

Commuters find KBR Park one-way loop less stressful

Hyderabad: The drive is a little stretched, but the commute is stress-free and comfortable.City & Local Guides

Though a little vexed at having to drive more and go around, most commuters appear to be comfortably getting acquainted with the one-way loop around the KBR Park that was introduced around 10 days ago.

With the chaos of traffic snarls and stopping and starting at signals largely done away with, most drivers feel that the driving has become less stressful along the loop.Some commuters told 'Telangana Today' that though the detour was adding a few extra minutes to their journey time, the one-way traffic system had removed half of the variables such as bumper-to-bumper traffic and heated argument over petty traffic issues.

Choose Playgrounds Over PlayStations: Modi

NEW DELHI, August 27

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday exhorted the youth to choose playgrounds over PlayStations, while calling for expanding India's participation across Olympic disciplines.

Launching a "charm offensive" to woo the younger generation, Modi said sports centres were more important than screens and urged youngsters to tap the transformative potential of sports.

In a virtual address to hundreds of athletes, students and volunteers gathered at various locations for the "Khelo India Dialogue" ahead of National Sports Day on Saturday, the Prime Minister said his vision for sports was not merely about winning medals but making it an integral part of the nation-building process.

"Sports centres are more important than screens. Playgrounds are more important than PlayStations," Modi said.

Reflecting on the sports vision he unveiled from the Red Fort on Independence Day, Modi said the value of sports extended far beyond winning medals. He described sports as a vital campaign to integrate the nation's athletic and youth power towards building a "Viksit Bharat".

"I have always kept saying, those who play, will blossom," he remarked.

Drawing attention to what he described as a major challenge, Modi said India had historically not participated in nearly half of all Olympic disciplines. Citing the 2012 Olympics, when India competed in only 13 sports, he said the country was missing out on a large share of potential medals by not competing in more than 20 other disciplines.

"To increase our medal tally, we will absolutely have to achieve mastery in these sports as well," the Prime Minister said.

Flagging India's untapped potential, Modi pointed to the country's vast coastlines and mountainous regions, which were suited for surfing, sports climbing and winter sports, but said India remained largely invisible globally in these disciplines. He called for a targeted approach to identify districts where specialised sporting ecosystems could be developed.

Modi said every district had the potential to establish itself on the global sporting map. "Every district has the potential to make its mark on the global sports map. It is with an understanding of this immense potential, we have to take this Samvaad programme forward," he said.

Stressing grassroots engagement, the Prime Minister said a true sporting culture could be built only when schools treated physical education as a core component of life rather than merely a co-curricular activity. Institutionalising sports, he said, would expand the national talent pool while helping young athletes secure family support.

Outlining a long-term strategy for the 2036 Olympics, Modi called for immediately identifying and preparing athletes capable of qualifying across a wide spectrum of sports.

He reiterated plans for a massive national "Talent Hunt" targeting children aged five to 15, saying selection should take into account both their interests and their physical suitability for particular disciplines.

"Whatever support is needed from the government for this, the government will walk shoulder to shoulder with you in it," Modi said.

Reaffirming the administration's commitment to building a modern, 21st-century sports ecosystem, the Prime Minister detailed the establishment of specialised sports universities and advanced training centres. He said the government was also increasing international cooperation to share global best practices in sports science, training and coaching.

"A system is being built in the country where, from identifying talent to taking it to the world stage, support is received at every level," Modi said.

He described the "Khelo India Samvaad" as more than a discussion and said it was a platform for shaping the country's sporting vision. He urged youngsters to connect their personal aspirations with national goals and said their ideas on talent development and governance could influence policy.



CM's CPRO G Malsur faces criticism for attending Congress party meeting

Hyderabad: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) G Malsur has courted controversy by participating in a Congress party meeting at Gandhi Bhavan.

People from different sections have raised objections to the CM's CPRO attending the meeting, which was convened by Bhongir MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy. Malsur joined as the Chief Minister's CPRO in June last year. Questions were raised over how an official drawing a salary from the Telangana government could participate in a political party meeting and share his views and suggestions.

Nepal Flash Floods: Death Toll Rises To 270, 288 Indians Missing

Katmanduru, August 27

The death toll in the massive flash floods in Nepal on Thursday rose to 270, as authorities in Nepal race against time to find thousands of missing people, including 288 Indian tourists, in one of the country's worst disasters in recent years.The flash floods on Wednesday wreaked havoc across three districts in Nepal.

Nepal Police on Thursday said that the death toll rose to 270 in the flash floods on the Bhotekoshi River after 93 more bodies were recovered.

The bodies recovered so far include 108 in Chitwan, 62 in Nawalparasi East, 27 in Dhading, 20 in Gorkha, 17 in Rasuwa, 15 in Nawalparasi West, 12 in Nuwakot, and nine in Tanahun, according to Nepal Police spokesperson Abi Narayan Kafle

Kafle further said that, over 800 stranded people, including those injured, have been rescued from the affected areas.

The flash floods were caused after an avalanche blocked the flow of the Lhende tributary of the Bhotekoshi and first hit Timure, near Nepal's border with China at Rasuwagadhi.

Nepal's Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal on Thursday said nearly 300 Indian tourists are among thousands who are reportedly missing in the flash floods.

Khanal also confirmed that more than 160 people have died and thousands remain untraced after the tragedy in the Rasuwa region.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi said that 288 Indians are missing in Nepal floods.



CM Revanth Reddy Inspects Mir Alam Tank Development Works

“Indian Chronicle”27 Aug 2026“Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy conducted a surprise inspection of the ongoing development works at Mir Alam Tank in Hyderabad, as part of the government's plan to transform the water body into a major tourist attraction. The Chief Minister personally inspected the various works being undertaken at the site.”“He directed officials to develop the area with high-quality designs and attractive features to draw tourists. Officials briefed him on the progress of the works through a photo exhibition showcasing the ongoing projects. After reviewing the plans in detail, the Chief Minister issued several instructions to the officials.”“The Chief Minister directed the authorities to complete all works within the stipulated deadline. He travelled around the tank in an open-top jeep to inspect the overall development works. He also inspected the construction of the suspension bridge being built across Mir Alam Tank, climbing up with the assistance of a heavy crane to review the progress.”“Mr. Revanth Reddy instructed officials to take all necessary measures to prevent sewage water from entering the tank. He also directed them to widen the nala so that floodwater could flow from the tank into the Musi River efficiently.”“The Chief Minister suggested developing facilities for water sports at the tank to attract tourists and making the islands located in the middle of the water body more aesthetically appealing. As Mir Alam Tank is located close to the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, he emphasised that the tank and its surrounding areas should be developed in a visually appealing manner to attract both domestic and international tourists.



New facility to overhaul 80 Army tanks annually to come up at Jabalpur



Jabalpur, August 27

A new facility for overhauling Army tanks will come up at the Ministry of Defence-owned Vehicle Factory in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, adding to the existing tank-overhaul capacity in the country.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Thursday performed the groundbreaking ceremony for the Rs 472-crore project, which is projected to have the capacity to overhaul 80 tanks annually and boost the Indian Army's operational readiness.

The facility will supplement the existing tank-overhaul capacity of the Heavy Vehicles Factory at Avadi, Tamil Nadu. The Army requires 230 tanks to be overhauled each year, while the Avadi facility currently has the capacity to overhaul 150 tanks. The new unit at Jabalpur will bridge this gap and help ensure that more tanks are overhauled annually and remain in war-fighting condition.

The Army has nearly 4,000 Russian-origin T-72 and T-90 tanks in its fleet, besides a smaller number of indigenous Arjun tanks.

The new overhaul facility will also create opportunities for MSMEs to supply mechanical, electrical, electronic and hydraulic components, assemblies and sub-systems.

At the event, Singh described the project as a testament to India's growing technological prowess and industrial capabilities. Speaking about the changing nature of warfare, he emphasised that while the nature of warfare was changing, the relevance of tanks had not diminished but evolved.

"There is a need to equip tanks with superior sensors and capabilities aligned with modern battlefield requirements," he added.

"Modern warfare demands combined capabilities rather than dependence on a single platform," the minister said. Tanks, infantry, artillery, drones, air power, surveillance and precision weapons together form an integrated combat system, a concept demonstrated by the Indian Army through its 'Integrated Battle Group'.

The Vehicle Factory, Jabalpur, is under the Defence Public Sector Undertaking Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited (AVNL).

What is tank overhaul?

Army tank overhaul refers to a comprehensive maintenance and refurbishment process in which a tank is inspected, repaired and restored to a fully operational condition. It is distinct from routine servicing or field repairs and involves much deeper maintenance.

Tank systems such as the engine, transmission, running gear, tracks, sprockets, gun and turret systems, electrical and electronic systems, and hull components are separated for individual inspection.

Each component is checked against technical specifications to determine wear, damage or degradation, including barrel wear, engine hours, armour integrity and suspension condition.

Worn or damaged components such as engines, gearboxes, tracks, optics and weapon systems are repaired, reconditioned or replaced with new or refurbished parts.

Overhauls can also be used to integrate upgrades, including improved fire-control systems, modern communication equipment, night-vision systems and engine upgrades.

KCR extends Raksha Bandhan greetings, calls brother-sister bond cherished

Hyderabad, August 27

BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao extended Raksha Bandhan greetings to the people of Telangana on Thursday on the eve of the festival. He termed brother-sister bonding as one of the most cherished human bonds.

In a statement, Chandrashekhar Rao said the bond between brothers and sisters was timeless. He recalled that Raksha Bandhan had a special place in India's family, cultural and traditional life. He stated that only when people of the country shun hatred and selfishness, and live together in a spirit of fraternity, the ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam will be achieved.



PUBLIC NOTICE
MISSING DOCUMENT
Notice is hereby given that the Original Registered Sale Deed No. 3438/1987 (Dated: 03/12/1987, SRO Gadwal) pertaining to the schedule property detailed below, owned by my client Mr. M. Raju (S/o M. Buchanna, Hamali Colony, Gadwal, Ph: 9848970308), has been lost. A missing report has been lodged at Gadwal Police Station (Receipt No: 1580210826 1274187953, Dated: 21/08/ 2026), and a certified copy (CC) has been obtained from the Sub-Registrar Office (SRO).
As the property is being proposed for a bank loan/mortgage, any person having any claims, rights, or objections over the said schedule property or the missing original document is requested to contact the undersigned Advocate with valid documentary proof within 14 days of this publication. Otherwise, the title will be deemed clear and marketable.
Schedule Property Details:
Description: Gadwal Shivar, Sy. No. 780/A, Plot No. 49 (25' x 40') & part of Plot No. 48 (5' x 40'), Total area: 30' x 40' (133.33 Sq. Yds.),Boundaries:East: Plot Nos. 46 & 47West: 23' Wide RoadNorth: Remaining part of Plot No. 48South: Plot No. 50
Date: 27/08/2026 |Place: Gadwal
M. Priyanka, Advocate (TS300/2019)
Ph: 9398420938

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Cometh the hour, cometh Carney—Canada draws a red line against Trump's tariffs

In his stirring address at the Davos summit in January this year, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney took the gathering by storm when he spoke about how the rule-based international order was being undermined by great powers and issued a clarion call for middle powers to reduce their excessive dependence on any one great power. Seven months later, his bold decision to retaliate "dollar for dollar" against United States President Donald Trump's 50% tariffs has sent ripples across the global trade circles. By walking away from trade talks with the United States and launching a counter-attack, Carney has drawn a red line against Trump's policy of weaponisation of tariffs. Despite Canada's economic vulnerability vis-a-vis America, the banker-turned-politician, who came to power in last year's national election on a promise to stand up to Trump's threats, has taken a courageous stance. The new US tariffs cover roughly \$20 billion of Canadian goods. Should Carney proceed with Canada's retaliation from September 8, there will be risks for his country, both political and economic. But the popularity of the "Buy Canadian" campaign—an expression of economic nationalism triggered by Trump's tantrums and open threats—has already shown that many Canadians support their government's challenge to the US President. Carney will now have to convince them that the costs of confrontation are worth paying. He has done the right thing by rejecting an unequal trade relationship. In doing so, he is also following up on his call, made during the Davos summit, to restore the rule-based international order.

GPACTS-26 Conference to Be Held in Hyderabad on September 3



"Hyderabad, August 27 (Indian Chronicle) : The GPACTS-2026 conference, focusing on Artificial Intelligence(AI), compliance, cybersecurity and digital manufacturing in the pharmaceutical sector, will be held on September 3 at Novotel HICC in Hyderabad. GPACTS Directors Shipra Singh and Ravindra Warang said in a statement issued in the city on Thursday that the conference would feature practical discussions on AI, data protection, cybersecurity, Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES), digital twins and quality management systems. The event is being organised in collaboration with Honeywell, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Rockwell Automation and Nividus Software. Representatives from leading pharmaceutical companies, including Alkem Laboratories, Dr.Reddy's Laboratories, Wockhardt, Granules India and Biological E, are expected to participate. Around 350 to 400 pharma industry professionals are expected to attend the conference, the organisers said.

Ensure No Injustice Is Done to Genuine Voters: FORMER UPPAL CORPORATOR RAJITHA REDDY



"UPPAL, AUGUST 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Former Uppal corporator Mandumula Rajitha Reddy urged officials to ensure that no injustice is done to genuine voters during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. She said that voters' names should not be deleted from the list without a valid reason. "She advised voters to immediately submit applications along with supporting documents if their names were missing from the electoral rolls. Rajitha Reddy attended the SIR ward meetings held in Uppal Division on Thursday and addressed the gathering. "She also urged eligible new voters who had not yet enrolled themselves in the electoral rolls to make use of the opportunity and register their names immediately. She appealed to all eligible citizens to take advantage of the enrollment process. "Division presidents Eega Anjaiah Mudiraj, Tummala Deva Reddy, Lingampally Ramakrishna, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Khaja Maulana, Pabbathi Venkatesh Gupta, Kanchamidi Srinivas, Kadapa Nursing Rao, Alugula Anil Kumar, Eega Rajesh, Alwala Bhaskar, Bommaji Ratnam, Mahankali Raju Mudiraj, Tummala Rajender Reddy, Anwar Pasha, Mahender Reddy, Bacha Ramu, Chandrasekhar Reddy, Rangula Shekhar, Jittu Reddy, Prashanth Reddy and senior Congress leaders participated in the programme.

Shortage of Sanitation Workers Must Be Addressed: UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY



"UPPAL, AUGUST 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Several sanitation workers from the Uppal Assembly constituency met MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy and brought to his notice the difficulties they were facing due to a shortage of sanitation staff. They said the shortage had increased the workload on the existing workers, making it difficult to carry out sanitation duties effectively. "The workers explained that sanitation activities have to be carried out continuously across various areas of the constituency. However, due to inadequate manpower, they were facing difficulties in completing the work on time. They stressed the need for suffi-

cient staff to ensure better sanitation services for the public. "They appealed to MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy to take immediate steps to address the shortage and arrange the required number of sanitation workers. They also requested measures to reduce the excessive workload on existing staff and ensure that sanitation services continue efficiently without causing inconvenience to residents. MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy listened positively to their grievances and assured them that he would bring the shortage of staff to the notice of the concerned commissioner and ensure that necessary steps were taken to resolve the issue. He directed the officials to examine the problems being faced by sanitation workers and take appropriate measures. "The MLA said sanitation plays a crucial role in protecting public health and stressed that sanitation services should continue uninterrupted in all areas of the constituency. He directed officials to pay special attention to garbage collection, cleanliness of surroundings and other sanitation-related activities. "He also called for providing necessary facilities to sanitation workers and taking steps to reduce their workload. Officials were instructed to focus on deploying additional staff wherever required so that residents do not face inconvenience due to the shortage of manpower. "MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy directed the concerned officials to resolve the issue at the earliest and further improve sanitation management across the Uppal constituency.

India's Rich Cultural Heritage Celebrated Through Raksha Bandhan in Kakatiya High School Manthani

"Manthani Peddapalli District, August 27 (Indian Chronicle): India is a land of rich culture and traditions, and the festival of Raksha Bandhan represents the bond of love, affection and mutual protection between brothers and sisters, said Kakatiya School Principal Pradeep Reddy. "An advance Raksha Bandhan celebration was held grandly on Thursday at Kakatiya School in Manthani under the leadership of Principal Pradeep Reddy. As part of the celebrations, girl students tied rakhis to boy students and participated enthusiastically in the festivities. "The students celebrated the occasion with the slogan, "You are my protection, I am your protection, together we are the protection of our nation. "Speaking on the occasion, Principal Pradeep Reddy said that India has a rich cultural and traditional heritage and that Raksha Bandhan holds a special place in the country's history and traditions. He urged everyone to respect and preserve Indian traditions. "He explained that Raksha Bandhan is a festival that celebrates the special bond between brothers and sisters. He also advised stu-



dents to live with a spirit of brotherhood, irrespective of caste or religion, emphasizing that unity and harmony are essential for a strong society. "The Principal further explained the significance and importance of Raksha Bandhan and encouraged students to uphold the values of love, unity and mutual respect. "School management members, teachers and students participated in the programme.

Lack of Basic Facilities at Wankidi Weekly Market

"Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28. "Wankidi: "The Communist Party of India (CPI) Wankidi Mandal Committee has expressed concern over the lack of basic infrastructure at the weekly market held every week at Wankidi mandal headquarters. Farmers, tribal traders and women visiting the market from around 30 villages are reportedly facing severe difficulties due to the absence of essential facilities. CPI Wankidi Mandal Secretary Kodurupaka Mahesh said that hundreds of farmers, tribal traders and women come to the weekly market every week to sell agricultural produce and other goods. However, there are no proper shelters to protect them from the scorching sun and rain. As a result, traders are forced to conduct their business under difficult conditions, standing in the sun during summer and getting drenched during the rainy season. The CPI leaders pointed out that basic facilities such as drinking water, toilets, proper drainage, sanitation and electricity are also inadequate at the market. Women, elderly people and tribal traders are particularly facing hardships. The CPI stated that the issue had already been highlighted through the media several times and representations had also been submitted to the concerned officials. However, no concrete steps have been taken so far to resolve the problem. The party strongly criticized the alleged negligence of the authorities. The CPI questioned why the revenue generated by the weekly market for the Gram Panchayat is not being utilized for the development of the market. The party demanded that a portion of the revenue collected from the market be allocated for providing basic infrastructure and improving facilities for farmers and traders. The CPI Mandal Committee demanded the immediate construction of roofing sheds at the market, along with drinking water facilities, separate toilets for men and women, proper drainage, waste collection arrangements and adequate lighting. It also urged the authorities to improve the



market premises to prevent waterlogging and mud-related problems during the rainy season. "CPI Mandal Secretary Kodurupaka Mahesh urged the authorities and Gram Panchayat officials to conduct an immediate field inspection and prepare a proper development plan for the weekly market. He said there should be no further delay in providing basic facilities to the farmers and traders who depend on the market every week. "The CPI Wankidi Mandal Committee demanded that the authorities immediately respond to the issue and take steps to provide all essential facilities at the Wankidi weekly market. The CPI leaders warned that if the problems are not resolved at the earliest, they would launch a large-scale agitation involving farmers, tribal traders and women.

Eligible Voters Must Not Be Removed from Electoral Rolls:



BRS STATE LEADER BANNALA PRAVEEN MUDIRAJ. "UPPAL, AUGUST 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj said that voting rights must be ensured for every eligible citizen and that the names of eligible voters should not be removed from the electoral rolls without valid reasons. Praveen Mudiraj, along with BRS Booth Level Agents (BLAs), attended a ward meeting held at Prashanth Nagar Community Hall in Beerappagadda Division as part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. Speaking with election in-charges and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) attending the voter revision programme, he urged them to take all necessary precautions to ensure that the names of no eligible voters are deleted from the electoral rolls. He also advised BLAs

to coordinate with BLOs and ensure that notices regarding the submission of required documents reach every voter concerned on a booth-wise basis. He appealed to all officials and political party representatives to work in coordination and ensure that the names of all eligible citizens are retained in the electoral rolls. "He further urged young men and women who have attained the age of 18 to register as new voters by submitting Form-6. He said that BLAs and BLOs would extend the necessary assistance to new voters if they had any doubts or misconceptions regarding the registration process. BLOs, BLAs, election in-charges, and leaders of various political parties from Beerappagadda Division, among others, participated in the programme.

ACB traps put police corruption under scanner in Telangana

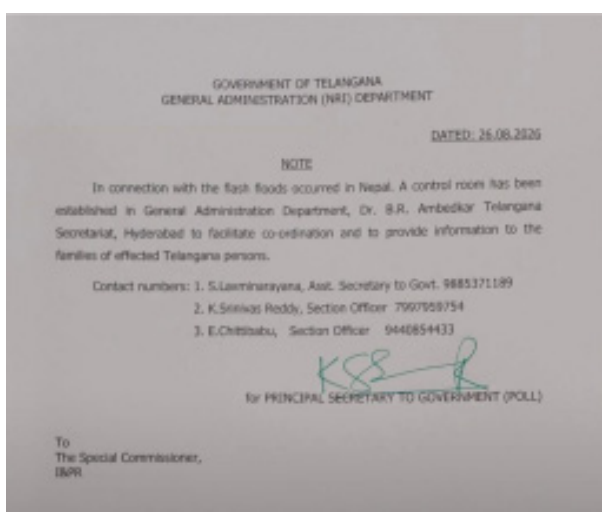
Hyderabad: A series of Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) traps against police personnel across the State in recent months has put the spotlight on allegations of bribery within the uniformed force, with officers from the ranks of constable and sub-inspector to inspector being caught or booked in separate cases. In the latest case at Chandanagar police station, a sub-inspector and a constable were caught allegedly accepting a Rs 75,000 bribe. The duo had allegedly demanded money from a complainant in connection with the investigation of a criminal case and filing of the chargesheet.

Sarpanch Bendare Krishnaji Leads New Electricity Pole Installation in SC Colony



"Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28. "Wankidi mandal Bambara New electricity poles have been installed in the SC Colony under Bambara Gram Panchayat to ensure uninterrupted and safer power supply to the residents. The hazardous electricity wires passing over residential houses were removed and replaced with new poles, with electricity connections properly arranged. "The works were taken up with the safety of the public in mind, said Gram Sarpanch Bendare Krishnaji. He stated that the issue of dangerous power lines has been addressed, bringing relief to the residents of the colony. The Sarpanch further said that the Gram Panchayat would continue to take necessary measures to provide better and safer electricity facilities to people across the village.

Telangana Government Sets Up Control Room Amid Nepal Floods



"Indian Chronicle" 27 Aug 2026 "Hyderabad: In the wake of sudden floods in Nepal, the Telangana government has set up a special control room at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat in Hyderabad to assist families of Telangana residents who may be stranded or affected in Nepal. "The control room has been established under the NRI Division of the General Administration Department (GAD) to provide information to families and facilitate coordination regarding the safety and whereabouts of Telangana residents affected by the floods. "Families seeking assistance or information can contact the following officials: "S. Lakshminarayana, Assistant Secretary: 9885371189 "K. Srinivas Reddy, Section Officer: 7997959754 "E. Chittibabu, Section Officer: 9440854433 "The state government has urged families requiring information or assistance regarding Telangana residents in Nepal to contact the control room through the numbers provided.

Demand for Transparent Probe into Deletion of Eligible Voters Names



"Hyderabad, August 27 (Indian Chronicle) : Congress OBC Department State Joint Coordinator and GHMC In-charge Gonti Vikram Yadav has demanded that the Election Commission conduct a transparent inquiry into complaints alleging the deletion of eligible voters' names from electoral rolls in several parts of the state and dispel the concerns surrounding the issue. He said complaints were being received particularly regarding the deletion of names of eligible voters belonging to illiterate, SC, ST, BC and minority communities. The right to vote is a valuable democratic right guaranteed by the Constitution, and the name of no eligible voter should be removed without a valid reason, he said. Yadav urged the Election Commission to ensure that the electoral roll revision process is conducted in a fair, transparent and legally compliant manner. He also appealed for the immediate restoration of the names of eligible voters whose names had been removed. He called upon Congress workers to conduct door-to-door verification of electoral rolls in every booth area and assist eligible voters whose names are missing in submitting applications through the procedure prescribed by the Election Commission, thereby safeguarding their right to vote.

CPI Mahesh Calls for Immediate Power Pole Repairs“



“Kumrambheem, Asifabad,District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28.““Wankidi: CPI Mandal Secretary Kodurupaka Mahesh stated that several electricity poles in agricultural fields across Wankidi Mandal have become dangerously tilted, causing concern among farmers and agricultural workers.“Farmers and farm labourers regularly work in these fields, and the weakened poles pose a serious risk to their safety. Since some of the poles are leaning considerably and appear to be in a weakened condition,

there is a growing fear among the public that they could collapse at any time.“The situation could become even more dangerous during the ongoing rainy season, particularly when heavy rains and strong winds occur. If a weakened pole collapses or an electricity wire snaps and falls into an agricultural field, it could result in serious injuries or even loss of life.“Mahesh urged the Electricity Department officials to respond immediately and take preventive measures instead of waiting for an accident to occur. He demanded that officials conduct a field-level inspection throughout the mandal and identify all dangerously tilted and damaged electricity poles.“He further called for the immediate replacement of severely damaged and leaning poles with new ones. Electricity wires hanging dangerously or in poor condition should also be inspected and repaired without delay.““Officials should take action before any unfortunate incident occurs,” Mahesh said, stressing that the safety of farmers, agricultural workers and rural residents must be given top priority.“He appealed to the Electricity Department to treat the issue as urgent, inspect the affected areas and take necessary corrective measures at the earliest. He also demanded a permanent solution to the problem so that farmers can carry out agricultural activities without fear of electrical accidents.

Suchith Elected District Youth Morcha President for Third Time

“Kumrambheem, Asifabad,District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28.““Asifabad: Several leaders and youth extended their heartfelt congratulations to Elagati Suchith on being elected as the District President of the BJP Yuva Morcha in Komuram Bheem Asifabad district for the third time. Leaders expressed confidence that under Suchith's leadership, the youth would be united and play an active role in addressing public issues. They wished that he would take the problems faced by people to the notice of the concerned authorities and continuously work towards ensuring justice for the public.They also urged him to undertake wider social service activities and create greater awareness among the youth on social and public issues.The well-wishers expressed hope that the Yuva Morcha would become stronger under Elagati Suchith's leadership and continue to play a constructive role in resolving public problems and standing by the people. They once again conveyed their heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Suchith on his re-election.



STATE CONGRESS LEADER MOHAMMED RAFIQ Attends Ward Meetings in Ramanthapur



--Urges Officials to Ensure Genuine Voters Are Not Disadvantaged““RAMANTHAPUR, AUGUST 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): State Congress leader Mohammed Rafiq attended the "SIR" ward meetings held in Ramanthapur Division on Thursday and reviewed the issues raised by voters.As per the directions of Uppal Constituency Con-

gress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, Mohammed Rafiq urged officials to ensure that eligible and genuine voters are not subjected to any injustice. He stressed that no voter's name should be deleted from the electoral rolls without a valid reason.“He also advised citizens whose names are missing from the voter list to immediately apply with the necessary documents proving their eligibility and safeguard their right to vote.“Special Opportunity for New Voters“Mohammed Rafiq appealed to eligible youth who have completed 18 years of age and those who have not yet registered as voters to make use of the opportunity and enroll themselves as voters at the earliest.““Every eligible person must have the right to vote. Genuine voters should not face injustice. The Congress Party will stand with the people to ensure that not even a single vote is removed unjustly,” Mohammed Rafiq said.“Senior Congress leaders Gangaputra Bhaskar, Mittu Goud, Samuel, Adinarayana Goud, Cable Ashok, Gayatri Goud, M.D. Shakeel, Harish Goud and others participated in the programme.

EARLY RAKSHA BANDHAN CELEBRATIONS HELD WITH GRANDUER AT GAYATHRI DEGREE AND PG COLLEGE

“PEDDAPALLI, AUGUST 27 (Indian Chronicle)“The premises of Gayathri Degree and PG College reverberated with joy and fraternal affection as early Raksha Bandhan celebrations unfolded on a grand scale today.“Embodying the spirit of unity and protection,female faculty members tied sacred rakhis to the male staff, College Correspondent Allenki Srinivas.The campus echoed with the vibrant slogan, "I protect you, you protect me, and together we protect the nation," emphasizing civic responsibility alongside familial bond.“Speaking on the occasion,Allenki Srinivas Chairman of Gayathri Educational Institutions highlighted the cultural significance of the festival.He noted that Raksha Bandhan stands as an eternal symbol of the sacred bond between brothers and sisters,urging everyone to foster strong feelings of brotherhood and harmony in daily life.“The event witnessed active participation from faculty members



including Sharada, Aamani,Ravali, Srividya, Saraswathi, and Leena, alongside a large gathering of enthusiastic students.

Raksha Bandhan Celebrations Held Grandly at Deccan Springs Global School



““Nacharam, August 27(INDIAN CHORNICLE):““Raksha Bandhan celebrations were held with great enthusiasm and grandeur on Thursday at the premises of Deccan Springs Global School. On the occasion of the Rakhi festival, students came dressed in traditional attire, beautifully showcasing India's rich culture and traditions.“The programme was witnessed by the Chairman, Mr. K. Navaneetha Rao, Managing Director Mr. Naveen Kumar, Director Dr. Kamala Manohar Rao, Core Head of Operations Mr. Kishore Kumar Reddy, Principal Mrs. Swarna Akkineni, along with the core team and

teachers.“The students entertained everyone with colourful dance and musical performances highlighting the significance of the Raksha Bandhan festival. The primary school students were the major attraction of the programme with their enthusiastic and impressive performances.“Speaking on the occasion, Principal Mrs. Swarna Akkineni said that India's family system is one of the most unique and valuable in the world. She stated that the bond of love and affection between brothers and sisters plays a significant role in life. She encouraged siblings to always stand by and support one another, strengthening their relationship and making their lives happier.“She further said that the bond between siblings is an inseparable and cherished relationship, filled with lifelong love and affection. Extending her heartfelt Raksha Bandhan greetings to everyone, she appreciated the students for beautifully explaining and presenting the importance and greatness of the festival.“Chairman Mr. K. Navaneetha Rao also extended his warm wishes to all the students on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and appreciated their participation in celebrating Indian culture and traditions.“The celebrations concluded on a joyful note, spreading the message of love, affection, unity and the everlasting bond between brothers and sisters.

New Toilets Bring Relief to Girls at Bambara Tribal School



Wankidi:Girls studying at the Government Tribal Residential High School in Bambara village of Wankidi Mandal had been facing difficulties due to a lack of adequate toilet facilities. Responding to the issue, the Hyderabad-based Das Seva Samithi came forward to provide new toilets at the school, keeping the health, hygiene, safety and dignity of the girl students in mind.Under the leadership of the Malk Yashaswi Team, with the support of Das Seva Samithi, new toilet facilities were constructed exclusively for the girl students at an estimated cost of 6 lakh. After completion of the construction work, the newly built toilets were made available for the use of students on Thursday.With the new fa-

cilities, a long-standing problem faced by the girl students has been resolved. The school authorities appreciated the efforts of Das Seva Samithi and the Malk Yashaswi Team for coming forward to provide essential infrastructure for the students.The school authorities stated that proper toilet facilities are particularly important for the health and hygiene of adolescent girls. The availability of safe and clean toilets will not only reduce the difficulties faced by the students but also contribute to creating a healthier and more comfortable school environment.“Villagers, school staff and students expressed their gratitude to the representatives of Das Seva Samithi and members of the Malk Yashaswi Team for identifying the need and spending ?6 lakh towards the construction of the new toilets.

They appealed to voluntary organisations and donors to undertake more such welfare activities for the benefit of students.“Das Seva Samithi representatives, members of the Malk Yashaswi Team, Bambara Gram Panchayat Sarpanch Bendare Krishnaji, Deputy Sarpanch Jadi Santosh, BJYM Man Ki Baat Telangana State Convener Elagati Suchith, Tribal Residential School Headmistress Lakshmi Prasanna, teachers, staff, students and villagers participated in the programme.Several participants observed that such service initiatives can play an important role in providing the necessary infrastructure for the education, health, hygiene and safety of girl students.

Documents Required for SIR Notices Must Be Issued Within Deadline

MULAKALAPALLI RAJESH MUDIRAJ““UPPAL, AUGUST 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Every citizen's vote is important in a democracy, and necessary steps should be taken to ensure that citizens who have received notices as part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process do not lose their voting rights, said Mulukalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj, former president of the Congress Party in Chikanagar Division.Speaking at a ward meeting held in Chikanagar Division, Rajesh Mudiraj said that many voters in the division were not fully aware of the SIR notices they had received. He urged officials to create awareness among voters about the documents required in response to the notices and ensure that the necessary documents are issued within the stipulated deadline.He said that the appointment of the local Tahsildar as the special officer for the ward to issue the required documents would provide some relief to the public. This arrangement would also help address the difficulties faced by voters during the SIR process, he added.“Congress SIR Assembly In-charge Varalakshmi, AERO, Uppal MRO Pool Singh, Supervisors Venkanna and Alivelu, Chikanagar In-charge Jaleel Pasha, Medchal District DCC General Secretary Kompally Balaraj, Block-A President Amarshwari, Division President Nallavelli



Mahender, Working President Manchala Raghu, BC Cell President Dandugula Shankar, Minority Cell President Moinuddin, SC Cell President Sriramulu, senior Congress leaders Bhaskar Reddy, Amar, Radhakrishna, Kiran, Ramacharla Balaram, Kurella Yadagiri, Marapaka Sailu, Ramulu and Satyam, women leaders Shobha Reddy, Sandhya, Vijaya, Samatha and Sumalatha, along with BLOs, BLAs, officials and local residents, participated in the programme.

Improve Education System in the District

“District Education Officials Must Monitor Educational Institutions DYFI District Secretary Durgam Raj Kumar““Kumrambheem, Asifabad,District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28.““Asifabad: The education system in Komuram Bheem Asifabad district is facing serious neglect, said Durgam Raj Kumar, District Secretary of the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI). He demanded immediate steps to address the problems in educational institutions and provide students with better education, accommodation and basic facilities.“He said students in several residential educational institutions are facing difficulties due to the lack of their own buildings. He alleged that proper food is not being provided as per the prescribed menu in hostels, resulting in nutritional deficiencies and health problems among students.In particular, he said that girl students at the Government Girls' Ashram School in Wankidi Mandal are facing severe difficulties due to the lack of proper toilets and bathing facilities. He demanded that the authorities immediately provide the required basic amenities, keeping the health and safety of the students in mind.“He also stated that the Government BC Girls' Hostel at Janakapur is still under construction and demanded that the construction work be completed at the earliest and the hostel be made available to students.Regarding the Government Model School in Asifabad, he said that the school is located alongside the National Highway and students face a serious risk from speeding vehicles. He urged the authorities to take immediate action and construct a Foot Over Bridge (FOB) to ensure the safety of students.“He further alleged that students are being harassed by teachers in some residential



educational institutions and that such incidents are affecting their mental well-being and preventing them from concentrating on their studies.“Durgam Raj Kumar urged the District Education Officials to regularly visit educational institutions, directly assess the problems faced by students and take immediate measures to resolve them. He demanded that students be provided with quality education, nutritious food, safe accommodation and adequate basic infrastructure.He warned that if the authorities fail to address these issues, the DYFI will mobilise students and launch a 'Chalo Collectorate' protest.DYFI District President Geddamm Tikanand, Treasurer Durgam Nikhil and others participated in the programme.

ASBL Legacy Launched at Hyd

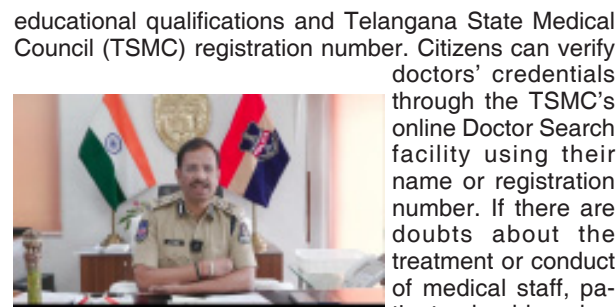
“Hyderabad, August 27 (Indian Chronicle) : ASBL has launched its new residential project, ASBL Legacy, at RTC X Roads in Central Hyderabad, ASBL CEO and Founder Ajitesh Korupolu said in a statement on Thursday. He said the project is being developed across approximately 7.97 acres and comprises three G+50-floor towers offering 3 and 4 BHK residences. The project is priced starting at ?1.99 crore. According to him, ASBL Legacy features a 74,000-square-foot clubhouse, more than 50 amenities, and 73.25 per cent open space. Korupolu said there is strong demand for gated communities in Central Hyderabad, but the availability of large land parcels has resulted in limited supply. Established in 2017, ASBL has previously undertaken



projects including ASBL Broadway and ASBL Landmark, he added.

Verify Doctor Credentials Before Treatment: CP Sajjanar

Hyderabad Correspondent, August 27 (Indian Chronicle): “People must verify a doctor's credentials before seeking treatment,” Hyderabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar said, urging citizens to stay alert to unqualified persons posing as medical practitioners. Sajjanar said Hyderabad Police had intensified surveillance against fake doctors and had so far identified 12 persons allegedly practising medicine without the required qualifications. Such practitioners were reportedly administering antibiotics, steroids, medicines for blood pressure and diabetes, besides injections and IV fluids, putting patients' health at serious risk. He warned that indiscriminate medication and prolonged treatment by unqualified persons could cause serious damage to vital organs, including the lungs, heart and kidneys. The Commissioner advised citizens to check whether clinics and hospitals prominently display the registration certificate issued by the District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO). Doctors' boards should also carry their



educational qualifications and Telangana State Medical Council (TSMC) registration number. Citizens can verify doctors' credentials through the TSMC's online Doctor Search facility using their name or registration number. If there are doubts about the treatment or conduct of medical staff, patients should seek a second opinion from a qualified specialist, he said. Sajjanar urged people to report suspected fake doctors immediately through Dial 112 or the nearest police station, stressing that public vigilance and timely reporting are crucial to protecting unsuspecting patients.

Raksha Bandhan Celebrations by Uppal Division Police



A Heartwarming Bond with Sahacharis""UPPAL, AUGUST 27(INDIAN CHRONICLE): On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, Uppal DCP Kumar, along with the police personnel of Uppal Division, celebrated the festival with Sahacharis in a warm and cordial atmosphere."Uppal CI Ramalinga Reddy, Women SI Samatha Reddy, SI Madhu, and other police personnel participated in the celebrations. On the occasion, the Sahacharis traditionally tied Rakhis to the police personnel, expressing their affection, gratitude,

trust and respect. They appreciated the services of the police personnel who tirelessly perform their duties to protect the public and maintain peace and law and order."The police personnel interacted warmly with the Sahacharis and conveyed their Raksha Bandhan greetings. Later, police officers and personnel distributed gifts and sweets to the Sahacharis."The celebrations strengthened the spirit of brotherhood, mutual respect and affection between the police personnel and Sahacharis. The event highlighted that the role of the police extends beyond maintaining law and order to building friendly and cordial relationships with all sections of society.Held in a pleasant and joyful atmosphere, the Raksha Bandhan celebrations stood as a symbol of the bond between the police department and the community. The programme further strengthened the trust and respect that people have for police personnel working continuously for public safety, while promoting a friendly relationship between the police and the public."The event, organised with an emphasis on mutual trust, respect and human values, brought joy to all those who participated.

Release Fee Reimbursement Arrears Immediately

"BJP State Executive Committee Member Arigela Nageswara Rao""Kumrambheem, Asifabad,District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28.""Asifabad: The State Government should immediately release the pending fee reimbursement dues and extend support to poor students, demanded Arigela Nageswara Rao, BJP State Executive Committee Member and senior leader."Speaking at a protest organised by the BJYM at Ambedkar Chowk in the district headquarters on Friday, he said that despite the Chief Minister holding the Education portfolio, the government had failed to release the pending fee reimbursement amounts. As a result, hundreds of colleges across the state were reportedly facing severe financial difficulties and some had been forced to close.He said many poor students were unable to pay their college fees and were being forced to discontinue their education midway. Fee reimbursement is crucial for students from economically weaker sections to pursue higher education, he added.Arigela Nageswara Rao demanded that the State Government immediately clear all pending fee reimbursement dues and safeguard the future of students.



He warned that if the government failed to respond, the BJP would launch a series of protests across the state."BJYM District President Suchit, BJP District Youth President Gajula Rajendra Prasad, Single Window Vice-Chairman Rukum Prahlad, and BJP leaders Prasad Goud,Durgam, Prasanth,Mekarthi Lachanna, Sapte Srinivas, Shankar and others participated in the protest.

Congress Leaders Visit and Enquire About Former MLA Atram Sakku’s Wife’s Health“

"Kumrambheem, Asifabad,District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28.""Hyderabad, August 27: Congress Party leaders visited NIMS Hospital in Hyderabad and enquired about the health condition of the wife of former Asifabad MLA Atram Sakku, who recently underwent knee surgery.The leaders met her at the hospital and enquired about her health and the treatment being provided by the doctors. They expressed their concern and wished her a speedy recovery and a return to good health at the earliest.The leaders said that the Atram Sakku family has the continued support of the Congress Party and its leaders. They prayed for her quick recovery and wished that she would soon regain her normal health and return home."The Congress leaders also interacted with the family members and offered them moral support during the recovery period. They expressed confidence that she would recover soon under the care and guidance of the doctors. The visit was attended by senior Congress Party leaders and former mandal presidents Masade Charan, Lavude Ramesh, Gurunule Narayana, Chittoori Sagar, Atram Kusum Rao, V. Murali, Bablu, and other Congress leaders.The leaders wished her a speedy and complete recovery and prayed for her good health and well-being.



Three Arrested in Uppal Silver Chain Snatching Case Stolen Silver Chain and Motorcycle Recovered



"UPPAL , AUGUST 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal police arrested three persons in connection with the snatching of a silver chain from a man who was sleeping at a bus stop in Uppal. Police recovered the stolen silver chain and a motorcycle used in the offence from the accused.According to police, Rachakonda Srinivas Chary (31), a resident of Sathyanarayanaapuram Colony, BJR Nagar, Kapra, works as a cab driver. On August 24, after completing his cab-driving duty at NSL, he attended a birthday celebration at his friend's house in Nagole. Later, while returning on his Jupiter scooter, he reached the LFJC bus stop in Uppal and fell asleep at around 2 a.m."At that time, three persons who arrived on a motorcycle noticed him and forcibly snatched the approximately three-tola silver chain from his neck. The victim subsequently approached Uppal police, who registered a case and launched an investigation.As part of the investigation, police examined CCTV footage and gathered information about the suspects. Based on reliable information, A-1 and A-2 were taken into custody near Rajyalakshmi Theatre in Uppal at around 6 p.m. on August 26. A-3 was arrested near Uppal Stadium Metro at around 8 a.m. on August 27.The arrested persons

were identified as Banala Karthik Kumar (19), Nampally Shiva (19), and Kandlakoya Ganesh (19). Karthik works as a band worker/decorator, Shiva works as a salesman at a garments shop, and Ganesh is a student.During interrogation, police found that the three were childhood friends. Due to financial difficulties, A-1 Karthik allegedly planned the robbery and informed A-2 and A-3, who agreed to join him for money. On the early hours of August 24, the trio allegedly rode around on a Glamour motorcycle, spotted the victim sleeping at the LFJC bus stop and snatched the silver chain from his neck.Based on CCTV footage and reliable information, police identified and arrested the accused and recovered the stolen property and the motorcycle used in the offence."The investigation was conducted under the leadership of Malkajigiri Police Commissioner B. Sumathi, IPS, under the supervision of Uppal DCP K. Suresh Kumar, IPS, and Additional DCP N. Venkataramana, with guidance from Uppal ACP Y. Venkat Reddy.Uppal Police Station Inspector Y. Ramalinga Reddy, Detective Inspector D. Ravi Kumar, SI T. Madhu, along with the Uppal Police Station Crime Team and CCS Uppal personnel, played a key role in cracking the case.

Cooking Protest Held in Front of SPM Mill Gate on 100th Day of Workers' Agitation

""Kumrambheem, Asifabad,District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.28.""Sirpur Kagaznagar: The relay hunger strike launched by the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of Sirpur Paper Mill workers demanding verification elections for trade unions completed its 100th day on Thursday. The workers have been insisting that the mill management should conduct wage settlement talks only with the union that wins the verification elections.



Big makeover of Mir Alam Tank Upgrade as Family Tourism Hub

"CM Revanth Reddy conducts surprise inspection""Orders officials to complete the works before the deadline""Envisaged plans to develop suspension bridge, water sports, and Island development""Linkage with Nehru Zoo Park ""Hyderabad:""The Telangana government envisaged a big plan for the makeover of the famous Mir Alam Tank with modern facilities aiming to promote the historical site as one of the best Tourist hubs. Under the plan, new facilities are being developed to upgrade the tank as a prominent tourism and recreation hub for the visiting families who spend the day enjoying nature, entertainment, and relaxation."Honourable Chief Minister Sri A Revanth Reddy conducted a surprise inspection of Mir Alam Tank on Thursday and reviewed the ongoing development works with officials. The Chief Minister inspected the progress of the works around the tank and the construction of the iconic suspension bridge over the tank. Officials briefed the CM on the progress of the projects in a photo presentation."The CM enquired the officials about the status of the various works and directed them to complete the project within a stipulated time frame. The Musi Rejuvenation Development Corporation Limited has taken up the works at the Mir Alam Tank where the works are being taken up in 3key aspects- rejuvenation of the tank, development of the surrounding areas with islands and the construction of the iconic bridge."During the visit, the CM also instructed officials to take robust measures to prevent sewage from flowing into the Mir Alam Tank and suggested widening the drainage channels (nalas) to ensure the smooth flow of floodwater from the lake into the Musi River. The Chief Minister stressed that focus should be more on improving water quality alongside the lake's rejuvenation."DESIGNS FOR WATER SPORTS""CM Revanth Reddy directed the officials to formulate development plans to introduce water sports at Mir Alam Lake. Exploring the possibilities of boating, water sports and adventure activities by adhering to necessary technical, environmental, and safety standards was discussed in the meeting. The Chief Minister emphasized the Mir Alam tank should be developed as an attractive recreational hub for both families and the youth by taking up several initiatives. The CM also proposed setting up food courts, lush green parks, relaxation zones, family entertainment facilities around the lake and development of dedicated playgrounds and activity centers for children. The plans also

included creating pedestrian-friendly walkways and public spaces, as well as improving accessibility and connectivity."REVAMPING ISLANDS""CM Revanth Reddy reviewed the plan to develop the islands located within Mir Alam Lake, explore utilizing the area for nature-based relaxation centers, glamping (luxury camping), and other tourism activities. The officials were ordered to prepare plans for establishing wedding and event destinations. The State Government has already announced the development of quality tourism and recreational facilities and creating employment opportunities through the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model at the Tank. ""INTEGRATED TOURISM LINKAGE WITH THE ZOO PARK""The Chief Minister instructed the officials to integrate the development of Mir Alam Tank with the nearby Nehru Zoological Park. The objective of the project is to offer a unified tourism experience that combines a visit to the zoo with nature, the scenic beauty of the lake, and family entertainment. A Detailed Project Report (DPR) regarding the tank's rejuvenation and the development of its surrounding areas and islands is currently being prepared."50 per cent PROGRESS IN SUSPENSION BRIDGE WORKS ""

"The construction work on the iconic bridge over Mir Alam Tank is also at a brisk pace. Out of the 544 piles targeted for completion by August 27, 2026, 273 have already been finished, marking a completion rate of 50.18 percent. Progress of 45.16 percent has been recorded regarding pile caps, with 28 out of 62 completed. Additionally, six out of the 62 pier-cum-pier caps have been finished so far."During the inspection of the works, CM Revanth Reddy suggested developing the Mir Alam Tank-located near the airport-into a major tourist attraction. The government aims to accord Mir Alam Tank a new identity by highlighting its historic lake, lush green surroundings, proximity to Nehru Zoo Park, islands, water sports, family entertainment options, food courts, and an iconic suspension bridge. Mir Alam Tank is set to become a major tourist destination, attracting not only Hyderabad residents but also domestic and international tourists once the comprehensive development works are completed. The lake is being developed into a place where the entire family can spend the day enjoying nature, entertainment, water sports, and relaxation at one location.

Every party worker should strive for Bahujan political empowerment

— BSP Telangana State President Ibrahim Shekar""Nacharam, August 27(INDIAN CHORNICALE):""Leaders and workers of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) congratulated Telangana State President Ibrahim Shekar on successfully completing one year since assuming charge as the State President."The programme was organised under the leadership of Uppal Assembly President Mindrala Narsinga Rao. BSP Telangana State General Secretary Banothu Ravinder Naik, General Secretary B. Eshwar, State Secretary Sheelam Anitha Reddy, Medchal-Malkajigiri District In-charge President Mallepogu Vijay Raj, Uppal Constituency Vice-President Venkatesh, General Secretary Panga Prabhakar, Nacharam Division President Mindrala Anitha, along with several party leaders and workers, participated in the programme."Speaking on the occasion, Ibrahim Shekar said that the party has been continuously fighting for the problems faced by the people with the objective of achieving political empowerment for the Bahujans. He stated that efforts are being made to further strengthen and develop the party by completing district-level committees across Telangana."He further said that Assembly, village, division, sector and booth-level committees are being constituted to expand the party's



organisational structure down to the grassroots level. Following the ideals and footsteps of great leaders, he called upon every leader and party worker to work with dedication and take responsibility for achieving Bahujan political empowerment."Ibrahim Shekar stated that strengthening the party further and taking it closer to the people is their primary objective. He assured that the BSP would continue to fight relentlessly over public issues and work with commitment for the rights, welfare and progress of the Bahujan community.

Woman Allegedly Cheated in the Name of Love and Marriage – Case Registered Against Cab Driver



""MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 27(INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally police have registered a case against a cab driver for allegedly cheating a woman by promising to marry her, maintaining a physical relationship with her, and taking lakhs of rupees from her."According to police, the 39-year-old woman, a private employee from Buddhanagar Colony in Boduppal, works at DSM-Firmenich company in Raidurg. Kolipaka Laxman (21), a cab driver from Peerzadiguda and a native of Reddigudem in Medaram, used to pick her up

and drop her at work daily. During this period, he became acquainted with her, and their relationship reportedly developed into a romantic one. Laxman allegedly assured her that he would marry her.The complaint states that he maintained a physical relationship with the woman at her residence from December 2025. He allegedly took Rs.12 lakh from her on the pretext of purchasing a new Maruti Suzuki Ertiga car. Police further stated that he allegedly collected another Rs.7 lakh to Rs.8 lakh from her citing personal needs."However, on August 24, 2026, Laxman allegedly called the woman's brother and informed him that he had married another woman and had no relationship with the complainant."Based on the woman's written complaint, Medipally police registered a case in Crime No. 1241/2026 under Section 69 of the BNS (sexual intercourse through deceitful means on the promise of marriage) and Section 318(4) of the BNS (cheating).On the instructions of Inspector D. Jalender Reddy, SI E. Yadukondalu is investigating the case.

NVSS Prabhakar Placed Under House Arrest While Leaving to Support Ramanthapur Polytechnic Students

""RAMANTHAPUR , AUGUST 27(INDIAN CHRONICLE): BJP senior leader and former Uppal MLA NVSS Prabhakar was placed under house arrest by the police on Thursday when he was preparing to leave for Ramanthapur Polytechnic College to extend his solidarity to students protesting over their issues.The students of Ramanthapur Polytechnic College have been staging protests demanding the resolution of various problems they are facing. Expressing support for their legitimate demands and their ongoing struggle, NVSS Prabhakar was scheduled to visit the college and extend his solidarity."However, police reached his residence and placed him under house arrest, preventing him from leaving the premises."Speaking on the occasion, NVSS Prabhakar said that it was unjustified to place him under house arrest when he was only going to express solidarity with students who were conducting their protest in a democratic manner. He demanded that the government immediately address the problems being faced by the students.He urged the government not to neglect issues concerning the future of students and called for discussions with the students to find a permanent solu-



tion to their problems."NVSS Prabhakar made it clear that the BJP would continue to fight for the resolution of the students' legitimate demands and stand by them in their struggle.

Probe into ‘corrupt Punjab cop’ tied to US action on Jaggu Bhagwanpuria gang

GNS News Agency, August 27

In a major revelation emerging from a sweeping international law enforcement operation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the US, an alleged “corrupt Punjab police officer” has been directly implicated in fabricating murder charges and running extortion rackets on behalf of a ruthless India-based transnational crime syndicate. According to federal indictments unsealed in Los Angeles as part of ‘Operation Hard Ball’, Gurinderjit Singh Nagra, a law enforcement officer in Punjab, worked hand-in-glove with members of the Jaggu Bhagwanpuria organised crime group to target perceived rivals with false accusations and demands for money. The FBI has charged Nagra, the Station House Officer of Tanda police station in Tanda, Hoshiarpur, with helping gangsters extort \$400,000 from a family in Los Angeles by threatening to file false murder charges against their relatives in India. While Nagra claimed that he had no idea why he was named, an inquiry was ordered against him on Wednesday. He was also shifted to Police Lines, Hoshiarpur. According to the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Jalandhar Range, the superintendent of police, Jalandhar Rural, an IPS officer, will probe the allegations and submit a detailed report at the earliest.

The details, laid bare in US court documents, show how corruption at the local level in Punjab enabled global criminal enterprises to thrive across continents. A US Department of Justice official made these revelations in a press statement in California late on July 7. In April 2026, Gural Singh, a 22-year-old illegal immigrant from India living in Stockton, California, and an alleged member of the Bhagwanpuria syndicate, provided the name and details of a victim (identified in court papers as Victim 2) to Nagra. Nagra then allegedly contacted the victim’s father and threatened to implicate the entire family, including the victim’s sister, in the January 2026 murder of a man identified as “B.S.”. As per the FBI, on April 13, 2026, Nagra told the victim’s father that charges would be filed against him for the murder. On April 16, he allegedly demanded payment, warning that failure to pay would result in all three family members being named as accused. In May 2026, following a press conference in Punjab where Indian au-

thorities publicly accused the family, Nagra allegedly continued pressuring the victims for money, explicitly referencing instructions from Gural Singh and complaining that “they didn’t pay us the whole amount what was agreed upon”. The indictment states that members of the Bhagwanpuria group “corrupted law enforcement officers in India and partnered with corrupt government officials” to assist in extortion schemes and to file baseless criminal cases against rivals.

This Punjab-based corruption was not an isolated incident but part of an alleged deliberate strategy by the syndicate to use the police in India as tools for intimidation and profit. Bishnoi, Bhagwanpuria, and Dhanda. The exposure of Gurinderjit Singh Nagra’s role came amid a coordinated international takedown announced on July 7 by the US Department of Justice, the FBI, and partners in Canada and Europe. Law enforcement arrested 24 defendants connected to three India-based transnational organised crime groups. The groups—the Bishnoi enterprise (led by Lawrence Bishnoi from a prison in Punjab), the Bhagwanpuria enterprise (led by Jaggu Bhagwanpuria, also imprisoned in Punjab), and the Dhanda group (led by Ravinder Singh Dhanda from Canada)—face charges including racketeering conspiracy, extortion, narcotics trafficking, firearms offences and murder-for-hire. The syndicates are accused of orchestrating violence that extend beyond India’s borders.

This includes the 2023 assassination of Khalistani activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar outside a gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia, a killing Canadian authorities had earlier linked to Indian criminal networks. First Assistant US Attorney Bill Essayli stated that the criminal organisations “have engaged in widespread violence, including targeted killings, extortions and kidnappings” and “have preyed in particular on communities in the United States and Canada with ties to India”. The FBI’s Los Angeles Field Office led the US investigation, with assistance from the Los Angeles Police Department, Homeland Security Investigations, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and international partners including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Spanish authorities.

Meet Berty Ashley, the quizmaster shaping Bengaluru’s quiz culture



GNS News Agency, August 27

Hang around Bengaluru’s quizzing scene long enough, and you are bound to run into Berty Ashley. Whether it is at a larger event or a cozy pub quiz in Indiranagar, the molecular biologist-turned-quizmaster is known for bringing a distinctive style to quiz format that often follows familiar patterns. Berty Ashley, who hails from Madurai, has been quizzing since he was a Class 5 student. Recalling how he got involved with quizzing in Bengaluru, he said, “The city has a very strong quizzing history. Earlier, when I was in Chennai, I used to travel to Bengaluru just to attend the KQA (Karnataka Quiz Association) quizzes... whenever they conducted quizzes, we used to cross state lines just to attend them. There was always this sense that the KQA quizzes were like the pinnacle of quizzing. And if you could do well in one of those, then that kind of seals your CV as to how good you are.” After permanently moving to Bengaluru in 2014, Ashley began conducting quizzes for the KQA before expanding into the wide range of quiz events he is known for today. Beyond the quiz stage, many Bengaleureans may also recognise his name on bookstore shelves — the 42-year-old has authored and co-authored eight quiz books. They had their roots in a series of quizzes that he does for The Hindu’s Sunday Magazine — after which Rupa Books approached him in 2020 to compile them into a book, Quiz-

zes for Quirky Minds. The other seven were all independent books, built on the pattern that Ashley incorporates into his quizzes — from topics as far apart as science, literature, and even the Indian Premier League (IPL).

There is one major difference between the quiz books and how he likes to manage a quiz. However, a book can never have an audiovisual component. He explains, “The one major difference is that none of these books can use any other media rather than print.... There are no visuals, there is no audio or video, and I can’t do any cluing in terms of visuals.... the quizzes that I host are heavily visual and only around five per cent of the questions are fully text based.”

However, he isn’t necessarily only aiming at people looking to prepare for a quiz. Ashley said, “My quiz books are written in such a way that they are more like entertainment. So a lot of people just pick it up and leave it on the coffee table. They give it away as gifts because you can just randomly open it up, as they have a lot of interesting themes. A lot of schools stock them as well. One thing which I also promote is purchasing the books so that people can run quizzes among circles themselves, among friends, and among family.” Ashley has been partnering with schools to establish quiz clubs, hoping to draw younger participants into the city’s quizzing scene. While Bengaluru’s quiz circuit has traditionally been dominated by older men, he says the demographic is slowly changing, with more women and students now taking part. As far as the quizzes he has been conducting are concerned, he bucks the trend again, with quizzes tending to go for a unique theme — possibly incorporating humour or even memes as he goes along. He explains, “I’m working on a quiz for the Tata Institute of Genetics and Society — all to do with genetic disorders and genetically inherited diseases. It’s a very serious topic, but I’m using a lot of GIFs and memes — using fun facts and comedy to get a very serious subject across.” Readers interested in participating in quizzes across Bengaluru are advised to join one of the WhatsApp groups of the Karnataka Quiz Association to keep an eye on timings.

Defence production hits Rs 1.80 lakh crore, exports near Rs 39,000 crore: Rajnath Singh



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said India’s defence production has nearly quadrupled to Rs 1.80 lakh crore over the past decade, while exports reached nearly Rs 39,000 crore. He also laid the foundation stone for a Rs 472-crore tank overhaul facility.

Jabalpur: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said India’s domestic defence production has nearly quadrupled over the last decade to around Rs 1.80 lakh crore, while exports have surged to nearly Rs 39,000 crore, as the country moves steadily towards self-reliance in the defence sector. Singh made the remarks after laying the foundation stone of a Rs 472-crore facility for the overhaul of T-series battle tanks at the 57-year-old Vehicle Factory Jabalpur (VFJ), an ordnance unit here. “Domestic defence (arms and ammunition) production, which stood at Rs 46,000 crore in 2014, has now reached approximately Rs 1.80 lakh crore. Similarly, defence exports have increased from around Rs 1,000 crore in 2014 to nearly Rs 39,000 crore,” he said.

The government has set a target of achieving defence exports worth Rs 50,000 crore by 2028-29, the defence minister said. “India’s defence sector has now taken firm steps towards complete self-reliance. The world’s perception of India is changing, and the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat is behind this transformation,” Singh said. Shopping For Authentic South Asian Apparel

He said India was not only manufacturing weapons domestically but was also developing the capability to maintain, overhaul and upgrade them. “Today’s project is another link in the chain of self-reliance. In the coming years, India will emerge as a strong country in defence manufacturing,” Singh said, adding that all stakeholders must discharge their responsibilities with utmost seriousness. He described the tank overhaul project as a major milestone for India’s self-reliant industrial ecosystem. “This is not an ordinary project. It reflects India’s growing capabilities and will prove to be a boon for our soldiers, who use these tanks to destroy the enemy,” Singh said. The project would also open up employment opportunities for local people, he added.

Expressing confidence that the facility would be completed on schedule and to high-quality standards, Singh said the upcoming project would overhaul 80 T-72 and T-90 tanks annually. The Indian Army requires the overhaul of around 230 such tanks every year, he added. The Heavy Vehicles Factory (HVF) at Avadi currently overhauls around 150 tanks annually, and the new facility at VFJ will bridge the remaining shortfall, the defence minister said. VFJ, where the tank overhaul facility is coming up, is a premier military vehicle manufacturing unit operating under Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited (AVNL). Established in 1969, the factory initially produced Shaktiman 3-tonne vehicles in collaboration with Germany’s MAN, as well as Nissan 1T and Jonga vehicles in collaboration with Japan’s Nissan Motors Co. The factory complex is spread over 330 acres, while its adjoining estate covers another 600 acres, officials said.

Bengal rape-murder accused killed in police encounter, his mother reacts

Baruipur Bengal rape murder Prabash Mondol was shot when he snatched a policeman’s weapon and opened fire, police said. Prabhash Mondol, the main accused in the gangrape-murder of an 11-year-old in West Bengal’s Baruipur, was shot dead in an encounter after midnight. According to a police statement, a police team took Mondol to the crime scene last night to reconstruct the crime as part of the investigation. At the crime scene, police said, the accused snatched the firearm of a policeman, fired one shot at the police party and tried to escape. Police opened fire in retaliation. Mondol was injured in the firing and rushed to a hospital, where he was declared dead, the police statement said. spoke to Prabhash’s mother, Sandhya, after the encounter that killed her son. “He got the punishment for the crime he committed,” she said. Sandhya Mondol said she had told police that she did not want to see her son’s body. “I grieve as a mother, but I am at peace that he got the punishment for his crime.” She said she would not even receive his body. “I don’t want to see him. No one will go. He did not listen to us,” she said, adding that Prabhash was an “addict”. A town on edge

Located about 30 km from Kolkata, Baruipur in Bengal’s South 24 Parganas district has been on the edge after the body of an 11-year-old girl was found dumped in a pond on Sunday. An autopsy confirmed sexual assault and police registered a case under charges of murder and gangrape. The stringent Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act has also been invoked. Four people have been arrested in connection with the heinous crime and a six-member Special Investigation Team is probing the incident. Three accused, Pravash Mondol, Ananda Sardar and Dibakar Sardar, were arrested earlier. Another accused, Kabir Mollah, was arrested in Basirhat, North 24 Parganas, on Tuesday night. According to police sources, Mollah fled Baruipur after the incident and was arrested after police got information that he was in Basirhat. Earlier, in a chilling development, a man suspected of being involved in the heinous crime was lynched in Baruipur, hours after the 11-year-old’s body was found dumped in a pond. Protesters also blocked roads and set tyres on fire before police brought the situation under control. According to police sources, CCTV footage from near the crime scene led to breakthrough in their investigation into the 11-year-old girl’s rape-murder. The footage showed the victim shortly before she went missing on Saturday. A day later, her body was found in a sack dumped in a pond. In the footage, Prabhash was seen accompanying her. According to police, the accused abducted her. They then consumed alcohol or ganja near a pond and raped her. Later, they drowned her into a nearby pond. During the autopsy, doctors found water in her lungs, suggesting that she was alive when the accused put her into a sack and threw it in the pond.

Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari visited

Baruipur on Monday and met the victim’s family. He stressed that the family was satisfied with the progress of the police probe. “I am satisfied after talking to them, and I think they are also satisfied,” he said. Adhikari also said the man lynched on suspicion of being involved in the crime was innocent. “The youth killed in the mob lynching, Indrajit Mondal, was also innocent. This is what the police told me; these are not my words. He (Mondal) will also get justice. I have met his family members also,” he said. The Chief Minister said the 200-odd people accused of damaging public property during a protest against the rape-murder had been identified and action will be taken against them. “All of them will be arrested. Not a single person will get respite,” he said. “Those who have instigated from behind, including those rejected by the people in the recent (assembly) elections, those who gained one seat from zero, and also some radical and anti-national forces, have been identified. The government will teach them a proper lesson,” Adhikari said. Police have so far arrested 20 people in connection with the violence during the protests. An FIR has been filed against CPM’s central committee member Sujan Chakraborty and the party’s youth leader Layek Ali. The Chief Minister also responded to allegations that the police delayed the search for the girl after she went missing. “When we filed a missing person complaint at Baruipur police station, it was around 9 pm on Saturday. Had the police started a search operation then, went through CCTV footage, my daughter could have been found alive,” the minor’s mother had told The Indian Express. The Chief Minister said he has asked the state’s police chief to submit a report within 72 hours. “If there is any negligence regarding the time taken after the complaint was lodged, even if it is one per cent, action will be taken,” he told reporters. Family members of the victim have said they were satisfied after the Chief Minister’s visit. “He listened to us and assured us of justice. We have requested him for a police outpost, and he promised us to look into it,” one of her relatives said.

Mahua Moitra interview, Mahua Moitra, Trinamool Congress Loyalists, TMC rebel camp, Sayoni Ghosh TMC rebel camp, Mala Roy TMC rebel camp, Abhishek Banerjee, Kalyan Banerjee, Sougata Roy, TMC rebel camp, Kakali Ghosh, Trinamool Congress, Trinamool Congress, Mamata Banerjee, Sayoni Ghosh, Mala Roy, Sayoni Ghosh TMC rebel camp, Mala Roy TMC rebel camp, Kolkata news, WEst Bengal news, Indian express, current affairs Mahua Moitra slammed Bengal police over the encounter. Trinamool MP’s ‘jungle law’ barb. Mahua Moitra, Trinamool Congress MP in the Mamata Banerjee camp in the ongoing tussle within the party, has criticised Bengal police over the encounter. “What is going on WBPolice? Bengal is please welcome new Bengal – Uttar Pradesh 2.0. @BJP4Bengal is no government. This is jungle law,” she said in a post on X. The post was retweeted by the party’s official handle on X.

ED files chargesheet against hacker Sriki, others in crypto laundering probe

Karnataka bitcoin scam, hacker Sriki, Sriki, Srikrishna Ramesh, ED chargesheet, crypto money laundering, cryptocurrency hacking, Unocoin hack, Indian Express news, Bengaluru crime news. Srikrishna Ramesh, also known as Sriki, Khandelwal, and Hegde were arrested on May 8 by ED in connection with its probe into the laundering of stolen material from crypto exchanges and gaming sites. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Monday filed a prosecution complaint against five people, including hacker Srikrishna Ramesh, and a private firm in connection with the laundering of funds generated by Ramesh through the hacking of multiple cryptocurrency exchanges, poker, and gaming websites. The ED prosecution complaint, which is the equivalent of a police chargesheet, was filed against Ramesh, alias Sriki, his accountant Robin Khandelwal, a close associate Sunish Hegde, a private Bengaluru IT firm, Infiny Solutions, and two officials of the firm who allegedly facilitated the transfer of funds stolen from a poker site by the hacker. Sriki, Khandelwal, and Hegde were arrested on May 8 by ED in connection with its probe into the laundering of stolen material from crypto exchanges and gaming sites. The prosecution complaint was filed by ED through its public prosecutor, Madhu N Rao, before the completion of 60 days of their custody.

Before arresting them, ED conducted searches at 12 premises linked to Sriki, his associates, and the properties of Mohammed Haris Nalapad and Omar Farook Nalapad, sons of a Congress MLA and Bengaluru Development Authority Chairman N A Haris, who have also been the hacker’s associates. According to investigation findings placed in court by ED in the course of a bail plea filed by Hegde, which was rejected on June 25, Sriki and his associates were involved in “repeated incidents of hacking, theft of VDAs (Virtual Digital Assets), data theft, extortion, and laundering of proceeds through cryptocurrency exchanges, traders, bank accounts and other financial channels.”

ED has stated that stolen VDAs, like Bitcoin and cryptocurrencies, “were liquidated through crypto traders, particularly Robin Khandelwal, who acted as a conduit for converting illicit digital assets into fiat currency.” After the

hacking crimes committed by Sriki, stolen materials were “layered through multiple bank accounts, cryptocurrency platforms and other channels before being utilised by the accused persons, including the Petitioner, for personal benefit and further criminal activities,” ED has stated. ED also stated that Sriki and his associates were involved in the hacking of the Poker Dangal, Spartan Poker, Poker Saint, GG Poker, and Poker Baazi poker websites, as well as the Unocoin cryptocurrency exchange and the Karnataka Government’s e-procurement tender platform, where Rs 11.5 crore was stolen between 2017 and 2020. The agency has said several FIRs filed against Sriki, involving similar modus operandi, common accused persons, and interconnected transactions, have been incorporated into the money laundering probe against the hacker and his associates. It has placed reliance on statements recorded under Section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, by the accused regarding their modus operandi as well as “digital evidence, bank account records, cryptocurrency transaction records, blockchain analysis reports and materials recovered during investigation.” ED has indicated that further investigations are underway into the exact quantum, movement, layering, and utilisation of the proceeds of the hacking crimes. Among the hacking crimes which form the basis of the money laundering prosecution complaint filed on Monday against Sriki and others is a 2018 hacking of the Poker Baazi website and a 2017 hacking of the Unocoin cryptocurrency exchange. ED has stated that Sriki, who hacked the Unocoin exchange, diverted funds through concealment to Hegde and others. “The stolen Bitcoins (proceeds of crime) were disposed of through various cryptocurrency trading platforms. The sale proceeds were routed and layered through multiple bank accounts and were utilised for the personal expenses of Srikrishna and his associates, namely Omar Farook Nalapad, Mohammed Haris Nalapad, Aqeeb Khan, Sunish Hegde and Sujay Raj,” ED said in its court filings noted by the district court last month. In May, a Special Investigation Team of the Karnataka Police named Sriki, Khandelwal, the Congress leader Mohammed Haris Nalapad, and their associates Nafi Mohammed Nasar and Vijay L as accused in a chargesheet filed in the Unocoin exchange hacking case of 2017.

Why is Mumbai seeing record rain in an El Niño year?

Between July 1 and 7, the India Meteorological Department’s (IMD) Colaba observatory recorded 791 mm of rainfall, surpassing its entire July climatological average of 768.5 mm. Meanwhile, the weather bureau’s Santacruz observatory recorded 879 mm of rainfall against its monthly average of 919.9 mm. The heavy rainfall has come even as the country continues to experience the effects of El Niño, a climate phenomenon in which sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean become unusually warm, often delaying the onset of the southwest monsoon. Although the monsoon reached Mumbai nearly two weeks later than usual, it entered an active phase by the end of June, bringing intense rainfall to the city and several parts of coastal Maharashtra. Scientists said there is no contradiction. While El Niño continues to influence when the monsoon arrives and how active it is, global warming is increasingly changing the way it rains. Once weather systems become active, rainfall is becoming more erratic and more intense. The latest spell also fits a longer-term trend. Between 1981 and 2000, Mumbai recorded an average annual rainfall of 2,325.8 mm. Between 2001 and 2024, the average increased to 2,672.7 mm, an increase of 346.9 mm, or nearly 15 per cent. A scooter drives past a boy in Mumbai on a flooded Mumbai road (PTI) A scooter drives past a

boy in Mumbai on a flooded Mumbai road (PTI) Science behind the high-intensity rain. Climate scientists said a warmer atmosphere and rapidly warming oceans are allowing the air to hold more moisture. As a result, rainfall is increasingly occurring in short, high-intensity bursts instead of being spread over many days. Such spells can overwhelm drainage systems, trigger flash floods and expose weaknesses in urban infrastructure. “During El Niño years, the number of rainy days is lower. But we know that the character of the monsoon has changed permanently due to global warming. Rainfall now tends to occur in short-duration, high-intensity spells, whether there is an El Niño or not,” said Dr K. J. Ramesh, former Director General of the IMD. Dr Raghu Murtugudde, Emeritus Professor at the University of Maryland and former professor at IIT Bombay, said several weather systems had come together to produce the exceptionally heavy rainfall. “Mumbai saw a delayed onset, which is partly explained by El Niño. But the global warming pattern over West Asia and changes in Arabian Sea winds have also played a role, as expected. The Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal are both feeding moisture into the monsoon system, and a low-pressure system is developing over the Bay of Bengal.

Iran to get Chinese shoulder-launched missile systems in weeks, sources say

GNS News Agency, August 27

- Iran is expected to receive within weeks a first shipment out of up to 400 Chinese-made shoulder-fired air-defence missile launchers, three sources familiar with the deal told Reuters, as it rebuilds its defences amid war with the United States. The purchase, valued at \$60-70 million, is one of Tehran's largest-known efforts to strengthen its short-range air defences since the outbreak of its war with the U.S. and Israel, which exposed gaps in Iran's ability to protect military sites and strategic infrastructure. Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here.

The contract covers the purchase of between 300 and 400 man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), including Chinese-made QW-12 and FN-16 missiles, the sources said. The deal was signed with Zhongqing Baoshang International Investment, a Hong Kong-based company that the sources said was acting as an intermediary between the Iranian side and the Chinese supplier. IRAN NEEDS TO REARM AFTER MONTHS OF WAR The sources spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. Iran's foreign ministry did not immediately reply to a request for comment. China's Foreign Ministry said: "The relevant reports are completely groundless. China has consistently played a role in promoting peace and ending the conflict." Beijing-based Zhong Qing Bao Shang Group, the parent company of Zhongqing Baoshang International Investment, did not immediately respond to an email request for comment on Tuesday. Iran needs to rearm after months of fighting in which the U.S. and Israel have struck facilities linked to its missile, drone and air-defence programmes, and Tehran responded with barrages of ballistic missiles and drones. The conflict has highlighted the challenge of defending fixed military and strategic sites against advanced aircraft and precision-guided weapons. Washington abruptly suspended two weeks of bombardment on Saturday, but President Donald Trump said strikes would resume if negotiations failed to end the five-month-old conflict, which has in theory been in a state of ceasefire since April. The delivery of hundreds of MANPADS would significantly expand Iran's inventory of short-range air-defence weapons and underscore how military ties with China are deepening. The sources cautioned that, although the agreement had been signed, delivery schedules, quantities and other implementation details could still change. Under a plan agreed by the parties, deliveries will initially be by air from Urumqi in western China, then transiting through Pakistan to Iran, according to the sources, who did not clarify whether the transfers would take place by air or by road. Pakistan's military public relations wing ISPR said: "Speculations of Pakistan being involved in supply of Air Defence weapons to Iran from China are absolutely concocted and false." A spokesperson for the Pakistani Foreign Ministry did not respond to requests for comment.



CHINA AND IRAN EXPLORE LAND ROUTES FOR DELIVERY, SOURCES SAY While Iran has invested heavily in the past two decades in missiles, drones and radar, military experts say portable air-defence systems are important because they can be dispersed quickly, operated by small teams and relocated frequently, making them less vulnerable than fixed air-defence batteries. A European security source said authorities in his country were aware of several contracts under discussion involving the possible sale of QW-series MANPADS to Iran, including QW-12, QW-18 and QW-19 systems. A second security source, in the Middle East, said Iran had been seeking to purchase QW-12 and QW-18 missiles, but they were unaware that a deal had already been concluded. The QW-12 and FN-16 are shoulder-fired, infrared-guided surface-to-air missile systems designed to engage low-flying aircraft, helicopters and drones. Their mobility allows them to be deployed rapidly around military installations, energy infrastructure and other sensitive sites.

Defence analysts regard the QW-12 as less capable than newer QW variants, including the QW-18 and QW-19, but say the systems can still provide an effective layer of short-range protection against drones and low-flying targets. Two Western intelligence sources and an Iranian official said Tehran had also explored the use of overland routes to move Chinese military supplies and dual-use components more discreetly and reduce the risk of disruption. The procurement highlights the Islamic Republic's continuing reliance on a combination of domestic weapons production and foreign suppliers despite years of sanctions and restrictions on defence-related imports. Reuters previously reported that Iran was close to securing a separate agreement with China to acquire anti-ship cruise missiles, according to people familiar with those negotiations. Reuters could not determine whether the agreement went through. Additional reporting by Liz Lee in Beijing, Clare Jim in Hong Kong and Rick Noack in Islamabad Writing by Parisa Hafezi; Editing by Kevin Liffey

Fear of war's spread as US, Saudi hit Iran-backed fighters in Iraq



DUBAI/CAIRO, GNS News Agency, August 27 The United States and Saudi Arabia jointly struck Iran-backed armed groups in Iraq on Wednesday, the first U.S. airstrikes in the Middle East since President Donald Trump suspended the U.S. bombing campaign against Iran last week. Iran, for its part, said it had fired on U.S. bases in Jordan and at ships in the Strait of Hormuz, prompting Trump to promise retaliatory strikes against Iran, which earlier reported a U.S. projectile hitting its northwestern city of Piranshahr near the Iraqi border.

Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here. "We'll be hitting them hard," Trump told Fox News, adding, however, about the possibility of future talks with Iran: "We're going to let them keep talking." In a diplomatic setback, Tehran earlier rejected an Omani proposal to jointly manage the strait. With renewed fighting and no quick end in sight to the war that broke out in February, oil prices rose sharply for the first time since last week.

Iraq's Popular Mobilisation Forces, powerful Iran-backed paramilitary groups incorporated into the Iraqi security forces, said at least 20 members were killed and 32 wounded in U.S.-Saudi strikes targeting several bases across Iraq. Iraqi men shouted Shi'ite sectarian slogans and "Death to America!" as they carried the bodies of slain fighters in body bags out of a hospital in Mosul in northern Iraq, footage from Iraq's Al-Ahad television showed. Washington and Riyadh said they had jointly struck Iran-backed armed groups in Iraq in retaliation for drone attacks on Saudi oil targets launched from Iraq. It was the first major U.S. military action in the Middle East, and, if confirmed, in Iran, since last Friday, when Trump abruptly suspended an intensive bombing campaign after 13 days, having been advised by commanders that the strategy had run its course.

STRIKES COULD WIDEN CONFLICT It was also the first time during the war that Saudi Arabia had publicly announced participating in strikes alongside the United States. That could widen the conflict by drawing Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia into combat against Shi'ite proxies of Iran on a new front.

Iraq's Shi'ite-led government, one of the few in the world to maintain close military and diplomatic ties with both Tehran and Washington, called an emergency meeting. The Iraqi presidency denounced the strikes on the paramilitaries as "an unacceptable attack and a flagrant violation of Iraq's sovereignty", while also calling for a halt to attacks by armed groups against Iraq's neighbours. Iran said the U.S.-Saudi attacks were an attempt by the United States and Israel to spread their war further in the region. One of Iran-backed armed groups in Iraq, Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, said U.S. and Saudi forces would pay a "heavy price".

US military may require some troops in Mideast to surrender cell phones, sources say

The top U.S. commander for the Middle East has warned troops that cellphone videos shared online can help Iran target American bases, and sources told Reuters some deployed personnel could soon be ordered to surrender their phones. Any crackdown on mobile communications would add a new dimension to the conflict for the thousands of U.S. troops in the region, many of whom still rely on phones to periodically message loved ones and assure them they are well.

The Reuters Inside Track newsletter is your essential guide to global sports news. Sign up here. Admiral Brad Cooper, in a previously unreported letter, said Iran was benefiting from being able to see the success or failure of its strikes in near real-time by searching news reports or online posts by journalists referencing reactions, photos, and footage from the cellphones of our troops. "The direct, unavoidable cost of this open-source intelligence could be measured in the lives of American service members and civilian residents in targeted Gulf countries," Cooper, head of U.S. Central Command, wrote in his July 28 letter, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters. He called on troops to "redouble our focus on operational security," without prescribing specific steps in the memo.

The warning underscored the mounting tensions between real-time news reporting on the war, often aided by satellite imagery and first-person accounts, and the desire by the U.S. military to restrict any information that could aid Iran as it tries to kill and wound U.S. troops. In Jordan, which has been a frequent target of Iranian strikes, some troops have been told their phones will be confiscated in the coming days, two sources familiar with the matter told Reuters. A third source said such a move was being considered in the region due to operational security concerns but did not present the confiscation as a certainty. Asked for comment, U.S. Central Command spokesperson Captain Timothy Hawkins said: "The message is a general reminder to our service members on the importance of maintaining operational security. This is one of many opportunities Admiral Cooper has used to convey operational priorities."

RUNNING FOR SHELTER DURING IRAN ATTACK In a video posted online this month, a U.S. service member recorded a video as soldiers ran for shelter during a deadly Iranian attack on the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Jordan on July 17. Cooper appeared to reference the footage in his letter, saying it had been recorded on Meta smart glasses with a built-in camera. "Video captured from a service member's Meta glasses was posted on Instagram showing where and how the individual had evacuated to a bunker during an Iranian missile and drone attack," Cooper wrote. Iran would normally have a tough time determining the success or failure of its strikes, were it not for such accounts, Cooper said, thanks to the U.S. military's electronic jamming or other tactics used in war zones. "Iran knows the weapons were fired; however, their forces do not know if they missed by 50 meters, hit an empty tarmac, or successfully struck a crowded facility," he wrote. "De-



tailed lists, descriptions, and analyses of what was hit, openly published by news outlets are essentially performing Iran's Battle Damage Assessment (BDA) for them, free of charge," Cooper said. Some 18 U.S. troops have died in the conflict with Iran that started on Feb. 28 and more than 600 have been wounded in the fighting, casualties that have deepened Americans' concerns about a war that just one in three Americans support. Democratic lawmakers have called for more information about the war, including details about damage to U.S. infrastructure on bases including radar towers, barracks and aircraft hangars. They have also called for the release of a U.S. military investigation into a likely U.S. strike on a girls' school in Iran, first reported by Reuters, on the opening day of the war on Feb. 28. Rules surrounding cell phone use for deployed troops can vary widely across the military, officials say. Many troops have to lock them away and cell phones can be banned on particularly sensitive missions by special operations forces, for example. But the possible seizure of phones has stoked anxiety among some family members, already on edge in recent months as they read Iranian claims of deadly strikes on bases throughout the Middle East, two of the sources said. U.S. officials have cautioned for years that certain applications on mobile devices, like fitness applications, can be exploited by adversaries to aid adversary targeting because of location data. Reuters reported in May that commercially available location data harvested from smartphones or other devices has been used to target or surveil U.S. forces. At the same time, the Pentagon has sought to carefully control the release of information due to what it says are operational security concerns, often declining to comment on Iran's attack claims or detail individual incidents that led to injuries of U.S. troops. Cooper said details on strikes can help Iran mount follow-up attacks. "Detailed public disclosures can become an immediate green light for Iranian forces to launch a secondary, much more devastating wave of attacks," he said.

Yemen's Houthis considering fees for ships sailing through Red Sea, sources say



LONDON/DUBAI, Yemen's Houthi group is considering imposing fees on commercial ships sailing through the southern Red Sea, a week after declaring a naval blockade on Saudi Arabia, regional sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. The Iran-aligned Houthis on July 20 declared a maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia, opening a new front against the U.S. and its allies in the Iran war and expanding attacks on tankers carrying global energy and other supplies to waters beyond the Gulf.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. The Houthis were looking into imposing fees on most traffic through the narrow Bab el-Mandeb gateway, which links the southern Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden, the sources said. No timeframe was given at this stage for implementation, they added. The Houthis' media office did not respond to a request for comment.

Houthi officials travelled to Iran in July for the funeral ceremony of late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, where Iranian counterparts discussed with them the issue of imposing fees on Bab el-Mandeb transits, two regional officials briefed by Tehran told Reuters. The objectives of such a move would be to normalise the practice of imposing fees on international waterways and increase pressure on the United States, the sources said. Chinese ships would be exempted from such fees and the Houthis were supportive of the arrangement, they added. China has held direct talks with the Houthis to enable its tankers to sail through the southern Red Sea without being attacked,

sources have told Reuters. China is the world's biggest buyer of Saudi Arabian oil. IRANIAN ADVISERS GUIDE FEE PLAN Houthi officials who returned by plane from Tehran were accompanied by Iranian advisers who were on the ground to guide them on setting up a potential authority that will regulate fees through the Bab el-Mandeb, an Arab official in the region said. "The Houthis will try to gain access over the Red Sea and they will try to charge ships if they do," Afrah al-Zouba, foreign minister-designate with Yemen's internationally recognised government, told Reuters.

Such a move would face strong opposition from Gulf and European countries, although overstretched international naval forces are currently unable to provide sufficient protection for merchant shipping and there is little political appetite to change that, two Western diplomats said. Tehran has ruled out Oman's proposal for regional joint management of the Strait of Hormuz that would include voluntary fees from ships, a senior Iranian official told Reuters on Wednesday, scuppering hopes for a resolution to the impasse that has choked off Gulf trade in that chokepoint for months.

Closure of the Bab el-Mandeb would deprive Saudi Arabia of a critical alternative to the Strait of Hormuz and heighten fears of oil supply shortages. Red Sea traffic has not fully recovered since Houthi attacks off Yemen's coast began in November 2023 in what the group said was an act of solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza war. The group's attacks on merchant ships only ended with the Gaza ceasefire last October. At least one Saudi tanker has been attacked in the past week off the southern Saudi port of Jizan, near Yemen, and the Houthis claimed responsibility. The Houthis were previously alleged to have collected fees from some shipping agencies transiting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden during the height of their maritime campaign in 2024 in exchange for safe passage, according to a 2024 U.N. Panel of Experts report, which said it was unable to independently verify the information. Those fees were estimated to have reached \$180 million a month, although those details were not verified. Sailing through the Bab el-Mandeb to Asia takes on average 16 days, versus 50 days if cargoes are rerouted through the northern Red Sea, through the Suez Canal and then via southern Africa.

US, Saudi forces launch airstrikes on Iran-aligned groups in Iraq after drone attacks

Washington: US and Saudi Arabian forces carried out precision airstrikes against Iran-aligned groups in eastern Iraq on Tuesday (local time) after more than 30 drone attacks targeted American troops and Saudi energy infrastructure, the US Central Command said. US and Saudi fighter aircraft struck several logistics and weapons sites used by the groups, according to CENTCOM. It described the operation as a response to aerial attacks conducted over the previous 72 hours under the direction of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. "The unwarranted attacks against U.S. forces were not successful," CENTCOM said.

The command did not identify the groups targeted or disclose the locations of the strikes beyond saying they occurred across eastern Iraq. It also provided no information about casualties or the extent of damage caused by the operation. CENTCOM said Iran-aligned militias in Iraq

had attempted more than 600 attacks against US citizens and facilities between February and April 2026. "The IIRC and its terrorist proxies must cease these attacks to avoid further U.S. military response," it said. The joint strikes came on a day of heightened military activity across the Middle East. CENTCOM said the IIRC launched several ballistic missiles from Iran at 5.45 p.m. Eastern Time in what it described as an attempted surprise attack on US forces stationed in the region.

"All Iranian missiles were successfully intercepted," the command said. "U.S. forces remain vigilant and at a high state of readiness." CENTCOM did not say how many missiles were fired, where they were intercepted or which US bases appeared to have been targeted. It also did not identify the defence systems used to stop them. The command separately said more than 20 US Navy warships were



operating across the Middle East in support of military missions. Those operations included what it called strict enforcement of America's "steel wall blockade" against Iran.

At 32.76 lakh hectares, Punjab’s paddy area hits all-time high



GNS News Agency, August 27

Punjab’s paddy area has touched an all-time high of 32.76 lakh hectares (around 81 lakh acres) this kharif season, with both Basmati and non-Basmati rice contributing to the increase, according to data compiled by the Punjab Agriculture Department. The rise comes despite years of government efforts to diversify the state’s paddy-dominated cropping pattern and reduce pressure on its rapidly depleting groundwater.Punjab has around 36 lakh hectares under cultivation during the kharif season, which means that more than 90 per cent of the state’s kharif area is now under rice, when both Basmati and non-Basmati varieties are taken together.

The total area under paddy stood at 31.79 lakh hectares in 2023-24 and it rose to 32.43 lakh hectares in 2024-25. It has reached 32.76 lakh hectares this season, the highest in the state’s recorded history.The increase has come from both categories. The area under non-Basmati, which stood at 25.83 lakh hectares in 2023-24, declined marginally to 25.63 lakh hectares last year, but has risen again to 25.90 lakh hectares this season. The area under Basmati, meanwhile, has increased from 6.39 lakh hectares in 2023-24 to 6.80 lakh hectares in 2024-25 and 6.86 lakh hectares this year.

The rise in Basmati acreage can be seen as a positive trend as it gives farmers an alternative to conventional, government-procured paddy and, owing to its shorter growing cycle, can reduce water use compared with some non-Basmati varieties. However, the overall increase in rice acreage remains a concern. The shift towards Basmati has not translated into any reduction in Punjab’s total area under paddy.In fact, Basmati acreage itself remains below the levels seen a decade ago. It covered 7.63 lakh hectares in 2015, compared to 6.86 lakh hectares this season. Thus, while Basmati has gained ground over the past two years, its long-term acreage has not shown a sustained upward trend.The latest figures underline the larger challenge before Punjab’s crop diversification programme. Alternative kharif crops such as cotton, maize and sugarcane together rarely crossed 4 lakh hectares in most years, and in recent years their combined area has fallen to around three lakh hectares.Cotton, once a major crop in Punjab’s Malwa region, has seen one of the sharpest declines. From 3.35 lakh hectares in 2015, its area has fallen to just around 80,000 hectares this year, a decline of more than 76 per cent.Maize, which policymakers have repeatedly identified as one of

the key alternatives to paddy, has also failed to make significant gains. Its area has declined from 1.26 lakh hectares in 2015-16 to below one lakh hectares in recent years.Sugarcane, meanwhile, has remained largely stagnant, with its area hovering between 90,000 and 95,000 hectares since 2015-16.The contrast is stark. While the government has been urging farmers to move away from paddy, the major alternative kharif crops have either lost acreage or remained stagnant. The result is that the space vacated by crops such as cotton has not been filled by other alternatives at the scale required for meaningful diversification.

The Agriculture Department’s comparative data also raises another concern: the increase in paddy acreage has not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in productivity.The average yield of non-Basmati paddy was 7,172 kg per hectare in 2023-24, declining marginally to 7,101 kg per hectare in 2024-25. Its production consequently fell from 18.53 million tonne to 18.20 million tonne during the same period.For Basmati, the average yield increased from 4,866 kg per hectare in 2023-24 to 5,047 kg per hectare in 2024-25. The increase in acreage, therefore, does not necessarily indicate an improvement in overall productivity or production efficiency.Farmers also opt for this crop because of its export-linked market and the possibility of better returns, while its shorter duration makes it relatively more water-efficient than some conventional paddy varieties.But from the perspective of crop diversification and groundwater conservation, replacing non-Basmati paddy with Basmati is only a partial shift. Both are rice crops, and an increase in Basmati acreage cannot compensate for the fact that the overall area under rice continues to rise.This is particularly worrying in a state where groundwater depletion has become one of the most serious threats to agricultural sustainability.A 2017-18 Central Ground Water Board report had warned that Punjab could face an agricultural crisis by 2039, with farmers potentially having to drill to depths of around 1,000 feet to access groundwater.Agriculture economist and expert Dr Sardara Singh Johal, who has for years advocated a fundamental shift in Punjab’s cropping pattern, has repeatedly warned of a water emergency caused by the excessive extraction of groundwater to support paddy cultivation. His argument has consistently been that crop diversification cannot succeed merely through appeals to farmers; it requires a policy framework that makes alternative crops financially viable.The question, therefore, is not simply why farmers are unwilling to diversify. It is whether Punjab has created an alternative agricultural economy that can offer them the same combination of assured markets, price security and income that paddy provides.Narinder Singh Benipal, Joint Director (Plant Protection), Punjab, said the state government was making every effort to increase the area under Basmati, which has a crop duration of around one month less than conventional paddy and requires less water. He said the area under Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) had also increased by 36 per cent this year, helping reduce water consumption.However, he said farmers would not shift to alternative crops unless the Centre provided MSP and assured procurement for them. “The Centre has a major role to play in promoting crop diversification,” he said.

Woman’s decomposed body found at Bengaluru home. She died a year ago

GNS News Agency, August 27

A 57-year-old woman, who had been living alone in her house in Bengaluru’s Bagalagunte, was found dead in the house, with her remains reduced to a skeleton, the police said on Saturday. They suspect that she may have died nearly a year ago.The victim has been identified as Dakshayini. Her remains were found at her duplex house on Friday evening after people alerted the police following suspicions about the house remaining locked for several months.“The house was undisturbed for a long period. People who approached the house, including brokers who reportedly went there to check it for rental purposes, were unable to open the door. Suspecting that something could be amiss, they alerted the police,” a police officer said.A team from Bagalagunte police station reached the house and found Dakshayini’s remains. The police have begun an inquiry to establish how and when she died.Police say victim suffering from mental illness

The police said Dakshayini had been living alone for several years. She had earlier suffered a major personal loss when her son died in 2005 following health complications. The death affected her deeply, following which she allegedly developed mental health problems and was later diagnosed with schizophrenia. Her family had arranged treat-



ment for her and cared for her.Her husband, Umesh, died in 2017. Following his death, Dakshayini continued to live alone at the house in Havanur Layout.According to her brother Mahesh, 50, the family had been out of touch with Dakshayini for around two years.The police have registered an unnatural death report and said that the victim’s family members did not harbour any suspicions regarding her death. “We are awaiting further findings that will help establish the approximate time and cause of death,” a police officer said.

Expired meat, veggies with fungus: What officials found at 6 Bengaluru 5-star hotels

GNS News Agency, August 27

Bengaluru hotel inspection stale foodThe inspections revealed several food safety violations, including the storage of expired food products and unhygienic food handling and storage conditions.The Karnataka Food Safety and Drug Administration (FSDA) department destroyed more than 250 kg of meat, 207 kg of vegetables, 32 litres of milk, and three kg of bakery products from six of the top five-star hotels in Bengaluru on Friday after finding violations of food safety practices, including storage beyond expiry dates and inferior storage systems.The action comes close on the heels of a crackdown on the sale of junk food around schools and colleges in Bengaluru.

According to the FSDA, 76 kg of meat, 200 kg of vegetables and 32 litres of expired milk were seized and destroyed at the Lalit Ashok (South Annexe); 15 kg of meat was seized at the Shangri La; 19 kg of meat at Four Seasons; three kg of expired bakery products at the Vivanta Whitefield; 72 kg of meat/fish at Taj Yeshwantpur and 50 kg of chicken, 25 kg of meat, 23 kg of fish, and seven kg of vegetables at the Radisson Blu hotel.The unsafe raw food was destroyed after the FSDA, under the guidance of Health Minister U T Khader, deployed 30 teams of food safety officers and inspected 26 three-star and five-star hotels in Bengaluru, according to the food safety commissioner’s office.“The inspections were carried out in all 3-star and 5-star hotels located within Bengaluru Urban District, including all zones under the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), to verify compliance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011,” the food safety authorities said in an official statement on Friday night.“The inspections revealed several food safety violations, including non-compliance



with FSSAI labelling requirements, improper labelling and misbranding of food products, storage of expired food products, unhygienic food handling and storage conditions, fungal growth on vegetables, and failure to maintain separate storage for vegetarian and non-vegetarian food items,” the food safety commissioner said.Chicken to cheese: Food samples collectedAmong the food samples collected for laboratory testing were tea powder, chicken, mutton, fish, edible oil, chilli powder, turmeric powder, tomato sauce, lemon juice, cheese, papad, cashew nuts, ginger, pepper powder, spice powder, and milk.The major violations found during the food safety inspection were “unhygienic conditions in kitchens and food storage areas, meat products not labelled in accordance with FSSAI requirements, storage of expired milk products, bakery products, chicken, fish, meat, and vegetables.”Further action against the defaulting establishments will be taken based on the laboratory analysis reports and the applicable provisions of the Act, the food safety commissioner said.Last week, the FSDA had issued an advisory to restrict the sale of food products high in fat, sugar, and salt around schools and colleges in the state.

From 500 sq ft cold drink house to 15,000 sq ft empire, inside Mohammad Ali Road’s Shalimar



GNS News Agency, August 27

It is impossible to miss Shalimar restaurant if you are crossing Mohammad Ali Road. Started 56 years ago as a 500 sq ft ‘cold drink house’ serving falooda and fresh fruit juices, it is today spread across over 15,000 sq ft — a Mughlai restaurant with multiple dining halls, a fast food counter famous for its chaats and over 600 pizzas sold daily, a dedicated takeaway section, and a cafe launched last year, Reserve By Shalimar.“It was started in 1970 by my grandfather Zainuddin Sheikh, who was the first to move to Mumbai from Jaunpur,” recalled Omaer Sheikh, 38, the third generation manning the business with his brother Arqam Sheikh, 24, and their mother Ishrat Sheikh, 56. “Back in those days, he got a chef from Bhutan to make falooda and it became an instant hit, and till today, it continues to be one of the most sought after.” The falooda is layered with housemade sugar syrup, vermicelli noodles and sabja seeds, topped with milk and finished with housemade ice cream. “We sell about 600 glasses on average, which goes up to 1000 on weekends and in summer, and beyond during Ramzan,” added Arqam.

In the late 1970s or early 1980s, adjacent shops were purchased and Shalimar became a restaurant serving hearty Mughlai food — Nalli Nihari, Mutton Biryani, Korma, Kadhai Gosht, Do Pyaaza among others.The restaurant expanded to a 400-seater under Omaer’s father Shahabuddin Sheikh, credited with introducing Shawarma to the city after sending a chef to Dubai to learn it. “I still remember our staff struggling to pronounce it correctly,” said Omaer, who started manning the eatery at 16 after his father’s sudden demise in 2004. “My younger brother Arqam was only two years old. I had three younger sisters. My mother took over the reins and I would spend all my day after college here. My teacher would come to the restaurant to give me tuition classes.”shalimar food Shalimar is known widely for serving hearty Mughlai food — Nalli Nihari, Mutton Biryani, Korma, Kadhai Gosht, Do Pyaaza among others. This was 22 years old. Ishrat admits it was tough being a woman and running a restaurant, but the staff supported me. “I was very worried. But I grew up as a tomboy — I knew how to drive, I could read well. My brothers said always read your pa-

pers so you know what you’re signing. They sent a CA who taught me the basics of business and finance. Thankfully it all worked out,” said Ishrat, who also runs a school nearby and is affectionately called ‘Mummy’ by staff.Omaer kept refining and expanding the restaurant — today it is a 600-seater. There is a dedicated dastarkhwan section where curtains are drawn and complete privacy is given to families. He also started four more branches, in Jogeshwari, Vashi, BKC-Kurla and Saki Naka, each 120-plus seaters.On the menu are about 450 dishes. When asked about the signature items, he said, “I can’t tell you five items that are the most selling dishes because we have at least 50 that are extremely popular — from our pizzas to chaat basket to our Mughlai delicacies to our falooda and shahi tukda.”

Although Omaer had to take over quite early, he was insistent that Arqam get a formal hospitality education; Arqam pursued IHM Aurangabad and gained experience at Taj Land’s End before joining Shalimar full time. “Ever since I’ve come, I’ve been putting more SOPs in place — cleaning solutions, kitchen planning, training staff,” shared Arqam, who is all set to get married later this year with a batchmate from college, who is a pastry chef. “We will then add a bakery,” he added with a smile.Their clientele spans neighbourhood regulars, Mohammad Ali Road shoppers, and politicians, industrialists and actors. “AR Rahman, Raj Kumar Santoshi, Javed Jaffrey and his son Meezan are our clients. Shahrukh Khan enjoyed our chicken chilli, while Aryan liked our shawarmas,” recalled Omaer.Last month, Shalimar was under the spotlight again after the Food and Drug Administration Maharashtra suspended its FSSAI license. “We were falling short on some compliances — maintaining annual medical records of staff, pest control reports among other things. They were largely paperwork related,” shared Omaer. “We have 200 staff on payroll, we had to look after them. Shalimar is a big restaurant, it’s not easy to follow so many standards. But we’re happy we did it anyway — we improved.”Ishrat added that though she felt bad then, she is happy they became better. “I am very particular about hygiene — our butchery is inhouse and all the mutton and chicken are washed thrice. Whatever we missed has now been fixed. I am actually very happy seeing the work FDA has been doing of late,” she said.The restaurant got a stay earlier this week after scoring 97 on compliances, and is currently doing renovation work, adding air-conditioning to the fast food section to keep rodents and flies away. A visible change: their paneer tikka now shows white paneer with a slight yellow from turmeric — the red is missing, per FDA guidelines. “We were using a high quality food grade colour, but since the FDA doesn’t want it, we’ve stopped.”When Omaer first expanded outside Mohammad Ali Road, his mother was worried. But he was clear — “I wanted to take Shalimar to everybody who couldn’t come here as frequently as they would like.” Fifteen years later, he’s eyeing at least four more branches: Thane, Pune, a posh pocket of South Bombay, and Dubai.

No phone, no teacher: How 10-day school shutdown for Kanwar Yatra hits Ghaziabad children

GNS News Agency, August 27

Ruksana, 16, woke up at 10 am on Friday, ate a hurried breakfast, and left home in Mankanpur, a neighbourhood in Ghaziabad, to join her mother at work, cleaning utensils at nearby kothis.Her day would usually not start like this. The Class 9 student of Home Science and Music would be at Balika Inter College, hitting the books. But with schools shut for the Kanwar Yatra for 10 days, she was left to study on her own.Taking cover from the rain under a tree, she said: “The teacher keeps sending work on the school WhatsApp group, but I haven’t seen any messages posted since August 3. I study from the books... what can we do if there is no phone?”The only phone at home belongs to her mother, who takes it to work and returns late.On August 4, the Ghaziabad District School Inspector ordered all schools in the district to remain closed till August 12, citing the movement of Kanwariyas in large numbers on various routes and the safety of students.Several schools moved to online classes or send work through WhatsApp groups. But many children either don’t have a smartphone, uninterrupted access to it, or someone who can help them understand what is being taught.“Teachers helped me, but now...”Half a kilometre away in Gyan Khand III, Arun Kanojiya, a Class 7 student, solved a math problem. Though he hates the subject, his teachers at school used to help him.

With three other siblings, his chance to open the school WhatsApp group on his father’s phone comes at 3.30 pm.student Arun, a Class VII student, solves a Math problem at his home in Ghaziabad. (Express Photo by Drishti Jain)“My father works at a gym... he leaves home at 5 am and comes back at 3 pm. I then study till 4.30 pm, after which my brother, who is in Class 9, uses the phone,” he said, adding that his mother uses a button phone.Studying the math concept of ‘HCF’ and ‘LCM’, he said he turned to ChatGPT to explain it to him: ‘Find Product 29.0 X 31.8,’ he typed, before noting down the answer in the notebook.He added that for other subjects, the teacher posts pictures of the pages and marks the paragraphs they need to study.“The problem is that I’m not able to understand the concepts. In class, I could raise my hand and clear my doubts,” he



said.His family is originally from Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh.While Ruksana and Arun get homework, three brothers who live a few lanes away have not received any since school closed.They study at a government school in Gyan Khand III.Their father, Rashid (30), a painter, was worried: “My elder one (in Class 8) studied regularly for a month... Now after this 10-day break, he’ll forget what he was taught.”

Glancing at the youngest one who is in Class 3, Rashid asked: “If they don’t learn now, when will they? In winters when schools shut due to the pollution, teachers used to hold online classes till 10 pm... sometimes stretching till midnight. But if they don’t get work from school, what will they do?”Basic Shiksha Adhikaari, O P Yadav told The Indian Express that schools decide which medium they want to use to continue teaching during such times. It could be online classes, sending work online, or assigning work before the holiday starts.“We’ve given directions that homework is to be given so that every child is nipun (skilled) and that the level of learning according to the class is maintained despite such breaks,” he said.He added that schools are regularly monitored by both State Resource Group (SRG) and Academic Resource Persons (ARP), who are responsible for visiting schools and conducting student assessments.Back at Mankanpur, the rain had eased. Ruksana set off again.“A day before school opens, I’ll sit the entire night and complete the work,” she smiled.

Indian stock markets post weekly gains as crude prices ease

GNS News Agency, August 27

Mumbai: The Indian equity benchmarks posted gains for the second consecutive week, over sharp corrections in crude oil prices and strong Q1 FY27 earnings results.Nifty jumped 0.77 per cent during the week and shed 0.27 per cent on the last trading day this week to reach 24,570. At close, Sensex was down 455 points, or 0.58 per cent, at 78,499. It added 0.52 per cent during the week.

Small-cap stocks continued to outperform, supported by strong earnings traction and stock-specific catalysts, while PSU banks led sectoral gains on improving fundamentals.Metals benefited from a stronger growth outlook and resilient domestic demand, while automobiles gained momentum on expectations of healthy festive-season demand, said market watchers.The week started on a volatile note triggered by the rollout of the new F&O Closing Auction Session (CAS), but markets regained stability as participants adapted to the revised framework, an analyst said.“Sentiment improved meaningfully with the sharp decline in crude oil prices, which helped strengthen the mac-

roeconomic outlook and supported expectations of easing inflationary pressures,” he added.Globally, softer labour market indicators reduced the likelihood of a near-term Fed rate hike, leading to a moderation in US bond yields and a weaker dollar. This, coupled with sustained safe-haven demand ahead of key US economic data releases, provided additional support to gold prices.On the domestic front, the RBI reinforced confidence by maintaining its policy stance, while modestly upgrading its growth outlook and lowering inflation projections. The ongoing Q1 FY27 earnings season has further strengthened investor confidence, with results broadly exceeding expectations and driving broad-based buying interest.Broad market indices outperformed the benchmark indices, as Nifty Midcap100 added 0.87 per cent, while Nifty Smallcap100 jumped 2.73 per cent during the week.Investors are looking for cues from upcoming US labour market and inflation data for further clarity on the Fed’s policy trajectory. Domestically, CPI and WPI inflation readings, along with credit growth trends, will provide key insights into India’s growth-inflation dynamics.

Erdogan’s neo-Ottoman foreign policy



Türkiye, a long-standing Cold War ally of the West, has significantly expanded its presence and influence across West Asia and the Caucasus in recent years. Under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Ankara has pursued an Islamist-leaning foreign policy aimed at building stronger ties with Muslim-majority countries and repositioning Türkiye as a regional power — all while maintaining its alliance with the Western bloc. The rise to power of the Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in Syria has helped Ankara expand its reach close to the Israeli border. Türkiye already maintains a military presence in Qatar, the rich Sunni Gulf kingdom, underscoring its growing strategic footprint in the region.

During the recent flare-up between India and Pakistan, Türkiye stood by Islamabad. Is this blend of Islamism with a pro-Western tint helping Türkiye remake itself in a volatile world?

When the Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 on the remains of the Ottoman Empire, the country’s new rulers adopted sweeping reforms aimed at democratising polity, secularising society and conciliating foreign policy. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of modern Türkiye, adopted a ‘peace at home, peace in the world’ foreign policy. After the Second World War, Türkiye joined the western bloc. Its geographical location as a Black Sea basin country with access to West Asia, the Mediterranean and the Caucasus made Türkiye a strategically important ally for NATO. All Turkish leaders, both military dictators and elected leaders, followed this establishment consensus on foreign policy — until the rise of the Islamists.Mr. Erdogan’s AK Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) that came to power in 2002 also followed this path in the initial years. The AKP came to power after years of political and economic instability, and Mr. Erdogan’s immediate focus was to stabilise the economy. Mr. Erdogan, then Prime Minister, sought close cooperation with the U.S. and integration with the European Union. In the immediate aftermath of the U.S.’s illegal invasion of Iraq in March 2003, Mr. Erdogan wrote in The Wall Street Journal that “My country is your faithful ally and friend”.Türkiye would take a more ambitious foreign policy turn in the early 2010s — with the onset of the Arab Spring protests to be precise.

Ittihad-i Islam (Unity of Islam) was a declared foreign policy doctrine of theOttoman Sultan Hamid IIwho reigned from 1876-1909. During this period, Constantinople sought Muslim unity against enemies in the West. The Islamists in Kemal’s Türkiye, who were more or less politically marginalised until the rise of the AKP, had always advocated for stronger ties with Muslim nations. Before Mr. Erdogan’s rise, perhaps the most influential Islamist voice in Türkiye’s politics was that of Necmettin Erbakan (1926-2011). Erbakan, who had served as Prime Minister briefly in 1996-97 and was later banned from politics by the Constitutional Court for violating the country’s secular laws, argued that Türkiye should protect its religious values, build closer relations with Muslim countries and combat western imperialism. For him, the European Union was “a Christian club”. Erbakan formed different political parties (of which the Welfare Party was the most prominent one) but never managed to break through Türkiye’s political and foreign policy consensus.When the Welfare Party was banned, Islamist politicians formed the Virtue Party in 1997. One of the leaders of the Virtue Party was Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The AKP was formed in 2001 after the Virtue Party was found unconstitutional. In the 2002 election, Mr. Erdogan did what Erbakan couldn’t — he brought the Islamists to power. It was only a matter of time before the AKP turned to Erbakan’s foreign policy doctrine.

“The people’s calls and their most humane demands” must be paid attention to, Mr. Erdogan said in February 2011 amid a mass uprising in Egypt against the rule of Hosni Mubarak. By openly backing the protesters, Mr. Erdogan risked unsettling Türkiye’s relationship with Arab countries. But when the Mubarak regime fell, Türkiye suddenly found strategic depth in its new approach, and it started seeing street protests in Arab countries as a vehicle for ittihad-i Islam. Then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu put this policy tilt in a historical perspective in March 2011, saying the mass protests could break “the template drawn by Sykes-Picot” (the Sykes-Picot Agreement was a treaty between the U.K. and France in 1916 where it was decided to divide the terri-

ories of the Ottoman Empire following World War I) and bring power to the parties “that truly represent the people” of the region. Türkiye started backing these parties, hoping that their revolutionary ascent could open corridors of influence for Ankara in a region which was ruled by the Ottomans for hundreds of years.

When the Muslim Brotherhood, another Islamist party with which the AKP shares ideological and political similarities, came to power in Egypt, Mr. Erdogan’s doctrine was put to practice. When protests broke out in Syria in 2011 against the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, Türkiye backed anti-Assad groups — first the Free Syrian Army and then different Islamist outfits. In Libya, which was divided between two governments — one based in Tripoli in the west and the other in Tobruk in the east — Türkiye supported the Tripoli government dominated by Islamist groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, after the Gaddafi regime was toppled by a NATO invasion in 2011.Mr. Erdogan did not blindly follow ittihad-i Islam. He mixed his Islamist ideology with pragmatism. He was aware of Türkiye’s limitations.

It is no longer the Caliphate and doesn’t enjoy any politico-religious command over the Muslim world. Geographically, it is only a fraction of what used to be the Ottoman Empire. It is also a treaty ally of NATO. It hosts several Western military bases, including U.S. nuclear weapons at Incirlik. While Mr. Erdogan was ready to risk some friction in Türkiye’s ties with the West, he was cautious not to lead those frictions to a break. At the same time, he saw Türkiye’s support for Islamist groups as an opportunity to rebuild the country’s influence in the Islamic world.Syria is a case in point. When Mr. Assad, backed by Russia and Iran, started turning the tide of the civil war in 2016, Türkiye offered protection to the HTS, the anti-Assad Islamist group that had taken over Idlib. HTS was formerly Syria’s al-Qaeda branch. But Türkiye strongly opposed any military action against HTS. It entered into an agreement with Russia to maintain order on the Turkish-Syrian border. It carved territories on the border, creating a buffer between the Turkish Kurdish regions and the Syrian Kurdish province. And in November 2024, when the Syrian regime was reeling under repeated Israeli strikes, HTS launched an offensive and captured Damascus within 12 days. This further raised Türkiye’s profile in West Asia.

Azerbaijan is yet another example. When Armenia and Azerbaijan went to war in 2023, Türkiye backed Azerbaijan against Armenia, a Russian treaty ally. When Russia, preoccupied with its own war in Ukraine, was unable to help Armenia, Azerbaijan, with Turkish support and Turkish-made drones, made quick gains. Türkiye supplied drones to Ukraine, but refused to enforce sanctions on Russia. Its decision to buy Russia’s S400 missile defence system had irked Washington. But Mr. Erdogan managed to reset ties and extract concessions from the U.S. when he supported the accession of Sweden and Finland into NATO.Mr. Erdogan has thus been playing a tricky game — balancing between the West and its rivals through traditional diplomacy, while at the same time reasserting itself in the Muslim world using Islamist foreign policy.

While Türkiye’s geographical location, its membership in NATO and its Islamist foreign policy allow the country to portray itself as a major force, its Achilles heel is the economy. Mr. Erdogan, who delivered on the economic front in the first decade of his rule, has ever since struggled to keep the ship afloat. Türkiye has experienced a prolonged period of hyperinflation, and the Turkish lira has depreciated significantly in recent years. Amid high inflation and high unemployment, social unrest has spread, frequently leading to violent crackdowns. Mr. Erdogan, who changed the Constitution turning Türkiye’s political system into an executive presidency from parliamentary democracy, has amassed huge powers in his own hands. He has suppressed political opponents, independent media, and other voices of dissent. Earlier this year, Turkish authorities arrested Ekrem Imamoglu, the popular Mayor of Istanbul, who is the opposition’s candidate for the 2028 presidential election, which Mr. Erdogan can’t contest under the current Constitution.While on the foreign policy front, Mr. Erdogan’s bets have paid tactical results as of now, it is to be seen how Türkiye is going to build on these gains for long-term strategic dividends. True, the regime change in Syria is a huge advantage for Ankara, but Syria is far from being stable. So is Libya, where violence resurfaces frequently. In the Gulf, Qatar is Türkiye’s powerhouse partner. While Ankara has improved ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE in recent years, old mistrust still lingers. And in the Caucasus and the Black Sea, Türkiye will have to take Western and Russian sensitives into consideration in its foreign policy decisions. Its support for Pakistan provides Ankara some legroom in South Asia, but Türkiye remains an insignificant player in the subcontinent.While Türkiye seeks to expand its strategic footprint in different directions, with a neo-Ottoman tilt and within the framework of the western security umbrella, it also risks turning itself into an authoritarian Islamist regime with a weak economy and political instability.

Delimiting by electors rather than population offers a fairer approach



Several recent articles in the mainstream media suggest that a delimitation exercise — if carried out with population as the primary criterion for allocating parliamentary constituencies (PCs) — would disproportionately disadvantage the southern States. Proponents of this view argue that the southern States, having adhered more rigorously to family planning norms than their northern counterparts, would either receive comparatively fewer PC seats or could even be left with less seats than what they have currently.

But the broader question that has not been adequately discussed is: what is the most rational criterion for allocation of PCs: population or the number of electors?Electors in a constituency are not always a subset of the population. Many electors may live outside their registered PCs, or may have failed to register. Census records are sensitive to migration, as they are based merely on a stay of six months or more (or even an intention to stay), without even requiring any proof of residence or registration in the voter list.

Migrants also generally avoid/delay transferring their voter registration for various reasons. Furthermore, variations in the age structure — such as a higher proportion of under-18s — may also lead to large differences in elector numbers between PCs with similar populations.Importantly, the principle of ‘one person, one vote, one value’ aligns more closely with electors than the population. Using elector data avoids the wait for a Census and offers a more accurate measure of representation.The value of a vote can be considered inversely proportional to the number of electors in a PC. Data shows that vote value has varied significantly across regions and over time. Union Territories (UTs), hilly States, and north-eastern States have consistently had a disproportionately high vote value from 1951 to 2024, due to geographical considerations and the minimum representation requirement from each State.

When comparing the southern States with other States, we find that they started with a higher vote value in 1951. However, this trend reversed, and they recorded a lower vote value in 1961, 1971, 1980, 1991, and 1999.The trend reversed once again, with the southern States registering a higher vote value in 2009, 2019, and 2024. It shows a mixed

A Chennai man’s honeymoon murder in Munnar and striking parallels to the Meghalaya case

On the night of June 16, 2006, Anantharaman, a 30-year-old resident of Shankar Nagar, Pammal, and Vidyalakshmi, 24, whom he had married just nine days earlier, boarded a train from Chennai to Thrissur, Kerala, for their honeymoon. The following morning, the couple offered prayers at the famed Guruvayoor temple. They then travelled in a tourist taxi to the scenic hill station of Munnar and checked into Sterling Resorts.

The next day, they visited the Kundala Dam, a popular tourist spot. The couple hired a pedal boat but returned to the jetty earlier than scheduled. They then proceeded to a secluded area near the dam. Sometime later, a visibly shaken Vidyalakshmi ran to their taxi driver and told him that two men had attacked them, strangled Anantharaman to death, and fled with cash and valuables. The driver immediately alerted the police.Elsewhere, two young men — Anand and Anburaj — were travelling from Kundala Dam to Hotel Arafra in an autorickshaw. They grew nervous when they saw police jeeps rushing past them in the opposite direction. The men told the driver they wanted to leave Munnar at the earliest. Sensing their anxiety, the auto driver became suspicious. Later, while the men were at the hotel, he shared his concerns with friends and informed the police.

The police quickly brought the two men in for questioning. Vidyalakshmi was already at the station. According to a report in The Hindu dated June 20, 2006, “The complaint preferred by Ms. Sreevidya [Vidyalakshmi, then wrongly identified] said her husband went into the woods where the assailants attacked him and robbed her of her jewellery.” She likely did not expect to come face-to-face at the police station with the very men who had helped kill her husband.Soon, the truth began to unravel — a secret love affair, a honeymoon, and a cold-blooded murder.Back then, few would have imagined that this sensational case would find eerie echoes 19 years later in Meghalaya, where Raja Raghuvanshi, a man from Indore, was murdered during his honeymoon — a plot allegedly hatched by his wife, Sonam.

What happened in 2006?

Returning to June 2006: at the police station, officers found a handwritten travel itinerary in Anand’s possession, tracing a route from Chennai to Munnar. Under interrogation, he admitted that Vidyalakshmi had given him the itinerary. Investigations revealed that Anand and Vidyalakshmi had been in love since their school days in Chennai. But Anand’s financial instability and his caste background led Vidyalakshmi’s parents to oppose the relationship. Eventually, they arranged her marriage with Anantharaman — a match she accepted, but with ulterior motives.The police learnt that Anand and Anburaj had travelled in an unreserved compartment on the same train as the newlyweds. Anand was originally to be joined by another accomplice, who backed out at the last moment. Anburaj was brought in instead.At Guruvayoor, the two men briefly met Vidyalakshmi while her husband was away. When the couple continued to Munnar, Anand and Anburaj followed them and unsuccessfully tried to check in to the same resort. They then found a room at nearby Hotel Arafra. From there, they made their way to Kundala Dam, where Anantharaman was strangled with his own camera strap. After confirming the attackers had fled, Vidyalakshmi fabricated her story and alerted the driver.Interestingly, she told a different version to Anantharaman’s brother — that the taxi driver had killed her husband. This contradiction later helped the prosecution build a case against her and her co-accused.The police also found minor bloodstains on the clothes of all three accused — stains that matched Anantharaman’s blood group.

It came to light that Vidyalakshmi had been in constant touch with Anand throughout the honeymoon, using her husband’s phone, without his knowledge. When Anand

pattern, with the percentage difference in the average number of electors between the southern States and other States ranging from -10.5% to +5%.Importantly, the southern States began with a higher vote value per parliamentary constituency when the first Parliament was formed in 1951. This initial advantage may have potential long-term implications for government policies and initiatives, development outcomes, and more.Moreover, among the five largest and five smallest PCs (excluding hilly/UTs/north-east) in terms of electors, four in each group are from the southern States. The value of a vote in Idukki is 4.5 times higher than in Malkajgiri and 2.6 times higher than in Bangalore North. This indicates that rationalisation of PCs is more needed in the southern States.According to the elector data for 2024, the southern States account for just 22.45% of India’s electors, yet they hold 23.8% of Lok Sabha seats. Their representation in the Rajya Sabha is even more skewed, at 24.4%, exceeding both their share of electors and their Lok Sabha seat share.

The pattern is reversed for the other States. Although they comprise 71.2% of India’s electors, they hold only 67.4% of Lok Sabha seats and just 64.4% of Rajya Sabha seats.In particular, Tamil Nadu has 39 Lok Sabha seats which is lower than Bihar’s 40 or West Bengal’s 42; but it has 18 Rajya Sabha seats, which is more than the 16 seats allotted to both Bihar and West Bengal.The fairer approach is to allocate seats based on electors. In the table, column 4 shows the proposed PC seats if the total number of seats is raised to 800.To avoid penalising smaller States and UTs, their current seat count is preserved, which results in a total of 810. The table shows that among the large States, Rajasthan (76%), Karnataka (60.7%), and Telangana (58.8%) would see the highest percentage gains in seats.

The current narratives — that PCs are allocated solely on the basis of population, and that the potential reduction in seats in southern States is primarily due to their strict adherence to family planning policies — are not entirely accurate.First, constituency allocation has never been based purely on population. Other considerations, i.e., geographical challenges and minimum representation, have always played a role.Second, linking political representation to population control sets a dangerous precedent. By that logic, similar claims could be made for representation based on religion or caste.For instance, Jains, among all religious groups, and upper castes, among all social groups, have the highest adherence to population control, while Muslims and Scheduled Tribes have comparatively higher fertility rates.Third, when the criterion of using population for the formation of PCs was originally adopted, the consequences of the population enumeration method and the impact of large-scale migration were not anticipated.Therefore, the principle of ‘one person, one vote, one value’ in a true sense is more closely aligned with the number of electors rather than the population across PCs.



reached Kundala Dam and faced poor mobile phone reception, he used the autorickshaw driver’s phone to get last-minute directions from her.All three were arrested and lodged in Devikulam Sub-Jail. A year later, the trial court found them guilty. Anand and Vidyalakshmi were sentenced to double life imprisonment, and Anburaj to life imprisonment.The three appealed to the Kerala High Court. But in January 2012, a bench comprising Justices R. Basant and P.Q. Barkath Ali dismissed their pleas.“The learned counsel for A1 (Anand) and A3 (Vidyalakshmi) want this Court to accept that the relationship had come to an end in 2004. Evidently, the love letters are not dated and this affords them the opportunity to advance such a contention,” noted the judges. “We have satisfactory evidence about the telephonic contacts between A1 and A3 after the marriage was fixed — immediately before and after,” they added.As to why Vidyalakshmi married Anantharaman despite wanting to be with Anand, the court speculated: “May be more mischievous ideas crept into her cranium and she may have thought that as a widow there may have been better chances of having a life with A1.”Pivotal witnessIf this case was solved on the same day as the murder — unlike the Meghalaya case, which took a week — much of the credit goes to the alert autorickshaw driver who sensed something amiss and acted swiftly. His testimony as “Prosecution Witness Number Two (PW2)” was pivotal. As the Kerala High Court observed: “The assessment and response of PW2, to crown all other circumstances, is eloquent about the manner in which A1 and A2 behaved and reacted on that crucial day.”

Jio BlackRock receives Sebi approval to launch advisory business

New Delhi: Jio BlackRock Investment Advisers Pvt Ltd, a 50:50 joint venture between Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFSL) and US-based BlackRock Inc, on Wednesday said it has received regulatory approval from markets regulator Sebi and leading exchange BSE to commence operations as an investment adviser.

This follows the announcement on May 27, 2025, of regulatory approval from Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) for Jio BlackRock Asset Management Private Ltd to commence operations as an investment manager for its mutual fund business in India.With this license, Jio BlackRock Investment Advisers will now focus on developing a digital-first product designed to meet the evolving needs of investors, Jio BlackRock Investment Advisers said in a statement.Jio BlackRock Investment Advisers also announced the appointment of Marc Pilgrem as its Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). As Indian investors increasingly seek personalized, insight-driven financial solutions, this joint venture is poised to democratise access to world-class advisory services, JFSL MD and CEO Hitesh Sethia said.

Sensitive German experiment sets new limit on maximum neutrino mass

The city Deggendorf in Germany is about 350 km by road from Karlsruhe. Yet when the spectrometer of the Karlsruhe Tritium Neutrino Experiment (KATRIN) was constructed in Deggendorf in 2006, it took an 8,600-km detour to Karlsruhe. Of this, only 7 km was by land, transported on a truck with great care and police protection.For the rest of its journey, it floated on the Danube, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Rhine. Such elaborate measures had to be taken because the spectrometer — the core instrument of the experiment — was a 200-tonne affair, making land transport dangerous.

Why make such a massive detector? For that is what it takes to attempt to determine the mass of the hardest-to-detect subatomic particle in the universe: the neutrino. Recently, the KATRIN collaboration published an upper limit on the sum of the masses of the three known neutrino types using 259 days of measurements recorded across five data-taking runs between March 2019 and June 2021.The collaboration said that this sum couldn’t exceed 8.8 x 10-7 times the heft of the electron — a 2x improvement on the previous best constraint. This is a significant feat.Physicists are so keen to study neutrinos because since their discovery in 1938, these particles have confronted them with one puzzle after another about nature. Here are some central questions pertaining to neutrinos’ masses that drive research today. 1. How much does a neutrino weigh? Neutrinos come in three types. It has been established, through a phenomenon called particle oscillations, that at least two types of neutrinos have more than zero mass. It was an experimental triumph so intricate with profound theoretical implications that the physicists who led the discovery teams won the 2015 Nobel Prize for physics for making such a seemingly diminutive observation.Unfortunately, particle oscillations can only measure the differences in the squares of the neutrino masses, not the masses

themselves.Measuring the actual masses is more challenging. This is what sophisticated devices like KATRIN are designed to attempt.

2. A neutrino’s mass is so small that in almost every situation it travels nearly at the speed of light (a particle that does travel at the speed of light, the photon, is massless). It is this unbearable lightness that makes their weight difficult to pinpoint in an experiment. Also, physicists don’t understand why neutrinos are so light.3. In the Standard Model — the current best framework scientists have to explain the ways particles interact with each other — there is no way to theoretically confer masses to neutrinos. Said differently, neutrinos are predicted as massless, in conflict with the Nobel-winning oscillation data. This implies the presence of new, hitherto unseen forces and particle species in new Nature — the clearest index yet that something lurks beyond the Standard Model. What is that something?

4. Are neutrinos their own antiparticles? They certainly fit the bill. The antiparticle of a particle type carries opposite charge, so the first criterion for a self-conjugate particle is that it must be electrically neutral — which neutrinos are. As far as physicists can tell, it’s also an elementary particle. This is unlike, say, a neutron, which is electrically neutral but composed of charged quarks. As antiquarks are distinct from quarks, an antineutron is distinct from a neutron.To seal the deal, physicists need to confirm a third requirement: whether the neutrino has a Majorana mass or a Dirac mass. These terms refer to the mechanism by which a neutrino gets its mass: if it follows the Majorana process, then a neutrino would be confirmed to be its own antiparticle. To settle this, physicists are looking for a very delicate natural process called neutrinoless double beta decay: one way that it can occur requires two neutrinos to mutually annihilate themselves.However, a neutrino is dreadfully hard to catch.

Aravalli question faces the brunt of India’s fondness for ‘strategic exemptions’



On December 23 Air Marshal and the Integrated Defence Staff chief Ashutosh Dixit laid out the defence establishment’s case for critical minerals. Modern defence systems, he said, rely on reliable access to these minerals and import dependence has become a strategic vulnerability because global supply chains are concentrated and exposed to export controls and geopolitics. He also linked self sufficiency in defence manufacturing and operational readiness to secure mineral value chains and pointed to the National Critical Mineral Mission as the country’s policy vehicle of choice.

Even if they were understated, his words come as the defence establishment’s contribution to the charged public debate over how the Aravalli Hills should be protected and whether their mineral wealth should be mined.Right now, India doesn’t resolve clashes between its climate commitments and industrial demand through any clear rules. Instead it often resorts to executive discretion and opaque instruments like office memoranda, project-specific exemptions, and ad hoc appraisals that treat “national defence” or “strategic considerations” as sufficient reason to evade scrutiny. The environmental impact assessment (EIA) framework itself allows exemptions from public consultation for projects linked to security and other strategic considerations “as determined by the Central Government”. This together with the government’s disinclination to bind itself to transparent criteria has often rendered the scope of “national interest” arbitrary and opaque, however.Controversy over the Aravalli Hills flared up after November 20, when the Supreme Court adopted a uniform way to identify the “hills and ranges”, froze new mining leases until the Environment Ministry had prepared a sustainable mining plan for the landscape, and said mining should be prohibited in “core” or “inviolate” areas, with an exception for critical, strategic and atomic minerals notified under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act 1957. The Court called this a “strategic exemption”.

In the new operational definition vis-à-vis mining, “Aravalli Hills” is any landform in the Aravalli districts that rises at least 100 m above the local relief (measured from the lowest contour line encircling the landform). Likewise the “Aravalli Range” is two or more such Aravalli Hills that lie within 500 m of each other, including the landforms in between.Environmental groups and opposition parties have argued that this definition could still exclude large tracts from protection and weaken enforcement in a landscape already stressed by illegal mining, urban expansion, denudation, and a dropping water table. For instance, if a surveyor draws the Aravalli Hills’ boundary using the elevation and distance rules, the new landscape that emerges will be of ‘Aravalli’-like feature sitting like islands in a sea of non-‘Aravalli’ features, including valleys, plains, scrubland, and forests. Yet the latter connect the Aravalli Hills and make the current landscape as good as it currently is.

And just these features are endangered by the same Environment Ministry that must execute the sustainable mining plan — whatever it looks like — also having weakened the legal environment protection framework to promote ease of doing business, creating gaps that make the “strategic exemption” easier to misuse.

The Ministry has repeatedly softened India’s environmental clearance process to reduce friction for projects and industrial investments since 2014. Two decisions in 2025 are notable. First, in May, the Supreme Court had held that ex post facto clearances are alien to environmental jurisprudence and “anathema” to the environmental impact assessment (EIA) framework because they invert the logic of prior scrutiny and can lead to irreparable environmental damage. But in November, the Court recalled that judgment on review, reopening the space for post facto regularisation, this time with the Court’s own uncertainty built into the regu-

latory space. This element wasn’t there before.Second, in September, the Environment Ministry issued an office memorandum to accelerate mining projects involving critical minerals by exempting them from public consultations as required by the EIA Notification 2006. This move didn’t require the notification to be amended because it already includes a special clause for “strategic considerations”, and the Ministry used that to accelerate projects while also reducing the formal space where affected communities and independent experts could force the government to disclose details of risks and cumulative impact. Ministers also defended the move in Parliament on national security grounds.Next, the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act 2023 and subsequent administrative practices have widened the exemptions for certain activities and have introduced new categories of land and projects with modified clearance requirements. The amended Act applies to land notified as ‘forest’ under the Indian Forest Act 1927 (or other laws) and land recorded as forest in government records on or after October 25, 1980, yet it exempted land that had already been shifted to non-forest use on or before December 12, 1996, by a State or UT order. It also exempted land along roads and railway tracks, the international border, and near “security-related infrastructure” and expanded the list of activities not treated as “non-forest purpose”.As a result, the Centre and States can now collect information by drilling narrow holes during exploration to pull up rock samples before having to file a mining proposal. And in forest districts with mineral deposits and which overlap with areas notified as harbouring left-wing extremism, it’s now easier to establish some connective infrastructure likeroads and power lines, which can also support exploration and other mining work.

Sure, the amendments don’t exempt mining outright, but there’s a scope creep that, together with the government’s sympathetic attitude towards businesses and the post facto regularisation regime, merits scrutiny. If nothing else, it serves the state’s framing of exploration as part of a strategic pipeline for critical minerals, a narrative supported by ministers’ statements in Parliament and in official documents.

This is also why the public controversy over the Aravalli Hills matters so much. The Supreme Court order itself linked the Hills to groundwater recharge and to functions that prevent desertification, which are the same ecosystem services that India needs to preserve to meet outcomes linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, including clean air, water security, and good living conditions.The Hills also contain or are believed to have potential for minerals that India’s strategic planners care about, including base metals in certain established belts, minerals such as tungsten and others often classified as ‘strategic’, and other bulk minerals including stone and rocks. The Court-appointed committee has also emphasised the potential for minerals relevant to the green energy transition, including lithium and rare-earth elements. This combination, together with the Ministry’s weakening of safeguards, makes the Court’s “strategic exemption” precarious.

Taken together the state has also effectively reduced the information that outsiders can access to hold claims of greenness — including “sustainable mining” and the circular economy of critical minerals that the new National Critical Minerals Mission promises — accountable.If India is going to invoke a “strategic” need to carve out exceptions in sensitive areas, it should also formalise how it arbitrates these conflicts, instead of letting them be negotiated through exemptions and post-hoc regularisation. At a minimum, the government or the Court should establish a binding test for when “strategic considerations” merit simpler or easier procedures; require landscape-level cumulative-impact and groundwater assessments before all leases; and disclose, in the public record, assumptions about the alternatives — including imports, substitution, recycling, and sourcing from less sensitive areas — that were rejected. Without such a framework, climate action and economic growth will keep colliding through ad hoc decisions that expand quietly while environmental law is left to absorb the political pressure.In fact if the Indian government accepts the defence and industrial establishments’ case that critical minerals are strategic enablers, it should also accept that strategic supply chains need strategic legitimacy. This includes the Court’s directions but should also be augmented by the Environment Ministry ceasing its parallel efforts to widen exemptions and reduce procedural checks. On the question of these minerals, the stakes are higher and the temptation to take shortcuts is greater.



set up a committee to support students keen on a career in the civil services.

The website of KCG Tech says its Civil Service Aspiration Club conducts classes every alternate week for two hours, which includes exam preparation and talks from UPSC achievers and high-ranking civil servants. Easwari Engineering College calls its programme Civil Services Training Programme. CTTE College in Perambur is increasingly focusing on helping its students excel in Group II and IV exams.Janani G, a Union Public Service Commission aspirant and a tutor at academies, says, “When I graduated from engineering college 12 years ago, we did not have such avenues being opened to us. There may not be many success stories from colleges, but that is fine as long as students are getting exposure even while pursuing under graduation.”Even before Chennai began to witness a craze for civil services, Queen Mary’s College started providing free training since 2001 for women graduates who are selected through an entrance exam and interview. The free coaching centre is funded by the government of Tamil Nadu.But more still needs to be done. Despite having Anna Nagar, which is hailed as a magnet for civil service coaching centres and colleges grooming students to think of a career in UPSC, Chennai is yet to see a string of success stories. Delhi continues to see the highest number of successful UPSC candidates.Fashioning civil servants for 25 yearsFor the last 25 years, Directorate of Employment and Training has been running ‘Study Circles’ that function at all the district employment and career guidance centres in the State.

How Central Europe’s ‘water guardians’ are fighting desertification



Oszkár Nagypáti climbed to the bottom of a sandy pit on his land on the Great Hungarian Plain and dug into the soil with his hand, looking for a sign of groundwater that in recent years has been in accelerating retreat.“It’s much worse, and it’s getting worse year after year,” he said as cloudy liquid slowly seeped into the hole. “Where did so much water go? It’s unbelievable.”

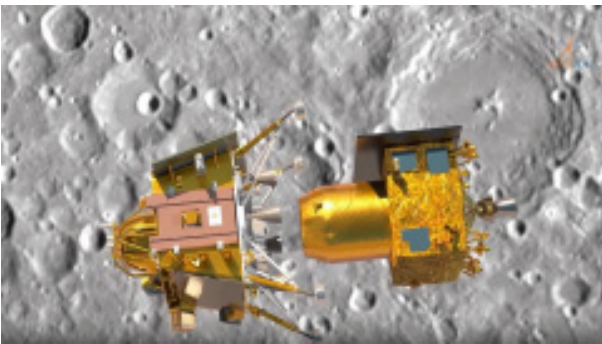
Nagypáti has watched with distress as the region in southern Hungary, once an important site for agriculture, has become increasingly parched and dry. Where a variety of crops and grasses once filled the fields, today there are wide cracks in the soil and growing sand dunes more reminiscent of the Sahara Desert than Central Europe.The region, known as the Homokhátság, has been described by some studies as semiarid, a distinction more common in parts of Africa, the American Southwest or Australian Outback, and is characterised by very little rain, dried-out wells and a water table plunging ever deeper underground.In a 2017 paper in European Countryside, researchers cited “the combined effect of climatic changes, improper land use and inappropriate environmental management” as causes

for the Homokhátság’s aridification.Now a group of farmers and other volunteers, led by Nagypáti, are trying to save the region and their lands from total desiccation using a resource for which Hungary is famous: thermal water.

Along with the group of volunteer “water guardians,” he began negotiating with authorities and a local thermal spa last year, hoping to redirect the spa’s overflow water, which would usually pour unused into a canal, onto their lands. The thermal water is drawn from very deep underground.According to the water guardians’ plan, the water, cooled and purified, would be used to flood a 2.5-hectare low-lying field, a way of mimicking the natural cycle of flooding that channelizing the rivers had ended.“When the flooding is complete and the water recedes, there will be 2.5 hectares of water surface in this area,” Nagypáti said. “This will be quite a shocking sight in our dry region.”

A 2024 study by Hungary’s Eötvös Loránd University showed that unusually dry layers of surface-level air in the region had prevented any arriving storm fronts from producing precipitation. Instead, the fronts would pass through without rain, and result in high winds that dried out the topsoil even further.The water guardians hoped that by artificially flooding certain areas, they wouldn’t only raise the groundwater level but also create a microclimate through surface evaporation that could increase humidity, reduce temperatures and dust and have a positive impact on nearby vegetation.Tamás Tóth, a meteorologist in Hungary, said that because of the potential impact such wetlands can have on the surrounding climate, water retention is the “key issue in the coming years and for generations to come”.Following another hot, dry summer this year, the water guardians blocked a series of sluices along a canal, and the repurposed water from the spa began slowly gathering in the low-lying field. After a couple of months, the field had nearly been filled.

How the moon kicked Chandrayaan-3 propulsion module into a new orbit



On December 30, astronomer Jonathan McDowell posted on X.com: “The abandoned Chandrayaan-3 propulsion module, left in a 125000 x 305000 km orbit in 2024, had a bit of a tussle with the Moon in November and has now been found in a 365000 x 983000 km x 22 deg orbit”.Dr. McDowell is well-known for, among other things, publishing Jonathan’s Space Report, “an irregular newsletter which attempts to provide a detailed and pedantic historical record of the space age” and for maintaining the ‘General Catalog of Artificial Space Objects’.His post describes a common problem in spaceflight: once you leave a spacecraft in a very large and lopsided orbit around the earth that comes anywhere near the moon’s path, the moon’s gravity can keep nudging it in ways that are hard to predict far in advance.

“Moon-orbit-crossing” in his post means the object’s orbit around the earth reaches out to distances comparable to the moon’s distance. As a result at some points the object and the moon can pass relatively close to each other. When that happens, the moon’s gravity matters a lot.In low-earth orbit, i.e. 150-2,000 km above sea level, the earth’s gravity dominates and the motion of satellites here is fairly regular. But when you get closer to the moon, you’re effectively in a three-body situation: the earth pulls, the moon pulls, and an object in between that’s affected by both their pulls moves quickly through regions where the balance of those pulls changes. In these systems, small differences in timing or position can lead to big differences later. That is what Dr. McDowell meant by “chaotic”. The orbit is still governed by the laws of physics but the underlying equations are very difficult to solve.This was also the premise of the science fiction book and later Netflix show ‘3 Body Problem’. An alien species inhabited a world in a system with three suns orbiting each other, repeatedly leading to periods of climate chaos. The three-body problem asks how three masses move when each attracts the others by gravity. In classical mechanics, this problem doesn’t have a general closed-form solution, meaning there’s no single formula with which you can predict how the system will evolve for all possible starting positions, speeds, and masses.A looping path

The Chandrayaan-2 mission ended in partial failure when its lunar lander crashed on the moon’s surface in 2019. But since it had successfully launched an orbital module, which continued to orbit the moon, the Chandrayaan-3 mission only consisted of a propulsion module, a lander, and a rover.After the lander and rover descended on the moon in August 2023, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) moved the propulsion module to a 125,000 x

305,000 km orbit around the earth in October. These two numbers are the distances from the earth at the closest point (perigee) and farthest point (apogee) of the orbit.So the propulsion module was looping around the earth on a highly elliptical path: it came as close as about 125,000 km, then swung out to about 305,000 km, approaching the moon’s average distance (~384,000 km). That means it spent some of its time in the moon’s gravitational neighbourhood.The moon’s kick

When Dr. McDowell says it had “a tussle with the moon in November”, he means the propulsion module had a relatively close pass by the moon. During a close pass, the moon’s gravity can kick, or suddenly change, the object’s speed and direction relative to the earth. This is not like friction or a collision but a purely gravitational interaction. Depending on the geometry, the kick can raise the orbit, lower it, tilt it or change its shape.According to an ISRO statement in November, the propulsion module entered the moon’s “sphere of influence” on November 4 and exited it on November 14. The organisation said it tracked the ‘event’ using the Indian Deep Space Network (IDSN), a collection of antennae near Bengaluru that, together with data received by similar ground stations operated by NASA and other space agencies, monitors Indian assets in space.While it was in the moon’s sphere of influence, the propulsion module flew by the moon twice: on November 6 it came within 3,740 km of the lunar surface and on November 11 within 4,537 km.After this encounter, the orbit of the propulsion module changed in three ways. First, it became much larger overall. According to ISRO the apogee jumped to 727,000 km; Dr. McDowell wrote in his post on December 30 that it was 983,000 km high. Either number is well beyond the moon’s distance and a sign that the moon’s pull added (or rearranged) orbital energy in the earth’s frame.Second, the new orbit has a different shape and orientation. ISRO concluded the perigee to be 409,000 km and Dr. McDowell, 365,000 km. That is, the propulsion module no longer comes back anywhere near 125,000 km; it stays high almost all the time. And third, the orbit became noticeably tilted, by 22°, relative to the earth’s equator. This happened because the moon’s gravity pulled the module in a direction that wasn’t perfectly aligned with its current motion and orbital plane. As a result the module’s angular momentum vector changed.Per the statement, ISRO took “special care ... to monitor its trajectory” and its proximity to other space objects. “The overall satellite performance was normal during the flyby and no close approach was experienced with the other lunar orbiters. This event garnered valuable insights and experience from mission planning, operations, flight dynamics perspectives, and especially enhanced the understanding of disturbance torque effects.”In sum, ISRO left the Chandrayaan-3 propulsion module in a wide earth orbit that grazed the moon’s neighbourhood. In November 2025, the timing lined up such that the moon passed close enough to strongly tug on the propulsion module. This reshaped its orbit, pushing it into a higher, more tilted, and more extreme ellipse. As a result, tracking teams now found it with a very different set of orbital parameters.In his post, Dr. McDowell credited amateur astronomer Sam Deen, astronomer Luca Buzzi, and Bill Gray, who developed notable software to track near-earth objects, “for figuring out that the suspected asteroid CE1M9G2 ... was actually Chandrayaan-3”.

Protests erupt in Tripura over murder of student Angel Chakma in Uttarakhand

The Tripura Chakma Students Association on Sunday (December 28, 2025) requested intervention from the central government following alleged persistent attacks on students and youth from the Northeast in various parts of the country.The demand was made during a press conference in Agartala, where the organisation highlighted the case of Angel Chakma, a student from Tripura who was severely assaulted in Dehradun, the capital of Uttarakhand, and later died in the hospital.

Chief Minister Manik Saha telephoned his Uttarakhand counterpart, Pushkar Singh Dhami, to discuss the fatal attack on a student from Tripura. Dr. Saha later informed that he had received assurance from Mr. Dhami of a complete investigation and justice for the deceased.Dr. Saha is likely to visit the family of the deceased near Agartala on Monday (December 29, 2025).The top brass of the Tripura police have also been in contact with the Uttarakhand police regarding the tragic incident that triggered protests in the State. Six people were reportedly wanted in connection with the murder case, and five have been arrested.

Leaders of the Chakma Students Association expressed grave concern regarding the safety of students from Northeast India, citing violence and harassment against them elsewhere in the country. They urged the government to take urgent and effective measures to prevent such incidents and called for the implementation of strict laws against derogatory comments and hate crimes directed at people from the Northeast.The Association warned that such “unwarranted incidents” could invite serious repercussions.The leaders stated that they will hold a candlelight march in Agartala in memory of Angel Chakma on Monday (December 29, 2025). They will also submit a memorandum to Chief Minister Dr. Manik Saha on Tuesday (December 30, 2025) to advocate for severe punishment for the perpetrators and compensation for the grieving family from the governments of Tripura and Uttarakhand.Meanwhile, Pradyot Kishore Manikya, founder of Tipra Motha, has condemned the murder of Angel Chakma and declared that his party would continue to fight for justice for Angel Chakma.

‘Great day’ says trans athlete Anaya Bangar after Cricket Australia okays participation



In March, Anaya Bangar, underwent gender affirming surgery. The former Mumbai Under-19 cricketer, who played with the likes of Sarfaraz Khan, will now head to Australia to play Community Cricket. (Credit: Ananya Bangar/Instagram) In March, Anaya Bangar, underwent gender affirming surgery. The former Mumbai Under-19 cricketer, who played with the likes of Sarfaraz Khan, will now head to Australia to play Community Cricket. (Credit: Ananya Bangar/Instagram)

Anaya Bangar, the former Mumbai Under-19 cricketer, who underwent a gender affirming surgery in March this year, has received the clearance to play female Community Cricket in Australia. “It is a great day for me especially after knowing the fact that I can play cricket. There was a stage where I thought I would never play cricket again but thanks to Cricket Australia, it has given me another chance,” Anaya told

Anaya’s father Sanjay Bangar is a former India all-rounder and was also the batting coach of the men’s team. Anaya played age-group cricket for Mumbai alongside Test-capped Sarfaraz Khan and his brother Musheer Khan. However, to play ‘Elite cricket’ like the Women’s Big Bash League, Anaya will have to fulfil testosterone-related eligibility criteria.

‘Transgender and Gender Diverse Players in Elite Cricket Policy’ of Cricket Australia requires a player’s serum testosterone to be below 10 nmol/L (nanomoles per litre) for a period of no less than 12 months to be eligible to play cricket. The International Cricket Council in 2023 banned transgender players from the elite women’s game if they have gone through male puberty. In a letter sent to Anaya accessed by The Indian Express, Cricket Australia’s, Head of Integrity Jacqui Partridge stated, “Your eligibility for Elite Cricket from that date (March 2027) is conditional upon you providing a blood test upon your arrival in Australia confirming that your serum testosterone concentration remains below 10 nmol/L and that you continue to satisfy the Policy’s eligibility requirements.” Anaya, who wrote to Cricket Australia in June, can start playing community cricket immediately, Cricket Australia said.

“Until March 2027, you remain eligible to participate in Premier Cricket competitions in any State or Territory of Australia. As Premier Cricket is classified as Community Cricket rather than Elite Cricket under the Policy, your par-

ticipation in those competitions is not affected by this determination,” Partridge stated. A top BCCI official told this paper that it has no policy on transwoman playing female cricket. “When it comes to ICC, they have said no to it. BCCI is yet to decide what can be done in such cases. As this is the first time board had come up with such a case of trans woman, the board is yet to formally take a stand on it. Especially on allowing them in domestic cricket,” the BCCI official said. Anaya said she wrote to the BCCI last year to check about eligibility criteria to play but has not received a reply yet. In June 2025, Anaya had posted on Instagram asking for a meeting with BCCI and ICC representatives to discuss a policy for trans athletes to play cricket based on data and not ‘outdated perceptions’. In the post, Anaya said she had participated in a research project conducted by the Manchester Metropolitan University Institute of Sport, which covered how hormone therapy affected her strength, stamina, hormone and glucose levels.

“After I published my athlete testing report and everything else, the BCCI stayed quiet about it. Whereas Cricket Australia, they actually read my report, went through all my medical history and had a proper team assessing my case. I approached Cricket Australia and then they gave me clearance to play in terms of fairness and inclusivity. They (CA) asked for my blood test report, testosterone test report. They asked for the papers for the surgeries that I’ve done. They asked me for my Manchester University report which I had published over a year ago. If everything goes well and I perform then I have a chance to play in the WBBL,” Anaya said. Anaya is still recovering from the gender affirming surgery, but said she was in the process of finding a club in Australia to play for. “I genuinely couldn’t believe that I’ll be able to play ever again. Because of Cricket Australia and its progressive and inclusive policies, which focus on fairness and inclusion in women’s sport for trans women, this is a huge milestone, not just for me, but for other athletes like me who want to try, but aren’t because they have to either choose the sport or choose transition,” Anaya said.

In 2022, after years of confusion about her identity, Anaya spoke to counselors who guided her about transitioning from a man to a woman at peace with herself. She moved to the United Kingdom, played club cricket and explored hormone replacement therapy. “Honestly, the journey since the beginning was very painful, not just physically, but emotionally. My whole life changed, family dynamics, friendships, career, social focus, everything changed. And to be honest, I would do this again because transitioning has made me comfortable and happier in my own skin. I wouldn’t trade back for anything else. I would have had to give up cricket as well. And now with Cricket Australia doing this, I’m just very happy,” Anaya said. Last year in an interview to The Indian Express Anaya had spoken about changes post hormone therapy. “I could feel my energy levels being stable all the time as a man and I was definitely much stronger. Now, my heart feels weaker, my bones are weaker, and muscle strength has gone down. And that’s difficult for an athlete. The downside of it is even if I wanted to, I just can’t face 140 kph of bowling.”

India’s bowlers grind out 8 wickets as Sri Lanka resist at Colombo

GNS News Agency, August 27

Day 3 of a Test is often viewed as the moving day, when the match starts to go in one team’s direction. In Colombo on Tuesday, the game moved in India’s favour, but not before they had to toil hard on a surface that showed little sign of deteriorating, making batting look difficult. India took eight wickets, yet Sri Lanka refused to fold, ending the day on 265 for 8, still 238 adrift with two days to go. India are in a strong position, but the scoreboard does not fully reveal the work that went into getting them there. The bowlers kept returning to their plans, almost accepting that wickets would not come quickly, and building pressure over long spells. It was a combined performance, rather than one bowler carrying the attack. Prasidh Krishna was the standout. His 3 for 47 from 14 overs provided the pace and aggression India needed. He repeatedly went to the channel outside off stump, made the batsmen play, and kept them unsure which ball to attack. His short-ball plan was effective too. He tested Kamil Mishara with the bounce, and later used the same method against Kamindu Mendis, who pulled a delivery straight to Ravindra Jadeja at mid-wicket. Prasidh’s willingness to change his lengths made it hard for Sri Lanka’s batsmen to score freely against him.

Manav Suthar carried the bulk of the workload among the spinners. He bowled 21 overs, the most of any Indian bowler, and while his economy rate was higher, his role was to keep attacking on a surface offering only modest assistance. He was prepared to give the ball air, draw the batsmen forward, and look for mistakes. He dismissed captain Dhananjaya de Silva, but his breakthrough in the post-tea session was just as important. Keshara Nuwantha had stayed with Sonal Dinusha for a long period, but Suthar tossed one up and tempted him into a drive. Nuwantha didn’t get the elevation he wanted, and picked out Saransh Jain at mid-off. Jadeja was India’s most economical bowler, going at 2.30 on a day when Sri Lanka’s batsmen were looking for ways to keep the scoreboard moving. His accuracy meant the batsmen often had to take risks to score. He also held the catch that ended Mendis’s innings.

Mohammed Siraj bowled only 11 overs through the day, but gave India the important wicket of Niroshan Dickwella, who had put on 146 with Sonal Dinusha in Galle, strangling him down the leg side. The surface didn’t offer enough to create more dents, but he remained economical for large parts of the day. Saransh Jain, on debut, would have hoped for a more productive day. He was the only bowler without a wicket on Day 3, his 18 overs going for 51 runs. He bowled mainly from around the stumps, varied his pace, and found enough turn and bounce to create uncertainty. Lahiru Kumara was beaten several times, including by one delivery that turned sharply past the outside edge. Jain also played his part when India needed control. As the light faded, the spinners were used from both ends, and he remained penetrative with the new ball. His spell let India keep attacking without giving away too many runs.

What stood out about India was the willingness to keep working. There were phases when the Sri Lankan batsmen defended well, used their feet against the spinners, and punished the occasional loose ball. The surface didn’t crumble enough to make batting impossible. India had to create sustained pressure through the day, through accuracy, changes of pace, bounce and patience. The bowling figures underlined how collective the effort was. Prasidh and Suthar took three wickets each, while Siraj and Jadeja claimed one apiece. No one dominated throughout, but together they kept Sri Lanka from building a partnership big enough to change the match. The final session summed up the day. Dinusha continued to resist, while Lahiru Kumara



looked to survive. India kept changing bowlers and fields, and the second new ball became available with Sri Lanka still fighting. But fading light became an issue, and then rain arrived, and play was finally stopped with just over 10 minutes left in the day. India left Day 3 with their noses in front. Sri Lanka trail by a big margin and need a few more runs to make India bat again. The hosts made the visitors work, but the moving day has still moved the Test India’s way. Pasindu Sooriyabandara and Sonal Dinusha deserve special credit. The right-hander combined caution with aggression, and looked set to reach his maiden Test hundred, but was bowled by Jadeja on 80. Dinusha was more stubborn, mixing sweeps, paddles and footwork to end Day 3 on 84. Their positive batting made India toil, and kept Sri Lanka’s resistance alive.

Harmanpreet Kaur on Lord’s win, Asia Cup, Asian Games and IND vs PAK pressure

Hyderabad: India women’s cricket captain Harmanpreet Kaur says that winning a Test match at Lord’s was a very different feeling and that she is really grateful that the opportunity came in life and that she could experience it.

In a wide-ranging interview with Sony Sports Network, the 37-year-old Harmanpreet shared her views on many topics. Playing a Test match at Lord’s is a big dream for any cricketer. For me also, it was a very big dream and to lead the team is an even bigger dream. I am really happy that I got the opportunity to play. I think, before this, I had played just 4-5 Test matches but the feeling of playing at Lord’s was totally different. I think, till now, thinking about those four days we had lived, we are still talking about it. Before this, we’ve won so many matches, so many tournaments, but it has never been that those feelings have lasted so long or been discussed so much about those four days. It was a totally different feeling and I was really grateful that the opportunity came in life and that I could experience it.

Since I have started playing, I have always seen idols play and make India win but over here it was something I had not felt, so I am genuinely very, very grateful that I got the opportunity and the experience and am really looking forward to having such experiences again going ahead in life. The Asia Cup is a very important tournament for us. Our team has been dominating for a long time and we’ve won multiple titles in the Asia Cup. I think, this year, it will be even bigger because when you play back-to-back good cricket, your fans and audiences expect even more.

India to host Commonwealth Cue Sports Championships in Ahmedabad from October 7



Hyderabad: As one of the world’s premier destinations for cue sports, India will host the second Commonwealth Cue Sports Championships from October 7-10 at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex in Ahmedabad. The four-day extravaganza will see cueists from nearly 46 countries compete across five disciplines – billiards, snooker, heyball, 10-ball pool and blackball — in both men’s and women’s categories. The championships will feature 16 players in each category in four disciplines, while billiards, which has been included in the programme this year, will be an eight-player draw in each section. The championships will be held under the aegis of the World Confederation of Billiards Sports (WCBS) and the Billiards and Snooker Federation of India (BSFI), and organised by Apex Sports. “Ahmedabad is becoming an increasingly important city on the international sporting map, and hosting the Commonwealth Cue Sports Championships here is a significant opportunity for our sport and for India,” said Ishaun Singh, president of the World

Pool Association (WPA).

“With the city now preparing to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games, this event gives us an opportunity to build a strong connection with the sporting community and audiences here. India has an extraordinary history in cue sports, and from everything we have seen through our recent events, I am confident that India can become one of the leading cue sports nations in the world,” the world body chief added. “This is the second of the three big-ticket events we will be hosting as part of BSFI’s centenary celebrations,” said S Balasubramaniam, president of the BSFI. “The federation successfully hosted the heyball World Championships, the highest-ever cue sports prize money event in the country, earlier this month in Pune. The festivities will conclude with the IBSF World Snooker Championships in Indore (Nov 12-21).”

The BSFI president was confident that several international events will further accelerate the growth of cue sports in the country, which has a rich heritage in the sport. The BSFI named the squad for the Ahmedabad championships on Tuesday. Thirteen cueists (six men and seven women) will represent the country at the four-day event. Players for the events were picked after the selection trials at the Karnataka State Billiards Association (KSBA) over the weekend.

Vidya Pillai (women’s heyball gold medalist), Shivam Arora (men’s heyball silver medalist) and Chitra Magimairaj (women’s 10-ball pool silver medalist) received direct entries. However, Chitra received her direct entry email only after finishing her matches in the trials. The Indian cueists won five medals – one gold, two silver and two bronze medals – in the inaugural edition.

Hard lengths, consistency, pressure: Prasidh Krishna’s recipe for success



There was a temptation, after Prasidh Krishna’s spell in the second innings at Galle, to view his success as a product of conditions: steep bounce, movement off the surface and awkward lengths. Colombo offered a sterner test. Could he reproduce that discomfort on a dissimilar pitch? On the third day, Prasidh responded to the doubts emphatically. His Colombo spell was not a carbon copy of the one at Galle, which is encouraging for his overall development. The methods remained the same – hard lengths, bounce, movement and relentless pressure – but the execution changed based on what was on offer in Colombo. From his fourth over, the pacer settled into the rhythm that had made him so awkward to face at Galle: attacking the body and the top of off-stump with hard lengths, mixing it with the short ball, before returning to the channel outside off. There was enough pace to hurry batsmen, and enough consistency to trouble them.

Kamil Mishara received an early warning in the eighth over. Prasidh angled a short ball into the left-hander, and it beat his attempted pull to strike the forearm. It wasn’t a wicket, but it did Mishara he couldn’t just line up and attack the rising delivery. Prasidh followed it with a good-length ball outside off, which Mishara left alone. He then went short again before returning to the channel. The plan was clear: keep changing the length and don’t let the batsman off the hook. The reward came soon. On the third ball of the 10th over, Prasidh got the ball to climb onto Mishara. The opener had already looked uncomfortable against the shorter delivery, and when he tried to fend, it caught the gloves and lobbed through to Dhruv Jurel.

Prasidh Krishna of India celebrates the wicket of Kamil

‘Not an ideal visual’: Pujara’s take on Yashasvi Jaiswal headbutt row

India’s Yashasvi Jaiswal, second right, and Sri Lanka’s Asitha Fernando (78) exchange words during day one of the second cricket test match between Sri Lanka and India in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2026. (AP Photo/Eranga Jayawardena) India’s Yashasvi Jaiswal, second right, and Sri Lanka’s Asitha Fernando (78) exchange words during day one of the second cricket test match between Sri Lanka and India in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2026. (AP Photo/Eranga Jayawardena)

The ongoing second India vs Sri Lanka Test in Colombo saw ugly scenes after India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal bumped heads with Sri Lanka’s Asitha Fernando when he was dismissed by the pacer during India’s first innings. Former India batsman Cheteshwar Pujara has termed the incident unacceptable and spoken about how the contact could have been avoided. The incident happened on the opening day of the Test, when Jaiswal, who made 45 in the first innings, was given a send-off by Fernando and the Indian opener then walked up to the pacer and bumped heads with him. Jaiswal’s helmet touched Fernando’s forehead before players from both the teams intervened to pull the players apart. Both Jaiswal and Fernando were fined 25 per cent of their match fee apart from being handed a demerit point each by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday. “It’s not an ideal visual. As a player, you need to control your emotions. Sometimes you do get angry. I can understand that till the time he was disappointed, or he was when he was having a chat, at that time. I think that’s acceptable till then. It is all fine, but the moment it got to a point where both of them were going against each other, there was body contact, which is not acceptable on the field,” Pujara said on Sony Sports Network.

In the last nine innings including Sunday’s knock, Jaiswal has failed to score a hundred and has only scored one half-century. Former Indian cricketer WV Raman believes Jaiswal’s frustration over the dismissal could be due to his lack of big scores in recent innings. “There’s always a little bit of exchange of words on a cricket field. It happens, and especially after a wicket falls, but restraint is so important because if you don’t restrain yourself, you’re going to get in trouble, and there’s always that line that you can’t



The ongoing second India vs Sri Lanka Test in Colombo saw ugly scenes after India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal bumped heads with Sri Lanka’s Asitha Fernando when he was dismissed by the pacer during India’s first innings. Former India batsman Cheteshwar Pujara has termed the incident unacceptable and spoken about how the contact could have been avoided.

cross. He got out when he was shaping really well in the first Test. You don’t normally get run out like that in a Test match, and here once again, he was set, and he gets out to a delivery, which he could have played forward. He knows that he’s letting go of opportunities. So the little bit of frustration is coming out,” said Raman on Sony Sports Network. Former Indian wicket-keeper Saba Karim too shared his views on the incident and shared how such incidents are unnecessary in a sport like cricket. “Someone should remind both of them that this is not a contact sport. It is cricket. You’re not supposed to headbutt each other, but I find it extremely puerile. There’s no need for something like this on a cricket field. There’ll be times when a pace bowler or a bowler will get after you. One can always remain aggressive without getting into an act like this. I think it is unnecessary, and one should always remember that all such players are brand ambassadors of this lovely sport. So many youngsters are watching it,” Karim said on Sony Sports Network.

Emraan Hashmi returns as a lover after Awarapan 2's Rs 200 cr success



Amid the success of Awarapan 2, Emraan Hashmi has teased his next film, Gunmaaster G9. The makers dropped the film's teaser today, offering a glimpse of Emraan's new avatar as Gunmaaster. The nearly 90-second teaser hints at the film's plot without revealing too much. The action drama is directed by Aditya Datt, who has previously helmed films such as Crakk. It also stars Genelia Deshmukh in the lead role. The teaser opens with Emraan's

voice saying, "Give me the worst death. Cut me into pieces and feed me to the vultures. My only request to Mahadev is that don't kill me until I reach my love." The text then reads, "Emraan Hashmi reloaded as Gun Maaster G9."

The teaser features visuals of a deserted location surrounded by armed police officers, who throw Emraan into a police van. It then cuts to a river where idols of Hindu gods are being immersed. The glimpse hints at a world of the underworld and mafia, but with a romantic twist. The film is produced by Deepak Mukut and Sangeeta Ahir and also stars Genelia Deshmukh, Aparshakti Khurana, Abhishek Singh, Snehil Mehra and Inayat Verma, among others. However, the teaser does not reveal much about the other characters. The film gives off Tere Ishk Mein vibes, albeit with a Himesh Reshammiya musical twist. Gunmaaster G9 is slated to hit theatres on November 27. Meanwhile, Emraan Hashmi is enjoying a career high with the success of Awarapan 2. The film has earned Rs 200 crore globally in 12 days. Interestingly, its 2007 predecessor had tanked at the box office. Before Awarapan 2, Emraan was seen in Haq, which also received critical acclaim. It remains to be seen whether Gunmaaster G9 can build on the success of Emraan Hashmi's recent films.

Saif Ali Khan is blinded by Akshay Kumar's mind games.



Haiwaan trailer: Saif Ali Khan is blinded by Akshay Kumar's mind games. Haiwaan trailer: Saif Ali Khan is blinded by Akshay Kumar's mind games. Haiwaan trailer: The trailer of Priyadarshan's Haiwaan, starring Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan, is out and it builds on the intriguing teaser released last week. But this time, we go beyond silhouettes and see the characters in flesh and blood — Saif Ali Khan's blind martial artist, Akshay Kumar's psychotic killer, and Saiyami Kher's investigating cop among others.

What's in the Haiwaan trailer?

The trailer of Haiwaan starts ironically with Akshay Kumar's voiceover, mentioning that someone holding a knife

would kill him. Whether that's a hint at his backstory or a foreshadowing of him framing Saif's character, we'd get to know once we watch the film. We then see him go on a murdering spree, even taking down cops who try to stop him in the thick of the night. We then move to Saif Ali Khan, who's always alert and trying to detect Akshay's presence. He suspects someone's following him, since he hears the sound of the same jeep again and again. But Rajesh Sharma's character says that the blind man is only cooking up the story of a murderer to justify his own evil actions. Consequently, we see Saif getting beaten up and arrested by the police. To which, Akshay points out, "Do you know what's worse than being blind? Being stupid." With Saif seemingly out of the way, Akshay continues his murdering spree, eyeing Boman Irani's character next, followed by a little girl in Saif's refuge. "How many more will you engulf in the fire of your revenge?," Saif asks, to which Akshay responds, "This is the last one," along with the maniacal laughter we heard in the teaser. The trailer ends with Akshay using his beanie cap to pretend to be blind in order to mock Saif. Haiwaan is the remake of Priyadarshan's 2016 Malayalam film Oppam, which starred Mohanlal, Samuthirakani and Anusree in key roles. Haiwaan marks the reunion of Akshay and Saif on screen after 2008's Tashan. The two worked on many films in the 1990s, including Main Khiladi Tu Anari, Yeh Dillagi, and Aarzoo.

Akshay and Priyadarshan are known for working together in various comedies, like Hera Pheri, Garam Masala, Bhagam Bhag, among others. Their last film was Bhooth Bangla, which released in April. Saif and Priyadarshan have never worked together. In an earlier chat with Hindustan Times, Saif said that Priyadarshan reminded him of his late father, Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi. "He reminds me of my dad. Both cricketers and both lost an eye but great in their professional space," said Saif. He also compared Priyadarshan to Hollywood director Clint Eastwood and said, "Priyadarshan gives you just one take, so you have to make quick decisions as an actor, and he wraps up the shoot in time every single day."

'My husband has died!': Himani Shivpuri recalls getting angry at a fanboying cop



For those who've watched Aditya Chopra's 1995 directorial debut Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, they can't help but admire the entire ensemble cast which was at the heart of the seminal romantic drama. One of the key members of the cast was Himani Shivpuri, who played Kammo Kaur, the aunt of Kajol's Simran, and the love interest of Dharamvir Malhotra (Anupam Kher), the father of Shah Rukh Khan's Raj.

Why Himani Shivpuri didn't make it to the DDLJ climax

But if you notice the memorable climax of DDLJ, where almost the entire ensemble cast comes together, Himani's Kammo is glaringly missing. She was supposed to be a part of that sequence, and even have a culmination to her romance with Dharamvir Malhotra, but she couldn't make it to the shoot because of a personal tragedy just two to three days prior — the death of her husband Gyan Shivpuri. Looking back, Himani recalled the overwhelming circumstances she found herself in following her husband's death. In a recent interview with Nation One, Himani Shivpuri said, "Thankfully, my brother had come then. But he was younger than me, and didn't know Mumbai well. So, I had to make all funeral arrangements myself. I had no semblance of what happened because I was busy with that. It was a big shock and responsibility."

She revealed that Gyan Shivpuri just collapsed on the washroom floor. When she called for a doctor who stayed in the same building as hers, he pronounced him dead. Unable to believe his word, Himani decided to take her hus-

band to the hospital. "It was a mistake. Because once you take it to the hospital, they carry out the full postmortem. I had to deal with it all alone," added the veteran actor.

As part of the postmortem formalities, Himani Shivpuri and her brother also had to go to a police station. There, she encountered a cop, who was a fan of her iconic villainous portrayal in Manohar Shyam Joshi's popular 1993 show Humrahi. "My husband was dead, but the cop said he loved my character of Devaki Bhaujai," she recounted, laughing. While she can laugh off the incident now, Himani recalls getting very angry back then, only for her brother to calm her down. Amidst all the commotion, the actor even forgot she had to go for the shoot of the DDLJ climax. "But they nicely called me and said, 'No, we understand your husband has died. But we have the dates of everyone else — Shah Rukh, Amrith Puri, Farida Jalal, and other actors. Ma'am, we have to do it, but we understand you can't come.' I didn't even devote much attention to it then," added Himani.

Umar Riaz supports brother Asim Riaz amid Himannshi Khurrana's conversion allegations, calls Paras Chhabra a 'fat pig'



Mumbai: Amid the ongoing controversy surrounding Asim Riaz and his former girlfriend Himanshi Khurana over allegations related to religious conversion, Asim's brother and actor Umar Riaz has come out in his support. Taking to his social media account, Umar shared a post lashing out on Paras Chhabra for using a sensitive topic for views and to defame someone and wrote, "SHAME ON YOU!" The

Toxic advance booking crosses Rs 40 crore, Yash film eyes Rs 100 crore opening



Yash's most ambitious project, Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups, is all set to hit theatres worldwide tomorrow, with shows scheduled as early as 6 am at multiple locations. Ahead of its release, the film has already earned over Rs 40 crore through advance bookings. The buzz around the film has been massive, not just in Karnataka but also across Hindi-speaking states. Toxic marks Yash's return to the big screen after nearly four years. He was last seen in KGF: Chapter 2.

For Kannadigas, the film is a matter of pride, with a Kannada actor and a Kannada film making an ambitious attempt to reach a massive global audience. Speaking to SCREEN, Ramakrishna DK, a member of the Karnataka Producers Association, said, "It is a matter of pride that a hero from our region has reached Bollywood and Hollywood level. It is inspiring to see how a bus driver's son has gone on to become a huge star."

The excitement is such that despite multiple Kannada films releasing just last week, more than 90% of exhibitors have planned to prioritise Toxic over other Kannada releases. "Several theatres have reached a point where they are on the verge of shutting down. At a point like this, Toxic has come as a boon. Nobody will let go of a movie this huge. The shows for the first day are already sold out," he said. According to industry members in Karnataka, Yash's ambitious attempt could motivate several other regional actors and filmmakers to dream bigger and attempt something extraordinary. Toxic @ box office: What trade expects Meanwhile, in the Hindi-speaking states, shows are yet to fill up at the same pace. Despite the relatively slow start, trade analysts are hopeful that the film will open to at least Rs 40 crore in the Hindi market.

Film trade analyst Girish Johar told SCREEN, "Advance ticket sales are very good, with a collection of over Rs 30 crore in all languages, which is second best to Dhurandhar 2. We are expecting a good start. While Kannada earnings will be number one, Hindi is also looking at Rs 30 crore, which is a good number." "Yash has achieved the action hero status with KGF. The ensemble cast is only going to add to the hype of the film," he added. Meanwhile, trade analyst Komal Nahta believes Toxic could overshadow the other films currently playing in theatres. "There is a huge buzz for all the versions. It is bound to wipe out all other films," he said. Nahta appeared to be referring to Awarapan 2, the only Hindi film currently performing strongly at the box office since its release on August 14. Toxic could also affect the run of Sunny Deol's Batwara 1947, which has been struggling at the box office since its release. According

Rashmika Mandanna calls Ravi Teja's Irumudi 'beautiful' as film crosses Rs 70 crore mark



Ravi Teja's latest release Irumudi has been receiving positive reviews from audiences and critics alike. Amid the favourable reception, actor Rashmika Mandanna has praised Ravi's recent family drama. In a social media post, Rashmika called Irumudi 'beautiful' and went on to congratulate Ravi for its success. Taking to her X handle, Rashmika wrote, "Yesterday I had the opportunity to watch Irumudi.. What a beautiful film it is.. it hit me in ways I didn't see com-

ing.. Generally when we grow up in small towns something happens to us or something bothers us our first response will be to tell our elders what happened because that's the innocence in us.. and then the reality hits us.. and we are then told to keep quiet.. no matter what." The actor further added, "This film was such a wonderful surprise and speaks of something that should be spoken about. Congratulations @RaviTeja_off sir.. I am so so happy for you for this success.. congratulations to Nakshathra.. you were the sunshine in the film! your smile made me smile.. congratulations sweetie! @ShivaNirvana you deserve this success and how.. so so happy for you. Congratulations to the whole team — Thankyou for making a beautiful film like this." Rashmika's husband, actor Vijay Deverakonda also took to his X account and appreciated Ravi Teja's Irumudi. "What a glorious atmosphere in the Telugu cinema halls @RaviTeja_offl anna and my darling @ShivaNirvana have created a celebration across the Telugu states. #Irumudi is a must watch for the gripping storytelling and the message. Biggest celebratory hugs to Ravanna, Shiva and @MythriOfficial," his tweet read.

to industry tracker Sacnilk, Toxic has earned Rs 34 crore through advance bookings, with an additional Rs 9 crore coming from block seats, taking its total advance sales to Rs 43.64 crore. The film is witnessing a strong response in states such as Bihar. More than 141 of the 402 shows tracked there are almost full, while another 75 shows are filling fast. Bihar has previously played a crucial role in boosting the box office collections of films such as Pushpa, with the makers even organising special events to celebrate the audience's response. However, Karnataka is expected to be the biggest contributor to Toxic. According to Sacnilk, more than 1,189 shows are almost full, while another 349 are filling fast. The film, however, is not witnessing the same level of buzz in Tamil Nadu and the Telugu-speaking states. In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Toxic is set to face competition from Ravi Teja's recently released film Irumudi, which is reportedly performing well at the box office. While there were earlier reports of a screen-sharing tussle with Irumudi, Toxic has now finally opened for online bookings in the Telugu-speaking states.

Anupam VR, a veteran trade analyst in the Telugu states, said the film's performance in Andhra Pradesh has been particularly impressive, with collections and occupancy already surpassing the benchmark set by the KGF franchise. Speaking to SCREEN, he said, "Sales in Andhra Pradesh have been excellent. The response has been even better than what we saw for KGF and KGF 2, with occupancy currently around 90%. At this pace, the film is expected to reach its break-even point within just two days." Sunil Narang, one of the state's veteran distributors and theatre owners, echoed the sentiment. Speaking to SCREEN, he said, "Telangana is seeing a good number of shows, and we are adding more even as we speak because the demand is crazy. Shows are starting as early as 6 am, and several screens are already running houseful. The response has been extremely strong, and the demand continues to build." A Kerala distributor told SCREEN, "The response in Kerala has been very encouraging right from the first shows. Occupancy has been strong across major centres, and we are seeing a steady increase in demand as the day progresses. Several shows are filling up quickly, and if this momentum continues, we expect the film to have a very strong opening weekend in the state."

Toxic advance booking: Yash's KGF stardom on display Industry experts believe much of the film's pull can be attributed to Yash's stardom, which he established globally with the KGF franchise. The film is witnessing a phenomenal response on BookMyShow. As of now, it has sold more than seven lakh tickets, placing it among the top pre-sales performers in recent history. According to Sacnilk, the film has secured a place in the elite top 10 list of all-time pre-sales, surpassing major blockbusters such as Kalki 2898 AD and Jawan. Around 3,46,410 tickets were sold on August 21 alone, followed by steady sales over the next two days. PVR leads the way with a gross of approximately Rs 7.90 crore from more than 1,700 shows, while INOX has contributed around Rs 5.40 crore. Cinepolis, meanwhile, has contributed approximately Rs 1.85 crore.

Toxic overseas advance booking On the international front, Toxic is breaking barriers even before its first show. In the UK, it is officially set to become one of the biggest Indian releases in history, with more than 400 screens — a scale that was previously unprecedented for a Kannada film. The film has received an 18+ certificate in the UK for excessive injury, violence and sexual violence. According to Venky Box Office, the film has already grossed \$292,541 across 362 locations and 873 shows, with more than 13,000 tickets sold. Meanwhile, the Telugu and Kannada versions are leading the charge in the US market.

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Is Shriya Saran a part of Rajinikanth's 'Dharmam'?

Chennai: A picture posted by actress Shriya Saran on her Instagram page in which the actress is seen next to Superstar Rajinikanth has now sparked off rumours that she too is a part of director Ashwath Marimuthu's eagerly awaited action entertainer, 'Dharmam', featuring Rajinikanth in the lead.

Shriya Saran, who took to her Instagram stories section to post the picture, captioned the picture, "Happy Day." The picture has triggered rumours in the industry suggesting that the actress would again be seen working with Rajinikanth in 'Dharmam'.

Shriya had earlier starred opposite Rajinikanth in director Shankar's blockbuster film 'Sivaji'. Meanwhile, sources in the industry said that the third schedule of Dharmam had commenced in Hyderabad on Monday.

It may be recalled that the unit had only recently completed the second schedule of the film. In fact, the unit had commenced its second schedule only on August 13 this year. Raaj Kamal Films International, the production house of veteran actor and parliamentarian Kamal Haasan, had then taken to its social media timelines to drop an update with a video clip.