

Retired employees challenge mandatory 1.5% health scheme deduction

Hyderabad: A group of retired government employees from Hanumakonda has approached the Telangana High Court to suspend a recent GO that makes a 1.5% contribution to the employees health scheme compulsory for pensioners.

T Seetaram and ten other retired workers filed the writ, arguing that the deduction places an unfair financial strain on those who rely solely on their monthly pension to make ends meet. The petitioners want the court to put the controversial order on hold and refund the money already deducted from their pensions since June 2026.



Patna, August 3

Jan Suraaj Party founder Prashant Kishor made a historic electoral debut on Monday, winning the bypoll for Bihar's prestigious Bankipur Assembly constituency, in a big blow to the BJP which had held the seat since 1995.

The defeat, coming days after the massive Gen Z protests across the country, was even more stinging because the seat was last held by BJP president Nitin Nabin, whose elevation necessitated the bypoll on August 30.

Kishor, who got 64,151 votes, defeated BJP's Neeraj Kumar by 19,324 votes. Kumar garnered 44,827 votes. Rekha Gupta of RJD was a distant third with 14,273 votes.

A little less than 3.8 lakh voters, including 2 lakh men and 1.79 lakh women, were eligible to vote in the polls.

The bypoll recorded a voter turnout of 34.30 per cent, down by more than seven per cent from the 41.45 per cent registered in the last assembly elections, held

just nine months ago.

"The victory is a wake-up call for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who must install a new Chief Minister in place of Samrat Choudhary, a man with criminal antecedents," said Kishor, for whom it was a satisfying reversal of fortunes. In the Assembly elections, his party had failed to win any seats. Kishor had decided not to contest then.

The 49-year-old Jan Suraaj founder had entered the fray, announcing that he saw the byelection as a "referendum" on the BJP-led government in the state.

Kishor, whose victory may help resurrect his fledgling outfit, also said, "On this occasion, besides thanking the common citizens, I would like to thank those who helped Jan Suraaj despite not being in the party." BJP had hurriedly fielded Kumar after its candidate Abhishek "Bunty" pulled out at the eleventh hour, citing "family reasons".

The bypoll to the Assembly seat was necessitated

Rampant corruption in Revenue Dept haunts people

Hyderabad: Although Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy has said that he is making every effort to make the Revenue Department "corruption-free", it appears that graft continues to flow in the wing like a perennial river, powered by "political interference".It is alleged that political interference in the Revenue Department reached its peak during the previous BRS government. However, according to a Revenue Department employee, who spoke to 'The Hans India' on condition of anony

Bihar's Bankipur falls: Prashant Kishor scores landmark bypoll win, ends BJP's 3-decade dominance

by the resignation of BJP national president Nitin Nabin, whose late father, Navin Chandra Sinha, began the party's winning streak in 1995, when the seat was known as "Patna seat".

Nabin had vacated the Bankipur seat in April, upon election to the Rajya Sabha, six months after having won it for the fifth time on the trot.

State BJP president Sanjay reacted to the humiliating defeat, saying, "We bow down before the will of the people. We shall draw lessons from the debacle, unlike our opponents who tend to blame every electoral loss of theirs on EVMs and the Election Commission".

Commending Kishor, Chief Minister Chaudhary said, "In the grand festival of democracy, the people have chosen Jan Suraaj in the Bankipur Assembly bypoll. I respect the people's verdict and extend my heartfelt congratulations to Prashant Kishor ji on his victory."

Kishor, who had first shot to fame for managing Modi's 2014 Lok Sabha campaign, has been a vocal critic of Chaudhary. "Bihar cannot be treated as a factory that produces cheap labour. I do not promise that my becoming the MLA will make Bankipur on par with Bengaluru. But, when Gujarat, the home state of Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, is looking forward to having a bullet train, the people of Bihar certainly have a right to expect something better than passenger trains", said Kishor, amid screams of "Jai Bihar", the Jan Suraaj Party's ubiquitous slogan.

Jan Suraaj supporters swarmed the streets and gathered in massive numbers at AN College, where the votes were counted. Kishor's wife, Jahnavi Das, who usually stays away from politics, also chose to be by her husband's side in his moment of glory.

"This victory belongs to the people of Bihar", said Das, who hails from Assam.

In the BJP camp, the exuberance on display in the morning, when hundreds of party supporters turned up a city-based sweets shop to pick up 200 kg of 'laddoos' they had ordered expecting a certain victory, gave way to shock and despondency as vote counting proceeded and the lead enjoyed by Kishor grew almost progressively with every round.

Kishor's victory was hailed as "a lesson to the arrogant BJP", even by those outside his party, like Janshakti Janata Dal president Tej Pratap Yadav, the estranged elder son of RJD supremo Lalu Prasad, and CPI(ML) Liberation general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, whose party is an INDIA bloc partner.

Polling, held on July 30, followed days of intensive campaigning by Kishor as well as the BJP, with both sides repeatedly accusing each other of electoral malpractices and approaching the Election Commission over the issue.

"The verdict in Bankipur must be viewed in the backdrop of the wider dissatisfaction with the BJP, which recently got reflected in the students' protests. Of course, credit must also be given to Prashant Kishor, who displayed enormous energy and organisational skills," said veteran socialist leader Shivanand Tiwary, who had been one of the foremost participants in the 'JP movement' of the 1970s and, in a political career spanning many decades, has been with parties like RJD and JD(U).

RJD spokesman Chitaranjan Gagan, whose party has often charged Kishor with being the "B team of BJP", came out with a statement expressing delight over the verdict.

Opposition demands Shah's response on student crackdown, holds protest in Parliament

New Delhi, August 3

The Opposition on Monday staged a protest in the Parliament complex, demanding that Home Minister Amit Shah appear in the House and answer questions over the police action against students protesting at Jantar Mantar. Holding placards reading, "Why is Amit Shah absent from Parliament?", Opposition MPs accused the government of evading accountability on issues they said had generated widespread public concern.

The Opposition also raised the issue of the alleged



Ram Mandir donation theft row.

Several leaders, including Congress MPs Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, SP MP Dimple Yadav, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra and several other members of the INDIA bloc, participated in the demonstration.

In a symbolic protest over the alleged Ram Mandir donation theft, Opposition MPs placed a donation box at the protest site, with several leaders seen dropping cash into it to underline their demand for accountability.

Addressing reporters, Congress general secretary K C Venugopal questioned the Home Minister's absence from Parliament and accused the government of remaining silent on the police action against protesting students.

"The students are still facing atrocities and attacks. We need an answer from the Home Minister, and the entire country also wants answers. Why is the Home Minister running away? Why is he not coming to Parliament? In all previous sessions, he used to be highly active, whether it was his Bill or someone else's. Then why is he not attending this session?" Venugopal asked.

Moreover, Gaurav Gogoi echoed the demand, saying the Opposition wanted Amit Shah to make a statement in Parliament on what he described as the government's "vindictive" action against protesters.

"The Opposition's demand is very clear. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi may have 'forgiven' some students via his Instagram, the youth of the country have not yet forgiven the Union Home Minister. Therefore, the Congress clearly demands that the Union Home Minister come to the House and make a statement regarding the vindictive actions taken against protesters by BJP-ruled states and their agencies," Gogoi said.

He further alleged that women and minor girl students were being specifically targeted and questioned whether action would be taken against those using abusive language against them on social media. "This government is clearly acting out of a spirit of vendetta," he added.TMC MP Mahua Moitra also targeted the Home Minister, accusing him of avoiding accountability over the police action against students during the July 20 protest in Delhi. She said the Home Minister must explain the police response to the march from Jantar Mantar to Parliament, during which, she alleged, Delhi Police used tear gas and pellet guns against students.

Moitra also criticised the absence of both the Prime Minister and the Home Minister from the debate in Parliament, alleging that while Prime Minister Narendra Modi was communicating through social media, Amit Shah had not responded to the Opposition's demands in the House.

CM Revanth Reddy lines up many sops for I-Day

Hyderabad, August 3

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is likely to announce a bunch of sops on August 15 to mark the Independence Day celebrations. Apart from launching a pension scheme for thalassemia and sickle cell anaemia patients, the Chief Minister is planning to go aggressive on the welfare front by introducing some more schemes meant for the welfare of farmers, women, and disadvantaged sections. The state government has already launched an exercise to identify among thalassemia and sickle cell anaemia patients persons eligible for pensions. Pensions for all widows, single women, weavers, and toddy tappers are already being implemented. New beneficiaries will be identified under various other schemes by August 15. Instant sanction of pensions to the wives of differently-abled individuals upon their demise would also be implemented from August this year. According to top officials, "the launch of Indiramma family life insurance scheme to provide Rs 5 lakh insurance coverage to approximately 1.60 crore families is under consideration". Compilation of the data of the families is crucial to launch the scheme.

A proposal to pilot the scheme in some districts has been forwarded to the Chief Minister. "Required formalities to launch the scheme are under study," officials told The Hans India'. Sources said that the Finance Department was studying the requirement of funds to implement the pending Rajiv Yuva Vikasa scheme. Nearly 16 lakh applications have been received from BC, SC, ST



and Minority communities. The government was supposed to launch the scheme last financial year. However, the government put the scheme on hold due to financial challenges. A decision on launching the scheme on August 15 would be taken this week, officials said.

Proposals to launch several village developmental works, mainly construction of buildings for village panchayats, sanction of blacktop roads have already been sent to the district authorities. "The Chief Minister will hold a Cabinet meeting next week to discuss the launch of a slew of welfare schemes targeting farmers and finalise them in consultation with the Finance Department," officials said.

The children of three former chief ministers are now part of Shivakumar's Cabinet. They are Yathindra Siddaramaiah (already a minister), Kumar Bangarappa (son of S Bangarappa) and Ajay Singh (son of N Dharam Singh).

Incidentally, six of the 20 newly inducted ministers were also part of the previous government led by Siddaramaiah.

Gayathri Shanthegowda, whose election from the Chikkamagaluru Local Authorities' Constituency was upheld by a recent Supreme Court verdict, will be the lone woman in the Cabinet. Her election came after the court set aside BJP leader M K Pranesh's election to the Legislative Council in December 2021.

Shivakumar expands Cabinet, discontent brews within party

New Delhi, August 3

In a deft political move, Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Monday inducted 20 ministers in the first expansion of his Cabinet since assuming the state's top post. Many of the inductees are new faces, reflecting a careful mix of caste and regional representation crucial to the southern state.The expansion strengthens the Shivakumar Cabinet, which took office in June. The influential Vokkaliga leader replaced Siddaramaiah in a leadership transition that had long been the subject of a power struggle within Karnataka Congress circles.

The new ministers include P M Narendraswamy (Malavalli), Shivaraj Tangadagi (Kanakagiri), Rudrappa Lamani (Haveri), K S Basavanthappa (Mayakonda), B Nagendra (Ballari Rural), T Raghunoorthy (Challakere),



B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan (Chamarajpet), Rizwan Arshad (Shivajinagar), Santosh Lad (Kalaghatagi) and Madhu Bangarappa (Soraba), among others.

GS Patil has been chosen as the new Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, while A S Ponnanna will serve as Deputy Speaker.

The expansion marks the return of former Scheduled Tribes Welfare Minister B Nagendra. A former BJP leader who joined the Congress in 2018, Nagendra had resigned from the Cabinet in 2024 over allegations linked to the Valmiki Development Corporation scam.

In addition, two minority community leaders, B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan and Rizwan Arshad, have been inducted into the Cabinet.

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a story of identity,
culture and self-respect

You cannot understand Telangana by looking at it on a map. You can truly understand it only by listening to the heartbeat of its people. Many tried to mock our language, erase our history, and belittle our culture. Yet Telangana has never remained silent. This land was born out of struggle, strengthened by sacrifice, and shaped by self-respect.

Telangana is not merely a State; it is a living philosophy woven together by history, culture, language, literature, folklore, struggle, and self-respect. Every step on this soil carries the memory of sacrifice. Every lake reflects a rich civilisation. Every village preserves a unique cultural legacy. Respecting Telangana's identity, therefore, is not about recognising a geographical region — it is about honouring the resilience of a people who safeguarded their language, heritage, and dignity through generations of struggle.

For decades, the Telugu spoken in Telangana was ridiculed and reduced to comic relief in mainstream cinema. The history of the region rarely found the space it deserved in textbooks. The glorious legacy of the Kakatiyas and the sacrifices of leaders such as Sardar Sarvai Papanna, Komaram Bheem, and Chakali Ailamma did not receive the recognition they truly deserved.

Telangana was often portrayed as backward and underdeveloped. Discrimination in employment, water allocation, financial resources, and administration was not merely a political issue; it was a lived reality that affected countless families. In an era of globalisation, preserving regional identities is more important than ever. When a language survives, culture survives, and when culture survives, history endures.

Collector Divakar TS Directs Officials to Ensure Swift Disposal of Public Grievances



“District Collector Receives Petitions at Prajavani Programme” Khammam, August 3 (Indian Chronicle): “District Collector Divakar TS directed district officials to examine the petitions submitted by the public and ensure their prompt disposal by taking necessary action without delay.” “The Collector received petitions from citizens during the Prajavani grievance redressal programme held at the Collectorate Conference Hall on Monday. He was accompanied by Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Dr. P. Srija and Additional Collector P. Srinivas Reddy.” “V. Venkataiah of Tekulapalli, Khanapuram Haveli, submitted a petition stating that his old-age pension had not been credited to his bank account for the current month. The Collector instructed the Project Director, DRDO to look into the matter and take necessary action.” “S.K. Najia of Lenin Nagar, 44th Division, Khammam City, requested financial assistance in the form of a pension for her daughter, who is suffering from thalassemia. The Collector referred the matter to the Project Director, DRDO and SERP for appropriate action.” “M. Surya Prakash Papi Reddy of Kothur village in Khammam Urban Mandal sought access to his land located near the Dhamsalapuram entry and exit point on the Khammam–Devarapalli National Highway. The Collector directed the National Highways authorities to examine the issue and take necessary action.” “V. Ramakrishna of Nachepalli village in Nelakondapalli Mandal informed the Collector that he had completed his postgraduate studies and was visually disabled. He requested suitable employment, and the Collector referred the matter to the District Employment Officer for necessary action.” “The programme was attended by Trainee Assistant Collector Paras Kumar, DRO C.H. Rammurthy, ZP CEO Diksha Raina, district officials, Collectorate AO Srinivas, and members of the public.

CARE Hospitals Inaugurates Advanced MICU



“Hyderabad, August 03 (Indian Chronicle) : CARE Hospitals, Malakpet, has inaugurated its state-of-the-art Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU). The facility was formally inaugurated by Malakpet MLA Ahmed Bin Abdullah Balala, according to a statement issued on Monday by Dr. Pavan Kumar, CEO (India-2), Aster DM Quality Care Ltd. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Pavan Kumar said the new MICU will provide round-the-clock emergency critical care services supported by advanced medical technology, further strengthening the hospital's critical care capabilities. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Regional CEO Nilesh Gupta, COO Praveen Kumar Edla, Corporator Sheikh Mohiuddin Abrar, Dr. Sridhar, Dr. Vajrapu Rajendra, and other dignitaries.

MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Urges Withdrawal of Proposed Power Substation in Sai Baba Nagar



“UPPAL, AUGUST 03 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Responding to strong objections raised by residents over the proposed construction of an electricity substation in the midst of a residential area in Sai Baba Nagar under Kapra

Division, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy took up the matter with senior officials of the Electricity Department. “The MLA directly spoke to the department's higher authorities and conveyed the concerns of the local residents. He stated that establishing a power substation within a densely populated residential locality could lead to problems such as vibration, noise pollution, and inconvenience to the people living nearby.” Lakshma Reddy emphasized that it is the responsibility of the government and its departments to ensure the safety, health, and peaceful living conditions of citizens. He urged the Electricity Department to respect the sentiments of the local residents, immediately withdraw the proposal to set up the substation at the present location, and, if necessary, identify an alternative site away from residential areas. “The MLA assured the residents that he stands firmly with them and would not support any decision that goes against public welfare. He reiterated that all necessary steps would be taken to safeguard the interests of the people.” BRS leader Bairi Naveen Goud, local residents, party leaders, and activists also participated in the programme.

BJP Medchal Urban OBC DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT PUPPALA VENKATESHWARLU Felicitated by Malkajgiri MP Etala Rajender



“UPPAL, AUGUST 03 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): BJP senior leader Puppala Venkateshwarlu, who was recently appointed as the Medchal Urban OBC District Vice President of the Bharatiya Janata Party, was felicitated with a shawl by Malkajgiri MP Etala Rajender on Sunday. “On the occasion, Puppala Venkateshwarlu, along with party lead-

ers, met MP Etala Rajender and BJP Medchal District OBC President J.K. Shekhar Yadav to convey their gratitude and receive their blessings.” Speaking on the occasion, MP Etala Rajender advised Venkateshwarlu to work with dedication for strengthening the BJP and to actively strive for the welfare of OBC communities and the resolution of public issues. He expressed confidence that Venkateshwarlu would efficiently discharge the responsibilities entrusted to him by the party and further enhance the BJP's support among the people. “Expressing his gratitude, Puppala Venkateshwarlu thanked the BJP state and district leadership for entrusting him with the new responsibility. He assured that he would work tirelessly for the upliftment of OBC communities and the strengthening of the party in line with the BJP's ideology and objectives.” Senior BJP leaders Palugula Yadagiri, Akula Anjaneyulu, Ashok Reddy, Nallu Purushotham Reddy, Nagu Narasimha, Palugula Venkatesh, Bikshapathi, Srinivas Chary, OBC committee members, party leaders, and a large number of party workers participated in the felicitation programme.

CM Revanth Reddy and Uppal Constituency In-Charge M. Parameshwar Reddy Thanked for Fulfilling Long-Pending Demand of Sri Nagar Colony Residents



M.A. Jaleel Pasha Organises Thanksgiving Meeting for 14 Lakh Drainage Project Ramanthapur, August 3 (Indian Chronicle): “A long-pending civic issue faced by the residents of Sri Nagar Colony in Venkat Reddy Nagar Division has finally been resolved with the sanction of ₹14 lakh for the construction of a new drainage line beside Hanuman Temple Lane. The project, approved by Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, has brought great relief and happiness to the local residents.” To express gratitude, M.A. Jaleel Pasha, General Secretary of the Medchal–Malkajgiri District Congress Committee (DCC), organised a special thanksgiving programme in honour of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Uppal Constituency Congress In-Charge M. Parameshwar Reddy. “Speaking on the occa-

sion, Jaleel Pasha said that the Congress government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, is giving top priority to public welfare and infrastructure development by addressing long-pending civic issues. He stated that, due to the special initiative taken by M. Parameshwar Reddy, the long-standing drainage problem in Sri Nagar Colony would now receive a permanent solution. “He explained that residents had been facing severe hardships for many years, especially during the rainy season, due to stagnant sewage water, foul smell, and difficulty in commuting. The new drainage line is expected to permanently resolve these problems. He also announced that efforts are underway to take up drinking water pipeline works and other essential infrastructure projects in the colony in the coming days.” Residents expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for sanctioning the funds and to M. Parameshwar Reddy for his continuous efforts towards the development of the Uppal constituency. They appreciated the Congress leadership for its commitment to addressing public grievances and improving civic amenities. “The thanksgiving programme was attended by Division President Raji Reddy, Balayya Babu, Arun Sai, Krishna Goud, Venkateshwarlu, Anjaiah, Mallesh, Padam, Aruna, Suvama, Lakshmi, Padma, Sarupa, Yashoda, along with several women, youth, and residents of Sri Nagar Colony.

TWJF Must Be Given Representation in Accreditation Committees



“Telangana High Court Issues Key Directions to State Government” Court Reaffirms Support for Journalists' Rights “This Is a Victory for Every TWJF Member” – State President Mamidi Somayya “Hyderabad, August 3 (Indian Chronicle): “In a significant judgment, the Telangana High Court has directed the State Government to provide representation to the Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF) in all District Media Accreditation Committees (DMACs) across the State.” “The Court observed that journalists' associations must be given fair and appropriate representation while constituting the Media Accreditation Committees. It also found fault with the Government for excluding TWJF from the committees despite the Federation fulfilling the required eligibility.” “Challenging the Government's decision to constitute the District Media Accreditation Committees without including TWJF, the Federation's State President Mamidi Somayya approached the Telangana High Court by filing a writ petition. The matter was heard several times over the past six months, during which advocates representing both the State Government and the petitioner presented their arguments before the Court.” “After examining the submissions of both sides, the relevant Government Orders, the procedure for constituting Media Accreditation Committees, and the rules governing the representation of journalists' associations, a Division Bench compris-

ing Chief Justice Apresh Kumar Singh and Justice Mohd. Moinuddin delivered its judgment on Monday.” “The High Court directed the State Government to ensure that TWJF is given appropriate representation in all District Media Accreditation Committees across Telangana.” “The verdict paves the way for TWJF to receive official representation in the accreditation committees. Legal experts believe the judgment will promote transparency, fairness, and equal opportunity among journalists' organisations in the accreditation process.” “Welcoming the judgment, the State leadership of TWJF described it as a major legal victory for journalists' rights, dignity, and equal representation. The Federation urged the State Government to implement the Court's directions without delay and appoint TWJF representatives to all District Media Accreditation Committees.” “The Federation further stated that the judgment would serve as an important precedent for ensuring fair representation to all recognised journalists' organisations in future accreditation committee formations.” “State President Mamidi Somayya said that justice and fairness had prevailed and described the High Court's verdict as a victory for every member of the Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF).

Take Preventive Measures Against Seasonal Diseases: Medical Officer Dr. Madhavi

“Khammam/Nelakondapalli, August 3 – Indian Chronicle” “Government Medical Officer Dr. Madhavi has urged the public to take preventive measures to protect themselves from seasonal diseases.” “A free medical camp was organized on Monday at Kotha Kothuru Gram Panchayat in Nelakondapalli mandal. During the camp, medical teams conducted various health check-ups for vil-

Guest Lecturers Hail Government's Timely Pay Initiative



“Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, Aug 3: Guest lecturers of the Government Junior College, Kagaznagar, expressed their gratitude to the Telangana Government for introducing a system to disburse salaries to guest faculty on the first day of every month. To mark the occasion, the lecturers performed a symbolic milk abhishekam to the portrait of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on the college campus on Monday.” “Speaking on the occasion, the guest lecturers said that although they had been discharging their duties with dedication on modest remuneration, salaries were earlier released only once every six months, causing severe financial hardship. They appreciated the State Government for recognizing their long-pending concerns and implementing a monthly salary payment system with effect from the first of every month.” “The lecturers stated that timely payment of salaries would significantly reduce their financial burden and enable them to focus more effectively on teaching while carrying out their responsibilities with greater enthusiasm and commitment.” “They expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Telangana Government and Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for taking what they described as a welfare-oriented decision. The guest lecturers also praised the government's initiative, stating that the new system of regular monthly salary payments would provide much-needed financial security and relief to guest faculty across the state.

District Collector Divakar TS Felicitates Retired Government Employees



“Collector Appreciates 30–35 Years of Dedicated Public Service” Khammam, August 3 (Indian Chronicle): District Collector Divakar TS felicitated two government employees who retired after rendering long and dedicated service to the public.” “A retirement felicitation ceremony for the employees who retired on July 31 was held at the Khammam Collectorate Conference Hall on Monday. District Collector Divakar TS, along with Additional Collectors Dr. P. Srija and P. Srinivas Reddy, attended the event as chief guests and praised the retirees for their sincere contribution to government service.” “The employees honoured were J. Ratna Kumari, Assistant CDPO in the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, and C.H. Nagaraju, Driver in the District Employment Office.” “Speaking on the occasion, Collector Divakar TS expressed his gratitude to the retiring employees for serving the public with dedication for nearly 30 to 35 years. He wished them a healthy, peaceful, and happy life after retirement.” “The Collector and the Additional Collectors later presented shawls and mementoes to the retirees in recognition of their valuable services.” “The programme was attended by Trainee Assistant Collector Paras Kumar, DRO C.H. Rammurthy, DWO A. Prameela, District Employment Officer N. Madhavi, district officials, officers from various departments, family members of the retirees, and others.

Fernandez Foundation Partners with GVK Health

“Hyderabad, August 03 (Indian Chronicle) : Fernandez Foundation (FF) has partnered with GVK Health to expand healthcare services for women and newborns by launching a dedicated outpatient clinic, according to Fernandez Foundation Chief Executive Officer Sameer Vira. Speaking alongside GVK Health Chief Operating Officer Suman Raju J. on Sunday, Vira said the clinic will offer comprehensive services including pregnancy care, gynecology, fertility assessment, adolescent health, and menstrual health services. To mark the launch, the clinic is offering a special Women's Health Package from August 1 to August 15. The package includes a gynecology consultation along with TSH, pelvic ultrasound, CBC, Pap smear, and HbA1c tests, he added.



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Take Preventive Measures Against Seasonal Diseases: Medical Officer Dr. Madhavi

“Khammam/Nelakondapalli, August 3 – Indian Chronicle” “Government Medical Officer Dr. Madhavi has urged the public to take preventive measures to protect themselves from seasonal diseases.” “A free medical camp was organized on Monday at Kotha Kothuru Gram Panchayat in Nelakondapalli mandal. During the camp, medical teams conducted various health check-ups for vil-

agers and distributed medicines free of cost.” “Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Madhavi advised people to maintain cleanliness in and around their surroundings to prevent the spread of seasonal illnesses.

She also urged the public to avoid eating outside food as much as possible and to give preference to home-cooked meals.

Sri Nalla Pochamma Temple Arch Inaugurated by MANDUMULA RAJITHA PARAMESWAR REDDY



UPPAL, AUGUST 03 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The inauguration of the newly constructed entrance arch (Kamaan) of the Sri Nalla Pochamma Temple at Venkateshwara Colony, Uppal, was held in a grand man-

ner on Monday. "Former Uppal Corporator Mandumula Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy and Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge M. Parameshwar Reddy attended the event as chief guests. Along with the temple committee members and local residents, Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy formally inaugurated the temple arch. Special prayers were offered on the occasion. "Later, the temple committee felicitated Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy and Parameshwar Reddy in recognition of their support. Addressing the gathering, they assured the committee of their continued assistance and cooperation for the development and progress of the Sri Nalla Pochamma Temple. Among those present were the donors of the temple arch Annapureddy Eshwar Reddy and Annapureddy Annapurna Reddy, along with Vijay Karthik Reddy, Eesha Reddy, Colony President Venkatesh Goud, Narasimha Chary, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Srinivasa Reddy, Bhaskar Reddy, Veeraiah Ravinder, Venkatachary, Naveen Reddy, Somaiah, Venkatesh Yadav, Mukundam, Madhusudhan Reddy, Nagesh Yadav, Tummaladevender Reddy, Kummari Sattaiah, and several other colony residents.

Prioritize Resolution of District and CM Prajavani Petitions

Additional Collector Kheemya Naik "Wanaparthy, Aug 03, (Indian Chronicle) : "Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Kheemya Naik directed officials to accord top priority to petitions received through both the District Prajavani and the Chief Minister's Prajavani, ensuring their prompt disposal and timely communication to the complainants. "Speaking at the Prajavani grievance redressal programme held on Monday at the Integrated District Offices Complex conference hall, Kheemya Naik, along with Additional Collector (Revenue) Vinod Kumar, received petitions and representations from members of the public. "Addressing district officials, the Additional Collector instructed that every complaint received through Prajavani must be resolved without delay. The status of each grievance should be communicated to the petitioner and updated on the online portal. If a complaint does not fall under the jurisdiction of a particular department, it should immediately be forwarded to the concerned department through official correspondence. "He further directed that issues which cannot be resolved at the district level should be referred to higher authorities. In cases where a grievance cannot be addressed due to existing rules or regulations, the reasons should be clearly explained to the petitioner instead of keeping the application pending. "Kheemya Naik also instructed officials to review all pending petitions



and take immediate steps for their disposal. He emphasized that petitions received through the Chief Minister's Prajavani and those forwarded by the District Minister must also be resolved on priority. "A total of 50 petitions were received during the district-level Prajavani programme, while two petitions were submitted at the RDO office. "The programme was attended by ZP CEO Yadaiah, Special Deputy Collector N. Tirupataiah, and district-level officers from various departments.

Take Preventive Measures Against Seasonal Diseases: Medical Officer Dr. Madhavi



Khammam/Nelakondapalli, August 3 – Indian Chronicle "Government Medical Officer Dr. Madhavi has urged the public to take preventive measures to protect themselves from seasonal diseases. "A free medical camp was organized on Monday at Kotha Kothuru Gram

Panchayat in Nelakondapalli mandal. During the camp, medical teams conducted various health check-ups for villagers and distributed medicines free of cost. "Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Madhavi advised people to maintain cleanliness in and around their surroundings to prevent the spread of seasonal illnesses. She also urged the public to avoid eating outside food as much as possible and to give preference to home-cooked meals. "She emphasized that "our health is in our own hands" and encouraged everyone to adopt healthy habits. She further advised people to prevent mosquito breeding by ensuring that water does not stagnate in their surroundings and to take necessary precautions against mosquito bites. "The programme was attended by Sarpanch Maloth Kalavathi, Deputy Sarpanch Vallala Radhakrishna, Panchayat Secretary Gundu Ravi, ANM Ramana, Supervisor Vijayakumari, ASHA Worker Aruna, and others.

Youth's Future Hanging by a Thread: BJP Leader Dr. Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy



"Attempted Suicide by Unemployed Youth Venu Kumar is Deeply Disturbing, Says BJP National Leader" Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle "Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National Leader, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu Co-Incharge, and former MLC Dr. Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy strongly criticized the Congress government, alleging that unemployment in Telangana has reached alarming levels and that the youth have been betrayed by unfulfilled election promises. "In a statement released on Monday, Dr. Sudhakar Reddy said that the Congress Party had promised a comprehensive Youth Policy before the elections but had failed to implement it after assuming power. He expressed concern over the government's failure to issue adequate job notifications and provide employment opportunities to unemployed youth. "Referring to the reported suicide attempt by Venu Kumar, an unemployed youth from New Lakshmiapuram village in Mudigonda mandal of Khammam district, Dr. Sudhakar Reddy described the incident as extremely tragic. He stated that the youth, reportedly distressed over the lack of employment opportunities, is currently undergoing treatment at Prashanth Hospital in critical condition. "He further alleged that despite the seriousness of the incident, the Chief Minister had not responded. Dr. Sudhakar Reddy also pointed out that Venu Kumar had written a letter expressing his anguish to Rahul Gandhi, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka before the alleged suicide attempt, reflecting the hardships faced by unemployed youth in the state. "The BJP leader accused the state government of attempting to divert attention from the issue instead of addressing the concerns of unemployed youth. He said students and job seekers are facing hardships due to pending fee reimbursement dues, delays in receiving degree certificates, and the non-implementation of unemployment



allowance. "He alleged that Congress leaders had made unrealistic promises to the youth and failed to fulfill them after coming to power. According to him, fee reimbursement arrears running into thousands of crores of rupees have put the future of students at risk. "Dr. Sudhakar Reddy also claimed that whenever the BJP raises issues concerning unemployed youth and students, the government resorts to preventive arrests and police action to suppress democratic protests. He recalled that the BJYM State President had recently visited Khammam to highlight these issues. "Questioning what he termed the Congress Party's "double standards," Dr. Sudhakar Reddy demanded that Rahul Gandhi visit Telangana immediately to assess the ground realities and review the implementation of the Youth Policy promised by the Congress. "He further stated that Venu Kumar belongs to a poor family and urged the state government to ensure the best possible medical treatment to save his life. He also called upon the government to address the issues faced by unemployed youth without delay and prevent such incidents in the future.

Telangana HC to hear petition filed by Rega Kantha Rao

GNS News Agency, August 3

Hyderabad: Justice BR Madhusudhan Rao of the Telangana High Court will on Tuesday hear a criminal petition filed by former BRS MLA Rega Kantha Rao seeking the quashing of an FIR registered against him by the Panjagutta Police in connection with allegations of sexual assault and criminal intimidation.

BRS STATE LEADER BANNALA PRAVEEN MUDURAJ Inspects 54 Lakh Box Drain Works in Bank Colony



UPPAL, AUGUST 03 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): BRS State Leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj on Monday inspected the ongoing ₹54 lakh box drain construction works in Bank Colony under Beerappagadda Division, along with

GHMC officials and the contractor. "Speaking on the occasion, Praveen Mudiraj said the box drain project is being undertaken to provide a permanent solution to the recurring rainwater drainage problem in Bank Colony. He recalled that, in the past, a 1000 mm diameter pipeline was laid from Vignan School to the Auto Stand on the Pista House–Bank Colony road to improve stormwater drainage. "He further stated that the box drain from Phani Medical Shop to the Sai Ram Nagar Colony transformer has already been completed. Following the foundation stone laid by Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, the remaining stretch from the Auto Stand to Phani Medical Shop is now being constructed as a four-foot-wide box drain. Keeping the monsoon season in view, Praveen Mudiraj instructed officials and the contractor to expedite the works and ensure timely completion. He also directed them to install proper signboards indicating alternative routes to prevent traffic inconvenience to the public during construction. Emphasizing the importance of quality, he instructed that all construction standards must be strictly followed and warned that any negligence in execution would invite strict action.

Collector Divakar TS Calls for Successful Observance of World Breastfeeding Week

"Special Awareness Programmes Across the District from August 1 to 7 "Exclusive Breastfeeding for the First Six Months is Essential" "Collector Unveils World Breastfeeding Week Poster" Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle "District Collector Divakar TS directed officials to ensure the successful observance of World Breastfeeding Week, being celebrated from August 1 to 7, through extensive awareness programmes across Khammam district. "As part of the celebrations, the Collector, along with Additional Collectors Dr. P. Srija and P. Srinivas Reddy, unveiled the official awareness poster at a programme held at the Collectorate Conference Hall on Monday. "Speaking on the occasion, Collector Divakar TS said that breast milk is nature's best and most complete food for an infant. He stressed the need to educate every family about the importance of feeding babies only breast milk during the first six months of life, as it provides all the essential nutrients required for healthy growth, development, and immunity. "The Collector explained that exclusive breastfeeding means giving an infant only breast milk for the first six months without any other food or drink, including water, animal milk, infant formula, or other supplements. He cautioned that introducing such alternatives without medical advice could increase the risk of health complications and advised against using infant formula unless recommended by a doctor. "He said awareness programmes are being conducted at the district, project, and Anganwadi centre levels to educate pregnant women, lactating mothers, and their family members



about the importance of breastfeeding. Officials were instructed to ensure that every infant receives exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months. "Officials informed that awareness campaigns, meetings with pregnant women and nursing mothers, and other educational activities are being organised at Anganwadi Centres under all ICDS projects in the district as part of World Breastfeeding Week. "The programme was attended by Trainee Assistant Collector Paras Kumar, DRO C.H. Rammurthy, ZP CEO Diksha Raina, District Women and Child Welfare Officer A. Prameela, District Medical and Health Officer Dr. Rama Rao, Collectorate AO Srinivas, Poshan Abhiyan staff, district officials, and other concerned officers.

Collector Divakar TS Reviews Preparations for Independence Day Celebrations

Directs Officials to Ensure Grand and Well-Coordinated Celebrations "All Departments Asked to Submit Reports to DPRO by August 8 "Departments to Nominate Employees for Appreciation Certificates "Minute-to-Minute Programme Schedule to Be Finalised in Advance" Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle "District Collector Divakar TS directed all departments to work in coordination and make comprehensive arrangements for the 79th Independence Day celebrations to be held in the district. "Chairing a review meeting at the Collectorate Conference Hall on Monday, the Collector, along with Additional Collectors Dr. P. Srija and P. Srinivas Reddy, issued a series of instructions to ensure the smooth conduct of the celebrations. "The Collector instructed all departments to complete preparations well in advance and submit brief reports highlighting their major achievements and developmental activities to the District Public Relations Officer (DPRO) by August 8. He also directed that the Chief Guest's speech should be prepared by August 11. "He assigned the responsibility of arranging the sound system to the Khammam Urban Tahsildar and instructed the DPRO to inspect and verify the arrangements beforehand. "The Collector further directed each department to nominate only two employees for appreciation certificates based on their outstanding service records. He instructed officials to prepare a minute-to-minute programme schedule well in advance and ensure that the programme announcer is fully briefed about every event. "He also instructed that all invitees should be seated before the arrival of the Chief Guest. Exhibition stalls should be ready by 6:00 a.m. on August 15, and cultural performances should feature pre-approved songs with each performance limited to three to



four minutes. All departments were asked to attend the celebrations with their latest departmental reports. "Speaking at the meeting, Additional Collector P. Srinivas Reddy instructed officials to send invitations to public representatives, dignitaries, and invited guests through the District Revenue Officer as per protocol. He also directed that the venue be prepared in advance with tents, tables, chairs, and other required infrastructure. "Departments including Agriculture, Allied Sectors, Rural Development, Welfare, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, and others were instructed to set up development exhibition stalls. The Tahsildar was asked to oversee the necessary arrangements at the Collectorate premises. "Officials were further directed to submit proposals for appreciation certificates by August 12, keep a fire engine on standby, arrange mobile toilets, and provide all necessary facilities for school students participating in the celebrations. "The meeting was attended by Trainee Assistant Collector Paras Kumar, DRO C.H. Rammurthy, ZP CEO Diksha Raina, district officials, Collectorate AO Srinivas, and other concerned officers.

"Youth's Future Hanging by a Thread": BJP Leader Dr. Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy

Attempted Suicide by Unemployed Youth Venu Kumar is Deeply Disturbing, Says BJP Leader" Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle "Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National Leader, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu Co-Incharge, and former MLC Dr. Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy alleged that unemployment in Telangana is worsening and accused the Congress government of failing to fulfil the promises it made to the youth before the elections. "In a statement released on Monday, Dr. Sudhakar Reddy said the Congress Party had promised a comprehensive Youth Policy before coming to power but had failed to implement it. He expressed concern over the lack of recruitment notifications and employment opportunities for unemployed youth. "Referring to the reported suicide attempt by Venu Kumar, an unemployed youth from New Lakshmiapuram village in Mudigonda mandal of Khammam district, he described the incident as deeply unfortunate. He stated that the youth is undergoing treatment at Prashanth Hospital in critical condition and alleged that the State Government had not responded adequately to the incident. "Dr. Sudhakar Reddy further claimed that Venu Kumar had written a letter expressing his distress to Rahul Gandhi, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka before the reported suicide attempt, calling it a reflection of the hardships faced by unemployed youth in the State. He also alleged that the government was attempting to divert attention from the issue. "The BJP leader alleged that students and unem-



employed youth are facing severe difficulties due to pending fee reimbursement, delays in receiving degree certificates, and the absence of unemployment allowance. He claimed that thousands of crores of rupees in fee reimbursement dues have affected students' futures. "He further alleged that whenever the BJP raises issues concerning unemployed youth, the government responds with preventive arrests and police action to suppress protests. He recalled that the BJYM State President had also recently visited Khammam over the issue. "Questioning what he described as the Congress Party's "double standards," Dr. Sudhakar Reddy urged Rahul Gandhi to visit Telangana, understand the ground realities, and review the implementation of the Youth Policy promised by the Congress. "He also appealed to the State Government to provide the best possible medical treatment to Venu Kumar, stating that the youth belongs to a poor family.

Government Urged to Allot House Sites to All Eligible Journalists



TJA Khammam District Committee Submits Memorandum to District Collector“Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle“The Telangana Journalists Association (TJA), Khammam District Committee, led by District President G. Nagaswamy, submitted a memorandum to District Collector Divakar TS, urging the State Government to allot house sites to all eligible journalists.“Receiving the memorandum, the Collector assured the delegation that he would bring the

issue to the notice of the State Government and make every effort to facilitate an early resolution.“Speaking on the occasion, TJA District President G. Nagaswamy said journalists play a crucial role in keeping society informed and stressed that the government should take special initiative to help them achieve the dream of owning a house. He appealed for the allotment of house sites to every eligible journalist in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner.“The Association pointed out that the long-pending issue of house sites for eligible journalists has remained unresolved for nearly 20 years and demanded its immediate settlement. TJA leaders stated that many journalists are struggling to cope with rising house rents and are facing serious financial hardships.“They further said that despite fighting for house sites for the past two decades, journalists are still waiting for justice. The Association urged the government and the district administration to ensure transparent allotment of house sites to all eligible journalists, thereby providing housing security to their families.“The programme was attended by TJA District Honorary President Kommamuru Manikumar, District President G. Nagaswamy, District Secretary Matti Ramakrishna, and district leaders Syed Khaseem, Vasam Rajendra Prasad, Ramu, Ramesh, Satish, C.H. Rambabu, and others.

Couple Arrested for Threatening Family with Toy Gun

“MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 03 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A couple was arrested by the Medipally Police for allegedly trespassing into a house at midnight and threatening a family with a toy gun. Police seized the toy gun used in the incident along with a mobile phone.“According to the police, the complainant, Chittaranjan Biswas, a resident of Boduppal, had become acquainted with Anil Kumar (40) and his wife Suman (37) through a cloud kitchen business about a year ago. The relationship later turned sour due to personal disputes.“Police said that on the midnight of August 2, Anil Kumar allegedly abused the complainant over the phone using offensive language. Around 1:00 a.m., he reportedly trespassed into the complainant’s residence, reached the second floor by forcibly opening the door, and threatened to kill the family while brandishing a toy gun.A short while later, his wife Suman also allegedly entered the house and threatened the complainant and his family with serious consequences.Based on the complaint, Medipally Police registered a case, investigated the matter, and arrested both accused. During the operation, police seized



the toy gun used in the incident and a mobile phone. Further investigation is underway.Speaking on the occasion, Medipally Circle Inspector Jalender Reddy urged people to resolve personal disputes through legal means and warned that strict action would be taken against those involved in unlawful acts such as criminal trespass and intimidation.

Future-Oriented Power Infrastructure Needed for Khammam: Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao

“Foundation Stone Laid for ₹3.62 Crore 33/11 KV Power Substation Near Government Medical College“Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle“State Minister for Agriculture, Marketing, Handlooms and Textiles Tummala Nageswara Rao directed officials to strengthen electricity infrastructure in line with Khammam city’s future growth and rising power demand over the next decade.“On Monday, the Minister, along with District Collector Divakar T.S., laid the foundation stone for a new 33/11 KV electricity substation, to be constructed at a cost of ₹3.62 crore near the Government Medical College in Raghunathapalem Mandal.“Speaking on the occasion, Minister Tummala said Khammam is expanding rapidly and the power department must prepare a comprehensive long-term plan to meet future electricity requirements. He instructed officials to assess the city’s projected power needs over the next ten years and prepare proposals for additional substations.“The Minister stressed the urgent need for a 132 KV substation for Khammam city and directed officials to immediately identify suitable government land for the project. He asked them to prepare technical proposals, cost estimates, and submit them to the government without delay.“He further instructed that construction of all newly proposed substations should begin immediately after land allocation and be completed within the stipulated timeframe. He expressed confidence that necessary administrative and financial approvals would be expedited since the Deputy Chief Minister, who also holds the Energy portfolio, is from the district.“Minister Tummala also directed District Collector Divakar T.S. to personally monitor the progress of



the project and ensure timely clearances and No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from all concerned departments so that there are no delays in execution.“The Minister emphasized that strengthening electricity infrastructure today would ensure uninterrupted development and industrial growth for Khammam in the coming years.“The programme was attended by SUDA Chairman Puvvalla Durgaprasad, Library Chairman Khader Baba, Electricity Superintending Engineer Srinivasa Chary, Market Committee Chairman Hanumantha Rao, RDO Srinivas, officials from the Electricity Department, other departmental officers, public representatives, and local dignitaries.

Congress Failed to Fulfil Promises, Says CPI“ “Delay in Sitarama Project a Curse for Farmers



“CPI to Launch Statewide Public Awareness Padayatras from August 6“Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle“The Communist Party of India (CPI) has alleged that the Congress government has failed to implement the promises it made during the Assembly elections and has not lived up to the expectations of the people.“Addressing a media conference at Giriprasad Bhavan, the CPI district office in Khammam on Monday, CPI District Secretary Dandi Suresh said that except for the free bus travel scheme for women, the government had failed to fulfil major election promises, including ₹2,500 monthly financial assistance for women, distribution of scooters to youth, gold assistance, enhancement of pensions, and proper implementation of the ₹2 lakh farm loan waiver.“He further alleged that the government had also failed to implement important welfare schemes such as crop insurance and farmers’ insurance.“Referring to the Sitarama Lift Irrigation Project, Suresh said the previous BRS government delayed the project by not allocating sufficient funds, and accused the Congress government of continuing the same approach. He stated that if the project had been completed on time, nearly seven lakh acres in the undivided Khammam district would have received irrigation, particularly during the present drought-like conditions caused by the El Niño effect.“He criticised the government for making only par-

tial budget allocations despite conducting a trial run more than a year ago, adding that water has still not been supplied to farmers. CPI demanded immediate allocation of adequate funds and speedy completion of the project.“Suresh also accused the government of politicising the Indiramma Housing Scheme, alleging that houses are being allotted on political considerations even in ministers’ constituencies. He demanded that only genuinely eligible poor families should receive housing benefits without discrimination.“Expressing concern over the prevailing drought conditions in the district, he urged the government to take immediate relief measures to protect poor and middle-class families from further hardship.“He also said CPI had extended full support to the recent student and youth protest at Jantar Mantar and claimed that the movement compelled the Central Government to respond to the concerns of unemployed youth.“Public Awareness Padayatras from August 6“Dandi Suresh announced that CPI will organise district-wide public awareness padayatras from August 6 to August 13 as part of a nationwide campaign.“The march will begin at Tallampadu in Khammam district on August 6 and conclude with a public meeting in Khammam on August 13. During the campaign, CPI leaders will visit villages, interact with people, identify local issues, and highlight what they described as the anti-people policies of both the State and Central governments.“He further announced that CPI would organise a massive rally at Jantar Mantar on September 1 against the policies of the Central Government, with a large number of party workers from Khammam district expected to participate.“The media conference was attended by CPI District Assistant Secretary Jammula Jitender Reddy, State Committee Member Kondaparthi Govinda Rao, Siddineni Karna Kumar, Mohammed Salaam, Ajmeera Ramamurthy, and other party leaders.

Parameshwar Reddy, Kandi Shravan Reddy Attend Baby Rudranshu's First Birthday Celebrations



“UPPAL, AUGUST 3 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy attended the first birthday celebrations of baby

Rudranshu, grandson of senior Congress leader and Uppal 'A' Block Secretary Pyata Murali Krishna Mudiraj.“The celebrations were held on Sunday evening at Pasand Banquet Hall in Habsiguda, where Parameshwar Reddy participated as the chief guest. He blessed the child and conveyed his heartfelt birthday wishes to Rudranshu.“Habsiguda Division President Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy also attended the function and extended his blessings and birthday greetings to the child.“Among those present were senior Congress leader and former Floor Leader Kandi Aggi Reddy, DCC Vice President Boppanapalli Sudhakar Reddy, Uppal Youth Congress President Aakarapu Arun Patel, Gundu Rajanna, Malu Naik, Raju Naik, Ramu, Vinod, Beeku Naik, along with Congress leaders, party workers, and family members from Habsiguda and various other divisions, who gathered to bless Rudranshu and celebrate the occasion.

Another Opportunity for Degree Admissions at Government Degree College, Uppal

— Admissions under DOST Special Drive Phase till August 11“UPPAL, AUGUST 03 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Government Degree College, Uppal has announced the DOST Special Drive Phase for degree admissions, providing another opportunity for eligible students to secure admission.“College Principal Dr. K. Vijay Kumar appealed to students who have completed Intermediate with BIPC or MPC streams to register immediately through the DOST portal.“DOST Convener J. Vishwanath Kumar said that the last date for registration is August 11, while the last date for exercising web options is August 12. Seat allotment will be announced on August 14.“The last date for online self-reporting and certificate verification at the college is August 18.Students seeking assistance with the admission process may visit the college office or contact 8686939844 or 8985927019. The DOST code of Government Degree College, Uppal is 12816.



Youth Should Take the Lead in Social Service:



State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao“Nelakondapalli, August 3 – Indian

Chronicle“State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao called upon the youth to take an active role in social service and contribute to the development of society.“He participated as the chief guest in the birthday celebrations of District Congress Official Spokesperson Bachalakuri Nagaraju, organized by local youth on Monday.

The celebrations began with a cake-cutting ceremony.“Speaking on the occasion, Rayala Nageswara Rao urged the youth to widely promote the various welfare and development schemes being implemented by the government. He also encouraged everyone to plant a sapling on their birthday as a contribution to environmental protection.“He extended his birthday wishes to Bachalakuri Nagaraju and appreciated his commitment to public service, wishing him continued success.“Among those present were State Youth Congress Secretary Jerripothula Anjani, Rayagudem Sarpanch Boyina Venu, Sheikh Said, Sheikh Mahaboob Pasha, Lal Pasha, and several other youth leaders and supporters.

Medical College, Young India School Works Must Be Expedited: Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao

Medical College to Be Readied for Inauguration by the Chief Minister“Hostels by September, Administrative Block by October, Entire Project by December“Young India Integrated Residential School to Be Ready for Students from the Next Academic Year“Khammam, August 3 – Indian Chronicle“State Minister for Agriculture, Marketing, Handlooms and Textiles Tummala Nageswara Rao directed officials to expedite the construction of the Government Medical College and the Young India Integrated Residential School and complete the projects within the stipulated timeline.“On Monday, the Minister, accompanied by District Collector Divakar T.S. and Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt, inspected the ongoing construction works at the Government Medical College and the Young India Integrated Residential School at Raghunathapalem. He reviewed the progress and issued key instructions to officials and representatives of the construction agency.“Addressing the officials, the Minister instructed them to prepare a detailed phase-wise action plan for completing the Medical College. He emphasized the completion of the compound wall, hostels, and internal roads, and directed officials to pursue approvals for revised estimates to ensure uninterrupted progress.“He instructed that the girls’ hostel be completed by September 1 and stressed the installation of CCTV cameras to ensure the safety and security of students.“During the inspection, Minister Tummala spoke over the phone with State Health Minister C. Damodar Rajanarasimha, requesting the release of an additional ₹64 crore for the completion of the Medical College. He explained that the project was in its final stage and that only electrical and infrastructure works remained. With timely sanction of funds, the college could be completed and inaugurated soon.“The Minister directed officials to complete electrical works on the ground and first floors at the earliest, making them ready for student use. He instructed that the hostels be completed by September, the administrative block by October, and all remaining works



by December, ensuring the campus is fully operational.“He further instructed officials to complete the project before the proposed visit of the Chief Minister to Khammam so that the Medical College could be formally inaugurated by him. Any issues affecting the progress of the project should be brought immediately to the notice of the District Collector and the Minister, he said.“Later, the Minister inspected the construction of the Young India Integrated Residential School. He directed officials to ensure quality construction of all 17 blocks, including the parents’ lounge, kitchen, dining hall, hostels, academic blocks, internal roads, and other infrastructure.“He instructed that the entire school project be completed and handed over to the concerned department by April next year, enabling the institution to admit students from the upcoming academic year without delay.“Among those present were SUDA Chairman Puvvalla Durgaprasad, Library Chairman Khader Baba, Electricity SE Srinivasa Chary, RDO Srinivas, Khammam Market Committee Chairman Hanumantha Rao, officials from the Medical Department, other departmental officers, and public representatives.

Temples in Medipally Decorated for Bonalu Festivities; Congress Division President Tungaturthi Ravi Reviews Arrangements“

“MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 03 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Preparations are in full swing for the Bonalu festival scheduled to be celebrated on August 9 in Medipally Division (Ward No. 9) of the Malkajigiri Municipal Corporation, with temples dedicated to Goddess Mahankali being beautifully decorated.“On this occasion, Medipally Division Congress Party President Tungaturthi Ravi visited the Mahankali Temple in Medipally, the Goddess Temple at Vishnupuri Enclave, and several other temples to inspect the Bonalu arrangements.“Along with temple committee members, he reviewed the ongoing preparations and instructed them to ensure that devotees face no inconvenience during the festival. He emphasized the importance of maintaining cleanliness around the temples, providing safe drinking water,



adequate lighting, security, and all necessary civic amenities by coordinating with the concerned officials.“Tungaturthi Ravi expressed hope that the Bonalu celebrations would be conducted with great devotion and grandeur, making the festival a grand success.

‘Use of pellet gun, iron rod’: Complaint claims ‘police excesses’ at CJP protest

GNS News Agency, August 3Senior Delhi Police officials have been accused of using “excessive force” against “unarmed protesters” during the July 20 Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protest at Jantar Mantar, in a complaint submitted by the Anand Legal Aid Forum Trust at Parliament Street police station.

The Trust moved the Delhi High Court, alleging that the police station had not issued an acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint. The Delhi Police Wednesday told the HC that a “temporary technical glitch” had prevented the police station from issuing the acknowledgement and assured the court that it would now be provided.When a complaint disclosing cognisable offences is filed at a police station, the complainant must be provided with a stamped acknowledgement.In its plea, the Trust said its complaint sought action against Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar; Joint Commissioner Madhur Verma; Additional DCP Sandeep Lamba; CRPF/RAF Assistant Commandant Sonia Sehrawat; SHO Navin Rath; three other police personnel, and hundreds of unidentified Delhi Police, RAF and CRPF personnel.It said its complaint disclosed cognisable offences “for the commission of attempt to murder; use/

firing from pellet guns; use of iron rod; brutal, unprovoked, and illegal baton/lathi-charge; electric shocked (using) police baton... on unarmed peaceful protesters” on July 20.The Trust, through its lawyer Abhijit Anand, told Justice Prateek Jalan that he was refused an acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint by the on-duty officer and station house officer of Parliament Street.Justice Jalan asked the state’s counsel: “No complaints on that day were acknowledged (at the Parliament Street police station)?”The state submitted that owing to a “temporary technical glitch”, the system was unable to generate acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint, and assured the court that it will be provided now.Justice Jalan, addressing the State, remarked, “Let’s see to it that the systems are working.”Disposing of the plea, Justice Jalan recorded in his order, “... counsel for the State submits that the acknowledgement was not given on the date due to a temporary technical glitch and acknowledgment, along with DD number, will be generated and given during the course of the day.”While the Trust had sought criminal prosecution of the Parliament Street police station officers for refusing to lodge an FIR based on the complaint, and for failing to provide the stamped acknowledgement, it did not emphasise on the request during the hearing.

Manoj Jarange-Patil threatens ‘final stir’ over Maratha reservation from August 29

GNS News Agency, August 3
Activist Manoj Jarange-Patil on Wednesday toughened his stance on Maratha reservation, saying that he would launch “a final and decisive protest” from August 29 if the Maharashtra government fails to issue Kunbi community certificates under Other Backward Classes (OBC) to the 58 lakh people who possess valid records.“The Fadnavis government has been targeting the Marathas. Therefore, this time, either I will die, or the Fadnavis government will fall,” he told reporters in Antarwali Sarati village, the seat of his historic hunger strike in 2023.

Jarange-Patil, who had to call off his ninth hunger strike within 15 hours of its launch at the end of May, said that the government is making efforts to make fools of the Marathas. “Once upon a time, the community stood united, which is why we need to move forward carefully. August 29 marks the completion of 3 years. If anyone is trying to make fools of us, that is why you have been called,” the social activist said, while urging those who possess Kunbi records to apply for reservation.Jarange-Patil said that the children of the Maratha community are suffering and demanded that the government give Kunbi certificates according to the Hyderabad Gazette by August 28. “My blood has been burning for the past three years, which is why I am staging the final decisive protest for the children of the community. Not a single person should stay at home; we will not stop until we get the certificates for the 58 lakh records. If the Hyderabad Gazette was given, then why weren’t the certificates issued? Why are Marathas being targeted? Earlier, you brought the local inquiry report. We will not stop

until we get Kunbi certificates according to the Hyderabad Gazette,” he asserted.

The Hyderabad Gazette is a document that came out in 1918 classifying Marathas in the Marathwada region (such as Nanded and Aurangabad) with Kunbi lineage.Jarange-Patil pointed out that it has been almost four months since the Kunbi certificates have not been given to Marathas. “The children and workers of NCP, Shiv Sena, and Congress are going to get reservation. We are demanding the implementation of the gazette for Satara Sansthan, Kolhapur, Aundh, and Pune; why are they not accepting it? In your (government’s) battle for credit, Marathas are being sacrificed.”Referring to the previous incidents of violence during the Maratha agitation, the activist said the Fadnavis government had promised to withdraw cases against Maratha community members. “Three years have passed. The government has not kept its word. Why are cases being filed against us after beating us?

The August 29 protest will not be called off until all cases are withdrawn,” he said.Jarange-Patil, who joined the Maratha reservation movement 15 years ago, said that only on official records have all facilities of OBCs been extended to Marathas. “However, today, facilities entitled to OBCs have not been started. Not a single school has these facilities,” the leader said.He said his demand for a separate ministry for the Maratha community remains unfulfilled. “It is only a 15-minute task for the Chief Minister; why wasn’t it done? Nine OBC ministers said they do not want a separate ministry for Marathas. Why do OBCs need a ministry, and why not Marathas?” the leader asked.

Karnataka BJP MLA Yashpal Suvarna booked for ‘drug addict’ remark against Rahul Gandhi

GNS News Agency, August 3The Karnataka Police booked BJP MLA Yashpal Suvarna for allegedly making provocative and defamatory remarks against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during a public protest in Udupi Tuesday.A complaint filed by Udupi district Congress president Ashok Kumar Kodavoor alleges that Suvarna described Rahul Gandhi as a “drug addict”. It further claims that the Udupi MLA compared the demolition of the Babri Masjid with “destroying Rahul Gandhi’s dynasty” and made remarks capable of promoting enmity, disturbing communal harmony and provoking violence. Suvarna’s speech also allegedly targeted students participating in protests over the NEET paper leak and intended to incite BJP workers against Congress supporters.

The police registered a case under charges of abetment of an offence by the public or a large group, provocation with intent to cause riot, promoting enmity between different groups, criminal intimidation, intentional insult to provoke breach of peace, and making or circulating statements likely to promote enmity, hatred or ill will between different communities.“We have initiated an investigation into the allegations,” a police officer said.

Examine video evidence, Congress leader urges policeReacting to the FIR, Manjunatha Bhandary, Karnataka Congress working president and a member of the Legislative Council, said the state government has taken the matter seriously. Bhandary alleged that Suvarna had

made “baseless, defamatory and provocative” remarks against Rahul Gandhi, including the claim that the Congress leader “remains under the influence of drugs for 24 hours” and a statement that his “family lineage would be destroyed”.He said video evidence of the speech was available and urged the police to examine it while proceeding with the case. The Congress leader also criticised BJP legislators present at the event, saying their silence could be interpreted as tacit approval of the remarks. He argued that while political disagreements are part of a democracy, they cannot justify hate speech, personal attacks or threats.Bhandary further said that an elected representative who has taken an oath to uphold the Constitution must refrain from making statements that could disturb communal harmony or public order. He added that he will raise the matter with the Karnataka home minister and seek appropriate directions to ensure a fair investigation and legal action against those found responsible. The BJP protest in Udupi was organised in response to the nationwide agitation against exam paper leaks and irregularities in the education system.Suvarna was one of the most headline anti-hijab voices during the 2022 Karnataka classroom hijab controversy. Following the March 2022 Karnataka High Court verdict upholding the dress code policy, Suvarna courted controversy by calling the six Muslim girl students who challenged the classroom ban “members of a terrorist organisation” and “anti-nationals” for disregarding the judiciary.

No guidelines for online astrology platforms, Consumer Affairs Dept tells CIC

New Delhi: The Department of Consumer Affairs has informed the Central Information Commission (CIC) that it has no guidelines to regulate online astrology platforms while hearing an RTI appeal that one such portal was indulging in unfair trade practices, causing mental and financial harassment to astrologers and cheating people. The CIC directed the department to provide details of any investigation, disclose complaint figures and transfer parts of the RTI application to other ministries.

The RTI application alleged that the online astrology platform was “involved in several malpractices and unfair trade practices which are causing mental, financial and professional harassment to astrologers as well as cheating the general public.” It sought information on whether the platform had been investigated by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), the Department of Consumer Affairs or the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for fraud, cheating or violation of business ethics.

It also sought the number of complaints received against the platform over the last three years, action taken on those complaints, details of licences or approvals required to operate such a platform and any guidelines governing online astrology or digital consultation services.The applicant alleged that astrologers were hired in bulk but denied adequate work opportunities, made to remain online

for “15 to 18 hours daily” while earning “less than 100 rupees per day”, and subjected to “unfair penalties ranging from Rs 50,000 to 1,00,000”.

The application also alleged manipulation of ratings and other internal parameters, and claimed the platform was “being misused as a chatting or dating app” where women astrologers faced “extreme mental harassment”.During the hearing, the respondent submitted that the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) had not conducted any investigation as it functions only as a grievance resolution platform.

On being asked whether any guidelines existed for regulating e-commerce or online astrology platforms, the respondent stated that “no such guidelines exist with their department”. The Commission also asked whether the department could provide the numerical value of complaints received against the platform, to which the respondent said it would verify the records and provide the same.Observing that “the respondent has provided partial information to the appellant”, Information Commissioner Khushwant Singh Sethi directed the department to issue a revised reply.

It ordered the respondent to “provide factual information” on any investigation, transfer the relevant queries to the CPIOs of the MCA and MeitY, provide the numerical value of complaints received and transfer the queries relating to licences, approvals and regulatory guidelines to the public authorities likely to hold the information.

Commercial flights to shift from Vizag Airport to Bhogapuram from Aug 17

Visakhapatnam: Commercial flight operations at Visakhapatnam Airport will cease from August 17, with all services shifting to the newly developed Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram in Vizianagaram district.According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, commercial operations at the Civil Enclave at Visakhapatnam Airport (INS Dega) will be closed with the commissioning of the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport, Bhogapuram, with effect from 00.01 hours on August 17.The notification says that the commercial operations at the Civil Enclave at Visakhapatnam Airport (INS Dega) will be for 30 years, except for airport activity at time of national emergency or by aircraft owned or operated by or for the Indian Air Force or other Armed Forces of India or police or any such other authorities or for transportation of dignitaries by special Government owned, leased or hired VIP aircraft.

The International Air Transport Code “VTZ” for the existing Visakhapatnam Airport will be transferred to Bhogapuram International Greenfield Airport from 00.01 hours of August 17. The Ministry of Civil Aviation also notified that Bhogapuram Greenfield Airport is renamed as ‘Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport’ with immediate effect.The new airport is set to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 1. Built at a cost of nearly Rs 4,727 crore, the airport is ready to commence commercial operations. According to officials, Bhogapuram is among the fastest-completed Greenfield international airports in

India, completed within 31 months, nearly five months ahead of schedule.The airport has already secured the DGCA aerodrome licence, along with all required safety, fire and environmental clearances. The airport has been designed to handle 6 million passengers annually in the first phase, with a master plan to expand capacity to 40 million passengers annually in the future.The project is expected to play a pivotal role in boosting economic growth, tourism, industrial investment, exports, logistics, and the aerospace and defence sectors across the erstwhile Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, and Srikakulam districts.

The integrated project spans 2,703.26 acres, including 2,203.32 acres for the airport, 500 acres for the aviation hub, and 136.63 acres for Aviation University/EduCity. The project includes comprehensive airside infrastructure, commercial development, residential zones and approach roads.The airport’s 3,800-metre Code-E runway, capable of handling wide-body aircraft such as the Boeing 777, Boeing 787 Dreamliner, Airbus A330 and Airbus A340. The airport is also equipped with advanced airfield lighting, navigation aids and CNS/ATM infrastructure to support both domestic and international operations.The terminal incorporates advanced passenger processing technologies including contact boarding bridges, Common Use Passenger Processing System (CUPPS), self-baggage drop, self-service passenger processing, smart surveillance, access control systems, security management systems, Integrated Operational Control and Monitoring Centre.

Kangana Ranaut, CJP Spokesperson Saurav Das trade sharp barbs over ‘Generation Gutter’ Remarks

New Delhi: BJP MP Kangana Ranaut and Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) spokesperson Saurav Das have traded sharp barbs as the controversy over the actor-politician’s remarks describing Gen Z as “Generation gutter” escalated.Ranaut on Tuesday sparked a political row by posting strongly-worded Instagram Stories targeting the CJP-led agitation over alleged irregularities in the NEET examination.Responding to Ranaut’s posts, Das said her language was unbecoming and questioned her mental stability while accusing her of trying to “ride the CJP wave”.The MP from Himachal Pradesh’s Mandi dismissed him as “totally useless and unemployed”.

“These words don’t seem to be of a person who is mentally stable because you wouldn’t use this kind of language about the young. If there is a young person in your family who belongs to Gen Z or Gen Alpha or whatever, would you use such language against them?” he told PTI Videos.Das also took a swipe at Ranaut’s performance as a parliamentarian.

“I don’t have much to say about Kangana Ranaut, her own party members don’t take her seriously. There are videos of her from her constituency where she is meeting people and telling them, ‘Aap log to bohat kaam karate ho. Mujhe to laga tha ki MP banke zyaada kaam nahi hoga. Lekin yaha par to mujhe roz kaam karna pad raha hai.’ So that’s the kind of seriousness with which she sees her own work,” he said.“It’s fine, I think she is trying to ride the CJP wave. We said this before, anybody who wants to take credit or fame from the current movement, they are free to do so and so is Kangana,” he added.Ranaut responded through a new post on Instagram Stories.“I just googled this person and he is 28 years old. And he claims to be a student. How he claims to be a student I have no clue!” she wrote.Hitting back at Das’ criticism of her work as an MP, Ranaut said

she may be new to politics but had been in public life for the past 20 years.“At his age, I had two National Awards. Yes, as a new parliamentarian, I was overwhelmed with all the work because I am also a filmmaker, performing artist, producer, screenwriter, and entrepreneur. But someone like him, who is totally useless and unemployed, will never understand what it means to be in massive demand at all times, at any age,” she said.“Dear Saurav, your issues are personal. You are not a student; you are simply useless. Let’s start with learning some skill. It’s a good place to start,” she added.

The exchange comes a day after Ranaut referred to young protesters as “Generation gutter” and questioning “who is birthing and raising them”.“Never in my life I have seen so much ugliness in one place, these reels from GenZ protests are puke inducing, the way they speak and the kind of language they are using, never in my life I have seen everything in each and every frame so jarring and so crass all at ones, ewwww who is birthing and raising them?” Ranaut said.In a follow-up post, the BJP MP from Himachal Pradesh’s Mandi went a step further and criticised young women who participated in the protests, saying their behaviour during the agitation was “most appalling”.“Here is a new generation of so called westernised Indian women. I call them Generation gutter,” she said, adding that some of the women protestors were “so ugly and corrupt that they can’t be home makers either”.Her remarks drew criticism from opposition leaders, including the Congress, Samajwadi Party and AIMIM, as well as several social media users, who termed the comments insensitive and derogatory.The CJP-led protests concluded on July 25 after the government accepted key demands of the agitators, including the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

‘He jumped into the Black Sea’: UP sailor’s second voyage ends in desperate search

GNS News Agency, August 3For the past four days, Ram Chandra Dubey’s family in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, has been anxiously waiting for any news of him.The 22-year-old seaman has been missing since July 25 after the merchant vessel he was on — MV AGN Ragnar — came under attack near Ukraine’s Port of Odesa. He is among two Indian crew members who remain unaccounted for after the incident.This was his second assignment at sea since joining the merchant navy, said his family.His elder sister, Seemakashi Pandey, said they last saw Ram before he left on September 25 last year. “He would call home frequently to check on everyone. The last time he spoke to our mother, Kalpana Dubey, was on the night of July 24. He told her the ship had departed from Ukraine,” she said.The next day, they received a phone call from an employee of the shipping company that had employed Ram. “The company representative said the vessel had come under a drone attack near the Port of Odesa on July 25 and four Indian crew members jumped into the Black Sea — one of them was my brother,” Seemakashi said.“We were told the Ukrainian Navy rescued two of them, but two others, including my brother, remain missing,” she said.Since then, the family has looked everywhere for help.“At first, we tried to gather information sitting in Prayagraj but we realised we had no way of tracing Ram from here,” said his brother-in-law, Anuj Kumar Pandey.

Court extends stay on demolition of 38 buildings at Mohammad Ali Jauhar University

Moradabad/Rampur (UP): The Moradabad Divisional Commissioner’s court on Monday extended till August 10 the interim stay on the proposed demolition of 38 buildings at Mohammad Ali Jauhar University in Rampur, providing temporary relief to the institution in the long-running dispute with authorities. Divisional Commissioner Anjaneya Kumar Singh, after hearing both sides, allowed the earlier interim order to continue and fixed August 10 as the next date of hearing.

The dispute stems from a July 15 order issued by the Rampur Development Authority (RDA), directing the university administration to demolish 38 of its 40 buildings within 15 days, alleging they had been constructed without approved building plans under the Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973.

The proposed demolition was stayed by the divisional commissioner’s court on July 27. Advocate Junaid Ejaz Jafri, appearing for the university founded by Samajwadi Party veteran Azam Khan, said on Monday that the court

had granted the university significant relief by continuing the stay on the demolition proceedings.

“The court has maintained the interim stay on the demolition of the university buildings. The matter will now be heard on the next scheduled date, when arguments of both sides will be considered,” he said.

The Allahabad High Court had dismissed a petition filed by the Maulana Ali Jauhar Trust challenging the demolition notices after noting that the appellate authority had already granted interim protection and declined to interfere at that stage. The university has maintained that the action against the buildings is unjustified, while the RDA has defended the demolition notices, alleging violations of building regulations.

The Samajwadi Party and other opposition parties have criticised the action against the university, alleging political vendetta. Students of the university were also protesting against the demolition notice but had “temporarily” halted their stir following the interim stay on the proposed action.

Bengaluru teacher posing as journalist booked over fake MLC seat promise



GNS News Agency, August 3

The Bengaluru police have booked a government school teacher, who allegedly posed as a journalist having close links with the Congress leadership, for cheating a woman from Mangaluru of Rs 1 crore by promising to secure her a nomination to the Karnataka Legislative Council (MLC). In her complaint, the woman, who is associated with a social trust, also accused the teacher, Sirigere Yerriswamy, 56, of misbehaving with her at a hotel in New Delhi, where she was taken on the pretext of arranging a meeting with senior All India Congress Committee (AICC) leaders in 2025.

Apart from Yerriswamy, the Halasuru Gate police also registered a case against his associates, Siddaraju and

Basavaraju, on July 27, following a court direction. According to the complaint, Yerriswamy claimed to be part of the Congress party's media team when she first met him in 2024 at Vidhana Soudha. He allegedly told her that he had close ties with former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and senior AICC leader Randeep Singh Surjewala and could use his influence to secure her a nomination to the Legislative Council. The accused have been booked on allegations of cheating, criminal intimidation, outraging the modesty of a woman, and other related offences. "Notices will be issued to the accused, and further investigation is underway," a senior police officer said. The woman told the police that he allegedly demanded Rs 5 crore to arrange the nomination, but later settled for Rs 1.25 crore. Subsequently, she handed over Rs 1 crore to Basavaraju and Siddaraju, and paid another Rs 5 lakh to a woman as per Yerriswamy's direction. The police said that the woman sought her money back from Yerriswamy on realising that his promises were false. "The accused allegedly threatened her with dire consequences, and later on the woman discovered that Yerriswamy was, in fact, a government school teacher," said an officer. Initially, the police had registered only a Non-Cognisable Report (NCR) on the complaint. The woman later approached a court, which directed the police to register a First Information Report (FIR), investigate the allegations and submit a report by August 25. Following the court's order, the police registered the case and began a formal investigation.

Delhi CP Anurag Kumar sets priorities for force; stresses integrity, professionalism

GNS News Agency, August 3

Newly appointed Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar has asked his colleagues to maintain the highest standards of integrity, professionalism and ethical conduct irrespective of their ranks. At an interaction with senior officers held on July 18, Kumar underlined a set of policing priorities for districts and units, stressing visible policing, timely complaint disposal, integrity in administration and better coordination among agencies. The meeting was attended by special commissioners of police, joint commissioners of police, additional commissioners of police, and deputy commissioners of police. "He (CP Kumar) told officers that the Delhi Police are counted among the finest police forces in the country, a standing that is tested every day under intense scrutiny and in an increasingly complex operating environment. But its reputation and image have to be restored through credible, visible and result-oriented policing on the ground," a senior police officer, who attended the meeting, said.

One of the key directions issued at the meeting was to make basic policing the priority of every officer. On internal discipline, Kumar underlined a zero-tolerance approach towards corruption, unethical practices and undesirable conduct. Kumar clearly conveyed that "strict action will be taken against erring officials" and that supervisory officers maintain continuous oversight over subordinate staff.



"He (Kumar) asked to ensure transparency, fairness and objectivity in transfers and postings, and administrative decisions. There will not be any instance, under any circumstances, of transfers/postings against illegal gratification," the officer added. Officers were directed to monitor platforms for feedback, intelligence and ground-level sentiment, and to use official handles for public communication and grievance redressal. Kumar also cautioned that organisational goals should guide the use of social media and that it should not be used for "self-promotion". "Kumar said in the meeting that a manpower audit is also to be conducted in every unit to assess optimal utilisation of available strength, followed by rationalisation of deployment," the officer said.

'Citizens or slaves?': Court cancels orders banishing 3 men from Mumbai for 7 months



GNS News Agency, August 3

For nearly seven months, Saeed Ahmed Abdul Wahid Choudhary lived in a rented room in Mumbra, uncertain about when he would return home; Akbar Hussain Sayyed, a delivery agent and local political worker, could not be with his wife, infant daughter and ailing mother for four months; Mohammad Rafiq Gulam Rasul Ansari fretted about not being able to meet his 68-year-old mother for months; and Firoz Abdul Wahab Khan had to miss the birth of his second child. Between December 2025 and early 2026, the four were extermed by the Mumbai Police from the city relying largely on FIRs lodged against them over political protests in 2019 and 2025 on a range of issues, from the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and National Register of Citizens, to the Ayodhya Ram temple and Varanasi Gyanvapi mosque rows, and azaan on loudspeakers plus local issues.

Under Sections 56 and 58 of the Maharashtra Police Act, a person can be extermed for up to two years if there is fear that they may commit offences. The four accused, with nothing common between them apart from their association with the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) — the political wing of the banned Popular Front of India (PFI) — moved into a shared rented accommodation in Mumbra, Thane district, after they were extermed.

Over several hearings since March, Justice Madhav J Jamdar of the Bombay High Court has questioned the basis of the police action, asking if exterment — generally used against gangsters, bootleggers and habitual offenders — could be sustained when the underlying allegations relate to political dissent. Setting aside Sayyed's exterment order in March, Justice Jamdar said it "infringes upon his fundamental rights" and "cannot be sustained". On July 2, quashing the exterment of Choudhary, the judge observed if by targeting citizens for opposing government decisions, they were being turned into "slaves of the government". On July 28, Justice Jamdar set aside the exterment orders against Khan as "totally illegal", and asked if "selective" action was taken "as they (the accused) belonged to one religion" given that members of other political parties too had participated in the protests. An order on Ansari's plea is expected next month.

The Devendra Fadnavis government has defended the exterment on the grounds that the four had held protests without permission and were linked to the PFI, which they deny. The "soul remained the same" of the PFI and SDPI, the government said. Justice Jamdar, however, pointed out that the show-cause notice preceding exterment orders did not mention this allegation, and said it could not be considered hence in the present pleas.

BMC revives golf course plan for Mulund dumpsite as Adani lease proposal hits a roadblock



GNS News Agency, August 3

BMC revives golf course plan for Mulund dumpsite, Mulund dumpsite golf course plan, Mulund dumpsite, Adani Group-led Navbharat Mega Developers, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation BMC, Mumbai news, Maharashtra news, Indian express, current affairs Officials added that the land is currently reserved for a waste processing facility because it earlier functioned as a dumping ground. If the golf course proposal is eventually approved, the reservation will have to be changed to that of a recreational facility.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) proposal to lease a portion of the reclaimed Mulund dumping ground to the Adani Group-led Navbharat Mega Developers Pvt Ltd (NMDPL) for the Dharavi Redevelopment Project (DRP) may have hit a pause, but the civic administration is simultaneously reviving another proposal for the site — an international-standard golf course. The erstwhile Mulund dumpsite spans 64 acres, of which 15 acres are proposed to be leased to NMDPL for five years to set up a ready mix concrete (RMC) plant and a casting yard for the Dharavi housing project. The remaining 49 acres, BJP MLA from Mulund Mihir Kotecha said, are sufficient to develop a nine-hole golf course.

"I have spoken to the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) CEO earlier this week and asked them to immediately begin the feasibility study at the Mulund site. The land is being leased to the DRP only for five years. After that, it will be converted into a green zone," Kotecha told "The Indian Express". The proposal is not entirely new. In November last year, the PGTI wrote to the BMC seeking permission to carry out a feasibility study for developing a golf course on the reclaimed landfill. A month later, the civic

90 days after bird flu outbreak, Navapur poultry farmers still await ?8 crore compensation



GNS News Agency, August 3

bird flu outbreak, Navapur poultry farmers compensation, Navapur poultry bird flu outbreak, Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases, Mumbai news, Maharashtra news, Indian express, current affairs The farmers' association has written repeatedly to the state government, pointing out that compensation during the 2021 bird flu outbreak was released within 48 hours of culling. More than 90 days after a bird flu outbreak crippled Maharashtra's poultry hub of Navapur in Nandurbar district, hundreds of poultry farmers are still waiting for compensation, with officials saying the state is yet to receive the Centre's share of funds needed for payouts.

The delay has also stalled the culling of around 10,000 backyard birds in villages surrounding the affected farms, as owners have refused to part with their birds without immediate compensation. District Deputy Commissioner of Animal Husbandry and Dairying Dr Sanjay Khachane said over ?8 crore is required to compensate farmers affected by the H5N1 outbreak. "The state has completed all documentation and is awaiting the Centre's share of funds. Once it is released, compensation will be transferred immediately. We have held several meetings on the issue and expect the funds soon," Khachane told "Under the Centre's Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD) scheme, compensation for avian influenza is shared equally between the Centre and the state. Officials said the same

administration permitted the organisation to undertake geotechnical surveys and other preliminary studies at its own expense. PGTI CEO Amandeep Johl said the organisation was awaiting the BMC's final confirmation before beginning the exercise. "We are looking forward to carrying out the study. Once we receive the final confirmation from the BMC, we will begin the feasibility exercise," Johl said. He said the study would assess the site's topography, soil quality, drainage, slope and other geological factors required for constructing and maintaining a golf course. "Our proposal is for a nine-hole golf course. Once the study is completed, we will prepare a detailed blueprint," he said. The developments came a day after the BMC's Improvements Committee deferred a proposal to lease the 15-acre parcel to NMDPL. According to the proposal tabled before the committee, the company sought the land to establish an RMC plant and casting yard for the Dharavi Redevelopment Project. The civic body expects to earn nearly Rs 103 crore through the proposed five-year lease. NMDPL is the special purpose vehicle implementing the Dharavi Redevelopment Project, with Adani Properties Private Limited holding an 80 per cent stake and the Slum Rehabilitation Authority the remaining 20 per cent. The committee withheld approval after members raised environmental concerns. Committee chairperson and Shiv Sena corporator Sandhya Doshi said the proposal had been sent back to the administration with a set of queries and would be placed before the panel again after the department submitted its replies.

A senior civic official said the proposed lease would not affect the golf course plan as only 15 acres were being given on a leave-and-licence basis for five years. "There are no legal issues that prevent the PGTI from carrying out a feasibility study on the remaining 49 acres. The ownership of the land will continue to remain with the BMC," the official said. Officials added that the land is currently reserved for a waste processing facility because it earlier functioned as a dumping ground. If the golf course proposal is eventually approved, the reservation will have to be changed to that of a recreational facility. The Mulund dumping ground remained operational from 1968 until 2018, when the Bombay High Court directed the BMC to scientifically close and remediate the landfill. The civic body subsequently began biominerally nearly 80 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste. Around 70 lakh metric tonnes have been cleared so far, with the remediation work nearing completion.

funding crunch has delayed the preventive culling of nearly 10,000 backyard birds in the notified surveillance zone. Though these birds have not tested positive for bird flu, the Centre's protocol requires all susceptible birds within the infected zone to be culled to contain the spread of the virus. "We cannot begin culling because villagers are demanding compensation before handing over their birds," Khachane said.

Navapur, one of western India's largest egg-producing centres, supplies around 10 lakh eggs daily to Mumbai, Nashik, Jalgaon and Surat. After the H5N1 outbreak was detected in April, authorities culled 4,06,682 chickens, destroyed 24,91,723 eggs and disposed of 5,48,958 kg of poultry feed between May 1 and May 17. The delay has prompted repeated representations from the Navapur Poultry Farmers Association, which says farmers have exhausted their savings while continuing to bear expenses such as labour, electricity, shed maintenance and loan repayments despite poultry operations remaining shut. Association president Arief Balesaria said a delegation met Animal Husbandry Secretary Dr N Ramaswami earlier this month and was told that the state's share of compensation was ready but could be released only after the Centre released its contribution. The issue has also been taken up by Navapur MLA Shirish Kumar Naik, who has sought immediate compensation along with a rehabilitation package, subsidised working capital loans, relief in electricity bills and loan repayments, and financial assistance for workers and transporters dependent on the poultry industry.

The farmers' association has written repeatedly to the state government, pointing out that compensation during the 2021 bird flu outbreak was released within 48 hours of culling. "That helped farmers disinfect sheds and restart operations quickly. This time we have received nothing. Many poultry farmers are now thinking of leaving the business because they cannot absorb such repeated losses," Balesaria said. Under the compensation norms, commercial poultry farmers are entitled to ?140 for every adult layer bird, ?40 for each chick up to eight weeks old, ?4 for every egg destroyed and ?25 per kg of poultry feed disposed of.

Man who sent hoax bomb threat aspired to become an influencer, say police



GNS News Agency, August 3 Raman Rambabu Mishra, surat hoax bomb threat, hoax bomb threat, Surat police, diamond factory worker hoax bomb threat, Ahmedabad news, Gujarat news, Indian express, current affairs Police also recovered a draft email addressed to the Supreme Court from his own mobile phone. Days after the Surat district court received a hoax bomb threat, police arrested a diamond factory worker who allegedly used his friend's phone to send the email on July 13. Identified as Raman Rambabu Mishra (36), the suspect, who lives on Ved Road in Surat, is a native of Bihar's Dabhanga district. He has been living in Surat for a decade and is employed as a diamond polisher/cutter. Police said he aspired to become a social media influencer.

Police said that over the last three weeks, he had mostly stayed at home with his wife and kids and spent a lot of time on YouTube. Mishra was arrested on Tuesday under BNS sections 351(3&4) (criminal intimidation), 353

(1) (B) (false statements, rumors, or reports), and other relevant charges. A court sent him to four days of police custody on Wednesday. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cyber Crime) Bishakha Jain said, "The accused took his friend's phone to send the threat... He wanted to become a social media influencer. On checking his phone, we found a draft bomb hoax email..."

Bengaluru hotels warn of Swiggy boycott from Aug 15

Bengaluru: The Bangalore Hotels Association (BHA) has warned that hotels affiliated to it and other hospitality bodies in the city would suspend business with online food delivery platform Swiggy from August 15 if the company failed to resolve longstanding issues relating to payment transparency, unauthorised deductions and advertising charges.

The association said it had given Swiggy a final opportunity to rectify the issues through discussions, warning that all affiliated bodies would discontinue business with the platform from Independence Day if corrective measures were not taken.

"Failing this, all our associations in Bengaluru have unanimously decided to suspend all business with Swiggy from August 15," the association said in a press release on Wednesday.

| Gangster hiding in London, Delhi court will try him anyway. Here’s how



GNS News Agency, August 3

In a first, a Delhi court will start hearing arguments against Kapil Sangwan, a gangster accused in two cases, under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), in absentia — or, in his absence. Sangwan has been declared absconding and is believed to be in London.

In an order issued on July 9, Special Judge Vishal Gogne of Rouse Avenue Court permitted the trial to proceed in ‘absentia’ under Section 356 (Inquiry, trial or judgment in absentia of proclaimed offender) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). The trial pertains to one of the two MCOCA cases against Sangwan, related to his alleged role in running an extortion syndicate. What is ‘trial in absentia’ According to new norms, a person accused of a crime can be tried and convicted in his absence, as if he was present in court and has waived his right to a fair trial.

Earlier, the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) provided for recording evidence in the absence of the accused but did not permit a trial in absentia. The BNSS, which replaced CrPC, brought the provision for the first time. “In simple terms, this means that an accused who deliberately remains absconding and evades the judicial process cannot indefinitely hold up the trial merely by staying away,” said advocate Samridhi Dobhal, who is associated with the office of the Special Public Prosecutor. What the court said

In his order of July 9, Judge Gogne had said: “The court finds that the safeguards provided under section 356 (2) for trial of an absconding accused in absentia have been suitably addressed by the State...there is no impediment to the furtherance of the proceedings by way of considering charge.” The order stated: “Since all accused except one are in custody, the court deems it appropriate that submissions on charge are heard on a day to day basis from 27.07.2026 till 07.08.2026. For the present, it is directed that the prosecution shall conclude its arguments on 27.07.2026 and 28.07.2026.” However, Judge Gogne was on leave on July 27 and 28. On Wednesday, the judge agreed to a request from lawyers representing Delhi Police that they would commence arguments from Thursday because Special Public Prosecutor Akhand Pratap Singh was occupied with another matter. The search for Kapil Sangwan Sangwan was granted interim bail in another MCOCA case registered in 2019. Following bail, he failed to surrender and has been

absconding ever since.

In the extortion racket case to be heard Thursday, the trial in absentia comes after the Delhi Police Crime Branch and the court tried to get Sangwan to appear or join the investigation multiple times. Two NBWs (non-bailable warrants) were issued against him in June and July 2026. In the July 9 order, Judge Gogne had said: “It is seen that the NBWs could not be executed and his house (in Najafgarh) was found to be locked. It is also reported that the said accused has not been seen at the premises in question for a long time.” The Crime Branch also published a notice in a national newspaper regarding Sangwan’s absence. They also reached out to a relative and gave an affixation regarding the commencement of the proceedings. “The significance of this order is that an absconding accused cannot be allowed to frustrate the criminal justice system simply by remaining beyond the reach of the law. To allow the application of trial in absentia, there is a minimum requirement of two NBWs against an accused and there should be a gap of one month between both NBWs,” advocate Dobhal said.

“Of course, this is not an automatic process. The law provides several safeguards and requires the court to first satisfy itself that all the prescribed steps have been complied with. Once those requirements are fulfilled, the court can proceed with the trial even in the physical absence of the accused,” she said. Cases against Sangwan Sangwan, meanwhile, faces over two dozen other cases related to extortion, land grabbing, and murder in Delhi and Haryana. He was arrested in 2016 and remained in jail until 2019, when he was granted parole for a month. During that period, his associates organised a grand party at a farmhouse, built on encroached government land, in Najafgarh. Although the Crime Branch raided the event and arrested 22 people, Sangwan could not be found. A Red Corner Notice was issued against him in June 2021. Sangwan was also allegedly involved in the murder of Haryana INLD leader Nafe Singh Rathee in February 2024. The killing is believed to be linked to his gang rivalry with jailed gangster Manjeet Mahal.

On July 9, Special Judge Gogne directed that a legal aid counsel be assigned by the Delhi Legal Services Authority (DLSA) to represent the gangster in the MCOCA case. As of today, Sangwan does not have a lawyer. Advocate Hritwik Maurya, who is also associated with the office of the Special Public Prosecutor, said: “If he’s convicted and judgement is passed by the trial court sentencing him under the provisions of MCOCA, and as such a situation arises where he is apprehended at a later stage, he will be directly sent to imprisonment to satisfy the sentencing judgement passed by the trial court since trial in his absence has already been concluded.” Former MLA and AAP leader Naresh Balyan was also booked under MCOCA in this case for his alleged links with Sangwan. Balyan, a two-time MLA from Uttam Nagar (2015 and 2020), was arrested in December 2024 and is in custody.

Things will move forward constructively once Bangladesh PM visits India, says Indian envoy

GNS News Agency, August 3

Dhaka: India’s High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Dinesh Trivedi, has expressed confidence that bilateral ties would move forward constructively once Prime Minister Tarique Rahman visits India, saying all issues between the two countries can be resolved, local media reported on Thursday.

Addressing reporters following separate meetings with Bangladesh’s Foreign Minister Khallur Rahman and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka, Trivedi described the discussions as positive. “I am looking forward to everything positively. We had a great meeting filled with immense positivity,” Bangladesh media outlet UNB quoted Trivedi as saying. When asked about the invitations extended to Rahman to visit India, Trivedi said the decision rests with the Bangladeshi Prime Minister. “From our end, I can assure you that we are looking forward to welcoming the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India. We are very hopeful that this visit will take place in the near future,” he said.

Last week, India extended an invitation to Prime Minister Rahman for the 18th BRICS Summit set to be held in New Delhi in September. He had also received an invitation to visit India during his swearing-in ceremony in February. Responding to a question on Teesta and Ganges Water Treaties, the Indian envoy said, “Today’s meeting was primarily a courtesy call, and it carried the warmth expected of one. However, there is no issue that cannot be sorted out through mutual understanding. Ultimately, at the end of the day, it is about people. Whatever is beneficial for both democracies and their citizens will be prioritised.”

He noted that both India and Bangladesh have active



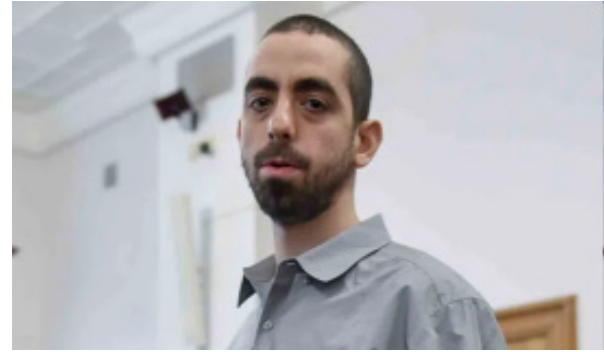
working groups to take forward discussion on treaty renewals. “These working groups will certainly meet and deliberate. As I mentioned, there is no problem that cannot be resolved. The working groups will actively do their part, and once the Prime Minister visits India, things will move forward constructively,” said the Indian High Commissioner. Trivedi further said that the bilateral talks with the Bangladeshi leaders were remarkably productive and marked a very positive step forward. “The meetings were held in an exceptionally warm environment. I can tell you that historically, culturally, and even in sports — such as cricket — our connections run deep. We discussed all these aspects. This relationship is truly historical. We share not only our borders, but also our history, culture, and aspirations,” said the Indian diplomat. “I am looking forward to a relationship whose very foundation rests on mutual, people-to-people benefits for both nations. This is just the beginning, and I am confident we will continue to engage more deeply with each other moving forward,” he added.

US federal jury convicts Salman Rushdie’s attacker of terrorism

New York: The man who stabbed author Salman Rushdie several times and destroyed his eye has been convicted on terrorism charges. The jury in a federal court on Wednesday (local time) found Hadi Matar guilty of acting on Iran’s instructions and helping a terrorist organisation. Matar attacked Rushdie in an attempt to carry out the fatwa issued by the late Iranian Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989 demanding Rushdie’s death because the Islamic clerics considered his novel, ‘Satanic Verses’, blasphemous. Geographic Reference

The jury also agreed with the prosecutors who linked the Lebanese American to the Lebanon-based Iran-aligned group Hezbollah for the charge of aiding a terrorist organisation. Prosecutors introduced as evidence a photo of Matar wearing a shirt with Hezbollah writing and a propaganda video he made with speeches of Khomeini and a Hezbollah leader. Matar, 28, was convicted last year in a New York State court of attempting to murder Rushdie and is serving a 25-year prison sentence. In the US legal system, a person can be tried in state or local courts under their laws and also in federal courts under federal laws over the same incident. When he is sentenced in November at the federal court in Buffalo, Matar could get a life sentence without parole.

Matar’s lawyer, Nathaniel Barone, did not deny that he had attacked Rushdie, but said that he had acted independently and not in coordination with Iran or Hezbollah. He was enraged by what he considered Rushdie’s blasphemy,



the lawyer said. After the fatwa was issued, Rushdie, a Booker Prize winner, went underground with British government protection. He later emerged in public and lives in New York City, where he is a professor at a university. Rushdie, 79, was participating in a literary programme at the Chautauqua Institution, a literary and arts centre about 600 kilometres from the city, and, ironically, was to speak on the protection of writers when he was attacked. He testified during the trial that he found himself in “an enormous and expansive lake of blood” after the attack. Besides destroying his left eye, the stabbings damaged his left hand and injured his liver, Rushdie said. He has written a book about the incident, ‘Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder’.

Record-low Danube River affects tourism, industry as drought and heat grip Central Europe



GNS News Agency, August 3

Budapest: As wildfires rage in France and Spain and a renewed heat wave is bearing down on Western Europe, a prolonged drought half a continent away is setting record low water levels on one of Europe’s largest rivers, disrupting tourism and industry and confronting residents with the realities of climate change. The Danube River, which runs through 10 countries from southwestern Germany to the Black Sea, has receded to never-before-seen lows along much of its course, exposing rocks, sand bars and old shipwrecks that have rarely been seen before.

In Budapest, Hungary’s capital, the national water authority measured the Danube’s water level at 23 centimetres (9 inches) on Wednesday morning, well below the previous all-time low of 33 centimetres (13 inches) set in 2018. The river is expected to further ebb in the coming days with no significant rain in the forecast and temperatures expected to rise to over 38 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit) across the region. As Danube levels sank to a new low on Tuesday, photographer Gabor Kertesz went to the base of Budapest’s Margaret Bridge — typically underwater but now an exposed shoal — to document the sight.

“The bare rocks, the dry sand bars around the bridge pillars ... it’s all shocking to see how things were before and how they are now,” he said. “Where will this lead? What will happen? We don’t know that yet, but this must be the result of climate change.” Much of Central Europe has been under a prolonged drought for most of the year, and successive heat waves have accelerated evaporation and caused waterways to dry out. According to the Hungarian Meteorological Service, 90-day precipitation totals are between 80 and 130 millimetres (3.1-5.1 inches) lower across nearly the entire country compared to multi-year

US launches retaliatory strikes on Iran following ‘attacks’ on American forces

GNS News Agency, August 3

Washington: The United States launched a new wave of military strikes against Iran in retaliation for what American officials described as an attempted Iranian attack on US forces in the Middle East, marking another sharp escalation in the months-long conflict. The US Central Command (CENTCOM) said the operation began at 8 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday. “US forces began launching strikes against Iran at 8 p.m. ET today. The strikes are a powerful response to yesterday’s attempted Iranian attacks on US forces based in the Middle East,” CENTCOM said in a statement.

The strikes came less than 24 hours after Iran launched ballistic missiles targeting US military positions in Jordan, an attack that US officials said was thwarted by air defences. President Donald Trump had earlier vowed a forceful response, saying the United States would hit Iran “very hard” following the attempted attack.

Reports from Iranian state media, however, said explosions were heard in several southern provinces, including Hormozgan and Khuzestan, with strikes reported near oil infrastructure and on islands in the Persian Gulf. Iranian officials also reported damage to residential areas in Qeshm Island, where rescue workers were searching for people trapped beneath rubble. The latest operation ended a brief lull in direct American strikes against Iran and signalled that diplomatic efforts to contain the conflict have again given

averages. The low water level has forced popular cruise ships, where passengers usually disembark for sightseeing in Budapest, to dock far upriver, while cargo ships have stopped operating nearly entirely, according to Hungary’s Ministry of Transport and Investment. In Bulgaria, where the Danube forms a border with Romania, police on Tuesday evacuated 186 tourists from a cruise ship that had run aground near the port city of Vidin.

Passengers of the Viking Ullur ran out of food and water after the vessel, which had been scheduled to take on supplies in Vidin, was unable to reach the port after running into a shallow shoal, according to Bulgaria’s state news agency BTA. The ship’s 52 crew members could have to remain onboard for an extended period depending on navigation conditions and refloating options, police said. In Serbia, hundreds of small boats and dozens of cargo ships were marooned on the dried-out riverbank near the northern city of Novi Sad. One houseboat owner, Radovan Segrt, who runs river excursions on his vessel, told The Associated Press that the water in the Danube had withdrawn “some 15 to 20 metres (50 to 65 feet) from its shore.” “The summer season is over now, as far as boat riding is concerned,” he said. Low water levels force nuclear plant shutdowns. The receding waters are also affecting nuclear energy production in numerous countries where water from the Danube is typically used to cool reactors.

In Romania, where the Danube water flow had fallen to 1,630 cubic metres per second, around a third of a typical July average, authorities shut down a reactor unit at the Cernavoda power plant on Tuesday for safety reasons and announced another would be shut down soon after. Similarly, Hungary’s Paks nuclear plant, which supplies nearly half of the country’s electricity, began powering down a reactor on Wednesday due to restricted cooling-water supplies. That came after two successive reductions in power output in two reactors over the previous two days. The exposed river bed can also pose dangers. Last week, authorities in Budapest closed the Margaret Bridge after a bomb dating from World War II was exposed at its base by the receding water levels. Treasure hunter Zsolt Horvath was using the extreme conditions to fish metal objects from the exposed bank with a powerful magnet on Tuesday. He said he got a lot of pleasure from finding things like an old radio amplifier or bullet casings from the World Wars. Horvath said that while “having so little water in the Danube is a blessing for this kind of activity, otherwise, it’s a curse.”



way to military action. The retaliation followed Iran’s missile barrage against US positions in Jordan, which American military officials said had been intercepted before causing damage. Tehran had said it carried out the attack in response to what it described as “aggressive actions by the US military.” Separately, CENTCOM said it continues to tighten maritime pressure on Iran through its naval blockade. “CENTCOM forces continue to strictly enforce the US blockade against Iran. As of July 29, CENTCOM has redirected 20 commercial vessels, disabled 2, and boarded 2,” the command said in another statement. The maritime measures underscore Washington’s broader strategy of combining military operations with economic and naval pressure against Tehran.

Over 30 civilians killed in PoK protest crackdown by Pakistani forces



New Delhi: A brutal crackdown by Pakistani security forces on protesters in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) over the last two days has reportedly left more than 30 civilians dead and over 33 injured, government sources said on Wednesday. The Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) has been leading the protests amid local body elections in the PoK. The PoK has been witnessing massive protests since last month over inflated living costs, alleged administrative apathy and political discrimination and atrocities against minorities.

New Delhi on Tuesday described the elections in PoK as an attempt by Islamabad to camouflage its illegal occupation and hide its “grave” human rights violations in the region. Pakistani security forces used lethal force against the protesters during JAAC’s long march from Rawalakote to Muzaffarabad and the crackdown reportedly resulted in the deaths of over 30 civilians and left over 33 protesters injured, the sources said. Among the deceased is Usman Nazir, the brother of JAAC Central Committee member Umar Nazir, they said.

The JAAC has officially appealed to United Nations Human Rights Council and international rights organisations for an immediate, independent investigation into the unlawful killings, immediate halt of lethal force and accountability for any excessive or unlawful use of force, they pointed out. The phase one of the regional elections in Mirpur division saw an estimated voter turnout of below 10 per cent, the sources said citing independent reports. This sharply contradicting official figures of 45 per cent turnout, they said,

adding major towns observed complete shutdowns in solidarity with JAAC’s boycott call. Organisations like Jammu Kashmir National Students Federation (JKNSF) have openly condemned the repression, the sources said. They said the security forces continue to maintain a heightened presence in Rawalakote, Muzaffarabad and other major areas to prevent any gatherings. The election boycott call is an evidence of declining public confidence in the political process and continued dissatisfaction with the administration, the sources said. Authorities continue to impose communication blackouts and suspended services across PoK, stripping citizens of basic rights and shielding the brutal crackdown from scrutiny, they added.

Sensex, Nifty open flat amid mixed global cues

Mumbai: Domestic equity benchmarks opened on a subdued note on Thursday amid mixed global cues, as gains in information technology and pharma stocks were offset by weakness in banking and realty shares. Sensex opened at 77,638.86, down 15.74 points or 0.02 per cent, while Nifty opened at 24,249.55, lower by 0.65 points.

Among the sectoral indices, Nifty IT was the top gainer, rising 1.39 per cent, followed by Nifty Pharma, Nifty Healthcare, Nifty MidSmall IT & Telecom, and Nifty Auto, which gained up to 0.54 per cent. In contrast, Nifty Realty declined 0.80 per cent, followed by Nifty Chemicals, which was down 0.45 per cent, while Nifty Private Bank fell 0.42 per cent. According to market experts, the Indian market continues to indicate a potential breakout trend, although several global headwinds are limiting the upside momentum. “The spike in Brent crude prices to near \$90 following the escalation of the US-Iran conflict is a strong headwind for markets,” they said.

Experts noted that the US Federal Reserve’s decision to keep interest rates unchanged, though widely expected, turned out to be negative for equities as the decision was split 9-3, with three members voting for a rate hike to curb inflation.

BJP leaders step up Instagram activity after PM’s call for digital outreach



New Delhi: As the BJP sharpens its digital outreach to young people following the recent NEET-UG paper leak controversy, Instagram has emerged as a key political messaging platform, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading a coordinated push joined by several Union ministers and party leaders. The heightened activity comes days after Modi urged his Cabinet colleagues to engage more actively with young people through Instagram reels. The party’s focus on the platform follows student-led protests over the NEET-UG paper leak, which underscored the growing influence of social media, particularly Instagram, in shaping political discourse among the youth. The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), which led the student protests, was born as an online satirical movement in May this year, drawing over 26 million followers on Instagram till now.

PM Modi himself posted a series of selfie-style videos on Instagram in recent days, thanking youngsters for their response and suggestions on issues such as examination reforms. Modi, who has been using Instagram since 2014, gained around one million followers after uploading a midnight selfie video during the protests, taking his total following to about 105 million. The BJP’s official Instagram account, with 9.5 million followers, is among the country’s most-followed political party handles. In recent days, it has been posting a series of reels centred on examination paper leaks, particularly highlighting alleged cases in Punjab.

The party’s recent posts also feature clips from Parliament on the introduction of The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, accusing the Opposition of disrupting discussions on the legislation while maintaining that it is aimed at curbing paper leaks and protecting students’ interests. Newly appointed Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi has also used Instagram to highlight the government’s response to the NEET paper leak controversy. “We implemented the strict Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, which guarantees 10 years of imprisonment and heavy fines for the exam mafia. “We want to permanently strengthen the system and are completely ready for a healthy, facts-based debate in Parliament. Even Akhilesh Yadav and several Congress MPs have said this issue should be discussed in Parliament. Unfortunately, due to the ego of one individual, that debate is not taking place,” Joshi said in one of his posts. He urged everyone to rise above politics and join the discussion to strengthen the examination system. While PM Modi’s videos were posted by all ministers on their Instagram, other posts have been mostly rare till a week back for many. Former BJP president and Union Minister J P Nadda has shared videos highlighting meetings with the Cockroach Janta Party’s (CJP) spokespersons on the NEET issue.

Union Minister of State for PMO Jitendra Singh has posted clips on the introduction of the Bill to amend the anti-paper leak law, along with videos appealing to students to remain patient and asserting that the government remained open to discussions during the protests held at Jantar

Mantar. In the case of Jitendra Singh, multiple posts have been made every day in the past one week, as against an average of four to five posts a week earlier. Nadda has started posting several videos every day, though his earlier activity was very rare. Before the prime minister’s call, his last post was on July 4 and before that on June 27. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju has also uploaded several videos centred on the Bill and the paper leak issue. His posts include excerpts from his speeches in Parliament urging political parties to debate and support the Bill, describing examination paper leaks as a “serious national issue” rather than a matter of party politics. While Rijiju has been among the more active ministers on Instagram, his activity has also gone up substantially now to over a dozen posts every day.

In other clips, he calls the Bill a “historic” and “uncompromising” measure to secure students’ future and curb examination malpractices. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has posted a video highlighting the government’s commitment to ensuring justice for the youth and bringing those responsible for examination paper leaks to justice through fast-track courts. PM Modi on Sunday announced the constitution of a high-powered task force headed by Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani to recommend reforms to make the exam system leakproof. Union Minister Piyush Goyal has similarly posted videos highlighting the government’s efforts to tackle examination paper leaks, including the provision for fast-track courts, while urging the Opposition, including the Congress, not to politicise the issue and instead participate in parliamentary discussions. Women and Child Development Minister Annpurna Devi has used Instagram to focus on alleged examination and recruitment paper leaks in Jharkhand. Her recent posts include videos and graphics carrying the slogan “Hemant Istifa Do”. In one video, she alleges that the voices of Jharkhand’s students are “not reaching Rahul Gandhi’s ears”, claiming that new layers of recruitment scams are being exposed in the state every day and calling for a CBI probe into the entire recruitment process.

BJP IT department head Amit Malviya has also been among the party’s most active voices on Instagram during the anti-paper leak protests. Referring to videos purportedly from the protest, he claimed they showed slogans calling for the restoration of Article 370, demands for “Azad Kashmir”, abuse directed at Hindu deities, the sexualisation of women, and calls for the release of those accused in the Delhi riots. “If these videos accurately reflect what transpired, then the movement had clearly strayed far away from the legitimate concerns of students,” he said. Malviya also questioned what he described as “different standards for different states”, asking why there was “outrage over UP but complete silence on Punjab” and “no mention of Karnataka where a paper leak was reported”. He also asked whether anyone had demanded the resignation of the education ministers in Punjab or Karnataka. He claimed that the highest number of reported examination paper leak and examination malpractice cases during the 2025-26 academic year had emerged from states governed by the INDIA bloc, listing Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Punjab, Kerala and Karnataka. He also said that the BJP-led government had enacted the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act and strengthened enforcement to deter paper leaks and ensure stringent punishment for those involved in examination malpractice. The government on Monday introduced a Bill in the Lok Sabha to amend the anti-paper leaks law with stricter punishment of up to 10 years in jail and Rs 50 lakh fine. The proposed legislation was introduced by Singh amid protests and sloganeering by the opposition demanding a response from the government over the police crackdown on students during the CJP-led July 20 protest march to Parliament.

Six Maggi recipes to make your monsoon even better



Hyderabad: There’s something about rainy days and a steaming bowl of Maggi that never gets old. If you’re looking to give your comfort food a flavourful upgrade, these six easy recipes are perfect for satisfying your monsoon cravings. Love cheese? This recipe is for you. Sauté onions, tomatoes and green chillies before adding Maggi, then stir in a generous handful of grated cheese until it melts into a creamy, gooey sauce. Finish with fresh coriander for an extra burst of flavour.

Tandoori Maggi

Bring restaurant-style flavours home with this smoky twist. Cook Maggi with butter, garlic, tomato ketchup and tandoori masala, then garnish with onion rings and a squeeze of lemon. It’s tangy, spicy and perfect for those who enjoy bold flavours.

Schezwan Maggi

Turn up the heat with a quick Indo-Chinese version. Toss cooked Maggi with garlic, vegetables, spring onions and Schezwan sauce for a spicy, flavour-packed meal. Sprinkle sesame seeds or chopped spring onion greens before serving.

Butter Garlic Maggi

Simple ingredients can make a big difference. Sauté plenty of garlic in butter until fragrant, then cook the Maggi in it and season with black pepper, chilli flakes and mixed herbs. It’s rich, aromatic and ready in under 10 minutes.

Monsoon Maggi Soup Bowl

Perfect for chilly evenings, this soupy version is both comforting and filling. Prepare Maggi with extra vegetable stock and add sweet corn, mushrooms, carrots and black pepper. Top with fresh coriander for a warm bowl of goodness.

Paneer Maggi

Give your Maggi a protein boost by cooking it with onions, tomatoes, capsicum and soft paneer cubes. Finish with a pinch of garam masala and fresh coriander for a

wholesome one-pot meal that’s both hearty and delicious. Whether you like your Maggi cheesy, spicy or comforting, these easy recipes are sure to make every rainy day a little more delicious.

Bengaluru hotels warn of Swiggy boycott from Aug 15

Bengaluru: The Bangalore Hotels Association (BHA) has warned that hotels affiliated to it and other hospitality bodies in the city would suspend business with online food delivery platform Swiggy from August 15 if the company failed to resolve longstanding issues relating to payment transparency, unauthorised deductions and advertising charges. The association said it had given Swiggy a final opportunity to rectify the issues through discussions, warning that all affiliated bodies would discontinue business with the platform from Independence Day if corrective measures were not taken. “Failing this, all our associations in Bengaluru have unanimously decided to suspend all business with Swiggy from August 15,” the association said in a press release on Wednesday. The association alleged that Swiggy was deducting advertisement and promotional charges without obtaining written or digital consent from hotel owners before launching CPC, CPA or promoted advertisements. It also sought a one-click opt-out mechanism for advertisements without any subsequent charges.

It further demanded greater transparency in payment statements, saying all charges, including commission, GST, CPC advertisements, offers and promotional charges, should be disclosed separately. The association also objected to service charges being levied on the GST amount collected from customers for remittance to the government. According to the association, unnecessary deductions and discrepancies in the accounting system had resulted in hotel owners receiving less than 50 per cent of the billed order value, causing severe financial hardship. Speaking to PTI, BHA honorary president P C Rao said the core issue was the platform’s payout mechanism. “The main issue is that the payment and payout system is not functioning properly. There are too many deductions,” he said. He clarified that the association was not opposed to Swiggy’s service charge but objected to additional deductions. “We have no objection to the service charge. Whatever the service charge is, they can take it. But apart from that, they impose additional service charges, payout charges, advertisement charges, map-up charges, and various other charges without our permission, and deduct them,” he said.

India’s space sector soars into orbit



For decades, rocket launches were the preserve of nation-states. NASA, Roscosmos, ISRO, and China’s space agencies operated with vast facilities, long development cycles, and budgets that rivalled the GDPs of small countries. That era is changing. Space Centre. Developed by Skyroot Aerospace, a startup founded in 2018 by former ISRO engineers, it marked India’s first privately developed orbital rocket. Co-founder and CEO Pawan Chandana, who began his career at ISRO, and his team had achieved in less than a decade what once required entire government programmes: designing, manufacturing, and launching an orbital-class rocket. The milestone signals a broader shift. Private capital, agile engineering, and entrepreneurial ambition are reshaping

space exploration. The question is no longer whether startups can build rockets, but how quickly they can out-innovate established players and what new markets they can unlock. “We built India’s first all-carbon fibre rocket, which was built using 3D printing technology, thus reducing the development cycle. Carbon composites and 3D printing helped cut the development cycle,” said Pawan Kumar Chandana, CEO of Skyroot, in a media interaction. On the global opportunities, he added, “In five years, India can have 6-7% of the global market, and it will need several companies to achieve that.” Vikram-I is a four-stage small-satellite launcher with three solid-fuel stages and a liquid orbital-adjustment stage. Its significance lies not only in its 350-kg payload capacity to low Earth orbit (LEO) but also in its engineering philosophy.

An all-carbon-composite structure reduces weight while maintaining strength. Its 3D-printed liquid engine, including the regeneratively cooled thrust chamber of the Raman-II engine, dramatically reduces the number of components and welds, eliminating potential failure points. Additive manufacturing can also reduce production timelines from months to days. The rocket carried the SCOPE and Grahaa satellites, along with additional experiments on its upper stage. The mission was both a technical triumph and a commercial validation. Skyroot had raised \$60 million in May 2026, reaching a valuation of more than \$1.1 billion. But capital alone cannot guarantee a successful launch. What the company demonstrated was that a young private team could design, test, and fly an orbital-class rocket on its maiden attempt. Chandana’s journey, from a Rs 35,000-a-month ISRO scientist to the head of a unicorn, captures the talent, ambition, and frugal determination driving India’s private space sector. Skyroot’s achievement is the latest chapter in a transformation accelerated by Elon Musk’s SpaceX during the 2010s. By demonstrating that private capital, iterative engineering, and vertical integration could reduce launch costs, SpaceX inspired a new generation of companies to challenge the traditional space industry. The opportunity is expanding rapidly. Satellite constellations for communications, Earth observation, climate monitoring, navigation, and scientific research are creating demand for flexible and affordable launch services.

Rocket Lab, founded in New Zealand in 2006 and now headquartered in Long Beach, California, has established itself in small-launch services with Electron and is developing the larger Neutron vehicle. Relativity Space, an American aerospace company established in 2015 by Tim Ellis and Jordan Noone, is pursuing large-scale additive manufacturing (building parts layer by layer using a 3D printer) and reusable launch technology. Founded in 2019 by aerospace engineers Andy Lapsa and Tom Feldman, Stoke Space, headquartered in Kent, Washington, is working towards fully reusable rockets. Meanwhile, US-based Firefly Aerospace and Astra, along with Germany’s Isar Aerospace, are competing in the small-satellite launch market. Their common advantage is speed. Startups can often iterate faster, take greater technical risks, and make decisions with fewer layers of bureaucracy than traditional institutions. The emerging space economy, therefore, is not simply about rockets. It is about the infrastructure supporting a growing data economy.

space startup ecosystem, which took shape during the 2010s, is particularly compelling because it has developed in partnership with a powerful national space programme. The 2020 policy reforms opened the sector to private investment, while the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) was created as a single-window facilitator and regulator. Startups gained access to launch infrastructure, testing facilities, and decades of institutional knowledge. More than 70 ISRO-developed technologies have been transferred to private industry, enabling companies to build on proven technologies rather than start from scratch. Skyroot tested its solid motors at ISRO facilities in Sriharikota and drew from a talent pool trained in government laboratories. The ecosystem has expanded rapidly. Chennai-headquartered Agnikul Cosmos is developing semi-cryogenic propulsion and a mobile launch system. Pixxel, based in Bengaluru, is building hyperspectral satellite constellations for climate and crop monitoring. Hyderabad-based Dhruva Space is developing small-satellite platforms and related services, while another Bengaluru-based company, Bellatrix Aerospace, is working on in-space propulsion.

Bengaluru, home to ISRO headquarters and a deep technology talent pool, has emerged as a major centre for Indian space technology, with Hyderabad and Chennai also playing important roles. India’s tradition of frugal innovation is another advantage. The Mars Orbiter Mission cost approximately \$74 million (around Rs 714 crore at current exchange rates), while Chandrayaan-3 was achieved at a fraction of the cost of comparable international missions. A driver of the spacetech startups, by no small means, is Telangana’s T-Hub SpaceTech programme, which has played accelerator to many of the spacetech startups. T-Hub, India’s pioneering startup incubator launched in 2015, laid the foundation for Telangana’s innovation ecosystem.

Championed by BRS working president KT Rama Rao (KTR) during his tenure as the State’s IT Minister, Skyroot Aerospace is perhaps the most powerful example of this ecosystem in action. Incubated at T-Hub, the company grew from a young space-tech startup into a globally recognised private space venture. The success of Vikram-I should not obscure the difficulties ahead. Reaching orbit once is an extraordinary achievement. Building a reliable commercial launch business is much harder. A single sensor failure can destroy a vehicle, while repeated missions must meet the exacting standards of customers and insurers.

Reusability will be another major frontier. SpaceX has

demonstrated its transformative potential, but applying the model to smaller launch vehicles is far from simple. Skyroot is developing its next-generation Vikram-II, with greater payload capacity and plans for future reusable capabilities. The financial challenge is equally significant. Rocket companies can consume tens of millions of dollars before generating meaningful commercial revenue. Skyroot’s \$60 million funding round provides a foundation, but scaling operations will require patient capital and investors willing to accept long development cycles. The market is also becoming increasingly competitive. Skyroot will need to compete not only on price but also on reliability, launch frequency, customer experience, and global partnerships.

Space, says: “Skyroot’s success is a significant milestone for the entire Indian Space ecosystem because it builds trust. I believe this will increase global confidence in India as a serious space technology destination. International customers will now view India as a place where complete space missions, from satellite development and launch to operations, can be executed. It also opens up opportunities for global partnerships, supply chain collaborations, and deeper technology co-development.”

Targeted government funding like the RDI (Research, Development and Innovation) Scheme has given a shot in the arm to deep tech. Prateep Basu, co-founder and CEO of SatSure, believes there’s growing confidence in deep tech today. “Space is a strategic sector, and tailwinds like the RDI scheme made it an investable sector. This is driving the growth of deep tech companies in ISRO also acknowledges the collaborative effort behind the mission. “The mission reflects the growing capability of the country’s space ecosystem. The IN-SPACe and ISRO teams, who enabled and facilitated the launch and ground testing operations along with technical consultancy and 24x7 safety surveillance, have done a great job.”

The mission also highlighted the depth of India’s space research ecosystem. Signals from the SOLARAS satellite were received and verified at the SSPACE-Tarang ground station at the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST), Thiruvananthapuram. Grahaa Space’s technology-demonstration nanosatellite, SOLARAS, successfully completed Mission SIDDHI, transmitting telemetry and payload data from LEO. The mission validated the Bengaluru-headquartered startup’s indigenous, stackable nanosatellite platform and demonstrated the performance of its onboard systems under real orbital conditions.

Calling Mission SIDDHI a major milestone for the team, Ramesh Kumar V, co-founder and CEO of Grahaa Space, remarked: “We set out to prove that an indigenously designed nanosatellite platform could perform successfully in orbit, and SOLARAS has done exactly that. Our hearty gratitude to Skyroot Aerospace for deploying SOLARAS into its intended orbit during its maiden mission, to STIIC (Space Technology Innovation and Incubation Cell) at IIST for their support throughout development, qualification and post-launch signal verification, and to IN-SPACe and ISRO for their continued handholding, guidance and support. We also thank the global amateur radio community for helping validate our telemetry.” Cost: Commercial components, additive manufacturing, and agile development can cut costs and timelines, making satellite constellations for agriculture, disaster monitoring, climate intelligence, and connectivity economically viable. Strategic autonomy: Space now underpins communications, navigation, weather forecasting, defence, and national security. Indigenous launch capability reduces dependence on foreign providers.

Commercial opportunity: The growing small-satellite market offers a chance to compete globally. But winning customers will require reliability, responsiveness, strong customer service, and insurance-grade performance

Sustainability. Skyroot’s partnership with LICO Materials to recover raw materials from end-of-life batteries reflects the broader need to build more circular supply chains. Skyroot’s Vikram-I launch is more than a technological achievement. It is a symbol of a fundamental shift in how space exploration is organised and financed. The old model—dominated by monolithic government agencies, enormous budgets, and decade-long timelines—is giving way to a more dynamic ecosystem of governments, startups, investors, universities, suppliers, and commercial customers. “As launch becomes more accessible and frequent, companies can deploy constellations faster, iterate more rapidly, and bring new capabilities to market sooner. That’s how India moves from participating in the global space economy to helping shape it,” says Awais Ahmed, founder and CEO, Pixxel, an Indo-US company that is building a constellation of hyperspectral imaging satellites into a sun-synchronous orbit.

The real significance of Vikram-I may not lie only in the rocket that reached orbit, but in what its success makes possible on the ground. The new space race will not necessarily be won by the country with the biggest rocket. It may be won by the ecosystems that innovate the fastest, manufacture efficiently, attract the best talent, and turn space technology into practical economic value. With Vikram-I, India has crossed an important threshold. The country is no longer merely participating in the global space economy. It is increasingly becoming a place where the next generation of

FSSAI directs Sun Organic Industries to recall ‘Wonderland Raisins’

New Delhi: The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued a recall order for a batch of ‘Wonderland Raisins’ manufactured by Sun Organic Industries Private Limited after regulatory testing found pesticide residues exceeding the prescribed safety limits. In a post on social media platform X, the food regulator said the recall was ordered after samples of the product were found unsafe under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006. According to the FSSAI, a regulatory sample of ‘Raisins’ (Brand Name: Wonderland Raisins), collected by the Central Food Safety Officer (CFSO) of its Northern Region Office, failed to meet the standards prescribed under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011. The sample was declared unsafe by both the National Food Laboratory,

Ghaziabad, and the Referral Laboratory at NIFTEM-K, which detected pesticide residues beyond the maximum permissible limits. Following the findings, the competent authority directed the company to immediately recall the entire batch of the product and comply with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Recall Procedure) Regulations, 2017. Moreover, the food regulator has also instructed the food business operator to submit recall information and periodic recall status reports, maintain accurate records of the recovered products, and implement corrective measures to prevent such incidents from recurring.”

Home interiors and real estate in 2025: India’s transformative year



lines softened in 2025 as curves dominated furniture, architecture, and décor. “Arched doorways, rounded sofas, sculptural coffee tables, and fluid silhouettes took over the interior world. These forms add a sense of calm, movement, and approachability while still feeling refined,” states Nookula. According to Danggu, more homeowners were open to having unique furniture shapes in their houses, creating a space filled with fluidity, comfort, and spatial harmony. The year saw the ample use of handcrafted ceramics, carved wood, woven textiles and lime-plastered walls. “Our interest in micro concrete and limewash comes less from their popularity and more from their discipline. It is robust, economical, and quietly expressive,” says Aditya Tognatta, co-founder of Custom Design Stories in Gurugram. Stone has been featured as a focal point. “Whether it is statement island countertops, floor-to-ceiling fireplace walls, or richly veined coffee tables, stones bring a dramatic and luxurious feel to the interiors. This is because the variations in veining and tone make each application feel unique,” adds Subramaniam. Retro patterns such as geometrics, psychedelic prints, and classic motifs like paisley and florals made a comeback. “Woven rugs, embroidered fabrics, and vintage quilts are being used to add texture, while reclaimed wood, distressed finishes, and classic designs add character to modern spaces, says Poonam Mehta, co-founder of Pune-based Poonam Akash (formerly known as AMPM Designs). “Further, vintage lighting like mid-century modern chandeliers and antique lanterns were popular statement piece ideas. “Maximalism with intention was another key trend of 2025. “There was a conscious move away from greys and beige towards layered, expressive spaces that are curated and not overwhelming,” says Pratyusha Kethinedi, principal designer and founder of Bengaluru-based House of Katha. “There is a clear demand for integrated study units, flexible storage, reading corners and layouts that can adapt as children grow. Safety and comfort also play a larger role, with preferences for softer finishes, rounded edges and practical materials that are easy to maintain,” says Viswanathan. “At the same time, these spaces are being designed to blend seamlessly with the overall aesthetic of the home rather than feeling separate or overly themed. This reflects a more mindful approach to family living, where children’s needs are addressed without compromising on design quality or longevity.”

As 2025 draws to a close and we enter 2026, it is significant to note that the housing and real estate sector has been one of the most standout and transformative sectors of the past year. From a burgeoning growth in the luxury housing segment and Tier 2 cities such as Lucknow and Indore displaying record growth to an increased focus on sustainable and innovative building materials, 2025 was definitely the year when the real estate sector showed unprecedented investment. The interior design space too witnessed the emergence of trends such as colour drenching, flexible layouts, as well as vintage and retro influences. “Premiumisation is one of the strongest trends we have observed, but it is no longer about opulence for the sake of it,” says Ganesen Viswanathan, vice president of Bengaluru-based MagickHome India. “Homeowners are choosing premium where it adds real value. Think better finishes, smarter storage, superior hardware and cleaner detailing. Interiors are increasingly being planned around individual needs and routines rather than following a fixed or generic design template. The focus is on longevity and performance rather than visual drama alone. This reflects a maturing market where customers understand the difference between surface-level luxury and well-designed, high-performing homes that age gracefully.” India’s luxury housing segment is experiencing a notable boom, with branded residences growing rapidly, outpacing the other luxury formats. “According to Knight Frank’s Residence Report, India ranks sixth globally in ongoing branded residential projects, contributing about 4% of the world’s supply. The number of branded residential developments is forecast to increase by nearly 60% by 2027, reflecting rising demand from affluent buyers seeking curated, experience-led homes that blend convenience with quality living,” says Mitu Mathur, director of New Delhi-based GPM Architects and Planners. “These residences also emphasise thoughtful design that embodies brand values and creates spaces fostering community and shared experiences. This shift marks a broader change in India’s urban housing market, where luxury is increasingly defined by experience, service, design, and a sense of belonging.” Purchases are being driven by high net-worth individual (HNWIs), ultra-HNWIs, and non-resident Indian (NRIs). “Even as some phases saw moderation in volumes, value growth remained strong, supported by demand for larger, lifestyle-enhancing homes. Mumbai also reflected robust market health with a 20% year-on-year rise in property registrations in November 2025,” adds Manan Shah, managing director, MICL Group, based in Mumbai. There has been a growing preference for integrated townships, which mirrors a broader desire for certainty in Indian cities. “Buyers are increasingly choosing environments where infrastructure, mobility, green spaces, and daily conveniences are planned as a whole,” says Monika Choudhary, co-founder and chief development officer of Habitat Architects, based in New Delhi and Ludhiana. “Large township developments across Pune, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, and Hyderabad underscore this shift. The home’s value is no longer contained within its walls; it is reinforced by the ecosystem around it. Community is

essential infrastructure.” Such townships are an opportunity for architecture to operate at an urban scale. “We have introduced elements like large ‘urban windows’, shared courtyards, and intergenerational parks that allow residents to balance privacy with vibrant community life. The approach is all about designing spaces where a sense of belonging and resilience can flourish,” says Khushboo Bansal, principal architect of Sthapati, based in Lucknow and New Delhi. While traditional materials such as cement, steel, and bricks remained essential, there was a clear move towards low-carbon, high-efficiency systems like precast construction, AAC blocks, fly ash bricks, and green cement alternatives. India’s green building materials sector is projected to grow at over 10% compound annual growth rate, reflecting a market-wide transition rather than a niche preference. “Sustainable construction has moved into the mainstream in 2025. Low-carbon cement alternatives, carbon-reduced concrete, and recycled materials are being adopted at scale to meet cost and environmental objectives,” says S.B. Sarveshaa, chairman and MD of Bengaluru-based Bhadra Group. Industrialised building systems are also gaining momentum, improving speed, precision, and quality control. “Prefabricated and modular components accelerated construction, reduced waste, and improved precision. Enhanced materials for waterproofing, insulation, and energy efficiency became mainstream, reflecting the growing demand for durable, comfortable, and green buildings,” says C. Rakesh Reddy, director of Hyderabad-based Aparna Constructions.

“This includes the use of heavy thermal curtains, strategic placement of reflective surfaces to bounce natural light deeper into rooms, and zoned ventilation,” adds Mueen Haris, founder of DS2 Architecture, a multi-disciplinary practice based in Bengaluru, Kochi and Mangaluru. “A major trend is the return of natural stone and terracotta floors for their ‘thermal mass’ properties, absorbing heat during the day and releasing it at night to stabilise indoor temperatures.” Material choices in 2025 were driven by performance and not novelty. “Natural stone, due to its inherent beauty, durability and versatility, has remained a go-to material. From statement marble countertops to understated limestone flooring, this versatile material works across styles, blending seamlessly into both traditional and modern homes. It is also an ideal choice for outdoor spaces, including pool decks, patios, terraces, and balconies,” says Harkaran Singh Boparai, founder and principal architect of Harkaran Boparai Studio (HBS), located in New Delhi. “While access to international styles and materials has expanded, it is essential to design in a way that responds to place through materiality, craft, and narrative, without becoming pastiche. The use of stone helps in balancing these layers while still creating something emotionally compelling and functionally seamless.”

Real estate, by definition, is always racing against the clock — with deadlines, approvals, handovers, and more. This year saw technology and AI begin to meaningfully compress those timelines. “The more transformative change is inside the delivery pipeline. From feasibility to floor area ra-

tio (FAR) modelling, test-fits, and massing options, to coordinated building information modelling (BIM), automated checks, clash detection, documentation, and finally the last-mile detailing that used to consume weeks of human bandwidth, AI is accelerating the entire arc,” says Manish Gulati, principal architect and founder of MOFA Studio. GST rationalisation in 2025 addressed long-standing concerns around the inverted tax structure in real estate, where input taxes were higher than output taxes. “Rates on essential materials such as cement were rationalised from 28% to 18%, while tiles, bricks, and several construction inputs were aligned to a 5% slab, thus simplifying the tax structure,” shares Reddy. “This correction improved input tax credit efficiency, reduced working-capital blockages, and enhanced cash-flow predictability for developers.” Equally important is the alignment of GST rates for government and private contracts. “Simplified registrations, faster refunds and clearer rate structures also reduce working capital stress and planning ambiguities,” says Bharat Bahl, joint managing director of New-Delhi based Krishna Build Estate Pvt. Ltd. Speaking of home décor and interior design, 2025 has been a year of experimentation and bold choices. “Homeowners have become far more open to exploring new ideas; they are more intentional and deeply personal about what they want in their homes. At the same time, they have been open to understanding what design can offer beyond the obvious,” says Disha Subramaniam, founder and principal designer of New Delhi-based Design by Disha Subramaniam. Here’s what ruled in 2025. The year definitely brought in the use of bold colours and colour-drenched spaces. “2025 embraced emotion-driven colour stories, where entire rooms were drenched in one dominant hue, including walls, furniture, ceilings, and décor. From deep plums and forest greens to burnt oranges and midnight blues, saturated palettes were used to evoke mood and identity,” says Harshita Nookula, lead-visual merchandising of Bengaluru-based Livspace India. “This trend worked especially well in bedrooms, lounges, and powder rooms, turning spaces into immersive, sensorial experiences rather than neutral backdrops.” The focus on muted, dusty shades akin to colourful extensions of neutrals was also popular. “Sage green, soft grey, and light coral colours that evoke a sense of calm were favourites. Sage green, in particular, has emerged as a go-to for cabinetry and walls, providing a soothing link to the outdoors without overwhelming the senses,” says Smita Vijaykumar, founder of ReNNovate Interiors, Mumbai. The year saw an increasing number of homeowners gravitating towards wooden floors. “Walnut, mahogany, and dark oak are being used to add warmth, depth, and a sense of quiet luxury to interiors. What stands out this year is the mixing of multiple wood tones within the same space, combining light and dark finishes to create visual balance and character. Wood is no longer limited to one element; it appears across cabinetry, wall panelling, flooring, ceilings, and custom furniture, giving spaces a cohesive yet layered look,” says Manav Danggu, founder and principal designer at Studiio Danggu, New Delhi. Hard

The long road to a water-secure future in Hyderabad



Every January, just after the Sankranti cheer ebbs, residents of the Czech Colony in Sanathnagar, Hyderabad, brace for an annual test, watching their water taps a little more closely. The borewell serving their 40-flat apartment still runs twice a day, but not for long. Its yield starts thinning, and within a month, there is nothing left to draw. What follows is a familiar routine: they must depend on water tankers, repeatedly checking the HMWS&SB app, tracking a slow crawl up the waiting list. That ritual, however, has quietly ended. T. Srinivas, a member of the apartment association, says the turning point came with the construction of an injection borewell. The change was immediate. “Our borewell improved and a few nearby apartments that opted for percolation pits saw a difference too.”

He details the consultations that went into the project, the pit collection system, annual rainwater estimates and how the intervention eased everyday life in the building. Experiences such as this are shaping a broader rethink of water use and conservation across Hyderabad. At Kavuri Hills, in the upscale Kakatiya Hills residential colony, a 16-flat apartment complex built on a 1,000-square yard plot also constructed an injection borewell with technical assistance from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWS&SB) and WaterAid, an NGO facilitating such projects through corporate social responsibility funds in select localities. Suneel, an IT professional and resident of the apartment, recalls how the building’s mandated rainwater harvesting structure was once ignored. “We were blessed with water. During monsoon, the borewell would overflow, and we would flush excess water out of the cellar through a hose,” he says.

That sense of abundance, however, faded rapidly as construction activity surged in the neighbourhood. Between January and May this year, the apartment complex purchased two 10-kilolitre water tankers a day for the first time, paying about ₹1,000 per load, often with some waiting period. “We got about 100 tankers,” says Suneel, his eyebrows raised. The response came in the form of a 200-foot injection borewell. Built with a contribution of just ₹20,000 from residents, it has the capacity to harvest around 509 cubic metres, or 5.09 lakh litres, of rainwater annually. According to HMWS&SB managing director K. Ashok Reddy, building injection borewells and harvesting pits is a key focus area for the Board. He recently grabbed headlines by stating, “If every house has a rainwater harvesting (RWH) pit, the city may not even need Krishna Phase IV for the 5 tmcft additional water supply.” Yet, success stories like Czech Colony and Kavuri Hills remain exceptions in a city as large as Hyderabad. They offer a glimpse of the possibilities but do not capture the full picture. A city that cannot hold its rain Hyderabad receives an annual rainfall of 700-900 mm. But in 2025, it recorded around 1,060 mm between June and December alone, nearly 40% above normal, according to the Telangana State Development Planning Society. But the city sits on crystalline formations such as granite, gneiss and compact basalt, which have very low permeability. As a result, groundwater storage depends entirely on fractures, joints, and weathered zones within these rocks. Even in a year of excess rainfall, Hyderabad failed to retain much of it. The absence of harvesting pits and collection systems meant runoff

rushed into drains, flowed into the Musi river, and eventually discharged into the Krishna river via Nalgonda district. The result? Growing dependence on water tankers and deep borewells. Hyderabad is now the most groundwater-extracting district in the State. With extraction exceeding 100% of recharge, the city is classified as both ‘over-exploited’ and ‘critical’. The pressure extends to Rangareddy and Medchal-Malkajgiri districts, which together form the contiguous Greater Hyderabad region, as well as neighbouring Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri. By contrast, Telangana as a whole is in a relatively better position, with an annual groundwater recharge of 20.4 billion cubic metres and average extraction of 45.91%, according to the Central Ground Water Board’s Groundwater Resource Assessment 2024.

To understand why only 42,784 residents in Hyderabad, those in households measuring more than 300 sq. metres, frequently book water tankers, HMWS&SB conducted a citywide survey in 2024. It found that 17,382 of these households either lacked an RWH pit or had borewells that had dried up. Others had pits but did not use them. Advisory notices were issued, but compliance remained limited. Broadly, Hyderabad’s water stress can be traced to these tens of thousands of properties, compounded by rapid urban expansion that stretches the Board’s reach. Parallely, HMWS&SB launched another survey of borewells installed by the Board and other civic authorities in public offices and community spaces. Eighteen NGOs advocating water conservation were roped in for the exercise. So far, 3,435 surveys have identified 8,285 borewells, of which 4,569 are non-functional. These would now be converted into injection borewells. Separately, a survey under Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, an initiative aimed at constructing one million recharge structures nationwide, began on December 7 this year. Preliminary findings show 7,043 users already have rainwater harvesting structures. These will be linked to the Board’s unique Customer Account Number (CAN). The survey is ongoing. When water becomes a commodity

If sustainability is a long-term pursuit, tanker supply is an immediate race against time. From February to May, the gap between booking and delivery often determines whether Hyderabad edges towards a water emergency. The summer of 2024 was a turning point. HMWS&SB expanded its tanker fleet from 604 to 1,000 almost overnight as bookings surged to an average of 2,000 a day. Demand was concentrated in western and north-western growth corridors — Manikonda, Gachibowli, Kondapur, Madhapur, Kukatpally, Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills. In April 2024, Principal Secretary (Municipal Administration and Urban Development) M. Dana Kishore acknowledged a sudden drying up of borewells in western Hyderabad and a shortage of tankers, drivers and filling points, while maintaining that the city was not in the grip of a water crisis. Under the Board’s service level agreement, tankers are to be delivered within 24 hours. But in peak summers, the target was reduced to 12 hours or less, with round-the-clock deliveries. Filling stations and points were expanded, and even tanker-filling designs were improvised such as single filler-to-T-joint pipes that could load two tankers simultaneously. Currently, the Board operates 1,150 tankers, supported by 90 filling stations and 150 filling points across the city. Data on tanker deliveries between January and July over five years, from 2021 to 2025, shows a steady year-on-year increase, mirroring falling groundwater levels and the pace of Hyderabad’s urban expansion. The escalation is stark. Peak deliveries in April rose from 85,880 tanker trips in 2021 to 2,90,180 in 2025, an exponential 238% jump. Even January, once considered a relatively stable month, saw a 127% rise, from 52,778 trips in 2021 to 1,19,752 this year. The contrast is visible year-on-year. Between 2024 and 2025, tanker trips in February and March climbed by a steady 58%. April registered a further 22% increase, marking the highest monthly tanker movement in the Board’s history — 2,90,180 trips — followed by 2,77,415 in June. In this context, HMWS&SB’s recent announcement marks a decisive

shift in Hyderabad’s groundwater conservation strategy. As part of its 100-day action plan, the Board plans to construct 15,000 RWH pits across Greater Hyderabad, extending up to the Outer Ring Road. While rainwater harvesting structures are mandated for all houses measuring 200 square yards, the requirement will now be enforced strictly for properties of 300 square yards and above.

The Board has also secured approval from the School Education Department to build rainwater harvesting structures in 1,200 government school premises across Hyderabad and neighbouring districts. Reiterating the larger ambition, Mr. Ashok Reddy says the city could do without Krishna Phase IV if it creates 50,000 rainwater harvesting structures over the next three years. “Yes, that’s my slogan. Why should Hyderabad’s water flood into the Musi and Krishna rivers, only to be pumped back into the city,” he argues. He explains that the proposed project would require an outlay of ₹3,000 crore, with recurring annual operations and maintenance expenses of ₹20 crore. By comparison, investing ₹100 crore in rainwater harvesting structures would be far more efficient and sustainable, and could even help check urban flooding. A key component of the plan is converting dried-up borewells in public spaces across the city into injection borewells. For the immediate construction of 700 RWH pits, the Board has already floated a tender. HMWS&SB’s push for rainwater conservation is not new. Over the past decade, it has taken multiple forms, with mixed outcomes. A similar 100-day action plan was rolled out in May 2016, during which 2,200 rainwater harvesting structures were built in common public spaces. The effort, however, fell short over time as resident welfare associations failed to maintain the structures. This was followed by the launch of Jalabhagyam in 2017 and Jala Jeevam in 2018. These programmes empanelled NGOs to educate residents on rainwater harvesting, maintenance practices and technical aspects. Jala Jeevam went further by making RWH structures mandatory for all households, expanding NGO involvement and constituting an expert committee on rainwater conservation. Moreover, 1,600 Jalavaarasathvam clubs were formed, involving grandparents and children, along with resident welfare associations and self-help groups, to revive a culture of water conservation. That same year, the Board developed a Rainwater Harvesting Theme Park on Road No. 51 in Jubilee Hills, showcasing around 40 water conservation interventions. The facility remains operational and is free for public use. Another initiative, Water Leadership and Conservation, was launched

in 2019 as a Sanathnagar-specific programme aimed at driving behavioural change and reducing water wastage. Government policy and intent, however, have not fully translated into active public participation. The data reflects this gap. In 2025, average demand for water tankers rose by 36.37% over 2024, while year-on-year projections estimate a further 22% increase. On rainwater harvesting, the Board continues to issue advisory notices to non-compliant properties under provisions of the Water, Land and Trees (WALTA) Act.

The missing link?

What stands in the way, officials argue, is mindset. “The attitude is: I can pay for water, use influence to get a tanker even in summer, and wash my luxury car with piped water. This is 100% literacy with ignorance and lack of common sense to use a limited resource wisely,” says T. Sharath Reddy, Deputy General Manager (Engineering), HMWS&SB, one of the two senior officers supervising Durgam Cheruvu, a high water tanker-dependent division. Jala Satyanarayana, Assistant Director (Rainwater Harvesting), HMWS&SB, whose phone number features on notices issued to households without RWH structures, recounts the responses he receives. “Some even threatened me, thinking it was a legal notice. I explain, visit their premises, and help design the structure. They do understand and want to build one. But, in general, people value water only when they experience scarcity.” For Kalpana Ramesh, designer-environmentalist and founder of The Rainwater Project, the missing piece is community ownership. Even well-crafted policies, she argues, fail without local engagement and upkeep. “How many can say they collect rainwater and are not contributing to urban flooding? How many would prioritise an RWH pit over interior design? How many speak of duties, not just rights? The key is collective stewardship, where everyone is responsible and collaborative,” she says. According to officials, where resident welfare associations and NGOs are active, a mix of awareness, community involvement, and what Kalpana Ramesh calls “penalties and harsher action” can act as effective deterrents. However, social fault lines complicate conservation efforts. In Malkajgiri, V. Sushmitha, a schoolteacher living in a 16-unit apartment complex, points to a common obstacle. “There is a lack of unity among residents,” she says. “Tenants don’t want to get involved, owners live elsewhere and nobody wants to bother. The space meant for RWH gets converted to parking. Any discussion leads to petty quarrels — and personal egos.”

Japan’s new flagship H3 rocket fails to put geolocation satellite into orbit

Tokyo: Japan’s space agency said its H3 rocket carrying a navigation satellite failed to put the payload into a planned orbit, a setback for the country’s new flagship rocket and its space launch program. Monday’s failure is the second for Japan’s new flagship rocket after its botched 2023 debut flight and six successful flights.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency said the H3 rocket carrying the Michibiki 5 satellite took off from the Tanegashima Space Center on a southwestern Japanese island Monday as part of Japan’s plans to have a more precise location positioning system of its own. The rocket’s second-stage engine burn unexpectedly had a premature cutoff and a subsequent separation of the satellite from the rocket could not be confirmed, Masashi Okada, a JAXA executive and launch director, told a news conference. Whether the satellite was released into space or where it ended up is unknown, and that JAXA is investigating the data to determine the cause and other details, Okada said. Jun Kondo, an official at the Ministry of Educa-

tion, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, told reporters that the failure was “extremely regrettable” and that the government set up a task force to investigate the cause and take necessary measures as soon as possible to “regain credibility.” Monday’s failure is a setback for Japan’s new flagship that replaced the earlier mainstay H-2A which had near-perfect success record. It also delays Japan’s satellite launch plans, including one to have a more independent geolocation system for smartphones, maritime navigation and drones without relying on the U.S.

The H3 rocket is designed to be more cost-competitive in the global space market. Japan sees a stable, commercially competitive space transport capability as key to its space program and national security. JAXA’s H3 project manager, Makoto Arita, said the new flagship is still in the early stages of operation but can be globally competitive. “We will pull ourselves together so that we won’t fall behind rivals. We’ll fully investigate the cause and put H3 back on track.”

Services sector growth may have fallen sharply in May, suggests MoSPI’s experimental data



India’s services sector growth may have more than halved in May from around 20.5% in April, the statistics ministry’s experimental Index of Services Production (ISP) for 19 sub-sectors, released Wednesday, suggested. Since the ISP data – which has 2024-25 as the base year – is still at a trial stage, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is not providing an overall services sector growth number. However, calculations by The Indian Express showed that the headline services sector growth figure may have declined from around 20.5% in April to approximately 9.5% in May. Even around 9.5%, services sector growth in May was almost double the 5% expansion clocked by the industry, as per the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

Released for the first time earlier this month, the ISP is the services counterpart to the IIP, which measures the industry’s performance in output terms. “There are clear indications of a robust growth momentum for the 1Q 2026-27 with IIP growth in this quarter showing an average growth of 5.7% and services (ISP) sector for the first two months of this quarter showing an average growth of 15.3%,” said DK Srivastava, EY India’s Chief Policy Advisor. Leading the charge for the services sector in May was the ‘accommodation and food’ category, which grew by 27.4% after posting a growth of 37.2% in April. However, this was one of the 17 sub-sectors out of the total of 19 that recorded weaker

year-on-year growth in May than in April. The only two sub-sectors that performed better in May were railway transport (3.4% versus -0.4%) and air transport. While air transport shrank by 2.8% in May, it was still better than a 13.9% contraction in April.

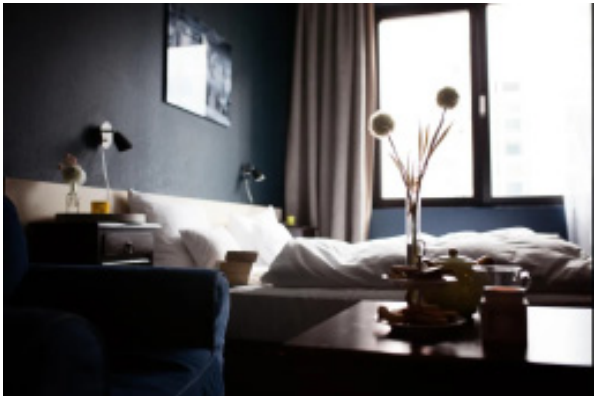
Air transport activity has been adversely impacted following the onset of the war in West Asia, which led to airlines raising fares on account of higher fuel costs. IT and computer related services, which has the highest weight in the ISP at 22.47%, saw its growth decline to 10.3% in May from 15.2% in April. To be sure, 16 of the 19 sub-sectors grew in May, with eight of them recording double-digit growth. In April, 17 sub-sectors had grown on a year-on-year basis, with 14 posting double-digit growth rates. The ISP fills a key gap in India’s official statistics. Until now, there was no official monthly measure of the performance of the services sector, which dominates the Indian economy and makes up more than half the GDP. Private firm S&P Global’s services Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) has been the only measure of the country’s services sector. India’s services PMI in May had risen to 59.8 in May from 58.8 in April. However, the PMI is a sentiment index and does not measure year-on-year change in production; instead, it looks at momentum in activity from one month to another, with a reading of more than 50 indicative of growth. The trial ISP covers about 60% of the services sector and does not include two key segments – health and education – as they are exempt from Goods and Services Tax (GST). The ISP is calculated on the basis of GST data. As such, the ISP’s compilation does not place additional compliance burden on companies to respond to a MoSPI questionnaire or survey as it is calculated entirely through data that is already available. Core government activity – such as public administration, defence, the Reserve Bank of India – non-market activities, and the informal sector are also excluded from the ISP. The ISP is not directly compiled as the output of the services produced by various companies; instead, GST and administrative data for sub-sectors like air and railway transport and banking are used. Sub-sectors for which data is available in value terms are ‘deflated’ by the appropriate measure, be it Wholesale Price Index or Consumer Price Index, to arrive at the output.

Services sector growth may have fallen sharply in May, suggests MoSPI’s experimental data

India’s services sector growth may have more than halved in May from around 20.5% in April, the statistics ministry’s experimental Index of Services Production (ISP) for 19 sub-sectors, released Wednesday, suggested. Since the ISP data – which has 2024-25 as the base year – is still at a trial stage, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is not providing an overall services sector growth number. However, calculations by The Indian Express showed that the headline services sector growth figure may have declined from around 20.5% in April to approximately 9.5% in May. Even around 9.5%, services sector growth in May was almost double the 5% expansion clocked by the industry, as per the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). Released for the first time earlier this month, the ISP is the services counterpart to the IIP, which measures the industry’s performance in output terms.

“There are clear indications of a robust growth momentum for the 1Q 2026-27 with IIP growth in this quarter showing an average growth of 5.7% and services (ISP) sector for the first two months of this quarter showing an average growth of 15.3%,” said DK Srivastava, EY India’s Chief Policy Advisor.

Leading the charge for the services sector in May was the ‘accommodation and food’ category, which grew by 27.4% after posting a growth of 37.2% in April. However, this was one of the 17 sub-sectors out of the total of 19 that recorded weaker year-on-year growth in May than in April. The only two sub-sectors that performed better in May were railway transport (3.4% versus -0.4%) and air transport. While air transport shrank by 2.8% in May, it was still better than a 13.9% contraction in April. Air transport activity has been adversely impacted following the onset of the war in West Asia, which led to airlines raising fares on account of higher fuel costs. IT and computer related services, which has the highest weight in the ISP at 22.47%, saw its growth decline to 10.3% in May from 15.2% in April. To be sure, 16 of the 19 sub-sectors grew in May, with eight of them recording double-digit growth. In April, 17 sub-sectors had grown on a year-on-year basis, with 14 posting double-digit growth rates. The ISP fills a key gap in India’s official statistics. Until now, there was no official monthly measure of the performance of the services sector, which



dominates the Indian economy and makes up more than half the GDP. Private firm S&P Global’s services Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) has been the only measure of the country’s services sector. India’s services PMI in May had risen to 59.8 in May from 58.8 in April. However, the PMI is a sentiment index and does not measure year-on-year change in production; instead, it looks at momentum in activity from one month to another, with a reading of more than 50 indicative of growth. The trial ISP covers about 60% of the services sector and does not include two key segments – health and education – as they are exempt from Goods and Services Tax (GST). The ISP is calculated on the basis of GST data. As such, the ISP’s compilation does not place additional compliance burden on companies to respond to a MoSPI questionnaire or survey as it is calculated entirely through data that is already available. Core government activity – such as public administration, defence, the Reserve Bank of India – non-market activities, and the informal sector are also excluded from the ISP. The ISP is not directly compiled as the output of the services produced by various companies; instead, GST and administrative data for sub-sectors like air and railway transport and banking are used. Sub-sectors for which data is available in value terms are ‘deflated’ by the appropriate measure, be it Wholesale Price Index or Consumer Price Index, to arrive at the output.

IRDAI unveils reforms to boost insurance sector, improve policyholder protection

Insurance Policy: The new regulations establish a transparent, uniform and proportionate enforcement framework under the Insurance Act, 1938, and the IRDAI Act, 1999. (AI Generated Image) The new regulations establish a transparent, uniform and proportionate enforcement framework under the Insurance Act, 1938, and the IRDAI Act, 1999. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has introduced a set of reforms aimed at modernising the insurance sector, strengthening governance and accelerating insurance penetration across the country. The measures span regulatory, supervisory and developmental areas.

The measures aim to support the implementation of the Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Act, 2025 (SBSR Act), the regulator said. The reforms were approved at the IRDAI board meeting on Tuesday and are designed to provide insurers with greater operational flexibility, facilitate capital formation, improve governance standards and reinforce policyholder protection while enhancing ease of doing business across the insurance ecosystem. Among the key decisions was the approval of amendments to the IRDAI (Actuarial, Finance and Investment Functions of Insurers) (Second Amendment) Regulations, 2026, and the IRDAI (Registration, Capital Structure, Transfer of Shares and Amalgamation of Insurers) (Amendment) Regulations, 2026.

According to IRDAI, the changes will provide insurers with “greater operational and financial flexibility through liberalised investment norms, a facilitative framework for capital infusion and corporate restructuring, and streamlined provisions relating to transfer of shares and amalgamations, while strengthening actuarial oversight and financial governance.” The regulator said the reforms are expected to improve ease of doing business, enhance financial resilience and support insurers’ long-term growth without compromis-

ing policyholder interests. A major policyholder-centric initiative approved by the regulator is the IRDAI (Policyholders’ Education and Protection Fund) Regulations, 2026, which operationalise the Policyholders’ Education and Protection Fund (PEPF) established under Section 16A of the IRDA Act, 1999, as introduced through the SBSR Act. According to IRDAI, the PEPF establishes “a dedicated institutional mechanism to promote insurance awareness and literacy, strengthen grievance redressal mechanisms, leverage technology to improve policyholder services, facilitate the tracing and recovery of unclaimed insurance amounts, and support other initiatives aimed at empowering and safeguarding policyholders.” In another move to strengthen accountability in insurance distribution, the regulator has approved amendments to the regulations governing insurance intermediaries.

A key feature of the reforms is the mandatory tagging of the authorised salesperson to every insurance proposal, policy and certificate of insurance. “The requirement enhances accountability and traceability across the insurance distribution process, strengthens regulatory oversight and promotes greater transparency for policyholders,” IRDAI said. The amendments also introduce perpetual registration for intermediaries through an annual fee regime, replacing periodic renewals. The revised framework streamlines compliance requirements, aligns the regulations with the SBSR Act and Foreign Investment Rules, and strengthens governance through enhanced disclosure and accountability standards, the regulator said. These changes are expected to reduce compliance costs while enabling intermediaries, third-party administrators and surveyors to focus on delivering better and more accessible services to policyholders. To reinforce confidence in the regulatory framework, it has also approved the IRDAI (Manner and Procedure for Imposition of Penalties) Regulations, 2026.

Can drinking coffee before a 20-minute nap boost your brain? What sleep and gut experts say



Drink a cup of coffee, close your eyes for 20 minutes, and wake up feeling more refreshed than you would after either coffee or a nap alone. That’s the promise of the “coffee nap” — a wellness hack that has exploded across social media and productivity circles. Interestingly, the concept isn’t just an internet fad. In a recent episode of The Matt Walker Podcast, renowned US neuroscientist and sleep researcher Dr Matthew Walker explained why the idea is biologically plausible. Caffeine, he notes, typically takes about 20 to 30 minutes to begin exerting its full effect. That creates a brief window in which a person can fall asleep before the stimulant reaches the brain. During a short nap, the brain naturally clears some of adenosine—the chemical that builds up during the day and makes us feel sleepy. As you wake, caffeine begins blocking the remaining adenosine receptors, potentially making you feel more alert.

But while the theory is compelling, does science show that a coffee nap actually works better than coffee or a nap on their own? And is it suitable for everyone? Sleep and digestive health specialists say the answer depends on more than just timing. Coffee and a power nap each have proven benefits. According to Dr Nikhil Modi, Senior Consultant, Respiratory Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi, both coffee and a short nap are independently known to improve alertness. “Caffeine acts as a stimulant and can help people feel more energetic and focused for a period. Many rely on it to overcome an afternoon slump or stay productive during work. However, its effects vary depending on an individual’s caffeine tolerance and sensitivity.” A power nap, on the other hand, gives the brain and body a brief opportunity to recover. Dr Modi says that limiting a nap to around 10 to 20 minutes can improve alertness, concentration and overall efficiency without interfering with the rest of the day. Sleeping longer, however, may leave people feeling groggy after waking because they enter deeper stages of sleep.

Does combining the two offer an extra edge? This is where the evidence becomes less certain. Although the biological explanation behind a coffee nap is reasonable, Dr Modi says there is still no strong scientific evidence showing that combining coffee with a short nap con-

sistently produces better results than having coffee or taking a power nap separately. He also points out that the strategy may not work equally well for everyone. “Since coffee is intended to increase alertness, some people may find it difficult to fall asleep immediately after drinking it, even if they intend to nap for only a few minutes. Individual differences in caffeine sensitivity, habitual coffee consumption and sleep quality all influence how effective the combination is likely to be,” he says. While the discussion around coffee naps largely centres on the brain, Dr Sudeep Khanna, Senior Consultant, Gastroenterology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi, says the digestive system deserves equal attention.

Coffee, he explains, affects much more than alertness. “Besides stimulating the brain, caffeine can also stimulate the digestive tract. In some people, it increases stomach acid production, speeds up bowel movements or causes acidity, particularly when consumed on an empty stomach. Although these effects are usually temporary, they can be troublesome for those with sensitive digestive systems.” From a gastroenterology perspective, drinking coffee and immediately lying down may not be comfortable for everyone. People who are prone to acid reflux or heartburn may experience worsening symptoms because reclining soon after consuming coffee makes it easier for stomach contents to move back into the food pipe. Those with gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) or frequent acidity may, therefore, want to avoid the practice altogether. It’s not a substitute for healthy sleep.

Both specialists agree that the coffee nap should not be viewed as a cure for persistent fatigue. While coffee and a brief daytime nap may help manage occasional tiredness, they cannot compensate for poor-quality or inadequate sleep. If daytime sleepiness becomes a regular problem, or if someone depends on caffeine simply to stay awake, it may be worth examining overall sleep habits or consulting a doctor to rule out an underlying sleep disorder. Similarly, from a digestive health perspective, people who frequently experience acidity, indigestion or reflux should pay attention to how their bodies respond to coffee rather than assuming every viral wellness trend is universally beneficial. For most healthy adults, an occasional cup of coffee is unlikely to cause digestive problems. However, maintaining balanced meals, staying hydrated, limiting excessive caffeine intake and getting adequate sleep remain far more sustainable ways to support both daytime energy and long-term health than relying on quick fixes. The coffee nap may be grounded in sound physiology, but like many health trends, its success ultimately depends on the individual. For some, it may provide a useful afternoon reset. For others, it may simply replace one problem — sleepiness — with another, such as disturbed sleep later in the day or digestive discomfort. The hack may seem plausible but is not practical for everybody.

Actor Rashami Desai lost weight by walking more on holiday: Here’s why it really works

Actor Rashami Desai recently revealed that she shed a few kilos simply by walking more during her travels. There was no punishing workout routine or strict fitness regimen — just hours spent exploring on foot. While that may sound too simple to make a difference, her experience highlights an important truth: consistent, everyday movement can have a powerful impact on weight and overall health. Walking alone isn’t a miracle solution, nor does travel automatically lead to weight loss. But holidays often create the perfect environment for healthier habits—more movement, less sitting, better sleep and lower stress. Together, these seemingly small changes can improve metabolism and contribute to gradual, sustainable weight loss. Why walking deserves more credit

Walking is one of the most underrated forms of physical activity. Every step helps improve blood circulation, supports better breathing and keeps the body’s metabolism active. Unlike high-intensity workouts, walking is easy on the joints, requires no special equipment and can be sustained over a lifetime. That is precisely what makes it so effective. When we run our morbid obesity management programmes, we don’t ask patients to chase a particular step count. Instead, we encourage them to develop a routine of walking before breakfast, before lunch and before dinner. Also, don’t underestimate the power of a post-meal walk. A brisk 10–15-minute walk after breakfast, lunch or dinner can help blunt blood sugar spikes, improve digestion and increase daily calorie burn. Over time, this simple habit can support both weight management and metabolic health. These short walks spread across the day help interrupt long periods of sitting and encourage the body to use energy more efficiently. Over time, this simple habit has produced consistently encouraging results.

As fitness improves, walking can become the foundation for other activities such as yoga, which builds strength, flexibility, balance and mindfulness. Some experts also believe that combining walking with massage therapy may aid recovery and improve overall wellbeing.

Why holidays often lead to weight loss Many people notice they return from a holiday feeling lighter, even without following a formal exercise programme. That’s because travel naturally increases Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis (NEAT) — the calories the body burns through everyday movement outside planned workouts. Whether you’re walking through museums, sightseeing, climbing stairs, shopping or simply exploring a new city, you’re likely to be moving for hours without thinking about exercise. These extra movements add up, increasing daily calorie expenditure in a way that’s both effortless and sustainable. Walking is only one part of the story. Weight is influenced by a range of factors, including diet, sleep, stress, hydration, hormones and overall lifestyle. Interestingly, travel often improves several of these at the same time.

People tend to spend more time outdoors, get more natural sunlight, disconnect from work pressures and sleep better. Meals may be more relaxed, and despite the occasional indulgence, many people consume fewer ultra-processed foods than they do during a busy work week. Together, these changes create an environment that supports healthier metabolism. How to recreate those holiday habits at home The good news is that you don’t need to be on vacation to enjoy the same benefits. Make walking a regular part of your day instead of treating it as a separate workout. Take a short walk before meals, use the stairs whenever possible and avoid sitting for long stretches. Even a few minutes of stretching, yoga or simple bodyweight exercises can complement your walking routine. It’s equally important to pay attention to the basics. Spend some time outdoors each day, soak up natural sunlight, practise a few minutes of deep breathing, stay well hydrated and prioritise good-quality sleep. Building your meals around fresh, minimally



processed foods while limiting sugary and heavily processed options can further support your health goals. The biggest lesson from Rashami Desai’s experience isn’t that walking alone is a shortcut to weight loss. Rather, it shows how powerful small, consistent habits can be when they become part of everyday life. Weight management rarely comes down to one activity or one diet. It is the cumulative effect of moving more, eating mindfully, sleeping well and managing stress that delivers lasting results. Walking may be the simplest of these habits, but for many people, it is also the easiest place to begin and often the one that makes the biggest difference over time.

India using too many powerful antibiotics meant for specific infections, says global Lancet study

India may be using too many powerful ‘watch’ antibiotics — medicines that should be reserved for specific infections when simpler antibiotics are unlikely to work — while underusing both first-line ‘access’ antibiotics and last-resort ‘reserve’ drugs, according to a major international study published in The Lancet Public Health.

Researchers estimate that India’s antibiotic use is skewed towards broader-spectrum drugs, suggesting that some patients are being exposed unnecessarily to ‘watch’ antibiotics even as others may not receive the most appropriate medicines for their infections. The findings come from the first global framework that estimates how much of each category of antibiotics countries actually need based on their infection burden and antimicrobial resistance patterns.

The India findings are part of a wider global picture that shows nearly three-fourths of countries are using more antibiotics overall than needed, while almost every country is overusing the antibiotics that contribute most to antimicrobial resistance. At the same time, millions of people worldwide still lack access to the antibiotics they need. “Our study found that in India some patients were exposed unnecessarily to antibiotics while others did not have access to the right antibiotics to treat their infections,” Prof Ramanan Laxminarayan, founder and president of One Health Trust, senior research scholar at Princeton University and one of the study’s authors, told The Indian Express. “Strategies to improve antibiotic use will focus on ensuring populations have access to the right antibiotics at the right time while reducing unnecessary use.”

What is antibiotic classification all about? The World Health Organisation (WHO) groups antibiotics into three categories: Access: First-choice antibiotics for common infections that have a lower risk of driving resistance. Watch: Broad-spectrum antibiotics that should be used only for specific infections because they carry a higher risk of promoting antimicrobial resistance.

Sreeshankar bags silver in long jump at Glasgow



Sreeshankar Murali jumped 8.09m to clinch the silver medal in the men's jump event at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow on Wednesday. Sreeshankar, India's best jumper this season, won his first major medal after coming back from a career threatening injury in 2024 which ruled him out of the Paris Olympics. Tajay Gayle of Jamaica won the gold medal with 8.15m while Stephen Mackenzie of Scotland won bronze medal with 8.08m.

This is Sreeshankar's second medal in the Commonwealth Games after his silver medal at the last edition. He

had jumped 8.08m last time and lost the gold medal on countback to LaQuan Nairn of Bahamas. Sreeshankar started with a 8m plus jump and recorded 8.03m on his first attempt as Jamaican Gayle and Scot Mackenzie also started with 8m plus jumps. Sreeshankar was placed third after his first attempt. He bettered it further on the second attempt and jumped 8.09m to take the lead. His third jump was a foul but he remained in the gold medal spot. While Sreeshankar fouled in the fourth attempt again, Gayle took the lead with a massive 8.15m jump in the fourth attempt to push the Indian to silver medal spot.

Sreeshankar tried in the last two attempts but couldn't produce the jump to beat Gayle's 8.15m. He looked disappointed knowing the form he was coming in after jumping 8.38m, second best jump of his career last month at the Inter State National Championships. This is the third silver medal for India in Athletics after Sarvesh Kushare and Gulveer Singh won in men's high jump and 10000m respectively. Another Indian in the event, Lokesh Satyanathan finished fifth with a best jump of 7.97m. Lokesh, who became the NCAA indoor champion earlier this year, failed to cross the 8m mark in his six attempts and his first attempt of 7.97m remained his best mark.

FIFA investigates Argentina FA, players over alleged World Cup violations



Zurich: FIFA has opened disciplinary proceedings against the Argentine Football Association (AFA) and several Argentina players over alleged breaches during the 2026 FIFA World Cup, the world football's governing body said. The FIFA Disciplinary Committee opened proceedings against the AFA following incidents involving Argentina's national team during several matches at the tournament. "The FIFA Disciplinary Committee has opened proceedings against the Argentinian Football Association for potential breaches of article 13 paragraph 2 c) (Using a sports event for demonstrations of a non-sporting nature), article 14 paragraph 5 (Team misconduct), article 15 (Discrimination and racist abuse) and article 17 (Order and security at matches) of the FIFA Disciplinary Code in light of discriminatory chants and gestures, late kick-offs, failure to comply with match and security protocols, the display of inappropriate messages by the team and spectators and the throwing of objects by spectators in relation to several matches of the representative team of Argentina at the FIFA World Cup 2026," FIFA said in a statement.

According to FIFA, the alleged breaches include discriminatory chants and gestures by supporters, delayed kick-offs, failure to comply with match and security protocols, the display of inappropriate messages by the team

and spectators, and objects being thrown from the stands. FIFA said the AFA could face charges relating to demonstrations of a non-sporting nature, team misconduct, discrimination and racist abuse, as well as order and security at matches. Separate proceedings have been opened against Argentina players Leandro Paredes, Nahuel Molina and Thiago Almada, team official Roberto Ayala, and Spain player Gavi over incidents following the World Cup final between Spain and Argentina.

Spain defeated Argentina 1-0 in the final on July 19, after which several Argentina players and staff were involved in confrontations with their Spanish counterparts. According to a report by FIFA's appointed Disciplinary and Ethics Prosecutor, Molina faces two alleged counts of assault, one completed and one attempted, while Paredes faces three alleged counts of assault and Ayala one. It added, "The FIFA Disciplinary Committee has received the report of the appointed Disciplinary and Ethics Prosecutor concerning incidents that occurred during the FIFA World Cup 2026 final (Spain v. Argentina) and, following the recommendation contained therein, has opened disciplinary proceedings – for potential breaches of article 14 paragraph 1 i) of the FIFA Disciplinary Code (assault) – against Argentinian players Nahuel Molina (two counts, one completed and one attempted) and Leandro Paredes (three counts) and Argentinian official Roberto Ayala (one count). "Disciplinary proceedings have also been opened – for potential breaches of article 14 paragraph 1 b) of the FIFA Disciplinary Code (unsporting behaviour) – against Argentinian players Nahuel Molina (one count) and Thiago Almada (one count) and Spanish player Pablo Martín Páez Gavira (one count). Proceedings have also been opened against Molina, Almada and Gavi over alleged unsporting conduct. FIFA said the respondents have now been provided with the opportunity to present their position, following which a decision will be issued by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee in due course.

Sreeshankar makes history with back-to-back CWG long jump silver

Glasgow: Murali Sreeshankar added another chapter to Indian athletics history on Wednesday, becoming the country's first long jump double medallist in Commonwealth Games with a silver here. Having claimed silver in Birmingham in 2022, the 27-year-old added another medal to his collection after producing a best leap of 8.09 metres, capping an emotional comeback from the career-threatening knee injury that had nearly derailed his career. Before Sreeshankar, the country's only medallists in the event were: Suresh Babu (men's bronze, 1978), Anju Bobby George (women's bronze, 2002) and M Prajusha (women's silver, 2010). Sreeshankar was understandably elated.

"Very happy, very grateful for being here as well. Very grateful for being able to represent India at the global stage ever again." "Two years ago, I didn't think that probably I'll be in Glasgow and represent my country. But thankful to God and I'm here winning a silver medal for my country yet again," he said. The Kerala man, however, could not hide his disappointment of not being able to bag a gold medal this time.

"I wanted to redeem the silver medal from Birmingham to gold. So, I am not satisfied with my performance. I have to keep improving my game, keep improving my skills." "But he hoped that he could build some momentum for the upcoming Asian Games. "I have to work on my technique. But I feel that this is like a stepping stone, it will add confidence going ahead for the Asian Games," he noted.

Former world champion Tajay Gayle of Jamaica clinched the gold with a best jump of 8.15m, while local favourite Stephen Mackenzie grabbed the last spot on the podium with an 8.08m effort. The medal was especially sweet considering where Sreeshankar stood just over a year ago. A ruptured patellar tendon in April 2024 forced him



to undergo surgery, and miss what was expected to be his maiden Olympic appearance in Paris and raising doubts over whether he could ever return to his explosive best. But here, he gave another emphatic statement of his comeback. Competing in only his second Commonwealth Games after missing the 2018 edition, Sreeshankar opened confidently with a leap of 8.03m before stretching it to 8.09m in his second attempt to move into the lead.

The advantage proved short-lived as Jamaica's Gayle responded with an 8.15m effort to seize top spot. Sreeshankar then endured two fouls as he searched for a bigger jump before managing 7.94m in his fifth attempt. The medal continues an encouraging resurgence for the Kerala athlete, who has consistently jumped above the 8m mark this year. He recorded a season's best of 8.38m at the National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar. The other Indian in the competition Lokesh Sathyanathan finished fifth with a best jump of 7.97m, achieved in his opening attempt.

Stephen Fleming to be appointed England's Test coach



Former Chennai Super Kings coach Stephen Fleming is in line to become the next England Test coach, according to reports in British media. Fleming recently stepped down as the coach of Indian Premier League franchise CSK — besides the Chennai team's subsidiaries Joburg Super Kings in South Africa's SA20 and Texas Super Kings in America's Major League Cricket — after CSK ended 8th in the recent IPL. According to a report in the Guardian, Fleming impressed the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) in a series of interviews over the past two weeks. Should the 53-year-old be handed the coaching reins, he will join predecessor, compatriot, and former teammate Brendon McCullum, who remains in charge of England's white-ball teams.

The Guardian report added that while Fleming is likely to be in place for the tour of South Africa in December, an interim coach, probably Marcus Trescothick, could assume control of the side for the upcoming three-Test series against Pakistan from August 19. Fleming joined CSK as a player in the inaugural edition of IPL under MS Dhoni's captaincy in 2008. After CSK ended as the runners-up in that season, the ex-New Zealand skipper was roped in as head coach ahead of the 2009 edition. He led CSK to all their five IPL titles besides two Champions League titles, which makes him the most decorated coach in the IPL.

"Eighteen years is a lifetime in sport, and I leave with nothing but gratitude. My time with Chennai Super Kings has been the privilege of my coaching career. I am proud of everything we have achieved," Fleming had said after quitting CSK. "Together, we celebrated unforgettable victories, overcame difficult moments, and built memories that will stay with me forever. CSK will always be close to my heart, and I will be cheering the team on for years to come." Fleming has had spells with Middlesex, Yorkshire and

Nottinghamshire besides coaching Southern Brave in the Hundred for two years, leaving in 2024. He was reportedly approached by England in 2009, shortly after he retired as a player. "I was flattered to be offered," he had said back then but went on to explain why he had turned down the offer: "It came down to the fact it wasn't my time. If I get another couple of years [as a coach] I can see if it is what I want to do and if I would be any good at it."

India enter men's and women's team finals at Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships

New Delhi: India stormed into both the men's and women's team finals of the 22nd Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships after defeating England in their respective semifinals at the Thyagaraj Stadium here on Wednesday. The top-seeded Indian men's team extended its unbeaten run with a commanding 3-0 victory in a one-sided contest.

Manush Shah set the tone with a composed 11-9, 11-9, 11-6 win over Connor Green before World No. 38 Manav Thakkar, competing despite 13 stitches above his left eye, produced another clinical performance to outclass Joseph Hunter 11-8, 11-4, 11-5. Veteran Harmeet Desai then wrapped up the tie in emphatic fashion, overpowering Benjamin Piggott 11-5, 11-5, 11-5 to send India into the title clash without conceding a single match throughout the competition.

The Indian women's team faced a tougher challenge before overcoming England 3-1. Commonwealth Games medallist Sreeja Akula gave India the perfect start with a convincing 11-6, 11-3, 11-9 victory over Cheuk Lam Jasmin Wong.

England drew level after Tin-Tin Ho defeated Yashaswini Ghorpade 11-9, 11-6, 11-7. Syndreela Das restored India's lead by defeating Anna Green 11-7, 11-4, 11-9, leaving the hosts one win away from the final. Sreeja then sealed the tie in a gripping fourth rubber, edging Tin-Tin Ho in a five-game thriller. She prevailed 11-8, 5-11, 11-6, 8-11, 11-9 to book India's place in the championship match.

'Players suggested saffron': Hockey India defends change in India jersey colour

GNS News Agency, August 3

After former India captain Viren Rasquinha questioned the logic of Hockey India changing the Indian hockey team's jersey from its traditional blue to saffron, the federation claimed that the change was made due to recommendations from players themselves. In sharp words he posted on social media, Rasquinha had called the decision "embarrassing". Rasquinha was responding to a clip Hockey India had posted on X where it unveiled the jersey for the FIH Hockey World Cup Belgium and Netherlands 2026. "I must say that Hockey India has done many good things for India. But this is embarrassing. The legacy and identity of the Indian team has always been BLUE. I wore the Blue jersey with pride for many years. Fans want to see our Indian team in blue. What is the logic of orange?" Rasquinha wrote on X. After a few users on X criticised Rasquinha for his post, he countered: "I'm seeing many unnecessary political comments on this. I don't want to get into any of that. My simple and humble point is on pride, identity & legacy. India is to hockey what Argentina is to football. Will we ever see Argentina wearing orange and white stripes as their 1st jersey?" In a video posted by Hockey India on their X handle, the federation said that saffron symbolises "courage, sacrifice and victory", was inspired by the Indian flag and the rising sun, and "reflects new beginnings." Hockey India's response

After criticism from multiple quarters about the change of jersey, Hockey India posted a statement on Thursday. "The decision to change the uniform colour was based on support staff and players recommendations and detailed consultations with them. The primary consideration was technical. It was observed that the blue playing uniform tended to blend/merge with the blue synthetic playing surface, which is now the standard colour of international hockey pitches. This visual similarity affected on-field clarity and visibility for the players," Hockey India said in the statement. "In light of the above, the coaches and players suggested alternative colours such as yellow or saffron. After careful consideration, saffron was finalised. Apart from



addressing the technical requirement, saffron also holds deep significance as one of the colours of our National Flag, symbolising courage, sacrifice and national pride. "It may also be noted that changes in jersey colour are not unprecedented in Indian hockey. From time to time, the national team's playing kit colour has been modified as per functional and other requirements. For instance, during the 2014 FIH Hockey World Cup, the team's jersey colour was changed to yellow and during the 2018 FIH Hockey World Cup the color was changed to sky blue with a completely different design. The present change to saffron was implemented considering both the technical feedback received from the coaches and players and the symbolic value associated with the colour being part of our National Flag."

What else in the jersey?

The jersey will have mandala pattern in the centre near the torso to "celebrate India's rich cultural heritage". Hockey India also said the chest graphic was a modern interpretation of the Sudarshan Chakra and symbolised "strength, unity, and momentum." The jersey will have tricolour piping along the shoulders and sides, which "reinforces national pride." "INDIA" is written on the front of the jersey in stylised 'Devanagari' script to "celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity." "New jersey design embodies the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' — One India, Supreme India," HI said in the jersey launch video.

'Cap 278 signing off': Ajinkya Rahane retires from all formats of cricket



GNS News Agency, August 3

Veteran India cricketer Ajinkya Rahane has announced his retirement from international cricket in an emotional video he posted on his social media. The 38-year-old draws curtains on a career that saw him play 85 Tests, 90 ODIs and 20 T20Is for the Indian cricket team in a career which began in 2013. However, he last played for India in the 2023 away Test series against the West Indies. Rahane is active on the domestic circuit and led Mumbai until the 2024-25 season. Rahane scored 5,077 runs in his Test career for India at 38.46. This had 12 centuries and 26 fifties. In 90 ODIs, he scored 2,962 runs at 35.26 including three tons and 24 fifties. Rahane also turned up in 20 T20Is for India, where he managed to score 375 runs. In India colours, Rahane will be best remembered for the 2020-21 Border-Gavaskar Trophy, when he took charge as captain when Virat Kohli returned home after the first Test. Led by Rahane, a heavily-depleted India defeated Australia 2-1 in their own backyard.

"The reality of life is that everything has a beginning and everything has an end. When the time comes, you simply have to respect it and move forward. I have always relied on timing in my batting and have always understood its importance. Today, I feel the timing is right for me to move on and announce my retirement from international cricket and all formats. From those early days, travelling from Dombivli as a young boy just to practice, I gave this game everything I had. "Every single day, every innings, every opportunity I got to bat, the dream was always to wear the India cap. I lived by one simple rule — always put my country and my team ahead of myself. I played this game with complete honesty and I have always believed that if your intent is right, the game will always take care of you. Since the time I made my debut as a first-class cricketer, Indian cricket has grown tremendously and I feel so proud to have been a part of it over the last 20 years.

"While my chapter as an Indian cricketer comes to an end, my journey with the game doesn't. I look forward to helping the next generation, sharing the values this sport has taught me and giving back to the game that has given me everything. From starting out as a young player in Mumbai to playing for India, it has been an absolute honour.

Asked Jadumani to leave no room for doubt in judges' decision: India boxing coach Hari Kishan Belwal

Glasgow: India boxing coach Hari Kishan Belwal expressed concern over the refereeing standards at the Commonwealth Games, saying close contests have been difficult for Indian boxers. After Mandengbam Jadumani Singh assured the country of at least a bronze medal after outclassing Mwale Mwengo in the men's 55kg quarterfinals in the competitions at the Commonwealth Games 2026, Belwal said the team's strategy has been tailored to ensure leave no room for debatable decisions in close contests. "Even the slightest margin has been proving costly here. That's why I told Jadumani to go for complete dominance so there would be no room for doubt in the judges' decision," Belwal told IANS after Jadumani Singh's quarterfinal victory. "Then they know that India has already improved a lot in boxing. So wherever we have a close contest bout, they think of taking it. Because if it's a one-sided bout, they can't do it. Where it's a close bout, they try to take it away," he added. Asked about on the tactical approach employed during the bout, Belwal explained that the coaching staff instructed Jadumani to execute a strict "score, move, score, move" strategy to neutralise his Zambian opponent Mwale Mwengo. "When we saw his (Mwale Mwengo) previous bout, he opponent threw a round-continuous punch. So we had planned that we will not stand in front of him. If we stand, he will throw a punch. So score, move, score, move. This was our strategy. "Our main target was to win the first round 5-0. After that, we planned to brief them for the next round. Regardless of our overall goal, our focus was to take the first round 5-0.

Ranbir Kapoor takes on Yash in the righteous fight; fans ask where is Hanuman?

Ramayana trailer: After month of anticipation, the Ranbir Kapoor-Sai Pallavi-Yash-starrer Ramayana trailer dropped on Thursday morning, teasing the good fight, the epic battle between the Maryada Purshottam Rama and the Lord of Three Worlds Ravana. The Ramayana trailer launched at 'Brahma Muhurat', 4:15 am in India, and will be attached to Spider-Man: Brand New Day in theatres. Yash enters the frame as a king without a kingdom who quickly goes on to win over the three worlds. We see glimpses of Rama (Ranbir Kapoor)'s might as a warrior, the swaymvar of Sita (Sai Pallavi) and the promise extracted by Kaikeyi (Lara Dutta) that send Rama, Sita and Lakshmana (Ravie Dubey) to 14 years of exile. We see Lakshmana cutting Surpanakha's (Rakulpreet) nose, the abduction of Sita and glimpses of the war that unfolds. While fights with many monsters ensue, Sunny Deol as Hanuman is missing from the trailer. Many fans online also asked, 'Where is Hanuman?' Made on a massive scale and with the might of Namit Malhotra's DNEG Studios, the story as old as time gets an era-specific makeover whether it's Rama (Ranbir Kapoor)'s Ayodhya, the home of Sita (Sai Pallavi) or the Lanka of Ravana (Yash). The rakshasas (demons) who inhabit the deep jungles are far different from what India has been used to — they owe more to Hollywood films than Ramanand Sagar's show. The scenes showing the drawing of Lakshman Rekha and Sita's kidnapping are visually stunning.

Ranbir Kapoor brings a quiet conviction to the role but the trailer belongs to Yash who overwhelms with his rage as the demon king. He enters the frame with the first scene and commands it till the last. The trailer offers the first look at the world of Ramayana, teasing the scale, emotion and spectacle of Nitesh Tiwari's retelling of Valmiki's timeless epic. From introducing its central characters to showcasing the film's expansive visual universe, the footage sets the stage for the first instalment of the two-part saga. The much-awaited trailer of Nitesh Tiwari's Ramayana was unveiled on July 24 at the prestigious San Diego Comic-Con (SDCC). The launch event was attended by producer Namit Malhotra, director Nitesh Tiwari and lead stars Ranbir Kapoor and Yash, who introduced the ambitious mythological epic to an international audience.

Ahead of the trailer launch, the makers had hosted a grand promotional event titled Pratham Sankalp at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, where several members of the cast came together for the first time. Ranbir Kapoor, Yash, Sai Pallavi, Sunny Deol, Ravie Dubey, Shobana, Rakul Preet Singh, Arun Govil, Kunal Kapoor, Vivek Oberoi and Ajinkya Deo were among those in attendance. Director Nitesh Tiwari explained why Ranbir Kapoor and Sai Pallavi were his first choices to play Lord Ram and Sita. "An artist's eyes always tell the truth. I saw Lord Rama in Ranbir's eyes and Sita in Sai Pallavi's eyes. Apart from being talented, both of them have the sincerity that I wanted in these very important roles," he had said. Ranbir Kapoor, speaking about portraying Lord Ram, said the role chose him rather than the other way around. Sai Pallavi also spoke about the responsibility of portraying Sita, saying, "It's not easy for ac-



tors to get roles like this because it's a challenge to essay a goddess on screen. There should be a team that can put their heart and soul into presenting their best version to the world. Only then does it become itihaas for everyone. Hence, thank you for selecting me for such a prestigious project."

Producer Namit Malhotra said the project had been over a decade in the making. "The Ramayana is one of the greatest stories ever told, not because of its scale, but because of the timeless values it represents. My responsibility has been to approach it with complete honesty, authenticity and reverence. Every creative decision we have made... has been guided by a single thought: to honour this extraordinary legacy with the dignity and respect it deserves, while presenting it through the finest cinematic craftsmanship possible." Directed by Nitesh Tiwari, Ramayana is a two-part cinematic adaptation of Valmiki's epic. The film stars Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Ram, Sai Pallavi as Sita and Yash as Ravana, alongside Sunny Deol as Hanuman, Ravie Dubey as Lakshman, Kajal Aggarwal as Mandodari, Lara Dutta as Kaikeyi,

Arun Govil as Dasharatha, Rakul Preet Singh as Surpanakha, Sheeba Chaddha as Manthara, Adinath Kothare as Bharat and several others. Backed by Namit Malhotra's Prime Focus Studios in association with DNEG and Yash's Monster Mind Creations, the film is reportedly mounted on a budget of Rs 4,000 crore. The music has been composed by Oscar winners Hans Zimmer and A.R. Rahman, marking their first collaboration on an Indian film. Pankaj Kumar serves as cinematographer, while Mad Max action director Guy Norris has designed the action sequences. The screenplay has been written by Nitesh Tiwari and Shridhar Raghavan. Ramayana is being filmed for IMAX and will release worldwide: Part 1 in Diwali 2026 and Part 2 in Diwali 2027.

affair with Dawood Ibrahim.

Ram Teri Ganga Maili was the story of a woman named Ganga, played by Mandakini, who lives in the mountain town of Gangotri, and meets a 'sheheri babu' named Naren from Kolkata when he lands in her village. They fall in love, get married, she gets pregnant, and he leaves for the city with a promise of returning. If one were to hear this today, one would instantly say that the man is took advantage of a naive, innocent woman; and honestly, that is how he comes across in the film. Ganga, with an infant son, travels from Uttarakhand to Kolkata, and on the way, every person she runs into is an evil, opportunistic villain. It almost makes you wonder if Raj Kapoor was getting some kind of sadistic pleasure from pushing Ganga into a corner at every possible turn. He neither granted her any agency, nor allowed her an escape. Mandakini, who was a newcomer, wasn't a great actor. But neither was Rajiv. It was almost as if Raj cast Mandakini so his son wouldn't draw all the criticism for poor acting. But once you start watching the film, you realise that this wasn't a film that relied on strong lead actors. Raj focused on sexualising the lead woman, much like he did in Satyam Shivam Sundaram. Raj took it a step above when he decided to dress Mandakini up only in a sheer white cloth. The way she was dressed would invite a strike on Instagram in 2026.

Decades later, when Mandakini was asked about this particular, she told Mid-day that she had no regrets. Mandakini in Ram Teri Ganga Maili Mandakini in Ram Teri Ganga Maili. It wasn't just this scene under the waterfall, but many other scenes when Raj insists on placing the camera while she breastfeeds. It is the most natural thing, but the way the director presents it, with men watching her like a hawk, he turns into one of those men as he shoots those scenes.

Raj Kapoor addressed the criticism of 'scantily dressed Ganga' The footfalls for Ram Teri Ganga Maili were high, as Raj and his team would have expected but there was enough criticism for the way he presented her. Addressing the criticism, he told daughter Ritu in the same book, "Although there was tremendous criticism of the so-called nudity, of the scantily dressed Ganga, it was the faith in the purity of the Ganga (the river), which sustained the faith in the innocence of Ganga (the character in the film). This is what held on and, despite all the criticism, the Ganga still flows." Ganga is shown as a helpless woman who is taken advantage of in every town she stops at. In Varanasi, she becomes the victim of a human trafficker and is mistreated repeatedly. One would wonder where Naren goes missing while Ganga is struggling through all of this, and the man, who is a full-grown adult, is shown getting beaten by his father, being locked up in his own house and being forced to marry another woman. He too, is shown as a helpless man who is cheated even by his parents. Raj does not allow Ganga any grace until the last few seconds, and even then, the only bleak way that he gives her a happy ending is that he lets her live. The film constantly repeats that Ganga (the river and the character) is pure, and is violated as she finds her way through the many cities and towns to get to the ocean. He implies that she should be worshipped but, in the name of trying to show her as a deity, he repeatedly disrespects her.

Mahima Makwana lived in a chawl, lost father at 5 months, now owns 2 Mumbai homes at 26

Most actors enter the industry chasing a dream. Mahima Makwana entered it to keep her family afloat. Today, the 26-year-old actor is earning praise for her Netflix series Musafir Cafe. But long before OTT shows, films and television fame came calling, Mahima was a nine-year-old child travelling across Mumbai in buses after school, attending auditions she never wanted to give. Acting wasn't her childhood dream; survival was. Speaking on Ranveer Allahbadia's podcast in 2021, Mahima recalled how life changed before she was even old enough to remember it. "I was just five months old when my father passed away. Back then, my mother worked at an NGO. My brother was nine. My mother had always wanted to become an actress but couldn't, so she pushed me towards acting."

"I started auditioning when I was nine. I would tell my mother that I wasn't interested in acting. I didn't understand this world. I would attend school for half the day, travel by bus to auditions and come back exhausted. But my mother kept pushing me. The biggest reason I became a part of this industry was because I wanted to support my family." That responsibility came at the cost of her childhood. Mahima says she barely experienced school or college like other children. "There was nobody else earning in the family. We lived in a chawl, and people—including relatives—often looked down upon us." Then came a conversation that changed her life. "One day my mother told me that before she left this world, she wanted to own a house." The wish became Mahima's mission.

Mahima's breakthrough arrived with Zee TV's Sapne Suhane Ladakpan Ke in 2012. She was just 13. The success of the show transformed her family's fortunes almost overnight. "After that show, I bought my first home. I was just 14. I bought a house in Mira Road and also bought my first car." Mahima Makwana's second home. Mahima Makwana's second home. (Photo: Mahima Makwana/Instagram) The achievement was extraordinary, but it came with a heavy price. "I missed out on the golden days of my life—school. I would only go to write my examinations. In the process, I grew up too early." The humiliation that changed everything

Before becoming a television lead, Mahima spent years working as a child artiste and junior actor, taking up one- and two-day shoots. Those early years were filled with disappointments. Recalling how child artistes were often underpaid, she said they would sometimes be promised one amount but receive only a fraction of it. "Sometimes we were promised Rs 10 but would end up getting just Rs 2," she said, using the figures to illustrate the stark difference rather than the actual amounts paid. Mahima Makwana in Sapne Suhane Ladakpan Ke Mahima Makwana in Sapne Suhane Ladakpan Ke One experience on the sets of Balika Vadhu left a lasting impact. She was around nine or ten when she was handed a monologue opposite veteran actors Surekha Sikri and Anup Soni. Overwhelmed by the moment, she froze. "The director came to me and said, 'If you don't know acting, then why are you here?'" The words crushed her confidence. "I felt humiliated. I went home, memorised my lines and worked harder. It became a learning experience. After Balika Vadhu, I got my first break as a protagonist, and there was no looking back." Even after becoming a familiar face on television, Mahima's struggle was far from over. She spent years auditioning for advertisements, films and OTT projects while continuing television work and trying to complete her education. "I studied on my sets because I didn't have time to attend school."

Breaking into films proved even harder. "When it came to films, I faced multiple rejections. Sometimes projects got shelved, sometimes I was replaced. But I always believed I would make it to the big screen." Despite working for nearly a decade, she says she continued to battle the stereotype of being "just a television actor." "I still face rejections and get typecast. But I took my work seriously and myself a



little less. I just kept working."

Mahima's persistence eventually led her to Salman Khan. While promoting her television show Shubharambh on Bigg Boss, she met the superstar for the first time. "He was intimidating but very sweet." A year later, she received a call from Salman Khan Films for Antim. The offer arrived at one of the most difficult phases of her life. "My brother had contracted COVID, and Shubharambh was about to shut down. I didn't know how to react." After meeting director Mahesh Manjrekar and auditioning for the role, she was cast in Antim. She still remembers what Salman Khan told her after she joined the film. "He said, 'I know you have had humble beginnings, but there is no looking back from here.'"

"People suddenly wanted to become my best friend" The release of Antim in 2021 brought Mahima a new level of recognition. It also changed the way people treated her. "When I did Antim, people's behaviour suddenly changed. They all wanted to become my best friend. It looks like overnight success to people who don't know you, but for me, it was over a decade of hard work." Rather than dwelling on setbacks, Mahima says she chose to learn from them. "I have learnt a lot from my failures. I have seen so many ups and downs." The void that still remains

Despite achieving financial security and fulfilling her mother's dream, Mahima says there is one emptiness that success cannot fill. "I don't know what it feels like to have a father. When I see my friends with their dads, I don't know what to feel. I feel empty and heavy at the same time." Mahima Makwana with her mother Mahima Makwana with her mother. (Photo: Mahima Makwana/Instagram) She says her mother ensured she never felt deprived of love, but questions about her father have stayed with her. "My brother was nine when my father passed away, so he has memories of him. I don't. Somewhere, you always want to know who your father was." From one dream home to another A decade after buying her first house at just 14, Mahima has fulfilled another dream. Last year, she gave fans a glimpse of her second Mumbai home, where she lives with her mother. Every corner of the house reflects her personality, with custom-made furniture, unique colour palettes and decor personally designed by the actor. Mahima Makwana in her second home. Mahima Makwana in her second home. (Photo: Mahima Makwana/Instagram) Speaking to Mashable India, Mahima said, "I bought my first house in 2014. At that time, I didn't realise what it meant to own a house in a city like Mumbai. Eleven years later, I have a second home, which is much bigger. It is a huge thing for me." Mahima made her Telugu film debut with Venkatapuram in 2017 before going on to star in Antim, Tumse Na Ho Payega, Showtime and, most recently, Musafir Cafe. At just 26, she has spent nearly two decades in front of the camera. The little girl who once skipped school to attend auditions has not only built a successful acting career but also fulfilled the promise she made to her mother years ago—to give her a home of her own. What's more commendable is despite all the hardships, she managed to be a graduate. She holds a degree in mass media.

Bombay HC restrains media from calling Rajesh Khanna's home Aashirwad 'haunted, cursed'



that such descriptions were prima facie defamatory and violated the plaintiff's fundamental right to live peacefully and with dignity.

The hearing came after businessman Shashi Shetty, the current owner of Aashirwad, approached the court after coming across several articles, social media posts and videos that described the property as haunted. Senior advocate Birendra Saraf, appearing for Shetty, told the court that his client had demolished the original bungalow and constructed a new house in its place. However, the name of the property was retained, and the new residence continues to be called Aashirwad. The petitioner also pointed out that India.com had recently published an article titled "19 Real Haunted Houses in India That Will Give You A Cold Sweat", in which Aashirwad was listed.

The court held that the owner was "wholly justified" in seeking interim relief. "The material, in my prima facie view, is clearly defamatory of the plaintiff so as to suggest that he lives in a haunted and so-called cursed bungalow," the order stated. The court further observed that such descriptions could impinge on Shetty's "right to live peacefully and in dignity". The Judge also noted that none of the respondents appeared before the court to justify or defend their publications. "Therefore, in my prima facie view, clearly such publications would be wholly unjustified and in the nature of creating sensationalism, at the cost to the plaintiff and for no fault of his," the court said. The ad-interim relief will continue until the next hearing on August 21, 2026.

The history of Rajesh Khanna's Aashirwad Rajesh Khanna bought Aashirwad from actor Rajendra Kumar for Rs 3.5 lakh. Rajendra Kumar had reportedly purchased the property for Rs 65,000 in the late 1950s. The bungalow proved fortunate for both actors, with each achieving immense success during the period they lived there. Rajendra Kumar earned the title of "Jubilee Kumar" following a string of hit films, while Rajesh Khanna went on to become Hindi cinema's first superstar, enjoying a level of fan frenzy that remains unparalleled. Following Rajesh Khanna's death in 2012, his family sold the property to Shashi Shetty for a reported Rs 90 crore. The actor had reportedly hoped to turn Aashirwad into a museum after his death, but the plan remained unfulfilled following the sale. Shetty demolished the original bungalow in 2016 and constructed a new four-storey residence for his family. However, he retained the name Aashirwad for the new property.