIRs had been lodged against Mondal after a video allegedly showing him issuing threats to BJP workers during a victory rally held at Malanga near Barupur on May 11 went viral on social media. His speech was streamed live on Facebook, in which he was purportedly heard saying: "We have shown a

lot of restraint. We kept peace for 15 years. But this won't happen again." On Wednesday, acting on a tip-off, STF officials raided Hotel Lily in Puri. According to police sources, the STF and the Odisha Police surrounded the hotel to prevent Mondal from escaping.

The hotel manager said that initially, officers in plain clothes enquired about Mondal by showing his photograph. Once his identity was confirmed after staff showed the Aadhaar card submitted at check-in, they called Mondal out of his room, where the police immediately took him into custody. Mondal will be brought back to Kolkata and produced in court, where police are expected to seek his custody. Earlier, Mondal had moved the Calcutta High Court seeking protection. However, police and STF teams continued searches across multiple locations. On May 14, the police raided Mondal's lavish Pailan residence, spread across several acres with manicured lawns, a swimming pool, luxury vehicles, decorative fountains, artificial caves, glass enclosures, statues, swings, etc. But Mondal was allegedly caught escaping from the house on CCTV. Mondal's arrest comes days after his son, Arghya, was arrested along with five others from the Bakhal-Fraserganj area in South 24 Parganas for allegedly possessing firearms on May 18. The police claimed that two pistols and six mobile phones were seized from the accused. All six were later brought to Diamond Harbour police station for questioning. The police also alleged that Arghya had been threatening BJP workers and supporters in the area.

Himachal forest fires surge to 248, Mandi worst hit this summer



GNS News Agency, June 1

Himachal Pradesh has witnessed a sharp rise in forest fires during the ongoing summer season, with as many as 248 incidents reported across the state's 11 Reserve Forest Circles so far this year. Of these, 241 incidents have been recorded between April 15 and May 27, highlighting the growing threat posed by forest fires during the peak summer months. The Mandi Forest Circle has emerged as the worst-affected region, reporting 81 forest fires in the last two months alone. Dharamshala Forest Circle recorded the second-highest number of incidents at 59, followed by Nahar Forest Circle in Sirmour district with 49 fire incidents. Mandi, Sirmour, and Bilaspur Forest Circles were among the 144 most vulnerable districts to the forest fires across the country.

The Solan Forest Circle, which includes the Kasauli forest area, has witnessed 9 major fire incidents, including the latest blaze that required the deployment of personnel from the Indian Air Force and the Indian Army for firefighting operations. Approximately 2985.22 hectares of forest area have been burnt, causing a loss of approximately Rs 70 lakh so far this year. The area includes 2596.71 hectares of natural burnt area, 192.76 hectares of plantation burnt area, and 195.74 hectares of other burnt area. M Madhav, Conservator of Forests (CF) and Chief Forest Fire Protection Cell, Himachal Pradesh, told The Indian Express, "The majority of fire incidents were reported after the onset of the summer season. In Himachal Pradesh, the summer fire season generally starts from April 15. Out of the total 248 incidents, 241 have been reported after April 15 to date." Madhav said while heatwave conditions and soaring temperatures were among the most probable causes behind the fires, the possibility of human involvement could not be ruled out. "Heatwave and scorching temperatures are indeed among the likely reasons, but when fire incidents

are being reported even in Shimla forests, these cannot be attributed entirely to extreme heat," he said. He added that the Forest Department has placed its field staff on alert in vulnerable areas. "Our field staff has been alerted. The divisional forest officer (DFO), Solan, along with other officials, is currently stationed in Kasauli. The Kasauli forests share boundaries with the Air Force Station there," Madhav said.

Forest officials said continuous dry weather, rising temperatures, the accumulation of dry pine needles, and human negligence remain major contributing factors behind the recurring forest fires in the hill state. The department has intensified monitoring and firefighting preparedness in sensitive forest zones as temperatures continue to rise across several districts of Himachal Pradesh. A senior forest officer said three vulnerable districts, Mandi, Sirmour and Bilaspur, were selected for a French-aided project AFD, under which Rs 8 crore has already been sanctioned for resources to prevent forest fires. "The money was sanctioned under the Himachal Pradesh Disaster Risk Reduction & Preparedness component. Under this, we have decided to procure powerful drones equipped with cameras to patrol forests and catch people who trigger fires within forest areas. Manpower is always an issue with the forest department." Environmentalist Guman Singh and Sandeep Minhas stressed that, apart from human negligence, factors such as global warming and the abundance of highly flammable, fire-prone pine trees can't be ignored. "Forest fires in Himachal increase in summer, and almost 90 per cent of the incidents are due to human negligence," Minhas said. "The mid-Himalayas, in which most of Himachal Pradesh falls, is full of pine trees, including those of indigenous and exotic species. All of these species are vulnerable to fire. The needles of pine trees catch fire speedily. The pine trees are full of resin, which is very inflammable. Although the new plantation of pine trees has not been done by the forest department for a long time, the pine species also grows on its own without any assistance," Singh said. Forest Department data showed that only seven fire incidents were reported during the winter season, including five in Shimla Forest Circle and two in Chamba Forest Circle, indicating a steep escalation in the number with the onset of summer. Among other forest circles, Hamirpur reported 17 fire incidents, Shimla recorded 10, Bilaspur nine, Solan nine, Chamba seven, Wildlife South four, Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP), Kullu two, and Rampur one incident. In 2025, 561 forest fire incidents were reported in the state. Out of this, 276 forest fires were reported during the summer season. With 92 forest fires, the Dharamshala Forest Circle was the worst affected.

Chandigarh beats Saudi Arabia to host 2027 Asian Relay Athletics Championships

GNS News Agency, June 1

After a gap of more than 25 years, Chandigarh is set to host a major continental sporting event, the Asian Relay Athletics Championships 2027, at the Sector 7 Sports Complex. The Asian Athletics Committee chose Chandigarh over Saudi Arabia to host the event during a meeting in Hong Kong Wednesday. Confirming the development, Chandigarh Athletics Association secretary Jaspinder Singh said, "Our delegation had come to Hong Kong for the meeting with the Asian Athletics Association committee members and Chandigarh has been chosen to host the Asian Relay Championships. After hosting events like the Athletics Federation of India's National Walk Championships and National Relay Championships in recent months, the Asian Athletics Relay Championships are a big moment for Chandigarh Athletics."

He said more than 250 athletes from around 24 countries are expected to compete in the championships. World Athletics vice president and former Athletics Federation of India president Adille Sumariwalla also confirmed the development. "Congratulations, Indian athletics. Odisha has been awarded the Asian Indoor Championships 2028. Chandigarh has been awarded the Asian Relays 2027. Odisha and Chandigarh were selected as host cities today at the Asian Athletics Council in Hong Kong. Very proud moment for India," Sumerwalla said. While Chandigarh hosted the Asian Rowing Championships in the past, the city has not hosted many international tournaments since then. While the Sector 16 Stadium hosted an India-Australia ODI in 2007, the Sector 42 Hockey Stadium had hosted the Punjab Gold Cup, an international hockey tournament, in 2009. Chandigarh Athletics Association has hosted the National Relay Championships and National Race Walk



Championships at Sukhna Lake in recent years. "Hosting the National Relay Championships at Sector 7 Sports Complex and the National Race Walk Championships at Sukhna Lake have given a lot of exposure and experience to host national-level elite competitions. We hope all international athletes enjoy competing in Chandigarh and it will be a memorable experience for them," said Harjinder Singh, president, Chandigarh Athletics Association. Earlier in March, a two-member delegation of the Asian Athletics Association, with the secretary general Shugurman and technical director SK Carlson, visited Chandigarh to take stock of the facilities, including the athletics track at the Sector 7 Sports Complex. Sorabh Kumar Arora, UT Director Sports, spoke about Chandigarh hosting such a big event and about the UT administration's readiness. "It is a huge thing for Chandigarh to host the Asian Athletics Relay Championships and the UT administration and sports department are prepared for the event. We have started the work on the floodlights as well as the spectator gallery at the stadium, and such events will motivate players, as well as coaches and youth, a lot," Arora told

'Don't make it another Zirakpur or Gurgaon': 4 architects sound alarm over Chandigarh's future

In January 1951, French-Swiss architect and urban planner Le Corbusier was commissioned, on the recommendation of Punjab's chief engineer, P L Varma, to design Chandigarh's master plan—a long-term blueprint meant to guide sustainable urban growth. Since then, the planning framework has been periodically updated, with the Chandigarh Master Plan 2031 currently serving as the guiding document. But the latest proposed amendments—including high-rise buildings, stilt parking, increased Floor Area Ratios (FARs) and mixed land use—have triggered concern among architects and urban planners, who warn that the city is at a critical crossroads. With barely two weeks left for the review committee to consider public objections and suggestions, four prominent architects told The Indian Express that the proposed changes risk compromising Chandigarh's infrastructure, environment and identity if implemented without long-term planning. Need regional planning, not internal densification

Sumit Kaur, a former chief architect and urban designer who led the original draft of the Chandigarh Master Plan 2031, strongly opposed the changes. She argued that Chandigarh is now landlocked, fully built and under pressure from aggressive regional urbanisation, but instead of distributing this pressure across the Tricity region, the revised plan seeks to internalise it through high-rise towers and drastically increased FARs. Kaur said protecting only Phase I while radically altering Phases II and III would undermine Corbusier's vision of Chandigarh as a unified living organism. The city's low-rise, human-scale design based on the principles of "sun, space and verdure", she said, would be heavily compromised by 30-metre towers.

She also warned that Chandigarh's infrastructure—water supply, sewage, roads and social amenities—is already stretched to capacity, making vertical growth unsustainable and merely a short-term fix. Raising another concern, Kaur said stilt-parking structures could create "soft storey" earthquake risks in Chandigarh's Seismic Zone IV. Instead, she advocated a binding Interstate Regional Planning Board for the Tricity to distribute growth more equitably. She also called for a pedestrian-first, transit-oriented framework with a Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS) and underpasses instead of flyovers.

Chandigarh, Kaur said, is a globally recognised urban-design masterpiece that should not compromise its integrity to compete in a commercial real-estate race with neighbouring cities. Change must be evidence-led, not market-driven. Noor Dasmesh Singh, head of NOOR Architects Consultants, also cautioned against hurried deregulation. While acknowledging the pressures of population growth, changing housing needs and land scarcity, Singh said any change must be evidence-led rather than market-driven.

He stressed that Chandigarh was built through calibrated, capacity-based planning, balancing density, mobility, green cover and infrastructure. Any major densification, he argued, requires rigorous technical reassessment first. Before altering FARs, building heights or land use, Singh said authorities must determine whether the city's water supply, sewage, stormwater systems, roads and civic services can handle the additional load. Pointing to Gurgaon and Zirakpur as cautionary examples, he said rapid vertical growth without matching infrastructure creates congestion, ecological stress and fragmented urban form. Singh also emphasised that Chandigarh's future cannot be planned in isolation. He advocates a binding Interstate Regional Planning framework that treats Mohali, Panchkula, New Chandigarh and Zirakpur as strategic partners, using satellite towns as "release valves" instead of concentrating density within Chandigarh itself. On mobility, Singh rejected private vehicle-centric solutions that "induce demand". Instead, he supported an integrated MRTS for the Tricity along with pedestrian-friendly planning and non-motorised transport networks. He also warned that unchecked verticalisation could alter wind patterns, worsen the urban heat-island effect, threaten heritage trees through road widening and reduce soil permeability, increasing flood risks. For Singh, the goal is neither to freeze Chandigarh in time nor deregulate it for short-term gains, but to evolve it in a phased and



context-sensitive manner. Former chief architect Kapil Setia took the middle ground. Accepting that high-density housing and vertical growth are inevitable due to market demands, he insisted that any transition must be systematic and infrastructure-focused.

Setia warned that the proposed changes appear to imitate neighbouring cities instead of respecting Chandigarh's unique urban character. He called for a comprehensive carrying-capacity assessment covering water, sewage, roads, schools, healthcare and open spaces before any increase in FAR or building heights is approved.

Saying he saw high-rises as a natural evolution, he argued that infrastructure upgrades and transport redesign must precede any densification to avoid severe congestion. He also said that architects must remain sensitive to Chandigarh's existing context, adding that the Chandigarh Urban Arts Commission should simultaneously approve urban design and building plans, including green coding and carbon-footprint considerations. On the proposed Tribune Flyover, Setia called it a redundant and short-sighted solution. Referring to an earlier scrapped 7.6-km corridor project connecting Sector 32 hospital to Zirakpur, he said similar traffic-diversion corridors should be explored instead. According to Setia, there are several alternatives to flyovers, including stronger public transport systems and shared mobility services like Uber. Flyovers, he argued, encourage private vehicle use and unplanned urban sprawl, as seen in Dera Bassi and Zirakpur. For Setia, the question is not whether Chandigarh should change, but how to do so responsibly and systematically. Limit vertical growth, prioritise mobility

Chandigarh architects Noor Dasmesh Singh (left) emphasised that Chandigarh's future cannot be planned in isolation, and Aashray Ahuja (right) warned against the pitfalls of prioritising private real-estate development over public infrastructure. Aashray Ahuja, director of design studio Urban Research + Architecture Practice (URAp), believes Chandigarh's Master Plan is overdue for revision, arguing that no city can remain rigidly loyal to a 20-year-old blueprint amid rapid population growth and rural-to-urban migration. Given that Chandigarh is completely landlocked by Mohali and Panchkula, Ahuja said group housing and selective vertical expansion are a natural and unavoidable evolution. However, he said the proposed amendments neglect two crucial pillars of the city's survival: transportation and the environment. By prioritising private real-estate development over public infrastructure, Ahuja warned, Chandigarh risks following the chaotic and congested path of cities such as Gurgaon and Bengaluru, undermining its foundational design principles. To avoid this, he said, vertical growth must remain strategic rather than scattered, and should largely be confined to Phase III and the Industrial Area to preserve views of the Shivalik hills. Ahuja also argued that Chandigarh must learn from global planning models. Referring to Singapore, he noted that increases in FAR or ground coverage there are legally linked to compensatory green cover and sustainable infrastructure measures. Returning to Corbusier's philosophy, Ahuja described Chandigarh's roads as "arteries" that are already severely clogged. Instead of large concrete interventions like the Tribune Chowk flyover, which he says could trigger a domino effect of car dependency, he advocated a shift toward robust public transit.

Maharashtra school bus operators warn of fee hike over fuel prices



GNS News Agency, June 1

Ahead of the new academic year beginning in June, the School Bus Owners Association (SBOA) in Maharashtra has warned of a fee hike due to the recent rise in fuel prices. Furthermore, the Association has urged the government to allow schools to function in hybrid mode to reduce the number of days students need to use school buses. The Association claims that frequent hikes in fuel prices—where cost is changing in days—have made it difficult for operators to finalise a uniform fee structure before the start of this academic year. In a statement issued on this SBOA stated, "School bus operators, who are already facing severe fi-

nancial pressure due to increasing operational expenses, maintenance costs, insurance premiums, permits, staff salaries, and compliance requirements, may now be compelled to revise school bus transportation fees if fuel prices continue to rise further." However, in the interest of parents, students, and educational institutions, the SBOA said it wanted to avoid additional financial burden on families, and has made suggestions for an alternate-day school functioning model and single shift transportation system. According to SBOA, a hybrid mode of functioning will reduce daily transportation operations, thereby lowering fuel consumption and operational costs, while a single shift transportation measure will significantly reduce multiple bus trips, fuel consumption, and operational expenditure. Anil Garg, SBOA president, said, "Schools currently have multiple shifts requiring as many trips to ferry students. If these shifts are combined, it can help in reducing the number of trips required." Garg highlighted that to run nearly 40,000 school buses under the association, the requirement of fuel is huge—over 1.2 lakh litres. Urging the government to make a decision soon, Garg said, "Although fuel prices have been rising constantly, there is no clarity on what the upper limit will be, as the government is increasing prices every few days. This creates uncertainty for us, as we have to finalise the fee structure before schools reopen and declare it to parents. If fuel prices continue to rise in this manner, how can we fix a single cost?"

Militant outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Hindustan releases video of Amritsar cop's killing

Two days after Tehreek-e-Taliban Hindustan (TTH) claimed responsibility for the murder of a Punjab Police assistant sub-inspector posted in Amritsar, the militant outfit on Wednesday released a video of the killing. The footage, which has surfaced on social media, captures the sequence of the attack on ASI Joga Singh in chilling detail while he was travelling on his two-wheeler on Sunday, May 24. A day later, TTH had claimed responsibility for the murder. Assaults opened fire at close range, striking ASI Singh twice—once on the left side of his chest and once in the waist. With no bystanders nearby at that early hour, he received no immediate assistance and died at the scene. ASI Joga Singh, a resident of Ghaniye village in Gurdaspur, was commuting to duty after a punctured tyre prevented him from using his car. The video shows him identifiable by the same clothes he was found dead in—a police uniform with a robe around his neck, the same attire seen in the surveillance photograph of the officer released by TTH before he was shot at. Attackers are then seen opening fire on ASI Singh as he rides his vehicle. He is seen falling to the roadside following the shots. The assailants subsequently approach his body and film it at close range—a pattern



consistent with how TTH documented the earlier double murder of policemen at the Adiyani outpost in Gurdaspur district in February. The little-known outfit had also claimed responsibility for the double murder that took place about 2 km from the India-Pakistan border. Following the May 24 killing, TTH had explicitly claimed it possessed video evidence of the murder and would release it. The outfit had already released a surveillance photograph of Singh—taken prior to the attack and showing him in the same clothes—which had indicated the attackers had conducted systematic reconnaissance of their target.

Trump gathers Cabinet as he looks to seal deal to end war



GNS News Agency, June 1

Washington: President Donald Trump will meet with his Cabinet on Wednesday at a precarious moment for talks aimed at ending the war with Iran, just days after insisting that his administration and Tehran had "largely negotiated" a settlement but with the negotiations still in a state of flux. As he prepares to huddle with his top aides, Trump is projecting confidence that he's closing in on a deal that will reopen the Strait of Hormuz and provide him a credible argument that Iran's nuclear capability has been diminished enough to declare victory, winding down a conflict that's been politically unpopular for Republicans.

But as things stand, Trump also risks finding closure to his war of choice comes with an unsatisfactory ending. The emerging deal puts off many critical issues to be resolved later and has already exposed the president to fierce criticism – even from some of his own supporters – that Iran's hardline leaders will emerge from the conflict battered but emboldened. It all comes to a head just as the midterm elections to determine control of Congress come into focus and as Republicans worry that rising costs and fuel prices are darkening the American electorate's mood. Talks were further complicated after US forces carried out what the Pentagon called "defensive" strikes on missile launch sites and mine-laying boats in southern Iran on Monday. The US said it acted with "restraint" in light of the weeks-long ceasefire, while Iran decried the action as a sign of "bad faith and unreliability". Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Tuesday that talks with Iran on reopening the strait and extending the ceasefire – a period that the administration says could be used to hash out the finer details of a nuclear agreement – will take several more days. "He's either going to make a good deal or no deal," Rubio told reporters. Trump for his part took to social media on Tuesday to grumble that even if Tehran were to offer a complete surrender, the media would paint the end of the conflict as Iran scoring "a Masterful and Brilliant Victory". While Trump insists a deal is within reach, there appears to be daylight between the US and Iran on several key issues. The president is also facing scrutiny from Republican allies, including Sens. Roger Wicker of Mississippi, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, and Ted Cruz of Texas, who have said the terms seem too favourable to Tehran.

They're balking at aspects of the deal that have emerged publicly that they say too closely resemble the nuclear agreement reached with Iran by former President Barack Obama, which Trump scrapped during his first term. Under the potential deal, Tehran would agree to give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium – a key Trump demand – in return for sanctions relief. That's according to two regional officials and one senior Trump administration official, all of whom spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive negotiations. One regional official, with direct knowledge of the negotiations, said how Iran would give up the uranium would be subject to further talks during

a 60-day period. Some would likely be diluted, while the rest would be transferred to a third country, the official said.

Iran has 440.9 kilograms (972 pounds) of uranium that is enriched up to 60 per cent purity, a short, technical step from weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran has not publicly committed to giving up its uranium. Trump on Monday said in a Truth Social post that the uranium, which is believed to be buried under nuclear sites battered by US air strikes last year, would either be turned over to the US or "destroyed in place or, at another acceptable location, with the Atomic Energy Commission, or its equivalent, being witness to this process and event". The comment signals a softening of Trump's previous insistence that the US take control of Iran's uranium stockpile. How Trump's plan affects Israel's war in Lebanon is another key issue unresolved is whether the ceasefire will also cover Israel's operations against Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed militant group in Lebanon. Iran has insisted that Lebanon must be covered by any ceasefire agreement negotiated with the United States. The administration appears to leave some wiggle room on the Lebanon question. The emerging memorandum of understanding calls for a ceasefire between the US and its allies against Iran and its proxies, such as Hezbollah, but also underscores Israel's right to act against imminent threats and in self defence. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday announced that the Israeli military is "deepening its operation" in Lebanon.

Jonathan Conrucus, a former spokesperson for the Israel Defence Forces, said Israel expects that Iran would quickly move to direct any sanctions relief to restore its military capability and boost proxy groups, including Hezbollah and Hamas in Gaza. "We're not done fighting, because the Iranian regime isn't done," said Conrucus, who is a senior fellow with the Foundation for Defence of Democracies, a hawkish Washington think tank. "Stunned silence" as Trump ties Abraham Accords to Iran deal Trump on Monday said any agreement to end the Iran war should include a requirement for several additional countries, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Pakistan, to join the Abraham Accords, the US-brokered agreements from Trump's first term aimed at normalizing diplomatic and economic relations with Israel.

Trump's optimism that the other Middle Eastern and majority Muslim countries could soon sign on to the accords might be overly ambitious. For example, Saudi Arabia, the most significant power in the Arab world and long seen as the biggest prize for the normalisation effort, has insisted that establishing a guaranteed path to a Palestinian state remains a precondition. It's something that Israel vehemently opposes. Trump made the Abraham Accords push during a call with leaders of Mideast allies over the weekend. Barbara Leaf, a retired US ambassador to the United Arab Emirates and senior State Department official during the Biden administration, said officials from Gulf countries who were on the call told her that Trump's pitch was greeted by "stunned silence". A person familiar with the call disputed that characterization and that some regional allies responded positively to the president's call to join the accords. The person spoke on condition of anonymity about the private conversation. Leaf, a distinguished diplomatic fellow at the Middle East Institute, said that Middle Eastern allies of the United States recognise that Iran will likely use any money from sanctions relief to bolster its military capabilities. Still, they have been supportive of Trump pursuing an end to the conflict. "They see no other way out," Leaf said of American allies in the region. "And they see no other way out because of many of these early mistakes that the president and the administration made in conducting the war."

Israel says Hamas military chief Mohammed Odeh killed in Gaza strike



GNS News Agency, June 1

Jerusalem: Israel has announced that Hamas military commander Mohammed Odeh was killed in a targeted overnight strike in Gaza City. Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz described the operation as a major blow to the militant group's military structure. According to Israeli authorities, Odeh was killed during an operation conducted jointly by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the Shin Bet after months of intelligence monitoring and surveillance of his movements. In a post on X, Katz said, "The fourth commander of the Hamas terror organisation's military wing in Gaza was eliminated yesterday and sent to meet his partners in the depths of hell." Israeli officials said Odeh had only recently assumed charge as head of Hamas's military wing following the killing of Izz al-Din al-Haddad earlier this

month. According to Hamas-affiliated reports emerging from Gaza, Odeh was reportedly killed along with his wife and sons during the strike. Praising the operation, Katz commended the Israeli military and intelligence agencies for what he called a "brilliant execution". "We pledged to eliminate everyone who led the October 7 massacre, and that is what we will do," Katz was quoted as saying by the Times of Israel. "They are all marked for death, everywhere."

The Israeli Defence Minister also reiterated Israel's stated objective of dismantling Hamas' rule in Gaza and advancing what he described as a plan for "voluntary emigration" from the enclave. "Everything at the right time and in the right manner," he added. In a joint statement, the IDF and Shin Bet confirmed that several buildings in Gaza City allegedly being used as hideouts by Odeh and his associates were targeted during the overnight strike. The Israeli military further stated that an apartment belonging to another Hamas operative allegedly involved in the October 7 attacks was also hit during the operation, according to the Times of Israel. According to the IDF, Odeh had previously served as the head of Hamas intelligence before becoming the organisation's military chief last week. Israeli security agencies alleged that he played a key role in planning and coordinating Hamas' October 7 assault on Israel and later directed attacks and intelligence operations against Israeli troops during the ongoing conflict. The agencies described Odeh as one of the last remaining senior Hamas military commanders linked to orchestrating the October 7 attacks and said his killing represented a "significant blow" to Hamas' efforts to reorganise and rebuild its military capabilities.

Congo says Ebola outbreak still at early stage but cases rising

Kinshasa: The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) remains at an early stage, but infections and deaths continue to rise, Health Minister Roger Kamba said. Health authorities have identified around 1,000 suspected cases in affected areas, of which 101 have tested positive, Kamba told a press conference. Preliminary figures show that about 200 to 220 deaths are believed to be linked to the outbreak, while 17 deaths have been confirmed through laboratory testing. "We are still at the beginning of an epidemic," Kamba said, adding that the duration of the current growth phase would depend on the effectiveness of response efforts.

The minister said authorities are planning a response operation expected to last four to six months. The outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, which Kamba described as less lethal than the Zaire strain but still dangerous if infections continue to rise. There is currently no approved vaccine or specific treatment for Bundibugyo Ebola. To contain transmission, authorities are relying on

surveillance, testing, isolation, contact tracing, community engagement and safe burials, he said. On Saturday, the government suspended civilian passenger flights to and from Bunia, the capital of Ituri Province and the epicentre of the outbreak, while humanitarian flights remain in operation, Xinhua news agency reported. Kamba said the virus may have been circulating before the outbreak was officially declared on May 15, citing Ebola's incubation period of up to 21 days. He added that health authorities have yet to identify the outbreak's "patient zero". Earlier on May 26, the World Health Organization (WHO) had said that a confirmed case of Ebola virus disease is recovering in Goma, an eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) city, with work underway to strengthen the response against the outbreak. Anne Anicia, WHO's acting representative in the DRC had made the remarks during a visit to Goma, currently under the control of the March 23 Movement rebel group. The confirmed patient is receiving treatment at a local hospital with "very positive"

The paper trail linking a US fuel trader to a notorious Mexican cartel



Mystery customers. Missing permits. Inaccurate customs declarations. Investigations in the U.S. and Mexico. Documents shed light on an alleged fuel smuggling racket. Ikon Midstream, a Houston-based petroleum trader whose offices were raided last month by U.S. authorities, is under investigation in Mexico in connection with fuel smuggling, according to three Mexican security sources with direct knowledge of the matter and four Mexican government security documents viewed by Reuters. The probe is part of ongoing investigations into maritime shipments of petroleum products that were brought to Mexico from the U.S. and Canada in an alleged scheme to evade a hefty tax due on these imports, the documents and sources said. Ikon Midstream is among the "central pieces" in a suspected scheme linked to one of Mexico's most powerful crime groups, the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), and Mexico's attorney general's office has opened an investigation into the company "based on testimonies, documents and surveillance," according to one of the documents. Mexico's attorney general's office did not respond to requests for comment.

The Texas trader's export of diesel aboard the tanker Torm Agnes is being scrutinized for potential cartel links, as is Ikon Midstream's purported relationship with a suspected CJNG-related trucking company that helped offload the vessel's cargo in the ports of Ensenada and Guaymas, according to the security sources and the document. Smuggled fuel and stolen crude oil have become the second-largest source of revenue for Mexico's cartels behind narcotics, according to the U.S. government. Two of the documents laid out the operations and players in the alleged racket. Among them, Ikon Midstream was allegedly a supplier of petroleum products that moved through a complex web of importers, transporters, distributors and facilitators in Mexico. The other two documents contained summaries of the probes. The four documents were created in March and April and their authenticity was confirmed by the security sources. A Mexican Navy vessel patrols near an oil refinery close to the Port of Tampico on May 28, 2025. The area has been a hotbed for fuel smuggling, authorities say. Asked to comment about the investigations, Ikon Midstream Executive Director Rhett Kenagy said in a May 12 email to Reuters that there was "not a single shred of documentation to back any of it up" and that the company was "not going to respond to accusations grounded in hearsay." Homeland Security Investigations, the primary transnational investigative agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, executed a criminal search warrant at Ikon Midstream's Houston offices on April 14, a DHS spokesperson told Reuters in an April 17 statement. "This is related to an ongoing investigation into criminal activity," the statement said. DHS did not elaborate, and it did not comment on whether it was coordinating with Mexican authorities. Excerpt from an April 17, 2026, statement to Reuters from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security about a raid made earlier that week by its investigative unit at the Houston offices of Ikon Midstream.

Ikon Midstream has repeatedly denied wrongdoing. In an April 24 statement to Reuters, the fuel trader said it "has never knowingly provided, and does not knowingly provide, material support or resources to CJNG." Regarding the raid by Homeland Security Investigations, Ikon Midstream said in its statement that "an investigative action by law enforcement is not itself a finding of wrongdoing." Mexican authorities have announced the arrests of at least 16 people since September in connection with fuel smuggling. While officials have said they've uncovered a "criminal structure" behind the alleged illicit activity, they haven't publicly named the detainees or said anything about their possible connections to CJNG.

In an October report, Reuters chronicled how diesel exported by Ikon Midstream aboard the tanker Torm Agnes made its way into the hands of Intanza, a Mexican company that authorities there suspect is a front for CJNG. Intanza has no listed phone number, website, social media presence or physical location that Reuters could find. That story detailed how Mexican cartels earn billions of dollars annually by smuggling fuel, mainly from the U.S. to Mexico, in what boils down to a massive tax dodge: Diesel, gasoline and naphtha are claimed in trade paperwork to be lubricants to avoid a steep import duty that Mexico charges on these imported fuels. Smuggled fuel and stolen crude oil have become the second-largest source of revenue for Mexico's cartels behind narcotics, according to the U.S. government, which has ramped up efforts to crack down on the illicit trade. The Trump administration designated CJNG as a foreign terrorist organization in February 2025. Import-export paperwork for these transactions is often incomplete or faked by smugglers, who use front companies to facilitate these deals and enlist established oil industry players to help, some actively colluding, others acting unwittingly, trade experts, tax authorities and law enforcement officials told Reuters. A member of the Mexican Navy and a sniffer dog patrol the Port of Tampico on May 28, 2025. Authorities have stepped up port security in an effort to combat smuggling of drugs and fuel. REUTERS/Daniel Becerrill/Ikon Midstream sued Reuters for defamation on November 14 in a district court in Texas, contending the news agency made "categorically false" statements about its business in the October article. Reuters stands by its reporting and is contesting the suit.

Ikon Midstream said it never did business with Intanza. Following publication of Reuters' October report, Ikon Midstream provided Reuters with internal company documents that showed the Torm Agnes cargo plus three other 2025 shipments of diesel and naphtha aboard the tanker Torm Louise were sold to a Mexican customer named Azteca Cone. Azteca Cone, like Intanza, is part of the same alleged scheme and is likewise under investigation for fuel smuggling and suspected links to CJNG, according to the three Mexican security sources and two of the government security documents. Azteca Cone cuts a mysterious figure in the fuel industry. Just like Intanza, Azteca Cone has no listed phone number, website or physical location that Reuters could find. Invoices provided by Ikon Midstream to Reuters show Mexican company Azteca Cone as one of its customers. Azteca Cone is suspected of being a front company for the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, according to three Mexican security sources and two government security documents reviewed by the news agency.

The internal documents that Ikon Midstream shared

with Reuters also show that the Texas fuel trader incorrectly described the cargo of at least four shipments last year in filings with U.S. customs. Some of Ikon Midstream's own paperwork described the cargo as lubricants, contradicting statements made to Reuters last year by the Texas company's lawyer and the commercial manager of the vessels that the tankers carried diesel and naphtha. The distinction matters because lubricants are exempt from Mexico's steep tax on imported fuel. When mislabeled export records match what's declared by the importer in the receiving country – such as both parties declaring cargo to be lubricants when the product is, in fact, diesel – smuggling is extremely hard to detect, according to law enforcement officials on both sides of the border.

Ikon Midstream in its April 24 statement to Reuters acknowledged that it had made errors in its export filings – a reversal of earlier assertions by the company that it had used the correct product codes in declarations to U.S. customs. In the updated statement, the company characterized its repeated paperwork inaccuracies as "clerical" mistakes and said there was "no duty-avoidance motive."

Petroleum shipping giant Torm, manager of the tankers Torm Agnes and Torm Louise, did not provide comment for this story. Denmark-based Torm told Reuters last year that it had ended its business dealings with Ikon Midstream "based on what has come to light." It did not elaborate. Reuters previously reported that the diesel Ikon Midstream shipped to Mexico aboard Torm Agnes came from Imperial Oil, a Canadian oil company that is majority-owned by U.S. oil major Exxon Mobil, according to four sources familiar with the deal.

Exxon is also named on inspection reports for the three Torm Louise shipments, documents shared with Reuters by Ikon Midstream showed, indicating that the oil giant supplied the fuel to Ikon Midstream. The parties listed on inspection certificates are typically the buyer, seller and terminal operator. Exxon Mobil is named on inspection certificates provided to Reuters by Ikon Midstream for cargoes of diesel and naphtha destined for Mexico, indicating the U.S. oil major supplied the fuel to Ikon Midstream. Exxon did not respond to multiple requests for comment. The company cut ties with Ikon Midstream in mid-2025, a person familiar with the matter said without elaborating.

The October Reuters report found that Ikon Midstream last year purchased about 120,000 barrels of diesel that was loaded in Canada aboard the tanker Torm Agnes and then transported to Mexico, where it was received by Intanza. Port records showed the cargo was twice declared to Mexican customs as a lubricant: first in the Port of Ensenada, where a portion was offloaded into fuel trucks, then later in the Port of Guaymas, where some of the remaining cargo was discharged the same way.

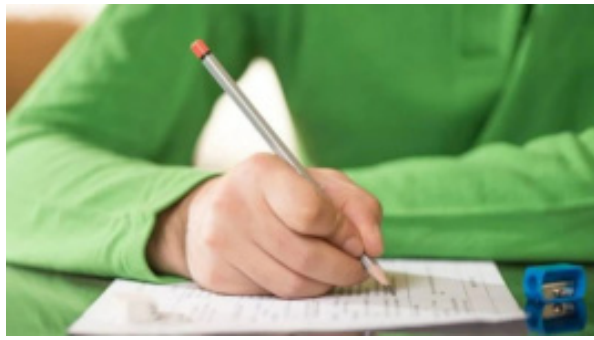
Fuel trucks line up at Mexico's Port of Guaymas to offload diesel from the tanker Torm Agnes in late March 2025. The exporter of that cargo, Ikon Midstream, is under investigation in Mexico in connection with cartel-linked fuel smuggling. Reuters was able to confirm the location from file and satellite imagery, and tanker-tracking data showed the vessel docked in Guaymas on March 20, 2025. VIA X.COM That misclassification allowed Intanza to avoid around \$7 million in tax that would have been due on the diesel, Reuters calculated, based on the volume of diesel and the tax rate at the time.

Mexican security sources told Reuters that a trucking company named Mefra Fletes helped haul away the Torm Agnes diesel in both ports. The company has also been identified as one of the central pieces in the alleged fuel smuggling scheme, according to the four government security documents. Mefra Fletes and Ikon Midstream have worked together extensively in recent years, including on tanker-to-truck transfers of petroleum products at multiple Mexican ports, according to the three Mexican security sources and two of the security documents. A Reuters reporter who stopped by Ikon Midstream's Houston offices in August was turned away by a man who said he was an Ikon Midstream employee and used to work for Mefra Fletes in Mexico. The man declined to give his full name.

A fifth undated Mexican government security document, a portion of which was viewed by Reuters, named five owners or representatives of Mefra Fletes that have alleged links to CJNG. Reuters could not ascertain whether any of those people have been charged, nor could it reach them or Mefra Fletes for comment. The company has no presence on social media and no listed phone number or address. Ikon Midstream did not answer Reuters' questions about its purported relationship with Mefra Fletes. In its lawsuit against Reuters, Ikon Midstream described itself as an exporter of petroleum products and said the importer alone bears responsibility for what gets declared at Mexican customs. Still, U.S. exporters are expected to know their customers and make reasonable attempts to check that they aren't sanctioned or connected to a sanctioned party, according to eight legal experts consulted by Reuters. Such vigilance is critical after CJNG and five other Mexican cartels landed on the U.S. list of designated foreign terrorist organizations in February 2025, according to Ephraim Wernick, a partner at Vinson & Elkins and a former U.S. Department of Justice prosecutor who specializes in foreign corruption and money laundering cases. That's because U.S. prosecutors now have more leeway to go after any parties suspected of providing cartels with material support, he said.

"You're not allowed to stick your head in the sand," said Wernick, who noted he isn't familiar with Ikon Midstream or its transactions in Mexico. In its April 24 statement, Ikon Midstream said it vets customers using a "risk-based due diligence program." It said it had never done business with an entity that appeared on a U.S. sanctions list and that none of its counterparties had shown "payment behavior inconsistent with a legitimate wholesale fuel purchaser." Reuters, however, could not ascertain even the most basic information about Azteca Cone, including its physical address. Using an address for Azteca Cone listed on four 2025 invoices provided by Ikon Midstream, two Reuters journalists in November traveled to an industrial zone on the outskirts of Monterrey in northern Mexico. That location was home to a metalworking company called C.W. Tech. An employee said they had never heard of Azteca Cone and that C.W. Tech had been at that address for the past three years. C.W. Tech did not respond to requests for comment. There is no indication that the company was involved in the alleged fuel smuggling scheme. Reuters attempted to locate Azteca Cone, one of Ikon Midstream's Mexican customers, at the Monterrey-area address listed on invoices. The news agency found a metalworking company there, but no signs of Azteca Cone. REUTERS/Daniel Becerrill In addition, Reuters could find no records showing that Azteca Cone or Intanza had ever held permits required by Mexico's Energy Ministry to import diesel or naphtha into Mexico, according to a Reuters review of such permits since the companies were founded in 2021 and 2022 respectively. Importers lacking these permits can face hefty fines or even jail time, two Mexican attorneys specializing in energy and tax matters said.

How NEET uncertainty can deeply affect students' mental health: '18-year-old beat exam stress once, now he has a meltdown'



time, unable to focus or repeatedly reading the same material without retaining information. This happens because prolonged stress without recovery affects concentration, memory and overall cognitive performance. Another common issue is performance anxiety. Students begin replaying the previous exam in their minds, questioning every answer and worrying whether they can perform equally well again. This overthinking itself becomes mentally exhausting. At that point, students are not simply preparing academically. They are also trying to process disappointment, uncertainty and psychological fatigue. How uncertainty affects confidence and self-worth

Repeated instability around high-stakes exams can deeply affect students' emotional well-being. Many aspirants gradually begin attaching their confidence and future identity to their exam performance. When uncertainty repeatedly interferes with that process, some students begin feeling that no matter how hard they work, outcomes remain beyond their control. This can lead to frustration, self-doubt and emotional exhaustion. Some begin questioning their abilities despite months or years of sincere effort. In more vulnerable students, prolonged uncertainty may contribute to anxiety, low mood, hopelessness and significant sleep disturbance. The impact is often larger than the examination itself because students feel trapped in a cycle of uncertainty without closure.

What should parents watch out for?

Parents should be alert to emotional, behavioural and physical changes that persist for more than a few days. Warning signs include difficulty sleeping, withdrawal from family interactions, irritability, crying spells, loss of motivation, negative self-talk and panic symptoms such as sweating, trembling or rapid heartbeat. Frequent headaches, acidity, nausea and appetite changes are also common physical manifestations of stress. Another increasingly common sign is excessive scrolling through social media for exam updates, often leading to emotional excesses due to rumours and conflicting information. Parents should avoid repeatedly discussing marks, ranks or comparisons during this period. Students need reassurance and emotional safety far more than additional academic pressure. If symptoms become severe or begin interfering with daily functioning, seeking timely professional mental health support is extremely important. What students can do immediately

The first priority after an exam cancellation or disruption should be emotional stabilisation, not immediate productivity. Students should allow themselves time to process disappointment instead of suppressing it. Restoring sleep, eating regular meals, maintaining physical activity and limiting exposure to social media speculation can significantly help regulate stress. It is also important to avoid panic-driven study schedules. The brain performs much better with structured revision and adequate rest than under prolonged emotional strain. Psychologically, students should focus on what remains within their control — daily routines, revision plans and self-care. Most importantly, they must remember that one disrupted examination does not define their intelligence, capability or future success.

Fake paneer can affect your protein intake: Why FSSAI's new label norms matter



making accurate labelling especially important. There is also the issue of satiety and nutrient adequacy. Consumers may assume they are eating a protein-dense meal when in reality they are consuming a product with a very different nutritional composition. This mismatch can affect overall dietary planning and long-term nutritional balance. Consumers have the right to know whether they are purchasing a dairy-based protein source or a processed substitute so they can make informed decisions based on their health needs. While the policy direction is commendable, its effectiveness will depend entirely on implementation. A significant portion of analogue paneer enters the market through informal supply chains involving local traders and small-scale suppliers. Monitoring these channels remains a major challenge. Without regular inspections, laboratory testing, compliance audits and strict action against violations, even the strongest regulatory intent risks remaining limited to paper.

Hope for pancreatic cancer? Top oncologists explain how an experimental vaccine hunts down rogue cells

Pancreatic cancer remains one of the deadliest forms of cancer, with fewer than 13 per cent of patients surviving beyond five years after diagnosis. Unlike cancers that benefit from routine screening methods such as colonoscopies or mammograms, pancreatic cancer has no standard early-detection test, and symptoms often emerge only after the disease has reached an advanced stage. Treatment options are limited and only about 20 per cent of cases are considered operable. Now imagine a vaccine custom-built just for the patient, designed to teach their own body to fight off cancer. That's exactly what researchers at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Cancer Center have done. They developed an experimental, individualized therapeutic cancer vaccine that uses messenger RNA (mRNA) to treat pancreatic cancer. Messenger RNA is a molecule that carries genetic instructions from DNA to help in protein synthesis. Follow-up results from a phase 1 clinical trial show that nearly 90 per cent of people

'My patient wasn't losing weight on Mounjaro. Then came the fake drug bust': Doc seeks advisory on identifying real drug



Diabetologist Anoop Misra, who had been treating a 30-year-old for obesity with the weight-loss injectable drug tirzepatide (sold as Mounjaro), was surprised when the latter didn't lose as much weight. "He had been on the medication for about two months but I didn't see the change I expected despite a third dose escalation," says the chairman of Fortis C-DOC Hospital for Diabetes and Allied Sciences, New Delhi. Speaking about his non-responder patient with The Indian Express, Dr Misra says, "The patient began questioning the drug after hearing that a particular pharmacy might be dispensing fake drugs. While I dismissed his fears, saying such claims could be untrue, the lack of expected weight loss was concerning. This was my first patient who had reported such an anomaly."

Then the seizure of counterfeit versions of Mounjaro KwikPen worth Rs 56 lakh in Gurugram exposed a racket that was manufacturing and selling the injections through illegal channels. That's when he recalled a similar concern raised by another patient in Gurugram about two to three weeks earlier. "I had dismissed his fear too, assuring that the drug was internationally manufactured to high standards. But the recent case has introduced some doubt, making it harder for me to confidently reassure patients," says Dr Misra. So, he has sought clear guidance from regulators such as the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) on identifying genuine batches of the anti-obesity drug tirzepatide, warning that laxity would mean that patients would be at risk from counterfeit supplies.

In his recent post on X, Dr Misra wrote, "@CDSCO (CDSCO) should clearly tell all of us who are prescribing Mounjaro how to identify fake batches." Or else the efficacy of the drugs, which have been proven to control obesity and reduce risk factors of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), would be compromised. "I strongly urge the Government of India and CDSCO to issue a physician-facing advisory on identifying genuine tirzepatide — covering packaging, pen device features and supply chain verification — so that our patients receive full therapeutic benefits without harm," he says.

Why an advisory is needed Dr Misra feels that in the absence of an official advisory, doctors are left relying on unverified videos and social media discussions, which are not sufficient to establish authenticity. "If there is a clear advisory, we can identify it ourselves. Clinicians could also guide pharmacists and advise patients on how to check their medicines," he adds. Such clarity, he feels, is especially important, given the high costs of these drugs, which are challenging for patients, and the potential risks posed by counterfeit products.

Dr Misra says that while the CDSCO has issued ad-

Gulmohar to Papaya: Five 'Indian' plants that actually came from abroad

Walk through any Indian neighbourhood, garden, or market, and you are likely to come across plants so familiar that they feel unquestionably native to the country. But many species now deeply integrated into Indian landscapes and cuisine were actually introduced from other parts of the world through trade routes, colonial influence, and botanical exchange. Here are five plants many people assume are native to India, but actually originated abroad.

1. Chilli Pepper

It is difficult to imagine Indian cuisine without chillies today, but chilli peppers were not originally grown in India. They were brought from Central and South America by Portuguese traders in the 15th and 16th centuries. According to Britannica.com, "Chilli peppers are native to the Americas and are cultivated in warm climates around the world." Before chillies arrived, black pepper and long pepper were primarily used to add heat to food. Over time, chillies adapted exceptionally well to Indian climates and became a cornerstone of regional cuisines across the country.

2. Bougainvillea

Known for its bright pink, purple, orange, and white blooms, bougainvillea is commonly seen climbing compound walls and decorating Indian streets. However, the plant is native to South America, especially Brazil, Peru, and Argentina. It became popular in tropical and subtropical countries because of its drought tolerance and vibrant appearance. According to Britannica.com, "The combination of bract plus inconspicuous flower itself resembles a flower with conspicuous petals. B. peruviana, from Colombia to Peru, has rose to magenta bracts. B. × butiana, a probable hybrid of B. glabra and B. peruviana, has given rise to varieties having lemon yellow ("Golden Glow"), orange ("Louis Wathen"), and crimson ("Mrs. Butt") bracts. Bougainvilleas are hardy in warm climates."

3. Eucalyptus

Eucalyptus trees are widely planted across India for timber, paper production, and fast-growing greenery. Yet the species originated in Australia. According to Britannica.com, "eucalyptus, (genus Eucalyptus), large genus of more than 660 species of shrubs and tall trees of the myrtle family (Myrtaceae), native to Australia, including Tasmania, and nearby islands." Introduced during the colonial period, eucalyptus was favoured because it grows rapidly. However, environmentalists have often debated its ecological impact, arguing that some species consume large amounts of groundwater and may affect local biodiversity.

4. Gulmohar

The gulmohar tree, famous for its fiery orange-red flowers during summer, is another species many mistake as Indian. In reality, it is native to Madagascar. According to researchgate.net, "The tree is native to Madagascar. It is now widespread in most subtropical and tropical areas of the world and has been widely planted more as a garden

visories on who is authorized to prescribe such drugs, a similar communication focused on identifying genuine batches would be useful. "Doctors would rely on and disseminate guidance that comes from credible government sources," he says. He also cautions users against depending on information from AI tools or social media without verification, stressing that only authoritative guidance can resolve the confusion.

Why identifying fake drugs is difficult According to Dr Ravindra Goswami, Professor of Endocrinology, AIIMS Delhi, identifying fake weight loss drugs is extremely difficult, even for doctors, because counterfeit products can look identical to genuine ones and are sometimes sold unknowingly through otherwise reputable pharmacies. "Fake drugs are not a new problem and there have been earlier instances where even complex medicines, including biologics, were reportedly refilled into discarded bottles and resold, making detection very challenging. Because of this, simply issuing guidelines on visual identification may not be very effective," he says. Instead, he emphasises stronger enforcement. "Although laws and regulations already exist, they are not sufficient unless strictly implemented. The focus should be on cracking down on supply chains, tracing the source of such drugs, breaking criminal networks and ensuring strict policing. Those involved in selling fake medicines should face very severe punishment. Without strong deterrence, the problem will persist," he adds. Dr Goswami also insists on strictness in ensuring the cold chain for drug storage. This is particularly critical for injectable anti-obesity drugs such as tirzepatide because they are temperature-sensitive biological molecules that need to be stored within a tightly regulated range, usually between 2°C and 8°C. Any break in this temperature-controlled supply chain — during transport, storage at warehouses, at the pharmacy, or even after purchase — can degrade the active compound, reducing its potency or rendering it ineffective. Unlike many conventional tablets, such degradation is often invisible: the pen may look intact, the liquid may appear normal, and there may be no obvious signs that the medicine has lost efficacy.

How counterfeit drugs impact patients If the product is counterfeit, it may contain no active ingredient at all or even have contaminants. If it has been exposed to improper temperatures, it may become partially inactive while appearing genuine. In both situations, the patient may continue injecting it under the assumption that treatment is working, only to experience poor weight loss, unstable blood sugar control or unexpected side effects. At one level, patients may simply fail to lose weight or achieve metabolic control, allowing obesity-related complications such as worsening diabetes, hypertension and fatty liver disease to progress unchecked. At another, counterfeit injectables may contain adulterants or incorrect concentrations that can trigger dangerous adverse effects ranging from severe nausea, vomiting and dehydration to allergic reactions, pancreatitis, electrolyte imbalance and kidney stress. In diabetic patients, ineffective or wrongly formulated medication can also lead to poor glycaemic control, exposing them to further health risks. Patients who believe they are receiving an effective drug may delay seeking medical review when expected results do not appear, losing valuable treatment time. "Since these drugs work gradually and response varies from person to person, counterfeit or degraded products can remain undetected for weeks," says Dr Misra.



and avenue tree in both moist and dry regions of tropical India. "Because of its dramatic canopy and ornamental appeal, gulmohar became a popular avenue tree in Indian cities and educational campuses. Papaya is now commonly cultivated and consumed across India, but it originally came from Central America and southern Mexico. According to the National Horticulture Board, "Papaya cultivation had its origin in South Mexico and Costa Rica. Total annual world production is estimated at 6 million tonnes of fruits. India leads the world in papaya production with an annual output of about 3 million tonnes. Other leading producers are Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, Indonesia, China, Peru, Thailand, and the Philippines." Introduced centuries ago through maritime trade, papaya adapted quickly to tropical climates and became valued for its nutritional content and digestive benefits.

Telangana government transfers T-SAT to Education Department

GNS News Agency, June 1

Hyderabad: The State government has transferred the T-SAT from the Information Technology and Communications department to the Education department. An order to this effect has been issued by Chief Secretary K Ramakrishna Rao.

The general administration (cabinet) department has been instructed to take necessary action to issue an amendment to the Telangana government business rules accordingly. The Education department was asked to take necessary action accordingly. The previous BRS government had established T-SAT (Telangana Skill and Academic Training) under the IT, Electronics and Communications department, aimed at improving educational access and quality training through satellite-based transmission, targeting underprivileged and rural communities in the State.

Sri Lanka records over 27,000 dengue cases, 14 deaths in 2026



GNS News Agency, June 1

Colombo: Sri Lanka has recorded 27,754 dengue cases and 14 deaths so far this year, with infections reported from all 25 districts, health officials said. The National Dengue Control Unit said the number of confirmed cases has increased compared with 2025. The highest number of infections has been reported from the Western Province, while Matara, Galle, Ratnapura, Kalutara and Kandy have also recorded significant case numbers during the first four months of 2026. Community Medical Specialist Priscilla Samaraweera of the National Dengue Control Unit said at a media briefing held at the health ministry that the start of monsoon rains could further increase transmission.

Officials said breeding has increased more in schools, workplaces, religious institutions and government and private institutions than in households. Improper waste disposal was identified as a key factor contributing to the spread of dengue, emphasizing the need for strict public cooperation in prevention, Xinhua news agency reported. The public has

also been advised to seek medical attention without delay if fever is accompanied by at least two symptoms such as muscle pain, headache, vomiting, nausea or skin rashes.

Dengue (break-bone fever) is a viral infection that is spread from mosquitoes to people. It is more common in tropical and subtropical than in temperate climates. Most people who get dengue do not have symptoms. For those who do, the most common symptoms are high fever, headache, body aches, nausea and rash. Most get better in 1-2 weeks. Some develop severe dengue and need care in a hospital. In severe cases, dengue can be fatal. You can lower your risk of dengue by avoiding mosquito bites, especially during the day. Dengue is treated through pain management as there is no specific treatment currently. Individuals who are infected for the second time are at greater risk of severe dengue. The symptoms of severe dengue often come after the fever has gone away and may include: severe abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, rapid breathing, bleeding gums or nose, and fatigue. The incidence of dengue has grown dramatically worldwide in recent decades, with the number of cases reported to WHO increasing from 505 430 cases in 2000 to 14.6 million in 2024. The vast majority of cases are asymptomatic or mild and self-managed, and hence the actual numbers of dengue cases are under-reported. The disease is now endemic in more than 100 countries. In 2024, more cases of dengue were recorded than ever before in a 12-month period, affecting over 100 countries on all continents. During 2024, ongoing transmission, combined with an unexpected spike in dengue cases, resulted in a historic high of over 14.6 million cases and more than 12 000 dengue-related deaths reported. The Region of the Americas contributed a significant proportion of the global burden, with over 13 million cases reported to WHO.

New York state Gov honours Indian chef Vikas Khanna for his culinary contributions

GNS News Agency, June 1

New York: Chef Vikas Khanna became the first Indian in New York State to be honoured during Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month for his outstanding, inspiring artistic and culinary contributions. Last week, New York State Governor Kathy Hochul conferred a "Special Citation" on Khanna during the commemoration of AAPI Heritage Month in the state capital, Albany.

Khanna, in a post on social media, described the honour as "deeply emotional and humbling" and added, "what makes this recognition even more meaningful is that it marks the first time an Indian has received this honour in New York State history." Noting that AAPI is the fastest-growing community in the United States, representing more than 25 million people, cultures, stories, struggles, and dreams, Khanna said, "This was never just a personal milestone. It was a statement of hope, identity, representation, and the power of diversity."

In his remarks at the event on May 9, Khanna said that "to bring an Indian chef to this table, this is not just an honour for me, it's a representation - that our stories matter, our culture matters." He said New York City thrives and becomes a beacon of hope for the world "because we protect the most vulnerable and in this city, most of the time, the immigrants are the most vulnerable." Governor Hochul celebrated AAPI Heritage Month in Albany, emphasising unity against divisive hate. She also highlighted that diverse cultures strengthen New York and promised to fight for and protect migrant communities. Honouring Khanna's journey from Amritsar to New York's, the citation described him as a "global culinary icon." "New York State is proud to join in honouring Vikas Khanna for his outstanding contributions



and inspiring commitment to artistic, culinary and personal excellence," the citation said.

Sibu Nair, New York's AAPI Affairs Director, stated Governor Hochul proudly hosted diverse communities to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month and recognise their tremendous daily contributions across the state. Last month, the Amritsar-born Chef was named by TIME magazine to its 2026 list of the '100 Most Influential People' in the world. The TIME profile for Khanna described him as a "man of extraordinary heart." In the TIME profile, award-winning chef Eric Ripert praised Vikas Khanna's global generosity and unique ability to use food as a universal language, connecting diverse people to build bridges and foster understanding. Khanna carries his culture with "immense pride", sharing the richness of Indian traditions while making them accessible and meaningful to a global audience, TIME said.

End of war in Ukraine getting very close: Trump



Washington: US President Donald Trump said a settlement between Russia and Ukraine was "getting very close", expressing optimism that the war could soon move towards an end after months of fighting and diplomatic efforts. Speaking to reporters before departing aboard Marine One, Trump suggested ongoing negotiations were making progress, although he provided no details about any specific breakthrough. "The end of the war in Ukraine, I really think it's getting very close," Trump said when asked about discussions with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Later in the interaction, Trump again struck an upbeat tone on the prospects for peace between Moscow and Kyiv. "That war is getting closer. Believe it or not, it's getting closer," he said.

"We think we're going to end up getting a settlement between Russia and Ukraine." Trump also denied reports suggesting there had been any understanding with Russian President Vladimir Putin regarding control of the Donbas region. "No. No." Trump said when asked whether Russia should get the entire Donbas.

The President said he was prepared to do "whatever's necessary" to help end the conflict. Trump made the remarks while outlining broader foreign policy priorities ahead of his trip to China, where he is expected to meet President Xi. The President indicated global conflicts, including Ukraine, would likely be discussed during the summit. He also argued that easing geopolitical tensions would have major economic benefits, particularly for global energy markets and inflation.

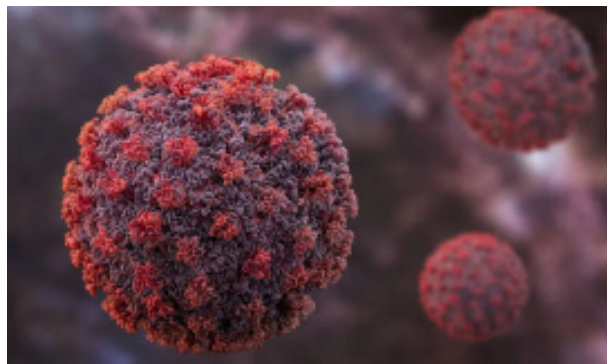
"As soon as this war is over, you're going to see oil prices drop," Trump said earlier in the interaction while discussing the Iran conflict and broader market conditions. Trump's comments come amid continued international efforts to push both Russia and Ukraine towards negotiations after more than four years of war that has devastated large parts of Ukraine and disrupted global energy, food and security systems. New Delhi has also faced pressure from Western countries over its continued purchases of discounted Russian crude oil since the start of the war. At the same time, India has expanded energy and defence cooperation with the United States and Europe while seeking to balance its longstanding strategic partnership with Russia.

Iran's armed forces ready to give 'lesson-teaching' response to any aggression: Parliament speaker

Tehran: Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that the country's armed forces are ready to give a "lesson-teaching" response to any aggression. His remarks on social media platform X came after US President Donald Trump on Monday dismissed Iran's Sunday response to a US proposal, warning that the ceasefire between the two countries is "on massive life support." "Our armed forces are ready to give a lesson-teaching response to any aggression," Qalibaf said, stressing, "We are ready for all options. They will be surprised." Iran sent its response to the latest US proposed text for ending the war to the Pakistani mediator on Sunday, Xinhua news agency reported. Elaborating on Iran's peace proposal at a weekly press conference on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei said the country has solely demanded its people's "legitimate" rights in it.

Baghaei added that ending the war in West Asia, stopping US "maritime piracy" against Iranian ships in the form of a naval blockade, releasing the assets belonging to Iran's people that have been blocked in foreign banks for years, ensuring safe traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, and establishing peace and security in the entire region are not "excessive demands." Meanwhile, Iran's atomic chief said on Monday that the country's nuclear technology and uranium enrichment are non-negotiable, the official news agency IRNA reported. "The issue of nuclear technology is not on the agenda of the negotiations (with the United States), and enrichment is non-negotiable," Mohammad Eslami, head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, was quoted as saying in the report. Iran, the United States, and Israel reached a ceasefire on April 8 after 40 days of fighting that started with US-Israeli joint attacks on Tehran and other Iranian cities on February 28.

French hantavirus patient is critically ill, on artificial lung as total cases grow to 11



Paris: A French woman infected in the deadly hantavirus outbreak on a cruise ship is critically ill and being treated with an artificial lung, a doctor at the Paris hospital caring for the sickened passenger said Tuesday. The outbreak has now reached 11 total reported cases, 9 of which have been confirmed. Three people on the cruise died, including a Dutch couple that health officials believe were the first exposed to the virus while visiting South America.

The French passenger hospitalised in Paris has a severe form of the disease that has caused life-threatening lung and heart problems, said Dr. Xavier Lescure, an infectious disease specialist at Bichat Hospital. He said the woman is on a life-support device that pumps blood through an artificial lung, providing it with oxygen and returning it to the body. The hope is that the device relieves enough pressure on the lungs and heart to give them some time to recover. Lescure called it "the final stage of supportive care." With the evacuation of all passengers and many crew members completed, the MV Hondius is now sailing back to the Netherlands, where it will be cleaned and disinfected. The director of the World Health Organization said confirmed and suspected cases have only been reported among the cruise ship's passengers or crew.

"At the moment, there is no sign that we are seeing the start of a larger outbreak," said Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO director general. He added: "But of course the situation could change, and given the long incubation period of the virus, it's possible we might see more cases in the coming weeks." The latest person confirmed to be infected is a Spanish passenger who tested positive for hantavirus after being evacuated from the ship, Spain's health ministry said Tuesday. The passenger was in quarantine at a military hospital in Madrid. Health authorities say it is the first hantavirus outbreak on a cruise ship. While there is no cure or vaccine for hantavirus, the WHO says early

detection and treatment improves survival rates.

Argentina's health ministry said Tuesday a team of scientific experts will be dispatched in the coming days to investigate the origin of outbreak. A Dutch couple, identified by the WHO as the first cruise passengers infected with hantavirus, spent several months in Argentina and neighbouring South American countries before boarding the cruise ship. The husband and wife later died. Argentine officials have said the couple took a bird-watching tour that included a stop at a garbage dump where they may have been exposed to rodents carrying the infection. The health ministry said its team will investigate the landfill and other locations the couple visited where rats known to carry the virus are found, although local officials in the province where the cruise departed have challenged the theory it began there. A total of 87 passengers and 35 crew were escorted from the ship to shore in Tenerife by personnel in full-body protective gear and breathing masks in a carefully choreographed effort that ended Monday night. Two aircraft arrived in the southern Dutch city of Eindhoven overnight carrying Dutch nationals as well as passengers from Australia and New Zealand and crew members from the Philippines. All were placed into quarantine, according to the Dutch government. Some crew stayed aboard the ship and set course for the Dutch port city of Rotterdam, said ship operator Oceanwide Expeditions. Hantavirus usually spreads from rodent droppings and is not easily transmitted between people. But the Andes virus detected in the cruise ship outbreak may be able to spread between people in rare cases. Symptoms - which can include fever, chills and muscle aches - usually show between one and eight weeks after exposure. WHO chief Tedros has advised that returning passengers should stay in quarantine, either in their homes or in other facilities, for 42 days. He added that WHO cannot enforce its guidance, and that different countries may handle the monitoring of passengers without symptoms in different ways. Twelve employees at a Dutch hospital where a passenger from the Hondius is being treated have to quarantine for six weeks after improperly handling bodily fluids, Radboud University Medical Centre said in a statement Monday night. The "risk of infection is low" the hospital said, but it was requiring the dozen employees to go into preventive quarantine as a "precaution." The hospital in the eastern city of Nijmegen received a passenger last week from one of the evacuation flights that landed in the Netherlands and the person has since tested positive for hantavirus. Blood and urine from the patient should have been handled "according to a stricter procedure," the hospital said.

Trump says stopping Iran's nuclear program outweighs Americans' economic pain

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that Americans' financial struggles are not a factor in his decision-making as he seeks to negotiate an end to the Iran war, saying that preventing Tehran from acquiring a nuclear weapon is his top priority. Asked by a reporter to what extent Americans' financial situations were motivating him to strike a deal, Trump said: "Not even a little bit." The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.

"The only thing that matters, when I'm talking about Iran, they can't have a nuclear weapon," Trump said before departing the White House for a trip to China. "I don't think about Americans' financial situation. I don't think about anybody. I think about one thing: We cannot let Iran have a nuclear weapon. That's all. That's the only thing that motivates me." Trump's remarks are likely to draw scrutiny from critics who argue the administration should balance geopolitical objectives with the economic impact on Americans, particularly as cost-of-living concerns remain a top issue for voters ahead of the November midterm elections. Asked to elaborate on the president's comments, White House Communications Director Steven Cheung said that Trump's "ultimate responsibility is the safety and security of Americans. Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon, and if action wasn't taken, they'd have one, which threatens all Americans." Trump is under growing pressure from fellow Republicans who fear economic pain caused by the war could spark a backlash against the party and cost it control of the House of Representatives and possibly the Senate in November. Rising energy costs linked to the Iran conflict have pushed up gasoline prices and contributed to inflation. U.S. consumer inflation in April posted its largest gain in three years, according to data released on Tuesday. Trump framed his approach as a matter of national and global security, suggesting economic concerns were secondary to preventing nuclear proliferation. U.S. intelli-



gence assessments, however, indicate that the time Iran would need to build a nuclear weapon has not changed since last summer, when analysts estimated that a U.S.-Israeli attack had increased the timeline to nine months to a year, according to three sources familiar with the matter. The assessments of Tehran's nuclear program remain broadly unchanged even after two months of a war. Trump's allies have echoed his argument that the risks posed by a nuclear-armed Iran outweigh short-term economic hardships. Iran denies seeking nuclear weapons and says its program is for peaceful purposes, though Western powers suspect it aims to develop the capability to build a bomb. Daniel Trotta is a U.S. National Affairs correspondent, covering race, guns, LGBTQ+ issues, immigration, homelessness and breaking news in the 50 states. Previously based in New York and now in California, Trotta was awarded the NLGJA award for excellence in transgender coverage. He was previously posted in Cuba, Spain, Mexico and Nicaragua, covering top world stories including the normalization of Cuban-U.S. relations and the Madrid train bombing by Islamist radicals.

Iraq, Pakistan strike energy deals with Iran as Tehran flexes Hormuz control

LONDON/BAGHDAD, Both Iraq and Pakistan have cut deals with Iran to ship oil and liquefied natural gas from the Gulf, according to five sources with knowledge of the matter, in a demonstration of Tehran's ability to control energy flows through the Strait of Hormuz. The U.S.-Israeli war with Iran has slashed energy exports from a region that normally supplies 20% of the world's crude oil and LNG. The U.S. has blockaded Iranian ports in recent weeks. And though Iran initially sought to halt traffic through the strait, that stance is now changing, said Claudio Steuer of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies.

The Reuters Power Up newsletter provides everything you need to know about the global energy industry. Sign up here. "Iran has shifted from blocking Hormuz to controlling access to it... Hormuz is no longer a neutral transit route, it is a controlled corridor," he said. With most of its crude exports typically shipped through the strait, Iraq was among the producers worst-affected by its closure, while Pakistan, which has sought to mediate in the conflict, depends heavily on Gulf energy imports and has faced surging fuel costs. In a deal between Baghdad and Tehran that has not been previously reported, Iraq secured safe passage for two very large crude carriers, each carrying about 2 million barrels of crude, that passed through the strait on Sunday.

Iraq is now working to secure Iran's approval for more transits, an Iraqi oil ministry official familiar with the initial deal and current talks told Reuters, as the government seeks to safeguard the oil revenues that make up 95% of its budget. "Iraq is a close ally of Iran, and any deterioration in Iraq's economy would also damage Iran's economic interests in the country," the official said. A second Iraqi oil ministry official and a shipping industry source also confirmed the talks with Tehran. All of the sources asked not to be

named as they were not authorised to speak on the matter. An Iraqi government spokesperson did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

QATARI LNG FOR PAKISTAN Similarly, two tankers loaded with Qatari LNG are headed to Pakistan following a separate bilateral agreement between Islamabad and Tehran, two industry sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters, also asking not to be named as they were not permitted to speak with media. Pakistan received roughly 10 LNG cargoes a month before the war and now must meet high summer electricity demand for cooling. Neither Iran nor Pakistan has made direct payments to Iran or its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in relation to the transits, the sources said. Qatar was not directly involved in the bilateral deals, the two industry sources said, but it informed the United States ahead of the shipments to Pakistan. Pakistan's petroleum and information ministries did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Neither did Qatar's foreign ministry. Other countries are exploring similar deals, according to sources familiar with the discussions, as rising energy costs and supply disruptions weigh heavily, particularly on Asian economies. "As more governments become willing to cut deals with Iran for passage, it risks normalising the idea that Iran will control the Strait of Hormuz on a permanent basis," said Saul Kavonic, head of research at consultancy MST Marquee. Before the war, about 3,000 vessels passed through Hormuz each month. Traffic is now around 5% of that level, according to shipping data. The disruption has sent Brent crude surging by more than 50% since the outbreak of the conflict at the end of February. LNG prices in Europe and Asia have jumped by roughly 35% to 50%. Iran says it wants to retain control over the strait after the war.

US trade chief to meet Goyal 'soon'; US trade team heads to India next week



then we can make a proposal whether its tariffs, quotas or export control measures and investment creating measures," Greer said.

Ahead of the US-India trade talks next week, an Indian trade delegation is in Canada for negotiations to sign a deal with Ottawa by the end of the year. Talks with Ottawa have picked up amid ongoing U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) negotiations, where the US and Mexico have started talks without Canada following a trade war. Amidst US-Canada ties, Goyal has led a delegation with 100 industry leaders. The Ministry of Commerce said that Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations have moved swiftly since the Terms of Reference were signed in March 2025. "A first round of virtual talks was held in March 2026, followed by a second round that concluded on May 8, 2026. A concurrent round of technical negotiations is underway in Ottawa from May 25-29, running in parallel with Minister Goyal's visit, signalling the seriousness and pace both sides are bringing to the process," the ministry said. Talks with the US for a deal assume significance as several countries are holding on to capex investment, awaiting Washington's new tariff architecture. For India, a slowdown in investments has resulted in a rapidly weakening currency. India saw gross Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows rise to a new record high of \$94.53 billion in 2025-26, up 17% from the previous year, although the net figure was a mere \$7.65 billion, data released last week by RBI showed.

Inflows had risen sharply in February on the back of global investor sentiment reversing in the wake of the signing of an interim trade deal between India and the US early that month, which eliminated the penal 25% tariff and reduced the reciprocal tariff to 18% from 25%. Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) had also net bought Indian financial assets in February to the tune of \$4.17 billion. However, once the West Asia war began at the end of February, foreign capital has exited Indian shores in droves: \$13.6 billion in March, \$7.56 billion in April, and \$2.62 billion so far in May.

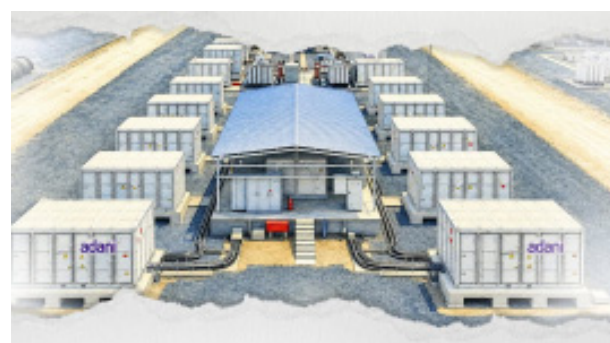
United States Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer on Wednesday said that he expects to meet Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal soon to finalise the India-US framework deal under discussion since early this year. New Delhi and Washington had agreed to the framework for a deal, but the reciprocal tariffs that served as the basis of the American trade agreements were declared illegal by the US Supreme Court in February. "On New Delhi, we have had many meaningful discussions. We have a framework agreement with the Indians. I have a team going there next week. I expect to meet my counterpart [Piyush Goyal] soon as well. I'd really like to be in a position to finalise our agreement based on the joint framework agreement we agreed to," Greer said at a Council of Foreign Relations conference.

Greer's comments come as the US is expected to come out with a new tariff architecture next month to replace reciprocal tariffs. The new set of tariffs is expected to follow the Section 301 investigation that the US launched in March on scores of countries, including India. Government officials said that India expects a comparative advantage in the new US tariffs for the deal to be finalised. "As we wrap up some of the Section 301 investigation in the coming months, USTR will put out a federal register notice to communicate our findings if we find something objectionable,

Adani commissions world's largest single-location battery storage outside China

GNS News Agency, June 1

Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), India's largest renewable energy company, has commissioned a cumulative 3.37 Gigawatt-hour (GWh) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), the world's largest single-location battery storage deployment outside China. The deployment includes the 1.37 GWh capacity commissioned in March 2026, taking AGEL's total operational BESS capacity at Khavda, Gujarat to 3.37 GWh. The project was delivered within just 10 months of commencement of on-site construction, marking one of the fastest utility-scale battery storage deployments globally, AGEL said. China's biggest battery energy storage system — and currently the world's largest single-site electrochemical battery storage facility — is the Envision Energy Jingyi Chagan Hada Energy Storage Power Station in Inner Mongolia with a capacity of 4 GWh. The commissioning marks a major milestone in strengthening grid reliability, peak-hour supply and enabling renewable energy to deliver dependable, round-the-clock power at scale, it said in a statement. AGEL plans to add over 10 GWh of battery storage capacity in FY27 and scale this to 50 GWh over the next five years. "AGEL's 3.37 GWh BESS can store enough clean energy to power nearly one million homes for an entire day, supporting peak electricity demand of cities like Indore, Chandigarh or the entire state of Goa," it said. It can also power more than 12 million LED bulbs continuously for ten hours. This would be a game changer as battery storage will help keep renewable heavy grids stable and deliver green power round-the-clock. India's clean energy transition is entering a new phase, powered not just by renewable generation, but by reliable renewable



delivery. "Large-scale energy storage will play a defining role in the next phase of India's clean energy transition. As renewable energy capacity scales rapidly, storage infrastructure becomes critical for delivering reliable, round-the-clock clean power," Sagar Adani, Executive Director, AGEL, said. With the commissioning of the 3.37 GWh BESS at Khavda, AGEL is strengthening the foundation for resilient, dispatchable and flexible energy systems. "Our investments in battery storage reflect a long-term commitment to building future-ready clean energy infrastructure at global scale," Adani said. The BESS project integrates advanced energy management systems with lithium-ion battery technologies to optimise efficiency, reliability and grid responsiveness. AGEL's BESS project has been strategically located at Khavda, Gujarat to further strengthen the world's largest renewable energy plant where AGEL is developing 30 GW by 2029 of which 9.9 GW is already operational.

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 participants 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.

Sensex, Nifty end lower amid banking weakness and geopolitical tensions

Mumbai: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower in a volatile trading session on Wednesday as weakness in banking and financial stocks, coupled with geopolitical uncertainties surrounding the US-Iran situation, kept investors cautious.

The 30-share Sensex slipped 141.90 points, or 0.19 per cent, to settle at 75,867.80. The index had opened on a positive note but lost momentum as the day progressed.

India and Canada push for year-end free trade deal



Washington/Ottawa: India and Canada have signalled a rapid reset in bilateral ties, with leaders from both countries expressing optimism about concluding a long-pending free trade agreement by the end of this year while sharply expanding trade, investment and business cooperation. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said negotiations on a free trade agreement with India would be "a game changer for Canadian workers and businesses". "We're negotiating a free trade deal with India. This will be a game changer for Canadian workers and businesses — unlocking a massive new market," Carney wrote on social media on Monday (local time) after meeting Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal in Ottawa. Carney said both sides reviewed progress in negotiations and explored opportunities in "energy, agri-food, tech, and education".

Goyal, who is leading what Canadian officials described as the largest-ever Indian business delegation to Canada, said he conveyed "warm greetings" from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Carney and recalled the Canadian leader's recent visit to India. "His recent visit to India has imparted

fresh momentum and renewed confidence to the India-Canada partnership," Goyal said. He said both countries held "forward-looking discussions on further deepening bilateral cooperation" and expressed optimism over an early conclusion of the India-Canada Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

In a joint media address in Ottawa, Canada's International Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu said both countries were moving quickly to conclude the agreement. "We promised Canadians that we'd be moving fast," Sidhu said, adding that two rounds of negotiations had already been completed. He said Canada wanted to diversify trade ties and unlock "roughly \$300 billion of additional non-US exports". Goyal described the relationship as "being reset very, very rapidly". "It has set in motion the pathway to a complete overhaul of this relationship, setting new agendas, new goals in mission mode," he said. The minister said the two Prime Ministers had tasked negotiators with completing "the free trade agreement with a comprehensive outlook before the end of this year or earlier". He added that both countries aimed to sharply raise bilateral trade by 2030. "We feel empowered to be able to make rapid progress to deliver results not only to businesses, but to the people of both countries," Goyal said. During his visit, Goyal also met Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand, Agriculture Minister Heath MacDonald and Sidhu to discuss trade, food security, agri-tech, sustainability, technology and investment cooperation. Anand said she discussed "strengthening and expanding our trade relationship to create new opportunities for businesses, workers, and investors in both our countries". Sidhu said India was "one of the world's fastest-growing major economies" and strengthening ties with New Delhi was central to delivering economic results for Canadians.

New FDA-approved eye drop promises to reduce dependence on glasses: Does it work?

If you have started holding your phone farther away, struggling with restaurant menus, or relying on reading glasses, a newly-approved eye drop is drawing attention. Called VIZZ, the once-daily prescription eye drop was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2025 for adults with presbyopia, the age-related loss of near vision that affects most people as they grow older. The promise sounds appealing: one drop in each eye, once a day, with improved near vision kicking in within about 30 minutes and lasting for several hours. But can it really replace reading glasses? Doctors say not so fast. Dr Poninder Kumar Dogra, Senior Consultant — Ophthalmology & Vitreoretina, ShardaCare-Healthcity, tells indianexpress.com that since VIZZ is a recent US approval, "routine Indian clinical exposure" to this specific acedilide formulation is still limited. "These eye drops may help some people reduce their dependence on reading glasses for a few hours, especially in mild to moderate presbyopia. However, saying they can completely replace reading glasses for everyone would be an exaggeration," he further explains.

How do these drops work?

Eye drops Many patients may still need reading glasses for fine print, prolonged reading, poor lighting or when the effect wears off (Image: Pexels) Presbyopia happens because the eye's natural lens gradually becomes less flexible with age, making it harder to focus on nearby objects. Unlike reading glasses, which correct this optically, VIZZ works differently. Dr Sharoon Shitole, Consultant Ophthalmologist and Managing Director, Vencer Hospital Pune, explains: "When the pupil becomes smaller, scattered light is reduced and the eye gets a greater depth of focus. This allows near objects to appear clearer without changing the ageing lens itself." Think of it like the effect of squinting — narrowing how light enters the eye can temporarily sharpen near focus. Or as Dr Dogra suggests, think of it as the "pin-hole camera" effect.

Who is most likely to benefit?

The drops may work best for adults in the earlier stages of presbyopia, especially those in their 40s or early 50s who



only need occasional help with near tasks. "Reducing dependence is realistic; eliminating reading glasses completely is not realistic for most patients," says Dr Shitole. That means someone checking their phone, reading a menu, or scanning shopping labels may benefit more than a person doing prolonged close work, detailed reading, stitching, or screen-heavy tasks. People with advanced presbyopia, cataracts, significant refractive errors, retinal disease, or other eye conditions may still need glasses.

Are there downsides?

Yes. Since the drops make the pupil smaller, less light enters the eye, which can make dim environments more challenging. According to Dr Dogra, some users may experience "headache, eye redness, blurred vision, eye strain, and difficulty seeing in dim light." Dr Shitole also cautions that sudden flashes, floaters, or unexpected vision loss after using such drops need urgent medical evaluation. Experts stress that these are not convenience drops to use casually. A proper ophthalmic examination is important before trying them, especially for people with glaucoma risk, high myopia, cataracts, retinal disease, or night-vision demands. For now, VIZZ appears to be a promising option for selected patients looking to temporarily reduce dependence on reading glasses — not a universal replacement.

Stylist reveals vision behind Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's Cannes looks: 'Remember her legend'

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan once again proved that she is the undisputed queen of Cannes. During the 79th International Film Festival, the Devdas actor chose a mix of structured and fluid couture silhouettes to grace the red carpet, attend movie premieres and media events. For the Light on Women's Worth Gala, she slipped into a powder pink draping that "flows into a chiffon cape," from Sophie Couture — featuring floral jewellery appliqué. According to the brand's official website, Aishwarya's dress costs USD 3700 (approximately Rs 3.5 lakh). Styled by Mohit Rai, Aishwarya wore her hair in side-parted soft curls, and kept her makeup minimal: a hint of eyeliner, blushed cheeks, and a touch of pink on her lips. The look was accessorised with sleek diamond danglers and rings.

In an interaction, Rai — who curated all of her Cannes appearances this year — spoke about the vision behind the red carpet looks. Breaking down the creative direction behind the Sophie Couture pink gown — which went on to become one of her most discussed appearances, he also reflected on shaping a Cannes wardrobe for a global icon. "For us, the most important thing was to remember her legend and keep that in mind constantly through every look, deliver that messaging through every look. Something timeless, beautiful, iconic and legendary. Not something that



is essentially screaming constantly for attention but just effortlessly glamorous and beautiful," he said. Aishwarya's red carpet appearances come with significant cultural memory, and keeping up with the expectations every year is no easy task. Rai believes what works best is blocking out the noise and focusing on the task at hand, which in this case, was "one of the most watched moments on the red carpet" this year in India. "You have a beautiful muse and subject, so just deliver the authenticity of the couture that she stands for, without necessarily being bothered by the noise," he told Luxurious.

Divyanka Tripathi, Vivek Dahiya welcome twin baby boys

Mumbai: Television's beloved couple, Divyanka Tripathi Dahiya and Vivek Dahiya, are on cloud nine as they welcome their twin baby boys. The couple who embraced parenthood for the first time in the last 10 years of their marital bliss, took to social media to announce the good news. Sharing an animated picture announcement, Vivek wrote, "The wait is finally over... 'The Boys' are here and life already feels more beautiful than we ever imagined. Mere Karan Arjun aa gaye! Need all your love and blessings as Div and I begin this incredible new chapter of parenthood. #Divek #babyboys #DivekBabies #twins #newparents"

The announcement post read, "We asked for happiness... God said, 'Take double.' Blessed with twin baby

boys." The dreamy announcement graphic featured two baby boys dressed in matching blue knitted outfits, sitting amidst clouds and stars, perfectly capturing the joy and warmth of the special moment. Just a night before, Vivek Dahiya and Divyanka Tripathi were seen having a gala time at their sweet date night. Vivek had taken to his social media account to share a beautiful picture with his pregnant wife and captioned it as, "A date to remember..." In the picture, Vivek was seen holding Divyanka close to him as the actress smiled for the camera. For the uninitiated, Divyanka Tripathi and Vivek Dahiya announced their pregnancy on the 19th of March on the auspicious occasion of Gudi Padma.

Remembering Randhir Singh: Shooter, royal and architect of Indian sport



GNS News Agency, June 1

Born in Patiala on October 18, 1946, he belonged to a family where sport was an inheritance. His uncle, Maharaja Yadavindra Singh, played Test cricket for India; his father, Raja Bhalindra Singh, also played first-class cricket for Cambridge and was an International Olympic Committee (IOC) member from 1947 to 1992. Randhir, who graduated from Delhi's St Stephen's College, made shooting his arena. Randhir was among India's earliest international regulars. He represented India at five Olympics — Mexico 1968, Munich 1972, Montreal 1976, Moscow 1980 and Los Angeles 1984 — after being a reserve shooter at Tokyo 1964. His finest hour came at the 1978 Bangkok Asian Games, where he won trap gold, becoming the first Indian shooter to win an Asian Games gold medal.

Years later, Randhir recalled the closing moments of that Bangkok final with amusement. He had built such a commanding lead that members of the Indian contingent and reporters began celebrating before the event was over. The noise distracted him, he missed a target, and he snapped at them: "Keep quiet. Let me finish at least." He added bronze in individual trap and silver in team trap at the 1982 Delhi Asian Games, and competed at four Asian Games in all, his last being Hiroshima 1994. By then, he had already crossed into administration, the sphere where his influence would become far greater. Randhir became IOA joint secretary in 1984 and served as IOA secretary general from 1987 to 2012 — a remarkable 25-year run during which Indian sport lurched through political battles, Olympic suspensions, administrative infighting and globalisation. He was also secretary general of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) from 1991 to 2015, later becoming acting president in 2021 and, in 2024, the first Indian elected president of the OCA.

His rise mirrored the arc of Indian sport itself. His father, Raja Bhalindra Singh, had helped bring the 1982 Asian Games to Delhi; the son became one of the key Indian figures in international Olympic diplomacy during the decades that followed economic liberalisation. Randhir mastered the

politics of federations, lobbying and continental alliances. Inside the IOA and OCA, Randhir developed a reputation as a consensus-builder who knew every corridor of Olympic politics, from Delhi to Lausanne to Kuwait. His longevity itself became a measure of his influence: few administrators survived as many changes in governments, federations and Olympic leaderships. Even critics acknowledged his extraordinary network within Asian sport. One of the defining stretches of his career came around the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi, when he emerged as one of India's principal sporting power-brokers internationally. And he was among the few who emerged from the CWG debacle with reputation intact. His authority at the continental level became evident in 2021, when Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah stepped aside as OCA president after legal troubles in Switzerland. Randhir was chosen acting president largely because he was seen as the organisation's senior-most institutional figure — the steady hand in a turbulent moment.

Away from shooting ranges and boardrooms, Randhir retained traces of old Patiala in another enduring passion: food. He often spoke about how cooking and classical music formed the rhythm of evenings in the Patiala royal household. And he spoke passionately about the process of cooking itself — the royal household of Patiala, he once said, was a space where the men cooked, experimented and preserved recipes across generations. Randhir took particular pride in archiving that inheritance, and just before the pandemic began collecting more than 1,000 recipes from royal kitchens. The recipes ranged from multiple variations of pulaos and shammi kebabs to slow-cooked dum preparations, game meats and dishes influenced by Afghan, Mughal and colonial cuisines. The culinary project also offered a revealing glimpse into Randhir himself. His friends in Indian sport often remembered him as a classic foodie and generous host who preferred long dinner-table conversations over formal meetings. In many ways, his administrative style reflected that world too — informal, relationship-driven and built as much on personal warmth as institutional authority. He was also unusual among Indian sports administrators in one important respect: he had truly been an athlete first. Before specialising in trap shooting, he played cricket in school and college, and later maintained interests in golf, squash and swimming. That background gave him credibility with competitors in a system often criticised for being dominated by career bureaucrats. In the end, Raja Randhir Singh became more than a shooter, more than an IOA official, even more than an OCA president. He became a bridge figure across eras — from princely India to professional sport, from shooting down clay targets to navigating Olympic boardrooms in Lausanne. Few Indians occupied so many layers of sport for so long, and fewer still carried that world with such effortless ease.

Prannoy turns table on World No 5 Jonatan Christie for first win over him since 2021

GNS News Agency, June 1

HS Prannoy hadn't defeated Top 5 regular, Indonesian Jonatan Christie since January of 2021. In fact he had only one win to show from his last 8 matches against the consistent Jojo since 2018. But top players — Jojo is World No 5 currently — have always known how dangerous the 33-year-old Indian can be. On Wednesday he defeated the Indonesian 10-21, 21-12, 21-18 with a typical Prannoying-playbook at the Super 750 Singapore Open.

In the Singapore Indoor Stadium which commentators call the 'Hairdryer arena' because of its bellicose drift, that maddens the shuttle flight, Prannoy showed what complete, cerebral badminton can be. His ranking hovers close to his age these days, it's No 35 this week. But the double-medallist from Thomas Cups, who has medals at World Championships, Asian Games, Asian Championships and the Malaysia Masters, took out Christie with a mix of psychological pressure and supreme racquet skills. It tends to get overlooked because Kidambi Srikanth's game was so elegant and Lakshya Sen's style is so electric, that Prannoy was one of India's earliest World Junior Championships medallists. He found even more renown because he pulled off Taufik Hidayat's backhand smash with some proficiency. 'Backhand beast' was alliterative. But Wednesday was about just how prolific Prannoy can be with other backhand strokes, not just the sensational looking smash. His first point itself had Prannoy scurrying to the net, poised to play a backhand push that ought to have gone cross — sending Jojo turning in that direction, but the shuttle went straight. It's a stroke that helped him beat Viktor Axelsen at his last World Championships. Only Prannoy could think of playing it first-up. Jojo was immediately jittery. Still, the Indonesian is a Top 5 staple for a reason. Equally an all-court player, he doesn't get fazed, and has the counters to anything opponents throw at him. So, Jojo calmly collected the first set 21-10. MS Dhoni's late charges in chases have many a fan in Indian badminton. But Prannoy really mixes Ali's rope-a-dope with Djokovic's fifth set resurrections quite routinely. Losing the first set to get a drift of the court — literally in that hyper-gravity wind chamber of Singapore, was the start of pure theatre in Round 1.

The backhand operated at all lengths. In the second set, Prannoy established an easy lead getting to 13-9 with a low pickup across host body, sending it arching over the net. A top view parabolic model of his loopy controlled strokes would resemble these fancy south east Asian cities with flyovers crisscrossing each other at different heights, when Tiger economies were still a new thing. But Prannoy's



variation is literally those flighted shuttles that boggle mid-air. He raised the lead to 15-10 in the second set, with a gentle backhand flick that curved for a drop close to the net. It is very difficult to confuse Jojo, is one of the better anticipators on the circuit, but a fit Prannoy did it repeatedly to take the second 21-12. Having pushed the decider, he got into the third, with a totally different game mode: he cut all the air on the shuttle, and switched to flat fast.

Controlling the drift and taming the shuttle in gusty conditions involves the ability to change your game every few minutes. This isn't just Plan B, but C, D, E, accounting for side drift, change of ends, and general theme of keeping opponents guessing. Prannoy continuously fell back, but by the end of it, Jojo would've prayed to not take the lead, because the Indian's response was scalding. 9-10 down, he played yet another low block from the backhand that skimmed the line. It is impossible to nail those unless your shuttle control is honed for years. Down 14-15, Prannoy simply upped the gear, knowing Jojo would come under pressure and used short smashes striking from high to mess with his defense. Still, the Indonesian pulled things back and took a 18-16 lead. Many a rival have regretted believing an ageing, tired, visibly panting Prannoy will wilt from 3 points away from their wins. He doesn't. He tugged back the shuttle, as if he had it on a leash, completely bogging Jojo in the next 4 points to upturn it to a 20-16 lead. Body smashes angled into the Indonesian had done the trick too — cramping his defense is the shot quality Prannoy possesses. But after the fast almost-doubles like exchanges, with two match points, Prannoy brought out the swaggering smash — full-blooded, forehand crosscourt, burying Jojo's hopes. Then he roared — avenging the Swiss Open title Jojo had cost him.

Ashwin backs Rajat Patidar for India comeback: 'Right up there'

Former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin believes it is time for Rajat Patidar to return to the national setup after the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) captain's exploits in the Qualifier 1 in Dharamsala on Tuesday. Patidar once again rose to the occasion in a big game, smashing 93 off just 33 balls against Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 1 to power RCB to a massive 254/4 and a place in the IPL final. Speaking on his YouTube channel after the match, Ashwin said Patidar's performances could no longer be ignored.

"There must be a discussion. If it doesn't happen, then something is wrong. Rajat Patidar played an important knock, but this is not the first time; he has a great record in Qualifiers," Ashwin said. Ashwin admitted the competition for places in India's batting line-up remains intense, but felt Patidar had now pushed himself firmly into contention with his performances and leadership this season.

"Before this knock, Shreyas Iyer was a little ahead of Rajat Patidar. But after today's knock, Rajat Patidar is right up there. We all know how Rajat Patidar plays spinners, but today, he did well against the fast bowlers as well. It was surprising that no GT bowler tested him with the bouncer," he said. Ashwin also pointed to the added weight of Patidar leading RCB deep into the tournament. "If Shreyas Iyer's amazing form coincided with PBKS making it to the playoffs, [it would have been ideal]. I still think Shreyas Iyer is in contention, but if, by captaining RCB and reaching the final with such a knock, who knows, he might defend the title as well, then it is important to talk about him. Not just talk, it is important to give him a chance," Ashwin added. Patidar has already represented India in international cricket, having played three Tests and one ODI. However, the 32-year-old has been out of the national setup since February 2024, when he last featured against England in Ranchi.

Veteran sports administrator, multiple Asian Games medallist Raja Randhir Singh passes away



Five time Olympian, veteran administrator and Arjuna Awardee shooter Raja Randhir Singh passed away on the Wednesday morning in New Delhi. He was 80. "He had a brain stroke earlier and could not recover. He died this morning at about 10.30am in Delhi. The cremation will be held at Haridwar tomorrow. It's a huge loss for shooting and the Olympic movement. We were together in Indian trap team for more than 20 years and our friendship completed 50 years this year," Gurbir Singh Sandhu, former president, Punjab Shooting Association, and father of Former world champion Manavjit Sandhu told Born in the Royal family of Patiala, Randhir had a distinguished shooting career and was the first Indian shooter to win gold at the Asian Games after claiming the top position in the trap event. While he was

competing as a shooter, he forayed into sports administration and became the Secretary General of the Olympic Council of Asia. During his last international competition in 1994, he became the first person to compete in the Asian Games while being an office bearer in a continental sports organisation.

Apart from OCA, Randhir held different positions positions at the International Olympic Committee, Indian Olympic Association, World Anti-Doping Agency, making him one of the most recognised Indian sports administrators worldwide. He also served as the vice chairman of 2010 Commonwealth Games in India and became the first Indian to preside over the Olympic Council of Asia in 2024. "A distinguished Olympian, Arjuna Awardee, and one of the most respected sports administrators in India, Asia, and the International Olympic Committee, Raja Randhir Singh, made invaluable contributions to the development of shooting sports and the Olympic movement. The National Rifle Association of India and the entire shooting fraternity mourn this irreparable loss and extend heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones. May his noble soul rest in eternal peace," the National Rifle Association of India wrote on their website. He is survived by his wife Vinita Singh and three daughters: Mahima Kumari, Sunaina Kumari and Rajeshwari Kumari. Sunaina has served as Vice President of IOA in the past while Rajeshwari is an Asian Games medallist in shooting.

Days after prize money protest, Sabalenka wears jewellery worth Rs 97 lakh on court



World No.1 Aryna Sabalenka walked onto court at Roland Garros wearing jewellery valued at more than £75,000 (approx Rs 97 lakh) — just days after joining leading players in pushing for a larger share of Grand Slam revenues and improved prize money distribution for lower-ranked professionals. The Belarusian, who opened her French Open campaign with a straight-sets win over Spain's Jessica Bouzas Maneiro, sported diamond-and-garnet necklaces and earrings reportedly supplied by New York luxury jeweller Material Good. The jewellery was worth more than the prize money earned by players who exited in the first round.

Telegraph Sport reported 'it has provided three necklaces and a pair of earrings worth a total of \$148,000 for the tournament'. "Sabalenka elected not to wear the third necklace on court yesterday (Tuesday). The jewellery, which has been designed to coordinate with the Belarusian's black-and-red Nike dress, includes over 200 carats of garnets and 23 carats of diamonds," the daily reported. The timing

drew attention because the jewellery worn on court was worth more than the prize money earned by Bouzas Maneiro for her first-round exit. Sabalenka, however, rejected suggestions of hypocrisy, insisting the campaign around prize money was aimed at helping players further down the rankings rather than enriching the sport's elite. When asked about the decision to wear jewellery worth more than the amount first-round losers received as prize money, Sabalenka was quoted as saying by The Telegraph: "I don't really see how it can be possible to, like, cross these two completely different worlds. As I said before, prize money, it's not about me at all. It's just fighting for players, lower-ranked players, who are really struggling to survive in this tennis world."

Earlier this week, the top men's and women's players collectively shortened their pre-tournament media commitments in what was seen as a symbolic protest over revenue sharing at the French Open. The current prize pool distributed by the French Tennis Federation is understood to be below 15 per cent of tournament revenues, while players are reportedly pushing for a figure closer to 22 per cent. Sabalenka argued that lower-ranked players face mounting financial pressure despite tennis' booming commercial success. Britain's Francesca Jones also highlighted the issue recently, saying many players outside the top tier struggle merely to break even after covering travel, coaching and support costs. Sabalenka, a three-time Grand Slam champion, said fashion and presentation remain important parts of her on-court identity. She explained that feeling confident in her appearance often helps her performance, adding that she enjoys bringing "a little bit of fashion" to the court by coordinating jewellery with her outfits.

Glenn Phillips slams reporter's question on GT's mentality after RCB's 254 score

Gujarat Titans all-rounder Glenn Phillips was entrusted with facing the media after his team's harrowing defeat to Royal Challengers Bengaluru, despite not featuring in the high-stakes contest at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala on Tuesday night. The Kiwi star had to confront a variety of questions, of which a particular query left him fuming. When quizzed if RCB's Playoffs record score of 254 for five had already left the Gujarat players resigned back in the dressing room during the mid-innings break, Phillips gave a sharp retort to the reporter, striking down the question as "silly and terrible".

Gujarat's stacked bowling attack was buried under a mountain of runs piled on by Rajat Patidar's unbeaten 93 and a string of strong cameos from Krunal Pandya, Virat Kohli and Devdutt Padikkal. "That's a silly question. That is a really silly question. No one goes in there waiting to go, 'Oh, you know what? We're just going to give up on this one.' Why would we do that as professional cricketers?" That's a terrible question. We went out there, we gave it everything. Unfortunately, when you're trying to chase 250, everything has to go right. And we went out there to try and make everything go right, and obviously it didn't," responded Phillips.

In reply, the GT chase was undone within the Powerplay as Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Josh Hazlewood sent the GT top-order comprising captain Shubman Gill, Sai Sudharsan and Jos Buttler packing. Phillips admitted that the scoreboard pressure was immense while chasing totals north of 250. "There's a huge amount of scoreboard pressure when you're trying to chase 250. And, you know, very few teams have done it. Obviously, Punjab Kings have managed to do it a couple of times, which has been phe-



nomenal. And I think they've maybe made it seem easier than it is. I've yet to be part of a team that's gotten anywhere near 250, so, you know, sometimes it just is what it is," he said. Phillips was also left to waste past a question regarding his presence in the post-match press conference despite not featuring in the match. While he was listed as an Impact Sub option, GT had already four overseas players in the line-up. "No, that's fine, that's fine. It's all good. Yeah, obviously we're all part of the team together, and we all have equal media roles to play. I think sometimes an outside perspective from someone who isn't playing the game, especially for the guys that have to now go and play an Eliminator [helps]. It's really important for them to just knuckle down, get their heads where they need to be. Obviously, we've played a lot of good cricket leading up to now, so for the boys that are on the park, you know, do what they have to do to make sure they're ready for the next game. As Ash [Ashish Nehra] says, 'chill pill,' make sure they're ready for the next one," he added.

India to play two friendlies against Tajikistan during June FIFA window

GNS News Agency, June 1 The Indian men's national team will play two friendly matches against Tajikistan away from home on June 5 and 9 in Hisor during the FIFA international match window, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said on Tuesday. The matches will happen in Hisor, a city 15km west of national capital Dushanbe where India had played in the Central Asian Football Association (CAFA) Nations Cup last year. India are currently in London to participate in the Unity Cup 2026. India will be facing Jamaica on Wednesday. Based on the result of the match, India will either play the final or the third-place playoff against either Nigeria or Zimbabwe. With India failing to qualify for the 2027 Asian Cup, they will be making do with playing friendly matches until the start of the next tournament cycle next year.

India will leave for Tajikistan from London on May 31. Both matches will take place at the Hisor Central Stadium, which was also India's venue for the CAFA Nations Cup.

The tournament was India's first under current head coach Khalid Jamil and they started off with a surprise 2-1 win over Tajikistan, who are currently ranked 33 places above India in the FIFA standings for international football. They went on to stage another surprise by finishing third despite being the second lowest ranked team in the tournament. India went past the group stage with a win, a draw and a defeat. They qualified for the third-place playoff in which the beat Oman in a tense penalty shootout 3-2 after the match itself ended 1-1 after extra time.

However, any positivity from the result was short-lived as India then lost 1-2 to Singapore in Goa in a decisive AFC Asian Cup qualifier, which confirmed their failure to qualify for the continental tournament. They had qualified for the last two editions of the tournament, making the first time in 10 years that India won't be appearing at the Asian Cup.

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



GNS News Agency, June 1

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

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 at Bay Counsel LLP, 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

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.



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 a kill fee clause, which is a stipulated sum the actor commits to pay the production house on voluntary exit. "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?

'It will destroy you': Shah Rukh, Akshay's warning to Honey Singh about his drug abuse



Yo Yo Honey Singh has opened up about the emotional emptiness he experienced even at the peak of his fame, admitting that despite becoming one of India's biggest music stars, he was deeply unhappy from within. During a conversation on the ABTalks podcast, the singer looked back at the height of his popularity in the early 2010s, and admitted that success never truly brought him peace. "Even when I was successful, when I became Yo Yo Honey Singh, it was crazy days in India if you see, 13 years back. Still, I was broken from inside. I don't know why. I was in darkness. I was not enlightened. Now I feel enlightened," he said. "I used to call myself God"

Honey Singh further admitted that during the peak of his fame between 2011 and 2014, he had completely lost himself in success, money, and substance abuse. "No, I was not happy. I was at my peak in 2013 and 2014. I was not in my senses. My ideology was different at that time. When I made it, I used to walk differently, talk differently, and disrespect everyone. I used to think that I did it all. I even used to call myself God. I was making money and getting successful at a very young age, and while doing that, I was also doing drugs. I was in a very demonic state of mind. I didn't like that version of myself." The singer also rejected the idea that fame or the entertainment industry itself was responsible for his downfall. Instead, he blamed his own actions and mindset. "I don't blame music or fame for this, I blame myself. I think there is no dark side to music and fame. If you are dark inside, you will spoil your life no matter where you are — not just in music and fame, but in anything."

Honey Singh also spoke warmly about some of the biggest stars he worked with during his rise, including Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Salman Khan, and Akshay Kumar. "I don't want to blame the entertainment industry for anything. I got the chance to share screen space with legends and have personal access to their lives at a very young age. People like Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan,

Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar — they are such simple people, there is no darkness in them." According to Honey Singh, several stars had repeatedly warned him about his lifestyle and addictions.

"They used to observe me and tell me to stay away from what I was doing because it was wrong. Especially Shah Rukh Khan and Akshay Kumar. Shah Rukh Khan told me many times, 'This is going to spoil you, finish you, and destroy you.'" Honey Singh on divorce, loneliness and losing friends. The singer also spoke about his divorce and why he eventually became comfortable with loneliness after his illness. "You are alone, you have to be alone. My first marriage and divorce were a different case. When I got sick, she was there in the same house. But when I decided to move out, we had conflicts and got separated."

Honey Singh said his years of isolation changed the way he looked at relationships and attachment. "Since then, I felt that I have to be alone, and now I love being alone because you came alone and you will go alone. I am in a state right now that even if everyone leaves me, including people without whom I thought I could never live, I will still be okay. I am prepared for it because I have already seen the trailer for seven years." Recalling how people disappeared from his life during his lowest phase, Honey Singh said only one childhood friend stayed by his side.

"When I was Yo Yo Honey Singh, 40 boys and friends used to walk with me everywhere. There was always a huge entourage. But when I got sick, everyone left. Only one childhood friend stayed. Now after my comeback, everybody is coming back, but I have realised that ultimately I have to be alone." Honey Singh calls Mahesh Bhatt "the greatest philosopher". The singer also shared his unconventional views on books and philosophy, revealing that he prefers learning directly from conversations rather than reading. "I have never read any book in my life. I don't believe in reading somebody else's ideology or thinking which has been edited so many times. I want to meet people and understand their ideology through conversations, not books." He further revealed that filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt is among the people he admires the most intellectually.

At the peak of his fame, Honey Singh enjoyed massive popularity and worked with several leading Bollywood stars before suddenly disappearing from public life due to mental health struggles and substance abuse issues. The singer was married to Shalini Talwar, but the couple later separated and officially divorced in 2023 following legal disputes and allegations made during their separation. Disclaimer: This article discusses personal experiences with mental health struggles, isolation, and substance abuse. If you or someone you know is going through a difficult time, experiencing emotional distress, or struggling with mental health challenges, please know that support is available and you do not have to carry it alone. Seeking professional guidance is a crucial step toward recovery and well-being.

Perfect Crown row explained: Why IU, Byeon Woo-seok's hit K-drama faces suspension



A petition demanding the removal of *Perfect Crown* from all streaming platforms has crossed 52,000 signatures, formally triggering a National Assembly review of the historical distortion controversy surrounding IU and Byeon Woo-seok's hit drama.

It had all the ingredients for a successful Korean drama. *Perfect Crown*, starring IU and Byeon Woo-seok, aired on MBC in the first half of 2026 and drew some of the strongest ratings a Korean drama has seen this year. Its final episode, which aired on May 16, recorded a nationwide rating of 13.8 percent, marking a series high. Fans were invested, the cast was celebrated, and the show had clearly connected with a large audience. Then the controversy arrived, and it had nothing to do with the performances or the storyline. It had to do with a crown and a chant, and what both of those things meant to Korean viewers who knew their history.

Within days of the backlash erupting, the director had issued a public apology, a pop-up store tied to the drama had been cut short, the script book publisher was revising disputed terminology, and the production was facing the possibility of having to return the government funding it had already received. For a show that had just finished on a ratings high, it was a remarkably swift and serious unravelling.

What went wrong with *Perfect Crown*?

Perfect Crown is set in a fictional version of present-day South Korea where a constitutional monarchy still exists and the Joseon royal family never dissolved. Byeon Woo-seok plays Grand Prince I-an, who ascends the throne in the course of the story, while IU stars alongside him. The premise required the production to build an entire royal world from scratch, filling it with costumes, rituals, and ceremonial language. The choices they made in doing so became the problem. The backlash focused on two specific moments from the coronation sequence, both of which carried historical weight that a significant portion of the audience immediately recognised. The first was the headgear. Byeon Woo-seok's character was shown wearing a guryu

myeonryugwan during his coronation, a form of royal headgear which critics noted was historically associated with subordinate kings within the traditional East Asian tributary order. Sovereign rulers such as Chinese emperors were typically represented with a sibi myeonryugwan featuring 12 strands of jade beads, while the nine-stranded guryu version was associated with kings of tributary states acknowledging imperial authority. The king of a fictional independent Korea, in other words, was crowned wearing the headgear historically worn by rulers who answered to a higher power.

The second was a chant. During the coronation, court officials proclaimed "Cheonse," meaning "Long live for a thousand years," a phrase historically linked to vassal states, rather than "Manse," meaning "Long live for ten thousand years," which has traditionally been used to signify an independent sovereign ruler.

Why this struck such a nerve. This is not a matter of pedantic historical correction. Viewers argued that although the story is set in a fictional 21st-century Korea, the production overlooked how modern audiences might interpret its depiction of Joseon court traditions linked to the East Asian tributary system. For many viewers, these ceremonial elements recalled a historical hierarchy in which Korea appeared subordinate, rather than reinforcing an image of a fully sovereign and independent nation. Korea's relationship with imperial China is not a subject Koreans take lightly, particularly when it comes to questions of sovereignty and how the country has been historically represented. Put that into a primetime drama with a massive domestic audience and an international streaming reach, and the response was always going to be strong. Director Park Jun-hwa issued a public apology after the backlash escalated. In a statement posted on the production's official website, the creators said, "We sincerely bow our heads in apology to the many viewers who have supported the drama with affection for the concerns caused by issues surrounding the worldbuilding and historical accuracy." He further added, "Without any room for excuses, I, representing the production team, bear the greatest responsibility. I apologize to all viewers. Personally, I feel sorry for the actors who have worked hard to create this drama, as I caused them hardship rather than rewarding their efforts. I offer my deepest apologies." The petition that changed everything. A public petition demanding that MBC pull *Perfect Crown* off air and remove it from all streaming and video-on-demand platforms has crossed the 50,000-signature mark, the number required under South Korean law for the matter to be taken up by the National Assembly. Filed on the Assembly's online petition platform, the petition had collected 52,344 signatures as of Tuesday afternoon. The petition accuses *Perfect Crown* of drawing heavily on Chinese-style costumes, ceremonial language, and court etiquette, and argues that in doing so, the drama reinforces historical narratives associated with China's Northeast Project, a state-funded academic programme that has long been criticised for appropriating Korean history and culture. Beyond calling for the drama to be taken off air, the petitioner is asking for all related content to be scrubbed from domestic and international platforms. The petition also pushes for systemic change, urging authorities to put in place permanent measures that would prevent similar productions from being broadcast or distributed in the future. Under National Assembly rules, any petition posted on the official platform that gathers more than 50,000 signatures within 30 days is accepted as a formal public consent petition and referred to a standing committee under the relevant provisions of the National Assembly Act and the Assembly's petition review rules.