

Retired army man killed, two injured in hit-and-run incident

Hyderabad: Barely a day after the death of Andhra Pradesh medico Dr K Priyanka following a horrific hit-and-run in Rajahmundry, a similar incident allegedly involving suspected drunk driving has shocked the city. In the latest, a retired Army jawan was killed on the spot and three others were injured after a speeding Mahindra SUV travelling on the wrong side of the road rammed into them at Hydershakote in Narsingi on Monday.

Revanth Joins Varuna Yagam For Rain In Telangana

Nalgonda, August 10

: The Maha Varuna Yagam was performed on the banks of the Krishna River at Vijay Vihar in Nagarjuna Sagar of Nalgonda district on Monday, praying to Lord Varuna for abundant rains. The ritual was conducted by 108 priests and Vedic scholars at 11 Yaga kundams under the supervision of the Yadagirigutta Temple Devasthanam.

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday participated in the purnahuti (final oblation) of the Maha Varuna Yagam at Nagarjuna Sagar, conducted to pray for rainfall across Telangana.

The Chief Minister prayed for bountiful rains in the Krishna and Godavari river basins. He said the Varuna Yagam was performed with a resolve that the people of Telangana should live in happiness, prosperity, and well-being.

Performing Yagams, Yagnas, and Pujas for rain is a centuries-old spiritual tradition inherited from ancestors in Indian culture. Praying to Lord Varuna, he said, "May there be abundant rainfall across the state and the Krishna and Godavari rivers brim with heavy inflows."

He also prayed for all projects, including Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar, to receive adequate water and for tanks and ponds across the state to overflow. He sought blessings for an increase in groundwater levels and bountiful crop yields. He also prayed for the prosperity of farmers, greenery across the state, and the health, happiness, and well-being of the people.

The Chief Minister, accompanied by his wife, participated in the ritual at Vijay Viharam on the banks of the Krishna River. He prayed for abundant rains, projects to fill with water, and a bountiful harvest this year.

The Yagam began at 4:05 a.m. Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, accompanied by his wife and Kodad MLA N. Padmavathi Reddy, participated in the rituals marking the commencement of the Varuna Yagam. The ritual concluded at 3:20 p.m., with purnahuti offered by Revanth Reddy.



On his arrival at the venue, Vedic priests welcomed the Chief Minister with a "purna kumbham" as per tradition. Wearing traditional clothes, he participated in the purnahuti at the main Yaga kundam at Vijay Viharam. As advised by the priests, the Chief Minister offered ghee, navadhanya, and clothes to the sacred fire, marking the purnahuti.

Speaking to the media after the Yagam, Uttam Kumar Reddy said he had great belief in God and that the state would be blessed with bountiful rains. He said Telangana had witnessed deficit rainfall due to the El Niño effect.

Apart from scientific assessments and planning, the government is organising rituals like Varuna Yagnas, respecting cultural traditions that reflect the connection between rain, agriculture, nature, and human life.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast, rainfall in the state is likely to be below normal this year due to the El Niño phenomenon.

Legislative Council Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy, government advisers K. Keshava Rao and P. Sudarshan Reddy, former minister K. Jana Reddy, and other public representatives participated in the Varuna Yagam.

7.4-Magnitude Earthquake Kills 69, Collapses Buildings in Colombia

Bogota: A powerful 7.4 magnitude earthquake struck western Colombia on Monday, killing at least 69 people, trapping residents under debris of collapsed buildings and forcing people to evacuate their homes as far as the capital of Bogota.

The epicentre was in San Jose Del Palmar, a community of about 4,800 people in the Choco region, about 250 miles (400 kilometres) west of Bogota, the U.S. Geological Survey and Colombia's counterpart reported. The USGS said it struck at a depth of 66 miles (107 kilometres). The quake was also felt in neighbouring Ecuador and Panama, though minimal damage was reported there.

Local officials confirmed that at least 40 people were killed in the department of Risaralda, where the hard-hit city of Pereira is located, and 27 people in the Valle del Cauca department, where Colombia's third-biggest city, Cali, is located. Two people also died in the city of Manizales.

At least three of those killed in Valle del Cauca were children, the governor said.

The quake left cities across the west of the country - Pereira, Quibdo, Cali and Manizales - ravaged. Residents and search teams picked through the rubble of collapsed buildings amid concerns by authorities of aftershocks. Colombia's interior minister said more than 20 municipalities across the country had been hit.

Colombia's Pacific region around the quake's epicentre lies along the "Ring of Fire", the line of seismic faults encircling the Pacific Ocean where most of the world's earthquakes occur.

Most powerful quake in the last decade, authorities say

Jorge Moncayo, a 64-year-old taxi driver in Cali, said he saw plumes of dust shoot up across the city as buildings collapsed. Residents and rescue workers were searching the rubble for survivors.

"My entire house shook. I've never lived through such a powerful earthquake," he said. "We're thanking God we're alive."

Colombia's Geological Service said Monday that it had been "the highest magnitude earthquake registered in Colombia in the last decade" and that it had been followed by two 2.8 and 4.8 magnitude aftershocks. Authorities also reported that flights were suspended in the airports of Manizales, Quibdo, Armenia, Cartago, Buenaventura and Pereira.

The earthquakes left many in the Andean nation unnerved after two back-to-back quakes devastated neighbouring Venezuela in late June, destroyed hundreds of buildings and killed more than 5,000 people. At the same time, the quake brought down buildings in Colombia, and desperate families in Venezuela continued to search the ruins for the bodies of their loved ones.



In Pereira, photos and videos published by local media showed pieces of the airport ceiling falling down on travellers taking shelter and screaming, and people running through rubble in a panic.

Pereira's mayor, Mauricio Salazar, told a local radio station that at least 18 people had died and that many more were trapped under "a massive quantity of collapsed buildings."

In nearby Manizales, a city nestled in the coffee-producing mountains of Colombia, one of the towers of the neo-Gothic cathedral collapsed and fell on the nave. Jorge Eduardo Rojas, the mayor of Manizales, asked residents to stay outside in case of aftershocks.

Authorities in the rural state of Choco, the epicentre of the quake, reported injured people and damaged buildings in the capital, but provided few details.

In Cali, a city of 2 million people, Mayor Alejandro Eder said that residents were trapped in at least 19 buildings that had collapsed.

Powerful quakes are rare in Colombia, where smaller quakes are common

Small earthquakes, known as "temblores," are common in central and western Colombia, but those above 6.0 magnitude are rare. In 1999, a 6.2 magnitude quake near the city of Armenia killed more than 1,100 people.

Colombia's newly inaugurated President Abelardo de la Espiella said Monday that he had personally taken charge of the government's response to the emergency in San Jose del Palmar following the earthquake.

"You are not alone. The state is present and taking action," he said.

Response to the earthquake presents the first major challenge to de la Espiella, a Trump ally who was sworn in as president over the weekend.

Messages of support rolled in from leaders across the Americas, including Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador and the United States.

"The Trump administration is closely monitoring the large earthquake that struck Colombia and stands ready to support the people of Colombia", and de la Espiella, wrote Secretary of State Marco Rubio in a post on X.

NIMS to offer free heart surgeries for children from August 13

Hyderabad: Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) will launch a free heart surgeries initiative for children from Thursday, August 13. The specialised heart procedures will be conducted by the hospital's CT surgery department in collaboration with London-based physician and pediatric cardiac surgeon Dr. Ramana Tannashuneni and a team of technical experts. Geographic ReferenceDirector, NIMS, Dr Rahul Devraj on Monday said that on behalf of NIMS, the heart surgeries for children will be led by Prof. Amareshwar, Head, CT Surgery and his team.



Telangana DGP Warns Officials of Action

Warangal:Telangana DGP C.V. Anand on Monday warned of strict departmental action against four officials who fail to improve their behaviour and work standards, while addressing a press conference held in the former Maoist stronghold of Karreguttalu. He unfurled the National Flag.

The visit assumed significance as a rare instances of senior police leadership reaching a region that had remained largely inaccessible for decades due to entrenched Maoist presence.

Addressing the press conference, the DGP said the four officers had failed to change their behaviour and working style despite repeated instructions issued through meetings and video conferences. He expressed concern over the lack of responsiveness among some personnel and stressed that such lapses would not be tolerated in the force

"If there is no improvement despite repeated directions, necessary departmental action will be taken," Anand said. He added that four such officers had already been identified and specific instructions had been issued to

them. He underlined that discipline, professionalism and adherence to directions were essential for effective policing and public trust.

Earlier in the day, Anand visited the remote Karreguttalu region along the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border and reviewed the situation on the ground. He interacted with officials from both states after unfurling the National Flag in the former Maoist stronghold.

Karreguttalu, once a Maoist stronghold for nearly five decades, has undergone a major transformation following sustained and coordinated anti-Maoist operations by Telangana and Chhattisgarh forces. These operations resulted in the elimination of several top Maoist leaders, while many cadres surrendered before the government, significantly weakening extremist influence and restoring administrative access in the region.

The DGP also noted that only a small number of Maoists remained active in the region and appealed to them to surrender and join the mainstream. He assured that the government would extend full rehabilitation support to those who lay down arms and reintegrate into society.



Students face tear gas, lathicharge in bid to storm Jharkhand Assembly

What began as a protest by hundreds of job aspirants and students over the alleged irregularities in JPSC and JSSC examinations in Jharkhand's capital Ranchi turned into an unprecedented confrontation outside the state Assembly on Monday, with the police resorting to the use of water cannons, tear gas and lathicharge.

Thousands of protesters broke through eight layers of barricading to reach the Assembly gates and its premises, refusing to leave.

The agitation, which entered its 17th day on Monday, was driven by demands for the cancellation of the JSSC CGL and JPSC examinations. The protesters are also seeking reforms in the commission and a CBI probe into the alleged irregularities, including paper leaks and manipulation of OMR sheets.

The third round of talks between student representatives and the government on Sunday had failed.

Students began gathering at the protest site around 9 am before marching towards the Assembly. At the Jagannathpur temple, the Ranchi police had erected multiple barriers, including barricades fitted with barbed wire. The march began around 9.30 am. Student leader Devendra Mahto, who is on a hunger strike, reached the protest site in an ambulance. Another student leader, Kush Mahto, who has been on a hunger strike for six days, also joined the march in an ambulance.

When the students pushed through the main route, the police used water cannons and tear gas. The protesters, however, changed the route and moved through forests, footpaths and farm fields, ultimately reaching areas close to the new Assembly and the MLAs' complex.

By afternoon, various groups of protesters had

reached the Assembly after crossing the barriers and approaching through alternative routes. The administration had deployed heavy forces, magistrates and drones for surveillance. The security operation was led by ADG Manoj Kaushik and Ranchi SSP Rakesh Ranjan.

The confrontation turned violent when the protesters attempted to breach the final set of barricades. The police resorted to a heavy lathicharge and fired tear gas shells. The protesters were accused of throwing stones, slippers and bottles. At least 12 people on both sides were injured.

Some injured students were taken to hospital for first aid, while Devendra Mahto was rushed by ambulance after his health deteriorated.

The students eventually reached Gate No. 1 of the Assembly and began a sit-in. They remained there despite repeated appeals from the administration to move away. The gate is used by the Chief Minister, ministers and MLAs. By the evening, efforts were underway to remove the protesters forcibly, while police forces were being called to Ranchi from other districts. Chief Secretary Avinash Kumar, Home Secretary Vandana Dadel, CID IG Manoj Kaushik and the Ranchi SSP were present at the Assembly. The protest also spilled into politics. BJP state president Aditya Sahu, Leader of the Opposition Babul Marandi, all 21 BJP MLAs and over 50 party leaders and workers were detained while attempting to surround Chief Minister Hemant Soren's residence. They were taken to the camp jail at Ranchi's Khelgaon. The BJP leaders backed the students' demand for a CBI probe.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Can lie detectors really detect lies?

Perched high above the lush Indrayani Valley, Lohagad Fort is known for its breathtaking views, mist-covered hills, and dramatic green landscapes. The historic hill fort is a well-known weekend trekking destination in the Mumbai-Pune corridor. The fort's beauty was overshadowed by an alleged murder that took place there. On June 18, a 26-year-old man fell to his death from Lohagad Fort while visiting the site with his fiancée. Initially believed to be an accident, the case later turned into a murder investigation, with police arresting the woman and her friend or allegedly pushing him to his death.

The investigation has relied on CCTV footage, digital forensics, crime-scene reconstruction, witness examination and physical evidence to determine whether the death was accidental or homicidal. With no eyewitnesses or direct proof, police are now seeking the help of AI-assisted forensic gait analysis and a polygraph test to examine conflicting accounts, assess alleged premeditation and identify concealed information. Although polygraph results can only be used as an investigative aid and are not admissible as conclusive evidence in court, they can help guide further forensic and digital evidence collection. Polygraph tests have been used in several high-profile Indian investigations, including the RG Kar Medical College rape case, the Hathras case, and the Aarushi Talwar–Hemraj deaths. In the Sheena Bora murder case, Indrani Mukerjea offered to undergo a polygraph test, but the CBI declined, stating that it already had sufficient evidence. A polygraph test, commonly called a lie-detector test or a test to detect deception, is a forensic investigative technique used to record a person's physiological responses while they answer a series of questions.

Student Dies After Alleged Medical Complication



Treated by Local RMP.. Breathing Difficulty Reportedly Developed After Injection""Family Alleges RMP Was Under the Influence of Alcohol.. Police Investigation Underway""Khammam, Konijerla, August 10, Indian Chronicle: "A tragic incident in which a 14-year-old student died following treatment has created shock and grief in Baswapuram village of Konijerla mandal, Khammam district. According to local residents and the family, Challa Hemashree (14), daughter of Challa Ramesh and Mounika, was studying Class 8 at the local Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya. ""On Sunday, Hemashree reportedly fell ill with cold and fever. Her parents took her to a local RMP practitioner, Sampath, for treatment. According to the family, the RMP inserted a cannula in her hand and administered an injection. Shortly thereafter, the girl reportedly developed difficulty in breathing. ""The family immediately shifted her by auto to a private hospital in Khammam. Doctors conducted an ECG and reportedly declared that Hemashree had died, according to her family members. ""Family Alleges RMP Was Under the Influence of Alcohol""The family has alleged that RMP Sampath was under the influence of alcohol while treating Hemashree. They further claimed that after the girl's death, police subjected Sampath to a breathalyser test and that the test indicated alcohol consumption. However, these allegations are subject to police investigation and official medical and forensic reports. ""Father Lodges Police Complaint""Hemashree's father, Challa Ramesh, lodged a complaint at the local police station on Monday, alleging that the RMP was responsible for his daughter's death. ""Konijerla SI Suraj reportedly said that a case has been registered based on the complaint and that an investigation is underway. Police also stated that the accused is reportedly absconding. ""The sudden death of the young student has cast a pall of gloom over Baswapuram. The exact cause of death, including whether the injection or any other medical factor was responsible, is expected to become clear after the police investigation and relevant medical reports.



(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 10):- BRS Party Bhuvanagiri Parliament in-charge Kyama Mallesh, who was recently resting at his residence after suffering a minor illness, was recently visited by BRS Party senior state leaders Chintala Venkateswar Reddy and Aleru former MLA Bhullu Bikhshamayya Goud. On this occasion, they prayed for Kyama Mallesh's well-being and wished him to excel in public life with full health as soon as possible.

Efforts to Secure Fee Concession for Uppal Students at Malla Reddy Engineering Colleges:



UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY""UPPAL, AUGUST 10(INDIAN CHRONICLE) : UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA ???????? has taken a special initiative to secure fee concessions for students from the Uppal constituency seeking admission to Malla Reddy Engineering Colleges. As part of this effort, he met Medchal MLA Chamakura Malla Reddy and discussed the issue of providing fee concessions to students from Uppal. During the meeting, Bandari Lakshma Reddy brought to the attention of the Medchal MLA the difficulties faced by students from economically weaker families in the Uppal constituency in pursuing higher education. He highlighted the high

cost of engineering education and explained that many talented students are unable to pursue their preferred higher education courses due to financial constraints. The MLA stated that professional courses such as engineering have considerable demand and offer good career opportunities, but the burden of tuition fees is placing significant pressure on poor and middle-class families. He said that providing a special fee concession at Malla Reddy Engineering Colleges to students from the Uppal constituency would benefit a large number of students. Bandari Lakshma Reddy stressed that it is the collective responsibility of all concerned to ensure that meritorious students do not have to give up higher education merely because of financial difficulties. He said that better access to education would help students build a brighter future and, in turn, improve the economic condition of their families. "The Uppal MLA said that education development is being given high priority in the Uppal constituency and assured that he would make every effort to provide the necessary support and assistance to students from poor and middle-class families. He emphasized the need to encourage students to pursue higher education and help them secure better employment opportunities. "On the occasion, Bandari Lakshma Reddy appealed to Medchal MLA Chamakura Malla Reddy to respond positively and extend his cooperation in providing fee concessions to students from the Uppal constituency seeking admission to Malla Reddy Engineering Colleges.

PARAMESWAR REDDY Participates in Pala Haram Bandi Procession in Ramanthapur

"UPPAL, AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): As part of the Ashada Bonalu festivities, a Pala Haram Bandi procession was held with great devotion and enthusiasm at Bharat Nagar in Ramanthapur Division of the Uppal constituency. "Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandamala Parameshwar Reddy participated in the procession, visited the goddess and performed special prayers. A large number of devotees and local residents took part in the procession, organised under the aegis of Team Yodhas. "Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy prayed for the blessings of the goddess to be upon all people and wished the residents of the constituency happiness, prosperity, good health and long life. He said that it was appreciable that people were celebrating the Bonalu festival with devotion and religious fervour, describing it as a symbol of Telangana's rich culture and traditions. "The programme was organised under the leadership of Team Yodhas members Saleem, Sunny, Tarun, Seshu, Yogi, Shiva, Aravind, Vishnu, Bunny, Pavan, Mahi, and Bharat. "Ramanthapur Division Congress President Sandeep, along with MD Tofiq, Vallapu Srikanth Yadav,



Upender Reddy, Arun Patel, Saga Sridhar, Bhaskar Gangaputra, Mundu Muralikrishna Reddy, Mutyala Babu, Bhaskar, Sachin, Shankar, Chintu and Naveen, besides several Congress leaders, party workers and local residents, participated in the programme.

Arvapalli Akhila Naga Ramya Becomes ICICI Bank Deputy Manager

""Young woman rises to a responsible position through determination, discipline and hard work""Parents experience true happiness not merely when children are born, but when they achieve success in life""Khammam, August 10, Indian Chronicle: "Arvapalli Akhila Naga Ramya, daughter of Arvapalli Nagesh and Sriakashmi, a middle-class family residing in Mamillagudem, has achieved a significant milestone by taking charge as a Deputy Manager at ICICI Bank. ""Akhila Naga Ramya has been academically focused from a young age. Despite facing several challenges and difficulties, she remained determined to pursue higher education and build a successful career. Her journey proves that with hard work, discipline and a clear goal, one can overcome obstacles and reach greater heights. ""Parents Stood by Their Daughter Through Difficult Times""Despite facing financial and other challenges, her parents, Nagesh and Sriakashmi, continuously encouraged and supported their daughter, giving her confidence to pursue her dreams and build a bright future. ""Akhila Naga Ramya completed her education from Class 1 to Class 10 at Montessori Private School in Mamillagudem. She later completed her Intermediate education at Sahithi Junior College. She pursued her higher education at Master Minds College in Guntur. ""With determination and discipline since her student days, Akhila Naga Ramya worked consistently towards achieving her career goals. Her appointment as a Deputy Manager at ICICI Bank has brought immense happiness and pride to her parents, relatives, friends and teachers. ""A Proud Moment for Her Parents""Her parents, Nagesh and Sriakashmi, expressed their happiness and



pride over their daughter's achievement. They wished that she would continue to reach greater heights in her career and bring recognition to her family and the educational institutions where she studied. ""Many people have congratulated Akhila Naga Ramya, saying that her achievement is a fine example of how education, determination and consistent effort can transform dreams into reality. ""Education combined with hard work has no limits to success. ""The journey of Akhila Naga Ramya—from Mamillagudem to becoming a Deputy Manager at ICICI Bank—stands as an inspiration to today's youth, particularly students from middle-class families who aspire to build successful careers through education and perseverance.

State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao Visits Several Families



Consoles Ailing Congress Leader; Pays Tributes to Deceased Party Leaders""Khammam, Nelakondapalli, August 10, Indian Chronicle: "State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao visited several families in Nelakondapalli Mandal and extended his support to those facing health and bereavement. ""In Mandrajupalli village, Rayala Nageswara Rao visited Nelluri Bhadravaya, a Khammam District Congress Party leader who has been unwell and recuperating at home. He enquired about his health and wished him a speedy recovery. ""Later, in Nelakondapalli town, he paid floral tributes to the portrait of Gudiboyina Saidulu, who passed away recently. He also paid tributes to the portrait of recently deceased Congress Party leader Mora Padma and consoled her family members. ""Rayala Nageswara Rao expressed his condolences to the bereaved families and assured them of his support during their difficult time. ""Khammam District Congress Party spokesperson Bachalakuri Nagaraju, State Youth Congress Secretary Jerripothula Anjani,

Somanaboyina Sai Naveen, Kadijala Naresh and others participated in the programme.

Teej festival begins in 31st ward Banjara Hills..Teej festival symbolizes culture and traditions of Gor Banjara–Lambadi

("Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 10):- Banjara Hills: The organizers said that Teej festival is the most important festival that showcases the rich culture, traditions and customs of Gor Banjara and Lambadi community. Teej festival celebrations have begun in 31st ward of Banjara Hills. "When it comes to Teej festival, wheat and its sprouts come to mind. This festival, which is very special in the Banjara tradition, is celebrated with great devotion and grandeur for nine days every year in the month of Shravan. The Teej festival is not only of spiritual importance, but also has great importance in preserving the culture and traditions of Gor Banjara-Lambadi that have been passed down from generation to generation and passing them on to future generations. One of the main objectives of this festival is to make the present generation know the customs and traditions that have been passed down from the ancestors and to ensure that future generations continue them. Also, on the occasion of the Teej festival, the Teej festival is celebrated with devotion and devotion every year in the month of Shravan with the wish that there will be abundant rains, that nature will be adorned with greenery, that dairy crops will be abundant, and that all

Grand Felicitations Held During Pochamma Thalli Bonalu Celebrations Under the Leadership of Kanchi Mahender



"Fatehnagar: As part of the Ashada Masam Bonalu festival, special prayers and Bonalu celebrations were held with religious fervour at the Sri Pochamma Thalli Temple in Fatehnagar. "BJP Malkajgiri MP Etela Rajender, BJP Medchal-Malkajgiri Urban District President Girivardhan Reddy, Shankar Yadav, Vaddeppally Rajeswar and other leaders visited the temple and offered special prayers to Goddess Pochamma Thalli. "On the occasion, BJP senior leader Kanchi Mahender felicitated the guests in a grand manner and extended Bonalu festival greetings to them. "Later, the leaders participated in the Bonalu celebrations along with devotees at the temple premises. They prayed for the well-being, happiness, prosperity and good health of all people with the blessings of Goddess Pochamma Thalli. "BJP local leaders, party workers and a large number of devotees participated in the celebrations.

Bonalu Celebrations Held Grandly at Nacharam Village



"Bonalu is a symbol of Telangana's culture and traditions Mindrala Narsing Rao""Nacharam, August 10, (Indian Chemical):""The Ashada Bonalu festival was celebrated with great devotion and grandeur at Nacharam Village. Bahujan Samaj Party Uppal Assembly President Mindrala Narsing Rao attended the celebrations as the chief guest and performed special prayers to the Goddess. "Speaking on the occasion, Narsing Rao said that the Bonalu festival stands as a symbol of Telangana's rich culture and traditions. He said that everyone has a responsibility to preserve and pass on these spiritual traditions, which have been followed for generations, to future generations. "He wished that, with the blessings of the Goddess, all the people of Telangana would lead happy, peaceful and healthy lives. He congratulated the organisers and local residents of Nacharam Village for conducting the Bonalu celebrations with great devotion and enthusiasm.

Paytm Payment Gateway Integrated with Claude

"Hyderabad, August 10 (Indian Chronicle) : Paytm Payments Services Limited(PPSL), a wholly owned subsidiary of One97 Communications Limited, has integrated the Paytm Payment Gateway with Anthropic's Claude through a Model Context Protocol(MCP) connector, Paytm Payment Gateway representatives said in a statement released in the city on Monday. They said the integration will enable businesses to securely access transaction details, payment links, refunds, settlements, subscriptions, order status and reconciliation information through AI prompts. The system includes security controls to ensure that information is accessible only based on merchant permissions, they added. The integration is expected to streamline payment management for MSMEs, large enterprises, developers, and finance and customer support teams, enabling them to access payment-related information faster and more efficiently.

people will live with long life, health and happiness. "As part of the Teej festival, it is an important tradition to first soak wheat and gram and then sprinkle them in baskets and grow them to sprout. Considering these seedlings as sacred, women and young women celebrate Teej with devotion for nine days. Similarly, in Ward 31, Banjara Hills, the Teej festival was inaugurated by sprinkling soaked wheat and peanuts in the first basket and starting the seedlings program in a traditional manner. With this, the nine-day Teej festival celebrations began. The organizers said that the Teej festival symbolizes the unity, devotion, respect for nature and commitment to the traditions of the ancestors in the Banjara community. They said that through this festival, it is the responsibility of everyone to preserve the Banjara culture, traditions and customs and pass them on to future generations. " Ward 31 Councillor Sumayya Tabassum Shafiq Ahmed, former Councilor Banoth Venkat Narasimha Nayak, Ghugloth Venkanna, Banoth Santosh, Nunawat Mahender, Banoth Jyoti, Banoth Lalita, Banoth Saroja, Banoth Anusha, Ghugloth Radha, Banoth Lakshmi, Ghugloth Dindal, Banoth Chatru, Banoth Somaiya, Banoth Bhima and others participated in this program.

AYUSH DOCTOR Hold ‘Vantavarpu’ Protest Seeking Hike in Stipend



—Strike Enters Seventh Day, Government Yet to Respond—“Demand Stipend on Par with Allopathic Medical Students”**RAMANTHAPUR , AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):** The indefinite strike launched by house surgeons and postgraduate students working at government AYUSH medical colleges and affiliated hospitals across Telangana, demanding a hike in stipend, entered its seventh day on Monday. With the government yet to give any clear assurance on their demands, AYUSH doctors and PG students staged a ‘Vantavarpu’ (cooking and eating protest) at the JSPS Government Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital in Ramanthapur. The protest was organised under the aegis of the Telangana AYUSH House Surgeons–Post Graduates Joint Action Committee (JAC), with a large number of house surgeons and PG students participating. “The protesters raised slogans demanding that the government immediately increase their stipend and provide them a stipend on par with students pursuing allopathic medicine.” “One Rule for Allopathy, Another for AYUSH?” JAC representatives questioned why the government was discriminating against AYUSH students despite having increased the stipend for allopathic doctors and

medical students. “They said house surgeons and PG students from both AYUSH and allopathic streams perform duties at hospitals and provide medical services to patients on an equal basis. While they work round the clock, including night duties, maintaining a huge disparity in stipends between the two streams was unfair, they said.” “Assurance in Assembly, But Where Is the Response Now?” JAC representatives recalled that Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, while in the Opposition, had raised the issue of increasing stipends for AYUSH doctors and students in the Assembly. They questioned why the issue had remained unresolved even after nearly 33 months of the present government. The protesters said they had hoped that the government would respond at least after the commencement of their strike, but expressed disappointment that there had been no response even as the agitation entered its seventh day. “They urged the government to intervene immediately and take a decision on increasing the stipend.” “Rising Cost of Living, Inadequate Stipend” JAC representatives said the cost of living, accommodation, food, transportation and educational expenses had increased substantially in recent years, while the stipend paid to AYUSH house surgeons and PG students had not increased proportionately. “They said they were facing severe financial difficulties due to the inadequate stipend and were forced to resort to an indefinite strike only after the government failed to take steps to resolve their concerns.” “Protest to Be Intensified if Government Fails to Respond” The JAC demanded that the government immediately hold talks with the protesting students and increase the stipends of AYUSH house surgeons and PG students on par with their allopathic counterparts. “The representatives made it clear that the strike would continue until the government responded positively and resolved their demands. They warned that if the government failed to take a favourable decision, the agitation would be intensified with more protest programmes in the coming days.

Jail Bharo Protest Successful—“Left parties conduct rally at Nelakondapalli; police arrest protesters

“Khammam, Nelakondapalli, August 10, Indian Chronicle: “The Jail Bharo protest organised under the leadership of the Left parties was successfully conducted at the Nelakondapalli mandal headquarters on Monday.” “Leaders and activists of the Left parties organised a rally in the mandal centre and raised slogans expressing their protest against the government’s policies.” “Local police arrested the protesters during the programme and took them into custody.” “Left party leaders K.V. Reddy, Marishetti Venkateswara Rao, Pagadikathula Ramadasu and others participated in the Jail Bharo programme.



: BRS STATE LEADER BANNALA PRAVEEN Inspects Rs.54 Lakh Box Drain Works in Beerappagadda

UPPAL, AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj on Monday inspected the ongoing box drain construction works being taken up at a cost of approximately Rs.54 lakh in Bank Colony of Beerappagadda Division. The project is aimed at providing a permanent solution to the rainwater drainage problem in the locality. “Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, accompanied by GHMC officials and the contractor, reviewed the progress of the works and directed the officials and contractor to expedite the construction.” “Speaking on the occasion, Praveen Mudiraj said that a 1,000-mm-diameter pipeline had earlier been laid from Vignaan School to the Auto Stand to facilitate the smooth flow of rainwater through Bank Colony. He said that the box drain works from Phani Medical Shop in Bank Colony to the transformer at Sairam Nagar Colony had already been completed.” “He stated that the construction of a box drain, approximately four feet wide, was currently underway from the Bank Colony Auto Stand to Phani Medical Shop. He recalled that the foundation stone for the project had been laid along with Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy. “As the works are being carried out on the Bank Colony main road, Praveen instructed the contractor to complete them on a war footing to minimise inconvenience to residents and motorists. Considering the ongoing monsoon, he directed that the pace of construction be increased. He also suggested installing signboards indicat-



ing alternative routes to prevent traffic disruption during the construction works. Praveen Mudiraj stressed that quality standards must be strictly maintained in the construction of the box drain. He warned that strict action would be taken against the concerned contractor if any lapses in quality were found. He directed the officials and contractor to complete the project within the stipulated time, ensuring that the works are carried out with proper quality and maximum benefit to the public.”

AKARAPU ARUN PATEL Participates in First Bonam at Ramanthapur Mahankali Temple

“UPPAL, AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): As part of the Ashada Bonalu celebrations, the first Bonam cer-



emony was conducted with devotion and traditional fervour at the Sri Sri Sri Mahankali Temple in Ramanthapur village on Monday morning. Village elders, Mathars, Panibatlavaru and devotees together offered the first Bonam to Goddess Mahankali. Akarapu Arun Patel participated in the programme, offered prayers and performed special pujas seeking the blessings of the Goddess. “The temple premises were crowded with devotees on the occasion. Women carried Bonalu in the traditional manner and offered them to the Goddess, while a large number of devotees participated in the special prayers and fulfilled their vows. Devotees prayed for the well-being, prosperity, good health and hap-

piness of the people of Ramanthapur with the blessings of Goddess Mahankali. “Ramanthapur Mahankali Bonalu Festival Committee president Burra Rajeshwar, vice-president Valla Satyanarayana, general secretary Aileshwar, Bandari Shivakumar, Dr. Muthyala Jangaiah and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Seva Sangham chairman Muthyala Narasimha were among those who participated in the programme. “On the occasion, under the leadership of Ramanthapur village elder Kapu Nam Rajireddy and Venkat Reddy Nagar Division Congress Party president Nam Raj Reddy, village elders, Mathars and Panibatlavaru were felicitated with shawls

as a mark of respect. “Ramanthapur Division Congress Party working president Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Seva Sangham general secretary Muthyala Naresh, Ramanthapur Mallikarjuna Swamy Devasthanam chairman Shaga Sridhar, temple trustee Mudigonda Arun Sai, senior Congress leaders Muthyala Baburao and Muthyala Laxman, Venkat Reddy Nagar Division Congress BC Cell president Satish Goud, along with Muthyala Anjaiah, Muthyala Ramesh, Muthyala Papaiah, Muthyala Haridarshan, Muthyala Prem Kumar, Boddupalli Rajesh, Boddupalli Bheem, Boddupalli Shambalingam, Guddupalli Jithu, Arukala Ramu, Mangali and others, were present.

Vimalakka’s 50-Year Journey in the People’s Cultural Movement—“50 hours of art, songs and dialogue



— ‘Praja Kala Jatara’ from September 26—“Vimalakka announces programme at press conference”**Khammam, August 10, Indian Chronicle:** “Marking the completion of 50 years of her journey in the people’s cultural movement, Arunodhaya cultural activist Vimalakka announced that a special 50-hour ‘Praja Kala Jatara’ will be organised in Hyderabad.” “Speaking at a press conference held at the Khammam Press Club on Monday, Vimalakka said the programme would begin at 10 a.m. on September 26 and continue uninterrupted until 12 noon on September 28, featuring performances, songs and discussions.” “She said revolutionary movements give rise to revolutionaries, while

people’s movements produce people’s artists. Recalling her five-decade journey in the revolutionary people’s cultural movement, she said the 50-hour cultural festival would showcase various forms of people’s art and folk traditions.” “Vimalakka said the event aims to contribute to building an alternative people-oriented culture in the face of what she described as the growing influence of caste-based and imperialist cultural forces. She invited cultural organisations, groups, artists and individuals to participate in the programme.” “She said “Vimalakka is not an individual but a collective force,” recalling her emergence as a child singer when the Arunodhaya cultural movement took shape at Osmania University in August 1974.” “Recalling the challenges she faced, including imprisonment, Vimalakka said her journey through songs and people’s movements remains an unforgettable chapter in the cultural movement. Considering her life dedicated to the people, she appealed to activists and artists who share her ideals to voluntarily participate in the 50-hour Praja Kala Jatara.” “Arunodhaya Cultural Federation State President Malsur, General Secretary Pothula Ramesh, Andhra Pradesh General Secretary Sudhakar, Varsha Social Study Forum State President Bhaskar, TPJAC District Convener Vijay, Arunodhaya Cultural Federation Joint Secretary Rakesh, Vice-President Anitha and others attended the press conference.

Bonalu Festivities Held Grandly at Venkata Sai Nagar Colony

“UPPAL , AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Bonalu festivities were celebrated with great fervour and devotion at Venkata Sai Nagar Colony in Ramanthapur Bhagya Nagar. The celebrations were organised under the aegis of the Venkata Sai Nagar Welfare Association. “As part of the festivities, special prayers were offered to the presiding deity and Bonalu was presented to the goddess with traditional rituals. Later, a beautifully decorated Thottela procession was taken through the main streets of the colony. The performances by Poturajus, rhythmic beats of drums and the enthusiastic participation of women carrying Bonalu offerings were among the major attractions of the procession. “A large number of residents participated in the celebrations, offered prayers and sought the blessings of the goddess.” “Speaking on the occasion, association members said that the Bonalu festival has been celebrated every year by the residents of the colony with unity, devotion and religious fervour. They prayed to the goddess for peace, good health, prosperity and happiness to prevail in the colony. “Colony president Vijayender Reddy, honorary members Ramesh Goud, M. Ravikumar, Gopal Yadav, Sarva Sattaiah Yadav, Shiva Shankar and Sanjeeva, along with committee members R. Govind, G. Ashok, Srinivas Goud, K. Naveen Kumar, Bhupathi Narasimha Goud, Dr. Vidyasagar, Ramakrishna, Shivakumar, B. Chalapathi Rao, Ramesh Shetty, Sridhar Goud, Swamy, Naresh, Srinivas Reddy, Harish, Shekhar, B. Ramulu Goud, Chandram Chari, Parushuram, Ailesh Yadav, Chari, Hussain, Bala Komaraiah and others participated in the celebrations.”



MEDIPALLY DIVISION PRESIDENT TUNGATURTHI RAVI Pays Tribute to Former Medipally Sarpanch Kuthadi Narasimha—

“MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally Division Congress Party President Tungaturthi Ravi attended the Dashadina Karma (10th-day memorial ceremony) of former Medipally Sarpanch and former MPTC member Kuthadi Narasimha and paid floral tributes to his portrait. Speaking on the occasion, Ravi remembered Narasimha’s services and contributions to the local community and expressed his condolences to the bereaved family. Narasimha’s son Karan, along with elders and Sailu, Krishna Kishore, Barla Nagaraju, Santosh, Sampath, Sharath, Kapil and others, participated in the programme.



Dr. Kadavendi Venugopal Meets Goa Governor Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju



Discussion on Plastic-Free India and Environmental Protection”**Khammam, August 10, Indian Chronicle:** “Dr. Kadavendi Venugopal, Founder and President of the Eco-Club Environmental Society, from the Khammam region, along with his wife Smt. Aruna Kadavendi, met Goa Governor Sri Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju at Lok Bhavan (Raj Bhavan), Goa. “During the meeting, which lasted nearly an hour, they discussed various environmental issues, strengthening environmental protection measures and promoting the goal of a Plastic-Free India. “Dr. Venugopal explained the various initiatives being undertaken by the Eco-Club Environmental Society, including environmental awareness programmes, campaigns to reduce plastic usage, environmental education, large-scale plantation drives, awareness on climate change and promotion of eco-friendly alternatives to single-use plastics. “He also submitted a representation to the Governor, requesting government support and encouragement to expand environmental initiatives and increase public participation in environmental protection activities.” “‘Plastic-Free India’ Banner Unveiled” “As an important part of the meeting, Governor Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju unveiled the ‘Plastic-Free India’ banner. The programme highlighted the message that collective efforts are essential to combat plastic pollution and that protecting the environment for future generations

is a shared responsibility. “On the occasion, Dr. Kadavendi Venugopal and Smt. Aruna Kadavendi felicitated the Governor with a traditional shawl and presented him with a memento. “The meeting focused on environmental responsibility, sustainable development, reduction of plastic usage and strengthening public participation in environmental protection. The discussions were described as fruitful and encouraging. “Dr. Kadavendi Venugopal expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Hon’ble Governor for his encouragement and support towards the ‘Plastic-Free India’ initiative.

Major setback for Congress in Kothagudem’s Aswaraopet: 50 families join BRS

Kothagudem: The ruling Congress party has suffered a major blow in Aswaraopet Assembly constituency as nearly 50 families left the ruling party and joined the BRS in the presence of former MLA Mecha Nageswara Rao on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, the new entrants stated that they had been misled by Congress’s deceptive promises and that they were better off under the previous BRS government. They pledged to work hard to ensure that BRS chief K Chandrashekhara Rao becomes Chief Minister again and Nageswara Rao is elected as MLA again. The BRS constituency in-charge Nageswara Rao remarked that while Congress has a history of deceiving people with false promises, the BRS is a party that holds the people of Telangana close to its heart; under Chandrashekhara Rao’s leadership, Telangana transformed into a prosperous State. He criticised the current Congress administration, stating that development has stalled as the party leaders have focused solely on personal gains.

If Modi’s Attitude Does Not Change, His Government Will Face Downfall: Leaders



Central Government Serving Corporate Houses and the Rich, Allege Farmers’ and Workers’ Unions”“Jail Bharo Protest Successful in Khammam; Hundreds Arrested”“Khammam, August 10, Indian Chronicle:“Leaders of various farmers’ and workers’ organisations warned that the Modi government would face political consequences if it failed to change its policies. They alleged that the Central Government was working in favour of corporate houses and the wealthy while undermining the rights and interests of farmers and workers.”“The Jail Bharo programme, organised in Khammam on Monday at the call of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) and Central Trade Unions, witnessed the participation of hundreds of farmers, workers and political activists.”“The protesters took out a massive rally from Ambedkar Centre to Khammam Two-Town Police Station. Hundreds of protesters staged a road blockade and raised slogans against the policies of the Central Government.”“Police arrested several leaders of the all-party delegation. In protest against the arrests, hundreds of activists attempted to enter the police station, demanding that they too be arrested.”“The protest was led by CPI National Council member B. Hemantha Rao, CPM District Secretary Nunna Nageswara Rao, former MLAs Gummadi Narsaiah and Banoth Chandravathi, C.Y. Pullaiah, and

Telangana Rythu Sangham district leaders Kondaparthi Govinda Rao, Dondapati Ramesh, Madineni Ramesh, Bonthu Rambabu, V. Koteswara Rao and Y. Prakash, among others.”“BRS leader Pagadala Nagaraju and several trade union leaders, including Singu Narsimharao, Thota Ram Anjaneyulu, Tati Venkateswara Rao, Kalyanam Venkateswara Rao, G. Ramaiah, Yerra Srinivas, Merugu Satyanarayana, Ashok, Narala Naresh Naidu and MDY Pasha, also participated.”“Government Favouring Corporate Houses”“Speaking on the occasion, CPI National Council member and Telangana Rythu Sangham President B. Hemantha Rao alleged that the Modi government was adopting an anti-farmer and anti-worker approach while favouring wealthy individuals and corporate houses.”“He alleged that the government was attempting to hand over the country’s wealth and the agricultural sector to corporate groups. He also alleged that the government was trying to implement agricultural reforms that had earlier faced strong opposition from farmers.”“The farmers’ organisations, he said, were demanding a legal guarantee for minimum support prices (MSP) for agricultural produce. He warned that the Samyukta Kisan Morcha would continue its agitation until the demand was addressed.”“Workers’ Rights Being Undermined”“Hemantha Rao alleged that labour laws won through decades of workers’ struggles had been replaced by labour codes that, according to him, weaken workers’ rights and favour employers.”“He said workers across the country would oppose attempts to weaken their rights and called for united struggles against the Central Government’s policies.”“He further alleged that the government had failed to control rising prices and had not taken sufficient pro-people measures during its tenure. United struggles by farmers, workers and people would be necessary to resist the government’s policies, he said.”“Several other leaders and activists, including Midikanti Venkata Reddy, Shankaraiah, Sambasiva Reddy, Varada Narsimharao, Bandi Padma, Y. Vikram, Naveen Reddy, Shobha and Shiromani, participated in the programme.”

Four Arrested for Stealing Copper Wires from Agricultural Motors and Transformers

“Khammam Rural, August 10, Indian Chronicle”“Khammam Rural: Khammam Rural police have arrested four persons allegedly involved in stealing copper wires by damaging agricultural electric motors, starter boxes and transformers in farm fields.”“A press conference was held at the Rural Police Station on Monday. Speaking to the media, Rural CI Raju said that police seized 10 electric motors, around 100 kg of copper wires and a Bajaj RE auto-rickshaw allegedly used in the crimes.”“The arrested persons were identified as Anguluri Yesupal (30), Shaik Mohammed Rafi (19), Pogaratthi Venkatesh (32) and Vendi Ramu (26).”“During interrogation, the accused reportedly confessed to damaging electric motors, starter boxes and transformers at agricultural wells and stealing copper wires in several areas, including Khammam Rural, Nelakondapalli, Tallada, Khammam Urban, Chintakani, Konijerla and Vemsur.”“According to police, the accused



sold the stolen motors and copper wires and used the proceeds for their personal needs.”“All four accused were arrested and produced before the court, which remanded them to judicial custody. Further investigation into the cases is underway, police said.”“SI Harikrishna and other police personnel participated in the press conference.

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Participates in Teej Celebrations



“UPPAL , AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy participated in the Teej celebrations held at Maruthi Colony in Chakripuram area under the Charlapally Division.”“On the occasion, the MLA enthusiastically joined the Teej celebrations organized by women and youth and celebrated the festival along with the local residents. He said that festivals reflecting the rich traditions and cultural heritage of the community should be celebrated with unity, brotherhood and harmony.”“Extending his greetings to women on the occasion of Teej, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy wished that all people live with happiness, prosperity, good health and well-being.”Nemuri Mahesh Goud, Mahender, Srisailam, Prasad Reddy, Sudhakar, Srinu, Venkatesh, Srikanth and Ravi, along with BRS party leaders and colony residents, participated in the programme.

BJP TO INTENSIFY AGAINST ANTI-PEOPLE POLICITES OF CONG GOVG

Hyderabad, Aug 10 : Telangana State BJP President N Ramchander Rao today warned that the party would intensify its agitation in support of burning issues relating to people who were deceived by the Congress government. “ In a chit-chart with media persons at state party’s headquarters here, he said the state government utterly failed to implement promises made to people even after three years of regime. It was unfortunate that Congress government is inactive taking any action even after the state High Court reprimanded some government officials relating to HYDRAA and other departments.” Rao said “ it was a sheer administrative failure” and alleged that Revanth Reddy government has even misled the courts.” Stating that BJP would fight against some anti-people policies of CURE,

BJP state chief questioned why HYDRAA has not taken action to retrieve over 300 acres government land allegedly encroached by some people in Balapur and Nadergul.” On the issue of E20 ethanol-blended petrol, Rao said every positive measure taken in the interest of the nation, it was habit of Congress and its INDI allies to oppose and spread rumours. Ethanol blended petrol is not a product of NDA government, it was Congress party which had recommended its usage over one decade ago. Usage of this E20 petrol was recommended after numerous tests, he clarified.” State party general secretary Dr N Goutham Rao and chief official spokesperson and Media in-charge N V Subhash also present during the chit-chat with media.

Short film..No Longer Human should be appreciated by everyone

Former Minister Jagadishwar Reddy.. State leader Chintala Venkateswar Reddy ”“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 10):- Former Minister Jagadishwar Reddy and BRS Party state senior leader Chintala Venkateswar Reddy congratulated the short film team. Speaking on the occasion, they said“Former ministers and Suryapet MLAs Guntakandla Jagadish Reddy and Chintala Venkateswar Reddy thanked the film team after watching the short film No Longer Human, made by director Likhit Thirunagari at Prasad Lab in Hyderabad. Speaking on the occasion, he said that No Longer Human should be appreciated by everyone and that director Likhit Thirunagari aspires to excel in the film industry by making good message-based films.



Handloom Expo Concludes at Uppal Mini Shilparamam“Good Response to Handloom Saree Exhibition;



Artists Enthral Audience with Kuchipudi Performance”“UPPAL , AUGUST 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The Handloom Expo organised at Uppal Mini Shilparamam concluded on Monday. The handloom saree

exhibition, specially arranged to attract women visitors, received an overwhelming response from the public.”“Handloom products from different regions, along with sarees featuring traditional designs, attractive colours and intricate patterns, emerged as major attractions at the exhibition.”“As part of the concluding programme, cultural performances were organised, entertaining the visitors. A Kuchipudi dance performance presented by the Shishay group of Indira Kalakshetra received an enthusiastic response from the audience. The artistes showcased various traditional dance compositions with grace and precision and earned appreciation from the spectators.”“The artistes presented several items, including Vinayaka Sthuthi, Brahmanjali, Krishna Janana Shabdam, Dashavatara, Koluvai Tivaaranga Sai, Brindavana Nilaye, Narayaneyam and Tillana.”“Mahathi, Sneha, Namrata, Sravani, Akshitha, Shreshta, Sahasra and other artistes enthralled the audience with their performances.”“Visitors appreciated the organisers for providing a platform not only for promoting handloom products but also for showcasing traditional Indian art and culture through cultural programmes. The Mini Shilparamam premises witnessed a festive atmosphere as the Handloom Expo came to a close.

Leaders Pay Tribute to Former Corporator Donthiri Harishankar Reddy’s Father



MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 10(INDIAN CHRONICLE):“In the wake of the recent demise of Sanjeeva Reddy, father of

former Peerzadiguda Corporator Donthiri Harishankar Reddy, former Minister and Medchal MLA Chamakura Malla Reddy, former Mayor Jakke Venkat Reddy, former Corporators Kolthuri Mahesh and Kaude Pochayya, senior leaders Lethakula Raghupathi Reddy and Akula Madhukar, Boduppall President Manda Sanjeeva Reddy, former Pocharam Vice-Chairman Redya Naik, Ghatkesar President Bandaru Srinivas Goud, Pocharam leader Baddam Jaganmohan Reddy, and others visited the bereaved family at their residence in Ikkurthi village. The leaders paid floral tributes to the portrait of the late Sanjeeva Reddy and offered their respects. They subsequently consoled the bereaved family members, expressed their deepest condolences and extended their support and strength to the family during the difficult time.

Grand Palanquin Procession of Goddess Held in Ambedkar Nagar, Nacharam

“Nacharam, August 10 (Indian Chronicle): ““A grand Palanquin Procession of Goddess was organised with great devotion and enthusiasm at Ambedkar Nagar in Nacharam. A large number of devotees, local residents and youth participated in the celebrations and offered special prayers to the Goddess.”“Former MLA NVS Prabhakar and Urban Ranga Reddy District Vice President Mallela Narsing Rao attended the programme as chief guests. They offered prayers to the Goddess and participated in the Palanquin Procession, extending their best wishes to the devotees.”“The programme was attended by Mallikarjun Goud, Naveen Kumar, Goudelli Ramakrishna, Ragiri Mohan Reddy, Korapaka Anji, Erpula Narsing Rao, Goudelli Praveen, Erpula Chinna Saibaba, G. Bablu, G. Rakesh, K. Vishal, B. Rakesh, Vamsi, and others.”A large number of



local residents and youth actively participated in the procession and contributed to its successful conduct. The entire Ambedkar Nagar area witnessed a festive atmosphere with the devotion and enthusiasm of the devotees.

EXPRESS PATRIOTISM WTH “HAR GHAR TIRANGA”: NRR“

Hyderabad, Aug 10 : BJP Telangana State President N Ramchander Rao today urged everyone to unfurl the national flag on their houses as part of the ‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ program initiated following the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. “ He stated that ahead of the upcoming Independence Day on August 15, we all share the responsibility to remember the freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the nation. As part of this, he shared that he participated in the ‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ program today alongside the youth of his village and street, hoisting

the national flag on his house also. He urged all citizens to voluntarily participate in this program and fly flags on their homes.” Rao announced that a grand ‘Tiranga Yatra’ will be organized near Tank Bund in Hyderabad on August 14. He clarified that this rally does not belong to any single party or politics, but is instead an initiative undertaken with the resolve of ‘Viksit Bharat’ (Developed India) to showcase India’s unity and strength to the world. “ He requested all citizens of Hyderabad to set aside differences of caste, religion, and politics, and participate in large numbers for the nation to make this Tiranga Yatra a success.

Polling station rationalisation proposals discussed with political parties

Collector says changes under SIR aimed at improving voter convenience; final decision after scrutiny by party representatives.

Karimnagar August 10 (Correspondent): District Election Officer and Collector Chitra Mishra on Monday held a meeting with representatives of various political parties to discuss the proposed reorganisation of polling stations in the district as part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The meeting, held at the Collectorate Conference Hall, focused on polling stations located in the Choppadandi, Karimnagar, Manakondur and Huzurabad Assembly constituencies. Officials discussed changes in the location of certain polling stations, shifting of polling station rooms, and proposals to bring two polling stations under a single polling centre where necessary.

Addressing the representatives, Ms. Mishra said the reorganisation was a routine exercise aimed at improving voter convenience. She explained that polling stations with more than 1,200 voters would be rationalised by shifting excess voters to nearby stations. Proposals had also been prepared for relocating polling stations functioning in dilapidated buildings lacking basic facilities and for merging stations with a low voter population with adjacent polling centres.

The Collector said further decisions would be taken after considering the views and observations of political party representatives. Stating that the SIR process was being implemented strictly in accordance with Election Commission guidelines, she said complaints received through the helpline established for clarifying doubts related to the revision process had been examined and appropriate in-



structions issued. When asked for feedback on the ongoing SIR exercise, representatives of the political parties reportedly informed the Collector that the process was progressing smoothly. Additional Collectors Ashwini Tanaji Wakade and Srinivas Reddy, Municipal Commissioner Praful Desai, RDO Jala Kumari, representatives of the BJP, Congress, AIMIM and TRS, and election returning officers participated in the meeting.

SIR enumeration ends in Haryana; 9.7 lakh voters ‘uncollectable’ in Gurgaon, Faridabad

GNS News Agency, August 10

As the Election Commission’s Special Intensive Revision (SIR) field enumeration exercise concluded in Haryana on Friday, over 9.7 lakh voters across Gurgaon and Faridabad districts have been excluded from the upcoming draft voter rolls. The excluded number of 9,73,589 constitutes over 28 per cent of the combined voter base of the two districts. According to official data, these voters have been marked “uncollectable” due to permanent shifting, long-term absence, death, or duplicate entries.

The final status report released on July 24 showed a stark urban-rural divide in electoral verification in the state. Out of Haryana’s 2.06 crore registered electors in 22 districts, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) digitised enumeration forms for over 1.72 crore voters, achieving a statewide completion rate of 83.61 per cent. However, the state’s total pool of 33.8 lakh unmapped electors remains heavily concentrated in the National Capital Region (NCR) hubs of Gurgaon and Faridabad, which together account for nearly 28.8 percent of all unmapped voters in the state. Official data from the SIR exercise showed Gurgaon district posted the lowest digitisation rate at 70.73 per cent. Out of 15.5 lakh registered voters in Gurgaon, 10.9 lakh forms were digitised, while 4.55 lakh forms were categorised as “uncollectable.” Within the district, Gurgaon Assembly Constituency (AC) emerged as the worst-performing seat statewide in terms of voter verification, with 40 per cent of its total electorate of 4,50,200 electors marked uncollectable. Badshahpur, the state’s largest constituency by voter strength (5,41,895 electors), followed closely with 1,76,590 unmapped voters (32.59 per cent). Sohna and Pataudi recorded uncollectable rates of 19.14 per cent and 15.56 per cent, respectively. Neighbouring Faridabad logged the second-lowest digitization completion rate in Haryana at 72.57 per cent. Out of 18.8 lakh voters, BLOs digitised 13.7 lakh enumeration forms, leaving 5.1 lakh in the uncollectable column. Ballabhgarh constituency logged the highest unmapped proportion in the district, with 1.01 lakh out of 2.8 lakh electors (35.49 per cent) deemed uncollectable. Faridabad constituency saw 97,619 unmapped voters

(35.37 per cent), while Tigaon recorded 99,240 (24.71 per cent), Faridabad NIT logged 91,508 (26.76 per cent), Badkhal recorded 89,309 (25.55 per cent), and Prithla registered 39,234 (16.72 per cent). Demographic analysis of Haryana’s Absent, Shifted, Dead, and Duplicate (ASDD) voter data reveals that permanent migration is the primary driver behind the state’s unmapped electors. Statewide, permanent relocation accounted for 40.61 per cent (13.74 lakh) of all uncollectable forms. This was followed by absent electors at 27.75 per cent (9.39 lakh), deceased voters at 22.62 per cent (7.65 lakh), duplicate entries at 6.04 per cent (2.04 lakh), and other categories at 2.98 per cent (1.01 lakh). In urban Gurgaon constituency alone, 96,838 electors were found to have permanently shifted, 50,909 were marked absent during door-to-door verification, and 17,561 have died. Badshahpur recorded 79,498 permanent shiftings and 51,969 absent voters.

The slow progress in the urban NCR belt contrasts sharply with Haryana’s predominantly rural and agricultural districts, where BLOs achieved digitisation rates exceeding 90 per cent. Fatehabad led the state with a 92.88 per cent digitisation rate, reporting only 50,569 uncollectable forms out of 7,10,261 electors. Mahendragarh recorded 91.46 per cent digitisation, Charkhi Dadri achieved 90.64 per cent, Sirsa reached 90.35 per cent, and Bhiwani touched 90.15 per cent. At the individual constituency level, Ellenabad in Sirsa district recorded the highest digitisation rate in the state at 95.91 per cent, followed by Loharu in Bhiwani (95.12 per cent) and Tohana in Fatehabad (94.78 per cent). Across all 20,629 polling booths in Haryana’s 90 assembly constituencies, enumeration form downloading, printing, and distribution reached 100 per cent completion. Pending electors were reduced to zero in 89 of the 90 assembly constituencies as of July 24. Only the Uklana constituency in Hisar district retained a minor backlog of 1,458 pending electors out of its 2.15 lakh voters, representing a negligible 0.01 per cent of the total state electorate. Election administration officials noted that with field door-to-door enumeration now wrapped up, the process transitions to final database reconciliation and draft electoral roll preparation.

‘These kids have courage’: Parents rally behind students at Jantar Mantar

GNS News Agency, August 10

As dawn settled over Jantar Mantar on Saturday, the protest site swelled with a fresh rush of weekend arrivals. Students streamed in with backpacks, families joined in and sat on the mats already spread across the ground, and new posters were unfurled, while others staked out corners under tarpaulin sheets to prepare for the day ahead. With delivery riders physically barred by Delhi Police, food through the morning continued to be bulk-ordered from Connaught Place and ferried in by auto-rickshaws. The site, which drew around 5,000 people by morning, had taken on the character of a self-organised community. And while the protest has been led largely by Gen Z, at least 1,000 people in the gathering were from an older generation: parents, professionals, retired personnel and families who had come from across the country to stand with the young protesters. Some to stand with their children and others to stand in solidarity with a generation they said had found the courage to challenge the government. A 12-year-old girl from West Bengal kept turning around to check that she had not lost sight of her father in the crowd. Her parents had accompanied her after she insisted on coming to the protest. A few metres away, two retired Air Force personnel from Ghaziabad stood among the students. “I came here for these students. They are my kids,” said one of them. “If they can compel Modi to release a video at 12 in the night. Inn bacchon mein toh hein. (These children are courageous.)” For Neeta, 45, an environmental scientist from Gurugram, the young protesters served as a stark reminder of “the failures of her own generation.” She had been at the protest on June 20,

when she said she was subjected to tear gas, and had returned on Saturday. “Our generation did nothing. We just did an MBA and minted money. This generation has a brain of its own,” she said. What struck her most, she said, was the sense of positivity at the protest. “From demonetisation to Ram Mandir chanda chori to inflation, everything is being raised here,” she said.

A father-daughter duo had also travelled from Indore to the protest site. Priyank, a surgeon in his 40s, said his daughter, a medical student in Rishikesh, was also participating in the protests. He said the movement had broken what he saw as a long-standing fear of the government. “The fear of the government and Modi has been removed. This government has silenced people for quite a long time now,” he said. He said he was worried about the consequences his daughter could face for participating in the protest. But that concern, he added, had not made him afraid. A family from West Bengal had travelled to Jantar Mantar on Saturday, with their 12-year-old daughter insisting on seeing the protest for herself. Keshav said his daughter had wanted to come to the protest alone. They accompanied her instead. Standing near the stage, Keshav kept an eye on her as she repeatedly turned around to make sure she had not lost sight of him in the crowd. There needs to be a solution. I have been wondering for quite some days what the solution is. I think the answer I have come to is resignation. Then systemic reforms,” he said. He said he was worried about the consequences of bringing his daughter to the protest. His wife stood beside him, holding their daughter’s hand tightly as the crowd moved around them.

As Dharmendra Pradhan resigns, Centre moves in cops to clear protest sites in Delhi

GNS News Agency, August 10

The Centre on Saturday moved in police forces at the protest sites in Delhi to clear them of protesters after the Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan submitted his resignation to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. DCP of Delhi Sachin Sharma reached the protest site at Parliament Street along with paramilitary forces. Crowds were seen pouring out of Jantar Mantar from the Janpath end near Metro Gate No. 2, cheering, most of them unsure of where they’ll head next. Some said they’ll stay until PM Narendra Modi resigned. The other exit towards the Sansad Marg has been sealed off. With only the Janpath end open, the police have left a narrow space for the crowd to squeeze through. Barely an hour before Dharmendra Pradhan announced his resignation, a clash had broken out between protesters and police at Jantar Mantar in Delhi. ‘Cooperate with Delhi police’: CJP

Meanwhile, CJP volunteers urged protesters to remain calm and peaceful and cooperate with the forces and Delhi police deployed at the site, telling the crowd not to jeopardise their ‘future’ after what they described as achieving their immediate objective. Addressing supporters, volunteers said, “Don’t let your future be ruined. We have achieved the goal we set.” They also appealed to protesters to immediately inform nearby security personnel if they noticed anyone attempting to create trouble. CJP’s national spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka, however, said the protesters would “go home” only if the government accepted their three demands in writing. Addressing supporters at Jantar Mantar, Ranka said, “If you accept our three demands in writing, we will go home.” He also said the group had sought permission to organise a peaceful nationwide candle march and urged people across the country to participate at 6 pm. Speaking to the protesters at the site, spokesperson Saurav Das said the group’s delegation has been called for another round of talks with the government at 3.30 pm and they would not end their agitation until all their demands were accepted in writing. “We’ve been called at 3:30 pm. We’re not going anywhere until all our demands are met and they give them in writing. This is a huge victory,” he said.

Scenes of celebration erupted at Jantar Mantar after the news broke of Pradhan’s resignation, with protesters cheering, embracing and singing the national anthem. As internet connectivity remained patchy at the protest site, many participants called friends and family to verify the reports before celebrating. Students and parents described the resignation as a major victory for the youth movement

but insisted the protest was not over. While some said the minister’s exit was their primary demand, others called for wider accountability and education reforms, signalling that the agitation would continue despite the government’s decision. Delhi Police issues advisory Delhi Police on Monday advised citizens to avoid travelling towards the New Delhi area because of heavy crowds and severe traffic congestion. Citizens are advised to avoid traveling towards the New Delhi area due to heavy crowds and high traffic congestion observed across the district.

Over 92 akh Telangana voters yet to submit enumeration forms ahead of August 3 deadline

Hyderabad: With one week remaining to close the window for submission of the enumeration forms (August 3), as on Saturday, more than 92 lakh electors across 33 districts in Telangana were yet to submit their enumeration forms for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls. According to the status report of the SIR, enumeration forms were distributed to 3,38,26,448 electors, and of them, 2,46,01,237 were submitted. Still, 92,25,211 electors did not submit their enumeration forms in the State. Chief Electoral Officer of Telangana, C Sudarshan Reddy, and Hyderabad district election officer, R V Karnan, urged the electors to submit their enumeration forms and not keep them pending.

From mental health to life lessons: Why Pune residents are learning tango

EMS News Agency, July 30 Growing up in an Anglo-Indian family, dance was a regular part of celebrations. For Dr Emma Johnson, 43, Argentine tango was less about learning a new dance form and more about reconnecting with a part of herself she had left behind. Growing up in an Anglo-Indian family, dance was a regular part of celebrations. “Every family gathering ended with people dancing to rock and roll,” she says. But as work, marriage and family responsibilities took over, dancing gradually disappeared from her life. Two years ago, tango brought it back. Across Pune, people from different age groups and professions are turning to tango not just to learn steps, but to explore ideas of connection, trust and communication. The Argentine dance form, known for its close partnership, improvisation and reliance on non-verbal cues, has found a small but growing community in the city. Unlike forms built around fixed choreography, tango requires two people to constantly respond to each other. The lead and the follow must listen through movement, making awareness and trust central to every interaction on the dance floor. “Tango is not just about memorising steps. It is about listening to another person through movement,” says Mitali Chinnulgund, who has been teaching tango in Pune for nearly a decade. Those who attend classes come with different motivations. Some are drawn by the curiosity of learning a new dance, while others find it a way to step away from increasingly digital and individualised lives.

For Muntazir, 28, tango offered lessons that extended beyond dance. “I learnt something from tango about life. It taught me that what matters is committing to a step. It does not have to be the right step or the wrong step,” he says. The

social aspect of tango has also been a draw for many participants. Sonal Mankar, 38, says the dance provides a space for human connection at a time when personal interactions are increasingly limited. “In our culture there are many taboos around sharing personal space and energy. Tango allows you to be in another person’s space without emotional pressure. It is not just movement but a connection through music and rhythm,” she says. For her, the experience can also be calming. “Today everyone is independent and busy. We often say people need a hug, but simple human touch is becoming rare. Tango creates that connection respectfully and helps the mind relax.” Beyond the social experience, some participants are drawn to tango for its physical demands. The dance involves continuous walking, changes in direction and constant adjustment to a partner’s movements, which can improve coordination and body awareness. Chinmulgund says she has had students with conditions such as Parkinson’s disease, ADHD and social anxiety attend her regular classes. Some joined after doctors suggested tango as a complementary activity, though she emphasises that it is not a substitute for medical treatment. “Tango is recognised worldwide for helping with mobility and balance, but it is important to understand that it is not therapy,” she says. For CS Shankar, 32, the process of learning tango resembles learning a new language. “In the beginning every step feels awkward, just like learning to speak a new language. Slowly you learn to communicate, first with one person and then with many others. Tango taught me that trust and vulnerability do not always need words,” he says. As one of the learners put it, the most meaningful part of tango is not mastering the steps, but discovering what those steps teach them about themselves.

The other challenge at Jantar Mantar: 15,000 kg of garbage everyday

At Jantar Mantar, the crowds are growing every day. So is the garbage. Plastic bottles, paper plates and food packets line the protest site, accompanied by a constant stench. There is no standard waste management protocol when more than 5,000 people gather every day,” said an official from New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC), in charge of managing waste in the area. “Earlier, we collected around 500-600 kg of waste from Tolstoy Marg, Sansad Marg and Jantar Mantar Road. Now we lift nearly 15,000 kg of waste every day.” To manage the waste, the NDMC has deployed extra workers in three shifts. About 50 workers clean the area in the morning, 15 in the afternoon and 20 in the evening. Catch the latest updates on CJP protest “We also use gobblers – battery-operated, eco-friendly litter-pickers – and vacuum devices designed to rapidly collect solid waste. Fogging machines and disinfectant sprays are also used in regular intervals. Further, auto-tippers and garbage trucks come to the protest site in coordination with the police,” the official said. Still, garbage piled up over the last few days, especially next to an abandoned building opposite Kerala House. “The NDMC had not collected garbage from the protest area for many days. Today we called them, and they cleared the heap,” said Gyan (35), one of the protesters.

According to NDMC officials, they could not enter the area because police permission had not been granted. “We didn’t have clearance from the district commissioner of police to clear waste for the last couple of days. As soon as we got permission, the entire area was wet cleaned,” said the official. Many protesters, meanwhile, have taken it upon themselves to keep Jantar Mantar clean. Near the protest site, on Tolstoy Road, opposite The Imperial Hotel, Amaldeep Singh (26) – who had travelled from Malout in Punjab for the protest – was seen collecting waste off the footpath amid the sea of people. “This is seva (service). When I came here last night, I saw some children clearing waste. I thought why can’t I do this too? Whatever I collect, I put it near the barricade opposite McDonald’s,” he

added. Priya (25), a UPSC aspirant, feels that collecting waste gives her a sense of responsibility. “I want to show that we youth are not here to have fun, we can also take some responsibility... Many are littering without any hesitation. What is the kind of message that we are trying to send out there?” NDMC officials said such volunteers have made their work easier. “We can’t deny it. The children have been really helpful and have coordinated with us throughout to make our work easier,” said the official. However, not everyone collecting waste is a volunteer.

Thirteen-year-old Janisar and his uncle Nasim, who collect scrap for a living, have been visiting the protest site for the last few days to gather discarded plastic bottles. The two sell them to a scrap dealer on Minty Road. “We have been coming here for the last three-four days. We keep walking around collecting bottles. We eat the free food distributed here and sleep at the protest site,” said Nasim, adding that they earn around Rs 800-900 a day. Outside the The Imperial Hotel, meanwhile, stood four portable toilets – three for women and one for all. The Sachkhand Foundation, whose members are volunteering at the protest site, got them installed on Friday. This comes amid reports that many protesters are complaining of headaches and sore throats at Jantar Mantar.

Volunteer doctors present at the site report that the overcrowding and open-air living conditions have left a large number of people grappling with viral infections, dehydration, and other health issues. Amritpal Singh, a volunteer for Five River Heart organisation, said many people are approaching them with throat infections and headaches. “Dehydration and hypertension are a few of the conditions we are fighting. The overcrowding and people sleeping out in the open doesn’t help either. It is one of the major reasons why the infections are spreading,” Singh added. Another doctor from Patiala, requesting anonymity, said due to the large crowds, the infection is spreading through coughing and sneezing.

How a Delhi DCP shielded a fellow officer from a violent mob



When a video of a police officer in a green helmet embracing a battered senior officer and slowly pulling him out of a violent mob during the recent student protests in Delhi began circulating on social media, few knew the identity of the man risking his own life. The officer in the green helmet is Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Vinit Kumar. On Wednesday, Kumar was posted at the Tolstoy Marg-Sansad Marg intersection for law-and-order duty. His shift had begun at 4 pm and was to continue until midnight. Around 8.30 pm, as personnel were in the middle of a shift change and several lower staff had moved out, the situation on the ground deteriorated rapidly.

Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Vivek Bhagat was making his way towards the intersection when he was surrounded by a mob. “A constable came running to me and informed me that a police officer had been surrounded by the crowd and was being thrashed,” Kumar recalled. “There was no time to think.” Accompanied by his operator, Rahul Siwach, and a handful of policemen, Kumar rushed into the crowd. Inside, the assault on Bhagat continued unabated. “At one point, I genuinely thought the mob would kill Vivek. There was no chance that one could leave him there like that,” Kumar said. He grabbed hold of Bhagat, wrapped his arms around him and began walking backwards, shielding the officer with his own body as the crowd continued to attack them. Kumar, identifiable in videos by his green helmet, became the human barrier between Bhagat and the mob. As they inched their way out, the blows shifted towards Kumar. “The crowd started hitting me as well,” he said. “Rahul and Deepak tried to protect me.” The rescue, however, came at high cost.

Head Constable Rahul Siwach was stabbed in the stomach during the operation. Constable Deepak was struck by a stone that smashed through the visor of his

helmet. The impact left him seriously injured, fracturing facial bones and causing neurological complications. He is currently admitted to hospital. Rahul Siwach Injured Head Constable Rahul Siwach (Photo Credit: Special Arrangement) Kumar credits the rescue not only to his team but also to the quick thinking of fellow officers who held their ground despite dwindling manpower. Among them was ACP Rajouri Garden Sharad Chandra Nirmal, who had been deployed since morning. Even as personnel rotated during the evening shift change, Nirmal stayed back instead of leaving his post. “He played a remarkable role,” Kumar said. “While we went inside to rescue Vivek, he used his presence of mind to call the RAF personnel inside to help control the mob.” For Kumar, the images that have since gone viral capture only a fleeting moment of the operation. They do not show the frantic decisions made in seconds, the officers who absorbed blows to shield one another, or the injuries that followed.

CSIR transfers four indigenous technologies, unveils IoT-based rural water system

New Delhi: The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) organised a Technology Transfer Event here, where four indigenous technologies were licensed to industry and an IoT-enabled rural water service, measurement and monitoring system was commercially launched, an official statement said on Thursday.

The programme — organised by CSIR-Central Scientific Instruments Organisation (CSIR-CSIO), Chandigarh — also saw recognition of royalty received from Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Panchkula, for licensed production of indigenous defence technologies, the statement from Ministry of Defence said. The technologies include a Pump Academy Private Limited, Bengaluru licensed to produce the Induction Motor Stethoscope (MSCOPE), Portable & Universal Motor-cum-Pump Performance Monitor (PU-MPPM) and i-Power Quality Analyser (IPQA). The optical module and beam combiner assembly for the head-up display (HUD) for SU-30 aircraft programmes was transferred to Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Panchkula.

‘Wanted to make her realise mistake’: Advocate takes back complaint against Noida girl

GNS News Agency, August 10

Stating that her intention was to “make them realise their mistake”, the advocate who filed a complaint against a Noida girl for allegedly using abusive remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a protest at Jantar Mantar has decided to withdraw it. “My intention was not to get them arrested... They did realise that they had made a mistake. The parents also felt that the words used were inappropriate,” Smriti Singh Chandel, who practices in the Supreme Court, told The Indian Express. “They are students. As they have already apologised and the PM has forgiven them, there is no need for legal action.”

In a purported video on August 1, the girl apologised and said it was her “first and last mistake”. “I was at the protest site, and there were many groups abusing PM Modi. They were also instigating others to say these things. I am so ashamed of saying those things that I am not even able to raise my eyes. I apologise to the whole nation for it,” she was heard saying in the video. On July 29, the Noida Police registered a Zero FIR against the girl for intentional insult with intent to provoke a breach of peace, statements conducing to public mischief and defamation. They later transferred it to the Delhi Police for further action. The FIR had recorded the girl’s age as 21. However, her mother later told the media that her daughter was 15 years old. The girl’s mother had also claimed the family had been forced to leave their Noida home due to constant harassment. “I am raising my daughter alone. My husband died in an accident in 2019, and my younger son lives with my in-laws. How can we continue living there when people and the police keep coming to our house?” she had told The Indian Express, appealing to the authorities and the public to stop hounding her family.

Chandel, however, said she has requested the Delhi Police to cancel the case after deciding to withdraw her com-



plaint. “I received a phone call from the Delhi Police, and I informed them that I am withdrawing my complaint. There is no need to take any legal action,” Singh said. Responding to allegations that the girl was being hounded by people following the case, Chandel said she had already apologised. “I don’t think she is being hounded by anyone. But if they feel threatened, they should approach the police,” she said. “Now that I have asked the police to withdraw my complaint, they should not take any action against the girl. Besides, it is only a Zero FIR,” she added.

A Zero FIR allows a complaint to be registered at any police station, irrespective of where the alleged offence took place. The case is then transferred to the police station having the appropriate jurisdiction. When contacted, the Delhi Police said they have neither registered a regular FIR nor converted the Zero FIR into one. According to a police officer, the case may not be pursued further. “Since it is a Zero FIR, it may not be converted into a regular FIR. The girl has also apologised. However, legal opinion is still being sought on how to proceed with the case.”

‘Machete against mosquito?’ Kannada actor Chetan Ahima questions Udhayanidhi Stalin’s arrest

GNS News Agency, August 10

Hours after DMK leader Udhayanidhi Stalin was arrested over his alleged sexually suggestive reference to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay’s friendship with a popular Tamil actor, Kannada actor and activist Chetan Ahimsa Tuesday slammed the move. Calling Vijay an “ignoramus” chief minister, Chetan Ahimsa said Tamil Nadu is turning into a police state. “Udayanidhi’s words may have been distasteful, questionable. But arrest? TVK Vijay’s never understood democracy: consistent pattern of weaponising govt machinery & police against opponents,” he said in a post on X. “A machete against mosquito? TN’s turning into POLICE STATE after making an ignoramus CM,” he added. Udayanidhi was briefly arrested and later released. His remarks came after Udhayanidhi Stalin criticised the Tamil Nadu Government for failing to secure the Cauvery water supply from Karnataka. “Forty-five thousand million cubic feet (tmc) of water should have come... but not a single drop has come. But the CM is not even opening his mouth. His only concern is about how to impose false cases on DMK leaders...” he said.

When some members of the audience began chanting the name of a prominent Tamil actor, seen as a close friend of Vijay, Udhayanidhi Stalin is alleged to have made the remark. The crowd then responded with applause and laughter. “I mean, I was referring to Cauvery only,” he



added. Born and raised in the United States, Chetan graduated from Yale University with a degree in South Asian studies. He came to India in 2005 as a Fulbright scholar and worked in association with the National School of Drama, Bengaluru. Chetan made his debut in Kannada cinema in 2007 with the film Aa Dinagalu”, which became a hit. He has since worked in about 8 more films in lead roles. His family is settled in the United States, where his brother had contested elections for the Green Party. Chetan has spoken on a range of public issues, taking a stand against corruption, communal politics, and fascism. He has been a known face in various movements for the rights of farmers, workers, Dalits and Adivasis.

Why Maharashtra’s healthcare system is witnessing one protest after another

GNS News Agency, August 10 Doctors protest Maharashtra Government nurses protest during a two-hour statewide work stoppage in Maharashtra on Tuesday, demanding revised service rules, cadre restructuring, promotions and recruitment. Violence against doctors. Nurses protesting staff shortages. Resident doctors striking over the registration of homeopathy practitioners. Over the past two months, Maharashtra’s healthcare system has lurched from one disruption to another, each sparked by a different issue but together exposing deeper fault lines over workplace safety, staffing shortages and regulation.

The latest flashpoint is the Maharashtra government’s move to operationalise a long-pending provision that allows certain homeopathy (BHMS) practitioners to be registered under a separate register maintained by the Maharashtra Medical Council (MMC) after completing a bridge course. On Tuesday, August 4, after hours of protest outside the MMC office, Dr Neha Pawar became the first CCMP-qualified homeopathy practitioner to receive an MMC registration certificate from the council. But it was only the latest in a series of disputes that have kept Maharashtra’s healthcare sector on edge. It began with attacks on healthcare workers

The first major flashpoint came in July, when doctors and nurses at KDMC’s Shastrinagar Hospital in Dombivli were allegedly assaulted by Shiv Sena corporator Ramesh Mhatre and his supporters after a pregnant patient was referred to another hospital because the NICU was full. The incident triggered statewide protests by resident doctors, nurses, and the Indian Medical Association (IMA), which suspended routine OPD services for 24 hours and demanded stricter implementation of the Maharashtra law protecting healthcare workers from violence. The agitation ended after the Bombay High Court took suo motu cognisance of the case, stayed the bail granted to Mhatre, directed him to surrender and appealed to doctors to call off the strike. Medical organisations, however, say weak enforcement of the law and inadequate hospital security continue to leave healthcare workers vulnerable. Then came the nurses’ agitation. Even as concerns over violence against healthcare workers persisted, government nurses launched a two-hour work boycott on August 4 over a different issue altogether — chronic staff shortages.

Led by the Maharashtra Government Nurses Federation, the protest sought the implementation of the Indian Nursing Council’s prescribed nurse-to-patient ratio, the filling of vacant posts, and changes to the state’s transfer policy. Although the Maharashtra government promised phased implementation of the staffing norms through a Government Resolution issued in June 2025, nursing organisations say hospitals continue to function with large vacancies, forcing existing staff to shoulder excessive workloads and affecting patient care. Now, the bridge-course row has triggered fresh protests

The latest confrontation centres on the Maharashtra government’s decision to operationalise a provision of the



Maharashtra Homoeopathic Practitioners and Maharashtra Medical Council (Amendment) Act, 2014. The law allows registered BHMS practitioners who complete the Certificate Course in Modern Pharmacology (CCMP), a one-year programme conducted by the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, to prescribe specified allopathic medicines and practise modern scientific medicine within the scope of that training. It also provides for maintaining a separate register for such practitioners under the Maharashtra Medical Council.

Although the law has existed for more than a decade, implementation remained stalled until the Medical Education Department asked the MMC in April 2025 to begin the registration process. The issue resurfaced this month after the government constituted an expert committee to define the competencies, ethical guidelines and standard operating procedures before registrations proceed.

Why has it become so contentious?

The IMA, the Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD) and other allopathic medical bodies say they are not opposed to the bridge course itself but to CCMP-qualified practitioners being registered under the Maharashtra Medical Council. They argue that registration under the same statutory regulator could blur the distinction between MBBS doctors and bridge course-qualified practitioners, creating confusion among patients about qualifications and scope of practice. They also contend that a one-year bridge course cannot be equated with the five-and-a-half years of MBBS training. The IMA has challenged the registration process before the Bombay High Court, which has said any registrations granted will remain subject to the outcome of the petitions. AYUSH organisations, meanwhile, argue they are only seeking implementation of a law passed in 2014.

They say thousands of BHMS practitioners completed the government-approved course years ago and have been waiting for registration ever since. The government maintains it is not immediately opening registrations and that the newly constituted expert committee will first recommend the competencies, scope of practice, ethical guidelines and regulatory safeguards governing CCMP-qualified practitioners.

No justice for Dalits flogged in Una in 2016, now they lack money to fight

GNS News Agency, August 10

In March, a court in Gujarat acquitted 35 men accused of partially stripping and flogging four Dalits after falsely accusing them of killing cows in Una in Gir Somnath district 10 years ago. The incident was seen at the time as a stark illustration of the atrocities that Dalit communities continued to face at the hands of non-Dalits in many parts of the country. Months after the acquittal, the complainant in the case, who was himself a victim of the 2016 atrocity, is seeking financial assistance from well-wishers so he can pursue his appeal in the High Court. The last hearing on Vashram Sarvaiya’s appeal against the March 16 order of the Veraval sessions court took place on July 20. A division Bench of the Gujarat High Court asked the registry to get the records of the proceedings in the trial court, and posted the matter for hearing on August 25. “Over the last 10 years, we have had to incur a lot of expenses to pursue this case. Our sources of income are limited. For a decade, we did not ask for help, but now we need it and I have appealed to society. We will need money to fight in the High Court and, if needed, in the Supreme Court as well,” Vashram told The Indian Express. On behalf of his family, Vashram has been sending out WhatsApp messages since July 11, 2026 to people he knows, asking for financial help to be sent directly to a bank account through UPI. He has also been calling and sending message to these people.

Among other things, his message in Gujarati reads, “Aaje aa parivar arthik rite bhangi tutyo chhe. Jo aa ladaai ma samaj sahbhagi bani ful nahi to ful ni pankhadi no bhagidar banshe to High Court Supreme Court ma ladaai khub majboot svaman swabhiman ni ladaai ma jeet melvi shakishu. High Court ane Supreme Court ma apane janie chhie ke khoob mota praman kharcha thata hoy chhe tyare aaje aa case ni javabdari samaj ni samjine sath, sahyog aapi aa pidit parivar ne ane samaj ne nyay apavie. [Today, this family is financially completely broken. If the community comes together and contributes even a modest amount—a petal if not a flower—we will be able to win this fight for dignity and self-respect in the High Court and Supreme Court. As we know, proceedings in the High Court and Supreme Court involve very heavy expenses. Therefore, considering this case to be the community’s collective responsibility, let us offer our help, support, and cooperation to secure justice for this victim family and our society.]” According to Vashram, since July 11, 2026, he has sent such messages to around 30 persons in Gujarat and 10 of them have made contributions. Impressions about the Dalit men who were involved in the 2016 incident continue to impact their avenues of finding work, Vashram said. “If we go asking for work, people look at us as though we were the ones who were slaughtering the cow. It happened many times, and so we have now stopped going out to look for work,” he said.

Skinning animal carcasses is the traditional occupation of the Dalit Sarvaiya community to which Vashram belongs. On July 11, 2016, Vashram and two of his relatives were skinning dead cows — one of which had been killed by a lion — on the outskirts of Mota Samadhiyala village of Una tehsil in Gir Somnath district, when a group of men claiming to be gau rakshaks arrived in two vehicles and accused them of killing the cows. The Dalits were tied up and assaulted with sticks and iron rods. Vashram and three others, Bechar, Ashok, and Ramesh, were taken to Una town where they were again beaten and flogged publicly. There was outrage across the country after videos of the assault circulated on social media. Then Gujarat Chief Minister Anandiben Patel visited the Sarvaiyas. Dalit activist Jignesh Mevani led a protest that eventually catapulted him into the Gujarat Assembly. Forty-one people were put on trial in the case, including four policemen from Una police station. One of them, then Police Inspector Nirmalsinh Zala died during the trial.

On March 16 this year, Veraval Additional Sessions Judge Jignesh Pandya convicted five accused and acquit-



ted 35, including the three policemen who faced charges of abetment, neglect, framing an incorrect document with intent to cause injury, and forgery of public records. A disappointed Vashram Sarvaiya had told The Indian Express at the time, “This is a sad judgment and we are not satisfied with it. We will challenge it in the High Court and up to the Supreme Court.” Vashram said last month that he was now seeking help from those who believed in “humanity”. He said he estimated that at least Rs 2 lakh would be needed immediately to pursue the case in the High Court. Depending on the time for which the litigation drags on, and whether the matter reaches the Supreme Court, the expenses could be significantly higher. At a state-level ‘Justice and Solidarity Convention’ organised at the Mangal Pandey Auditorium in Ahmedabad on July 11 to mark 10 years of the flogging incident, Balu Sarvaiya, the father of Vashram and Ramesh Sarvaiya, said they would continue to fight for justice for as long as they were alive.

“After ten years of struggle, our case was hushed up at the Veraval sessions court... We are angry, and we want to fight. We have moved the High Court; we will take it up to the Supreme Court if we have to. We will fight for as long as we live. If even the Supreme Court doesn’t give us justice, we will then agitate against the government,” Balu Sarvaiya said. Vashram said he had asked for help from “people who have been fighting for the [Dalit] community”. “I am also reaching out to people from other communities who believe in humanity. If needed, I will post a video on social media making an appeal for help,” he said. The accused too had created a fund to help them carry on the legal battle, Vashram said. “They have also received clandestine support from political organisations,” he said. The five individuals who were convicted by the Veraval court on charges including voluntarily causing hurt using dangerous weapons, wrongful confinement, intentional insult to provoke breach of peace, and humiliating members of Scheduled Caste communities, were identified as Ramesh Jadav, Rakesh Joshi, Nagjibhai Vaniya, Pramodgiri Gausvami, and Balvantgiri Gausvami. Vashram said members of his family have been visiting other victims of caste atrocity across the state to express their gratitude for the support from the Dalit community that they received in 2016. “We got so much support from the community, and we must visit others who faced similar atrocities in the state,” he said. Vashram said his family does not own any land, and their only reliable source of income is the sale of the milk of a cow and a buffalo that they own. The family includes Vashram and his wife, their daughter, a younger brother and younger sister, and their parents. The sale of milk earns them only around Rs 350 every day, Vashram said. The family’s income was reduced after one of the two cows they reared was killed by a lion some months ago. Lion populations have colonised areas near Una tehsil in Gir Somnath district since at least the early 2000s as part of a broader trend of Asiatic lions recolonising coastal areas outside the protected Gir forest. Ironically for Vashram’s family, the 2016 incident took place after the alleged cow vigilantes accused them of killing cattle that included a cow that had been killed by lions.

Bengal’s Annapurna Yojana: Rs 3,000 delayed? Here’s what you can do



Annapurna Yojana West bengal government The Annapurna Yojana is a social welfare initiative that provides an assured financial assistance of Rs 3,000 per month directly to the Aadhaar-linked bank accounts of eligible female residents aged between 25 and 60 years. Several women in West Bengal are still waiting for the third instalment of Rs 3,000 under the state government’s Annapurna Yojana, with funds yet to be credited to many bank accounts as of August 4. The scheme, launched on June 1, assures Rs 3,000 per month to eligible women aged 25-60, excluding taxpayers and government employees. Payments are usually disbursed in phases during the first week of every month. Government sources have advised beneficiaries who have not yet received their benefits to verify whether their documents and bank accounts meet the scheme’s conditions. If your August instalment is pending, here’s what you should know and what you can do next.

What is Annapurna Yojana?

The Annapurna Yojana (or Annapurna Bhandar scheme) is a social welfare initiative introduced by the West Bengal government. Designed for the financial empowerment and socio-economic upliftment of women, it provides an assured financial assistance of Rs 3,000 per month directly to the Aadhaar-linked bank accounts of eligible female residents aged between 25 and 60 years. Effective from June 1, it replaces and expands upon the earlier Lakshmir Bhandar initiative, excluding income-tax payers and permanent government employees or pensioners.

Possible reasons for payment delay If your money has not been credited, this could be one of the reasons: * Inactive DBT: Check if Direct Benefit Transfer has been activated in your bank account. * Unlinked Aadhaar: Check if your bank account has been linked to your Aadhaar card. * Data mismatch: There might be inconsistencies in the details provided across your Aadhaar, bank account, and application form. * Pending verification: Your application could be under administrative verification. * Account confusion:

Check if you have selected the correct DBT-enabled bank account to avail the benefit. * Document errors: You may have submitted incorrect or incomplete documents during the application process. Check if you forgot to submit any document. * Disqualification as an applicant: It is possible that, as per the conditions of the Annapurna Yojana, you belong to an ineligible category (e.g., government employee, pensioner, or taxpayer). * Phased rollout: Due to administrative or technical reasons, there might be a temporary delay in the phased release of instalment funds. Annapurna Yojana: Application status Applicants can check their status directly on the designated portal of the West Bengal government. Here are the status options and what they mean: * Approved: Means your application is successful and the money will be disbursed very soon. * Rejected: Means you have been deemed ineligible for this scheme. You can appeal at the block development officer’s (BDO) office.

* Pending at the BDO Office: Means the verification process is incomplete. Do not panic. Check again after 15-30 days for the next update. * Bank Account Invalid: This message indicates that the account details do not match the Aadhaar records. To resolve this issue, submit a copy of your passbook to the BDO office. * Payment Pending: Indicates that your Annapurna Yojana funds have not been released yet. If you are certain that all your documents are correct, your bank account is DBT-enabled, and you still have not received the money even after the initial payment timeframe has passed, you should take necessary action. The most effective step is to visit your local administrative office, file a complaint as per official procedure, and inquire about the exact verification status of your application. Lodge a complaint if you want to register a complaint, call 1800345555 between 11 am and 4 pm on working days and lodge your grievance.

Two arrested for tiger’s death in Andhra’s Nallamalla forests

Amaravati: Making progress in the case relating to the death of a tiger under suspicious circumstances in Nallamalla forest, the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department arrested two suspects. Anji and Viranjanyulu were arrested at Medikundur in Guntur district and shifted to Giddalur in Markapuram district for questioning, officials said on Tuesday.

Russian missile and drone barrage in Ukrainian capital region kills 15



GNS News Agency, August 10

Kyiv: Russian missile and drone strikes on Kyiv and the surrounding region killed at least 15 people and wounded 42 others overnight into Wednesday, Ukraine's state emergency service said. The attack was the latest in a series of large-scale Russian ballistic missile strikes that have become near-routine this summer. Ukraine has a limited stockpile of interceptor missiles for the US-made Patriot systems, the sole air defense system in its arsenal able to

shoot down ballistic missiles, making large volleys like Wednesday's hard to stop, even as Ukraine has stepped up deep strikes on Russian oil refineries and energy infrastructure.

In the wider Kyiv region around the capital, 14 people were killed and 27 wounded, with fires at multiple locations in Brovary, Bucha and Fastiv districts, Ukraine's emergence service said. Large warehouse fires burned in the city of Brovary and the villages of Velyka Dymerka, Kvitneve and Peremoha. A fire involving vehicles at an enterprise in Fastiv district was extinguished. In Bucha district, crews battled a warehouse fire in the village of Chaiky after putting out a separate fire at a logistics facility in Sofiivska Borshchahivka. In the capital, one person was killed and 15 were wounded, and emergency crews extinguished all fires sparked by the strikes in the Obolonskyi, Sviatoshynskiy, Holosiivskiy and Desnianskiy districts, the Kyiv City Military Administration said. Serhii Beskrestnov, an adviser to Ukraine's president on defense technology development, said the war of attrition has entered a new phase. "The enemy is attacking everything indiscriminately – retail warehouses, food storage facilities, logistics hubs, enterprises, building materials warehouses," he said on Facebook.

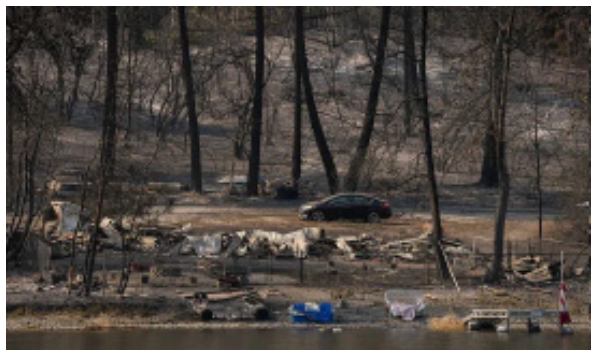
Wildfire destroys about 230 homes in western Canadian Indigenous community, officials say

GNS News Agency, August 10

Vernon: A fast-moving wildfire destroyed about 230 homes in an Indigenous community in western Canada, officials said on Tuesday, making it one of the country's most destructive fires in recent years. Dan Wilson, chief of the Okanagan Indian Band, said the Bradley Creek wildfire devastated much of a reserve community near Vernon, about 440 kilometres (275 miles) northeast of Vancouver.

"It was hard to recognise my community from the air with all the structures and the forest gone," Wilson said after surveying the area by helicopter. The destruction ranks among Canada's worst recent wildfires. A 2024 blaze in Jasper, Alberta, destroyed about 350 homes, while the 2023 McDougall Creek wildfire, also in British Columbia's Okanagan region, destroyed about 200 homes. Canada has endured increasingly destructive wildfire seasons in recent years, with smoke from the blazes repeatedly spreading across North America and triggering widespread air-quality alerts. Wilson called the devastation "surreal" and said it was one of the darkest days in the band's history. The fire erupted late Friday and was driven by wind gusts of up to 115 kilometres (71 miles) per hour. The fire spread so fast that some of our members only had five minutes to evacuate," he said. Wilson said aerial firefighting crews helped save critical infrastructure, including a daycare centre and a newly built school, by repeatedly dropping water on the area.

Among those forced to flee were Louis and Shorty Fred, who said they escaped Saturday with flames close behind them. "I've been living here all my life, and I've really never



seen anything like this," Louis Fred said. "Even 2021 was bad. It was huge. But the wind wasn't anything like compared to this one." About 8,000 people have been evacuated across British Columbia, Emergency Management Minister Kelly Greene said. There were 37 evacuation orders on Tuesday, with conditions changing hourly. The BC Wildfire Service said about 120 wildfires were burning across the province, roughly 50 of them out of control. In addition to Bradley Creek, major fires were burning near the communities of Boston Bar, Clinton and Kimberley. "My thoughts are with everyone whose life has been upended by the wildfires in British Columbia. The Bradley Creek wildfire alone has forced thousands of people to evacuate their homes in the past few days," Prime Minister Mark Carney said in a post on social media.

India invites Bangladesh PM Tarique Rahman to BRICS outreach session



GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi: India on Tuesday said it extended an invitation to Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to attend the outreach session of the upcoming BRICS summit in New Delhi in his capacity as current chair of BIMSTEC.

India is hosting the annual BRICS summit in New Delhi on September 12 and 13 that is expected to deliberate extensively on a number of pressing global challenges including the economic consequences of the West Asia crisis. New Delhi's confirmation on inviting Rahman came amid some fresh unease in ties between the two countries over former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina's plan to hold a virtual media interaction in New Delhi on Wednesday.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India has nothing to do with Hasina's planned news conference, emphasising that it does not endorse any views that may be expressed during the event. Jaiswal, responding to a question, said that an invitation was extended to Rahman to undertake a bilateral visit to India after he assumed the charge of the top office in February. "As far as the BRICS summit is concerned, India has separately extended an invitation to the Bangladesh prime minister in his capacity as the current chair of BIMSTEC to attend the outreach session of the 18th BRICS Summit," he said at a regular media briefing. "The invitation has been extended as per the standard practice being followed in BRICS for the outreach sessions. Other heads of regional groups have also been invited in a similar manner," he said. Without divulging much details, he said India was making preparations for the BRICS summit and extending invitations. New Delhi is hosting the BRICS summit in its capacity as its current chair. Chinese President Xi Jinping, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Russian President Vladimir Putin are among the top leaders expected to attend the summit. BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, with Indonesia joining in 2025.

It emerged as an influential grouping as it brings together 11 major emerging economies of the world, representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population, around 40 per cent of the global GDP and around 26 per cent of the global trade. A meeting of the foreign ministers of the grouping's member states in May had ended without a joint statement as sharp differences between Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) over the West Asia conflict were on

Netanyahu says Israel will not withdraw from Gaza until Hamas is disarmed



GNS News Agency, August 10

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the country will not withdraw its forces from their current positions in Gaza until Hamas is fully disarmed. "We are instructing IDF (Israel Defense Forces) soldiers to do whatever is necessary to protect themselves, our territory and our citizens," Netanyahu said in a video released on social media. Regarding the deal US President Donald Trump said Thursday the so-called "Board of Peace" had reached for the "complete disarmament" of Hamas and other armed groups in Gaza, Netanyahu said that the White House "sent us a draft," but "we did not agree to it." "It is not our draft. We sent our comments," he said.

A day after Trump's announcement of the deal, Hamas said it had agreed to the "latest version of the roadmap" for the second phase of the Gaza ceasefire agreement after

"fierce" negotiations, but conditioned weaponry arrangements on a complete halt to "aggression," Israeli withdrawal from the enclave, and progress on reconstruction, Xinhua news agency reported. Over the weekend, Israeli strikes reportedly killed dozens of people, including children and other civilians, across Gaza, prompting Qatar, Egypt and Turkiye, mediators in the Gaza ceasefire talks, to issue a joint condemnation on Monday. Earlier, Hamas agreed to relinquish both its civilian and military role in governing Gaza under a new internationally backed roadmap that would hand control of the territory to a transitional Palestinian administration as part of a phased peace process, according to senior administration officials.

The proposal, announced by Trump as part of his Gaza peace initiative, goes beyond a ceasefire by outlining a detailed plan to dismantle Hamas's governing structure. Instead a National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, an independent Palestinian body would oversee both civilian administration and internal security during a transitional period. Senior administration officials said the roadmap represents the first time Hamas has agreed to accept an international framework that requires it to surrender its governing role while allowing a new Palestinian authority to assume responsibility for administering Gaza. The document states that all civilian and security responsibilities would be transferred to the National Committee, which would become the sole authority responsible for running public institutions, maintaining essential services and enforcing law and order across the Gaza Strip. It also calls for the committee to conduct a comprehensive audit of Gaza's financial and administrative affairs before beginning reconstruction.

Trump warns Iran of 'very hard' response if Strait of Hormuz remains closed

Washington: US President Donald Trump said Tuesday (US local time) that Iran will be "hit very hard" if the Strait of Hormuz is not reopened "very soon." In an interview with Fox News, Trump said the United States is "having very good discussions" with Iran. But Tehran denied it is having any talks with Washington. Trump earlier warned that he was giving Iran a "last chance before decapitation", he said that they were talking about opening the Strait of Hormuz "literally by tomorrow". "I mean they're going to go quickly, one way or the other. It's not very complex", he said on Monday at the Oval Office. "We're talking about the Strait, the opening of the Strait, having it open, literally by tomorrow", he said, but Iran has denied there were any talks with the US. The contradictory claims leave the gateway to the world for 20 per cent of fossil fuels trapped in uncertainty. "We are not holding any negotiations with the United States at present", Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said at a news briefing in Tehran. Speaking a few hours before Trump, he said that except for Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who is on a pilgrimage to Iraq, all the negotiators were in Iran. Trump dismissed it, writing on Truth Social, "Iranian Leadership is unbelievably duplicitous" because after they "beg" for a meeting "they say, openly and proudly, that they're not having any discussions". Baqaei did say that Iran was in consultations with Oman, which is across from it on the Strait, for



what the Iranian news agency Tasnim described as a "temporary arrangement that would ensure maritime safety in the strategic waterway". He said that no other country was involved in Muscat-Tehran talks. Trump said Iran was spooked by leaks about the planned attack, "very very hard, harder than any" since World War II and pleaded, "We want to talk. We want to talk about the Strait". A Memorandum of Understanding on opening the Strait, where shipping was disrupted after the bombing of Iran, was signed by Trump and Iranian president Masoud Pezeshkian on June 17, but unravelled within weeks after Iran attacked ships in the Strait and the US blockaded Iranian ports.

Congo Ebola death toll crosses 1,700 in fastest-growing outbreak



Bunia (Congo): Ebola has killed more than 1,700 people in eastern Congo in the fastest-growing outbreak of the disease, data showed. As of Tuesday, 3,802 cases had been recorded, with 1,707 deaths, according to the latest government update. It is not clear when the outbreak will reach its peak, Africa CDC Director-General Dr Jean Kaseya said during his second visit to the town of Bunia near the outbreak's epicentre on Tuesday. Kaseya cautioned that nearly 80 per cent of new cases are not coming from contact tracing but instead from community spread.

The outbreak, declared on May 15, has been linked to the Bundibugyo virus for which there are no approved vaccines or treatments. Delays in contact tracing, difficulties accessing affected areas, mistrust from communities, and

violence by armed groups and some residents have hampered the response, the Africa CDC has said. The outbreak is mostly concentrated in eastern Congo's remote Ituri province, which accounts for nearly 90 per cent of cases, but cases have also been confirmed in five other provinces, including in one of the country's largest cities, Kisangani. Neighbouring Uganda declared itself free of Ebola following the discharge of the country's last patient in mid-June. On Monday, healthcare workers in the hard hit town of Mongbwalu issued an ultimatum over unpaid wages saying that "if nothing is done within 24 hours, we will escalate our action." A key challenge is that patient zero has yet to be identified in the outbreak while displacement from armed conflict and illegal mining in the region have made it difficult to trace thousands who have come in contact with infected individuals. Previously, healthcare workers in Bunia went on strike over a lack of pay and dangerous working conditions. The World Health Organization says more than 100 healthcare workers have been infected since the beginning of the outbreak. The latest outbreak has killed more people at a quicker rate than any previous outbreak, including in 2014-2016 when 28,000 cases were reported, of which over 11,000 people died. That outbreak took about eight months to reach 1,000 deaths. The response is also hampered by a funding gap, attacks on health centres, an ongoing conflict in eastern Congo and mistrust among local communities. Enrollment in a highly anticipated study of two possible Ebola treatments recently started in Ituri.

Gulf shipping traffic steady amid uncertainty of peace talks

GNS News Agency, August 10

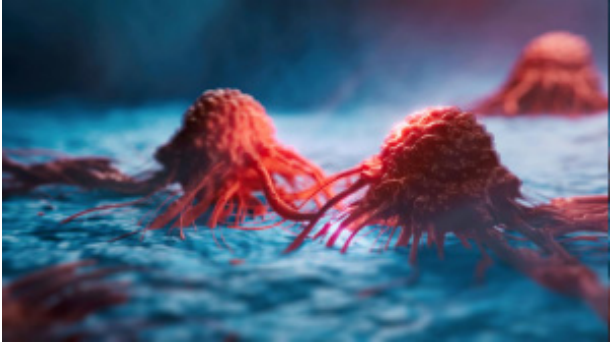
SINGAPORE, GNS News Agency, August 10 Shipping traffic at the key Middle Eastern maritime chokepoints of the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb was little changed on Tuesday from the previous day, ship-tracking data showed. Eight vessels transited the Strait of Hormuz, including five tankers and three bulk carriers, shipping data from Kpler showed, the same as the previous day. Six of the vessels, three tankers and three bulk carriers, were entering the strait, while a gas carrier and a tanker were exiting.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. Roughly 130 to 140 ships would typically transit the waterway before the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran began on February 28 and Iran responded by closing the strait. Additionally, a liquefied natural gas tanker controlled by Abu Dhabi National Oil Co reappeared outside the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday, carrying a cargo loaded from Das Island, according to LSEG and Kpler data. The tanker Mubarak departed Das Island, United Arab Emirates, on July 14 after picking up a cargo there, both LSEG and Kpler

reported. It was last seen inside the strait on July 16, according to the ship-tracking data. The tanker is currently off the western coast of India, both companies' data showed. LSEG data shows a discharge location of India's Dahej terminal in Gujarat, with an arrival date of August 5. This is the third time the Mubarak LNG tanker has exited the strait carrying cargoes from Das Island since the war began. The previous two cargoes were delivered to China and India.

In response to a request for comment, ADNOC said the company "does not comment on" the position, movements, or routing of its vessels as a matter of policy. In the Bab el-Mandeb, 20 vessels crossed the strait on Tuesday, with 10 entering and 10 exiting the waterway, Kpler data showed, the same as the previous day. Six tankers, three dry bulk carriers and a gas carrier entered the Bab el-Mandeb, while seven tankers and three bulk carriers exited, the data showed. Some vessels may still be sailing with their transponders turned off, which are not considered in the counts. Qatar said on Tuesday that mediators were making progress in efforts to end the U.S.-Iran war, driving oil prices lower, although Tehran has denied President Donald Trump's assertion that talks are already under way.

Childhood cancers account for over 2% of new cases in Karnataka annually



Childhood cancers continue to remain a significant, yet often under-recognised health burden in Karnataka, contributing to more than 2% of all new cancer cases detected annually. Doctors stress that with timely diagnosis and uninterrupted treatment, more than 70% of childhood cancers are curable — a message being reinforced during September, globally observed as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. To mark the month, the State-run Kidwai Institute of Oncology (KMIO) is organising an awareness programme with activities and a fun fiesta for children at the institute on September 20, Saturday. According to data provided by T. Naveen, Director In charge of Kidwai institute, as many as 87,855 new cancer cases are detected every year in Karnataka, of which 1,882 (2.1%) are in children. Childhood cancers account for 1.4% of cancer deaths in the State. In Bengaluru alone, 15,812 new cases are detected annually, with children making up 339 (2.1%) of the total. Childhood cancers contribute to 1.5% of cancer deaths in the city. Specialised diagnosis

At Kidwai institute, the State’s apex Regional Cancer Centre, 601 childhood cancer cases (0–14 years) were registered in 2024, representing 4.6% of its total cancer caseload. “This reflects the significant paediatric oncology workload at KMIO and underlines the importance of strengthening specialised diagnostic and treatment services for children,” said Dr. Naveen. In India, of the 14 lakh new cancer cases reported annually, 35,240 (2.5%) are in children, con-

tributing to nearly 1.8% of cancer-related deaths. Experts point out that while the absolute numbers may seem smaller compared to adult cancers, the impact is profound as it affects children at their most vulnerable ages and places a heavy social and emotional toll on families. Most common cancers

An analysis of childhood cancer patterns in Bengaluru by doctors at Kidwai shows that leukaemia remains the leading cancer type among children, contributing to over 40% of cases in boys and more than one-third in girls. This is followed by lymphomas, brain and nervous system tumours, bone cancers, and kidney cancers. Brain tumours, doctors observed, were slightly more common among girls compared to boys. “These patterns show the urgent need to expand paediatric oncology facilities, especially for blood-related and neurological cancers,” said Arun Kumar A.R., professor and Head of Paediatric Oncology at Kidwai. Over the past few years, doctors at Kidwai have been witnessing more girls registering for cancer treatment than in the past. “With more awareness, the sex ratio for cancer registration has improved now compared to previous years when there were gender disparities in cancer treatment for girls,” said Dr. Kumar. Early detection Despite advances in treatment, delays in diagnosis and interruptions in cancer therapy remain major challenges in India. “Persistent unexplained fever, swellings or lumps, a white reflex in the eye, vision changes, prolonged bone or joint pain, and unexplained weight losses are red-flag symptoms that parents and caregivers should never ignore,”

Dr. Kumar said. He stressed that early detection, timely treatment, and adequate family support can make childhood cancers curable in majority of the cases. “The diagnosis of cancer in a child is the beginning of a demanding journey, which often turns out to be life-changing for the entire family. People should avoid alternative systems of medicine for cancer treatment as it only delays the initiation of proper treatment. Early diagnosis and early intervention is better as it improves the chances of successful treatment and reduces mortality,” he added.

Amoebic meningoencephalitis: Ten things you need to know



Amoebic encephalitis is a rare yet potentially fatal infection of the central nervous system caused by free-living amoebae commonly found in freshwater environments like lakes and rivers. As many as 19 deaths and about 70 cases of amoebic meningoencephalitis have been reported this year alone in Kerala, even as several continue to be in treatment as of September 17, 2025. Here are ten things to know about amoebic meningoencephalitis:

1. There are two types of amoebic encephalitis, namely primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) and granulomatous amoebic encephalitis (GAE).
2. Primary amoebic meningoencephalitis or PAM is caused by Naegleria fowleri, an amoeba that thrives in warm freshwater lakes, ponds, and rivers. It can also survive in poorly maintained swimming pools in rare cases.
3. As it can infect the brain and destroy the tissues there, this one-celled organism is also called ‘brain-eating amoeba’. These infections, though rare, are fatal, and 97% of the patients don’t survive.
4. The amoeba enters the body through the nose and

reaches the brain. It destroys brain tissues and causes swelling. In recent cases, children have been found to be more vulnerable to it. The infection does not spread from person to person. Swallowing water containing the amoeba does not lead to it either.

5. PAM is rare and usually occurs in otherwise healthy children, teens, and young adults, and has a high fatality rate because of rapid onset and delayed diagnosis.
6. The initial symptoms of PAM are indistinguishable from bacterial meningitis, while the symptoms of GAE can mimic a brain abscess, encephalitis, or meningitis. Both PAM and GAE can be fatal, with only a few reported survivors. The Kerala government now has a protocol in place for treatment and is attempting to diagnose and treat early.
7. Patients typically have a history of swimming, diving, bathing, or playing in warm, generally stagnant, freshwater during the previous one to nine days. Some cases have been reported with no such known history, however.
8. The deadly Naegleria species are ubiquitous in soil and fresh or brackish water (lakes, rivers, ponds). In general, they are sensitive to environmental conditions such as aridity and pH extremes and cannot survive in seawater.
9. The infection can be diagnosed through PCR tests of the cerebrospinal fluid. However, as PAM is a rare condition, detection can sometimes be hard.
10. Holding the nose or wearing a nose clip while jumping or diving into fresh water are some of the steps suggested to avoid the infection. The head should be kept high while entering warm water. Steer clear of digging in shallow waters, say experts. Distilled or boiled water should be used for clearing nasal passages. Chlorination and regular cleaning of wells, tanks and swimming pools is also being recommended.

Peyronie’s Disease: breaking myths and embracing modern treatments

When it comes to men’s health, there are still conditions that are rarely spoken about, even within families. One such condition is Peyronie’s disease — a disorder that can significantly affect both physical health and emotional well-being but often goes unrecognised due to embarrassment or lack of awareness. As a urologist, I often meet men who have silently lived with the symptoms for months, sometimes years, before finally seeking help. By this time, the disease has often progressed, impacting not only their sexual health but also their confidence, relationships, and quality of life.

What is Peyronie’s Disease?

Peyronie’s disease occurs when fibrous scar tissue (plaques) develops inside the penis, leading to an abnormal bend or curvature during erection. This can cause pain, difficulty with sexual intercourse, and in some cases, erectile dysfunction. Global studies estimate that between 3% and 9% of men may be affected, with prevalence rising among those between 40 and 70 years of age. In some populations, surveys suggest the number could be as high as 1 in 10 men. Despite this, many cases remain undiagnosed, as men often avoid seeking medical care for sexual health issues. In India, we suspect similar prevalence, but cultural barriers and stigma around discussing men’s health mean a large number of cases likely go unreported. The biggest challenge in India is silence. Many men dismiss symptoms as a normal part of ageing or avoid seeking care due to embarrassment. Some turn to unverified home remedies or delay medical consultation until the disease becomes severe. This is a critical concern because Peyronie’s disease is a medical condition, not a reflection of masculinity or virility. The longer one waits, the fewer the minimally invasive options available. Advances in treatment Over the past decade, treatment for Peyronie’s disease has advanced significantly across the world, and India is now adopting many of these innovations: Medical therapies: Oral medications provide limited benefits, but intralesional injections are increasingly being introduced in India with encouraging results in reducing curvature. Minimally invasive approaches: Penile traction therapy devices, now available in India, are proving effective when used in the early stages of the disease.



Surgical excellence: For severe curvature, surgery remains the most effective solution. Techniques such as plication, grafting, and penile prosthesis implantation are being performed in Indian centres with successful outcomes. Holistic care: Treatment in India increasingly includes psychological support, couple counseling, and sexual health education, acknowledging the emotional impact of the disease. Research shows that men often wait over a year before seeking medical advice for Peyronie’s disease. This delay can lead to worsening curvature and the need for more invasive treatments. In India, where men’s health discussions are even more restricted, undiagnosed cases may be far higher. It is important to understand that Peyronie’s disease is not rare, and is certainly not something to be ashamed of. It is a recognised medical condition with effective treatment options available. For men who experience penile curvature, pain during erections, or difficulties with sexual activity, consulting a qualified urologist early, can make a significant difference. Families and partners can also play an important role by offering emotional support and encouraging timely medical care. Improving awareness With modern therapies and advanced surgical expertise now available in India, men no longer need to silently endure the burden of Peyronie’s disease. Awareness, early action, and open conversations are the keys to better outcomes, preserved sexual health, and improved quality of life. The key is to act early — timely consultation with a urologist and early treatment in these patients ensures better outcomes and overall well-being.

Why are deaths occurring despite rabies vaccine? Doctors stress strict adherence to prevention and treatment steps



The death of a 50-year-old man in Chennai due to rabies, despite reportedly receiving both immunoglobulin and a complete course of the vaccine after a dog bite, has raised questions about vaccine failure and gaps in post-exposure care. Experts underline that while rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms develop, it is also fully preventable if the correct steps are taken promptly. “The very first step after a bite is washing the wound thoroughly with soap and running water for at least 15 minutes. This alone can wash away most of the virus,” said C. Ananthakrishnan, senior consultant in internal medicine, Prashanth Hospitals, Chennai. He described wound cleaning as “as golden as the vaccine itself,” emphasising that the first hour after a bite is critical. Sindhuja L., neuro-physician, VS Hospitals, Chennai added that many failures occur because people either miss or delay this step. “If the virus enters the nerves before the vaccine starts working, the outcome can be fatal,” she said. The location and depth of the wound play a decisive role in determining outcomes. “Bites on the head, face, neck and upper limbs allow the virus to travel quickly to the brain. These require an aggressive approach,” explained Surendran R., consultant, infectious diseases & hospital infection control, SIMS Hospital, Chennai. Category 3 wounds -- deep bites with bleeding, contamination of mucous membranes, or multiple injuries require immunoglobulin in addition to the vaccine, he said. Dr. Sindhuja recalled treating a child bitten on the face who developed rabies despite receiving the vaccine, underscoring how the proximity of the bite to the brain accelerates disease progression.

The post-exposure rabies vaccine (PEP) regimen in-

cludes five doses given on days 0, 3, 7, 14, and 28 following a potential exposure. For high-risk Category 3 bites, rabies immunoglobulin is also given, ideally infiltrated into and around the wound to neutralise the virus locally. Errors in vaccine or immunoglobulin administration remain a significant concern. “Immunoglobulin should be infiltrated thoroughly into and around the wound, not just given intramuscularly. Missing areas, especially on the face and neck, increase the risk,” said Dr. Ananthakrishnan. Completing the vaccine schedule is equally critical, doctors noted. “Getting just two shots is not enough. If the full course is not completed as per schedule, protection drops significantly,” he said. Ajay Christopher, associate consultant in Emergency Medicine, Rela Hospital, Chennai, pointed out that starting the vaccine or immunoglobulin late, more than a day or two after the bite can also render the intervention ineffective. Timely initiation, proper administration site (usually the deltoid), adherence to the full schedule, and maintenance of cold chain are critical to ensure full protection. Experts pointed to cold chain maintenance as a weak link in the system. “Rabies vaccines are sensitive biological products. If they are frozen, or not stored between 2°C and 8°C, their effectiveness drops drastically,” said Dr. Christopher. Dr. Surendran added that improper handling during transport and storage failures at hospitals could result in ineffective doses being administered.

Underlying health conditions may also affect vaccine response. “Patients who are immunocompromised, those with diabetes, on transplant medications or heavy alcohol use, may not respond as well to vaccines,” said Dr. Ananthakrishnan. Systemic issues also persist. “In smaller towns, immunoglobulin is not always available, and public awareness about immediate wound washing is still very low,” noted Dr. Sindhuja. Dr. Surendran stressed the need for strict protocols on vaccine storage and handling, regular monitoring and training of healthcare staff. Despite these gaps, experts emphasised that rabies remains one of the most preventable diseases. “Rabies has no cure once symptoms start, but if dealt with properly, it is 100% preventable,” said Dr. Ananthakrishnan. Doctors also said that no animal bite should ever be ignored. “Even a scratch from a stray dog or cat can be dangerous. Wash immediately, seek medical care and never skip or delay vaccine doses,” said Dr. Sindhuja. For those at high risk, such as people frequently handling animals-- pre-exposure vaccination can also be considered, Dr. Surendran added. “The take-home message according to experts: rabies deaths can be avoided if wound care, vaccine, and immunoglobulin are administered correctly and on time.”

Not merely puffy feet: what pedal oedema can signify about your health

Pedal oedema, pedal from the Latin pedalis, meaning “pertaining to the foot” and oedema from the Greek oidema, meaning “to swell” literally means swelling of the feet. This is a fairly common symptom, but one that generally has physicians delving deep, to identify the underlying cause. It can be caused by a variety of diseases: these can be systemic, due to cardiac, renal or liver disease, or may be local, caused by trauma. Understanding pedal oedema

Pedal oedema is considered a premonitory symptom for many diseases. Understanding it involves firstly, classifying it. The first major classification is whether it is unilateral or bilateral, or, present on one or both feet. In case of single-sided pedal oedema, a local cause needs to be considered. This can range from trauma to the leg, lymphatic obstruction or even deep vein thrombosis or a mass compressing the leg’s venous supply, which needs expert consultation and radiological investigations. Bilateral pedal oedema could portend something bigger. A famous quote of medical professors is: “Bilateral pedal oedema means all failures – cardiac, renal, liver, respiratory”. This grim line highlights the importance of detailed investigations into the cause of pedal oedema involving both limbs.

How does swelling happen?

Water makes up about 60% of an adult human body by weight. This water is divided: two-thirds of it is located within our cells (intracellular) while one-third of it is outside the cells (extracellular), and part of this extracellular water is in the vascular chamber. The vascular chamber is governed by the Starling equations of hydrostatic and oncotic pressure. When the hydrostatic pressure increases, as in the case of heart failure, water from the vascular chamber is pushed out, into the interstitium (supporting or connective tissues) causing oedema. Likewise, when the oncotic pressure decreases, as in low albumin states of chronic kidney disease and chronic liver disease, the fluid is pulled out into the interstitium. There are also two other causes of oedema. One is endothelial injury (damage to the inner lining of blood vessels), as seen in trauma and other gravely sick conditions needing ICU admissions. The other is lymphatic stasis as is seen in Wuchereriosis or filariasis, colloquially known as elephantiasis. Apart from these two conditions, a gross deficit in calories and protein over a prolonged period causing a nutritional deficiency condition known as



beriberi, can cause pedal oedema. It can also be caused by the ingestion of food that is rich in sodium, leading to a sodium overload. Other causes A middle-aged woman had recently been diagnosed with hypertension, and was duly instructed by her doctor to take antihypertensives daily. The doctor warned her that if she developed pedal oedema, it was a sign of “heart damage due to uncontrolled hypertension”. The patient returned after four weeks of being on medication, tormented with pedal oedema. She said she had taken all her medications as prescribed, but even then, had developed pedal oedema. This turned out to be a case of drug-induced oedema, caused by one of her medications. A large number of drugs can cause oedema by renal vasoconstriction or arteriolar dilation or by augmented renal sodium reabsorption. Irrespective of the cause, patients must ell their doctors about what medications they are on. A few rarer causes of oedema include hypothyroidism, endocrine cortisolism (abnormally high or low levels of cortisol) and taking steroid tablets. Pregnancy is a common cause of pedal oedema, especially towards the later trimesters; however, it is best to consult your doctor about it, to ensure it is not indicative of the potentially dangerous condition of preeclampsia. Thus, pedal oedema, or foot swelling, is a symptom—not a disease— that can be caused by a range of systemic or local conditions. Do not ignore it or try home remedies. A thorough evaluation by a healthcare professional is essential to determine its cause and treat it.

Here’s why obesity affects people differently

New Delhi: Ever wondered why some people with obesity remain relatively healthy while others develop serious conditions like diabetes and heart disease? Genetic differences may be the reason, according to a new study. An international team of researchers led by the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and the University of Copenhagen analysed genetic data from 452,768 people and discovered variants in 205 regions of the genome linked to higher body fat but better metabolic health.

Using these findings, they developed a genetic risk score that accounts for the impact of these variants. Individuals with higher scores were more likely to develop obesity — but were less likely to suffer complications such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or heart disease. This is partly due to the way fat cells behave in different people. Importantly, these protective genetic effects were already visible in children. Kids carrying the protective variants were more likely to develop obesity but did not show the usual warning signs of metabolic disease, the study revealed. The research was published in Nature

Medicine. “Our study shows that obesity is not a single condition — it is made up of different subtypes, each with its own risks,” said Nathalie Chami, Instructor of Environmental Medicine and Artificial Intelligence and Human Health, at the Icahn School. “By uncovering these genetic differences, we can start to understand why obesity leads to different health outcomes in different individuals. This could eventually change how we predict, prevent, and treat obesity and its complications,” Chami added. The research identified eight distinct obesity subtypes, each linked to unique health risks. “These insights could eventually help doctors predict which patients are most vulnerable to complications and inform new treatments that mimic the protective genetic effects found in some people,” Chami said. The team cautioned, however, that the findings do not mean obesity is harmless. “Most people with obesity still face health challenges, and lifestyle factors such as diet and exercise remain critical for overall health,” said Zhe Wang, Assistant Professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The study was conducted using individuals from the UK Biobank, comprising people of European ancestry.

Ada Lovelace: the Enchantress of Numbers



Women in STEM is a popular term you would have heard, and it is well-celebrated in the modern age. However, what about the women who laid the stepping stones for the term? Women who not only broke gender barriers but also played an important role in laying the foundation in several modern fields. One such icon was Ada Lovelace. Augusta Ada King, Countess of Lovelace, more commonly known as Ada Lovelace, was the daughter of the poet Lord Byron and his wife, Anne Isabella Milbanke. She did something most women deemed impossible then. She became the world’s first computer programmer. Even though recognised much later, her visionary notes on Charles Babbage’s Analytical Engine included what is recognised as the first computer algorithm, earning her that title.

Being a single mother, Lady Byron was sceptical of several skills thought to be irrational — specifically subjects like the arts — which she associated with Lord Byron. In order to prevent Ada from having any poetic tendencies, Lady Byron made sure that her daughter received a rigorous education in science and mathematics, which were very uncommon for girls in her era. Ada had a natural aptitude for numbers and reasoning from a young age. Among her tutors were renowned mathematicians like Augustus De Morgan, a well-known logician, and Mary Somerville, one of the first female members of the Royal Astronomical

Society. Ada’s life changed dramatically when she met Charles Babbage, the inventor and mathematician who is frequently referred to as the “father of the computer”, when she was just 17 years old. Babbage was then developing the Difference Engine, a mechanical device used to perform mathematical calculations. Ada was fascinated by his ideas and demonstrated a thorough understanding of his work.

They developed a strong intellectual bond, and Babbage was impressed by her perceptions and critical abilities. He affectionately referred to her as “The Enchantress of Numbers”. Babbage and Lovelace’s friendship and collaboration would become one of the most significant intellectual partnerships of the 19th Century. Babbage later started working on the Analytical Engine, a general-purpose computing machine. It contained many features that we see and use in modern computers, including an arithmetic logic unit and integrated memory. In 1842, based on a lecture Babbage gave in Turin, Italian engineer Luigi Federico Menabrea wrote a paper in French about the Analytical Engine. Lovelace was commissioned to translate this paper into English. But she went far beyond a mere translation.

Her notes were three times longer than the original text and offered profound insights into the potential of the machine. She described how the engine could be programmed to perform tasks beyond pure number-crunching—such as composing music—highlighting her prescient understanding of computing as a universal machine. Lovelace most famously included a technique for using the Analytical Engine to calculate a series of Bernoulli numbers. This is widely regarded as the first algorithm ever intended to be executed by a machine, making her the first computer programmer in history. Ada Lovelace Day, celebrated annually in October, promotes the achievements of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The U.S. Department of Defence named a programming language “Ada” in her honour in the 1980s. She was also aware of machines’ limitations and emphasised the difference between human creativity and machine processing, which is still relevant in discussions about automation and artificial intelligence today. But in the late 1840s, her health began to decline, and in 1852, she passed away from uterine cancer. She was buried next to her father, Lord Byron, in Nottinghamshire’s Church of St Mary Magdalene, as she requested. For many years after her death, Ada Lovelace’s contributions were largely forgotten. It wasn’t until the mid-20th Century, with the rise of computer science as a discipline, that her work was rediscovered and properly recognised. In a field where women have been traditionally

Endocrine disruptors in plastic waste: a new public health threat



Plastics have revolutionised modern living with their convenience and affordability, but this same ubiquity is spawning an invisible, long-term health crisis. Beyond choking oceans and clogging landfills, plastics are now infiltrating our bodies through microplastic particles and a cocktail of endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs). The evidence is clear and deeply concerning: these substances are interfering with our hormonal systems, damaging reproductive health and increasing our susceptibility to chronic diseases, including cancer. India, now the world’s largest generator of plastic waste, stands at the epicenter of this escalating public health emergency. Microplastics in the human body: from the environment to the bloodstream. Once considered inert pollutants, microplastics—plastic particles smaller than 5 mm—are now recognised as biologically active. A 2022 study by Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam detected microplastics in the blood of 80% of human participants. Further, a 2024 study published in Nature Scientific Reports reported the presence of microplastics in nearly 89% of blood samples in India, with an average concentration of 4.2 particles per milliliter. These particles have also been found in human lungs, hearts, placentas, breast milk, ovarian follicular fluid, and semen. Alarmingly, testicular tissue in Indian men was found to contain three times more microplastics than that in dogs.

The plastics in our lives are not chemically neutral. They often contain EDCs such as: Bisphenol A (BPA) and BPS: Used in water bottles, food containers, and thermal paper. - Phthalates (e.g., DEHP, DBP): Used to soften plastics and found in cosmetics, toys and IV tubing. - PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances): Found in food packaging and non-stick cookware. These chemicals mimic or block natural hormones such as estrogen, testosterone, thyroid hormones, and cortisol. They interfere with receptor binding, disrupt gene expression in reproductive organs, and induce oxidative stress, inflammation, and apoptosis (cell death). Animal studies published in Food and Chemical Toxicology (2023) showed that even low doses of polystyrene microplastics (20 µg/L) disrupted testosterone levels, impaired sperm production, and damaged the blood-testis barrier. Similar effects were observed in ovaries, where microplastics reduced anti-Müllerian hormone levels, triggered oxidative stress pathways, and induced cell death. Recent clinical studies from China and India have linked the presence of microplastics in semen to reduced sperm count, concentration and motility. Exposure to BPA and phthalates has been associated with lower testosterone levels and elevated luteinizing hormone (LH) levels—both indicators of endocrine disruption. A global review published in Science of the Total Environment further supports the connection between microplastics and male subfertility. Notably, a 2023 study in Environmental Science & Technology Letters reported a strong correlation between microplastic levels in semen and decreased sperm count, motility, and abnormal morphology in Chinese men. In India, studies have documented a 30% decline in average sperm count over the past two decades.

A study published in Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety (2025) found microplastics in 14 out of 18 follicular fluid samples collected from women undergoing fertility treatment in Italy. These particles, along with their associated endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs), were found to compromise egg quality and were linked to menstrual irregularities, reduced estradiol levels, and an increased risk

of miscarriage. Epidemiological studies have also linked exposure to phthalates and BPA with conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), endometriosis, and spontaneous abortions. These associations have been further supported by findings published in Advances in Pharmacology (2021) and Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology (2023). The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) now classifies several plastic additives as probable human carcinogens. Case-control studies from India have shown that women with elevated levels of DEHP in their urine face nearly a threefold increased risk of breast cancer (odds ratio = 2.97). Exposure to BPA and phthalates has also been linked to higher incidences of prostate, uterine, and testicular cancers.

In addition to their carcinogenic potential, these endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) have been implicated in metabolic disorders. By mimicking cortisol, altering insulin sensitivity, and promoting fat storage, EDCs contribute to the development of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Moreover, PFAS exposure has been associated with metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, and thyroid dysfunction, as reported in a 2024 study published in Frontiers in Public Health. India generates over 9.3 million tonnes of plastic waste each year. Of this, approximately 5.8 million tonnes are incinerated, releasing toxic gases, while 3.5 million tonnes end up polluting the environment. Studies have shown that residents in cities like Mumbai are exposed to between 382 and 2,012 microplastic particles daily through air, food, and water. In Nagpur, doctors are reporting an increase in cases of early puberty, respiratory problems, obesity, and learning disorders in children—conditions increasingly linked to plastic pollution. Recent testing by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) detected phthalate concentrations in drinking water samples from Delhi, Jabalpur, and Chennai that exceeded European Union safety limits. Despite progressive policies like the Plastic Waste Management Rules (2016, updated in 2022 and 2024), enforcement remains inconsistent. Current regulations do not account for low-dose effects or the complex interactions of EDCs, nor do they address the specific vulnerabilities of children and pregnant women.

The health burden associated with EDCs in India is staggering, costing over ₹25,000 crore annually due to increased healthcare spending and lost productivity. The poorest populations, often living near waste dumps or working in the informal recycling sector, bear the brunt of this crisis. Globally, the U.S. reports healthcare costs of \$250 billion annually linked to plastic-related chemicals, according to the Endocrine Society. Biomonitoring and surveillance are crucial for establishing national programmes that measure endocrine-disrupting chemical (EDC) levels in blood, urine, and breast milk. Longitudinal studies must be funded to assess the health impacts of EDC exposure on fertility, neurodevelopment, and chronic diseases. In addition, public awareness needs to be improved, and behaviour changes should be encouraged, such as educating people on the risks of microwaving food in plastic containers and promoting the use of glass, stainless steel, and EDC-free alternatives. It is also important to advocate for antioxidant-rich diets to help counteract oxidative stress.

Further actions should include enforcing plastic segregation, recycling, and safe disposal, while investing in microplastic filtration systems for water treatment plants. Additionally, incentivising the development of biodegradable, non-toxic materials is essential to reduce EDC exposure. Plastic pollution is no longer a distant environmental concern; it is a biological invasion with profound implications for human health. The infiltration of microplastics and plastic-derived EDCs into our bodies is triggering hormonal disruption, reproductive dysfunction and chronic diseases. The science is undeniable, and the time for action is now. For India, the world’s most exposed population, this is more than a policy issue—it is a generational imperative. We must address this silent epidemic through science-driven regulation, robust monitoring, public education, and systemic change. The health of our people, especially our children, depends on it.

Revisit digital search powers under the I-T Bill 2026



The Finance Minister recently introduced a proposal in Parliament to allow tax authorities to access, under the Income-Tax Bill, 2025, an individual’s “virtual digital space” during search and seizure operations. The justification is straightforward: as financial activity moves online, so must enforcement. However, this glosses over the far-reaching implications of such a shift, which raises significant concerns about privacy, overreach, and surveillance.

A blurring, open-ended. Currently, India’s tax law already provides for search and seizure under Section 132 of the Income-Tax Act, 1961. But those powers are limited to physical space such as a house, office, and locker. Since such operations are based on suspicion of undisclosed income or assets, there is a connection between the objective, which is finding undisclosed income and getting access to physical assets.

The new Bill, however, blurs this link by including an individual’s digital presence which is not only vast but often contains much more than what is relevant to a tax investigation. Without clear limits, such access can lead to disproportionate intrusion. For example, under the existing regime, what could be searched was what concerned only the individual under investigation. In contrast, digital spaces involve multiple stakeholders. Accessing a social media account also exposes friends, family, and professional contacts, through photographs and posts.

The proposed definition of ‘virtual digital space’ includes access to emails, personal cloud drives, social media accounts, digital application platforms, and more. Crucially, the phrase “any other space of similar nature” makes the list open-ended, potentially covering a wide range of digital platforms. Additionally, the proposed provision empowers tax authorities to override access codes to gain entry into electronic devices or virtual digital spaces. It still remains unclear though how this power will be operationalised in practice particularly in cases involving encrypted messaging apps such as WhatsApp, as explicitly cited by the Finance Minister in Parliament. The problem becomes even more of a concern when the individual involved is a professional whose work requires confidentiality. For instance, journalists whose devices and emails hold sensitive information, including confidential sources, unpublished material, and protected communications. If a search is conducted on flimsy or overly broad grounds, it not only violates their privacy but also endangers their ability to undertake reporting. Recognising the risks, the Supreme Court of India, in 2023, circulated interim guidelines on the seizure of digital devices and directed the Union Government to contemplate formulating necessary protocols. Moreover, the judicial interpre-

tation of “reason to believe” emphasises the need for tangible material beyond mere suspicion. Even under existing law, courts have construed that the provision ought to be exercised strictly, acknowledging that search and seizure is a serious invasion of privacy. A violation of transparency, accountability. Yet, the proposed provision goes against these principles and is devoid of guardrails, judicial oversight, and has a lack of understanding of the stakes. It fails to acknowledge, let alone address, the sheer breadth and layered sensitivity of information stored on electronic devices. In line with the current law, the proposed provision prohibits disclosure of the “reason to believe” clearly violating principles of transparency and accountability. Globally, privacy and transparency standards in search and seizure, especially where digital devices are involved, are grounded in statutory protections and procedural safeguards. In Canada, Section 8 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the right to be secure against “unreasonable search or seizure”. It is designed to prevent unjustified searches and sets a three-part default standard: prior authorisation; approval by a neutral and impartial judicial authority; and reasonable and probable grounds. In the United States, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, adopted by the Internal Revenue Service, affirms that taxpayers have the right to expect that any inquiry or enforcement action will be legally compliant and will not be more intrusive than necessary following due process rights, including search and seizure protections. The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Riley vs California also necessitated a warrant before accessing digital data, given the deeply personal nature of information stored on phones and devices. Contradiction of proportionality test. In contrast, India’s proposed Income Tax provision grants sweeping access to digital personal data without warrants, relevance thresholds, or any distinction between financial and non-financial information.

‘Disclose PEDs to insurers’

For now, hiding a pre-existing disease (PED) from an insurer before buying a health policy might seem to be an advantage with a lower cost premium. However, the reality is that it can lead to rejection of the claim or even policy cancellation. In both cases, the policyholder must pay exorbitant medical bills from his/her pocket. When one buys cover, he/she is entering into a contract with the insurer. All the medical insurance policies are developed on a legally-binding principle – ‘utmost good faith’ so the insurer and the policyholder must be transparent and honest. While buying the policy, the policyholder has an obligation to disclose all relevant details regarding his/her health conditions, including PEDs. If even a small piece of information on PEDs is not disclosed, it means the policyholder has violated the fundamental legal principle, thereby forcing the insurer to reject claim or even cancel the policy itself. The premium the policyholder has paid till then will go down the drain.

What are PEDs?

A PED is a disease/medical condition existing in an individual even before buying a policy. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) guidelines say illness/disease is treated as a PED if it was diagnosed within three years (36 months) prior to the purchase of the policy by a recognised doctor. (Previously it was 48 months but IRDAI brought it down to 36 months, effective from April 1, 2024.) In common insurance parlance, if an individual knows he has a health issue before buying the policy, it is considered a PED and must be disclosed. V. Mangala, senior subject-matter executive, Aionion Insurance Marketing Pvt. Ltd., says, “It must be noted not every visit to a doctor is treated as a PED. For instance, if you consult a doctor for normal fever, cold, cough, etc. you need not reveal these details. PEDs are those ailments that have a major impact on your general health in the long run. Say, for instance, BP, cholesterol, thyroid, asthma, piles, diabetes, lumbar issues, previous surgery or heart attacks, epilepsy etc., these must necessarily be divulged to the insurer.” Waiting period. Another concept while buying health



insurance policy is the waiting period. Most insurers in India cover pre-existing diseases but only after the waiting period gets over. If any medical emergency occurs during the waiting period, especially related to the PED, then in almost all cases, the claim would naturally be rejected by the insurer. Though the concept of wait period is there in all insurers, the wait time might differ across insurers. Generally, majority of the insurance companies provide coverage to PEDs after a waiting period of two to three years.

Ms. Mangala says, “In some insurance companies, riders are sold separately at an additional premium. These riders reduce the waiting period, and some insurance companies also cover PEDs from Day 1 with or without a rider, of course, the premium will be high. Therefore, before buying a policy, whether an individual health insurance policy or a family floater policy, the policyholder must choose a policy that has no/low waiting period.” Co-payment clause. Some insurers might offer PED coverage with a ‘co-payment’ clause. Based on the co-payment agreement, the policyholder must pay an agreed portion of the total claim amount; only then will the insurance company settle the remaining claim amount. Ms. Mangala says that it is always advisable and cost-effective to choose a policy without the ‘co-payment’ condition so that the entire claim amount would be settled by the insurance company.”

Global warming changing cloud patterns. That means more global warming

Melbourne: At any given time, about two-thirds of Earth’s surface is covered by clouds. Overall, they make the planet much cooler than it would be without them. But as Earth gets warmer, mostly due to the rise in greenhouse gases in the atmosphere from humans burning fossil fuels, clouds are changing too.

And that might already be causing more warming – adding to the greenhouse heat boost, and changing clouds even more. Over the past few years, the world’s average temperature has increased more than climate scientists were expecting. In our latest research, led by NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, we show that changes in clouds have made a significant contribution to turning up the thermostat. Clouds and climate. Clouds help to keep Earth cool by reflecting sunlight back out to space before it can reach the ground. But not all clouds are equal. Shiny, white clouds reflect away more sunlight – especially when they are closer to the equator, in the parts of Earth that receive the most sun. Grey, broken clouds reflect less sunlight, as do clouds closer to the poles where less light falls.

Research published last year showed that Earth has been absorbing more sunlight than the greenhouse effect alone can explain. Clouds were involved, but it wasn’t clear exactly how. Bright cloud zones are shrinking. A new study shows what is happening. The areas covered by highly reflective clouds are shrinking. At the same time, the areas containing broken, less reflective clouds are growing. The net effect is that additional energy from sunlight is reaching Earth’s surface. Here it is absorbed, leading to extra heating. The effect of changes in the properties of the highly reflective clouds, caused by things such as changes in the amount of aerosol pollution in the atmosphere, were found much smaller than the effect of the change in area.



In the big picture, Earth’s wind patterns are driven by hot air rising near the equator and the rotation of the planet. This creates huge, looping currents of atmospheric circulation around the globe. Local weather systems – the kind that determine the location and type of clouds – depend on these major, large-scale wind systems. The major circulation patterns in the atmosphere are changing as a result of global warming. We found much of the cloud action is taking place at the edges of these major wind systems. Highly reflective clouds are on the decline in a region near the equator called the intertropical convergence zone, and also two other bands called the storm tracks, which lie between 30 and 40 degrees of latitude. At the same time the subtropical trade-wind regions, home to ever-present but less reflective broken clouds, are expanding. A feedback loop. In short, the global warming induced by increased greenhouse gases changes the major wind systems on Earth. This in turn reduces the area of highly reflective clouds, leading to additional warming. Warming changes wind patterns, which changes cloud patterns, which results in more warming.

Cases registered by Enforcement Directorate under PMLA rose to a four-year high in 2025-26



The cases registered by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) under the country’s anti-money laundering law increased to a four-year high of 1,080 in the financial year 2025-26, taking the total cases to 4,622 in the last five years. The conviction rate, however, remained low with the agency securing conviction only in 0.93% or 43 cases during 2021-22 to 2025-26. The financial investigation and law enforcement agency had seen a decline in the number of cases registered under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) from 2021-22 to 2023-24, before picking up again in 2024-25 and 2025-26, data presented by the government in Parliament on Tuesday showed.

In response to a written question by CPI(M)’s V Sivadasan in Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said the ED has filed prosecution complaints in 2,444 cases under the PMLA provisions before the Special Courts, PMLA as on June 30 this year. “These cases are at various stages of trial. The ED has arrested 1,243 accused under the provisions of the PMLA,” the minister said. On the question regarding the number of undertrial prisoners, the minister said: “the data regarding under trial prisoners, currently in jail, some of which are arrested by a

predicate agency, is not centrally maintained”. The agency had registered 1,116 cases in 2021-22, which then declined to 953 in 2022-23, and then to 698 cases in 2023-24, before picking up again to 775 cases in 2024-25 and 1,080 in 2025-26. In total, the ED has registered 4,622 cases under PMLA in the last five years, the data showed.

The rate of convictions was slow, with the agency securing convictions only in 43 cases in the last five years — 9 each in 2025-26 and 2024-25, 13 in 2023-24, 9 in 2022-23 and 3 in 2021-22. Of the total 43 cases which saw convictions between FY22-FY26, the number of persons accused convicted in these cases stood at 104. The highest number of accused convicted over the last five years was in 2024-25 at 38, followed by 24 in 2022-23, and 19 each in 2023-24 and 2025-26. Income Tax Department cases

A total of 2,127 prosecution cases were filed by the Income Tax Department over the last five years (2021-22 to 2025-26). The number of prosecution cases were the lowest in three years at 432 in 2025-26 as against 611 in 2024-25, 502 in 2023-24 and 387 in 2022-23. In income tax matters, prosecution complaints are filed only after obtaining sanction from the competent authority under section 279(1) of the Income-tax Act, upon completion of investigation and recording of relevant facts, the minister said. Detailed breakup showed that the Income Tax Department was able to secure conviction in just 233 cases over the last five years, with the convictions being the lowest in two years at 47 in 2025-26. The rate of acquittals was high, with a total of 854 cases seeing acquittals over the last five years, with the acquittals in 2025-26 rising to a four-year high of 293. The Finance Ministry, however, said the number of prosecution cases filed and the figures relating to conviction or acquittal are not directly correlated, as convictions or acquittals may pertain to cases filed in different years.

Operating environment challenging, but won’t change IndiGo’s direction: New CEO Walsh to staff

The operating environment for the aviation sector has become dynamic and is currently replete with challenges, but it won’t alter the long-term direction that India’s largest airline IndiGo has decided to take, the carrier’s new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Willie Walsh said in an address to employees on Tuesday. He also called upon employees to be agile, disciplined, and resilient in the face of the challenging operating environment. After dominating the Indian skies with a domestic market share of a staggering 66%, IndiGo has now set its eyes on ramping up its international operations and even serving long-haul routes.

Walsh, an international aviation industry veteran who until recently was the director general of the global airline trade grouping International Air Transport Association (IATA), took charge as IndiGo CEO on Monday. His appointment follows the abrupt exit of former CEO Pieter Elbers in March. Elbers’s resignation followed the network-wide disruption that IndiGo faced in early December, leading to thousands of flights getting cancelled. “The environment in which we operate today is becoming increasingly dynamic. Aviation today faces evolving airspace challenges, supply chain constraints, and changing global conditions. And these realities require us to remain agile, disciplined, and resilient. Yet they do not change our direction. If anything, they reinforce the qualities that have always defined IndiGo, our unwavering commitment to safety, operational excellence, and delivering consistency to our customers,” Walsh said on the occasion of IndiGo’s 20th anniversary.

Indian carriers were already facing headwinds due to Pakistan closing its airspace to them since late April of last year. The operating environment got worse due to the West Asia war, which led to more airspace restrictions in the Gulf region and significantly pushed up jet fuel costs. Moreover, supply chain issues have plagued the global aviation industry by slowing down aircraft and engine deliveries for a few years now.

While IndiGo has also been impacted, which is evident from its recent decision to exit its damp-leased wide-body operations till it gets its own twin-aisle jets starting next year, the airline is betting big on long-range routes as its next growth frontier. IndiGo has 60 wide-body Airbus A350 aircraft on order. The airline is already operating flights to Athens using the extra-long-range variant of the narrow-body Airbus A321 aircraft — the A321XLR. Last year, it



launched flights to destinations in Europe and the UK using damp-leased Boeing 787 jets, but has now decided to discontinue their use due to operating environment-related challenges amid the West Asia conflict. “Now, what excites me even more is the opportunity before us. As new aircraft join the fleet and our international network continues to expand, IndiGo will connect India with more destinations across the world than ever before and every new route strengthens connectivity, brings people and businesses closer together and proudly represents India on the global stage. India’s aviation story is still unfolding and I firmly believe its greatest opportunities lie ahead with one of the fastest growing aviation markets in the world,” Walsh told staff.

“(With) rising aspirations and a favourable geographic position, India is uniquely placed to become a leading global aviation hub and IndiGo is exceptionally well positioned to lead that future and further strengthen its position as one of the world’s most respected airlines,” he added. As it enters its third decade of operations, IndiGo plans to operate around 3,000 daily flights by 2030, up from about 2,200 at present. It also aims to have 200 million passengers annually by 2030 against about 123 million in 2025-26, and expand its fleet to over 550 aircraft from 430-plus jets at present. “In many ways, the story of IndiGo is a reflection of India’s own growth and aspirations, emerging as an important enabler of the country’s economic and social progress. And as someone who spent my entire career in aviation, I know just how difficult it is to build an airline. Many have tried and few actually succeeded. And to put it into context, in the last 10 years alone, 408 airlines have failed. So what you have achieved is absolutely remarkable,” Walsh said.

LNG imports rise as US, Nigeria and Oman offset Hormuz volume loss

Agility in ramping up Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) imports from regions that were not impacted by the Strait of Hormuz crisis helped India import higher volumes of the super-chilled gas in the May-July period, after seeing a dip in import volumes in March and April — the initial two months of the West Asia war, according to latest ship-tracking data. Even as the effective closure of the strait forced a crash in LNG imports from India’s largest supplier Qatar, the ramp-up in cargoes from a diversified pool of sources, including the US, Oman, Nigeria and Angola, came to the rescue.

While some major LNG importing countries reduced imports amid sky-high prices due to the regional conflict and the disruption in maritime movements via the critical chokepoint, India prioritised supplies over price considerations amid demand from various sectors, which include city gas distribution (CGD), fertiliser, power and ceramics. The country’s LNG imports in May-July rose 15.4% over the year-ago period to 7.08 million tonnes, according to an analysis of ship-tracking data from commodity market analytics firm Kpler. In March-April, the import volumes had declined by almost 13% from the year-ago period. India depends on LNG imports to meet about half of its natural gas requirement, and about 60% of those imports came through the Strait of Hormuz, primarily from Qatar and also the UAE. The two Gulf countries are major LNG exporters at the global level as well. LNG imports rise as US, Nigeria and Oman offset Hormuz volume loss Vessel movement through the strait — the narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea — has been heavily disrupted due to the conflict. The strait is a major transit point for energy flows, usually accounting for a fifth of global oil and LNG shipments. With 2.19 million tonnes of supply, the US was the top source of LNG for India in May-July, followed by Nigeria at 1.31 million tonnes, Oman at 1.22 million tonnes, and Angola at 0.80 million tonnes, the data shows. LNG imports from the US jumped 252.8% year-on-year (y-o-y), while those from Oman were higher by 340.9%. Imports from Nigeria and Angola were higher by

123.8% and 71.3%, respectively. In 2025, the average monthly LNG imports from the US were just 0.2 million tonnes, while those from Nigeria, Oman, and Angola were 0.1 million tonnes, 0.2 million tonnes, and 0.1 million tonnes, respectively. Notably, after crashing in March, April and May, India’s LNG imports from the UAE recovered in June and July despite the exports being dependent on the strait for transits. For May-July, LNG imports from the UAE were down 34.4% y-o-y at 0.55 million tonnes, while supplies from Qatar plummeted 91.3% to 0.23 million tonnes. In 2025, the average monthly LNG import volumes from Qatar stood at 1 million tonnes, followed by imports from the UAE at 0.3 million tonnes. According to industry insiders and experts, the UAE has been able to export sizable cargoes despite the Hormuz blockade using tactics like switching off the LNG tankers’ transponders to avoid detection and capitalising on short windows of opportunity based on maritime security assessments in the region. While Qatar has also exported some cargoes using this strategy, the UAE has been far more aggressive, displaying a higher risk-tolerance. Both suppliers also benefited from the partial recovery in transits via the strait in the three-week period after the US and Iran inked an initial peace pact on June 17. The pact crumbled after the first week of July, after which vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz again reduced to a trickle. “Indian market has shown more resilience, since the last dip in March-April, for July 2026 alone we have almost 16% higher year-on-year imports. Supplier mix remains dominated by the US and Oman, supplying about 30% and 20% of the total LNG supply in India respectively. Although the gas supply restrictions (imposed to ensure adequate supplies to critical sectors) were removed in July, we have seen stronger demand throughout May-June as well, showing the resilience of the market even in high-price situations,” said Sonal Ranjan, LNG and natural gas analyst at Kpler. Although high and largely inelastic demand from critical sectors like CGD and fertilisers has ensured that LNG imports remain strong, a few other sectors, most notably power and ceramics, added to the demand due to the weather and the broader fuel supply constraints.

Breastfeeding vs breast pumps: Doctors explain when pumping is necessary and when it isn’t



Six months after giving birth, 34-year-old Monica (name changed) returned to the demands of a full-time job. Every morning was a race against the clock, but before leaving for work she made time for one ritual she refused to compromise on. Remembering her doctor’s advice, she breastfed her baby before heading to the office, using a breast pump only on days when work made direct feeding impossible. Her paediatrician had explained that breastfeeding is about much more than nutrition. The baby’s latch stimulates milk production while the close physical contact strengthens the bond between mother and child. Whenever Monica expressed milk, she stored it safely and fed it to her baby with a spoon rather than a bottle, following medical advice.

As breast pumps become increasingly common among working mothers, paediatricians and lactation experts are reminding families that they are valuable aids in specific situations — not substitutes for breastfeeding. Speaking during the World Breastfeeding Week (August 1–7), Dr Umesh Vaidya, vice-president of the National Neonatology Forum of India and head of the Human Milk Bank at KEM Hospital, said healthy mothers should be encouraged to breastfeed directly whenever possible. “If a baby is able to latch and suckle well, direct breastfeeding remains the best option,” he said. The debate has gained fresh attention following a paper published in the International Breastfeeding Journal by researchers led by Melissa Bartick of Harvard Medical School. The authors argue that the growing tendency to equate breast pumping with breastfeeding and increasingly replace the term “breastfeeding” with “human milk feeding” risks overlooking the unique biological relationship between mother and baby. While pumping is an important tool, they say, it is not equivalent to breastfeeding. The researchers contend that women need better support to breastfeed rather than greater dependence on technology. With adequate workplace policies, mater-

nity support and skilled lactation care, they argue, routine pumping would become far less necessary. Breastfeeding offers benefits beyond nutrition Dr Vaidya said breast milk does much more than nourish a baby. “It provides antibodies and immune protection, helps establish a healthy gut microbiota and supports the development of the infant’s microbiome during the first two years of life.” Studies have also associated breastfeeding with improved cognitive development, healthier metabolic outcomes and a lower risk of childhood obesity. The act of breastfeeding itself also matters. When a baby suckles effectively, the hormones prolactin and oxytocin are released, helping establish and maintain an adequate milk supply. Direct feeding, therefore, supports both the baby’s development and the mother’s ability to continue breastfeeding.

When pumping is the right choice That does not mean breast pumps should be avoided. On the contrary, Dr Vaidya said they are indispensable in several medical and practical situations. They can help mothers with cracked, painful or retracted nipples continue providing breast milk. They are useful in relieving severe breast engorgement and are often essential when babies admitted to neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) are too ill or premature to breastfeed directly. Expressing milk in these situations helps maintain the mother’s milk supply while ensuring the baby continues to receive breast milk. Working mothers who are temporarily separated from their infants may also need to express milk. The decision, however, should be guided by medical advice and the needs of the mother-baby pair rather than convenience alone.

When pumping is necessary, proper hygiene is critical. Mothers should be taught how to clean and sterilise pump equipment correctly and store expressed milk safely. Dr Vaidya also advises caution in how expressed milk is offered. “Where feasible, spoon or cup feeding may be preferable to bottles, as bottle feeding can contribute to nipple confusion in some babies and make breastfeeding more difficult.” The message to families Dr Vaidya believes breast pumps are increasingly being marketed as essential baby-care products, creating the impression that every new mother needs one. “The message should not be that every mother requires a breast pump,” he said. “They are extremely valuable when there is a medical or practical indication. But for a healthy mother and baby who are breastfeeding successfully, nothing replaces feeding directly at the breast.” For experts, the distinction is important. Breast pumps are tools that help mothers continue breastfeeding when circumstances demand it. They are most effective when they support breastfeeding — not when they replace it.

Scientists discover 14 new gut bacteria species in Indian tribal communities

Scientists at BRIC–National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS), Pune, have identified 14 previously unknown bacterial species and nearly 200 local microbial strains while studying the gut microbiomes of India’s tribal communities, highlighting how much of the country’s microbial diversity remains unexplored. The findings, published in the journal Gut Microbes, challenge the idea of a universal “healthy” gut microbiome. Instead, they show that the microbes living in our intestines are shaped by where we live, what we eat and the communities we belong to. The researchers say the study also raises important questions about relying solely on microbiome reference data — and even probiotics—developed in Western populations.

What is the gut microbiome?

The gut microbiome is the vast community of bacteria, fungi, viruses and other microorganisms that live in the human intestine. Together, they help digest food, regulate the immune system, protect the intestinal lining and prevent harmful microbes from growing. “The gut microbiome differs from person to person and is influenced by diet, geography, medicines, environment and cultural practices,” said Dr Dhiraj Dhotre, scientist at BRIC-NCCS and co-corresponding author of the study. The study analysed gut microbiomes from eight tribal communities across India — Warli from the western coast; Gond and Madia from the Deccan Plateau; Kabui (Rongmei Naga) from the Northeast Hills; and Boto, Balti, Brokpa and Purigpa from the Trans-Himalayan region. According to Dr Yogesh Shouche, senior microbiome scientist and co-author, finding so many previously undocumented microbes in a relatively small study suggests that India’s microbiome remains a largely unexplored biological resource. No single blueprint for a healthy gut

Despite living in different regions, all eight communities shared three dominant bacterial groups — Segatella, Agathobacter and Faecalibacterium. However, the Indian strains of Segatella belonged to distinct genetic lineages not commonly represented in microbiome databases from Europe and North America. “This tells us that an Indian gut microbiome should not be labelled abnormal simply because it differs from Western reference populations,” Dr Dhotre said. “Instead, we need population-specific microbiome data to understand what is healthy in different communities.” The greatest differences were seen in the four trans-Himalayan communities, whose traditional diets include milk, homemade butter, wheat and barley, along with rice and other plant-based foods such as leafy vegetables,



tubers, fruits and berries. These communities showed greater gut bacterial diversity and significantly higher levels of Bifidobacterium than tribes consuming little or no dairy. Their gut microbes also carried more genes involved in digesting lactose, galactose and grain-derived carbohydrates, suggesting that the microbiome adapts over generations to local dietary patterns. The researchers caution, however, that the study identifies strong associations rather than proving that dairy alone caused the differences. Larger, long-term studies will be needed to establish cause and effect.

What the findings mean for probiotics

One of the study’s key findings involved Bifidobacterium adolescentis, a bacterium widely used in probiotic research. The Indian strains differed genetically from those found in industrialised countries and carried a distinct set of carbohydrate-processing enzymes, indicating adaptation to local diets. According to Dr Dhotre, the findings raise legitimate questions about the indiscriminate use of imported probiotics. However, they do not suggest that imported probiotics are ineffective or that Indian strains are necessarily superior. Instead, they underscore the need to evaluate probiotics in the context of local populations and dietary habits.

Why India needs its own microbiome map

The researchers say the discovery of new bacterial species and hundreds of previously undocumented strains is a reminder that India’s microbial diversity is still largely unmapped. Building an India-specific microbiome database could improve future research on nutrition, metabolic diseases and personalised medicine, while helping develop probiotics and dietary interventions that are better suited to Indian populations rather than relying exclusively on Western reference data.

Schools still see mothers as the default parent to contact

Sydney: The start of the school year brings a familiar list of responsibilities for parents: buying school supplies, keeping track of forms, coordinating transportation and responding to a steady stream of emails from teachers and administrators. Although many families strive to share these responsibilities, research has consistently found that mothers tend to shoulder a larger share of the work tied to their kids’ schooling. That includes not only attending school events or packing lunches, but also the less visible work of scheduling doctor appointments, signing up for after-school activities and responding to emails or calls from teachers and administrators. We are economists who study gender and families. We wanted to understand whether schools themselves might unintentionally contribute to this imbalance by defaulting to contacting mothers more than fathers. Our recent research suggests they do.

Who do schools contact first?

Economists and other social scientists have long recognized that mothers spend more time than fathers on childcare, even when both parents work full time. And even though men have assumed more caretaking responsibili-

ties over the past several decades, women still spend more time caring for their children and homes. This gap matters, because the way childcare is divided up shapes much more than parents’ work schedules. It can contribute to chronic stress and burnout and influence how couples perceive fairness within their relationships. It can also influence parents’ careers by affecting work hours, opportunities for advancement and how much they earn. In the summer of 2022, we conducted a nationwide field experiment involving more than 80,000 K-12 school principals across the United States. Schools received an email from a fictitious two-parent household with both a mother and father interested in enrolling a child. The email listed both parents, each with a phone number and asked the principal to call one of them. Because we randomly varied the names and wording of the emails, we could isolate whether a parent’s gender influenced who received the callback. When neither parent appeared more available than the other, mothers were about 1.4 times more likely than fathers to receive the first phone call. Among principals who called someone back, roughly 60% contacted the mother first and 40% contacted the father.

From Bumrah to Washington: Why India’s cricketers keep breaking down



As captain Shubman Gill landed with his team in Colombo on Tuesday for a crucial two-Test series against Sri Lanka, he arrived with a familiar problem that has confronted him in the recent ODIs in England – missing key players due to injuries. Jasprit Bumrah has been ruled out of the series, and there is no guarantee Washington Sundar would join the team for the second Test. Sai Sudharsan is racing against time to be fit and is continuing his rehabilitation at the Centre of Excellence – whose role has once again come under the scanner. A deeper look points to a more fundamental issue.

“First, there is no off-season for players like before,” Ramji Srinivasan, who was India’s strength & conditioning coach before 2008-2013, told The Indian Express. “Second, there is a missing link between the workload and the recovery protocols and the training protocols. There is not much of a sync between these three. So, that is when most of the injuries can happen,” he said.

Workload Trap Take Bumrah for example. After playing the T20 World Cup with a niggle in his knee, Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene revealed he had to build his workload gradually, which saw a dip in his pace. Then, after the IPL, despite being rested for the Afghanistan series and T20Is against Ireland and England, the knee injury resurfaced following an impact injury in Cardiff. Washington raced against time to regain fitness clearance and, in England, suffered a hamstring injury. Nitish Kumar Reddy broke down again with a quadriceps injury after he worked and increased his bowling pace by 10 yards. Whether he consulted anyone before taking the step is not known yet. And then there is Harshit Rana, who missed the T20 World Cup with a knee injury and ended up with a hamstring issue in England. This isn’t the first instance of players suffering breakdowns after an IPL. And Ramji felt there was a reason for it. “In those two months of IPL, players are only in recovery mode. There is not much work that happens with regards to improving fitness in that period.

This workload management, they may not be working more. They may be working less. And suddenly, you come into the Indian team, your workload increases. So during the IPL, if you don’t prepare ahead for your red ball cricket or 50 overs, there is no workload management there,” he added.

The cramped schedule has also prevented India from having pre-season camps. In 2024, prior to the two-Test series against Bangladesh at home, they camped in Chennai. They have planned a camp in Colombo before the upcoming series, starting on August 15. India’s switch from T20 mode to Tests after the IPL also did not help. A few contracted players told The Indian Express that they did not get sufficient recovery time between series to work harder on aspects as advised by trainers. Ramji agreed. “One has to train according to the format which one transitions to. For example, somebody is training for T20. The transition should happen for them to play 50-over or Test cricket. Whether the transition is happening or not is a big question. There is a huge shift from one format to the other. And they (players) know the calendar in advance. They are not randomly put in a situation. So they need to plan their training better. They cannot blame the support staff always or the coaches always,” Ramji says. In the BCCI circles, there are concerns that players are rushed back from injuries. In Bumrah and Washington’s case, the management needed them in the T20 World Cup squad. In more recent times, players have been named in squads before clearing fitness tests. Bumrah was part of the list to go to Sri Lanka, with an asterisk beside his name, but was withdrawn on Monday. “When a player is named in the squad, immediately he prefers to get the fitness test. He may pass the test, which is basic match fitness, but whether his fitness has improved or not is often overlooked. That shouldn’t happen. The RTP (return to play) parameters shouldn’t be compromised,” said a source familiar with the developments. There was a time when players could make a comeback only after proving their fitness by playing practice matches. That yardstick has not been applied in all cases.

With another gruelling schedule ahead, Ramji said, a robust system has to be put in place. “You can have a camp for all the red-ball players well ahead. Put them in a robust place so that they peak at the right time. Before you move to red-ball cricket, you need a format-specific camp. For the last six months, you have been playing a high-intensity, power game here. And suddenly, you get into endurance mode. Imagine Usain Bolt suddenly running like (Eliud) Kipchoge. Can you do that or vice versa?”

Former pacer on Bumrah: ‘...take a break for five to six months or even a year’



GNS News Agency, August 10

Jasprit Bumrah’s injury woes continued as the ace pacer has been ruled out of India’s upcoming red-ball series against Sri Lanka. Former Indian seamer Karsan Ghavri suggested that Bumrah should consider taking a one-year break from cricket if needed, to achieve complete fitness before returning to the side. Ghavri also said that the numerous ongoing tournaments make managing his workload difficult. “Bumrah should take a break for five to six months or even a year, and get back to 100 per cent fitness. The

issue is that he goes into tournaments even if he’s half-fit and then, due to workload management, halfway through, there’s a breakdown. This is unnecessary. Only if he can manage his workload throughout a tournament should he be included in the team,” Ghavri said to the Mid-day.

“Shami and Bhuvni have been playing consistently in the IPL without injuries and should return to the national set-up. Selectors should consider them. All fast bowlers face niggles or injuries, but Bumrah has been on and off for the last two-three years. He has hardly played an entire series. That’s not a good sign for him or for the country,” he added. Another former pacer Raju Kulkarni said Bumrah should consider only playing one format going forward and that should be Test cricket. “I don’t think Bumrah can sustain playing all formats. The team management must consider playing him only in Tests as that’s a critical format. Though he may want to play IPL, T20Is and ODIs too, it’s not viable. For this reason, it will be great if Mohammed Siraj can get the support of senior pacers like Shami and Bhuvni. Bhuvni should be used in T20Is because he’s done brilliantly in the IPL. And you can rotate Shami and Siraj in Tests. This will reduce the pressure on Bumrah,” said Kulkarni.

Ireland’s Afghanistan ODI series could cost them future England fixtures, ECB unhappy: Report



GNS News Agency, August 10 Ireland’s decision to play a five-match ODI series against Afghanistan could have serious consequences, as their long-standing relationship with neighbouring England is now at risk. According to a report in The Guardian, the series against Afghanistan could cost Cricket Ireland future fixtures with England. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is understood to be unhappy about the series, which begins on Wednesday. This follows England’s refusal to play Afghanistan outside ICC events, citing what ECB chair Richard Thompson has described as the “gender apartheid” enforced by the Taliban regime.

Cricket Ireland, however, has taken a different stance, going against the wishes of the ECB – which is backed by the UK government. The Irish board has developed close ties with the Afghanistan Cricket Board and has offered them five ODIs this month, all to be played in Northern Ireland. As part of a reciprocal arrangement, Ireland will tour the UAE next March for one Test, three ODIs, and three T20 fixtures.

England have previously played a one-off Test against Ireland at Lord’s as preparation for both the 2019 and 2023 home series. However, the ECB has opted instead for a warm-up Test against Bangladesh next year, a decision that could be seen as a response to Ireland’s growing alignment with Afghanistan. Afghanistan remain the only ICC full member without a women’s cricket programme, yet the world governing body has not imposed a ban on them. Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand also refuse to play Afghanistan in bilateral series, though Ireland, along with West Indies, Zimbabwe, and the four Asian ICC full members, have granted them fixtures.

England’s men faced Afghanistan in a Champions Trophy group game in Lahore last year, but only after a specially convened ECB board meeting approved the fixture. The decision was strongly criticised by a cross-party group of 160 MPs, who had urged the ECB to withdraw from the match in a joint letter. According to The Guardian, the ECB’s relationship with Cricket Ireland has been delicate for some time. England have declined an invitation to join a proposed new Euro Nations Cup tournament, which would also feature Scotland, the Netherlands, and Italy next year, citing an already congested calendar.

SC Delhi rally to beat Jamshedpur FC in Durand Cup

GNS News Agency, August 10

Hyderabad: New signing Lalrinliana Hnamte made his debut for Sporting Club Delhi a memorable one, scoring twice in the space of five minutes in the second half to complete a comeback win for his side against Jamshedpur FC in a Group C fixture of the IndianOil Durand Cup played at the Birsamunda Stadium in Ranchi. Hnamte scored his brace in the 51st and 56th minutes after Jamshedpur FC took the lead in the 22nd minute through Sanan Mohammed. Despite the loss, Jamshedpur remain at the top of the table with three points from two matches, ahead of SC Delhi only on goal difference, with the latter having played just one match. That approach paid dividends midway through the first half. Pronay Halder won possession deep inside his own half before releasing Sanan with a perfectly weighted long ball over the top of the defence. The Kerala winger showed superb footwork to wrong-foot Ashutosh Mehta inside the penalty area before unleashing a fierce left-footed strike past Nora Fernandes, leaving the goalkeeper with no chance and giving Jamshedpur a deserved lead. After a scrappy start to the second half, SC Delhi found the equaliser by capitalising on a costly goalkeeping error. Aimen found space on the edge of the penalty area and unleashed a low effort that appeared comfortable for Albino Gomes. However, the slippery conditions made the ball difficult to handle, and the Jamshedpur goalkeeper failed to gather it cleanly, spilling the rebound into the path of Hnamte.

Vipraj, Harsh, Shivang & Kotian join India squad as net bowlers in Sri Lanka tour



Shubman Gill-led India have arrived in Sri Lanka for the two-Test series starting August 15 in Galle, with the squad accompanied by four net bowlers in Harsh Dubey, Shivang Kumar, Tanush Kotian and Vipraj Nigam to assist the team in the build-up to the two-match Test series. The net bowling quartet includes two genuine spinners and two bowling all-rounders. Leg-spinner Vipraj and left-arm wrist-spinner Shivang join off-spinner Kotian and left-arm spinning all-rounder Dubey as practice bowlers. Vipraj has developed into a reliable leg-spinning option, capable of contributing valuable runs with the bat. He was recently part of the India A squad for the tri-nation series in Sri Lanka. Shivang emerged as one of the breakout youngsters of the 2026 Indian Premier League. Mumbai’s Kotian has been a

familiar face in the Indian set-up for some time, having featured in multiple A tours, while Dubey has been a consistent wicket-taker in the Ranji Trophy over the last two seasons. He was also included in the India squad for the one-off Test against Afghanistan in June.

The team landed in Colombo on Tuesday evening and will play a three-day warm-up match from August 7 before the first Test. The two-match series, part of the ICC World Test Championship 2025-27 cycle, opens at Galle International Stadium from August 15 to 19, with the second Test scheduled at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo from August 23 to 27. India have been dealt a major blow with ace pacer Jasprit Bumrah ruled out of the series due to a left knee injury sustained during the ODI series against England. The 31-year-old, who missed the final ODI after experiencing discomfort, has not fully recovered despite rehabilitation at the BCCI’s Centre of Excellence. Uncapped Jammu and Kashmir pacer Auqib Nabi has been named as his replacement. Nabi, who claimed 60 wickets in the 2025-26 Ranji Trophy season and played a pivotal role in J&K’s maiden Ranji triumph, earned his maiden India call-up. India are also grappling with other injury concerns, with Harshit Rana (hamstring), Nitish Kumar Reddy (quad) and Washington Sundar (hamstring) ruled out of the tour, while Sai Sudharsan’s availability remains subject to fitness clearance.

‘Past 10 months have tested me in ways I never expected’: Neeraj Chopra on injury comeback



Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra has opened up about the struggles of returning from a long injury layoff, saying the past 10 months have tested him in ways he never expected. “There are throws that travel far, and then there are moments that carry the weight of an entire journey. This one means so much more than the distance,” Neeraj wrote on Instagram after announcing his comeback with a statement silver medal at the recently concluded Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow.

“The past 10 months have tested me in ways I never expected. Recovering from multiple injuries, rebuilding my body, finding my rhythm again, and learning to be patient

when all I wanted was to compete. I was training every day without knowing if I would even have a season to compete this year,” he added. At the Glasgow Games, Neeraj was competing in a stacked field that included world leader and Sri Lankan sensation Ramesh Pathirage, defending Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem, Keshorn Walcott, and former world champion Anderson Peters. He produced a season-best throw of 85.83m on his second attempt, only to be upstaged by Pathirage’s 89.75m as the Indian settled for silver.

Earlier, he had made his comeback from a back injury at the Doha Diamond League in June. The injury, sustained during training before the World Championships, kept the Olympic gold medallist and world champion out of competition for nine months, his longest absence since bursting onto the global stage with Olympic gold in Tokyo in 2021.

The two-time Olympic medallist said he was grateful to be competing at this level again. “To be back competing at this level feels good. None of this would have been possible on my own. I’m deeply grateful for the people who never stopped believing in me. My physio, Ishaan ji, who has been by my side every step of the recovery, helping me get back to doing what I love. My coach, Jai, who has been with me since the very first time I picked up a javelin. My family, who always stand strong with me no matter what the circumstances are.”

Jordan FA chief accuses FIFA president Infantino of ‘blackmail’ over endorsement

Jordan FA chief Prince Ali bin Hussein has accused FIFA president Gianni Infantino of “blackmail,” alleging that FIFA offered to resolve the kingdom’s footballing problems in exchange for his political endorsement. Prince Ali, a former FIFA vice president, also claimed that his federation has still not received prize money owed for reaching the final of the FIFA Arab Cup in Qatar last December. He described the withholding of funds as a form of blackmail.

In a social media post, Prince Ali said that during the World Cup – where Jordan made its debut in June – he was told that endorsing Infantino “would go a long way to helping our FA out.” Infantino is currently under pressure to salvage his 11-year presidency following fierce backlash over his now-abandoned plan to sell a stake in future World Cup profits to investors led by Joshua Kushner.

“We pride ourselves in Jordan in upholding ethical values. We did not endorse him before and certainly will not now,” said Prince Ali, who finished third in a five-candidate FIFA presidential race when Infantino was first elected in February 2016. “But the whole situation amounts to blackmail and we refuse to give in to that,” he wrote on social media. On the unpaid prize money, Prince Ali said: “The money our team should receive for having reached the final has not been delivered yet, while at the same time FIFA brags about how many billions they have in reserve. It is clear the problem really is with leadership.” Football confederations and national associations had rejected Infantino’s proposal following a hard September 19 deadline. FIFA had argued that selling a minority stake in its commercial operations would raise billions to fund global sports develop-



ment, but top executives, including Secretary General Mattias Grafstrom and Arsène Wenger, distanced themselves from the plan. The Jordan FA chief also outlined several grievances facing his association as a small nation with a “minimal budget.” These included fans paying “exorbitant prices for tickets” while still being denied visas for the World Cup in the United States, and outstanding reward money for players’ participation in the 2025 Arab Cup. Adding to Jordan’s woes, Prince Ali complained about being taxed by the US government through FIFA for World Cup participation, costs not faced by teams based in Canada and Mexico. “We are being taxed by the U.S. government through FIFA for our participation. Money that should go to players and staff,” he said. “This was not the case for those who played and set up camp in Canada and Mexico. But we happened to be in the USA so now we face these huge costs in taxes for having participated.”

PCB warns players of ban for participating in unsanctioned cricket events

GNS News Agency, August 10 Lahore: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has warned former Pakistan cricketers against participating in unsanctioned overseas tournaments, announcing a series of disciplinary measures for those found to have featured in the ongoing 20th Asian Legends League in Zambia without obtaining the mandatory approvals.

In an official statement, the PCB said it had taken serious notice of the participation of certain former Pakistan players in the tournament, which the International Cricket Council (ICC) has classified as an unsanctioned or disapproved cricket event under the ICC Regulations on the Sanctioning of Events and Player Release.

The PCB also noted that the competition has not been sanctioned by the Zambia Cricket Union (ZCU), making participation in the event a violation of the applicable ICC regulations. “The International Cricket Council (ICC) considers this league as an unsanctioned/disapproved cricket event under the ICC Regulations on the Sanctioning of Events and Player Release and the tournament has not been sanctioned by the Zambia Cricket Union (ZCU) as well,” the PCB stated in a press release. According to the PCB statement, the ICC has reiterated that all foreign players must obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from their respective home board before taking part in overseas cricket events. The regulations also require member boards to take

appropriate disciplinary action against players who participate in unsanctioned competitions. Failure to enforce these regulations could invite action against the respective member board. The PCB said any individual found to have participated in unsanctioned event without obtaining the requisite approvals from the PCB will face strict disciplinary action. As part of the sanctions, the Board will impose a ban of two years from the issuance of any PCB No Objection Certificate for participation in approved overseas cricket leagues or events.

In addition, the individuals concerned will be declared ineligible for any cricketing, coaching, consultancy, mentoring and/or other assignments with the Pakistan Cricket Board and the Pakistan Super League (PSL) for a period of two years. PCB said it remains fully committed to implementing the ICC’s regulatory framework governing international cricket. “The PCB remains fully committed to upholding the ICC Regulations and safeguarding the integrity and governance of the game. The Board reiterates that all current and former cricketers seeking to participate in overseas cricket events requiring PCB clearance must obtain the necessary approvals and NOCs prior to participation,” it said. PCB said it will continue to work closely with the ICC and fellow Member Boards to ensure compliance with the international regulatory framework governing the sport.

Ranbir Kapoor reveals why he initially rejected playing Lord Ram in Ramayana: ‘I felt I wasn’t good enough’; says fatherhood changed everything



Nitesh Tiwari's *Ramayana* has been the talk of the town ever since *Adipurush* released in 2023. Soon after, reports emerged that Ranbir Kapoor would step into the role of Lord Ram. This was followed by a wave of speculation, viral videos of the actor preparing for the part, and reports about the ensemble cast. The project was eventually made official by producers Namit Malhotra and KFG star Yash, who will also be playing the role of Ravana in the film. While several actors associated with the film have often spoken about Ranbir's dedication, this marks the first time the actor himself has opened up about being offered the role, his initial fears, and how the film has been a life-changing experience. Speaking at a Q&A during the New York special IMAX trailer screening, Ranbir recalled his first reaction when Namit approached him. "Coming to play Lord Ram, I remember when Namit offered me this part around four years back, my instant reaction was: 'I am not fit enough, good enough.' I felt I wouldn't be able to do full justice. But that fear quickly turned into gratitude because opportunities like this were something I truly needed in my life," he said. He added that the timing of the role coincided with a deeply personal phase. "There was a period when I needed to change my lifestyle. I had just become a father for the first time. The

sweet coincidence of playing Lord Ram and becoming a father became a turning point in my life." "For me, the preparation began the day I watched Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayana*. It is so deeply etched in our subconscious and rooted in us that we feel immense pride in Lord Rama's journey. When I got the opportunity to portray him, I knew the preparation had to go beyond the physical—it had to be emotional and spiritual. One has to be truthful to the character, because he is loved by billions across centuries and will continue to be long after we are gone," he said.

He concluded by expressing gratitude for the opportunity. "The responsibility is something I take very seriously. I have immense love and respect for this part and for the story of *Ramayana*. When that conviction is in place, everything else falls into place."

Previously, speaking on Ranveer Allahbadia's podcast, actor Ravi Dubey, who plays Laxman in the film, had shared his excitement about being part of the project. "I am just very grateful. This was never even in my foresight. The collaboration itself felt impossible—Ranbir as Ram, Sai Pallavi as Sita, Yash as Ravana, Sunny Deol as Hanuman, A. R. Rahman composing the music, and Nitesh Tiwari directing it. It's incredible. Something like this only happens in dreams," he said, adding that he would remain forever indebted to the makers. Praising Ranbir, Ravi added, "Ranbir has an incredible aura. He's quiet, graceful, and deeply committed. He carries a very soft energy, and that's something everyone who meets him can feel." *Ramayana* made on a Rs 4000 crore budget. The film is mounted on an unprecedented scale. Speaking to Prakhar Gupta, producer Namit Malhotra revealed, "When we set out to make this six or seven years ago, people thought I was a lunatic because no Indian film comes close to this scale. Put simply, the budget will be around \$500 million for both parts combined, which is over Rs 4,000 crore." He added, "We're making the largest film in the world for the greatest epic that deserves to be seen globally. And yet, I believe we're doing it more efficiently than some of the biggest Hollywood films. We're not being irresponsible—we're being ambitious, but grounded."

Mahima Chaudhry was ‘reluctant’ to work in Baghban with Salman Khan: ‘I had no intention of doing it, went to say no’

Some movies stand the test of time and age well, while others don't. And then there are a few that tear the audience base in two with highly polarised reviews, even years or decades after their release. Some love the movie, while others hate it. Director Ravi Chopra's *Baghban* (2003) — starring a large ensemble including Amitabh Bachchan, Hema Malini, Salman Khan, and Mahima Chaudhry — is one such film. Although it opened to critical and commercial success and still enjoys a solid fan base, the "family drama" has earned significant backlash over the years for gaslighting youngsters into believing that prioritising their parents over their own lives was of utmost importance and then guilt-tripping them if they don't. Nonetheless, it provided a major break for its cast and crew and remains one of the most celebrated works for many of them.

While Salman and Mahima's presence is felt throughout the movie, they technically had only extended cameos as Raj (Amitabh Bachchan) and Pooja Malhotra's (Hema Malini) adopted son, Alok, and his wife, Arpita, respectively. In fact, since it was yet another guest appearance, Mahima had even considered turning down the offer initially. "When Ravi ji called me for *Baghban*, I had no intention of doing the movie because he said Salman and I had guest appearances," she shared during a recent conversation with Bollywood Hungama. During that period, Mahima mentioned, she had done so many cameos that it almost felt like that was all people called her for. "People started feeling that if they included me in one of their songs, the movie would become a hit. It was very nice to be considered a lucky mascot, but all I was getting were two-four scenes or a song. I was very reluctant." However, since the call came from Ravi Chopra, Mahima decided to pay him a visit — as she



had immense respect for him and his father, legendary director-producer BR Chopra — and politely decline the offer. "When he suggested coming and meeting me, I immediately told him that I would come over. I went to say no to him, but I couldn't. My secretary at that time even stepped in, saying he would do it. But I stopped him, saying, 'I will do this one more movie. It's okay,'" the actor noted. But that, she explained, turned out to be one of the best decisions she ever made, as she continues to receive immense love and respect for the film. "I am so happy today. Not just that I got to work with Amitabh Bachchan, but the movie continues to have very good shelf-life. Even now, people come up to me saying they love the film and its songs. Good came out of it." *Baghban* also featured Aman Verma, Samir Soni, Saahil Chadha, Nasir Khan, Suman Ranganathan, Divya Dutta, Arzoo Govitrikar, and Rimi Sen in key roles.

Rishi Kapoor was always ‘irritated’ with son Ranbir Kapoor, *Ramayana* actor used to ‘laugh’, says Viveck Vaswani: ‘He was used to it’



Actor Ranbir Kapoor has always been vocal about his complex relationship with late dad, actor Rishi Kapoor. The father-son duo went through a phase where they could not see eye to eye. Now, in a recent interview, actor-writer Viveck Vaswani opened up about Ranbir and Rishi's personal relationship.

He revealed that the late actor was usually irritated with his son. During a conversation with Vickey Lalwani, he opened up about Rishi Kapoor's "moody" behaviour and shared, "He was born like that, he was moody. Once you accept that he is moody, you can get along

with him perfectly. But, with the good people, he was very good. Be was excellent with me. He was fond of most people. He was very fond of Vinod Khanna." He further added, "He was continuously aggravated with Ranbir. He felt that because he is his son, he had to be aggravated with him. Never angry, only

aggravated, very irritated. He was like that with everybody." When asked if Ranbir ever got upset with the way Rishi spoke to him, he replied, "No, no. He was used to it since he was born. He used to laugh. He used to say, 'See, he is going to shout at me again. Just let me stand here'." Earlier, in a video shared by the YouTube channel of PNG Jewels, the Animal actor had opened up about how his approach towards fatherhood differed from his father Rishi's parenting style. "My father's relationship with me had a little bit of distance; it was not like a friendship, because that's how that generation was; there was a glass wall. But now, differently with my child, I want to break that glass wall. I want to be a friend to her, give her the wings to fly in whichever direction she wants," he expressed. Ranbir Kapoor will next be seen in Nitesh Tiwari's mythological epic, *Ramayana*.

Megan Thee Stallion rushed to hospital mid-performance after health scare; suffers from extreme exhaustion: ‘A real wake-up call for me’



Rapper and songwriter Megan Thee Stallion had to leave her *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* Broadway performance mid-way after she reportedly experienced breathing difficulties during the show on Tuesday. Following the sudden health scare, she was rushed to the hospital. However, Megan is now reported to be recovering and resting. According to Variety, Megan's representative shared a statement about her health following her hospitalisation and also revealed the cause of the issue. "On Tuesday evening, Megan was transported to a local hospital to undergo a medical evaluation after experiencing concerning

symptoms. Doctors ultimately identified extreme exhaustion, dehydration, vasoconstriction and low metabolic levels as the cause of her symptoms. Megan has since been treated, discharged and is now resting," the statement read. The statement also confirmed that the rapper will return to the Broadway show on Thursday. It went on to read, "Megan is incredibly grateful for the prayers and well-wishes from her supporters and is looking forward to resuming her role as Zidler on 'Moulin Rouge' on Thursday."

Megan herself took to social media to speak about the health incident and described it as a 'wake-up call' to prioritise her well-being. "Last night was a real wake-up call for me. I've been pushing myself past my limits lately, running on empty, and my body finally said enough. It honestly scared me. I thought I was gonna faint on stage, I really tried to push through my performance but I just couldn't. Hotties I wanna be real with y'all because you mean everything to me and I hate letting y'all down ???" She added, "I just need one day to rest, reset, and take care of myself the way I should have been. I'll be right back on that stage Thursday, stronger, clearer, and ready to give you 100% the way you deserve. Thank you for always riding with me and loving me through everything. Earlier, Megan had spoken about how her mother had manifested her being a part of Broadway one day. "I guess that manifested into me being who I am today, but going back to her putting me in plays when I was young, when I got the opportunity to be a part of Broadway, I was like, 'Wow. I feel like this is something that my mom would've really wanted me to do,'" Megan told USA Today.

Alia Bhatt calls husband Ranbir Kapoor ‘fabulous’ in *Ramayana* teaser, says he has ‘done a beautiful job’

The makers of Ranbir Kapoor's upcoming epic *Ramayana*, are set to reveal the first glimpse of the film on Thursday. Fans have been excited about the big reveal scheduled to unveil on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti. Now, ahead of its release, Ranbir's wife and actor Alia Bhatt recently opened up about the highly-anticipated glimpse. She also praised her husband on social media, saying that he has done a "beautiful job."

"Ranbir Kapoor has just done a beautiful job" During a virtual interaction with fans, Alia was seen expressing her excitement about the Rama glimpse from *Ramayana*. "Ramayana unit is going to be out tomorrow. It is the unit called the Rama unit. I'm going to be posting it on my social media, so again, please go out there and support it," she said.

The actor also talked about Ranbir's performance and further added, "It's absolutely fabulous. I think Ranbir has just done such a beautiful job and I just can't wait for you guys to see it. It's just out of this world." Several fans appreciated Alia for supporting her husband and dropped delightful comments in the live session. Meanwhile, during a recent Q&A New York special IMAX trailer screening, Ranbir Kapoor recalled being approached for the movie. He shared, "Coming to play Lord Ram, I remember when Namit offered me this part around four years back, my instant reaction was: 'I am not fit enough, good enough.' I felt I wouldn't be able to do full justice. But that fear quickly turned into gratitude because opportunities like this were something I truly needed in my life." He added, "There was a period when I



needed to change my lifestyle. I had just become a father for the first time. The sweet coincidence of playing Lord Ram and becoming a father became a turning point in my life." Helmed by Nitesh Tiwari, *Ramayana: The Introduction* is the first part of the mythological franchise and is set to hit the theatres on Diwali, this year. The second part will release on Diwali 2027. Besides Ranbir Kapoor, the film also features Yash as Ravana, Sai Pallavi as Sita, Ravi Dubey as Lakshman and Sunny Deol as Lord Hanuman. Music composer Hans Zimmer has also joined AR Rahman for the composition. The film has been produced by Namit Malhotra who had previously said that the film's budget is around Rs 4,000 crore.

Jaya Bachchan gets ‘aggravated’ by paparazzi when they ‘push her buttons’, says Viveck Vaswani: ‘It’s a game between them’



Viveck, who has worked with Jaya Bachchan in the past, shared that the veteran actor was never rude and was always sweet with people around her. He said, "She was a superstar. She has only given hits. She worked with Randhir Kapoor, Manoj Kumar... she was phenomenal. She was very sweet." When asked the reason behind her losing her cool at photographers, Viveck said, "I don't know. Maybe over time. Maybe she wasn't acting too much, so she had more time." But Viveck argued that Jaya remains cordial and warm towards her close friends. "With her close friends like Dimple and Abu Jani, Sandeep Khosla, she's very charming," he said.

Blaming the paparazzi, Vaswani said, "I think what has happened is that she is continuously aggravated by the paparazzi. Now once or twice, she got aggravated. So they started understanding how to press her buttons. So they do that and she gets aggravated. It's now become a game between them. I don't think it's serious," he said. He also pointed out that Jaya raises valid points in Parliament, but the way she presents them sometimes gets in the way of conveying the message and rubs people the wrong way. "I also think that in Parliament, the points she makes are very valid, but she puts them across like a school teacher. Half of them get aggravated. So I think there is a way to say things," he added. Earlier, Jaya was criticised for her remark against the paparazzi. While speaking to Barkha Dutt on *Mojo Story*, Jaya Bachchan had said, "My relationship with the media is fantastic. I am a product of the media. My father was a journalist, and I have immense respect for them. But my relationship with paparazzi is zero. Who are these people? Are they trained to represent the people of this country?" She added, "Yeh jo bahar gande, tight pant pehnke, haath mein mobile leke ghoomte hain (These people who walk around in dirty clothes, tight pants, with phones in their hands), they think that just because they have a mobile phone, they can take your picture and say whatever they want. The kind of comments they pass — kahan se aate hain, kis tarah ka education hai, kya background hai? (Where are they from? What is their education? What is their background?) And these people will represent us? Just because they can upload content on YouTube or social media platforms?"

Actor and producer Viveck Vaswani blamed the paparazzi for aggravating Jaya Bachchan and called her 'very sweet'

There have been a few instances in the recent past when veteran actor Jaya Bachchan lost her cool with the paparazzi. While many photographers have spoken about her conduct, actor and producer Viveck Vaswani recently came to her defence. In a recent interaction, Viveck blamed the paparazzi for "pushing her buttons" and "aggravating" her.