

## TG EAPCET mock allotment leaves 8,740 students without seats

Hyderabad: The Telangana Engineering, Agriculture and Pharmacy Common Entrance Test (TG EAPCET) engineering mock allotment on Saturday left 8,740 students without seats, while the same number of seats remained vacant. These students could not be allotted a seat as they exercised a limited number of web options. The mock seat allotment details released by the Technical Education department reveal that 88,062 students exercised web options for seat allotment from among 88,053 seats in 175 colleges. As many as 79,313 seats were allotted, leaving 8,740 vacant.

## Revanth, On 20th Political Birthday, Wants Rahul As PM

Hyderabad: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Saturday said that having risen from the position of a zilla parishad member to being Chief Minister within 20 years, that his next political mission was to make Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Prime Minister in the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing a thanksgiving meeting at Midjil in Mahbubnagar district, where he was first elected on July 4, 2006 as an independent ZPTC member from Midjil. Thanking the people for their unwavering support from his first electoral victory to becoming Chief Minister in December 2023, he said Midjil had given him his political birth.

Expressing confidence that the Congress would remain in power in Telangana until 2034, Revanth appealed to the people to ensure the party's victory in the next Assembly elections and to support the Congress in the 2029 Lok Sabha polls. He said making Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister was a historic necessity for the country and urged the people of Telangana to support the Congress as a mark of gratitude to Sonia Gandhi for creating the state. "Walk with me and let us make Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister. The first step should begin from Midjil," he said.

Launching a scathing attack on BRS president and former chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, Revanth Reddy alleged that the previous BRS government had pushed Telangana into a debt burden of ₹8.21 lakh crore while the Kalvakuntla family amassed wealth worth nearly ₹1 lakh crore. He questioned what the BRS regime had delivered to the people despite incurring such massive borrowings.

The Chief Minister alleged that Chandrashekar Rao acquired a 100-acre farmhouse at Erravalli, BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao built a 100-acre farmhouse at Janwada, Siddipet MLA T. Harish Rao constructed a



50-acre farmhouse at Moinabad, and Kalvakuntla Kavitha a 25-acre farmhouse at Shankarpally during the BRS regime. He questioned what businesses the family had undertaken to accumulate wealth running into thousands of crores while leaving Telangana heavily indebted.

Revanth Reddy questioned whether the BRS government had fulfilled its promises of providing double-bedroom houses, one government job for every family, three acres of land to Dalits or irrigation to one crore acres. He said the BRS government had failed to provide water, funds and jobs during its ten-year rule and asked why it deserved another term.

Alleging that BRS leaders wanted to return to power only because their avenues of corruption had been blocked, Revanth Reddy warned that if those who had "committed mistakes and piled up debts" returned to office, people would once again lose their freedom, alleging that the BRS regime had even resorted to phone tapping of ordinary citizens. He said Chandrashekar Rao would remain confined to his farmhouse and stated that the BRS should forget about returning to power.

## MHA designates Bengaluru techie, five other Indians among 23 as terrorists

Bengaluru, July 4

The Ministry of Home Affairs on Saturday designated 23 individuals based in Pakistan and associated with the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and other outfits as "terrorists" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Six Indians also figure on the list while the rest are Pakistanis. With the latest additions, the total number of individuals designated as terrorists under the UAPA has gone up to 80.

The prominent among those designated as "terrorists" are the close aides of Lashkar founder Hafiz Saeed, who has been behind multiple attacks in India. A 40-year-old Bengaluru engineer, Mohammed Shaheed Faisal, is among the six Indians, according to a notification issued by the MHA.

The 23 individuals — none is present in India — have been accused of roles ranging from recruitment, training, infiltration and logistics support to financing, arms supply, drone-based weapon delivery and planning or facilitating terrorist attacks.

Home Minister Amit Shah said, "Of the 23 designated terrorists, 17 are Pakistani nationals and six Indians. However, all of them are currently operating from Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir."

Faisal is residing in Pakistan's Rawalpindi and is associated with Lashkar and Jaish, the notification said. The MHA said he also had links with Al-Qaeda and IS modules.

Hailing from Yeshwanthapur in Bengaluru, Faisal has been accused of recruiting youths through social media, arranging weapons' training in Pakistan and raising funds for terror activities. "Faisal has been active in imparting training in the use of data encryption and fake identities to evade law enforcement agencies. He has also been involved in the delivery of weapons and ammunition, and conspiracies related to several terror incidents," the notification read.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has identified him as the "handler" of the terror module that carried out an IED explosion at the Rameshwaram Cafe in Bengaluru on March 1, 2024. Wanted by the NIA since 2012, Faisal carries a reward of Rs 10 lakh and is accused of handling three terror modules in Karnataka over the past 14 years.

Hafiz Saeed's close associates Abdul Rauf, Hafiz Khalid Waleed and Rana Ifthikhar are on the list.

Senior Jaish functionary Masood Ilyas Kashmiri, who operates from Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, too is on the list. So is Mohammad Mussadiq, alias Doctor, who handles the infiltration of Jaish's Pakistani terrorists into India. Both were involved in the April 22, 2022, attack on security forces in Suniwan (Jammu).

"Mussadiq is involved in carrying out a wide range of terrorist activities, including supplying arms and ammunition through drones from across the border, plan-

ning attacks in Jammu and Kashmir. He is also involved in handling a team of Jaish cyber operatives who use various social media platforms to recruit youth," the MHA said.

A third senior Jaish functionary designated as terrorist on Saturday is Mufti Muhammad Asghar Khan, alias Abu Saad, who is a "launching commander" of JeM terrorists in J&K and was one of the masterminds of the attack on the Indian Army camp at Nagrota (Jammu) on November 29, 2016.

The Centre had amended the UAPA in August 2019 to include a provision for designating an individual as a terrorist. Prior to this, only organisations could be designated as terrorist outfits. Designating individuals as terrorists allows agencies such as the NIA to impose an embargo on arms and funds and seize the assets of such persons.

The 80 designated terrorists include Hafiz Saeed, JeM chief Maulana Masood Azhar, 26/11 Mumbai attacks co-mastermind Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, fugitive underworld don Dawood Ibrahim and US-based Khalistani leader Gurbhant Singh Pannun.

## Telangana Police oppose bail plea of accused in POCSO case before High Court

Hyderabad: Telangana Police on Friday filed a counter-affidavit opposing a regular bail petition moved by accused Bandi Sai Bhageerath in a POCSO case pending before the Telangana High Court.

The counter was submitted in Criminal Petition No. 9986/2026 by Inspector K Vijayvardhan of the Pet-Bashirabad Police Station. Police said they registered Crime No. 684/2026 at Pet-Bashirabad Police Station and initially invoked Sections 74 and 75 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), along with Section 11 read with Section 12 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. According to the police complaint, the victim's mother approached the police station and the child underwent a medical (vaginal) examination on May 9, 2026. Police said education records establish the victim's age as 17 years. Given the nature of the allegations revealed by the medical report, investigators amended the charges by adding Section 5(l) read with Section 6 of the POCSO Act and Section 64(2)(m) of the BNS based on the evidence collected. The police counter states that the accused, Bandi Sai Bhageerath, developed a relationship with the victim, influenced her emotionally and repeatedly sexually assaulted her from 2025 onwards. Investigators told the court that the alleged offences took place at multiple locations, including Sriram Gardens near the victim's home and the Golf Edge apartments in Nanakramguda.

## Intoxicated man kills son at Kallur in Khammam

Khammam: A man who was under the influence of alcohol allegedly killed his son at Ambedkar Nagar in Kallur town of Khammam district.

According to police, an auto driver, Kothapalli Seetharamulu took his son, Kothapalli Kiran Kumar (30) to a nearby belt shop on Friday night and the two consumed liquor. Later, when they came home, an argument took place between them over an issue.

## India navigated energy crisis with minimal burden on citizens: PM

India successfully navigated one of the biggest global energy crises of the 21st century through proactive policies, diversified fuel sourcing and strong diplomatic engagement, while imposing only a "minimal burden" on citizens even as several major countries struggled, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday.

Some forces were busy spreading fear and playing political games, but "they must be wallowing in the depths of despair today", Modi said at a public meeting, asserting that India's handling of the situation would be remembered as an "unprecedented" chapter in history.

"The war in West Asia created the biggest energy crisis of the 21st century. Many powerful nations struggled with fuel shortages. India overcame this challenge because it took the right decisions at the right time, assessed the situation correctly, used its resources in a balanced manner and utilised its diplomatic strength positively," he said.

Modi, who dedicated the country's first greenfield integrated refinery-cum-petrochemical complex to the nation in Rajasthan's Balotra district, lauded officials and workers for restoring the project after a major fire broke out there on April 20, forcing the postponement of its scheduled inauguration the following day.

Addressing the gathering in Balotra, he said: "Thousands of people in the region will get employment because of this refinery. I especially congratulate the youth of Rajasthan on this project. Today is proof that BJP governments



do not merely lay foundation stones and abandon projects midway. We work tirelessly to ensure that such projects are completed."

The PM also blamed the previous Congress government in Rajasthan for delays in the Pachpadra refinery project. He said although an agreement for the project had been signed in 2017, progress slowed considerably between 2018 and 2023 when the Congress was in power in the state.

"Because of the Congress government's lack of cooperation, work on the project almost came to a standstill. After the double-engine government came to power, work gathered pace," Modi said.

Built at an investment of more than Rs 79,450 crore, the 9 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA) Greenfield Refinery-cum-Petrochemical Complex has been developed as a joint venture be-

tween Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited and the Rajasthan Government.

The project is expected to boost domestic fuel production, increase petrochemical output and generate employment in the region.

The plant has been designed to process both imported crude oil and locally produced crude from Rajasthan. Modi said India now enjoys greater flexibility in sourcing crude oil based on prevailing global market prices.

To secure crude feedstock and water supply, the complex is supported by an 800-km cross-country pipeline network connecting it to key locations, including Mundra, Palanpur, Mangla and Nachna.

The PM also claimed that the government prevented a sharp rise in domestic cooking gas prices despite global disruptions. According to him, the crisis could have pushed the

price of an LPG cylinder to nearly Rs 2,000, but government intervention ensured consumers continued to get cylinders for around Rs 950.

He further said oil marketing companies incurred losses of about Rs 75,000 crore on petrol and diesel between April and June, a burden borne by the government to shield citizens from soaring global fuel prices.

Meanwhile, former Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot dismissed Modi's remarks as "misleading" and claimed that 85 per cent of the project had been completed during the Congress government's tenure.

"It is unfortunate that the PM behaved like a BJP leader even during an official programme and made misleading statements at a government function," Gehlot said.

"These claims sound ridiculous. The PM should have spoken to people associated with the refinery project," the senior Congress leader added.

## Wife can seek court's help to access estranged husband's call details: SC

New Delhi, July 4

A wife can seek the help of a court to collect evidence such as call detail records (CDRs) and hotel booking details of her estranged husband to substantiate her charge of adultery against him in a matrimonial dispute, the Supreme Court said.

A Bench of Justice Manmohan and Justice K Vinod Chandran upheld the Delhi High Court's order requiring production of a man's CDRs and hotel booking records to establish a charge of adultery in a matrimonial dispute on the ground that it did not violate his right to privacy.

"Having heard learned counsel for the parties, this court is of the view that no interference is called for with the impugned judgment. Accordingly, the Civil Appeal along with pending applications is dismissed," the top court said in its July 2 order, dismissing a man's petition against the high court's order. On May 10, the high court had dismissed the husband's petition against a family court's December 14, 2022, order for production of records from a Jaipur



hotel where he had allegedly stayed with a woman and CDRs of his two mobile phone numbers.

Referring to the Supreme Court's verdict, the high court had said though the right to privacy was a constitutionally protected right, it's not an absolute right and it has to be necessarily subject to reasonable restrictions, especially those in public interest. When a wife sought the court's help for procuring evidence which

would go a long way to prove adultery on the part of her husband, the court must step in, the high court had said, adding "...this would be in consonance with Section 14 of the Family Courts Act, 1984, which gives a leeway to the court to consider evidence that may be not admissible or relevant under the Indian Evidence Act." According to Section 14 of the Family Courts Act, 1984, a family court may receive as evidence any report, state-

ment, documents, information or any other matter which it thinks may assist the court to deal with a dispute, whether or not the same would be otherwise relevant or admissible under the Indian Evidence Act. "The Hindu Marriage Act specifically recognises adultery as a ground for divorce and therefore, it would not at all be in public interest that the court should on the ground of right to privacy, come to the aid of a married man who, during the subsistence

# Indian Chronicle

## English Daily

### Welcome policy shift in India's nuclear power sector

The decision to permit private players in the nuclear power sector marks a decisive shift in India's energy policy. It is poised to enhance the country's long-term energy security and technological innovation. The announcement, made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, comes against the backdrop of the country's inability to substantially increase nuclear power output, a sector that remains under government control. The promise of massive additions to the installed capacity has continued to elude the Department of Atomic Energy since the 1980s, when it first set a target of 20,000 MW by 2000. For over six decades, the civilian nuclear sector has been the exclusive preserve of the state. Now, with the government preparing amendments to the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, private companies may finally be allowed a formal role in nuclear power generation. It is a reform whose time has come. Nuclear power, considered a clean, carbon-free source of energy, is crucial if India wants to decarbonise without slowing economic aspirations. The government's ambition to reach 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047 cannot be met by public investment alone. Allowing private participation could unlock capital, speed up project execution and bring in operational efficiencies that government entities often struggle to guarantee. Delays and cost overruns have plagued multiple reactor projects. Competition and accountability could help overcome those structural bottlenecks. A strategic opening may also make way for advanced technologies such as small modular reactors, potentially accelerating deployment and reducing upfront costs. While India has set a target of 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2070, the share of nuclear power is less than 3 per cent of its total installed capacity. This is because the nuclear industry has been a government monopoly, from uranium mining to power production. It is time for bold reforms in this sector to meet the target of a 10-fold increase by 2047 from the current capacity of 8.8 GW.

# Inline Hockey Development Camp Concludes Successfully

“Hyderabad, July 4: The Inline Hockey Development Camp, organized by the Telangana Roller Skating Association (TRSA) and hosted by the Vanasthalipuram Skating Academy, concluded successfully.”“The camp focused on preparing players for state and national-level competitions by providing specialized training in modern inline hockey skills, fitness, tactical gameplay, and team coordination.”“Speaking at the closing ceremony, TRSA President Rajagopal, the chief guest, encouraged the participants to practice with discipline and strive for excellence at the national and international levels.”“On the occasion, Indian team coach Nicola was felicitated by TRSA Additional Secretary V. Vitthal and Organizing Secretaries G. Ajay, Satyam, Yadaiah, and Srinu in recognition of his contribution to delivering training that met international standards.”“The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of skaters and their parents. Coach Nicola conducted intensive sessions covering technical skills in inline hockey, physical fitness, game strategies, and teamwork.”“Camp In-charge, TRSA representative, and Founder of Vanasthalipuram Skating Academy, Tanguturi Nagaraju, expressed his gratitude to the association officials, coaches, parents, and athletes for their support in making the camp a success.

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# Swami Vivekananda Youth President Erelli Ravinder Reddy Organises Grand 124th Death Anniversary Celebrations of Swami Vivekananda

## Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Attends as Chief Guest and Pays Floral Tributes



# MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Pays Floral Tributes to Alluri Sitarama Raju on His 129th Birth Anniversary



“UPPAL, JULY 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): On the occasion of the 129th birth anniversary celebrations of , floral tributes were paid to his statue located on the HB Colony Main Road under the Meerpet HB Colony Division on Saturday, July 4, 2026.”The tributes were offered by MLA along with former corporators Kotha Rama Rao, Jeripothula Prabhudas, Gundarapu Srinivas Reddy and Golluri Anjaiah.”Speaking on the occasion, the MLA described Alluri Sitarama Raju as a great and inspirational personality who firmly believed that India could achieve independence only through armed struggle. He stated that Alluri's fight against British rule remains a distinct and remarkable chapter in the Indian freedom movement.”He recalled that despite having limited resources and support from poor, illiterate and in-

# MSc Psychology Health Assistant Running Hospital, Pharmacy and Lab

## Where Are the Permissions? Who Is Playing with People's Lives?

“Khammam, Mudigonda July 4 Indian Chronicle:”“Mudigonda, Special Correspondent:”Is the healthcare system, which is meant to protect public health, being turned into a business by some individuals? Is an RMP crossing professional limits and acting as a one-man medical establishment, allegedly putting innocent people's lives at risk? A case that has surfaced in Mudigonda mandal headquarters has now become a topic of serious public discussion.”An RMP is reportedly using the title “Doctor” on his clinic board while displaying qualifications such as MSc Psychology and Health Assistant, allegedly promoting himself as a full-fledged medical practitioner. The same premises are said to be operating as a hospital, pharmacy, and laboratory, where blood tests, medicine distribution, and medical treatments are reportedly being provided.”According to local sources, after receiving information that officials were planning inspections, the operator allegedly locked the premises and became unavailable. This has raised several questions among residents. “If everything is being run according to the rules, why fear inspections?” locals ask.”One Person, Multiple Roles?”Residents allege that a single individual is functioning simultaneously as a doctor, pharmacist, laboratory technician, and psychology health assistant.”Under medical regulations, the role of an RMP is generally limited to providing primary healthcare assistance and first aid in emergency situations. However, allegations suggest that the individual has been prescribing medicines, selling them from the same premises, conducting blood tests, and even offering services resembling those of a mental health specialist.”What Does the Law Say?”Medical regulations prohibit RMPs from using the title “Doctor” before their names unless they possess the required qualifications and registrations. Running a hospital, laboratory, or pharmacy without the necessary government approvals is also prohibited. Promoting oneself as a specialist, conducting diagnostic tests without authorization, and prescribing

# PSwami Vivekananda Youth President Erelli Ravinder Reddy Organises Grand 124th Death Anniversary Celebrations of Swami Vivekananda



Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Attends as Chief Guest and Pays Floral Tributes

“UPPAL, JULY 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The 124th death anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with great reverence and enthusiasm at Chiluka Nagar Crossroads under the leadership of



nocent tribal followers, Alluri courageously confronted the mighty British Empire. The MLA noted that Alluri sacrificed his life for the cause of freedom at the young age of 27 on May 7, 1924, and remembered him as the revolutionary who kept the British administration under constant fear and pressure for nearly two years.”Among those who participated in the programme were local leaders Vanjari Praveen Karipe, Ullem Balaraju, Naveen Goud, Harinath Reddy, Gadiyaram Ramakrishna, Kumar, Sandeep Yadav, Shekhar Goud, Poosa Ramesh, Jaipal, Madhu Varma, DVSSN Raju, Jayaram Raju, Ramakrishna, Vasu Raju and several others.”[11:51 AM, 7/4/2026] +91 93911 09207: End



medicines beyond the permitted scope may constitute violations of applicable regulations.”Despite these restrictions, such establishments are reportedly operating openly, raising questions about regulatory oversight and enforcement.”Why the Silence from Authorities?”Local residents are demanding that the concerned departments immediately conduct a comprehensive investigation into the matter. They are calling for special inspections of hospitals, laboratories, and pharmacies operating without proper permissions and for strict action against those found violating the rules.”Public Health Must Come First”Healthcare is not merely a business—it is a responsibility that directly impacts human lives. Allowing unqualified or unauthorized individuals to handle medical treatment can pose serious risks to public health. Medical experts advise rural residents to seek treatment only from registered and recognized healthcare professionals to ensure their safety and well-being.

# Uppal MLA Bhandari Lakshma Reddy Lays Foundation Stones for Development Works Worth Rs 97 Lakh in Ramanthapur and Venkat Reddy Nagar Divisions

“UPPAL, JULY 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): With an objective of providing improved drinking water supply and better sewage infrastructure to the residents of the Uppal constituency, laid foundation stones for several development works worth a total of ₹97 lakh in the Venkat Reddy Nagar and Ramanthapur divisions.”The development works inaugurated on the occasion include the laying of a 100 mm diameter water pipeline in Nehru Nagar at a cost of ₹8 lakh, a 100 mm diameter water pipeline in



Balaji Nagar–Sriram Colony at a cost of ₹15 lakh, a 300 mm diameter sewerage line in Srinagar Colony costing ₹10 lakh, a 200 mm diameter sewerage line in Satyanagar with an expenditure of ₹24 lakh, and 300/ 200 mm diameter sewerage line works in Lakshmi Srikanth Nagar at an estimated cost of ₹40 lakh.”Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bhandari Lakshma Reddy stated that he is committed to ensuring the development of basic infrastructure in every colony of the constituency. He assured residents that all necessary measures would be taken to strengthen drinking water supply and sewage disposal systems to ensure a better quality of life and to address public grievances effectively.”Among those who participated in the programme were Water Works Manager , , a state leader of , along with party leaders, activists, and local residents.

# Telangana Girijana Samakhya Calls for Success of 3rd State Conference on July 18–19

“Khammam, July 4 Indian Chronicle:”“Telangana Girijana Samakhya State President Ajmeera Ramamurthy Naik has called upon tribal and Adivasi communities across the state to actively participate in and make the 3rd State Conference of Telangana Girijana Samakhya, scheduled to be held on July 18 and 19 at Palvoncha in Bhadradi Kothagudem district, a grand success.”The appeal was made during a district executive committee meeting of the Khammam unit of the Girijana Samakhya held on Saturday at the CPI district office, Giriprasad Bhavan, under the chairmanship of Banothu Rambabu Naik. District In-charge Mohammed Maulana and State President Ajmeera Ramamurthy Naik attended the meeting and addressed the gathering.”Speaking on the occasion, the leaders alleged that tribal and Adivasi regions continue to remain deprived of comprehensive development. They criticized

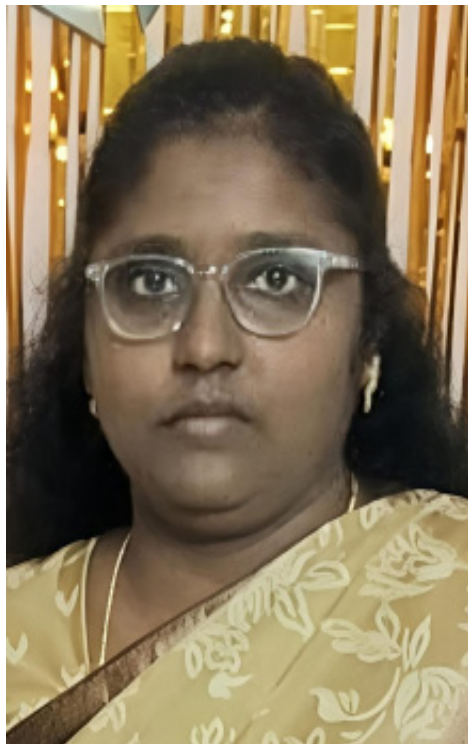


the Central Government for undermining tribal rights and accused the State Government of suppressing the interests of tribal communities. They urged tribal people to prepare for sustained struggles to safeguard their rights and secure social and economic justice.”The leaders demanded that land pattas be issued for surplus lands to eligible tribal beneficiaries. They also called upon the government to allocate budgetary funds for pending TRICOR loans sanctioned during the previous government and ensure that the benefits are credited directly to the accounts of eligible beneficiaries. Additionally, they demanded the allotment of Indiramma houses and house sites to deserving tribal families.”They stated that the upcoming state conference would focus on these and several other issues affecting tribal communities and



serve as a platform to strengthen future movements for the protection of tribal rights and welfare.”Among those present at the meeting were CPI Khammam District Assistant Secretary Jammula Jitender Reddy, Girijana Samakhya District Secretary Banothu Jagannadham, State Committee Member Banothu Bharat, District Executive Members Bhookya Narsimha, Dungrothu Shekhar, Kampa Amarayya, Gugulothu Srinu, Srikanth, and others

## Husband Murders Wife Over Suspicion, Absconds After Crime; Police Launch Investigation



“UPPAL, JULY (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Suspicion over his wife's character led to a tragic incident in a family, as a husband allegedly murdered his wife, who was working as a nurse in Tarnaka, and fled the scene. The incident, which occurred in Adarsh Nagar of Chilkanaigar under the limits of Uppal Police Station, created a sensation in the locality. “According to police, P. Suresh (41), a resident of Adarsh Nagar, Chilkanaigar, was working as a cab supervisor in Safilguda. His wife, P. Jessica (38), was employed as a nurse at a hospital in Tarnaka. The couple got married in 2015 and have a nine-year-old daughter. “Following the incident, based on a complaint lodged by the deceased woman's relative, police learned that Suresh had been suspecting Jessica's character and frequently quarrelled with her over the issue. In this background, he allegedly attacked and killed her on Saturday before fleeing from the spot, according to the complaint. “Upon receiving information, Uppal police immediately rushed to the scene and began collecting evidence. Police are currently investigating the case from all possible angles while efforts are underway to trace and apprehend the accused.

## 'Har Maa Ke Naam Pe Ek Ped' Plantation Drive Held at Fatehnagar

“Hyderabad, Fatehnagar: As part of the 'Har Maa Ke Naam Pe Ek Ped' campaign launched at the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a large-scale tree plantation drive was organized in Fatehnagar. “The programme was conducted under the leadership of senior BJP leader Kanchi Mahender and BJP Minority Morcha leader Nasir. BJP Minority Morcha State President Jagannathan Singh and State Vice President Shahjahan participated in the event. “On the occasion, the leaders visited the Arab Shah Baba Dargah in Fatehnagar and offered special prayers. They later planted saplings near the Fatehnagar Mosque, reaffirming their commitment to environmental conservation. “Addressing the gathering, the leaders said that protecting the environment is the responsibility of every citizen. They urged everyone to plant at least one tree and nurture it to ensure a cleaner and greener environment for future generations. They also appealed to the public to actively participate in the environmental conservation initiatives being undertaken by the Central Government.



## The Gift of Education is the Greatest Gift: Dr. Anita Reddy Supports Underprivileged Students



“Hanamkonda, July 4 (Indian Chronicle): Education is akin to service to the Divine, and poverty should never be a barrier to learning; this was stated by Dr. Anita Reddy, a member of the Kakatiya University Governing Council and Chairperson of the Anurag Helping Society. “On Saturday, under the aegis of the Anurag Helping Society, Dr. Anita Reddy distributed free notebooks to students residing at the Government Urban Destitute Orphanage and Street Children's Home in Shyampet, Hanamkonda. “Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Anita Reddy remarked that supporting the education of underprivileged students is a meaningful contribution towards achieving total literacy. She noted that her organization has been providing free books and covering educational fees for numerous economically disadvantaged students for many years. “She emphasized that education is key to personal, social, and economic development, and that helping a child receive an education

is equivalent to uplifting an entire family. Describing education as the greatest form of charity, she appealed to everyone to extend whatever assistance they could to children from poor families. “She advised students to cultivate good conduct alongside academic skills, to work towards their goals with discipline and proper planning, and to develop a genuine interest in their studies rather than viewing education as a burden. She explained that education not only imparts knowledge but also empowers individuals economically and enables them to achieve great success in life. She further emphasized that education should be accessible to every school-age child. “Principal Deep Prasanna Kumar, teacher Raghava, students, staff, and others participated in the event.

## Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj Completes Two and a Half Years of Service as Chilukanagar Congress Party President

“UPPAL, JULY 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj, who was appointed as the President of the Chilukanagar Division Congress Party under the guidance and blessings of Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy, has successfully completed two and a half years in the position. Speaking on the occasion, Rajesh Mudiraj stated that during his tenure he had worked tirelessly to strengthen the Congress Party at the grassroots level. He said that efforts were made to ensure that government welfare schemes reached the people and that public issues within the division were consistently brought to the attention of officials for their resolution. He further mentioned that with the guidance and suggestions of Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy, he was able to successfully discharge every responsibility entrusted to him by the party leadership. Rajesh Mudiraj expressed his special gratitude to Parameshwar Reddy for his constant support and encouragement throughout his political journey. He also thanked the division's senior leaders, party workers, supporters, and the people who continuously encouraged and stood by him during his tenure. He said the cooperation extended by the residents of the division in bringing public issues to his notice and supporting their resolution would always remain memorable. Rajesh Mudiraj expressed his commitment to continue working for the welfare of the people and the resolution of public issues in the coming days, while seeking the continued support and blessings of the public. “On this occasion, he met Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy and felicitated him with a shawl as a mark of respect and gratitude for providing him opportunities and encouragement. He also extended his best wishes to Mahender Mudiraj on his election as the new President of the Chilukanagar Division Congress Party. “Rajesh Mudiraj concluded by expressing his heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported and cooperated with him during his tenure.



## Vidya Pravesh Programme Launched at Kattukacharam School



“Khammam Nelakondapalli, July 4 Indian Chronicle: “The Vidya Pravesh programme was inaugurated on Saturday at Kattukacharam Primary School in Nelakondapalli mandal by Mandal Education Officer B. Chalapathi Rao. “Speaking on the occasion, the MEO said that the government has introduced the Vidya Pravesh programme to help children overcome their fear of school and develop an interest in learning through fun-filled and engaging activities. He stated that the programme will be implemented for 12 weeks with a range of specially designed activities. “He explained that special emphasis would be placed on the children's physical and mental development, social and emotional growth, health, and

hygiene. For the first three months, children will participate in indoor and outdoor games, drawing activities, clay modelling, storytelling, and other interactive learning methods without the burden of textbooks. “The MEO also appreciated teacher Itikyala Suresh for providing the necessary materials required for the successful implementation of the Vidya Pravesh programme. “Complex Headmaster Narender, School Headmaster Ramdas, teachers Kalyani, Suresh, Narayana, and others participated in the programme.

## BLOs Must Remain Vigilant to Prevent Deletion of Eligible Voters: Dayakar Reddy

“Khammam Nelakondapalli, July 4 Indian Chronicle: “Ministerial Camp Office In-charge Tumburu Dayakar Reddy has urged Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to remain vigilant during the SIR programme and ensure that no eligible voter is removed from the electoral rolls. “He was speaking during the inauguration of a newly shifted fair price shop in the SC and BC Colony of Nelakondapalli mandal on Saturday. The ration shop was relocated to the colony following a complaint submitted to State Revenue, Housing and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy by ward members Kodirekka Vinod and Manne Supraja regarding the inconvenience caused by the shop being located far from the colony. “Residents expressed their gratitude by performing a ceremonial milk and Panchamrutham abhishekam to the Minister's portrait. They also brought to his notice the acute drinking water shortage being faced by the colony. Dayakar Reddy informed them that a water tank costing ₹50 lakh had already been sanctioned and that the works would commence soon. “Later, he visited the local government school and interacted with staff regarding student strength and the issues faced by the institution. “Addressing the gathering, Dayakar Reddy stressed that all BLOs must actively participate in the SIR programme. He said that not a single eligible voter should be left out of the electoral rolls and called upon BLOs to meet every voter and create awareness about the programme. “Market Committee Chairman Vennapusala Seetharamulu, leaders Shakamuri Ramesh, Bachalakuri Nagaraju, Anjini, Boddu Bondaiah, Venkanna, Rayapudi Naveen, Pasupuleti Srilatha, Yadavalli Nagaraju, Manne Nareish, Kadiyala Nareish, Yedakondalu, Pasupuleti Upender, Nallani Mallikarjuna Rao, ward members Kodirekka Vinod and Manne Supraja, along with others, participated in the programme. “[5:10 PM, 7/4/2026] +91 96187 88997: End



## Action Sought Against CRPF Constable for Alleged Assault; Victims Demand Return of Rs 35 Lakh

“Khammam, July 4 Indian Chronicle: “Victims have appealed to the authorities to take action against CRPF constable Kelothu Ramesh, alleging that he assaulted them when they demanded repayment of money borrowed from their family. They also sought the recovery of ₹35 lakh, which they claim was taken as loans through their mother. “Addressing a press conference at the Khammam Press Club on Saturday, Banoth Vani and Banoth Venkat of Jinkala Thanda in Raghunathapalem mandal stated that their mother, Banoth Padma, had helped Ramesh secure loans amounting to ₹35 lakh from various individuals, as he is their close relative. “According to them, despite repeated requests, Ramesh has allegedly failed to repay the borrowed amount and has been avoiding repayment. They said that due to mounting pressure from the lenders, they approached him again seeking settlement of the dues. “The victims alleged that on June 27, when they met Ramesh after being informed that the money would be repaid, he tore up the promissory notes they possessed, threatened them, and assaulted them when they questioned his actions. Vani further alleged that he abused them and threw a pesticide container at their mother, telling her to consume it and die. “The family stated that the incident caused severe emotional distress to Banoth Padma, who subsequently consumed pesticide and is currently undergoing treatment in a hospital. “They said a complaint was lodged at Khanapuram Police Station regarding the incident, but alleged that no significant action has been taken even after a week. The victims appealed to the police and concerned authorities to take appropriate action against Kelothu Ramesh and ensure the recovery of the ₹35 lakh allegedly owed to them.



## Sanctity of Temple Violated; Congress and BRS Leaders Must Apologize to Devotees: Ganta Ravikumar

“Warangal, July 4 (Indian Chronicle): BJP Warangal District President Ganta Ravikumar strongly condemned the actions of Congress and BRS leaders, alleging that they turned the Sri Bhadrakali Temple—a revered deity for the people of Orugalla (Warangal)—into a political platform and violated its sanctity. He demanded that leaders from these parties immediately apologize to the devotees and the Hindu community for desecrating the temple's sanctity. “He stated that conducting political activities at this historic and sacred pilgrimage site, visited daily by thousands of devotees from across the country and abroad, is highly objectionable. He alleged that the leaders violated temple norms for their own political gain and caused severe inconvenience to the devotees. “Ravikumar alleged that former KUDA Chairman Marri Yadava Reddy and current KUDA Chairman Inagala Venkatram Reddy entered the temple in wet clothes to take oaths; he noted that this act was contrary to temple traditions and religious customs. He asserted that their actions had compromised the sanctity of the temple. “In response to this, he mentioned that BJP leaders and activists performed Samprokshana (a purification ritual) by sprinkling waters from the Ganga and Godavari rivers, as well as turmeric water, within the temple premises. He stated that this initiative was undertaken solely to uphold the temple's dignity and preserve Sanatana traditions. “He alleged that thousands of devotees visiting for darshan faced severe inconvenience due to the political chaos created by the leaders. He remarked that if there were allegations of corruption, they should be addressed before investigative agencies or on public platforms, rather than using places of worship as arenas for political conflict. “Ravikumar also criticized the conduct of the Endowments Department officials and the Temple Executive Officer (EO) for remaining silent despite the violation of temple norms. He stated that the officials neglected their responsibility to safeguard the temple's sanctity, instead succumbing to political pressure. “He alleged that the police failed to maintain law and order in Warangal city, despite having prior information about the incident. He demanded immediate action against the police officials who failed to respond to the political turmoil at the Bhadrakali temple. Expressing concern that such an incident occurred in the constituency represented by the State Endowments Minister, Ravikumar described the event as unfortunate and shameful. He warned that if Congress and BRS leaders did not immediately apologize to the devotees of Goddess Bhadrakali, they would have to face the devotees' wrath.



# Implement Special Action Plan for Crop Diversification and Expansion of Oil Palm Cultivation: Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju“All Departments Must Work in Coordination, from Agriculture to Public Health

“No Drinking Water Problem in Khammam; District Fully Prepared for Floods: Collector Divakara T.S.”District Administration Must Remain Alert on Monsoon Conditions, Public Health and Flood Preparedness“Preventive Measures Needed to Control Seasonal Diseases”Chief Secretary Reviews Key Issues with District Collectors Through Video Conference”Khammam, July 4 Indian Chronicle:”“State Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju has directed officials to actively encourage farmers to adopt crop diversification and increase the area under oil palm cultivation across the state.”On Saturday, the Chief Secretary conducted a video conference from the State Secretariat in Hyderabad with District Collectors and senior officials to review monsoon conditions, drinking water supply, agricultural requirements, availability of fertilizers and seeds, public health, flood preparedness, and education-related issues. Khammam District Collector Divakara T.S., Additional Collector P. Srija, Municipal Commissioner Abhishek Agastya, and other district officials participated from the Khammam Collectorate.”Speaking during the review meeting, Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju stated that the state has set a target of bringing 85,000 acres under oil palm cultivation during 2026–27. He instructed district officials to take proactive measures to achieve the target. He emphasized the importance of crop diversification and encouraged greater focus on vegetable cultivation. Farmers should also be motivated to adopt micro-irrigation practices to improve productivity and water efficiency.”The Chief Secretary directed officials to ensure adequate availability of urea, DAP, and other complex fertilizers for farmers. He warned that strict action would be taken against those involved in the diversion or illegal sale of fertilizers and instructed District Collectors to maintain close vigilance on the issue.”He also ordered the speedy completion of the Farmer Registry process and reviewed the progress district-wise. Telangana currently ranks first in the country in Farmer Registry implementation, having achieved 71.45 percent coverage, he said.”Expressing concern over the increased risk of seasonal diseases during the monsoon, he advised officials to remain vigilant and take preventive measures against dengue, malaria, typhoid, and other communicable diseases.”District Collector Divakara T.S. briefed the Chief Secretary on the situation in Khammam district. He informed that there is currently no drinking water shortage in the district and that sufficient water is available from the Munneru, Paleru, and Wyra reservoirs to



meet drinking water needs.”The Collector stated that precautionary measures have already been initiated in areas that may face irrigation-related challenges. Continuous monitoring is being carried out at seed sales centers, and a case has already been registered against a person involved in irregularities. He clarified that there is no shortage of fertilizers in the district and that fertilizer distribution is being effectively monitored through the Urea App to ensure smooth supply to farmers.”Regarding public health, the Collector said coordination meetings are being conducted regularly with all concerned departments. Continuous monitoring of seasonal diseases such as dengue, malaria, and typhoid is underway. He noted that dengue cases are on the decline in the district and that only a few cases are being reported in urban and peri-urban areas.”On flood preparedness, the Collector stated that several review meetings have already been conducted and that a request has been made to keep NDRF teams on standby for immediate deployment if required. He affirmed that the district administration is fully prepared to handle any emergency situation arising from heavy rains or floods.”With regard to the Education Department, the Collector informed that two locations in the district have been identified for government educational initiatives. He added that all departments in the district are working in close coordination to ensure that public services are delivered efficiently and without disruption.”Later, the Collector held a separate meeting with district officials and instructed them to adopt proactive approaches in addressing local issues. He directed officials to respond immediately to problems within their jurisdiction and bring any major concerns to his notice without delay.”Officials from the Agriculture, Horticulture, Health, Welfare, Revenue and other departments attended the meeting.

# Rajyadhikara Samarabheri Must Be Made a Grand Success: All India OBC JAC Chairman Sayini Narender

“Hanamkonda, July 4 (Indian Chronicle): All India OBC JAC Chairman Sayini Narendra has called upon members of the SC, ST, BC, and Minority communities to participate in large numbers and make the Rajyadhikara Samarabheri public meeting, scheduled to be held on July 5 in Bhongir, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, a grand success. He said the meeting aims to achieve political empowerment for the productive communities.”“Speaking after inaugurating posters of the Rajyadhikara Samarabheri campaign at Ambedkar Centre in Hanamkonda on Saturday, under the aegis of various people’s organisations, Narendra said that although the majority communities have played a crucial role in the country’s development for centuries, they have been denied political power and self-respect.”“He expressed concern that even after nearly 80 years of India’s Independence, the BC community has not received adequate representation in the legislatures. He appealed to intellectuals, academicians, students, women, workers, farmers, poets, artists, leaders of people’s organisations, caste associations, and BC organisations to participate in large numbers and support the movement for Bahujan political empowerment being led by the Telangana Rajyadhikara Party under the leadership of Teenmar Mallanna.”“On the occasion, Chaphathi Kumar Gadge, State President of the Rajaka Reservation Struggle Committee, urged Bahujan communities to rise above caste and political affiliations and participate in the Rajyadhikara Samarabheri. He said that Bhongir, which has histori-



cally been the birthplace of many people’s movements, should also become the launching ground for the Bahujan political empowerment movement. Drawing inspiration from legendary figures such as Sardar Sarvai Papanna, Chakali Iamma, and Doddi Komuraiah, he called for a united movement to establish Bahujan rule.”“Dr. Chintam Praveen Kumar said the BC community should recognize its political strength and play a decisive role in the struggle for political empowerment.”“Advocate Rachakonda Praveen Kumar appealed to lawyers, doctors, intellectuals, and educated members of the Bahujan community to actively participate in the movement for Bahujan political empowerment.”“Among those present were TRP Warangal District President Pendela Sampath, Advocate J.J. Swamy, Chintam Lakshminarayana, Dr. Chintam Praveen Kumar, Sooram Niranjan, Thatikonda Sadguna, Muttoju Padma, Jallela Krishnamurthy, Lakshman Goud, Booru Ravi, N.S. Raju, Bisa Mahesh, Prakash, Yellawamy Yadav, Jannu Srinivas, and several leaders of various people’s organisations.

# Newly Appointed Mandal and Division Presidents Pay Courtesy Call on DCC President 'Inagala'

“Hanamkonda, July 4 (Indian Chronicle): Newly appointed Congress Mandal and Division presidents from the Vardhannapet Assembly constituency visited the residence of DCC President Inagala Venkatram Reddy at Ramakrishna Colony in Hanamkonda on Saturday to pay a courtesy call.”“On this occasion, N. Mohan Goud (newly elected Ainavolu Mandal Congress President), along with GWMC Division No. 2 President Putta Tirupati, Division No. 65 President Nedinuri Sunil, and Division No. 66 President Gorre Kiran, felicitated Inagala Venkatram Reddy by presenting him with bouquets and conveying their best wishes.”“Speaking on the occasion, the new presidents stated that they would work with dedication to strengthen the Congress party and effectively address public issues. They affirmed their commitment to taking the party’s ideology and programs to the grassroots level.”“Senior Congress leaders and party activists also participated in the event.



# Dr. Srigodha Vishnu Reddy Guides BLAs on the SIR Process

“Hanamkonda, July 4 (Indian Chronicle): With the objective of ensuring the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls is carried out efficiently and transparently, Dr. Srigodha Vishnu Reddy, daughter of Warangal West MLA Nayani Rajender Reddy, conducted awareness meetings in two phases on Friday with Booth Level Agents (BLAs) and senior Congress leaders, following the MLA’s directions.”“The first meeting was held at the Hanamkonda DCC Bhavan, where BLAs, division in-charges, and key party leaders from Divisions 47, 60, 61, 62, and 63 participated. Later, another meeting was held at Vishal Bhavan with BLAs and Congress leaders from Divisions 51 and 59.”“Addressing the participants, Dr. Srigodha Vishnu Reddy instructed the BLAs to complete the enumeration forms strictly in accordance with the Election Commission’s guidelines, accurately record voters’ details, and carry out all necessary corrections. She emphasized that every eligible voter should receive full assistance throughout the SIR process.”“She further urged



the BLAs to discharge their responsibilities with dedication and without negligence, stressing the importance of remaining vigilant in protecting every citizen’s voting rights during the SIR exercise.”“Division in-charges, division presidents, former corporators, Booth Level Agents (BLAs), senior Congress leaders, and party workers attended the meetings.

# AI and Digital Learning Classes Launched by Government Degree College Students in Uppal Under Anna-Akka Mentorship Programme

“UPPAL, JULY 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): As part of the State Government’s prestigious “Anna-Akka Mentorship Programme,” students of the Government Degree College, Uppal, on Saturday launched special classes on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital Learning, and Digital Literacy in government schools.”“Under this initiative, college students will provide practical and activity-based training to students from Classes VI to X in various government schools on topics such as Artificial Intelligence, the use of digital tools, safe internet practices, digital literacy, and modern technological advancements.”“Speaking on the occasion, the college Principal stated that creating awareness among school students about Artificial Intelligence and digital skills has become essential in today’s digital era. He noted that the programme would help students understand emerging technologies and prepare them for future educational and employment opportunities.”“The Principal appreciated the efforts of the participating college students and advised them to conduct the sessions responsibly while encouraging school students to develop an interest in technology and digital skills.”“As part of the programme, the college nodal faculty members, along with students, visited the respective schools and supervised the commencement of the classes. The headmasters and teachers of the schools welcomed the college team and assured their full cooperation in the successful implementation of the initiative.”“The organisers stated that the primary objective of the Anna-Akka Mentorship Programme is to promote interest among government school students in Artificial Intelligence, Digital Learning, Digital Literacy, and technological skills, thereby preparing them for the rapidly evolving technological world of the future.



# Doddi Komaraiah’s Life an Inspiration to Present Generation: BJP Leader



Gnanaratnam, Syed Mohiuddin, Tejavath Nagaraju, Srinivasa Rao, Hanumanth, Moodu Ramesh, Tejavath Gopi, Tejavath Venkatesh and others participated in the program.”“The party also observed the death anniversary of Swami Vivekananda at the BJP office, where leaders paid floral tributes to his portrait. Later, a meeting of the BJP Tribal Morcha was held at the party office. Leaders called for grassroots-level agitations to address the issues faced by tribal communities. Several Morcha leaders and members attended the meeting.

“Khammam Nelakondapalli, July 4 Indian Chronicle:”“BJP Mandal President Pagarthi Sudhakar said that the life of Telangana’s first martyr and freedom fighter, Doddi Komaraiah, is an inspiration to the younger generation.”“On the occasion of Komaraiah’s death anniversary, BJP leaders and party workers paid floral tributes to his portrait at a program organized in the mandal headquarters. Speaking on the occasion, Sudhakar described Komaraiah as a great leader who fought against the rule of the Nizam and played a significant role in the Telangana liberation struggle.”“He stated that thousands of people sacrificed their lives for the liberation of Telangana and emphasized that Komaraiah’s courage, commitment, and spirit of sacrifice should serve as a guiding force for today’s youth. He urged people to follow the path shown by the legendary leader.”“Party leaders Sheikh Sharifuddin, Surepalli

# Road and Development Works in the District Must Be Completed Expeditiously: District Collector Divakara T.S

“Development activities should progress through inter-departmental coordination”“Priority must be given to both quality and timely completion of road projects”“All arrangements for the Chief Minister’s proposed district visit should be completed on schedule”“District Collector reviews progress of development works being executed by the Roads & Buildings Department”“Khammam, July 4 Indian Chronicle:”“District Collector Divakara T.S. has directed officials to ensure that road, bridge, building, and other development works being undertaken across various constituencies in the district are completed within the stipulated time frame while maintaining high quality standards.”“The Collector chaired a review meeting on Saturday at the Collectorate Meeting Hall with engineering and concerned departmental officials to assess the progress of development works being executed under the Roads & Buildings (R&B) Department.”“Speaking on the occasion, District Collector Divakara T.S. instructed officials to continuously monitor ongoing projects and remove any obstacles that may delay road and building construction works. He emphasized that there should be no compromise on quality and that all works must be completed in accordance with prescribed standards.”“The Collector also directed officials to take special precautions to ensure that road works being undertaken with CRF funds do not cause damage to public properties. Any issues arising during project implementation should be brought to his notice immediately, he said.”“He reviewed the ongoing road works in the Khammam Cable Bridge area and the Mudigonda–Vallabhi four-lane road project, directing officials to execute the works according to approved measurements and in a manner that minimizes inconvenience to the public.”“Regarding the Bonakal–Alapadu road project, the Collector instructed officials to immediately submit the necessary proposals to the concerned Tahsildar and ensure that the works are completed as soon as the required permissions are obtained.”“As there is a possibility of the Chief Minister visiting the district later this month, the Collector directed all departments to coordinate effectively and expedite pending development works and related arrangements so that they are completed on time.”“During the meeting, officials presented updates on the progress of projects under their jurisdiction. The Collector instructed them to resolve all pending issues at the earliest and ensure the speedy completion of development works.”“The meeting was attended by R&B Superintending Engineer Yugandhar, Executive Engineers Basheer and Seetharamaiah, Deputy Engineer Bhagavan, and other officials.





# Schools flouting Marathi mandate to lose recognition: Minister Bhuse



GNS News Agency, July 4

The Maharashtra government on Monday warned that schools failing to make Marathi a compulsory subject will face stringent action, including cancellation of recognition.Replying to a starred question during Question Hour in the Legislative Assembly, School Education Minister Dada Bhuse said all schools in the state, irrespective of their medium of instruction, are legally bound to teach Marathi from Class 1 to 10 and conduct examinations in the language.

“If any school fails to comply with the government’s order, it will first be fined Rs 1 lakh. Continued non-compliance will lead to the cancellation of its recognition,” Bhuse said.The minister also announced a statewide verification drive to ensure schools are implementing the Marathi mandate. Physical inspections will be carried out, and reports will be sought from education department officials. Schools found violating the rules during inspections will face action.

The issue was raised by BJP MLA Atul Bhatkalkar, who sought clarity on whether schools would be required not only to teach Marathi but also conduct examinations in the language.During the discussion, MLAs Nitin Raut, Sunil Prabhu and Varun Sardesai questioned how many schools had faced action so far and suggested increasing the existing penalty from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 10 lakh.Bhuse informed the House that while the original government resolution making Marathi compulsory was issued in 2020, implementation had been inconsistent. To address this, the government has issued a stricter resolution this year, laying down a two-step enforcement mechanism a Rs 1 lakh fine for the first violation, followed by derecognition if the school continues to defy the mandate.

# Man stabs ‘girlfriend’ to death on busy Bengaluru road after dinner together

GNS News Agency, July 4

A 24-year-old man has been arrested in Bengaluru for stabbing his girlfriend to death on a busy road after she refused to marry him, the police said. The murder took place near Sri Chaitanya Techno School in Mahalakshmi Layout around 9 pm on Sunday.The police identified the woman as Anjali, 23, and the man as Rajeev, a secondhand car dealer. She worked at a vehicle dealership.

The Bengaluru residents first met each other three or four years ago and fell in love later, according to the police. However, Anjali’s parents later found out that Rajeev had criminal cases against him, including those related to robbery and attempted murder. As they asked her to stay away from him, Anjali started avoiding him.But Rajeev asked her to meet on Sunday evening for dinner, hoping to change her mind. As they had dinner, Rajeev brought up the subject of their marriage. When Anjali told him that she would not marry him, he picked up a fight, the police said.As they reached near Aditya Junction afterwards by walking, Rajeev allegedly stabbed Anjali multiple times using a knife he had carried with him. A passerby immediately informed the 112 police emergency helpline. Anjali was taken to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared her dead on arrival.The police arrested Rajeev within an hour after the incident. They handed over Anjali’s body to her family after a postmortem at MS Ramaiah Hospital.DCP B S Nemagouda said that Rajeev, who stayed in KP Agradhara till moving to Laggere recently, has two or three criminal cases against him.

In another incident, a 40-year-old house help from West Bengal was found dead at her rented house in Muniyappa Layout on Sunday night. The woman, identified



as Krishna Barman, had been living in the house in the Bommanahalli police limits for four months and had earlier worked in a garment factory, according to the police.According to DCP (Southeast) Mohammed Sujeetha M S, a patrol team received a call about a suspected murder from the son of Barman’s landlord. “The staff rushed to the spot and found Barman dead. We have found out that none of her relatives lived in Bengaluru. We are verifying the details that we have got now. We are also questioning a couple of suspects,” she added.In another incident, a gang of five armed men killed a rowdy-sheeter on a busy road in JP Nagar on Saturday. Raju, alias Hallu Muruka Raju, 48, who was accused in murder, robbery, and attempted murder cases, was returning from a salon after a haircut when the assailants chased him. They fled the spot after killing him, according to the police.DCP (South) Kona Vamsi Krishna said on Monday that the police have arrested four people in connection with the incident, adding that further investigations are underway.

# First trip to Varanasi: How 30 women from this remote UP village fulfilled their ‘lifelong dream’



GNS News Agency, July 4

In the remote village of Pandi in Uttar Pradesh’s Chandauli district, a group of 30 women left for a trip to Varanasi, along with their families. They had never visited the holy city before. For many, a lifelong dream of praying at the revered Kashi Vishwanath Temple was fulfilled Monday morning with the help of the Uttar Pradesh Police.The pilgrimage, organised by the UP Police, came after the villagers shared their long-cherished dream of visiting Varanasi during a community outreach programme last week. As part of the Mission Shakti, senior police officers reached out to the women residents during a community outreach programme in Pandi.

The remote villageLocated near the Uttar Pradesh–Bihar border, Pandi is a remote forest village that has long remained cut-off from the outside world. For many women, their lives are limited to Pandi, without ever travelling beyond the village.Pandi is about 120 kilometres from Varanasi, yet for many residents the journey had remained beyond their reach because of Pandi’s isolated location.“Our village is located on the Bihar border and is surrounded by forests. Because of its remoteness, we have remained largely cut off from the outside world,” says Prabhavati Kumari, one of the women who joined the trip.“When the police officers asked if we wanted to visit Varanasi, all the women immediately agreed. Most of us had never seen a city before,” she said.Prabhavati travelled with her husband, America Kharwar, and their two children.The 30 women — most over the age of 40 — boarded a police-arranged bus, many accompanied by their young children. Five men from the village also joined the pilgrimage.A police escort led by an inspector-rank officer travelled in a separate vehicle to assist the group throughout the journey. The convoy left the village at around 9 am, with the police also arranging meals and other logistical support for the travellers.

Pandi, a predominantly Dalit village in Naugarh block of Chandauli district, lies about 80 kilometres from the district headquarters and just three kilometres from the Bihar border. Home to around 80 families, the village depends largely on subsistence farming, daily wage labour and forest produce. Most households earn barely enough to cover basic necessities such as food and clothing, while only a handful of younger residents have left the village in search of work.

A lifelong dream“It has always been our dream to step outside our village, but visiting the Kashi Vishwanath Temple was an even bigger dream. We had only heard about it from our parents and grandparents,” said Beena Kumari, who made the journey with her four-year-old child.“When the



# Maharashtra Government may slap MCOCA against TET exam paper leak accused



GNS News Agency, July 4

The Maharashtra government is examining the possibility of invoking the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) against the accused in Teachers Eligibility Test paper leak case, state School Education Minister Dadaji Bhuse informed the state legislative Assembly on Monday. He also announced that the government will set up a committee headed by the Chief Secretary to work out modalities of conducting TET and other examinations in a transparent manner through an online system.After an uproar in the House over the TET exam paper leak, minister Bhuse said, “Regarding the paper leak of TET scheduled to be held on June 28, 2026... an assessment will be made to introduce necessary amendments to the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) to register cases against anyone found guilty.”

Bhuse said that on June 27, police received information that certain individuals were planning to sell the question paper for the Teacher Eligibility Test scheduled to be held the next day.“Police set a trap and apprehended three individuals... The items found in their possession included the question papers for the TET exam,” he said. Senior officials from the education department confirmed that the recovered papers were in fact the question papers for the exam scheduled for June 28 and a case was registered at Kongaon police station in Bhiwandi. The charges against the three arrested include sections 318(4), 316(5), and 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, along with sections 11(1), (2), (3) and 12(1), (2) of the Maharashtra Competitive Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, and sections 6 and 8 of the Maharashtra Prevention of Malpractices at University, Board and Other Specified Examinations Act, 1982, the minister said. The charges stem from the unauthorised acquisition and possession of the government-conducted TET question papers with the intent to distribute them to examinees in exchange for large sums of

# Bengal sets the ball rolling for UCC, sets up panel under retd Supreme Court judge to look into draft Bill



Asserting that the newly elected BJP government is committed to implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in West Bengal, Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Monday said that a draft Bill pertaining to it will be taken up by the Cabinet on July 2.Speaking in the Assembly during the ongoing Budget Session, the chief minister said that a committee, led by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, will look into the draft UCC Bill and propose changes.“The Uniform Civil Code will definitely be implemented in Bengal. There is a specific process for it... We will bring this (UCC) Bill after examining the examples of Uttarakhand, Gujarat, and Assam. Ancient tribal communities and indigenous people will remain outside the purview of the UCC Bill,” Adhikari said after an uproar in the Assembly over the government’s plan to implement UCC in the state.According to the chief minister, the committee led by the former Supreme Court judge will be asked to submit its report on the draft UCC Bill within four weeks.

“The committee will function as a task force, with an educationist, a social worker, and an IAS officer as its members,” the CM said.“This committee will examine a total of

money.The minister said that a Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by the joint commissioner of police (crime), Thane city, has been constituted as per the order issued on June 27 by the Director General of Police, Maharashtra. “The investigation is currently underway by the SIT. To further the investigation, two teams have been dispatched to Bihar, one to Haryana, and one to Delhi. The three arrested accused are in police custody,” the minister said.The minister said that the re-examination will be conducted in a transparent and disciplined manner and no examination fees will be charged from candidates.Earlier in the day, Opposition MLAs staged a walkout in the Assembly stating that the government failed to provide a concrete response on the alleged leak of the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) question paper, while the legislative Council was adjourned for nearly half an hour due to an uproar from the Opposition over the leak.In both the Houses, the Opposition demanded discussion on this issue, keeping the scheduled business aside.

In assembly, prior to Question Hour, Shiv Sena (UBT) MLA Bhaskar Jadhav moved an adjournment motion and said, “From NEET to TET, the state is becoming the centre of paper leaks. It is important that the issue is discussed in the Assembly by setting aside other business.”Congress legislative party leader Vijay Wadettiwar said the recurring question paper leaks in major examinations were bringing disrepute to Maharashtra and creating insecurity among lakhs of students and teachers. He demanded the government explain why it had “repeatedly failed” to conduct examinations transparently.Referring to Abhishek Sawarikar, an accused in the 2018 TET scam, Wadettiwar questioned how the BJP later inducted people accused in such scams. The Congress leader also hinted at Sawarikar’s association with a BJP legislator and raised concerns about the government’s “role” in such scams.In the Upper House, Ambadas Danve of Shiv Sena (UBT) questioned the government’s failure to prevent another examination paper leak despite the recent controversy surrounding the NEET-UG examination controversy.Demanding a discussion under Rule 289, Danve said, “There are irregularities worth crores of rupees and paper leaks are happening repeatedly. If the government cannot conduct examinations properly, then the education minister should resign.”Congress MLC Satej Patil said conducting examinations without irregularities was the government’s responsibility, while Congress leader Jayant Asgaonkar demanded an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation.Congress MLA Dhiraj Lingade said the incident reflected the collapse of the country’s education system, while Arun Lad of NCP (SP) argued that repeated paper leaks had become common due to the absence of strict legal safeguards.

nine issues, including marriage, divorce, inheritance of property, custody of children, and adoption,” the chief minister said, adding it would seek people’s views and proposals before submitting the report to the government.“In August, after accepting the recommendations of this committee, we will bring the UCC Bill. And this Bill will be implemented in West Bengal. If you have anything to say, you may present your views before the committee. But let me make it clear – we are determined to implement UCC in West Bengal,” Adhikari reiterated, adding the Bill will be in accordance with the BJP’s Sankalp Patra (manifesto).During the Assembly elections in the state earlier this year, the BJP had promised to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) within six months of being voted to power.The UCC is a proposed framework to replace religion-based personal laws with one common set of secular laws governing marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption for all citizens. Rooted in Article 44 of the Constitution, it seeks to promote gender justice and national integration.Historically, personal laws, such as the Hindu Marriage Act or Muslim Personal Law, have governed private affairs.The BJP has already implemented UCC in Uttarakhand and Gujarat.Assam became the third BJP state to implement UCC and passed a Bill last month after returning to power in the state last month.The BJP in West Bengal has also promised strict laws against “love jihad”, a term used by the party to refer to the marriage of a Muslim man with a Hindu woman, and “land jihad”, stating that its objective is to protect the state’s “social and territorial integrity” in its manifesto.Members of the Muslim outfits have opposed the move.Uzma Alam, a member of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, had told The Indian Express last week that implementing UCC would infringe the rights of the minorities. His colleague, Mohd Kamrudzaman, had said that Muslims will protest as UCC is unacceptable.



is of course correct. But the work is so vast that they need to work in the mornings and nights. Is there no personal life for teachers? We get one Sunday as a holiday in a week and even on that holiday we have to work?”Every teacher is assigned 1400-1500 voters. Instructions are such that form distribution and filling should be done in seven days. In rural areas the voters won’t be able to fill the forms as they are technical, the BLO has to do everything. At some district trainings, teachers are being verbally told to adjust work in contravention of the election office’s orders. At a school in Wardha district, seven out of nine employees are on SIR duty. One teacher and headmaster are the only ones in school. How is the school supposed to function?” Kombe added.



# Building the information backbone for India’s drinking water future



Data and its management are the backbone of any system, and any differences in that may appear technical but have real consequences. When definitions differ and data sources conflict, states spend valuable time reconciling spreadsheets instead of solving problems on the ground. Engineers struggle to prioritise repairs and progress slows down, not because of lack of effort, but of absence of a holistic picture.

As India undertakes one of the world's largest rural water supply transformations, this challenge needs urgent attention. Since the launch of the Jal Jeevan Mission in 2019, household tap water coverage in rural India has increased from 16.72% to over 81%. This achievement is not just about pipes and connections. It is about lives changed, saving over 5.5 crore hours of daily drudgery (largely for women), and preventing nearly four lakh deaths from diarrhoeal diseases. But building pipes and pumps is only one part of the journey. The real test is ensuring water flows regularly, safely, and sustainably for years to come. That requires constant monitoring of infrastructure, early detection of problems, and coordinated action across multiple institutions. This is where India has begun laying the foundations for Digital Public Infrastructure for the drinking water sector. A key building block in this effort is the creation of a unique digital identity for every drinking water scheme through Sujalam Bharat IDs and Sujal Gaon IDs. A Sujalam Bharat ID establishes a comprehensive digital record of hydraulically connected assets from source to tap. Integrated with platforms such as the Sujalam Bharat App, it enables the creation of Sujal Gaon IDs and provides a clear view of how water systems are interconnected. This enhances monitoring, promotes transparency, and contributes to building a technologically empowered Viksit Bharat @2047. Scheme performance

Infrastructure data alone are not enough. For drinking water systems to remain reliable, digital systems must also capture how these schemes perform over time. Data on the regularity of water supply, water levels in sources, water quality indicators and the financial sustainability of schemes are equally important. When such information flows regularly into digital systems, governments and com-

munities can better understand whether schemes are functioning as intended and where attention is needed. Reliable operational data can transform how the sector responds to challenges. Declining source levels and irregular supply patterns can be detected early. Water quality risks can be flagged before they become public health concerns. Timely financial planning for operation and maintenance can ensure that systems continue to deliver their intended benefits.

Equally important, this visibility strengthens community governance. Gram panchayats and village water and sanitation committees play a central role in managing rural drinking water systems, with a close understanding of local needs and seasonal water realities. When local institutions can see both the physical infrastructure and how it is performing, they gain a clearer understanding of their water supply systems. Information on pipelines, pumps and tanks, combined with data on supply regularity, water levels, water quality and financial sustainability, provides village institutions with a simple but powerful view of their systems. With this data, communities can spot problems early and resolve them with engineers. For gram panchayats and village water and sanitation committees, this transparency strengthens local water management and Jan Bhagidari. As this infrastructure evolves, states can share information more easily using common formats. They retain control of their systems while enabling collective learning on what works and where improvement is needed.

These foundations can enable data- and AI-driven innovations. Frontline workers can capture images of pumps and pipelines, and AI can assess supply, detect damage, and flag maintenance needs. Analytics can identify risks and patterns that need attention. All of this depends on one thing: trusted, reliable information flowing through the system. Pipes and pumps will deliver water, but trusted, shared information will keep them working well for years. When communities understand their water systems, they care for them. When local institutions have the right information and tools, they manage them with confidence. And when digital infrastructure supports people on the ground, safe and sustainable drinking water for every rural household can be ensured. When communities understand their water systems, they care for them. When local institutions have the right information and tools, they manage them with confidence. And when digital infrastructure supports people on the ground, safe and sustainable drinking water for every rural household can endure. The Jal Jeevan Mission has connected millions of rural households to tap water. The next phase is ensuring these systems remain functional over time. The recently concluded Jal Mahotsav 2026 reflected this shift, recognising communities across the country for their role in managing drinking water assets, showing that this spirit is already taking root at the grassroots and must now be strengthened to ensure systems remain functional over time.

# Uttar Pradesh top performer under PM’s solar power scheme: UPNEDA



Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top-performing State under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojna, in March 2026, setting a new national benchmark in rooftop solar deployment. With 52,729 installations in a single month, the State has outperformed leading States such as Gujarat and Maharashtra. The State has consistently remained among the top two States since July 2025, with the government arguing that it reflects sustained momentum, strong execution, and robust field-level governance. "Under PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, Uttar Pradesh has surged ahead with more than 1,524 MW of rooftop solar capacity, generating approximately 6.8–7.0 million units of green energy daily and enabling households savings on electricity bill. This progress positions Uttar Pradesh as a national leader in

sustainable energy adoption, while also creating more than 60,000 jobs across the State," said Inderjit Singh, Director of the Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA). "The March 2026 installations in Uttar Pradesh represent the highest monthly deployment achieved by any State since the inception of the scheme, underscoring the State's leadership in accelerating decentralised solar adoption.

As per the national portal, Uttar Pradesh has achieved 4,48,233 cumulative rooftop solar installations, placing it third in India. However, given the current growth trajectory, the State is well-positioned to surpass Maharashtra and move to second place in the coming months. The State also recorded multiple operational milestones during the month, including a record 3,188 installations in a single day on 31 March 2026, marking the highest-ever daily achievement. The total installed capacity has now reached 1,524.61 MW. Additionally, approximately ₹4,000 crore in subsidies have been disbursed, including ₹2,985 crore from the Central government, directly benefiting lakhs of households," reads an official statement. This large-scale solar expansion is delivering measurable socio-economic and environmental benefits. Rooftop solar adoption has resulted in an estimated saving of more than 6,000 acres of land, which would otherwise be required for ground-mounted plants. The installed capacity is generating approximately 6.8–7.0 million units of free electricity per day, translating into direct consumer savings of ₹4 to ₹4.5 crore daily.

# Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Rajnath Singh's remarks: 'Response to any attack would be 'swift, calibrated and decisive'



Mr. Asif took to X to respond to remarks by his Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh, who earlier said that any "misadventure" from India's neighbour in the prevailing situation would invite an "unprecedented and decisive" action. Speaking at an event in poll-bound Kerala, Mr. Singh on Thursday (April 2) said that following the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 lives, India had destroyed the terrorist hideouts and infrastructure in Pakistan. He contended that during Operation Sindoor, Indian forces brought Pakistan to its knees within 22 minutes.

"Repeated rhetoric reflects not strength, but visible strategic anxiety as the anniversary of the Pahalgam" attack approaches, Mr. Asif said. Mr. Asif further said: "Such threat-mongering is not new; it is part of a predictable pattern - externalising internal fragility, and attempting to provoke escalation under the garb of unsubstantiated allegations for vested political interests." Recalling the four-day conflict in May, the Pakistani Minister said that history was

a stark reminder that miscalculation has consequences. "The next time our response will be even more forceful and decisive. Let there be no ambiguity: Pakistan remains committed to peace and regional stability, but its resolve to defend sovereignty is absolute, its preparedness complete, and its response will be swift, calibrated, and decisive," he said. The Pahalgam attack that took place on April 22 last year resulted in a brief conflict between the two countries.

# Telangana DCA serves notices to 75 medical shops over weight loss drug violations

Hyderabad: The Drugs Control Administration (DCA), Telangana on Thursday issued show cause notices to 75 medical shops for various violations while selling weight loss drugs. The special drive focused on weight loss drugs containing Tirzepatide (Mounjaro) and Semaglutide (Ozempic, Wegovy, Rybelsus) as well as generic equivalents of Semaglutide formulations, manufactured by various companies and recently introduced into the market following the patent expiry of the innovator's Semaglutide formulations, along with other weight loss drugs. The violations detected included sale of drugs without prescriptions and without issuing bills, failure to produce sales bills, failure to maintain prescription drug registers.

# ‘Operation Chabutra’ sparks debate over safety and freedom on Hyderabad streets



A late-night policing drive targeting groups 'loitering' on city roads has triggered a split in public opinion, with residents and netizens sharply divided over whether it enhances safety or encroaches on personal freedom. The initiative titled Operation Chabutra is being carried out across Hyderabad, particularly in the south and Old City areas, where police say complaints of harassment, intimidation and petty crime tend to surface after midnight. Teams patrol identified stretches, questioning those found sitting on roadside platforms, street corners and relatively isolated locations.

Police officials maintain that the operation is aimed at deterrence rather than indiscriminate action. DCP, Golconda Zone, G. Chandra Mohan said the questioning is based on behaviour rather than mere presence. "The motive behind the questioning is that whoever is loitering on streets, or sitting in isolated places, will be pulled up, not all. When some are found catcalling couples, women, and indulging in extortion, we counsel them in front of their parents or elders. If they are involved in crime against women, teasing, or property offence, that will be a case. Minor scuffle will be dealt with counselling," he said. An officer from the Charminar zone said the timing and approach are calibrated based on past incidents. "The operation usually starts after midnight. If found roaming without a purpose, we cross check them once, but roaming after 1 a.m. is dealt with strictly. Recently, there were incidents of a couple being assaulted, and a delivery boy robbed. The South and South-West range get more of such cases."

He added that the drive is intended to remain largely non-confrontational. "It is a peaceful operation, mostly counselling. There is a misconception of using lathi by police. That happens in isolated cases when a group tries to escape or evade questions. If there is a complaint about it, we will surely take action." The term 'chabutra' itself reflects a long-standing social culture in parts of the Old City, where

residents, particularly youth, gather on raised platforms or 'arugu' during summer nights. Advocate Vasudev Raju from Nampally Criminal Court said that such spaces have traditionally been part of community life. "I am basically from a place called Aliabad in Old City, south of Charminar near Rajanna Bowli. Life here has to be experienced, not just witnessed. Youth can really enjoy summer nights on an arugu or chabutra. But they should not run away when patrol vans or police come, should avoid vices and always be in a place covered by CCTV to establish that nothing nefarious is done."

However, legal concerns have also been raised over the manner of enforcement. Advocate Rama Rao Immaneni criticised the operation, calling it an overreach. "Innovative humiliation in the name of a new device called Operation Chabutra turned out to be a source of public humiliation. Powers of police with regard to surveillance are limited to erstwhile AP Police Standing Orders 601 and 744 adopted by Telangana after reorganisation. It forms no part of their duty to publicly thrack the citizens by branding them. Crime control cannot be under unconstitutional methods as we are living in a democracy," he said. Videos of the operation, particularly from Mailaredevally and surrounding areas, have circulated widely online, drawing contrasting reactions. Some users have welcomed the move, arguing that stricter enforcement is necessary to address nuisance. One comment described the action as a "good job", adding that certain groups take advantage of perceived leniency and need to be controlled to maintain order.

Others have raised concerns over the manner of policing. A user questioned why people were being 'harassed' instead of simply being asked to disperse, while another replied that such an approach often fails. Questions have also been raised about freedom of movement on public roads and the use of force in certain instances. At the same time, there is support from residents in other localities who say similar nuisance persists in their areas. Some have called for such drives in places like Balapur, citing disturbances through the day and night. Sai Sagar, a resident from Maruthi Nagar, said, "I often reach home around 2 a.m. and see boys ganged up with beer bottles in the end of my lane. There is definitely a need for such vigilance to ensure public safety," he said. Police also clarified that individuals returning from work or with valid reasons are not targeted. In recent checks, youth allegedly driving under the influence of alcohol were counselled, 81 bikes were seized, and small quantities of marijuana cigarettes were found in a few cases. Officials added that no one was detained unnecessarily, countering claims circulating online.

# AI tools to increase IVF success rate and reduce patient costs



Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help reduce patient costs by achieving pregnancy faster during IVF (In vitro fertilisation) process, said Dr. Manika Khanna, Chairperson and MD at Gaudium IVF, while introducing two new AI tools — SiD (Sperm Identification Device) and ERICA (Embryo Ranking Intelligent Classification Assistant) — in New Delhi on Wednesday (April 1, 2026). These AI tools have been developed by the IVF 2.0, a UK-headquartered embryology innovation organisation, founded by embryologists Dr. Jacques Cohen and Dr. Alejandro Chave.

SiD is an AI system designed to optimise sperm selection during fertility treatments. It identifies the most viable sperm for fertilisation, which can lead to better-quality blastocyst formation. While ERICA supports embryologists

in embryo selection, provides objective, data-driven ranking of embryos. It is done by analysing static images of blastocysts based on key morphological and developmental characteristics. They have been data-fed by the genome sequencing data from India as well, said Dr. Khanna. The newly introduced technologies are designed to enhance critical stages of the IVF process.

Together, these non-invasive tools assist embryologists in improving decision-making and reducing variability. Early clinical observations suggest that the integration of these AI systems can significantly improve fertilisation and blastocyst development rates. Dr. Khanna said that nearly 15% Indians (male and female, both) are infertile now. She attributes it to increasing stress and exposure to pollutants, consumption of preservative-rich food, use of tobacco and unverified fitness supplements. By improving precision and consistency, the adoption of AI has the potential to reduce the need for repeat cycles, thereby lowering the emotional, physical, and financial burden on patients while inspiring confidence among clinicians and stakeholders, added Dr. Khanna. She said that these AI tools analyse the sample on 2.5 million parameters and help embryologists choose the best sperm and embryo. Dr. Khanna added that AI increases first-cycle IVF success rate by 5-7%. While these AI tools help reduce time and money, the base price for an IVF cycle begins around ₹2,00,000 at Gaudium IVF, with additional costs for complex cases.

# Belagavi entrepreneur helps commercial units overcome LPG shortage using alternative energy sources

Since the war in West Asia began a month ago, hotels and industries in Belagavi have been facing the shortage of commercial LPG cylinders. However, a third of them have switched to biomass-based stoves, water heaters and steam generators, thanks to Sameer Kanabargi, an innovator and entrepreneur who runs Phoenix Industries. For over 35 years, this small unit in the Udyambag Industrial Estate in Belagavi has been silently working in the field of alternative energy sources and disseminating technology developed by premier institutions like IIT, IISc, TERI and others. Phoenix Industries has designed and produced a range of equipment for the Indian Army and the Border Security Force. Some of the over two dozen tools and implements produced by Mr. Kanabargi are his own inventions. Phoenix produces biomass-based stoves, water heaters, gasifiers, steam generators and other equipment. They can be used to feed a small family of two to a crowd of two lakh. They use inputs, including agriculture waste like bagasse, stems, leaves and other farm residue, twigs, tree branches, coconut shells and other waste, paper, cardboard and plywood. "The input can be any inflammable waste material. There is no need to modify any of our equipment," Mr. Kanabargi said. It is estimated that around 150 of the 350 hotels and around 100 small and medium industries in Belagavi and Maharashtra have switched to biomass-based stoves and burners. Some of them have made the switch now while those that had stopped using them have returned to the renewable and low-cost energy source. The current LPG shortage has increased the demand by multiple times and the factory is working in three shifts to meet the demand. "I think the demand and inquiries we have got in the last 10 days is equal to the demand we received in the last 10 years," he said. "While we need to rely on foreign countries for LPG supply, biomass is easily available all around us. In rural areas, it is virtually free, while in the cities, it costs around ₹5-₹7 per kg. Three kilograms of biomass gives the same amount of heat energy as one kilo of LPG. But then, the final cost works out to be 40%-50% cheaper. Industries that use our products have recovered the cost in 30-100 days," he said. Mr. Kanabargi was



among the earliest adopters of the ASTRA Ole no smoke chulha designed by IISc's Centre for Application of Science and Technology for Rural Areas. "We produced over 20,000 model ASTRA Ole that were given to rural poor by the government and other agencies. He was among the few industrialists invited by IIT Bombay for a feasibility study of biomass-based gasifiers and other tools. He mass produced biomass stoves designed by TERI under its extension programme. He designed a portable room heater that runs on pine needles for BSF personnel working in sub zero temperatures and transferred the technology free. Mr. Kanabargi says he has this streak of "think differently" from the crowd. "It all started when I was in ninth standard," he recalls. He designed a multi-purpose kitchen stove that can cook rice and generate hot water at the same time. He won a State-level award for the project. He still keeps the working model in his office. He inherited a factory from his father Surendra Kanabargi but soon shifted focus to innovation-based products. He designed and produced sheep shearing kits and modern Charkhas using bicycle wheels that were faster and needed less labour. These units were commissioned by the India Development Society founded by activists S.R. Hiremath and Shyamala Hiremath. Dayanand Appayyanavarmath, owner of Shri Basaveshwara Khanavali, has introduced biomass-based stoves and heaters in all his eateries."

# AI can assist in detecting foetal abnormalities, however, clinical decisions require medical expertise



GNS News Agency, July 4

Prenatal care (before birth), during pregnancy, and postnatal care (after birth) are crucial for ensuring a healthy pregnancy and newborn. As these aspects of care evolve, the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in maternal and neonatal health raises important questions, generating both interest and concern among medical practitioners. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), India faces a significant burden of birth defects, with over 1.7 million children affected annually, and several of whom succumb to mortality due to delayed detection and inadequate care. Therefore, early diagnosis and intervention are crucial in reducing the impact of these birth defects and improving survival rates. Foetal abnormality detection is a critical aspect of prenatal care, ensuring early identification of potential complications. Traditional ultrasound methods rely on skilled sonographers and obstetricians, but challenges such as inter-observer variability and limited access to expertise can impact accuracy. AI-powered imaging, according to the specialists can transform foetal diagnostics by enhancing precision, standardising assessments, and improving neonatal outcomes.

However , specialists in maternal and neonatal health in India stress that AI should not replace human expertise but rather assist in time-consuming tests. They emphasise the importance of clinical oversight, ensuring that AI complements trained sonographers in interpreting results and providing holistic care. This perspective aligns with a recent study by King's College London and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, which found that AI-assisted scans nearly halve screening time while maintaining diagnostic reliability. According to Deepa Hariharan, senior neonatologist based in Chennai , accurate gestational age assessment is fundamental for managing newborns, particularly premature or sick infants. It is typically determined in the first trimester, but if high-quality scans are unavailable early in pregnancy, errors of up to two to three weeks can occur. In such cases, AI-enhanced ultrasound assessments can help in determining accurate gestational age, allowing better preparation for potential complications. Monitoring foetal growth involves measuring parameters like head circumference (HC) and abdominal circumference (AC). HC helps assess brain development and hereditary conditions, while AC indicates intrauterine health. AI aids in reducing human error and standardising biometric measurements, improving early detection of anomalies such as intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) or macrosomia related to maternal diabetes. The 20-week anomaly scan is a crucial milestone in prenatal screening. Post-28 weeks, Doppler studies or Doppler ultrasonography, evaluate foetal blood flow and amniotic fluid levels, essential for assessing foetal well-being. Here, AI-integrated ultrasound systems assist in real-time monitoring, helping clinicians identify distress signals early and plan timely interventions, including preterm deliveries or cesarean sections.

# Painted lady butterflies don't migrate like birds — ask their genes

Some plants, like snapdragons, can produce a wide range of colourful flowers. The difference between two flowers of different colours can be elicited by comparing their genomes and spotting the differences there, according to Daria Shipilina, a researcher at the Institute of Science and Technology Austria. As an evolutionary biologist, Shipilina is fascinated by how genes in an organism's genome contribute to its observable traits, or phenotypes. A phenotype is a physical, biological, or behavioural characteristic shaped by genetics as well as environmental factors. Examples include skin and hair colour in humans, vocal behaviour among birds, and the migratory patterns of some animals. "Migration is a very complex phenotype," according to Shipilina. "With colors, it's quite easy — we see it with our eyes." But migration is a complex adaptation that involves traits such as migratory timing, orientation, distance covered, and wing shape and size.

For many years, scientists had had difficulties studying migration in insects because of their size and experts' inability to track their movement thanks to technological limitations. But a boom in genomics and the development of tracking technologies in miniature has allowed researchers like Shipilina to delve into insect migration with astounding precision. Taking advantage of the new tools at her disposal, Shipilina has been studying if there are both short-distance and long-distance migrants among butterflies as there are among birds, by phenotyping them.

"For birds, we know a lot — we understand their migration routes and how genes control their migratory behavior in some species," Shipilina said. "We know practically nothing about insects and specifically genomics of insect migration comparatively." In a study published recently in the journal PNAS Nexus, her team of researchers from institutes in Austria, Benin, Canada, Senegal, Spain, and Sweden reported that short- and long-distance migrants among painted lady butterflies (*Vanessa cardui*) don't have significant genetic differences between them. Instead, the distances across which each member migrates appears to be influenced by environmental conditions. This is unusual. "Most migration genomic studies have focused on birds. But butterflies behave differently: they are a moving population that genetically behaves as one," Shipilina said. The painted lady butterfly is known for its remarkable ability to thrive in diverse climates, from temperate grasslands to deserts, and is found on every continent except Antarctica and South America. Scientists have previously tracked this butterfly traveling up to 15,000 km in a single migratory cycle, one of the longest insect migrations on the earth. And unlike birds, which often return to the same breeding grounds at the end of their journeys, the painted lady follows a multi-generational migration cycle, meaning no single individual completes the entire journey. Shipilina called it a "family business": each cycle spans eight to 10 generations, with each butterfly living for two to four weeks on average. The researchers, who are currently pursuing a project called 'Butterfly Migration', observed the migration and behavior of the butterflies from locations in Benin, Senegal, Morocco, Spain, Portugal, and Malta. They collected data over many

According to Harini Sreedaran, consultant neonatologist and paediatrician, Narayana Health, Bengaluru, AI can aid in diagnostic accuracy, particularly in paediatric care. "Paediatric emergency departments can use AI to triage patients, determining which cases need urgent attention," Dr. Sreedaran says. Similarly, AI models can help predict and diagnose conditions such as neonatal sepsis and pneumonia by analysing symptoms alongside imaging and laboratory findings. "In paediatric endocrinology, AI can aid in managing conditions like diabetes, adjusting treatment plans based on symptom patterns and patient responses," she says. Moreover, it can also contribute to patient education by alerting caregivers to seek medical help when concerning symptoms arise, helping prevent delayed interventions. In maternal health, AI plays a vital role in improving prenatal care by predicting and monitoring complications like preeclampsia and gestational diabetes, enabling timely interventions that can significantly improve outcomes for both mothers and babies. It can also support personalised care plans, tailoring treatment based on a woman's specific health needs. The existing foetal imaging faces several challenges, including inconsistent scan quality and a shortage of highly trained personnel. Several ultrasound centers lack expertise in conducting detailed anomaly scans, leading to misdiagnoses or the need for repeated imaging. AI has the potential to address these challenges by standardising assessments and enhancing diagnostic accuracy, particularly in underserved regions. Dr. Hariharan points out AI-powered portable ultrasound devices can aid in situations where clinical decision-making can be through data-driven insights, thereby expanding prenatal diagnostics to remote and resource-limited areas. This, she says, can aid in providing better maternal and foetal health.

Why expert evaluation matters ? While AI holds immense promise in neonatal and maternal healthcare, Dr. Sreedaran emphasises that it should complement, not replace, medical professionals. "AI can refine diagnostics and streamline processes, but human expertise remains essential in interpreting results and making critical decisions," she says. Swati Bhayana, consultant in paediatric hematology and oncology at Fortis, Gurugram, says, "AI can assist in complex diagnoses, acting as a second opinion in cases where there is uncertainty. It provides valuable insights and can help in detecting patterns that might be missed by the human eye.". However, she stresses the need for human judgment in medical decision-making. "Even though AI can provide precise information, there still needs to be an experienced doctor to determine what to do with that information," Dr. Bhayana says. AI can also generate a wide range of possible diagnoses, but without expert evaluation, there is a risk of misinterpretation. "One of the biggest hurdles is establishing normative values that reflect India's diverse population. Paediatric AI, in particular, faces difficulties due to variations in height, weight, and developmental metrics across different regions," Dr. Hariharan says. Additionally, she says "AI must be tailored to account for the unique healthcare needs and constraints of both urban and rural settings". Dr. Bhayana likens AI's role in medicine to online search engines. "Whenever you ask Google what causes a fever, it gives you a million answers, ranging from the common flu to cancer. AI works in a similar way; it might suggest both benign and severe conditions, but a doctor is needed to differentiate between them." According to specialists AI in sonography serves as an aid rather than a replacement. While it enhances diagnostic accuracy and speeds up the process, the final decision must always be made by a qualified medical professional.



years of the migration, mating, and other behaviours as the insects moved seasonally between Europe and North Africa. In spring, painted ladies migrate north from the Sahara desert, crossing the Mediterranean into southern Europe, where they breed. By late summer and autumn, their offspring begin the southward return, flying across Spain and Italy back to North Africa. "They are very strong flyers and are capable of developing very high speeds and flying very high," Shipilina said, adding that their thoracic muscles are akin to those of a bodybuilder, with several adaptations for long-distance flight. To understand their places of origin, the researchers captured the butterflies at the end of their life cycle and analysed their wings. The butterflies' wings retain stable isotopes of hydrogen and strontium absorbed from the food and water they consume as larvae. Because the wings are metabolically inactive, they preserve the isotopic signature of their birthplace. Thus, the researchers analysed the ratios of the isotopes in the wings of specimens. Since different isotopes degrade at different rates, their relative abundance is a signature. The challenge here, according to Shipilina, is finding out "where on the planet this combination of two stable isotopes is found". The team used European and North African isoscapes, maps of the distribution of isotopes of hydrogen and strontium. Then based on where the researchers found the butterflies, and from the places of their origin determined using the isoscapes, they estimated the distance covered by each butterfly. Genetic analysis revealed that short- and long-distance painted ladies don't form distinct genetic groups. Instead, they belonged to a single interbreeding population, Shipilina said. The study also found that wing size and shape didn't seem to affect the migration distance. The findings also challenged an assumption that higher wing-wear suggests greater distance: some painted ladies estimated to have traveled 4,000 km had minimal wing-wear. The study has raised new questions for Shipilina and her team. Their future research will explore whether butterflies from distant regions, such as the UK and Japan, bear genetic differences and how migration in painted ladies looks like in other parts of the world, especially in different environmental conditions. "But for now, butterfly migratory genomics is not sufficiently described at all," Shipilina said. By expanding both genetic and isotopic research, scientists hope to better understand how environmental conditions shape insect migration and how these patterns may shift in response to climate change.

# Tackling the disinformation threat in India



The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Risks Report 2025 underscores misinformation and disinformation as the highest ranked short-term global threat. The WEF defines "global risk" as an event that can adversely affect a sizeable portion of the population, the global GDP, and natural resources. The rapid rise of AI-generated content, algorithmic biases, and deep societal divides are making it harder than ever to separate facts from deception. India, poised to surpass 900 million Internet users, would find itself vulnerable without proper policy implementation to combat disinformation, with its diverse political and social landscape creating fertile ground for manipulated narratives, voter influence, and economic disruption. The crisis isn't just political; it fuels consumer boycotts, economic conflicts, and international tensions. Adding to the chaos, public trust in legacy media is dwindling, and both political actors and non-state entities are exploiting this gap to push propaganda. With trust in mainstream media declining, citizens are relying more on social media for news. This shift has resulted in a significant number of users forwarding unverified information, often believing it to be accurate simply because it comes from friends or family. With former U.S. President Joe Biden's warning of an emerging "tech oligarchy", the world's largest democracy shouldn't wait any further to come up with important policy changes such as the European Union's Digital Services Act to combat Disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI). With prominent politicians and national parties' social media accounts actively sharing deep fakes and unverified information, India is grappling with an escalating information disorder. As a rising global power, India has faced persistent Chinese disinformation threats since the 2017 Doklam standoff, prompting the ban of over 300 Chinese apps, including TikTok, to curb foreign interference. A study by the Indian School of Business and the CyberPeace Foundation reveals that political disinformation accounts for 46%, followed by general issues (33.6%) and religious content (16.8%). Platforms such as Weibo, operating within China, have been actively trying to propagate a distorted image of India. The risks could escalate if Meta ends fact-checking

partnerships, as seen in the U.S. The youth dividend of India is facing a growing threat from false information, as a survey report revealed. The Global Risks Report 2025 perceives that people in high-income countries are more concerned about disinformation risks in the coming years than those in lower-income nations with some exceptions. If Indian citizens fail to recognise how disinformation deepens political and societal divides, the consequences could be severe for the democratic and social fabric.

The Global Risks Report 2025 recommends measures such as upskilling developers working with algorithms, improving public awareness and digital literacy, and ensuring accountability through supervisory boards and AI councils to oversee Generative AI practices. Initiatives like Shakti – India Election Fact-Checking Collective, and the Deepfake Analysis Unit, played a role in tackling disinformation during the 2024 general elections. With almost 400 million Facebook and over 500 million WhatsApp users, India stands as the largest market for social media platforms. By capitalising on this market power, regulatory bodies can push big tech towards positive policy changes to tackle disinformation, such as audits and transparency actions for Very Large Online Platforms with more than 45 million users, similar to the EU's Digital Services Act. However, caution is needed, as there is a risk that ill-intentions could also escalate surveillance, potentially compromising democratic safeguards, with both censorship and surveillance highlighted as global risks in the WEF report. Platforms should be mandated with regular risk assessment. Adequate funding should be allocated for advancing cybersecurity research and innovation. Transparent content moderation policies must be implemented to address misleading content that threatens public health, safety, or democracy, with strict enforcement of non-discrimination rules. Online ads must disclose funding sources and target audiences to prevent malicious actors from spreading false narratives. Expanding public awareness initiatives, such as the Reserve Bank of India's Financial Literacy Campaign with Amitabh Bachchan, is essential for fostering critical thinking and societal resilience. Collaboration among civil society groups, fact-checkers, and regulators is crucial to create evidence-based policies for information integrity. A support system for independent research on disinformation and FIMI is necessary, along with stronger laws to protect journalists. With the global nature of disinformation, cross-border coalitions must be established for a coordinated global response. This challenge goes beyond technology; it is a test of our shared democratic values and threatens our collective ability to uphold truth, unity, and equality. As the world's largest democracy, India must set an example of diversity and resilience in a growingly polarised global digital world. The real question isn't just about fighting falsehoods, but also about ensuring that we safeguard our unity in diversity.

# With a very hot summer ahead, how prepared is India?

This summer is likely to be extremely warm. In its latest forecast for the coming months, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted an "above-normal number of heatwave days" over most parts of the country. The forecast is in line with the general trend of summer heat becoming more intense, and heatwaves occurring with greater frequency. This has implications for people's health, particularly that of poor and vulnerable groups, and has economic impacts, including income loss. Unlike some other consequences of climate change, the impacts of heatwaves can be largely managed, if timely actions are initiated. Several states, and cities, have prepared heat action plans to deal with heatwaves and soften their impact on the people. However, several reports have pointed out in recent years that their implementation has not been adequate. The IMD has said during the April to June summer season, "above normal" heatwave days are expected in practically the entire northern, central and eastern India. The extreme south, the northeastern region, Jammu & Kashmir, and Himachal Pradesh are the only regions that might escape exceptional heat this summer.

The 'normal' number of heatwave days varies from state to state. Rajasthan, for example, is expected to have eight to 12 heatwave days during the summer season in a normal year. However, in 2024, eastern Rajasthan experienced 23 heatwave days, while western Rajasthan had 29. Similarly, Uttar Pradesh is expected to get 10-12 days of heatwaves but had 32 last year. The year 2024 was particularly bad. Every state in the country, except Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, and Tripura, experienced a heatwave. Even Kerala recorded six days of heatwave conditions during the summer season. The year saw a total of 554 heatwave days across the country — a sum of heatwave days in all the states — which was the highest in the last 15 years.



The year 2010 had recorded 578 heatwave days. Incidentally, 2024 was the warmest year on record, both for the world and for India as well. However, there is no direct correlation between the number of heatwave days during a season and the average annual temperature. Heatwaves are concentrated periods of abnormally high temperatures, usually over relatively smaller areas. The annual temperature is the average of temperatures over the entire country or region over the year. For example, 2023 was the second warmest for India on record, but it had only 230 heatwave days. The year 2022 was relatively cool as a whole, but still recorded 467 heatwave days in the country. Increasing trend The likely number of heatwave days in the coming season cannot be predicted with much confidence, but the fact that the frequency and intensity of heatwaves in India are rising has been established by several studies.

One recent study, 'Heat waves in India: patterns, associations, and sub-seasonal prediction skills' by Raju Mandal and colleagues at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune, has mapped the heatwave trends over the country in the last seven decades. Published in the journal Climate Dynamics, the study found that instances of heatwaves in central, northwest and southeast regions of the

country had been growing at the rate of about three heatwave days per decade since 2000. The increase was more pronounced, in relative terms, in the south-eastern coastal region that includes Odisha, and parts of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Chhattisgarh. It also showed that there was a steady rise in long-duration heatwaves, those that extended for seven days at a stretch or more. The study said long-duration heatwaves had become more prevalent in the northwest, central and southeastern regions, "which may have more significant adverse impacts on ecosystems, agriculture and public health". The study also noted instances of heatwaves occurring outside the summer months. In 2023, for example, heatwave-like conditions existed in several parts of India in February. Heat action plans The IMD puts out fairly accurate forecasts, alerting states, and districts, five to seven days in advance about an impending heatwave. Unlike extreme rainfall which are highly localised events, heatwaves are spread over relatively large areas and are easily captured in weather models, leading to better forecasts. However, improved forecasts have not necessarily translated into more effective response measures to tackle heatwaves. At least 23 states, and many more districts, have developed their

localised heat action plans, which list out the steps to be taken to minimise the disruption caused by heatwaves, and prevent heat-related deaths. Many of these are low-cost and relatively easy interventions, such as the creation of shades in public places, arrangements for availability of water, distribution of oral rehydration solutions among vulnerable groups, or shifting of school, college and office timings. Such measures have been very effective in reducing exposure to heat, and containing heat-related illnesses. However, several recent assessments have shown that the implementation of heat action plans has not been adequate. A recent study by Sustainable Futures Collaborative, a Delhi-based research organisation, for example, found that the administration was more likely to implement short-term measures, such as making provision for drinking water in public places, creating cool shades for workers, or preparing hospitals for dealing with heat-related illnesses. However, longer-term interventions, like the greening of the cities, rejuvenation of water bodies, or creation of parks or open spaces which can provide long-lasting contributions towards bringing down the local temperature, were getting ignored. In effect, the governments were only reacting to a heatwave event when it occurred, and not doing enough to deal with the problem in a more comprehensive manner.



# AI infrastructure bets outshine weak Indian stock markets in 2026



The lack of an AI play may have contributed to the 8-10% decline in Indian stock markets so far in 2026. But a small segment of domestic businesses has boomed thanks to their links to AI. A number of companies building AI infrastructure and supplying hardware have delivered robust returns to shareholders, including those supplying components, cables and wiring, grid systems, and transmission lines for chipmakers and data centres. Take, for instance, Acutaas Chemicals and CG Power and Industries Solutions, whose shares have risen 93% and 45%, respectively, so far in 2026.

Surat-based Acutaas makes specialty photoresist chemicals used in semiconductor circuits. In February, the company acquired a 75% stake in South Korea-based Indichem Inc., turning it into a joint venture for expansion into the global semiconductor specialty chemicals market. Meanwhile, CG Power is expanding its semiconductor presence through its subsidiary CG Semi, which operates a state-of-the-art outsourced semiconductor assembly and testing (OSAT) facility in Sanand, Gujarat. The company has partnered with Thai and Japanese semiconductor companies to strengthen its manufacturing capabilities. Its subsidiary, Axiro Semiconductor, also has a radio frequency chip designing facility in Bengaluru.

Power, distribution, and transmission equipment makers have benefited from the massive energy needs for rapidly expanding data centres. Shares of companies such as GE Vernova India, Hitachi Energy India, and Quality Power have gained 61-86%. "We are looking at a much higher demand for data centres...data centres give you a better realisation of prices for the same products," GE Vernova's management said after their Q4 earnings. Data centres need equipment such as transformers for reliable power supply. As such, electrical infrastructure providers are crucial to

ensuring the robustness of these centres. Complex electrical and power systems also need robust cables and wiring, which benefits companies such as Polycab India and RR Kabel, with their share prices up 25-71% this year. "In power sector alone, if Rs 100 is spent on transmission and distribution, the translation to cable requirement is around 15% to 20%, which basically indicates that any amount invested in the power sector will translate into heavy demand for cable and wire," Polycab's management said in the Q4 earnings call. AI beneficiaries

Similarly, many other companies have ridden this AI boom, manufacturing hardware, providing software services, and playing a role in the AI value chain. Shares of Netweb Technologies, which designs AI servers and deploys them to help train AI models, have risen 59% this year. MTAR Technologies, which manufactures precision components used in semiconductor manufacturing, has more than tripled. EZE Networks, which provides AI-focused GPU cloud services, has more than doubled. "AI will eventually have an impact on every business," Persistence Capital said in a report earlier this month. "For now, we think it positively impacts two kinds: those that enable the build-out, and those that can immediately use AI to cut costs or launch new products." The problem, however, is that these companies have "immaterial representation in frontline Indian indices", Persistence Capital said. "In other markets, the AI winners are the biggest names, easy to find. India sits below the top of the index."

While FILs have been heavy sellers across most sectors, they have increased their stakes in many of the aforementioned AI-linked companies, reflecting their importance in the AI value chain. FILs have pulled out around \$30 billion from Indian equities so far in 2026, with their holdings in NSE-listed companies dropping to a 17-year low of 15.8% as of the end of March. However, foreign investors have raised their stakes in the likes of MTAR Tech, Polycab, GE Vernova, and Hitachi Energy. MTAR Tech has been among the biggest beneficiaries, with FILs increasing their stake in the company by over 5 percentage points quarter-on-quarter to 17.31% as of March 31. Polycab saw its FIL holding increase by 3.4 percentage points to 18.21%. FILs also raised their stake in Acutaas by 2.8 percentage points to 19.48%. FILs may have heavily sold Indian equities in recent months, but the AI boom has not bypassed domestic companies. They may be out of the limelight, but they are building the physical infrastructure that underpins global AI leaders such as Nvidia and AMD.

## Ashok Vaswani to step down as Kotak Mahindra Bank CEO in December



Ashok Vaswani, Managing Director & CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank, has decided not to seek reappointment upon completion of his current term on December 31, 2026. The bank said the decision to step down after the current tenure is due to personal reasons. "The board has, at its meeting held today, respected his decision and has initiated the process for the appointment of a new Managing Director &

CEO. The process will be completed within applicable regulatory timelines," the bank said in an exchange filing. The bank's board formally appointed him as MD & CEO for a three-year term, effective January 1, 2024. Uday Kotak, founder of Kotak Mahindra Bank, stepped down as MD and CEO in September 2023. Kotak Mahindra Bank is the fourth largest private sector bank with a market capitalisation of Rs 4.06 lakh crore. With over 35 years of global banking experience, Vaswani held leadership roles at Citigroup, Barclays and Pagaya Technologies. At Barclays, he led the transformation from analog to digital, redesigning tech architecture and customer journeys. He was CEO of Barclays UK and later of its Global Consumer, Private, Corporate and Payments businesses. At Citigroup, he served as CEO Asia Pacific. He also served as President of Pagaya, scaling its AI fintech operations. He also served on boards including LSEG, VISA and SP Jain Institute. He holds degrees in Commerce, is a Chartered Accountant, Company Secretary and has completed Executive Education from Stanford.

## Board 'ignored' queries on legal review after resignation, says HDFC Bank ex-chair Atanu Chakraborty



Chakraborty said that he had hoped his resignation would prompt the board to reflect on the concerns he had raised, rather than treat the matter as what he described as a "compliance exercise." Chakraborty said that he had hoped his resignation would prompt the board to reflect on the concerns he had raised, rather than treat the matter as what he described as a "compliance exercise." Former HDFC Bank chairman Atanu Chakraborty on Saturday said he had repeatedly sought clarity from the bank's board on the scope and legal basis of the independent review initiated after his resignation in March but got no response from the lender.

According to CNBC-TV18, Chakraborty also inquired about the legal provisions under which the review was being conducted, but said those queries too went unanswered. Giving a "clean chit" to the bank, the law firms — Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, PC and Wadia Ghandy & Co — said the contemporaneous evidence re-

viewed was inconsistent with Chakraborty's statement, and law firms' review did not identify any basis for the statement. Chakraborty did not interact with the law firms which were appointed by the bank's board.

On March 18, Chakraborty resigned as chairman of the bank with immediate effect, saying that "certain happenings and practices within the bank are not in congruence with my personal values and ethics". Six days later, HDFC Bank said that the board of directors have appointed external law firms — domestic as well as international — to review the points highlighted by Chakraborty in his resignation letter. Chakraborty said that he had hoped his resignation would prompt the board to reflect on the concerns he had raised, rather than treat the matter as what he described as a "compliance exercise." The law firms said the legal review was conducted over a three-month period and involved the review of thousands of documents and interviews of the Independent directors and several members of senior management. "The bank and external law firms repeatedly requested that Chakraborty speak with them as part of the legal review, but ultimately the interview with Chakraborty did not occur," the law firms said. After the probe, law firms found that Chakraborty's statement and its implications were not substantiated by the record and witness interviews, they said. "Specifically, the minutes of the meetings Chakraborty attended were a product of a comprehensive drafting, review and approval process that afforded Chakraborty an opportunity to record any 'happenings and practices' that purportedly were not in congruence with his personal values and ethics," they said.

## Tata Motors targets annual CV sales of over one million units after Iveco deal

New Delhi: Leading automobile firm Tata Motors is targeting annual commercial vehicle (CV) sales of more than one million units in the coming years as it prepares to integrate Italy's Iveco Group, Chairman N. Chandrasekaran said on Monday. Addressing shareholders at the company's second annual general meeting after the commercial vehicle business was demerged and separately listed, Chandrasekaran said the proposed acquisition of Iveco would significantly accelerate Tata Motors' global ambitions. "Together we will be in the range of 6 lakh vehicles to start and easily see us crossing 1 million vehicles in the years to come," he said. Moreover, the combined business will begin with annual sales of around 600,000 commercial vehicles, positioning Tata Motors among the world's four largest commercial vehicle manufacturers. The

acquisition — which is awaiting regulatory approvals — is expected to be completed by the second quarter of the current financial year. The deal would provide Tata Motors access to advanced powertrain and next-generation technologies, strengthen its manufacturing and product portfolio, and significantly expand its international footprint, Chandrasekaran said. "We will optimise, scale and grow to be ranked amongst the top four commercial vehicle entities globally," he added. The expansion plans come after Tata Motors Commercial Vehicles reported its strongest financial performance since becoming an independently listed company following the demerger in November 2025. The company is also reducing its dependence on the cyclical truck business by expanding higher-margin and relatively stable revenue streams.

## 'Never a homebreaker': Asha Parekh on Nasir Hussain and love beyond marriage; expert weighs in



Relationships don't always follow a conventional path, and not every meaningful emotional connection leads to marriage. Veteran actor Asha Parekh once reflected on her bond with filmmaker Nasir Hussain, describing a relationship that was both deeply personal and widely known in the film industry. Hussain had launched her as a leading actor in Dil Deke Dekho (1959), and the two went on to collaborate on several successful films. Speaking to journalist Subhash K Jha, Asha Parekh shared that she has always believed in acknowledging love rather than concealing it. "Yes, Nasir Saab was the only man I ever loved. It is not respectful to those whom we love if we don't acknowledge their presence to the world." She added that, for her, expressing her feelings openly has always felt important. "I don't know about others. And I won't comment on what others feel about this. For me, it is important to acknowledge my feelings. And, I am proud to do so." Addressing long-standing perceptions about their relationship, she clarified that there was no secrecy or conflict involved. "Because I wasn't! There was nothing secret about our association. Nasir Saab's wife was in the know. We shared a very warm and cordial equation. I knew there was never going to be marriage or anything. I was just happy to be a small part of his world." She also spoke about how she viewed her role in the relationship, firmly rejecting labels often attached to such situations. "I was never a homebreaker. There was never any ill will between me and Nasir Saab's family. In fact, when my biography (by Khali Mohamed) was launched, I was so happy to see Nusrat (Hussain's daughter) and Imran Khan (grandson) at my book launch. I feel I've lived my life decently and without hurting anyone." In a 2019 interview

with Verve magazine, she also mentioned: "I know I admitted to being in love with Nasir Hussain in The Hit Girl, but as much as I loved him, I could never consider breaking up his family and traumatising his children. It was far simpler and satisfying to be on my own. Make no mistake, it wasn't like I didn't want to get married. In fact, my mother was very keen on it and had even assembled my trousseau in advance. I met my share of boys, but the end result was always the same — they weren't the right kind of men for me. Over time, my mother also gave up her dream of seeing me as a bride because whoever she showed my horoscope to would say my marriage wouldn't be a successful one. It was not the kind of thing I believed in, but it did grant me some semblance of peace."

But why do some people choose to remain in meaningful relationships that do not lead to marriage?

Psychologist Rasshi Gurnani tells indianexpress.com, "Some individuals remain in relationships that do not lead to marriage because the connection fulfils core emotional needs such as companionship, intimacy, validation, and a sense of belonging without the pressures of formal commitment." She adds that psychologically, these relationships "can meet attachment needs while allowing personal or situational constraints to remain intact." For some, the bond itself holds more value than societal definitions of commitment. Such relationships can also offer emotional stability and identity reinforcement, especially when both individuals share mutual understanding.

How can individuals navigate love and attachment while respecting boundaries?

Navigating love and attachment in such contexts requires strong emotional awareness and clear boundaries. Gurnani suggests, "Individuals need to differentiate between emotional needs and realistic expectations, ensuring they do not create internal conflict. Respecting boundaries involves open communication, acknowledging limitations, and avoiding dependency that compromises self-respect." Psychologically, she states that it is about maintaining secure attachment while regulating desires that cannot be fulfilled. This balance helps prevent emotional distress and preserves the integrity of the relationship without forcing it into a structure it cannot sustain.

## Why 43°C feels different in Europe than in India



As Europe experiences an intense heatwave, a social media post comparing temperatures in Europe and India has sparked widespread debate. X user Umed Pratap Singh wrote, "Is 43°C in Europe different than 43°C in India? What's so rona dhona about? Here, the temperature even touches 48°C." The post quickly went viral, prompting many users to explain why the same temperature can feel very different depending on where you are. One user pointed to differences in housing and cooling systems, writing, "They don't have ACs. Very few have fans. Many apartments have restrictions on how much a window can open, many of them open upto 10 degrees angle only." Another highlighted how cities are built for different climates, saying, "Infrastructure is built for the cold. 43 in Europe will feel like >55 in India. Many houses don't even have fans; they're waking up to portable units now out of necessity (sic)." A third user suggested weather conditions also play a role, commenting, "I think may be due to high humidity, like in our coastal area, 35 is unbearable."

Many people on social media have remarked that Indian summers feel very different from European summers, especially as news reports and viral clips of the ongoing heatwave across Europe have sparked widespread discussion. The discussion raises a question: if the thermometer shows the same number, why can the experience be so different? Temperature alone does not determine how hot we feel. Factors such as humidity, wind, direct sunlight, urban design, building materials, air conditioning, and even people's acclimation to a particular climate can influence how the body responds to heat. Understanding these differences is becoming increasingly important as heatwaves become more frequent across many parts of the world.

Why the same temperature can feel different Dr Palleti Siva Karthik Reddy, MBBS, MD General Medicine, FAIG, Consultant Physician at Elite Care Clinic, tells indianexpress.com, "A temperature of 43°C affects the human body similarly, irrespective of geography, but the surrounding environment determines how dangerous that temperature becomes. Factors such as humidity, direct solar exposure, wind patterns, nighttime cooling and urban heat retention significantly influence heat stress. Dr Manjusha Agarwal, Consultant- Internal Medicine, Gleneagles Hospi-

tal, Mumbai, adds, "A temperature of 43°C is physiologically stressful regardless of the location, but how the body experiences it depends on environmental factors such as humidity, wind, direct sunlight, and the urban heat island effect. High humidity reduces sweat evaporation, while poor ventilation and heat-retaining concrete surfaces make it harder for the body to cool itself, increasing the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke." Many parts of India experience high temperatures regularly, Dr Reddy explains, and populations have developed certain levels of behavioural and physiological adaptation. "In contrast, several European regions historically experience milder summers, making sudden heat waves more difficult for the body and society to handle." Urban infrastructure also plays a major role. Dr Reddy states that dense cities with limited shade, heat-retaining buildings and poor ventilation can intensify heat exposure, making the same temperature feel substantially more severe.

Why buildings and cooling matter According to Dr Agarwal, homes without air conditioning, buildings designed to retain heat, and poor natural ventilation can trap indoor heat, preventing the body from cooling effectively, especially during prolonged heatwaves. This increases the risk of dehydration, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and worsening of underlying heart, lung, and kidney conditions, particularly in older adults and those with chronic illnesses. "Many European homes are designed to retain heat during long winters rather than dissipate it during summer," notes Dr Reddy, adding that thick insulation, smaller windows and limited cross ventilation can trap heat indoors, causing indoor temperatures to remain dangerously high even after sunset. He shares that when the body is exposed to prolonged heat without adequate cooling, its ability to regulate temperature becomes impaired. This increases the risk of dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, particularly among older adults, children and individuals with chronic illnesses. "Access to cooling is a major determinant of health outcomes during heat waves. In places where air conditioning is uncommon, people may experience continuous heat exposure for several days, preventing the body from recovering adequately." The human body primarily cools itself through sweating. Dr Reddy says, "When sweat evaporates from the skin, it removes heat from the body. In humid conditions, the air already contains significant moisture, making sweat evaporate less efficiently." As a result, he reveals that the body retains more heat, causing greater physiological stress even at lower temperatures. "This is why 35°C with high humidity can sometimes feel more uncomfortable and dangerous than 43°C in a dry climate." "Humidity reduces the evaporation of sweat, which is the body's main cooling mechanism, making it harder to release excess heat even if the air temperature is lower. As a result, the 'feels like' temperature better reflects the actual heat stress on the body and is often a more accurate indicator of the risk of heat-related illnesses than the air temperature alone," concludes Dr Agarwal.

## Barun Sobti shocks Farah Khan, admits not eating for 14-15 hours during shoots

Farah Khan, who recently visited actor Barun Sobti and his childhood sweetheart-turned-wife, Pashmeen Manchanda's Mumbai home, asked the actor about his massive weight loss post Kohrra. Responding to Farah on her YouTube vlog, Pashmeen said, "He doesn't eat during shoots. He literally doesn't eat." Leaving Khan shocked, Barun confessed that he doesn't eat and responded, "For 14-15 hours...what to do...I am focused on the scene." Taking a cue from the actor's candid confession, we asked an expert about what prolonged fasting does to our bodies, especially when working.

From a clinical perspective, going without food for 14-15 hours is essentially a form of prolonged fasting or time-restricted eating. "In certain settings, intermittent fasting can have benefits such as improved insulin sensitivity and better appetite regulation. However, the context matters greatly. A planned fast is very different from skipping meals due to hectic schedules and work demands," remarked consultant dietician Garima Goyal. During long shoot hours, the body is often under physical and mental stress. "Prolonged peri-

ods without eating can lead to fatigue, irritability, reduced concentration, headaches, and lower energy levels, especially if hydration and nutrient intake are inadequate. For individuals performing physically demanding roles or working long shifts, inadequate fuelling can also impact recovery and muscle maintenance," said Goyal. Another important concern is what happens after such long gaps. "Extended fasting can sometimes lead to overeating later in the day, larger portions, or choosing quick, high-calorie foods due to excessive hunger. This may ultimately disrupt energy balance and digestive comfort," said Goyal. From a nutrition standpoint, if someone naturally prefers a time-restricted eating pattern and meets their nutritional needs within the eating window, it may work for them. "However, unintentionally remaining unfed because of work commitments is generally not an ideal long-term strategy, particularly if it leads to inadequate protein, micronutrient, and overall calorie intake," clarified Goyal. Fasting by choice and skipping meals due to a busy schedule are not the same thing. "Your body can adapt to occasional long gaps between meals,

# GCL could experiment with board swaps, heart-rate monitors this season



GNS News Agency, July 4

When the fourth edition of the Global Chess League is held this September, teams might be able to jiggle around their players. In three seasons so far, players have been restricted to playing on fixed boards, meaning players picked for the 'icon board' can only take on the icon player of the other team. But in a bid to offer more strategic options to teams, the GCL could allow teams to decide their board orders. This means that in a battle between Alpine APL Pipers and FYERS American Gambits, for example, one team might opt to play Javokhir Sindarov on a different board than against Carlsen. League commissioner Gourav Rakshit said that currently the idea was in an exploratory phase, but was likely to be formalised in the coming weeks so that all the six teams have enough time to work on how they can use the new rule to their advantage in the tournament that will be held in Bengaluru from September 3 to 13.

"This will be something that we haven't seen before in

GCL. It is extremely powerful from an entertainment point of view and from a strategy point of view. This is going to make the tournament itself a lot more exciting," Rakshit told The Indian Express after the season 4 draft of the GCL. "We're also looking at whether we can include a rest day in the tournament, which gives teams a chance to reset if they are not doing well." He added that the league was also looking to bring in heart-rate monitors, which have been tried at other chess events like Freestyle Chess. The heart-rate monitor offers fans the chance to get a peek into a player's emotions when they are in a crunch situation in a game. "The heart-rate monitor potentially gives a little more insight into the drama that's actually unfolding over the board. That's also something that we're exploring," Rakshit added. When the GCL starts, fans are also likely to be given the chance to contemplate moves from live games. The fourth season of GCL will have former world champion Magnus Carlsen back after he skipped last edition, while Divya Deshmukh will feature for the first time. The biggest absentees are world champion Gukesh, women's world championship contender Vaishali Rameshbabu and R Praggnanandhaa.

"Gukesh indicated early on that he wouldn't be available. Vaishali as well. Because they're preparing for the World Championships. The Olympiad being right after also potentially has an effect although all the other players headed to the Olympiad are actually participating in GCL," Rakshit said. "The chess calendar this year is overflowing with tournaments. In fact, there are marquee tournaments that have overlaps where players are having to make a choice. That's something that is being addressed at a central level by FIDE. So next year FIDE will look to give us a clean slot again."

# Bowlers not taking wickets just one of the issues for Harmanpreet's team

GNS News Agency, July 4

India's 2026 Women's T20 World Cup campaign ended in the league phase with a six-wicket loss to Australia at Lord's on Sunday, but the exit felt less like a shock and more like confirmation. The cracks had been visible for a while. India never found a clear identity: the batting lacked power, the bowling combinations kept changing, the middle order remained unsettled and the fielding faltered at key moments. While other sides arrived with defined roles and plans, India spent the tournament searching for theirs.

Perhaps the clearest example was India's ever-changing playing XI. Following the win over Bangladesh, captain Harmanpreet Kaur defended the constant tinkering, saying combinations were determined by opposition match-ups. "I think when we came here, one thing was very clear in our mind that every game is a different opposition and they have different positives and negatives, and accordingly we have set our playing XI. So we were very open about our playing XI, and we just thought about what is the best combination on that part. We will be well with that," she said. Middle-order muddle Yet that flexibility led to uncertainty.

India shuffled batters between Nos. 3, 4 and 5 without anyone settling into a defined role. Jemimah Rodrigues moved across positions through the middle order, scoring only 92 runs in five matches, while Harmanpreet batted between Nos. 4 and 6 before producing her lone standout knock at No. 4 — a 27-ball 56 against Australia — after 85 runs in her first four innings. India's Harmanpreet Kaur looks on during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup match between India and South Africa, at Emirates Old Trafford, Manchester, England, Sunday June 21, 2026. (Nigel French/PA via AP) India's Harmanpreet Kaur looks on during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup match against South Africa. (AP)

The team numbers reflected that struggle. India's batters between Nos. 3 and 5 scored only 281 runs at a strike rate of 128.31, the ninth-best among the 12 teams. Australia topped the charts with 415 runs at 157.20, England scored 381 at 144.32 and South Africa scored 328 at 134.43. Australia struck 55 fours and England 53, while India managed only 28. "I think we really have to rethink our strategy or our T20 game. We really need to put our heads around what combination we are going to play," head coach Amol Muzumdar admitted after the defeat to Australia. The lack of stability also exposed India's biggest batting weakness: the absence of sustained power. Only Deepti Sharma (171.42), Richa Ghosh (153.84) and opener Shafali Verma (151.69) struck at above 150, while Rodrigues (119.48) and Harmanpreet (131.77) struggled to accelerate consistently. India also appeared reluctant to promote Richa often enough to get the best out of her. Bowling instability If the batting lacked clarity, the bowling was in even greater flux. India fielded five different pace-bowling combinations in five league games, rotating Kranti Gaud, Renuka Singh Thakur, Arundhati Reddy and Nandani Sharma. The experimental



tion yielded little as India's pacers claimed just five wickets. The inability to strike with the new ball has left them chasing games for a while now. Among the top 10 teams in T20Is since the 2024 World Cup, India's Powerplay bowling has the worst economy rate (7.8), the highest bowling average (36.8) and the most deliveries per wicket (28), showing an inability to contain runs or take wickets. Indian pace attack has been toothless at Women's World Cup 2026. (AP) Indian pace attack has been toothless at Women's World Cup 2026. (AP) The lack of wickets from the pacers at this World Cup meant the burden fell almost entirely on the spinners. Left-arm spinner Sree Charani emerged as India's player of the tournament with 14 wickets. All-rounder and off-spinner Deepti Sharma, however, could not maintain the momentum after her 5/10 against Pakistan, managing only two wickets in the next four matches. Shreyanka Patil's injury further weakened India's attack. Overall, India's bowling was respectable without being exceptional. Their 36 wickets were the fifth-most in the tournament, but the difference lay in how teams like England, Australia and South Africa had more settled attacks sharing the workload.

As Muzumdar said: "Sree Charani has... gone to the number one bowler in the chart... it just speaks volumes about how she has approached international cricket." One bowler alone, however, was never going to win a World Cup. India's fielding compounded those issues. Eleven dropped catches across five matches repeatedly undermined the bowlers' efforts, with South Africa in particular punishing the lapses. "I don't think our bowling or our fielding helped the cause, to be very honest," Muzumdar admitted. The next T20 World Cup is two years away, allowing India to reassess personnel, leadership, roles and the team's overall blueprint. Asked if he expected Harmanpreet to continue as captain, Muzumdar replied: "It's up to the selectors to decide the captain. I think, yes. My short and sweet answer would be yes." Whatever direction India opt for moving forward, the 2026 campaign never took off — not for lack of experience, but because they never managed a single complete performance against the tournament's strongest sides when it mattered most.

# Divya Deshmukh teams up with Carlsen; Sindarov, Nihal in same team for GCL



GNS News Agency, July 4

Defending champions Alpine APL Pipers have retooled their roster by adding Magnus Carlsen, Koneru Humpy, Divya Deshmukh, Anish Giri, Vidit Gujrathi and reigning world rapid champion Volodar Murzin for the upcoming season of Global Chess League, to be held in Bengaluru from September 3 to 13. This will be Deshmukh's first GCL while Carlsen will return after sitting out season 3. World champion Gukesh, women's world championship contender Vaishali Rameshbabu and R Praggnanandhaa have skipped this season.

Meanwhile, at the GCL Draft held in Mumbai on Monday, the FYERS American Gambits managed to put together an intimidating line-up bolstered by recent Bullet Chess Champion Nihal Sarin, world championship contender Javokhir Sindarov and three-time world blitz champion Bibisara Assaubayeva. The fourth edition of the Global Chess League will see five-time world champion

Viswanathan Anand switch teams for the first time in league history, swapping his Ganges Grandmasters jersey for PBG Alaskan Knights, where he will be joined by Arjun Erigaisi. The team will also have Turkish phenom Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus, who has been praised as the most talented 14-year-old the sport has ever seen, the youngest grandmaster in chess history Abhimanyu Mishra and veterans like Kateryna Lagno and Nino Batsiashvili. Two-time winners and last season's runners-up Triveni Continental Kings made their most decisive moves before the draft, retaining Season 3 MVP Alireza Firouzja, China's Wei Yi and Zhu Jiner. Then they picked up the promising Indian pair of Aravindh Chithambaram and Pranav Venkatesh while also adding Alexandra Kosteniuk. Global Chess League season 4 teams

FYERS American Gambits: Javokhir Sindarov, Nihal Sarin, Daniil Dubov, Bibisara Assaubayeva, Sara Khadem, Marc Andria Maurizzi Alpine APL Pipers: Magnus Carlsen, Anish Giri, Vidit Santosh Gujrathi, Divya Deshmukh, Koneru Humpy, Volodar Murzin Ganges Grandmasters: Ian Nepomniachtchi, Levon Aronian, Leinier Dominguez, Polina Shuvalova,

Stavroula Tsolakidou, Leon Luke Mendoncaup Grad Mumba Masters: Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, Vladimir Fedoseev, Carissa Yip, Harika Dronavalli, Bardiya Daneshvar PBG Alaskan Knights: Viswanathan Anand, Arjun Erigaisi, Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus, Kateryna Lagno, Nino Batsiashvili, Abhimanyu Mishra Triveni Continental Kings: Alireza Firouzja, Wei Yi, Aravindh Chithambaram, Zhu Jiner, Alexandra Kosteniuk, Pranav Venkatesh

# Three jumps over 8.30m: Sreeshankar leads India's best long jump generation



Three jumpers over 8m. The top two beyond 8.30m. On Sunday at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, the men's long jump final at the 65th National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships produced a result that belongs on the global stage — because it already is. Sreeshankar Murali won with 8.38m — the second-best jump of his career, behind only his national record of 8.41m set on the same track. Shahnnavaz Khan of Uttar Pradesh finished second with 8.30m, a personal best. David P of Tamil Nadu took third with 8.06m. The 8.38m makes him the seventh-best jumper in the world this season and the best in Asia. Both Sreeshankar and Shahnnavaz secured Asian Games qualification with their performances, with the AFI set to announce the Games-bound contingent on Monday. Sreeshankar and Ancy Sojan, who shattered the women's long jump national record earlier in the meet, were named the best male and female athletes of the championships. "This is probably the best year for the Indian long jumpers overall," Sreeshankar said. "The competition has increased and these youngsters are pushing each other and me also." The moment Sreeshankar took off from the board in the fourth round, he knew. After landing, he broke into the Pushpa celebration before turning to the scoreboard. When 8.38m flashed, the stands erupted. The moment Sreeshankar took off from the

board in the fourth round, he knew. (AFI Photo) The moment Sreeshankar took off from the board in the fourth round, he knew. (AFI Photo) "I knew it was a big jump. The weather conditions are ideal for me. Humidity helps my body function better. That is why I love Kalinga Stadium. My personal best came here. Last year I returned from injury and jumped 8.13m and this year 8.38m," he said. The consistency was as striking as the distance. All five of his legal jumps cleared 8m — 8.06m, 8.00m, 8.21m, 8.38m, 8.26m — and three exceeded 8.20m. What separates him from the rest of the field is not one big jump but the inability to produce a small one. "After my comeback from injury last year, I needed one big jump. I had told my dad today the competition will be at 8.30 due to the weather," he said. It nearly did not happen at all. Sreeshankar suffered a career-threatening knee injury in 2024 that ruled him out of the Paris Olympics. "After the injury, I never thought I would jump this far. When I first broke my knee and had the MRI report in my hand, it looked over for me," he said. The knee is still not fully right. "One knee is big and one is small. There are three anchor screws in my knee, so I need to ice it regularly and take a deep tissue massage. But I have got used to the new training regime now." Shahnnavaz, who trains alongside Sreeshankar at SAI Trivandrum, is nineteen, from a village in Pratapgarh district in UP, where his father drove a taxi before dying of cancer when Shahnnavaz was ten. An uncle took him to athletics. On Sunday he jumped 8.30m. "Each of these guys are amazing. Shahnnavaz, David, Jithin — they have really raised the bar," Sreeshankar said. "We have five Indians jumping above 8m. That tells you about the depth. We train together and my father and his coach are always discussing ideas — the knowledge transfer helps both of us." When asked whether being pushed by the youngsters bothered him, he grinned. "That's a good way to tell me I'm getting old." With five Indians in the Asian long jump top ten heading into the Games, the pit at Kalinga has rarely looked more crowded with genuine talent. The man his father made is still the best of them.

# Cricket's road to Olympics: No West Indies, India among automatic qualifiers

The Indian women's cricket team have qualified for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics while the men's team will likely go through due to their T20I ranking as the International Cricket Council unveiled the qualification path to the Games on Monday. It will be the first time since 1900 that the sport will be played at the Olympics, and the first time ever that women's cricket will make an appearance. The T20I format will be used at the Olympics, with six nations competing for the podium places. Five of them are to be decided through the ICC T20I rankings for men and through rankings in the ongoing 2026 Women's T20 World Cup for women. Meanwhile, the West Indies, who won the women's T20 World Cup in 2016 and the men's tournament in 2014 and 2016,

The Indian men's team, the defending T20 World Cup champions, are the top-ranked side, naturally making them the highest ranked team in their continent — Asia, which is the minimum criteria for automatic qualification. The Indian women's team's T20 World Cup campaign ended in the group stage but they are the highest placed team in the tournament from Asia. "The ongoing ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 has confirmed the first participants for LA28, with Australia, Great Britain (via England), India and South Africa qualifying as the highest-placed teams from Africa, Asia, Europe and Oceania," said the ICC.

"For the Men's competition, five of the six nations will be decided through ICC Men's T20I rankings, with the highest-ranked eligible teams from Africa, Asia, Europe and Oceania on 31 December 2026 progressing to LA28, provided they are in the top-15 of the rankings." The United States of America, as the host nation, are eligible for automatic qualification in both men's and women's events if they remain within the top 15 of the rankings at the December



31 cut-off. On the women's side, should the USA women's team not meet that criteria, a fifth automatic qualification spot will be awarded to the highest-placed non-qualified nation in the ICC T20I rankings from any continent as of 1 March 2027.

"If the USA men's team do not meet that criteria, the fifth automatic qualification spot will be allocated to the next-highest-ranked nation from any continent that has not already qualified by 31 December 2026," said the ICC. Cricket's global governing body also announced a first-ever ICC Olympics Qualifier for the one remaining spot in the men's and women's events. "Six nations will compete in each of the Men's and Women's T20 competitions, with all matches to be played at the purpose-built cricket venue in Pomona," it said. Meanwhile, while the West Indies are ineligible to participate, the ICC said that it will host a "dedicated Caribbean Qualifier event to determine which NOC will represent the region at the ICC Olympics Qualifier" if they are among the eight highest-ranked teams not yet qualified by December 31.

# Vishy Anand not running for FIDE Deputy President post as Arkady Dvorkovich announces re-election bid



FIDE president Arkady Dvorkovich will run for a third term as head of the global governing body of chess when the election takes place in September, but five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand will not be contesting for the Deputy President's post that he holds currently. "Vishy will not be running again as Deputy President. However, he remains a valued part of our main team and will continue working closely with me on strengthening relations with federations, understanding their needs, and supporting their priorities," Dvorkovich told T. Timur Turlov, President of the Kazakhstan Chess Federation, President of the International School Chess Federation and founder and CEO of Freedom Holding Corporation, will run alongside Dvorkovich as the candidate for FIDE Deputy President's post.

"We are grateful to have the backing, experience and friendship of the great Vishy Anand. He has given so much to chess — both as a player and as an official, and continues to do so. His knowledge and experience, including the remarkable growth of chess in India, will help us better understand the challenges federations face in building infrastructure, developing talent, and popularising chess," the FIDE chief added. On his part, Anand confirmed that if Dvorkovich is re-elected, he intends to remain at the heart of the FIDE leadership team, working closely with the Russian on the organisation's strategic priorities, including global chess development and support for national federations. I have worked closely with Arkady over the past four years and have seen his commitment to chess and to federations around the world. I'm proud to be part of his team, and I'm confident we will continue to strive for the global chess community! <https://t.co/rahYCr0jRE>

So far, two contenders have thrown their hat in the

ring to challenge Dvorkovich: German entrepreneurs Wadim Rosenstein and Jan Henric Buettner. Rosenstein is the founder of WR Chess and collaborates with FIDE to organise the World Rapid and Blitz Teams Championship while Buettner is the man behind Freestyle Chess. The FIDE presidential election will take place at the FIDE General Assembly, during the 46th Chess Olympiad in Uzbekistan in September. Dvorkovich won elections held in Batumi (Georgia) in 2018 and Chennai in 2022. Dvorkovich said that if re-elected, his priorities over the next four years will be to provide every federation with "better practical support and digital services, expand opportunities for young people, women and seniors, strengthen the connection between online and over-the-board chess, and continue working towards bringing chess into more schools around the world". Timur Turlov, President of the Kazakhstan Chess Federation, President of the International School Chess Federation and founder and CEO of Freedom Holding Corp., will run alongside Dvorkovich as the candidate for FIDE Deputy President. (Special Arrangement) Timur Turlov, president of the Kazakhstan Chess Federation, President of the International School Chess Federation and founder and CEO of Freedom Holding Corp., will run alongside Dvorkovich as the candidate for FIDE Deputy President.

"The goal is not simply bigger events, but to make chess stronger everywhere," he said. "During the past eight years, we have strengthened FIDE financially, expanded global events and invested more in children's chess, women's competitions, senior chess, as well as social and educational programmes. But this is not the end point. It is a solid foundation for the future. Dvorkovich has constantly been criticised for his links to the Russian government. He was the country's deputy prime minister till May 2018. "I understand why people ask the question (about his links to Russian politics) Since becoming president, I have represented every federation equally, travelled widely across the world, made an effort to work with everyone."

Our partners are global, our events are held all over the world, our team is international. For the past eight years, we have served more than 200 national federations, helping them grow and promote chess in their own regions. My responsibility has always been to chess, and this will continue," Dvorkovich said. "My focus is not politics. My focus is chess, players, federations and the future of our sport."

# ‘Hamza more challenging than Khilji’: What Ranveer Singh told Superyou co-founder, said Dhurandhar took ‘so much out of me’



Actor Ranveer Singh has surely set a benchmark with his performance in Dhurandhar. While his role in the Aditya Dhar film is said to be his career best, in the past, Ranveer has also played various other challenging roles. Until Dhurandhar, Ranveer Singh’s performance as Alauddin Khilji in Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s Padmaavat remained his most challenging role, for which the actor had famously said that it sent him in a dark place and impacted him personally. However, his character in Dhurandhar precedes that now. In a conversation with Men’s XP, Ranveer Singh’s business partner Nikunj Biyani recalls their conversation where Ranveer said playing Hamza and Jaskirit Singh Rang in Dhurandhar was more challenging than playing Alauddin Khilji.

In his recent interview, while Nikunj praised Ranveer Singh’s Dhurandhar, he shared, “I saw Dhurandhar first day first show for both the movies, I loved the film. Dhurandhar 2: The Revenge, for me, was the best film of all time. I enjoyed part one as well, but part 2 was something else. We were chatting with him once, and we asked him if he would do something that would be as demanding as Khilji, and he said, ‘This character has been way more challenging for me, as an artist; it has taken so much more out of me. I have had to go deep and give it 300 percent; it has been very demanding.’”

In 2019, Ranveer Singh spoke to India Today about locking himself in a room for weeks to prepare for his role as Alauddin Khilji. He had shared how he avoided meeting people, moved to a new apartment closer to the set, and read many books about Khilji.“I took 21 days and

locked myself up in my Goregaon house. I was completely isolated. I kind of isolated myself, marinated into the character because I can’t relate to Alaudin Khilji, I can’t relate to that level of manipulativeness, greed and ambition. I had to tap into dark experiences but his world view is not something I can relate to also,” he continued.Khilji took Ranveer Singh to a dark placeHe added that the process became ‘dangerous’ for him. “Stuff that I have buried in my conscience, that I had to dig out in order to play this character. And it was not always pretty, which validates my apprehension. I knew how deep I had to go into this rabbit hole. I would have had to go into this dark, black space. This abyss that could be dangerous for me. And it was.”In 2018, Ranveer had said, “When I was offered Padmaavat, most people thought that a hero should not play the anti-hero. But I believed otherwise. I saw Khilji as a challenge for me, as an actor. And I wanted to take the challenge up. I went with the vision of Sanjay Leela Bhansali and my instinct of what I could achieve with Khilji.”He had also shared, “I took a big risk with this character, and it’s wonderful to see my gamble pay off. This kind of validation gives one the confidence to take bigger and bigger risks, challenge stereotypes, and continue to push the envelope in the realm of mainstream Hindi cinema. I feel very happy and very fulfilled today.”

Ranveer Singh as the co-founder of Super YouNikunj, who is the co-founder of Super You, also spoke about Ranveer Singh’s creative genius and involvement in the brand. He said, “We get to see the other side of Ranveer Singh. The world has seen this one side of him, which is an insanely talented actor or superstar. They have seen him in his public appearances as an extremely high-energy person. We also get to see his other side, where he is so detail-oriented about everything. He is so thoughtful about anything that goes out. He is very well aware of what’s happening and anything that he is doing. He is that extreme energy guy all the time, whenever you meet him, but he is also the person who goes very deep into everything.”Nikunj further added, “He will want to know the smallest of details, and then he absorbs everything, activates his creative muscles, and then come these sharp creative insights. When we started, he told me that my background was business, product, and operations. I trust you fully with it. I understand content and how to land a certain narrative or story, and you trust me with it. As long as that is there, we have nothing to worry about. He has never gotten involved in things that he will not have valuable input into. He was clear with this from the get-go. He has known everything that has been going on.”Recalling Ranveer Singh’s detail-oriented approach in their first brand film, Nikunj shared, “The first brand film that we did, he has literally taken screenshots frame by frame and given feedback himself. He said which shot can be better, if we can alternate one option with the other, and I don’t know what kind of memory he has. He will remember something from 20 years ago about you that you did not know, it’s scary. He has a crazy memory.

# Michael Jackson’s estate went from \$450M debt at the time of his death to a \$3.5 billion empire

One would imagine Michael Jackson would be swimming in money when he died of drug overdose in 2009. But the reality tells a different story. The King of Pop was, in fact, in great financial peril, thanks to a debt of at least \$450 million at the time. But things were looking up before his sudden demise, as he was all set to go on one of his biggest global tours — This Is It. But unfortunately, Jackson passed away barely a month before the opening concert in London.Michael Jackson began earning lucratively in the late 1980s, when his earnings bumped from \$37 million a year to \$125 million. This was aided by the groundbreaking success of his 1987 album Bad, its ancillary tour, his 1988 autobiography Moonwalk, and the acquisition of the ATV Music catalogue (including songs by The Beatles). The earnings continued well upto the late 1990s across the 400 million records sold by the popstar throughout his career.

However, this tremendous cash inflow was subset by an equally draining cash outflow. As per Forbes, every year, he’d spend around \$50 million on luxuries like jewellery, art, amenities, animals, and travel. He’d also donate liberally towards charitable organizations and medical facilities, including treatment of burns, having encountered a traumatic burning accident himself in 1984 while shooting for a Pepsi commercial.

The \$450 million debt at the time of his death also included \$40 million paid by This Is It promoter AEG Live. There was also a loan of \$270 million. Creditors lodged as many as 65 claims against Jackson across the US and abroad. To add to the trouble, his estate would also have to pay for the mounting legal fees involved in settling these claims.Micheal Jackson was in 0 million debt at the time of his death. Micheal Jackson was in 0 million debt at the time of his death.

How did Michael Jackson estate bounce back?

Michael Jackson’s estate put his unparalleled legacy to the best use and eventually made him one of the highest earning dead celebrities ever. Since the much-anticipated This Is It tour could never really take over, the estate put together the rehearsal footage for Jackson’s new tour and released Michael Jackson’s This Is It, a 2009 documentary.The posthumous love and fandom for Jackson led to the documentary earning over \$265 million at the global box office, aided by another \$100 million+ gathered through the sale of DVDs, soundtrack, and merchandise sale. The estate went on to earn \$200 million from the documentary, thus paying off a significant chunk of the debt.Up next, Jackson’s ATV catalogue, consisting of over 4,000 songs, was sold to Sony Music for \$750 million. Sony also acquired half of Jackson’s own music rights for \$600 million in 2024. Jackson’s legacy was further encashed through new albums with unreleased music, touring shows, stage productions including Cirque du Soleil, and now, a Hollywood biopic.

Although Jackson rented out a lot of properties across the globe, including a luxurious apartment in Trump Towers, his beloved Neverland ranch on the outskirts of Los Angeles, California was paid to his friend and billionaire Ron Burkle in 2020 for \$22 million. All the above earnings were used to pay off the debt, legal expenses, and taxes. After all the settlement, the current net worth of



Michael Jackson estate stands at a whopping \$3.5 billion, making this the most profitable career phase of Jackson, over 15 years after his death.A still from Michael Jackson’s This Is It. A still from Michael Jackson’s This Is It.

Michael: Make or break?

Taking a cue from how Michael Jackson’s This Is It changed the course for them, the estate then invested in Michael, a Hollywood biopic, in which Michael’s nephew Jafar Jackson essays the King of Pop. The estate carefully considered its bets, renegotiating its terms with Sony over Jackson’s music catalogue in order to benefit from the spike in his music post Michael’s release. And they weren’t entirely wrong to presume that, since seven of Michael Jackson’s tracks, from “Billy Jean” to even “They Don’t Care About Us” (which isn’t even in the film), have started dominating music charts just three days after the biopic’s global release.They also roped in Billy Graham, who previously backed another musician’s biopic, Bryan Singer’s Bohemian Rhapsody (2018), which fetched Rami Malek an Oscar for his portrayal of Queens lead singer Freddie Mercury. That film earned over \$940 million globally, also leading to a spike in Queen’s music across charts. Mercury’s estate and the surviving Queen members, who had a profit sharing in the film’s business, saw their revenue increase from \$24 million in 2017 to \$94 million in 2019, followed by a dividend of over \$85 million over the next four years. The soaring popularity also enabled Queen to sell their catalogue in 2024 to Sony Music for more than \$1.2 billion.Now, Michael has opened at \$217 million worldwide, including \$97 million in North America and Canada alone. This is \$45 million more than the opening weekend of Bohemian Rhapsody (\$52 million) at the domestic box office. However, unlike the latter which was made on a budget of \$55 million, Michael’s reported budget is as high as \$200 million.It was already one of the most expensive biopics to be made in Hollywood, on a budget of \$150 million. But its budget was escalated to \$200 million, thanks to a major lapse on part of the Michael Jackson estate.

# ‘She belongs to Tara Singh’: How an angry crowd didn’t let Bobby Deol hug Ameesha Patel



Ameesha Patel and Sunny Deol’s 2001 blockbuster Gadar: Ek Prem Katha won hearts for their characters Tara Singh and Sakeena. The iconic duo, who reprised their roles in the latest 2023 release, Gadar 2, have gained a massive following. Now, in a recent interview, Ameesha revealed an interesting anecdote, when a serious climax shoot of Humraaz with Bobby Deol, turned into a funny moment. She also opened up about Sunny’s huge fanbase, sharing a BTS story from Gadar’s shoot.

During a conversation with Bollywood Bubble, she recalled the shoot of Humraaz with Bobby Deol, and revealed that the crowd couldn’t accept her in Bobby’s arms, calling the actor his brother Singh’s ‘property’. “Some characters etch in people’s heart and memories so much, that they blur the difference between real and reel life. Gadar was newly released, and Tara and Sakeena were receiv-

ing a lot of love from everyone. I was shooting for Humraaz at Jaipur fort. It was the climax scene, in which I had to shoot Akshaye Khanna with a gun and Bobby Deol had to hug me.”The excited crowd turned the serious scene into a laughing moment. “A crowd had assembled to watch the shoot. There were ropes to control the people, cops were present, and people weren’t able to cross and reach the set. But, there was so much public during the shoot, all three actors were there, so it was very exciting for them. However, when Bobby came to hug me, public started shouting loudly, ‘Leave her. Yeh toh Taara Singh ki amaanat hai, tere Bhai ki amaanat hai. Vo Pakistan se leke aaya hai usse, chorr Sakeena ko (Leave Sakeena, she is your brother’s partner, he brought her from Pakistan),” she shared.The actor further added, “It was a bit-tersweet and happy feeling also, that people loved Tara and Sakeena so much that they couldn’t digest someone else coming in her life. But, it was laughable also, because after all it was a film, not real life. It was quite funny. We all were serious, crying during the scene, but we all started laughing, including the directors and actors. I joked with Bobby, ‘I won’t hug you now, mai aapke bhai ki amaanat hu, yeh samajh lo aap (I belong to your brother).”

Recalling another instance from Gadar’s shoot with Sunny Deol, she shared, “Sunny ji loves dhaba food – raw milk etc. We were driving from Dalhousie to Pathankot for the shoot. He asked me to sit in his car, so we can listen to music and travel. We were crossing a dhaba and he said that he will make me try all these things,” she said.Ameesha continued, “So, we stopped at the dhaba and were sitting in the car. A cute boy came to give our food and tea in a tray. When Sunny rolled down the window to receive it, the boy was in a state of shock. Sunny ji was a big star. That boy was looking at the TV and then looking at him live, his film was showing. He said, ‘Sunny ji kaise do-do jagah?’ The tray fell from his hands, the entire food fell on us.”The 50-year-old has worked with both Deol brothers extensively in the past. She has shared screen space with Sunny Deol in the hit films, Gadar and Gadar 2. With Bobby Deol, the actor has starred in Humraaz and Humko

# TDP supporters disrupt Bengaluru comedy show, force comedian Sarat Uday to apologise for two-year-old jokes

A stand-up comedy show by Hyderabad-based comedian Sarat Uday was cut short at a club in Koramangala on Saturday evening after a group of men claiming to be Telugu Desam Party supporters walked onto the stage, abused him, and demanded he chant party slogans in front of a paying audience.Sarat was performing a solo show at Ministry of Comedy when the disruption began within minutes of him taking the stage. Around 7 pm, a man from the audience walked up, and told the stand-up comedian, “I’m your fan, you do comedy very well. But in one show, you insulted our leader.” Before Sarat could respond, two more individuals joined the first man on stage. Within a short while, a group of five to six others had gathered near the stage as well, turning what began as a confrontation into something far more hostile.

The video had already faced backlash at the time it was posted. Sarat had received a wave of abusive messages and threats, and he subsequently issued a public apology in 2024, acknowledging that viewers had found the jokes hurtful and saying he would step back from political comedy. On Saturday night in Bengaluru, he reminded the group of this. However, it didn’t stop the group.The men on stage demanded he apologise again, in person, in front of the audience, using abusive language while doing so. Sarat Uday complied, addressing his apology directly to Naidu, Lokesh, and TDP workers, but the group did not leave. They raised slogans of “Jai Telugu Desam Party” inside the venue and pushed the comedian to repeat their chants, specifically “Jai TDP,” “Jai Lokesh Anna,” and “Jai Chandrababu Naidu.” He refused, pointing out that since his original video had covered multiple parties, he was not going to publicly align himself with any single one.One member of the group questioned how Sarat had dared to joke about the Naxalite assassination attempt on Naidu in 2003. Another said the



comedian had hurt Hindu religious sentiment with his references to the Tirupati laddu adulteration episode. A warning was issued openly: “If you make such a mistake one more time, mark my words.” CCTV footage from the venue captured the group explicitly calling it a “final warning” and telling Sarat to be careful going forward. After the apology, the group demanded refunds for their tickets before eventually heading for the exit.The incident is the third of its kind involving Telugu comedians within the space of a month. Earlier in April, comedians Anudeep Katikala and Rafiq Muhammad were arrested by Andhra Pradesh police over separate videos in which they made jokes about state Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan. Katikala was picked up from Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh and taken to Kakinada, while Muhammad was arrested

# Suriya meets singer Dhee in Colombo; calls her single ‘Vari Vari’ a “timeless song”

Chennai: Actor Suriya, who recently met singer Dhee in Colombo, Sri Lanka, has now called her latest single ‘Vari Vari’ “a timeless song”.Music director Santhosh Narayanan, who has jointly produced the song with Dhee, posted a video clip of Dhee’s meeting with Suriya on his X timeline and thanked Suriya for the love he expressed for their song.He wrote, “Thank you, dearest @Suriya\_offl sir, for your love for #VariVari. Eternally grateful for this and for the unforgettable moments we spent making music together.”

In the video that Santhosh Narayanan posted, Suriya is seen telling Dhee that he was coming to Colombo after 24 years. The actor went on to thank the singer for taking the time to come and meet him and also show him her song. Commenting on the recently released single of



Dhee, Suriya said, “It’s a lovely song” and urged viewers to check the song out.

“I’m a big fan of her work always and I was very happy to hear such a song again. I think it will be a timeless song. Everybody will love it,” he said, speaking about the number, youthful

number that has just been released.The actor on the occasion was also seen making a request to Dhee. He said, “In fact, I have a request now. Is this song only in your album or is it in a film? Can I have this song?”For the unaware, ‘Vari Vari’ is a single that has music by Santhosh

Narayanan and lyrics by Vivek. It has been sung by Dhee, who has a huge fan following.While describing the number, its makers said the song was about “someone or something that’s gone and isn’t around anymore, something that’s been lost.”