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Farmers pushed to their limits in for irrigation water in Khammam

Khammam: Ambiguity over the supply of water for standing crops has been pushing farmers to their limits in Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao's Khammam district.

The sad state of farmers in the district was amply revealed during a protest by BRS, CPM and CPI (ML) Massline at Wyra on Monday, demanding the release of irrigation water from Wyra reservoir to crops in the command area.

Farmers stages protest over un-scheduled power cuts in Jogipet

Sangareddy: Farmers staged a protest at Anna Sagar sub-station on the outskirts of Jogipet town, highlighting the government's failure to provide 24-hour power supply to the farming sector. Traffic came to a standstill on the busy Jogipet-Sangareddy road. Farmers from Jogipet, Masanpally and other neighbouring villages gathered at the 11-kV sub-station as there were frequent disruptions in power supply to agricultural connections in these villages. As the Transco officials failed to respond even after the farmers raised the issue multiple times, the farmers took to the streets.

BRS Wanted BCs To Rear Sheep: CM

Hyderabad:, August 18

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy accused the previous BRS regime of keeping the Backward Classes communities away from education by encouraging them to pursue traditional caste-based professions. In contrast, he said, the Congress government was improving their educational standards, besides supporting caste-based professions.

"Unlike the previous government which asked people to rear buffaloes and sheep, stitch footwear, or catch fish while ensuring KCR's family remained at the helm of affairs, we are encouraging education, besides ensuring that caste-based professions flourish," the Chief Minister said.

"I reiterate that children from these communities should pursue education, become doctors, lawyers, and IAS officers, and play a part in rebuilding Telangana. We can change our children's destinies, as there is greater awareness today," Revanth Reddy said, after unveiling a statue of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud at an event held at Tank Bund here on Tuesday. The state marked the birth anniversary of Sardar Pappanna, who fought the Mughals and briefly ruled from Golconda Fort.

Revanth Reddy reiterated that the Congress was working for social justice, while the BRS only looked at "family justice." He urged the Goud community to consider the Congress government their own. "We will win 117 seats in the Assembly elections if you affirm that this is your government," Revanth Reddy said, addressing the BC community.

"When KCR became Chief Minister, he appointed his son KTR as working president. When Revanth Reddy became Chief Minister, Mahesh Goud became state Congress president. When KCR was Chief Minister, Harish Rao and KTR became key figures. When Revanth Reddy

became Chief Minister, Ponnam, Vakiti, Seethakka, and Konda Surekha became ministers," Revanth Reddy pointed out, highlighting what he called the difference in approach between him and former chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao.

"When KCR was CM, he made his daughter an MP



and an MLC. I appointed the granddaughter of the heroic Chakali Iamma and Srikanthachari's mother Shankamma as members of the Telangana State Women's Commission. KCR's approach is based on family interests; mine is based on social justice. KCR represents the justice of the feudal lords (doralu), whereas ours is social justice," Revanth Reddy said.

The Chief Minister reiterated his allegation that top leaders from the BRS were engaged in 'black magic'. "They are performing occult rituals, hoping for drought and losses for farmers. How can they stoop so low just to get back to power," Revanth Reddy asked. "Those who practice black magic deserve to be tied to trees and thrashed."

Ram Temple theft case: Champat Rai, Anil Mishra get SIT clean chit

Mew Delhi, August 18

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged theft of cash and valuables at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya has submitted its report to the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.



The SIT has cleared former Trust general secretary Champat Rai and Anil Mishra, a former Trust member, according to a statement accessed by The Tribune.

Both Rai and Mishra had resigned from their positions in the Trust, which manages the Ayodhya Ram Mandir, after allegations of donation theft surfaced. Both were questioned by the SIT regarding the process of donation management at the temple.

Sources said the Trust had indicated that the report would be placed before a meeting of the panel next month.

The Trust is also expected to review the findings

and decide on further action.

The three-member SIT, headed by Lucknow Divisional Commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant, was constituted by the Uttar Pradesh Government on June 13 at the Trust's request, before the Supreme Court intervened in the matter. Range Inspector General Kiran S and Special Secretary (Finance) Neel Ratan Kumar are the other members of the probe panel.

The Uttar Pradesh Home Department later handed over the SIT's final report in the Ayodhya Ram Temple donation theft case to the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust for further action, the statement said.

Sources claimed Rai denied any role in the alleged donation theft, stating that it was on his complaint that the suspects were arrested. He also told investigators that it was his responsibility to ensure that no irregularities occurred in donation collection and that he acted as soon as he became aware of the alleged wrongdoing.

Based on the SIT's preliminary report, Trust member Krishnamohan filed a written complaint at the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi police station, following which an FIR was registered on June 25.

The FIR named eight people, Avinash Shukla, Anukalp Mishra, Lavkush Mishra, Manish Kumar Yadav, Karunesh Pandey, Ramashankar Mishra, Subhash Srivastava and Ram Shankar Yadav alias Tinnu, along with other unidentified individuals, as accused. All of them have been arrested and booked under relevant provisions of the BNS and Section 13(1)(a) of the Prevention of Corruption Act. The report also formed the basis for subsequent FIRs and arrest-related action in the case.

All citizens must be given voting right: Mahesh Goud

Hyderabad:, August 18

Expressing concern over about 92 lakh voters in the state receiving notices during the ongoing SIR, PCC president B Mahesh Kumar Goud on Tuesday demanded that the Election Commission remove the necessity of voters linking themselves with 2002 electoral rolls.

As many as 73 lakh names have not been included in Telangana's draft electoral rolls released on August 17, while another 92 lakh electors will be issued notices over anomalies or failure to establish a link with the 2002 rolls during the ongoing SIR. Goud claimed that it is the poor who are losing their voting rights as they are not able to produce the requisite documents. On the EC using the 2002 electoral rolls as a baseline for the current Special Intensive Revision (SIR), he said the poor are not able to link their names with the 2002 voter lists.

He said all citizens of India should be given voting right after conducting an enquiry regardless of whether their vote is linked with 2002 rolls or not. The Booth Level Officers are supposed to take a call on absent, shifted, dead or duplicate (ASD) voters after making three visits to a house in their jurisdiction but the BLOs, especially in Hyderabad, have hardly visited, he said.

Though Congress submitted a list of its 35,000 booth level agents (BLAs), the election authorities in Telangana show the number to be over 13,000, he claimed.

He alleged that the BJP is trying to remove names of ordinary people by imposing tough rules and reducing the Election Commission (EC) as its "pocket institution."

He demanded that the Election Commission provide details of 1.60 lakh voters (including those in categories of ASD, anomalies and unmapped categories)



so that the BLAs can try to help in enrolling them in the electoral rolls.

Chief Electoral Officer C Sudharshan Reddy on Monday said that about 73 lakh names were in the Absent, Shifted, Dead or Duplicate list. Genuine electors can still have their names included in the electoral rolls during the claims and objections period from August 17 to September 16 by submitting Form 6 along with the prescribed declaration form. Reddy said notices would be issued to 60 lakh people in the 'anomalies' category and another 32 lakh in the 'unmapped' category, comprising those who could not establish a link with the 2002 electoral rolls.

Death penalty: Supreme Court dismisses PIL seeking to replace hanging with painless methods

Mew Delhi, August 18

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a PIL seeking abolition of the practice of executing death row convicts by hanging and replacing it with less painful methods such as "intravenous lethal injection, shooting, electrocution or gas chamber".

"We are not persuaded that a case has been made out for referring the decision of the three-judge bench in Dina to a larger bench for reconsideration of the constitutional validity of Sections 354 (5) of the CrPC/ 393(5) of the BNSS (dealing with the death penalty by hanging)," a Bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta said.

While dismissing the PIL filed by senior counsel Rishi Malhotra in 2017, challenging the validity of Section 354(5) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Now replaced by Section 393(5) BNSS), which provides for hanging till death, the Bench said the Centre was free to undertake a comprehensive review of the existing method of execution

The Bench, however, clarified that its judgment was not the final word on the subject and that the issue may be re-examined in future if "compelling scientific, medical, or empirical evidence" emerged on alternative ways to carry out the death sentence.

"We also observe that nothing contained in this judgment shall preclude the Union government should it consider it appropriate from undertaking a comprehensive review of the existing method of execution through an expert body comprising specialists in law, forensic medicine, neuroscience, criminology, and allied disciplines with a view to examine whether any alternative method of execution better serves the constitutional objective of minimizing unnecessary pain while preserving the dignity of the condemned prisoners," it noted.

The PIL referred to the 187th Report of the Law Commission advocating removal of the present mode of execution from the statute. Malhotra contended that the best way to give the death penalty was lethal injection and that 49 out of 50 states in the US have adopted lethal injection.

Malhotra contended that hanging involved prolonged pain and suffering compared to the other two



methods. He wanted the top court to "declare Right to Die by a dignified procedure of death" as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution.

As the Centre opposed a petition seeking removal of the present mode of execution of death row convicts by hanging from the statute, the Supreme Court had on October 15, 2025 questioned its status-quoist attitude on the contentious issue.

In an affidavit filed in April 2018, the Centre had defended "hanging by the neck till death" -- the practice of execution of death sentence, terming it a safer and quick method for termination of life of a death row convict. Other modes of execution of death sentences such as lethal injection or firing squad, if bungled, could lead to results that could be called barbaric, inhuman, and cruel, it had said.

The Centre said, "The procedure followed for execution by electrocution or lethal injection or firing squad could be just as inhumane or barbaric to another person. As far as likelihood of execution getting botched up is concerned, the statistics show that hanging with more advanced procedures is far safer than techniques such as lethal injection."

It maintained that hanging was consistent with the State's obligation to ensure the process of execution was conducted with decency and decorum without involving degradation or brutality of any kind.

Siwan SP shifted amid row over use of AK-47 during stir

Mew Delhi, August 18

In a major reshuffle, the Bihar Government on Tuesday transferred 18 IPS officers, including the Superintendents of Police (SPs) of Siwan and Bhojpur — whose role had come under scrutiny in separate cases involving the students' protest in July and the encounter of 28-year-old Bharat Bhushan Tiwari.

Siwan SP Purnan Kumar Jha has been shifted following the controversy over the use of an AK-47 by a constable during the students' protest against the NEET (UG) paper leak in the district on July 25. He has been placed on the waiting list for a new posting. Bharat Soni, who was serving as the SP of Nalanda, has been appointed as the new Siwan SP.

Constable Abhishek Kumar, who fired the AK-47 into the air during the

protest, was earlier suspended and departmental proceedings were initiated against him.

The Bihar Police has told the Supreme Court that the constable fired four rounds after he got trapped in a "crowd of protesters". In an affidavit in the apex court, the Bihar Police said in a stone-pelting incident in Siwan, 20 police personnel — an SP, two sub-divisional police officers, two inspectors, two sub-inspectors and 13 constables — were injured.

Jha, who was the Siwan SP, had stated that no one was injured in the AK-47 incident. "A district intelligence unit officer had visited JP Chowk. The investigation revealed that a murder had taken place on that day, and a team was passing through the area to conduct an investigation and take necessary action...Constable Abhishek has been suspended with immediate effect," he had said on July 25.



Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Bihar temple stampede — no act of fate

The death of seven people in a stampede near Ashok Dham Temple in Bihar's Lakhisarai district serves as yet another grim reminder of the serious gaps in our crowd management systems, safety protocols, and emergency preparedness. Temple stampedes in India are not random acts of fate. They are usually predictable crowd disasters produced by a combination of excessive density, constrained movement, poor anticipation, inadequate infrastructure and a failure to intervene before the crowd becomes unstable. The disturbing part is that India has known this for decades. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has detailed guidelines for mass gatherings, while the Home Ministry has repeatedly advised States to prepare crowd-management SOPs and checklists. Yet the same failures recur. The Bihar tragedy unfolded amid a heavy rush of worshippers who had gathered at the temple on the third Monday of the month of Sawan. An unprecedented surge of devotees led to a barricade collapsing outside the Indramaneshwar Temple in Ashok Dham, one of the oldest Shiva temples in Bihar. An estimated 50,000 people had gathered at the temple when the tragedy struck. The pattern of stampede incidents in India has been disturbingly familiar. So are the responses that follow. Compensation is announced, a probe is ordered, and a few officials are suspended amid a political blame game. And no lessons are learned from past mistakes. It's business as usual until the next tragedy strikes. This has been the story of all recent stampede cases. More than a decade ago, the NDMA released a guide on managing crowds at big events and mass gathering venues. The document emphasised capacity planning, crowd control, risk assessment, and real-time surveillance to prevent any mishaps. However, the guidelines are observed more in the breach than in practice. Inadequate infrastructure, disregard for scientific protocols, a lack of accountability, and a reactive approach to disasters continue to be significant obstacles. The Bihar temple stampede is the latest in a series of such stampede deaths. In 2005, over 265 people died in a stampede at Mandhardevi temple in Maharashtra; 145 devotees died in Himachal Pradesh's Naina Devi temple in 2008; over 250 worshippers were killed in Rajasthan's Chamunda Devi temple in 2008; over 115 died in Madhya Pradesh's Ratangarh temple in 2013 and at least 30 devotees died at Prayag Kumbh Mela in January 2025, the sixth stampede during the Kumbh Mela in 70 years.

Drunk Man Repeatedly Calls Dial-100; Case Registered

****MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally police registered a case against a man for repeatedly calling Dial-100 after consuming alcohol and causing inconvenience to the police. He was subsequently produced before a court. According to Medipally CI G. Jalandhar Reddy, Yellapatti Vara Prasad Reddy (47), a driver and resident of Road No. 3, Kranthi Colony, Chengicherla, allegedly consumed alcohol and made four to five consecutive calls to Dial-100 on the night of August 15 from the Chinna Kranthi Colony area. "The CI stated that Reddy behaved inappropriately with the police, wasted their valuable time and caused a nuisance. A case was registered against him and a charge sheet was filed. Medipally police said that he was subsequently produced before the First Special Judicial Magistrate of Second Class Court in LB Nagar under Section 70(B) of the City Police Act.



Reddy behaved inappropriately with the police, wasted their valuable time and caused a nuisance. A case was registered against him and a charge sheet was filed. Medipally police said that he was subsequently produced before the First Special Judicial Magistrate of Second Class Court in LB Nagar under Section 70(B) of the City Police Act.

Five Fined for Creating Nuisance After Consuming Alcohol

****MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):

Medipally police registered petty cases and filed charge sheets against five persons for allegedly creating a nuisance after consuming alcohol within the limits of Medipally Police Station. They were subsequently produced before the 1st Special Judicial Magistrate of Second Class Court in L.B. Nagar. The court imposed fines on each of them and also directed them to clean the surroundings of the police station and the court as part of the Swachh Bharat programme. Following the court's



directions, the accused participated in a cleanliness drive at the police station and court premises. According to police, the accused were identified as Yadav Mahender (31) of Indira Nagar Colony, Chengicherla; Uday Kiran (25) of Papireddichandanagar, Shailigampally; D. Pasha (32) of the Double Bedroom Houses at Pratap Singaram village; Varaprasad (47) of Road No. 3, Kranthi Colony, Chengicherla; and Yakaiah (35) of the Double Bedroom Houses at Pratap Singaram village. Police said cases were registered against them for consuming alcohol and creating a nuisance on August 9, 11, 15 and 17. As per the court's orders, the accused participated in the Swachh Bharat cleanliness programme, police said.

Meeting on Issues Faced by Landowners Over 22A Prohibited List:

UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Participates

***UPPAL, AUGUST 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A meeting was held in Malkajgiri to discuss the problems faced by landowners whose properties have been included in the 22A prohibited list. Malkajgiri MLA Marri Rajashekar Reddy presided over the meeting, which was attended by former minister and MLA Harish Rao, who interacted with the affected landowners. "The meeting discussed the various difficulties arising from the inclusion of lands in the 22A prohibited list, protection of land rights, and measures to ensure justice for the affected people. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy also participated in the meeting and enquired about the problems faced by the landowners. The leaders said there was a need to bring the issues of those affected by the prohibited list to the government's attention and work towards resolving them. The meeting decided to move forward in coordination to find a permanent solution to the problems faced by the affected landowners. BRS leaders, party workers and landowners participated in the meeting.



Grand Tribute to Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud on His Birth Anniversary

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Pays Floral Tribute at Sarvai Papanna Goud Statue in Meerpet HB Colony

***Nacharam, August 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud, a great warrior who fought for social equality and the rights of oppressed communities, floral tributes were paid to his statue at the main junction of Phase-1 in Meerpet HB Colony Division on Tuesday, 18 August 2026. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, along with former corporators Jeripothula Prabhudas, Gundarapu Srinivas Reddy and Golluri Anjaiah, garlanded the statue of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud and paid rich tributes. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud was a great people's leader who fought for the self-respect and dignity of the Bahujan communities. He recalled that Papanna Goud united people against social discrimination and fought for equality and social justice. "The MLA said that Papanna Goud's courage, determination and commitment to the welfare of the people continue to inspire the present generation. Born into a humble family, Sarvai Papanna Goud challenged the dominance and oppressive systems of the ruling classes and led Dalit and Bahujan communities towards political empowerment. "He stated that Sarvai Papanna Goud holds a unique place in history as one of the earliest Bahujan leaders to fight for political power and social equality. He also recalled that Papanna Goud built several forts across Telangana and courageously challenged the rulers of his time, establishing himself as a prominent Bahujan king of the 17th century. "The MLA called upon the youth to



draw inspiration from Papanna Goud's spirit of struggle, self-respect and commitment to equality. He urged everyone to work collectively towards establishing social equality and justice in society and fulfilling the ideals for which Papanna Goud fought. "Former Division President Vanjari Praveen Karipe, Kaundinya Goud Welfare Association leaders Mallesham Goud, A. Krishna Goud, Muthyam Venkanna Goud, Balayya Goud, Suresh Goud, Bhupal Goud, Sailu Goud, Shravan, Ettayya Goud, U. Sheenu, A. Anjaiah Goud, Chekilla Chandrasekhar Goud, Naveen Goud, Kishore, D. Narasimha Goud, Hanuman Das Goud, Yadagiri Goud, Ashok Reddy, Harinath Reddy, Chari, and others participated in the programme and paid rich tributes to Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud.

Apollo Medical Academy Felicitates Dr. Valigonda Narsimha

"Tarnaka, August 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Apollo Medical Academy felicitated Dr. Valigonda Narsimha, a student leader of Osmania University, in recognition of his academic achievements, leadership qualities and commitment to value-based student politics. "Apollo Medical Academy Principal Alavala Madhusudhan warmly felicitated Dr. Valigonda Narsimha on the occasion and appreciated his journey and contributions. "Speaking on the occasion, Principal Madhusudhan said, "Coming from a humble family background, Dr. Valigonda Narsimha has earned a doctorate in Political Science and is setting an example through value-based student politics. His journey and dedication are truly inspiring, and our institution will always extend its support and encouragement to him. "He further appreciated Dr. Narsimha for his commitment to education, leadership and social responsibility, and wished him continued success in his future endeavours. "The felicitation programme was held in a warm and cordial atmosphere, with the participants congratulating Dr. Valigonda Narsimha on his achievements and wishing him greater success in the years ahead.



Food Safety officials find substandard oil at Raja Tea Stall.

Karimnagar August 18 (Correspondent): A joint team of the Task Force and Food Safety officials conducted surprise inspections at food establishments in Tower Circle here on Monday on the directions of Commissioner of Police Gaush Alam.

During the inspection, Food Safety officials found that the cooking oil being used at Raja Tea Stall did not conform to the prescribed quality standards. Food items prepared using the oil were removed and the matter was brought to the notice of senior officials for further action.

Task Force Assistant Commissioner of Police V. Satish warned that legal action would be taken against traders found violating food safety norms and endangering public health.

Task Force Sub-Inspectors Surender and Srikanth and Food Safety officials Ankit Reddy and Rohit Reddy participated in the inspections.



Ravi Naik appointed SC, ST, BC Joint Secretary

*** Indian chronicle, Secunderabad, August 18: "Ravi Naik of Tarnaka has been appointed Joint Secretary of the SC, ST, BC and Minority Cell in Secunderabad under the leadership of its president Manda Jagan. "Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Jagan called upon members to work in coordination towards resolving the issues faced by SC, ST, BC and minority communities and promoting their welfare. "Mr. Naik thanked Mr. Jagan for reposing confidence in him and entrusting him with the responsibility. "Chintakindi Mallesh, general secretary Gundelli Madhukar, Undeti Sachin, vice-president Janaki Ram, M.D. Mastan Baba, Chilam Sai Yadav, Jinkala Mallesh, M.D. Akbar, Amar Banswade and M.D. Kaja Pasha were among those present.



Approved Development Works Should Be Started Immediately: UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY

*****UPPAL, AUGUST 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy brought to the attention of the concerned officials that development works already sanctioned in Cherlapally Division were still pending without being started. "In this regard, the MLA met MMC Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy, IAS, and discussed the details of the sanctioned works. He stated



that despite funds having been sanctioned, the delay in commencing the works was causing inconvenience to the public. "The MLA urged the officials to start the sanctioned works immediately without any further delay and complete them within the stipulated time. He also requested the Zonal Commissioner to allocate the necessary funds for new development works required in the division based on the needs of the people. "Bandari Lakshma Reddy suggested expediting development works to provide permanent solutions to issues related to roads, drainage and other basic infrastructure in the division. "BRS party leaders, including Mahesh Goud, and others participated in the programme.

Government's aim is to satisfy the hunger of the people of Bhuvanagiri and Aleru :- Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy

***** * Construction of drinking water pipeline from Mallannasagar with Rs.210 crores *****(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August. 18):- Government Whip Birla Ailaiah, MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy who inspected the pipeline works will move drinking water from Mallannasagar to Bhuvanagiri and Aleru constituencies at a cost of Rs.210 crores to quench the thirst of the people of Bhuvanagiri and Aleru constituencies. Today, Government Whip, Aleru MLA Birla Ailaiah, Bhuvanagiri Constituency Legislator Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy inspected the pipeline construction works at Ghanpur Gutta. On this occasion, in a meeting held at Ghanpur Gutta, the pipeline construction works along with officials and public representatives. Reviewed the progress. The MLAs said that the government has already obtained the permissions for the 4.5 km forest area required for the project. The officials were directed to speed up the rest of the works and take steps to ensure that the people get drinking water quickly. The MLAs criticized that despite the BRS government in power for ten years, it did not provide a permanent solution to the drinking water problem of the people of Bhuvanagiri and Aleru constituencies. He said that the previous government had neglected the issue of quenching the thirst of the people.



He said that after the Congress government came to power, we are giving utmost priority to the drinking water needs of the people and taking forward this prestigious pipeline project with Rs.210 crores. By bringing the water of Mallannasagar to Bhuvanagiri and Aleru constituencies, the MLAs will get a permanent solution to the problem of drinking water. stated. The officials were advised to complete the works with quality standards and speed up and make them available to the public. In this program, Aliabad Municipal Chairman Shirisha-Krishna Reddy, Councilors Bhuvanagiri, Aleru Constituency Public Representatives, Mission Bhagirada CE Ramchandranayak, SE Venkat. Reddy, other officials, officials, public representatives and others participated.

	GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA	
	ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT	
<u>e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE</u>		
NIT No. 08/AEE/DB/EBD/2026-27/e-proc/1034		Dt: 17.08.2026
Name of work : Providing fluted glass partition in the peshi of Special Secretary to Government, Ind & Co Dept., in room no. 33 of 3rd floor in the premises of Dr. B.R Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat, Hyderabad (2nd call).		
ECV: Rs. 1,00,224.00. Bid submission Start Date & Time : 18-08-2026 from 11:00 AM. Bid Submission Closing Date & Time : 21.08.2026 up to 11.00 AM. Bid Evaluation opening Date & Time : 21.08.2026 - 2026 after 11.30 AM. Further details can be seen at 'e-procurement' market place at www.tender.telangana.gov.in .		
Sd/- Executive Engineer (R&B),		East Buildings Division, Hyd.,
DIPR.NO. 8049-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2026-27, Dt: 17.08.2026		

'The Red Bag' Will Appeal to Audiences Across All Sections: Producer Harikrishna Somisetty

Produced by Harikrishna Somisetty under the Memory Makers banner, The Red Bag is a different suspense thriller directed by Ravi Kumar Seerapu. The film features Kabir Singh, Prasad Behara, Raadhya, Monica, Sneha Singh, Akanksha, Eeshan Shankar, Avinash Badal, Bhargavi and Raasi in key roles. PVR INOX Pictures is set to release the film on a grand scale on August 21. "As the film gears up for its theatrical release, producer Harikrishna Somisetty shared his confidence in the movie and spoke about the response to its promotional content." Producer Harikrishna Somisetty said, "There is a good amount of hype surrounding The Red Bag. Every piece of content we have released so far has received an encouraging response. The glimpses, teaser and songs have all trended on YouTube, and our content has received appreciation from all quarters." "Everyone who watched the promotional content appreciated the stylish presentation of the film and the action sequences. The movie will create ten times more impact than what audiences have seen in the content released so far. Nobody will be able to guess the twists in the film." "The story keeps the audience engaged with thrilling moments until the very end. We have made the film with elements that will appeal to audiences across all sections. It has all the essential elements, including action, suspense and thrilling sequences." "The artistes and the entire technical team extended their complete support to the project. We are now gearing up for a grand theatrical



release on August 21. "PVR INOX Pictures has been providing us with tremendous support in terms of the release. With their cooperation, we are able to bring the movie to audiences across a large number of screens. I am confident that The Red Bag will appeal to audiences and entertain everyone," he concluded. "The Red Bag is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on August 21, promising audiences a stylish suspense thriller packed with action, thrills and unpredictable twists.

Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud's 376th Birth Anniversary Celebrated Grandly in Uppal — Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Attends as Chief Guest

UPPAL, AUGUST 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The 376th birth anniversary of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud was celebrated grandly at his statue located at Nerdham Function Hall on Chilkanagar Main Road in Uppal constituency. "The programme was organized under the leadership of Nerdham Bhaskar Goud, Founder of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Sena and Telangana activist. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the event as the chief guest. "BC Welfare Association National President Jajula Srinivas Goud, Malkajgiri Parliamentary Constituency in-charge Ragidi Laxma Reddy, former OBC Commission Chairman and BJP State spokesperson Taduri Srinivas, BRS State leader Bandala Praveen Mudiraj, along with local community association leaders, former corporators and Uppal Assembly BC JAC leaders participated in the programme." "Speaking on the occasion, Nerdham Bhaskar Goud expressed concern that despite 80 years having passed since Independence, BCs have not received adequate representation in the social, political and administrative spheres." "He recalled that BC youth had played a significant role in the Telangana movement, fighting for self-respect with slogans such as "Our Funds – Our Jobs – Our Water" and making sacrifices for the cause." "He said that even though 13 years have passed since the formation of Telangana, adequate political and administrative justice has not been provided to BCs, who constitute around 60 per cent of the state's population. He emphasized the need for BCs to unite as a strong political force to increase their political representation." "Bhaskar Goud



called upon BC leaders including R. Krishnaiah, Jajula Srinivas Goud, Teenmar Mallanna, Visalandhra Maharaj and Balaraju to work together more strongly for greater political representation for BCs. He said BCs should strive to reach a position where they can create political opportunities for themselves rather than seeking tickets from parties dominated by upper castes. He stated that the objective should be to elect BC candidates as MLAs, mayors, MLCs and MPs and work towards forming a BC-led government in Telangana with a BC Chief Minister. Bhaskar Goud urged people to carry forward the inspiration provided by great personalities such as Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud, Chakali Ailamma, Panduga Sayanna and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He called for BCs across Telangana to unite politically and emerge as a strong political force.

Surmount School of Excellence Inaugurated in Grand Manner — OU EMRC Director P. Raghupathi Reddy Attends as Guest of Honour



UPPAL, AUGUST 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): P. Raghupathi Reddy, Director of OU EMRC, attended the inauguration ceremony of Surmount School of Excellence as the Guest of Honour. Speaking on the occasion, he expressed his happiness over the participation of more than 70 school correspondents in the inaugural programme. He said the event once again demonstrated the strong bond of friendship and unity among school correspondents in the Uppal area. Raghupathi Reddy said that although there is competition among schools, it should always be healthy competition. He appreciated the school representatives for congratulating one another on their achievements and working together for the development of the education sector. "He observed that the presence of so many school representatives at the inauguration of a single school was a testament to the mutual respect, friendship and unity prevailing in the education sector of Uppal." "The inauguration of Surmount School of Excellence thus stood out as a special occasion that highlighted the close relationship and camaraderie among schools in the Uppal area." [5:40 PM, 8/18/2026] +91 93911 09207: END

S.Vivek Appointed as Telangana Employees Association State Secretary

"President M.Ravinder and General Secretary Harish Kumar Reddy Issue Appointment Orders" "Hyderabad, August 18 (Indian Chronicle) : S. Vivek, who has been actively fighting for teachers' and employees' issues for a long time, has been appointed as the State Secretary of the Telangana Employees Association, according to a statement released in the city on Tuesday by Joint Karimnagar District Chairman Jakkoju Venkateshwarlu and Chief Coordinator Mohammed Fayaz Ali. They said that the appointment orders were issued by the association's State President M.Ravinder and State General Sec-

retary Harish Kumar Reddy. Speaking on the occasion, S. Vivek said that there was no alternative to a united struggle by employees and teachers to secure their rights. He said he would work towards mobilising employees and securing their basic rights, besides striving for the resolution of their problems. Vivek expressed his gratitude to State President M.Ravinder, State General Secretary Harish Kumar Reddy, Joint Karimnagar District Chairman Jakkoju Venkateshwarlu and Chief Coordinator M.D.Fayaz Ali for entrusting him with the state-level responsibility and expressing confidence in him.

Seminar on Homeopathy Held Under HMAT

Hyderabad, August 18 (Indian Chronicle) : A one-day seminar was organised by the Homeopathic Medical Association of Telangana (HMAT), Himayatnagar, in memory of Kandula Venkata Narasinga Rao, Manikyam and paediatrician Dr.Gouribai Kirtane. The programme was held at the Jupally Balamma Auditorium and sponsored by Dr.K.S.Gupta, head of Star Homeopathy. In his welcome address, HMAT president Dr.K.Gopalakrishna said that Dr.Gouribai Kirtane, though an allopathic doctor, had a keen interest in homeopathy and provided homeopathic treatment extensively. He praised her contributions to the promotion of homeopathic medicine until her last days. HMAT general secretary Dr.G.Durgaprasad Rao explained the medical services and other programmes being undertaken by the association. He also recalled the social services rendered by Kandula Venkata Narasinga Rao and Manikyam. Senior homeopathic physician Dr.Ganesh Achari delivered a lecture on 'Integrative Approach of Homeopathy in Diabetes Complications'. Dr.Annapurna Mantha presented homeopathic cases related to the treatment of psoriasis. As part of the memorial lecture dedicated to Dr.Gouribai Kirtane, Prof.Dr.Gorantla Chandrasekhara Rao spoke at length on the management of cancer cases through homeopathy. Dr.Venugopal Gouri, Director of HMAT and ICRH, delivered the concluding remarks. HMAT Governing Council members Dr.C.V.Swamy, Dr.Madhu Varanasi, Dr.Kalpna Krishna, Dr.Rajeshree Shah, Dr.Satish Krishna, Dr.Saishruthi and Dr.Harshitha Ure, besides homeopathic practitioners, students, interns and postgraduate students from various homeopathic medical colleges, attended the programme in large numbers. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by organising secretary Dr.Gautham Rallabandi.



Sardar Sarvai Papanna is not only for BCs..a symbol of self-respect for all the people of Telangana..a great warrior who ruled the state before independence:- BC Welfare Advisor to the Telangana State Government and former PCC President V. Hanumantha Rao

"Sardar Sarvai Papanna's 376th birth anniversary celebrated in Bhuvanagiri town" "Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 18):- On the occasion of Sardar Sarvai Papanna's 376th birth anniversary, a grand tribute was paid to the statue at the fort in Bhuvanagiri town. "In this program, BC Welfare Advisor to the Telangana State

Papanna and tributes were paid. On this occasion, former PCC President BC Welfare Government Advisor V. Hanumantha Rao said "Sardar Sarvai Papanna is not only for BCs..a symbol of self-respect for all the people of Telangana..a great warrior who ruled the state before independence. Everyone should continue his ideals," he said.



Government and former PCC President V. Hanumantha Rao, Bhuvanagiri Town Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar, Bhuvanagiri MRO Jagan, TPCC members Tangallapalli Ravi Kumar, Sardar Sarvai Papanna Utsava President Panjala Jaihind Goud, Balaraj Rashtra Gowda Sangam members and others participated. "On this occasion, floral garlands were placed at the statue of

Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar said, "Sardar Sarvai Papanna is not just a warrior. He is a symbol of the self-respect of the BC, tribal and poor weaker sections, and he is the first Telugu hero to achieve self-rule against the Mughals. Sarvai Sarvai Papanna's sacrifice and courage are an inspiration to today's youth, and the Congress government gives top priority to the welfare of BCs. We should all work to establish the society that Papanna dreamed of." Senior Congress leaders

former councilor Kukka Dugu Somaiya, Mazar Pasha (Bablu) councilor Anil Nagaram Shankar, Kura Shiva Kumar, Pittala Balaraj, Avu Shetty Pandu, Nazir Bhai Sheikh Wajid Here Kar Srinu Rafiddeen Gowri, Gowda Sangam members, and representatives of various associations participated in the program in large numbers.

Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud's 376th birth anniversary was celebrated grandly in the Venkat Reddy Nagar Division

UPPAL, AUGUST 18 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal Constituency Youth Congress President Akarapu Arun Patel attended the programme as the chief guest. On the occasion, he garlanded the statue of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud and paid rich tributes. Speaking on the occasion, Akarapu Arun Patel praised Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud as a great warrior of the Bahujans who courageously fought against imperialist forces. He said Papanna's struggle for equality and self-respect continues to inspire the present generation. He called upon everyone to work together for the rights of Bahujans and the development of the region. Venkat Reddy Nagar Goud Sangam President Malles h Goud, Somashekar Goud, Shankaraiah Pujari, Somaiah, Ramantapur Goud Sangam President Anil Goud, Gaddam Sai, Srisailam, Krishna Goud, Malles h Goud, Naresh Goud, Ellachari, Sudhakar, Shankar, along with several Goud Sangam leaders and colony residents, participated in the programme.



Rs 8.50-Crore Bridge to Boost Rural Connectivity: Minister Jupally

"Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, Aug 18: State Minister for Excise, Prohibition, Tourism, Culture and Archaeology and District In-Charge Minister Jupally Krishna Rao said the government is undertaking development programmes to provide better transport facilities to the public and connect rural areas with major roads. "On Tuesday, the minister laid the foundation stone for the construction of a high-level bridge between Ankushapur and Tattugudem in Kagaznagar mandal. The bridge has been sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 8.50 crore. He was accompanied by Legislative Council Member Dande Vithal, Sirpur MLA Dr. Palvai Harish Babu, District Collector K. Haritha, Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Yuvraj Marmat, Kagaznagar Revenue Divisional Officer Chepuri Kistaiah, and officials from the Roads and Buildings Department. "Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that developing infrastructure to ensure hassle-free movement for people is one of the government's primary objectives. He said the construction of high-level bridges would provide a permanent solution to the transportation problems faced by people in areas where streams and rivulets overflow during the monsoon. "Once the bridge is completed, transport connectivity between Kagaznagar and Wankidi areas will improve significantly. It will also make it easier for people from rural areas to access nearby towns, markets, educational institutions, healthcare services and other essential facilities.

Pending projects should be completed- CPI(M) Padayatra from 29th to 31st of this month

- State Secretariat Member MD Jahangir, AIKMS State President Mamidala Bhikshapati, Baswapur Project Landless Persons Leader Kalabhairava in the Roundtable Meeting

“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle..August 18):- CPI(M) has demanded that the irrigation projects pending for years in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district be completed immediately. A padayatra will be organized from the statue of Dr. BR



Ambedkar in Bhuvanagiri town to Indira Park Dharna Chowk on 29th, 30th, 31st of this month, said party State Secretariat Member MD Jahangir. They participated in a roundtable meeting organized by the party's state committee member Kondamadugu Narasimha at the CPI(M) office in Bhuvanagiri on Tuesday and spoke. They said that many irrigation projects have been pending in the district for almost 20 years. They criticized that the officials and public representatives respond when people and political parties raise concerns, but then they do not pay attention to the problems again. Jahangir said that the Baswapuram project should be completed, saying that the Baswapuram project is almost 90 percent complete, and if the remaining work is completed, there is a possibility of providing water to the farmers. He said that the officials are saying that about Rs. 420 crore is required to pay compensation to the displaced people. He said that if water is filled in the reservoir without solving the problems of the displaced people, there is a risk of drowning nearby villages and villages. They demanded that attention be paid to Gandhamalla and Cherlaguda. He said that the Cherlaguda project has a capacity of about 12 TMC and the Gandhamalla project has a capacity of 1.4 TMC. He criticized the lack of progress in the work even after a year since the foundation stone was laid for the Gandhamalla project.“He said that the estimated cost of the Shivannagudem project is about Rs. 6,200 crore, but work of Rs. 1,500 crore has been done so far. He said that the work is progressing slowly due to insufficient funds. He also asked the government to take forward the proposals to provide water to Choutuppal and Narayanapuram areas. The condition of the canals is also pathetic.“Jahangir said that the second phase of the Dharmareddypalli, Pillaiyapalli and Bunadigani canals has been stalled due to lack of funds. He said that despite digging and lining the canals in the Aleru area, water has not been supplied for almost ten years. He said that garbage has accumulated in the Brindavan canal, obstructing the flow of water, and the Asifnagar canal is also not being maintained properly. Solution to water problem with Musi purification“The CPI(M) leaders demanded that the Musi purification should not be limited to road expansion and tourism development but should also consider irrigation and drinking water needs. They demanded that the government clearly announce the possibility of linking Godavari waters with Musi and the plan to provide water to reservoirs and canals. The government, which is allocating funds for Musi purification works from Hyderabad to Babu Ghat,

should also give equal priority to areas in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. They said that the Shamirpet reservoir should also be used as previously proposed to provide irrigation water to this area. The CPI(M) has decided to launch a large-scale movement to move the government on pending projects from 29th. They said that a padayatra will be organized in Bhuvanagiri on 29th, 30th and 31st of this month and then an open dharna will be held at Indira Park.”

Former MLC Cherupalli Seetharamulu and CPI(M) Central Committee Member S. Veeraiah will start the padayatra, he said. John Wesley, Julakanti Rangareddy and others will attend the dharna at Indira Park, he said. Jahangir called on all political parties and public organizations to join hands to implement pending projects. He urged people to participate in large numbers and make the padayatra and dharna a success. They said that united movements are needed for agriculture and drinking water. CPI(ML) New Democracy leader Mamidala Bikshapati said that there is a need to unite for the pending irrigation projects in Yadadri and Bhuvanagiri districts and reminded that since 1987, Left parties and public organizations have organized many movements for water. He said that the Devadula project was started as a result of those movements. He said that if the Devadula project had been completed from Tapaspally to Shamirpet, Bhuvanagiri and many other districts would have benefited from irrigation and drinking water. He criticized that the previous governments had not done due justice to the region in terms of projects. He said that it is sad that even today there is a situation where people have to struggle for water..He alleged that political parties that make promises during elections see people as voters and do not care about their real problems. He said that the current rain situation is also worrying and farmers are facing difficulties in terms of crops. He urged all parties and public organizations to jointly launch a strong movement on irrigation and drinking water issues to prevent drought conditions in the future. He announced that CPI(ML) New Democracy and AIKMS will support the movement to be undertaken by the CPM for the implementation of pending projects. The problems of Baswapuram residents should be solved. The residents of the Baswapuram project demanded that the compensation and R&R package be paid immediately. The victims of the project demanded that the problems of the residents who are losing their lands and houses due to the Baswapuram project be resolved immediately. He said that a total of 4,291 acres of land are being affected under the project. He said that the villages of B.N. Thimmapuram, Choukathanda and Lappanayakthanda are being completely submerged. He said on behalf of the displaced that they have been fighting for compensation and rehabilitation for the past 16 years. He said that out of 1,761 acres in B.N. Thimmapuram, only 1,400 acres have been compensated and about Rs. 140 crores are still due. He said that the authorities had earlier promised to provide compensation for the occupied lands as well, and if the arrears related to them are added, it is about Rs. 200 crores. He said that in 2016-17, the market price was Rs. 25-30 lakhs per acre, but they were paid only Rs. 15 lakhs. He said that the youth who turned 18 in 2019 were promised an R&R package and plots, but it has not been implemented yet. He also demanded that the 79 families who left the village for employment should also be given an R&R package.“He demanded that the project work not be taken forward until the compensation and rehabilitation measures are completed. He said that

Development Works Launched in Bhavani Nagar

““Nacharam, August 17(INDIAN CHORNICLE):““In a major step towards addressing long-pending civic issues, development works for underground drainage and CC roads have been launched in Bhavani Nagar, 21st Division of Nacharam under Uppal Constituency. The works had been pending for several years, causing inconvenience to the residents, particularly during the rainy season.“The development works were initiated following the special initiative and efforts of Uppal Congress Party In-charge Sri Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy and under the supervision of Nacharam Division President Sri Nuthalakanti. The commencement of the works is expected to provide much-needed relief to the residents and improve basic civic infrastructure in the colony.“For several years, the residents of Bhavani Nagar had been facing difficulties due to inadequate underground drainage facilities and damaged or incomplete roads. The lack of a proper drainage system had resulted in water stagnation and other sanitation-related problems, while poor road conditions had made commuting difficult for pedestrians and motorists.“With the commencement of the underground drainage works, the existing drainage-related problems are expected to be addressed systematically. The CC road works will also help improve connectivity within the colony and provide safer and more convenient access for residents.“Speaking on the occasion, local leaders stated that providing basic infrastructure and resolving the day-to-day problems of residents should remain a priority. They said that efforts would continue to identify and address other pending civic issues in the division in coordination with the concerned authorities.“The residents of Bhavani Nagar welcomed the commencement of the development works and ex-



pressed their happiness that their long-standing demands were finally being addressed. They thanked Sri Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy and the local Congress leadership for taking the initiative to bring attention to their problems and initiate the necessary development works.“The residents also hoped that the works would be completed at the earliest with good quality and according to the required standards, so that the benefits would reach every household in the locality.“The programme was attended by DCC leaders Rama Reddy and Raji Reddy, former Division President Srikanth, Fasiuddin, Goud, Dharmakartha Sunil Reddy, Gadda Kranthi Kishore, Shankar Goud, Poomima, Sana, Jupally Rajesh, Rajasekhar, local residents and other Congress leaders and activists.“The launch of the underground drainage and CC road works marks an important step towards improving the civic infrastructure and quality of life for the people of Bhavani Nagar.

Police asked to step up efforts to secure convictions

CP Gaush Alam calls for closer coordination among investigators, prosecutors and court duty officers. Karimnagar August 18 (Correspondent): Police Commissioner Gaush Alam has directed police officers, public prosecutors and court duty officers to strengthen coordination at every stage of a criminal case to improve the conviction rate.



Addressing the monthly crime review meeting for July at the Karimnagar Police Commissionerate here on Tuesday, Mr. Alam called for scientific and effective investigation immediately after the commission of an offence and the expeditious disposal of pending cases. He also directed officers to closely monitor evidence, charge sheets, court petitions and other aspects of cases under trial. The Commissioner stressed the need to expedite investigations into crimes against women and children and ensure that victims received justice. He called for regular monitoring of the progress of POCSO, rape and other cases involving women. Reviewing cybercrime, Mr. Alam directed officers to focus on the early recovery of money lost

by victims and take stringent action against those involved in cyber fraud. He also called for expediting the recovery of lost mobile phones through the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) and handing them over to their owners.

He directed officers to maintain constant vigil against illegal activities, including drug-related offences, sale of gutka, gambling and illegal transportation of sand, and take stringent action against violators. Enforcement of traffic rules and measures to prevent road accidents were also reviewed.

15 major cases end in convictions Mr. Alam appreciated the coordinated efforts of police officers, public prosecutors and court duty officers in securing convictions after investigation. During July, the prosecution secured convictions in 15 major cases, with the accused receiving sentences ranging from life imprisonment to 18 months.

Additional Public Prosecutor D. Sharath played a key role in securing convictions in six cases, Public Prosecutor M. Pratap in five cases, Assistant Public Prosecutor A. Ranjith Kumar in two cases, Assistant Public Prosecutor G. Veeraswamy in two cases and Gayatri in one case.

The Commissioner presented appreciation certificates to public prosecutors for their contribution to securing convictions through effective presentation of evidence before courts, coordination of witnesses and monitoring of case proceedings.

Mr. Alam said ensuring justice to victims was one of the primary responsibilities of the police department and called for stronger coordination from investigation through the final court verdict to ensure that offenders were brought to justice.

Additional DCP Venkataramana, Deputy Director of Prosecutions P. Krishnamurthy, Additional Public Prosecutor D. Sharath, Public Prosecutor M. Pratap, Additional Public Prosecutors K. Jhansi, Lakshmi Prasad, Srinivas, Kumaraswamy and Rajesh, Assistant Public Prosecutors Ranjith, Veeraswamy and Rama Upender, ACPs Srinivas, Srinivas G., Venkataswamy, Vijay Kumar, Madhavi, Satish and Swamy, inspectors, other police officers, court duty officers and other personnel attended the meeting.

Grand Celebration of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud's 376th Birth Anniversary in LB Nagar



““Congress senior leader Antarti Srinivas Goud““LB Nagar, August 18 Indian Chronicle ““The 376th birth an-

niversary celebrations of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud were held grandly at LB Nagar Crossroads. On the occasion, floral tributes were paid to the statue of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud at the crossroads. Congress senior leader anthatti Srinivas Goud“ attended the programme as the chief guest and paid floral tributes to the statue.“Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud was a legendary warrior who fought for social equality and dedicated his life to the welfare of the weaker and underprivileged sections of society. He earned a lasting place in history by instilling self-respect, courage and a spirit of struggle among oppressed communities.“Speaking on the occasion called upon the youth to draw inspiration from Papanna Goud's ideals and contribute to the social and economic progress of society.“[6:37 PM, 8/18/2026] +91 91548 01111: End

Pawan Kalyan garu Personally Called Me and Spoke to Me After Seeing My Work – Music Director Ajay Arasada

““With impressive projects like Aay, Save the Tigers, Vikatakavi and Gurthukostunnayi to his credit, music director Ajay Arasada has carved a distinct identity for himself among Telugu audiences. With several promising offers coming his way, Ajay Arasada opened up about his journey in the film industry and shared several interesting experiences. Here are excerpts from his conversation.“““Tell us about your background.““- Art and music run in my family and are in my blood. I am from Vizag. I also worked at TCS for seven years. While I was working, I got an opportunity to work on two films. Devi Sri Prasad is my inspiration. It was because of the support from my mother and wife that I could enter this industry. Sricharan, who is also from Vizag, is a very good friend of mine. He brought me on board as a keyboard programmer for Goodachari.“““What challenges did you face while working on smaller films?““- I never faced any difficulties working on small films. Since I worked with good production houses, there were never any issues with payments. So, I did not really face any major challenges in that regard.“““Are you trying to establish a distinct identity for yourself?““- I want to work across all kinds of genres and stories. My intention is to do justice to every story that comes my way. If I get a mass story, I will create mass music for it. There is a perception among some people here that if a music director comes from Tamil cinema, he will bring something new, and if someone comes from Malayalam cinema, he will bring a fresh sound. I don't think that should be the approach. I want to explore different kinds of music myself.“““Does the music change depending on the budget?““- Every singer charges differently. Once I feel a particular singer is right for my song, I proceed with them. Because ultimately, it is my song. I want to create something that will remain memorable for a lifetime. When I was starting my career, I told a producer that I wanted Anurag Kulkarni to sing a song, but he refused. Today, that same producer isn't even in a position to get Anurag to sing for him (laughs).“““What is the difference between working on music for theatres and for OTT? How do you feel about it?““- We create the music and score keeping the theatrical experience in mind. But eventually, the

film comes to OTT. By then, a lot of the effort we put in gets compromised. If Vikatakavi were to be watched in a theatre, it would sound completely different and be on another level in terms of sound quality. By the time it reaches OTT, what I created gets reduced to almost 50 percent of its original impact.“““How much of an impact will AI have on music?““- AI has not had any impact on music so far. No matter how much prompting you give AI, the output tends to sound similar. Some producers send us tracks generated through AI and ask us to create something like that. At times, we feel, “Then why don't you make the entire thing yourself?“ (laughs). Any technician can use AI as a tool. But that doesn't mean anyone can become a music director just by using AI (laughs).“““ You recently met Pawan Kalyan. What did you discuss?“““I provide music for Jana Sena programmes. Recently, when he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I created a score for that occasion. After seeing my work, Pawan Kalyan garu called me and spoke to me personally. He said that we could work together, whether it was for political activities or for the PK Creatives banner.“““When did you start working for Jana Sena? How did that opportunity come your way?““- A friend of mine, Venkat Chikkala, works there as an editor. I got the opportunity through him. Bunny Vasu garu also gave me a lot of work. That association eventually led to my opportunity in Aay.“““Why don't we see you much outside?““- I don't like coming out and talking about my own work. I am an introvert and don't talk much. I don't usually attend events, and I don't really know how to promote myself.“““What was your reaction when you were told that you had a meeting with Pawan Kalyan?““- I initially wondered why he would want to speak to me personally. But then I received another call confirming the meeting. I thought I would just spend five or ten minutes with him, take a photograph and leave. But when I reached there, he was alone. We spoke for nearly half an hour and discussed several things. He also spoke about projects that we could work on together.“““We heard that he also asked you about an interesting object you had with you?““- I have a Bose speaker that is shaped like a coffee mug. He asked me what it was. He picked it up, looked at it playfully and laughed.

Mumbai mayor is getting info on WhatsApp forwards. The real problem is bigger



GNS News Agency, August 18

Four months after Mumbai’s civic body returned from its longest spell under bureaucratic rule, confrontations between corporators and the administration are exposing an unexpected consequence of administrator raj: bureaucrats who ran the country’s richest civic body alone for four years are struggling to share power.The latest flashpoint came this week: Diksha Karkar, chairperson of the BMC Law Committee and a Shiv Sena corporator, escalated her complaint against Municipal Commissioner Ashwini Bhide to Industries and Marathi Language Minister Uday Samant, over unanswered requests on Marathi signboards in shops.“I had written a letter to the civic chief earlier on June 1 asking for an immediate meeting. However, since the letter didn’t elicit any response from her, I have escalated the issue with the honourable state cabinet minister,” Karkar told The Indian Express.BMC, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation BMC, Mumbai’s bureaucratic rule, Diksha Karkar, BMC Law Committee, Municipal Commissioner Ashwini Bhide, Uday Samant, Indian express news, current affairs BMC Central hall :

It’s the latest sign of a monthlong rift between BMC’s elected representatives and its bureaucracy that has flared into three flashpoints. Corporators across parties, including the ruling Mahayuti alliance that Karkar belongs to, say the administration hasn’t adjusted to their return.The sharpest of the three came last week, when the civic body’s inquiry into the Chembur tree collapse that killed a schoolboy absolved its departments of fault, a finding Mayor Ritu Tawde called “unacceptable” in the House on July 16.“When this report was published, it was neither tabled before me as the Mayor nor before Hetal Gala who is the chairman of the markets and garden committee,” she said, demanding a re-inquiry.Tawde said she’d been assured the report would be shared with her, then learned its contents from a WhatsApp message. “I was assured by the authorities that all the reports will be prepared with fairness and that I will be informed. But I never received that report. I found out about the findings through a message circulated on WhatsApp, following which I issued my statements,” she said.The second came on July 10, when Opposition corporators demanded answers from Bhide over monsoon deaths between June 30 and July 7 linked to civic negligence. Bhide stayed away, and the Opposition protested her “lack of answers”.BMC, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation BMC, Mumbai’s bureaucratic rule, Diksha Karkar, BMC Law Committee, Municipal Commissioner Ashwini Bhide, Uday Samant, Indian express news, current affairs BMC Central hall :

(Credit: Amit Chakravarty)The third came days earlier, after 55-year-old Aslam Isaq Shaikh died in an open manhole in Saki Naka: Mumbai BJP chief Ameet Satam warned the administration. “We have demanded that a case of culpable homicide should be taken against the contractor concerned and all supervisory officers of the municipal

After surgery, protester injured in march speaks: ‘RAF man shot me... pellets hit me in the face’



GNS News Agency, August 18 from the ENT ward of Lady Hardinge Hospital, Shaikh, an MBA graduate working in Gurgaon, was among the protesters who had joined the CJP’s “Chalo Sansad” march that day when, he says, he was hit by “multiple pellets” fired by an “RAF man”.The RAF (Rapid Action Force), drawn from the CRPF, was on duty that day, along with the Delhi Police, to control the massive crowd of protesters who were part of the Parliament march — a faceoff that quickly spiralled into clashes with the security personnel wielding lathis and teargas.On Wednesday morning, Delhi Police denied they used pellets. The CRPF did not respond to a request for comment from The Indian Express. When asked if Shaikh had pellet injuries and about the nature of his treatment, Dr Himani Ahluwalia, Director, Lady Hardinge Hospital, did not comment.

CJP Jantar Mantar protest, Jantar Mantar protest, Delhi protest, jantar mantar protest, Cockroach Janta Party, CJP protest Delhi, NEET paper leak, unemployment in India, Delhi street protests, Bhagat Singh jail diary, Jantar Mantar protest, Jodhpur IT professionals protest, Shahdara Delhi, youth protests India, media misinformation, Indian Express reporting, civil rights dissent India, Indian express news, current affairs Irshad Shaikh at Lady Hardinge HospitalOfficials in the hospital said “pellet injuries” refer to the nature of the injury and can be caused by “small objects thrown at speed”. “Whether or not the injury was caused by a pellet gun needs to be scientifically determined on the basis of forensic investigation,” an official said.Irshad said: “The call for the protest was around 9 am, so from 9-11 am, I was near the protest site, close to Kerala Bhavan (House). Then, I had a meeting from 12.30-3.30 pm. After finishing the meeting, I came back.”He said: “I was walking with other protesters near Jantar Mantar when security personnel began lathi-charging the crowd. We retreated a bit. Then, the police started firing tear gas. My eyes started itching. It was like a blackout for a minute. When we turned back, there was a police blockade, so we stopped. I went up to the police and pleaded with them, ‘Sir, do not beat us. We are students. We are citizens of your country. We are not terrorists’.”Irshad said that an “RAF man came in front of me”. “He was holding a gun. He showed it to me. I thought he was only threatening me, that he wouldn’t actually shoot,”

corporation should be suspended. The administration needs to show more sensitivity while handling the affairs of the city going forward. We would like to give a warning to the administration after this incident,” Satam told reporters.The city’s 227 corporators, one per ward of 50,000-60,000 people, connect citizens to the administrative wing. That link broke on March 7, 2022, when the House was dissolved and the commissioner took over as administrator until elections concluded in January 2026, the longest such stretch on record. By then, the administration’s old ways were entrenched.

Deputy Mayor Sanjay Ghadi felt the same gap. “There is definitely a gap in coordination and communication between the administration and the elected body. I have submitted several letters on issues, including levelling of roads, request for a bungalow and many public grievances. While commissioner Bhide has met me, I have not received any formal replies to my letters from either the commissioner or the departments concerned. We represent the people and flag their issues. We need to improve this situation,” he told The

Congress leader Ashraf Azmi said: “Four years of administrator rule is a long period. The knowledge of the field that corporators bring was missing. To this date, the administration is not able to get out of their habits. Even though we work on the grass-roots, they speak directly to the state government by bypassing the Mayor, or even the chairmen of special committees,” he told .A senior civic official called the grievance valid but structural: in the elected body’s absence, the commissioner had exercised its powers.“The administration had the power of the standing committee and officials had direct access. However, the current system of a democratic body can be time-consuming. Since the administration had been working in a system where sanctions were granted easily, there is now a sense of non-cooperation being felt by the corporators,” the official said on condition of anonymity.Sachin Padwal, a senior corporator from the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT), put it more bluntly: the administration had “failed to come out of administrator mode”. “Earlier, corporators were the first point of contact for citizens. During the four years without an elected House, officials got used to functioning without consulting us. That mindset has continued even after corporators returned,” he said.Tawde, who has largely avoided public confrontation with the administration, said: “The system operated without corporators for four years. It will take some time for the administration to get back to the system”, adding that she often has to remind officials that “they have corporators in place”.Rejecting an institutional breakdown, she said, “I have very good communication with civic commissioner Ashwini Bhide. However, in the case of the Chembur tree collapse report, it was not acceptable at all. I raised this issue with the commissioner and informed her that the report should be reviewed.”Responding to The Indian Express, Bhide denied any rift, saying the corporation is “committed to maintaining close, constructive and seamless coordination with elected representatives.” She said she regularly attends meetings of the corporation, its standing committees and group leaders’ meetings.

“These interactions provide a valuable platform for dialogue and we actively consider the suggestions and feedback received from the Hon’ble Mayor, Deputy Mayor and corporators. Appropriate suggestions made by the elected representatives are duly taken into consideration and the administration remains committed to implementing the policies and decisions approved by the elected body. Our approach is collaborative, with the shared objective of strengthening civic governance and ensuring better service delivery for the citizens of Mumbai,” said Bhide on Wednesday.

he said.

Behind him, he said, there were screams and the sound of lathis striking people. “Then the blue-uniformed man pointed the gun at my face and shot me... Everything went silent,” he said.“Multiple pellets hit me. First I smelled something rancid. Then something stung my right eyebrow. Pellets pierced through my right eye and down on my cheek and nose. Then, the pellets hit my chin, and scattered on my neck, my shoulder, my chest. I could taste blood on my tongue. I put my fingers on my face and blood was gushing out from everywhere,” he said.Despite the injuries, Irshad said, he did not lose consciousness. “There was no siren or warning from the police. If you search online, you can find videos of me covered in blood. I walked away from there. Some bystanders put a cloth over my face and took me out,” he said.

Irshad reached Lady Hardinge Hospital around 5 pm. He said doctors first treated him in the Emergency department before shifting him to the ward, where he filled out the admission forms himself.“After reaching the hospital, my wounds were cleaned, and the treating staff informed me that there were pellets lodged in my face, eyes, and neck. At the time, they said no surgeons were available during the night, so I was given pain management and asked to wait until the next day. The following (Tuesday) afternoon, I underwent surgery performed by ENT surgeons, and I signed the consent forms,” he said.According to Irshad, the treating doctors told him that “one pellet was lodged near the muscle controlling the movement of my left eye, and doctors said that if it had remained there, it could have affected my eye movement”.“Another was lodged in my neck, close to a major nerve and blood vessel. A third was near my nose, inside the facial cavity,” he said.Pellet guns began to be extensively used for crowd control by central forces from the 2010 unrest in J&K. Since then, they have been used during the 2016 protests in J&K, the 2023 violence in Manipur, the 2024 Punjab-Haryana farmer protests and the 2025 Leh agitation.Irshad, meanwhile, was moved to the ENT ward on Tuesday, where he remains admitted.Later that day, Union Health Minister J P Nadda visited him. “He assured me, ‘Do not worry. You will be taken care of. We are here for you’,” Irshad said.According to him, the Union Minister also asked why he had gone to the protest. “I told him it was my duty to be there. I joined the protest because I believed in the cause,” he said.Although Irshad’s family in Jabalpur knows what happened, he has asked them not to travel to Delhi. “My close friends have taken turns staying with me. They have taken care of me here. I just want to recover fast,” he said.The shooting should never have happened, he said, adding: “I want compensation from the Government.”Then, Irshad spoke about the life he had imagined before July 20. “I have done my MBA from Indore. In the next five years, I want to expand my horizons and my knowledge, and continue to learn. I want to be a part of the change,” he said.

Lenders’ plan to get back money lands them in jail for ‘filmy abduction’ of a techie



GNS News Agency, August 18filmy abduction of a techie, abduction of a techie, kidnapping, Bidhannagar Police, IT employee kidnapping, Nadia district, Kolkata news, WEst Bengal news, Indian express, current affairs“There is a monetary dispute involved. We are probing the matter and also looking into why Saha had borrowed and from how many people,” the senior officer added.A film-style ‘kidnapping’ to get back the money loaned to a person ended in the arrest of six persons in Nadia district of West Bengal. According to Bidhannagar Police, 39-year-old Ankan Saha, an IT employee, had borrowed Rs 78 lakh from several persons, but was not returning the money to the lenders, despite repeated reminders.

On Tuesday evening, Saha was kidnapped from in front of the RDB building in Sector V in Salt Lake. After wrap-

GNS News Agency, August 18Chennai man trafficking exotic turtles, trafficking exotic turtles, Kolkata Customs officials stopped wildlife trafficking. wildlife trafficking. Indian express news, current affairs“Customs remains committed to a zero-tolerance approach towards wildlife trafficking,” said Vinayak Azaad, Principal Commissioner of Customs Foiling a major wildlife trafficking bid, the Customs officials at Kolkata’s Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport on Wednesday seized 707 red-eared slider turtles (Trachemys scripta elegans) from a Chennai-based passenger who arrived from Bangkok.Customs officials said a detailed investigation is currently underway to identify the network behind the illegal

ping up his work, Saha was trying to start his motorbike parked in front of the RDB building when a white Scorpio SUV stopped right in front of him. A group of young men got out of the vehicle, surrounded him and before he could understand anything, they started beating him up. When he tried to resist, the men forcibly pulled Saha inside the SUV and whisked him away.But an alert mall security staffer, who witnessed the abduction, promptly dialled 100 and informed the police. He also provided the registration number of the SUV.Since the abduction took place during peak office hours, panic spread in the area.A police team reached the spot, cordoned off the area and started examining CCTV footage from the cameras installed at the RDB building and the adjacent roads. The police identified the white Scorpio SUV and tracked down the owner and his mobile number. They began to track the location of the cellphone and within two hours, the police zeroed in on the SUV and rescued Saha from Haringhata in Nadia district.“Saha had borrowed Rs 78 lakh from several lenders but was not repaying the money. With no sight of the money being returned, the group of six men, who had lent him the money, hatched a plan to abduct Saha to get back the money,” said a senior police officer.The six arrested accused are claiming that they were the “victims” of Saha’s cheating and just wanted to get back their money.“There is a monetary dispute involved. We are probing the matter and also looking into why Saha had borrowed and from how many people,” the senior officer added.

Chennai man from Bangkok and 707 hidden exotic turtles: How Kolkata Customs officials stopped wildlife trafficking



shipment.

“The passenger was intercepted after crossing the Green Channel. Detailed examination of his checked-in baggage resulted in the recovery of 707 live red-eared slider turtles, an invasive exotic species, concealed without any valid licence or permit,” an officer of the Air Intelligence Unit said, adding the passenger had arrived by an IndiGo flight.“The passenger failed to produce any lawful documents in support of their import or possession. The live turtles were seized under the relevant provisions of the Customs Act, 1962, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, and applicable CITES provisions. Further investigation is in progress,” the official said, adding that the passenger has been detained.The red-eared slider is a semi-aquatic turtle native to the southern United States and northern Mexico, but it has become one of the most widely distributed invasive species in the world.As per sources, Thailand serves as a major global transit hub for exotic wildlife. In local, grey-market aquarium shops or online pet groups across India, individual hatchlings or young sliders sell for Rs 800 to Rs 1,500 each. Pairs or larger specimens can go up to Rs 2,000–Rs 5,000.“Customs remains committed to a zero-tolerance approach towards wildlife trafficking,” said Vinayak Azaad, Principal Commissioner of Customs (Airport & ACC), Kolkata.

Anna Hazare writes to PM Narendra Modi, says Dharmendra Pradhan’s resignation will not cause the government to fall



Anna Hazare writes to PM Narendra Modi, Narendra Modi, CJP Jantar Mantar protest, Jantar Mantar protest, Delhi protest, Sansad Chalo march, jantar mantar protest, Cockroach Janta Party, CJP protest Delhi, NEET paper leak, unemployment in India, Delhi street protests, Bhagat Singh jail diary, Jantar Mantar protest, Jodhpur IT professionals protest, Shahdara Delhi, youth protests India, media misinformation, Indian Express reporting, civil rights dissent India, Indian express news, current affairsSame venue, another fast: Anna Hazare at Jantar Mantar in April 2011. With him is former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who visited the CJP protest site on Tuesday. (Ravi Kanojia)

Anti-corruption activist Anna Hazare, who went on a historic hunger strike at the same venue more than 15 years ago, wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday saying “the news of...violence and police action...is extremely painful”, and that the resentment of the protesters must be viewed “not as a law and order problem, but as the agony and expectations of society”. If Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan is asked to resign, “it will not cause the government to fall; rather, it will...make its functioning more accountable and effective”, Hazare said. He requested the government to “listen to [the protesters] patiently, create an atmosphere of trust, and find solutions through positive dialogue”.Vijeta Dahiya, the sacked former spokesperson of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) told The Indian Express on Wednesday that he was “shocked” by the decision taken by the leadership of the activist platform.“[When CJP leaders called] I thought they would ask me how I was doing after the viral, controversial videos [of me dancing on the stage at Jantar Mantar], but I was told, ‘Vijeta, please don’t come [to the protest],’” Dahiya said.

The CJP removed Dahiya after videos circulating online showed him away from Monday’s ‘Sansad Chalo’ march and munching on a burger, allegedly at the same time as protesters were braving police lathis and tear gas elsewhere in the city. In a post on X, the CJP said Dahiya’s

conduct “shows a complete lack of judgment, and is wholly inconsistent with the values and principles of our movement”.Naseeruddin Shah (right) with Satish Shah and Ravi Baswani in the 1983 cult comedy Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro, a dark satire on corruption in politics, bureaucracy, media and business. Express Naseeruddin Shah (right) with Satish Shah and Ravi Baswani in the 1983 cult comedy Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro, a dark satire on corruption in politics, bureaucracy, media and business. Veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah has lashed out at the government, and urged students to continue their fight. His heart was “aching”, and he was “boiling” inside, Shah said in a video posted on Instagram.“Right now, my heart is aching, and I am also boiling with anger to see how our kids are being meted out injustice by these goons who remind me of American ICE agents, wearing masks and carrying sticks. Think about your own children sometimes and know that you will face consequences for your actions one day for sure,” he said.“To the children, I want to say that don’t lose courage as sympathies of many are with you. There are many who are with you, keep fighting... And to the rulers of this country, I just want to say this, sab yaad rakha jaayega (nothing will be forgotten),” he said.

Samsung unveils Galaxy Z Fold8 series with AI boost

New Delhi: Samsung Electronics on Wednesday unveiled its next-generation Galaxy Z foldable smartphone lineup, introducing the Galaxy Z Fold8, Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra and Galaxy Z Flip8 with enhanced Galaxy AI capabilities, slimmer designs and new form factors aimed at bringing foldable devices to a wider audience.

The South Korean technology giant said the new Galaxy Z series is its most comprehensive foldable lineup to date, offering three distinct devices designed to cater to different user needs, ranging from productivity and content creation to entertainment and self-expression.

The Galaxy Z Fold8 introduces a redesigned foldable form factor aimed at delivering a more immersive experience for users who frequently switch between quick interactions and extended content consumption. The company said the device has been engineered to offer seamless transitions between the cover display and the larger inner screen for activities such as reading, gaming and video streaming.Samsung also introduced the Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra, which extends the company’s Ultra smartphone experience to the foldable category with a larger workspace designed for multitasking, productivity and content creation.Meanwhile, the Galaxy Z Flip8 has been positioned as the slimmest model in the Flip series, featuring an AI-powered FlexWindow for faster access to information and everyday tasks.

Heart disease led Maharashtra’s deaths in 2024, but cancer, diabetes stood out



GNS News Agency, August 18

Heart disease remained the biggest killer among medically certified deaths in Maharashtra in 2024. But the state’s mortality profile also throws up another concern: cancer, metabolic diseases and injuries accounted for a substantially larger share of deaths in Maharashtra than they did across India.Of the 3,27,174 deaths medically certified in Maharashtra in 2024, diseases of the circulatory system accounted for 30.8 per cent, or 1,00,878 deaths. Nationally, however, circulatory diseases accounted for a much larger 38.8 per cent of medically certified deaths according to data released by the Office of Registrar General of India (ORGI) last month.The sharpest difference was seen in cancer, which accounted for 8.1 per cent of medically certified deaths in Maharashtra, with 26,492 deaths, compared with 5 per cent nationally.

Metabolic diseases, including diabetes and related conditions, accounted for another 7.5 per cent of deaths in the state, or 24,462 cases. The corresponding national share was 4 per cent.The state also recorded a higher share of

deaths from injuries, poisoning and other external causes. They accounted for 5.5 per cent of medically certified deaths in Maharashtra, or 18,061 deaths, against 4.1 per cent nationally.Maharashtra’s 2024 Mortality Data Maharashtra’s 2024 Mortality Data (Image generated using Gemini)Respiratory diseases were the second largest category in Maharashtra, accounting for 9.8 per cent of medically certified deaths, or 32,133 cases. The national share was 11 per cent.Infectious and parasitic diseases, meanwhile, accounted for 6.7 per cent of deaths in Maharashtra, or 21,807 cases, lower than the national share of 8.3 per cent.

The figures point to a mortality pattern in Maharashtra that differs in important ways from the national picture. The state has a lower proportion of certified deaths from circulatory and infectious diseases, but higher proportions from cancer, metabolic disorders and external causes.There is, however, an important limitation to the data. MCCD figures cover only deaths for which the cause has been medically certified and do not represent all deaths registered in the state.Maharashtra recorded 7,39,124 registered deaths under the Civil Registration System in 2024. Of these, 3,27,174 were medically certified, giving the state an overall medical certification rate of 44.3 per cent. The rate has risen from 39.3 per cent in 2022 and 42.4 per cent in 2023.Maharashtra’s certification rate was also substantially higher than the national average of 23.1 per cent. Among deaths of people who had received medical attention during their terminal illness, the state reported 100 per cent medical certification.This distinction is important in reading the cause-of-death figures. The Civil Registration System establishes that a death occurred, while the Medical Certification of Cause of Death provides a medically certified explanation of what caused it.

Man paraded for phone theft in UP, father-son duo arrested after video goes viral

GNS News Agency, August 18

The father and son were booked on charges including assault, criminal intimidation and kidnapping. The father and son were booked on charges including assault, criminal intimidation and kidnapping.Police in Uttar Pradesh’s Unnao district on Monday arrested a 50-year-old man and his son after a video of a man being publicly humiliated over alleged phone theft went viral this weekend.According to police, the incident took place on August 1, but no complaint was lodged. Police registered a case on Sunday after the video surfaced on social media. Police said the accused father and son – Raju (50) and Raj (27) – belong to the upper caste, while 30-year-old Sonu, who was paraded through the village with his shaven head, is from Other Backward Class (OBC). The victim and the arrested accused are neighbours. The police are looking for the third accused, who shaved Sonu’s head.

“Of the two mobile phones reported missing from Raju and Raj’s house, one was recovered, while the other is yet to be traced,” said Pradeep Kumar Singh, the Station House Officer of Asivan police station, adding that Sonu has two criminal cases registered against him.According to police, after the video surfaced on social media, they started to verify the location of the incident and those seen in the video. “During verification, we identified the victim as Sonu, a resident of Pathakapur village. A preliminary inquiry found that the alleged disappearance of two mobile phones from the house of Raju on July 30 led to the incident. The family



suspected Sonu, as he had visited their house shortly before the phones went missing. Raju’s family said Sonu was a habitual drinker,” said a police officer involved in the probe.“Raju and his son Raj began searching for Sonu. During their search, a villager allegedly told them that Sonu was seen entering a general store that had remained shut for several years. The father-son duo then went to the shop and claimed to have recovered one of the missing mobile phones. They traced Sonu to Lucknow and brought him back to the village on August 1. Instead of handing Sonu over to the police for alleged phone theft, they shaved his head before parading him around the village,” the officer said.The father and son have been booked on charges of assault, intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace, criminal intimidation, and kidnapping, the SHO added.

Delhi to scrap 20-year-old bed-and-breakfast law, replace it with new policy



GNS News Agency, August 18

Twenty-one people died after a fire broke out at a Malviya Nagar hotel.Twenty-one people died after a fire broke out at a Malviya Nagar hotel.Delhi is set to overhaul the way bed-and-breakfast establishments operate in the city, with the government moving to scrap the nearly two-decade-old law governing them and replace it with a new policy framework.

The move comes after a fire at a B&B in Malviya Nagar claimed 21 lives in June and triggered a city-wide crack-down on properties violating safety norms and building by-laws. More than 750 B&B establishments are currently registered with the Delhi Tourism Department under the existing law.While the government stated that the proposed changes are aimed at keeping pace with the changing tourism and hospitality sector and making the rules more flexible, the repeal will also mark a significant shift in how B&Bs are regulated in the capital.What does the proposed bill stateThe Delhi Bed and Breakfast Establishments (Repeal) Bill, 2026, will be introduced in the Assembly on Tuesday. It seeks to repeal the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Incredible India) Bed and Breakfast Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2007, along with its amendments of 2010 and 2021.According to the Bill, the repeal will come into force on a date to be notified by the government in the Official Gazette.To avoid creating panic among people already registered and running B&Bs in the city, the proposed Bill provides that existing registrations, certificates, orders, approvals and proceedings under the repealed Acts will continue to remain valid, as long as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of the new Act.It also states that the repeal will not affect the previous operation of the laws or anything already done under them.

According to the document, Tourism Minister Kapil Mishra laid down the reasons behind repealing the B&B Act, citing the need for a “flexible” policy.“Over a period of time, the tourism and hospitality sector has undergone significant transformation, including the emergence of new forms of accommodation and evolving policy approaches. In this context, it has been considered necessary to discontinue the existing statutory framework governing bed and break-

fast establishments and to replace it with a more flexible and facilitative policy regime,” read the bill document undersigned by Mishra.Mishra said the government proposes to revamp and re-initiate the regulation and promotion of bed and breakfast establishments through an executive policy framework, which would be implemented in a more liberalised and supportive manner, while continuing to ensure compliance with applicable laws relating to safety, public health, municipal governance and public order.The Bill says a comprehensive policy in this regard is under process and will be placed before the Council of Ministers for approval. During the transition period, fresh registrations and processing of pending applications under the existing Act shall remain in abeyance,” it read.

Ram Temple Trust begins interview for selection of full-time CEO

Ayodhya: A high-powered panel on Tuesday is interviewing 18 candidates for appointment as the first full-time Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.

The Trust had decided to appoint a full-time CEO after the alleged Ram temple donation embezzlement came to light.According to a senior functionary of the Trust, all the 18 candidates, shortlisted from 5,200 applicants, reached Ayodhya late on Monday night and stayed at various locations in the temple town as suggested by the Trust.The interview is being carried out in the conference room of the Ram temple’s pilgrim facilitation centre in Ayodhya.If the interviews are not completed on Tuesday, the process may continue on Wednesday, sources in the Trust said.

The candidates reached the Ram temple complex at around 9 am and the interview process started at 10 am, they said.“Each candidate had forwarded his arrival schedule at the Ayodhya airport. They were picked up by people appointed by the Trust. From the airport, they were taken to the different locations in separate vehicles,” sources said.

“The candidates have been instructed not to interact with the media. After the interview is over, all of them will be taken back to the Ayodhya airport to board a flight to New Delhi. From Delhi, they will board flights to their respective destinations,” they added.The 18 candidates include former bureaucrats and former senior position holders of temples in South India, according to sources.

The three-member selection committee landed in Ayodhya Monday night for the screening.From the 18 applicants, it will zero in on three names for the Trust to make the final call.The panel comprises retired Supreme Court judge Justice Pramod Kohli, Lt Gen (Retd) Vishnukant Chaturvedi, and Suresh Haware.

SC adjourns Sambhal’s Jama Masjid plea hearing to Aug 18



GNS News Agency, August 18New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned till August 18 hearing on pleas filed by the committee of management of Sambhal’s Jama Masjid challenging an order of the Allahabad High Court against the survey ordered in the Shahi Jama Masjid-Harihar temple dispute.A bench of Justices P S Narasimha and Alok Aradhe deferred the matter after noting there was a letter circulated seeking adjournment.

On Tuesday, two separate pleas filed by the committee of management of Sambhal’s Jama Masjid challenging a May 19, 2025 order of the Allahabad High Court came up for hearing before the bench.The top court was earlier told that the Allahabad High Court could not have proceeded in the matter concerning the survey ordered by a Sambhal court in the dispute in light of the apex court’s December 2024 order.

In a significant order passed on December 12, 2024, the apex court had restrained till further directions the courts

in the country from entertaining fresh lawsuits and passing any effective interim or final orders in pending ones seeking to reclaim religious places, especially mosques and dargahs (a Muslim shrine).The top court had passed the 2024 order while hearing pleas challenging various provisions of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.The 1991 law prohibits conversion of any place of worship and provides for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947.However, the dispute relating to Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid at Ayodhya was kept out of its purview. The high court had dismissed a plea of the mosque committee against the survey ordered by a Sambhal court in the dispute, upholding the civil court’s direction for the survey.The high court had said the order to appoint a court commissioner and the suit were maintainable.The mosque committee had moved the high court against a November 19, 2024 order of the civil judge directing the Mughal-era mosque’s survey which took place the same day.A second survey carried out on November 24, 2024, the committee claimed, was illegal as the civil court never ordered it.On August 22 last year, the apex court had agreed to hear the mosque committee’s plea against the high court order.

“In the meantime, the parties are directed to maintain status quo, as on today,” the top court had said in its order.A suit was filed before the civil judge senior division, Sambhal, contending that the mosque was built after demolishing a temple at Sambhal.The mosque, it claimed, was built by Mughal emperor Babur in 1526 after demolishing the Harihar temple.The top court on November 29, 2024 ordered the Sambhal court to halt proceedings in the case over the mosque and its survey at Chandausi while directing the Uttar Pradesh government to maintain peace and harmony in the town.

1 tonne rotten food seized from 60 Bengaluru star hotels, McDonald’s served notice

GNS News Agency, August 18

Karnataka’s food safety officials have seized nearly one tonne of expired or rotten food from 60 star hotels in Bengaluru during a three-day inspection drive that concluded on August 9.

Thirty teams of the Karnataka Food Safety and Drug Administration (KFSDA), during the inspection drive on 3- and 5-star hotels in Bengaluru Urban district, collected 77 food samples and forwarded them to the laboratories to assess their quality and compliance with food safety standards.In one of the compliance checks, the team also served notice on a McDonald’s outlet on Brigade Road after it was found using the banned Magnesium Sulfite (MgSO3) to treat frying oil, Srinivas K, Commissioner, KFSDA, said. The matter will be examined under the prevailing food safety regulations and other applicable legal provisions, and necessary further action will be taken based on the findings, he added. The samples collected from star hotels include chicken, meat, fish, bread, mayonnaise, cooking oil, fresh oil, curd, pulses, chickpeas, coriander, chutneys and marinated food products.The officials seized 640kg of expired and improperly stored mutton, fish, and chicken; 276 kg of rotten vegetables; 45 litres of expired dairy products; 12kg of stale bakery products, including cakes; expired or mislabelled 67 kg of cereals and other food products; and 49 litres of used cooking oil.

“The teams noted various safety violations, mainly non-compliant labelling as per Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) regulations, misbranding, storage of expired food products, improper storage of meat, fish and poultry, unhygienic food-handling conditions, use of banned artificial colours and failure of prescribed food safety



practices in the storage and handling of food products, fungal growth in vegetables, and improper segregation of vegetarian and non-vegetarian food products,” Srinivas said. In certain instances, products with a declared shelf life of one year under the applicable requirements were found to have shelf-life declarations extending up to two years, and some products had been imported and subsequently repacked, Srinivas said.As part of the drive, the officials have sealed Hotel Skyye and Pegs and Bottles on Church Street for allegedly storing expired food items. The seized food articles were subsequently disposed of in accordance with the applicable procedures.Srinivas said that special inspections were also conducted at various international food business chains operating within the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA), including KFC, McDonald’s and Subway, and samples of food products, including mayonnaise, chicken and bread, were collected and sent to food laboratories.The food safety teams also inspected godowns and warehouses supplying food products to these establishments.

Bank account frozen in cybercrime probe? Karnataka CID helpdesk offers relief

GNS News Agency, August 18

The Karnataka Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has set up a dedicated helpdesk to assist people whose bank accounts have been frozen during investigations into cyber fraud and suspected mule-account networks.Functioning under the Cyber Command centre at the CID headquarters, the helpdesk provides grievance redressal for account holders whose accounts may have been frozen because a transaction linked to them was allegedly connected to a cybercrime.The new mechanism brings together the account holder, bank, and investigating agency to examine why an account was frozen and whether the entire account needs to remain blocked. In cases where only a specific amount is suspected to be linked to a crime, officials will examine whether a lien (a temporary legal hold on a specific portion of your funds), rather than a complete debit freeze, would be sufficient.The initiative follows the Karnataka High Court’s intervention in cases involving the freezing of bank accounts during cybercrime investigations. During a hearing on June 22 in Selladurai vs Reserve Bank of India and Others, Justice Suraj Govindaraj observed that Karnataka needed an appropriate grievance-redressal mechanism for complaints arising from debit freezes and liens ordered by investigating officers.The court observed, “Insofar as actions initiated within the State are concerned, it would be necessary for the State of Karnataka to establish an appropriate grievance redressal mechanism to address complaints arising out of debit freezing and/or marking of lien pursuant to orders passed by any Investigating Officer within the State of Karnataka.” It then appointed Dr Pronab Mohanty, Director General of Police, Cyber Command, as the nodal officer. The court also flagged the need for investigating officers to specify the amount for which a lien was sought, record reasons for a complete debit freeze, standardise procedures for freezing and de-freezing accounts, and periodically review freeze orders.In a subsequent proceeding, the Karnataka High Court directed a petitioner and the bank representative to appear before the CID helpdesk with communications and orders received from the police stations relating to the freezing of the account.Helpdesk to mediate frozen-account disputes“The helpdesk will essentially function as a mediation centre, helping people understand why their bank accounts have been frozen and identifying possible ways to resolve the issue,” Mohanty told The Indian Express.“If the freezing order has been issued by the Karnataka Police, we can examine the reasons behind it and, where appropriate, help expedite the process. If it has come from another state, we can coordinate with the concerned authorities there and also take up the matter with the bank. In each case, we will assess whether the entire account needs to remain frozen or whether placing a lien would be sufficient,” he said.The



helpdesk is currently operating on an experimental basis, and has conducted sessions on four Thursdays so far. Around seven to eight cases originating in Karnataka have been resolved, officials said, while cases from other states remain pending due to the need for coordination with the respective investigating agencies.One such case involving a victim from Tamil Nadu highlights the plight of bona fide account holders whose accounts are frozen during cybercrime investigations. The case involved a property seller who had executed a registered sale deed and received the sale consideration from the purchaser. His bank account was subsequently frozen after investigating authorities alleged that part of the funds transferred by the purchaser was linked to a cyber fraud. The seller is unable to access the sale proceeds despite having transferred ownership of the property. The matter was subsequently referred to the CID helpdesk, but has yet to be resolved.The CID is also using the Grievance Redressal Module introduced by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre, through which affected account holders can register complaints and submit documents.6.11 lakh cases in 2024: Cybercrime surge in KarnatakaThe National Cybercrime Reporting Portal data for 2024 shows that Karnataka recorded losses of Rs 2,915 crore across 6.11 lakh cybercrime cases, nearly four times the Rs 660 crore reported in 2023.Between December 2025 and February 2026, the Cyber Command centre registered 60 First Information Reports in which 869 bank accounts were linked to cybercrimes. Investigators also received 8,788 complaints through the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal. The police alleged that account details were collected from the public and accounts were opened in the names of relatives to facilitate fraudulent transactions.The funds were allegedly routed through these accounts before being withdrawn as cash, converted into cryptocurrency or transferred further, in some cases to handlers outside India. A coordinated crackdown during the period led to the arrest of 68 alleged mule-account handlers and account operators during searches at 35 locations across Karnataka.

British national shot dead by Pakistani forces in PoK



GNS News Agency, August 18

London: Pakistani security forces shot down a British national during the protests in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), according to media reports. The deceased, 50-year-old Mohammad Akhtar, a resident of the UK's Peterborough city, was killed on June 9 after Pakistani security forces opened fire on protesters gathered to demand economic and electoral reforms in PoK, British daily The Guardian reported, citing his family.

Reports suggest that another British national has remained behind bars in a regional prison in PoK for more than two months despite the efforts by his family to secure his release through the intervention of the UK's Foreign Office. The previously unreported details highlight the impact of the clashes on British nationals with familial ties to the region, where the violence has killed dozens and posed one of the biggest challenges to Pakistani authorities in recent years. Akhtar was staying in Kotli city in PoK, near the

area where the clashes broke out. His family said he was hit by a stray bullet during firing by Pakistani forces. "He wasn't taking part in protests, but the demonstrations were happening close to his house. There was firing by the forces that day, and he was hit by a stray bullet. There was a bullet wound on the side of his chest," The Guardian quoted Mohammad Saad, Akhtar's cousin, as saying.

Saad further said that Akhtar's children chose not to take up the matter with British authorities. He added that they had been unable to file a police complaint in PoK and feared that drawing attention to the case could put the family at risk. Additionally, 38-year-old British national Waqas Arif, from Nottingham, was detained in Mirpur city in PoK, following the June 5 protests, despite his family's claim that he had not participated in the demonstrations.

"Waqas was not involved in any kind of protests. But since my other two brothers were involved and they went for the protests with everybody else, the Pakistani forces along with the Rangers came into my house, and they took my brothers away," The Guardian quoted his sister Sumera as saying. "There is no charge. He hasn't done anything. This is my brother, but I think there are thousands of other brothers like him from everywhere who they have put in (prison) so they can minimise the protest power ... they have not even been taken to court," she said. Meanwhile, the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) expressed grave concern over the dire situation in PoK. "FCDO ministers and the UK high commissioner in Islamabad are in touch with their counterparts, and UK travel advice was updated on 7 August and continues to advise against all but essential travel to affected areas," it stated.

People raise concern over communication blackout in Pakistan's Balochistan



Quetta: People have voiced concerns over the communication blackout as authorities have suspended mobile and internet services in Quetta and various other parts of Pakistan's Balochistan for a second consecutive day due to looming security threats, local media reported on Tuesday, citing sources within the Home and Tribal Affairs Department.

The basic mobile network signals were partially restored in some areas while internet services remained fully disrupted in several areas, resulting in residents being unable to access essential digital communication, leading Pakistani daily The Express Tribune reported. In addition to the communication blackout, all commercial and financial services have stopped operations in Nushki district on August 5. The financial blackout is expected to last until August 31, resulting in people unable to access financial services.

Local trade and business operations in Balochistan have been disrupted due to the closure of financial institutions without prior notice. Government workers and retired personnel were unable to draw their monthly salary to buy basic groceries or medicines, while students are unable to pay for tuition or living expenses. Local business owners and residents have voiced concerns over the dual shutdowns and urged authorities and banking officials to resume services so that people are able to access financial and communication services, Tribune reported.

Last week, leading Baloch human rights defender Mir

Yar Baloch accused the Pakistani military of making every possible effort to disrupt public gatherings and Independence Day events of Balochistan scheduled for Tuesday. He stressed that the people of Balochistan remain resolute and refuse to submit to repression by Pakistani authorities or comply with the Section 144 restrictions imposed across the province. Balochistan is observing the 79th Independence Day on Tuesday, continuing an annual tradition that defies what Baloch human rights groups call Pakistan's "illegal occupation" of the region. The Baloch struggle for independence has significant historical origins, starting in 1947 when the princely state of Kalat made a short-lived declaration of independence following the partition of British India.

Nevertheless, in 1948, Pakistan forcibly annexed the region, a move that has continually been opposed by Baloch nationalists. Taking to social media platform X, Mir alleged that the "occupying" Pakistani forces had imposed sweeping restrictions in Balochistan, including an internet shutdown from August 7 to August 30, in an effort to prevent national celebrations. He asserted, however, that no deployment of additional Pakistani troops, military assets or air power could indefinitely maintain Pakistan's presence in Balochistan against the determination and resolve of the Baloch people. "The Republic of Balochistan rejects attempts to characterise the Baloch people as militants or separatists. The Baloch freedom fighters constitute the Defence, Security Forces, and military of Balochistan, enjoying the confidence and endorsement of the sixty million Baloch people. The Baloch masses place their trust in these forces because they are sons and daughters of the same soil and serve the interests of their own nation," Mir stated. "These forces are not fighting for financial gain, nor are they engaged in creating unrest or spreading violence. They are carrying out their national duty: safeguarding peace and security, protecting the people, and laying the foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and developed Balochistan," he added. He further claimed that operations carried out by Baloch armed groups are aimed at "dismantling and expelling Pakistan's alleged terrorist networks", which they hold responsible for "instability, insecurity, and violence" across Balochistan.

Trump smuggled out of Air Force 1 in food cart to military jet in Turkey to evade threat

New York: US President Donald Trump was put in a food truck after he boarded Air Force 1 in Turkey and smuggled to a military jet to take him to Britain because of "credible threats" against his official plane, according to media reports. After he publicly boarded the Air Force 1 in Ankara under the glare of the media last month, he and some key aides got into a catering truck that had been raised to the level of the plane, The Washington Post reported Monday.

He was moved to a car from the food truck, which "had been fitted to the belly of the plane", and taken to a smaller C32A military jet, The New York Times said. He and the small group of aides flew to the British Air Force base Mildenhall, where he switched to the Qatari-donated plane for the next leg of the flight to the US, both newspapers reported, quoting unnamed officials. Meanwhile, the other officials and the reporters, who had boarded Air Force 1, flew on the older plane to Britain and joined Trump on the onward trip, oblivious to Trump having made the switch. Journalists on the plane reported that they had been asked to keep the windows closed during the flight. The White House did not confirm or deny the reports about the operation that sounds like a spy thriller, but White House communications director Steven Cheung hinted that the president's trip faced security issues requiring special measures.

He said, "As the president has said recently, there are many enemies of America who have their sights on him, and we use every tool at our disposal to address those threats". There was another drama behind the return journey on July 8 from the NATO summit in Ankara. The plane gifted by Qatar, which Trump flaunted as a showpiece because of its luxuries, was used for Trump's trip to Ankara.

But the Secret Service and other security officials did not consider that the hasty upgrades it received had given it the level of security of the older Air Force 1s. Therefore, they first made the switch to an older Air Force 1, and sent the Qatar plane on to Britain, before the switch to the military jet. Trump said that he had sent the Qatar plane to Britain because US military personnel at the base wanted to see the plane. However, reports said the reason was the "credible threats" that had been intercepted, and the Qatar



US President Donald Trump was reportedly moved secretly from Air Force One to a military jet in Turkey amid credible security threats. Officials cited concerns over the Qatar-donated aircraft's security systems, while the White House declined to confirm details surrounding the covert transfer

plane's upgrades did not include the anti-missile defence systems and the wiring to resist electromagnetic surges that the older Air Force 1s had. It appears that the Secret Service and other security officials later thought that even the older Air Force 1 was not safe enough and decided to smuggle Trump to the military jet, a variant of Boeing 757 without the ostentatious luxuries he is fond of. When The New York Times exposed the inadequacies of the Qatar-donated plane quoting official sources, the Department of Justice issued subpoenas to the reporters as well as to their relatives, including the mother of one of the journalists, demanding their phones. Officials defended the unusual subpoenas, claiming they wanted to find the leakers they asserted had endangered national security before dropping them because of the backlash. The accusations of the leaks only confirmed the security issues with the Qatar plane that Trump and officials had denied. The plane was taken off service "to be maxed out", Trump said. The old Air Force 1s and the Qatar-donated plane that is to serve as another Air Force 1 are all variations of Boeing 747s.

US court permanently dismisses criminal case against Adanis; truth has prevailed, says Gautam Adani



New York/New Delhi: A US federal judge has permanently dismissed the criminal securities-fraud case against Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar, closing nearly two years of prosecution without a trial. US District Judge Nicholas Garaufis of the Eastern District of New York granted the Justice Department's Rule 48(a) motion, dismissing Counts Two, Three and Four of the indictment — covering securities-fraud conspiracy, wire-fraud conspiracy and securities fraud — with prejudice, meaning the charges cannot be refilled.

The court reserved judgment on Count One (Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations) and Count Five (obstruction of justice) as they relate to non-appearing defendants, pending further compliance by the government with Rule 48(a). "Truth has prevailed," Gautam Adani said in response to the ruling, adding that he respected the judicial process and thanked those who had stood by the Group through the proceedings, while reaffirming its commitment to "nation-building" and "long-term value creation." The indictment, unsealed in November 2024, alleged Adani Group executives paid roughly USD 265 million in bribes to Indian officials to secure solar-power contracts projected to generate more than USD 2 billion in profits, while misleading investors who helped raise nearly USD 4 billion in US financing, and that other defendants destroyed evidence and lied to federal investigators. The Adani Group has consistently denied the allegations, calling them baseless. US District Judge Nicholas Garaufis granted the Justice Department's Rule 48(a) motion to dismiss Counts Two, Three and Four of the indictment against Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani and former Adani Green CEO Vneet Jaain.

The counts covered securities-fraud conspiracy, wire-fraud conspiracy and securities fraud. The court found that the DOJ had met the legal requirements for dismissal on one ground: its argument that alleged statements about Adani Green's anti-bribery policies and corporate compliance could amount to "inactionable puffery" — broad statements that investors could not reasonably rely on — creating legal risks for the prosecution.

The order followed the Justice Department's decision to seek dismissal after an extensive review of the case. In its submissions before the court, the government said continuing the prosecution no longer served the interests of justice, citing significant jurisdictional and evidentiary challenges, the predominantly Indian nature of the alleged conduct, the fact that Indian authorities had examined the matter, the absence of identified investor losses and broader public-interest considerations.

The DoJ also stated that the indictment, unsealed in November 2024 during the closing weeks of the previous Biden administration, had little realistic prospect of proceeding to trial and appeared to have been a politically motivated "name and shame" exercise orchestrated by the outgoing administration. Before approving the request, Judge Nicholas Garaufis directed the DOJ to publicly explain its reasons for seeking dismissal and required the defendants to file sworn declarations confirming there had been no promise, offer, quid pro quo or undisclosed agreement connected with the decision. In his sworn declaration, Gautam Adani categorically denied the existence of any promise, offer, quid pro quo or undisclosed agreement relating to the DOJ's decision. After reviewing the government's submissions and the sworn declarations, the court accepted the motion and permanently dismissed the case.

The dismissal means the criminal proceedings concluded before trial. No witnesses were examined, no evidence was tested in court and no judicial findings were made on the underlying criminal allegations. Separately, the US Securities and Exchange Commission's civil action against Gautam Adani has resulted in a final judgment under which he consented to permanent injunctions covering specified US securities-law violations without admitting the allegations, except as to jurisdiction. Adani welcomed the decision "with humility and deep respect for the judicial process". "Throughout this challenging period, our faith in truth, fairness and the rule of law remained unwavering. My deepest gratitude to those who never lost faith in us, in the system and in India's capacity for justice. We will continue doing what matters: building for our nation, creating value that outlasts us and serving a purpose larger than ourselves. That is our commitment," he said in a post on X. The indictment, returned by a grand jury on October 24, 2024 and unsealed on November 20, alleged three interlocking schemes between 2020 and 2024: paying roughly USD 265 million in bribes to Indian officials to secure solar-power contracts projected to generate more than USD 2 billion in after-tax profits over two decades; misleading US and international investors to raise close to USD 4 billion in financing; and destroying evidence and lying to the FBI, SEC and a federal grand jury to obstruct the resulting investigations. The charges followed shortly after Gautam Adani twice publicly congratulated then-President-elect Trump on X, including a November 13, 2024 post announcing the Group's intent to "invest USD 10 billion in US energy security and resilient infrastructure projects." The Adani Group has consistently denied the allegations, maintaining it acted in line with applicable law. The proceedings unfolded against a backdrop of intense scrutiny following a January 2023 short-seller report from Hindenburg Research, which triggered a rout that briefly wiped out more than USD 150 billion in the Group's market value. These allegations were also rejected by the Group. Adani's legal team, retained in August 2025, spent what Robert Giuffra of Sullivan & Cromwell described as "many thousands of hours" on the matter, submitting roughly 600 pages of legal argument, expert reports and presentations to the DOJ over ten weeks between February 3 and April 17, 2026 — including an 118-page letter, a 95-page slide deck, a separate 151-page presentation to the SEC, and around 200 pages of expert opinions from four specialists: a Harvard Law School professor, a former Acting SEC Chair, a former Chief Justice of India, and a former chairman of India's Central Electricity Authority. The Adani Group says the litigation never interrupted its operations, financing or project execution. It invested more than Rs 2.08 lakh crore in the second half of FY25 and FY26, including record annual capital expenditure of Rs 1,52,967 crore in FY26 — the highest by any Indian corporate — while its asset base grew from Rs 4.12 lakh crore in FY23 to Rs 7.85 lakh crore in FY26 and its

market capitalisation recovered above pre-indictment levels. Major projects came onstream during the period, including Navi Mumbai International Airport, Terminal 2 at Guwahati Airport, the Colombo West International Terminal, and the Ganga Expressway; Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone became India's first port operator to handle more than 500 million metric tonnes of cargo in a financial year; and Adani Green Energy crossed 20 gigawatts of operational renewable capacity.

Credit-rating agencies upgraded several Group companies during the period, investors, including Apollo Global Management, BlackRock and Capital Group expanded their positions, banks such as MUFG, SMBC, Deutsche Bank, BNP Paribas, and Societe Generale deepened their relationships with the Group, and partnerships with Google, MSC, IHC, EdgeConneX, Embraer and Dioxycle also broadened. Adani had announced nearly USD 15 billion in fresh investment commitments in a single week as the US legal clouds began to clear. Judge Garaufis of the Eastern District of New York granted the DOJ's Rule 48(a) motion in part, dismissing Counts Two, Three and Four of the indictment — securities-fraud conspiracy, wire-fraud conspiracy and securities fraud — against Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani and former Adani Green Energy CEO Vneet Jaain, with prejudice, meaning they cannot be refilled. He reserved judgment on the remaining charges: Count One, alleging Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) violations, and Count Five, alleging conspiracy to obstruct justice, both brought against five non-appearing, India-based co-defendants — Ranjit Gupta, Cyril Cabanes, Saurabh Agarwal, Deepak Malhotra, and Rupesh Agarwal. The DOJ has until August 31 to satisfy the court's requirements on those two counts, and the non-appearing defendants' counsel must confirm their clients' consent by the same date. Garaufis was explicit that the outcome reflects prosecutorial discretion, not a verdict. "No one should mistake the court's granting of the Rule 48(a) Motion as to Counts Two, Three, and Four, for the court's agreement with the Department's decision to dismiss these Counts or as expressing any opinion about the merits of the case," he wrote. No trial was held, no witnesses testified, and no evidence was tested. Of six sweeping "overlapping" justifications offered by the DOJ for dismissing all charges against all defendants — including that "this is a foreign case", that India had "found no actionable conduct," and that "not a single penny has ever been lost on the securities at issue" — the judge rejected every one as unsupported.

On the government's claim that the case was essentially foreign, he noted tartly that if counting mentions of "India" in the indictment settled the question, the 108 references to "United States" and 110 to "US Issuer" might just as easily make it a domestic case. On the claim that Indian authorities had cleared the conduct, he found the three unauthenticated Indian filings cited by the DOJ did not, in fact, support that assertion at all — they were decisions by Indian bodies not to investigate, brought by private complainants on unrelated claims, and "not one of the documents meaningfully contends with the allegations in this case". The one rationale the court did accept: that the alleged false statements in Adani Green's bond and loan documents — pledges of a "zero tolerance policy for bribery and corruption," "robust internal compliance measures" and oversight by a "risk management committee" — amounted to "inactionable puffery", the kind of generic corporate assurance courts have found too vague for investors to reasonably rely on.

That alone, the judge found, was sufficient and substantial grounds to dismiss the three fraud-related counts. He explicitly rejected the DOJ's separate argument that the transactions fell outside US securities jurisdiction, noting the indictment itself alleges investors "irrevocably committed themselves in the United States" and that the scheme relied on the US financial system.

The most pointed criticism was reserved for how the dismissal decision was made inside the DOJ. Garaufis wrote that the process contained "irregularities" and was "highly unusual," describing how Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General R Trent McCotter — who joined the Deputy Attorney General's office in January 2026 and, by his own account, "had never heard of any defendants in this case" — became the sole architect of the dismissal after months of meetings with Adani's defence team, "with tremendous help from counsel for Appearing Defendants," and apparently without input from the FBI, SEC investigators, or the prosecutors who originally built the case. Two DOJ attorneys involved in bringing the original indictment, Shy Jackson and Andrew Tyler, withdrew from the case two days after McCotter filed the dismissal motion. Garaufis was equally unsparing of McCotter's written justifications, calling one claim — that prior DOJ leadership had unsealed the indictment as a "name and shame" exercise, dumping "a potential quagmire of a case into the lap of the incoming Administration" — "baseless" and "unbecoming of his office", adding that in 26 years on the bench he did not share McCotter's characterisation of the FBI, SEC, and prosecutors' integrity. Central to the proceedings was whether Gautam Adani's publicly announced pledge to invest USD 10 billion in the US had influenced the DOJ's decision. In a sworn affidavit, Adani stated, "I am not aware of anything promised, offered, sought, received, agreed to, or accepted by anyone in connection with the dismissal of the indictment." He disclosed, however, that during settlement talks his counsel had suggested his "publicly stated intent to invest USD 10 billion in the United States might be part of a resolution... if that was what the DOJ or SEC wanted." His lead counsel, Giuffra — who is also President Donald Trump's personal attorney — said in his own declaration that he had raised the investment offer with the DOJ "on two occasions". A May 11, 2026 email from US Attorney Joseph Nocella, cited in the ruling, responded that "the portion of the joint defense offer made by [Appearing Defendants] to resolve the criminal charges against them by, in part, a general proposal to invest USD 10 billion in the United States is categorically rejected by this Office," adding that the proposal "will not be considered by this Office." After reviewing the affidavits, Garaufis wrote he was "now convinced" McCotter was the "sole decisionmaker" and that the investment pledge was, in fact, a "non-consideration." The court's scrutiny was heightened by news coverage referenced in McCotter's own filings — including reporting on the "transactional nature" of the department's motion, on Giuffra's ties to Trump, and on a reported November 2025 meeting between Gautam Adani and Donald Trump Jr. Those reports also prompted Senators Elizabeth Warren and Richard Blumenthal to write to then-Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche in June, raising "serious questions" about "the role that Mr Adani's politically salient offer played in the DOJ's decision" — a letter the court noted the department has not answered. Separately, on the same day the dismissal motion was filed, the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control announced a USD 275 million settlement with Adani Enterprises over "apparent violations" of US sanctions on Iran, in which OFAC found the company's conduct "egregious" though it "extensively cooperated" with the probe.

A graphic novel that brings to life Francis Buchanan's survey of South India



and Gattipura, and talked to the people who inhabited them, they became deeply intrigued by one of the occupations described by Buchanan: iron-smelting. In South India, where iron has been smelted since at least 2000 BCE, going by artefacts at very early iron age sites, they couldn't help but wonder why the traditional craft of smelting has largely disappeared, says Sashi, who worked with Mahadev Nayak, Amalendu Jyotishi and G.J Lingaraj on this project. "We met people who told us that smelting would happen even in the 1930s and 40s; they remember their grandfathers doing it," he says, adding that, in India, there is usually a certain continuity of tradition, with things rarely disappearing completely. "So I started looking for answers to why and when iron smelting disappears from this region," says Sashi, who was involved in this research till 2010 and has published it in several academic journals, including *Environment and History* and *Economic and Political Weekly*.

Although he is someone who “could not believe that curses come true...I am quite a rationalist”, he thought of investigating this story, going into the project with an open mind. “Wherever we went, in Mysore and places around it, people generally believed in it,” he recalls. And while there appeared to be some anecdotal evidence, with many of the Mysore rulers failing to beget heirs and having to adopt, “it all seemed very confusing,” says Sashi, who researched the subject, with a colleague, for a year and a half, “getting stuck along the way, because there was very little evidence about all this.” In 2005, as part of his research, Sashi visited the library of the Mythic Society on Bengaluru’s Nrupathunga Road, looking through some references, when he came across Buchanan’s three-volume survey titled *A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, published in 1807. Buchanan, who became a medical officer with the British East India Company in 1794, had been commissioned to survey South India in 1800, following the death of Tipu Sultan and the British’s decisive victory over the Kingdom of Mysore. While going through the survey, he discovered this. “Buchanan had visited Malangi, and he does talk about some curse and states that Talakadu was covered in sand,” says Sashi, who went on to make a film about the curse in 2005. “That was my introduction to Buchanan.”

Sashi then found himself delving deeper into Buchanan's work, becoming increasingly fascinated by this survey. "Normally, when you look at history, it is about battles and wars," he says. "But here, Buchanan touches upon people and the day-to-day life in these places. He talks about farmers, agricultural labourers, people weaving blankets, things we don't usually learn as part of our history education." That is when he decided that he wanted to trace Buchanan's journey, travelling back and forth, between Bengaluru and the places chronicled in *Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, trying to understand whether the occupations Buchanan had described continued to exist and in what form. As Sashi, accompanied by other researchers, travelled to places such as Channarayana Durga, Yelladakere, Chikkanayakanahalli

"From these findings, a larger narrative of iron smelting evolved," states the book's introduction, pointing out that Indian environmental history has missed the scale and importance of proto-industrial development in South India, viewing medieval economies as agrarian, consisting of self-sufficient villages. And yet, the centrality of a war economy in the feudal period and the need for arms and ammunition were too large to be brushed aside, continues the introduction, which goes on to argue that there is a need to rethink our environmental history by "integrating military and metallurgical history, with elements of anthropology, economics and sociology." Since iron smelting requires larger amounts of wood to make charcoal, the fuel for the activity, it leads to excessive deforestation, says Sashi, who believes that while many environmental historians attribute the destruction of forests in India to a colonial enterprise, connected to the advent of railways, the reality is a bit more complicated. "Typically, environmental history is not connected to iron and steel, but imagine armies of 50-100,000, carrying a sword, shield...elephants with armour... canons," he says, pointing out that even making a small cannon would require 1000-1500 tonnes of wood to make. In Sashi's opinion, there is a desperate need to connect the environment, the military, the social and the political history of the nation, and to reach a larger audience, which the graphic novel attempts to do. "We can write technical or academic papers and get them published, but how many people are interested in reading them?" he asks. Graphic novels, on the other hand, are well suited to convey research and are also very accessible, in his opinion. Besides, he admits, he has personally always loved graphic novels. "I grew up on comics. Superman, Batman, Tintin. Even my knowledge of Indian history started with comics," he says. "Comics have always been able to communicate with me, so I thought if I made one, I could communicate with others."

A photograph showing a person riding a motorcycle down a paved road that is lined with tall, leafy trees, creating a canopy effect. The road has a dashed white line down the center. The scene is bright and green, suggesting a summer day.

agement, forest conservation, and agroforestry. These are particularly vital for rural communities. Agroforestry, which integrates trees into agricultural systems, is a particularly promising approach. It enhances soil fertility by improving nutrient cycling, provides additional income from timber, fruits, and medicinal plants, and increases resilience to droughts and erratic weather conditions. A study by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research found that agroforestry can increase farm incomes by 20-30%. To support community-led afforestation, government and non-governmental organisations have stepped in to provide financial incentives, training and capacity-building programmes to educate farmers and rural workers, and market linkages to help communities sell forest-based products. These foster a sense of responsibility and ownership. Policy recommendations Despite its benefits, large-scale tree plantation faces several challenges. One is the rising cost of carbon credits. In 2023, the average price of carbon credits under the EU Emissions Trading System was €83 per tonne of CO₂. For Indian businesses, investing in afforestation offers a more cost-effective solution than purchasing expensive carbon credits from international markets. Another challenge is the absence of a robust carbon trading policy in India. To fully capitalise on global carbon markets, India must establish a transparent national carbon credit registry, a well-defined regulatory framework under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, and financial incentives to encourage private-sector investments in afforestation. As India strives to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070, tree plantations and carbon sequestration will be key pillars of its sustainability strategy. The risks of inaction are too high. B.B.L. Madhukar, Chairman, FORE School of Management, and Director General, BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Hyderabad man loses Rs 1.6 crore in crypto currency investment fraud

Hyderabad: A man has approached the Cyberabad Cybercrime police alleging he was duped to the tune of Rs 1.60 crore by cyber fraudsters who promised him huge returns for investments in crypto currencies. The 47-year-old private employee from Miyapur told the police that his mobile number was recently added to a Telegram group by unidentified persons, where he was contacted by a woman who claimed to show huge returns for investment in 'Bitcoins' and also offered him guidance and tips for the same.

A photograph showing a small, dark-colored boat with a canopy on a river. Several people are visible on board. In the background, there are larger boats and a shoreline with trees.

Vembanad, the longest lake in India and the largest in Kerala, is gasping for breath. The 96.5 km-long water body spans the districts of Alappuzha, Kottayam, and Ernakulam and forms part of the Vembanad-Kol wetland system, a Ramsar site. Six major rivers drain into the lake, which accounts for around 30% of the State's total surface water resource. Over the past century, the lake has shrunk significantly due to human-induced interventions, land reclamation, and natural sedimentation, according to experts. Though vital to the region's ecology and agriculture, it faces severe threats from pollution, eutrophication, unsustainable agricultural practices, and invasive weed proliferation.

A few years ago, a study by the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies revealed alarming levels of plastic waste, silt, and other sediments in the lake. According to a recent expert committee report prepared as part of the Vembanad Lake Rejuvenation Project, an ambitious joint effort of the Alappuzha district administration and the Local Self Government Department, the lake's surface area has shrunk mainly due to land encroachment. Citing previous studies, the report notes that the surface area of the lake diminished by 27% between 1917 and 1990. The drastic reduction in not only area, but also depth, has significantly reduced the lake's floodwater retention capacity and impaired its critical ecosystem services, including water purification, biodiversity support, and sediment transport. The unchecked proliferation of water hyacinths has further worsened the situation, contributing to dangerously high levels of chemical oxygen demand and biological oxygen demand. As a result, the fish catch has declined by about 66% over the last three decades.

The efforts to rejuvenate the lake are being spearheaded by Alappuzha District Collector Alex Varghese. The initiative draws “inspiration from the Namami Gange

Fatty liver disease goes down with novel weight loss drugs, shows new study: What does this mean for therapy?



Nearly two in three people with fatty liver disease lost some of the liver fat and inflammation after using semaglutide 2.4 mg weekly shots for one-and-a-half years, according to initial results from an ongoing phase 3 trial, published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine. Importantly, around one in three patients also saw reduction in liver fibrosis or scarring of the liver that prevents it from functioning properly.

Metabolic dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MAFLD) — until recently referred to as the Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease — is a chronic condition where there is an excessive build-up of fat on the liver. This fat accumulation leads to inflammation, scarring of the liver and may even cause liver cancer. The prevalence of MAFLD in India is estimated to be between 9% and 32%. Dr SK Sarin, liver specialist and vice-chancellor of the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences, talks about the significance of the findings.

What do the results of the phase III trial tell us?

This is a very important study, which builds on the findings of the phase 2 trial on the impact of semaglutide on MASLD. Phase 2 trials are usually done to fix the dosing and the highest 2.4 mg dose of the medicine was used for the current trial. The results show that 62.9% of the people

on semaglutide saw a loss of liver fat and inflammation as compared to 34.3% among people given placebo. The stiffening of the liver also reduced in 36.8% of the participants on semaglutide as compared to 22.4% on placebo. The participants lost around 10% of their body weight in the current trial as compared to 14% recorded previously. All in all, the study shows promising results for fatty liver disease.

How does the drug work? Are these the effects of weight loss?

Semaglutide belongs to a class of medicines known as GLP-1 receptor agonists which mimic the action of certain gut hormones to improve secretion of insulin, inhibit secretion of glucagon that stimulates glucose production in the liver, and also reduce appetite by slowing down digestion. The study does not look into the confounding variable of weight loss, so we cannot say if there is any other reason for the improvements seen. However, it is well-known that when people lose weight, MASLD improves. People who lose around 7-10% of their body weight, see a reduction in liver fat. And, with a weight-loss of more than 10%, they see regression in fibrosis. This happens even if people lose weight without using these drugs.

What is the current treatment for MASLD? What are the challenges?

The best way to treat MASLD is weight loss — be it with drug or with diet and exercise. The drug is meant for people who are not able to move and exercise or are unable to lose weight with diet and exercise. They come with several side effects such as vomiting, nausea, and even serious side effects such as stomach paralysis, inflammation of the pancreas, and thyroid cancer. At present, there are three lines of treatment. One, of course, are the GLP-1 drugs that work on the gut hormones. Two, a drug called resmetirom that works on the thyroid hormone — this is again very expensive at around \$ 5,400 a month. Third, FGF21 medicines that work on the adipose tissues. All of these medicines are meant to help with weight loss and thereby improve the liver.

Karnataka youth dies after drinking five bottles of alcohol: Why heavy drinking is simply poison for the heart

Do not bet on a bottle of alcohol, which studies have proven to be toxic to health. A 21-year-old man in Karnataka has died after he drank five bottles of liquor neat over a Rs 10,000 bet with his friends. The incident also proves how binge-drinking at one go can be a major risk factor for a sudden cardiac arrest. "While occasional alcohol consumption in moderation may not pose major health risks for many, binge drinking — defined as consuming a large quantity of alcohol in a short time — can have serious and immediate consequences for heart health," says Dr Mukesh Goel, Cardiothoracic and Cardiovascular, Heart and Lung Transplant surgeon, at Apollo Hospital, Delhi. This pattern of drinking overwhelms the body's ability to cope, leading to a cascade of harmful effects on the cardiovascular system. He lists the effects:

Heavy drinking at one session heightens the risk of heart attack and stroke within hours of consumption. It triggers the release of certain hormones that cause constriction of blood vessels, thus increasing the blood pressure abruptly. This stresses the arteries and the heart, increasing the risk of heart attack or stroke. Rapid consumption can raise blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to dangerous levels, which impact key organs and their functioning, like breathing, heart rate and body temperature regulation.

Heavy alcohol consumption is linked to abnormal heart rhythms, even in healthy individuals. Alcohol is a diuretic and quickly depletes electrolytes and fluids in the body. In this case the person drank neat, which means he was severely dehydrated. Electrolytes are crucial for maintaining a stable and regular heartbeat. Any imbalance disrupts the



electric impulses in the heart, leading to sudden cardiac arrest. Repeated episodes of heavy drinking can weaken the heart muscle, reducing its ability to pump blood effectively and eventually leading to heart failure. Alcohol can interfere with oxygen delivery to the heart tissue, increasing the risk of angina (chest pain) or myocardial infarction (heart attack). Binge drinking can make blood platelets more prone to clumping together, increasing the chance of dangerous clots that can block blood vessels in the heart or brain. The liver can only metabolise a limited amount of alcohol per hour. Excessive intake overwhelms the organ. As it struggles to handle the toxins produced during this process, they pile up quickly, damaging liver cells. Alcohol depresses the central nervous system, which can slow down brain function and impair motor skills. In extreme cases, this sluggishness of the brain can lead to unconsciousness, coma, even death.

Ultra-processed food expert and nutrition scientist Kevin Hall resigns: What it means for research



Amidst funding cuts and layoffs, the United States' National Institute of Health also lost one of its foremost nutrition and metabolism scientists, Kevin Hall. After working for 21 years, he resigned earlier this month, saying "recent events have made me question whether NIH continues to be a place where I can freely conduct unbiased science."

Why did Hall decide to quit?

The move comes after the scientist's views on one of his recent publications about addiction to ultra-processed foods was censored. In a post on X, Hall said: "I experienced censorship in the reporting of our research because of agency concerns that it did not appear to fully support preconceived narratives of my agency's leadership about ultra-processed food addiction. I was hoping this was an aberration. So, weeks ago I wrote to my agency's leadership expressing my concerns and requested time to discuss these issues, but I never received a response."

He said that given the bipartisan support to preventing diet-related chronic diseases, he had hoped to expand the research programme. He went on to say: "The NIH ... allows scientists to take risks, form unique collaborations, and do studies difficult to conduct elsewhere."

What did the study say?

Last month, the agency published a study that showed that the dopamine-hit after eating ultra-processed foods was not similar to what is seen in drug users as previously thought. Brain scans have shown that the levels of the feel-good hormone dopamine increases in the brain when people take addictive drugs, pushing them to go for it again and again. It was believed that the dopamine-reward mechanism may be similarly triggered by foods high in fats, sugars,

and salts, driving people to consume more and more. In their latest research, Dr Hall's team, however, did not see significant changes in the dopamine levels in brain scans after consuming ultra-processed foods. Those who did show very small increases in their dopamine level, however, found their milkshakes to be more pleasurable and ate more cookies later on. However, researchers put in a caveat that the machine used to study the brain, while very effective for tracking the large dopamine changes caused by drugs, might not have been sensitive to detect small changes. So the research raised more questions about what makes these foods more addictive.

What are ultra-processed foods?

Ultra-processed foods are industrially produced foods containing ingredients not available in home kitchens, such as breakfast cereals, biscuits, chicken nuggets and other frozen foods. These tend to contain high levels of salts, sugars, and fats, especially harmful fats such as trans fats. While many naturally occurring fruits, vegetables, or nuts might contain high levels of either fats or carbohydrates, they rarely ever contain both unlike ultra-processed foods. These foods have been known to cause addictive behaviours in people and are known to lead to diet-related chronic diseases such as obesity, hypertension, and diabetes among others.

Hyderabad-based ParentVerse now available on iOS and Android

Hyderabad: Hyderabad-based ParentVerse, a digital parenting companion, launched on iOS and Android, for families navigating the challenges of raising children in a tech-driven world. The app under a 'freemium' model offers free features with plans to introduce advanced, premium tools for subscribed users in the near future. It offers a more engaging and empowering experience, allowing parents to guide their children's digital usage while promoting healthy habits through interactive, gamified tools.

Ukraine and US have finally signed minerals deal. What does it include?



Kyiv: After months of tense negotiations, the US and Ukraine signed a deal that is expected to give Washington access to the country's critical minerals and other natural resources, an agreement Kyiv hopes will secure long-term support for its defense against Russia. According to Ukrainian officials, the version of the deal signed on Wednesday is far more beneficial to Ukraine than previous versions, which they said reduced Kyiv to a junior partner and gave Washington unprecedented rights to the country's resources. The deal itself has not yet been made public, but the Economy Ministry and the Prime Minister's office have offered some details.

The agreement — which the Ukrainian parliament must ratify — would establish a reconstruction fund for Ukraine that Ukrainian officials hope will be a vehicle to ensure future American military assistance. A previous agreement was nearly signed before being derailed in a tense Oval Office meeting involving US President Donald Trump, US Vice President JD Vance and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "We have formed a version of the agreement that provides mutually beneficial conditions for both countries. This is an agreement in which the United States notes its commitment to promoting long-term peace in Ukraine and recognizes the contribution that Ukraine has made to global security by giving up its nuclear arsenal," Ukrainian Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko said in a post on Facebook. The signing comes during what US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said would be a "very critical" week for US-led efforts to end the war that appear to have stalled. Ukraine sees the deal as a way to ensure that its biggest and most consequential ally stays engaged and doesn't freeze military support, which has been key in its 3-year-old fight against Russia's full-scale invasion. "This agreement signals clearly to Russia that the Trump administration is committed to a peace process centred on a free, sovereign, and prosperous Ukraine over the long term," Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a statement.

What does the deal include?

The deal covers minerals, including rare earth elements, but also other valuable resources including oil and natural gas, according to details released by Ukrainian officials. It does not include resources that are already a source of revenue for the Ukrainian State. In other words, any profits under the deal are dependent on the success of new investments. While Trump has repeatedly expressed inter-

The future in your palm - a non-contact wearable that studies skin flux to estimate health

William Blake could have scarcely estimated just the expanse that a palm full can contain, when he said 'hold infinity in the palm of your hand', but science today can give him a fair estimate. Smaller and smaller wearable devices, with the surface area the extent of a mere watch dial, have come to play, measuring all kinds of health parameters on the go — heart rate, blood oxygen, even continuous blood glucose levels. Here's yet another wearable, but one with a difference. Researchers have zeroed in on a wearable that can study the streams of molecular substances that pass through the skin, as a measure of studying the health status of individuals. What is different is that this wearable is 'non contact' relying on an enclosed chamber immediately adjacent to the skin's surface to do its job.

A collaboration of American and South Korean experts from the domains of materials sciences, dermatology, engineering, bio-medics and chemistry worked to produce a small device, just about the size of a smartphone face, that has demonstrated unique capabilities to measure the flux of water vapour, volatile organic compounds and carbon dioxide at various locations on the body, to examine not just skin health but general health too. The particular use has been to study wound healing properties in diabetes and has the additional advantage of non contact operation, therefore potential damage to fragile tissues can be avoided. John A. Rogers who is the Lewis Simpson and Kimberly Querry Professor of Material Sciences and Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, and Neurological Surgery at the Northwestern University, U.S. and is steering the research says his team has been working on wearable technologies for about two decades now. "With the COVID pandemic, there began a heightened awareness of the value of technologies that could continuously monitor health status; catch very early signs of disease or infection or health complications, in remote and, cost-effective ways. We have introduced a number of skin interface devices for measuring vital signs like electrocardiograms, blood oxygenation, body temperature."

The wearable in question however is unique, he explains. "It is unique in the sense that the sensors don't contact the skin. They're actually separated from the skin, and instead of directly measuring underlying physiological processes- cardiac cycles, lung function, for example, we're measuring, properties of the skin itself and measuring species that emerge from the body through the skin to the surrounding environment. And likewise, we are also measuring chemical species that can move from the environment into the body through the skin." He adds this is something that people haven't looked at before, and experiments have proved that there's a lot of interesting information that emerges, related to wound healing but also basic health. The authors write up the results in a recent paper published in Nature journal. This technology can provide unique insights for clinical decision-makers managing conditions such as dermatological diseases and dermal wounds, but who are also interested in understanding the underlying pathophysiology better. It can also monitor hazardous chemicals that enter the human body via the skin, making it a viable option to monitor the health of persons working in hazardous industries and zones.

He continues to explain: The skin is a layered substance with a pretty good impermeable water barrier on the very surface - called the stratum corneum. Underneath that is the epidermis and then the dermis. Those tissues are fairly permeable to water. But the stratum corneum is a very thin layer of dead cells, and serves as a barrier. If that barrier did not exist, you'd have tons of water evaporating and water loss just coming out through all surfaces of the body.

est in Ukraine's rare earth elements, it unclear what other minerals might be part of the deal. Earlier this year, Andrii Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential office, said it could include lithium, titanium or uranium. The agreement ensures full ownership of the resources remains with Ukraine, according to Ukrainian officials. The state will determine where and what can be extracted. It also does not refer to any debt obligations for Ukraine, the officials have said, meaning profits from the fund will not go toward the paying the US back for its previous support.

What are rare earth elements? They are a group of 17 elements that are essential to many kinds of consumer technology, including cellphones, hard drives and electric and hybrid vehicles. China is the world's largest producer of rare earth elements, and both the US and Europe have sought to reduce their dependence on Beijing, Trump's chief geopolitical adversary.

How will the fund work?

The agreement establishes a reconstruction investment fund, and both the US and Ukraine will have an equal say in its management, according to Svyrydenko. The fund will be supported by the US government through the US International Development Finance Corporation agency, which Ukraine hopes will attract investment and technology from American and European countries. Ukraine is expected to contribute 50% of all future profits from government-owned natural resources into the fund. The United States will also contribute in the form of direct funds and equipment, including badly needed air defense systems and other military aid.

Contributions to the fund will be reinvested in projects related to mining, oil and gas as well as infrastructure. No profits will not be taken from the fund for the first 10 years. Trump administration officials initially pushed for a deal in which Washington would receive \$500 billion in profits from exploited minerals as compensation for its wartime support. But Zelenskyy rejected the offer, saying he would not sign off on an agreement "that will be paid off by 10 generations of Ukrainians."

What is the state of Ukraine's minerals industry?

Ukraine's rare earth elements are largely untapped because of state policies regulating the industry, a lack of good information about deposits, and the war. The industry's potential is unclear since geological data is thin because mineral reserves are scattered across Ukraine, and existing studies are considered largely inadequate. In general, however, the outlook for Ukrainian natural resources is promising. The country's reserves of titanium, a key component for the aerospace, medical and automotive industries, are believed to be among Europe's largest. Ukraine also holds some of Europe's largest known reserves of lithium, which is required to produce batteries, ceramics and glass. In 2021, the Ukrainian mineral industry accounted for 6.1% of the country's gross domestic product and 30% of exports. An estimated 40% of Ukraine's metallic mineral resources are inaccessible because of Russian occupation, according to data from We Build Ukraine, a Kyiv-based think tank. Ukraine has argued that it's in Trump's interest



A small device, just about the size of a smartphone face, has demonstrated unique capabilities to measure the flux of water vapour, volatile organic compounds and carbon dioxide at various locations on the body.

So, it performs a very critical function as a water barrier. If that's compromised in any way, then, you can be at risk for dehydration and, degradation in the properties of the healthy living part of the skin, the epidermis and, and the dermis. Therefore, measuring water permeation through the skin can tell you a lot about the barrier function of the skin, and various skin disorders can reduce the barrier functions, Prof Rogers explains. "You can monitor that. Transcutaneous CO2 for example, coming right through the surface of the skin is important, and physicians already know how to interpret that." He adds that their assumption is that the device, with its capacity to read and measure the environmental species that enters the body through the skin will likely yield additional insights that physicians are not aware of yet. The device itself, he describes, is like a small pocket, with wireless electronics that can transmit data to your phone. It also has a chamber that forms a microclimate when the device is sealed against the surface of the skin. Suspended within that chamber is a suite of sensors, very small semiconductor devices that can measure water, CO2, and various volatile organic compounds. On the back, there is a valve that can be opened and closed through a wireless trigger. When the valve is closed and the device is on the surface of the skin, the sensors measure a gradual increase in the concentration of water vapor and CO2. When the valve is open to the surrounding environment, the heightened concentrations of those species can dissipate because now those species can just diffuse out to the surrounding environment. We make measurements with the valve closed, then open, and so on. The rate at which those concentrations increase determines the flux." These low-cost devices can just be adhered to the surface of the skin, and measure these properties continuously, without a physician having to be at call. The device can be mounted anywhere on body and track outward flux and also inward flux at the same time. Prof. Rogers says there has already been some interest in the device from the perfumery industry. And while it has not yet been studied in an environment where the patient has suffered burns, he added that it would be an exciting pathway to launch on. Once adequate data emerges from the device over a period of time, measurements off the skin might turn out to be an additional vital sign that doctors rely on to estimate the health of their patients, in addition to the conventional vital signs.

Gold import duty hike helped Centre collect Rs 10,000 crore in under 3 months



The central government has collected Rs 10,040 crore as revenue just from gold bought from abroad after it raised the customs duty on the yellow metal on May 13, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary informed the Parliament on Monday. The revenue was collected from May 13 to August 2. A further Rs 328 crore was collected from silver imports and Rs 95 crore from platinum purchases from overseas. All in all, Rs 10,463 crore has been collected as revenue by the government from the import of gold, silver, and platinum between May 13 and August 2. To put this number in perspective, the Centre's overall customs duty revenue in May-June was Rs 40,317 crore, up 42% year-on-year, latest data shows.

On May 13, the government hiked the customs duty on gold and silver imports from 5% to 10%, and Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) from 1% to 5%, taking the total effective import duty to 15%. The effective import duty on platinum was also increased to 15.4% from 6.4%. Further, the import duty on gold and silver findings was also raised to 5%, with platinum findings attracting a duty of 5.4%. Findings are small components such as

hooks, clasps, clamps, pins, and screws used to hold the whole or a part of a piece of jewellery in place. Finally, a 3% Integrated GST (IGST) will be payable on all imports of precious metals in addition to the basic customs duty and AIDC.

Gold is one of India's major imports and amounted to \$72 billion in 2025-26, up 24% from the previous year. In January 2026, for the first time ever, Indians invested more in gold Exchange Traded Funds than equity mutual funds. As per latest available data, India's gold imports in the first three months of 2026-26 were \$11.01 billion, up 47% on year. Silver imports, however, were down 43% at \$547 million. The sharp increase in import duties on precious metals came amid unprecedented pressure on the rupee, which was moving towards the 100-per-dollar mark in the wake of the US and Israel's attack on Iran. The West Asia conflict led to the closure of the key waterway of the Strait of Hormuz, pushing up global energy prices, disrupting supplies and trade, and spooking foreign investors, who fled Indian financial markets. All this weakened the rupee significantly and it almost touched the 97-per-dollar mark in mid-May. The duty hike on the import of precious metals also followed an appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to reduce their consumption of fuel – which Indian mostly imports – non-essential foreign travel, and gold purchases for a year. This, Modi had said, would help preserve the country's foreign exchange. Siddharth Upasani is a Deputy Associate Editor with The Indian Express. He reports primarily on data and the economy, looking for trends and changes in the former which paint a picture of the latter. Before The Indian Express, he worked at Moneycontrol and financial newswire Informist (previously called Cogencis). Outside of work, sports, fantasy football, and graphic novels keep him busy.

RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group buys ReNew Solar Power for Rs 4,859 crore

The RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group (RPSG) on Monday announced that Purvah Green Power Pvt Ltd, the renewable energy platform of CESC Ltd, is set to acquire a 1.4 GWp operating solar portfolio from ReNew Solar Power Pvt Ltd for an enterprise value of Rs 4,859 crore. The portfolio is held across six project special purpose vehicles in Rajasthan and Karnataka. ReNew Power Group was founded by Sumant Sinha, son of former Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha.

The acquisition is being funded by CESC. "The transaction is among the largest acquisitions of operating solar assets in the Indian market and marks a decisive shift in the composition of Purvah's portfolio — from a platform built primarily on projects under development to one anchored by assets already generating contracted cash flows," CESC said in a statement. The acquired assets are operational projects with an established generation track record. More than 90% of the capacity is contracted with the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) under long-term power purchase agreements (PPAs), with the balance contracted with Karnataka distribution companies, it said.

Shashwat Goenka, Vice Chairman, RPSG, said: "This acquisition marks a significant acceleration of our renewable energy journey. It gives us immediate operating scale, complements our strong pipeline of contracted capacity, and meaningfully brings forward the growth of the platform." "For a group with a long heritage in the power sector, this marks our move from a conventional power player



to a diversified energy platform, and an important step towards building RPSG into one of India's leading renewable energy platforms," he said. Purvah's contracted capacity stood at approximately 3.4 GWp before the transaction. Following completion, total contracted capacity will rise to 4.8 GWp, of which 1.8 GWp will be operational and 3 GWp will be tied up at various stages of construction. Additionally, 2.2 GWh of battery capacity is tied up and under implementation, the company said. The acquisition substantially increases the proportion of the portfolio that is already generating revenue and strengthening recurring cash flows well ahead of the commissioning schedule for the under-construction pipeline, it said. "The acquisition also materially accelerates progress towards the group's immediate stated ambition of building a 10 GW renewable energy platform in the next few years," it said.

Amid Adani interest in airline business, Government says AAI got request for cross-holding cap waiver

The airline sector in India has seen a number of airlines fail due to a difficult operating environment, fierce competition in a highly price-sensitive market, and global supply chain woes. (Image generated using AI) The airline sector in India has seen a number of airlines fail due to a difficult operating environment, fierce competition in a highly price-sensitive market, and global supply chain woes. The government on Monday said that there was no blanket policy restricting airport operators from holding substantial equity in airlines, although cross-holding restrictions are part of contracts for some airports operated by private sector players. It also said that the state-owned Airports Authority of India (AAI) had received a request seeking a waiver of the cross-holding cap provision, but the matter has not yet been examined by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA).

The comments, which were in response to a question from CPI(M) MP John Brittas, come close on the heels of reports that the Adani Group, which operates eight airports, had sought relaxations from cross-ownership restrictions as it was evaluating participating in the airline business. On July 24, Adani group flagship Adani Enterprises had said that it was not evaluating any proposal to enter the airline business. The Adani group didn't immediately respond to a request for comment following the government's response in the Rajya Sabha today.

"There is no such Government Policy restricting operators of major airports from holding substantial equity in or operating scheduled airlines. However, the extant contractual agreements relating to some airports under Public Private Partnership (PPP) contain certain restrictions on scheduled airlines and their group entities/associates from holding Equity Share of the Concessionaires," Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol said in a written response to Brittas's question. "Request seeking waiver of the relevant agreement provision has been received by Airports Authority of India (AAI). The matter has not yet been examined by the Ministry of Civil Aviation," Mohol added. Mohol didn't name the Adani group, nor did Brittas in his question. The Adani group operates eight airports in the country and has a major presence in other segments of the aviation sector, including ground handling, maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO), and pilot training. The conglomerate also plans to set up an aircraft manufacturing facility in India in partnership with Brazil's Embraer. As per the Operation, Management and Development Agreement (OMDA) for Mumbai and Delhi airports, schedule airlines and their group entities can't hold more than 10% stake in the airport operator. This also effectively restricts the airport operator and its group entities from investing in or promoting a scheduled airline. The Adani group has 74% stake in the Mumbai airport, while GMR has 74% in the Delhi airport. Sources had earlier indicated that the Adani group was weighing having its own airline and MoCA was learnt to have initiated preliminary discussions internally after the conglomerate sought relaxation in June. Any change on this front will also require the approval of the Union Cabinet, sources had said.

In a letter addressed to the Airports Authority of India

Bengaluru marathoner dies of suspected cardiac arrest at 31: What runners need to know about hidden heart risks



Ever since a 31-year-old software professional from Bengaluru, Aman Deep Singh Jagade, died of a suspected cardiac arrest on August 9 while completing a 21-km half-marathon at Nandi Hills, I have been flooded with questions. How can a young, seasoned athlete, used to running long distances, suffer a sudden cardiac event?

It can seem surprising that someone who appears fit and healthy and has even passed a routine medical check-up could suffer sudden cardiac arrest during endurance sport. The reason is that standard screenings, such as a basic ECG, blood-pressure measurement, or routine physical examination are designed to identify common warning signs, not every possible heart abnormality. Some structural or electrical problems can remain hidden, while the extreme physical demands of long-distance running can act as a trigger in a person who is otherwise unaware of an underlying vulnerability. The limitations of routine medical checks

One important issue is that early coronary artery disease can remain silent. A person may have plaque developing in the coronary arteries without experiencing symptoms, and routine examinations may not detect it. Even a stress test can sometimes appear normal if the disease has not yet significantly restricted blood flow. Some structural heart conditions can also go unnoticed. For example, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, in which the heart muscle becomes abnormally thickened. Certain congenital abnormalities of the coronary arteries may not always be obvious during a routine physical examination. There are also heart conditions that primarily affect the heart's electrical system rather than its structure. Certain inherited rhythm disorders can cause dangerous arrhythmias even when the heart looks structurally normal. These conditions may not be identified during a routine check-up and sometimes require more specialised cardiac or electrophysiological assessment.

What happens to the heart during a marathon?

A marathon places an enormous and sustained demand on the cardiovascular system. For several hours, the heart must maintain a high cardiac output to deliver oxygen-rich blood to working muscles. This prolonged workload can place considerable stress on the heart, particularly when combined with dehydration, heat, fatigue, or an individual's underlying susceptibility. Among the conditions doctors consider in sudden cardiac death in younger people are cardiomyopathies — diseases of the heart muscle that can affect its structure, pumping ability or electrical stability. One of the best known is hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. Often

Remo Fernandes claims he had a stroke after COVID-19 booster: What do neurologists say?



Neurologists caution, however, that while a stroke occurring after vaccination naturally raises concerns, timing alone is not enough to establish that the vaccine caused the event. Besides, there is no scientific proof of the same.

Musician Remo Fernandes, while announcing withdrawal from live performances, said that he had suffered a mild stroke after taking his third COVID-19 vaccine. He said the stroke affected the movement of his fingers, making it difficult to play the guitar and flute as before.

Neurologists caution, however, that while a stroke occurring after vaccination naturally raises concerns, timing alone is not enough to establish that the vaccine caused the event. Besides, there is no scientific proof of the same. Determining the cause requires careful evaluation of a person's underlying health and other stroke risk factors. "The weight of evidence from large population studies and systematic reviews, one done this year itself, does not support an increased overall risk of stroke after COVID-19 vaccination, including after booster doses. One should understand the difference between association in time and causation since there were reports about rare clotting complications connected to some vaccines, including adenoviral-vector vaccines. But these are not frequent and do not correspond to the average risk of stroke among people having health problems such as diabetes and hypertension," says Dr Vipul Gupta, Director, Neurointerventional Surgery, Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital, Mumbai. At the same time, he says, COVID-19 itself leads to a higher risk of developing blood clots or stroke because of inflammation and changes in the blood coagulation system. "That too in the initial phase post-recovery," he told. Even then, not everyone who gets COVID-19 is at risk of having a stroke. "During an infection, the body's immune system mounts a response to fight the virus. In some individuals, this response can become excessive, leading to widespread inflammation throughout the body. That, left unattended, is a risk factor," says Dr Vineet Suri, senior consultant, neurology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, New Delhi.

What causes a brain stroke?

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to a part of the brain is interrupted, preventing brain cells from receiving oxygen and nutrients. This can happen when a blood vessel supplying the brain is blocked by a clot (known as an ischemic stroke) or when a blood vessel bursts and causes

inherited, it causes abnormal thickening of the heart muscle. The degree and pattern of thickening can vary considerably, and some people remain completely unaware that they have the condition. Others may experience breathlessness, chest discomfort, palpitations, dizziness or fainting, particularly with exertion. In some individuals, however, there may be no warning at all before arrhythmia (irregular heartbeats) occurs. This makes the heart's electrical activity so chaotic or fast that the heart can no longer pump blood effectively and its electrical impulses shut down. Cardiomyopathies are mostly inherited. And the condition does not necessarily have to appear in every generation. A person can carry a disease-associated genetic variant but show few or no clinical manifestations. A strong family history of premature coronary disease, inherited cholesterol disorders, smoking, diabetes, hypertension and other risk factors can bring coronary disease into consideration even in a younger person.

Electrolyte disturbances can add another layer of risk. Significant changes in sodium and other electrolytes can interfere with the heart's normal electrical activity. Both severe dehydration and excessive fluid intake can potentially contribute to dangerous electrolyte imbalances that interfere with normal heartbeats, which is why appropriate hydration during endurance events is important. Finally, the combination of intense exertion, a very high heart rate, and a surge of stress hormones such as adrenaline can increase the heart's electrical instability. In someone with an underlying heart condition or vulnerable coronary plaque, this intense physiological stress may help trigger a serious arrhythmia or another acute cardiac event. Are there warning signs?

Certain patterns deserve medical attention, particularly when they occur during exercise. Watch out for chest pain or pressure with exertion, fainting or near-fainting while exercising, recurrent dizziness during intense activity, unexplained racing or irregular heartbeats and breathlessness that is disproportionate to the level of exertion. A fainting episode during exercise, in particular, should not simply be written off as exhaustion without appropriate assessment.

What should an evaluation include?

There is no universal battery of tests that every marathoner needs. The person should definitely do an echocardiogram, which assesses heart chambers, wall thickness, pumping function and other structural features. A CT angiogram is needed to map the extent of plaque in the arteries. Exercise testing can reveal abnormalities that are not evident at rest and may help assess symptoms during exertion. Holter or longer rhythm monitoring is useful when palpitations, fainting or intermittent arrhythmias are suspected.

What about the "athlete's heart"?

Years of endurance training genuinely change the heart. The chambers can enlarge. The heart can pump more blood with each beat. Resting heart rate can fall considerably. There can also be physiological changes in heart-muscle thickness. This is commonly called the athlete's heart. It is not a disease. It is the heart adapting to sustained physical training. This is why interpreting an athlete's ECG or echocardiogram requires context — including the athlete's sport, training history, symptoms, family history and the pattern of cardiac adaptation.

bleeding in the brain (known as a haemorrhagic stroke). Since brain cells begin to get damaged within minutes, a stroke is a medical emergency that requires immediate treatment.

How can COVID-19 affect the brain?

COVID-19 has also been found to affect the inner lining of blood vessels, making them more vulnerable to injury. "Together, inflammation and damage to blood vessels can increase the likelihood of blood clot formation. If one of these clots blocks an artery supplying the brain, it can result in an ischemic stroke," says Dr Suri.

Who is more likely to be at risk after COVID-19?

The risk of stroke following COVID-19 is generally higher in people who already have underlying cardiovascular risk factors. "These include hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease, obesity, smoking and a previous history of stroke or blood clotting disorders. People who experience severe COVID-19 infection, particularly those requiring hospitalisation, are also at a higher risk of developing stroke-related complications than those with mild illness," says Dr Suri. According to Dr Gupta, severe infections may also lead to dehydration, immobility, altered blood pressure and imbalance in the normal coagulation processes of the body, which collectively increase the cardiovascular burden. "In certain cases, heart complications resulting from an infection could raise the risk of blood clots reaching the brain," he adds.

Does everyone with COVID-19 have an increased risk?

No. Most people who contract COVID-19, especially those with mild symptoms, recover without experiencing a stroke. While studies have shown that the infection can temporarily increase the risk, strokes remain relatively uncommon. The risk is generally greatest during the active infection and in the weeks following recovery, particularly among individuals with existing health conditions.

What symptoms should not be ignored?

Stroke symptoms usually appear suddenly and require urgent medical attention. These may include weakness or numbness on one side of the face, arm or leg, difficulty speaking or understanding speech, sudden loss of vision in one or both eyes, loss of balance, coordination or difficulty walking or a sudden, severe headache with no obvious cause. "Seeking medical care without delay can improve the chances of recovery and reduce the risk of long-term disability," advises Dr Suri.

Can the risk be reduced?

While it may not be possible to prevent every stroke, maintaining good control of blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol can significantly lower the risk. Regular physical activity, avoiding tobacco, eating a balanced diet and taking prescribed medications as advised are important preventive measures. "For people recovering from COVID-19, any new neurological symptoms such as sudden weakness, slurred speech or loss of balance should be evaluated promptly rather than being dismissed as part of post-viral recovery," says Dr Suri.

The last man standing from India’s 2015 core



In August 2015, when India landed in Sri Lanka for Virat Kohli’s first full Test series as captain, it felt like the beginning of something new. MS Dhoni had retired from Test cricket months earlier. Ajinkya Rahane, Cheteshwar Pujara, R Ashwin and Rohit Sharma were expected to carry India into the next decade. One name was still yet to become indispensable. Ravindra Jadeja was not part of that tour. He reclaimed his place a few months later, in the home series against South Africa. Fast forward to 2026 and India are back in Sri Lanka, in transition again. This time, almost everyone from that generation is gone. Ashwin retired in 2024. Rohit and Kohli called time in May 2025. Pujara followed a few months later. Rahane is the latest to walk away. Everyone else from that 2015 dressing room has moved on. Ravindra Jadeja simply refused to. (BCCI Photo) Everyone else from that 2015 dressing room has moved on. Ravindra Jadeja simply refused to.

“The most important thing is that he’s a multidimensional player. He’ll get you wickets, he’ll bat wherever you send him, No. 4, No. 6, No. 7 or No. 8, and he’ll still score runs. Then, in the field, he’ll produce a run-out or a catch that very few others can. He’s a complete all-rounder. That’s what makes him different from any other cricketer,” Saurashtra head coach Niraj Odedra told When he returned to the Test side in late 2015, he was viewed largely as India’s premier left-arm spinner. On the raging turner in Mohali against South Africa, or the unresponsive Chennai surface against England in 2016, Jadeja was a relentless wicket-taker who squeezed batsmen with unwavering accuracy. Somewhere along the way, another dimension began to show. His technique tightened, his shot selection improved, his temperament settled into the longer format. A maiden Test century against West Indies in Rajkot in 2018 announced the change. A career-best 175 not out against Sri Lanka in Mohali confirmed it. Then a hundred at Edgbaston in 2022, after India had slumped to 98 for 5. Three years later, 516 runs across a five-Test series in England left little doubt his batting belonged at the highest level. Even now, that trust remains. With Shubman Gill unable to bat in the first innings of India’s warm-up against a Sri Lanka Cricket XI this month, Jadeja was pushed up to No. 4, a spot he wasn’t first choice for. He made 63 off 117 balls.

Mindset change Odedra puts the biggest change down to something other than technique. “Himself. Nobody else.

The biggest change was his mindset. He had to believe that he wasn’t just somebody who could bowl, but a player who could bat as well. He backed himself to such an extent that that’s what made him a better batsman,” he said. “People have this perception that he’s a bowler who can only bowl. But from a very young age, Under-16, Under-19, he always was a very good batsman. When he started playing for the Indian team, he realised that if he didn’t score runs, if he didn’t become a multidimensional player, then he wouldn’t last long like others.” The earliest test came before any of that. In 2005, when Jadeja was sixteen, his mother died of burns from a kitchen fire. He was not at home when it happened. He wanted to give up the game afterwards. What kept him in it was the thought that she hadn’t raised a cricketer for him to walk away from it. His father had told him something, years before any of this, back when Jadeja didn’t yet know cricket would become his living. “When I started playing cricket, my father gave me very important advice. At that point, I didn’t even know that I will be playing cricket seriously, forget playing for the country. He told me it’s your performance on the ground that matters,” Jadeja said in a separate interview to this newspaper in 2023. Ground mein perform karo, bus baat khatam, his father had put it. Perform on the field, and the chatter ends there.

Recovering from setbacks The setbacks kept coming in different forms. In 2018, he found himself out of favour during the England tour, watching the first four Tests from the sidelines. Many players would have allowed frustration to creep in. Jadeja came back for the fifth Test, at The Oval, and made an unbeaten 86 and took seven wickets. “That Test changed everything for me. Poora, complete, game. My performance, my confidence, everything. When you score in English conditions against the best bowling attack, it greatly impacts your confidence,” Jadeja told The Indian Express in 2021. A fractured thumb in Australia in 2020-21. A forearm injury. A bruised rib. A serious knee injury during the 2022 Asia Cup. A hamstring problem in 2024. Tennis elbow during this year’s IPL.

Each one threatened to derail him. Each time, he dusted himself off and found his way back. While Jadeja fought those battles, the generation around him slowly faded. Time eventually caught up with everyone else. Everyone else from that 2015 dressing room has moved on. Ravindra Jadeja simply refused to. On his Test comeback after more than a year, Jadeja took 8/76, including 5/21 in the second innings, to help India defend 217 runs and win Player of the Match. Jadeja produced an all-round masterclass with a half-century and a match haul of 10/154, that included 7/48 in the second innings, to help India secure a dominant victory. Returning after knee surgery, Jadeja took a match haul of 7/81 and scored a crucial 70, earning him the Player of the Match, as India won by an innings and 132 runs. Jadeja’s 86, including a 199-run seventh-wicket stand with R Ashwin, rescued India from 144/6 before he added match figures of 5/77 to seal a 280-run win. Jadeja took 4/143 before making an unbeaten 107, sharing a 203-run fifth-wicket stand with Washington Sundar to help India bat out the final day and secure a draw.

Keep Babar away from English media: Ex-Pakistan captain’s advice ahead of tour

Pakistan are set to tour England for a three-match Test series that starts on August 19 and former captain Rashid Latif has an unusual suggestion for the team management: keep current skipper and talisman Babar Azam from facing the English media. Babar had been reinstated as captain of the Test squad ahead of their recently concluded series against the West Indies. Latif said that it would be wiser to send Shan Masood, whom Babar had replaced as captain, out to face the media on the tour.

“An England tour is a difficult assignment, and the English media often tries to unnecessarily involve visiting teams in news stories,” Rashid said on Geo News’ Score. “Babar Azam is an experienced player, so it would be better for the PCB management to keep him away from the English media and send former captain Shan Masood to speak to them more often. Shan has played in England and has better experience of dealing with the English media.”

This will be Pakistan’s first tour of England for a Test series since 2020. England had won that previous rubber 1-0. They haven’t won a Test series in the country since 1996. At the time, it was Pakistan’s third consecutive series win in England, having won a five-Test series 1-0 in 1987, a five-Test series 2-1 in 1992 and then the 2-0 win in the three-Test series in 1996. Pakistan continue to have a



good record in England over the past decade – they have won three and drawn two of the nine Tests they have played in the country in this period. For England, this would be their first Test series since the end of the Stokes-McCullum era. Captain Ben Stokes announced his retirement at the end of their three-Test series against New Zealand at home, which they lost 2-1. Brendon McCullum was sacked as England’s Test coach shortly thereafter, although he continues to hold the position in England’s white-ball setup. Star batsman Joe Root has been reinstated as captain, having led the team before Stokes took over while McCullum’s former New Zealand teammate Stephen Fleming is their new head coach.

Virat Kohli’s intensity is non-negotiable, says former India fielding coach Dilip

GNS News Agency, August 18

Hyderabad: Former India fielding coach T Dilip from Hyderabad, whose successful stint of nearly five years with the Indian team came to an end after the recent tour of England, said “When it comes to Virat Kohli, intensity is non-negotiable. You have seen him in the powerplay, how he is as a batsman, whether at cover or short mid-wicket, with his reflexes and with his dives, is admirable. Even in the last series, he was putting in those dives and was sharp, always at you all the time.”

Speaking to JioStar, Dilip, who hails from Warangal (Telangana), said: “Even at this juncture of his career, he runs from long-on to long-on at either end during the death overs, and he is the first one to run out of the circle when the field is spread, and that’s a fabulous thing to do for the team. But what impressed me more is not just the actions, what he does when the ball is at him, but also when the ball is not near him, he wants the ball in his hands.” “With Virat Kohli, there is not much difference between him in a practice session and a match, because it’s not just Virat; it’s the five other players who have stretched their limits when they are fielding with Virat Kohli. That’s the influence he brings into the group,” he said.

“If I go back to my best moment, I think Barbados 2024, not just the trophy, but the dressing room atmosphere afterwards, the silence for a few seconds before it broke. I think in that silence, I could sense the amount of hard work the boys had put in over those four years. And I’ll always keep that frame in my mind,” Dilip said. On the thinking behind introducing the fielding medal, Dilip said: “What I thought was to recognise the overall impact as a fielder rather than just a spectacular catch. But what it brought in was that all the 11 players on the field, who may not be in the hotspots, had a feeling inside them that, ‘A little contribution would get me that award.’ That positive competition among the group had started and, automatically, players started to notice even small things while being on the field.” “They celebrated when their other teammates did something exceptional. And



that was a huge factor for me because, at the end of the day, the fielding medal is a team award. The players embraced it, fans supported it, and fielding got the recognition it deserved the most,” he said. On Suryakumar Yadav’s catch in the last over of the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2024 final which helped India win the trophy against South Africa, Dilip recalled: “For the first few seconds, I was silent and calm physically because my mind was doing all the calculations, whether Surya had taken that ball cleanly, whether his feet were inside the boundary rope, whether he had popped the ball out in time. So, my mind was doing all the calculations. But once it was confirmed that it was a clean catch, there was a surge of emotions. But in the back of my mind, I also knew that the match had yet to be completed. But that was an extraordinary catch by Surya in the context of the game.” On the importance of fielding placement in the slips ahead of India’s Test tour of Sri Lanka, Dilip said “The important factor is that the spacing between the fielders has to be very fine because the ball comes faster in the slip region while fielding to fast bowlers. You may not have time to really go wide on your lateral side.” “And for the spinners, I think, with most of the spinners, we saw how Shubman placed them in the Afghanistan series. It’s like, how would you place yourself, the gap between your keeper and slip, to take those finer edges which go on to your left side? And also, based on the turn, how fast or slow it is coming, how much you should stand away from the batter or not, will be key,” he signed off.

Why Duleep Trophy is no longer a bridge to international cricket



Over the past week, recurring fitness concerns ahead of the Sri Lanka tour forced India’s national selectors back into the domestic First-Class system, rewarding two work-horses, aged 33 and 29, with their maiden Test call-ups. Yet, the Duleep Trophy squads that were announced this week suggest that the season-opening domestic tournament is becoming increasingly detached from India’s Test selection pipeline. Picked by selectors from 32 major state associations in five separate meetings, the zonal selections expose a disconnect with the priorities of the national selectors.

A lack of national oversight, shifting leadership across the zones, contrasting selection philosophies and an informal quota-based system have again diminished the Duleep Trophy’s value as a bridge to the Test side. The prevailing system was installed after several state associations complained to the BCCI that the selectors were ignoring performers in domestic cricket, a board official told this daily.

“The national selectors wanted to try those they felt had the potential to play for India A or India, even if they hadn’t played Ranji Trophy. But the associations felt that the selectors if they wanted to try those players, then they should pick them for India A. The state and selectors were at loggerheads,” he explained. So it was decided that the zonal committee would pick the Duleep Trophy teams while the national selectors would chalk out the A squad. “If a national selector wants to try any player they straightaway pick them for India A. If any national selector has a good equation with state selectors, they put in a word with them for particular players,” a BCCI official said. Of the 75 players initially picked in the North, South, East, West and Central zones for the domestic season-opening tournament, only six have represented India in Tests. Of them, pace veteran Mohammad Shami has not featured in a Test for three years, while Karun Nair, 34, and Shardul Thakur, 35, have slipped out of India’s plans since mid-2025. Former Indian selector Saba Karim, who represented East Zone on the national panel between 2012 and 2016, said the Duleep Trophy currently serves two purposes: winning the tournament and identifying players for the India A and the Test team.

“Although the selectors have shut the door on him now, Shami could still get back into the team based on one great performance or season. Even for Shardul, for that matter,” said Karim. Karim, however, observed that the presence of national selectors from each zone could improve the quality of the Duleep Trophy selections. “During my term as a national selector, the person who belongs to that particular zone would chair the meeting for zonal selections. I am not sure whether that is happening now. It isn’t mandatory, but the presence of national selectors creates a very healthy kind of an environment,” Karim told Central Zone selector from Madhya Pradesh, Suhail Ansari, confirmed that the national selectors “have not intervened” in the zonal selections. It marks a swift departure from a project undertaken two seasons ago during the 2024-25 Duleep Trophy when Ajit Agarkar’s national panel announced four squads – ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ – to align domestic selection more closely

Magnus Carlsen is the star at Esports World Cup, but Indian challenge strong

Magnus Carlsen had completed chess a fair time ago. There isn’t a major title left which the Norwegian maestro hasn’t conquered in his glittering career. The Classical and Rapid & Blitz World Championships, the Chess World Cup, Grand Chess Tour, Champions Chess Tour, and the Freestyle Championship — one might run out of breath, but Carlsen has won it all. The sport’s biggest name is busy ticking off certain side quests, now trying to combine the worlds of chess and Esports. It was Carlsen’s unflinching interest in Esports that paved the way for chess to debut at the Esports World Cup (EWC) last year.

After dominating the inaugural edition, Carlsen will mark his return for the EWC 2026 in Paris. He is not just the tournament’s headline act but also the global brand ambassador for the EWC alongside football legend Cristiano Ronaldo. Carlsen’s face dominates the Paris Metro and the many billboards in the city, making his performance one of the most anticipated storylines of the event. Standing in Carlsen’s way is his familiar rival, Hikaru Nakamura. The American has consistently pushed Carlsen in online and rapid formats but has rarely managed to get the better of him when it matters most. Carlsen has even conceded that Nakamura is superior in bullet chess. “There’s a mountain of evidence that Hikaru is better than me at no-increment bullet,” he stated earlier this year. However, in match formats like the EWC, Carlsen’s ability to raise his game in critical moments has repeatedly proven decisive.

Indian challenge With four players set to be in action, India will also deploy their strongest-ever representation at this EWC. Grandmasters Nihal Sarin, Aravindh Chithambaram, and Pranesh M are representing Indian Esports organisation Team S8UL. They will be joined by Arjun Erigaisi, who will compete for Gen.G Esports for the second consecutive year. Together, they will take on the world’s best players for a share of the \$1.5 million prize pool.

Nihal, Pranesh and Arjun secured direct qualification to the Group Stage through their performances in the 2025-26 Champions Chess Tour (CCT), while Aravindh earned his place through DreamHack Atlanta earlier this year. He will begin his campaign in the Play-In stage. Nihal and Arjun were the only Indians to compete in the previous edition. While Nihal reached the quarterfinals, Arjun finished in fourth place. The Indian challenge will be spearheaded by Nihal, the country’s strongest player in speed chess, who recently won Chess.com’s Bullet Chess Championship. In a remarkable run, he defeated defending champion Alireza Firouzja with 15 successive victories in the final. After finishing just outside the podium in the previous edition, Arjun will be hungry as ever to break his jinx of near-finishes. His dynamic attacking style makes him a genuine threat, while he has plenty of experience taking on some of the game’s biggest names. Starting with the Play-In stage, the road is toughest

with the national set-up.

Central Zone have picked a squad that largely rewards continuity from last year’s title-winning campaign. “We do not know about other zones. Our selection has been based entirely on those players who have performed. We won the championship last time, and we have got very good youngsters who have played for India in the recent past or are still playing,” MP selector Ansari told. Meanwhile, the West Zone continue to rely on their established names — nine of the 15 hail from Mumbai and Maharashtra — with five internationals in Ruturaj Gaikwad, Prithvi Shaw, Sarfaraz Khan, Shardul, and Tushar Deshpande. The trend extends to the East Zone, where 11 players from Bengal and Jharkhand dominate the squad. The zonal selection pitfalls are highlighted by the seasonal cycle in the South Zone, which includes Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Hyderabad, Kerala, Pondicherry, and Goa. An insider, who was part of the South Zone selection meeting held on August 1, revealed to this newspaper that selections were typically based on the performance of the teams in the previous Ranji season and certain “spots” reserved for each state association. In the squad picked in Hyderabad and chaired by the Andhra Cricket Association (ACA) secretary Sana Sathish Babu, seven of the 15 players came from Andhra and Hyderabad. This is up from three players from the region last year, when the selections were dictated by Kerala’s run to the final (four players) and the venue of the meeting (Pondicherry), which contributed two players.

It was also decided during the meeting that national players from the South, who have not expressed unavailability for the semi-final starting on August 30 in Bengaluru, were unanimously omitted from selection. These variations have come at the expense of team balance. Seven middle-order batters were named alongside only one specialist opener in the 15-member squad. The only representative from Kerala is MD Nidheesh, the seamer who racked up 28 wickets last season. At 35, Nidheesh is unlikely to be viewed as a long-term Test option despite his performances. Karnataka bowler Vidwath Kaverappa is the only other specialist pacer in the side. Meanwhile, Mumbai-born Pondicherry seam all-rounder Aman Khan earned a berth despite taking only nine wickets across two First-Class seasons. Andhra batter Ricky Bhui is understood to have earned a berth primarily because of his part-time wicket-keeping credentials. Retaining his spot in the South Zone squad, Bhui averages 24 in his last 20 innings across two Ranji seasons. “His performances have been poor, but he was picked in the form of a back-up keeper only because Andhra made the quarter-finals,” a South Zone official told on condition of anonymity. “We see that the West has continued to pick senior players like Shardul who have already played for India. Our intention in the South is different in that we look at the players from the previous Ranji season,” the official added. An over-reliance on the previous Ranji season can overlook sustained First-Class excellence, especially from players whose teams exited early, and bear little resemblance to the metrics used by India’s national selectors.

For instance, Tamil Nadu spinner R Sai Kishore was omitted despite collecting 97 wickets in the last three Ranji seasons. His tally of 20 wickets last season trailed Hyderabad’s Tanay Thyagarajan (27) and Andhra’s Tripurana Vijay (24), costing him his place despite being the second-highest wicket-taker (97) across the zone over the last three seasons. Averaging over 60 for 1285 runs in the last three seasons, Baba Indrajith is another questionable omission. Featuring in five matches last season, Indrajith hit 401 runs at 66.20 average. Across the last three seasons, only two South Zone batters have scored more runs at a higher average than Indrajith — a reminder that the qualities currently rewarded in the Duleep Trophy are not necessarily the qualities valued by the national selectors.



After dominating the inaugural edition, Carlsen will mark his return for the EWC 2026 in Paris. He is not just the tournament’s headline act but also the global brand ambassador for the EWC alongside football legend Cristiano Ronaldo. Carlsen’s face dominates the Paris Metro and the many billboards in the city, making his performance one of the most anticipated storylines of the event.

for Aravindh. Pranesh, on the other hand, could very well be the dark horse who could spring surprises with his game.

Adding an Indian subplot are two clubs — Team MGD1 and GodLike. A chess management firm based in Pune, MGD1 entered the fray at the last moment, onboarding Dutch Grandmaster Benjamin Bok after his club went defunct at the eleventh hour. Bok had secured his EWC 2026 qualification by defeating Indian Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi 2-1 in sets at the India Rising: Road to EWC Grand Finals in Mumbai. After a successful debut last year in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, the expanded competition in Paris will feature a new two-phase format, with an increased field of 22 players, six more than the previous edition. The first phase comprises a double-elimination Play-In stage starting August 11. It will feature eight players in total who qualified through the Last Chance Qualifier (LCQ) and DreamHack Atlanta earlier this year. Of the eight in the Play-In — where matches consist of two games using a 10-minute time control with no increment and Armageddon as a tiebreaker — only two will proceed to the main Group Stage, where they will meet 14 players, including defending champion Carlsen. The Group Stage will be held on August 12 and 13, with two groups of eight competing in double-elimination brackets under the same match format. The top eight then advance to the Playoffs and 15, where a single-elimination bracket features four-game quarterfinals, six-game semifinals and a Grand Final played as a best-of-three sets, with the first two sets consisting of four games and a potential final set consisting of two games.

Farhan Akhtar takes a dig at Ranveer Singh's exit from Don 3: 'A pattern nowadays'

GNS News Agency, August 18

Farhan Akhtar's Don 3, which was once supposed to star Ranveer Singh, has not even begun shooting, but the film has been at the centre of a prolonged controversy for months. The controversy surrounding the film began in 2025 when Ranveer Singh reportedly exited the project, just weeks before the film was scheduled to go on floors. What followed was a dispute between the actor and filmmaker, with multiple stakeholders eventually becoming involved in the fallout. Now, while discussing 25 years of Dil Chahta Hai, Farhan appeared to make a pointed, albeit playful, remark about Ranveer Singh, without mentioning his name.

Farhan was speaking about the difficulties of locking actors' dates for his debut film Dil Chahta Hai in a chat with The Hollywood Reporter India. Recalling how Saif Ali Khan almost walked out of the project shortly before filming, Farhan said the actor had a scheduling conflict with another film. "Saif suddenly had some date issue with another film that he was gonna do. The dates shifted, and he was kind of half in, half out on that. So he was in a bit of a spot, and he had to leave the film. And everybody tried to convince him, like, 'Yaar, please.' And for me, I was just like, my head was, like, destroyed. Because when we got, when I met him, when we got into it, there was nobody else who could have played that part. It was just impossible.

Farhan then appeared to draw a parallel with the uncertainty filmmakers can face today. "So, like, that was too heartbreaking for me. Not, maybe ten days, I think it was maybe about a month away from filming, which seems to be a pattern nowadays," he said, before smilingly adding, "Not just with me. Aisa bhi hota hai. Huh?" While Farhan did not name Ranveer but the remark inevitably brings the Don 3 row to mind, given that the actor's reported exit came only weeks before the film was expected to begin production.

"You can't take anything for granted" Farhan had previously spoken about the uncertainty surrounding Don 3 in another conversation with the publication. Without going into the specifics of the dispute, he said the experience had taught him to "expect the unexpected". "What I've learnt is expect the unexpected. You can't take anything for granted until it's on film. You realise at some point that there'll be a period that would come that would be a bit challenging. You've had it good. It's okay, just take it on your stride. I inculcated a lot from the experiences of people who came before me. There will be these moments which will come along that'll be challenging creatively and existentially. You'd wonder, do I have what it takes?" Farhan also reflected on how his career had already taught him to deal with professional setbacks. The success of Dil Chahta Hai was followed by the failure of his second directorial, Lakshya, starring Hrithik Roshan. The 2004 film did not perform at the box office as Farhan had hoped, and he admitted that it took him considerable time to recover from the disappointment. "This time, I could process it a lot faster. I've been through times in my life where I really wanted things to work, but they didn't. And it's really depressing. Like Lakshya, for example. It didn't do what I imagined a film like that would do. And it took me a long time out of it and really feel, is this something that is for me?"

The Don 3 controversy stems from Ranveer's reported decision to walk away from the film in December 2025, weeks before filming was scheduled to begin. Farhan's Excel Entertainment subsequently sought compensation for losses it said had been incurred during the film's pre-production, leading to a mediation process that eventually involved industry bodies. A non-cooperation directive was also issued against the actor by a cine body, which was revoked days later. As earlier reported by SCREEN, during a meeting held by the Producers Guild of India, Ranveer report-



edly outlined four key concerns that contributed to his decision to leave the project. According to the account, the actor maintained that the script was not up to his satisfaction. He also reportedly raised concerns about Farhan's availability, arguing that sustained creative collaboration had been difficult because of the filmmaker's other professional commitments, including concert tours and acting projects. Ranveer further alleged that his remuneration had been renegotiated downward and that the film's budget had been substantially reduced from the originally discussed figure of around Rs 300-350 crore to approximately Rs 150 crore. He also reportedly said that he had not received a signing advance for the project.

Excel Entertainment disputed Ranveer's claims. Farhan and Excel Entertainment disputed several of these allegations during subsequent meetings. According to their position, Ranveer had responded positively to multiple drafts of the script that were shared with him during the film's development. The producers also disputed the actor's claim that his remuneration had been reduced after the terms were agreed upon, maintaining that discussions around his fee had taken place during negotiations before the term sheet was signed.

Excel Entertainment also challenged Ranveer's assertions regarding the reduction in the film's budget and Farhan's availability. One of the most notable exchanges during the mediation reportedly involved Excel Entertainment's Ritesh Sidhwani asking Ranveer whether he would have left Don 3 had Dhurandhar not become a blockbuster. According to people present at the meeting, Ranveer said he would not have exited the project under those circumstances. Ranveer subsequently proposed a settlement to resolve the dispute. He reportedly offered Rs 10 crore as immediate compensation, along with a 25% discount on his fee for any future project produced by Excel Entertainment. The producers, however, rejected the proposal. Their position was that a discount on a future collaboration had little value, as they were no longer interested in working with the actor and were instead seeking compensation for losses they had already incurred. The Don 3 controversy gained steam after Dhurandhar became a massive hit in December 2025, earning over Rs 1300 crore worldwide. The sequel, which released in March, proved to be an even bigger hit, and earned over Rs 1800 crore worldwide, making it the biggest Hindi film series of all time.

chased a neighbouring property as well to further expand the premises. She has yet to react to the incident.

The latest incident comes almost a decade after she was robbed at gunpoint at an apartment in Paris, France. Thieves disguised as police officers broke into her place, tied her up, and stole over \$6 million worth of jewellery, including a diamond ring valued at \$4 million from Kanye West. In 2025, the trial of the 10 defendants concluded, with eight found guilty and two acquitted. The daughter of attorney and businessman Robert Kardashian and socialite Kris Jenner, Kim Kardashian is best known for the reality television series Keeping Up with the Kardashians, which revolves around the personal and professional lives of the Kardashian-Jenner family.

Ajay Devgn to host 'Crime Patrol 2026', show to premiere on Aug 31

Mumbai: Actor Ajay Devgn is set to take over as the host of Sony Entertainment Television's long-running true-crime franchise "Crime Patrol" with its latest season, scheduled to premiere on August 31.

Titled "Crime Patrol 2026 – Crime Ka Current Season", the show will air at 10:30 pm on Sony Entertainment Television and stream on Sony LIV. Devgn, whose screen image has often been associated with police and action roles in films such as "Singham", "Drishyam" and "Gangajal", will present stories inspired by cases that have shaken the nation.

In a recently released promo, the actor addresses viewers directly, urging them not to be consumed by fear but to exercise greater caution while navigating the realities of crime. "Main rahunga aapke saath," Devgn says in the promo, assuring viewers that he will accompany them through the stories. In a statement, the actor said joining a show like 'Crime Patrol' felt like a responsibility to his fans and viewers. "The show has built a legacy of understanding crime stories while driving awareness among viewers, encouraging them to become more vigilant about the people around them and who they interact with and trust," Devgn said. "As we bring to the forefront some of the stories inspired by cases that have shaken the nation, I hope and believe that I can help and guide audiences to navigate them with caution rather than fear," he added.

Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna turns 20: Karan Johar romanticized, glamorized infidelity

Twenty years later, Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna is still one of the most divisive Karan Johar films till date, with polarised opinions and audience feedback. The supposed 'romantic' drama, starring Rani Mukerji as Maya, Shah Rukh Khan as Dev, Preity Zinta as Rhea, and Abhishek Bachchan as Rishi, released in 2006 and was considered way ahead of its time for the Indian society. Being a fan of Karan Johar's feel-good cinema, I have watched KANK more than once. But, even 20 years later, it demands one question – When does understanding the reason why someone cheats become an excuse for the cheating itself? Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna divided audiences with a section criticising the film for its portrayal of infidelity while another called it a mature look at modern marriages. As the film turns 20, the debate refuses to die. We bring you two contrarian pieces on the Karan Johar film. Shruti Kapoor disagrees with Navya Kharbanda's point of view, writing that KANK was never asking audiences to approve of an affair. It was asking them to look past one, at two marriages that had failed long before anybody strayed. Read her piece here.

The unusual Karan Johar movie had everything the filmmaker is known for — good-looking people in good-looking settings, lavish songs, Shah Rukh Khan, and beautiful songs. However, under the glossy skin was a core value that failed to go with his 'love your family' ethic. The story of two lovers Dev and Maya, who fall in love with each other, despite being married to other people, was supposed to represent the depth of unhappy marriages, emotional unavailability, and the possibility of falling out of love. All happy couples are alike; each unhappy couple is unhappy in its own way. However, somewhere between making us understand Dev and Maya's perspective, Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna forgets the difference between showcasing adultery and romanticizing it. A bad marriage can explain why two people are unhappy, but it cannot automatically justify betrayal and turning to a third to compensate for the unhappiness.

The accident didn't make Dev a difficult husband. Shah Rukh Khan plays Dev Saran who is bitter and frustrated because he is unable to play football after an accident and leg injury. But, much before he bid goodbye to his sports career, his wife Rhea's (Preity Zinta) professional success had started bothering him. In the opening scene, when Dev calls Rhea to talk about his match, his insecurities surface during their conversation. Resentful and competitive, he asks if she is happy because she earns more than him. Dev forgets their wedding anniversary, only for Rhea to remember, but the blame of emotional distance somehow lands on the woman. Their love didn't diminish because Rhea was an unavailable due to her busy work schedule, it was because Dev simply wanted to walk out of their marriage after meeting Maya. There is not even a hint of any desire to work things out with his wife, who he must have loved in the past, ergo the decision to marry and have a child with her. In the entire first half, Dev keeps grumbling about not being understood when he made minimal effort to understand his life partner.

Dev and Rhea's 6-year-old son Arjun often becomes a punching bag for his frustration, which is even more uncomfortable to watch. The filmmaker tries to examine the reasons behind adultery, which weren't even justified. Rhea isn't perfect, she is ambitious, busy and sometimes unavailable. But, the fact that she earns more cannot be the cause of her husband's emotional crisis. They both were at fault but while Rhea wants to work on herself and protect their marriage, Dev chooses to have an affair. Entering a mar-



riage with doubts. Similarly, it would be too easy to call Maya a blameless wife. She and Rishi both fail to communicate with each other properly, which is the key to a happy marriage. A failing marriage and having an affair are two different things.

Maya's problems start much before Dev, because she suddenly didn't become unhappy, but already had doubts about tying the knot with her best friend cum core family member, Rishi. Despite that, she makes the mistake of marrying Rishi, only to blame the emotional cheating on his daily-life issues? A still from Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna. A still from Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna.

They both are very different personalities – while Rishi wants more physical intimacy and reassurance in his marital relationship, Maya felt it was putting pressure on her. It is undeniable that Rishi can also be immature, insensitive and very fixated on physical affection, but there's a clear difference between flawed partners and cheating partners. Even if Maya felt unsatisfied after staying in the marriage for a while, adultery cannot be the only escape. If she really felt that Rishi was more of a best friend for her instead of a husband, it should have been easier to confront the truth.

Dev and Maya form an intimate relationship much later in the film. Amid their troubled marriages, they form a deep, emotional bond initially. And my friend, emotional infidelity doesn't happen overnight. One has to fall out of love, start having feelings for someone else, spend time with the other person, to realise they have detached from their spouse – its series of choices and opportunities. During that process, both Dev and Maya had several chances to confess the truth to Rhea and Rishi, but they don't, which make their transgressions worse. Towards the end of Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna, after all the damage is done, Dev and Maya go to their respective partners and say – 'I was cheating on you for the last 6 months, but I am ready to give our marriage another chance, so let's work it out'.

The filmmaker tries to make us understand the reasons behind adultery, but understanding those reasons doesn't justify the choices. Dev and Maya meet, confide, become jealous, test their partners and lie. Eventually, they sleep together. The saddest part is that Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna makes the affair look beautiful, with songs like 'Mitwa' and 'Tumhi Dekho Na', the cinematography, and the patina of gorgeousness that all Dharma films have. In 2026, the film can also be read as two adults who repeatedly had opportunities to be honest and chose not to be. 20 years later, the more important lesson is not that 'Every marriage doesn't survive' but actually 'Be honest in your relationship'.

Prakash Raj calls out crackdown on Jharkhand student protests: 'Brutality won't work anymore'



After being at the forefront of the student protests led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) last month, which eventually resulted in the resignation of then Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, veteran actor Prakash Raj has now voiced his support for the ongoing student protests in Jharkhand. The protests in Jharkhand have been led by students and job aspirants alleging irregularities in government examinations. On August 10, students marched towards the Vidhan Sabha, where they were met with lathi-charge, tear gas and water cannons by the state authorities. Reacting to the developments, Prakash Raj took to X on Monday and reposted a video allegedly recorded at

the protest site. The visuals showed tear gas being fired and police using lathis to disperse the protesting students. Sharing the video, the actor wrote, "Why .. Why .. Why. This brutality will not work anymore.. it will only bring the arrogant power down." Prakash Raj had also been a visible presence during the student protests led by CJP last month. At Delhi's Jantar Mantar, where he joined the protesters ahead of their Chalo Sansad march, the actor addressed the gathering from atop a vehicle using a loudspeaker. As protesters raised the slogan "Inquilab Zindabad" (long live the revolution), Prakash waved the Indian Constitution towards the crowd, drawing cheers from those gathered.

Before the Chalo Sansad march, he told the protesters, "I am with you tonight. I am right here. We will see what happens," he said while addressing the gathering. The actor also shared a selfie video from the protest site on social media, captioning it, "Youth of our country are #JustAsking." The video featured protesters raising slogans, before Prakash concluded, "That's youngsters fighting for the cause." The protests in Jharkhand began after the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) declared the preliminary examination results of the 14th Combined Civil Services Examination on July 2. Around 3.5 lakh candidates had appeared for the examination. Job aspirants have since alleged irregularities in the examination process, including claims of a paper leak. The allegations have fuelled protests by students demanding greater transparency and accountability.

Harshvardhan Rane unveils 'first trial look test' for RGV's Police Company

Mumbai: Actor Harshvardhan Rane has shared a glimpse of his first trial look test as he prepares to step into the world of filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma's upcoming project 'Police Company'.

The actor took to X, formerly called Twitter, where he shared a video of himself removing his beard for his look as Dayanayak and said that the look is still in its early stages, with RGV set to add more permanent details and gradually build his character's appearance. "This was my 1st trial look test for stepping into #DAYANAYAK sir's world. @rgvzoomin Sir will now add more permanent details and build the look slowly," Harshvardhan wrote as the caption. It was on Monday when RGV announced his next titled "Police Company", which will be produced by T-Series.

RGV wrote: "My NEXT film's NAME being produced by T SERIES is... POLICE COMPANY With the tag line: 'It Is More Dangerous Than D Company'. The police is an institution, and an underworld company is a money making organisation.. But when an institution is given extra pow-

ers, it will soon become a company."

"After DAWOOD IBRAHIM brutally finished most of his rival gangs, he grew his GANG into a COMPANY and then left for DUBAI leaving his protégée CHOTA RAJAN to head the operations of D COMPANY. Subsequently a chain of events led to a split between Dawood and Rajan , which in turn caused a vacuum in the Mumbai underworld."

"Taking advantage of the situations many other gangs jumped in to stake their claim for the top spot creating a massive outburst of criminal activities. The system was completely failing to halt the gang activities which in turn was attracting a lot of young men from places like U P, M P, Bihar etc to join the underworld companies. In a panicky situation a special squad was created which in between 1997 and 2004 killed more than 300 gangsters."

RGV said that the film "Police Company" is story inspired from that "SQUAD based on one of its team members DAYA NAYAK which is being played by HARSH VARDHAN RANE ..The film has a huge ensemble cast , the details of which will be revealed soon."