

Adilabad man held for duping youth with fake police job offer

Adilabad: A man was arrested for allegedly duping a jobseeker under the guise of providing a placement with the police department in Gudihathnoor mandal centre on Wednesday.

Police said that Pad Raju from Mannoor village was apprehended for duping Swapnil of the same village by collecting Rs 1 lakh after promising to offer a police job.

Trusting the words of Raju, Swapnil transferred Rs 1 lakh from his mother's account in 2018. However, Raju neither provided the job, nor repaid the amount since then. Based on a complaint lodged by Swapnil, a case has been registered against Raju. Investigations have been taken up.

Trader held for diverting PDS rice in Adilabad

Adilabad: A trader was arrested on charges of diverting PDS (Public Distribution System) rice in Indervelli mandal centre on Wednesday. Police seized 150 quintals of PDS rice.

Police said that Chintawar Santosh was apprehended for diverting PDS rice. Santosh was found storing the grains and profiting by selling the same during inspections held by the police. The rice was handed over to civil supplies for further action.



PM distributes social media ‘report cards’ to ministers, asks them to boost outreach among Gen Z

NEW DELHI AUGUST 19

Ministers at the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday were greeted with white sheets of paper — their digital report cards mapping presence across major social media platforms. Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged all ministers to boost their performance and outreach among people.

The report cards provided details of posts made by ministers, engagement per post, and the number of followers they had.

Recently, MPs invited for breakfast at the PM's residence were also given similar digital report cards.

The exercise also included comparative social media rankings of ministers, other BJP leaders, and prominent opposition figures.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi ranked number one. Amit Shah, Yogi Adityanath, Rahul Gandhi, Asaduddin

Owaisi, Raghav Chadha, Kangana Ranaut, Nitin Gadkari and Arvind Kejriwal were among the other top rankers.

At the meeting, a decision was also taken for ministers to visit universities to expand outreach to Gen Z.

The expectation is that every minister will visit one university a day and engage with students on issues related to the education system, curriculum and examination patterns.

The outreach with youth will proceed as part of a PM-led strategy to expand the social media reach of government leaders and ministers.

Ministers have further been asked to engage with youth through any medium available to them.

Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman took the Vande Bharat train from Delhi to Jaipur and interacted with five students on the way.

At Least Nine Dead in Massive Kolkata Hotel Fire

Kolkata: At least nine people died, and six were injured in a fire at a hotel on Mirza Galib Street in central Kolkata early on Wednesday night, police said. Five fire tenders were pressed into service to douse the blaze that erupted around 1.45 am. Police and Disaster Management Department personnel reached the spot for the rescue operation.

The injured have been taken to a nearby hospital.

"The dense smoke made it difficult for firefighters to climb the staircase and reach the upper floors. While nine people have died, more deaths are feared," a police officer told PTI.

"Our priority is to rescue those trapped and determine the reasons for the fire. The flames have been doused, and the cooling process is underway," he added.

West Bengal Fire Department headquarters is located close to the hotel building.



Konda Surekha served notice over daughter's remarks against MLA Revuri

Hyderabad:., August 19

TPCC Disciplinary Committee has sought an explanation from Endowments and Forest Minister Konda Surekha over remarks made by her daughter, Konda Sushmita, against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and senior Congress MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy in Parkal. The committee directed Surekha to submit her explanation within three days.

During the birthday celebrations of her mother, Sushmita warned Revanth Reddy and ridiculed Revuri Prakash Reddy over his candidature in Parkal. She declared that she would contest as an independent candidate in the next elections, if needed.

The notice comes amid growing friction in the Parkal Congress unit, with Sushmita making strong remarks against the Chief Minister and Revuri Prakash Reddy. Sushmita made headlines earlier by accusing Revanth Reddy and other Congress leaders of threatening a businessman at gunpoint and also trying to intimidate her mother's staff.

The disciplinary committee also sought an explanation



from former Minister and Telangana State Planning Board vice-chairman G Chinnareddy over alleged anti-party remarks made at a recent meeting in the Wanaparthi Assembly constituency and his alleged inappropriate comments against the local MLA.

In another issue, the committee ordered the suspension of senior LB Nagar Congress leader Jakkidi Prabhakar Reddy, accusing him of allegedly making derogatory remarks against several individuals, including references to their castes.

CWC to Take Paper Leaks, ‘Chanda Chori’ to Grassroots



New Delhi, August 19

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Wednesday decided to take issues including paper leaks and alleged "chanda chori" at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya to the grassroots and demanded a Supreme Court-monitored probe and audit into the alleged donation theft.

The CWC also discussed alleged Chinese incursions in Arunachal Pradesh and accused the government of following a "surrender policy". It raised concerns over agricultural and energy security and E20 fuel.

The meeting discussed the singing of Vande Mataram and said the party would sing only two stanzas of the song in accordance with the 1937 resolution, which had the concurrence of senior leaders including Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Subhash Chandra Bose and Tagore.

Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal said 88 leaders attended the CWC meeting and 33 spoke.

"We are focused on three-four issues. Number one is paper leaks. The agitation done by the people of the country and the way the government dealt with that agitation was discussed. The CWC noted that the Monsoon Session of Parliament was successful for the Opposition and the government was on the back foot," he said.

Venugopal said Rahul Gandhi's 'Chhatron ki Goonj' would continue with more such gatherings in 800 cities, some of which would be headed by the former Congress president.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge asked the party's chief ministers to work with education experts to prepare a roadmap to overhaul the education and examination system and submit a report to him, Venugopal said.

"Chanda Chori" is a serious area of concern among

people of this country. It is an issue associated with the sentiments of people. Those who used Ram Mandir for polarising people now stand exposed," Venugopal said.

"We will take this issue to the grassroots level. We directed PCCs to take it up at the village and panchayat level," he said.

Venugopal said the alleged "Chinese incursion" in Arunachal Pradesh was also discussed.

The CWC reiterated its demand that women's reservation be implemented within the current strength of 543 Lok Sabha seats. Venugopal said the party wanted the number of seats capped at 543 for the next 25 years, with one-third reserved for women and implemented immediately.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise to the country over the "shudhikaran" in Uttarakhand after Kharge's programme there.

Addressing the CWC, Kharge said, "In Parliament, too, we strove for a comprehensive deliberation on issues concerning education and examinations-seeking a discussion on the injustices faced by students and demanding accountability. However, (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi ji and (Home Minister) Amit Shah ji evaded questions throughout the Monsoon Session. Now that they have started speaking, they are prioritising non-issues over the questions raised by the youth,"

The CWC meeting was held at Indira Bhawan and chaired by Kharge. Former Congress presidents Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretaries Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Jairam Ramesh and K.C. Venugopal and senior leaders Ambika Soni, Mukul Wasnik and P. Chidambaram were among those who attended.

Telangana CEO releases draft electoral roll after SIR enumeration

Hyderabad:., August 19

After nearly 50-day enumeration forms distribution and collection process that concluded on August 10, the Telangana Chief Electoral Office (CEO) released the draft electoral roll as part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral roll in the State.

As many as 2,64,87,213 out of 3,38,26,448 electors submitted their forms. Of the total electors, a staggering 73,39,235 are identified under the Absent, Shifted, Death and Duplication (ASDD) category.

Of these, 9,22,229 electors are categorised as dead, 11,25,546 absent or untraceable, 45,18,963 permanently shifted, 6,70,203 already enrolled and 1,02,294 are categorised under other categories.

The electors identified under the ASDD have been removed from the draft roll. However, genuine electors still have a chance to enrol back in the ongoing claims and objection phase, which concludes on September 16. Such individuals have to fill and submit the Form-6 along with the prescribed declaration form.

Among those who submitted the forms, the Telangana CEO identified anomalies in the forms submitted by 92,87,577 electors. While 60,50,918 voters have anomalies such as name and age mismatch in their forms, 32,36,659 electors have not furnished their SIR 2002 list details.

Now, the Telangana CEO has commenced issuing notices to 92,87,577 electors who have any one of these nine identified logical discrepancies/anomalies.

Electors who will receive the notice from the Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant EROs via the Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and/or registered post at their house addresses on or before September 16. Replies, along with necessary documents, can be submitted to the BLOs, AEROs or EROs.

If not satisfied with details, an ERO/AERO might call an elector for hearing for submitting additional information.



The notice and disposal of claims and objections phase will conclude on October 15, and the final electoral roll will be published on October 19.

Amit Shah to chair Southern Zonal Council meet in TN

Chennai:., August 19

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will chair the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council on August 20 at Mamallapuram near here, and the chief ministers of southern states and UTs will take part, the government said on Wednesday.

The Southern Zonal Council comprises the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, and the Union Territories of Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.

The council serves as an excellent forum for resolving issues and disputes between the Centre and the member States/Union Territories, the union government said.

River water sharing disputes between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and Kerala are among the ongoing disputes. In an official release, the Centre said that the council meetings also discuss broad issues of national importance.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Caste census exercise gets tricky

The government's decision to use an open-ended format for the caste census, to be conducted alongside the population enumeration phase of the Census 2027, is fraught with complex problems. The open-ended format for recording people's responses to the question of caste, rather than a drop-down menu of castes, poses a tricky challenge: converting millions of individual responses into reliable, standardised caste data without altering what respondents have reported. As per the plan, the enumerators will simply ask people to state their caste and record the answer verbatim, without attempting to classify surnames, sub-castes or other responses into broader caste categories. Population enumeration, along with the caste census, will be conducted across the country in February. This methodology is expected to create massive data processing hurdles, risks generating millions of unverified distinct entries, and leaves the state vulnerable to accusations of arbitrarily standardising or altering raw public responses. Without a restricted list, respondents may report sub-castes, clans, or regional variations verbatim.

The open-ended method was exactly how the 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) was conducted. The exercise failed to produce usable caste data largely because of poor data quality, the absence of a standardised caste registry and flaws in operational design. Since respondents could self-report caste names without verification, the exercise generated an administrative nightmare. The final dataset contained nearly 46.7 lakh distinct caste names, compared with the 4,147 castes recorded in the last comprehensive caste census in 1931. The Centre eventually withheld the raw caste data.

PARAMESWAR REDDY: I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR UPPAL BHAGAYATH'S DEVELOPMENT



“----Multi-Sports Arena with ₹3.50 Crore Investment; Footpaths to Be Built Soon at a Cost of ₹35 Crore”UPPAL, AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-Charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy said that he would take responsibility for the comprehensive development of Uppal Bhagayath in all sectors. He said that with the support of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, necessary funds were being sanctioned and development works were being expedited in the area. “On Wednesday, Parameswar Reddy inspected the ₹3.50-crore multi-sports arena being constructed at Uppal Bhagayath along with colony residents, HMDA and municipal engineering officials. “Multi-Sports Arena with Modern Facilities”Parameswar Reddy said the multi-sports arena would feature facilities such as a baby pool, swimming pool, triple jump area, air rifle and air pistol facilities. He said the completion of the multi-sports complex would give Uppal Bhagayath a special identity and assured that steps were being taken to complete the construction as early as possible and make it available to the public. “Footpaths Worth ₹35 Crore Soon”Parameswar Reddy said development works worth hundreds of crores of rupees were already underway in Uppal Bhagayath. He announced that footpaths would soon be constructed at an estimated cost of ₹35 crore and that the related proposals were in the final stage. “Vakkanti Srinivas Rao, Bijjala Ravinder Reddy, Vamsi Chandra Reddy, Eega Santosh, Poojala Prabhakar, Viswanath, Shiva Prasad Rao, Suryagopal, Chari, Tummala Devi Reddy, Lingampally Ramakrishna, Rafiq, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Sunku Shekhar Reddy, Manda Murali Krishna Reddy, Murthy, Manohar Reddy, Mahesh, Murali, Raghavendra Reddy, Mallikarjun, Sandeep, Yadavalli Raju, Viprav Reddy, Kishan, Muthyangari Ravi, Sridhar Reddy, Chandrasekhar Reddy, Bangla Srinivas Reddy, Srihari, Sangameswar Reddy and others participated in the programme.

Telangana Sailors Shine at World Championship in Italy



“Hyderabad, August 19 (Indian Chronicle) : Eight sailors from Telangana helped India win 16 medals at the International Cadet Class Under-17 World Championship held at Lake Garda in Italy, Telangana Sailing Association and Yacht Club of Hyderabad president Suhaim Shaikh said in a statement on Wednesday. He said the pair of Chandralekha Tattari and Rishwita Sunchankota won a silver medal in the Silver Fleet. The pair of Ravikumar Banneolu and Badrinath Nirudu finished eighth, while Vinod Dandu and Mani Nilakonda secured 11th place. Kaunik Vardhan and Hanumanth Vadhya finished 20th. Ravikumar also secured first place in one of the races. The successful sailors include Udbhav School students Ravikumar, Chandralekha and Mani; Vinod from Nallakunta Government School; Badrinath from Bansilalpet Government School; and Gurukul students Rishwita, Hanumanth and Kaunik Vardhan.

Two Flyovers Should Be Constructed at Kushayiguda and Radhika X Roads



UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY”UPPAL, AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy has urged the Telangana Minister for Roads & Buildings and Cinematography, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, to take steps for the construction of two flyovers at Kushayiguda X Roads and Radhika X Roads to provide a permanent solution to the increasing traffic congestion in the Uppal constituency. “The

MLA met Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and submitted his request. He stated that Kushayiguda and Radhika X Roads are major connecting points to areas including ECIL, Keesara and Nagaram. “Due to rapid urbanisation, the expansion of residential areas and the sharp increase in vehicular movement, severe traffic congestion is being witnessed every day at these two major junctions. During peak hours, commuters, students and employees are forced to remain stuck in traffic for hours, resulting in loss of time and fuel as well as increased air and noise pollution. He also pointed out that traffic congestion has increased the possibility of road accidents in these areas. Against this backdrop, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy requested the minister to initiate the necessary measures for constructing one flyover at Kushayiguda X Roads and another at Radhika X Roads, and to expedite the required approvals and sanction funds for the projects. “The MLA said that completion of the two flyovers would ensure smoother traffic flow, reduce the possibility of accidents and provide better transportation facilities to people in Keesara, Nagaram, Kushayiguda, ECIL and surrounding areas. He appealed to Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy to consider these two crucial projects on priority and sanction them at the earliest to provide a long-term solution to the transportation problems faced by the public.

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. He joked that it looked like a coffee cup and even asked me if I had brought coffee. I was thinking to myself, “Wow, he is actually joking with me!” I was secretly thrilled (laughs). “How is it working with the current generation of directors? “Earlier, directors would explain the situation or concept and ask for a tune accordingly. But many of the directors coming in now don't approach it that way. They explain the scenes, but they are unable to clearly convey what they want to say through the scene, what the core concept is, or what kind of song they are looking for. Sometimes, they are unable to explain the overall concept of the film clearly either. Unless the concept is explained properly, a lyricist cannot write the lyrics and I cannot compose the tune. “What is your opinion about credits being missed in music or being given to someone else? “I faced a similar situation with Aay. Ram Miriyala garu also contributed two songs, while I worked on the rest of the music. However, only his name appeared in some places. It was incorrectly reported in the media. That is why Bunny Vasu garu would mention my name at every event. He also tried to correct the misinformation that appeared in certain sections of the media. More recently, during Save the Tigers, someone else's name appeared instead of mine. I always make sure to give credit to every member of my team. “Are you satisfied with your decade-long journey? “Although it has been ten years on paper, a significant part of that journey was lost to the COVID period. Over the course of this journey, I have gained confidence in myself. I now know that I can score music for any kind of film. I am confident that I can create exceptional music even for a big commercial film. That confidence is something I have earned over these ten years. Now, I am waiting for the right opportunity.

Taranaka Division Residents Demand Immediate Resolution of Civic Issues“Roads in Taranaka Division Resemble Ponds Due to Waterlogging

Tarnaka, August 19 (Indian Chornical): “Former Corporator Smt. Alakunta Saraswathi Hari has demanded that the GHMC authorities and concerned contractors immediately address the long-pending civic issues in Taranaka Division and complete all unfinished works without further delay. “She stated that roads in several parts of the division have been dug up for various works and left incomplete for many days, causing severe inconvenience to residents and motorists. “In particular, on the road leading from under Taranaka Flyover towards Vijaya Dairy, the road was dug up and the works have remained incomplete for a long time. Due to heavy waterlogging, the road now resembles a pond, making it extremely difficult for pedestrians and motorists to commute. Despite the seriousness of the situation, the concerned officials have failed to take timely action, she alleged. “She also pointed out that trees have been removed at several locations in the division, but the branches and debris have not been completely cleared. This is creating inconvenience for residents and is also contributing to prolonged delays in restoring electricity whenever power supply is disrupted. She urged the officials to immediately clear the remaining branches and take necessary measures. “Questioning the alleged negligence of the authorities with regard to roads, sanitation, removal of tree branches and electricity-related issues, Saraswathi Hari



asked why the administration was failing to respond to the basic needs of the people. She said it was unfortunate that residents of Taranaka Division were being forced to face such difficult conditions due to failures in maintaining basic infrastructure. “Smt. Alakunta Saraswathi Hari assured the residents of Taranaka Division that she would bring all these issues to the attention of local MLA Sri Padma Rao and discuss them with the concerned officials. She promised to take necessary steps to ensure that the pending works are completed at the earliest. “Chintala Manohar, Orsu Krishna, Uddemari Prasad, Tallapalli Raju, Neeraj, Raju, Shashi, Usman, and others participated in the protest programme.

Threats and High-Handed Behaviour Will Not Be Tolerated:



MEDIPALLY, CI JALENDER REDDY Advises Transgender Persons”MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally Circle Inspector Jalender Reddy warned that everyone in society must respect the law and live with mutual cooperation, and that strict legal action would be taken against anyone engaging in activities that disturb public peace. He made it clear that threatening people, pressuring them for money, or resorting to high-handed behaviour would not be tolerated under any circumstances. Following a complaint regarding an attack on transgender persons in the Peerzadiguda area on Tuesday, police registered a case and launched an investigation. Against this backdrop, a counselling session on social issues and legal responsibilities was conducted for transgender persons at the Medipally Police Station under the supervision of CI Jalender Reddy. “Speaking on the occasion, CI Jalender Reddy said transgender persons have the right to live with dignity and equal respect in society. However, he stated that they should not inconvenience others, issue threats, or engage in disputes as part of activities undertaken for their livelihood. “He warned that legal action would be taken if people are harassed indiscriminately at different places and times. He particularly advised transgender persons not to trouble organisers during auspicious functions or the inauguration of new businesses and to cooperate with them. “The CI made it clear that pressuring people for money, forcibly collecting money, or engaging in confrontations would invite legal action. He advised them to approach the police directly in case of any problems or disputes instead of getting into confrontations. “CI Jalender Reddy urged them to follow police instructions and act within the framework of the law. He said that if everyone respects one another, follows the law and cooperates with each other, transgender persons can gain greater dignity and recognition in society. “Medipally police personnel and several transgender persons participated in the programme.

Permanent Solution to Low-Voltage Problem in Indiranagar Through Initiative of State Congress Leader MOHAMMED RAFIQ



“RAMANTHAPUR , AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Residents of Indiranagar in Ramantapur Division, who had been suffering from a low-voltage electricity problem for several years, have finally received a permanent solution. State Congress leader Mohammed Rafiq took special initiative to resolve the issue with the power supply. “As part of the Basti Bata programme, Mohammed Rafiq visited Indiranagar, where local residents brought the low-voltage problem to his notice. He immediately brought the issue to the attention of Uppal Congress Party in-charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy. Subsequently, he remained in constant communication with electricity department officials and made special efforts to resolve the problem. “As a result, the electricity supply in Indiranagar has improved and the low-voltage problem has been permanently resolved, Mohammed Rafiq said. He stated that his objective is not to limit public issues to mere assurances, but to identify them and ensure their resolution. He said he considers people's problems as his own and would continue working until they are resolved. “Senior Congress leaders Poosa Satyaiah, Chukka Satyanarayana, Adinarayana Goud, Gangaputra Bhaskar, Ankala Sandeep, M.D. Shakeel, Poosa Balaraj, Poosa Mallikarjun, Gangaputra Ashok, Youth Congress leader Swamy, NSUI leader Sai and others participated in the programme.

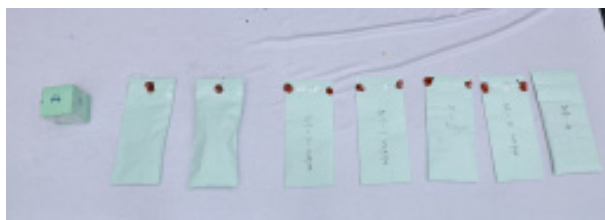
Special Officer Inspects Bambara Tribal Residential High School

“August 20. (Indian Chronicle) “Wankidi News A Special Officer visited the Bambara Tribal Residential High School in Wankidi Mandal and inspected the educational and residential facilities available to the students. The officer enquired about student facilities, school management, teaching, and other related matters. “Headmistress Prasanna explained the current situation of the school to the Special Officer. The officer suggested taking necessary steps to ensure better education, accommodation, food, drinking water, and other essential facilities for the students. “Local Sarpanch Bendare Krishnaji, Deputy Sarpanch Jade Santosh, and school staff participated in the programme.

The Sarpanch and Deputy Sarpanch assured that they would extend their support to provide necessary facilities and ensure that students face no difficulties.



GACHIBOWLI POLICE, SOT CYBERABAD TEAMS NABBED THREE MDMA PEDDLERS AND SEIZED 95.41 GRAMS OF MDMA DRUG & 50 GRAMS OF OG KUSH. WORTH Rs. 16.4 LAKHS.



“Serilingampalli Zone: Acting on reliable information Gachibowli police, SOT Cyberabad teams jointly nabbed 03 drug peddlers along with 16 consumers and recovered 95.41 Grams of MDMA drug & 50 Grams of OG Kush. worth Rs. 16.49 Lakhs.”“CASE DETAILS: 1431/2026 U/s 27(B),8C,22(C) NDPS ACT of Gachibowli PS.”“SEIZED PROPERTY: 1.) MDMA – 95.41 Grams of Worth Rs.11,40,920/- “2.) OG Kush – 50 Grams of Worth Rs. 5,00,000/- Total property seized worth Rs.16,40,920/-“ 3.) Two cell phones”“DETAILS OF THE ACCUSED: 1) Md Razal Abdul Gafoor, Age 26, Occ Business, R/o Begur, Bangalore, Karnataka State, N/o Thrissur, Kerala State.”“2) Navina KD, Age 22, Occ Business, R/o Begur, Bangalore, Karnataka State. N/o Thrissur, Kerala State.”“3) Koripella Yashwanth Sai Shanmukh, Age: 26 years, Occ: unemployed R/o Moosapet, Kukatpally, Hyderabad. N/o East Godavari, A.P State.”“FACTS OF THE CASE: On 11.08.2026, arrested MDMA peddler Koripella Yashwanth Sai Shanmukh near Kindom pub road, Vattinagulapally along with 16 consumers, on enquiry Yashwanth revealed that he procured MDMA from Md Razal Abdul Gafoor R/o Kerala

& Navina KD R/o Bangalore, upon which formed teams to apprehend accused persons at Kerala & Bangalore.”“On 18.08.2026, arrested Md Razal Abdul Gafoor at Trissur, Kerala on enquiry he revealed that he was given 44.41 Grams of MDMA to Koripella Yashwanth Sai Shanmukh which was procured from Sam (Nigerian) and on the same day arrested Navina KD at Begur, Bangalore of Karnataka State, on search of her residence at Begur found 51 Grams of MDMA & 50 Grams of OG Kush, on enquiry Navina KD revealed that seized drug procured from her friend Aneshwar from Kerala.”“The above arrests were made under the direct supervision of CH. Srinivas, DCP, Serilingampally Zone, Shobhan Kumar, DCP, SOT Cyberabad, T. Govardhan, Addl. DCP-I, SOT Cyberabad, Uday Reddy, Addl. Dy. Commissioner of Police, Serilingampally Zone, G Venkata Ramana Goud, ACP, Narsingi Division, SOT Cyberabad teams & SHO, Gachibowli PS, DI Gachibowli and Gachibowli police personnel.”“ADVISORY: The CITIZENS are hereby requested to inform the Police pertaining to any information related to Druga/Ganja suppliers through Dial 100 or through Cyberabad WhatsApp number 8712663061. Management of Educational institutions are requested to keep an eye on student's activities, if any information related to Drugs/Ganja, inform to Police Immediately. Identity will be kept confidential.

Every Character in Ameer Log Has Its Own Importance: Actress Vedha Jalandhar



‘Ameer Log’ is the maiden production venture of Madhavi Reddy Soma under the Awwal Number Productions banner. Directed by Ramana Reddy Soma, the film has Manohar Reddy Manchuri as co-producer. MC Hari, Manoj and Sashidhar play the lead roles, while Vedha Jalandhar, Ravan Nitturu, Vishwender Reddy and Sai Yogi essay key characters. Rana Daggubati's Spirit Media is set to release the film grandly in Telugu on August 21. As part of the promotional campaign, actress Vedha Jalandhar shared interesting details about the movie and her experience working on it. “Tell us about your journey.” “I started my career in 2019. Two films I worked on were screened at international film festivals, but unfortunately, they were not released. Later, I also trained in theatre to improve my acting skills. I have really enjoyed this journey of learning acting and being part of films.” “What is your role like in ‘Ameer Log’?” “My character is like the girl next door. She is a woman who can inspire others. My mother has always been my inspiration, and the character in this film also reflects some of her qualities. I learned from my mother to be straightforward and speak my mind without hesitation. My character has the same nature.” “How did you get the opportunity to work in ‘Ameer Log’?” “Our director Ramana garu did not know about my work in ‘Thimmarajupalli TV’. Bashir Master informed us about the auditions for this film. I attended the audition and performed well, following which Ramana garu immediately selected me.” “What kind of compliments have you received from people who have watched ‘Ameer Log’ so far?” “Everyone who has watched ‘Ameer Log’ has spoken about my character. People are appreciating my performance. Even though I have done only

one or two films so far, audiences are remembering me. I want to be part of films where my character has importance, which is why I am being very selective about the roles I choose.” “We hear that biryani plays a major role in ‘Ameer Log’. Is that true?” “You can say that biryani itself has an important role in ‘Ameer Log’. That element has been beautifully integrated into the story. I believe the film will connect well with everyone.” “How was your experience working with sync sound?” “I had already worked on a feature film that was shot with sync sound. No matter how professionally we work, sounds from the surroundings also get recorded. So, working with sync sound can be quite challenging on the sets. However, everyone cooperated wonderfully for this film. Even the people living in the basti supported us tremendously. Since it is also the area where Ramana garu's mother-in-law lives, we received even more support (laughs).” “Do you feel disappointed that only one or two of your films have been released in six years?” “I believe the number of films we have released is not as important as how audiences accept us and what kind of characters we choose. Looking back at my six-year journey, I am satisfied with the roles I have played. Whether the films we work on eventually get released is not entirely in our hands.” “What can you say about the music?” “I would say Smaran garu's music has taken our film several levels higher. He has given us wonderful music. There were certain emotions that we could not completely express through the visuals, and he conveyed them beautifully through the background score. His music is a very important part of our film.” “Tell us about the lead characters in ‘Ameer Log’.” “Every character in ‘Ameer Log’ has its own importance. Audiences will be able to connect with all the characters. It was a wonderful experience working with Hari, Manoj and Sasi. We had a lot of fun shooting together on the sets.” “How was it working with the technical team?” “Ramana Reddy garu took great care of all of us. He would clearly explain how every scene should look and what he expected from us. We even conducted demo shoots. We shot the film in the area where Madhavi Reddy garu was born and brought up, and the people there took very good care of all of us. Our DOP speaks very little, but his work is exceptional.” “What compliments did the Spirit Media team and other celebrities give after watching the film?” “The Spirit Media team watched our film and appreciated it. VN Aditya garu, who watched our premiere, also praised the film a lot. He said my character was not like a routine role and that it was written in a way that audiences could connect with it. He also appreciated how our performances complemented Ramana garu's writing.” “Did the language and dialect create any difficulties? Will audiences from all regions understand the film?” “The language and dialect will not be a problem for our film. Emotions are universal, and the same emotions are understood everywhere. I believe our film will appeal to audiences across different sections and regions.

Devender Nagar Nala Inspected by MMC Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy

“UPPAL, AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): MMC Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy, along with Uppal Zone Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta and DD, UBD Annapurna, inspected the Devender Nagar Nala on Wednesday.”“During the inspection, the Commissioner directed the engineering officials to complete the nala desilting works at the earliest.



He instructed the sanitation officials to immediately remove the accumulated construction and demolition (C&D) waste and garbage from the surroundings of the nala.”“He also directed the

UBD officials to undertake plantation and remove unwanted creepers, weeds and overgrown vegetation around the nala.The Commissioner further instructed

the Town Planning officials to identify encroachments along the nala and take necessary action for their removal.Uppal Deputy Commissioner Anand, Assistant

City Planner Nagireddy, Deputy Executive Engineers Neelima and Venel Goud, along with other concerned officials, participated in the inspection.

The Srinivasa Kalyanam was grandly celebrated at Kodanda Rama Temple

Habsiguda Division Congress Party President Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy witnessed the celestial wedding”“HABSIGUDA , AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The 108th Srinivasa Kalyanam was celebrated in a grand manner at the Sri Kodanda Ramachandra Swamy Kalyana Mandapam in Street No. 8, Habsiguda, under the auspices of Sri Venkateswara Maha Mantra Peetham. A large number of devotees attended the spiritual event and witnessed the celestial wedding of Lord Srinivasa.”“At the invitation of the Kodanda Rama Temple Committee, Habsiguda Division Congress Party President Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy attended the event and witnessed the Srinivasa Kalyanam. Later, he received the blessings of the Vedic scholars. The temple priests offered him Teertha Prasadam and felicitated him with a shawl. He subsequently participated in the annadanam programme.”“The Srinivasa Kalyanam was celebrated with great spiritual fervour and attracted a large gathering of devotees. Former Floor Leader Kandi Agi Reddy, DCC Vice-President Boppanapalli Sudhakar Reddy, Rondla Damodar Reddy, District ST Cell President Ganesh Naik, senior Congress leaders Murali Krishna Mudiraj, Kishan Naik, Malu Naik, Ganesh Naik and others participated in the celebrations.



Campaign Aims to Recognise and Honour the Strength of Homemakers



“Hyderabad, August 19 (Indian Chronicle) : Tata Tea Chakra Gold has launched a new campaign titled 'Ghanam Soch' with the aim of recognising and honouring the selfless services and often unseen efforts of homemakers, Tata Consumer Products President - Packaged Beverages and Organic India, Sharath Varma, said in a statement released in the city on Wednesday. He said the campaign highlights the crucial role homemakers play in building and nurturing families, despite their work not being financially compensated. Set against the backdrop of a home loan, the campaign narrative challenges the conventional definition of what constitutes 'work', he said. Andhra Pradesh is a key market for the brand, Varma said, adding that 'Ghanam Soch' is a natural extension of the brand belief that 'Ghanam Tea inspires Ghanam thinking'. The campaign seeks to recognise the quiet strength of homemakers and give due respect to their invaluable contribution to their families, he added.

Immediate Resolution Sought for Road Problem in Shardanagar: MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY“

“RAMANTHAPUR , AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy urged Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta to take immediate steps to permanently resolve the road problem in the ADRM Galli area of Shardanagar under Ramantapur Division.”“The MLA stated that although a new BT road was laid in ADRM Galli about six months ago, the manholes located in the middle of the road were not level with the road surface, resulting in serious inconvenience and safety concerns.”“He said the road had sunk around the manholes, creating potholes and posing a danger to motorists. The problem was particularly hazardous at night, as the manholes were not clearly visible, increasing the risk of accidents involving two-wheelers and other vehicles.”“The MLA said local residents were expressing concern over the deterioration of the road within a short period of its construction. He discussed the issue with Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta and requested her to direct the concerned officials to raise the manholes to the level of the road, fill the potholes and re-



store the road completely.He also urged the authorities to take immediate action to ensure that residents face no inconvenience while commuting.”Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta responded positively to the MLA's request and assured that the issue would be inspected and necessary measures would be taken to resolve it at the earliest.BRS state leader Gandham Nageswara Rao and others were present on the occasion.

Complete Support for the Agency Bandh““Tudum Debba Mandal Leader Karpetha Mehpath Rao“



“Indian Chronicle. August. 20.”“The Agency bandh held in Wankidi Mandal, following the call given by Tudum Debba, was successful. The bandh was organized in protest against the injustice being faced by tribal youth in police constable recruitment.”“Major commercial establishments, shops, and small businesses in the mandal headquarters voluntarily remained closed and extended their support to the bandh.

As a result, the main streets of Wankidi appeared deserted. The bandh received support from various sections of society, with traders and small shopkeepers responding to the call given by Tudum Debba leaders.”“Speaking on the occasion, Tudum Debba Mandal leader Karpetha Mehpath Rao said that special reservation in employment opportunities is crucial for tribal youth living in Agency areas. He said the 75% reservation that was previously in force should be continued.”“He demanded that the government take the interests of tribal youth into consideration in police constable recruitment and take immediate steps to protect their rights. He said the government has a responsibility to ensure justice for tribal people in employment recruitment, considering the special circumstances of Agency areas.”“Mehpath Rao urged the government to take a clear decision on the reservation issue and end the concerns among tribal youth. He made it clear that the movement would continue through democratic means until justice is delivered to tribal youth.”“Police made security arrangements during the bandh to prevent any untoward incidents. The bandh concluded peacefully in the mandal headquarters.

Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy congratulated the prominent photographers of Bhuvanagiri town on the occasion of World Photography Day by cutting a cake

“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 19):- At the local Babu Jagjivan Ram Chaurasta in Bhuvanagiri town, Bhuvanagiri MLAs under the leadership of Kumbham A

nil Kumar Reddy felicitated the prominent photographers of Bhuvanagiri town on the occasion of MLA World Photography Day. Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar, Fahindar MD Zakir Hussain Raju Narasimha Abhi and others participated in this program.



Legal Science Conference on the National Legal Services Scheme for Victims of Human Trafficking, Human Trafficking Act, Implementation of Punishments and Impact on Society



- Legal Services Authority Secretary V. Madhavi Latha“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 19):- As per the instructions of the President of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Legal Services Authority and District Chief Justice A. Jayaraju, a legal science conference was organized at the Sahithi Convention Hall in Old Yadagirigutta under the joint auspices of the District Legal Services Authority, Anti-Human Trafficking Unit and the district administration on the National Legal Services Scheme for Victims of Human Trafficking, Human Trafficking Act, Implementation of Punishments and Impact on Society. The Secretary of the organization, V. Madhavi Latha said that the Legal Service Organization will provide rehabilitation, compensation and legal services to the victims of human trafficking in coordination with the relevant departments. In today's rapidly developing world, it is inhumane to transport and send people into prostitution. Everyone should work responsibly to stop this. The victims should be given the opportunity to live with dignity as the constitutional right has been granted to everyone. Apart from this, as part of rehabilitation, district officials of all departments will not only create awareness about welfare schemes but also provide them with support services. Yadagirigutta DSP Srinivas Naidu said that his police department has worked hard to identify the victims and provide higher education to their children. He said that sex trafficking is a crime and has strict punishments. They should create awareness about the law and live responsibly and with dignity. Anti-Human Trafficking Unit Inspector Praveen said that the Anti-



Human Trafficking Unit has been newly formed in this district to combat human trafficking and that it will keep a close eye on human trafficking in the district and take action from time to time, and will work to create awareness and rehabilitate the victims. Yadadri Bar Association President Srihari said that if anyone needs legal advice and services, their lawyers will provide appropriate services. Child Welfare Committee President B. Jayashree, DRDA Project Director Nagi Reddy, District Welfare Officer C. H. Srinivas, District Employment Exchange Officer Padma, District SC Development Officer Suresh, District Youth and Sports Officer Shyam Sundar, District Child Welfare Officer Ananthalakshmi, District Education Department CMO Linga Reddy, District AIDS Control Unit DPM Sudhakar, Swami Ramananda Tirtha Rural Institute DTO Gurram Venkatesh Sakhi Kendra Central Admin Vinila, Sarp NGO Dr. Pramila explained about the services and welfare schemes provided to the victims and the people through their branches. Scheed N. G. O. P. D. Nagaraju said that they are providing free services to the victims and those with AIDS through their organization and are helping them to stay in the community and submitted an application to the authorities for the benefits required by the victims. “In this program, Yadagirigutta Municipal Commissioner Shravan, Yadadri M. P. D. O, CI Bhaskar, AHTU Sub Inspector Tejam Reddy, SKED NGO District Coordinator Bhanu Kumar, victims and people participated.

206 crores of funds have been sanctioned to farmers and displaced persons who lost their lands for Baswapur Reservoir..



. His main goal is to provide complete justice to the victims:- Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy “(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 19):- ““The villagers of B.N. Thimmapuram, a village submerged by Baswapur Reservoir, today met Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy at the camp office under the leadership of local Sarpanch Edla Venkat Reddy and thanked him. The villagers expressed their joy over the release of Rs. 206 crores of funds for R&R and land acquisition. Later, the villagers along with the MLA reached Ambedkar Chaurasta in a rally and garlanded the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Later, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy anointed the portrait and expressed his gratitude. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy said that his main goal is to do complete justice to the farmers and displaced people who lost their lands for the Baswapur reservoir. He said that the problems were pending as the funds required for R&R and land acquisition were not released on time in the past. After the Praja government came to power, B.N. He said that the issue of the villagers of Thimmapuram was brought to the attention of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who responded immediately and released Rs. 206 crores for R&R and land acquisition. He expressed special gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on behalf of the people of Bhuvanagiri constituency. The MLA said that if the Baswapur project is completed, the farmers of Bhuvanagiri, Valigonda, Nakirekal, Ramannapet and Tungaturthi areas will get irrigation water. He said that the government is focusing on completing the Baswapur project so that farmers can cultivate with Godavari water instead of relying on Musi sewage water. The MLA clarified that during the tenure of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, efforts are being made to fill five TMCs of



water in the Baswapur reservoir and provide irrigation water to farmers. He said that necessary work has been undertaken on the National Highway to ensure that water reaches the downstream areas through the canal, and the work of Bunadigani, Dharma Reddy and Pillaipalli canals will also be completed quickly. MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy clarified that the goal of the public government is to complete the Basavapur project and provide irrigation water to farmers, as well as to provide complete justice to the displaced. Municipal Chairperson Tangallapalli Srivani-Ravi Kumar, Market Committee Chairman Rekha-Babu Rao, Atma Chairman Krishna Reddy, Vice Chairperson Pothamsetty Manjula-Venkateswarlu, PACS Chairmen Satish Pawan, Shyam Goud, urban councilors, mandal presidents of Bhuvanagiri constituency, public representatives, Congress party leaders, activists, B.N. Thimmapuram villagers and others participated in this program.

World Heritage Treasure Must Be Preserved : Vedakumar

Hyderabad, August 19 (Indian Chronicle) : Deccan Heritage Academy Trust Chairman Manikonda Vedakumar called for concerted efforts to protect and preserve world heritage sites. He said that the Archaeological Survey of India(ASI), Telangana Heritage Department, Deccan Heritage Academy Trust officials and archaeological experts jointly inspected the unique megalithic menhirs, stone circles and burial sites at Mudumal in Krishna Mandal of Narayanpet district. ASI Hyderabad Circle Superintending Archaeologist Dr.Nikhil Das said Mudumal is already included in the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List and that studies and documentation are underway for its inclusion in the World Heritage List. He said the 2,000- to 3,000-year-old menhirs and stone circles, along with their astronomical and solar-alignment connections, make the site particularly sig-



nificant. ASI Assistant Superintending Archaeologist Dr.Rohini Pandey suggested that the Mudumal heritage site

be conserved without disturbing its natural setting. Prof.K.P.Rao, Deccan Heritage Academy Trust Coordinator Khaiser Basha, field consultancy and concerned teams, along with district and local officials, participated in the inspection.

Congress has taught the culture of respecting national anthems like Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana



Congress party leaders Potnak Pramod Kumar Tangallapalli Ravikumar Kumar“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 19):- In the premises of Bhuvanagiri Government Junior College, under the auspices of the Congress Party's Urban Seva Dal, the BJP party's Modi, Amit Shah and Sonia Gandhi were strongly condemned for spreading misinformation that they should not sing Vande Mataram. Congress party leaders Potnak Pramod Kumar Tangallapalli Ravikumar Kumar and senior citizens participated in the program and spoke about the family of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi who sacrificed their lives for this country, Sonia Gandhi, who lived in this country and even when she had the opportunity to become the Prime Minister of the country for two terms in 2004 and 2009, she respected the sovereignty of this country, respected the people of this country, sacrificed her positions, took historic decisions for the people of this country, such as the Employment Guarantee Act and the Right to Infor-

mation Act, and worked for the development of this country. Sonia Gandhi, who is in the family of sacrifices, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and these patriotic elders, always respect the democratic values ???in the country, the constitution written under the leadership of Ambedkar, and along with it, she always sang the national anthem, Vande Mataram Jana Gana Mana, and even in public meetings where thousands and millions of people were present, she has a history of respecting the songs of Vande Mataram Jana Gana Mana, Sonia Gandhi is the Congress party, every person living in this country He said that the credit for bringing Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana as our national anthem also belongs to the All India Congress Party. The history of singing Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana as our national anthem 150 years ago during the freedom struggle and 100 years ago is that of the Congress, but in order to rule this country for a seat, for a position, in the name of Ram, in the name of God, in the name of religions, in the name of vote theft, note theft, Rajya Sabha theft, national anthem theft, politics and gaining positions, the Bharatiya Janata Party is misleading the youth and the people by spreading false propaganda, the BJP is misleading the people, the BJP is running a democratic government, the BJP is a fake university, democrats, senior citizens, young people, intellectuals, women's groups, people from all sections of the society, all Indians are strongly condemning the BJP and asking Sonia Gandhi to express solidarity with the Congress Party. Bendelal Raju, Pittala Balaraju, Padigela Pradeep, Dakuri Prakash, senior citizen leaders, Padma Reddy, Shankar Reddy, Mohan Reddy, Buchanna Muthireddy, Nakka Pandu, Diddi Kadi Narsing, Srinivas, Sridhar Mohan Nayak and others participated in this program.

Agency Bandh Successful““Restore 75% Reservation for Tribal Youth“



“Indian Chronicle. August. 20. ““The “Agency Bandh” observed in Komuram Bheem Asifabad district headquarters, following the call given by Adivasi Tudum Debba, was successfully and peacefully completed. The bandh was organized in protest against the alleged injustice faced by unemployed tribal youth of the local Agency areas in the recently released police recruitment notification.Led by Tudum Debba District President Kova Vijay Kumar, district leaders staged a large-scale dharna near the RTC depot and strongly criticized the government's policies concerning tribal communities.“The bandh received voluntary support from market complexes, business establishments, and private educational institutions in the district headquarters. Principals, teachers, students, and trainee teachers of government schools, junior colleges, degree colleges, D.Ed. and B.Ed. colleges extended their support to the tribal community's demands and closed their institutions.75% Reservation Issue“The leaders expressed strong opposition to the removal of the 75% local reservation previously provided to tribal people living in Fifth Schedule areas. They alleged that changing these posts to the general category in the latest police recruitment notification would seriously affect employment opportunities for unemployed tribal



youth.Opposition to Ignoring Tribal Laws“The leaders alleged that the government was undermining important tribal protections, including GO No. 3, the 1/70 Act and the PESA Act. They said new government orders should not undermine the rights and livelihood of tribal communities.“Demand for Proper Implementation“The leaders made it clear that tribal communities do not need new orders or alternative laws, but want the existing special laws and government orders concerning tribal areas to be implemented effectively and strictly.Warning of Intensified Movement“The leaders warned that the bandh was only the beginning of their protest. They stated that if justice is not provided to tribal youth, the movement will be intensified across the state in the coming days through democratic means.Tudum Debba District President Kova Vijay Kumar, District General Secretary Pendor Maruthi, District Vice Presidents Kinnera Venkatesh, Madapachi Bheem Rao and Kotnaka Ramshaw, District Secretary Sidam Nagesh, Adivasi Sena Mandal President Sidam Kailash, Tudum Debba leaders Kodapa Jagann, Ada Somesh, Madavi Purushotham, Kotnaka Vinesh and Prashanth, along with district and mandal-level Tudum Debba leaders and representatives of various tribal organizations, participated in the protest.

Awareness Programme on Girls’ Safety at Kasturba School



“Indian Chronicle:August. 20. “Chintalamanepalli: As per the directions of Kumuram Bheem Asifabad District SP Nithika Pant, an awareness programme on the safety and security of girls and women was conducted by the SHE Team at the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya in Chintalamanepalli Mandal.“Kagaznagar SHE Team In-charge ASI Sunitha educated the students about good touch and bad touch, laws related to women's safety, how to respond during emergencies, the use of Dial



100 and 112, precautions while using social media, eve-teasing and cybercrime.“She advised the students to know their rights, move forward with confidence and immediately report any harassment or problems. Students were also asked to contact the Kagaznagar SHE Team at 8712670565 in case of any issue.“SO Sreeja Nandini, teachers and SHE Team members Ramadevi, Srinivas, Sunitha and Rajitha, among others, participated in the programme.

Case Filed Against Two for Sale of Expired Tea and Coffee Products

“MEDIPALLY , AUGUST 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally police have registered a case against two persons for allegedly manufacturing and selling tea, coffee powders and flavours without the required permissions.“According to police, they received information that tea and coffee products were being illegally stored and sold at Sri Shirdi Sai Enterprises in Srinivasa Nagar Colony. Acting on the information, police conducted a raid and apprehended the establishment's operator, Perapu Siddulu (40). Another person, Gujja Rajeshwar, reportedly fled the scene.“Police found that tea and coffee products were being manufactured and sold without the necessary permissions and without expiry dates. During the inspection, police seized 33 packets of Vidya Filter Coffee (500 grams each), 17 one-kilogram packets of Wagh Bakri Navchetan Tea Powder, one one-kilogram packet of Milli Premium Tea, 24 packets of Ginger-Masala Flavour, nine packets of jaggery raw material and 20 empty packets.“The seized items were confiscated, and a case was registered against both persons. Police said they were searching for the absconding accused, Gujja Rajeshwar



Ram Temple Trust begins interviews to select first CEO, 8 applicants appear on Day 1



GNS News Agency, August 19

Eight of the 16 shortlisted candidates were interviewed on the first day as the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust on Tuesday started the interview process to select its first chief executive officer (CEO) in the wake of the controversy over alleged embezzlement of donations at the temple. The remaining candidates are scheduled to appear on Wednesday before the selection committee comprising retired Supreme Court judge Justice Pramod Kohli, Lieutenant General (retired) Vishnukant Chaturvedi and Suresh Haware, a retired nuclear scientist and former chairperson of the Shri Saibaba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi. The CEO will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day administrative functioning of the temple and various projects associated with the shrine. After the completion of the interviews, the committee is likely to shortlist three names, and then the Trust will finalise the candidate for the job. The incumbent's proposed tenure is three years, with remunerations yet be decided. Retired IAS, IPS and military officers are among

the shortlisted candidates who have already been interviewed virtually, it is learnt. The candidates were asked to report at the pilgrim facilitation centre in the temple complex with their ID proofs and other documents, sources said. Their details were verified before the personal interviews that began around 11 am. Each interview lasted for nearly half an hour, it is learnt. The major focus during Tuesday's interviews was on the applicants' professional and administrative experience while questions related to maintaining security in the temple complex were also asked, one of the candidates who appeared on Tuesday said.

The candidates were also asked about their association with social or religious organisations, their understanding of functioning of temples, their association with Hindu religious institutions, sources said. Former IPS officer Rajesh Pandey, who is among the shortlisted candidates, confirmed that he had appeared before the selection panel on Tuesday. A 2003-batch IPS officer and a Prayagraj resident, Pandey, 65, was known for encounters during his service and was promoted from the Provincial Police Service (PPS). He served as the senior superintendent of police (SSP) of Lucknow, Aligarh, Meerut and Saharanpur districts and was part of the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF) and Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS). He was also part of the teams that investigated the 2005 Ayodhya terror attack and the 2006 Varanasi blasts. Besides, he has been serving as secretary of the Aliganj Hanuman Mandir in Lucknow since 2022, he said. The Trust had received over 5,000 applications from across the country after inviting applications after the CEO's post was advertised by the Trust last month. The eligibility criteria included a minimum graduate degree, 50-70 years age and at least 20 years of "executive leadership" experience.

Karnataka bans sale of gutka, pan masala and some tobacco products for one year

GNS News Agency, August 19

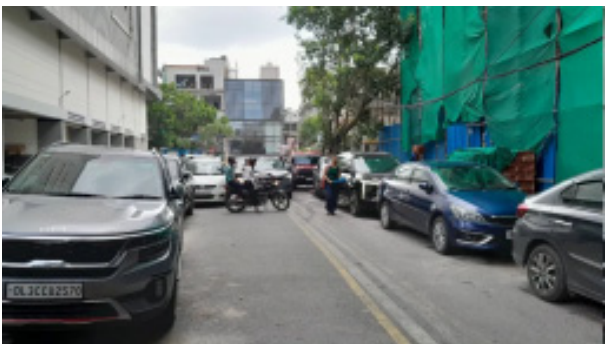
The Karnataka government has banned the sale and distribution of products containing tobacco and nicotine across the state for one year in the interest of public health. However, the notification does not impose any ban on their consumption. The Food Safety Division of the Department of Food Safety and Drugs Administration is carrying out enforcement measures against the manufacture, storage, transportation, distribution and sale of gutka, pan masala and other prohibited products containing tobacco and/or nicotine.

Special inspection and enforcement drives are being conducted across Karnataka under the leadership of Food Safety Officers. The department issued a government notification on August 10 under Section 30(2)(a) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and Regulation 2.3.4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011. The ban will remain in



force across Karnataka for one year from the date of issuance. The department has appealed to the public to report the manufacture, sale or distribution of prohibited tobacco and nicotine products to the concerned authorities and cooperate with efforts to build a "healthy and addiction-free Karnataka".

South Delhi's GK M Block has 400-car facility, but few takers: 'Whole thing is hard work'



GNS News Agency, August 19

On a Saturday evening, cars line the roads at Greater Kailash 1's M Block market, leaving little room for vehicles to enter and exit. Just metres away, at one of its entrances, is an eight-storey automated parking facility with space for nearly 400 cars. Opened last September to ease the market's parking woes, it has not stopped shoppers and residents from continuing to use the surface parking outside.

Not convenient for quick visits Bhavana, a regular at the market, said she uses both facilities. "It depends; if I'm in a rush, I park alongside the road. If I'm in the market for a long time, I'll use the automated one." Some visitors complained about the time it takes to park a car at the facility. "If we want to be in and out of the market to grab something really quick, the multi-level parking doesn't help. The parking takes around five to ten minutes. Getting the car back also takes another five minutes. The whole thing is hard work," said a visitor. An MCD parking attendant, who has been managing traffic and issuing parking tickets in the market since 2020, said the new parking facility is yet to earn the public's trust. "Both facilities charge the same Rs 20 per hour and Rs 100 for the whole day. Yet, people prefer to park on the road," he said. An official at Sotefin Bharat, the agency in charge of operations and maintenance of the parking facility, explained how the facility works.

"We have five entry bays for cars. The driver enters the drop off point. The car is placed in one of the bays and it is automatically shuttled off to a parking space in the multi-level structure. Through the same automated system, the car is brought to the exit bay, which is then collected by the driver," he said. m block parking The eight-storey automated parking facility has space for nearly 400 cars. (Express Photo by Abhinav Saha) The parking attendant said the facility was closed last week for a couple of days due to the heavy rain. "You can't blame the residents or the visitors for being hesitant," he said. The Sotefin Bharat official claimed it was shut for safety reasons.

"Due to the heavy rain, BSES cut off our power supply as a precautionary measure. Our basements, where we kept our generators and our electrical equipment, got a little flooded. But we've learnt our faults and taken care of the situation," he said. He added, "We've installed several pumps across the facility to avoid any waterlogging. We've also found the spot where water is seeping in and put a wall as a barrier. We haven't had any problems during rains after this measure." He said that surface parking and the multi-level parking facilities belong to different departments within the MCD and they have no relation with each other. "MCD needs to market it better" The problem is not unique to the GK facility, with several other multi-level parking facilities across

the city also struggling to attract users. Anil Chikkara, a former Transport official, said it is a matter of advertising. "We now have several multi-level parking facilities across the city facing the same problem. The main problem they have to tackle is why should a resident prefer this facility to roadside parking, which is easily accessible and mostly free."

He said the MCD should highlight the security offered by the facility as a reason for motorists to use it. "For a meager fee, the parking facilities see to that your car is not damaged or stolen. Your valuables inside the vehicle are also safe. The MCD should take advantage of this and market it properly." Chikkara also pointed out the lack of the signages. "There are no signs that point to the parking facility at the market. So how will a visitor know of this facility?" He added that incentives should be provided to regulars and residents of the area. Ward councillor Anjum Mandal said she has been requesting the MCD to scrap surface parking.

"The M-Block facility was created to provide an organised parking solution and ensure better utilisation of public infrastructure. I've requested the MCD authorities concerned to review the existing surface parking arrangement and rationalise it in a practical manner, so that the multi-level facility is effectively utilised while ensuring convenience for residents, visitors and local businesses," she said. "Our priority is clear: better parking management, smoother traffic movement and maximum public benefit." When contacted, an MCD official said they plan to 'delete' stretches of surface parking near the entrances. "Based on multiple grievances, including letters from the ward councillor, we have come up with a proposal to limit surface parking facilities, especially along stretches near the entrance and exit of the market. Hopefully, the issue will be resolved by this year," he said. However, the official claimed there were no plans to scrap surface parking altogether in the market, as it remains a revenue-generating mechanism for the MCD.

Former University of Hyderabad student held with ganja on campus

Hyderabad: The Gachibowli Police, along with the Eagle Team, have nabbed one Biswajit Kalita alias Biswa (28), in connection with a drug supply case. A former student of the University of Hyderabad (UoH), Biswa is currently residing in Gopanpally and works as an actor trainee.

Police nabbed him on Tuesday, on the HCU campus and seized 5 grams of marijuana from him. He was reportedly absconding in a drug case booked earlier under Gachibowli Police Station. The case was registered on August 7 after police received credible information about drug consumption at the Men's-L Hostel on the campus.

During the investigation, a student allegedly told police that he had purchased 10 grams of dried ganja for Rs 500 from his friend, Biswa. Based on the information, Gachibowli Police and the Eagle Team traced Biswa and nabbed him on the campus. Police are now investigating the source of the ganja supply and the possible involvement of other persons in the network.

Entry via Nepal, fake Aadhaar: How Pak national 'Wahab Alam' lived in India



GNS News Agency, August 19 The West Bengal Special Task Force (STF) arrested a suspected Pakistani national along the India-Bangladesh border in Bongaon early Wednesday morning. Rana Raut was allegedly living in India under the assumed name Wahab Alam using forged identification documents. Investigators suspect Raut of having long-standing links with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and of being involved in espionage and terror-related activities. According to STF sources, Raut is originally a resident of Faisalabad, Pakistan. He allegedly entered India via Nepal in 2012 before settling in West Bengal.

During the search operation, officers seized sensitive materials, including photographs of railway stations, train movements, and tracks across the country, as well as documents related to the Indian Army. Investigators found that Raut had transmitted these images to multiple phone numbers. The STF is currently tracking those contacts to ascertain their identities and determine whether financial transactions were made in exchange for the intelligence. Investigators are also looking into Raut's con-

tacts within West Bengal and trying to identify who was scheduled to receive him across the border in Bangladesh.

Network and forged documents During interrogation, Raut disclosed that a carpenter residing in Kolkata's Topsia neighbourhood had helped him procure fraudulent Indian documents, including a voter card and an Aadhaar card. The duo had reportedly met in Nepal prior to Raut entering India. Following Raut's confession, the STF arrested the carpenter, who is currently undergoing interrogation to identify other potential members of the network. STF sources said that Raut attempted to flee to Bangladesh after learning of the carpenter's recent arrest on terror-related suspicions. Acting on a specific tip-off regarding his escape plan, the STF launched a targeted search in Bongaon early Wednesday, resulting in his capture. Preliminary investigations suggest Raut maintained contact with the ISI for several years, allegedly leaking critical information regarding senior Indian officials.

Commenting on the arrest, minister Agnimitra Paul said, "Having taken charge just three months ago, our administration is working to address issues left by the previous government, which allowed illegal infiltration for electoral gains. It will take time to address these deep-rooted networks completely. Sleeper cells are present, and we urge all citizens to remain vigilant and immediately report any suspicious individuals to the authorities." The arrest comes amid a series of high-profile crackdowns by the Bengal STF. Recently, the police arrested Hamim Mondal, a suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) associate, from a residential township in Burdwan for allegedly tracking the movements of Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari. The operation subsequently led to the arrests of Mondal's associate Arpita Sarkar in Jharkhand and Aditya Singh, a college student from Howrah, accused of supplying information to Mondal.

Sarnath is now in UNESCO club. UP wants tourists to see more of its Buddhist sites

Sarnath's UNESCO World Heritage tag is set to give Uttar Pradesh's Buddhist tourism plans a fresh push, with the state government working on a circuit linking six sites associated with Buddha's life and teachings. The circuit will connect Sarnath, Kushinagar, Shravasti, Kapilvastu, Kaushambi and Sankisa. Together, the destinations recorded nearly 82 lakh visitors in 2025, including 4.4 lakh foreign tourists. In the first six months of 2026, they recorded more than 30 lakh visitors, including over 2 lakh foreign tourists, according to the UP Tourism Department. The government plans to strengthen connectivity, visitor facilities and interpretation centres, while encouraging tourists to travel between the sites. Sarnath is a key destination in the government's plan (Express Archive) Sarnath is a key destination in the government's plan (Express Archive) Sarnath as the entry point

Sarnath, where Buddha is believed to have delivered his first sermon after attaining enlightenment, is expected to be a key entry point to the circuit. The Tourism department plans to leverage Sarnath's proximity to Varanasi, which offers an international airport, rail connectivity and a well-established hospitality infrastructure. The site already has an international Buddhist presence, with Thai and Japanese temples and institutions linked to Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh said, "Sarnath is where the Wheel of Dharma was first set in motion... Our aim is to use this (UNESCO) recognition to strengthen the entire Buddhist circuit, improve visitor experience and encourage longer journeys across the state." Officials said Sarnath is also among 15 archaeological sites identified in the 2026-27 Union Budget to be developed as "vibrant experiential cultural centres".

The proposed work includes curated walkways through excavated areas, technology-based interpretation, interpretation facilities and conservation laboratories, besides support for guides. The government is planning a carrying-capacity study, tourism management plan, interpretation strategy and heritage impact assessments before new construction is undertaken in the immediate surroundings.

Plans across the circuit At Kushinagar, where Buddha is believed to have attained Mahaparinirvana, the government is planning a vipassana centre and development of a "Buddha Gaman Marg", a proposed route with six identified halt points to connect places associated with Buddha's journey beyond the Mahaparinirvana Temple and Ramabhar Stupa. Interpretation and meditation facilities are also planned. The Kushinagar International Airport provides the destination with an international air link, particularly for pilgrims travelling from Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, officials said. In Kaushambi, a "Buddha Theme Park" has been proposed, with a "Jataka Mural Gallery", "Dhyana Vanam" and a "Stupa Gallery" among the planned facilities. A Kaushambi Museum is also proposed, which will comprise interactive displays and immersive interpretation.

Pune social media influencer held for cheating Rs 10.7 crore in digital arrest scam

The accused, identified as Rohan Rajeshwar Jadhav, was arrested by the cyber police as part of an investigation into the fraud and was subsequently produced before a court. Police personnel on duty said Kamble was shouting loudly when he entered the police station. (File Photo/Enhanced using AI) Investigators suspect that he was part of a larger network involved in defrauding victims through digital arrest scams. (File Photo/Enhanced using AI) A 26-year-old social media influencer was arrested in Pune on Monday for his alleged involvement in a digital arrest scam in which an octogenarian Pune resident was cheated of Rs 10.74 crore, police said. The accused, identified as Rohan Rajeshwar Jadhav, was arrested by the cyber police as part of an investigation into the fraud and was subsequently produced before a court.

According to police, Jadhav has been active on Instagram since 2022 and has made a large number of reels. He is a BSc graduate and is originally from Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, police said. Investigators suspect that he was part of a larger network involved in defrauding victims through digital arrest scams. He was currently living in Pimple Gurav area of Pimpri Chinchwad. The case was registered at the cyber police station under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Information Technology Act. By staging a fake court hearing on camera with a fake judge presiding and running a fake prosecution over alleged links to 'Naresh Goyal case', cyber fraudsters duped an 82-year-old retired businessman from Pune of more than



For Shravasti, the government is planning to promote the site as a "Monsoon Retreat", building on its association with the period when Buddha and his disciples stayed at the site during the rainy season. Better road connectivity is also being planned. Officials said the upcoming four-laning of the Barabanki-Bahraich section of the National Highway-927 is likely to reduce travel time to Shravasti. Improvements to Buddhist viharas and visitor facilities are also part of the plans. At Kapilvastu and Piprahwa, the longer-term proposal is for a "Buddhist Heritage Park" focused on Siddhartha's early life and the archaeological significance of the region. The proposed facilities include a sculpture trail, interpretation centre, Buddhist stupa and meditation areas, parking, a cafeteria and visitor facilities. The state also plans to strengthen the destination's tourism link with Lumbini in Nepal, located across the India-Nepal border.

Amrit Abhijat, Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism, Culture and Religious Affairs, said the government wanted the six destinations to be presented as a connected circuit. "Uttar Pradesh is the only state where visitors can experience so many defining chapters of Lord Buddha's life. The first six months of 2026 recorded over 30 lakh visitors at these destinations even before Sarnath received the UNESCO recognition. Our focus is now on interpretation, signage, last-mile access, visitor facilities and stronger linkages between the sites so that the circuit becomes easier to understand and travel," Abhijat said.

Taking the circuit abroad Officials said the state has been promoting the Buddhist circuit in international markets through travel trade events, "familiarisation visits" and participation in tourism fairs, including WTM London, ITB Berlin, FITUR Madrid and Tourism Expo Japan. In June 2025, the Bodhi Yatra familiarisation programme brought monks, tour operators and travel influencers from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam to UP, they said. A delegation of nearly 200 members from Japan's Yamanashi Prefecture is scheduled to visit the state from August 20 to 23, with Varanasi and Sarnath among the proposed destinations. The visit follows discussions between the state government and Yamanashi authorities on experiential tourism, hospitality, familiarisation exchanges and professional cooperation.

Rs 10.73 crore in one of the largest 'digital arrest' scams reported in Maharashtra to date. The fraudsters threatened the octogenarian with a prison sentence of over seven years. Police said the victim made transfers to several mule bank accounts after the fraudsters allegedly threatened him with arrest and claimed that officials from investigative agencies were monitoring the case. The transactions are being examined as part of the investigation. During the investigation, police carried out a technical analysis of the transactions and identified accounts into which the cheated money had been transferred. Police said the investigation revealed the involvement of several people in the network. Two other accused persons, identified as Shubham Dhanatole, 26, and another accused, 24, were arrested on February 22 in connection with the case. Another accused, identified as Amar Attargi, 24, was arrested on March 6. Police said they subsequently identified Jadhav as another alleged member of the network. Police have appealed to citizens not to panic if they receive calls from people claiming to be officials of the CBI, Enforcement Directorate, police or other government agencies and threatening them with arrest. Officials do not conduct investigations or arrests through video calls in the manner used in digital arrest scams, police said. Citizens who receive such calls can contact the cybercrime helpline 1930 or register a complaint through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal. They can also approach their nearest police station. The investigation is being conducted by the Cyber Police under the supervision of senior Pune Police officials.

How Parliament, Tamil Nadu panels flagged NTA's loopholes, 'failings'



In its report, the Committee noted that “several firms involved in paper setting, administration, and correction have been blacklisted by one organisation/state government but that this however, is not impeding their securing of contracts from other states or organisations”. It stated that “such black-listed firms must not be engaged for any entrance test by the NTA or the state governments”, adding that “The Committee therefore recommends that the Department (Department of Higher Education) should compile a nationwide list of blacklisted firms along with the persons or entities that constitute such firms so as to prevent such firms/persons/

As CBE rises from 30% toward 40%+ of revenue, and as new application-specific products (filling fats, bakery shortenings, ice cream coatings), the CBA segment from FY28) gain share, blended realisation should rise. Management confirmed on the Q3 FY26 call that the EBITDA margin has stayed stable through the cocoa price cycle, but declined to share per-tonne numbers because of varying raw-material yields and parties. Another risk is competitive intensity. Global ingredient companies such as AAK, Bunge Loders Crokalan, Cargill, and Fuji Oil are expanding in specialty fats. Manorama's defence appears to rest on three advantages: A deeply entrenched tribal procurement network DSIIR-certified R&D centre A multi-year approval cycle that locks customers in The moat looks intact for now Why was cash conversion weak?. In FY24, PAT was Rs 53 crore, and operating cash flow was negative Rs 153 crore.

AICC general secretary, in-charge, Uttar Pradesh, Avinash Pande told The Indian Express: "Their (Gautam and Punia's) visit had nothing to do with the Congress party or Rahul Gandhi ji. There was no mandate given to them by the party, nor by me as general secretary, in-charge... They have been asked to give an explanation for their conduct." Apart from looking at options in UP, where the Congress is struggling to rise from rock bottom, a section of the party believes an alliance with Mayawati will boost the party's attempts nationwide to consolidate Dalits behind it, with Gandhi spearheading the effort. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, a Congress and SP campaign around the issue

In an interview with PTI, Hindustan Copper Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) Sanjiv Kumar Singh said that the copper PSU has reached an understanding with UCIL under which tailings will be handed over to the Uranium Corporation of India to extract uranium. Copper tailings are finely ground waste rock and water that remain after copper minerals are extracted from mined ores. Singh said, "UCIL was concerned with our proposal and technically agreed because there is a presence of uranium in small quantities in our tailings, which they can extract".

No injectable cosmetics, says drug regulator, amid rise in botox, glutathione use



Amid the growing popularity of skincare procedures using compounds such as botox and glutathione, the country's apex drug regulator has issued a public advisory stating that no cosmetic product should be injectable. "No cosmetic is permitted to be used as an injection by consumers or professionals or aesthetic clinics. Cosmetics are only intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled or sprayed on to the human body," the advisory by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) says.According to officials in the know of the matter: "While these products have been in use over the last several years, adverse reactions linked to such procedures were being reported. This is the reason the public advisory was issued."

What did the advisory say?

The advisory states that the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 — which continues to govern the manufacture, storage, and sale of all medicines and cosmetics in the country — defines cosmetic as "any article intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled or sprayed on, or introduced into, or otherwise applied to, the human body or any part thereof for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance, and includes any article intended for use as a component of cosmetic."Aside from warning against injectables, the advisory goes on to state that the

articles should not carry labels that may "purport or convey any idea which is false or misleading to the intending user of cosmetics." And, nothing marked on the packages by the manufacturer should be changed or altered by anyone, the advisory said."Use of prohibited ingredients in cosmetic products, misleading claims on label, use of cosmetics for treatment and application of cosmetics through injection attracts violations," it added.

Why is this significant?

The advisory could trigger tighter scrutiny of India's booming aesthetic and skincare industry, particularly clinics and wellness centres offering injectable "beauty treatments" that often operate in a regulatory grey zone. India has previously seen repeated instances of misuse involving skin-lightening injections, unapproved glutathione drips, steroid-laced cosmetic products, and misleading "medical-grade" beauty claims marketed through salons and social media influencers.Experts have long warned that many such procedures are administered by inadequately trained personnel, sometimes using imported or improperly labelled products with little oversight. By explicitly stating that cosmetics cannot be injectable under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, regulators may now have stronger grounds for enforcement actions against clinics, importers, and manufacturers making unauthorised cosmetic injection claims

What can you do?

The advisory asks people to report any such observations to the drug controller at cosmetics@cdsco.nic.in.What prompted the advisory?Aside from the increased use of injectable cosmetics, the drug regulator had reportedly cancelled the registration of a Telangana-based company importing a face cream with three alpha hydroxyl acids (AHAs), the total concentration of which stood at 60%, higher than the mandated 30%.The product had also said "patient tolerance" on the packaging that appeared to be a misleading claim.

Ebola alert at Indian ports, airports: Health Ministry puts out screening norms

India has issued Ebola screening protocols at airports, ports and other entry points for travellers arriving from or transiting through high-risk countries, as health authorities step up preparedness despite no confirmed cases in the country. (File Photo)India has issued Ebola screening protocols at airports, ports and other entry points for travellers arriving from or transiting through high-risk countries, as health authorities step up preparedness despite no confirmed cases in the country.The Union Heath Ministry has issued advisory on Ebola for travellers from "high risk countries" to Indian ports, airports, and all points of entry to the country. Anyone travelling from or transiting through DR Congo, Uganda, and South Sudan and experiencing symptoms such as fever, weakness and fatigue, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, unexplained bleeding, and sore throat have been asked to report to the airport health officer or health desk before going to the immigration check.

Any person with a history of direct contact with blood or bodily fluids of a person confirmed or suspected to have Ebola should also reach out to the health authorities at the port of entry. The measures were taken as a matter of precaution. There are no ebola cases in the country as of now."Please cooperate with health screening and public health measures in the interest of passenger safety and international health regulation," says the advisory, reminiscent of the COVID-19 pandemic.The World Health Organisation (WHO) last week sounded the alarm bells, declaring the ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. Its senior officials have flagged the speed of the spread ever since the outbreak was detected. The Health Ministry has since conducted two meetings on the issue — one with its own officials and one with the states to check the preparedness levels. During the high level



meeting Health Secretary Puniya Salila Srivastava on Wednesday, States and Union Territories were advised to be ready on all fronts, with standard operating procedures shared covering pre-arrival and post-arrival screening, quarantine protocol, case management, referral mechanism, and laboratory testing. Srivastava emphasised the importance of coordinated surveillance, timely reporting, and preparedness of designated health facilities.Ebola is a zoonotic infection — caused by Orthoebolavirus family — that can be extremely fatal in humans. It can spread from humans to humans through direct contact with infected fluids such as blood, saliva, sweat, tears, vomit, faeces, and breast milk among others. It can also be transmitted by touching contaminated surfaces and contact with dead bodies of those who have died of the infection. While most of the symptoms of the disease are like flu — fever, headache, muscle and joint pains — unexplained internal and external bleeding is one of the distinct features of the disease.

Why fish oil supplements may not lower LDL or bad cholesterol

I have many patients who began taking fish oil supplements the moment they found their cholesterol levels to be "abnormal" during an annual blood test. Concerned about heart disease, they started taking fish oil capsules daily after hearing from friends and online sources that they are "good for the heart." A few months later, they felt reassured simply because they were taking a supplement, even though they did not fully understand which part of their lipid profile was abnormal in the first place. And then they came to see me after their second test showed little to no improvement.Cases like these reflect a very common misunderstanding: many people assume fish oil can solve every cholesterol-related problem, when heart health is actually far more complex. The problem is that cholesterol itself is often treated like one single number. In reality, not all blood fats behave the same way, and not every supplement works in the way people expect.

What fish oil actually doesFish oil contains Omega-3 fatty acids, mainly EPA and DHA, which are associated with cardiovascular health. One of their benefits is that they reduce inflammation that is considered one of the key factors involved in developing heart diseases.Another common use of fish oil is for its ability to reduce triglycerides. Triglycerides are fats present in the body, and they could cause cardiovascular risks to individuals suffering from high triglyceride levels.However, triglycerides and low-density lipoprotein or LDL cholesterol (also known as bad cholesterol) are not the same. Even though triglycerides and bad cholesterol are tested in blood lipid profile tests, they cannot be managed in the same way.Looking beyond the common assumptionsFish oil cannot lower LDL. In some cases, especially at higher doses, certain formulations may even increase LDL levels. Why does this happen? While reducing triglycerides, fish oil reduces the liver's production of triglyceride-rich particles called VLDL (very low-density lipoproteins). As these particles are broken down and cleared from the bloodstream more efficiently, some of them get converted into LDL particles, which can lead to a rise in LDL cholesterol levels. This effect appears to be more common with supplements containing DHA and at higher doses used for treating elevated triglycerides. However, the increase in LDL does not always mean cardiovascular risk rises in the same way, because some studies suggest fish oil may also shift LDL particles toward a larger and potentially less harmful form. Nevertheless, this is one reason why fish oil is mainly used for managing high triglycerides rather than as a general cholesterol-lowering supplement.Another point that is often overlooked is that



while fish oil may be useful in specific situations, it has not consistently shown benefits in reducing overall deaths related to heart disease. This reminds us that improving one number on a blood test does not always mean overall heart health outcomes will improve.Because fish oil supplements are easily available, they are often perceived as completely harmless. However, like any supplement or therapy, they can have side effects.Higher doses may increase bleeding tendency in some individuals, particularly those already taking blood-thinning medications. Certain studies have also raised concerns regarding heart rhythm disturbances in selected patients.This does not mean fish oil supplements should be avoided altogether. Rather, it highlights the importance of using them appropriately and under medical guidance when required.

Food sources and supplements are not always the sameA natural source of Omega-3 like fatty fish might be better compared to supplements. When nutrients are consumed via food, they come along with several other components, such as proteins, fats, and vitamins, which complement each other as a result of being part of the same diet.This is why people are suggested to maintain a balanced diet based on their natural sources rather than taking supplements alone. Although there can be some situations where taking fish oil capsules becomes necessary for people, the consumption of nutrients via food and natural sources can be good for heart health.Heart health is rarely about one nutrient, one supplement, or one number on a report. It is about understanding the larger picture and making choices that can be a preventive tool.

How extreme heat is quietly damaging our heart, kidneys, brain



For decades, extreme heat was treated as a seasonal hardship but temporary. But with large parts of India consistently reporting summer temperatures above 44°C, heat stress is posing a health threat. "We are not looking at dramatic episodes of heatstroke but the quieter, cumulative damage that relentless heat inflicts on the human body over weeks and months. The body gets very little time to recover," says Dr Rakesh Gupta, senior consultant, Internal Medicine, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, New Delhi.Sustained exposure to extreme heat affects nearly every major organ system. It strains the heart, taxes the kidneys, disrupts sleep, impairs cognition, alters emotional stability and accelerates underlying disease. And it does so unevenly, with children, working-age adults and the elderly facing distinct and often underestimated risks.

"The human body was never designed to work continuously to maintain its core temperature. With sustained heat exposure, the body spends more time trying to cool itself through sweating and changes in blood circulation. Over time, this can lead to persistent fluid and electrolyte loss, disturbed sleep, fatigue, reduced concentration, headaches, and a general feeling of exhaustion. People may dismiss these symptoms as routine tiredness, but they can be early signs that the body is struggling to adapt. By the time the body visibly collapses, the damage is often already advanced," says Dr Gupta.Dr Prashant Borade, Director-ICU at Gleneagles Hospital, Mumbai, says hospitals are witnessing a sharp rise in patients suffering from severe heat stress and dehydration. "Blood investigations in severe cases often reveal muscle breakdown, strain on the kidneys and liver, and dangerous electrolyte imbalance caused by extreme heat exposure," he says.

What's the biggest myth about heat stress?

That it affects only outdoor workers or vulnerable populations. According to Dr Gupta, "Daily commuters, children spending time outdoors, individuals living in poorly ventilated homes and even otherwise healthy young adults can experience cumulative heat stress."

Why children are more prone to heat

Children are among the least protected from extreme heat, though they are rarely perceived as the highest-risk group. Physiologically, they are poorly equipped for prolonged exposure to temperatures above 44°C. "Their bodies heat up faster, they sweat less efficiently than adults and they dehydrate far more quickly. Infants are especially vulnerable because their temperature regulation systems are still developing. A child can move from mild dehydration to a medical emergency with alarming speed," says Dr Gupta, urging parents to pay attention to unusual tiredness, irritability, reduced activity, poor appetite, headaches, or lethargy, particularly if children continue outdoor activities during peak heat hours.Repeated dehydration, exhaustion and disrupted sleep weaken immunity and leave children more vulnerable to gastrointestinal illnesses and respiratory infections. "A child who becomes unusually quiet, refuses food, appears persistently irritable or stops urinating normally may already be entering dangerous dehydration," advises Dr Gupta. In infants, the warning signs can be even harder to recognise: sunken eyes, weak crying, excessive sleepiness or skin that feels hot but dry. The absence of sweating in extreme heat is itself a medical warning.Dr Joel Dsouza, paediatric specialist at PD Hinduja Hospital and MRC in Khar, Mumbai, says infants may become fussy during feeding, cry excessively, have fewer wet nappies

and develop fever-like symptoms. "Toddlers playing outdoors can dehydrate very quickly and develop heat rash or exhaustion. Teenagers involved in sports are at risk of exercise-induced collapse and electrolyte imbalance," he says.

How working adults are vulnerableIf children are visibly vulnerable, young adults are vulnerable in a more deceptive way. Prolonged exposure creates what doctors describe as "invisible damage". "Symptoms such as ongoing fatigue, poor concentration, headaches, disturbed sleep, dizziness, muscle cramps, and exhaustion may develop gradually and are often ignored. The kidneys are often the first organs to show signs of stress. Repeated dehydration concentrates toxins in the body and impairs renal function over time. In several heat-intensive regions globally, there are rising incidences of kidney stones and chronic kidney disease among labour populations routinely exposed to high temperatures," says Dr Gupta.The cardiovascular system also comes under continuous strain. To cool itself, the body pushes blood toward the skin and increases heart rate. Sustained over months, this places a heavy burden on circulation, especially in people already living with poor nutrition, long work hours and limited access to cooling. "One symptom deserves particular attention: when a person stops sweating despite intense heat exposure. This can signal that the body's cooling system is failing and heat stroke may be imminent," says Dr Gupta.No group faces greater danger during extreme heat than the elderly. "Living with 45°C can become especially difficult because the body's ability to regulate temperature and conserve fluids reduces with age. Existing heart, respiratory, or metabolic conditions may also become harder to manage," warns Dr Gupta.

During severe heat waves, hospitals often report spikes not only in heatstroke cases but also in heart attacks, strokes and arrhythmias. "In many cases, heat acts less as a direct killer than as the trigger that overwhelms already fragile systems in the elderly," adds Dr Gupta.Cognitive decline also worsens sharply in prolonged heat. Elderly people suffering from dementia or neurological disorders can become severely disoriented, confused or withdrawn. Some stop recognising thirst entirely. "Elderly individuals living alone may deteriorate gradually over several days. Families frequently mistake confusion, excessive sleepiness or refusal to eat as signs of ageing rather than medical distress. Sudden confusion, slurred speech, rapid breathing, hallucinations, imbalance or unusual lethargy are not merely signs of discomfort. They may indicate systemic heat injury," says Dr Gupta.The hidden threat of hot nightsIn many Indian cities, temperatures now remain above 30°C well after midnight. Concrete, asphalt and trapped heat create "urban heat islands" that prevent cities from cooling after sunset. The result is that the body loses its recovery window. "Human beings are physiologically designed to cool down at night. Core body temperature naturally falls during sleep, allowing the cardiovascular system, brain and hormonal networks to recover from daytime stress. When nights remain excessively warm, that process is interrupted. So the body is carrying one day's heat burden into the next without adequate physiological recovery," says Dr Gupta. In such a scenario, the heart rates remain elevated, dehydration worsens and blood pressure regulation becomes unstable.

The brain relies on temperature regulation during sleep. Elevated temperatures interfere with circadian rhythms and hormone cycles, including melatonin production. Studies globally have linked prolonged hot nights with rising anxiety, aggression, psychological distress and hospital admissions for mental-health crises.

Why prevention is more than just hydrationFor years, heat advice focused largely on individual behaviour: drink water, avoid direct sunlight, remain indoors where possible."In prolonged heat, the body continuously loses salts and electrolytes. Oral rehydration solutions, buttermilk, coconut water and salted fluids may become medically important during extreme conditions. Make a habit of drinking infused water," says Dr Gupta.Fans become less effective when temperatures and humidity rise too high. Cooling the neck, feet and underarms with water and improved ventilation are often more effective.

‘Can I carry mangoes on domestic flights in India?’

As the mango season is in full swing in India, many passengers tend to travel from one part of the country to another with a box or two of their favourite fruit. "Can I carry mangoes on domestic flights in India?", a Quora user asked. So, we decided to explore domestic and international rules.Aviation expert K Anuradha Suresh, retired Senior AGM at Air India, affirmed that mangoes are generally allowed on domestic flights. "Not a prohibited item," she said.She mentioned that in domestic carriage, the only concern is the security clearance issue that permits it. "International carriage = customs and agricultural quarantine issues, which are country-dependent. In simple words, countries have biosecurity laws in place which help prevent the spread of pests or diseases," said Anuradha.

According to the official site of Ratnagiri Hapus, which are Alphonso mangoes grown in the Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, India, and widely called the King of Mangoes, if one is "carrying mangoes to countries like the USA, UK, Australia, or New Zealand, the mangoes must go through irradiation treatment (a method to kill bacteria and pests) and come with a phytosanitary certificate issued by India's APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority)".Notably, the official BCAS Prohibited Items List via the CISF Portal or through the Delhi Airport Security Guidelines, which prohibits carrying weapons, explosives, or liquids over 100ml, doesn't mention fresh fruits or mangoes on the prohibited list. So, legally, one can carry mangoes without it being explicitly banned or flagged as a security hazard.Furthermore, IndiGo's official customer support on X once explicitly confirmed in tweets that man-



goes are permitted in both cabin and check-in baggage on domestic flights. "Mangoes in limited quantity can be carried in cabin baggage. You carry mango boxes in your check-in baggage, within the check-in baggage limit," it read.

Air India's Restricted Baggage Guidelines allow dry food and fresh produce as long as they adhere to the standard weight limits, sans hygiene issues.Interestingly, while fresh fruits are allowed, the only fruit explicitly banned by Indian aviation security is dry coconut, also called copra, because it is highly flammable, which could lead to a hazard. "Mangoes have no such restriction domestically, though international flights must comply with destination-specific customs and their laws," said Anuradha.Experts suggest that if you are concerned about a specific airport security encounter, pack the mangoes neatly in a well-sealed, commercial cardboard box, which ensures instant visual inspection by security personnel.According to Ratnagiri Hapus website, some of the tips for travellers are:

Forza Horizon 6: Unbeatable experience

Hyderabad: Over 300 hours is the total amount of time I spent playing Forza Horizon 5 in 2021 and 2022 as I drove through the many biomes and regions of Playground game's Lamorghini collection to the Hoonigan catalogue, there was an endless variety of cars and a seemingly endless number of challenges to experience both speed and control. After my time with Horizon 5, I thought no driving game could come close to it; however, my 20 hours in Horizon 6 have me seriously reconsidering that assessment.Horizon in Japan is not only bigger and brighter, but also doing its best to capture the spirit of automobile racing in Japan.I would like to begin my early review of Horizon 6 with two words:

Mt. Fuji and Tokyo. For fans of racing culture, I don't need to say any more. For everyone else, the joy of driving a classic Nissan "Hakosuka" (the 1971 Skyline 2000 GT-R) is one of the greatest pleasures in a racing game, and in Horizon 6 it is available as a barn find in the Nangan region.Driving up to Mt. Fuji and through the streets of Tokyo in Horizon 6 is an unparalleled experience. Similarly, drifting with classic JDM cars or driving off-road among the cherry blossoms is a thing of sheer beauty. This is by far the most beautiful driving game, and with over 600 cars, we are all going to spend a lot of time here.In comparison with other racing games,

The old city changeth, yielding place to new



In Srinagar’s historic Gadi Kocha spice market, the heady smell of dried cockscomb and dandelion mix with the aroma of pear and apple, and the sinus-hitting turnip. Jute sacks, used as curtains to shops, protect these delicate ingredients. Abutting the shops is Zaina Kadal the wooden bridge built by Sultan Zain-ul-Abideen in the 15th Century. This is Srinagar’s city centre.At one end of the Zaina Kadal bridge, off the ghats of the Jhelum, live the Qureshis, who trace their ancestry to 16th Century preacher Makhdoom Haji Ahmad Qari. “Srinagar’s old city is changing. Concrete is replacing wood. Markets like Gadi Kocha and the mohallas (small neighbourhoods) around it, with old structures barely survive now,” Zahoor Qureshi, in his 70s, says. The Qureshis have been witness to the changing character of the city, both in terms of architecture and the way of life, in this city of seven bridges. “The ghats were buzzing social spaces for men and women. No one visits them anymore, except for those who wash shawls in the traditional way. The Jhelum used to be the highway of Kashmir, to travel and ferry goods,” he says. Before the affluent lived by the ghats; today, they live by the highways.

With the widening of roads and the change in people’s professions and lifestyles, more modern houses are taking the place of bungalows. Srinagar’s cityscape and skyline are changing. Laws now allow for taller buildings, dwarfing the natural elements that the city prided itself in. The easy availability of modern materials like cement, and the imminent entry of real-estate companies, are motivating inhabitants to sell the land on which old structures stand. A walk from Zaina Kadal up to Ali Kadal, two old bridges 290 meters apart, reflects the erosion of traditional homes, ghats, even bylanes.Citizens have mixed feelings about these shifts. Some feel nostalgia for the old way mixed with the reality of the mounting expense of maintaining heritage homes; some look forward to new ideas of living; some find the changes a threat to the ecology and social fabric of Srinagar.Migration has left behind unattended houses, with many caught in property disputes. “It’s hard to find place to park cars. The old city lacks basic amenities like drainage. There are no parks for kids to play in. It’s better to shift and buy property on the outskirts of the city,” says Amir Khan, 44, an engineer who works with a private company. Srinagar was founded by emperor Ashoka in 250 B.C. with its centre at Panderethan. With 4,000 recorded history, the city offers a layered architectural grammar from the Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim periods, often described as a rare example of syncretism. Saleem Beg, former director general of tourism, and currently the convener of the non-profit Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), Kashmir, sees Srinagar’s architecture as a key element that shaped the identity of the city like its music and literature.

Beyond the shrines, mosques, graveyards, and temples, the old city is a hub of handicrafts. Government figures say there are 20,822 craftspeople in multiple clusters, each mohalla (locality) houses residents that pursue a particular craft. “The qalamdanpora (design work) and sheshgari (mirror-work) mohallas are examples of how trade pursued by its residents resulted in naming the localities,” Qureshi says. In the narrow by-lanes, where houses almost lean into each other, the slope-roofed houses had distinct handcrafted elements, such as walnut wood carvings and khatamband, where geometrical wooden pieces were used for ceilings. In Ashai Kocha lane, near Mujahid Manzil, Ayesha Jan, 62, a retired school teacher, lives in an old wooden mansion. The lane is a living example of the old. Houses maintain local external features like lattice (pinjarakari) work and a projected wooden balcony with foliated arched screens (dub). The maharaji bricks are half the thickness of modern ones, there is coloured glasses, and murals on walls.

“Original residents like the Ashias, the Chistis have left the city to newer areas. Like this house, the city’s old charm is dying fast. The courtyards that once grew grapes and creepers are fast turning into godowns. It’s difficult to maintain these dilapidating houses,” says Jan, who will need to spend over ₹4 lakh to restore the wooden lattice of the dub. She hopes that the government will help in maintenance and in building new amenities while retaining the old structures, so it becomes fashionable to live here.INTACH listed 349 properties in a survey held across the city in 2003 as heritage sites. A fresh survey, conducted in 2021, showed that 13% of these properties had been dismantled, 33% showing signs of deterioration, 3% were in danger of disappearance, and 3% in an advanced state of decay. The survey captured the changing architectural mood of the city where “repair and restoration was carried out without consideration for preserving traditional vernacular character”. It also pointed out the scarcity of traditional skills contributing to “huge loss of vernacular construction techniques”. The Ashias and Chisti, who Jan talks about, have kochas (bylanes) named after them. The houses that have stood for over a century, include those of the Khanyaris in Fateh Kadal, the Bhats in Nawab Bazar, the Matoos in Kachgari Mohalla, the Shahs in Qalamdanpora, the Dhars in Zaina Kadal, and the Mirwaizs at Rajouri Kadal.

Most of these structures extend to three floors or four floors, with attics, creating a horizontal skyline. Beg, from INTACH, says houses built today are “more functional than luxurious”. He speaks of the loss the dhajji dewari, a technique of a timber-framed structure filled with brick masonry that. “There are many unique elements to Kashmir houses that are appropriate for the weather here,” Beg says, adding that newer structures that can be found across the country may not have that advantage. For instance, they miss the hamam, a room used in Srinagar’s winter that extends to four months, with temperatures dipping up to -8 degrees Celsius. Here, people sit on a carpet laid over stones heated with a fireplace beneath.Each room in old homes was defined by function, Beg says. For instance, there was a the bana kouth to store utensils and grain, which was separate from the daan kouth, the kitchen. The top floor usually had a kaeni, an open hall with wooden screen features to adjust its size as per the occasion.

“I have attended Sufiana mehflis and Khatami Quran ceremonies in such houses in the city as a young boy,” says Beg, whose was born in the old city’s Khankah area. He recalls sitting in ghulam gardesh, a big hall with a sunken central space with floor seating. “It was supported by an ornamental arched arcade with carved and coloured

wooden columns. This kind of setting made it easy for those serving tea or hookak during a mehfil or religious musical nights.”Now, the religious gatherings once held at least twice or thrice in both wealthy and middle-class households in the city are dwindling. “Even the attendance of local devotees on Urs (specials days dedicated to local saints) is thinning,” Anjum Rashid, a shopkeeper from the city’s Kalashpora mohalla, says.

The built-up area in Srinagar has seen a significant change in the Land Use Land Cover (LULC), an indicator of fast urbanisation. A survey conducted by the Sher-i-Kashmir University for Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) between 2000 and 2020 concluded that these two decades saw “the high rate of urbanization, population growth, migration, and tourism”. The LULC changes have been experienced at the urban hotspots of Srinagar city, like Lal Chowk, Natipora, Hyderpora, Rajbagh, Nowgam, Dangarpora, the Dargah area, Chhatabal, Batamaloo, and Bemina. “These places have experienced the highest level of urbanization in Srinagar city,” it records.According to the SKUAST data, Srinagar increased from 34.53 square kilometres in 2000 to 60.63 sq km by 2020. Population too has grown from 0.1 million in 1901 to 1.2 million in 2011, when the last census was carried out. It was projected to be 1.7 million in 2024. Water bodies in Srinagar city reduced from 19.36 sq km in 2000 to 14.44 sq km.It suggested that the extent of vegetation in Srinagar city was 43.87 sq km in 2000 and came down to 26.23 sq km by 2020. The vegetation area has decreased mainly in the northern and eastern parts of Srinagar, at places like Khaja Bagh Colony, Pahal, Mazgam, and Mughal Gardens, due to a population increase and developmental area build-up.

Similarly, the dense forest area in Srinagar city was 1.02 sq km in 2000 and reduced to 0.38 sq km by 2020. Sparse forest area was 0.76 sq km in 2000 and came down to 0.7 sq km by 2020. The extent of open areas in Srinagar city was 131.95 sq km in 2000 and stood at 124.39 sq. km by 2020. The reduction, according to the survey, was attributed to construction of hotels, buildings, and amusement parks at places like Lal Chowk, Batamaloo, and Boulevard Road.“The urbanization process causes chaotic expansion, deteriorates living conditions, and degrades environmental scenarios, all of which have negative consequences for human health,” the study concludes.Sameer Hamdani, author of the book The Syncretic Traditions of Islamic Religious Architecture of Kashmir (Early 14th to 18th century), says Srinagar was put on the list of Endangered sites of the New York-based World Monuments Fund watchlist in 2008.“The city was described as one of the world’s last surviving intact examples of pre-engineered wooden architecture. Many people have been impressed by the medieval charm of the historic city with its narrow gullies and kuchhas, wood and masonry houses, and tall wooden shrines,” Hamdani says, drawing attention to the quintessential Kashmiri spire on several religious structures.Tracing architectural influences to Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Timurid, Mughal, and Tibetan, Hamdani says change was inevitable but “the apathy of its residents to the historical architectural traditions is unfortunate.” He speaks of aspiration, more than functionality. “A vast majority of people find that by using costly, non-native materials and designs and motifs, they are fulfilling an aspirational goal,” Hamdani feels.There is architectural and human chaos at Lal Chowk, Srinagar’s commercial hub, where several buildings retain elements of the Dogra and British colonial period. Located just 3.5 km away from historic Zaina Kadal, Regal Cinema has been turned into a massive shopping mall with more than eight floors. It’s one among dozens.Srinagar Municipal Corporation (Building) Bye Laws, 2011, limited houses and commercial structures to three floors and an attic. This was because the Kashmir valley falls under Seismic Zone V (very high damage risk zone), according to the Jammu and Kashmir State Disaster Management Authority.The J&K Lieutenant Governor’s administration, however, introduced Urban Building By-Laws (UBBL), 2020, only to be withdrawn, and fresh by-laws introduced in 2021. Officials say these by-laws had no local inputs and were aimed at deregulation and densification of Srinagar to accommodate its growing population.Iftekhar Ahmad Hakim, who retired as Srinagar’s chief town planner (CTP) in 2023, says the proposed by-laws deregulate Floor Area Ratio (FAR), ground coverage, and height in building. For the first time in Kashmir there is no bar on the number of floors that can be constructed, no leeway for fire gaps.Srinagar’s European style of living in bungalows comes from previous by-laws that ruled in favour of a 15- to 30-foot distance between two houses as a fire gap. Here, people would lay lawns, adding to the green cover around the houses. The latest by-laws have also done away with zoning to delineate the city into compartments of commercial and residential pockets. “Earlier regulations existed to balance development with the need for liveable, resilient, and equitable cities. Removing them without careful planning and alternative safeguards can have long-term disastrous consequences for both current and future generations,” Hakim says. He adds this will lead to “spatial anarchy” leading to “social anarchy” because communities will be displaced and cultural networks broken. He warns that water will soon become scarce and sanitation will become “inefficient or overwhelmed” if these bylaws are implemented.Author Hamdani too warns against densification of Srinagar, “which is already a congested city”. “We need to de-densify and not increase the building footprints viz-a-viz open green spaces. The city could go vertical in certain corridors that do not affect the horizontal character of the historic city,” Hakim suggests. He adds that the whole idea of going vertical is to save open spaces and demarcate more green areas.

Heat waves forecast for 17 mandals across Andhra Pradesh

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority forecasted heat wave conditions in 17 mandals across the State on Thursday.

“Out of the 17 mandals, six in Krishna district, four in NTR, two each in Parvathipuram Manyam, Guntur, and Palnadu, and one in Eluru are expected to suffer heat waves,” APSDMA Managing Director, Kurmanadh said in a press release.Scattered rains with thundershowers are also expected in 13 districts on Thursday including Parvathipuram Manyam, Alluri Sitaramaraju, Anakapalle, and East Godavari, he added.Other districts that may receive thundershowers due to surface circulation over central India: Konaseema, Kakinada, Eluru, NTR, Guntur, Prakasam, Nandyal, Anantapur, and Sri Sathya Sai, said the press release.The maximum temperature was recorded at 40.8 degrees Celsius in Ulindakonda of Kurnool district, 40.3 degrees Celsius in Darimaduga of Prakasam district, and 40.1 degrees Celsius in Thavanampalle of Chittoor district, Kurmanadh added.

Tanks battle polluted groundwater in Haryana



Ikbal Khan, 60, speaks in Hindi accented with a strong, rough Mewati accent. He recalls a time, over 25 years ago, when women from his village of Ghaghas would fetch drinking water from a well on the outskirts of the village. As the groundwater diminished, borewells were sunk. “But over the past four to five years, the groundwater has turned salty,” he says. People in Nuh district in Haryana began constructing kundas, underground water tanks, some with government support.Ikbal, like most of his fellow villagers, constructed one a month ago. He spent ₹60,000, with financial aid from the Block Samiti, a rural government body. Ikbal lives below the poverty line, with an annual income of less than ₹1.8 lakh. His tank, like most others, has a capacity of around 20,000 litres. The farming family uses the water only to drink, relying on the rain to feed the crop. This cuts the produce per acre to less than half that well-irrigated land brings in.

Before his family of six got their own tank, Ikbal used to share one with other families. This is common in this village of about 5,000 people, which now has close to 200 tanks. Together, three or four families bear the cost of water, supplied by privately owned water tankers. This way, they share the financial burden.Ghaghas is situated in the foothills of the Aravali mountain range, 10 km off National Highway 248A, connecting Gurugram in Haryana to Alwar in Rajasthan. Nuh figures among the government think-tank NITI Aayog’s list of 100 ‘Aspirational Districts’, for faring poorly on various development parameters. But it’s not just Nuh. More than two-thirds of Haryana’s districts face a groundwater crisis. Harmful chemicals have entered underground streams, making the water unfit for drinking and irrigation.

The Annual Ground Water Quality Report, 2024 released by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in December 2024, stated that fluoride concentrations exceeded the permissible limit in Haryana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. Haryana was second on the list, with 208 out of 879 samples containing excessive fluoride. In addition, several samples had arsenic beyond permissible limits. Long-term exposure to both these contaminants can have severe health consequences, including fluorosis that degrades the skeletal system and causes cancer.Out of Haryana’s 22 districts, anomalous values of uranium (over 30 parts per billion) were found in 16 districts. This makes it part of the “over-exploited, critical, and semi-critical groundwater stress zones”, the report says. Chronic exposure to uranium can lead to kidney damage. The report was based on groundwater samples collected from 15,259 background monitoring network stations in May 2023 across India.In Haryana, 19 districts had a high electrical conductivity (EC) groundwater value. This is a measure of the ease with which water conducts electricity, indicative of the degree of salinity.Referring to the CGWB report, Indian National Lok Dal leader and Rania MLA Arjun Chautala raised the issue of deteriorating groundwater quality during the Budget Session in the Haryana Assembly this year. The first-time MLA said the report had made alarming revelations. He said groundwater contamination is a serious matter and that attention must be paid to ensure testing and reducing rising uranium levels in the Ghaghar and other rivers.Haryana Public Health Engineering Minister Ranbir Gangwa, in his reply, informed the House that a water testing laboratory had been established in every district of the State.Activist and convener of community-led Mewat RTI Manch Rajuddin Meo, who led a campaign, Jal Care Mission, for clean drinking water in Nuh in 2009, says, “The groundwater crisis is now serious. The water here has become so salty that even birds and animals do not drink it.” He adds that Nagina block bore the brunt. Out of 68 villages, 26, including Ghaghas, were the worst hit.“A survey by the Haryana government in 2022 identified these 26 villages as having levels of total dissolved solids (TDS) beyond the permissible limit,” he says. Nuh district water testing laboratory sources confirm this. “Of 860 borewells, 70 had a TDS over the permissible level of 2,000 mg/litre,” says a source.Meo says a locality of around 100 families in Ghaghas continues to use the groundwater as they cannot afford water from the tankers. He claims that the government’s free piped drinking water to Nuh villages is yet to cover the entire district. “Also, the ₹2,100 crore three-phase Mewat Canal project, announced by former CM Manohar Lal, is yet to take off.” A pipeline of the Central government’s Jal Jeevan Mission and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation for Rural and Ur-

ban Areas was laid in Ghaghas last year. Villagers say it is being tested, so there is no regular drinking water supply.About half an hour’s drive from Ghaghas, down the highway, across the road, is Madhi village. Mohammad Jubair, 58, sits under a thorn-ridden keekar tree, often the only foliage in this water-starved area. His white beard matches white turban and kurta. He claims that the village is divided into three localities for water supply through pipelines. “Each locality gets only 10 minutes of piped water supply every third day. We need at least 30 minutes a day to meet our household’s water needs,” he says.

Mohammad Sabir, 42, on a handicap tricycle, joins the conversation, adding that the water supply is only in name and the village is dependent on private water tankers. People in Jhajjar and Hisar had similar stories. Agroha, Barwala, and Adampur blocks of Hisar are the worst hit.Many village panchayats in Hisar have bought their own tankers. “Dushyant Chautala (former Deputy CM) had facilitated a donation of 50 tankers through a private firm four years ago,” says Suresh Kumar, the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (Hisar) president. He lives in Durjanpur village.Raj Kumar, Jhajjar’s Kheri Khumar village sarpanch, says, “The two wells in the village have been abandoned, as the water is not fit for drinking. We are dependent on a canal for irrigation and drinking water.” Around a dozen villages in Jhajjar district, including Gudha, Dhor, and Palra, also face similar problems. Sushila, the sarpanch of the neighbouring Khatiwass village, wonders what will happen when the canal dries up.Sandeep Kumar, an executive engineer at the Public Health Engineering Department in Punhana block, Nuh, says the whole district has piped water. “About 100 villages face difficulties, including those pertaining to illegal connections, but Madhi does not have a problem.”When Arjun Chautala raised the issue of groundwater in the Assembly, Chief Minister Nayab Saini had said that the government had, as part of its commitment to ensure the supply of clean drinking water, worked to provide tap water to every household in the last 10 years.Hazi Fateh Mohammad, who has been running a water supply business for the past decade, selling water to three or four villages in Nagina block, Nuh district, says the demand for tankers has decreased since the arrival of the pipeline. “We supplied 25-30 tankers during the month of Ramzan last year. Now it is down to 5-10 tankers.” He has installed a common water point fed by his tanks in his village of Nagina, where he gives water free of cost.Maya, 65, a fellow resident of the village, says she fetches drinking water from here twice a day despite the piped water supply to her home. “Almost all households prefer groundwater from the filling point for drinking. It tastes better. The piped water is mostly used for washing, cleaning, and for animals,” she says.Dilshad Khan, 32, is a marginal farmer in Madhi. He owns less than an acre of land and works as a truck driver to supplement his income. He shares a kunda with a neighbour, but they still find the water bill high. “A tanker costs ₹1,200 in winter, but it’s hard to find one for even ₹2,000 in summer. There’s often a five-to-six-day waiting period. We need at least two tankers a month,” he says.Like him, many others in Nuh own agricultural land, which is often too little to live off. People either rear cattle or work as drivers and helpers to make ends meet. “We are at the mercy of god! There is neither a canal nor any drain for irrigation,” says Irfan Khan, 35, who holds a vocational diploma from an industrial training institute. “The groundwater here is so salty that we cannot even bathe with it. It causes a burning sensation. We put out clay pots filled with the tanker water even for the birds,” he says.

In Haryana, 1.14% samples have high sodium levels and 0.34% have very high levels making the groundwater unfit for irrigation, as per the CGWB report. The CGWB has listed some of the reasons for deteriorating groundwater quality. These included an excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides in farming, improper waste disposal, sewage leakage, landfill contamination, and the over-extraction of groundwater, among others.Kumar from Hisar says the government’s approach to the crisis seemed short-term, with the stress mainly on supplying water through a pipeline. “Instead of focusing on long-term sustainable solutions, such as recharging groundwater and promoting crop diversification to reduce the extraction of groundwater, the government is taking stop-gap measures,” he says.Shiv Singh Rawat retired as a superintendent engineer in the Haryana government’s Irrigation and Water Resources department. He is now the convener of the Yamuna Bachao Abhiyan, a movement to clean up the river ghats and protect the river from pollution.He advocates for a comprehensive and sustainable water management strategy to move from water scarcity to water security. He suggests “holistic solutions adopted globally for water management, such as floodwater aquifer rechargers, large-scale rainwater harvesting, and the reuse of treated wastewater.” He also wishes that States would cooperate to resolve interstate water disputes, like the ongoing Sutlej-Yamuna Link canal and Ravi-Beas water allocation issue between Haryana and Punjab. “Investment in climate-resilient infrastructure is needed to withstand the impact of erratic rainfall and rising temperatures,” says Rawat. He also calls for improving public awareness and participation in water conservation efforts.

Hyderabad-Amaravati greenfield expressway gets Centre’s nod after 11 years wait

Decks are finally cleared for the much awaited Hyderabad-Amaravati greenfield expressway project, connecting the capital cities of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh respectively. It ends more than 11 year wait since the bifurcation of the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh.The Ministry of Home Affairs, the nodal agency to resolve the pending bifurcation issues, has directed the Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) to prepare a detailed project report (DPR) of the Hyderabad-Amaravati greenfield expressway on Tuesday (April 9, 2025). The development follows the meeting Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan had with heads of departments concerned after the Telangana government made a strong pitch for the implementation of the assurances given in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act (APRA), 2014 during a meeting convened by the Ministry of Home Affairs on February 3, 2025.The Telangana government has been insisting on the implementation of the assurance given in Schedule XIII of the APRA for the greenfield expressway. “The Central Government shall take measures to establish rapid rail and road connectivity from the new capital of the successor State of Andhra Pradesh (Amaravati) to Hyderabad and other important cities of Telangana,” Schedule XIII of the Act says.

The issue figured in the February 3 meeting yet again and the MoRTH secretary informed that this was a new proposal and therefore, alignment clearance is needed before proceeding further. Mr. Govind Mohan suggested that the Union Ministry could consider initiating the process for



detailed project report and also accord in principle approval for the project resulting in the approval by the Union Government.Telangana wanted expressway up to MachilipatnamThe approval however falls short of the Telangana government’s expectations as Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is in favour of a greenfield expressway up to Machilipatnam for faster movement of goods to and from Telangana. The Chief Minister discussed the matter with his Andhra Pradesh counterpart N. Chandrababu Naidu during their face-to-face meeting on July 8 last year and explained about Telangana’s plans to set up a dry port in area abutting Hyderabad-Vijayawada highway.Mr. Naidu too concurred with Mr. Reddy’s views claiming that the improved connectivity between the two capitals would act as a confidence building measure for further strengthening the relations between the two Telugu speaking States.

Cultural appropriation isn’t just colonial, it’s casteist



When Italian luxury house Prada recently unveiled its version of the Kolhapuri chappal, Indian social media was quick to react. Accusations of cultural appropriation and erasure followed, accompanied by demands for proper attribution and a wider call to “decolonise fashion”. But what if the cultural erasure didn’t start with Prada, or with the West? What if the deeper, older story is not just about colonial appropriation, but about caste-based appropriation from within? Beneath the Indian diaspora’s outrage lies a deeper, more uncomfortable truth: the issue isn’t just about what is being borrowed, but who gets to borrow and who doesn’t. The Kolhapuri controversy exposes not only colonial legacies but also the casteist dynamics embedded within India’s cultural economy. Originating in Maharashtra’s Kolhapur region and its neighbouring districts, the Kolhapuri chappal is known for its durability and distinct structure. What is less commonly discussed is who makes them. Historical accounts of Kolhapuri craftsmanship often mention specific sub-castes such as the Chamar, Dhor, and Matang: scheduled caste communities historically assigned the task of leatherwork, a practice stigmatised due to its contact with animal hides. These artisans, often from marginalised backgrounds, tan, dye, and stitch the leather by hand, creating a product celebrated for its durability and aesthetic. Yet, mainstream narratives often generalise Kolhapuris as a “Maharashtrian” or “Indian” craft, erasing the caste-specific labour behind them.

Within India, cultural appropriation often wears the mask of reverence. Many Indian artforms, textiles, jewellery, and crafts originate from Dalit-Adivasi aesthetics, labour, and design but commercialised by upper caste (Savarna) owned businesses. When a luxury Indian label collaborates with artisans, it is seen as uplifting tradition. But these collaborations rarely involve co-authorship or equity. Artisans are paid per piece. Designs are owned by the brand. The origin story is softened into a marketing stunt. While artisans toil for minimal wages, the profits and prestige accrue to brands. Artisans, often from marginalised social backgrounds, form the backbone of India’s handicraft sector but

lack control over branding or distribution. Savarna designers and brands act as gatekeepers, curating and profiting from these crafts while framing their role as “saviours of craft”.

Indian fashion runways feature designers predominantly from Savarna castes. The narratives in Indian fashion are largely shaped by editorials run by upper-caste surnames. The leadership roles in the Indian fashion and textile sector are disproportionately represented by upper castes. Meanwhile, Bahujans remain largely invisible in decision-making roles, often limited to labour roles. Their labour, when filtered through a Savarna designer’s lens, becomes “art.” When done independently, it remains “ethnic” or “rural.” Many traditional artisans lack access to formal design education, capital investment, or English-language fluency. Such barriers make it difficult for Bahujans to participate in the elite circuits of fashion. Bahujans are often reduced to tokenistic roles: a one season’s showstopper or a lookbook model, to signal performative inclusivity without ceding power. Bahujans are rarely seen in leadership roles, such as creative directors or brand owners, yet their identity is exploited in marketing campaigns that romanticise their poverty and struggles as “hardwork” or “heritage.” This tokenism commodifies Bahujan struggle while denying them agency, perpetuating a cycle where their labour is celebrated, but their voices are silenced. The Indian diaspora’s calls to decolonise fashion often overlook these internal caste hierarchies. This blind spot is telling. National pride tends to eclipse caste critique. In calling out foreign appropriation, many forget to examine who within India controls narrative, capital, and authorship. The act is the same. The reaction shifts from outrage to celebration depending on who borrows and who gets to author the narrative.

The question isn’t whether Kolhapuris or any Indian craft should evolve. They must. But the more urgent question is: who gets to decide how they evolve? Who profits? Who gets cited in design schools and magazines, and who remains a footnote? True cultural equity is about fair wages, credit, representation in leadership roles and platforms for co-authorship in design and storytelling which rebalance historic exclusion. The Prada-Kolhapuri controversy is more than a clash over sandals; it’s a mirror reflecting how global and local systems both flatten the histories of marginalised makers while uplifting those with socio-economic capital. Within the Indian fashion ecosystem, the intersections of caste and class dictate who gets to be the “designer” and who remains the uncredited, underpaid and exploited “artisan.” Until credit, compensation, and representation are equitably shared, cultural appropriation — whether by Prada or privileged Indian elites — will remain a form of theft, rooted in both colonial and casteist legacies.

Building awareness around a rare and often misunderstood cancer: sarcoma

Every year in July, Sarcoma Awareness Month brings attention to a group of rare and often misunderstood cancers. Sarcoma is not just one disease: it is a family of cancers that originate in the bones and soft tissues such as fat, muscles, blood vessels, nerves, and deep skin tissues. While sarcomas account for only about 1% of all adult cancers and 15% of paediatric cancers, their impact is profound, especially due to limited awareness and late diagnosis. Raising awareness is crucial to helping with early detection, advancing research, and supporting those affected. Types of sarcomas Sarcomas are primarily divided into two main categories: soft tissue sarcomas and bone sarcomas. There are more than 70 subtypes, and this complicates both diagnosis and treatment. Examples of common soft tissue sarcomas include liposarcoma (originating from fat tissue), leiomyosarcoma (arising from smooth muscle), and angiosarcoma (developing from blood vessels). Bone sarcomas consist of osteosarcoma (frequently seen in children and young adults), Ewing sarcoma, and chondrosarcoma. A sarcoma typically appears as a painless lump or swelling that may increase in size over time. Since these signs can be confused with non-cancerous conditions such as cysts or injuries, diagnosis is often postponed, permitting the cancer to advance.

While sarcoma can affect anyone, certain risk factors increase susceptibility. These include: genetic conditions such as Li-Fraumeni syndrome or neurofibromatosis; previous radiation therapy, especially in areas later affected by sarcoma; chemical exposure to agents like vinyl chloride or dioxins; chronic swelling (lymphedema) or certain inherited syndromes. Children and young adults are more frequently diagnosed with bone sarcomas, while soft tissue sarcomas are more common in older adults.

One of the major difficulties with sarcoma is the limited awareness among the public, and even within the clinical community. Some general practitioners might go their entire careers without encountering a sarcoma case, either because they have not come across one, or because they may not be aware of the signs and symptoms, resulting in a missed diagnosis. These situations influence treatment outcomes, as therapies are more effective when administered in the early stages of sarcoma. Management usually consists of surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy. Developments in targeted therapies and immunotherapy provide new optimism, especially for those diagnosed with metastatic or recurrent sarcoma. Nevertheless, because sarcomas are rare and varied, research funding is significantly less than that for more prevalent cancers. This paucity of funding has a negative impact on drug development, clinical trial opportunities, and access to specialised treatment modalities. The importance of awareness

Sarcoma Awareness Month is essential to inform the public, legislators, and medical professionals about the distinct difficulties associated with this type of cancer. Heightened awareness can facilitate earlier diagnoses, which in turn create an opportunity to improve survival rates. Additionally, it fosters public backing for research funding and motivates pharmaceutical companies and researchers to focus on creating improved treatment alternatives. Community events, educational webinars, fundraising campaigns, and patient testimonials help amplify the voices of those affected by sarcoma. The yellow ribbon, the symbol of sarcoma awareness, serves as a visual reminder of the need for continued advocacy and support. Supporting patients and families A sarcoma diagnosis can be life-changing not just for the patient but also for their families. Given the rarity of the disease, many patients feel isolated or overwhelmed. Connecting with sarcoma-specific support groups and organizations can provide emotional, financial, and informational assistance. Organizations such as the Sarcoma Foundation of America, Children’s Cancer Research Fund, and Sarcoma UK offer resources for patients, fund research initia-



tives, and advocate for better public health policies. These groups also push for inclusion of sarcoma in national and international cancer agendas. Even if you are not directly affected by sarcoma, there are several ways to support the cause: educate yourself and others about the signs and symptoms of sarcoma; participate in awareness campaigns during Sarcoma Awareness Month; donate to sarcoma research foundations or volunteer your time; advocate for better healthcare policies and more research funding and support patients and families through acts of kindness and community engagement. This July, and every month, let us stand together to shine a light on sarcoma and support those who face it with courage and hope.

Ever imagined seeing a golf ball on the surface of the moon in an image taken from the earth? This is now possible with the Vera C. Rubin Observatory (VRO), the world’s latest astronomy facility, located on one of the peaks of mountain Cerro Pachón in northern Chile. Jointly funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy, this 8.4-metre telescope offers an unprecedented view of the universe. The 3,200-megapixel (MP) camera installed on the VRO has 67-times more pixels than an iPhone 16 Pro camera. The large mirrors and unique design allow the telescope to capture wide-angle 3.5-degree-diameter images, equivalent to the size of seven full moons in the sky. These unique features will allow the VRO to scan the entire southern hemisphere sky every three nights, which it will do continuously for 10 years. This ultra-high definition, wide angle survey of the sky will thus create the longest astronomical time-lapse movie of all time, allowing for many new discoveries in the solar neighbourhood and deep space alike. While the future holds endless possibilities for this next generation observing facility, the VRO was constructed to serve four major science goals. One of them is understanding the nature of dark matter, the mysterious substance that makes up 80% of all matter in the universe. But while dark matter can’t be seen, it causes galaxies to clump together in specific ways. Astronomers will study the distribution of galaxies near and far in order to understand the properties of dark matter, and figure out what it is made of. Since the VRO will scan the entire southern hemisphere sky over and over again, scientists will also get a pretty good idea of how the sky looks generally. This will allow them to pick up any changes in the sky relative to images taken a few days ago, a few weeks ago, and, eventually, a few years ago. In fact its state-of-the-art technology allows the VRO to compare each image to the ‘general’ image of that part of the sky within 60 seconds and

Kailash Manasarovar Yatra: Pilgrims’ progress



Damini Pandya, 68, had taken a vow of silence for eight days before she reached the clear, ice-blue waters of the Manasarovar Lake in Tibet. There, the retired government officer from Ahmedabad in Gujarat gazed at the majestic snow-capped Kailash mountain in the distance. It had taken her 17 days to get there, walking for three days with low oxygen at an average altitude of about 15,000 feet above sea level. Breaking into a wide smile, she splashed cold water over her head — a ritual that Hindu pilgrims believe purifies the body and soul. Eight days after she began her maun vrat (vow of silence), Pandya crossed into India at the Nathu La Pass in Sikkim. Breaking her vow, she said that the silence had helped her absorb the spiritual significance of the yatra. “I did not utter a word for days because I wanted to be with god. I broke my vow after I entered India, but I don’t have words to describe the cosmic energy I felt in Lord Shiva’s abode,” she said.

Pandya and more than 30 other yatris spent a week in Tibet’s Ngari prefecture, where they trekked the 52-km circumference of Mount Kailash, called the parikrama or the kora. This was Pandya’s second solo trip after 2019. She entered Tibet through the Lipulekh pass in Uttarakhand, which, she said, was a shorter route compared to the journey through Nathu La pass. It may well be her last visit to Mount Kailash, as the Chinese government has restricted the yatra to those under the age of 70, given the high altitude and concerns about illnesses. The youngest member of the group, Arpit Rai, 19, from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, who travelled with his father Shashikant Rai, 55, said he is keen to return to Mount Kailash. “Between Kashi (another name for Varanasi) and Kailash, Shivji (Lord Shiva) is the common factor. Perhaps Shivji wanted us to visit together for the first time. It was an unforgettable journey despite the long travel time in altitudes we are not used to,” he said. The yatris travelled for 14 days by bus covering nearly 3,000 km and took three days to do the parikrama by foot, covering around 50 km. Geopolitical considerations

Damini Pandya and the Rais were part of the first batch of Indian pilgrims since 2019 who were allowed to cross into Tibet as part of the Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra, organised by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2020, the COVID-19 lockdown, the violent clashes between the Indian Army and the People’s Liberation Army at Galwan Valley along the Line of Actual Control; and stand-offs at other points such as Demchok, about 250 km from Kailash Manasarovar, ensured the yatra was suspended. Four years later, after talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping, Delhi and Beijing began discussions on normalising relations and restoring a number of different mechanisms between them. The yatra, held between June and August each year due to weather conditions, was prioritised, even as other mechanisms, such as direct flights between India and China, are set to restart. Suman Lata, who recently retired as a school teacher in Delhi, said that while crossing over, the group did not feel any of the tensions between the neighbours that have dominated bilateral ties over the past few years. “We have no link with politics, so we don’t think about such things. I can only say that the Indian government sent us off very well and the Chinese government has received us extremely well too,” she said. Lata was among the 13 women on the group. Like her, half of them had come alone on the yatra. Women pilgrims with their certificates after returning from the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra 2025, in Gangtok.

Women pilgrims with their certificates after returning from the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra 2025, in Gangtok. | For officials on both sides, the final go-ahead in February 2025 presented a daunting task. They had to build facilities along the way in a short period of time. These included re-viving immigration posts at various entry points for the yatris, providing rest stops, oxygen banks, and medical facilities.

World’s largest digital camera starts observing the cosmos

issue an alert if any changes are detected. When fully operational, the VRO will generate around 10 million alerts from 20 TB of raw data collected every night. That’s equivalent to more than three years of streaming videos. The changing sky While most of the changes in the sky are due to fast-moving objects such as comets, there exist other celestial entities whose position and brightness can change over time. For instance, while 1.5 million asteroids — rocky bodies orbiting the sun between Mars and Jupiter — have been discovered, only 30% of those smaller than 140 m are known so far. The VRO is expected to increase this figure to 90% and allow scientists to locate ‘killer asteroids’, which despite their relatively small size could devastate our planet if they strike it. With its unprecedented resolution, the VRO can raise the count of known solar system objects by 10x, discovering many new comets and asteroids, dwarf planets like Pluto, and even a ninth planet if it exists. All galaxies interact with their neighbours gravitationally. Small satellites are torn apart by the gravity of bigger galaxies as they merge with them. The VRO will map the distribution of stars in the Milky Way, helping astronomers identify ‘streams’ of stars that once belonged to smaller galaxies that blended with the Milky Way millions of years ago. Given its unique long-term survey capability, the VRO will also discover millions of objects of variable brightness. For instance, dying stars explode as supernovae, which brighten up for a few days before their nuclear furnace is extinguished. Some stars may have planets, or another star orbiting them, blocking their light from reaching us occasionally. Other variable stars may change in brightness because their outer surfaces pulse over a few hours to a few days. The first images In a June 23 press conference, the observatory revealed that the \$473 million facility had already discovered 2,104 asteroids in a week of observations. All other efforts combined currently find around 20,000 asteroids a

At the hostel in Zhunzhui Pu, near Taklakot, where the pilgrims stopped for a night before beginning the Kailash parikrama, extra tents were set up inside the atrium to accommodate more people. This is a part of Tibet where people live off subsistence farming. Tourism is the only means of making a living, local workers said, adding that the resumption of the yatra has come as a relief for them. According to the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra website, yatris who pay about ₹3 lakh for arrangements need to budget about 990 Renminbi or RMB (₹12,000) to pay the local porters and 2,370 RMB (about ₹29,000) for pony handlers. In addition, many of the porters do odd jobs for the yatris and make some extra cash, just enough to get by during the brutal winters. During the years when the yatra stood suspended, pilgrims came in via Nepali tour groups. They included many people of Indian origin from the U.S. and the U.K. But the yatra, and Indian pilgrims in particular, have been a mainstay for the local workers in Tibet. According to an External Affairs Ministry response in Parliament, the number of pilgrims allowed to join the yatra each year, which is negotiated between the foreign ministries of India and China, has fluctuated every year since the route was reopened in 1981. In 2015, there were 999 pilgrims. By 2019, there were 1,364. Each of the 15 batches of yatris (10 via Nathu-La pass and five via Lipulekh pass) of about 50 pilgrims this time includes two liaison officers — government officials who apply to join the yatra; 2-4 cooks; and a medical officer from the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. Each of the pilgrims is chosen by a computerised lottery. Of about 5,000 applicants, 750 were chosen this year. They then had to undergo strenuous medical tests to be proclaimed fit to undertake the journey.

“Despite the acclimatisation for two days each at two centres in Sikkim — one at 11,000 feet and the other at 13,500 feet — some 30 out of the 33 pilgrims in my batch experienced high-altitude sickness and breathlessness at times,” said the medical officer, who did not want to be named. “My job was to monitor the health of the pilgrims and ensure that those with hypertension and diabetes take their medicines regularly. A few experienced cramps, but they were too excited by the experience to let these affect them,” he said. One of the cooks, who also did not wish to be named, said it was a challenge to prepare vegetarian food for people from so many different parts of India. But previous experience with the armed forces helped. “When one caters to soldiers with different acquired tastes from all over the country, one finds the formula to make something that appeals to everyone. We focused on pulse-based items and vegetables provided by the Chinese authorities,” he said. While many pilgrims praised the arrangements, some expressed discomfort with the sanitation facilities along the way. According to retired Wing Commander of the Indian Air Force Sadanand Jakhare, they were “comparable to public toilets in India”. He said, “The Chinese officials were hospitable, although restrictive and not very expressive. They declined to let us explore the countryside, even a little beyond the designated places. We were under constant watch.” However, he added that he was “impressed” by the roads and the use of solar power that he saw along the way. Some people were also unhappy about the restrictions on worship. Pilgrims are not allowed to take a full dip in Manasarovar Lake. Officials said the practice was discontinued in 2016 after Indian pilgrims were found using soap to wash themselves in the lake, and leaving items of clothing and jewellery there. “The yatra is not for comfort,” said Devi Prasad Ketkar, a retired manager from Mumbai, who was on the pilgrimage with his wife Pradnya. Ketkar also served on the organising committees for the group. “There is no place for negative energy or negative comments during our visit here... visiting Mount Kailash and doing the parikrama gives us all the answers we need,” he said, as others in the group nodded. As the pilgrims stepped into the waters of Manasarovar Lake, the air was filled with chants of ‘Om Namah Shivaya’, ‘Om Parvati Pataye Namah’, and ‘Har Har Mahadev’. In Hindu scriptures, Mount Kailash is believed to be the home of Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati, who live there with their sons Kartikeya (Muruga) and the elephant-headed god, Ganesha. Lake Manasarovar, where the gods and goddesses are believed to descend for a bath every day, was created, according to the scriptures, by Lord Brahma from a part of his brain (manas means mind and sarovar means lake in Sanskrit). With its peak at 6,638 metres (21,778 feet), Mount Kailash has not been summited in modern memory. After 2001, the Chinese government banned attempts to climb it due to the religious sensitivities of different faiths.



year. While one of the initial images displays swirling clouds of dust and gas in the Trifid and Lagoon nebulae 9,000 lightyears from the earth, another shows a section of the Virgo galaxy cluster located 54 million lightyears away. The giant images captured by the VRO are a journey through space and time: Milky Way stars shining in an array of colours from blue to red in the foreground, groups of galaxies with reddish hues moving away from us in distant space, and a suite of gravitationally interacting galaxies in a nearby cluster sandwiched in between. The VRO is distinguished from its predecessors, including the James Webb Space Telescope: while they are more sensitive, they can only observe a small patch of the sky at a time. The VRO was originally proposed in 2001 and was then called the ‘Large Synoptic Survey Telescope’ (LSST). It was renamed as the Vera C. Rubin Observatory in 2019. Rubin (1928-2016) was an American astronomer. She was the first to show that spiral galaxies rotated so fast that if their constituents were just stars, they should fly apart. The implication was that there are large amounts of unseen matter holding galaxies together, the substance we call dark matter today. Despite her pioneering work, gender bias denied Rubin a Nobel Prize.

Marijuana found in sample of Air India pilot whose flight fell 300 feet, injured 24



The confirmatory drug test of the Air India pilot-in-command of a Phuket-Delhi flight that fell 300 feet, leaving 24 people injured, has come in as positive for marijuana, according to sources.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) had said on Sunday that the preliminary drug screening gave a "non-negative" result. The samples were sent for confirmatory testing, and the result has come as positive with the substance identified as marijuana, it is learnt. Confirmatory tests are required in the case of a non-negative preliminary screening as certain foods and medications can throw up false positives in initial screenings.

Emails sent to MoCA, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) regarding the confirmatory drug test did not elicit any response. Air India didn't comment on the development. The Air India Airbus A320 aircraft, operating a flight from Phuket to Delhi on August 4, encountered a sudden altitude drop of about 300 feet, leaving 20 passengers and four cabin crew members injured; 17 of the 24 had to be hospitalised. The aircraft had 137 passengers, six cabin crew members, and two pilots on board. The incident was classified as serious and is under investigation by the AAIB.

The government and the airline had initially attributed the incident to severe turbulence.

According to sources, the conduct of the pilots is also under the scanner, particularly in view of the positive drug test. Moreover, the aircraft may have faced some snags with its hydraulic and control systems, which will also be investigated by the AAIB, it is learnt. Aircraft manufacturer Airbus and French aviation accident investigation authority BEA will be assisting in the investigation. Earlier on Tuesday, a team of Air India management led by the airline's outgoing CEO, Campbell Wilson, met senior MoCA officials, according to sources. Apart from Wilson, former aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola, who is currently executive advisor to Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran, and

Air India's flight safety head Deepak Joshi also attended the meeting, it is learnt. From the ministry's side, Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha, Director General of Civil Aviation Vir Vikram Yadav, and AAIB Director General GVG Yugandhar are learnt to have been present. Asked about the meeting, Wilson told reporters outside the ministry that the Air India team was there to provide the ministry with "an update on the status of the investigation". As per DGCA rules on testing for psychoactive substances, in case the confirmatory test is found positive, the medical in-charge of the concerned organisation is required to consult a medical review officer (MRO) to determine if the result was due to a legitimate therapeutic treatment or some other innocuous source, and not drug abuse. For instance, pain relief medication containing codeine may trigger a positive result for opiates. If the MRO confirms it is a drug abuse case, there is an escalation ladder of disciplinary actions that comes into the picture. If it is the first incident of a positive drug test, the employee is referred to a specialist doctor, counsellor, or de-addiction centre for a rehabilitation programme, in consultation with the MRO. To return to active duty, the employee must undergo new testing, receive a negative report, and obtain a fitness certificate from the organisation's medical in-charge.

In case of a second offence, the licence is suspended for three years. A third positive test result leads to the cancellation of licence. It could not be immediately ascertained if the Air India pilot had tested positive in the past. Meanwhile, AAIB said in a statement that it is "presently engaged in the systematic collection, preservation and examination of all relevant technical, operational, medical and human-factor evidences". "This includes examination of the aircraft and its systems, recorded flight data, relevant operational and maintenance records, medical information and interviews with persons concerned. All material evidence will be examined in its entirety before any conclusions are drawn," it said. The AAIB said the sole objective of the investigation is to determine the circumstances and contributing factors relating to the occurrence and to identify appropriate safety measures to prevent recurrence. It also cautioned that no inference about the probable cause of the incident should be drawn from any isolated information. "Certain records, statements, medical information and other material collected during the investigation are protected and confidential in accordance with the applicable investigation framework. Maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the investigation process is essential to a fair, objective and technically sound determination of the facts," it said. "The AAIB, therefore, requests all concerned, including the media and the public, to respect the investigation process and refrain from drawing conclusions on the basis of incomplete, unverified or selectively available information," it added.

Large-cap funds see outflows after 31 months in July: AMFI data



Large-cap schemes saw monthly outflows for the first time since December 2023 as net inflows into equity mutual funds fell 15% month-on-month in July, according to data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). This came as foreign investors, who heavily invest in large caps, returned to Indian stocks after four months in July, likely allowing other investors to book profits after an improved month for the Indian stock market, according to Chief Executive Venkat N Chalasani. Overall inflows into equity-oriented mutual funds fell to Rs 24,697 crore in July, with large-cap funds seeing an outflow of Rs 1,322 crore. Mid-cap, small-cap, and multi-cap schemes saw inflows increase from the previous month as these sections of the market outperformed the overall market in July. For context, the Nifty 50 gained around 2.2% in July, which was its best monthly performance since April. Broader markets outperformed, with the Nifty Small-cap and Nifty Mid-cap indices gaining around 2% during the month.

Fewer negative shocks from West Asia, revival of foreign inflows during the month, and better-than-expected corporate earnings in the April-June quarter helped markets score better. "Large-cap stocks have moved to reasonable valuations but are saturated at the moment in terms of growth potential. At a time when investors are handpicking growth-oriented stocks, we are seeing the blue chips see less interest, while money pours into mid- and small caps," an investment head at a domestic fund house said.

Ankur Punj, the MD and business head at Equirus Wealth, also echoed a similar view. "The trend (of fall in equity MF inflow) also highlights ongoing portfolio rebalancing amid evolving valuations, with investors favouring segments that offer stronger long-term return potential while remaining mindful of associated risks," he said. The contributions from systematic investment plans (SIPs) remained robust, remaining above the Rs 30,000-crore level for the 5th con-

secutive month with inflows of Rs 31,961 crore in July, higher than the Rs 31,781 crore in June. Some sections of the market are cautious on equity funds due to the heavy dependence on the retail segment and lower returns in recent times.

"While flow is positive largely through the 30k crore strong SIPs, we feel there is a cautious stance on equity-oriented MFs given lower returns over the past 2-year period. We also believe flows to some extent moving towards SIFs (special investment funds) and arbitrage products which are to be low risk and absolute returns," according to Akhil Chaturvedi, executive director and chief business officer at Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company. Data from AMFI shows flexi-cap equity funds, which comprise stocks from every section of the equity market, have provided an average return of around 12% over the last five years. In comparison, many multi-asset hybrid funds have delivered returns of 15-22% over the last three years, rewarding investors who have diversified into other asset classes.

Flows into exchange-traded funds (ETF) fell nearly 34% to Rs 11,071 crore in July after inching up last month. Flows into gold ETFs fell nearly 55%. However, flows into index funds turned positive to Rs 1,537 crore, compared to an outflow of 58 crore last month. Flows into debt schemes turned positive at Rs 1.88 lakh crore in July compared to outflows of Rs 10.91 lakh crore a month ago. With debt funds making up more than half the flows of the overall mutual funds industry due to the presence of institutional players and corporates, this uptick led to the industry receiving net inflows of Rs 2.4 lakh crore during the month, compared to outflows of Rs 52,949 crore last month. The debt inflows during the month were due to a slight moderation in bond yields as fresh shocks from West Asia became less frequent. AMFI's Chalasani said the industry would have to "wait and watch" for further directives from the government on whether investments through the Unified Payments Network (UPI) may be chargeable. "We'll have to wait and watch as the finance minister mentioned that it may not have an impact on the small remittances. But we'll have to wait and watch. It's too early for us to comment on that," he said. While a large chunk of SIP inflows come through UPI, there are other methods too like RTGS and NEFT, which makes it too early to determine how any charges on UPI may affect the industry. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has assured that there will be no higher costs on personal transactions, there is still no clarity on how much transactions with or within businesses will be charged.

Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran resigns ahead of AGM

New Delhi: Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran has resigned from his position and will not seek re-appointment when his current tenure ends in February 2027, according to a report by NDTV Profit citing sources. The development comes ahead of Tata Sons' Annual General Meeting scheduled for August 18.

In a statement, Chandrasekaran said, "I have completed 40 years of professional life at the Tata Group. I am grateful for the immensely satisfying opportunity to contribute to this venerable institution. Leading Tata Sons over the past decade has been a great honour and a profound responsibility."

Chandrasekaran has served as Chairman of Tata Sons and the Tata Group since January 2017. He joined Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as an intern in 1987 and went on to become the company's Chief Executive Officer in 2009 before taking charge of Tata Sons.

In July 2025, Tata Sons had set two conditions for

extending Chandrasekaran's tenure, including that the holding company would continue to remain unlisted and that a resolution would be reached on the stake held by the Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) Group, according to the report.

Tata Sons is the principal investment holding company of the Tata Group, with Tata Trusts holding around 66 per cent of the company.

Chandrasekaran's exit comes as the conglomerate continues to navigate the restructuring of its businesses and the group's broader ownership and capital structure. Following the development, shares of several Tata Group companies came under selling pressure in Wednesday's morning trade. Tata Consumer Products declined more than 1 per cent to Rs 1,066 apiece on the NSE, while Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) fell up to 5. Titan Company shares were down 1.03 per cent at Rs 5,075.10, while Tata Power Company declined 0.9 per cent to Rs 376.60.

Can exercise help your brain clear waste, prevent dementia? What new research reveals



We often think of exercise as something that keeps the heart, muscles and bones healthy. But growing research suggests that its benefits may extend much deeper — right into the brain. A recent analysis by researchers at Victoria University has shown how regular physical activity may help the brain's natural waste-clearance system function more effectively and support healthy brain ageing.

Explaining the significance of the findings, Dr Biplab Das, director, Neurology, Batra Hospital, Delhi, says the study draws attention to the glymphatic system, a network involved in clearing metabolic waste products from the brain. "The brain is highly metabolically active and produces waste products as part of its normal functioning. The glymphatic system acts somewhat like a clearance mechanism, helping remove these substances, particularly during sleep. As we age, processes involved in maintaining brain health can become less efficient, which is why understanding ways to support this system is important," says Dr Das. Excerpts:

What exactly is the glymphatic system?

The glymphatic system is not a single organ or a pipe in the brain. It is a network of fluid-filled spaces that works alongside the brain's blood vessels. Cerebrospinal fluid, or CSF, moves through these spaces and helps carry waste products away from brain tissue. Special brain cells called astrocytes help regulate this movement. One of the proteins involved is aquaporin-4, which acts like a channel that allows water to move through these cells. This process is important because the brain is constantly working and using large amounts of energy. Like any active organ, it produces waste as part of normal functioning. Researchers are particularly interested in whether this clearance system helps remove substances such as amyloid-beta and other proteins that can build up in some brain diseases. However, this does not mean that poor glymphatic function alone causes dementia. Brain ageing and neurodegenerative diseases involve many different processes.

Why is sleep so important?

The connection with sleep is one of the most interesting parts of the research. Studies suggest that the movement of fluid through the brain changes when we sleep, particularly during deeper stages of sleep. This may allow

the brain to carry out some of its maintenance and waste-clearance work more effectively. So, sleep is not simply a time when the brain switches off. It is an active biological process during which the brain and body carry out important repair and maintenance functions. Poor or regularly disturbed sleep may interfere with some of these processes. This is another reason why getting enough good-quality sleep is considered important for long-term brain health.

Where does exercise fit in?

Exercise may influence the brain's waste-clearance system in several ways. Physical activity improves blood circulation and keeps blood vessels healthier. During exercise, blood pressure and the movement of blood through the vessels also change. Since the brain's fluid-clearance pathways are closely associated with blood vessels, these changes may help move fluid through the brain. Exercise may also reduce chronic inflammation and improve sleep. All of these effects could create better conditions for the brain's natural waste-clearance processes to work. Scientists are also studying whether exercise affects aquaporin-4, the water-channel protein involved in moving fluid through brain tissue. The important point is that exercise probably does not work through one single mechanism. Its effects on circulation, blood vessels, inflammation, sleep and brain function may all work together.

Is there a particular exercise that is best for brain health?

Researchers themselves have highlighted the need for further studies to establish how much exercise is required, which forms of exercise are most beneficial and whether the effects differ in people who already have cognitive impairment or neurological disease. People do not necessarily need to think of exercise only in terms of intense workouts. Regular walking, cycling, swimming, strength training or other activities that are appropriate for an individual's age and fitness level can contribute to overall health. The important thing is consistency and avoiding prolonged physical inactivity.

What do we know from studies in people?

There is now some early evidence from human studies as well. In a 2025 study, researchers used brain scans to look at changes in fluid movement after people followed a 12-week cycling programme. They found changes in measurements linked to the brain's glymphatic system and in the vessels that help drain fluid from around the brain. These findings are encouraging because they suggest that exercise may actually influence the brain's fluid-clearance pathways in humans. Scientists still need larger and longer studies to understand whether these changes eventually translate into better protection against memory loss or brain disease. People should also pay attention to other modifiable factors that influence brain health, including blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol, smoking, obesity, diet, stress and sleep quality. The takeaway is not that exercise is a cure or guarantee against dementia. Rather, it reinforces a much broader message: what is good for the heart and blood vessels is often good for the brain as well.

Chef Pankaj Bhadouria's chemo-driven hair loss: Why it hits women survivors so hard



When Chef Pankaj Bhadouria spoke recently about losing her hair during chemotherapy and posted a photo with clumps of hair in her comb, what came through was not simply distress over a side effect. It was the shock of seeing a familiar part of herself disappear. The MasterChef India winner has spoken candidly about how difficult it was to actually experience hair loss even after knowing that chemotherapy could cause it. She described the moment as having "stopped my breath." The body-image struggle gets serious during cancer treatment. Patients are often told that hair will fall out, that surgery may leave scars, that weight may change, that skin and nails may look different. "All of this can sound manageable when explained in a consultation room. It can feel very different when the changes begin appearing in the mirror. For women treated for breast cancer, surgery may alter the shape of the breast or leave a scar. Psychologically, these changes can be profound," says Dr Ramesh Sarin, clinical advisor, breast oncology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, New Delhi. She explains the psychological effect of chemotherapy. Excerpts:

Why chemotherapy causes hair loss? Chemotherapy targets all cells that divide rapidly, including the cancerous. Hair follicle cells are among them. As a result, some chemotherapy drugs can interrupt the normal growth cycle of hair, leading to thinning or significant hair loss. The extent depends on the particular drugs, their doses and the individual patient. Hair loss can affect the scalp as well as eyebrows, eyelashes and other body hair. A patient who previously looked outwardly healthy may suddenly have an unmistakable physical sign that she has cancer. The change can therefore affect not only how she sees herself, but also how she imagines other people see her.

Why does hair matter so much?

Hair frames the face, contributes to appearance and is associated with attractiveness, femininity and identity. For many women, hair is part of how they have understood and presented themselves for decades. Consequently, losing it can produce a form of body-image disruption — a mismatch between the person's internal sense of how she looks and the appearance she now encounters in the mirror. The American Cancer Society recognises hair loss as one of the most noticeable effects of cancer treatment and notes that it can affect body image, emotional wellbeing and quality of life.

The loss is also about control. Cancer itself can create a profound sense of lost control. Diagnosis, surgery, chemotherapy, scans and treatment schedules introduce a series of events that patients cannot entirely determine. Their bodies become the site of repeated medical interventions. Hair loss can intensify this experience because it is visible, involuntary and difficult to conceal. Psychologically, therefore, hair loss can represent more than the loss of hair. It can become another reminder that the body is responding to forces outside the patient's control. That's why preparation before therapy matters.

When patients know what may happen and are given an opportunity to discuss it beforehand, they are psychologically better prepared. It doesn't necessarily prevent distress but can give the patient some sense of control. That sense of agency can be particularly important during cancer treatment.

A woman may no longer recognise herself when she looks in the mirror. She may become more conscious of being watched or judged. For some patients, this can lead to embarrassment, withdrawal or avoidance of social situations. Others may become preoccupied with changes in their appearance. The National Cancer Institute notes that hair loss can be associated with emotional responses including embarrassment, anger and depression. Breast cancer adds another layer. When breast surgery is followed by chemotherapy-related hair loss, several aspects of appearance and identity may be disrupted simultaneously. This can make it difficult to separate the medical experience from the psychological one. The breast may have personal significance as well as cultural associations with femininity, sexuality and motherhood. Its alteration can therefore produce feelings of grief, loss, vulnerability or diminished attractiveness. The psychological impact varies enormously. Some women adapt relatively quickly; others experience persistent body-image distress. Body image can also influence intimate relationships. A woman who feels unattractive or unfamiliar in her body may worry about whether her partner sees her differently. Surgical scars, breast changes and hair loss can alter sexual confidence, while fatigue, pain and treatment-related hormonal changes may independently affect sexual function and desire. These are subjects that patients may hesitate to raise.

What happens when the hair returns?

Chemotherapy-related hair loss is generally temporary, although recovery varies. Hair commonly begins to grow again after treatment, and the initial regrowth can differ in texture, thickness or appearance before settling over time. But psychological recovery does not necessarily follow the same timetable as biological recovery. A patient may continue to feel disconnected from her appearance even after her hair begins returning. Cancer treatment should address the whole person. If we prepare patients only for the medical effects of treatment and not for the emotional impact of changes in their appearance, we are leaving out an important part of their experience.

Facial recognition helps Hyderabad Police identify eight offenders during Bonalu

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad Police detained 116 suspicious persons during the Lal Darwaza Bonalu celebrations held on August 9 and 10, with facial recognition technology helping identify eight people with previous criminal records. The CCS Special Crime Team and local police used facial recognition cameras linked to the criminal database as part of intensified surveillance to prevent pickpocketing, mobile theft and chain-snatching.

According to Additional CP (Crimes & SIT) M Srinivas, the eight identified offenders were handed over to the concerned police stations for further action. Police said no theft, mobile phone theft or chain-snatching cases were reported during the two-day celebrations.

Hardik seeks return to Gujarat Titans, with captaincy rider; franchise says no



GNS News Agency, August 19

Mumbai Indians' captain Hardik Pandya held talks with Gujarat Titans over a possible return to the franchise but was rejected after he made it conditional on being reinstated as captain,

According to sources, Gujarat Titans, where Pandya won the Indian Premier League (IPL) as captain in their inaugural campaign in 2022 before moving back to Mumbai Indians in 2024, had been open to bringing him back. They had already discussed the prospect with current captain Shubman Gill, but Pandya's captaincy condition was a deal-breaker. The franchise was fine with him making a return. They had even discussed the same with its captain Shubman Gill, and he, too, had agreed that the franchise could trade him back. But when his condition of captaincy was put up, everyone said no to it," said a source. Gill is the India captain for both Tests and One-Day Internationals.

Hardik Pandya had a rather below par campaign individually as well in the 2026 IPL. (BCCI/Creimas Photo) Hardik Pandya had a rather below par campaign individu-

ally as well in the 2026 IPL. (BCCI/Creimas Photo) When contacted, a Gujarat Titans representative refused to comment on the matter. "Hardik Pandya had no direct conversation with any franchise whatsoever regarding transfer trade, or otherwise. If any approach has been made to him, that has been directed to the MI franchise," Pandya's spokesperson said. The development follows weeks of uncertainty over Pandya's position at Mumbai Indians. The Indian Express had reported earlier that MI's team management was not keen to retain him as captain and was even evaluating his role in the squad, after a season in which the team lost 10 of their 14 games, finished ninth, and extended the franchise's title drought to six years. The unravelling was laid bare in a team talk by the coaching staff after MI's final game of the season, against Rajasthan Royals. "The coaching staff was very clear in their message to the senior players that wherever they play, they need to be coachable. There were many instances where the coaching staff recommended something which was backed by data but players didn't follow it," a source had told

Mumbai Indians, with among the biggest names in the IPL, have looked out of step with the T20 format of late. None of their players featured in the race for the Orange (most runs) or Purple (most wickets) Caps; their best batsman, Ryan Rickelton, finished 17th among the season's run-getters, while leg-spinner Allah Ghazanfar was 14th among wicket-takers. Pandya's relationship with the MI fanbase has also been complicated since he was released by the franchise in 2022, joined Gujarat Titans and won the title as their captain, then returned to MI in 2024 to replace Rohit Sharma, days after the latter had led India to the 2023 50-over World Cup final. Fans booed Pandya through his first season back, when MI finished bottom of the table.

Sri Lanka squad for first India Test: de Silva leads; Nissanka, Mendis ruled out

GNS News Agency, August 19

Sri Lanka on Wednesday named their 16-member squad for the first Test against India, starting Saturday in Galle. Dhananjaya de Silva will lead the side while all-rounder Kamindu Mendis has been named his deputy. Senior batters Kusal Mendis and Pathum Nissanka have been ruled out of the opening Test of the series that will form a crucial part of the World Test Championship cycle for both India and Sri Lanka. In Kusal's absence, Sri Lanka have recalled 33-year-old Niroshan Dickwella as wicket-keeper into the Test team after three years. Ramesh Mendis and Prabath Jayasuriya form the spin options alongside Keshara Nuwantha. The 25-year-old off-spinner picked up three wickets during the Sri Lanka Cricket XI's three-day practice game against the Indians in Colombo last week. He also registered a five-for against India A in Galle last month.

Sri Lanka have included five pacers in the squad, including two left-arm quicks in Vishwa Fernando and Dilshan Madushanka. Meanwhile, visitors India have been hit with multiple injury setbacks ahead of the first match on tour. Shubman Gill's side have lost pace ace Jasprit Bumrah and batter Sai Sudharsan to injuries, with Aaquib Nabi and Sarfaraz Khan named as their replacements. Spin all-rounder Washington Sundar is also in a race against time to be deemed fit for the second Test that begins in Colombo on August 23. India are ranked fifth in the WTC standings after nine games this cycle, while Sri Lanka are ranked sixth



after four matches.

Sri Lanka squad for first Test: Dhananjaya de Silva (c), Kamindu Mendis (vc), Lahiru Udara, Nishan Madushka, Dinesh Chandimal, Pasindu Sooriyabandara, Sonal Dinusha, Niroshan Dickwella (wk), Ramesh Mendis, Prabath Jayasuriya, Keshara Nuwantha, Milan Rathnayake, Asitha Fernando, Lahiru Kumara, Vishwa Fernando, and Dilshan Madushanka. India squad for first Test: Shubman Gill (Captain), KL Rahul (Vice-Captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant (WK), Dhruv Jurel (WK), Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Manav Suthar, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Gurnoor Brar, Devdutt Padikkal, Saransh Jain, Aaquib Nabi, Sarfaraz Khan.

‘One should know about one’s own body...’: Kapil Dev on injuries



GNS News Agency, August 19

The Indian players getting injured regularly have raised a few questions. For the upcoming series against Sri Lanka, which starts on Saturday, India will miss their regular starters in the format: Jasprit Bumrah, Sai Sudharsan, and Washington Sundar. Both Bumrah and Sudharsan had been named in the squad but were subsequently withdrawn from what is a crucial two-Test series. While the BCCI had revealed that their availability was subject to fitness, their extended absence has raised questions over whether the right protocols are being followed at the CoE. "Playing domestic cricket

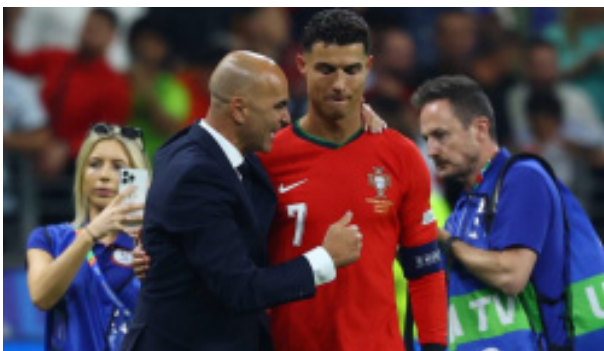
is very important," said Kapil Dev at the launch event of the inaugural JITO Premier League.

"One should know about one's own body. There is too much T20 cricket happening, so you have to be careful about the toll it takes on the body. Our body is actually not tuned to being a fast bowler. Our body is more tuned to being a batter. The BCCI should look into how much workload can be given to a fast bowler," said Kapil Dev. Beyond the two, there are also growing concerns around all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy, who has had a series of injury setbacks. After adding 10 yards of extra pace during the IPL, he broke down with a quadriceps injury.

India's game against spin in recent times has been under the scanner after whitewashes against New Zealand and South Africa in home conditions. "The reason why Indian teams struggle against spin is that the top players don't play enough domestic cricket. That's where the BCCI should put its foot down and make everyone play multi-day matches. The other aspect is that the younger generation will get to learn from the top players," Kapil Dev observed. "In recent times, India has not been the best against spin bowling. They play too many T20s and ODIs. Test matches are a different ball game. I hope they can put their heads together."

After coaching Belgium and Portugal, Roberto Martinez could take over Dutch side

After helming Belgium and Portugal at successive FIFA World Cups, Spanish coach Roberto Martinez could be in line for another high-profile managerial assignment as he is in talks to take over the Dutch side. The Orange are without a manager after Ronald Koeman stepped down in the wake of the Netherlands' ouster at the hands of Morocco in the Round of 32 at the recent World Cup. Nigel de Long, the former defensive midfielder who is now the technical director of the Royal Dutch Football Association (KNVB), has held talks with the 53-year-old Martinez in Malaga, De Telegraaf reported. Prospects like former Liverpool manager Arne Slot, ex-Manchester United handler Erik ten Hag and current PSV Eindhoven coach Peter Bosz have dropped out of the race. Others said to be in contention were Michael Reiziger, the handler of the Dutch junior team, and Louis van Gaal, who had already taken charge of the national side on three previous occasions. Martinez's Portugal side bowed out of the 2026 World Cup to a late Mikel Merino goal in the Round of 16 game against eventual champions Spain, after which he stepped down. He had earlier guided them to the title in the 2025 UEFA Nations League. Martinez took Belgium to a third-place finish at the 2018 World Cup but failed to take them out of their group at Qatar 2022, after which he resigned. However, he had the distinction of taking the team to the top spot in the FIFA world rankings. At the club level, his most high-profile stint was at Everton



before being fired in 2016. Before that, he won the 2013 FA Cup with Wigan Athletic and League One with Swansea City in 2008. If Martinez does get the Dutch job, it would be the first time since Austrian Ernst Happel took the team to the 1978 World Cup final that the Netherlands would have a foreign coach. Slot, who took Liverpool to their 20th English title in his debut season in charge before being sacked after a string of poor results, said he was keen to coach in club football for the time being. "At this stage of my career, I prefer to see myself on the training pitch with my players every day. Something that is simply not possible in the same way with a national team," the 47-year-old who won the Dutch Eredivisie with Feyenoord in 2023,

‘We have so much money’: Kaif asks why experts are declining BCCI CoE contracts



Former India batter Mohammed Kaif questioned why the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the world's richest cricket body, has failed to appoint a head for sports science at the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for over a year amid the national side's current injury crisis.

India's fitness situation has unravelled over the last fortnight, with several key international stars out injured ahead of the two-match Test tour to Sri Lanka. In a major blow to the side, India lost pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah to injury despite the 32-year-old initially being named in the squad. Subsequently, batter Sai Sudharsan was also ruled out of the tour. All-rounders Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar and Harshit Rana are also contending with injury concerns alongside white-ball stars Hardik Pandya and Varun Chakaravathy.

"There was a statement from VVS Laxman [CoE head] that they had approached several people. Those things were being worked out, but at the last minute, they turned it down.

Afghanistan to host India in three-match T20I series in Delhi, confirms BCCI

GNS News Agency, August 19

In a first, the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) will host India in a three-match T20I series in India in September. The Afghans, who toured the country for a one-off Test and three ODIs in June, will return to New Delhi next month to take on Shreyas Iyer's side, shortly before the Asian Games campaign. The teams will play three games between September 13 and 17, all set to be played at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in the national capital.

"The BCCI is pleased to support the Afghanistan Cricket Board in hosting this T20I series in India. The India-Afghanistan cricketing rivalry has produced some thrilling encounters over the years, with both teams boasting quality cricketers. Afghanistan's players are also quite popular among fans in India, which is a reflection of the strong bond that has developed between the two cricketing nations. India hosting Afghanistan for their historic first Test in 2018 was another significant milestone in this journey, and since then, we have continued to see regular bilateral engagements between the two teams," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said in a statement. Over the years, Afghanistan have adopted India as one of their secondary home venues after playing their first-ever Test in the country in 2018. In June, India hosted the Afghans in the first-ever Test at the New Chandigarh Stadium. They recorded their biggest-ever Test



win by an innings inside three days. The teams then met in a three-match ODI series, the first bi-lateral 50-over series between the sides that India won 3-0. "We have hosted our home fixtures in both India and the UAE in recent years, and given the importance and scale of this series, we believe India provides an excellent setting for the event. We are confident that the series will create valuable opportunities across commercial, technical, and cricketering areas, while adding a new dimension to our bilateral engagement. We look forward to a successful series and to further strengthening our partnership with the BCCI," ACB chief Mirwais Ashraf said.

‘Uska waqt aagaya’: Inside Kuldeep Yadav’s race against time before Sri Lanka



After India's white-ball tour of Ireland and England this July, during which Kuldeep Yadav spent nearly all his time on the bench, the opportunity to play the One-Day Cup for Yorkshire came around and he didn't have any second thoughts. The plan had been Kanpur, then Sri Lanka, working under his childhood coach Kapil Dev Pandey ahead of what was a make-or-break series for the 31-year-old wrist-spinner.

GNS News Agency, August 19

After India's white-ball tour of Ireland and England this July, during which Kuldeep Yadav spent nearly all his time on the bench, the opportunity to play the One-Day Cup for Yorkshire came around and he didn't have any second thoughts. The plan had been Kanpur, then Sri Lanka, working under his childhood coach Kapil Dev Pandey ahead of what was a make-or-break series for the 31-year-old wrist-spinner. Instead, from London, Kuldeep changed course and headed north to Leeds, in search of game time that had been badly missing.

As India head into the series against Sri Lanka, Kuldeep finds himself in a precarious situation. Understudy to R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja as a third spinner, kept out by team combinations, his Test appearances stand at 18 in nine years. Even after Ashwin retired, he has played only five Tests, with Washington Sundar preferred ahead of him, and now faces a fresh challenger in Sri Lanka in Manav Suthar. "This series is made for Kuldeep," Pandey tells The Indian Express. "Uska waqt aagaya. He has to believe it and show it to the world that he is a match winner. Of course, the pressure is definitely on him, but at this level it is all about handling that. He has been playing for years now, so this is the time to pull all that experience together and show who he is and what he can capable of when he plays."

In the one-off Test against Afghanistan, Kuldeep showed signs of rustiness, inevitable given the time he has spent warming the bench across formats. That is why he turned out for Yorkshire, even if it meant it was one-day cricket. "Before he landed in Sri Lanka, I wanted him to be in the rhythm," Pandey says. "No matter how many overs you bowl in the nets, in a match when the batsman is trying to put you off, you have to find that rhythm. If you can keep hitting the right line and length when batsmen are after you,

then you are in the game. So that's what he did in England," Pandey says, pointing to the five matches he played in ten days. Pandey doesn't hide that the noise around Kuldeep since Suthar's arrival hasn't made things easy for the 31-year-old. If anything, he calls it a glorious opportunity for Kuldeep to take his game to another level. "In early years, even when Ashwin and Jadeja were there, he has played ahead of them," Pandey says. "So why can't he do it now?" Kuldeep Yadav in action during India's warm-up match against SLC XI in Colombo. (CREIMAS) Kuldeep Yadav in action during India's warm-up match against SLC XI in Colombo. (CREIMAS)

In subcontinent teams, a third-choice spinner losing his way isn't new. But in most cases, the opportunities rarely opened back up, as with Murali Kartik or Venkatapathy Raju. With Kuldeep, the story is different: a left-arm wrist-spinner is a unique breed, with enough variation up his sleeve that, played regularly, he has produced performances of real note. His well-disguised variations have left batsmen struggling to read him out of the hand. Since Ashwin's retirement, Kuldeep has one five-wicket haul in five Tests, a return that isn't bad but has been viewed through the harsh lens of a spinner not stepping up. Raju, who played much of his career in a three-pronged spin attack himself, says Kuldeep should by now be carrying the weight of expectation. "It is an international level. You can't think about all that. We have to be ready for it. But in Kuldeep's case it is unfortunate that he doesn't get to play enough matches. That's why it makes it more difficult for him. The trust is very important. It takes a different skill to bowl longer spells," Raju says.

Raju doesn't hide his disappointment that India didn't make Kuldeep the second spinner the moment Ashwin retired. "Somebody like Kuldeep shouldn't be warming the bench. Once Ashwin retired, he should have always been second choice. As long as Jadeja is there, he will play as an all-rounder. But Kuldeep being a wrist-spinner should be a straightforward choice. Whether the pitch is helpful or not, he will get you those wickets. You can't leave such bowlers outside," Raju says. The importance of the series isn't lost on Kuldeep either. Before leaving for the UK, he had a few sessions with Pandey in Kanpur, who made him bowl with every kind of ball. "I gave him old ball, ones that don't turn, ones which seam had worn off and even the new ball and Kookaburra," Pandey says. "What he bowls with shouldn't be a concern. If he gets the basics right, he can work magic with any ball."

In the warm-up fixture, Kuldeep showed encouraging signs, but once India head to Galle, they confront a key question. Whether the opportunity opens up for Kuldeep or not, one thing is clear for Pandey: a promise made and heard decades apart. "This series is important for him and me personally. This is what he has been craving for a long time, to play Tests regularly. Last year when he didn't play a single Test in England, you heard many experts say he had played it could have been different. So I hope he gets an opportunity here and he wins matches for India. "It is what Kuldeep told me when I met him as a boy. Uska waqt aagaya."

Batwara 1947, Main Vaapas Aaunga, Operation Safed Sagar remind India who she used to be



Ever since Aditya Dhar's 2019 hit military drama Uri: The Surgical Strike, the depiction of India on screen has changed. That perception has been further bolstered by the director's recent blockbuster spy thriller franchise Dhurandhar. Surgical strike has become a part of household parlance, and calls for 'Naya Bharat', the one which pierces through the border to hit back, are now commonplace. While its depiction may have changed on screen, has India really changed? Has its peace-loving DNA been altered to a point of no return? This year, there's been a pushback on screen, which has slowly and surely reminded India who she used to be, and still is, at its core. When its Ganga-Jamuna tehzeeb comes under threat, India often takes a dip in the imaginary river of Saraswati, which continues to flow smoothly underneath without any obstructions.

Partition revisitedIn the trailer of Rajkumar Santoshi's upcoming Partition drama Batwara 1947, Karan Deol's character warns Pakistani fundamentalists that his father (also his real-life father Sunny Deol) pays no heed to any 'sarhad' when it comes to protecting his own. "Seedha ghus ke maareng," he declares. The moment seems designed to welcome that section of the actor's followers who have been lapping up him singlehandedly dismantling Pakistan in Anil Sharma's 2023 blockbuster Gadar 2 or trembling the enemy state with a war cry in Anurag Sharma's hit period war drama Border 2 earlier this year.

But not too many noticed the ache in his eyes when he can sense the loss of his son, also a soldier, in the 1965 Indo-Pak War, in Border 2. Similarly, many would choose to ignore the context within which his son mouths that familiar slogan. Sunny's character in Batwara 1947 is no Tara Singh, as Santoshi tells SCREEN. "Tara Singh is fighting for his own right. But our character takes on a fight for someone else," says the filmmaker. "He's fighting what the mightiest of them fall prey to — fanaticism." Batwara 1947, an adaptation of Asghar Wajahat's popular play Jis Lahore Nai Dekhya O Jamiy Nai, revolves around a Muslim family in India, who are forced to flee to Pakistan during the Partition. Despite the traumatic event, they ensure protection to an elderly Hindu woman (Shabana Azmi) who refuses to leave her ancestral haveli in Lahore. "Mandir todna Islam nahi hai," asserts Sunny's character, when a Pakistani extremist (Abhimanyu Sharma) orders the lady's temple within her home to be demolished.

Sure, Sunny here dials up the 'Good Muslim' stereotype perpetuated by the cinema of Manmohan Desai back in the 1970s. But it's subverted by the smart casting — most of the Muslim characters are played by Hindu actors, while Shabana Azmi plays the Hindu woman. Aamir Khan, who has produced the film, could've easily opted to play the lead, but he lets Sunny do the heavy-lifting (literally) because when an actor with that screen image would speak, the audience would listen intently. It also helps that Batwara 1947 revisits Partition through the lens of harmony just a week after Imtiaz Ali's period romance Main Vaapas Aaunga dropped on Netflix India. That film uses a different approach, a less heavy-handed one, to convey the same message. Keenu (Vedang Raina) and his family are made to flee their hometown of Sargodha, Pakistan during Partition, forcing him to leave behind his love interest Afsana (Sharvani). Even over 75 years later, a 95-year-old Keenu (Naseeruddin Shah) insists on returning to his motherland to deal with some unfinished business.

Of course, given Imtiaz Ali's brand of cinema, one would expect the unfinished business has to do everything with the unfulfilled love. But the filmmaker takes the audi-

ence for a ride by flipping the definition of unfulfilled love on its head. Keenu's last wish is indeed to reconcile — not with the girl he lost, but with the love he lost. Upon learning how Afsana's 'fellow' Muslims raped, tortured, and killed the women of his family in their protection, he orders his younger brother — and in turn, himself — to never look back at what they've lost. While that leads to a life full of ambition and wealth in a rising, independent India, but one that's not without seething bitterness. This vitriol stems not so much from the tragedy that transpired, but from how it almost irrevocably altered his DNA, his ability to love, and his faith in humanity itself.

The old passing on the India they knew Whether it's Batwara 1947, Main Vaapas Aaunga or Sriram Raghavan's Ikki, which was the first release of this year, each of these films on cross-border tension had an aged figure with undying optimism showing a new generation the direction India should be heading in. Shabana Azmi and Naseeruddin Shah, both of whom unequivocally supported the recent student protests in New Delhi, were only walking their talk. Whether it's through their films or via actions in real life, the most enduring onscreen couple from India's parallel cinema movement have demonstrated that they owe to a new generation reparation for what they've lost of our country over the years. Shabana Azmi in Batwara 1947. Shabana Azmi in Batwara 1947. "The Partition of Indians and the cavalier manner in which the Radcliffe Line was drawn is one of the most traumatic events in our history," Shabana Azmi tells SCREEN. "For a long time, a veil of silence covered any mention of it, which in some cases, made the wounds even deeper. For Partition, the historical irony may be that the veil of silence helped the first generation survive — but perhaps made it harder for later generations to understand and metabolize what actually happened," she adds.

The veteran actor hails legendary South African President Nelson Mandela's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 1995 as the watershed moment that "opened the doorway to revisiting past events so that the many stories of humanity that occurred were also recorded along with the tragic severing of brothers from brothers." Santoshi also echoes what Imtiaz and Naseeruddin Shah's love letter to humanity acknowledges — "We've seen the highest of highs and the lowest of lows of humanity during such monumental events like the Partition. We've seen extraordinary stories of courage, and at the same time, witnessed humans stoop down to an unbelievably low level," he says.

Perhaps this dying breed of actors — Shabana, Naseeruddin Shah, and Dharmendra — have witnessed Partition too closely through their loved ones to know better than hating the 'enemy state'. Sunny told SCREEN that the consequences of Partition are in the DNA of both him and his late father, given his grandparents were first-hand witnesses, hailing from a joint family in Punjab. Which is why Dharmendra proudly headlined Ikki on the verge of his demise — a story where he fondly visits his birthplace of Pakistan despite having lost his 21-year-old son in the 1971 Indo-Pak War. When he embraces a Pakistani man (Deepak Dobriyal) crippled by the war, you can feel it in your bones that he means every inch of it. The rhetoric around war also finds a refreshingly restrained lens in Onir Sen's Netflix India show Operation Safed Sagar, which released earlier this month. While it's often India's victory over Pakistan in the 1999 Kargil War that's usually flashed in front of our eyes whenever we revisit that episode, the series also underlines the terms under which that victory was achieved — with restraint (India didn't infiltrate the Line of Control, even after one of its pilots drifted into 'enemy territory'), with honour (India buried Pakistani soldiers with Islamic rituals when the neighbouring country refused to accept the dead bodies), and most crucially, with a sense of repent and loss (the lives laid down during the war are not used as a fuel for revenge). As depicted in season 2 of Nikkhil Advani's period drama Freedom at Midnight on SonyLIV earlier this year, whether it's Partition or the Kargil War, the hatred is initiated by the inflated ego of one individual (Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Pervaz Musharraf respectively) instead of a political strategy or civilian sentiment. Politicians and mobs are reduced to pawns by mobilizing their deepest, darkest insecurities. There's no doubt that history keeps repeating itself, and India keeps exercising restraint whenever needed, often bearing the brunt of her non-violence ideals. Which is why pop-patriotic dramas like Uri: The Surgical Strike and Dhurandhar offer momentary relief to the national ego. But when the eyes are always set on badla instead of badlav, the hands that massage the ego are never able to reach for the soul.

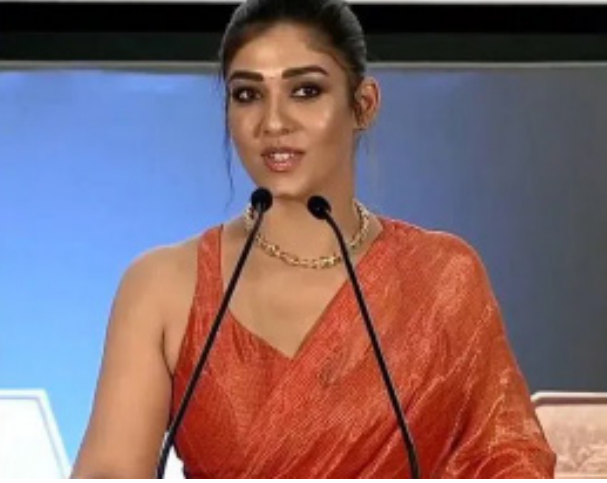
Nayanthara praises 'Toxic' director Geethu Mohandas's sensitivity towards actors; calls her "amazing!"

Bangalore: Calling Geethu Mohandas, the director of 'Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown Ups', as 'amazing', actress Nayanthara, who plays a pivotal role in the eagerly awaited action thriller, has now showered praise on the actress-turned-director for being deeply sensitive to the needs of actors. Participating in the trailer launch event of the film which was held recently, Nayanthara, while talking about director Geethu Mohandas, said, "I think everyone's spoken about how good you (Geethu Mohandas) are as a director, but the woman that you are, the way you took care of each and every actor, the way you gave love when everyone needed you."

Going on to explain further, Nayanthara said, "I'm sure all these actors here have had their good moments, bad moments, tough moments. You were there holding their hands, walking with them, and doing the best you could (for them)." Nayanthara then went on to disclose an instance when the director, who herself was not in control of her emotions after a particular shot, actually walked in to the caravan of an actor to comfort the person.

Recollecting what Geethu Mohandas had told her after coming out, Nayanthara said, "Everyone was a little, you know, scared because we were shooting and it was a tough situation. But Geethu Mohandas came back and I was like, 'What happened? Did you lose your mind? And did you lose control? Did you say something that you're not supposed to say?' And she said, 'No, I just gave love.' That's all she said. And I was amazed at this woman and the kind of deep sensitivity that she has towards each and every actor that she's worked with. She just owns them. That's why Huma said, 'I love you.' Because that's the kind of love that she gives to all of us. You are amazing, Geethu!"

For the unaware, 'Toxic' features Yash, Nayanthara,



Calling Geethu Mohandas, the director of 'Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown Ups', as 'amazing', actress Nayanthara, who plays a pivotal role in the eagerly awaited action thriller, has now showered praise on the actress-turned-director for being deeply sensitive to the needs of actors.

Kiara Advani, Tara Sutaria, Rukmini Vasanth, and Huma Qureshi in a powerhouse ensemble cast. Written by Yash and Geetu Mohandas, and directed by Geetu Mohandas, the film has been shot in Kannada and English and has been dubbed in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and other languages. Produced by KVN Productions and Monster Mind Creations, 'Toxic' is scheduled to hit theatres on August 26 this year.

Raj Babbar's dialogue on nepotism almost stopped BR Chopra's Mahabharat from airing ever



Two shows ruled Indian television in the late 1980s—Ramanand Sagar's Ramayan and BR Chopra's Mahabharat. However, Mahabharat was reportedly supposed to hit television much earlier, around 1984, but was delayed by several years. As a result, Ramayan became the first of the two to premiere, in 1987, while Mahabharat finally arrived in 1988.

Even then, the show's telecast faced uncertainty after a politician objected to certain elements and obtained a stay order. A court hearing was reportedly held overnight to get the order revoked. Actor Gajendra Chauhan, who played Yudhishtir in the iconic series, recently recalled how he was cast in Mahabharat and how the show took several years to reach television.

'Wasn't happy with the role of Yudhishtira' Speaking to Hindi Rush, the actor said, "I am glad and happy that I got a chance to work in Mahabharat. I have had a long journey in Mahabharat. I was originally offered the role of Krishna. Then I was made Balaram. And eventually, I was given the role of Yudhishtir, for which I wasn't prepared. I thought maybe I am not getting what I wanted to do. But our director Ravi Chopra told me that this role is equally good. He convinced me that the story of Mahabharat is led by Yudhishtir. He is the main character. Everybody speaks about Yudhishtir. He has always been the talking point." He added, "The reality was that I didn't have a lot of work with me earlier. When they started casting for Mahabharat, they approached me first for the role of Krishna. I auditioned for the same. But it got delayed. Originally, Mahabharat was supposed to telecast much before Ramayan. But due to multiple issues, it got delayed."

'Mahabharat was supposed to telecast in 1984' Chauhan revealed that the makers had begun pro-

From Fahadh Faasil, Dulquer Salmaan to Vismaya Mohanlal: How Malayalam cinema handles nepotism



With director Jude Anthany Joseph's Thudakkam, Vismaya Mohanlal, the daughter of Dadasaheb Phalke Awardee Mohanlal, has made her foray into Malayalam cinema. The movie also marked the acting debut of producer Antony Perumbavoor's son, Aashish Joe Antony, rendering it a "clash of the nepo kids." While nepotism among actors has often been a hot topic, it was rarely a concern for Malayalam cinema for the longest time. One of the main reasons was that, unlike in other industries, nepo kids seldom made a significant impact here if they failed to impress the audience with their work. Even if they received an easy debut, launched by one of their parents, relatives, or family friends, unless the nepo kid himself did a solid job, they risked being written off almost instantly. Must Read | Thudakkam review: Vismaya Mohanlal shines, but Mohanlal's cameo can't save this flawed film To be precise, almost all those who had prior connections to the top strata of Malayalam cinema established themselves and continued to be chosen solely because they could stand on their own, separate from the names that brought them into the industry.

Nepotism in Malayalam cinema Veteran actors Vijayaraghavan and Jagathy Sreekumar stand as prime examples of this. The son of legendary playwright and theatre director NN Pillai, Vijayaraghavan made his acting debut in Kaapalika (1973), scripted by his father. Meanwhile, Jagathy made his first appearance as a child artiste in Achanum Makanum (1957), written by his father, iconic dramatist Jagathy NK Achary. Having been active members of their fathers' drama troupes, they were familiar with the art of acting since childhood. Also, they grew up in an era when theatre was at its peak, and Pillai and Achary were widely regarded figures in Kerala's cultural domain. However, Vijayaraghavan and Jagathy (who made his debut as an adult with the 1974 film Kanyakumari) outgrew their familial legacies and established themselves as two of the finest character actors in Malayalam cinema.

Vijayaraghavan made his acting debut in Kaapalika (1973), scripted by his father. Veteran actor Vijayaraghavan is the son of legendary playwright and theatre director NN Pillai. (Credit: Facebook/@actorvijayaraghavan)

From Sukumari and Shobana (related to the iconic Travancore sisters: Lalitha, Padmini, and Ragini), Jayan (the maternal cousin of actor Jayabharathi), and Mukesh (theatre director O Madhavan and character actor Vijayakumari's son), to Sai Kumar (son of acting legend Kottarakkara Sreedharan Nair), the Kalaranjini-Kalpana-Urvashi sister trio (the granddaughters of ace author Sooranad Kunjani Pillai and daughters of drama actors), and Shammy Thilakan (acting legend Thilakan's son), there are several exceptional actors who made the audience com-

moting the show as early as 1984, but it took several years for the series to finally make it to television. "Originally, the makers had played the ad for the show in 1984. But the shooting for the series could start only in 1988. And it got telecast in the same year—October 2. There is a huge story behind the telecast of the first episode of the show. On September 30, 1988, there was a huge party organised at the Taj Mumbai. Several big industrialists and businessmen had attended the party. We were all happy that our show was finally going to release on October 2," he said.

However, just days before the premiere, the show faced another hurdle. "Meanwhile, a couple of politicians in Delhi watched the preview of Mahabharat. They objected to two things. First, Raj Babbar, who played Raja Bharat, had a dialogue that said, 'A king must be determined on the basis of merit and not on the basis of birth.' Someone was very badly affected by it. That person ordered that this serial shouldn't be telecast. On October 1, they put a stay on it. Every media house carried the news and the newspapers were printed," Chauhan recalled.

'An overnight court hearing was arranged' He then shared how BR Chopra and Ravi Chopra sought an urgent court hearing to ensure that the show could premiere as scheduled. "However, on the same evening as the stay, Chopra sir pulled a fast-track court at night. He made sure the stay was revoked. But by this time, newspapers were printed for the next day. There was a misunderstanding. People believed that Mahabharat wouldn't be telecast. Many believed the same, and it affected the first episode of the show. The TRP was very low," he said. Chauhan also recalled another objection raised against the show. "The second thing they objected to was that the chakra used in the series was a party symbol. It almost got trapped because of that, but somehow escaped it," he said.

The actor also remembered how Mahabharat turned into a community viewing experience at a time when television sets were still a luxury in many parts of India. "During those times, there was one TV for four houses. The whole village often gathered to watch it together, and they wouldn't appreciate any sort of disturbance while watching the series," he said. He also recalled former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's admiration for the show. "The biggest fan of the show was our former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He used to watch Mahabharat so intently that no one could cross him. He was very strict while watching it. He had literally adopted Mahabharat. If you go back to his parliamentary speeches, you will see his references to Mahabharat. He often made me retell my dialogues," Chauhan added.

pletely forget their prior connections to the industry.

At the same time, those who couldn't impress the masses were shown the door quickly enough, never even receiving a chance to promise them that they would learn on the go. Since the industry wasn't as wealthy as its counterparts and the market for Malayalam movies was limited, producers and production houses also preferred not to gamble with such star kids, opting instead for safe bets, even if that meant nearly every film featured a similar set of actors.

While one could argue that producers were principled and didn't wish to impose talentless nepo kids on the audience, it could also have been strictly business. From Prem Nazir, Sheela, Sathyan, Sarada, and Madhu to later stars like Sukumaran, MG Soman, Mohanlal, Mammootty, Revathy, and Manju Warrier, Malayalam cinema always had enough talented outsiders who could easily entice audiences and draw them into cinema halls. So, why would producers waste money on those who couldn't promise returns? How Malayalees handled Fahadh Faasil's disastrous debut Fahadh Faasil remains the biggest example highlighting how brutal Malayalees can be towards nepo kids. As the son of legendary director Fazil, the man behind some of the most iconic movies of all time, including Manichitrathazhu (1993), widely regarded as one of the finest Indian films, anticipation was high for Fahadh's debut. This was mainly because Fazil was an expert in launching exceptional debutants, with Mohanlal (Manjil Virinja Pookkal), Kunchacko Boban (Aniyathipraavu), and Shalini (Ente Mamattikkuttiyammakku and Aniyathipraavu) being the best examples.

However, Fahadh's performance in Kaiyethum Doorath (2002) was not just unimpressive, but it felt as though Fazil took people's love and trust for granted and tried to force his ill-equipped son upon them. The movie met with harsh reactions, forcing the young man to take a long hiatus. Although he returned over half a decade later, better prepared, and emerged as one of the best actors of his generation in the country, the responses to Fahadh's disastrous debut showed how discerning and hard to impress Malayalees are. Fahadh Faasil was launched by his father, veteran director Fazil. Fahadh Faasil in Kaiyethum Doorath. (Screenshot: YouTube/CentralTalkiesmovies)

In fact, this has always been the case. Be it Prem Nazir's son Shanavas (late), who initially showed promise but withered away soon enough; Sheela's son George Vishnu; Soman's son Saji Soman; veteran director IV Sasi and yesteryear actor Seema's daughter Anu IV; or Ratheesh's children Parvathy and Padmaraj Ratheesh — none of them managed to make a significant impact. And, if not for occasional appearances in certain movies, they would have long been forgotten. From Prithviraj to Kunchacko Boban: Why early star kids faced double the scrutiny Even though Sukumaran and Mallika's sons, Indrajith and Prithviraj Sukumaran, and legendary movie producer Kunchacko's grandson, Kunchacko Boban, made easy debuts, their journey forward was strenuous. They faced more (rightful) scrutiny at every turn than their outsider contemporaries. While the audience went easy on others, they showed no sympathy towards the star kids and nipped them far too often. Knowing Malayalees' nature well, Indrajith and Prithviraj were mindful and did not take things lightly. When Kunchacko felt that he was being heavily typecast and that if things continued this way, he would soon be written off, the actor took a break, worked on himself, and returned with a willingness to take on diverse roles.