

Gutha pitches for cabinet reshuffle, says change will bring fresh approach

Hyderabad: Amid demands from some MLAs for induction into the State Cabinet, Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy on Saturday favoured a Cabinet reshuffle, saying it would bring a fresh approach to the government.

“There needs to be a change in the Cabinet. There needs to be a change in the government. The existing Cabinet should be reshuffled,” Sukhender Reddy said during an informal interaction with media persons.

Neem tree dispute turns fatal, two killed in Suryapet

Suryapet: A dispute over a neem tree between two neighbouring families turned fatal at Erragattu Thanda in Mellacheruvu mandal on Saturday, leaving two persons dead and a police Sub-Inspector injured.

According to reports, the families of Bukhya Saida and Manda Venkateswarlu were neighbours. A neem tree stood adjacent to Venkateswarlu's house. Trouble began after Bukhya Saida cut a branch of the tree, leading to a verbal confrontation between the two families.



Hyderabad:, august 29

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has urged the Election Commission of India (ECI) to extend by four weeks the September 16 deadline for filing claims and objections in the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, expressing concern that the compressed schedule could result in eligible voters being left out of the final rolls.

In a letter to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday, the Chief Minister said the SIR had reached a stage where the numbers warranted the commission's attention. Against the 3.38 crore electors on the rolls as of June 10, 2026, 73.39 lakh entries, or 21.7 per cent, had been placed under the Absent, Shifted, Dead and Duplicate (ASDD) categories. Of the 2.65 crore enumeration forms digitised so far, 60.5 lakh had been flagged for anomalies and another 32.36 lakh for lack of a link to the earlier electoral roll. The two categories were distinct and did not overlap, taking the total to 92.86 lakh electors requiring further verification, he said.

Revanth Seeks 4-week SIR Extension In State

Revanth Reddy said the composition of the ASDD list was particularly concerning, with 45.19 lakh of the 73.39 lakh entries, or nearly 62 per cent, classified as “permanently shifted”. He cautioned that the existing verification process did not adequately distinguish between temporary absence and permanent relocation. Voters who happened to be away from home for work, travel or other reasons when a booth level officer (BLO) visited could be treated in the same manner as those who had permanently moved.

The Chief Minister said genuine voters who had shifted residence were not being adequately facilitated to enrol at their new addresses, even as their names could be marked for deletion at their previous residences. He also pointed out that deletions under the “shifted” category bypassed the formal notice mechanism, with notices being issued only in cases involving data anomalies or unmapped entries.

He warned that such gaps could deny natural justice to a large number of eligible citizens, who might discover that their names had been removed only when they reached polling stations on election day. He noted that Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri and Rangareddy districts accounted for a disproportionate share of the workload, with the three districts together having about one-third of the state's electors but accounting for 58.6 per cent of ASDD entries and 41.9 per cent of verification notices.

Seeking procedural safeguards, Revanth Reddy said the claims and objections period, currently sched-

uled from August 17 to September 16, was too short for an exercise of such magnitude. With final publication of the electoral rolls scheduled for October 19, he requested that the claims and objections window be extended by four weeks so that voters, particularly those in the ASDD category, had sufficient time to ascertain their status and file Form 6 claims for inclusion in the electoral roll.

He also sought public reading of the draft rolls through gram sabhas, urban ward meetings and ward committee meetings. He suggested that such meetings be held at least twice in every village and municipal ward, with advance publicity, to enable omissions to be identified and corrected while there was still time.

The Chief Minister asked the ECI to provide voters who were served with notices at least three to four weeks to respond and produce the required documents. He said a one-week response period, even with a second notice, could be inadequate, particularly for daily-wage earners, migrant workers and elderly persons who might have to obtain documents from another district or state.

He proposed opening helpdesks, especially in urban districts and at the booth level, to assist voters in responding to notices, identifying admissible documents and obtaining them from the authorities concerned. He also urged the commission to notify a clear and comprehensive list of documents that voters could actually obtain and submit, including documents available at the mandal level at short notice.

The Chief Minister referred to the ECI's earlier communication stating that Family Register Certificates is-

sued under the Telangana government's July 25 order would not be accepted for SIR verification, and sought a wider, clearly enumerated list of admissible documents to ensure that voters were not denied verification merely for want of a particular document.

On manpower, Revanth Reddy said the additional electoral registration officers (EROs) already appointed would not be sufficient to cope with the volume of notices and hearings. In Hyderabad district alone, the notice workload was upwards of 78,000 cases for each Assembly constituency, while the prescribed procedure required electors to appear personally before the officer. He therefore sought sufficient additional EROs and decentralised hearing arrangements below the ERO level, particularly in Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri and Rangareddy districts, with the dates and times of hearings printed on the notices.

The Chief Minister said the objective of the SIR should be to ensure that no eligible elector was left out and no ineligible voter was included. He stressed that no eligible voter should be excluded merely because of lack of time or an inadequate opportunity to establish eligibility.

Revanth Reddy assured the ECI that the Telangana government would extend all possible assistance, including opening helpdesks, mobilising the administration to convene gram sabha and ward committee meetings, disseminating information among affected voters and providing any other logistical support sought by the commission.

‘It’s a crime, PM Modi must order filing of FIR’: Rahul Gandhi on Kharge ‘purification’ row

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

Congress leader says this incident shows BJP-RSS mindset that they do not want Dalits to progress, live with respect and be successful

LoP in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi addresses a press conference at Indira Bhawan in New Delhi on Saturday. Tribune Photo: Mukesh Aggarwal

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked the BJP-RSS over the ‘shuddhikaran’ (purification) ceremony carried out at the venue of a rally addressed by AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge in Haldwani earlier this month, saying it was a “crime” and Prime Minister Narendra Modi must order the registration of an FIR in the matter.

The Leader of Opposition said this incident shows the BJP-RSS mindset that they do not want the Dalits to progress, live with respect and be successful.



“We are demanding justice for the Congress president. Give the Congress president justice in Uttarakhand. It is the duty of the central and state governments to ensure that Kharge gets justice,” he said at a press conference in Delhi.

GHMC, Hyderabad police prepare for one-day Ganesh immersion on September 25

Hyderabad:, August 29

This Vinayaka Chaturthi, the GHMC and the city police plan to complete the Ganesh idol immersions in a single day, on September 25.

In previous years, idol immersions at Hussain Sagar Lake used to extend into the following day, resulting in hundreds of vehicles piling up and causing traffic congestion on Tank Bund and adjoining stretches. To address this, two platforms at NTR Marg have been upgraded with the aim of completing the immersion process in a single day.

The HMDA has strengthened and extended the platforms along the Hussain Sagar shores to deploy more cranes and streamline idol immersions, officials told Telangana Today.Telangana Region News

Boulders are being placed at the two platforms to bear the weight of large cranes and prevent them from sinking. Two to three cranes, each with a capacity of 200 tonnes, can be deployed simultaneously to ensure a quick and smooth idol immersion process, HMDA officials said.

A total of 38 locations have been identified at Hussain Sagar for the ensuing idol immersions, and the number of cranes will be increased from 15 to 20, with capacities ranging from 100 to 200 tonnes.



Except for some finishing work, the major works on the two platforms at Tank Bund are nearing completion. The cranes will be deployed two days before the Ganesh immersion, an HMDA official said.

Meanwhile, work on the city's popular Khairatabad Ganesh idol, based on this year's theme, Panchamukha Sankatahara Maha Ganapati, is progressing at a brisk pace.

The eco-friendly idol is being built to a height of 69 ft. Simultaneously, work on a 15-ft Somnath Jyotirlinga on the main idol's right side and a representation of Kalika Mata on its left is also in progress.

Mamata Banerjee booked for violating HC conditions during TMC student wing event

Kolkata, August 29

The Kolkata police have registered a suo motu FIR against former West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo Mamata Banerjee and organisers of a Trinamool Chhatra Parishad (TMCP) foundation day event, alleging violation of conditions imposed by the Calcutta High Court for the programme in central Kolkata.

The case was registered on August 28 at the Hastings police station under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the police said on Saturday.

According to police, the FIR followed an assessment of whether the conditions laid down by the High Court for the TMCP event at Cathedral Road on Friday had been complied with.

The FIR was based on a complaint filed by Hastings police station sub-inspector Apu Baidya. According to the complaint, Banerjee and the event organisers allegedly entered into a criminal conspiracy and violated the High Court's directions.

The police alleged that during the programme, TMCP supporters breached barricades and



jostled with personnel deployed for maintaining law and order, resulting in a chaotic situation. The gathering also disrupted vehicular movement along one flank of Cathedral Road, said the official.

The FIR comes days after Justice Saugata Bhattacharyya of the Calcutta High Court laid down conditions for the TMCP foundation day programme. Justice Bhattacharyya had directed that efforts be made to keep attendance within 1,500. The court had also directed the police to ensure law and order and that no untoward incident takes place.

Reacting to the FIR against Mamata, TMC MLA Kunal Ghosh rejected the allegations and accused the police of political targeting. “The FIR is politically motivated. We fully respect the High Court's order and the court, but the court of the people must also be respected,” Ghosh said.

He said that the party had made every effort to comply with the court's directions, adding that managing an unexpectedly

US clears plan to scrap H-1B job-loss grace period

Washington: The Trump administration has completed its review of a proposal to eliminate the discretionary 60-day grace period available to H-1B and other foreign professionals after their employment ends, potentially affecting thousands of Indian workers and their families.

The Department of Homeland Security proposal, titled “Eliminating the Discretionary 60-day Grace Period”, was submitted to the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on August 6

The review concluded on August 27 with the action listed as “Consistent with Change”, according to the official regulatory record. The designation means the proposal cleared the White House review process with changes.

The proposal has not been published, and its full provisions remain unavailable. The existing 60-day protection therefore remains in force.

The next step would ordinarily be publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register, followed by a public comment period. DHS would then have to consider the comments and issue a final rule before any change could take effect.

The proposal carries Regulatory Information Number 1615-AD22 and is being developed by US Citizenship and Immigration Services. The regulatory record describes it as a proposed rule that is not economically significant and has no legal deadline.

Under the current regulation, eligible workers may receive up to 60 consecutive days after their employment ends, or until the expiration of their authorised stay, whichever period is shorter.

The window allows affected workers to find another employer willing to sponsor them, seek a change of immigration status or prepare to leave the United States. It covers people holding H-1B, L-1, O-1 and several other temporary employment visas.



Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Beyond IFI rankings — India's investment divide

Five States—Maharashtra (31%), Karnataka (21%), Gujarat (15%), Delhi (13%) and Tamil Nadu (6%)—accounted for nearly 85 per cent of India's cumulative equity inflow from October 2019 to March 2026, while the entire northeastern region attracted less than one per cent. The contrast is striking, especially given the Northeast's abundant natural resources, rich biodiversity, strategic international borders, and immense tourism potential. The disparity raises an important question: what really attracts investment? The recently released Investment Friendliness Index (IFI) by the NITI Aayog offers some answers. More than a ranking of States, it provides a framework for understanding why some regions consistently attract investment while others struggle despite possessing significant potential. As India pursues the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047, these insights are particularly relevant. According to the NITI Aayog, India needs to sustain annual GDP growth of nearly 7.8 per cent to achieve developed economy status. Meeting that ambition will require far more than public expenditure; it will depend on creating business environments where private investment can flourish. India's investment rate has recovered to 29.9 per cent of GDP in FY2025, marginally above the average of the previous decade. While public investment has strengthened roads, ports, and digital infrastructure, long-term economic transformation will increasingly depend on private enterprises investing, innovating, and creating productive employment. Investors today evaluate much more than tax incentives. They look for quality infrastructure, policy stability, efficient institutions, skilled human capital, financial soundness, and an ecosystem that reduces business uncertainty.

Beerappagadda Division Racing Ahead in Development:



BANNALA PRAVEEN MUDIRAJ""UPPAL, AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Development works are progressing continuously in Beerappagadda Division, said BRS state leader and former corporator Bannala Praveen Mudiraj. He said that special priority is being given to the development of basic infrastructure in the division with the support of Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy. "Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, along with MMC officials, inspected the ongoing CC road construction works in the lane opposite ARK Residency in Beerappagadda Division. The road is being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 29 lakh, from Shankarayya Kirana Store (Varamma's house) up to the house of Vanjari Narsing Rao towards the Mudiraj and Goud burial ground. He enquired with the officials about the progress and quality of the works. "Speaking on the occasion, Bannala Praveen Mudiraj said that development works are being taken up in a planned manner to provide the basic infrastructure required by the people of the division. He expressed special thanks and gratitude to Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy and MMC Corporation officials, particularly Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, for their support towards the development of the division. "He stated that efforts are being made to mobilise the required funds with the support of MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy and develop Beerappagadda Division more comprehensively than all other divisions in the constituency, with the aim of making it the No. 1 division. He said priority is being given to the development of essential infrastructure such as roads and drainage facilities. On behalf of the people of Beerappagadda Division and Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, he conveyed special thanks and gratitude to MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy. BRS senior leaders Vanjari Narsing Rao, Srinivas Yadav, Vanjari Balaji, Tirupathi Yadav, Venkat Reddy, Banti Goud, Praveen Reddy, Varamma, Shankarayya and local residents, among others, participated in the programme.



(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 29):- Sri Peddamma Thalli Bonala festival was held in Bhuvanagiri town under the auspices of Mudiraj Sangam. The leaders of the association who participated in this Bonala procession program were.. Bhuvanagiri former Municipal Chairman Kolupula Kamalakara, Town Congress President.. Kura Venkatesh Mudiraj, Sangam President Siddenki Kotaiah, General Secretary Kolupula Nagaraju, Ward Councilor Bontala Narsingarao, Enaboya Jahangir, Kura Srinivas, Bandi Mahesh, Srikanth, Kolupula Krishna, Bandi Suresh and others participated.

42 Lakh Public Funds Allegedly Wasted in Manikguda



"Canal Revetment Works Damaged Within Four Months""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.30.""Asifabad: Questions have been raised over the quality of canal revetment works undertaken at a cost of ₹42 lakh in Manikguda Gram Panchayat limits

of Asifabad Mandal in Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district. "The government sanctioned ₹42 lakh for revetment works along the right canal of the Kumuram Bheem Project near the Manikguda Gram Panchayat office. The works were reportedly inaugurated by local MLA Kova Laxmi and the District Collector by performing a traditional coconut-break ceremony. "However, the villagers allege that the revetment structure was severely damaged and washed away within just four months of completion, following even a relatively light spell of rain. As a result, the canal bund is reportedly eroding, creating a potential threat to houses located close to the canal. The villagers have expressed serious concern over the quality of the works, alleging that sub-standard construction may have led to the early damage. They have demanded a comprehensive inquiry into the works, including an inspection of the quality and materials used. "They further demanded strict action against the contractor if any irregularities or quality violations are established, including blacklisting the contractor as per applicable rules. "The villagers also urged the authorities to immediately restart and complete the damaged revetment works with proper quality standards and take preventive measures to ensure that nearby residential houses are not exposed to further danger.

BRS Party Leader Rajitha Reddy Receives Birthday Wishes from MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy

"HABSIGUDA, AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Birthday celebrations of Habsiguda Division BRS party leader Rajitha Reddy were held in a warm and cordial atmosphere on Saturday. On the occasion, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy visited her residence, met Rajitha Reddy, presented her with a bouquet and conveyed his heartfelt birthday greetings. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy wished Rajitha Reddy a long, healthy and happy life filled with prosperity and happiness. He expressed his desire that she continue to take an active part in public service and party programmes and rise to higher positions in the future. He advised her to understand the problems faced by the people, work towards resolving them and contribute to strengthening the party. "Several party leaders appreciated Rajitha Reddy's efforts in successfully conducting party programmes in Habsiguda Division. They said she has been playing an active role in party activities, remaining accessible to party workers and maintaining close relations with the people. "Later, BRS party leaders, women leaders, workers and supporters met Rajitha Reddy and extended their birthday greetings. They presented bouquets and wished her greater success in the future and hoped



that she would continue to make further progress in public service. Rajitha Reddy thanked everyone who conveyed birthday wishes to her. She said that the affection shown by party leaders, workers and supporters had brought her immense happiness. The programme was held in a joyful atmosphere in the presence of family members, party leaders and workers.

"Modi Government Serving Corporate Interests



AITUC District Deputy Secretary Atmakuri Chiranjeevi""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.30.""WANKIDI AITUC District Deputy Secretary Atmakuri Chiranjeevi alleged that the Narendra Modi-led Central Government was serving the interests of corporate companies at the expense of workers' rights. He called upon workers to participate in large numbers and make the AITUC State Conference a grand success. On Wednesday, AITUC State Conference wall posters were released at the Wankidi Government Hospital in the presence of workers. Speaking on the occasion, Chiranjeevi said the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) was established on October 31, 1920, and had fought numerous struggles and made sacrifices over the decades to

secure 44 labour laws and protect workers' rights. He alleged that the Central Government had repealed 29 labour laws in the name of "Ease of Doing Business" and replaced them with four Labour Codes. He demanded that the four Labour Codes, which he described as anti-worker, be immediately withdrawn. He further alleged that the government was weakening workers' rights for the benefit of corporate companies and turning the working class into bonded labour. Chiranjeevi demanded a minimum wage of Rs.26,000 per month, continuation of the eight-hour workday, equal pay for equal work and job security for workers. He also demanded an immediate halt to the privatisation of public sector enterprises. He demanded that recognised trade union elections at the Sirpur Paper Mills (SPM) be conducted immediately, that former workers be taken back into service without conditions, and that labour laws be strictly implemented. He also urged the government to upgrade the Wankidi Government Hospital into a 100-bed hospital. "He said the AITUC State Conference would be held in Karimnagar from September 6 to 8. AITUC National General Secretary Amarjeet Kaur, along with national and state-level leaders, would attend the conference. He appealed to organised and unorganised workers from Komuram Bheem Asifabad district to participate in large numbers and make the conference successful. AITUC District Assistant Secretary Kodurupaka Mahesh, along with AITUC leaders Itankar Tirupati, Dharma Rakesh, Dongre Prashanth, Chandrakala, Siddu and others, participated in the programme.

Major Dhyan Chand Excellence Awards-26 Presented



"Hyderabad, August 29 (Indian Chronicle) : On the occasion of National Sports Day, the Major Dhyan Chand Excellence Awards-2026 were presented to professors and physical directors at a programme organised under the leadership of Telangana Intellectuals Forum State President Dr. Raj Narayana Mudiraj on Saturday. Telangana State Council of Higher Education Vice-Chairman Prof. V. Balakrishna Reddy, who attended the event as the chief guest, presented the awards. Justice B. Chandrakumar and Telangana State Council of Higher Education Vice-Chairman Prof. Etikala Purushotham addressed the gathering. K. Sai Baba, a recipient of the President's Award, and Prof. K. Deepla, Director of Physical Education at Osmania University, also participated in the programme and felicitated the awardees, including Prof. B. Suresh Kumar, Dr. K. Anita, Dr. C. Sandeep Reddy, Dr. Battu Venkanna, Dr. B. R. Neth, Dr. Punjala Supriya, Dr. A. Siddhartha, Dr. R. Murali, Major D. Jayasudha, Major K. A. Shivaprasad, and Potel Srinivas Yadav. TRSMA State President Sadhula Madhusudan, Twin Cities Gujarati Brahma Samaj President Tarun Kumar Mehta, Secretary Dr. Mohammed Akhtar Ali, Chief Coordinator Dr. Raviteja,

and Coordinators G. Venugopal, K. Ravinder, and Surya were also present.

Awareness Among Youth Key to Building a Safer Society

SHE Team Conducts Awareness Programme at Cherlapally""MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Awareness among youth and children about safety and security issues is essential for building a safer society, members of the Medipally SHE Team said. An extensive awareness programme was conducted for students at the Mandal Parishad Primary School in Cherlapally under the aegis of the SHE Team. "During the programme, students were educated about the functioning of SHE Teams, cyber safety, online loan app frauds, human trafficking, child protection, gender equality, and the harmful effects of drugs. The students were also guided on how to

'Mugguru Kothulu' Title Song Released from Shobharani Garimella's Production, Directed by Kartik Garimella



"Presented by GSR Creations and co-presented by Sky Flare Networks, 'Mugguru Kothulu' is a film produced by Shobharani Garimella and directed by Kartik Garimella. Teja Kondapally, Ganesh Bodda and Devansh play the lead roles in the movie, while Varshika Pasam is the female lead. The film's first-look poster has already impressed everyone. Now, the team has come up with another update by releasing the title song from the movie. "The video song, which goes by the title 'Mugguru Kothulu', features the three heroes having a blast and enjoying themselves to the fullest. The song showcases the fun and carefree lives of bachelors and singles. Going by the song, it is evident that the film is set to be a youthful, fun-filled entertainer. The audience is likely to enjoy the catchy tune and the crazy antics of the three heroes. Jagadeesh Busayavalasa's lyrics and Chaitanya Gannavarapu's vocals are expected to be major highlights of the song. "The shooting of the film is progressing at a brisk pace. S. Suhas is composing the music for the movie. Raj Nomula is the cinematographer, while Jameer Shaik is handling the editing. The team is gearing up to entertain the audience with many more updates in the coming days. "Cast : Teja Kondapally, Ganesh Bodda, Devansh, Varshika Pasam and others. "Technical Team ""Presented by: GSR Creations""Co-Presented by: Sky Flare Networks""Producer: Shobharani Garimella""Director: Kartik Garimella""Cinematography: Raj Nomula""Music: S. Suhas""Editing: Jameer Shaik""PRO: Sai Satish

SIR process must be expedited, says Telangana CEO

Officials told to serve pending notices, examine claims and objections within stipulated timelines.



Karimnagar August 29 (Correspondent): Telangana Chief Electoral Officer Sudarshan Reddy has directed officials to expedite the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and ensure that notices pending for service are delivered to the concerned electors without delay. Mr. Reddy issued the directions during a video conference with Collectors and District Election Officers, Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) from Hyderabad on Saturday. Karimnagar Collector Chitra Mishra participated in the review. The meeting reviewed the progress of notice issuance and the disposal of claims and objections filed during the SIR exercise. The CEO instructed officials to examine complaints and objections within the prescribed timelines and speed up scrutiny of the relevant records. Enquiries should be conducted only after completion of seven days from the date on which a notice is served on the concerned person, he said.

He directed officials to make the anomalies/no-mapping lists available to representatives of recognised political parties and conduct extensive awareness programmes on the documents and evidence that electors would need to furnish while submitting claims and objections.

The status of claims and objections should be updated on notice boards on a daily basis, Mr. Reddy said, stressing the need for transparency and accountability throughout the revision process. He also directed officials to ensure that the exercise was completed within the stipulated deadlines without causing inconvenience to the public. Necessary training should be provided to AEROs engaged in the process, while meetings with representatives of recognised political parties should be held to facilitate the speedy completion of the exercise, he said.

deal with strangers and whom to approach in suspicious or unsafe situations. "The SHE Team personnel explained the importance of Good Touch and Bad Touch, advising children not to remain silent or afraid if they experience any inappropriate touch or behaviour. They urged them to immediately inform their parents, teachers or the police. They stressed that parents, teachers and society have a crucial role to play in ensuring the safety and protection of children. "Students were advised to remain vigilant against cybercrime and never share personal details, banking information or OTPs with unknown persons through suspicious links, applications or phone calls.

Uppula Krishna, Wankidi Mandal Congress Youth President



Demands Priority for Genuine Poor in Second-Phase Indiramma Houses""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.30. ""Wankidi: The second phase of the Indiramma Housing Scheme should become a source of hope for poor families who have been waiting for years for a permanent house, said Uppula Krishna, Wankidi Mandal Congress Youth President. He demanded that priority be given to genuinely eligible poor families without any political or personal considerations. "Speaking on the ongoing selection of beneficiaries for the second phase of the Indiramma housing scheme in the 28 gram panchayats of Wankidi mandal, Krishna said that merely preparing a beneficiary list was not enough. The eligibility of every selected beneficiary must be verified at the field level, he said. He urged officials to conduct door-to-door verification and examine the actual living conditions of applicants, including whether they own a house, live in a rented or dilapidated house, or have any other residential facility. The economic condition and family circumstances of applicants should also be examined strictly as per the government guidelines, he said. "Transparency Through Gram Sabhas" Krishna called for effective conduct of Gram Sabhas during the beneficiary selection process. The details of selected beneficiaries should be placed before the villagers, and objections and complaints from the public should be received and thoroughly verified. "He said that the selection process must be transparent and impartial, with eligibility being the only cri-

terion. Political affiliation, personal contacts or other considerations should have no role in deciding beneficiaries. "Inquiry Into Allegations" Krishna said that allegations were being heard locally that some BRS-affiliated sarpanches in certain gram panchayats were allegedly selecting beneficiaries according to their preferences. He urged officials to inquire into allegations that government employees, financially stable families and those who already have proper residential facilities were being included in the beneficiary lists. "However, he clarified that such allegations should be officially verified through a proper inquiry before any action is taken, and that no individual should be targeted for political reasons. "Justice for Eligible Families" Krishna also urged authorities to provide an opportunity for eligible poor families whose names have not appeared in the second-phase list to submit complaints and seek reconsideration. Similarly, objections regarding the eligibility of persons included in the list should be investigated properly. He stressed that an eligible family should not lose the benefit because of an ineligible beneficiary. The entire process should therefore be strengthened to ensure that the benefits reach those who genuinely need them. "Priority for the Most Vulnerable" Uppula Krishna demanded that homeless families, extremely poor households, and those living in huts or temporary sheet-roofed houses should be given top priority in the second phase of the Indiramma Housing Scheme. He said that owning a house is a basic dream and necessity for every poor family. Families living in huts and vulnerable houses face difficulties during rain, summer and winter and therefore deserve special attention. "He urged senior officials to closely monitor the beneficiary selection process across all 28 gram panchayats of Wankidi mandal and ensure uniform implementation of the rules. Records should be scrutinised, field-level inspections should be conducted and public objections should be properly addressed. The Indiramma Housing Scheme was introduced for the welfare of the poor, and its benefits should reach genuine beneficiaries, Krishna said. He called upon officials to ensure complete transparency and prevent political interference, irregularities and selection of ineligible beneficiaries so that the dream of a permanent house becomes a reality for deserving poor families.

BJP-BJYM Protest for Release of Pending Fee Reimbursement Dues

""Fee Dues – BJP's Fight": Leaders Demand Immediate Release of Pending Funds""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.30. ""Asifabad: Demanding the immediate release of pending fee reimbursement dues to students, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) organized a protest and demonstration at the Telangana Thalli statue in Asifabad on Saturday. The protest was held as part of the statewide call given by the Telangana BJP and was led by BJYM District President Elagati Suchit. Speaking on the occasion, BJP and BJYM leaders alleged that the state government was failing to release the fee reimbursement funds due to students, causing severe difficulties to poor and middle-class families. The leaders said that students should not be forced to discontinue or face obstacles in their education due to the delay in fee reimbursement payments. They alleged that the Congress government had failed to fulfill its promises made to students and was neglecting important issues in the education sector. They demanded that the government immediately clear all pending fee reimbursement dues and take steps to ensure that students can continue their education without financial difficulties. The leaders warned that if the pending dues were not released immediately, the BJP and BJYM would intensify their agitation across the state. "BJP State Executive Committee Member Arigela Nageswara



Rao, former BJP District President Dr. Kothapalli Srinivas, Asifabad Bar Association President Bonagiri Satish Babu, BJP District General Secretary Kova Vijay, TMC Telangana State Board Member Kandre Vishal, BJP SC Morcha District President Ashok, Asifabad Mandal President Pentayya, Tiryani Mandal President Sara Ramesh Goud, Kerameri Mandal President Send Meka Tukaram, Jainoor Mandal President Gnaneshwar, senior BJP leader Sapta Srinivas, BJYM district leader Sanju, BJYM mandal presidents Vikas and Arjun, along with BJP and BJYM district and mandal-level leaders, workers, youth and students, participated in the protest in large numbers. The protesters raised slogans demanding the immediate release of fee reimbursement dues and urged the government to resolve students' educational problems without further delay.

Hearing Notices to Be Served Quickly



"State Chief Electoral Officer Sudarshan Reddy""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" August.30. ""Asifabad, August 29, 2026: State Chief Electoral Officer Sudarshan Reddy directed officials to expedite the issuance of hearing notices to voters listed under the unmapped and anomalous categories as part of the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls, and to collect the necessary supporting documents from them. A review meeting was held through video conference on Saturday from the State Election Office in Hyderabad with District Collectors and Additional Collectors from across Telangana. Sudarshan Reddy instructed Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to visit voters' homes, serve the notices personally and obtain acknowledgements from the concerned voters. He directed officials to maintain the prescribed time gap between the issuance of notices and the hearing process and to collect all required documents during the hearings. He also instructed officials to conduct weekly meetings with representatives of political parties and create awareness among voters who receive notices about the documents they need to submit. "District Collector K. Haritha and Asifabad Revenue Divisional Officer Lokeshwar Rao attended the video conference from the Video Conference Hall at the Integrated District Collectorate Complex in Asifabad. Speaking during the meeting, Collector K. Haritha said that steps were being taken to serve notices to 1,05,829 voters listed under the unmapped and anomalous categories in the district. So far, notices had been served to 8,098 voters, she said. The Collector stated that BLOs were visiting households to serve the notices and that hearings would subsequently be conducted at the concerned Gram Panchayat offices within the polling station limits. Necessary documents would be collected during the hearings and the details would be entered in the BLO app, she added. "She

said that the entire process was being carried out in accordance with the guidelines and regulations of the Election Commission of India. Election officials and other concerned officers participated in the video conference.

"Rulers... do not turn the people into dependents with freebie schemes..."

instead, assist the farmers who toil year-round and expand job and employment opportunities," stated Chiduruppa Suvarna Reddy, former President of the undivided Nalgonda District Congress Party and a dedicated social worker. ""Today's Telangana state is the fruit of the sacrifices made by so many noble souls... yet, they have burdened 'Bangaru Telangana' (Golden Telangana) with debt. The students made the sacrifices... while one party reaps the benefits and another enjoys the luxuries—such is the state of Telangana today," remarked Chiduruppa Suvarna Reddy. ""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau – Indian Chronicle – August 29): Chiduruppa Suvarna Reddy, former President of the undivided Nalgonda District Congress Party and a social worker, stated that for the people of a democracy to prosper, the ruling establishment bears the responsibility of ensuring fundamental rights for every individual. She emphasized that if the government provides essential amenities such as education, healthcare, food, and housing, it would significantly drive the development of both the nation and the state. Speaking on Friday at her residence in Bhuvanagiri town with Mandava Srisailem of the Indian Chronicle (Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau), she extended her Rakhi festival greetings to the people of Telangana state, as well as to the residents of the undivided Nalgonda and Yadadri Bhuvanagiri districts. Speaking further, she remarked that the "Golden Telangana"—achieved after sixty years of struggle—is being driven to ruin by the current rulers. She noted that today's Telangana state is the result of the sacrifices made by many noble souls, particularly thousands of students; yet, the situation reflects the adage: "One makes the sacrifice, another reaps the benefit, and a third enjoys the spoils." She highlighted how, lacking job and employment opportunities, the youth are going astray—falling prey to marijuana, narcotics, and alcohol abuse—and urged the government to finally create employment by facilitating the establishment of private com-



-Action plan begins in Medchal–Malkajgiri district following KTR's call""-----Meeting of MLAs and key leaders held under the leadership of MLC Shambipur Raju""UPPAL, AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): With the Congress government completing 1,000 days in office, the BRS has decided to intensify its campaign to highlight the government's alleged failures and the problems being faced by the people. Following the call given by BRS Working President KTR to make the "Battle Against Congress' 1,000 Days of Failure Rule" programme a success, party leaders in Medchal–Malkajgiri district have begun preparations and chalked out an action plan. "In this regard, a meeting of BRS MLAs, former ministers and senior leaders was held at the party's district office under the leadership of Medchal district BRS president and MLC Shambipur Raju. "Former minister Malla Reddy, MLAs Madhavaram Krishna Rao, KP Vivekanand Goud, Marri Rajasekhara Reddy and Bandari Lakshma Reddy, along with several other senior leaders, attended the meeting. "The leaders extensively discussed

the problems being faced by people under the Congress government, pending development works, the status of implementation of promises made to the public and various alleged failures of the government. They decided to conduct the Samarabheri programme in a manner that brings these issues directly before the people. "The leaders alleged that the Congress government has failed to fulfil several promises made to the people after coming to power, while development works have been delayed and people are facing difficulties in the implementation of welfare schemes. They said the problems faced by farmers, students, employees, workers and the common public would be highlighted as part of the campaign. "The meeting decided that the BRS should undertake intensive programmes at the grassroots level, identify public issues and question the government over their resolution instead of limiting the campaign to political criticism. "Special focus will be given to several local issues in Medchal–Malkajgiri district, including the 22A land issue, pending development works, roads, drainage, drinking water, protection of lakes and government lands, traffic problems, double-bedroom houses and implementation of welfare schemes. "The leaders called upon the party cadre to gear up for the Samarabheri by placing questions before the public such as: "What has the Congress government delivered to the people in 1,000 days? How many of its promises have been fulfilled? How many of the development works initiated by the previous BRS government are being continued?" The district leadership stated that under the guidance of BRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao and the leadership of Working President KTR and former minister Harish Rao, the BRS would continue to fight for public issues and question the Congress government over its alleged failures on behalf of the people.

Karimnagar civic body clears 180 agenda items unanimously

Corporators flag sanitation, drinking water, infrastructure and stray dog menace.

Karimnagar August 29 (Correspondent): The general body meeting of the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation (KMC), chaired by Mayor Kolagani Srinivas, on Saturday approved all 180 agenda items unanimously after a detailed discussion on civic infrastructure, public health, sanitation and welfare measures. The meeting, which began at 11 a.m. with the Telangana State song, concluded at 3.40 p.m. with the National Anthem. Deputy Mayor Yadagiri Sunil Rao and Municipal Commissioner Praful Desai were present.

During the question-and-request session, corporators raised a range of issues, including sanitation, drinking water supply, street lighting, road and footpath encroachments, drainage works, shortage of sanitation personnel, solid and biomedical waste management, stray dog and monkey menace, maintenance of vacant plots and development of cremation grounds. Members also sought action on building permissions, digital house numbering, online registration of house numbers in divisions covering merged villages, discrepancies in property tax assessments, protection of municipal parks and government lands, and construction of soak pits. 25 crore for dumping yard works

Mr. Srinivas said the civic body was taking steps to address the long-pending dumping yard issue. He said ?17 crore had been sanctioned under the Swachh Bharat Mission and the tender process was under way. Another ?8 crore would be utilised under the Smart City programme for remediation of the dumping yard, he said. The Mayor said the corporation would procure JCBs, loaders, fogging machines, funeral vehicles, blade tractors and rickshaws to strengthen sanitation operations in the divisions. He said the KMC was committed to making Karimnagar a "plastic-free model city" and that measures would be taken to prevent the use of plastic at function halls. 840 crore proposals under UCF

The Mayor said, with the support of Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar, the KMC had been brought under the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) and development proposals worth ?840 crore had been submitted. UCF works would commence shortly, he said. Development works had also been taken up in several divisions under the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF). Action would be initiated against contractors who had failed to commence sanctioned works, he added. ABC centre to be expanded On the growing stray dog menace, Mr. Srinivas said the corporation had already established an Animal Birth Control (ABC) centre where sterilisation operations were being carried



out. The centre would be expanded by increasing the number of kennels to 150. The civic body had sanctioned ?2 crore for a compound wall and additional facilities, and the tender process was under way, he said. The Mayor also assured members that the issue of monkeys and other civic problems raised during the meeting would be addressed in accordance with the applicable rules. Focus on merged villages

The civic body would take steps to provide basic infrastructure in the divisions formed following the merger of villages with the corporation, Mr. Srinivas said. He said the online process for house numbers in the merged-village divisions was under way. Residents seeking online registration of water connections would be required to pay ?100 within four months, he said. The corporation would also construct ward offices across its divisions and take measures to safeguard municipal parks and government lands, he added. Mr. Srinivas directed municipal officials and staff to work in coordination and remain accountable to elected representatives and citizens. "The objective of the council is development and public welfare, without allowing any scope for corruption," he said. The meeting was attended by corporators, municipal officials and other staff.



rectly, and I will always provide any help I can, said Chiduruppa Suvarna Reddy, former district president of the joint Nalgonda district Congress Party and volunteer..

Telangana crime up 7.15 pc in 3 yrs; organised crime jumps 1,704 pc

Hyderabad: Telangana recorded a 7.15 per cent increase in overall crime in the last three years, with a sharp rise in organised crime, narcotics and traffic offences. However, grave crimes, cybercrime and economic offences showed a decline, according to the latest crime review conducted by the Telangana Police. The number of registered cases increased from 2,65,377 in 2023-24 to 2,84,363 in 2025-26.

“Hello Mala.. Chalo Secretariat” Programme on August 31“Roster system should be revised to ensure justice for Malas:



DR. ALLIBILLI MAHENDER““UPPAL, AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Telangana Government Festivals Committee Co-Chairman and National Mala Mahanaadu Greater Hyderabad President Dr. Allibilli Mahender said that the “Hello Mala.. Chalo Secretariat” programme will be organised on August 31, demanding that the government revise the roster system to prevent injustice to the Mala community in the fields of education and employment. He said the programme was being organised as per the directions of National Mala Mahanaadu Telangana President Pili

Sudhakar.“Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Allibilli Mahender expressed concern that the existing roster system was causing injustice to Malas in educational and employment opportunities. He demanded that the government review the roster system and make necessary changes to ensure that the constitutional rights and reservation benefits provided to Malas are effectively implemented.He said it was the responsibility of everyone to make the “Hello Mala.. Chalo Secretariat” programme, being organised to protect the rights of Malas, a success. He appealed to every Mala family to voluntarily participate in the programme, with students, youth, women and elders joining in large numbers, rather than limiting the programme to a few leaders and activists.“He urged students and youth to attend the programme in large numbers, keeping their future educational and employment opportunities in mind, and raise their voice for their rights. He stressed the need for the community to move forward unitedly to achieve equal justice in employment and educational opportunities.Dr. Allibilli Mahender made it clear that the movement would continue until the government takes the issues of the Mala community into consideration and makes the necessary amendments to the roster system.“He appealed to representatives from every Mala family to participate in the “Hello Mala.. Chalo Secretariat” programme on August 31 and make it a grand success.

National-Level Kho-Kho Competitions Held Grandly in HabsigudaSATS Chairman K. Shiv Sena Reddy Attends as Chief Guest and Distributes Prizes



“Habsiguda Division President Kandi Shravan Reddy Congratulates the Players”“HABSIGUDA, AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The CISCE Games & Sports 2026 – Kho-Kho (Boys) National-Level Competitions, organized by St. Joseph's School in Habsiguda on the occasion of National Sports Day, were held in a grand manner. Students from various parts of the country participated enthusiastically in the competitions and showcased their sporting talent.Telangana State Sports Authority (SATS) Chairman K. Shiv Sena Reddy attended the event as the chief guest and distributed prizes to the winners.Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy, Habsiguda Division Congress Party President, also attended the programme and congratulated the students who displayed outstanding performances. He extended his best wishes to the students who secured first, second and



third prizes in the competitions.He said that victories and defeats are a natural part of sports and that every student who moves forward with discipline, hard work and determination deserves appreciation. He conveyed his heartfelt wishes to all the players participating in the national-level competitions and encouraged them to continue striving for excellence in sports.“Uppal Youth Congress President Akarapu Arun Patel, BN Reddy Nagar Congress Division President Ganesh Reddy, State Youth Congress General Secretary Ranganath, State Youth Congress Secretary Prem, Bapi Reddy, and Habsiguda Division Congress leaders Gundu Rajanna, Malu Naik, Suman Naik and Vinod Naik were among those present.“The school principal, teachers and a large number of students also participated in the programme.”

Concern Over Hyderabad Woman Missing Amid Heavy Floods in Nepal“



“Tarnaka, AUGUST 29(INDIAN CHORNICLE)““The disappearance of K. Suhasini Reddy of L.B. Nagar, who went missing in Nepal following the recent heavy floods, has caused serious concern among her family members and relatives.“According to her family, Suhasini Reddy, who is currently residing in Australia, had travelled to Hyderabad to attend a housewarming ceremony at her family members' residence. After the ceremony, she left for a Manasarovar pilgrimage in Nepal.“It is noteworthy that Suhasini Reddy is a relative of former Hyderabad Deputy

Mayor Mote Srilatha Shobhan Reddy.“In this regard, former Hyderabad Deputy Mayor Mote Srilatha Shobhan Reddy met Suhasini Reddy's family members and expressed her solidarity with them. She assured the family that she would extend all possible support, bring the matter to the attention of the government and concerned authorities, and make efforts to ensure that necessary steps are taken to trace Suhasini Reddy.“According to the family, Suhasini Reddy was last known to have visited a temple in Kathmandu, Nepal. Subsequently, due to the heavy floods and adverse conditions in Nepal, communication with her was lost. Since then, no clear information regarding her whereabouts has been received, leaving her family members deeply worried.“Against this backdrop, the family members have appealed to the Telangana State Government, Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Embassy officials, and disaster management authorities to take immediate and coordinated action. They urged the authorities to establish contact with the concerned officials in Nepal and make all possible efforts to trace Suhasini Reddy.“They further appealed to the authorities to expedite all possible rescue and assistance measures and ensure that she is safely located and reunited with her family.“The family members and relatives are earnestly hoping and praying that Suhasini Reddy returns safely to her family. They have also appealed to anyone who may have any information regarding her whereabouts to immediately inform her family members or the concerned authorities.

HYDRA Inspects Fish Deaths in Ramacheruvu “Water samples collected from various locations; high levels of pH and TDS detected“

““BODUPPAL, AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): HYDRA officials have responded to the incident of fish deaths in Ramacheruvu Lake in Boduppal. To ascertain the reasons behind the fish deaths, HYDRA Environmental Scientist Srivalli visited Ramacheruvu on Saturday and conducted an inspection.She thoroughly inspected various parts of the lake and collected water samples from several locations to assess the water quality. She said that the water samples collected from different points in the lake would be sent for further testing. She stated that examining the chemical changes and pollution levels in the water would help determine the exact cause of the fish deaths.“Later, Srivalli also visited the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) located near the lake and inspected the conditions there. She gathered details regarding the sewage treatment process and the release of treated water, among other aspects.“Environmental Scientist Srivalli said that during the preliminary inspection, very high levels of pH and TDS (Total Dissolved Solids) were found in the water of Ramacheruvu. She said that a clearer picture of the water



quality would emerge after the completion of detailed tests.“Mudiraj community leaders urged the concerned authorities to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the fish deaths in Ramacheruvu, identify the causes of pollution in the lake water, and take appropriate action. They also appealed to the authorities to protect the lake and safeguard the interests of fishermen who depend on fish farming for their livelihood.“

: Woman Allegedly Harassed for Additional Dowry; Case Registered Against Husband, In-Laws and Four Others



“MEDIPALLY , AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally police have registered a case against seven persons, including a woman's husband and in-laws, following a complaint alleging that she was physically and mentally harassed and assaulted over demands for additional dowry.“According to police, 33-year-old Amudala Chandana, a resident of NIN Colony, Road No. 7, Medipally, married Harish on May 26, 2019. In her complaint, Chandana alleged that her parents gave Rs. 14 lakh in cash and 36 tolas of gold as dowry at the time of the marriage. The couple has a six-year-old daughter, Sharanya.“Chandana alleged that after the marriage, her husband Harish, mother-in-law Susheela and father-in-law

Venkatayya subjected her to physical and mental harassment demanding additional dowry . She stated that the harassment continued even after her parents gave her a 174-square-yard plot. She also alleged that her husband's brother, G. Siddhanath, threatened to kill her and her daughter.“She further alleged that even after she was selected as a police constable in 2024, her husband continued to mentally harass her and made insulting remarks about her physical appearance. She stated that during an argument in March 2026, her mother-in-law Susheela, her sister Indira and her husband's younger brother Shiva allegedly assaulted and abused her.“Chandana said that another dispute occurred with her husband and family members on August 27. She alleged that Harish attempted to attack her with a sharp object. While trying to protect herself, she sustained an injury to her right hand that required three stitches. She also suffered swelling and injuries to her shoulders, according to her complaint.“She further alleged that Susheela and Lakshmi attempted to assault her, while Venkatayya abused her using obscene language.“Based on Chandana's complaint, Medipally police registered FIR No. 1251/2026 under Sections 85, 118(1), 115(2), 351(2), and 352 read with 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). SI P. Srinu is conducting the investigation.

Beerla Ayilayya participated in the review meeting of various departments in the united Nalgonda district along with ministers



“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 29):- A review meeting was held on the performance of the Revenue, Registration, Survey, and Housing departments, development programs, and resolution of public issues in the united Nalgonda district. Revenue, Housing, Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Nalamada Uttam Kumar Reddy, Roads-Buildings and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, and senior officials of the departments related to Revenue, Registration, and Survey participated in this meeting. Along with them, Telangana State Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilayya participated. Speaking on the occasion, Beerla Ayilaiah brought to the attention of the government the issues facing the people in the Aleru constituency as well as the joint Nalgonda district, such as land issues, sur-



veys, registrations, revision of revenue records, and pattadar passbooks. He urged the officials of the Revenue, Survey, and Registration departments to work in coordination and resolve the pending issues expeditiously, without the people having to go around the offices to resolve their land-related issues.“Similarly, he urged Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy to sanction houses to all the eligible poor under the Indiramma House Scheme and to expedite the construction of houses that have already been sanctioned.“He explained the main issues related to the people in the Aleru constituency such as roads, buildings, irrigation water, drinking water, housing construction, and revenue issues in the meeting and asked the ministers to take necessary steps to resolve them.“Giving priority to public issues, Beerla Ayilaiah suggested that the officials of all departments should work in coordination and further accelerate the development of the joint Nalgonda district.

Free Delivery Services at Neelima Hospital for Uppal Residents

MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Discusses with Palla Rajeshwar Reddy““UPPAL , AUGUST 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy has taken another significant step towards providing better healthcare services to the people of the Uppal constituency. He held discussions with Jangaon MLA Palla Rajeshwar Reddy regarding the free medical services being provided at Neelima Hospital.In particular, Bandari Lakshma Reddy requested that free delivery services, which would be highly beneficial to poor and middle-class families, also be made available to residents of the Uppal constituency.“The MLA requested Palla Rajeshwar Reddy to facilitate a special arrangement through which people from Uppal constituency could avail themselves of the free medical services currently being provided at Neelima Hospital. He also sought an arrangement allowing beneficiaries to receive recommendations through a letter from the Uppal MLA's office.“Palla Rajeshwar Reddy responded positively to the request and assured that the necessary cooperation would be extended to ensure that residents of the Uppal constituency can also avail themselves of free delivery services at Neelima Hospital.“Bandari Lakshma Reddy expressed his gratitude to Palla Rajeshwar Reddy for responding positively to his request. If implemented, the facility is expected to significantly reduce the financial burden of pregnancy and childbirth-related medical expenses for poor and middle-class families in the Uppal constituency.“The MLA said that free delivery services would provide considerable relief to families who otherwise have to spend large amounts on



childbirth at private hospitals. He stated that his objective is to ensure that quality healthcare is accessible to every family and that no one should face difficulties in accessing medical treatment due to financial constraints.“He further said that every available opportunity would be utilized to strengthen healthcare support for economically weaker sections. Bandari Lakshma Reddy expressed hope that making free delivery services available to Uppal residents through Neelima Hospital would greatly benefit pregnant women, women requiring maternity care, and their families. He urged the people of the constituency to make the best use of the facility.

What do Gujarat student leaders want? Question after Gen Z protests

Gujarat's universities may have lost student union elections, but not student politics. In fact, the students' focus has moved on to paper leaks, fee hikes, and other issues concerning their academics. The recent protests led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) in Delhi's Jantar Mantar, which eventually led to Dharmendra Pradhan resigning as the Union Education Minister, have brought the spotlight back on students in politics.At an event in Ahmedabad on August 21, National Secretary of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the RSS's student arm, Shravan B Raj said, “Gen Z in India does not want to be cockroaches; they want to be lions,” in an indirect reference to the Jantar Mantar protests.Several student leaders agree that campus elections should return.

The Gujarat University, the state's largest, saw its last elections in 2020, when the NSUI won six of the eight senate seats. The two others went to the ABVP.Devansh Brahmhatt, 26, the ABVP's Gujarat State Secretary, said students didn't lose interest in politics, and, in fact, they participated enthusiastically when the last elections were held.“Gen Z doesn't believe in enduring it. They won't tolerate it (injustice),” he said.Brahmbhatt said complaints regarding the Gujarat Common Admission Service (a centralised admission system for colleges across the state), delayed government scholarships, and shortages of teach-

ers in state universities and grant-in-aid colleges were some of the most common issues reaching the ABVP.Meanwhile, Rahul Tharoda, 29, Gujarat National Students' Union of India General Secretary (NSUI) and Gujarat University Senate member, said students now were more focused on academics and less willing to join political organisations. The NSUI, therefore, was taking its recruitment efforts to colleges, hostels and paying guest accommodations, he said.He criticised the GCAS admission process, saying it can stretch over months and eat into teaching, examination and extracurricular time. He also pointed out the lack of permanent faculty members, water problems and inadequate lectures in affiliated colleges.Dharmik Mathukiya, an architect and state president of Association of Students for Alternative Politics (the AAP's student wing) Gujarat, said student elections were discontinued in mainstream institutions in Gujarat because of “violence and clashes associated with student politics”, but he also argued for how other states have continued to hold the elections.“If you don't hold elections, then you can never understand what student rights are, what students want, what problems they are facing.These issues will never reach the government,” said Mathukiya. Instead of cancelling elections, he suggested increasing security.Nitish M Nair, 32, former state secretary of Students' Federation of India (SFI) Gujarat and an advocate

How a Pune wildlife expert fought against Guillain-Barré Syndrome

GNS News Agency, August 29

Using a walker, 38-year-old Sushil Chikane navigates his way into a popular bistro on the Baner-Pashan Link Road. There is a tremor in his hand, but not a drop spills from his cup of coffee. “The only thing that I cannot do to-day is climb steps without a walker or some assistance. A big thing that we achieved yesterday was to get up if I fall. It might take half an hour, but I will get up on my own,” he says.On November 7, 2025, Chikane, a wilderness expert, uploaded a video on social media, captioned, “Trapped in my body, but finally waking up....” To the song The Hanging Tree, the video begins with a shot of Chikane bundled in a wheelchair. It goes on to show him immobilised in a hospital bed, a tube for food running through his nose. There are photos of doctors and physiotherapists helping him with basic actions, such as lifting a hand. It was the first of many intimate posts on an illness that, for hundreds of people, was mired in confusion and ignorance.

Sushil Chikane After being diagnosed with GBS, Sushil Chikane uploaded a video in 2025, captioned, “Trapped in my body, but finally waking up....”The year 2025 had started in Pune with an outbreak of the Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS), a rare neurological disorder in which the body’s immune system begins to attack the peripheral nerves. By January 22, 2025, Pune had reported more than 110 suspected cases of GBS.Two days after the Ganeshotsav Visarjan in September that year, Chikane, the director of the travel company Journeys, had woken up to a normal day in Bavdhan. He had recently returned from a three-month trip in Sikkim, where he was setting up a homestay with a Tibetan Buddhist monk. He had also visited Ladakh to climb the Himalayas. Four days earlier, he was also hiking in the Western Ghats, looking for snakes.

Sushil Chikane Sushil Chikane was diagnosed with GBS after he returned from a three-month trip in Sikkim, where he was setting up a homestay with a Tibetan Buddhist monk. But that day, working on a video from one of these trips, Chikane realised that he could not click the mouse on his computer. “By the evening, I couldn’t get up from my study chair. I realised that the entire body shutting down was not normal,” says Chikane.He was diagnosed with GBS. One and a half months later, Chikane was “crying every day, cursing myself, the medical system, everybody around me”. He was not able to go to the washroom by himself or even turn in his bed. “Except for my bowels and my breathing, I had no control over anything. Even the fingers didn’t move, the eyelids didn’t close,” he says.One day at 5 am from a sanitised hospital room, Chikane managed to make a call to his mother, crying as he told her that he had not slept for 74 hours, though he desperately wanted to. Later that day, as his entire family gathered around his bed, his mother, Kumudini Chikane, a former school teacher,

told him, “I did not raise you as a single parent so that you can want to die.”

It was at that moment that Chikane decided to fight back. As the first step, he returned to the mountains in his mind. “When I started mountaineering, I was told, ‘never look at a peak as this will stress you out’. You look down, and take one step at a time,” he says. In his years at Fergusson College, Chikane had worked as a mountain guide to make money. Following the rules of the mountains, now, he stopped asking doctors when he would go back to work. He stopped asking if he would ever be fine.“I had become a wilderness traveller because it would bring a change in my life and in society. That’s why I work with grassroots organisations rather than big corporations. I want to make a social impact. Similarly motivated, I decided to reach out to others who were impacted by the horrors of GBS. I began a project to document my story on social media,” he says.Chikane had heard of GBS patients being wrongly treated for arthritis. A patient even lost her vision. Chikane roped in his sister, Suchitra Chikane, and his nine-year-old nephew, Naksh Chikane, to take photos and shoot videos to help with the posts.Most of his Instagram stories are about the mental issues that come with GBS. “Nobody addresses emotions. Everybody talks about the medical factors,” he says. A heartwarming post shows Chikane struggling to move as a voice-over says, “According to all aerodynamic laws, the bumblebee cannot fly as its body weight is not in direct proportion to its wingspan. But, ignoring these laws, the bumblebee flies anyway.”He wrote about how frustrated he felt when he couldn’t curl his fingers. He talked about the vital role of physiotherapy. Even in the mountains, there are days when you feel that nothing is working. “You want to go back. You have to let that day pass because, maybe, the next day is better,” he says. People began to message him, and conversations began, including how patients become vulnerable to quacks and superstition.As his condition improved, Chikane wrote every day. “People told me that they were taking screenshots of my stories and forwarding these. Strangers got in touch with me with varied experiences. There was concern, but also curiosity about how a fit and active guy like me could get GBS. Some people cried,” he says.A few months later, Chikane was working on a long-pending book on a favourite creature, the snakes of the Andaman Islands. “People see snakes but don’t know what to do with them. In case a snake bites, they don’t know which snake it was. We had thought of writing a book for them. Whether we make money from the book was never important. We wanted to create a directory that people could use for the Andaman Islands,” he says. With Ganeshotsav around the corner, Chikae is ready to celebrate. Last week, he took his first flight for his first safari to Jhalana Leopard Reserve. “I will be back in the wilderness soon,” he says.

Nepal flood survivors from Tamil Nadu arrive in Chennai after narrow escape

GNS News Agency, August 29

Chennai: Tearful embraces, hushed prayers and narrow escapes marked the scene at the airport here as Nepal flood survivors arrived safely.Twenty-one pilgrims from Tamil Nadu, caught in the jaws of a catastrophic disaster in Nepal, set foot on home soil, carrying with them memories of horror and astonishment at having survived.The group was part of a larger contingent undertaking the sacred Kailash Manasarovar Yatra when tragedy struck on August 26. A sudden, violent burst of flash floods and massive landslides tore through the mountainous Rasuwagadhi region near the Nepal-China border, transforming a serene spiritual journey into a desperate fight for life.“It felt like a tsunami falling from the mountains,” said one survivor, trembling as she embraced her weeping family. “Within seconds, the water swept away everything. The entire market area in Timure disappeared right before our eyes,” she said.The disaster claimed numerous lives and left hundreds missing across the region, including several other Indian travellers. For the Tamil Nadu pilgrims, safety came in the form of a gruelling trek to a border police outpost, where local authorities managed to shelter them before facilitating their transit to Kathmandu.

Through coordinated efforts between central and state officials, the group was flown back via New Delhi from Kathmandu and landed in Chennai on an Air India flight on Friday night. They were received at the airport by state Ministers N Anand (Rural Development and Water Resources) and D Sarathkumar (Human Resources and Management), who oversaw their immediate welfare and transport home.For these 21 survivors, the relief of returning home is inextricably bound to the haunting memory of a raging river

that took so much in mere moments.Some of the survivors shared stories of the devastation they witnessed, noting that entire market areas in Timure were swept away in moments. The incident, which triggered massive landslides and flooding, claimed numerous lives and left hundreds missing, including other Indian travellers.Later, speaking to reporters, Anand said four Tamil Nadu ministers sent to Delhi on the instructions of Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay were coordinating well in the national capital.“Our efforts will continue till everyone is brought back home safely,” he said.Two women from Tiruchirappalli, Vallinayaki and Karpagam, recounted their harrowing experience of surviving a natural disaster in Nepal.They were travelling in a bus towards the Chinese border when they encountered a massive landslide. They described seeing a thick, smoke-like cloud of mud and debris, resembling wet concrete, rushing down the mountain.With no immediate external help, the 21 passengers on their bus worked together to survive. They escaped through the driver’s side and climbed steep, rugged mountain terrain. When some women struggled to climb, they used a sari to pull each other to safety before help finally came, they said.They eventually reached a rescue centre after an arduous two-and-a-half-hour climb through difficult, pathless terrain. The group emphasised the critical role played by the Nepal Army and local authorities in their rescue. They also credited the Tamil Nadu and Central governments for coordinating swift rescue efforts and providing assistance with travel and documentation. The survivors expressed deep gratitude for their miraculous escape but requested privacy and sensitivity regarding others who are yet to be traced, noting that constant inquiries are difficult for the families involved.

Bengaluru hacker denied bail over ED evidence of Rs 288 crore money trail



The court considered prima facie evidence against Sriki—who moved with sons of top politicians in Bengaluru between 2017 and 2021 and allegedly hacked cryptocurrency exchanges, poker and gaming sites, and state e-tender portals—while rejecting his bail plea.

A 30-year-old Bengaluru hacker at the centre of an alleged corruption nexus involving police and politicians amassed over Rs 288 crore through hacking activities, a special court for money-laundering cases noted this week while rejecting his bail plea.“The investigation has quantified the alleged proceeds of crime at approximately Rs 288,96,54,677,” the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court noted in its August 27 order, rejecting the bail pleas of hacker Srikrishna Ramesh alias Sriki and his ac-

countant Robin Khandelwal.Sriki has been in jail for three months after being arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in May.The court considered prima facie evidence against Sriki—who moved with sons of top politicians in Bengaluru between 2017 and 2021 and allegedly hacked cryptocurrency exchanges, poker and gaming sites, and state e-tender portals—while rejecting his bail plea.The court said that “the material relied upon by the prosecution prima-facie indicates his alleged involvement in generating the proceeds through hacking activities and thereafter in their possession, transfer, concealment and utilisation. Thus, the role attributed to the petitioner is neither peripheral nor incidental.”The ED has specifically alleged that the proceeds of crime were routed through multiple wallets and intermediary channels and that technologies such as mixers and CoinJoin were used for concealing or obfuscating the trail of the virtual digital assets. It is further alleged that the proceeds were utilised towards online betting and gambling, hotel accommodation, travel, luxury expenditure and payments to associates,” the court noted.The court said that the contention that no proceeds of crime were recovered or attached from the petitioner’s physical possession “does not, by itself, demolish the prosecution case”. “The allegations relate substantially to virtual digital assets, which by nature are capable of being transferred through digital wallets and various cryptocurrency platforms,” it added. The special court also pointed out that Sriki continued to indulge in illegal activities even after the Bengaluru police arrested him in 2020 for hacking-related offences.Sriki claimed that he had responded to over 30 summonses issued by the ED over five years and argued that his arrest on May 8 was unwarranted given his cooperation with the central agency.

What do Gujarat student leaders want? Question after Gen Z protests

Gujarat’s universities may have lost student union elections, but not student politics. In fact, the students’ focus has moved on to paper leaks, fee hikes, and other issues concerning their academics. The recent protests led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) in Delhi’s Jantar Mantar, which eventually led to Dharmendra Pradhan resigning as the Union Education Minister, have brought the spotlight back on students in politics.At an event in Ahmedabad on August 21, National Secretary of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the RSS’s student arm, Shravan B Raj said, “Gen Z in India does not want to be cockroaches; they want to be lions,” in an indirect reference to the Jantar Mantar protests.

Several student leaders agree that campus elections should return. The Gujarat University, the state’s largest, saw its last elections in 2020, when the NSUI won six of the eight senate seats. The two others went to the ABVP.Devansh Brahmhatt, 26, the ABVP’s Gujarat State Secretary, said students didn’t lose interest in politics, and, in fact, they participated enthusiastically when the last elections were held.“Gen Z doesn’t believe in enduring it. They won’t tolerate it (injustice),” he said.Brahmhatt said complaints regarding the Gujarat Common Admission Service (a centralised admission system for colleges across the state), delayed government scholarships, and shortages of teachers in state universities and grant-in-aid colleges were some of the most common issues reaching the ABVP.

Meanwhile, Rahul Tharoda, 29, Gujarat National Students’ Union of India General Secretary (NSUI) and Gujarat University Senate member, said students now were more focused on academics and less willing to join political organisations. The NSUI, therefore, was taking its recruitment efforts to colleges, hostels and paying guest accommodations, he said.He criticised the GCAS admission process, saying it can stretch over months and eat into teaching, examination and extracurricular time. He also pointed out the lack of permanent faculty members, water problems and inadequate lectures in affiliated colleges.Dharmik Mathukiya, an architect and state president of Association of Students for Alternative Politics (the AAP’s student wing) Gujarat, said student elections were discontinued in mainstream institutions in Gujarat because of “violence and clashes associated with student politics”, but he also argued for how other states have continued to hold the elections.“If you don’t hold elections, then you can never understand what student rights are, what students want, what problems they are facing.These issues will never reach the government,” said Mathukiya. Instead of cancelling elections, he suggested increasing security.

Nitish M Nair, 32, former state secretary of Students’ Federation of India (SFI) Gujarat and an advocate, believes Gujarat’s student movement had “weakened” over time, and pointed to the 1974 Navnirman Movement as an example of how powerful student mobilisation could become.Satyasha Leuva, 27, State Secretary of SFI Gujarat and an advocate, said SFI worked around students’ rights, social reforms and issues affecting marginalised sections.On the CJP protests, Tharoda said, the government was “scared of students coming onto the streets”.ABVP’s Brahmhatt said, “The movement of the students was right. But... political parties came there and started speaking about the restoration of Article 370,” he said, adding that issues such as LGBTQ+ rights and religious slogans had nothing to do with the NEET protest.According to Brahmhatt, the ABVP did protest on the NEET paper leak “outside the National Testing Agency’s office on May 13, a day after the NEET paper leak was confirmed, and demanded the NTA director’s resignation and fast-track courts”. He said that protest drew as heavy a security presence as the later Jantar Mantar demonstration but “almost no media coverage”.However, Brahmhatt was clear that violence on campus should not happen.Brahmhatt, an MSU Baroda gold medalist now pursuing a PhD, explicitly said that he did not intend to join the BJP full-time. “I am doing my PhD. My mind is set that going forward I want to become a professor.”From campus to party officesSeveral in the current leadership of the BJP and the Congress have seen a similar progression: a cam-

pus issue led them to a student organisation; organisational work gave them responsibilities and networks; those networks eventually opened a path for them into mainstream politics.Congress Spokesperson Manish Doshi joined the NSUI in 1990 while studying engineering at LD College of Engineering, where a protest over the hostel mess bill led to the Nav Nirman agitation in 1974. He said he came from a simple, rural family with no political background.“I joined the NSUI to fight for campus issues,” he said. The issues were often ordinary ones: hostel facilities, fees, examinations and access to university authorities. He recalled campaigns against excessive fees charged by private institutions, including an MBA/MCA fee-refund agitation over more than ?17 crore charged without AICTE approval and against donation-based admissions in homeopathy colleges, which he credits with today’s centralised single-window admission system in Gujarat.“These issues required long-term connection and consistent effort,” Doshi said. “The main thing is staying connected with the campus, representing issues properly to administrators and principals.”

That process took him from NSUI worker to district president in Surendranagar, then state general secretary, then into Youth Congress and mainstream Congress politics. He credits senior Congress figures — Prabodh Raval, former Gujarat Congress president and education minister; former chief minister Amarsinh Chaudhary; Ahmed Patel; Arvind Sanghvi; and Sanat Mehta — with guiding him along the way.Doshi estimated that about half of the Congress party’s active young leaders have NSUI or Youth Congress background.“Elections are essential for developing new campus leadership,” he said. “If there are issues, regulate or control them, but don’t suppress student representation entirely.”Dr Indravijaysinh Gohil, now Working President of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee, entered the NSUI in 2001 after helping fellow students following the 2001 Bhuj earthquake. He rose to become the NSUI state president (2003-2009). He was then the first elected president of the Gujarat Pradesh Youth Congress in 2009, under an internal-election system introduced nationally by Rahul Gandhi. He noted that former Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot was NSUI’s first state president.Bhavik Solanki, 34, a former NSUI and Youth Congress worker now working at the block level for the party, described a more combative apprenticeship — including, by his own account, “vandalising a college campus and locking a principal in his office during a 2013-14 protest”. He said he currently has seven FIRs against him, all linked to protests, effigy-burnings and road blockades. He credited Doshi and Gohil as his political mentors.Dr Anil Patel, who joined the Bharatiya Jan Sangh in 1974 and has held party and government positions continuously since, including Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation councillor (2000-2010), spent only about six months in the ABVP before moving directly into full-time party organisational work. Even so, he described ABVP as the training ground the BJP relied on.Union Home and Co-operation Minister Amit Shah is seen among the party’s strongest leaders with roots in the ABVP.Before Naresh Desai became Gujarat state general secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), he was a student at Bhavan’s College, where a lack of basic facilities and “nuisance elements” on campus pushed him towards ABVP.Desai joined the ABVP in 2010 at Bhavan’s College, where he said students faced fee-related problems, inadequate sports facilities and “nuisance elements”. The ABVP, he said, offered a path to fix those problems. “The ABVP is an organisation that teaches the youth to work for the nation... They work on that ideology, along with the Hindutva ideology, which I also liked.”His proudest achievement is keeping the 2015 Patidar, Thakor and Dalit agitations from entering college campuses. By 2019, he had moved into the BJP; in 2021, he became the BJYM’s state general secretary. He credited MLAs Amit Thaker and Kaushik Jain, former BJP general secretary Pradipsinh Vaghela, former BJYM president Rutvij Patel, general secretary Prashant Korat and Hemang Joshi for his riseDesai puts the conversion rate from ABVP into full-time BJP politics at roughly 10 percent, with the rest moving onto other Sangh-affiliated organisations, business or employment.

“During the meeting, the committee brought to the Chief Minister’s attention the major demands of Telangana agitators, including 250-square-yard residential plots, Aasara pensions, health cards, free travel facilities in RTC buses, and official recognition for employees who participated in the Telangana movement, among other demands.“The committee members expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for constituting the Telangana Agitators’ Identification Committee through G.O. No. 679, in accordance with the assurance given in the election manifesto, and for responding positively to the welfare demands of Telangana agitators.“Committee Chairman Dr. K. Keshava Rao, Professor M. Kodandaram, Mote Shobhan Reddy and S. Ramulu Naik thanked Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for his positive response and support towards the Telangana agitators.

Expedite the Identification Process of Telangana Agitators:

CM Revanth Reddy“Telangana Agitators’ Identification Committee Meets CM Revanth Reddy“



“Tarnaka, August29 (INDIAN CHORNICLE).“Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy directed officials to expedite the process of identifying Telangana agitators and ensure that the exercise is completed without any delay.“A delegation of the Telangana Agitators’ Identification Committee, led by its Chairman Dr. K. Keshava Rao (KK), met Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat on Saturday and discussed various issues concerning the identification and welfare of Telangana agitators.“The meeting was attended by MLC Professor M. Kodandaram, Committee Executive Member Mote Shobhan Reddy, and former MLC S. Ramulu Naik.“

The committee briefed the Chief Minister on the details of the extensive consultations recently held at the Amaraveerula Smaraka Chihnam (Amaradeepam) in Hyderabad. The committee informed the Chief Minister that more than 13,000 Telangana agitators, along with representatives of various JACs, people’s organisations, poets, artists and women activists, participated in the consultations.“The committee submitted to the Chief Minister the opinions and representations collected from the agitators, along with a draft report on the classification of Telangana agitators.“The committee stated that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy emphasised the need to recognise the sacrifices made by Telangana agitators for the achievement of statehood and to accord them due honour and respect.“The Chief Minister instructed officials to complete



the exercise related to the identification and welfare of the agitators at the earliest without any delay. He also directed officials to extend full cooperation to the committee in establishing an official website and portal for the identification process, receiving digital applications, coordinating the process at the district level, and providing the necessary administrative resources.“The meeting was attended by Chief Minister’s Special Chief Secretary V. Seshadri, IAS; Chief Minister’s Secretary Chandrasekhara Reddy, IAS; V.P. Gautam, IAS; S. Sridhar, IAS; Chief Minister’s OSDs and other senior officials.

“During the meeting, the committee brought to the Chief Minister’s attention the major demands of Telangana agitators, including 250-square-yard residential plots, Aasara pensions, health cards, free travel facilities in RTC buses, and official recognition for employees who participated in the Telangana movement, among other demands.“The committee members expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for constituting the Telangana Agitators’ Identification Committee through G.O. No. 679, in accordance with the assurance given in the election manifesto, and for responding positively to the welfare demands of Telangana agitators.“Committee Chairman Dr. K. Keshava Rao, Professor M. Kodandaram, Mote Shobhan Reddy and S. Ramulu Naik thanked Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for his positive response and support towards the Telangana agitators.

She gave her bank account details to ‘friend’. Kills self after multiple police cases



GNS News Agency, August 29

A 38-year-old woman from Thane in Maharashtra, who had given her bank account details to a friend from her native place, committed suicide on Tuesday, August 25, after she found that multiple cases were registered against her. The account was allegedly being used for cybercrime. The deceased was Devika Armugam Pandaram, a resident of Sairam Society in Dombivli (East). Officials from the Churu Cyber Cell police station in Rajasthan had visited Devika Pandaram's home on August 8 and served her a notice to appear for questioning in a case registered under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Information Technology Act. Her bank account in the Bank of Maharashtra

was being used in an online fraud, they said.

Seeking clarification, Devika Pandaram approached the Cyber Crime Department at the Thane Police Commissionerate, where she was informed that multiple cyber fraud cases had been registered against her across several states, including Haryana, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu. Worried over the multiple cases that would require her to travel to various states for questioning, Pandaram used a sharp blade to cut her wrist and throat at around 4 pm the same day the police visited her home. Relatives rushed her to a nearby private hospital, from where she was referred to the municipal-run Shastri Nagar Hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead, they added. ACP Suhas Hemade, Thane City Police, told The Indian Express, "Her family has said that she had provided her bank account details to a friend from her native place. She did odd jobs, and her family says she was not aware what her friend was doing with her bank account." ACP Hemade said that the police will be checking if she received any commission from her friend for allowing him to use her bank account. An FIR will be registered against the 'friend' if Devika's family files a complaint. Usually in mule accounts – accounts used to move fraudulently obtained money – the person gives access to their bank account in exchange for money. In some cases, however, the person is unaware that the account is being used for fraud.

After Karnataka amends Bengaluru mobility law, BJP's Tejasvi Surya writes to Governor

GNS News Agency, August 29

The BMLTA (Amendment) Bill, 2026, to amend Section 19 of the BMLTA Act of 2022, which came into force in 2023 after being introduced by the previous BJP government, was passed by the Karnataka legislature Monday without a debate. "It has been reported that this provision would have the effect of retrospectively legitimising mega projects valued at nearly Rs 1 lakh crore, including the Tunnel Road Project, estimated to cost over Rs 40,000 crore, without the institutional scrutiny and due process envisaged under the BMLTA framework," the BJP MP said in the letter to the Governor.

"The intent of the parent legislation enacted in 2022 cannot be retrospectively altered in a manner that defeats the safeguards and institutional oversight it was intended to establish," Surya further contended. The amended BMLTA Act, 2026, which introduces a new Subsection 6 under Section 19, is seen as facilitating major Bengaluru infrastructure projects that had previously been criticised by BMLTA, like a 16.75 km-long city road tunnel project pushed by Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar. According to the amended Section 19 of the BMLTA Act, "all projects initiated during the period commencing from the date of commencement of the Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority Act, 2022 (Karnataka Act 6 of 2023) and ending immediately before the date of notification of the Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority Rules, 2026... shall be deemed to have been taken, prepared, undertaken or instituted, as the case may be, under this Act." The amendment is necessary "to ensure continuity in administrative decision-making in view of the imminent and pressing need to decongest traffic and address the mounting mobility challenges in Bengaluru," the new law states in its statement of reasons. Prior to the recent amendment, Section 19 of the BMLTA Act, 2022, said the BMLTA had the power "to approve all major Urban Transport projects proposed" for Bengaluru "from the perspective of consistency with the Comprehensive Mobility Plan" in a time-bound manner. "No

authority, agency, department under the state government shall initiate any public, private or public-private partnership project concerning Urban Mobility without obtaining prior approval of the Authority. The Approval of the Authority shall be necessary to seek any financial assistance..." from the state government, external aid agencies and the Centre, says Subsection 2 of Section 19 of the BMLTA Act of 2022.

The Bengaluru tunnel road project incidentally envisages 40 per cent government funding. The amended law is seen as also circumventing controversial rules issued by the BMLTA on January 3, 2026, to facilitate retrospective clearances for big-ticket Bengaluru mobility projects – flyovers, tunnel roads, etc – that did not undergo the due process of scrutiny and analysis by state urban mobility experts and agencies. The law has come amid a challenge by citizens in the Karnataka High Court to the rules framed in January 2026.

Last year, the BMLTA, in a review of the feasibility of the 16.75 km tunnel road project, had slammed the proposal – first floated by the then deputy CM and Bengaluru development minister D K Shivakumar – for allegedly not aligning with the Metro-centric Comprehensive Mobility Plan for Bengaluru, the city's Climate Action Plan or the National Urban Transport Policy (NUTP). The BMLTA review of the tunnel road said the Comprehensive Mobility Plan for Bengaluru targets a 70 per cent share for public transport by 2035 and that tunnel roads would encourage car-based commuting instead of usage of public transport. One of the major criticisms of the proposed north-south tunnel road project in Bengaluru is the absence of a scientific travel demand assessment. The BMLTA said the feasibility study ignored interactions with other major infrastructure projects, such as Metro Phases 2A, 2B, 3, and 3A, suburban rail corridors, and the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) policy. "I hope BMLTA's sound advice is heeded and the government drops the unscientific car-only Tunnel Road. Strengthening public transport is the only proven way forward for Bengaluru," urban mobility expert Satya Arikutharam said at the time.

Bengaluru chemist murder: Suspected arms maker nabbed after police encounter



GNS News Agency, August 29

weapon maker Suspected arms maker Syed Zeeshan who received bullet injuries in the police encounter; (top right) the weapon he used to attack the police; (bottom right) chilli powder used by the accused. A suspected arms maker and an associate of one of the accused in the murder of a medical shop owner in Bengaluru's Madiwala was shot in the right leg after he allegedly attacked a police constable with a sharp-edged weapon and threw chilli powder at a police team early on Friday. The suspect, identified as Syed Zeeshan, 34, a resident of Subhash Nagar, was being traced by the police in connection with the murder of pharmacist Syed Suhail, who was hacked to death with machetes in the middle of a traffic jam in Bengaluru on August 22. According to the police, Zeeshan had sharpened the machetes allegedly used in the attack.

He was nabbed in an encounter near Somasandrapalya Lake around 12.50 am, the police said, adding that Zeeshan was an associate of Adil Akmal, one of the accused arrested in the Suhail murder case. Apart from Akmal, the police had arrested Arbaz, Shaan, Yasin, Rafiullah, and Syed Farhan in connection with Suhail's killing, which the investigators suspect was carried out to avenge the killing of a rowdy-sheeter, Shabbir, in January. Suhail himself was not an accused in that case, though his brothers Syed Kaleem and Nazeer were arrested in connection with Shabbir's murder, said an officer. The police suspect that the two cases are linked to a gang rivalry over control of the Bandepalya area.

Following a tip-off, Inspector Manjunath R V deputed sub-inspector Sachin Gowda and a team to trace Zeeshan. They located him near Somasandrapalya Lake sometime after Thursday midnight. According to a senior police officer, Zeeshan brandished a sharp-edged weapon when the police tried to apprehend him. He allegedly attacked a police constable in the team, injuring his left hand. The situation escalated when Zeeshan allegedly took out chilli powder

and threw it at the policemen before attempting to attack them again. A senior police officer said, "He continued to pose a threat. The sub-inspector first fired a warning shot and asked him to surrender. When he continued to attack the police, the officer fired another round, hitting him in the right leg." Zeeshan and the constable were taken to a hospital in Jayanagar, and the two are reportedly out of danger, the police said. The police have seized the two-wheeler allegedly used by Zeeshan and three weapons. A forensic team and scene-of-crime personnel visited the spot. The police have registered a case for attempt to murder, using criminal force against a government servant, breach of public peace, and carrying prohibited arms.

Karnataka teachers suspended over RSS march, Priyank Kharge backs action

Bengaluru: Karnataka Home, IT and BT Minister Priyank Kharge on Friday backed the suspension of two government school teachers in Yadgir district for allegedly participating in a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) route march, saying the Education Department was within its rights to take action if it found their participation in the programme warranted disciplinary proceedings.

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Kharge stated, "That's left to the Education Department. If someone is participating in some event and the department sees it is fit to take action, they will initiate action. Why should our employees take part in the programme of an unregistered organisation?" Kharge asked. The remarks came after the Deputy Director of the Department of School Education in Yadgir issued an order suspending two government teachers for allegedly participating in an RSS route march held on October 10, 2025, after nearly 10 months.

The suspended teachers have been identified as Annasaheb Deshmukh, Head Master of the Government Junior Primary School in Kuppi, Surapura, and Gururaja Joshi, a teacher at the Government Girls Higher Primary School in Hunasagi, also in Surapura taluk of Yadgir district. According to the suspension order, the two teachers were found to have participated in an RSS route march while serving as government employees. The action was initiated following a complaint filed by Jummanna Gudimani, Yadgir district president of the Ambedkar Swabhimani Sene.

Land controversies mount for Congress government in Telangana



GNS News Agency, August 29 Hyderabad: Since the Congress government came to power in 2023, it has faced severe criticism over acquiring farmers' lands, auctioning government lands and making plans to utilise government properties for various purposes. Several of the State government's initiatives have been mired in controversy, particularly over its unilateral decisions and plans. From Lagacherla and Kancha Gachibowli to colonies along the Musi riverbanks and the proposed Future City, the government has faced criticism over its focus on acquiring and utilising large parcels of land.

Amid the controversy over the inclusion of several private properties under the prohibited 22-A list, the State government has triggered another row with its plans to utilise lands belonging to the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) and polytechnic colleges. The government is planning to allot six acres of prime TGSRTC land at RTC Crossroads to the Housing department for the construction of Indiramma Towers. The proposal has drawn strong criticism from RTC unions. The government should construct houses for the poor and needy, but that does not mean it can divert RTC lands. Previous governments allotted lands to the corporation to meet its future requirements.

If these lands are diverted for other purposes, the corporation may not even have enough space to park its buses in the days to come," said a member of the RTC Employees Union.

The government's proposal to allot RTC land to the Housing department has also raised questions as it had earlier assured employees that the corporation would be merged with the government. "Instead of fulfilling the promises made to RTC employees, the government is eyeing the corporation's vast land holdings," the union member said. Similarly, the Telangana Polytechnic Joint Action Committee has alleged that the government is attempting to divert large parcels of land owned by polytechnic colleges for commercial development under the aegis of the Young India Skills University (YISU). The committee said using these lands for commercial purposes would leave colleges without adequate space to establish laboratories, research and development centres and other infrastructure. It alleged that this was one of the objectives behind the government's plans to merge polytechnic colleges with YISU. Interestingly, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, while serving as TPCC president in 2021, had strongly opposed the then BRS government's plans to auction government lands. Contrary to those objections, however, the Congress government has since auctioned several plots owned by the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGILC). Now, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) is also preparing to auction its lands, primarily to generate revenue for the government. Irrespective of the purpose, the State government should discuss its plans with the stakeholders and take them into confidence. If RTC unions or polytechnic staff and students have any apprehensions, the government should clear them and protect their interests, said Forum for Good Governance president M Padmanabha Reddy. "Development is welcomed but the government needs to follow a procedure and cannot take unilateral decisions," he said.

Six months of shelter, skill training: Gujarat draws up plan to free 4 cities of beggary

GNS News Agency, August 29 Gujarat has launched a rehabilitation initiative to make Vadodara, Gir Somnath, Ekta Nagar and Pavagadh cities free of beggary. The identified individuals and families will be provided shelter for up to six months, documentation, skill training and employment support as part of the initiative, as per a government release. They will "undergo health screening, receive assistance in obtaining essential identity and welfare documents, and be given employment-oriented training before efforts to help them find work", it stated.

The roadmap was discussed at a meeting, chaired by Mona Khandhar, Additional Secretary, Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, in Vadodara, held to review and strengthen the implementation of the Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) scheme. Vadodara, Gir Somnath, Ekta Nagar and Pavagadh are among 25 districts and locations across the country that have performed well in the first phase of the Centre's campaign. The next phase will focus on making these locations free of beggary through a coordinated rehabilitation programme. The initiative will involve municipal bodies, district administrations, health departments, social security agencies and employment authorities. Officials will identify people engaged in begging and shift them to designated shelter facilities, where their essential documents such as Aadhaar cards, ration cards and Ayushman cards can be prepared.

Addressing the meeting, Vadodara Police Commissioner Narasimha Kumar said rehabilitation would have to take into account the fact that people engaged in begging were often part of the same family. He suggested that family members should, as far as possible, be accommodated together in shelters. He also stressed that the government's



responsibility should not end with providing training and employment, the release said. Komar said officials must carry out sustained follow-up to ensure that those rehabilitated are able to remain in their jobs and do not return to begging. Khandhar said the families identified would first undergo health screening after being shifted to shelters. During their stay, officials will assist them in securing identity and welfare documents and provide skill development and employment-oriented training. The rehabilitation plan envisages keeping such families in shelters for six months, during which they will receive support aimed at helping them become financially independent. Vadodara Municipal Commissioner Arun Mahesh Babu said the civic body had already identified locations in the city where begging is prevalent. The Vadodara Municipal Corporation currently runs around eight shelter homes and plans to strengthen the network. The meeting also reviewed the preparedness of administrations in Panchmahal, Narmada and Gir Somnath, which joined the discussions online.

Delhi government plans to appoint transaction advisor to assess land, building assets



Delhi government is planning to engage a professional transaction advisor to conduct a comprehensive assessment of its land and building assets, which can be redeveloped and commercially utilised. According to officials, the aim is to assess the existing assets and redevelop it for optimal commercial utilisation. "It will also help in identification of revenue-enhancement opportunities and development of financially viable models for under-utilised assets," said an official. These assets include Varunalaya/ Jhandewalan office premises as well as residential housing at Haiderpur and Lajpat Nagar.

"The objective is to unlock the value of DJB's existing assets and generate additional sustainable revenue without compromising operational requirements," said the official. The government, through the IT department, had developed a portal named Delhi Asset Management Information System (DAMIS) — a centralised, updated, digital and GIS enabled repository of all government owned land and properties. Under this, the government urged all its departments to submit details of land parcels and properties under them so that it can use the same to build schools and hospitals, among others. Various departments have already uploaded details of nearly 14,000 properties on the DAMIS, said officials. Departments were also asked to submit details on type of ownership — acquired, transferred, leased or freehold — the current status of the asset (in use, vacant, damaged, under repairs, etc.), including its use (industrial, commercial, residential), land use as per the Delhi Master Plan and whether a boundary wall exists in the area. Further, departments have been asked to submit the size of the land in square metre, and if there is a building, details regarding its built-up area, plinth area, year of construction and type of construction. Also, encumbrance sta-

tus — whether the land is free from encumbrance, encroached or under litigation — has been sought. Details on the shape of the plot, demarcation status, road connectivity or distance from the nearest road, custodian of the land, and any currently proposed development plans have also been requested, officials said. According to officials, DAMIS allows departments and agencies to easily enter details of land parcels and properties, generate customized reports and use high-resolution satellite imagery to create GIS based maps for spatial visualisation and analysis. Over 100 departments, offices, institutions and other entities come under the Delhi Government.

Family members can represent senior citizens, PwD electors responding to notices: Telangana CEO

Hyderabad: Adult family members can appear on behalf of senior citizens, persons with disabilities, sick electors and overseas electors who have received notices, and submit the documents or information required for their disposal, Telangana Chief Electoral Officer C Sudarshan Reddy said.

In an official communication sent to the Commissioner of GHMC and District Election Officer (DEO), Hyderabad, as well as all other District Collectors and DEOs, the CEO directed them to issue necessary instructions to Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs). The CEO also stated in the communication that EROs and AEROs must explain this decision to representatives of political parties during their weekly review meetings regarding the issuance and disposal of notices.



Jaishankar reviews rescue efforts, India sends 47.5 tonnes of relief



GNS News Agency, August 29

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Friday held a meeting with officials of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Embassies in Kathmandu and Beijing to discuss the relief and rescue efforts for Nepal in the wake of the deadly floods. During the meeting, MEA officials informed about the relief supplies that will be sent to Nepal. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, and other officials were present during the meeting. Following the meeting, EAM Jaishankar said: "Discussed the relief and rescue efforts underway in Nepal today. Our Embassies in Kathmandu and Beijing provided an updated picture in respect of the status and well-being of Indian nationals. The concerned MEA Divisions apprised us of the further relief supplies to be sent to Nepal. We give highest priority to this issue." The meeting comes as catastrophic flash floods in Nepal's Bhote Koshi River have led to the death of 469 people while 977 people remain out of contact. Addressing a press briefing on the Nepal disaster here on Thursday, MEA spokesperson Jaiswal said that India will send Bailey bridges to assist Nepal in the rescue and relief efforts after the flash floods. He said that India has sent 47.5 tonnes of relief material to Nepal through two aircraft.

"Two aircraft with humanitarian assistance have been sent to Kathmandu. A C-130J aircraft took off yesterday (Wednesday) at around 8.30 p.m., carrying 10 tonnes of

relief material, including temporary shelters, blankets, hygiene kits, solar lamps, medicines, etc. And then this morning, a C-17 aircraft departed with 37.5 tonnes of supplies, comprising 28.5 tonnes of relief items such as tents, blankets, hygiene kits, solar lamps, dewatering pumps, kitchen sets, gensets, etc, eight tonnes of medicines, and one tonne of food items," he said. "In total, across the two departures by air, India has sent 47.5 tonnes of emergency supplies aimed at supporting Nepal's ongoing rescue and relief operations. Let me say that further assistance is also being considered. We are also mobilising Bailey bridges to assist in rescue and relief efforts," he added. The floods, believed to have been triggered by an avalanche on a transboundary river between Nepal and China upstream of the Bhote Koshi River, have left a trail of destruction along the riverbanks downstream, sweeping away several human settlements, roads, hydropower projects and transmission infrastructure, among other facilities.

According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), 469 bodies have been recovered from various districts, with the highest number — 178 bodies — recovered in Chitwan district, followed by 110 in Nawalparasi East. Likewise, 44 bodies were recovered in Gorkha, 37 in Nuwakot, 28 in Tanahun, 27 in Nawalparasi West, 23 in Dhading, and 12 in Rasuwa, the authority said. Of the 977 people out of contact, 517 are foreign nationals. The MEA said on Thursday night that as many as 290 Indians remain out of contact in the aftermath of the deadly floods in the Bhote Koshi River. The United States said that approximately 90 Americans may have been affected by the floods in Nepal, while China said that nearly 100 Chinese nationals remain missing on the Nepali side.

Among those out of contact, 127 Nepal residents abroad are also missing, according to the authority. The latest update also said that those out of contact include 28 Nepal Police personnel, 45 Nepal Army personnel, 13 Armed Police Force personnel, 15 Customs Office staff and four Immigration Office staff. At least 73 people have been injured in the disaster, including 43 in Rasuwa, three in Dhading and 27 in Nuwakot, the authority said.

China resumes rescue work after assessing upstream lake conditions

GNS News Agency, August 29

BEIJING, Chinese authorities have assessed that risks from an overflowing lake formed after a glacier collapse that triggered catastrophic flooding on the China-Nepal border had become manageable by Friday afternoon, allowing suspended rescue operations to resume. Nepal and China both warned on Thursday of fresh risks of flooding in the Himalayas, with a dam from debris leading to the formation of a lake that had been threatening to collapse.

Stay up to date on the key companies, data, and decisions in the ESG world with the Reuters Sustainable Finance newsletter. Sign up here. Reuters was able to identify the lake's location, which straddles the border of both countries and lies upstream from the Gyirong border crossing, based on Nepali authorities and Chinese state media. Wednesday's flash flood devastated the border crossing, sweeping away people and vehicles, according to China's CCTV. China had been racing to reduce the risk of more flooding at the border crossing linking Tibet region to Nepal, after hundreds were killed on Wednesday.

On Friday morning, the risk of the lake bursting and potential secondary disasters such as mountain collapses and avalanches prompted all Chinese rescue personnel and vehicles to withdraw to stand by in a safe area, state broadcaster CCTV said. By noon, the risk posed was deemed manageable, allowing rescue operations to be continued and stepped up, CCTV reported. The lake's reservoir has topped 2.5 million cubic metres of water, up from the estimated 1.5-2 million cubic metres a Chinese eight-member engineering team dispatched to monitor the site recorded a day ago. Authorities mobilised the engineering team to conduct aerial surveys and 3D modelling of the barrier lake on Thursday, according to another CCTV report. One of the engineers, Chen Hanxiao, said challenges included difficult access to the site. "After the glacier collapse created



the lake, many isolated cliffs and steep cliffs appeared along its shoreline," Chen told CCTV on Thursday evening.

The Gyirong border port area has seen light to moderate rainfall which has loosened and destabilised soil and rock surrounding the precarious zone upstream. The rain is forecast to continue over the coming week. China on Thursday warned that 3 million cubic meters of water — the equivalent of about 1,200 Olympic swimming pools — were expected to flow into the still-dammed lake over the next three days, creating a high risk of a breach, with peak flow expected around September 1. The formation of the lake was captured in aerial footage by a Chinese rescue team shown by state broadcaster CGTN. It showed masses of brown water accumulating in a basin with no visible outlet, that had already submerged bushes and trees and appeared to push against a barrier of debris and stones. The official death toll on the Tibetan side rose to five while the number of people missing remain unchanged at 558. Nearly 1,000 remain missing on both sides of the border, including as many as 540 foreigners from 31 countries, according to officials.

Families of South Koreans missing in Nepal floods seek urgent helicopter access



SEOUL, - The families of South Korean workers missing after a catastrophic flash flood in Nepal urged authorities on Friday to secure helicopter access for a search, saying rescuers were losing critical time more than 48 hours after the disaster. The nine missing workers, employed by Doosan Enerbility and Korea South-East Power, were working on a major hydropower project hit by Wednesday's glacier-triggered flash flood. Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here.

"Our only demand is to get helicopters in the air as soon as possible," relatives of Doosan Enerbility employees told reporters, according to the company and Yonhap News Agency, expressing frustration over what they described as a lack of visible progress despite assurances from officials. The families said they had not received sufficient information about the missing workers' whereabouts or the circumstances of the disaster, and called for search footage and other updates to be shared promptly. They also urged South Korea to press Nepalese authorities through diplomatic channels for more active support.

A South Korean rapid response team that arrived in Kathmandu on Thursday night was still awaiting flight clearance to travel to the affected area, South Korea's Foreign

Ministry said. Nepal's military had restricted private helicopter operations over concerns of further flooding, Yonhap said. Earlier on Friday, the ministry said Nepal had indicated it was not yet planning to accept foreign rescue teams and that it was holding discussions on the matter. Nepal's Foreign Ministry said on Friday that it did not need foreign assistance for search-and-rescue operations and that it was managing the rescue efforts. South Korean President Lee Jae Myung ordered on Thursday an all-out response to the disaster. Doosan Enerbility CEO Jeong Yeon-in said on Thursday the company was working closely with relevant authorities and would "make every possible effort" to rescue employees who remained out of contact. Yoon Jang-hyun, head of new growth business at Korea South-East Power, said the company would focus on searching for its employees and assessing conditions at the site, adding that it would mobilise all its capabilities to secure their safe return. The nine South Korean workers still unaccounted for include six Doosan Enerbility employees and three employed by Korea South-East Power, the Yonhap News Agency said.

IndiGo Ventures invests in Sarvam as part of Series B funding round

Hyderabad: IndiGo Ventures, the corporate venture capital arm of IndiGo, announced its investment in Sarvam, India's full-stack sovereign AI company, as part of Sarvam's Series B round of funding.

The investment builds on the existing relationship between IndiGo and Sarvam, which have been working together to enhance customer experience, empower employees and streamline complex operational workflows across the airline through Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies.

Leaders across parties seek more relief, rescue efforts for stranded Indians



Mumbai: Leaders across party lines on Friday expressed concern over the devastating floods in Nepal and called for intensified rescue and relief efforts, particularly for Indians stranded in the neighbouring country. BJP's Maharashtra MLA Ram Kadam said helping a neighbouring country during a crisis has been a long-standing tradition in India. He also highlighted the concerns of Indians who had travelled to Nepal for the Kailash Yatra and were now stranded.

"Protecting one's neighbour and supporting one's neighbour in times of crisis has been a tradition in India since ancient times. Many Indians also went there for the Kailash Yatra and are stranded. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis is a very sensitive person. He personally spoke with them to discuss how to bring them back. The Indian government is also making efforts. Some people from Maharashtra are stranded, and the Maharashtra government is also making efforts," he said. Congress Uttar Pradesh President Ajay Rai described the situation in Nepal as unfortunate and urged the Centre to send additional relief material to assist those affected.

"The tragedy that has occurred in Nepal is very unfortunate, and we all stand with Nepal. I would urge the Government of India to send as much relief material as possible there so that the people there can be helped," he said. Congress MP Imran Masood expressed concern over the disaster and the possibility of further flooding. Responding to reports about China's alert regarding another possible flood in Nepal, he said: "May God make things better. May Allah ensure that nothing unfortunate happens." Shiv Sena-UBT spokesperson Anand Dubey said the scale of the disaster was deeply distressing and emphasised the close ties between India and Nepal.

"It is very tragic and sad news that a huge natural disaster, a tragedy, has hit our neighbour Nepal. According to the information received so far, more than 400 people have died, and around 1,000 people are missing, including many people from India as well. So first, we stand with

them," he said. Dubey also appreciated the efforts of the Indian Army and Air Force in relief and rescue operations and said India and Nepal shared deep familial and economic ties. Union Minister Ramdas Athawale said the floods had caused extensive damage and that several Indians, including tourists from Maharashtra, were missing or stranded. "A major flood has hit Nepal, causing extensive damage, with many people losing their lives and several others missing. Rescue and relief operations are underway, and some tourists from Maharashtra and other parts of India are stranded there. The state government is making efforts to bring the stranded Maharashtra tourists back safely," he said. DMK spokesperson T.K.S. Elangovan said party MP Dayanidhi Maran had already written to the External Affairs Minister, urging the government to locate people who remained unaccounted for and take necessary action. "Nepal is another country and not part of India, so the External Affairs Ministry has to intervene and do something. That is what our MP Dayanidhi Maran had written to the minister," he said. West Bengal Minister Shankar Ghosh said coordinated efforts were being made to rescue people in Nepal, including Indian tourists and those who had travelled there for religious purposes.

"The government is making every possible effort to rescue the people of Nepal, as well as those who went to Nepal as tourists or to visit Manas. There are joint efforts being made from all sides, and we are hopeful that we will receive some information," he said. Samajwadi Party spokesperson Fakhru'l Hasan Chand expressed grief over the deaths and conveyed condolences to the families of the victims. He also raised concerns over reports that Nepal may not have been adequately informed about the possibility of the disaster. "The incident in Nepal is very sad. The Samajwadi Party expresses deep grief over the incident and conveys its condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones," he said, calling the situation a major international tragedy. Trinamool Congress MP Sougata Ray said the exact extent of the loss of life was still unclear and expressed concern over Indians who remained stranded or unaccounted for. "The incident in Nepal is a very tragic and difficult disaster. It is still not clear how many people have lost their lives. Many Indian citizens are stranded there, and their families have not been able to receive any information about them. More than 300 people from Bengal are reportedly unaccounted for there. So, this is a very major tragedy," he said. Shiv Sena-UBT MP Sanjay Raut also urged the Centre to provide large-scale assistance to Nepal and rescue stranded Indians. "Many people from India are stranded and missing, including more than 60 people from Maharashtra. Given the extent of this devastation, I believe the Government of India must step in and provide large-scale assistance to rescue and support everyone — not just our citizens, but all the people of Nepal," Raut said.

Fresh lake outburst in Tibet raises risk along Bhote Koshi, Trishuli rivers

Kathmandu: Nepali authorities on Friday issued a fresh warning about the risk of another flood, stating that they had received a report of a lake outburst in the Tibetan region of China that could trigger fresh flooding in Nepal. "Information has been received that the flow of water mixed with debris and mud has increased again on Friday in the same area of the Bhote Koshi River in Rasuwa, where a major flood occurred on August 26," the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) said in a notice on Friday.

"As there is a risk of another flood, all personnel engaged in rescue and relief operations along the banks of the Bhote Koshi and Trishuli rivers, as well as those remaining in high-risk areas for various reasons, are strongly urged to exercise the highest level of caution and immediately move to a safe location if any danger is observed." Nepal Police also issued a warning, saying they had received a report of a lake outburst in the Tibetan region and urging people and those involved in rescue operations to remain alert to the danger. The authorities issued the fresh warning as the country continues to reel from the devastation caused by the massive flood on August 26, which killed at least 469 people, while 977 people remain out of contact, NDRRMA said earlier on Friday. Of those out of contact, 517 are foreign nationals.

Earlier, citing information received from the Chinese side, the Water Resources Research and Development Centre under the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and



Irrigation said that the lake formed at the site where the river was blocked had not yet fully drained. "Therefore, the possibility of an additional surge in water flow in the Upper Bhote Koshi area cannot be completely ruled out at this time. Continuous monitoring of the Bhote Koshi-Trishuli river system is therefore necessary," it said in a statement issued on Thursday night. It said that as the situation at the site where the river was blocked in the Upper Bhote Koshi area had not yet returned completely to normal, the risk in the Bhote Koshi, Trishuli and Narayani river systems could not yet be considered to have fully subsided. Amid the risk of another flood, authorities have urged security personnel deployed for rescue and relief operations along the Bhote Koshi and Trishuli rivers to remain on high alert.

Opposition leaders slam govt over energy crisis, economic hardship, worsening law and order



Bangladesh opposition leaders rejected the BNP government's claims of success after 180 days, citing worsening energy shortages, load shedding, factory closures, unemployment and deteriorating law and order. Critics said public suffering and insecurity have increased, challenging the government's key election promises.

Dhaka: Bangladesh's opposition leaders have rejected the BNP government's claims of success during its first 180 days in office, citing continuing energy crisis, frequent load shedding, industrial plant closures, rising unemployment concerns and the deteriorating law and order situation in the country, local media reported. Speaking at the national Parliament on Thursday, independent lawmaker Rumeen Farhana criticised the government and highlighted growing public frustration over the ongoing gas and electricity crisis, saying people sarcastically remark, "Here comes Tuku, there goes Tuku," referring to the country's Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood and the prolonged crisis.

"Fuel prices are rising, there is an outcry over electricity, and gas is unavailable... this is the same government

that promised one crore new jobs during the election. Yet within six months of coming to power, 62,000 people have lost their jobs. More than 900 factories have shut down. Will new jobs be created? Those who are employed, only God knows how long their jobs will last," Bangladesh's leading newspaper the Daily Star quoted Rumeen as saying. She recalled that the government had set improving law and order, controlling commodity prices and ensuring energy security as three major priorities for its first 180 days.

Referring to the worsening law-and-order situation across Bangladesh, Rumeen said, "It is difficult to speak about it. Our home minister either mocks the issue or hides behind wordplay." "But if you talk to ordinary people, you will hear them say that, just as the foreign ministry has three ministers, even if Bangladesh had 64 home ministers for 64 districts, the situation could hardly be any worse. That is the state of law and order," the lawmaker added. Meanwhile, the Jamaat-e-Islami-led 11-party alliance also slammed the government, saying the latter could not claim success amid the crisis confronting people in their daily lives and the deteriorating law-and-order situation. Jamaat's Assistant Secretary-General Hamidur Rahman Azad made these remarks while addressing journalists following a meeting of the alliance leaders. "Public suffering, deterioration of law and order, and insecurity have increased in the country, Bangladeshi daily Prothom Alo quoted Hamidur as saying. He further said: "The electricity and gas crises, the closure of industrial plants, unemployment, the deterioration of law and order, and the failure to ensure people's security must be viewed as failures of the government." Highlighting the law and order situation, Hamidur cited figures on abductions, enforced disappearances and killings. He claimed that about 512 people had been abducted or subjected to enforced disappearance over nearly six months, while roughly 1,800 had been killed, without identifying the source of the data.

Why there needs to be more awareness about chronic fatigue syndrome in India



While estimates suggest a significant portion of the Indian population may have CFS, experts say the condition is often undiagnosed or misdiagnosed: it requires a multidisciplinary approach for accurate diagnosis and effective treatment

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), also known as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME), is often mistaken for routine tiredness or exhaustion, but experts stress that it is a far more complex and debilitating condition. Characterised by extreme fatigue that lasts for at least six months, is not alleviated by rest, and severely impacts daily functioning, CFS remains poorly understood - particularly in the Indian context, where research and awareness are limited. While it can affect anyone, it is more frequently diagnosed in women. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there is still no universally accepted diagnostic framework for CFS. The condition typically involves persistent, unexplained fatigue accompanied by symptoms such as sleep disturbances and post-exertional malaise, making it challenging to identify and manage effectively. While precise figures are scarce, estimates suggest that a significant portion of the Indian population may be affected by CFS or ME/CFS. One study indicated that a population-based survey of 3,000 randomly selected women aged 18-50 found that more than 12% reported chronic fatigue. Another study says that more than a million Indians are diagnosed with CFS annually

According to Preetha Purushothaman, consultant neurologist, Prashanth Hos-

pital, Chennai, the diagnosis of CFS is not straightforward and is often arrived at through a process of exclusion. "We don't see it daily. In the case of chronic fatigue syndrome, it is like a diagnosis of exclusion. We exclude all other diseases and then, at last, when we don't know where to place the patient, that is when we call it chronic fatigue syndrome," she explains. Dr. Purushothaman points out that most forms of fatigue encountered in clinics have identifiable causes — ranging from diabetes, cardiac conditions, cancer, to even side-effects of medications such as antibiotics.

"Fatigue is often associated with an underlying illness. Someone living with diabetes, for instance, will definitely experience fatigue. But that cannot be labelled as chronic fatigue syndrome," she clarifies. She adds that even common antibiotics such as azithromycin can induce severe tiredness. In such contexts, the fatigue is symptomatic of another ailment, not stand alone. Typically, CFS tends to manifest between the ages of 30 and 60, often in individuals who show no signs of thyroid dysfunction, cardiac conditions, or diabetes. Dr. Purushothaman describes a pattern of unexplained fatigue, unresponsive to rest and unlikely to nutritional or hormonal deficiencies."The only thing common among such patients is severe

stress — the kind of stress that comes from intense trauma or grief-- like the loss close ones. This isn't normal stress. It's bereavement at an extreme level," she says. Viral infections are also known triggers. "Viruses such as the Epstein-Barr virus, cytomegalovirus, and other herpes group infections have been known to act as triggers," Dr. Purushothaman explains. "But most recently, the cases we saw were after COVID-19. Long COVID is practically equivalent to chronic fatigue syndrome."She adds that some patients have remained under follow-up for up to three years, experiencing lingering symptoms such as persistent fatigue, with no other physical anomalies detectable through standard medical investigations.

CFS overlaps multiple domains -- neurology, psychiatry, and internal medicine --requiring a multidisciplinary approach for accurate diagnosis and effective treatment. According to the WHO, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) is primarily considered a neurological disorder, as it involves abnormalities in brain function and the nervous system, particularly in the regulation of neurochemicals that influence energy, pain tolerance, and mood. In India, the condition often goes underdiagnosed or misattributed to lifestyle factors, nutritional deficiencies

like vitamin B12 or iron, or even psychiatric issues due to a lack of widespread awareness and limited dedicated programmes or policies. Himanshu Champaneri, senior consultant, department of neurosurgery, Marengo Asia Hospitals, Gurugram, says many patients present with persistent fatigue, sleep disturbances, or unexplained pain for over six months, often triggered by stress, life transitions, or burnout -- especially young working adults. The underlying neurochemical imbalances are similar to hormonal deficiencies such as those in thyroid or insulin regulation, bringing to light the fact that mental health and neurological disorders often overlap. Despite being a significant issue, CFS is not yet a public health priority in India, though awareness is gradually rising post-COVID, with more urban cases and organisational responses being observed. There is no single drug that cures chronic fatigue syndrome, nor is there a uniform treatment plan. Management of CFS involves a multidisciplinary approach, led primarily by lifestyle modification and supportive therapy. According to studies in The Lancet CFS is complex since it is a multi-system disease with varied symptoms and potential triggers, including infections, genetic factors, and immune system dysfunction. Studies recommend cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and graded exercise therapy (GET) as effective treatments for chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS). A 2020 study published in the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine highlights that while most evidence supporting cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) for chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) comes from randomised controlled trials, there is limited research in real-world clinical settings. Nonetheless, the study confirms that CBT remains an effective approach for improving fatigue, physical functioning, and social adjustment in individuals with CFS.

Sinner returns, tennis reels, and a new era stumbles into focus



In mid-February, when Jannik Sinner accepted a three-month ban from tennis after entering into a case-resolution agreement with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for two positive tests in March 2024 for the banned anabolic steroid clostebol, many in the tennis world thought that the Italian had gotten away lightly. After the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) decided in August 2024 that Sinner bore "no fault or negligence" and let him off, WADA appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) seeking a one-to-two year ban. WADA agreed that Sinner did not intentionally dope, but it believed that there had to be consequences for the presence of a banned substance in an athlete's body.

From that position, to then settle for a three-month sentence, wherein the then World No. 1 would not even miss a single Grand Slam tournament, ranked many. Tennis was replete with players having their cases drag on for months before being handed multi-year bans. In such a scenario, Sinner was seen as being treated with kid gloves. Back in the hunt This weekend, Sinner is set to return to action at the Italian Open ATP Masters 1000 in Rome, the last big tune-up before the season's second Slam French Open. If the 23-year-old was perceived to have had an easy ride with the authorities in the aftermath of his doping violations, his peers have ensured that he will have the softest of landings. Sinner, whose only tournament this year was the Australian Open which he won, is still the World No. 1 despite a full three-month period where he was not even permitted to watch competitive tennis as an in-stadia spectator let alone pick up the racquet. And quite miraculously, he is set to be the top-seed at Roland-Garros, which begins on May 25.

When the expulsion kicked in, Sinner's lead over No. 2 Alexander Zverev was 3695 points. In spite of missing four Masters 1000s and a couple of ATP 500s, Sinner is still ahead by 1645 points. Zverev, despite playing eight tournaments in the time Sinner was absent, didn't win more than two matches at all but one event — Munich 500, where he lifted the trophy. The gap between Sinner and Zverev did reduce by 2050 points, but that was largely because of the 500 the former chose not to defend in Rotterdam in early February and the 1000 he could not in Miami in late March. "It's a very strange feeling again, to be around with so many people and attention, but it's nice to be back," Sinner said at the Foro Italico earlier this week in his first official press conference on return. "The new generation is coming stronger and stronger. For me, what's most important is the Race to Turin (ATP Finals), which gives you a bigger picture of how players play in that moment. I'm happy with the position I'm in, but I would be [equally happy] to be No. 3 or No. 4, to be honest." All bets are off The fact that he is not No. 3 or No. 4 but numero uno is an adequate enough reflection of the current state of men's tennis. The 2025 clay-court swing is the first after 14-time French Open winner Rafael Nadal retired, and with the Spaniard's giant shadow no longer hovering menacingly over the red dirt, the field feels chaotic and open. Novak Djokovic, 37, and the last of the Big Three (Nadal and Roger Federer being the others) still active, hasn't won a Tour-level title since November 2023 and lost his opening matches at both the Monte Carlo and Madrid Mas-

ters recently. World No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz, the defending champion at Roland-Garros and Wimbledon, won in Monte Carlo and reached the final in Barcelona before skipping Madrid with an adductor injury. Stefanos Tsitsipas, a capable clay-courtier, has not gone past the last-eight stage at three straight tournaments in Monte Carlo, Barcelona and Madrid.

This has meant that there have been breakthrough performances for the likes of Jack Draper, who won Indian Wells, finished runner-up at Madrid and is now up to a career-high No. 5, and 19-year-old Czech Jakub Mensik, who beat 24-time Slam winner Djokovic in the Miami final, reached the quarterfinals in Madrid and is at a career-best No. 21 in the world. Three-time Major and two-time French Open finalist Casper Ruud is back in the top-10 (No. 7) after claiming Madrid, his maiden Masters 1000 triumph, while Lorenzo Musetti, a tricky and talented Italian, has breached the top-10 for the first time in his career (No. 9). "Anybody can clip anybody on a given day," Frances Tiafoe, the American World No. 16, told reporters in Madrid. "I think these are exciting times. Tennis reminds me right now of 2000 to 2004 or 2005. Anybody can win Slams; anybody can win tournaments like this [Madrid]. Every Masters, we'll probably have eight, nine [possible] winners." Back to the double act?

While this may be true at the Masters 1000, ATP 500 and ATP 250 levels — the last 15 Masters competitions have seen 11 different winners — the Grand Slams remain the preserve of the best. Ever since the vice-like grip of the Big Three loosened, Sinner and Alcaraz have ensured a wrinkle-free transition. The two, in fact, split the four Major titles equally in 2024, and Sinner even defended his crown in Melbourne earlier this year.

With Alcaraz inching closer to top form and Sinner back in the mix, it remains to be seen if men's tennis retains its recently acquired volatility. Much depends on what shape Sinner is in. Physically, the lengthy rest period would have helped him, but a certain amount of rustiness cannot be ruled out after three months of no competitive play. The body still has to adjust," Sinner said. "The blisters on the hands, they'll come again when you're not used to [playing] anymore. But it's all good. I'm just very happy and very curious to see where I'm at." Slippery clay Interestingly, just one of Sinner's 19 Tour titles have come on clay (Umag 2022), and he now has just the Rome Masters and one of Hamburg 500 or Geneva 250 to build his way up for the war of attrition clay-court tennis often is. But it was on the Parisian red dirt in 2020 that he made his first Slam quarterfinal, where he matched the legendary Nadal shot for shot for one set before losing 6-7(4), 4-6, 1-6. What should give Sinner confidence is that, despite the lay-off, there is a certain aura that he has built up which makes him the favourite against practically everyone he competes against. Until his ban kicked in, he was the standout player on the men's Tour, having won 14 of his previous 26 tournaments and finished semifinalist or better in five others. That a large part of this streak was conjured even as his doping saga was running parallelly spoke volumes about Sinner's resilience and toughness. He won the 2024 US Open just after ITIA made public his twin positive tests and he secured the Shanghai Masters, ATP Tour Finals, Davis Cup and the 2025 Australian Open after WADA announced that it will appeal his case at the CAS. He also handled deftly the ill will and frostiness that the whole episode gave rise to among fellow players and fans. "Look, last year was very difficult," Sinner said. "I had a lot of personal pressure, holding everything. I couldn't talk with many people about what happened. I was in a tough situation at the beginning of the Australian Open. I struggled a lot, so it was nice to take a small break. Three months...but it is what it is. A small break was good. I could feel that I'm not playing for quite a long time. What's missing for me is the complete feedback of where my level is. That's going to come slowly with more playing time."

All you need to know about: cystic fibrosis

Have you heard of Cystic fibrosis? If you haven't this month, May, is Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month, and makes for a good time to learn about the condition!

What is cystic fibrosis?

Cystic fibrosis or CF, is a genetic condition that causes the mucus in the body to become thick and sticky instead of being thin and slippery. When there is a build-up of thick mucus, it can cause clogs and blockages, damaging the lungs, pancreas and other organs in the body. It is a progressive condition and can get worse over time. CF occurs, when there is a mutation or change to a gene known as the CFTR gene. The gene makes a protein that helps move chloride to the surface of cells. When chloride moves out of a cell, it takes water with it, thinning out the mucus. When the protein is not working correctly due to the gene mutation, this process is disrupted, leaving the mucus thick.

Whom does CF affect?

CF is a genetic condition. People who inherit two mutated CFTR genes, one each from their mother and father, are born with this condition. There does not have to be family history of the condition for someone to be born with it. People who have only one copy of the defective gene are carriers. While CF is more common in people of Caucasian descent, research in India has suggested that it is not as rare in the country as it was previously thought to be. In India, the first CF case was reported in 1968. A 2024 research paper, 'Diagnosis and treatment of cystic fibrosis in India: What is at stake for developing countries?' states that India is said to have the most number of undiagnosed CF patients in the world. The paper adds that although the exact prevalence of CF among Indians is unknown, it is estimated to be 1:43,321 to 1:100,323. Estimates vary however, and exact numbers for India are not known: another 2024 research paper, 'Diagnosis of Cystic Fibrosis Beyond Childhood in India,' states that while in India, the true incidence of CF is unknown, it is estimated to be 1:10,000–1:40,000 based on data from migrant Indian populations in the U.S. and U.K., respectively. With a population of [over] 1.3 billion, this could translate to high absolute numbers, it notes. The Cystic Fibrosis Trust of India, a non-profit working to further the cause of children with CF, estimates that there about 39,000 people living with CF in India.

What are the symptoms of CF?

CF symptoms depend on the organs that it affects and vary from person to person. CF mainly affects three systems: the respiratory system, the digestive system and the reproductive system. Symptoms include: salty-tasting skin, a nagging cough, sometimes with phlegm, frequent lung infections such as pneumonia or bronchitis, wheezing, shortness of breath, repeated sinus infections, poor growth in spite of a good appetite, nasal polyps, clubbed fingertips or toes, oily or greasy stools, blocked intestines in babies, constipation, rectal prolapse and pancreatitis.

What are its complications?

Frequent respiratory infections are one common com-



CF is a genetic condition. People who inherit two mutated CFTR genes, one each from their mother and father, are born with this condition

plication due to bacteria becoming trapped in the airways due to the thick mucus. Over time this can damage the lungs and lead to loss of lung function or to lung collapse. In the digestive system, the pancreas may be affected, causing a decrease in the enzymes that help digest food, causing trouble with the absorption of nutrients. This may put the person at risk of malnutrition and also at risk of other conditions such as lower bone density. Damage to the pancreas may also lead to glucose intolerance and CF-related diabetes. The liver may also get affected in some people with CF, causing liver disease. CF can also affect fertility. Men with CF may have congenital bilateral absence of the vas deferens, a condition where the sperm-carrying tubes are not present. In women it may cause thicker cervical mucus or irregular ovulation.

How is CF treated?

There is no cure for CF, but treatment can help manage symptoms and lessen complications. Research is ongoing in gene therapy. At present treatment involves keeping airways clear and preventing infections and ensuring that the person gets adequate nutrition and preventing intestinal blockages. Treatment can involve breathing techniques and airway clearance therapy, or the use of devices. Medications may include those to thin the mucus, medications called CFTR modulators to make the faulty protein work better, antibiotics to prevent or treat infections, pancreatic enzyme supplements to help take in nutrients and stool softeners. People with an advanced form of the condition may need a lung or liver transplant. A special diet plan may also be recommended. Newer therapies have now increased the lifespan of those with CF. Careful management can help improve quality of life. Regular check-ups are important, as is finding support for mental health care if needed. Always consult a doctor if you believe you or a family member have symptoms.

FIITJEE crisis: Centre closures, unpaid salaries, and legal troubles leave students and parents stranded

In less than five days this month, two cases — one at Chandigarh and another at Chennai — have been registered against FIITJEE's management, adding to at least four existing cases on the coaching giant. On May 5, the Economic Offences Wing of Delhi Police, which registered a case in March for criminal breach of trust, cheating, conspiracy and common intention, questioned three FIITJEE officials in connection with the case. In centres where parents have filed complaints, the FIITJEE management is resorting to temporary fixes—such as setting up online classes—to placate them. However, with a mass resignation of teachers from the online setup as well, FIITJEE's future remains increasingly uncertain. Hunky dory in the past

In February 2024, when Monika Agarwal enrolled her Class 11 studying son at a FIITJEE centre in Ghaziabad, the centre had around 20 teachers and about 800 students. She had paid ₹3.45 lakh for a two-year programme — something the family could afford only after taking a loan. "We believed their reputation and now, we have been cheated," said Monika, adding that the management should reimburse more than what was paid because the closure of the centre has disturbed her son. A few months after Monika's son joined the centre, things started taking a downward turn. Teachers kept resigning every month, and the new ones took time to settle down and sync with students' level.

Gowri Bhadauria, who appeared for the IIT entrance exam this year and missed the cutoff by just 0.51 percentile, attributes her setback to FIITJEE's problems. She had joined the Gwalior centre two years ago, paying ₹3 lakh for two years. Initially, she found the centre promising — someone who had never liked Math, she began to enjoy the subject for the first time, thanks to the quality of teaching at FIITJEE. But over the preceding months, the quality declined, she says. For most part of the last year, the centre was open only in name, as just two rooms had students, Gowri said. "There was no proper mentoring, no discussions and no questions asked. In the past year, as teachers kept resigning, we cooped up in one room at the centre and prepared for the exams ourselves," Gowri said. "Choosing FIITJEE has been the biggest mistake of my life," Gowri sighed.

Chennai's Bharadwaj Narayanan, who admitted his son to the Velachery centre last year, paid ₹2.7 lakh for the two-year programme. "Coaching used to be great and the management would follow up if students missed any class," he said. But since the beginning of this year, as the centre had shut down and FIITJEE teachers were joining Aakash Institute, parents realised that the crisis that had started in North India had now reached the South as well. "FIITJEE had tied up with Aakash and asked our children to attend online classes, saying the same teachers would be taking them. But now, even those teachers are resigning from Aakash too," Bharadwaj said. From filing police cases, writ-

ing to the management and sending legal notices — parents have been resorting to various measures. However, FIITJEE management has kept mum about the whole crisis. Parents who can afford it are admitting their children to the new centre, while the majority—already burdened with multiple loans—are asking their kids to prepare for the exam on their own. Why are teachers quitting

Dharam Prakash Kanda, who taught mathematics at the Ghaziabad centre between June 2023 and January 2025, is to receive the dues of ₹11.73 lakh from FIITJEE. "Few months, we received 70 percent of my salary and in other months, it was just 27 percent. All dues when calculated comes to ₹11,73,359," Dharam Prakash said. When the centre was closed in January 2025, he wrote to the management on email and LinkedIn but received no response. Many teachers, like Dharam Prakash, did not resign even when they weren't receiving their salaries, as they felt responsible for their students. "My father helped me financially. It has been so tough to run the family — paying rents and fees of two school going kids — without getting the salary," Dharam Prakash said, who has joined another coaching centre recently. "I have so much faith in FIITJEE."

Academically, the institute is strong. I feel bad that I'm no longer a part of it—the level of teaching, conceptual depth, and the calibre of students are all top-notch," he said. It was only in March 2025 that FIITJEE sent a termination notice to the teachers via email, accusing them of tarnishing the image of the institution. FIITJEE has a decentralised business approach where centres are managed by heads or partners. The financial decline took off at FIITJEE long ago. A senior teacher who worked at FIITJEE for more than five years said that the declining curve started way back in 2017, when the coaching giant celebrated its silver jubilee and went for double and triple appraisals of the staff based on the assurance from the centre heads. "However, admissions expected in 2018 and 2019 to support such increments did not materialise," said the teacher, seeking anonymity. Between May 2018 to April 2019, FIITJEE deducted salaries of the teachers which was repaid only a year later. In 2019, it revised the salaries, even reducing it for many, based on the income generated by the centres.

"During the pandemic, the number of admissions were very low. Adding to that was the irresponsibility of the managing partners in a few centres who failed to generate the income. Even the teachers who resigned in 2018 after following the due procedures have dues left from FIITJEE," the teacher said. Former teachers and FIITJEE staff The Hindu spoke to put forth multiple theories behind the downfall of FIITJEE: cash crunch, investment in share markets, purchase of assets and change of business module. "Our Chairman Dinesh Kumar Goel has been affirmative of the franchise model for quite some time. We are hopeful that the organisation would overcome these challenges at the earliest," said the teacher.

Does intermittent fasting help or harm kidney health?



The trend of intermittent fasting is growing in the community, and it has gained popularity among those trying to improve their general health or control their weight. There has also been interest in the possible benefits of intermittent fasting (IF) in promoting health and combating chronic diseases. But it is important to understand how IF works in order to avoid health issues and ensure optimal outcomes. The kidney is essential to maintain the body's equilibrium. Maintaining the body's balance depends on the kidneys' ability to filter waste, regulate blood pressure, and control fluid and mineral levels. Any substantial change in eating habits can affect how they operate.

Who can and cannot practice IF

When done correctly, intermittent fasting is generally safe for those with healthy kidneys. It might even be beneficial, by improving blood sugar regulation and reducing inflammation, both of which, over time, can support kidney function. A family history of kidney problems, diabetes, high blood pressure, or pre-existing renal disease, on the other

hand, raises concerns. Long-term meal skipping or inadequate hydration can lead to dehydration, which strains the kidneys. Certain forms of fasting that restrict fluid intake, particularly when done for extended periods or in heated environments, could raise the risk of kidney stones or perhaps serious kidney damage. These days, different salt compositions are increasingly consumed with different kinds of food, which may cause harm rather than benefit a patient with kidney and cardiac problems in particular. Fluid intake in excess can also be a problem with already weak kidneys. While intermittent fasting holds promise as a metabolic intervention, its effects on kidney health depend heavily on individual patient profiles. A one-size-fits-all approach is inappropriate, particularly for those with renal and cardiac vulnerability. It is important to counsel patients on both the potential benefits and risks of IF, offering personalised strategies for safe implementation. If in doubt, ask a doctor

Fasting may sometimes create imbalances and may also damage kidney function if done without a doctor's instructions. Also, deterioration of kidney function can lead to the need for dialysis or a kidney transplant. Dialysis, which occurs multiple times each week, is when a machine is used to filter the body's waste and fluids. A kidney transplant is where the damaged kidney is replaced with a functioning kidney from a donor. Typically, when patients are on dialysis, it is best not to fast because it may impair their ability to take in their fluids and electrolytes. Intermittent fasting can be beneficial in certain circumstances, but how it affects kidney function depends on the person's general health. Before beginning any fasting regimen, anyone with known renal problems or risk factors should speak with a doctor. Simple dietary adjustments can have a significant impact on important organs, and thus, it is always safer to proceed under supervision.

India up three spots to 130 among 193 nations in Human Development Index, but inequality persists

India continues its steady rise on the Human Development Index (HDI), ranking 130 out of 193 countries in the 2025 Human Development Report (HDR) released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). With its HDI value increasing from 0.676 in 2022 to 0.685 in 2023, India remains in the medium human development category, moving closer to the threshold for high human development (HDI = 0.700). Also, India's life expectancy is the highest since the inception of the index, indicating a strong recovery from the pandemic and its impact on life expectancy. The 2025 HDR, titled 'A Matter of Choice: People and Possibilities in the Age of AI', highlights the critical role of artificial intelligence in shaping the next chapter of human development, particularly in fast-growing economies, including India.

"India has progressed from 133 in 2022 to 130 in 2023. This advancement reflects sustained improvements in key dimensions of human development, particularly in mean years of schooling and national income per capita. India's life expectancy reaching its highest level since the inception of the index is a testament to the country's robust recovery from the pandemic and its investments and commitment to long-term human well-being," said Angela Lusigi, resident representative, UNDP India. The report notes that in India, life expectancy rose from 58.6 years in 1990 to 72 years in 2023, the highest recorded since the index began.

It attributes this to the national health programmes followed by successive governments, including the National Rural Health Mission, Ayushman Bharat, Janani Suraksha Yojana, and the Poshan Abhiyaan. Also, children today are expected to stay in school for 13 years on average, up from 8.2 years in 1990. "Initiatives like the Right to Education Act, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, the National Education Policy 2020 have enhanced outcomes. However, quality and learning outcomes remain areas for continued focus," the report said. The HDR adds that India's Gross National Income per capita rose over four times, from \$2167.22



(1990) to \$9046.76 (2023), and 135 million Indians escaped multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21. However, challenges persist, with inequality reducing India's HDI by 30.7%, one of the highest losses in the region, the report said. While health and education inequality have improved, income and gender disparities remain significant. Female labour force participation and political representation lag, though recent steps — such as the constitutional amendment reserving one-third of legislative seats for women — offer promise for transformative change," the HDR said. The report placed India in a unique position globally as a rising AI powerhouse with the highest self-reported AI skills penetration and growing domestic retention of talent — 20% of Indian AI researchers now remain in the country, up from nearly zero in 2019. The report underscored a broader global slowdown in human development. The 2025 HDR reveals that the current pace of progress is the slowest since 1990, and India is no exception. "Had pre-2020 trends continued, the world would be on track to reach very high human development by 2030, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal timelines," the report said. The inequality between low and very high HDI countries had increased for the fourth consecutive year, reversing long-standing progress, the report said.

India needs patient-centric care and trained counsellors to manage Inflammatory Bowel Diseases burden: experts

The Global Burden of Disease (GBD) 2019 study estimated 2,70,719 cases of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) in India, with an age-standardised prevalence rate of 20.34 per 100,000. This marks a dramatic rise from 1,30,000 cases in 1990. At the same time, more people are being diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, and Crohn's disease -- though often underdiagnosed or underreported -- is becoming a big concern for public health. IBD, which includes ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, is chronic inflammatory conditions of the digestive tract. Symptoms such as diarrhoea, abdominal pain, fatigue, and weight loss can severely impact quality of life. According to Nandish H. K., senior consultant gastroenterologist, Narayana Health City, Bengaluru, any symptoms like chronic diarrhoea, blood in stool, or abdominal pain lasting more than four weeks warrant referral to a higher centre for colonoscopy and early diagnosis and proper counselling are key to managing complications and improving outcomes.

According to the authors of a recent Lancet study titled 'Developing IBD counsellors in low- and middle-income countries: bridging gaps in patient care,' hospital-based studies confirm a surge in ulcerative colitis -- a type of IBD that causes inflammation and ulcers in the large intestine (colon) and rectum, cases in India. Crohn's disease, a type of IBD that can affect any part of the digestive tract, from the mouth to the anus though less-frequently documented, is often misdiagnosed due to lack of awareness and limited infrastructure. By 2025, the country is projected to have only 4,200 gastroenterologists for a population of 1.45 billion -- roughly 0.29 gastroenterologists per 1,00,000 people. In comparison, the United States had 3.9 gastroenterologists per 1,00,000 people as early as 2007 -- over 13 times higher than the current projected ratio. This shortage leads to rushed consultations, delayed diagnoses, and inadequate time for patient education. Many IBD cases are mistaken for irritable bowel syndrome or infections, resulting in inappropriate treatments. Dr. Nandish also explains that misinformation around dietary triggers and treatment options further complicates disease management and causes emotional distress for patients and families.

Do western models fall short and why?

A mammoth vaccination drive: Looking back at the COVID-19 pandemic



Earlier that year, in January 2023, WHO still maintained that the COVID-19 pandemic remained a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), three years to the day after it sounded the highest level of global alert. In September 2022, Dr. Tedros said that the "end is in sight" for the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the world was on its guard again at the beginning of 2023, with new waves breaking out in China after it lifted restrictions in December 2022. Vaccination had widely been considered the mode to bring an end to the pandemic, and the COVID-19 era witnessed a global mobilisation effort. The UNICEF COVID-19 market dashboard noted that 17.2 billion doses had been secured globally. Of these, 13.64 billion had been administered across the world, according to the WHO-UNICEF COVID-19 Vaccination information hub. The fear about COVID-19 has, by and large subsided, although it remains extant in pockets across the world. The global vaccination drive, however, is at an end. A recent study by the Pew Research Center found that more adults in America reported getting the updated flu shot than the updated COVID-19 shot after both vaccines became available in August last year. Here is a throwback to the historic effort to vaccinate the world's public, amid loss, fear, skepticism and anti-vaccination sentiment. The vaccination rate

As of March 13, 2023, the global rate for vaccination stood at 72.3% vaccinated (at least one dose) and 67% fully vaccinated, according to a coronavirus tracker run by TheNew York Times. This was the last update since many countries stopped regularly reporting vaccine data post this period. Of this, four nations- Macau, Brunei, U.A.E and Qatar-reported vaccination rates above 99% - including those who were fully vaccinated. Per government data, Macau used inactivated virus vaccines from Sinopharm CNBG Beijing and mRNA vaccines from Fosun-BioNTech. Meanwhile, Brunei approved the emergency use of the Sinopharm (BBIBP-CorV), Oxford-AstraZeneca, Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines. Per the Emirates Health Services, U.A.E residents had access to Pfizer-BioNTech, Sinopharm, Moderna, and Hayat Vax, and the GEN2-Recombinant COVID-19 Vaccine (CHO Cell) for booster doses. Qatar offered the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines.

India still updates its COVID-19 dashboard, managed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, noting active cases, discharged patients and total deaths. The vaccination tracker however has not been updated since June 19, 2024, where the total vaccination was reportedly 220,68,94,861 — above 2.2 billion doses. At this point, India reported a vaccination rate of 75%, with 70% fully vaccinated. Several persons also took booster doses. Mainland China, the origin point for the pandemic, reported a total of 94% first-dose coverage- with 91% fully vaccinated. In December 2022, China lifted zero-COVID restrictions after almost three years, followed immediately by a major spike in COVID-19 infections and deaths. China's vaccination programme largely relied on indigenously developed vaccines- CoronaVac, manufactured by Sinovac, and Sinopharm, which are both inactivated whole- virus vaccines. Researchers, however, say that mRNA vaccines manufactured by Pfizer and Moderna are more effective. A paper published in December analysed data from Singapore and found that mRNA vaccines were more effective than Chinese vaccines in preventing severe illness in those over 60. China, however, refused offers of surplus mRNA vaccines from the EU. While there were still countries struggling to achieve widespread vaccination in 2023, the greatest number of vaccines had already been given out in 2021. By June 2022, world COVID-19 vaccinations had touched 12 billion, which increased gradually to 12.9 billion by November 2022. The vaccination programme slowed down considerably in 2022, because most people worldwide had either received two vaccine doses or developed better resistance due to exposure to the virus. As of March 2023, there were still a few countries which struggled with a low vaccination rate. At the bottom of the ladder were Burundi (0.3%), Yemen (2.6%), Haiti (2.1%), Papua New Guinea (4.2%), Madagascar (8.6%), Democratic Republic of Congo (13%), Congo (13%), Gabon (14%), Cameroon (15%), Senegal (16%) Mali (18%), Algeria (18%) and Syria (19%). It is unclear whether vaccination rates went up after the official end of the pandemic. Further, some countries were absent from the NYT tracker, since they do not report vaccination data. Causes for poor vaccination rates included both lack of access to vaccines and vaccine hesitancy, among other factors. Vaccine hesitancy is an issue even in developed countries, with approximately 30% of Americans never choosing to get fully vaccinated. A World Bank working paper estimated that one in five adults in 53 low and middle-income countries had been hesitant to receive a vaccine between late 2020 and the first half of 2021. Covishield, Covaxin, Sputnik V, CorBEVax, Covovax were the main vaccines in use in India. Others, such as ZyCoV-D received the nod for emergency use. Bharat Biotech also launched a nasal COVID-19 vaccine — INCOVACC.

Other vaccine candidates were developed and tested later, with oral, intra-nasal, aerosol and inhaled vaccines. A total of 64 vaccines were approved for use by at least one national regulatory authority. Of this, 12 were a part of the WHO's Emergency use listing (EUL): AstraZeneca Vaxzevria, BBIL- Covaxin, CanSino Convedicia, Janssen Ad26.COV 2.S, Moderna Spikevax, Novavax- Nuvaxovid, Pfizer BioNTech Comirnaty, Pfizer BioNTech Comirnaty (bivalent), SII Covishield, SII Covovax, Sinopharm Beijing-BBIBP- CorV, and SinoVac- CoronaVac, SK Bio-SKYCovione.

The EUL process seeks to establish if new health products are suitable for use during public health emergencies. The first vaccine which received emergency use validation during the pandemic was the Comirnaty COVID-19 mRNA vaccine manufactured by Pfizer/BioNTech. The Comirnaty vaccine required storage using an ultra-cold chain, needing to be stored at -60°C to -90°C degrees. Several other vaccines too needed to be stored at a precise, cooler temperatures, posing dual challenges for storage and distribution, particularly in hot countries. Not every vaccine has been equally effective against COVID-19. For example, data indicates that monovalent Omicron XBB vaccines provide slightly better protection as contrasted with those containing bivalent variants or monovalent index viruses. A total of 13.64 billion COVID vaccine doses were administered globally. As per data from the WHO, as of December 31, 2023, 67% of the world population had been vaccinated with a com-

plete primary series (in most cases two shots) of a COVID-19 vaccine, while 32% had been vaccinated with at least one booster dose.

While WHO and UNICEF maintained a COVID-19 vaccination information hub during the pandemic years, annual COVID-19 vaccination data will now be collected through the WHO-UNICEF Joint Reporting Form on Immunisation. Final figures for 2024 will be collected from March to June 2025 and released in July 2025 with other immunisation data. A detailed visualisation about the global efforts to vaccinate people against COVID-19 was created by a collaborative effort between CEPI, GAVI, UNICEF and WHO, noting milestones in the production and distribution of the vaccine. The COVID-19 vaccine was unique in that its development and clinical trials had to be squeezed into a narrow timeframe, making it the fastest-developed vaccine in history. Just 326 days after the virus's genomic sequence was published, WHO issued the first EUL authorisation for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. Normally, new vaccines usually take an average of 10 years to develop. By the end of April 2021, nearly every country had introduced the vaccine. Adequate supply was the next issue. High income countries had a headstart and signed contracts with pharmaceutical companies for more supply than needed. Vaccine hoarding and control over the supply chain hindered access to vaccinations for lower-income countries. Establishment of cold storage chains for storage and transport of the heat-sensitive vaccines was important, too. Further, manufacturing infrastructure was also vulnerable to the impact of the virus. An example was what happened in March 2021 in India. At this point, India was the home of the largest vaccine manufacturing industry in the world. In February and March 2021, it seemed like India would escape the worst of the pandemic; although it saw high caseloads, it also saw record recovery rates and a lower number of deaths contrasted with its enormous population. However, the arrival of the Delta variant upended the nation. There were around 60,000 new cases a day and a crushing load on the country's health infrastructure, which faced a shortage of hospital beds, oxygen cylinders and medicines. This was a stiff hike from 15,000 cases a day barely weeks ago. In the face of this new, deadly wave, India suspended vaccine exports to other nations, even with signed purchase orders. Supply was redirected to domestic shores, to try to quell the rising caseload. An additional challenge was that the COVID-19 vaccines had to be delivered to all age groups, and not just children, as was the case with other immunisation programmes. The three groups which were sought to be prioritised were frontline workers, the immunocompromised and the elderly. Although some regions had adult vaccination programmes — for flu, for example — not every country had this set-up in place. Ensuring global vaccine access was an uphill task for global health networks. GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, led a global effort to send vaccines to poor and middle-income countries, termed a "historic attempt to achieve global equity." GAVI, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), WHO and UNICEF co-converted COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, which in turn was a global collaborative framework to end the pandemic. The COVAX Country Readiness and Delivery team (CRD) developed the COVID-19 Vaccine Introduction Readiness Assessment Tool (VIRAT), which sought to prepare countries for the quick licensing of vaccines, and also help them deal with policy measures, and logistics pertaining to the introduction and deployment of the COVID-19 vaccines. The G7 group of advanced economies called for donation of at least one billion vaccines by high-income countries, to aid 92 low and middle income countries which were part of the GAVI Advance Market Commitment supported by the COVAX facility. 1.97- 1.99 billion doses were delivered to 146 countries through COVAX, with prices per dose ranging from \$2 to \$120. To help vaccinate the public, GAVI, UNICEF and WHO launched the COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership (CoVDP) in January 2022, which supported the AMC 92 and focused on 34 countries which were at or below 10% vaccination coverage. COVAX and the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) had also set up the COVAX Humanitarian Buffer to fill in the gaps in global vaccine access. (The Buffer stopped accepting new applications after December 31, 2022.)

Although GAVI's programme was to be wound up towards the end of 2022, on December 8, 2022 its board approved the continuance of its COVID-19 vaccinations in countries supported by the GAVI COVAX -AMC. As per a press release, while priority was to "help countries raise coverage levels and boost high risk groups," the Board also endorsed plans to start preparing for future evolutions of the virus. COVAX had in place plans for worst-case scenarios and explored "integrating future COVID-19 vaccinations into GAVI's core programming..." also recognising the need to reduce "the additional burden a specialised emergency response places on countries." Seemingly, the COVID-19 vaccine has not become a mainstay of the vaccine basket. In a study conducted in November 2024, 60% of Americans said they would not get an updated COVID-19 shot. Per another Pew Research Center study in March 2025, 53% of the surveyed Americans got neither the flu shot nor updated COVID-19 shot, contrasted with 22% who have gotten both. One-in-five got the flu shot but not the COVID shot, while 5% had gotten the COVID shot but not the flu shot. Democrats were far more likelier than Republicans to get either vaccine; further, Democrats were also more likely than Republicans to report getting the updated COVID-19 vaccine (42% vs. 12%). This is even as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended the updated vaccine to everyone aged 6 months and older before the fall and winter months to protect from severe disease and hospitalization.

Efforts are still underway to strengthen health networks for future pandemic preparedness. In April 2025, after nearly three-and-a-half years and 13 rounds of meetings, WHO member-states agreed on measures to prevent, prepare for and respond to pandemics. On April 16, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body finalised a proposal for the WHO Pandemic Agreement. The draft, described as a "generational accord to make the world safer," is to be adopted this month by the World Health Assembly. The African Union, GAVI, and the G7 group of nations are engaging in a 10-point action plan to enhance diversification of regional vaccine manufacturing. Meanwhile, CEPI is building a network of vaccine manufacturers in the countries of the Global South, building capacity to produce advanced vaccines to combat emerging public health crises within 100 days. Some infrastructure gains made during the pandemic are sought to be retained. Africa CDC's Pathogen Genomics Initiative used data from the pandemic to increase training in genetic sequencing and data analytics, and deliver equipment to researchers. Further, WHO and its partners launched an mRNA vaccine technology hub in Cape Town. Cold storage facilities and disease surveillance systems had been scaled up during the pandemic; these are now being put to use for other purposes. So also, vaccination networks built during the devastating dates of the pandemic can now be used to address other public health concerns.

LIC Housing faces Rs 1,322 crore exposure in two Subhash Chandra loan accounts



LIC Housing Finance Limited (LICHFL) has said it had sanctioned financial facilities under two loan accounts in which Essel Group founder Subhash Chandra is the personal guarantor, and that it continues to retain all rights over the secured assets. LICHFL reportedly had an admitted claim of Rs 1,322.39 crore in the insolvency proceedings against Chandra. Under the approved repayment plan, however, LICHFL is set to receive just Rs 38.09 lakh. The statement comes after HDFC Bank on Thursday said it was “exploring an appeal” against an order of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approving a repayment plan submitted by Chandra in his capacity as a personal guarantor. The plan entails a substantial haircut for creditors on their admitted claims.

However, it did not refute the admitted claim mentioned in the reports. “The media reports state that LICHFL has an admitted claim of Rs 1,322.39 crore in the said proceedings, against which the repayment plan provides for payment of Rs 38.09 lakh to LICHFL,” LICHFL said in a statement. “LICHFL continues to hold and enforce its security interest over the secured assets against which the financial facilities were granted, which have been duly charged/ mortgaged in favour of LIC HFL,” the company said.

“Accordingly, LICHFL continues to hold and retain all

its rights, security interests, enforcement remedies and recovery avenues over the said secured assets in accordance with applicable provisions of law,” it said. “We clarify that the recent NCLT order pertains to the insolvency resolution process against the personal guarantor Subhash Chandra, under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, and does not in any manner adjudicate, discharge, dilute or impact the corporate liabilities of the principal borrower entities in anyway,” it said. The NCLT has approved Chandra’s proposal to pay Rs 6.25 crore against total guarantees signed for Rs 22,000 crore. “Total claim against Subhash Chandra as a personal guarantor, in the personal insolvency proceedings is only Rs 3,992 crore by the objectors of the plan and not Rs 22,000 crore,” Subhash Chandra’s office said in a press statement issued on Thursday.

HDFC Bank said its admitted claim accounted for 3.2% of the total claims and that it was inherited from erstwhile HDFC Ltd prior to the merger of the two entities. “With regard to the referred NCLT matter, HDFC Bank’s admitted claim was only 3.2% of the total stated amount. The bank inherited this facility, which was previously provided by HDFC Limited. HDFC Bank had opposed this settlement and voted against the resolution, which was approved by the majority. The bank is exploring an appeal at NCLAT,” the lender said in a statement Thursday. The NCLT verdict saved the case from going into bankruptcy. The proceedings concern personal guarantees given by Chandra for borrowings of Essel Group-linked companies. When a promoter gives a personal guarantee for corporate loans, the lender can, subject to the applicable legal process, pursue the guarantor when the underlying borrower defaults. Chandra’s insolvency proceedings were initiated in 2024 following a petition by Indiabulls Housing Finance. The case therefore goes beyond Zee Entertainment Enterprises. It concerns Chandra’s personal liability arising from guarantees linked to corporate debt. There is a separate corporate insolvency proceedings involving companies associated with the Essel Group, or with regulatory proceedings involving Zee Entertainment and its executives.

Can both E10, E20 petrol be sold at fuel stations? Centre to take call

There has been opposition over the E20 fuel from various quarters, with claims ranging from notable reduction in mileage and engine component wear in older vehicles whose engines were not designed for higher ethanol blends. There has been opposition over the E20 fuel from various quarters, with claims ranging from notable reduction in mileage and engine component wear in older vehicles whose engines were not designed for higher ethanol blends. Amid the public debate around E20 petrol — 80% petrol and 20% ethanol — being the only standard petrol variant in the country, the option of additionally offering petrol with 10% ethanol blending, or E10, is being explored specifically for older vehicles, Sanjay Khanna, chairman of the country’s second-largest fuel retailer Bharat Petroleum (BPCL), said Thursday in an interaction with reporters. But no concrete decision has been taken yet as discussions are on regarding supply chain and logistical challenges that selling two variants of base fuel are likely to pose. Khanna also said that there is no proposal to fully replace the E20 blend with E10.

“One of the options being explored is can we have E10 fuel for the older vehicles, which is what is being pursued right now. What are the challenges related to the supply, can we handle another grade of MS (motor spirit, or petrol) simultaneously? Yes, those challenges are there and they are being debated, they are being worked out right now. That is the reason why we don’t have any ready answer. But definitely, it was one of the options that was being pursued. In what form it would come, to what extent it would come, the details are being worked out at this juncture at different levels,” Khanna said in response to a question from

On August 19, The Indian Express had reported quoting sources that early exploratory discussions within the government and the industry were underway on whether E10 petrol can also be retailed for older vehicles alongside the E20 fuel. Any decision on the matter is likely to be taken at the government level, and will be binding on all fuel retailers. India achieved 20% ethanol blending in petrol last year, five years ahead of the original deadline. There has been opposition over the E20 fuel from various quarters, with claims ranging from notable reduction in mileage and engine component wear in older vehicles whose engines were not designed for higher ethanol blends. On its part, the government has been attempting to allay fears, saying that the drop in mileage in older vehicles would be 3-5% at most, and would be outweighed by E20’s benefits as it is a superior fuel. It has also consistently rejected claims that E20 fuel could damage engine components. Questions have also been raised on why motorists aren’t being offered the choice of pure petrol, E10, and E20 fuels.

According to sources in the know, the discussions — described as preliminary — are being held on various technical as well as non-technical aspects of the country’s complex fuel retail supply chain. They said that the backlash from certain quarters against E20 and the lack of choice for consumers, specifically those with older vehicles — particularly two-wheelers — that were certified for E10 petrol, led to the initiation of these discussions. In July, the government had said that offering multiple grades of base fuel across the country would create an “enormous logistical challenge”, apart from raising costs and reducing operational efficiencies in India’s complex fuel retail network. It also said that the current base fuel E20 is cleaner and su-



perior than pure petrol and lower ethanol-petrol blends, has required massive investments, and reverting to a lower blend level wouldn’t be prudent on various counts. Petrol is the second most consumed petroleum fuel in India; about 43 million tonnes of petrol was consumed in the country in the last financial year.

Notably though, an opinion piece co-authored by Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran, which appeared in The Indian Express on August 18, called for lower ethanol-petrol blend, say E10, to also be available alongside E20 fuel. While the views expressed in the article were personal, this was the first instance of a high-ranking government official publicly calling for more petrol options. “Restoring a lower blend at the pumps, say, E10, alongside the option to buy E20, would calm most public concern, lower total ethanol use instead of raising it, and protect the existing fleet while the retrofit programme catches up,” Nageswaran and Akash Poojari, a consultant in Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), wrote in the opinion piece. While writing that social-media worries about engine damage “do not hold up”, Nageswaran and Poojari flagged concerns around millions of older two-wheelers that weren’t manufactured for E20 fuel. According to auto industry insiders, only petrol vehicles manufactured and sold after April 2023 are considered fully E20-compliant. As per a senior oil industry official, making two base variants of petrol available simultaneously isn’t “simple and straightforward”, and would involve various complexities.

“It will be like introducing a new petrol variant altogether, that too in large volumes. Apart from the base fuel (E20), we do have two-three premium petrol variants, but their consumption is minuscule compared to the base petrol, so it is not too complicated to offer some volumes of such fuels along with E20. But if E10 is to be retailed in large volumes, it will require building an almost parallel supply chain as the existing one has shifted entirely to E20,” said the industry official, who didn’t wish to be identified. Experts pointed out that most retail fuel outlets in India use single or dual underground tanks. Adding E10 alongside E20 would require replacing it with a dual tank system for petrol at thousands of petrol pumps, apart from equipping them with separate dispensers for the base fuel. The oil marketing companies (OMCs) would also have to manage duplicate supply chains, right from the blending stage at their facilities to the point of retail, with separate road tankers transporting two different petrol grades at scale while ensuring there is no cross-contamination. Refineries and terminals would have to run two separate automated blending processes simultaneously — one tracking a 10% ethanol mix and another tracking a 20% mix.

from June and accounting for 17.7 per cent of total digital merchant payments. Debit card spending, meanwhile, declined 0.8 per cent year-on-year, although it increased 7.4 per cent month-on-month to Rs 37,700 crore. Prepaid card transactions stood at around Rs 6,600 crore, while wallet spending was approximately Rs 13,700 crore. Together, prepaid cards and wallets accounted for Rs 20,300 crore of spending in July, registering strong growth of 41.1 per cent year-on-year and 4.3 per cent month-on-month. The credit card market also continued to expand, with the number of cards in force rising by 1.267 million from the previous month to 122.9 million in July. E-commerce continued to dominate credit card usage, accounting for 63.6 per cent of total credit card spending in July, compared with 63.1 per cent in June. Average monthly e-commerce spending per credit card stood at Rs 10,772, while average point-of-sale spending was Rs 6,165.

Actor Chhavi Mittal’s Tamoxifen story: Can the breast cancer drug cause fibroids?



When actor and cancer survivor Chhavi Mittal spoke about developing a uterine fibroid and linked it to her use of tamoxifen, it raised an important question for many women taking the drug: Can tamoxifen cause fibroids?

The short answer is more complicated than a simple yes or no. “Yes, tamoxifen can lead to alterations in the uterus such as fibroids, but it’s not accurate to state that the drug causes fibroids in all women,” Dr Smit Sheth, oncologist, MOC Cancer Care, Mumbai, told The Indian Express. Tamoxifen is widely used to reduce the risk of hormone-sensitive breast cancer returning. “Although it blocks estrogen’s effects in breast tissue, it can behave differently in other parts of the body, including the uterus. Research has documented uterine changes in women taking tamoxifen, and some studies have found growth of existing fibroids or the appearance of new ones. But that does not necessarily mean tamoxifen causes every fibroid that develops during treatment,” she adds. Excerpts:

What is tamoxifen and how can it affect the uterus?

Tamoxifen is a medicine commonly used to treat and prevent certain types of breast cancer. It works by blocking the effect of the female hormone oestrogen on breast cells. However, tamoxifen can act differently in the uterus. While it blocks oestrogen in breast tissue, it can have an oestrogen-like effect on the lining of the uterus. This may cause the lining to become thicker than normal and, in some women, can lead to problems such as unusual vaginal bleeding or spotting. Most changes are not cancerous, but any new or unusual bleeding after menopause should be checked by a doctor.

So, can tamoxifen cause a fibroid?

It is safer to say that tamoxifen may contribute to fibroid growth or, in some women, the development of fibroids, rather than saying it definitively causes them. There are published reports of fibroid growth in women taking tamoxifen. But an individual fibroid cannot automatically be

attributed to tamoxifen simply because it appeared after treatment.

Why does the distinction between “caused” and “associated with” matter?

Because fibroids are extremely common, and their development is influenced by several factors, including hormones and age. If someone taking tamoxifen develops a fibroid, there are two separate questions: Did the fibroid arise independently? Did tamoxifen contribute to its growth or make an existing fibroid larger? The second possibility has some scientific support. Establishing the first or second with certainty in one individual is much harder.

Is there evidence that tamoxifen can actually make fibroids grow?

The evidence is not enormous, but it exists. A study involving postmenopausal women taking tamoxifen found a statistically significant increase in average fibroid volume over follow-up; some women also developed new fibroids. The researchers interpreted the findings as supporting an estrogen-like, or “agonistic,” effect of tamoxifen on uterine tissue.

Do patients need to worry about developing fibroids?

Not necessarily. A uterine fibroid is a benign tumour of uterine muscle. Most fibroids are not cancerous. They can cause heavy periods, pelvic pressure, pain, or sometimes no symptoms at all. The issue with tamoxifen is broader than fibroids: because of its effects on uterine tissue, doctors also pay attention to abnormal endometrial changes.

Should women stop tamoxifen if they develop a fibroid?

Not without talking to your doctor. Tamoxifen can substantially reduce the risk of recurrence of certain breast cancers, so stopping it independently can have serious consequences. A newly discovered fibroid generally calls for an assessment of its size, location, symptoms and growth rather than an automatic decision to discontinue cancer treatment. The appropriate response depends on the individual’s breast-cancer history and gynaecological findings.

What symptoms should a woman on tamoxifen take seriously?

New or unusual vaginal bleeding, spotting or discharge should be discussed with a doctor — particularly in women who are postmenopausal. A fibroid can itself cause bleeding, but tamoxifen users may also need evaluation for other uterine conditions. Tamoxifen also causes an increased risk of complications to the lining of the uterus and, rarely, of getting endometrial cancer, so any unusual bleeding should be objectively evaluated.

Teen vaping may fuel nicotine addiction later in life, study finds

Vaping nicotine during adolescence may do more than create a short-term dependence on e-cigarettes. A new study in rats suggests that exposure to nicotine vapor while young could increase nicotine-seeking behaviour later in adulthood, raising concerns about the potential long-term consequences of teenage vaping. Researchers at the University of Texas at El Paso studied how exposure to nicotine during adolescence affected rats as they grew older. The animals exposed to nicotine vapor when they were young later showed stronger nicotine-seeking behaviour as adults. The findings suggest that early exposure to nicotine may alter the developing brain in ways that make nicotine more rewarding or increase the tendency to seek it out later.

The study is particularly relevant because adolescence is a critical period for brain development. The brain continues developing into the mid-20s, including areas involved in decision-making, impulse control and reward. Nicotine can affect these developing systems and can lead to dependence. Young people who begin using nicotine may therefore be particularly vulnerable to developing addiction. However, the findings need to be interpreted carefully. The study was conducted in rats, not humans. Animal studies are useful for identifying biological mechanisms and potential risks, but results in animals do not automatically translate into the same outcomes in people. Researchers would need to conduct longer-term human studies to determine whether teenagers who vape nicotine are actually more likely to seek or use nicotine as adults.

The research nevertheless adds to an existing body of evidence about nicotine and adolescent brain development. Previous research has linked youth nicotine use with dependence, cravings and difficulty stopping. Because e-cigarettes can deliver nicotine efficiently, frequent vaping can expose young users to substantial amounts of nicotine, sometimes without them fully understanding how much they are consuming. The issue is significant because e-cigarette use remains common among American teenagers. In 2024, approximately 1.63 million U.S. middle- and high-school students reported currently using e-cigarettes. Flavoured products, discreet designs and the ability to vape



without producing the smell associated with traditional cigarettes have all contributed to concerns about youth use. There is also an important distinction between vaping nicotine as a teenager and vaping as an adult. For adults who already smoke cigarettes, switching completely to e-cigarettes may potentially reduce exposure to many of the harmful chemicals produced by combustible tobacco. But that does not mean vaping is harmless, and it does not establish vaping as a safe product for young people who otherwise would not use nicotine.

The study provides another warning signal: exposure to nicotine during a vulnerable stage of brain development may have effects that persist beyond adolescence. More research — particularly long-term studies following young people into adulthood — is needed to establish how strongly adolescent vaping predicts nicotine use later in life. Until then, the findings reinforce the importance of preventing nicotine dependence from taking hold during adolescence. Youngsters need to understand the health impacts of vaping. Studies have shown that people who vape had a 30 per cent higher risk of asthma and a 49 per cent higher risk of respiratory diseases. Current vape users had up to 52 per cent higher risk of stroke compared to non-users. They experience increased blood pressure, faster heart rate, reduced lung function, and higher rates of depression and suicidal thoughts.

AIIMS Delhi director’s post up for grabs, 65 doctors apply

AIIMS Delhi director’s post up for grabs, AIIMS Delhi director vacancy, AIIMS Delhi director post up for grabs, AIIMS, Delhi AIIMS, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs A search and selection committee will choose the director from among the applicants. They may also choose to invite more applicants, something that had happened during the previous round of selections. Sixty-five doctors from across the country have applied for the position of AIIMS Delhi director, which was held by an acting director since Dr M Srinivas was appointed as NITI Aayog member (Health) in April this year. Dr Nikhil Tandon, the acting director, has not applied for the position as he has crossed the age criteria — the candidate has to be 62 years old or less. Those who have applied for the post include doctors heading various departments and centres within AIIMS Delhi, those heading other institutes, including AIIMS in other cities, and even those who have moved to the private sector. The group of 65 also included several women candidates. This is important considering all the three other Central government-run hospitals in Delhi currently have women directors at the helm. Of the 65 candidates who have applied for the position — the applications closed in the first week of August — 29 are from institutes other than AIIMS Delhi while 36 are from the institute itself. A few doctors among the 29 not from AIIMS Delhi have previously worked at the institute. They include Dr Alok Thakur, who headed the National Cancer Institute in Jhajjar. He was associated

with AIIMS before moving to Medanta Hospital. The other is Prof M Ashraf Ganie, who worked as professor of endocrinology at AIIMS and then as director at Sheri-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences in Jammu and Kashmir. The list further included doctors from AIIMS in Raipur, Rajkot and Rishikesh. The others are from medical colleges such as Lucknow’s Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute and King George’s Medical University, Chandigarh’s Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research and Delhi’s Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. Also among the contenders are vice chancellors of Odisha University of Health Sciences and Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical University in Lucknow. Importantly, the list included Dr Arti Sarin, who in 2024 became the first woman officer to take over as the Director General, Armed Forces Medical Services. When it comes to the list of doctors from within AIIMS Delhi, several heads of departments have made it to the list. They include Dr Sudheer Gupta, who has headed the Forensics department for 14 years; Dr Manish Singhal, who has headed the Burns and Plastics department for 11 years and is its current head; Dr Uma Kumar, who set up the Rheumatology department and has been at its helm for 10 years; Dr Rakesh Yadav from the Cardiology department, who at present is the head of the institute’s emergency centre and Dr Ambuj Roy, professor at the Cardiology department. Moreover, the list includes Dr Sanjay Rai, who heads the Community Medicine department at the hospital and was in-charge of the Covid-19 vaccine trials at AIIMS.

‘Only second to World Championship’: Praggnanandhaa on historic GCT triumph



Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa created history on Friday, becoming the first Indian to win the Grand Chess Tour after staging a remarkable comeback to defeat defending champion Fabiano Caruana in the final. The Indian takes home a hefty \$200,000 prize and secures a guaranteed spot in next year’s tour. Praggnanandhaa headed into the final day with a six-point deficit, trailing Caruana 3-9 after the Classical leg, having lost the opening game and drawn the second. But he turned the tide in the Rapid leg, winning both games to earn eight points and take an 11-9 lead into the final Blitz leg.

In the first Blitz game, Pragg had winning chances but blundered in a time scramble. The position turned worse, but Caruana failed to capitalise, and the game ended in a draw. Caruana, the 2018 World Championship challenger and the man with the third-highest Elo rating in history (2844), struck back immediately, winning the second Blitz clash to level the score at 12-12.

The Grandmaster from Chennai wasted no time regaining his lead, beating Caruana with the white pieces for his third win of the day. Heading into the final game, Praggnanandhaa held a 14-12 lead and needed only a draw to seal the title. He did exactly that, forcing a threefold repetition in a completely winning position to dethrone Caruana. Congratulations to Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu, the winner of the 2026 Grand Chess Tour, which comes with \$200,000! Praggnanandhaa admitted he wasn’t too hopeful of the title heading into the final day. Across six games against Caruana, he managed to win three, drew two, including the final game where he had a winning position, and lost just one. “Honestly, I didn’t think I had much of a chance today. A six-point deficit is a lot. You basically need to do what I did,” he laughed. “It’s difficult. It’s not every day you can get one win against Fabi, but to get two... that was crucial in the Rapid,” said Praggnanandhaa after his historic title win. “Mainly, what changed from last year is my Rapid and Blitz game. It’s much better now, I think, and that’s a massive improvement in this format.”

Magical run Hopes were high for him at the 2026 Candidates for a potential all-India World Championship final clash, but Praggnanandhaa had a cold outing in Cyprus in his second Candidates appearance. However, he stepped up big time after that disappointment, embarking on a magi-

cal run that saw him become the first Indian to win the Norway Chess title, beating Magnus Carlsen twice in the same event. His Saint Louis win and Sinquefield Cup performance only vindicated his true strength. Praggnanandhaa and his coach, grandmaster Vaibhav Suri, arrive at Oslo’s Deichman Bjørvika for the round 3 clash with Magnus Carlsen. (Photo: Michal Walusza/Norway Chess) Praggnanandhaa and his coach, grandmaster Vaibhav Suri, arrive at Oslo’s Deichman Bjørvika for the round 3 clash with Magnus Carlsen. (Photo: Michal Walusza/Norway Chess) When asked about his incredible run, Praggnanandhaa saw the funny side of it. “Yeah, it would have been nice to win the Candidates,” he laughed it off. “But winning a tournament like this is still a great achievement. You have to show a lot of character to come out on top in such an event, and I’m happy that I managed to do that and fight till the very end,” he added. The Grand Chess Tour means a lot to Praggnanandhaa, so much so that he called it second only to the World Championship. “Winning this is certainly second only to the World Championship, given the tradition and the stature of the event. The World Championship is obviously at the top, and the Grand Chess Tour is right up there as well, so winning this is amazing. The format is also incredibly tough. You have to prove yourself not just in Classical but also in Rapid and Blitz. I’m happy I was able to do it here,” he said.

Praggnanandhaa has been in Saint Louis for nearly a month, playing continuous chess. The exhaustion is beginning to show, and all he wants to do now is go home and rest. “I just want to go home and rest now, and not look at chess for a week or two ideally. But then there’s the Olympiad coming up, so...” he laughed. Praggnanandhaa Praggnanandhaa celebrates with the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz trophy. (Lennart Ootes/Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz 2026) He credited his team and expressed special gratitude to his travelling partner and trainer, Vaibhav Suri, who managed things for him from India. “My mother and sister were here for the Sinquefield Cup, but they had to go back. Still, it’s great to have them at any tournament. And to my trainers, Ramesh sir and Vaibhav Suri. I think he completely messed up his sleep schedule because of me. He couldn’t come here because of some visa issues, but he stayed connected with me despite the massive time difference. His sleep cycle must have been completely ruined. Huge credit to him. He was basically up throughout the night. It’s 3-4 AM back in India. So huge thanks to him and my other seconds as well. They have been doing a great job.”

Praggnanandhaa won the highest total prize of \$404,354 from the entire 2026 tour, having earlier won the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz and tied for first place in the Sinquefield Cup. The Grand Chess Tour is an elite circuit spanning Classical, rapid, and blitz events with a \$2 million prize pool. The top four players in the season standings qualify for the GCT finals, a knockout event where the year’s best compete for the title. Wesley So defeated Germany’s Vincent Keymer in the third-place match to confirm his spot in next year’s tour alongside Praggnanandhaa and Caruana.

Devdutt Padikkal shows unique after-effect of fielding for over 240 overs in 2nd Test vs Sri Lanka



India had to be on the field for more than three days in their drawn second Test against Sri Lanka in Colombo and Devdutt Padikkal has showcased a rather unique side effect of the effort. Padikkal, who himself had been out for nearly four full days of the Test, having scored a century on Day 1, put a pic of his bare back on Instagram, on which his skin can be seen tanned lighter on the parts where his jersey had his name and shirt number. Effectively, he inadvertently ended up getting “Dev” and “37” temporarily tattooed on his back. “Really grateful for the opportunity and hungry for more. Lots of learnings from a hard fought series. Onto the next challenge... P.S- The sun gave me a tattoo on the last slide,” Padikkal said in his caption to the

post on Instagram.

Padikkal scored 117 in 193 balls, his second century of the two-Test series, and was dismissed about eight overs before the end of the first day’s play. India declared on 503/9 in the third session of Day 2, after which it was Sri Lanka who batted all the way to the end of the Test. The hosts were all out for 290 and were forced to follow-on by India. However, Sri Lanka put up a remarkable resistance in their second innings, first through Pasindu Sooriyabandara and Kamindu Mendis’s 87-run stand for the fourth wicket on Day 4 and then through Sonal Dinusha on Day 5. Dinusha scored his second century of the match and third of the series and saw Sri Lanka to safety.

While India won the series 1-0, the draw in the second Test hurt their chances of making it to the World Test Championship final. Captain Shubman Gill defended his decision to enforce the follow-on. “I won’t say that the follow-on backfired. We fielded for about 250 overs. They bowled around 130 overs. Around 70 overs were lost because of rain,” Gill told reporters after Day 5 on Thursday. “We were also anticipating whether Days 4 and 5 would be possible or not. We wanted to take that chance. Either we bat one or one-and-a-half sessions on Day 4, make 200 runs, give them a target of around 400, or give them the follow-on and then score another 100 runs or whatever.”

‘That’s the one bias he has’: Former India cricketer on Gill’s captaincy in Sri Lanka

Shubman Gill’s Team India faced stubborn resistance on the brink of a series clean sweep on Thursday when Sri Lanka’s lower-order eked out a draw in the Colombo Test. Led by a superlative century from Sonal Dinusha, India were denied victory after asking the hosts to follow on. Former India all-rounder Ajay Jadeja highlighted the one quality of Gill’s leadership that may have come in the way of India’s decisive plans on the final day. Jadeja said that the 26-year-old Gill carries a particular liking towards handling field placements for the shorter deliveries used by his pacers.

“Every captain leads based on how he thinks about the game. One clear thing with Gill is he likes having deep square leg for his pacers, and he loves short-pitched bowling. That’s something you don’t see as often with others. So that’s one bias he has where he uses the seamers with short balls and not just with line and length, with pressure on,” Jadeja told Sony Sports. “So he likes to attack with the seamers. Whereas with the spinners, it’s the other way around. Maybe because he bats the spinners so comfortably, he feels spinners can’t get you out here and there. So invariably, whatever the situation of the game is, one step lower is the field he sets as an attack for the spinners. It’s a standard you set for yourself with defensive fields for the



spinners.” Despite the series ending 1-0 in India’s favour, their World Test Championship final chances took a hit with their points percentage slipping to 51.51 after 11 matches this cycle. “He just loves attacking with short-balls for the pacers, and that’s his style, and he will evolve. But at this level, it’s the bowler who decides the fields and the captain agrees or disagrees, which is his choice. But it is the bowler who decides, and the captain gets the credit and the blame,” added Jadeja.

Pat Cummins backs petition seeking medical care and family access for Imran Khan

New Delhi: Australia’s Test and ODI captain Pat Cummins on Friday threw his weight behind a petition led by former international captains, including ex-Australia player Greg Chappell, which demands dignified treatment and proper court-directed medical care for jailed former Pakistan captain and Prime Minister Imran Khan. In the petition raised by Chappell and addressed to Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, which includes signatures from Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev and Dilip Vengsarkar, it has urged Pakistani authorities to grant family access and independent medical checks for Khan.

“Adding my support here to GC and the other former international captains. I hope the court-ordered medical assessment be allowed to run its course, and that family visits continue. I hope Imran Khan is treated with the dignity anyone deserves,” Cummins wrote on his ‘X’ account on Friday. The petition was signed by 21 former international captains, including Sir Alastair Cook, Michael Atherton, Steve Waugh, Adam Gilchrist, and Nasser Hussain, and expressed grave concern over Khan’s health, particularly reports regarding significant vision loss in his right eye, after he spent over three years in custody. “Imran Khan is 73 years old and has now spent more than three years in custody. Whatever the legal and political arguments surrounding his case, the basic decency of ensuring a court-ordered medical process is actually completed is not, in our view, a controversial request,” the letter stated.

The signatories laid out three primary demands: a comprehensive health evaluation by a Supreme Court-directed medical board that includes Khan’s personal physicians, uninterrupted weekly family visitation rights, and immediate implementation of any recommended medical treatment. The petitioners described themselves as ‘former colleagues and rivals who share a bond forged on the cricket field’ that ‘transcends the borders and disputes that too often divide countries’. Khan led Pakistan to their maiden Men’s ODI World Cup triumph in 1992 and served as the country’s prime minister from 2018 to 2022, before being jailed in August 2023 on multiple charges, which his party and aides maintain are politically motivated. The joint appeal follows a recent controversy where Khan was examined by a state-appointed team at a government facility rather than being transferred to a private hospital for evaluation by his personal doctors, as ordered by Pakistan’s top



court. Furthermore, in a recent episode of The Grade Cricketer podcast, Chappell raised serious concerns over Khan’s failing health. “I mean, 73 years of age, so obviously, you know, he’s getting older, but I met up with him in Pakistan six years ago, and he was still a strong, robust older man. That’s not the case anymore. His right eye apparently has developed a disability... he’s struggling. He’s been in isolation for three years.

“At the moment, he’s not getting any better. From a physical point of view, it’s hard to get information, but I saw a video clip the other day, I’m assuming of his latest trip to hospital, where he was put into a wheelchair to get him from wherever he was to wherever he was going. He didn’t look well at all. He didn’t look robust. He didn’t look like he could really get around very much.” I don’t think he is allowed to read books. He’s pretty much just got to sit there by himself. And he’s in the dark most of the time. So that’s not good for your mental health. And as your mental health deteriorates, your physical health is going to deteriorate. Imran is as strong physically and mentally as anyone that I played cricket against. But I don’t know how you deal with absolute isolation for three years.”

Gambhir praises India’s resilience, applauds Dinusha’s match-saving century

Colombo: India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Friday praised his team’s mental resilience to keep fighting till the end of their two-Test series, while giving a “special shoutout” to Sri Lanka’s Sonal Dinusha. While India crushed the hosts by 165 runs in the opening Test at Galle, Sri Lanka produced a remarkable fightback particularly in the final innings and on the last day of the second Test at Colombo, with Dinusha leading their resistance. Dinusha produced a memorable performance as he struck a second century of the Test on Thursday to force a draw in Colombo, keeping India winless who had earlier imposed a follow-on against Sri Lanka. “Test cricket needs character, patience and mental toughness that’s shown by our boys! Special shoutout to Sonal Dinusha for his exceptional performance!” Gambhir wrote on X. After scoring 103 in Sri Lanka’s first innings in which they were bowled out for 290 in reply to India’s 503 for nine declared, Dinusha stood tall in the second innings as well. Dinusha remained unbeaten on 133 (264 balls; 8



fours, 2 sixes) while forging crucial late partnerships which denied India one last push to make it 2-0. The century in the second innings also made Dinusha only the third player in history to make a ton in each essay of a Test after their side was asked to follow-on.

Ashwin says Pant’s decision-making is costing him a place in ODI, T20I sides

Rishabh Pant of India plays a shot during Day 2 of the 2nd Test match between Sri Lanka and India at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground, Colombo, Sri Lanka, on August 24, 2026. Rishabh Pant of India plays a shot during Day 2 of the 2nd Test match between Sri Lanka and India at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground, Colombo, Sri Lanka, on August 24, 2026. (CREIMAS) Former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin said that Rishabh Pant hasn’t fulfilled his potential, adding that the ‘once in a generation’ tag shouldn’t lead to the wicketkeeper-batter getting special backing from the team management. “Don’t give one player special treatment. This once-in-a-generation player backing, then give it to everyone. Jaiswal is also such a player. All I’m saying, Rishabh, is that he is experienced; he has played 50 Tests. He needs to take responsibility. Don’t come up with this ‘once-in-a-generation’ argument. It is because of his decision-making that he’s not playing the other two formats. The day you tell him the truth, he will be an all-format player for India,” he said on Ash ki Baat.

Ashwin also said that Pant’s attacking style cannot be used as an excuse for his poor decision making in critical junctures. “My expectation from Rishabh Pant hasn’t been fulfilled till now. I am very sorry. Sonal Dinusha had his strike rate up there. But the difference is high-risk options. When you have the game in your hand, these are all statements: ‘That’s how Rishabh plays.’ It is about what your team needs,” Ashwin said. “Rishabh played a class knock in Sydney and Brisbane, but you couldn’t have won that match without Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur. It takes



11 cricketers to build a Test and win it in the last session of the game, but it takes only one moment of foolishness to lose a Test,” he added. In the recently-concluded Sri Lanka series, Pant finished with 168 runs, including two half-centuries in the two Test matches. India on the series 1-0 after the second Test in Colombo was drawn. Ashwin also rejected the notion that Pant’s aggressive batting mirrors that of past greats such as Virender Sehwag and Adam Gilchrist. “I am just talking about the times when these chances are being taken when the game is on the line. I love Rishabh the player. It is about playing situations in this format. Sehwag and Gilchrist played high brand of cricket, but these two don’t get edged out while dancing down to Marco Jansen when your team is trailing by 500 runs. Don’t place these marketing lines in front of me ever again,” he said.

‘Ridiculous’: SA all-rounder questions Anaya Bangar’s inclusion in women’s cricket



Anaya, whose father, Sanjay Bangar, is a former India all-rounder and was also the batting coach of the men’s team, earlier played age-group cricket for Mumbai alongside Test-capped Sarfaraz Khan and his brother Musheer Khan. She underwent gender-affirming surgery in March this year.

GNS News Agency, August 29

Veteran South African all-rounder Marizanne Kapp has criticised Cricket Australia’s (CA) decision to allow Indian trans athlete Anaya Bangar a pathway back through women’s cricket. Anaya, whose father, Sanjay Bangar, is a former India all-rounder and was also the batting coach of the men’s team, earlier played age-group cricket for Mumbai alongside Test-capped Sarfaraz Khan and his brother Musheer Khan. She underwent gender-affirming surgery in March this year.

Earlier this week, she received clearance to play women’s community cricket in Australia. In June this year,



Film made on Rs 2 cr budget earns Rs 12 cr, sees 2500% box office jump



On July 31, a film titled Hanuman Ansh was released in theatres. In its first two weeks, the film earned Rs 1.5 crore. However, it witnessed a massive jump in its third week, earning Rs 10.5 crore, with several people praising the film on social media. According to reports, the film was made on a budget of just Rs 1.8 crore to Rs 2 crore. It currently stands at Rs 12 crore, translating into a profit of over 500% on its reported production budget.

According to industry tracker Sacnilk, Hanuman Ansh opened at Rs 10 lakh and went on to collect Rs 1.08 crore in its first week. In its second week, the film earned just Rs 40 lakh before witnessing a dramatic jump in collections in its third week.Producer took Premanand Ji Maharaj's adviseBut did you know that before the film's release, the producers approached Premanand Ji Maharaj, who advised them to ensure that the protagonist remained extremely careful about his lifestyle and followed a vegetarian diet?

Speaking to Aaj Tak, the film's director and writer Vishal Chaturvedi said, "One of our producers went to Premanand Maharaj Ji after we shot the film and asked for his suggestion before releasing the film. He said, make sure your protagonist is a vegetarian. He asked the main lead to be very careful about these things."Strict rules were followed on setsApart from this, the makers followed several rules on set. When they encountered problems, the director said, reciting the Hanuman Chalisa became their way of dealing with them."There were specific rules that had to be maintained on set. Nobody can abuse on set. Nobody can fight or argue on set. Only vegetarian food will be allowed on set. No one associated with the film will drink any alcohol. Every day, we started our shoot by chanting Hanuman Chalisa and ended the day with the same," the director said.Actor Shobhinaw Satyaa, who played the role of Neem Karoli Baba, recalled, "Every time we had a problem on set, we would recite Hanuman Chalisa."

Vishal explained, "While the schedule would be at 7 am, a lot of times, the camera wouldn't roll until 10 am due to some or the other problem. So, while waiting for it, I would suggest everyone recite Hanuman Chalisa, thinking doing something is better than nothing. And by the time we ended the Chalisa, we would find some or the other solution to the problem we were facing."

"We had no money for film campaign"Vishal also recalled how the makers had virtually no money for the film's promotional campaign, but chose to follow the path of service instead."We didn't have money when we started the campaign for this film. At the same time, we were very clear that except for spreading Neem Karoli Baba's message to the world, we don't have to do any other kind of campaign at all," he said.He added, "We did bhandaras. We did eight such bhandaras, which became our campaign and spread the word about our film. And at such a tough time, CBFC, without any issue, gave us a U certificate."Produced by Ragini S, Namrata G Singh, Anupriya A Nagar and Vishal Chaturvedi, Hanuman Ansh has emerged as the latest small-budget film to find an audience through the theme of spirituality, following Laalo and Deool Band 2, which also found success with spiritually driven narratives in the past six months.

'Rajinikanth apologised': Amrish Puri thought star was throwing his weight around, walked out

Amrish Puri's son, Rajeev Puri, has spoken about the veteran actor's close relationships with several Bollywood stars, including Sunny Deol, Ajay Devgn and Priyanka Chopra. In a conversation with Vickey Lalwani, Rajeev also recalled an incident involving Rani Mukerji and Preity Zinta that showed his father's caring and protective nature.

'Sunny and Ajay considered him their dad'Rajeev said Sunny Deol and Ajay Devgn shared a particularly close bond with Amrish Puri and regarded him as a father figure."Sunny Deol and Ajay Devgn considered him their dad. They were like sons to him. Sunny had so much love in his heart for Daddy and was emotionally attached to him. Sunny's first few films involved a lot of work with Daddy, and Daddy was also a very close friend of Dharamendra ji."Rajeev also spoke about his father's association with Ajay, who worked with Amrish Puri in his debut film, Phool Aur Kaante. The 1991 film marked Ajay Devgn's entry into Hindi cinema, with Amrish playing his on-screen father."And then with Ajay, Daddy did Ajay's first film, Phool Aur Kaante," Rajeev said.

He added that his father shared warm relationships with several other actors, including Jackie Shroff, Anil Kapoor, Sanjay Dutt and Kumar Gaurav.Rajeev said Sunny and Ajay would often remember his father whenever they passed by the family home."I have seen many times that whenever Sunny or Ajay leave from here, they always turn and look at our home and pay their respects to Daddy. They must have so many memories in their hearts. So, it feels nice."He refused a film with Rajinikanth because he thought he was throwing his weight around. Amrish returned from Chennai and told the producer he was not comfortable working with him. However, Rajinikanth apologised and they then did films together. "They worked in a film called Thalapathi and he was fond of him."Rajeev also recalled Priyanka Chopra's association with his father, saying the actor had offered her guidance during the early years of her career."Priyanka Chopra considered Amrish Puri as her guardian. I remember, in the initial stages of her career, she received a lot of advice from Daddy. She used to take advice from him because Daddy liked to guide young actors and actresses whenever he was asked for advice. And his advice was always very, very valuable."According to Rajeev, Priyanka and her father, Dr Ashok Chopra, had visited the Puri family home because of Dr Chopra's friendship with Amrish Puri and for guidance about the film industry.

"Priyanka Chopra and her father, Dr Ashok Chopra, came home because Dr Ashok Chopra was a good friend of Daddy. They thought Daddy was a good guide for them in the film industry, and so they came over."

When Amrish Puri gave Rani Mukerji and Preity Zinta his vanity vanRajeev also shared an anecdote from the sets of Chori Chori Chupke Chupke, in which Amrish Puri worked alongside Rani Mukerji and Preity Zinta. The 2001 film starred Salman Khan, Rani and Preity, with Amrish playing Kailashnath Malhotra.According to Rajeev, Rani and Preity were left without a vanity van on the set after they did not arrive. When Amrish noticed them waiting, he immediately offered them his own."Rani Mukerji and Preity Zinta were both very fond of him. They were doing a movie called Chori Chori Chupke Chupke. Daddy had his vanity van standing there, but there was no other vanity van. Rani Mukerji and Preity Zinta's vanity van hadn't come, or something had happened.""When Daddy came out of the vanity van, he saw them and asked, 'Where is your van?' They said, 'Our van hasn't come yet.' Daddy got very angry with the producers and said, 'Use my vanity van until the other one comes.'"Rajeev said his father was particularly conscious about ensuring that the women around him were comfortable and safe."Daddy was very chivalrous. He used to always make sure that all the women around him were looked after. He made sure that everyone was comfortable and everyone was safe."

After giving Rani and Preity his vanity van, Rajeev said Amrish chose to sit outside under an umbrella rather than disturb their privacy."Daddy opened an umbrella and sat outside. When those two girls came out, they asked him, 'Why did you sit here?' He said, 'You are inside, so I am comfortable here.'"Rajeev added that his father did not want



to intrude on their space and was perfectly willing to sit outside in the heat.

About Amrish PuriAmrish Puri remains one of the most memorable actors in Indian cinema. While he became synonymous with iconic villains, most notably Mogambo in Mr India, his career included a wide range of acclaimed performances.His extensive filmography included Nishant, Manthan, Ardh Satya, Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, Virasat and Gadar: Ek Prem Katha. He also played the memorable Mola Ram in Steven Spielberg's Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom.

Kriti Sanon's cheeky response to critics amid Raksha Bandhan ad controversy

Mumbai: Amidst the Raksha Bandhan controversy, actress Kriti Sanon decided to reply to those criticising her for her choice of attire for a recent advertisement with a chill Raksha Bandhan post.Making it clear what really matters to her, the 'Cocktail 2' actress took a subtle dig at the 'fashion committee'.

On Friday, Kriti uploaded a picture of her and her sister Nupur Sanon's rakhi-clad hands on her official handle.While she did not say much, she perfectly communicated her current mindset with her caption that read, "While the Rakhi fashion committee is still in session... We're focusing on what really matters. Happy Rakhi to all (sic)."A lot of people came in support of the 'Mimi' actress in the comment section.One of the Insta users wrote, "You go girl!!!! Everyone is free to celebrate festivals in their own manner. In India every festival is celebrated differently by different communities. Inclusivity and tolerance for diversity is the base for this diverse country."Another one shared, "Thank you for speaking up and taking a stand when it mattered the most!"and that is how you laugh at the trolls." read the third comment.For the unversed, Kriti was criticized for wearing an off-white ensemble featuring a bralette-style blouse, a cape, and a draped skirt for an advertisement for a jewellery brand named GIVA on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. A section of social media claimed that the attire was not appropriate as per Indian traditions. Later on, the ad was eventually withdrawn by the brand.Recently, Kriti reacted to the backlash with a note on social media, saying "The essence of festivals is not in the clothes you wear, it is in the emotions and meaning you hold for the traditions.

From Shiva idol to Shivling: Inside Priyanka Chopra-Nick Jonas' Rs 171 cr LA mansion



Priyanka Chopra may have started small — the girl who changed clothes in her school washroom to look cool, while maintaining a sense of decency at home, and was bullied for being brown in the US as a student. Today, however, she is a global star and the owner of several real estate properties, including her Rs 171 crore mansion in Los Angeles.Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas' LA mansion Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas' LA mansion

Priyanka Chopra purchased the mansion in 2019 with her husband, Nick Jonas. Spread across 20,000 square feet, the property boasts seven bedrooms, 11 bathrooms and soaring ceilings.The interiors of their home are predominantly white, complemented by wooden architecture in earthy tones. The living room is a spacious area with white sofas and walls, while the dining area features contrasting tones. Opposite it is a dramatic black marble wall that breaks the otherwise white aesthetic. Below it is a fireplace, adding warmth to the space during chilly evenings.Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas' LA mansion Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas' LA mansion

The entrance to the dining room features three pieces of modern art that add a splash of colour to the white walls. A jhoomar hanging from the centre adds an element of gran-

GST officer loses Rs 7.5 lakh after missing question about origin of India's name

KBC 18: Amitabh Bachchan-hosted Kaun Banega Crorepati 18 saw Dr Anuj Bhatnagar from Udaipur, Rajasthan, take the hot seat in the August 27 episode. A tax officer serving as a deputy commissioner in the GST department, Anuj came on the show with his wife and son and played his way to Rs 7.5 lakh before a question about India, Jordan and Zambia brought his game to an end.

Anuj used one lifeline before reaching the Rs 3 lakh mark and also gained another lifeline after correctly answering the question worth Rs 25,000. This season of KBC begins with limited lifeline options, with more becoming available as contestants progress through the game.Check this space tomorrow to learn more about the toughest question on the latest episode of Kaun Banega Crorepati 18. We will be bringing you the question and the story behind it.

Dr Anuj Bhatnagar reaches Rs 7.5 lakhFor the 10th question, worth Rs 5 lakh, Anuj used the Sanket Suchak lifeline before giving the correct answer and reaching the milestone. During his conversation with Amitabh Bachchan, Anuj also shared that his wife wanted a diamond necklace, giving him another reason to try and take home a big prize.Anuj then played the Super Sandook round and answered nine out of 10 questions correctly, winning Rs 90,000. He chose to take the 50:50 lifeline, adding another option to his game.The 11th question, worth Rs 7.5 lakh, proved difficult for Anuj, and he used the MahaFlip lifeline to move past it.He then moved on to the 12th question of the game, worth Rs 12.5 lakh. It was this question, involving the flags of India, Jordan and Zambia, that ended his journey on the hot seat.Anuj was shown the flags of India, Jordan and Zambia and asked: Which of these is true about the countries whose flags are shown in the image?The options were:

- A. English names come from rivers
- B. Have the same Independence Day
- C. Capitals begin with "New"
- D. Are in the Northern Hemisphere

Unsure of the answer, Anuj used his final lifeline, 50:50. The lifeline eliminated two incorrect options — "Capitals begin with 'New'" and "Are in the Northern Hemisphere" — leaving him with:

- A. English names come from rivers

Dulquer Salmaan sings 'Loser' for 'I'm Game'

Chennai: The makers of director Nahas Hidayath's eagerly awaited action entertainer 'I'm Game', featuring actor Dulquer Salmaan in the lead, on Thursday released the single 'Loser' from the film, much to the delight of fans and film buffs.The song offers audiences a playful glimpse into the world of the upcoming thriller. The track also sees Dulquer stepping into the role of a singer, lending his voice to the song and adding a personal touch to the film's musical album. The song has been set to tune by Jakes Bejoy and has lyrics by Suhail Koya.

'Loser' takes a refreshing approach to the idea of being a loser, turning what is often considered a negative label into something to celebrate. The song embraces the imperfect, unconventional and chaotic side of its characters, giving the track a fun and irreverent energy.Speaking about the song, Dulquer says, "It's a song that celebrates losers, and I think it's kind of fun. I also got to sing it."

The track also gives audiences a glimpse into Dulquer's character in 'I'm Game'. The character he plays is unlike the actor himself. Describing his role, Dulquer says, "I get to play a character who is quite a brat in this movie,

deur to the space.The dining room is designed to host Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving dinners, allowing the couple to celebrate the traditions and cultures of Nick Jonas' family.Other amenities in the house include a chef's kitchen, a temperature-controlled wine room, an indoor basketball court, a private bowling alley with striking lighting, a home theatre and a luxury entertainment lounge with a spa and gym.

Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas' LA mansion Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas' LA mansion – bowling alley (Mansion.dimensions) Priyanka Chopra Priyanka Chopra at her pool.A few years ago, while promoting an alcohol brand, Nick Jonas gave viewers a glimpse of his kitchen, gym, poolside area and a recreation space equipped with a table tennis setup.The couple also have a fully equipped gym where they work out when they are not busy with their professional commitments. The private bowling alley is another feature of their home. The pool area serves as a space for the couple to unwind on their days off. During Indian festivals such as Holi and Diwali, however, it transforms into an entertaining space for guests, with the couple hosting colourful Holi celebrations and Diwali festivities.

The expansive pool is surrounded by wooden flooring and cream-coloured furniture. The mansion is also surrounded by lush greenery and features a massive garage where the couple parks their luxury cars.While the house is a dream abode for many, one of its most personal spaces is the couple's puja room, which also doubles as a prayer and meditation corner. The space features a white Shiva idol against a white backdrop, surrounded by candles. It also has a silver Lord Ganesha idol, a Shivling and other Hindu deities. Items traditionally used for puja, including agarbatti, dhooop and aarti essentials, are also kept there. The corner additionally features a photograph of Priyanka's father, Ashok Chopra.Priyanka Chopra's puja area Priyanka Chopra's prayer corner.Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas often celebrate each other's festivals and cultural traditions. Last year, on Diwali, Priyanka shared a video of the couple performing Lakshmi Puja according to Hindu rituals.Although the couple purchased the house in 2019, they were forced to move out after it became "virtually unlivable", according to a report by Page Six.Priyanka Chopra prayer corner. Priyanka Chopra prayer corner.According to a lawsuit filed in May 2023, the property's pool and spa began developing problems soon after the purchase. Waterproofing issues allegedly led to "fostered mold contamination and related issues". The complaint also alleged that, around the same time, another water leak developed in the barbecue area on the deck.



B. Have the same Independence Day

Anuj chose "Have the same Independence Day", but it was the wrong answer. The correct answer was "English names come from rivers."Although he had correctly answered the Rs 7.5 lakh question, Anuj lost money after getting the Rs 12.5 lakh question wrong. Since Rs 5 lakh was the guaranteed level, his winnings dropped back to Rs 5 lakh, which is the amount he ultimately took home.

Similarity between India, Jordan and ZambiaThe answer was linked to the origins of the English names of all three countries, each of which is connected to a major river.India's name is derived from the Indus River, known in Sanskrit as Sindhu. The name travelled through Persian and Greek usage before evolving into "India" in English.Jordan is named after the Jordan River, which is closely associated with the country and runs along its western side.Similarly, Zambia takes its name from the Zambezi River, one of Africa's largest and most important rivers.Despite being located in different parts of the world, India, Jordan and Zambia therefore have one thing in common: their English names are connected to rivers.Kaun Banega Crorepati 18 begins with limited lifeline options, with additional lifelines becoming available as contestants progress through the game. Contestants can also earn the 50:50 lifeline through the Super Sandook round, while MahaFlip is another lifeline introduced later in the game.The current season has already seen several contestants make impressive winnings, including two who reached the Rs 1 crore question but chose to quit and take home Rs 50 lakh.

which is very unlike me. Hopefully, by the end of the movie, I redeem myself and win you back."The song's release comes as anticipation continues to build around 'I'm Game', with Dulquer taking on a character that allows him to explore a different side of his performance.Dulquer, who shared the link to the song on his social media timelines, wrote, "No matter the language, the vibe hits the same! The LOSER SONG from I'M GAME is officially OUT NOW in Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, and Kannada!"For the unaware, 'I'm Game' is to hit screens on September 3 this year. The film was originally scheduled to hit screens worldwide on August 20.In a statement announcing the postponement of the film's release date, Dulquer Salmaan had acknowledged the anticipation around the film and stated that the decision to opt for a new release date came with a larger vision for the film.He said, "The game gets bigger. The release gets wider. We understand the anticipation and we apologize for the delay, but #imgame will now release worldwide on 3rd September, moving from its earlier release date of 20th August."The actor went on to say, "The new release date comes with a larger vision for the film as #imgame gears up for a wider theatrical release across markets.