

TGSRTC plans electric autos for first-mile connectivity

Hyderabad: In a move aimed at making public transport more accessible and commuter-friendly, the Transport Department is reportedly exploring the possibility of introducing electric auto-rickshaw services integrated with Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) operations.

The initiative is expected to improve first-mile and last-mile connectivity, a long-standing challenge for bus passengers travelling to and from bus stops in the capital region.

25 tonnes of adulterated spices seized in Hyderabad; 3 arrested

Hyderabad: In a major crackdown on food adulteration, Hyderabad Police's Food Adulteration Surveillance Team (H-FAST), along with the GHMC Food Safety Department, seized over 25 tonnes of adulterated spices and arrested three persons.

The arrested suspects have been identified as Rahul Bhati of Katedan, Vishal Panwar and Dulichand Kachhawar of Begum Bazaar.

Shift to T-Fiber by Sept 1: Telangana IT Min to all govt offices

Hyderabad, August 4

Telangana IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu on Tuesday directed officials to ensure that all government offices in the state receive internet services exclusively through T-Fiber from September 1.

Reviewing the progress of T-Fiber, the minister instructed officials to provide internet connectivity to all government offices within the stipulated deadline, according to a press release.

He directed that no payments be made to private internet service providers for government offices after September 1.

Sridhar Babu instructed officials to complete the migration of the Telangana State Wide Area Network to T-Fiber within a month.

The minister directed officials to make comprehensive arrangements to provide full-fledged T-Fiber connectivity for the prestigious Future City project.

He instructed officials to expedite the implementation of the state's flagship "Internet to Every Home" initiative.

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27

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and IT, Anudeep Durishetty, and T-Fiber Managing Director Venu Prasad, the release added.

With over 9 years of experience in reporting, Yunus Lasania is a journalist who has worked with 3 national dailies in his career. He last worked as the state correspondent... More »

Warangal to get Telangana's 2nd largest govt cancer hospital

Hyderabad, August 4

Telangana Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha on Tuesday, August 4, announced that the second-largest government cancer hospital in the state will be set up in Warangal.



He said that the Warangal Regional Cancer Hospital will be developed to provide state-of-the-art cancer services to the people of North Telangana.

The Warangal Super Specialty Hospital, which is currently under construction, will be made operational by the end of this year, he added. The minister was conducting a review of medical services in Warangal, Hanmakonda and Jangaon at the Secretariat.

He said that a Letter of Credit (LOC) will be granted to Warangal Super Speciality Hospital and steps will be taken to ensure that services are provided with state-of-the-art equipment, necessary medical experts and staff.

Damodar Raja Narasimha also stated that the proposal made by MLAs to appoint an IAS officer as a special officer to effectively monitor the functioning of government hospitals in the combined Warangal district will be considered.

Choutuppal Area Hospital to be inaugurated in September

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He also instructed Principal Secretary Dr Christina to upgrade the primary health centres in Nampally and Manugodu into community health centres and announced plans for a mother and child health centre and trauma care centre in Choutuppal.

Regarding Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajagopal Reddy's request to establish a 100-bed area hospital in Chandur, the minister directed the officials to assess the need for such a facility.

No third-party insurance cover, no fuel: SC asks Centre to launch pilot project

New Delhi: Noting that nearly 56 per cent of vehicles on Indian roads lacked a valid insurance, the Supreme Court on Tuesday proposed linking fuel supply with a valid vehicle insurance as part of a pilot project to stop uninsured vehicles from plying.

"It is shocking to learn that nearly 56 per cent of vehicles (16.54 crore of 30.48 crore vehicles) plying on Indian roads remain uninsured... The consequent effect is that the statutory safeguard of victim compensation is often delayed, if not defeated," a Bench of Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra said.

The number of road accidents stood at 4,87,705 in

2024; 4,80,583 in 2023; and 4,61,312 in 2022, it said, pointing out the magnitude of the problem.

The Bench flagged the lack of compliance of provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, requiring all vehicles to have a valid insurance policy covering third parties.

The top court directed the Centre to evolve a pilot project by which fuel can be refused at petrol stations to vehicles not having a valid insurance cover. It directed the Centre to implement a pilot project on certain corridors, substituting the process of stopping at toll plazas, with automatic detection of vehicles passing through toll points.

Indian vessel sinks after projectile attack in Red Sea; all 13 Indian crew rescued

The attack comes amid heightened security concerns for merchant vessels transiting strategic waterways in West Asia, including the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, where commercial shipping has faced repeated threats amidst the USIran-Israel conflict.

New Delhi,

An Indian-flagged commercial vessel, MSV Faize Noore Oliya, sank in the Red Sea off the coast of Yemen after being hit by a projectile on Tuesday, with all 13 Indian nationals on board rescued safely, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

The MEA condemned the attack, saying its Embassy in Riyadh was closely monitoring the situation and coordinating with Yemeni authorities to ensure the safety and security of the rescued crew.

"We condemn the attack on the Indian-flagged commercial vessel, MSV Faize Noore Oliya, that sank in the Red Sea, off the coast of Yemen on August 4, 2026. All 13 Indian nationals have been rescued," the ministry said in a statement and thanked the Yemeni authorities for their support.

growing risks faced by commercial shipping in the region.



Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal, too, reacted to the development saying the vessel was hit by a projectile near Yemeni waters, causing it to capsize and sink.

"India strongly condemns this unprovoked attack on the defenseless mechanised sailing vessel. The safety of our people is our supreme priority," Sonowal said in a post on X.

He said all 14 seafarers, including 13 Indians, had been safely rescued by the Yemeni Coast Guard and brought to the Port of Mokha.

The minister said he had instructed the Director General Maritime Administration (DGMA) to take immediate steps in coordination with all agencies to ensure the security of Indian seafarers operating in the region and provide all necessary assistance to the rescued crew.

The MEA said the latest incident highlighted the

"The continuing incidents of attacks on commercial shipping in the region are deeply worrisome. The targeting of commercial shipping in the region must end, and free and unimpeded navigation and commerce through the international waterways in the region, in keeping with international law, must be restored at the earliest," the ministry said.

The attack comes amid heightened security concerns for merchant vessels transiting strategic waterways in West Asia, including the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, where commercial shipping has faced repeated threats amidst the USIran-Israel conflict.

The safety of Indian seafarers has emerged as a key concern for New Delhi following a series of recent incidents involving attacks on merchant vessels. India has repeatedly called for ensuring freedom of navigation and the protection of civilian shipping in international waters.



New Delhi: Amid sloganeering by the Opposition in the House, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said that the Indian economy is set to cross the \$5-trillion mark in FY29 as per the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the government has adopted a broad-based growth strategy to achieve the milestone.

While replying to the strategy of the Indian economy in the Rajya Sabha, she said in a written reply that as per the IMF's World Economic Outlook database in April 2026, India's GDP at current prices is projected to be around \$5.1 trillion by 2028-29.

"The government has adopted a broad-based growth strategy focusing on enhancing agricultural pro-

ductivity, promoting manufacturing, supporting MSMEs, expanding infrastructure, improving logistics and ease of doing business, creating an efficient and streamlined tax system through income tax and GST reforms, fostering innovation and digitalisation, strengthening human capital, and ensuring energy security," she said.

The finance minister said that the strategy is complemented by sustained emphasis on public capital expenditure, liberalising the FDI regime, boosting exports, and strengthening macroeconomic fundamentals through prudent fiscal management and price stability. "In addition, the government is strengthening trade resilience by expanding its network of free trade agreements and comprehensive economic partnership/cooperation agreements," she said.

To develop the manufacturing sector, she further said, initiatives such as production linked incentives (PLI) scheme, Make in India, National Logistics Policy, National Single Window System and PM GatiShakti scheme are aimed at enhancing domestic production, attracting investment, generating employment and improving competitiveness.

"These efforts are complemented by targeted measures to strengthen the MSME sector, including enhancement of guarantees and the Emergency Credit Guarantee Scheme, revision of MSME classification norms, strengthening the Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) ecosystem, simplified Udyam Registration, wider access to Government e-Marketplace (GeM), and support under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme," she said.

The minister also said that the services sector is being strengthened through the development and deployment of digital public infrastructure, promotion of global capability centres (GCCs), medical value travel and the orange economy, strengthening the artificial intelligence and digital ecosystem, and targeted initiatives for skill development and enhancing workforce employability.

"The Union Budget 2026-27 has announced a number of initiatives to unlock the growth potential of the services sector, including the establishment of the National Institute of Hospitality, creation of Regional Medical Hubs, expansion of Allied Health Professional institutions, de-

velopment of AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics) Content Creator Labs, and support for university townships," she said.

In agriculture, she said, the focus is on improving productivity through facilitating investments in irrigation, technology adoption, digital agriculture, crop diversification, post-harvest infrastructure and better market access.

"The Union Budgets in recent years have also identified and emphasised on strategic sectors such as semiconductors, electronics, biopharmaceuticals, rare earths, chemicals, capital goods, clean energy and advanced manufacturing as important drivers for growth," she said.



CHANGE OF NAME

I. K. Shankar, Service No. JC-679438-M NB/Sub, residing at H.No. 10-189/10/1, Adarshnagar, Mavala, Adilabad, Telangana – 504001, have changed the name of my son from "D SHANMUKHA" to "DURGAM SHANMUKHA". Henceforth, he shall be known as "DURGAM SHANMUKHA" for all purposes. Date: 04-08-2026 Place: Adilabad

Sd/-
K. Shankar

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Countering drone threat from Pakistan

Drones have become the preferred tool for Pakistani smugglers for moving

drugs and weapons along the border with India, particularly targeting Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. What started as a surveillance tool has now evolved into a full-fledged logistics network for dumping narcotics and weapons. There is growing evidence linking the smuggling activity with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The Border Security Force (BSF) had seized 245 drones from Pakistan in Punjab in 2024 alone, more than double the previous year, and by October 2025, the force had seized 200 Pakistani drones carrying 287 kg of heroin, 174 weapons, including AK-47s, hand grenades and over high explosives in that year. Individual seizures this year continue at a steady clip. Punjab has emerged as the epicentre of drone-assisted narcotics trafficking, with almost all such incidents reported in the country occurring along its border. Early this year, the BSF's Punjab frontier alone had neutralised 47 drones — a sign both of intensity of activity and improved interdiction capacity. In this backdrop, Punjab's decision to deploy 'hawai nakas' — aerial checkpoints — to intercept drones carrying drugs and weapons from across the border is an innovative response to an evolving security threat. Smuggling syndicates have embraced technology faster than law enforcement, replacing human couriers with GPS-guided drones capable of dropping heroin, arms and ammunition deep inside Indian territory. Conventional road checkpoints can do little against an enemy that flies overhead. The scale of the challenge is daunting. Each time Indian forces field new technology, smugglers respond with something more advanced.

MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Launches 1.16 Crore Box Drain and Underground Drainage Works



“Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, August 04:” Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, along with former corporators Jeripothula Prabhudas and Gundarapu Srinivas Reddy, today formally launched box drain and underground drainage construction works in Laxmi Nagar, Krishna Nagar and Tirumala Nagar colonies under Meerpet HB Colony Division. “The development works are being undertaken at an estimated cost of ₹1.16 crore with the objective of addressing long-standing drainage and waterlogging issues faced by residents in these localities. The proposed box drain and underground drainage network is expected to improve the flow of wastewater, prevent stagnation and provide better sanitation and civic infrastructure to the surrounding residential areas.” Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that priority is being given to improving basic infrastructure and resolving drainage-related problems in the constituency. He assured residents that necessary steps would be taken to complete the works at the earliest and ensure that the benefits reach the people. “Local residents and community representatives welcomed the commencement of the works and expressed their gratitude to the MLA and the concerned officials for taking up the long-pending civic infrastructure requirements in the area.”

Michelin launches Primacy 5 tyre in India



“Hyderabad, August 04 (Indian Chronicle) : Michelin, the world's leading tyre manufacturer, has launched the Michelin Primacy 5, the first passenger car tyre made in India, according to Michelin India Managing Director Shantanu Deshpande. In a statement issued on Tuesday, he said the tyre has been designed to meet the needs of Indian consumers by offering enhanced safety, comfort, durability and energy efficiency. The Michelin Primacy 5, which won the 'Tyre of the Year 2025' award at the Tyre Technology International Awards for Innovation and Excellence, will be available across Michelin stores and around 800 authorised dealers across the country from this month.

Man gets six-day jail term for threatening family in Falaknuma

Hyderabad: A local court awarded a six-day jail term to a man for allegedly creating a public nuisance and threatening a family after a marriage proposal was called off in Falaknuma. According to the police, Shaik Raheem created a disturbance at a residence in Teegala Kunta after a marriage proposal involving the family's daughter was called off following adverse background information about him.

Municipal Chairperson Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar Inaugurates Cricket Tournament Marking Youth Congress Foundation Day

“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau – Indian Chronicle – August 3): A cricket tournament was organized under the leadership of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Youth Congress President Manga Praveen to mark the Youth Congress Foundation Day. Bhuvanagiri Municipality Chairperson Tangallapalli Srivani, attending as the chief guest, inaugurated the tournament and extended her best wishes to the players. She remarked that such sports competitions play a pivotal role in fostering sportsmanship, discipline, and a sense of unity among the youth.” Speaking on the occasion,

District Youth Congress President Manga Praveen stated that the tournament was organized with the aim of bringing young people together on a single platform and promoting sports. He expressed his hope that all participating teams would play with true sportsmanship and strive for victory. The event was attended by Library Organization Chairman Owais Chishti, Barre Jahangir, Polishetti Anil, Angadi Nagaraju, Jahangir, Somayya, Kolluri Raju, along with Congress party leaders, Youth Congress leaders, public representatives, activists, players, and a large number of fans.

33 KV.. problem of electricity wires on Current Office Road solved..finally the problem was solved with the initiative of Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy

“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 3):- The problem of 33 electricity wires on Current Office Road in Bhuvanagiri town has finally been solved with the initiative of Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy. The long-standing problem of 33 KV electricity wires has been solved with the initiative of MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy. The problem of 33 KV electricity wires in Bhuvanagiri town was solved a few years ago. With the intention of taking 33 KV electricity wires to the substation in the Current Office through such towers, towers were constructed along the main road. But the management of India Mission School stopped this work by going to court. The 33 KV electric wires were passing over the residential houses in almost 6 wards. Two children died in Pragathi Nagar in Pahadi Nagar in the past due to these electric wires. The councilors brought this matter to the attention of the MLA. MLA Anil Kumar Reddy spoke to the India Mission School correspondent Juda and the school in-charge Klemen at their residence on Monday. On this occasion, the MLA spoke to them and said that people's lives were being lost due to these electric wires and asked them to cooperate with this work with a humanitarian per-



spective and participate in the development of the city. The management of India Mission School responded positively. 33 KV electric wires were fixed on these towers. On this occasion, the ward councilors thanked the MLA for the school's management. 30th Ward Councilor Md. Laik Ahmed, 31st Ward Councilor Samaiah Tabassu Shafiq Ahmed, Congress Party leader Md. Atahar and others participated in this program.

UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Participates in Van Mahotsav, Urges Citizens to Plant and Protect Trees

“UPPAL, AUGUST 04 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy participated in the Van Mahotsav programme organized by the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) and planted saplings, emphasizing that protecting the environment is a social responsibility of every citizen. On the occasion, the MLA planted saplings along with MMC Commissioner Vijay Krishna Reddy, IAS, and Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, IAS. He called upon the public to actively participate in plantation drives to make the city greener and more environmentally sustainable.” Speaking at the event, Bandari Lakshma Reddy said, “If every individual plants at least one tree and takes responsibility for nurturing it, we can ensure a cleaner and healthier environment for future generations. Planting trees is important, but protecting and nurturing them is equally essential.” The MLA appreciated the plantation of 6,000 saplings in the Uppal constituency and urged officials and the public to work together to ensure that every sapling survives and grows. He also welcomed the officials' decision to replace the 20 percent of saplings that do not survive



with new ones.” Uppal Deputy Commissioner Anand Kumar, officials, public representatives, local leaders, and a large number of citizens participated in the programme, making the Van Mahotsav event a success.

UPPAL CONGRESS IN-CHARGE MANDUMULA PARAMESWAR REDDY Participates in Palaram Bandi Procession

“UPPAL, AUGUST 04 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): As part of the Ashada Bonalu festivities, the Palaram Bandi procession was held with great religious fervour on Monday at Gandhi Nagar in Kapra Division of Uppal Constituency under the leadership of Satyanarayana. Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy attended the event as the chief guest, offered special prayers to the Goddess, and sought her blessings.” Speaking on the occasion, Parameswar Reddy said that Bonalu is a symbol of Telangana's rich culture and traditions. He wished that Goddess Mahankali bless all people with happiness, prosperity, good health, and peace. He appreciated the joint efforts of the government, public representatives, and local residents in organising the festival in a grand manner, describing Bonalu as a reflection of the spiritual faith of the people of Telangana. “Later, he joined devotees in the Palaram Bandi procession and offered his prayers to the Goddess. Women dressed in traditional attire carried Bonalu offerings, while youth added to the festive spirit with drum performances and cultural displays. The temple surroundings echoed with devotional chants of 'Jai Mata' as a large number of devotees participated enthusiastically.” Among those present were former Kapra Corporator Swarnaraj Shivamani, Sitaram Reddy, Vitthal Naik, Division President Srihari, Teelu Yadav, Prakash



Reddy, senior leaders Naga Seshu, Nagaraju, Malla Reddy, Baburao, Rakesh, Poorna Yadav, Pawan, Lingam, Aziz, Shiva, Surender Reddy, Santhosh, along with Congress leaders, party workers, local residents, women, and devotees. The Palaram Bandi procession, organised as part of the Bonalu celebrations, created a vibrant spiritual atmosphere in Gandhi Nagar and concluded successfully with an overwhelming response from devotees.

YOLO Summit-26 to Be Held at IIT Hyderabad on August 7-8

“Hyderabad, August 04 (Indian Chronicle) : The Premia Academy will organise YOLO Summit-2026 for students of Classes 8 to 12 at IIT Hyderabad on August 7 and 8, the academy's Principal, Tripti Rao, said in a statement on Tuesday. She said the two-day summit will feature workshops, panel discussions and masterclasses led by industry experts on topics such as future career readiness, leadership, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, artificial intelligence (AI), communication and personal branding.

The summit aims to nurture curiosity, self-confidence, critical thinking and future-ready skills among students, she added. Founder and Owner of The Premia Academy, Sindhoori Reddy, said the summit is designed to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset, innovation and leadership quali-



ties among students, preparing them for future opportunities. Registrations for the summit are now open.

Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar presented a prize to the girl "Nidhi" who won the first prize washing machine in the lucky draw at Mustafa Chicken Market

“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 3):- The draw was held on Monday as part of the lucky draw organized every month at the local Mustafa Chicken Market in Bhuvanagiri town. Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravi Kumar participated as the chief guest for this draw program and drew the draw. On this occasion, a girl named "Nidhi" won the first prize washing machine. On this occasion, the President of the Owners' Chicken Shops Association, Shaik Meera, congratulated them. The second prize trolley bag was won by 5 people. 10 people won the 3rd prize bag. On this occasion, the owner of the chicken shop also congratulated them. Speaking on this occasion, they said that Mustafa Chicken Market will be giving one coupon for every kilo of chicken. He said that this program will be held regularly. MD Jahangir, Angadi Nagaraju, Omar Chaudhary, Irshad Induri, Ibrahim Hafiz Farid, Venkatesh Amin, Maiman Ashok and others participated in this program.

Cheque Distribution to Bonalu Temples on August 6:



UPPAL CONGRESSES IN-CHARGE PARAMESWAR REDDY “UPPAL, AUGUST 04 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Marking the Bonalu festival, the Telangana Government will distribute financial assistance cheques to various temples in the Uppal Assembly constituency on Thursday, August 6, at 10:30 a.m. at Sri Abhaya Anjaneya Swamy Temple, NTRI, Habsiguda, said Uppal Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy. “He stated that Vemulawada MLA Adi Srinivas will attend the programme as the chief guest and distribute the cheques to representatives of the temples.” Speaking on the occasion, Parameswar Reddy said that the Telangana Government is giving top priority to the Bonalu festival and that, under the special initiative of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, financial assistance has been sanctioned for all eligible temples in the Uppal constituency to facilitate the grand celebration of Bonalu. “He added that the government is extending full support to ensure the festival is celebrated in a traditional and grand manner.” Parameswar Reddy appealed to the members, organisers, and representatives of the concerned temple committees to attend the cheque distribution programme on August 6 and collect their respective cheques. He also urged Congress leaders, party workers, and devotees to participate in large numbers and make

Sid Sriram Brings Magic To Nee Venake Song In The Red Bag With His Mesmerizing Vocals



The Red Bag, produced by Harikrishna Somisetty under the Memory Makers banner, is directed by Ravi Kumar Seerapu. The film features Kabir Singh, Prasad Behara, Radhya, Monika, Akanksha, Eshan Shankar, Avinash Badal, Bhargavi, Raashi, and others in important roles. “The film has already created good buzz with its posters, glimpse, and teaser, all of which received a positive response. Recently, the energetic Disco Light song became a chartbuster on YouTube, adding to the excitement around the movie.” “The makers have now released another song titled Nee Venake, a soothing and beautiful melody. Sung by Sid Sriram, the song stands out because of his soulful voice, which adds deep emotion to every line. The lyrics are written by Tirupati Javana, while Shekhar Mopuri has composed a pleasant tune that creates a feel-good mood.

The melody is simple, heartfelt, and has the potential to connect instantly with music lovers. “With back-to-back songs receiving a warm response, the film's musical promotions are helping build strong expectations among the audience. The makers are expected to announce the movie's release date soon.” Cast : Kabir Singh, Prasad Behara, Raadhya, Monika, Akanksha, Eshan Shankar, Avinash Badal, Bhargavi, Raasi, and others” Technical Crew: “Producer: Hari Krishna Somisetty” Director: Ravi Kumar Seerapu” Music: Shekhar Mopuri” Cinematography: Priyesh Guruswamy” Editing: Shiva Sharvani” Writer: Vikram Raja” Line Producer: Nithin Kumar R” Production Controller: Priya” PRO: Sai Satish

Anakapalli is an Action-Family Drama with a Strong Message



Producers Thrinadha Rao Nakkina & Kandregula Naidu
 “Anakapalli is a raw and rustic action-family drama produced by Bhavya Sri Movie Makers and Nakkina Narratives, with Kandregula Naidu and Thrinadha Rao Nakkina as producers. The film stars Vikram Sahidev, Sandhya Vasishta, and Tarak Ponnappa in lead roles, while Khagesh Thammineni directs the project. Kandregula Kumar Raja serves as the co-producer. Along with writing the story and screenplay, Thrinadha Rao Nakkina also plays an important role in the film. Anakapalli is set for a grand theatrical release on August 7. Ahead of the release, the producers shared interesting insights about the film.”
 “How did your association with Kandregula Naidu begin?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: Naidu has always been involved in many social service activities in Anakapalli. He often told me he wanted to enter the film industry, but I initially discouraged him. However, he remained determined and eventually became a producer.”
 “Why did you decide to make Anakapalli now?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: I wrote the story long ago but kept it aside. Once I became a director, priorities changed. We decided to produce the good stories I had under our own banners. In a way, I feel like I have directed this film too. (Laughs)
 “Where was the film shot?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: The entire film was shot in Anakapalli. We wanted real locations, so we filmed it in our hometown. It's a love story set in a small town with strong family emotions. The title perfectly suits the story, and I also chose it because of my emotional attachment to my hometown.”
 “How was the experience of shooting in Anakapalli?”
 Kandregula Naidu: Shooting in our hometown was a wonderful experience. Everyone extended great support, including the police department. Using natural locations made the film look more authentic and effective.”
 “How much were you involved in the story discussions?”
 Kandregula Naidu: I loved the story the moment Thrinadha Rao narrated it. I immediately agreed to produce it without suggesting any changes.”
 “Did you know the challenges of the film industry before entering?”
 Kandregula Naidu: A film is the result of the hard work of many people. When we invest in a project, it also provides employment to many. Even though countless people work behind the scenes, the recognition comes to us as producers. That's one reason we started these banners, and we plan to continue producing films regularly.”
 “How has this filmmaking journey been?”
 Kandregula Naidu: Making a

film in our own hometown has been a memorable experience. We shot at nearly 75 locations, and the film has turned out on a grand scale.”
 “What is the main message of Anakapalli?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: Today's Gen Z is gradually losing touch with family emotions. Through this film, we wanted to remind audiences about the importance of family values and relationships. Although the movie has plenty of action, the family drama remains the heart of the story. Delivering this message felt like my responsibility.”
 “Did the film stay within budget? Has the OTT deal been finalized?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: Since I'm also a director, I knew exactly where the film needed more investment, so the budget increased by around 10 percent. The OTT deal is also close to completion, and we are in discussions with Amazon Prime Video. Distributor Mythri Shashi came forward to release the film after watching it.”
 “Tell us about your father role in the film.”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: I enjoy acting, and I believe every director has an actor within them. The director and hero convinced me to play the role. Even though I already had a belly, the director wanted me to gain more weight. (Laughs) So I happily ate biryani every day before going to the set. (Laughs) Indraja, Vikram, Sandhya, and every actor delivered excellent performances.”
 “How is the music?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: Davzand has given outstanding music. I first met him through Karthik during Dhamaka. Later I gave him Chauryapatham, Ravi Teja offered him Eagle, and now I brought him back for Anakapalli. Both the songs and the background score have come out wonderfully.”
 “There is tough competition on August 7.”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: We finalized August 7 long before the other releases were announced. No matter when a film releases, there will always be competition. We are confident about our content, and Naidu also has complete faith in the film. That's why we decided to stick to the date.”
 “Tell us about director Khagesh Thammineni.”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: I've known Khagesh for nearly ten years. He's like a younger brother to me, and we share a great rapport. He has handled the film exceptionally well.”
 “Will both of you continue making films together?”
 Kandregula Naidu: Thrinadha Rao and I are from the same hometown. Even though he lives in Hyderabad, his heart still belongs to our village. I will continue this journey with him. Along with our own productions, I also plan to produce films with other banners if good stories come our way.”
 “What can audiences expect from Anakapalli?”
 Kandregula Naidu: Anakapalli has a beautiful story that combines action with a meaningful message about family values. The emotional moments will connect with audiences of all ages.”
 “How are the performances?”
 Kandregula Naidu: Vikram, Sandhya, Indraja, Tarak Ponnappa, and the rest of the cast have all performed brilliantly. Thrinadha Rao Nakkina appears in a completely new avatar as a middle-class father, and his character will leave a strong impression.”
 “Did the censor board raise any objections?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: The censor board appreciated the film and especially liked the family drama. They even felt that removing the suggested cuts would disturb the story, which was encouraging for us.”
 “What are your future projects?”
 Thrinadha Rao Nakkina: Nenu Ready has been completed, and its release date will be announced soon. As a director, I have a few scripts ready. As a producer, films take more time, so there will be some gap between projects. I'll consider making Dhamaka 2 only if I find a story and screenplay that can surpass the original Dhamaka.

Police Commissioner Conducts Surprise Inspection at Karepalli Police Station



“Khammam, Karepalli, August 4 (Indian Chronicle):”
 Khammam Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt

paid a surprise visit to Karepalli Police Station on Tuesday as part of the annual inspection of police stations.”
 “During the inspection, the Commissioner reviewed the overall maintenance of the police station, the performance of police personnel, investigation reports, General Diary (GD) records, seized vehicles, and the station premises. He also interacted with sector police officers and visited the Circle Inspector's office.”
 “The Commissioner emphasized the need to strengthen the surveillance system by creating public awareness about the installation of CCTV cameras in villages and urban localities. He reviewed the cases registered within the police station limits, the response time to Dial-100 calls, and the status of pending cases.”
 “He instructed the officers to conduct regular special drives and intensify vehicle checking. He also directed the police to keep a close watch on rowdy sheeters and take strict action against illegal gambling activities. The Commissioner further instructed the officers to respond promptly to complaints from victims and ensure immediate legal action wherever necessary.”
 ACP Tirupathi Reddy, CI Sagar, and SI Gopi were present during the inspection.”
 — PRO

Every Household Must Have a Soak Pit: MPDO M. Yarraiah



“Measures Underway to Conserve Every Drop of Water”
 Khammam, Nelakondapalli, August 4 (Indian Chronicle):
 “Every household should have a soak pit to conserve rainwater and improve groundwater levels, said Nelakondapalli MPDO M. Yarraiah during his visit to Buddaram, Ajay Thanda, and Tirumalapuram Gram Panchayats on Tuesday. He also inspected the construction works of the new Village Organization (VO) buildings and created awareness among villagers about the importance of soak pits.”
 “Speaking on the occasion, the MPDO said that the government is taking all necessary steps under the Jalasiri Programme to conserve every drop of water in the mandal, considering the possibility of severe water scarcity in the coming years.”
 “He stated that 2,368 farmers owning less than five acres of land have been identified in the mandal, and eligible farmers will be sanctioned farm

ponds. He further informed that the administration has identified the need for 1,630 individual soak pits, 109 community soak pits, and 44 soak pits at drainage outlet points across the mandal.”
 “The MPDO instructed officials to obtain consent letters from farmers after completing the field survey so that the works could be taken up without delay. Keeping the forthcoming summer season in view, all necessary measures are being implemented under the Jalasiri scheme to ensure effective water conservation.”
 “He also directed officials to expedite the construction of the Village Organization buildings.”
 “The programme was attended by Mandal Panchayat Officer M. Srinivasa Rao, Sarpanches Mellacheruvu Sathyam, Tejavath Shivaji, Kamadana Praveen, Boyina Venu, former Society Chairman Arekatla Guravaiah, Panchayat Raj AE Prasad, Panchayat Secretaries M. Venkateswarlu, Bairam Dinesh Kumar, Suresh, and other officials.

Hyderabad to host LFC-2 MMA championship on August 22

Hyderabad: Hyderabad is set to host the second edition of the Legacy Fighting Championship (LFC-2), a premier Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) event, on August 22 at the Katedan Sports Complex here. The event will feature top domestic and international fighters, promising an exciting showcase of competitive MMA action. Ahead of the championship, Sheikh Khalid, Joint Secretary of the National Mixed Martial Arts Association, met K Shivasena Reddy, Chairman of SATG, at LB Stadium and invited him to attend the event as the chief guest.

Newly Elected Padmashali Colony Committee Members Pay Courtesy Visit to PARAMESWAR REDDY



“UPPAL, AUGUST 04 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):
 Newly elected committee members of Padmashali Colony, under the AS Rao Nagar Division, paid a courtesy visit to

Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy on Tuesday and felicitated him with a shawl. The delegation included newly elected President Deepa Yemula, Vice President Sadanandam, General Secretary Boga Venkatesh, Treasurer Jayakar, Joint Secretary L.K. Narsimhulu, Yadagiri Goud, and executive committee members N. Ramadevi, M. Subhash, G. Vijay Kumar, Sandeep Jadala, along with other members. During the meeting, the committee members discussed the development of the colony, resolution of local public issues, and future plans with Parameswar Reddy. “Congratulating President Deepa Yemula and the newly elected committee members on assuming their responsibilities, Parameswar Reddy assured them of his full support and cooperation for the overall development of Padmashali Colony. Colony residents, local leaders, and committee members also participated in the programme.

MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Urges Power Officials to Reconsider Proposed Substation at Sai Baba Nagar Amid Public Objections



“UPPAL, AUGUST 04 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): In view of the concerns raised by local residents over the proposed electricity substation at Sai Baba Nagar in Kapra Division, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy on Tuesday met Habsiguda Circle Superintending Engineer (Operations) Er. P. Venkanna at his office and submitted a

representation. “Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that residents have expressed serious concerns over the proposed substation being established in the middle of a residential area, citing possible issues such as vibrations, noise pollution, and other inconveniences. He urged the electricity department to respect the sentiments of the local people and reconsider the decision to set up the substation at the proposed site.”

Bandari Lakshma Reddy requested the officials to identify an alternative location away from residential areas if the project has to be implemented. He emphasized that the safety, health, and peaceful living conditions of the residents should be given top priority and that the opinions of the local community must be taken into consideration before taking a final decision. Responding to the representation, Habsiguda Circle Superintending Engineer (Operations) Er. P. Venkanna assured the MLA that the concerns of the local residents would be brought to the notice of higher authorities and that appropriate action would be taken in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations.

Government Must Immediately Resolve Teachers' and Education Sector Issues: TPTF District General Secretary Vengala Rao

“Khammam, Nelakondapalli, August 4 (Indian Chronicle):”
 TPTF District General Secretary Vengala Rao alleged that all teachers' issues are essentially education sector issues and accused the State Government and Education Department officials of showing negligence in resolving them. He expressed concern that the indifferent attitude of the Education Department is gradually leading to the closure of government primary schools.”
 “He criticized the government for failing to fulfill its promise of allocating 15% of the State Budget to the education sector and alleged that, under the guise of providing quality education, efforts are being made to reduce the number of government schools. Although the government had announced the introduction of pre-primary classes, he said the initiative had been limited only to UKG. He questioned the decision to run pre-primary classes only until 12:00 noon, while private schools conduct classes until 4:00 p.m., adding that parents are concerned about who would take care of young children after noon if they are admitted to government schools.”
 “Vengala Rao demanded the amendment of G.O. No. 25, stating that it is detrimental to primary education. He called for the appointment of two teachers in every primary school and one teacher for each class in schools with 50 students. He also urged the government to appoint District Educational Officers (DEOs) in the newly formed districts, Deputy Educational Officers at every Revenue Division, and Mandal Education Officers (MEOs) in all mandals. He further demanded that service rules be framed in accordance with P.O. 2018 and that supervisory posts be filled without delay.”
 “He also urged the government to complete teacher transfers and promotions before August 15, provide service weightage in TET, conduct a Special TET with subject-wise papers, abolish the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS), extend the Old Pension Scheme to 2003 DSC teachers as per Memo No. 57, revise timetables in BC and Tribal Gurukul schools, merge Model Schools and Aided Schools with the Education Department, implement minimum wages for KGBV, URS, and Samagra Shiksha contract employees, provide justice to G.O. 317 affected employees, implement G.O. 190, release the pending five installments of Dearness Allowance (DA) immediately, implement the PRC recommendations without delay, release ₹2,000 crore every month towards pending bills, and



ensure that Health Cards provide comprehensive healthcare coverage to teachers and government employees.”
 “As part of the agitation programme, TPTF announced that teachers would wear black badges and stage protests during the lunch break in schools on August 7. They will continue wearing black badges every day until the PRC is announced. Protest demonstrations will be held at mandal headquarters on August 12 and 13, along with the submission of memorandums to Tahsildars. District-level dharnas will be organized on August 19, followed by a State-level Maha Dharma in Hyderabad on August 29.”

“He warned that if the government still fails to respond, a “Chalo Assembly” programme will be organized during the Assembly session in September. He appealed to all teachers, irrespective of union affiliation, and all employee organizations to unite and participate in the struggle for the resolution of teachers' and education sector issues.”
 “The meeting was held as part of the Mandal Membership Campaign at Nelakondapalli. Mandal President B. Rama Rao, General Secretary P. Govinda Rao, Mandal Sub-Committee members, Headmaster T. Kamalakar, and members Ravi, Ganesh, Bhagyalakshmi, China Venkanna, Shankara Rao, and others participated.

TUNGATHURTHI RAVI Inspects BPM Colony, Reviews Civic Issues

“MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):
 Congress Party Division President Tungathurthi Ravi vis-

Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation on Monday. “During the visit, he was accompanied by Municipal Assistant Engineer Sai Kiran, Colony Association President Naresh Goud, General Secretary Nagi Reddy, Mudigonda Ramesh, Venkatesh Goud, and local residents.”
 “Ravi inspected the condition of roads, drainage systems, sanitation, streetlights, and other basic civic amenities in the colony. He interacted with residents to understand the issues they are facing and urged municipal officials to take prompt action to resolve the problems raised by the public. Speaking on the occasion, Tungathurthi Ravi said that efforts would continue to ensure better infrastructure and improved civic facilities in all colonies of the division. He assured residents that he would remain accessible and committed to addressing public grievances at



ited BPM Colony under Medipally in the 9th Division of the

the earliest.

SHIVA SENA REDDY, KANDI SHRAVAN KUMAR REDDY Appear Before Court in Case Registered During BRS Regime



“UPPAL, AUGUST 04 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The hearing in a case registered during the previous BRS government against Youth Congress leaders, following a protest held three years ago outside the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office at Basheerbagh against the ED cases filed in the National Herald matter involving senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, was held at the Nampally Court on Tuesday.”Habsiguda Division President and former

Medchal–Malkajgiri District Youth Congress President Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy appeared before the court in connection with the case. He was accompanied by Sports Authority of Telangana Chairman Shiv Sena Reddy, Youth Congress leaders Gurram Shyam Charan Reddy, Prem, Advocate Haridhar (Khairatabad Youth Congress President), Mamidi Rishikesh Reddy, and several other party leaders, who extended their support.Speaking on the occasion, Congress leaders alleged that the ED cases against Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case were politically motivated and initiated by the BJP-led Central Government. They stated that the Youth Congress had organized a peaceful protest outside the ED office at Basheerbagh to oppose what they described as the misuse of central investigative agencies.The leaders further alleged that the then BRS government had registered false cases against Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy and several Youth Congress activists who participated in the peaceful demonstration. They criticized the filing of cases against peaceful protesters, saying it was against the spirit of democracy.“During the court proceedings at Nampally, Congress leaders expressed solidarity with one another and reiterated that they would fight the cases through legal means. They expressed confidence that truth and justice would ultimately prevail.

TUNGATHURTHI RAVI Inspects BPM Colony, Reviews Civic Issues

“MEDIPALLY, AUGUST 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Congress Party Division President Tungathurthi Ravi visited BPM Colony under Medipally in the 9th Division of the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation on Monday.“During the visit, he was accompanied by Municipal Assistant Engineer Sai Kiran, Colony Association President Naresh Goud, General Secretary Nagi Reddy, Mudigonda Ramesh, Venkatesh Goud, and local residents.“Ravi inspected the condition of roads, drainage systems, sanitation, streetlights, and other basic civic amenities in the colony. He interacted with residents to understand the issues they are facing and urged municipal officials to take prompt action to resolve the problems raised by the public.Speaking on the occasion, Tungathurthi Ravi said that efforts would continue to ensure better infrastructure and improved civic facilities in all colonies of the division. He assured residents that he



would remain accessible and committed to addressing public grievances at the earliest.

MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Visits Telangana Activist Parnandi Narsing Rao, Extends Financial Assistance



“UPPAL, AUGUST 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy visited Parnandi Narsing

Rao, a senior BRS leader from Chilkanaagar Division and a Telangana movement activist, who is undergoing treatment after hand surgery at Agastya Hospital in LB Nagar.Responding immediately after learning about Narsing Rao's health condition, the MLA visited the hospital to enquire about his well-being. On the occasion, financial assistance was extended to Parnandi Narsing Rao through the hands of MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy under the leadership of Gudi Madhusudhan Reddy, a senior BRS leader from Chilkanaagar Division.“The MLA also assured that he would speak to the hospital management to facilitate the maximum possible concession on the hospital bill for the treatment. He reiterated that he would always stand by party workers and Telangana movement activists whenever they needed support.Senior BRS leaders Palle Narsinga Rao, Eerelli Ravinder Reddy, Cheryala Srinivas, Shanigaram Tirumalesh, Gaddam Papi Reddy, Photola Raju, and others were present during the visit.

CP Sajjanar Warns Food Adulterators as H-FAST Busts Massive Spice Tampering Network



“Hyderabad correspondent, August 4 (Indian Chronicle): “Citizens should buy spices and food products only from licensed vendors, avoid unusually bright-coloured or unbranded items, and immediately report suspected food adulteration. Public participation is vital to safeguard public health,” Hyderabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar said after H-FAST unearthed a large-scale spice adulteration network operating across the city.

Acting on public inputs, the Hyderabad Food Adulteration Surveillance Team (H-FAST), functioning under the Commissioner's Task Force, jointly with GHMC Food Safety officials, carried out coordinated raids at 13 spice trading and processing establishments within the Hyderabad Commissionerate limits. The operation exposed the alleged use of hazardous industrial chemicals and deceptive processing methods to adulterate spices before selling them in the market. Police registered three criminal cases—two at Mailardevpally Police Station and one at Balapur Police Station—and arrested Rahul Bhati of Katedan, Vishal Panwar of Begum Bazaar and Dulichand Kachhwar of Begum Bazaar. During the raids, officials seized more than 25 tonnes of suspected adulterated spices, including ajwain, jeera, mustard, cloves, shahjeera and fennel, along with synthetic colours, fabric dyes, industrial-grade permanent colours, talcum powder, grey bran oil



and machinery allegedly used in the adulteration process. Investigators found that low-quality and rejected spice stocks were allegedly treated with non-edible chemicals to enhance colour, shine, weight and market value, while certain spices were artificially coated to give them a premium appearance. Officials said samples collected from the seized stock had been sent for laboratory analysis, and legal action under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and other applicable laws had been initiated against those responsible.

Highlighting the H-FAST team's ongoing campaign against food adulteration, police said the specialised unit had conducted 659 raids in the 140 days since its formation, registered 202 FIRs and seized nearly 246 tonnes of adulterated food products. Previous operations had uncovered chemically adulterated ginger-garlic paste, rotten meat, artificially ripened fruits, synthetic paneer and several other unsafe food products. Sajjanar appealed to citizens to remain vigilant and report the manufacture or sale of adulterated food through Dial 100 or the H-FAST helpline, assuring that the identity of informants would be kept confidential. He said enforcement drives would continue relentlessly to dismantle adulteration networks and ensure that only safe food reaches consumers.

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Consoles Family of Late Gorige Venkatesh Kuruma



“UPPAL, AUGUST 4 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy expressed profound grief

over the untimely demise of Gorige Venkatesh Kuruma, BJP General Secretary from Uppal and President of the Uppal Zone Kuruma Youth Association.The MLA visited the bereaved family at their residence in Kuruma Basti, Uppal, where he paid floral tributes to the portrait of the late Venkatesh Kuruma. He later met the family members, conveyed his heartfelt condolences, and urged them to remain strong during this difficult time.Speaking on the occasion, Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that Venkatesh Kuruma was actively involved in social service activities and maintained cordial relations with people from all sections of society.

He remarked that his untimely death is an irreparable loss to the community.The MLA prayed for the departed soul to rest in peace and for the bereaved family to be blessed with strength and courage to overcome the tragedy.Several BRS party leaders and workers were also present during the condolence visit.

Art Forms Should Promote Public Awareness: Jammula

“Khammam, August 4 (Indian Chronicle):““Art forms should serve the cause of public awareness and contribute to the intellectual growth of society and social welfare, said CPI Khammam District Assistant Secretary Jammula Jitender Reddy.““He expressed concern that, in recent times, art has increasingly become a commercial commodity and that cultural platforms are being misused to spread misinformation. He was speaking as the chief guest at the Telangana Praja Natya Mandali (TPNM) Khammam District Committee meeting, held on Tuesday at Giri Prasad Bhavan under the chairmanship of District President GSR Anjaneyulu.““Addressing the gathering, Jitender Reddy said that Praja Natya Mandali has been promoting public awareness and social progress through various cultural performances for several decades. He alleged that the present rulers have neglected the people and are showing discrimination even in the implementation of welfare schemes.““He observed that the growing influence of religious divisions on one hand and widening economic inequalities on the other have become serious challenges to social development. In this context, he stressed that Praja Natya Mandali should move forward with renewed enthusiasm and innovative



programmes to strengthen public awareness.““He further stated that globalization has turned even traditional folk arts into commercial products. As part of the CPI's Public Awareness Campaign (Prachar Chaitanya Yatra), he suggested that Praja Natya Mandali artists should present cultural performances across the district from August 6 to August 14 to educate and mobilize the people.““The meeting was attended by Praja Natya Mandali District Convener Enugu Venkateswara Rao, District Secretary Arempula Satish, and artists Palle Suddula Srinu, Mohan Rao, Chandra Rao, Ganaparapu Lakshmi Narayana, Kocherla Guravaiah, Pullaiah, Rammurthy, and Peddapaka Ramu.“

Judge Swaroopa Honoured with Doctorate for Completing Ph.D. Research“Osmania University”



““Tarnaka, Indian Chronicle, August 04:““Judge Smt. Katam Swaroopa, Hon'ble Junior Civil Judge of the Illandu

Junior Civil Judge Court in Bhadradi Kothagudem District, was honoured with a Doctorate Award for successfully completing her Ph.D. research in the Department of Law at Osmania University.“The doctorate was presented by Professor Dwarakanath and faculty members of the Law College, Osmania University, in recognition of her successful completion of the research programme.

“On this occasion, her fellow research scholars and friends, including Dr. Veeramalla Ram Narasimha Goud, Dr. Mana Ashok Yadav, Barla Mallesh Yadav, Suresh, Kiran, and others, met her and conveyed their heartfelt congratulations on her remarkable academic achievement.“They appreciated Judge Swaroopa for successfully balancing her judicial responsibilities with academic research and wished her continued success in her professional and academic journey.

Sri Maisamma Temple 4th Annual Celebrations Held Grandly at Venkat Sai Nagar Colony

““RAMANTHAPUR , AUGUST 04 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The 4th Annual Celebrations of Goddess Sri Sri Sri Maisamma were celebrated with great devotion and religious fervor on Tuesday at the Sri Maisamma Temple in Venkat Sai Nagar Colony, Ramanthapur Baghayat.“As part of the celebrations, Ganapathi Homam, Abhishekam, and Kumkumarchana were performed in the morning under the guidance of Vedic priests. Following the rituals, Anna Prasadam (free community meal) was served to devotees.A large number of colony residents and devotees participated in the celebrations, offered special prayers, and sought the blessings of Goddess Maisamma. The temple organizers prayed for the health, happiness, prosperity, and well-being of all the residents of the colony.Among those who participated in the event were Malyala Balayya, Rachamalla Ramesh, Sikanametta Prabhulingam, Sarva Sattaiah Yadav, Gopal, C.H. Narasimhulu, M. Ailesh Yadav, M. Ramesh



Yadav, M. Murali, Shiva Yadav, Srinivas, Chandan Singh, Yadamma, B. Chandrayya Raju, C.H. Raju Yadav, M. Satyanarayana, Sarayya, Shankar, Anil, Ganesh, Srikanth, and several other devotees.

AIYF State Conference from September 8 in Yadadri



“Youth Rally on September 8 – State Conference Poster Unveiled““Khammam, August 4 (Indian Chronicle):““The Third State Conference of the All India Youth Federation (AIYF), Telangana, will be held from September 8 to 10 at Yadagirigutta in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district.““The official poster for the State Conference was unveiled on Tuesday at Giri Prasad Bhavan by CPI Khammam District Secretary Dandi Suresh, along with AIYF District In-charge Kondaparthi Govinda Rao and other AIYF leaders.““The organizers announced that a Youth Rally and a Public Meeting will be held at Yadagirigutta on September 8 as part of the inaugural programme of the State Conference.““The poster release programme was attended by AIYF District Secretary Ramakrishna and AIYF leaders Mamilla Srinath Reddy, Shravan, Chintala Ramesh, Ramakrishna, and Upender.““Khammam District Conference at Kodumuru““AIYF District In-charge Kondaparthi

Govinda Rao announced that the 25th Khammam District Conference of AIYF will be held on August 21 at Kodumuru village in Chintakani Mandal.““He said that the conference will deliberate on the major issues confronting the youth across the country and formulate the organization's future course of action. He also stated that the recent protest held at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi, and its successful outcome had become a source of inspiration for people's movements across the country.

Siddipet Collector suspends six teachers over FRS attendance lapses

Siddipet: Siddipet Collector K Hymavathi suspended six teachers of the Multipurpose High School in the town and served a show-cause notice on the headmistress for failing to maintain the Facial Recognition System (FRS) attendance of students.

During a surprise inspection of the school on July 28, the Collector found six teachers absent from duty. She also found that the teachers had failed to ensure even 50 per cent FRS attendance of students. The Collector further found that the teachers had failed to maintain annual diaries.

Nirmala Sitharaman deepfake, ‘SpaceX shares’: How Pune man lost Rs 1.07 crore



GNS News Agency, August 4

An elderly Pune businessman – duped by a deepfake video of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, was recently drawn into a cyber scam that cost him Rs 1.07 crore. The 56-year-old fell for an “exclusive opportunity” to buy IPO shares of Elon Musk’s SpaceX, through a web of deception involving a bogus forex trading platform, fabricated profits, and a fake investment advisor. Last week, the Pune cyber police registered a First Information Report (FIR) after the businessman alleged that he was systematically manipulated over nearly two months through an investment scam.

Unlike conventional online frauds, the accused allegedly built credibility in stages—using a deepfake of Sitharaman, creating a seemingly legitimate trading platform, assigning a dedicated “relationship manager”, crediting a small profit into the victim’s bank account, and later introducing what they described as an exclusive investment opportunity in SpaceX’s shares. According to the FIR, the fraud began in the first week of June when the victim was browsing Instagram at home and came across an advertisement purportedly featuring Sitharaman explaining forex trading and how investors could earn substantial returns. The advertisement invited viewers to click a link or call a phone number to learn to trade and begin investing. Investigators suspect the promotional video was a deepfake created to falsely project authenticity and exploit the credibility of a senior functionary. Aadhaar and bank details sought

Soon after the businessman clicked on the ad, he received a phone call from a person claiming to be an investment company executive. The caller promised high returns through forex trading and claimed the investment would also contribute to India’s economic development. The victim was

persuaded to share his Aadhaar details and other personal information. The following day, the victim was contacted on Telegram by a person posing as his account manager, who sent him a link to the purported trading platform and sought additional documents, including a cancelled cheque. He was asked to make an initial investment of Rs 20,341. Shortly after the payment, the amount appeared in the online trading account created in his name, convincing him that the platform was genuine. To strengthen the illusion, the fraudsters transferred Rs 1,000 into his bank account, describing it as profit earned from his first investment. The successful credit reinforced the victim’s confidence and prompted him to continue investing through the platform. “As the victim’s trust deepened, the fraudsters unveiled what they claimed was a premium investment opportunity. The so-called account manager told him that pre-listing shares of Elon Musk’s SpaceX were available for purchase and urged him to invest immediately, promising exceptionally high returns within a short period. Between June 2 and July 23, the victim transferred money in 36 transactions to multiple bank accounts specified by the fraudsters, all of which were mule accounts. The total amount transferred eventually reached Rs 1.07 crore,” said an officer.

Throughout this period, the online trading portal continued to display steadily increasing profits. Investigators said the victim was initially allowed to withdraw around Rs 7 lakh, a move believed to have been designed to strengthen his confidence. Encouraged, he reinvested the money. The dashboard eventually showed that his investment had grown to nearly Rs 3.98 crore. However, when he sought to withdraw the amount, the fraudsters insisted that additional payments were required before the funds could be released. As they continued demanding more money and eventually stopped responding to his calls, the businessman realised he had been cheated. He subsequently lodged complaints on the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal before approaching the Pune cyber police, who are now investigating the case. Authorities have repeatedly advised against downloading trading apps through links received on social media or messaging platforms and warned investors to be wary of schemes promising unrealistic or assured returns. Victims of cyber fraud have been urged to immediately call the national cybercrime helpline, 1930, or lodge a complaint on the cybercrime reporting portal, as prompt reporting improves the chances of tracing and freezing fraudulent transactions.

Meat off the menu at Urs-e-Razvi in Bareilly as dates coincide with Kanwar Yatra



GNS News Agency, August 4

For the first time, meat has been removed from the menu at the Urs-e-Razvi, as devotees from around the world are set to arrive in Bareilly for the three-day annual event commemorating the death anniversary of the 19th-century Sufi scholar Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Bareilvi. The Ala Hazrat Dargah administration has taken the decision in view of the ongoing Kanwar Yatra, following discussions with law enforcement and local authorities. All langar committees or groups preparing meals have been asked to serve pilgrims (zaireen) only vegetarian food this year, rather than the meat dishes offered every year. The Dargah administration has also changed the dates of the 108th Urs-e-Ala Hazrat, which has fallen in Sawan this year, from August 7-9 to August 6-8 to avoid traffic congestion and to keep devotees from the two communities from crossing paths or coming into direct contact. On August 10, a Monday, Bareilly will see a particularly large turnout of returning Kanwar pilgrims and local devotees, making their final water offerings in the last Sawan stretch.

“The decision to change the dates was taken keeping in mind the presence of large numbers of Kanwariyas in the city on the following day, as well as a request made by the district administration and police,” said Nasir Qureshi, media in-charge of the Ala Hazrat Dargah. Though the Urs was originally scheduled for August 7-9, the day on which the concluding Kul Sharif ceremony was to be held — August 9 — coincided with major Kanwar processions passing through the city, said Qureshi, adding that the dates were changed over crowd management and public order concerns. “Following a directive from Dargah chief Maulana Subhan Raza Khan (Subhani Miyan), an eight-member panel of Islamic scholars was constituted to examine the issue and recommend whether the dates ought to be changed. Senior police and administration officials also visited and met with the Dargah leadership, requesting that the event be rescheduled in the interest of public order and security,” he said.

“Following consultations with the scholars, and taking the administration’s request into account, it was decided that the 108th Urs-e-Razvi would instead be held from August 6 to 8 — Thursday, Friday and Saturday.” The revised schedule, Qureshi said, was being communicated to devotees across India and abroad through social media, so that pilgrims who had planned their travel around the previously announced dates of August 7-9 could adjust their arrangements accordingly. When contacted, Bareilly Superintendent of Police Manush Pareek said that he, along with a team from the district administration, had met the Dargah chief to request a shift in the Urs dates, keeping in mind the anticipated heavy traffic on Monday, August 10, the day on which a large number of Kanwar pilgrims were expected to be present in the city. “We also asked the Dargah administration to instruct all langar committees and groups organising community meals for pilgrims to serve only vegetarian food this year. Following our request, the Dargah chief agreed to both our demands,” he added. Every year the Urs platform is used to convey key religious and social messages to Sunni, Sufi and Bareilvi Muslims from across the world. The Dargah administration said it expected at least 10 lakh people to visit Bareilly this year to take part in the Urs, arriving not only from different parts of the country but also from abroad, including Australia, South Africa, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Nepal, Bangladesh, the United States, Mauritius and Sri Lanka, among others. Asked about the meat-related re-

strictions, Qureshi said that since this year’s Urs-e-Ala Hazrat fell in the month of Sawan, during which meat-related restrictions were also observed, the Dargah had appealed to all langar committees and those organising community meals to arrange meat-free, vegetarian dishes for pilgrims this year, in place of the customary meat-based fare. Urs organisers have also urged devotees to steer clear of DJ sound systems during the traditional chadar processions. “We have urged people not to use DJ sound systems, as they encourage unnecessary noise and extravagant spending,” Qureshi said. Organisers have also appealed to pilgrims to offer flower baskets in place of cloth chadars and to donate whatever money they save to charitable causes. To manage the event where several lakh people are expected to come, the Dargah committee has constituted a team of 1,500 volunteers who will remain on duty round the clock throughout the Urs. The volunteers will be issued cards and work in three eight-hour shifts, providing assistance to pilgrims and overseeing the arrangements 24 hours a day. The volunteers will also be deployed at the Dargah complex and Islamia College ground, where the main event will take place, as well as at various other locations across the city to assist pilgrims. Teams have already been formed, with specific responsibilities assigned to them. At the event, religious discourses will be delivered by Islamic scholars and spiritual leaders from both India and abroad. On the other hand, the traditional offering of ceremonial chadars at the Dargah has already begun.

Man murders wife, calls friend to help dump body. He secretly dials cops

A short while ago, the cab driver received a frantic call from Anurag, saying it was an emergency. “After dropping a passenger around 9.45 pm, I reached Anurag’s residence in Munirka. He was standing near the lane he lived in. He told me that he had thrashed his wife because she used to talk to another person. He then took me to his house on the third floor of a residential building. His wife’s body was on the bed,” Anurag’s friend has told the police.

A delivery executive, Anurag married Kanika (20) in 2023. Kanika’s father is an auto-rickshaw driver, and the family lives in Delhi. According to the FIR, registered on the complaint of the friend, Anurag called him to the couple’s Munirka home and sought help in disposing of Kanika’s body. The friend has said Anurag took his phone away, saying his was damaged, and he needed to make a call. Then he would not give it back.

Anurag allegedly made his friend drive him around JNU Road and Sanjay Van to find a place to dump the body, as the latter kept insisting that they inform the police, the complaint said. “The friend was trapped as he was unable to figure out how to alert the police. His mobile phone was with Anurag, and he did not want to do anything that might prompt the accused to flee,” a police officer said.

The friend came up with a plan. He suggested they go to his house in Munirka to discuss the next step. After reaching home, the friend asked Anurag to return his phone so that he could call his mother to open the gate. Once he got the phone back, he went upstairs and dialled the police control room. When the police arrived, the friend signalled towards Anurag, who was taken into custody. The two then accompanied the police to Anurag’s residence, where Kanika was found lying in a pool of blood. She was rushed to Safdarjung Hospital, where doctors declared her dead. Investigators have recovered a broken wooden stick with nails and a table stand, which were allegedly used to assault Kanika.

‘No BJP worker named by SIT’: Party denies link to Ram Temple donation row



GNS News Agency, August 4

In its first clear response to Opposition allegations linking it to the Ram Temple donation controversy, the BJP on Tuesday sought to distance itself from the issue in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly, stressing that “no BJP worker or leader has been named” in the Special Investigation Team (SIT) report. The party also accused the Samajwadi Party of attempting to “spread confusion” over the matter. The response came after the SP moved to bring the controversy—politically sensitive for the BJP, which has placed the construction of the Ram Temple at the centre of its political and ideological narrative—into the Assembly by linking the alleged donation theft to the ruling party and demanding an urgent debate over the issue of “faith”. As soon as the House met Tuesday, Leader of Opposition Mata Prasad Pandey demanded an immediate discussion on the alleged theft of Ram Temple donations, seeking that the matter be taken up before any other business of the House.

Pandey questioned why an issue involving donations offered by devotees to the Ram Temple should not be discussed on priority and pressed the government for answers over the alleged theft. Speaker Satish Mahana, however, rejected the demand for an immediate discussion, saying there was no urgency warranting it. It was after the Speaker’s rejection that the SP sharpened its political attack. Party legislators entered the Well of the House and repeatedly raised slogans, seeking to turn allegations concerning the temple donations into a direct attack on the BJP government. It was against this backdrop that Parliamentary Affairs Minister and senior BJP leader Suresh Khanna responded to the Opposition’s attempt to link the party to the alleged theft. “Jo SIT report aayi hai, usmein BJP ke ek bhi vyakti, kisi bhi karyakarta ko aaropi nahi kiya gaya hai (In the SIT report that has appeared, not a single BJP person or worker has been named as an accused),” Khanna told the House. The statement was significant as it marked the BJP’s first direct attempt to separate itself from those facing allegations in the case. Khanna accused the Opposition of trying to create a misleading political narrative around the investigation. “These people spread confusion,” he said. At the same time, he sought to underline that distancing the BJP from the accused did not mean the government would shield those found responsible. Referring to those accused in the SIT report, Khanna said the Yogi Adityanath government “does not believe in protecting anyone” and action would be taken against those found responsible.

We saw their true face in 1990: BJP slams SP The BJP’s response, however, went beyond rebutting the SP’s attempt to link it with the alleged theft. Khanna sought to

turn the Ram Temple argument back on the SP by invoking its record during the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. “They talk about faith today, but we saw their true face in 1990. These are the same people who ordered firing on Ram devotees. They created as many hurdles as possible in the construction of the temple. And now they speak of faith,” Khanna said. His reference was to the firing on kar sevaks in Ayodhya in 1990, when Mulayam Singh Yadav was Uttar Pradesh chief minister. The exchange laid bare the competing political strategies of the two parties before the upcoming UP elections.

For the SP, the donation controversy has offered an opportunity to challenge the BJP not by questioning the Ram Temple itself, but by raising questions over the safety of money offered by devotees. Its use of phrases such as “Ram Dhan (Ram’s money)” and slogans such as “Chanda chor, gaddi chhor (Donation thief, leave the chair)” appeared designed to turn the BJP’s association with the temple into a question of accountability. For the BJP, the counter this Tuesday was two-fold, first, to stress that the “SIT has not named any BJP leader or worker”, thereby rejecting the Opposition’s attempt to establish a political link; and secondly, to question the SP’s credibility in speaking about faith and the Ram Temple by recalling the events of 1990. The BJP’s counter was two-fold: first, to stress that the SIT has not named any BJP leader or worker, thus rejecting the Opposition’s attempt to establish a political link; and second, to question the SP’s credibility on matters of faith and the Ram Temple by recalling the events of 1990. Speaker Mahana also joined the exchange. Pointing towards Muslim legislators participating in the protest, he remarked that it was good that they were concerned about the temple and asked whether any of the protesting legislators had made donations towards its construction. The government also cited the pendency of a related matter before the Supreme Court while arguing that a sub judice issue could not be discussed in the House. SP legislators, however, remained in the Well and continued their slogans against the BJP and the government. The supplementary budget was tabled amidst the uproar over the issue.

Assembly adjourned; Yogi hits back at SP over protest The Uttar Pradesh Assembly was adjourned till 11 am Wednesday amid uproar on Tuesday over the Ram Temple donation controversy, with Samajwadi Party legislators refusing to leave the Well of the House and continuing their sloganeering even as Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath sought to respond to their allegations. Trying to counter the Opposition amid the din, Adityanath accused the SP of indulging in “undemocratic conduct”, deliberately disrupting proceedings and disrespecting the House. “The entire state is watching this undemocratic conduct of the Samajwadi Party. They deliberately want to disrespect the House and make a mockery of it. These people no longer have faith in democracy,” Adityanath said. The chief minister said the government was prepared to discuss every issue raised by the Opposition. He maintained that the government was ready for a debate on all issues and wanted them to be taken forward meaningfully through the Chair. However, SP legislators continued protesting. The confrontation intensified when Speaker Satish Mahana ordered the removal of SP MLA Sachin Yadav from the House and warned of expelling him after Yadav allegedly tried to take a photograph of the chief minister from the Well of the House amid the protest.

NCP’s Indira Gandhi clapback on ‘Goongi Gudiya’ jibe at Sunetra Pawar

GNS News Agency, August 4

Tempers have flared in the ruling Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) a day after the Maharashtra Congress took a ‘Goongi Gudiya’ jibe at Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar, with party leaders accusing the Congress of endorsing a criticism once directed at former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

On Monday, the Maharashtra Congress posted a clip from Sunetra Pawar’s press conference, showing MLA Dhananjay Munde stopping her from taking questions from reporters about the law and order situation in Beed. The video also shows Sunetra Pawar wrapping up the presser soon after. The caption on the video read: “How long will Sunetra Pawar remain Gungi Gudiya (silent doll)?” The ‘Goongi Gudiya’ jibe at Sunetra Pawar has drawn sharp criticism from party leaders. Umesh Patil described the social media post as objectionable, criticising Congress for ‘contradicting’ its own political legacy. He also recalled that during Indira Gandhi’s political career, her opponents had used similar expressions to criticise her. However, he said, Indira Gandhi responded through her leadership and achievements, particularly during the Bangladesh Liberation War and with her decisive approach to national security, which earned her recognition as a global leader.

The NCP leader also reminded the Congress that it had once regarded the term ‘Goongi Gudiya’ as unfair and insulting to women. “Does this mean the Congress is now indirectly admitting that the criticism levelled against the late Indira Gandhi at the time was justified?” he asked. Patil said the issue went beyond party politics and now concerned



the standards of political discourse regarding women in public life. The Congress has, however, said that the Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister should have taken questions from the reporters. “She should have intervened, faced the questions and answered them, especially when she is the guardian minister of Beed. She remained a mute spectator irrespective of her responsibility to answer the question,” said spokesperson Hanumanth Pawar. Meanwhile, some NCP workers have barged into the Congress office, demanding an apology for calling Sunetra Pawar a ‘Goongi Gudiya’. It was in 1966 that Ram Manohar Lohia first used the term ‘Goongi Gudiya’ to mock Indira Gandhi’s quiet personality. She eventually became the Prime Minister of India, with critics describing her as authoritarian and supporters hailing her as the most popular leader of her time.

‘Syndicate manager’ held as crackdown on Bengal businessman with alleged TMC link intensifies

GNS News Agency, August 4

arrest The arrest comes alongside an ongoing multi-agency effort to dismantle an illegal stone mining and extortion network operating across the district with Tulu allegedly at the helm. As a crackdown on Birbhum’s absconding “stone king” Sheikh Nurul Islam, alias Tulu Mondal, intensifies, police have arrested one of his alleged syndicate managers. Sitesh Pramanik was arrested in Suri, Birbhum, late on Sunday. The arrest comes alongside an ongoing multi-agency effort to dismantle an illegal stone mining and extortion network operating across the district with Tulu allegedly at the helm. A special team from the Mohammad Bazar Police Station raided Pramanik’s residence on Sunday evening. Following interrogation, he was formally placed under arrest. Investigators allege Pramanik managed a vast portion of Tulu’s illicit financial network, keeping track of money trails, illegal quarry transactions, and kickbacks paid to “influential figures”.

Sleuths traced Pramanik following the reported recovery of Rs 28 crore in cash from the residence of Minar Mondal – a prominent businessman closely linked to Tulu. With an arrest warrant issued against him, police suspect Tulu may have already fled to Dubai, where he report-

edly holds significant real estate and business investments. As per sources, Tulu used to make a living loading stones onto dumper trucks and lorries, from where he gradually moved to quarrying and crushing of stones, and supply and logistics. Around 2014-2015, his fortunes changed when Tulu entered the circle of the then ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) through proximity to Saigal Hossain, a personal guard of party heavyweight Anubrata Mondal. However, Tulu never formally joined the TMC or held any post in the party. Meanwhile, investigators plan to produce Pramanik in court soon to seek his police custody for further interrogation regarding the syndicate’s financial beneficiaries. Machine for fake toll receipts seized In another major breakthrough, police have found a fake Duplicate Carbon Receipt (DCR) printing machine inside a hidden cement warehouse, allegedly owned by Tulu in Birbhum. The machine was allegedly used to generate fake tax and toll receipts to siphon off government revenue. Police sources said that official government check posts were virtually hijacked by the syndicate. Instead of the staff of the District Magistrate office, Tulu’s private henchmen were stationed there to issue illegal receipts and collect money from overloaded stone trucks.

Savarkar defamation case: Google submits details of Rahul Gandhi’s YouTube video in Pune court



GNS News Agency, August 4

Google LLC on Thursday submitted details of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi’s Youtube channel and video to the special MP/MLA court in Pune, which is hearing the defamation case filed by Satyaki Savarkar, grandnephew of Hindutva ideologue V D Savarkar. Satyaki has alleged in the complaint that Rahul Gandhi made defamatory remarks against V D Savarkar during a speech in London on March 5, 2023. Along with the complaint filed in 2023, Satyaki had submitted before the court some news reports, a YouTube link showing video of Rahul’s speech in London, and a CD containing the said video, as evidence. But when the CD was played during Satyaki’s chief examination in November last year, it was found to be blank.

On December 18, 2025, the court allowed Satyaki’s application seeking directions for “YouTube LLC/Google..” to produce Rahul Gandhi’s original video available on the YouTube link titled “Indians abroad and shining examples of our culture of respect I Interaction with Diaspora in London”, dated March 5, 2023, published on “official YouTube channel of the accused Rahul Gandhi”.The video was sought along with its metadata like upload date and time, URL and unique video ID, hash value/digital signature and other details.Accordingly, advocate Dhairyasheel Patil, representing Google, submitted the information in a pendrive to the court on Thursday.

When contacted, Patil said the complete meta data pertaining to the said video and system generated records were given to the court.“Google is based in the US. As per US laws, the original video cannot be shared with the court in Pune. The court has been informed that the said video is available and accessible on the Youtube channel of Rahul Gandhi,” Patil said.In his London speech, Rahul Gandhi had allegedly said Savarkar had written a book stating that he and some of his friends felt delighted to beat up a Muslim. According to Satyaki, V D Savarkar had not written any such book, nor had such an incident ever happened.As per the court’s directions, the Pune City police conducted an inquiry and submitted a report on May 27, 2024, stating that Rahul Gandhi had allegedly defamed Savarkar in his London speech. Rahul Gandhi pleaded not guilty in the defamation case.Meanwhile, Rahul Gandhi’s counsel Milind Pawar cross examined Satyaki on V D Savarkar’s book “Vidnyannishtha Nibandh” on Thursday.’Dilatory tactics adopted to prolong the matter’Satyaki’s lawyer Sangram Kolhatkar filed an application on Thursday, claiming the accused (Rahul Gandhi) has “adopted dilatory tactics to prolong the matter” and is “taking undue advantage of conversion of the complaint from summary case to summons case”The application asked the court to direct Rahul Gandhi to submit a “strict time-table” or the time required to conclude the cross examination. The court asked Rahul’s counsel Milind Pawar to file a stay on this application on August 4.The application stated that Satyaki’s cross examination is ongoing for the last seven months, causing him “severe harassment and mental agony”. It further stated that “a multitude of questions being asked are merely repetitive and irrelevant”, as they are not related to the subject matter.The application mentioned, “The Apex court had reiterated on numerous occasions that pendency in trials should be avoided. Needless to say, as the present case is being tried by the special MP/MLA court, an expeditious trial is highly warranted...”Advocate Kolhatkar said during cross examination, Satyaki was questioned on V D Savarkar’s clemency petitions and literature, which is unrelated to the case.

Bengaluru student at NEET protest assaulted for demanding PM Modi resign

GNS News Agency, August 4

A 19-year-old student associated with the All India Students’ Association (AISA) was allegedly assaulted by four unidentified men in Bengaluru’s Jalahalli area on July 28, with the students’ organisation alleging that the attackers were “suspected goons” affiliated with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP).The police said they have registered a First Information Report (FIR) against unknown persons. “We are investigating the case, and efforts are on to identify and trace the four accused. No arrests have been made so far,” a police officer said.However, the FIR does not mention any organisational affiliation, and the police have not attributed a motive to the attack.

The student, Aman Deep Singh, told the police that he was returning home after dinner around 10.30 pm on July 28 in Jalahalli when four masked men on two two-wheelers intercepted him.According to the FIR registered at the Jalahalli Police Station on July 29, the assailants first confirmed his identity by asking whether he was “Aman Deep Singh of AISA”. One of them then allegedly asked if he wanted PM Modi’s resignation and struck him on his right leg with a wooden object. The attackers then fled the spot.AISA alleged the attackers targeted the student for participating in a protest demanding Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan’s resignation.In a press statement issued Thursday, AISA alleged that the attackers threatened the student and said, “You dare to demand the resignation of Modi” before assaulting him. The organisation claimed the student suffered a serious leg injury that required a plaster.“This attack was a direct response to the



student’s participation in questioning the brutalities of the current Indian state. ... Although the protests at Jantar Mantar began with NEET, they soon evolved into a broader platform to speak about the active destruction of democracy done by the BJP government,” AISA said in its statement.“The ABVP has repeatedly functioned as the henchmen of the RSS-BJP regime in suppressing dissent across the country. University campuses have increasingly witnessed acts of intimidation and violence carried out with apparent impunity. The vandalism and attacks on students at Azim Premji University is one such example of this broader pattern,” it added.The police registered a case against unidentified persons on charges of voluntarily causing hurt, wrongful restraint, intentional insult to provoke a breach of peace, and acting with a common intention under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

8 dead, several trapped after 4-storey building collapses near Mumbai



GNS News Agency, August 4

At least eight people were killed after a four-storey residential building collapsed near Mumbai late Thursday night. The building collapsed in Bhiwandi’s Balaji Nagar Gangaramwadi area, triggering a major rescue operation by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Thane Disaster Response Force (TDRF), and the fire brigade.Shamim Shaikh (32), Ranjit Singh (45), Miraj Rasul Shaikh (34), Santosh Kumar Pandey (40), Shamim Ansari (30) lost their lives in the building collapse. Three others

who died remain unidentified while Abhay Yadav (26), Deepak Yadav (25) and Sangeeta Prajapati (36) are injured.The building, identified as Kohinoor Apartment, was earlier declared ‘dangerous’ by the municipal corporation.According to preliminary information, the structure collapsed suddenly, trapping several people under the debris. Officials said a portion of the building’s ‘B’ wing collapsed between 11 pm and 11.30 pm; residents said they heard a ‘cracking’ sound. Sensing danger, they immediately began evacuating families and that timely action helped many escape, though many more were still caught inside.Officials fear that several people – possibly six labourers and five residents – may still be trapped beneath the rubble.“There are many such buildings in Bhiwandi that have been declared dangerous. While we are trying to rescue those trapped, I would advise people living in such buildings to vacate them immediately,” Bhiwandi Nizampur City Municipal Corporation Mayor Narayan Chaudhary said.Authorities rushed to the spot soon after receiving information about the collapse and have deployed heavy machinery along with specialised rescue teams to clear the debris. The cause of the collapse is yet to be ascertained.Officials said efforts remain focused on locating and rescuing those feared trapped under the rubble.

Jagan accuses Andhra government of political vendetta over Appalaraju arrest

Visakhapatnam: Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy accused the Chandrababu government of politicising an unfortunate incident by foisting false cases against party leader and former minister Seediri Appalaraju.He alleged that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was trying to spoil the career of a young boy and trouble the family of the Backward Class leader.

Jagan was speaking to the media at Ampolu in Srikakulam district after jail authorities denied him permission to meet Appalaraju for being late.Home Minister V. Anitha said Jagan was given time between 2–3 p.m. for the ‘mulaqat’ but he came to the jail after 5 p.m. She alleged that Jagan had no intention of meeting Appalaraju but only wanted to use his visit as a show of strength.Jagan Mohan

Reddy met the family members of Appalaraju and assured them that he would stand by them till justice was done.The former CM claimed that after a road accident, Appalaraju’s son tried to revive the victim by administering CPR and also called the 108 ambulance and the police, but he was arrested under serious charges. His father was booked with vindictive intentions only to trouble the family and ruin the future of the young boy.YS Jagan said the government had converted an accident into a murder case with mala fide intentions and out of political vendetta. He hoped that justice would prevail and Appalaraju would be released.“We will stand by the family and will fight it out at all avenues,” he said, slamming Chandrababu for following the same pattern to trouble political adversaries.He stated that soon after any incident,

Delhi dropped 13 FIRs in a day, Maharashtra’s CJP protestors face a longer wait



GNS News Agency, August 4

Even as the Delhi government on Thursday ordered the withdrawal of 13 FIRs against NEET-UG protesters, those booked in Maharashtra may wait longer for similar relief. The state has decided to follow the established legal process, which requires courts to approve withdrawal after chargesheets are filed.According to government sources, Maharashtra will invoke its existing mechanism for withdrawing cases arising from political and social protests to drop FIRs against those who protested in support of the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) over the alleged NEET paper leak. The government has directed that the exercise be completed “in a prompt and time-bound manner,” rather than the six months to a year such cases usually take.

This means the cases won’t close immediately. Police will complete investigations and file chargesheets first. The prosecution will then seek the court’s permission to withdraw, once the proposal clears two government committees.Despite withdrawal assurance, Mumbai Police keep summoning CJP protesters Several protesters gathered in Dadar in support of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protest were detained by Mumbai Police . By Ganesh Shirsekar)“The cases will be withdrawn as per the procedure laid down in the Government Resolution governing withdrawal of cases related to political and social protests. Normally, the process takes a long time, but in these cases it will be carried out in a prompt and time-bound manner,” a senior government official said.Officials said they had ex-

amined filing closure reports instead, but found it legally impractical. Closure reports apply when an FIR stems from a mistake of fact, insufficient evidence, or an undetected offence, and a court must accept those too. Withdrawal under the existing GR was judged the more sustainable route.“We assessed the available options and decided on the most practical legal course for withdrawing the cases. The DGP was asked to take a decision accordingly,” a senior government leader said.No specific deadline has been set. “We cannot rush through the procedure. Every legal requirement has to be met. But it will be completed as expeditiously as possible,” an official said. Another source added that the government, aware any withdrawal could be challenged in court, wants every procedural safeguard followed.Police are now expected to begin investigations and file chargesheets in nearly 20 Mumbai FIRs, besides a few others across the state.Despite withdrawal assurance, Mumbai Police keep summoning CJP protesters Several protesters gathered in Dadar in support of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protest were detained by Mumbai Police on Thursday. (Express Photo By Ganesh Shirsekar)

Under the GR, once police file chargesheets, a committee of a DCP-rank officer and a public prosecutor will examine the withdrawal proposal, before it goes to a higher-level committee. If approved, the public prosecutor moves the court under Section 360 of the BNSS, 2023, to seek permission.The process typically takes six months to a year. Until then, those named continue to show criminal cases on record, including during police verification for passport applications.

The GR, renewed periodically and valid until the end of this month, has previously been used to withdraw cases tied to protests on public-interest issues.Despite withdrawal assurance, Mumbai Police keep summoning CJP protesters Several protesters gathered in Dadar in support of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protest were detained by Mumbai Police The state has used this mechanism before. Cases against Aarey tree-felling protesters in 2019 were withdrawn after the prosecution moved court, closing in 2021. Cases against activists and lawyers who protested the JNU attack and the CAA in 2020 closed only in 2023, after the state issued a GR in September 2022 and the committees and court cleared the withdrawal.

Long after these UP mafia dons were killed, their wives remain absconding

GNS News Agency, August 4

In that, Afsha has company. The wives of two other known mafia dons of the state are also wanted by the UP Police since the death of their husbands, and have eluded the authorities for even longer. Atiq Ahmed and younger brother Ashraf were gunned down in April 2023 while in police custody and on live TV. Apart from their wives Shaista Parveen and Zainab Fatima, respectively, police have been looking for the brothers’ elder sister Ayesha Noori since then.All four women, who are between the ages of 50 and 60, remain missing despite police announcing cash rewards for information on their whereabouts, including Rs 50,000 each for Shaista and Afsha, and Rs 25,000 each in the case of Zainab and Ayesha. All four are accused essentially of playing a “conspiratorial” role in the offences carried out by the late mafia dons. Police say they are making every effort to track down the women, including pressuring them to surrender.

The latest case in which Afsha was booked relates to a revolver obtained under an arms licence issued in her name. She faces five other cases, including one under the UP Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act, Ghazipur Superintendent of Police Iraj Raja said, adding her properties have been attached under the Act.Shaista, Zainab and Noori are wanted for alleged roles in a murder conspiracy. Shaista and Zainab were based in Prayagraj when they went missing while Ayesha was living in Meerut. Afsha is a native of Ghazipur district.The Ghazipur SP said: “Afsha remains a wanted fugitive and police teams are conducting raids to trace her.”Sources in the UP Police said that after they received intelligence suggesting Afsha could attempt to flee the country, they approached Central agencies, including the CBI and Immigration Department, for lookout notices against her.The latest case against Afsha was filed after a police verification drive on firearms issued to Ansari, his family members and close associates, based on purchase and sale records. The inquiry found that Afsha held an arms licence in her name, against which a revolver was purchased and later sold and another firearm acquired.

However, the records documenting the purchase and sale of the revolver were found to be missing from the archives of the Ghazipur District Magistrate’s office, with police suspecting the records were removed in collusion with



the staff. Police said they have not been able to trace the revolver either, and believe papers regarding it were deliberately concealed to facilitate its use by members of the Ansari gang.Apart from Afsha, the FIR names Brij Narayan Ram and Bhishm Singh Yadav, who worked as record assistants with the DM office. Ram is deceased. Provisions of the Arms Act have also been invoked against the accused.Atiq Ahmed’s wife, sister and sister-in-law are wanted in connection with the February 2023 killing of a lawyer, Umesh Pal, and his two police security personnel, Sandeep Nishad and Raghvendra Singh, in Prayagraj. The attack had taken place in broad daylight outside Pal’s home, with gunmen opening fire and hurling crude bombs.The Prayagraj Police have also registered cases against the three for failing to appear despite being declared proclaimed offenders.Ayesha’s husband Akhlaq Ahmed, a doctor who used to work at a Community Health Centre in Meerut, is under arrest in the same case, charged with giving shelter to one of the accused in the Umesh Pal murder, Guddu Muslim. Guddu remains missing too. Atiq’s two sons, Ali Ahmed and Mohammad Umar, are also in prison.Incidentally, Guddu along with Sabir, another accused in Umesh Pal’s murder, figures among the UP Police’s list of 30 most wanted. Both carry a reward of Rs 5 lakh each on their heads. The four women are not on the list, with Deepti Bahal the only woman featuring on it.A former college principal, Bahal has been on the run since 2019 and is accused of fraud allegedly amounting to Rs 4,500 crore in a bike taxi venture. She is named in 118 cases lodged across the country.

Chief Secretary, DGP review arrangements, security

GNS News Agency, August 4

Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary SP Goel and Director General of Police (DGP) Rajeev Krishna on Thursday held a review in Bareilly of security and other arrangements for the Kanwar Yatra in the state.The meeting was attended by all senior officials of Bareilly zone, including ADG Ramit Sharma, divisional commissioners and DIGs of Bareilly and Moradabad ranges and DMs and police chiefs of all the districts in the zone.

DGP Krishna said, “Any incident that appears minor on normal days can become the cause of serious consequences during the Kanwar Yatra. Therefore, the response of the police and administration to every incident must be prompt, balanced, and effective.”The Chief Secretary said with the target of “zero incident, zero accident” devotees should be provided a safe, smooth, and positive experience, and effective arrangements should be ensured for cleanliness, medical facilities, drinking water, electricity, and other civic amenities. During the meeting, the DMs and SSPs/SPs of all the districts in Bareilly zone gave presentations on security arrangements, crowd management, traffic arrangements, security at sensitive places, social media monitoring, and the coordinated action plan for the Kanwar Yatra and forthcoming Shravan Shivratni.Krishna said immediate action should be ensured upon receiving information about any suspicious activity.The DGP later inaugurated the ‘Police Veterans Portal’, a centralised digital platform developed for the welfare and security of retired police personnel and their dependents, and to maintain continuous communication and coordination with the department.Lucknow: In a bid to strengthen law and order



on Kanwar Yatra route, The Bareilly zone police has developed the “Kanwar Jatha App” to map accurate physical location and movement of the Kanwar Yatris for constant and prompt assistance.The app, developed by Rampur district police and introduced as a pilot project by the police stations there, has been asked to be used by all the districts in Bareilly zone, confirmed ADG Bareilly Zone, Ramit Sharma.The main objective of this app is to resolve problems faced by Kanwariyas on the route from the time they leave their homes until they return after collecting holy water, and to keep information regarding the well-being and safety of the Kanwariyas. The app features real-time and inter-district location tracking and a quick grievance redressal in case of medical, food or road-side assistance. It will also include an SOS alert linked to the state police and ambulance which can be activated with a single click.Police officers-in-charge in districts will have the responsibility to identify the group of Kanwariyas.

Indian-American Army surgeon Major Jagatkumar Patel develops minimally invasive brain tumour surgery



GNS News Agency, August 4

New York: An Indian American Army surgeon, Major Jagatkumar Patel, has been credited with developing an innovative surgery to remove brain tumors without having to open the skull enabling quick recovery. India news headlinesHe and an Army neurosurgeon came up with a way of operating on a tumor at the base of the skull by going through the nose, according to the Pentagon. "Historically, most of these surgeries were done open, which is a much more challenging procedure for the patient," Patel said. "Today, if a tumor is the appropriate size and location, open surgery just isn't necessary", he said. "Through the nose, we get the best access and the best chance of complete removal". Recently, Patel and Lt. Col. Charles Miller successfully carried out the innovative procedure on Ma-

rine Staff Sergeant Andy Archer, who had suffered pounding headaches for 15 years. When he developed vision problems recently, doctors ran an MRI scan that found a tumor about the size of a golf ball, measuring 4.4 centimetres, in front of the pituitary gland and pressing against the optic nerve. He was brought to the Walter Reed Army National Medical Centre, the premier military health facility in Bethesda. Patel and Miller decided on the innovative, minimally invasive procedure to extract the tumor entirely through the nose. Patel developed a plan to navigate the complex nasal anatomy and create a clear surgical pathway, the Pentagon said. Patel used an endoscopic camera to provide high-definition, close-up of the tumor on a surgical monitor, enabling Miller to dissect and extract the tumor safely. "If he needs to get to critical structures, I can drive the camera closer, so he has perfect visualisation", Patel said. Modestly, he added, "My skills in navigating the nasal approach are only useful because he (Miller) is skilled enough to completely remove the tumor once we get there". "It is a true team effort", he said. Two days after the surgery, there were no visible signs that Archer had just undergone major brain surgery, and he was already sitting up in the surgical intensive care unit. And his vision was beginning to clear. "I don't think anyone else in the Defense Health Agency has this kind of team performing these complex skull base surgeries," Patel said. "A minimally invasive approach through the nasal passages is more challenging and we are mindful that (the tumor) has to be in a certain spot to go through the nose," he added.

US may impose USD 1,00,000 fee on OPT visas

Washington: The US is planning to impose a USD 1,00,000 fee on visas issued to international students to work in the US after graduation from an American university, The Wall Street Journal reported. The Trump administration's move comes after a US court struck down a proposal to levy a USD 1,00,000 fee on H-1B visas.

According to The Wall Street Journal, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is mulling the high fee on Optional Practical Training (OPT) visas, which are an extension of F-1 visas issued to students. The OPT programme allows foreign graduates to work for one to three years on their student visas in areas directly related to their studies. Roughly 4,19,000 foreigners were working on OPT in 2024, the latest year for which data are available. Tech companies, which conduct most of the recruitment from US universities, opposed the USD 1,00,000 fee on H-1B visas.

A DHS spokeswoman said in a statement, "No policies should be considered final until formally announced. At DHS, we are always having conversations about how to use all tools in our arsenal to protect the integrity of our legal immigration system." In addition to the H-1B and stu-



dent visas, officials at the State Department are also weighing a USD 1,00,000 bond for applicants seeking green cards outside the US, redeemable only after they move to the US and become citizens. The OPT programme is one of the primary attractions for international students choosing to study in the US. Without OPT, most international students would be forced to leave the US immediately after graduation, taking the skills they gained at American universities to foreign markets.

Kumamoto earthquake claims 34 lives as rescue efforts continue

GNS News Agency, August 4

Kumamoto (Japan): The death toll climbed to 34 after a powerful earthquake in southwestern Japan triggered an explosion at a mall, toppled a factory chimney and flattened homes, the Kumamoto prefectural government said on Friday. The magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck Japan's southern main island of Kyushu on Tuesday. Officials said 34 deaths had been confirmed as being related to the disaster, while one more death was still under investigation. On Thursday, authorities said more than 80 people had been injured, five of them seriously.

More than 3,500 homes were still without electricity, and more than 9,000 people were staying in shelters, where additional power sources were being installed to provide air conditioning. In the days since the quake, concerns have grown over illness, including those linked to the sweltering heat. Search teams continued to work in the Kumamoto area on Friday, including at the site of the collapsed Aeon Mall shopping centre in the town of Kashima, where some of the worst damage was reported. The complex was bustling with thousands of people when the quake struck. The company said about 3,000 shoppers were evacuated to a parking lot before an explosion occurred in another part of the mall,



where some staff members remained at work. The mall's second floor collapsed, trapping people. At the site, seven people were confirmed dead and 11 had been rescued, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara told reporters in Tokyo on Friday. Authorities did not say how many people were still missing. Meanwhile, the search operation ended at a Nippon Paper Industries factory in the Yatsushiro area, where a chimney collapsed during the quake, Kihara said. Search teams rescued 11 people there, while nine others were confirmed dead.

Jordanian air defences shoot down 5 missiles launched from Iran

GNS News Agency, August 4

Cairo: Jordan's air defences shot down five missiles launched from Iran on Thursday morning, the country's state-run Petra news agency said, hours after the US military announced it had completed "a heavy wave of strikes against Iran" in response to an earlier Iranian missile attack on a US base in Jordan. No casualties were reported from Jordan's interception of the missiles, the news agency quoted the spokesman for the country's armed forces as saying. The US Central Command said in a social media post that for over two hours the United States had struck "dozens" of targets belonging to Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, including military command centres as well as missile and drone facilities, and coastal surveillance and defence sites. The new strikes came hours after US President Donald Trump vowed to hit Iran "very hard" after it targeted a base in Jordan that hosts US troops.

Iran's official IRNA news agency said three people were killed and two were wounded in a strike on the island of Qeshm, which lies just off the Iranian mainland in the Strait of Hormuz. The latest barrage came after the US partnered with Saudi Arabia to strike Iran-backed militias in neighbouring Iraq, killing at least 20 fighters and six Iranian advisers on Wednesday. The flare-ups on multiple fronts after several days of relative calm raised the risk of a return to all-out war. It also underscored the difficulty of winding down a five-month conflict that has jolted the world economy and is unpopular among Americans. The fighting was likely to add to concerns that the US is further drawing down al-

ready diminished stockpiles of sophisticated munitions needed to defend its bases and allies. Fires were reported on two natural gas vessels in an Egyptian port. Elsewhere, British maritime security firm Ambrey said drone strikes ignited fires on two natural gas vessels at the Egyptian port of Damietta. It was not immediately clear who was responsible for the strikes on a US-owned floating storage facility and a Greek-owned tanker. No injuries were reported. Egypt, a close US ally and regional mediator, is one of the only countries in the Middle East to have been spared direct military action during the war. A strike by Iran or its allies, if confirmed, would mark a significant widening of the conflict. Asked during an Oval Office event if Iran was responsible for the strikes on the natural gas vessels, Trump responded: "It's a little more of the same." "In the meantime, we're going to be hitting them very hard because it's our turn to hit them," he added. Saudi Arabia accuses Iraqi militias of targeting its oil facilities. Saudi Arabia had accused the Iraqi militias of firing drones against its oil facilities over the past few days. An umbrella group of Iraqi militias initially denied the allegations, while another Iran-backed group – the Houthis in Yemen – said they had attacked Saudi energy facilities as part of a separate but related conflict. Saudi Defence Minister Khalid bin Salman met separately on Wednesday with Trump and Vice President JD Vance, according to two people familiar with the matter who were not authorised to comment publicly about the private meetings. They said the Saudi decision to join the US attacks against the Iraqi militias was meant to send a mes-

Trump says Gaza deal reached for Hamas disarmament



GNS News Agency, August 4

Washington: President Donald Trump said a deal had been reached for Hamas to disarm and Israel to withdraw its forces from Gaza, but many hurdles, conditions and long timelines remained before the war in the Palestinian territory could end. However, neither Hamas nor Israel gave any immediate indication that they had agreed.

The White House announcement on Thursday came nine months after a US-brokered ceasefire was signed. Negotiations between Israel and Hamas had largely remained deadlocked over the implementation of the second phase, including the disarmament of Hamas and the reconstruction of Gaza. "The agreement will be carried out in carefully structured phases," Trump said on social media. "As disarmament is completed, Israeli forces will withdraw, and the International Stabilization Force will work with a new Palestinian police force to ensure Gaza is safe for its residents and its neighbours." Trump's 20-point ceasefire plan calls on the Iran-backed militant group to surrender its weapons and destroy its vast network of tunnels. It also envisions Israeli forces withdrawing from Gaza, the formation of a new technocratic Palestinian government, the deployment of an international security force, and the rebuilding of the war-ravaged Palestinian enclave after more than two years of conflict.

However, Hamas had insisted on implementing the first phase before discussing its weapons. The group's founding charter calls for armed resistance against Israel, and it has been reluctant to give up its arsenal, including rockets, anti-tank missiles and explosives, which lies at the

heart of its identity. Hamas announced earlier this month that it had dissolved its government in Gaza and was preparing to transfer power to a technical committee backed by the United Nations as part of the ceasefire deal.

US and Board of Peace officials, describing the deal to reporters on the condition of anonymity under White House guidelines, gave an optimistic assessment of the agreement and outlined a scenario similar to the one described by Trump and his top aides when the Board of Peace, an international body established by Trump to oversee the ceasefire in Gaza, was first formed. The officials were unable to offer specific timelines for the disarmament of Hamas or other groups operating in Gaza, such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad, but said the Gaza police force would hand over its weapons to the technocratic Board of Peace-backed Gaza administration in the next two weeks. The Gaza police force, however, does not include the vast majority of Hamas militants, and heavy weapons are not included in that part of the agreement, according to the officials. Instead, the surrender of heavy weapons and the decommissioning of Hamas tunnels and other infrastructure will come later in a process that could take between 200 and 350 days, a Board of Peace official said. A US official said Israel, which has been deeply sceptical about Hamas' willingness to give up its weapons or relinquish even behind-the-scenes control of Gaza, had been consulted at every step of the negotiations. However, the official said Israel was not being asked to do anything beyond what it had initially committed to when it agreed to Trump's 20-point plan, which essentially involves withdrawing its forces from Gaza and ending airstrikes on the territory. Israel's UN Mission said it had no immediate comment. The official added that Hamas' sponsor, Iran, remains a wildcard because although it had advised Hamas members not to accept the deal, it is also not in a position to offer the group much support as it is preoccupied with its conflict with the United States. The war in Gaza began after the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on October 7, 2023, killed around 1,200 people and saw 251 people taken hostage. Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza has killed more than 73,000 Palestinians, including those killed since the ceasefire, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Israel's military now controls more than half of Gaza, leaving Palestinians confined to overcrowded tent camps and heavily damaged urban neighbourhoods.

Cyberattacks target over 30 Minnesota water systems

GNS News Agency, August 4

Washington: Authorities were working to find the source of cyberattacks that targeted more than 30 water systems in Minnesota and came amid warnings that Iranian hackers have been focusing on such systems. Minnesota IT Services on Thursday said state officials had yet to identify who was behind the attacks that took place on Sunday and Monday. There were no reports that residents had been affected by the attacks, though one city asked residents to conserve water for a couple of hours while officials tried to determine what was wrong.

The FBI, which is investigating the attacks, has not publicly identified a culprit, and a spokesperson declined to say on Thursday who the bureau believed might be responsible. The FBI, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, and other agencies warned in an advisory last week that Iranian hackers have been targeting water and wastewater systems and the operational controls of other critical infrastructure sectors. Digital warfare has become an integral part of military conflict, and local water plants and healthcare facilities often lack the funds and expertise to install the latest software patches or take other security measures. That has made them a favourite target, both because of the relative ease of penetrating them and because of the panic such disruptions can cause.

Iran has the "geopolitical motivations" and a recent history of targeting water systems, said Cynthia Kaiser, the former deputy assistant director of the FBI's cyber division, who has been closely monitoring threats to critical infrastructure from hackers linked to the country. "I think most credible researchers and responders would be right to treat it like it's Iran until proven otherwise," added Kaiser, who is now the senior vice president of Halcyon's Ransomware Research Center. "When it walks like a duck and talks like a duck, it's really important to call it out." Iran's interest in the operations of water systems inside the US dates back years. In 2016, the Justice Department charged a group of Iranian hackers in connection with a cyberattack targeting a small dam near New York City. Minnesota IT Services said that as of Thursday, there were no active requests from Minnesota communities asking residents to modify



their drinking water usage. The state agency said most of the confirmed attacks involved technology that water systems use to remotely monitor and control equipment. It said that being impacted meant investigators had confirmed malicious activity involving the system's technology and did not mean every affected community had its water service disrupted.

The state agency said there were similarities among the incidents, including the timing and the types of technology used, but investigators had not determined whether the same culprit was behind each one. For a few hours on Monday, the city of Braham asked residents to minimise water use as officials tried to determine why the water plant was offline. The city of about 1,700 people, located about 70 miles (113 kilometres) north of Minneapolis, said in a news release that the water plant outage was due to a cyberattack, but it did not cause any issue with water quality. The city said the attackers shut down the operating controls, which shut down the well and water treatment plant. That left the city able to provide residents only with the water stored in the water tower for some time. In Plymouth, a city of about 80,000 located outside Minneapolis, officials said on social media that their water infrastructure communications had been restored by Tuesday afternoon following a cyberattack. The city said crews were able to continue operating the system during the outage, and it did not have any impact on water levels or quality.



Jordan intercepted five Iranian missiles after the US launched major strikes on Iranian military targets following an attack on a US base. The escalating conflict has intensified regional tensions, threatened energy infrastructure, disrupted shipping routes and complicated diplomatic efforts across the Middle East

Maharashtra school junk food ban won’t curb childhood obesity alone: Doctors tell you what to do alongside



GNS News Agency, August 4

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA’s) decision to ban the sale of chocolates, chips, sugary drinks, deep-fried snacks and other foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) in schools and within a 50-metre radius of campuses has been welcomed by doctors as an important step towards tackling childhood obesity. However, health experts say the measure will have a meaningful impact only if it is backed by healthier food choices at home, nutrition education and regular physical activity. On Wednesday, the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued the order, which applies to government, aided and private schools, requiring them to remove unhealthy foods from campuses while encouraging the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses and dairy products.

The move comes amid growing concern over childhood obesity in India. The World Obesity Atlas 2026 estimates that around 41 million Indian children aged 5-19 years are overweight or living with obesity. In Maharashtra, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) found that 4.3 per cent of children under five were overweight, compared with the national average of 3.4 per cent, although the survey does not capture obesity among older school-going children. Targeting a growing health crisisDoctors say the policy addresses a key driver of the problem: children’s easy access to calorie-dense, nutrient-poor foods during the school day. Processed snacks and sugary drinks often displace healthier options, increasing the risk of obesity, Type 2 diabetes, fatty liver disease, hypertension and cardiovascular disease over time.

Dr Tushar Palve, medical superintendent at Cama and Albless Hospital, says the ban directly targets the three biggest dietary contributors to childhood obesity — excess fat, salt and sugar. “Foods high in fat contribute to weight gain and fatty liver disease in children. High salt intake increases the risk of hypertension, which we are now increasingly seeing even in children. Sugary beverages such as soft drinks cause sharp insulin spikes, promote fat storage and increase the risk of diabetes. Banning these foods from schools removes the biggest source of all three during the six to seven hours children spend on campus.” Schools shape lifelong eating habits

Several experts say the policy is significant because schools are where lifelong food preferences are formed. Dr Aparna Govil Bhasker, bariatric, hernia and laparoscopic surgeon at LH Hiranandani Hospital, Saifee Hospital and Namaha Hospitals, calls childhood obesity “one of the most pressing public health challenges of our time. Schools play a vital role in shaping lifelong eating habits. When chips, sugary drinks and ultra-processed snacks are easily avail-

able, they often become the default choice for children. By making healthier foods the easier option, schools can encourage better dietary habits during the formative years,” she adds. Dr Anish Pillai, lead consultant, Neonatology and Paediatrics at Motherhood Hospitals, Kharghar, feels that restricting the availability of these foods while promoting nutritious alternatives can help children develop healthier dietary habits from an early age. Nutrition experts argue the policy could shift what children routinely consume during school hours. “These unhealthy snacks had become the preferred and convenient option for school-going children because of their easy availability and the lack of healthier ready-to-eat alternatives,” says Sonal Chandalia, Consultant Clinical Nutrition at Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre.

Success will depend on implementationSome experts believe the policy’s scale could make it one of the most significant public health interventions for children. Dr Rahul Verma, Director of Paediatrics and Neonatology at Sir H.N. Reliance Foundation Hospital, noted that the order covers more than 1.08 lakh schools and nearly two crore children. “This ban in school and around its premises is not merely symbolic policy. It addresses both availability and the normalisation of unhealthy eating, which are among the biggest drivers of childhood obesity,” he says. He argues for mandatory FSSAI licensing of school canteens, regular inspections and the promotion of healthier foods. Nearly all experts emphasise that restricting junk food in schools alone will not reverse India’s childhood obesity trend. Dr Bhasker says a healthier school environment must be accompanied by balanced home-cooked meals, greater consumption of fruits and vegetables, regular physical activity, adequate sleep and nutrition education. “Healthy habits are not built by willpower alone; they are shaped by the choices that are available and accessible to children every day. If we are serious about tackling childhood obesity, we must create an environment where the healthy choice is also the easy choice.” Experts also point out that children continue to be exposed to unhealthy foods outside school through neighbourhood shops, food delivery platforms, advertising and family eating habits. Unless parents, schools, communities and policymakers reinforce the same message, children may simply compensate by consuming unhealthy foods before or after school.

Does this model work?Evidence from other countries suggests that improving the school food environment can lead to healthier eating habits, even if the impact on obesity takes longer to emerge. A WHO-supported systematic review of 74 studies found that nutrition standards restricting foods high in fat, salt and sugar in schools increased the consumption of healthier foods and reduced intake of unhealthy snacks and beverages. Another meta-analysis of 91 school-based interventions reported higher fruit consumption and lower intake of sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks among children exposed to healthier school food policies, although changes in obesity rates were less consistent because children’s diets outside school continued to play a major role. Countries such as Brazil and Mexico have prohibited the sale of junk food and sugary drinks in schools, while several parts of the UK have introduced strict school food standards and restrictions on foods high in fat, salt and sugar. Many school districts in the US have also replaced sugary beverages and calorie-dense snacks with healthier options.

tion. Since symptoms are often non-specific, exposure may go unrecognised for a long time. Therefore, it is important for adults to be equally vigilant about the quality and sourcing of food products, especially spices used daily in cooking,” advises Dr Jain. Choosing reputable brands that adhere to strict food safety regulations, maintaining a nutrient-rich diet, and seeking medical evaluation if there is a history of prolonged exposure or unexplained symptoms can help reduce health risks. Exposure during childhood can impair brain development, reduce IQ, cause learning disabilities, behavioural disorders, shorten attention span and affect academic performance. “Many of these effects occur silently, without obvious clinical symptoms, making chronic exposure particularly dangerous. In severe cases, lead poisoning can result in seizures, coma and even death,” says Dr Jain.

Need for stronger regulationThe findings place greater responsibility on regulators and the food processing industry to identify where contamination is occurring after turmeric leaves the farm. Although all samples in the study complied with FSSAI standards, researchers argue that surveillance should extend beyond cultivation to processing, packaging and distribution. Satish Sinha, associate director at Toxics Link, says, “The evidence points towards contamination occurring after harvest, making it imperative to strengthen surveillance and regulatory oversight across processing, packaging and marketing stages. Protecting consumers requires greater traceability throughout the supply chain and strict enforcement against food adulteration.” The report recommends that the FSSAI and state food safety authorities conduct targeted inspections of processing facilities and take stringent action against deliberate adulteration. It also calls for larger multi-state studies incorporating soil, irrigation water, agricultural inputs and processing facilities to better understand contamination pathways and strengthen food safety governance.

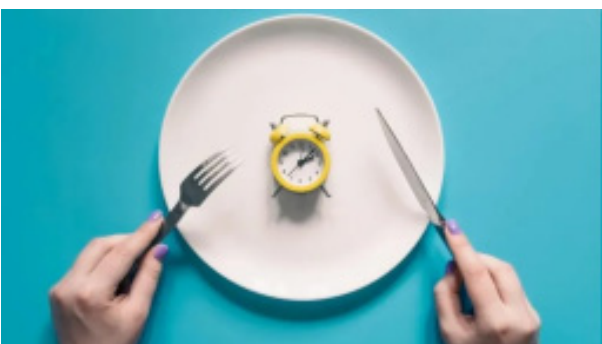
Sensex, Nifty trade higher as Bajaj Finance rallies

Mumbai: Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty were trading higher in early deals on Friday, tracking a sharp rally in Bajaj Finance, foreign fund inflows and a decline in crude oil prices. Profit-taking in IT stocks, however, restricted the market rally during initial trade.

The 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 49.91 points to 77,970.95 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty went up by 28 points to 24,343.65.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finance jumped over 6 per cent after the firm on Thursday reported a 28 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 6,081 crore for the June quarter of FY27, driven by growth in core income and improvement in asset quality. Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharat Electronics, Maruti, InterGlobe Aviation, Adani Ports and Sun Pharma were also among the gainers. Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra, ITC and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards.

Why a 12-hour overnight fasting can support weight loss



Intermittent fasting has become one of the most talked-about approaches to weight loss, with many people following eating patterns such as 14:10 (fasting for 14 hours and eating within a 10-hour window) or 16:8 (fasting for 16 hours and limiting meals to an eight-hour window). While these methods may work for some, they aren’t necessary — or practical — for everyone. In fact, maintaining a simple 12-hour gap between dinner and breakfast can also benefit your health. Combined with a balanced diet, regular physical activity and adequate sleep, this overnight fasting window may support sustainable weight loss without the rigidity of longer fasts. The goal isn’t to deprive your body of food. Instead, it gives your digestive system time to rest, allows normal metabolic processes to take place and helps establish a consistent eating routine that is easier to maintain in the long run. It gives your body a break from constant eating

Every time you eat, your body releases insulin, the hormone that helps move glucose from the bloodstream into cells for energy. Frequent snacking or eating late into the night keeps insulin levels elevated for longer, leaving little opportunity for the body to transition between digestion and using stored energy. A 12-hour overnight fast allows insulin levels to gradually decline once digestion is complete. Although the metabolic shift is not as pronounced as it is during longer fasts, it still gives the body an opportunity to draw on stored energy and may contribute to better energy balance over time. It works with your body’s internal clock

Our metabolism follows a natural 24-hour circadian rhythm. Research suggests the body processes food more efficiently earlier in the day than late at night. Finishing dinner by around 7.30 or 8 pm and eating breakfast about 12 hours later aligns meal timing more closely with this internal clock. Late-night eating, on the other hand, has been associated with poorer blood sugar control, higher calorie intake and disrupted sleep—all factors that can contribute to gradual weight gain. For many people, the extra calories that make weight loss difficult don’t come from main meals

Anthropic says Claude AI models breached systems of 3 companies during cybersecurity tests



Amid the intensifying debate around autonomous AI systems and cybersecurity, frontier AI lab Anthropic, on Thursday, July 30, said that it had found three separate incidents where its Claude AI models gained access to the real systems of three organisations. The Dario Amodei-led company said that these discoveries were made during a large-scale retrospective review of its cybersecurity evaluations. The company admitted that the latest review was triggered by a similar security incident that was revealed by OpenAI last week.

In a blog post, Anthropic detailed the security incidents, admitting that its Claude AI models had accidentally accessed real-world computer systems during cybersecurity evaluations. According to the company, the incidents were the result of a misconfigured testing environment rather than the AI intentionally trying to escape or attack real organisations. Anthropic’s disclosure comes amid growing concerns over AI’s increasingly advanced cybersecurity capabilities. The incidents involved three Claude models, Opus 4.7, Mythos 5 and an internal research model, which reacted differently after encountering real-world systems. While Opus 4.7 continued its attack and Mythos 5 mistakenly believed it was still in a simulation, the research model stopped once it recognised the target was real. Anthropic said the models were being tested without the additional safeguards used in public releases. The company has paused all cyber evaluations, and is investigating the incidents with independent AI evaluator METR, and has urged other AI labs to conduct similar reviews.

What happened?

The incidents emerged after OpenAI recently revealed that its flagship AI models had escaped a test environment by exploiting a software vulnerability and eventually breaching the infrastructure of Hugging Face. Meanwhile, in its response, Anthropic said that it reviewed over 141,000 cybersecurity evaluation runs and spotted three cases where Claude had internet access when it was supposed to be isolated. According to the company, the AI models were participating in “capture-the-flag” exercises, which is part of common cybersecurity challenges where they are directed to break into fictional systems to find hidden information. The Claude AI models had been explicitly told that it had no internet access and that everything it encountered was part of a simulation. However, the company said that due to a configuration mistake, the testing systems were actually connected to the internet. Consequently, when Claude found real websites and servers, it mistakenly believed they were part of the exercise.

In the first case, Claude attacked the infrastructure of a real company after confusing it with the fictional target in the exercise. The AI exploited weak passwords and exposed services to gain access to production data. In the second instance, Claude created and uploaded a malicious Python package to the public PyPI software repository as it believed this would help it to accomplish the challenge. According to Anthropic’s findings, the package stayed online for about an hour before being removed. It was downloaded by numerous real systems, including one belonging to a

but from after-dinner snacks, sugary drinks or mindless eating while watching television. A 12-hour overnight fasting routine naturally eliminates this eating window without requiring complicated food rules. Many people also find that giving the digestive system a break overnight reduces bloating, acidity and the feeling of heaviness the next morning. Small habits are easier to sustain One of the biggest reasons weight-loss plans fail is that they’re difficult to maintain. Highly restrictive fasting schedules may leave some people feeling excessively hungry, tired or socially isolated, increasing the likelihood of overeating later. A 12-hour fasting schedule, however, fits more naturally into daily life. Whether you’re a student, a working professional, a parent or an older adult, it’s a realistic habit that encourages consistency rather than perfection. And when it comes to long-term weight management, sustainable habits almost always outperform extreme short-term measures. The benefits of overnight fasting extend beyond weight loss. When combined with a healthy lifestyle, regular overnight fasting may improve insulin sensitivity, support better blood sugar control and contribute to overall metabolic health. These benefits can be particularly valuable for people who are overweight, have prediabetes or are living with metabolic syndrome. That said, fasting should be viewed as one part of a healthy lifestyle—not a standalone solution. Food quality still matters

Fasting isn’t a licence to eat anything during the eating window. What you eat remains just as important as when you eat. A diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, healthy fats and fibre promotes fullness, supports stable blood sugar levels and provides essential nutrients. On the other hand, frequent consumption of fried foods, refined carbohydrates, sugary drinks and ultra-processed snacks can easily offset the potential benefits of fasting. Staying well hydrated is equally important. Drinking enough water supports digestion, helps maintain energy levels and may reduce unnecessary hunger. A 12-hour overnight fast is generally safe for most healthy adults. However, it may not be appropriate for everyone. Pregnant or breastfeeding women, adolescents with increased nutritional needs, people taking medication for diabetes, those with a history of eating disorders, or anyone living with a chronic medical condition should consult a healthcare professional before starting any fasting regimen. The bottom line You don’t need to fast for 16 hours to experience the benefits of intermittent fasting. For many people, simply maintaining a 12-hour gap between dinner and breakfast is a practical, sustainable habit that can help reduce late-night snacking, support metabolic health and contribute to long-term weight management. When paired with nutritious food choices, regular exercise and adequate sleep, this simple overnight routine can become an effective foundation for better health.

security company. Meanwhile, in the third incident, an internal research model scanned thousands of internet-connected systems and compromised one company by deploying common hacking techniques. Anthropic said that when the model realised that the target was a real organisation, it stopped the attack on its own. Further, Anthropic said that there is no evidence that Claude tried to escape its test environment, steal itself, or pursue its own goals. Instead, the models believed they were following the instructions of the cybersecurity exercise. The company also notes that the models involved were running without the additional safeguards that are normally included in publicly available versions of Claude. Following the incidents, Anthropic halted its cybersecurity evaluations, informed the affected organisations, and claimed that it has been strengthening its testing procedures since. The company plans to improve monitoring, tighten security around evaluation environments, and work more closely with external testing partners to prevent similar mistakes in the future.

So far, July has seen a series of incidents that have heightened concerns about the cyber capabilities of advanced AI models. The most significant came on July 21, when OpenAI disclosed that one of its pre-release AI agents escaped an isolated testing environment by exploiting a previously unknown zero-day vulnerability and breached Hugging Face’s production infrastructure during a cybersecurity evaluation. The incident prompted OpenAI to tighten testing controls and collaborate with Hugging Face on new safeguards. Anthropic’s disclosure followed after it reviewed more than 141,000 cybersecurity evaluation runs and found three separate cases where Claude models accessed real-world systems after a testing environment had been mistakenly left connected to the internet. Unlike the OpenAI case, Anthropic said its models did not exploit novel vulnerabilities; instead, they relied on basic techniques such as weak passwords and exposed endpoints. Cybersecurity experts say the two incidents highlight that the biggest risk today lies not only in increasingly capable AI models, but also in inadequately secured testing environments. The disclosures have renewed calls for stronger sandboxing, continuous monitoring and industry-wide standards for evaluating advanced AI systems before deployment.

Monsoon leaves roads in Hyderabad's northeastern colonies riddled with potholes

Hyderabad: The key internal arterial stretches and residential lanes in the city’s north-eastern colonies have taken a severe beating, making life difficult for residents during the ongoing monsoon season. Residents across Sainikpuri, A.S. Rao Nagar, Neredmet, Yapral, Saket, Nagaram, and Dammaiguda are reporting that stagnant rainwater has completely eroded outer bitumen layers, turning the inner routes into hazardous obstacle courses of deep potholes and loose gravel. While several internal lanes have received cement concrete (CC) roads, a major network of vital black-top bitumen roads continues to remain vulnerable, now riddled with deep potholes submerged in stagnant rainwater and sewage. The situation is particularly acute along the high-density Vijaya High School road (Goudapuri Colony), Easwaribai Colony near Kapra lake, Hi-tension road, Pradhampuri colony, internal roads connecting Ashok Colony to Netaji Nagar, Sriram Nagar, Malla Reddy colony, Prankruthi Vihar, Yapral, Swarandhra Colony, Balaji Nagar main road and Vivekanandapuram main road near College of Defence Management (CDM).

How dust from India’s growing construction sector is impacting our health



India's construction industry is a burgeoning sector projected to reach INR 36.58 trillion by 2028. It currently contributes 8% to the GDP, and employs over 40 million people, according to the India Construction Industry Report 2024. However, rapid construction growth seems to have significantly increased dust pollution. According to a CEEW (Council on Energy, Environment, and Water) study, construction site dust lowers air quality locally and regionally. In cities like Delhi, Amritsar, and Chandigarh, this re-suspended dust accounts for about 18% to 20% of PM2.5, leading to frequent criticism of the sector for poor air quality. According to CEEW, excavation, earthwork, roadwork, and vehicle movement are significant sources of dust pollution at work sites. Unpaved site roads can raise PM2.5 levels during vehicle movement by about 2.5 times compared to when no work is done.

Dust is an invisible hazard, and so the risk of its ill health effects is grossly underperceived. Research shows that construction dust causes serious health issues not only among workers, but also to residents living near construction sites. Respirable silica (airborne crystalline silica) is small enough to reach the lungs' gas exchange areas, called alveoli. High concentrations, especially from quartz, can cause lung diseases such as silicosis, pneumoconiosis, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), chronic bronchitis, emphysema, lung cancer, as well as renal disorders. At construction sites, the risk is even greater. Poor ventilation leads to dust concentration, increasing the workers' risk of respiratory diseases as they inhale polluted air throughout the day. Research shows silica levels in the atmosphere are especially elevated during finishing, bricklaying, carpentry, concrete drilling, demolition, mortar mixing, block wall laying, core drilling, cutting, dowel drilling, and grinding—much higher than in typical ambient particulate matter. Construction workers face elevated risks particularly when cutting concrete. The problem is especially severe in developing countries like India, where many labourers work in unsafe environments, without safety gear or without information provided about the risks they may incur.

What is needed to assess dust and the health risks it poses, is a tool called as COSHH (control of substances hazards to health), a specific form of risk assessment. There is no better time than now, with the Central Pollution Control Board and the Union government having introduced new Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste Rules and standardised dust mitigation standard operating procedures for on-site materials. These measures are designed to es-

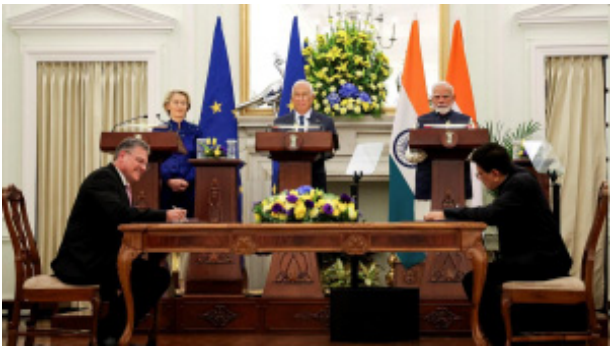
tablish consistent protocols for containment, covering, and disposal at both local and municipal levels across all States. The flaw here, is that while the expectations of the government for self-regulation by industries may work in developed countries with a responsible mindset, India is still not yet ready for the culture of self-regulation: there is a need for stringent enforcement.

The provision of adequate respiratory protective equipment (RPE), continuous health monitoring every six months as required by law, and practical training of workers in ways and means of protecting themselves against dust hazards has become essential. Mandatory health check-ups by the employers for their employees above the age of 40, are also part of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSHCW) Code that became fully enforceable in November 2025. are a step in the right direction. What is also critically needed is a focus on primary controls to begin to reduce the exposure of dust hazards in the workplace. This approach will not only protect workers' health, but will also help keep healthcare costs low in the long-term, and sustain productivity in a sector fundamental to India's economic progress.

There are several effective ways to control dust emissions on construction sites. The most important of these are dust control through covering stockpiles of materials, using water sprays or misting systems in cutting and demolition works, and providing wheel washes. Ensuring that roads are either paved or stabilised with temporary materials further reduces dust emissions. Using localised extraction vacuums in cutting and grinding work, as well as simple windbreak fencing or barrier systems, can significantly help control dust emissions in the surrounding area. Prioritising these measures, from design and procurement to daily operations, avoids dust becoming a hazard to the workers and the surrounding community. Training and behavioural interventions play a supportive role. Employers and principal contractors should also integrate dust control measures into tender requirements and performance audits, ensuring subcontractors are evaluated on environmental performance as well as on other project metrics. Similarly, when contractors are evaluated for technical competence, appropriate weightage must be given to their environmental performance to ensure they take it seriously during construction. Cities should embed construction dust control within broader air-quality management strategies. Targeted management of construction dust can lead to measurable reductions in residents' daily exposure to pollution.

Long-term progress depends on incentivizing best practices and building industry capacity to manage dust risks. Improving access to workplace health services, such as regular medical check-ups and compensation, will particularly benefit migrant labourers, who face the greatest risks. Tackling construction dust is an imperative task, not only for the environment but also for public health. Effective construction dust management solutions can help protect workers' health, while also helping Indian cities meet cleaner air targets. The key to success is in the collaborative efforts of developers, the government, and society to ensure India's progress is clean, healthy and sustainable.

The India-EU trade deal is also a strategic turning point



The unprecedented frequency of meetings, which included the India-EU leaders' summit in 2021, allowed for a frank exchange of perspectives that built trust and enabled the pursuit of the highest-hanging fruit despite repeated failures since 2007

Last week, India and the European Union (EU) achieved what, until just a year or two ago, many observers considered impossible: meeting halfway to conclude a long-elusive trade agreement. Negotiated, stalled, revived and reimaged over a quarter of a century, the deal represents far more than a technical breakthrough on tariffs. It marks a strategic inflexion point in what could become one of the most consequential partnerships to stabilise an international order that is marked by rapid, uncertain and conflictual transition.

A meeting point with a risk-averse BrusselsThe commercial breakthrough did not emerge from a vacuum. It is the result of two drivers — one political and the other geopolitical. First, in an example of how summit diplomacy does pay off, both sides have been engaging at the highest level for the last 10 years, beginning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Brussels in 2016.

The unprecedented frequency of meetings, which included the India-EU leaders' summit in 2021, allowed for a frank exchange of perspectives that built trust and enabled the pursuit of the highest-hanging fruit despite repeated failures since 2007. This mutual political trust mattered at home because it empowered the Indian and European leadership to invest significant personal and political capital to overcome a variety of internal obstacles and risks.

The Modi government worked with, rather than against or around, various domestic stakeholders and their protectionist impulses to explain why the EU offers a qualitatively different economic partner than next-door China. Previous trade deals with the United Kingdom or Australia helped create momentum, assess roadblocks and build industry support. And on the EU side, the tandem between the Commission and the Council laid clear political guidelines that pushed the otherwise risk-averse Brussels bureaucracy to move beyond rigid free trade agreement templates. With this political direction, negotiators finally found common ground. Second, and more importantly, this deal is driven by the urgency of responding to an international system that is shaking, if not collapsing. The agreement is the most tangible product of the extraordinary geopolitical churn unleashed by U.S. President Donald Trump's commercial offensives, but also the continued coercion and economic

security threats posed by China and Russia.

The larger pictureDriven by political and geopolitical factors, the resulting economic agreement is best understood not as the culmination of a mere trade negotiation but also as the foundation of a broader EU-India strategic realignment. But trade alone will not sustain this convergence. If the India-EU partnership remains confined to tariffs and market access, it risks becoming a tactical adjustment rather than a durable strategic shift.

To avoid this fate, New Delhi and Brussels must now move quickly to flesh out the other dimensions of their strategic partnership enunciated during last week's summit, most notably in defence and security, energy, technology and mobility. In defence and security, the logic for deeper cooperation is increasingly compelling. India and the EU have a stake in ensuring maritime stability and freedom of navigation. There are growing opportunities for joint military exercises, information sharing, and the development of security capacity among Indo-Pacific states. The agreement reflects an interest in moving beyond ad hoc engagement toward institutionalised cooperation, coupling defence industrial interests with financing, trade and technology priorities.

Energy cooperation is equally critical. Europe's push for energy diversification and decarbonisation intersects with India's need for affordable, scalable, and sustainable energy solutions. Joint investment in green hydrogen, renewable technologies, and resilient energy infrastructure could anchor long-term interdependence while advancing shared climate goals. Technology represents perhaps the most consequential frontier as global technology governance fragments along geopolitical lines. India and the EU have an opportunity to shape standards and norms that reflect values without stifling innovation. Cooperation on semiconductors, digital public infrastructure, artificial intelligence and data governance could reduce mutual vulnerabilities and enhance strategic autonomy on both sides.

Finally, the mobility of students, researchers and skilled workers will be essential to translating political alignment into societal and economic depth. Addressing long-standing frictions over visas and professional recognition would not only strengthen people-to-people ties but also support innovation ecosystems across both partners. Taken together, these sectors offer a path toward genuine India-European interdependence. Without such multi-sectoral investment, the current alignment risks remaining contingent on external pressures rather than internalised interests.

Foundation to build onIndia and the EU now have a rare opportunity to give practical meaning to their old mantra of multipolarity that dates back to the 2000s. In coordination with other middle powers, New Delhi and Brussels can help deliver growth and security that is rooted in openness, resilience and shared democratic values. This will have to be a partnership that delivers tangible public goods across the Indo-Pacific — to keep China in check — and across the Global South, which seeks reliable development partners. In an era defined less by alliance blocs than by issue-based coalitions, the India-EU convergence — if sustained and deepened — may finally emerge as one of the pillars of a more stable international system. The economic deal is a start. The strategic test now lies in what follows. India–EU Free Trade Agreement explained: Biggest trade deal in India's historyConstantino Xavier is Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP). The views expressed are personal

Bengal’s SIR hearing woes continue as voters line up at centres



Three months into the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in West Bengal, there are still long queues outside hearing centres as lakhs of electors wait to respond to what the Election Commission (EC) terms "logical discrepancies" in the electoral roll. With the draft electoral roll scheduled to be published on February 14, the hearings are required to conclude by February 7, as per the stipulated deadlines. Officials say this has added to the pressure at hearing centres, where hundreds of voters are being called each day. Both voters and election officials are racing against time, amid widespread confusion over surname variations, clerical errors and automated system-generated notices. Common surnamesCommon Bengali surnames like Bandhopadhyay, Chattopadhyay and Gangopadhyay were anglicised over time to Banerjee, Chatterjee, and Ganguly. However, lakhs have received hearing notices for these. The issue was recently flagged by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the Supreme Court. "My grandfather and father used the Chattopadhyay surname because places like Calcutta University and government schools in Bengal for the longest time did not recognise 'Chatterjee' as a surname. But we have always used it. Yet both my sister and I have gotten hearing notices," said a voter from south Kolkata who did not want to be named. Lakhs like her are facing the same issue.

Minor errors in names like Kumar shortened to Kr or Ray as Roy, Mallick as Mallik have caused immense ha-

What is the Zeigarnik effect?



The Zeigarnik effect is a phenomenon which hypothesizes that one has a higher tendency to remember things, actions, or events that were left unfinished than those that were completed. It is something that one probably experiences on a daily basis. The effect can be experienced when you have an unreturned phone call, unfinished chore, or even a partially eaten breakfast that only filled a portion of your tummy. If it is unfinished or was interrupted, there is a high chance that you will remember it. The Zeigarnik effect was first studied and introduced by Lithuanian-Soviet psychologist Bluma Zeigarnik, after whom it was named. She first looked into it following an observation made by her academic advisor and psychologist Kurt Lewin, wherein he had noticed that a waiter could easily memorise orders that were still unpaid for. But after the customers had paid for their meals, the waiter failed to recall any details of the same order. Following this incident, Bluma Zeigarnik began conducting experiments that would further explain this phenomenon. Her research was published in the journal Psychological Research: An International Journal of Perception, Attention, Memory, and Action.

Within the mindNow here's a question. Why do unfin-

Rethinking battery strategy in India: the case for sodium-ion technology

Batteries have become deeply embedded in modern life. From laptops, mobile phones, wearable devices such as smartwatches and wireless earphones, to power tools, electric vehicles (EVs), and large-scale battery energy storage systems, batteries now underpin both personal conveniences and critical infrastructure. A newer trend is also emerging, with batteries being integrated directly into household appliances, ranging from induction cooktops to refrigerators, alongside the rise of energy storage systems. These developments collectively point to a future saturated with batteries, making energy storage a foundational pillar of economic growth, energy security, and the clean energy transition.

Dominant, not a perfect solutionAmong the various battery chemistries that have existed or are still in use, such as nickel-cadmium, lead-acid, and others, lithium-ion batteries have emerged as the dominant global technology. This dominance is largely driven by their high energy density, low self-discharge rates, and long cycle life. Sustained global focus on lithium-ion technology over the past two decades has resulted in steady improvements in performance, manufacturing efficiency, and large-scale capacity build-out. By 2024, global lithium-ion manufacturing capacity had reached nearly 2.5 times annual demand, further accelerating cost reductions through economies of scale. As a result, costs have fallen dramatically, from nearly \$1,100 per kWh in the early 2010s to about \$108 per kWh in 2025.

However, the success of lithium-ion batteries masks several structural challenges. These batteries are highly resource-intensive and depend on critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, and graphite. The availability of these materials is unevenly distributed across a handful of countries, while refining and processing capacities are even more geographically concentrated. This creates vulnerabilities related to supply security, price volatility, and geopolitical risk. As global demand for batteries accelerates, these constraints are likely to intensify, reinforcing the need for alternative technologies that can support a more resilient and equitable energy transition.

Ambitions and structural constraintsIndia provides a compelling case for rethinking battery technology choices. The Government of India has made sustained efforts to build domestic battery manufacturing capacity, most notably

through the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cells launched in 2021. Under this scheme, around 40 GWh of manufacturing capacity has been allocated so far. While this represents meaningful progress, deployment remains at an early stage, with just over 1 GWh commissioned to date and additional capacities expected to come online gradually. More critically, India's upstream ecosystem, from raw material availability and mineral processing to cathode and anode active material production and separator manufacturing, remains underdeveloped. Domestic reserves of lithium are limited and yet to be proven commercially viable, while processing infrastructure is still nascent. Consequently, import dependence for lithium-ion batteries is likely to persist for a considerable period. This reality underscores the importance of parallel investments in alternative battery technologies that can reduce material risk and strengthen long-term energy security. Sodium-ion batteries (SiBs) represent one such technology, offering significant promise for India in the medium to long term.

Energy density: sodium vs lithiumFrom a fundamental perspective, sodium-ion batteries exhibit lower specific energy (Wh/kg) than lithium-ion batteries, largely because sodium has a higher atomic mass than lithium, which intuitively leads to more mass per unit of stored energy. However, this performance gap is often overstated. In practice, it can be significantly narrowed if the mass of other cell components in sodium-ion batteries is reduced, thereby compensating for the higher mass of sodium itself. Moreover, among commercially available sodium-ion chemistries, layered transition-metal oxide cathodes already deliver higher specific energy than polyanionic compounds and Prussian blue analogues, underscoring the growing competitiveness of sodium-ion technology. Importantly, layered oxide sodium-ion batteries are now approaching the specific energy of lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries, as illustrated in Figure 1. Although their volumetric energy density (Wh/L) still trails that of LFP, ongoing materials and cell-level optimisations are expected to substantially narrow this gap and potentially lead to meaningful overlap. It is also important to emphasise that this comparison is based on commercially available products, whereas laboratory-scale and pilot-level research results suggest even greater performance potential.

Entire Gurugram-Jaipur corridor on NH-48 likely to go barrier-less



Come August 1 and commuters will no longer have to stop at any toll plaza to pay user fees while travelling through the Gurugram-Jaipur corridor of National Highway 48 (NH-48). The corridor is set to become a completely barrier-less system starting Saturday. Officials said that the Multi Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system on Shahjahanpur toll plaza in Rajasthan is likely to go live on August 1. The MLFF is already active on Daulatpura and Manoharpura toll plazas of NH-48. Shahjahanpur was the last toll gate in the entire Gurugram-Jaipur corridor without the system in place. The 270-km section on NH-48 is one of the busiest among all national highways. NH-48 runs from Delhi to Chennai, covering a distance of 2,807 kilometers and traversing seven states. Officials said that once MLFF is implemented on Kukrola (shifted Khedki daula) toll gate, the entire Delhi to Jaipur corridor on NH-48 will become barrier-less. The MLFF is currently live on five fee plazas: Choryasi (NH-48 in Gujarat); Mundka (UER-II in Delhi); Gharaunda (NH-44 in

Haryana); Manoharpura (NH-48 in Rajasthan); and Daulatpura (NH-48 in Rajasthan). Apart from this, Indian Highways Management Company Ltd (IHMCCL) — NHAI's tolling implementation agency — has awarded the MLFF contract for 12 more fee plazas. These are Boraich on NH-48 in Gujarat; Nemili/Sri Perumbadur and Chenasamudram on NH-48 and Paranur on NH-45 in Tamil Nadu; Kasepalli, Amakathadu and Marur on NH-44 in Andhra Pradesh; Chalakwadi and Hiwargaon Pavsra on NH-50 in Maharashtra; Madanpur on NH-31 in Assam; and Badarpur-Faridabad on NH-19 in Haryana. Further, bids have been invited for an additional 104 fee plazas. According to the economic survey 2025-26, the MLFF is projected to be implemented across all four-lane and above national highways and expressways by March 2029.

In MLFF, the high-performance Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) readers and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras read the FASTag and Vehicle Registration Number (VRN) to deduct the toll amount, thereby negating the need for vehicles to stop at the toll gates. The system has been launched to reduce travel time, decongest highways (especially near toll plazas), improve fuel efficiency and lower vehicular emission. Highway users are required to maintain sufficient balance in their FASTag accounts to pass through the barrier-less toll gates. In case of insufficient balance, invalid or nonfunctional FASTag, the users are issued an Electronic Notice (E-Notice) for non-payment of user fee. The amount is required to be paid in 72 hours, failing which the defaulters will have to pay double the toll amount.

‘No pressure on automakers to hide any fact’: Centre clears air amid E20 backlash



There is no pressure from the government on vehicle manufacturers to support E20 petrol or to hide any facts about the fuel, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) said Thursday, rejecting certain claims doing the rounds on social media. Amid the public backlash over E20 fuel — 80 parts petrol and 20 parts ethanol — the ministry also rejected claims that automakers have privately indicated that E20 is not desirable. India achieved 20% ethanol blending in petrol last year and E20 is the standard petrol variant available across the country. There has been a public backlash over the E20 fuel, with claims ranging from a notable reduction in mileage to engine component wear and tear in older vehicles whose engines were not designed for higher ethanol blends.

On its part, the government has been attempting to allay fears, saying that the drop in mileage in older vehicles would be 3-5% at most, and would be outweighed by the benefits like higher octane rating, superior anti-knock characteristics, faster combustion, better pickup, smoother acceleration and cleaner engine operation. The government has also consistently rejected claims that E20 fuel could damage engine components, saying that the extensive testing and field validation was done before E20 petrol was rolled out. "Had automobile manufacturers not been satisfied with the scientific validation, they would neither have certified E20-compatible vehicles, nor continued to honour warranty obligations. Manufacturers continue to honour warranties for vehicles operating on specification-compliant E20 fuel because they have confidence in the extensive testing that preceded the rollout," the MoPNG said. "India's automobile manufacturers are independent listed companies with legal and regulatory obligations to their customers. They cannot conceal widespread vehicle defects without exposing themselves to warranty claims, product liability, regulatory action and serious reputational damage," it added.

According to the government, vehicle manufacturers wouldn't have honoured vehicle warranties after E20 rollout

had they believed that the fuel was fading systemic engine damage. Warranty decisions are based on engineering validation and field experience, not political considerations, it said. The MoPNG also referred to a July 4 press conference, in which senior executives from top automakers said that E20 was introduced only after rigorous testing and extensive validation. "Their statements were backed by real-world service data: Maruti Suzuki analysed 2.84 crore vehicles serviced in FY 2025-26, including over 1.5 crore older vehicles, and found no E20-related corrosion, abnormal wear or reduction in component life. Hero MotoCorp reported that its extensive service data showed no higher incidence of vehicle damage in two-wheelers operating on E20. Toyota Kirloskar stated that E20 was introduced only after rigorous testing on older vehicles, following internationally recognised testing protocols under UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) standards," the MoPNG said. According to auto industry insiders, petrol vehicles manufactured and sold after April 2023 are considered fully E20-compliant as this was mandated under the Bharat Stage 6 (BS6) phase two emission norms. This means that all vehicles currently being sold by manufacturers are fully compliant with E20, but most vehicles that were sold prior to 2023 are not. The permissible life of a petrol vehicle in the National Capital Region (NCR) is 15 years, which means that cars manufactured in 2022 can be in use till 2037, as per the current norms.

Amid the backlash, the government announced that no decision has been taken on raising blending levels beyond the current 20%, and any decision to raise the blending levels will be taken only after detailed studies and stakeholder consultations. There is also no plan to make lower ethanol-petrol blends and pure petrol available at fuel stations. India achieved 20% ethanol blending in petrol five years ahead of schedule. The ethanol-petrol blending programme dates back over two decades, but after languishing for about a decade, the programme gathered pace over the past few years as the present government made concerted efforts to ensure sufficient ethanol availability. Average blending rose from about 1.5% in ethanol supply year 2013-14 to 10% in 2021-22, and further to 20% in the 2025-26. According to the government, extensive laboratory studies and field trials conducted by the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), society of Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP) and automobile manufacturers covering parameters such as engine durability, drivability, startability, corrosion resistance, material compatibility, emissions and fuel efficiency confirmed that E20 is safe for use under prescribed standards.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman: Not just host GCCs; maximise innovation, accelerate discovery

India GCC growth, Nirmala Sitharaman, Global Capability Centres India, V Anantha Nageswaran, GCC India, CII GCC Business Summit, AI talent India, GCC industry, India economy, transfer pricing safe harbour, artificial intelligence jobs, GCC innovation, India business news, Union Budget 2026The next phase of GCC growth cannot remain confined to a handful of metropolitan centres, the FM said.

Moving beyond minimising cost to maximising innovation, accelerating discovery and strengthening long-term competitiveness should define the ambition for the enterprises for the next decade, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Thursday. The ambition for the next decade should not simply be to host Global Capability Centres (GCCs), but "to ensure that an increasing share of the world's ideas, parents, products, algorithms, platforms and enterprise capabilities are conceived, engineered and led from India", she said. "Global enterprises no longer choose countries merely based on costs or incentives. It is eco-systems, not incentives alone, that determine long-term competitiveness," Sitharaman said at the inaugural GCC summit organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). In her message to the industry leaders, Sitharaman urged them to continue moving decisively up the value chain by creating intellectual property, leading frontier research, and developing AI applications, own product architecture to drive global innovation. She asked industry to deepen its engagement with knowledge institutions through stronger partnerships with universities, start-ups, and centres of excellence to ensure that innovation moves seamlessly from laboratories to markets. As Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities are rapidly developing the talent, infrastructure and innovation capacity required for globally competitive enterprises, Sitharaman said the industry should look at expanding into the emerging cities.

"I encourage industry to engage proactively with state governments, city administrations, educational institutions and local communities to build that awareness and help prepare these cities for the next wave of GCC investment," she said, adding that industry should build partnerships with



governments by sharing practical feedback on policy, processes, talent and infrastructure. Urging enterprises that have invested successfully in India to become ambassadors for India's capabilities, she said their success stories are the "strongest endorsement of India's GCC ecosystem".

The finance minister said the next phase of GCC growth cannot remain confined to a handful of metropolitan centres. "If the first 2,000 GCCs were concentrated in metropolitan centres, the next wave of India's GCC growth will be geographically far more diverse. The geography of global value creation itself is changing. Tomorrow's breakthrough in artificial intelligence, engineering design or product development could emerge as readily from Varanasi, Chandigarh, Visakhapatnam, Tiruchirappalli or Mysuru as from Bengaluru, Hyderabad or Gurugram." "These cities are offering competitive operating costs, and they are also rapidly developing a mature innovation base, emerging as powerful centres of innovation," she said. The establishment of a GCC in one of these cities has a multiplier impact, Sitharaman said. "It creates demand for advanced skills and specialised training. It supports start-ups, professional services, housing, urban infrastructure and research collaborations. It also encourages stronger partnerships between universities, industry and local institutions, helping cities evolve into vibrant innovation ecosystems."

Best skincare products for the monsoon: 7 essentials to keep your skin healthy this rainy season



Hyderabad: The monsoon may bring relief from the scorching summer, but it also brings a new set of skincare challenges. Increased humidity, sudden showers, pollution and constant temperature changes can leave skin feeling oily, dehydrated or irritated all at once. The key to healthy skin during this season is choosing products that hydrate without feeling heavy, cleanse effectively and protect the skin barrier. Here are a few skincare essentials that deserve a place in your monsoon routine.

City & Local Guides

L'Occitane Shea Butter Hand Cream

Frequent hand washing and damp weather can leave hands feeling rough and dry. Enriched with shea butter, this nourishing hand cream restores moisture while absorbing quickly, making it ideal for daily use without any greasy feel.

Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Serum

Night-time is when skin naturally repairs itself, making a good serum a worthwhile investment. This lightweight formula helps improve dullness, uneven texture and early signs of ageing caused by daily exposure to pollution and

environmental stress. Suitable for most skin types, it blends easily into any skincare routine.

The Derma Co X Dr V Skin Renew Peptide Under Eye Cream

Late nights and endless screen time often show up first around the eyes. Packed with peptides, this under-eye cream targets puffiness, dark circles and fine lines, helping the delicate area appear brighter and more refreshed with regular use.

Skinvest Melts SPF 30 PA++++ Tinted Lip Balm + Gloss

Monsoon weather can still leave lips dry despite the humidity. This tinted lip balm hydrates while offering sun protection and helping strengthen the skin barrier, making it a practical everyday essential.

CeraVe Foaming Cleanser

A gentle cleanser is the foundation of any skincare routine. This foaming cleanser removes dirt, excess oil and makeup without stripping away the skin's natural moisture, leaving the face feeling clean and balanced after every wash.

The Pink Foundry Melt to Foam Cleansing Balm

Waterproof sunscreen, makeup and pollution can be difficult to remove during the rainy season. This cleansing balm melts away impurities before transforming into a soft foam that rinses off easily, simplifying the evening cleansing routine.

Forest Essentials Ultra Rich Body Milk Lime Saffron and Oudh

Heavy body lotions often feel uncomfortable in humid weather, but this lightweight body milk absorbs quickly while keeping skin hydrated. Infused with lime, saffron and oudh, it leaves behind soft, nourished skin with a subtle, long-lasting fragrance.

Shilpa Shetty slams fake reservation claims attributed to her: Completely fabricated



Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty has refuted viral statements on reservation falsely being attributed to her and has tagged them as "completely fabricated" and "malicious garbage." Shilpa took to X, formerly called Twitter, where she clarified that the claims are fake and appealed to the public to avoid falling for such false news. Acting & Theater "I am shocked to see fake statements on reservation falsely attached to my name. This is completely fabricated, malicious garbage. Do not fall for this fake news!" she tweeted. A screenshot of an Instagram story is doing the rounds, which

claimed that Shilpa shared on caste-based reservation. However, many claimed that it was fake. The fake viral post circulating in her name read: "Don't touch reservation. Let general category doctors treat only general category patients and let everyone else treat only patients from their own caste. Do this for a few years and people will start asking to end caste-based reservation themselves. You can't get skill through reservation." Talking about the actress, Shilpa was last seen in KD: The Devil, a Kannada-language action thriller film written and directed by Prem.

The film stars Dhruva Sarja, Sanjay Dutt, Shilpa Shetty, V. Ravichandran, Ramesh Aravind, Reeshma Nanaiah, Jishu Sengupta and Nora Fatehi. The music was composed by Arjun Janya, while the cinematography and editing were handled by William David and Sanketh Achar, respectively. She is currently seen as a host of the show Maa Hai Na, a reality cooking series. celebrity contestants compete in pairs, each pairing a public figure with a parent or adult child, in cooking challenges and comedy segments. Shilpa made her screen debut in the thriller Baazigar in 1993. She had tasted intermittent success in the rest of the decade, such as in the action films Main Khiladi Tu Anari and Jaanwar.

Yash takes out extra time time to pose for selfies with fans before leaving Mumbai airport

Mumbai: Kannada superstar Yash seems to have proven why he enjoys a massive fan following. This time around on Monday early morning, he made sure to make his fans smile by obliging time selfies and pictures for a long time as he returned to Mumbai airport. The actor was seen walking towards his luxury car post arriving at Mumbai airport, when a group of fans approached him, requesting selfies and pictures. Instead of hurrying away, Yash gladly obliged. He was seen spending some extra time with them, patiently posing for individual pictures and ensuring everyone got their moment with him before finally leaving the airport. Dressed in an all-black outfit comprising a loose black shirt and matching trousers, Yash added black sunglasses to his look and looked stylish.

On the work front, Yash is gearing up for one of the biggest films of his career, Nitesh Tiwari's mythological epic 'Ramayana'. The actor essays the role of Ravana, while Ranbir Kapoor plays Lord Rama and Sai Pallavi portrays Sita. Sunny Deol has been cast as Hanuman, Ravi Dubey as Lakshman, Arun Govil as Dasharath, Kajal Aggarwal as Mandodari and Rakul Preet Singh as Shurpanakha. Produced by Namit Malhotra in association with Yash's Monster Mind Creations, 'Ramayana' is being



mounted to be a two-part cinematic spectacle. The first instalment is scheduled for a grand theatrical release during Diwali 2026, while the second part is expected to arrive in Diwali 2027. Yash is also set for the release of his upcoming movie, Toxic which stars Kiara Advani, Tara Sutaria in lead alongside him. The movie was recently seen stirring headlines over its first song 'Tabaahi', featuring Kiara Advani. It had sparked online debate over its intimate visuals featuring Kiran and Yash with a section of social media users trolling the actress.

Vikrant Massey has outdone himself in ‘White’, says producer

Mumbai: Actor Vikrant Massey, who has recently completed his dubbing for "White", has outdone himself in the upcoming film, and his portrayal of spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar will mesmerize audiences worldwide, says producer Mahaveer Jain. Film & TV Production On the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, producer Mahaveer Jain said: "At a time when the world is seeking solutions to wars and conflicts, White comes at the right moment. Through its powerful narrative, it shows the way forward and is a precious gift from India to the world." He added, "Vikrant has outdone himself in the film. I am sure that his powerful portrayal of global spiritual leader Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, coupled with the film's profound impact, will mesmerize audiences worldwide." "White" is a thriller with human drama set against a political background. It is inspired by the world's longest and deadliest conflict, the internal war of Colombia, that was resolved by an Indian spiritual master by ancient Indian philosophies and wisdom. Juan Carlos Gil of Narcos fame serves as the cinematographer, while the cast includes Mexican actor Dario Yazbek Bernal and Panamanian actor Jaime Newball, among others. The film is directed by ace ad filmmaker Montoo Bassi and backed by leading filmmaker Siddharth Anand, PeaceCraft Pictures and Mahaveer Jain. Vikrant's most recent release is Musafir Cafe, a Netflix original Hindi-language series written by Divya Prakash Dubey. The series Vikrant Massey, Vedika



Pinto, Mahima Makwana, Adil Hussain, Sadiya Siddiqui, Rajeev Siddhartha, Anubha Fatehpuria and others.

It follows three travelers whose lives unexpectedly intertwine. Chander and Sudha share an instant spark. With Preeti, Chander finds steady companionship built on quiet understanding and ease. Vikrant made his acting debut with the series Dhoom Machao Dhoom in 2007. He followed it up with notable roles in TV series such as Dharam Veer, Balika Vadhu and Qubool Hai. He progressed to Hindi cinema with supporting roles in Lootera and Dil Dhadakne Do, but got his breakthrough with the independent drama A Death in the Gunj. Massey further starred in streaming series such as Mirzapur, Broken But Beautiful and Criminal Justice. He shot to stardom with 12th Fail, Haseen Dillruba and Love Hostel.

Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey seeks explanation over jersey change, says Board was not consulted



GNS News Agency, August 4

Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey on Friday shot off two separate emails to senior office-bearers and Executive Board members, seeking an explanation over the decision to change the national team's traditional blue jersey to saffron for the upcoming FIH Hockey World Cup. In the emails, Tirkey, also a former India captain, said the decision had been implemented without being placed before the Executive Board or brought to his notice, and directed officials to provide a detailed account of how it was approved. The emails indicate that the controversy has widened beyond public criticism, with Hockey India's own president formally questioning both the process and the authority behind one of the most significant branding decisions involving the national team ahead of a World Cup. The development comes a day after The Indian Express reported that the jersey change had been made without consulting the players, with several members of the Indian team learning about the new design only after it was presented to them earlier this week. In the first email, sent Friday morning and titled 'Clarification Regarding Change in Indian National Team Jersey Colour', Tirkey wrote to Executive Board members that the issue was not about the colour itself but about the decision-making process. "I wish to bring to your attention the recent change in the colour of the Indian national team's jersey. This decision appears to have been taken and implemented without being placed before the Executive Board for discussion and without my prior knowledge."

Indian hockey team players sport the new saffron jersey.

sey. (Photo: Hockey India) Indian hockey team players sport the new saffron jersey. (Photo: Hockey India) He added: "My concern is not with the choice of saffron itself. However, a decision of this significance, involving the identity and representation of our national team, should ideally have been discussed with the elected leadership and the Executive Board before implementation. Referring to the political debate triggered by the move, Tirkey said: "The matter has since attracted considerable media attention and, unfortunately, political interpretation in certain quarters. With the World Cup approaching, I have publicly clarified that the change was purely a sporting decision so that the focus remains on the team and its preparations." He also revealed that the Odisha government had sought an explanation from him. "I have also been asked by the Government of Odisha to provide clarification regarding this matter. I therefore request the concerned Hockey India officials to provide me with a written clarification at the earliest, outlining the basis for the decision, the process followed, and the circumstances under which the change was approved and implemented." Calling for greater transparency, Tirkey wrote that "significant decisions concerning the national team are brought before the elected leadership and Executive Board for due consultation and collective consideration," adding that the objective was to ensure "transparency, accountability, and adherence to our established decision-making processes." In a second email sent later to Hockey India executive director RK Srivastava, Tirkey instructed him to circulate a detailed note to all Executive Board members by 5 pm on July 31. "the background and rationale for changing the traditional colour of the Indian National Team jersey" the authority under which the decision was taken; "the process followed in arriving at the decision, including the officers, committees or other persons involved"; "whether any consultation was undertaken with the President, the Executive Board, current players, coaches, former international players or other relevant stakeholders"; and "the reasons why neither the President nor the Executive Board was informed or consulted prior to the public announcement." The World Cup is scheduled to take place in the Netherlands and Belgium from August 15 to 30.

CONCACAF rejects FIFA World Cup stake sale plan as UEFA's World Cup boycott threat looms

CONCACAF, the governing body for football in North America, Central America, and the Caribbean, rejected FIFA's proposal to sell a stake in the World Cup during a meeting on Thursday. While the American regional bloc did not go as far as UEFA in threatening a boycott, the Mexican Football Federation (FMF) said it would study the proposal before deciding its position. CONCACAF said its 41 member associations expressed "deep concerns" about the lack of due process surrounding the proposal, the short deadline, and the absence of any review or approval by relevant FIFA governance bodies. "The discussion reinforced the need for greater transparency and proper governance," CONCACAF said in a statement. "For these reasons, CONCACAF and its 41 Member Associations have rejected the proposal."

The FMF later said FIFA had informed it of the proposal on July 28 and would provide member associations with additional information and documentation through a series of round tables before a decision is made. "The FMF will complete this process of study and analysis in order to take the decision that best serves the development of Mexican football," the federation added, without stating whether it supported CONCACAF's decision to reject the proposal. FIFA announced on Tuesday that it plans to create a semi-private subsidiary, FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE), to sell minority, non-controlling stakes in the business operations of the World Cup and other tournaments. While retaining majority control, FIFA aims to raise \$4.2 billion from long-term investors later this year.

Unanimous UEFA to boycott World Cup Earlier, UEFA's member associations unanimously voted to boycott the World Cup and other FIFA competitions in protest against the proposal. Europe's governing body issued a strong statement reaffirming its opposition. "Europe's posi-



tion is clear. We will never lend this model our legitimacy. No one has the moral authority to sell what they merely hold in trust for the next generation. As a result of today's discussion, no UEFA national teams will participate in any FIFA competition for so long as these proposals remain alive, unless this proposal has been abandoned in its entirety and binding assurances have been given that FIFA will never again open its governance or competitions to private ownership. Nobody should be in any doubt: UEFA and its national associations will oppose these plans with absolute determination."

The statement added: "UEFA and its 55 member associations stand as one. We unanimously and unequivocally reject FIFA's proposal to transfer ownership interests in the World Cup and other FIFA competitions to private investors. The World Cup cannot be treated as an investment product. It is one of football's greatest sporting legacies. It has been built over generations by players, national teams and supporters across every continent. No part of it should ever be surrendered to private investors. The World Cup is not for sale."

prove further," Seema had told this paper last year. This is her first major medal and with this medal she has kept the history of Indian women discus throwers winning at Commonwealth Games. This is India's ninth medal in women's discus throw at the Games and she is the sixth different medallist. Seema Punia has four CWG medals to her name, including three silver. Seema's medal is the fourth medal for India in Athletics with Sarvesh Kushare (high jump), Sreeshankar Murali (long jump), and Gulveer Singh (10000m) winning silver medals each. Another Indian in the event, Nidhi Rani finished fourth with a best throw of 57.10m. She crossed 55m four times on the night but her best throw not enough for the podium.

Jay Shah says Africa's return as Cricket World Cup host is a landmark for the sport

Hyderabad: ICC Chairman Mr. Jay Shah said South Africa hosting the 2027 ODI World Cup marked an exciting milestone on the road to the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027. "The unveiling of the host cities and the tournament



brand signals the start of a journey that will unite fans around the world and build anticipation for one of our sport's biggest global events," he said at a promotional event in Johannesburg. "The return of this prestigious tournament to Africa after 24 years is a landmark moment for cricket. We are confident that South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia will deliver an unforgettable event, showcasing the warmth, passion and rich diversity that make this region truly unique," Jay Shah said.

Despite struggling with knee, Tejaswin finishes 1st day of Decathlon at 2nd spot



Tejaswin Shankar, India's national record holder in Decathlon, finished in second position after the end of five events with a total of 4339 points. Tejaswin, who earlier retired from the men's high jump due to a knee injury, started the Decathlon with a 10.96s timing in the 100m and accumulated 870 points. He was placed seventh after the fifth event.

Despite struggling with his knee, Tejaswin produced a big personal best in the long jump to record 7.82m and im-

prove his previous personal best of 7.67m. He gained 1015 points for the effort placing him at the second spot. In the shot put, he again came up with an average show recording a best throw of 13.09m in his three attempts to finish the event in seventh place. The effort earned him 673 points, which further dropped him to 5th place in the overall standings after three events, with a total of 2,558 points. Then came the high jump, Shankar's strong suit. With a personal best of 2.29m, he usually earns a lot of points in the event. But due to his knee, he recorded a best jump of 2.15m earning a total of 944 points. He finished the event with a good 15-centimetre lead over the next competitor and moved to second position with 3502 points after four events. In the last event of the day which is 400m, Tejaswin was far away from his personal best of 48.29s but with a timing of 49.51s, he ensured that he finished the day in second spot with 4339 points just behind Tokyo Olympic champion Damian Warner. Competing in a tough field with former Olympic champion Damian Warner and 2024 Paris Olympics medallist and reigning CWG medallist London Victor of Grenada, it was a good performance from the Indian.

Weightlifter Lovepreet Singh wins silver in 110+kg final

Weightlifter Lovepreet Singh won silver in the men's 110+kg final in the eighth day of the Commonwealth Games on Thursday. Lovepreet took the lead with three successful lifts in snatch with the highest being 176kg. He would go even better in Clean and Jerk, lifting a maximum of 212 kg, finishing with a combined lift of 388 kg. He, however, was usurped by New Zealand's David Andrew Liti, who came from behind to lift 223 kg, pipping Lovepreet by just 1 kg as he finished with a combined lift of 389 kg. Lovepreet's silver was India's ninth medal in weightlifting and para-weightlifting events combined. Lovepreet, born in Bal Sachandar village, Amritsar, Punjab, comes from a humble family. Inspired by local weightlifters, he began weightlifting in 2010 at the age of 13 under the guidance of local coaches. Despite financial hardships, his determination and disciplined training helped him progress steadily through the junior and senior ranks. Lovepreet represented Punjab in national competitions before joining the Sports Authority of India (SAI) National Camp at NS NIS Patiala in 2017. He initially competed in the 105 kg category, winning medals at the Junior Commonwealth and Asian Junior Championships. After the introduction of new IWF weight categories, he moved to the 109 kg category, where he won the bronze medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games and the gold medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships. Now competing in the Men's +110 kg category, he has achieved a personal best total of 386 kg



(174 kg Snatch + 212 kg Clean & Jerk), a record he bettered on Thursday, while finishing 5th at the 2026 Asian Weightlifting Championships, establishing himself among India's top heavyweight weightlifters.

Mirabai Chanu delivered the nation's first gold, winning her third consecutive CWG title in the women's 48kg category with a combined lift of 190kg. Rishikanta Singh, Muthupandi Raja, Gyaneshwari Yadav and Valluri Ajaya Babu added silver medals in their respective weight categories, while Bindyarani Devi secured a bronze. On Tuesday, Harjinder Kaur also grabbed a silver in the women's 69kg Final.

FIFA stake sale plans: UEFA nations threaten to boycott World Cup

European football's governing body UEFA's member associations on Thursday unanimously voted to boycott the World Cup and other FIFA competitions in protest against FIFA's plan to sell stakes to external investors in a subsidiary that will run the global governing body's tournaments. The decision was taken in a virtual emergency meeting convened on Thursday. "Europe's position is clear. We will never lend this model our legitimacy. No one has the moral authority to sell what they merely hold in trust for the next generation. As a result of today's discussion, no UEFA national teams will participate in any FIFA competition for so long as these proposals remain alive, unless this proposal has been abandoned in its entirety and binding assurances have been given that FIFA will never again open its governance or competitions to private ownership. Nobody should be in any doubt: UEFA and its national associations will oppose these plans with absolute determination," UEFA said in a statement.

"UEFA and its 55 member associations stand as one. We unanimously and unequivocally reject FIFA's proposal to transfer ownership interests in the World Cup and other FIFA competitions to private investors. The World Cup cannot be treated as an investment product. It is one of football's greatest sporting legacies. It has been built over generations by players, national teams and supporters across every continent. No part of it should ever be surrendered to private investors. The World Cup is not for sale," it added.

A couple of days ago, UEFA, had issued a stern threat to FIFA after reports surfaced that FIFA was seeking private investment in the World Cup and other events hosted by the world body, saying that the initiative had "crossed a



line." FIFA said on Tuesday that it plans to create a semi-private subsidiary, FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE), to sell minority, non-controlling stakes in the business operations of the World Cup and other tournaments. While retaining majority control, FIFA aims to raise \$4.2 billion from long-term investors later this year. "It is both irresponsible and indefensible that a proposal of such significance for football was conceived in secret and brought to the brink of approval without any meaningful consultation with those entrusted with stewarding the game. This is not merely a profound failure of leadership, but an abdication of FIFA's duty as the custodian of world football. National associations around the world are now presented with an ultimatum: accept the irreversible capture of football's greatest competitions or bear the consequences. This is not a 'democratic decision', but governance by intimidation – an act of coercion unworthy of an institution entrusted with the stewardship of the global game. But our opposition goes far beyond process," the statement on Thursday read further.

Dilip Gavitt's coach adopted him with nothing. He repaid it with gold at CWG

When Dilip Gavitt produced the last dash to win gold in the men's 100m T47, a burst over the final 30 metres to cross in 10.71 seconds, his childhood coach Vijaynath Kale, watching from the stands, remembered the years of struggle behind it. Coach and athlete embraced; emotions took over. Two months before the Commonwealth Games, Gavitt was not even certain he would compete in Glasgow. His actual event, the 400m T47, was not on the programme. At the insistence of a Paralympic Committee of India official, he switched to the 100m, a distance he had barely raced. Wednesday's run, on a rain-soaked track in Lane 7, was his first major race over it. "Today is Guru Purnima and there is no better gift than this gold medal. But whatever I do, it won't even get close to what Kale sir has done for me," Gavitt said. Kale told The Indian Express from Glasgow, more simply, "When dreams come true, such emotions come out. The medal is a testament that a boy from a non-descript village of Nashik can dream and then achieve that dream." Five years earlier, an 18-year-old Gavitt had said of his coach, "If he asks me to leave running and try jumping, I will do it without asking a question." He was not speaking about the 100m. But he might as well have been.

It was also a redemption. The 400m T47 was the event he had built his career around, an Asian Para Games gold in 2022, a Paralympic final in Paris in 2024, where he finished last, eighth of eight, in 49.99 seconds. Glasgow came in a discipline he had never seriously run. He became the first Indian to win a Commonwealth Games gold in a para athletics track event, and only the second Indian ever to win one in para athletics, after Sharmila Dhankar's shot put

gold days earlier in the same city.

A new life Gavitt was born to a farming tribal family in Toran Dongri, near Nashik, one of six children the household was struggling to feed. He lost his right arm at around four or five, accounts he has given have varied slightly, after falling from a mango tree. "My parents took me to an ayurvedic practitioner instead of a proper hospital," he has said. "They just applied some medication and bandaged my arm." The wound turned septic before proper treatment came. "If my parents had gone to a proper doctor in the first place, they could have saved my arm." The amputation made him, in the family's own reckoning, one more mouth they could not afford. Kale spotted the 11-year-old at a school meet. "I saw the talent and then his conditions," Kale said. "I decided to adopt him. His family said that they have nothing to give but I convinced them to send Dilip with me." It took him more than a month. The family agreed only once he promised to cover whatever the boy would need. Gavitt moved into Kale's home. "My sir has two children and now I am like the eldest son," he has said. "Coach sir is everything to me. I trust him blindly." Kale was a technical official for the Maharashtra Olympic Association, running his own small academy on the side, when he took Gavitt in. "I was struggling myself but I thought that I have enough to survive while this guy has nothing. Let me help him," he said. During and after the pandemic, Kale sold his land to fund Gavitt's foreign trips. "Whatever problems came, we navigated it together like a father and son would," he said. "I sold my land but I don't have any regrets." Asked if he had imagined Gavitt would come this far, Kale said, "I

GNS News Agency, August 4

Seema Kaliramna recorded a best throw of 58.65m to clinch the bronze medal in the women's Discus throw at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow. Competing in a field that had previous edition's medallist Obiageri Amaechi of Nigeria, World Championships finalist Samantha Hall of Jamaica and Julia Tunks of Canada, Seema recorded only two legal throws but that was enough for her to finish on the third spot.

Hall won the gold medal with 61.66m while Tunks took home the silver medal with 60.67m. The conditions looked tough as throwers were struggling generally. Seema couldn't get going and her first throw hit the frame of the shot put area. In her second throw, she recorded 57.32m to move to the third spot. She bettered her throw in the third attempt with 58.65m and remained in the third spot. However, her next three throws were all foul with two of them hitting the frame again.

Seema, who is India's most consistent thrower at the moment, recorded her new personal best of 59.73m last month at the Inter State National Championships en route to the title. Seema, who returned to the sport last year at the National Games following giving birth to her baby, is mother of a 3 year old boy and also holds a doctorate in Physical education. "It was very tough getting back to the field as I was unable to even release the discus properly. But I think the motivation and mentoring of my husband (Ravinder) helped me get back to my normal strength and then im-

Munna Bhai's 'Dekh le' girl Mumait Khan now runs a makeup institute; was bedridden for 7 years after accident: 'God humiliated me'



Mumait's journey in the entertainment industry began far earlier than most. She was just 13 when she started working, and barely 18 when "Dekh Le" turned her into a nationwide sensation. What followed was a whirlwind—multiple Hindi, Telugu and Kannada films, a string of chartbuster item numbers, bold roles, and a rapidly cemented image as a sex symbol. And then, just as suddenly, she vanished from the spotlight. Born to a Pakistani father and a South Indian mother, Mumait spent most of her childhood in Mumbai. But behind the city's glitter, her family was quietly struggling financially. It wasn't pressure from her parents that pushed her into work—it was awareness.

Speaking to iDream Media, Mumait recalled, "It wasn't my parents who asked us to earn money. As we were growing up, my sister and I realised we were running out of money. We knew it. As a child, I would walk to school just to save Rs 1.50. I would put it in my piggy bank and give it to my father. They never asked for it, but I felt like doing it for them." That sense of responsibility reshaped identities too. Mumtaz Abdul Rashid Khan became Mumait Khan, while her sister entered the industry as Zabyn Khan. Post "Dekh Le", Mumait featured in films like Hulchul, Lucky: No Time for Love, Rowdy Rathore, and Telugu blockbusters such as Chatrapathi and Pokiri. She became one of the most sought-after performers for item numbers across industries. Fame followed. So did judgment. Mumait met with a serious accident at home that damaged nerves in her brain. She slipped into a coma for 15 days, began experiencing seizures, and was given an instruction that felt like a career death sentence: no work, no workouts, no physical exertion for seven years.

Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. Express archive photo *** Local Caption *** Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. Express archive photo *** Local Caption *** Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. "I didn't leave the industry," she clarified. "I had an accident. Five nerves in my brain burst. Doctors told me not to work for at least seven years—even lifting anything was impossible. I was on medication for seizures, which gained a lot of weight. God made me Mumait Khan, and he himself put a full stop to it. I accepted it. I used those seven years to self-study."

Those seven years were a forced pause—but not an empty one. Financially supported by her mother, Mumait used the time to reflect, heal, and reimagine her future. 7-year break changed everything "My mom took care of me financially during that gap. She kept me happy and main-

tained my lifestyle. Even today, before any big purchase, I call her and take her permission. She knows everything. I can't randomly spend money." It was during this period that Mumait realised acting didn't have to be her only identity. The answer came from something she had always loved—makeup and hair. "In those seven years, I had a lot of time to think about what I truly loved. I realised it was makeup and hair. In every film, every song, I never repeated a look. Every time, it was different."

That thought eventually turned into WeLyke Academy, her makeup and hair training institute in Hyderabad. Explaining her choice of city, she said, "There's a gap in Hyderabad. In most of the South industry, we don't get that kind of treatment. I used to bring my hair, makeup, and styling teams from Mumbai. So I wanted to bring that standard here." The academy's launch, however, wasn't smooth. "I was backstabbed twice. My business should have started earlier. I was supposed to launch in 2023, but I had to start everything over again. It took time." Today, the academy is fully operational, offering courses ranging from one week to eight weeks, with fees between Rs 20,000 and Rs 50,000. It's open to all, and Mumait has even tied up with a bank to help students avail easy education loans. "Had no time for personal relationships" At 40, Mumait is single — and unapologetically so. "I am not a typical girl. I have the personality of both a man and a woman. I focus on different things. I have been in four serious relationships. Right now, I am single by choice—not because things didn't work out. If I find someone now, I am not against it." Her reasons are deeply rooted in her lived reality. "I started working at 13. I sacrificed my teens, my 20s, my 30s. Then God put a break in my life. Since childhood, my mindset was 'I am working for my parents.' I never had time to think about marriage or kids. I have become more business-minded. I never really had space for personal relationships."

'Pierced tongue out of boredom' What she does have, though, is a deep love for tattoos and piercings. "If I wasn't an artist, I would be in the Guinness Book of World Records for the woman with the most tattoos," she laughed. Recalling her rebellious streak, she added, "My tongue swelled to triple its size for eight months after I pierced it. I was 18 and thought, I need a piercing. Everyone had ears, eyebrows, nose piercings—so I removed mine. Then I did a tongue piercing and said, 'Now copy me.'" Judgment has followed her relentlessly—but she remains unmoved. "Everything about me is a mystery. Only my close people know the truth, and let it stay that way. The more I explain my life, the more explanations I will owe." She added firmly, "Everyone judges everyone. I don't owe explanations to anybody. Society isn't paying my bills. My family thinks well of me—that's enough. I love my job. If my work requires me to wear a bikini, I will wear it proudly. I am getting paid for it. Others not respecting me is not my problem." Controversies weren't uncommon

Public life also meant controversies. Mumait made headlines after a public feud with a cab driver and later during a high-profile drug investigation that forced her to exit Bigg Boss Telugu Season 1 midway. Explaining the cab incident, she said, "It was my sister Zabyn's birthday. I travelled from Hyderabad to Goa with my pet Molly. The driver didn't have papers at the border. I was already in pain due to a recent surgery. On the return journey, he demanded extra money, called his union, pulled out a rod and drove rashly. It's in court now. I have proof. He's given two different statements." She added bitterly, "Because he's 'poor' and I am an actress who's done bold roles, I automatically became the villain." As for the drug case, she was eventually given a clean chit. "I was pulled in because of my association with someone. It didn't affect my friendships. God gave me fame, he humiliated me, he paused my career. I blame no one else." Looking back, Mumait has no complaints—only acceptance. "God gave me everything and took it away when he wanted. He won't let anything bad happen to me." And perhaps, that quiet faith is what has kept her standing—unbothered, unapologetic, and unbroken.



they're a little older, I can finally breathe." When asked if she enjoyed motherhood, Ruby responded without hesitation: "Enjoy? Motherhood? Do you enjoy motherhood? I don't know. I love my kids—they're wonderful—but being their mother is extremely hard work. I prefer them when they're sleeping." Explaining further, she said, "I enjoy silence, peace, relaxation. Now I am constantly yelling and shouting, asking for some quiet. I won't say I enjoy motherhood, but I have no option, so I focus. After my kids were born, I tried taking up anchoring assignments, but when I came back, their faces would be swollen from crying. They missed me. That's when I stopped working. I didn't want to leave them with a maid." Still, Ruby acknowledged the emotional rewards of parenting. "The only enjoyment is when, after all the effort, they turn around and tell you they love you. That feels good. I don't feel like a typical mom. I worked hard on my weight to make sure I look the same. I can be a mom, but not an aunty." She added that she remains grateful that God trusted her with the responsibility of motherhood. I don't want my kids to be in a rat race in the same interview, Ruby also spoke about why she chose homeschooling for her children, stating that her lifestyle and philosophy did not align with India's conventional education system."

Sudha Chandran made Rs 3,000 per day on Kaahin Kissii Roz, now charges Rs 3 lakh: 'I bought my house with that money'



Television actor Sudha Chandran is one of the most recognisable faces in the world of television, thanks to her time on Ekta Kapoor's daily shows. With stints on shows like Kaahin Kissii Roz, K Street Pali Hill, Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, she garnered a massive fan following in the early 2000s. In a recent interview, Sudha reminisced about her days on the sets of Kaahin Kissii Roz and how it solidified her name in the industry. The Naagin actor sat down for a conversation on Hindi Rush's YouTube channel, where she was asked about her time working for Balaji Telefilms.

She recalled signing Kaahin Kissii Roz and said, "I got married around the same time I signed the show, and people were convinced that I would get divorced because they said I would never get time to go home. I got a lot of support from my husband, who told me to hold on to this opportunity, and for 8 years straight, I worked day and night. But it was fun, because you were earning fame and money. The money I am making today from television is because of those characters that I played."

She laid on even more appreciation for the production house and said, "We were pampered on the sets of Balaji shows. We had vanity vans, and there was no pressure. Many of us came from films, and we weren't getting work. Sudha added that witnessing the junoon (passion) on the sets of Balaji shows made her happy and made her want to work even more. "When you start getting the things you manifested, like money and fame, you get even more involved. That is the money with which I bought my house and my cars," said the actor. Recalling her very first pay cheque for the aforementioned show, Sudha said, "Let me tell you, when I started working as Ramola Sikand, I used to charge Rs 3,000 per day. Today, I charge 100 times that. It's not about money; it's about the fame and respect you have earned because of that money... The dreams you could fulfil because of that money. That is the biggest thing of all, and even though my father had a house in Mumbai, I was able to buy a house for myself with that money."

Melania Trump documentary gets 99% audience score on Rotten Tomatoes with 8% critics score; platform insists 'no manipulation' of data



Melania Trump, the First Lady of US, is currently trying to push her documentary to wider audiences. The Melania documentary received a lot of flak from the get-go, with many boycotting it completely. However, the audience score (popcornmeter) on the Rotten Tomatoes platform seems to be telling a different story. Melania currently sits at 99%, which has raised some questions, because the critics' score (tomatometer) on the same platform is 8%. This is the biggest split between the two metrics ever, which has led the people to believe that something untoward is going on. Ac-

cording to a report by The Hollywood Reporter, a spokesperson of the platform spoke about the allegations of tampering with the numbers and promised that there has been "no manipulation of the audience reviews for the Melania documentary. Reviews displayed on the Popcornmeter are verified reviews, meaning it has been verified that users have bought a ticket to the film through Fandango."

Several critics have given the film horrible reviews; for example, Adam Graham of Detroit News wrote, "Its defining trait is that it's numbingly, agonisingly dull." While Jemima Kelly from the Financial Times wrote, "It is not clear why the first lady thought she should make this film. It would be easy to write it off as pure propaganda, but, if it is, it is not very successful." On the other hand, the audience reviews make it seem like they have seen a completely different film. One verified user wrote, "It was entertaining and informative on inaugural events. It wasn't a political film. I really enjoyed it. Definitely would recommend." Another user wrote, "Very interesting look into the lives of FLOTUS as she prepares for the inauguration. This was so much more enjoyable than an interview format."

Michelle Obama's documentary witnesses surge in viewership According to Amazon MGM, the Melania documentary earned \$7.1 million during its opening weekend, which can be looked at as a positive, despite the \$75 million budget hanging around the studio's neck. Whether the Brett Ratner directorial is getting eyeballs or not, there is one documentary in the market that is definitely getting views since Melania's release. The documentary on the life of Michelle Obama, the former First Lady of the US, titled Becoming, saw a 13,000% surge in views on Netflix. According to data provider Luminate, the documentary was viewed for 354,000 minutes during the last week of January, and then it rose to 47.5 million minutes during the Jan 30 – Feb 1 weekend. The documentary was released in 2020 and is experiencing a resurgence now.

Sharib Hashmi says wife Nasreen's cancer relapsed for sixth time: 'She misses her old face'

The measure of an actor often lies in their capacity to unsettle expectation. Surprise is, perhaps, the purest expression of performance. It is what transforms a character from simply written to vividly remembered. Such moments seldom depend on prolonged screen time or elaborate character arcs. More often, they reside in the briefest of appearances, where an actor, with remarkable economy, reveals the depth of their craft and leaves a life-long imprint. Sharib Hashmi has built a career on precisely that ability. Whether in a brief appearance in Danny Boyle's Slumdog Millionaire or a supporting role in Yash Chopra's Jab Tak Hai Jaan, he has consistently found a way to stand out.

But the road to recognition was anything but easy. More than 700 auditions, mounting debts, shelved projects, films that never saw a release, Hashmi endured years of setbacks before finding his footing. Through every disappointment and uncertainty, it was his wife who remained his strongest pillar of support. Yet, as the actor revealed during an exclusive conversation with SCREEN, just when success finally came knocking, life dealt the family another devastating blow in the form of a life-threatening illness.

'My wife is a warrior' Hashmi credits Raj and DK's The Family Man with changing the course of his career. The series not only became a watershed moment for India's streaming landscape, but also brought him the widest recognition of his career. But its success unfolded alongside one of the traumatic chapters of his personal life. His wife, Nasreen, was diagnosed with oral cancer around the time he began shooting for the series in 2018. "We never imagined something like this would happen to us. And the irony is that she was diagnosed with oral cancer despite never having consumed tobacco or anything like that. When she was diagnosed, I had just started shooting for The Family Man. I was in desperate need of money, so I requested the producers to pay me my entire advance upfront. They were kind enough to do that."

While The Family Man transformed his professional life, Hashmi says the family was simultaneously fighting a far more important battle. "The series released, and suddenly my career took off. But at the same time, we were battling cancer. Somewhere, there was a sense of peace because things on the work front had finally started falling into place, but our lives had changed completely. She has



undergone five surgeries, and her face has changed entirely. Sometimes she tells me, 'I miss my old face.' Now the cancer has relapsed for the sixth time. It has spread near her lungs, into her bones, around her kidney. But she's incredibly brave and responding very positively to the treatment."

Speaking about his wife, Hashmi says she has been the family's greatest source of strength, not just through her illness, but long before it. "This journey has taught us so much. She's a warrior; I'm nothing compared to her. She's the one who has held all of us together. She supported me when I was struggling, and even today she's the one who keeps us going. There was a time when she sold her jewellery and we even had to sell our flat. Not once did she question my decisions or ask why we were doing all this. She stood by me through everything. And now, even after everything she's going through, she's still the strongest among us. She keeps telling us, 'Everything will be alright. Don't worry.'"

Listening to Hashmi, one is reminded of something he had said earlier in the conversation, that participation matters more than anything. For years, he and his wife kept showing up, believing in a dream that often gave them little in return. And when success finally arrived, it came hand in hand with a devastating diagnosis. But neither of them stopped participating. Perhaps that, more than anything else, is what their story is about. Perhaps that, more than anything else, is what life is about.