

Vayu launches air compressors for MSMEs in India

Hyderabad: Vayu, a new air compressor brand created for manufacturers and growing businesses, recently announced its launch in India with a portfolio of compressed air solutions designed to deliver dependable performance, operational simplicity and efficient ownership across diverse manufacturing requirements. The company is offering a 5–45 kW range of air compressors, available in fixed- and variable-speed configurations and designed for operating pressures ranging from 7 to 12.5 bar. The portfolio is supported by a range of accessories, genuine spare parts, comprehensive warranty coverage and nationwide service support.

Centre Denies Permission for US Visit, Revanth to Return to Hyderabad

Hyderabad, August 21

The Centre on Friday denied Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy permission to travel to the United States, where he was scheduled to oversee the signing of memoranda of understanding with higher education institutes. The Union ministry of external affairs said “clearance from political angle is denied”.

Following this, Revanth Reddy in a statement said he was shocked by the decision as the visit was meant to bring top global educational institutions to Hyderabad, but instructed officials who were part of the delegation to proceed with the US tour programme and to sign MoUs with educational institutions like Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), North-Eastern University and Virginia Tech.

Revanth Reddy will return to Hyderabad from London on August 23, after completing scheduled meetings in the UK. In the meantime, he will meet top Oxbridge (Oxford, Cambridge) and other top British Schools academics in London and sports institutions over the next two days.

The state government had sought the Centre’s permission for the trip to the UK and USA, as per policy and protocol, but only the UK let of the tour was approved. “The only purpose of the visit was to bring the world’s best institutions to India, to Telangana, to Hyderabad, as part of the New Education Policy of the Centre. They would have been an answer to our youth’s aspirations to get education, skills, and training from the best Ivy Leagues and top global institutions,” the Chief Minister said in response to the developments.

“I have always believed we should all think beyond politics and elections when it comes to nation building and the future of the youth,” Revanth Reddy said, adding that he was shocked by the “political denial” for a visit to further Telangana Rising, and contribute to the Viksit Bharat vision.

In his statement, Revanth Reddy said: “We will make Hyderabad a global knowledge hub. The creation of universities from Osmania to HCU to JNTU et al made Hyderabad a hub for the best human resources. A single school, Hyderabad Public School, has shown how we can lead the world, producing some of the greatest tech leaders. The start of IIT, ISB, IIIT, and Nalsar helped Hyderabad attract top corporations and their GCCs. Now, we will make Hyderabad the home for the world’s greatest education and skills institutions to power our 21st century journey,” he said.

Revanth Reddy will continue his scheduled programme of visits to Oxford, Cambridge, London School of Economics, the London Business School, University of London, among others, and interaction with their leadership. He will also be meeting with top sports institutions and skilling leadership in the United Kingdom, and try to formalise partnerships with Telangana.

“My resolve and endeavour to make Hyderabad one of the top global cities, where any common Indian can get education and a certificate from Harvard and Oxford, or an MIT and LBS or LSE, is because while most leaders have wanted to send their children abroad, I want to bring



the world’s best to India,” he added.

The Congress strongly condemned the BJP leaders for politicising the Chief Minister’s official international educational and investment tour. Government Whip Aadi Srinivas accused Telangana BJP leaders of being unable to tolerate or digest the rapid growth of the state. He reminded the BJP that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made over 103 foreign trips to 82 nations since 2014 and questioned why a Chief Minister’s visit to global institutions is viewed differently.

Vemulawada MLA Srinivas strongly criticised Nizamabad BJP MP Dharmapuri Arvind for claiming the Chief Minister was meeting ‘anti-India forces’, calling his statements absurd. He warned that the Congress government would deal strictly with anyone attempting to destabilise or unjustly attack the state leadership.

During a media briefing in New Delhi on Friday, external affairs ministry’s official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated that political clearance for Revanth Reddy’s proposed visit to the United States was denied because the submitted itinerary was deemed inappropriate for his office and the purpose of the visit.

Jaiswal explained that all international visits by Chief Ministers and high-profile dignitaries were thoroughly evaluated by the ministry before political clearances were granted. The MEA spokesperson said that the proposed schedule and agenda submitted for the United States leg of the trip did not conform to the ‘protocol requirements’ of a Chief Minister’s office.

Jaiswal clarified that while the US leg was blocked, the Central government had fully approved and granted political clearance for Revanth Reddy’s travel to the United Kingdom. “The visit of Chief Ministers, as indeed other dignitaries, is assessed by the ministry of external affairs to accord political clearance,” spokesperson Jaiswal said.

“The programme proposed in such cases should be appropriate to the office held and the purpose of the visit. In this particular case, that was not so in respect of the US,” he said at his bi-weekly media briefing while responding to a question on the issue. “Therefore, clearance has not been given. Incidentally, his visit to the UK has been cleared,” he added.

There have been instances of the MEA declining political clearances to Arvind Kejriwal and Mamata Banerjee to travel abroad when they were holding the Chief Minister’s post in Delhi and West Bengal respectively.

Telangana HC clears decks for advocate enrolment, sets aside interim stay

Hyderabad: Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice G.M. Mohiuddin of the Telangana High Court directed the Bar Council of Telangana to immediately resume the advocate enrolment process, setting aside an earlier interim stay.

The Bench passed these orders in a Writ Appeal filed by a law graduate, Kaluva Bhuvana Srija Reddy, challenging an order that kept the enrolment proceedings in abeyance.

Modi Urges Space Startups To Expand Into Agriculture, Environment

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday interacted with the CEOs and founders of 20 space start-ups at Seva Teerth, the Prime Minister’s Office, as India seeks to strengthen its private space industry and expand its presence in the global space sector.

Modi urged space companies to explore new applications of their technologies and focus on how these can make people’s lives easier. He assured them of the government’s full support and urged them to explore how space technology can be used in agriculture, livestock

He suggested greater collaboration between space-sector companies and companies working in other sectors. Companies working on space debris, he said, could work with environmental organisations to scale up their technologies. Similarly, space technology companies working with the agriculture sector could collaborate with agricultural universities and departments to help farmers make better-informed decisions and maximise their output.

The Prime Minister called for creating an ecosystem and an environment where, when the world thinks of space, it looks towards India. He said that India’s space sector can act as a magnet to attract global talent, companies and investment to the country.

Calling for closer collaboration with “Atal Tinkering Labs”, he said that this can create curiosity and interest in the space sector among young children from an early age.

The interaction saw participation from CEOs and Founders of 20 startups working in space sector, including Skyroot Aerospace, Agnikul Cosmos, Pixxel, Dhruva Space, GalaxEye, PierSight, Bellatrix Aerospace, Digantara, SatSure, Suhora Technologies, Manastu Space, Astrobase, TakeMe2Space, VyomIC, Cosmoreserve Space, OrbitAID Aerospace, SkyServe (Hyspace), Serendipity Space, Vassar Labs and mISTEO.

The CEOs highlighted the rapid progress being made by India’s private space industry and shared their vision for its future.

They said that their companies had invested significant time and effort in building capabilities and developing the required technologies indigenously in the country, while expressing gratitude for the support received from the Prime Minister.

They also highlighted the strong support from the government and collaboration within the industry, saying their teams were highly motivated and working with determination to achieve ambitious goals in the space sector.

The CEOs recalled that opening the space sector to private participation had generated significant enthusiasm and created new opportunities for industry. They also said several companies had shown interest in adopting and leveraging technologies developed by India’s emerging private space industry.



management, dairy, the environment and other areas that affect people’s everyday lives.

The interaction was attended by CEOs of leading companies in the space sector working in diverse fields, including rocket building, reusable semi-cryogenic launch vehicles, avionics, satellites, advanced propulsion systems, space and defence intelligence, space-debris removal, and AI-powered hyperlocal weather and climate intelligence.

The Prime Minister congratulated the leaders of the space sector for showing courage and taking the lead in a new area. He said the confidence shown by the sector had strengthened the vision behind opening the space sector to private participation.

Modi noted that many countries either cannot invest in the space sector or do not wish to invest in it and this gives India a major opportunity to rapidly strengthen its position in the global space sector.

The Prime Minister encouraged the space companies to explore new applications of their technologies and focus on how these can make people’s lives easier.

Vande Mataram not fully accepted even years after Independence: Amit Shah

New Delhi, August 21

For a long time even after Independence, Vande Mataram was not accepted from the core of the heart by some people, Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday. Addressing a gathering of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) at Siliguri, Shah recalled that despite the strategic significance of Siliguri Corridor (also known as the Chicken’s Neck), former West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee did not heed to the Centre’s repeated pleas to allot land for border fencing.

“Vande Mataram was sung in Parliament. Everyone used to stand up. But many people like me were saddened that even after Independence and the Partition, the entire Vande Mataram was not sung,” he said. The Minister said, “A few days ago, Independence Day was celebrated. Since 2015, whenever Prime Minister Narendra Modi has hoisted the national flag at the Red Fort, I used to be present there. But this year’s Independence Day ceremony was different. This was the first time that the entire Vande Mataram was sung. This is a unique creation of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay. It not only gave momentum to the freedom movement, but also gave it a vision of what an independent India should be like,” the Home Minister said.

FIR in pellet injury case after Rahul’s 7-hr dharna

New Delhi, August 21

High drama unfolded at Parliament Street police station on Friday as Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi staged a nearly seven-hour sit-in demanding an FIR over the alleged pellet-gun injuries suffered by a 19-year-old protester. The standoff ended in the evening after Delhi Police registered a case, which Gandhi described as the “first step towards justice”.

Gandhi reached the police station with Sahil Lochab and his mother after first approaching Mandir Marg police station to seek registration of the case. When the demand was not accepted, he met deputy commissioner of police (New Delhi) Sachin Sharma at Parliament Street police station, which also houses the DCP’s office.

In visuals released by the Congress, Gandhi is seen asking joint commissioner of police (New Delhi Range) Nupur Prasad and Sharma to register an FIR immediately and showing them Lochab’s injuries. After the officers refused, Gandhi said he was prepared to stage a dharna outside the station for “15, 20 or 30 days” and walked out of the room.

Gandhi then began a sit-in inside the police station and said he would not leave until an FIR was registered. The protest came exactly a month after he staged a demonstration outside the Prime Minister’s residence.

“We are only saying that an FIR must be lodged. Sahil is here and



his mother is accompanying him. Till an FIR is registered, we will not budge from here,” Gandhi said.

Gandhi alleged that officials had told him the FIR could not be registered because there were “orders from the top”.

“The police personnel here wanted to register the FIR, but there was a brake on justice from above,” he said, claiming that approval had to come from senior authorities, including Union home secretary Govind Mohan and Union home minister Amit Shah.

The protest drew senior Congress leaders, including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Jairam Ramesh, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Kumari Selja. Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav and members of the Indian Youth Congress and the NSUI also arrived, leading to a heavy rush in the area. Security was strengthened with the deployment of police and Rapid Action Force personnel.

The protest ended nearly seven hours later when police informed Gandhi that an FIR had been registered against unknown persons under Sections 118 and 125 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The provisions deal with voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt using dangerous weapons or means and acts endangering the life or personal safety of others.

Emerging from the police station in the evening, Gandhi said the delay raised questions about the functioning of the justice system.

“We arrived here at around 11.30 am. It is now almost 7 pm, and only then has the FIR been registered,” he said.

“This is the first step towards justice. An FIR has been registered. Look at how long it took,” Gandhi said, pointing out that nearly a month had passed since Lochab was injured.

Gandhi said pellets remained lodged in Lochab’s body, including three in his eye and several near his heart, and claimed that the youth had lost vision in one eye.

“This is a police station right in the heart of New Delhi, and justice is not being delivered here. Now imagine what happens at a police station in a village or a small town,” he said.

Lochab said Gandhi’s intervention had been crucial in getting his complaint registered.

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Section 22-A and Right to Property

This has been happening since 2013. The government has disregarded the Constitution of India. The judiciary has emphasised that depriving a citizen of the right to alienate their private property through executive instructions violates the constitutional right to property guaranteed under Article 300-A.

Before Justice CV Nagarjuna Reddy issued comprehensive, binding directions applicable across all districts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, there was a widespread practice of insisting on NOCs (No Objection Certificates), which forced common people to pay bribes. The directions categorically provided that registering officers shall not insist on NOCs from Revenue authorities as a precondition for accepting documents for registration.

In both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the legal and socio-economic suffering caused by the misuse of Section 22-A of the Registration Act, 1908, persists, despite the judgment. Section 22-A is said to have been intended as a statutory shield to protect public, religious, and government lands from fraudulent transfers, but it became a widespread tool of administrative harassment in both States.

Landowners with clear titles found themselves trapped in perpetual litigation due to arbitrary "prohibitors" issued by Revenue officials without statutory authority. Justice Nagarjuna Reddy of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, in *Raavi Satish v. State of AP* (2012), delivered a significant judgment aimed at curbing executive overreach and restoring property rights. The judgment examined the systemic issues, historical misuse, and the need for comprehensive directives.

Indiramma House Slab Work Begins in Wankidi Mandal Centre



"Kumrambheem, Asifabad.District. "Indian Chronicle" August.22." "Wankidi: As part of the Telangana State Government's ambitious Indiramma Housing Scheme, slab construction work for a newly built Indiramma house was formally inaugurated at Wankidi Mandal Centre on Friday. Former Wankidi Mandal Congress Party President Gurnule Narayana performed special prayers at the house and officially commenced the slab work. Speaking on the occasion, Gurnule Narayana said the government was implementing the Indiramma Housing Scheme with the objective of fulfilling the dream of owning a house for poor and middle-class families. He urged eligible beneficiaries to make proper use of the assistance provided by the government and construct quality houses. He stated that owning a house is a cherished dream for every family and expressed happiness that the Indiramma Housing Scheme is bringing hope and improving the lives of economically weaker families. "The house owners and family members expressed their happiness on the occasion, saying that their dream of owning a permanent house was becoming a reality with the support provided by the government." Local Congress leaders, party workers, village elders, family members and residents attended the programme and participated in the inauguration of the Indiramma house slab construction work.

VK Korean Derma Clinic Launches Skin and Hair Care Services



"Hyderabad, August 21 (Indian Chronicle) : VK Korean Derma Clinic has launched an authentic Korean skin and hair care experience centre in Hyderabad. The centre was inaugurated by Jubilee Hills MLA Naveen Kumar Yadav, clinic founder Karthik Putta said in a statement on Friday. Speaking on the occasion, Karthik Putta said the clinic offers personalised treatments using Korean technology under the supervision of experienced dermatologists. The clinic provides services for various skin and hair concerns, including pigmentation, melasma, acne, scars, hair fall, dandruff and hair transplantation. Dr Pranay Reddy heads the Hyderabad centre, while Dr Apoorva leads the Bengaluru centre, he added.

Wanaparthi MLA Megha Reddy demands suspension of Chinna Reddy

Hyderabad: Wanaparthi MLA Tudi Megha Reddy has complained against State Planning Board Vice Chairman G Chinna Reddy to the party high command and sought stern action against him. Megha Reddy, along with his supporters, met AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi on Friday and submitted a representation to him.

Karnataka Liquor Smuggling Route Unearthed in SR Nagar, 55 Bottles Seized



"Hyderabad Correspondent, August 21 (Indian Chronicle): Ameerpet excise police have uncovered an al-

leged interstate liquor smuggling operation in Hyderabad with the seizure of 55 bottles of premium and defence liquor reportedly sourced from Karnataka. The stock, valued at around Rs 1.5 lakh, was intercepted during checks near SR Nagar. Police arrested K. Govardhan Reddy, 46, in connection with the alleged illegal transportation and sale of the liquor. Investigators suspect that the accused was procuring liquor from Karnataka and bringing it into Hyderabad for resale at a higher margin. According to the police, the operation reportedly fetched him a profit of Rs 300 to Rs 500 on every bottle sold. With the liquor seized and the accused taken into custody, police have registered a case and launched a detailed probe into the source of the stock, its intended distribution points and possible involvement of other persons in the interstate supply chain.

Grand Varalakshmi Vratam Held at Velugu Gutta



"UPPAL, AUGUST 21 (INDIAN CHRONICLE) : Special puja rituals were performed with religious fervour on Friday at the Sri Durgamata Temple situated atop Velugu Gutta in Uppal, as part of the auspicious Shravana Masam celebrations. On the occasion of the second Friday of Shravana Masam, a grand mass Sri Varalakshmi Vratam

was organised at the temple. "The rituals began at 6 a.m. with a special Abhishekam to the Goddess using 16 sacred substances (Shodasha Dravyas). The deity was then beautifully decorated, followed by a mass Kumkumarchana. A large number of devotees participated in the rituals, offered prayers and had darshan of the Goddess. Devotees also offered Vadi Biyyam to the deity. "During Rahukalam, devotees lit lemon lamps and fulfilled their vows. Later, Maha Mangala Harathi was performed, followed by the distribution of Theertha Prasadam to devotees.

"A large number of devotees thronged Velugu Gutta to seek the blessings of Sri Durgamata, who is revered as the fulfiller of devotees' wishes. Temple Chairman Gorige Pedda Mallesha, EO Ram Naresh, Founder Trustee Gorige Mallesha Kuruma, Trust Board members Srikanth Reddy, Raju Naik, Krishna Reddy, Srinivas Goud, Ayireni Santosh, photographer Rukma Pal Reddy, Jashwanth Nagamani, Ramadevi, Anjamma, Balamani Deepti, Ailayya, Sunitha, Bandaru Manjula, Lakshmi and others participated in the programme.

Boire Prakash Speaks at CPI District Council Meeting...Calls for Party Strengthening and Resolution of Public Issues

"Kumrambheem, Asifabad.District "Indian Chronicle" August. 22." "Asifabad The Communist Party of India (CPI) conducted its District Council meeting on Friday at the Komaram Bheem Asifabad district headquarters. District Secretariat Member and Wankidi Mandal In-charge Boyire Prakash attended the meeting and addressed the gathering. "Speaking on the occasion, he said that the CPI's primary objective is to continuously fight for public issues and stand by the people. He urged party leaders and activists to work actively at the grassroots level by identifying the problems faced by people in rural areas and striving for their resolution. "He stressed the need to ensure that government welfare schemes reach every eligible beneficiary. Party workers should create awareness among the public about welfare programmes and bring unresolved issues to the attention of the concerned authorities, he said. "Boyire Prakash stated that special attention would be given to issues concerning roads, drinking water, education, healthcare, employment and farmers in Wankidi Mandal. He said the CPI would continue its struggles on behalf of the people and remain at the forefront in addressing the problems faced by the poor, farmers,



workers, labourers, tribal communities and weaker sections. He called upon party leaders and activists to work in coordination to further strengthen the CPI from the village level in the coming days. He emphasized the importance of maintaining close contact with the people, understanding their problems and expanding public movements for their resolution. "District-level CPI leaders, District Council members, mandal leaders and party activists attended the meeting.

Development works worth Rs. 60 lakh launched in Uppal Saibaba Colony-Uppal Congress Party in-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy inspects development works



"UPPAL, AUGUST 2 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Development works are progressing rapidly in Uppal Division, with Congress Party in-charge of the Uppal Assembly constituency, Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, regularly

monitoring their progress. As part of this initiative, Parameshwar Reddy visited Saibaba Colony on Friday and inspected the ongoing works along with local residents. "Development works worth Rs. 60 lakh, including the construction of CC roads, are being taken up in the colony. Parameshwar Reddy said that a new stormwater drainage system would be constructed to prevent drainage problems in Saibaba Colony. He also assured residents that the CC road works would be completed soon. "Saibaba Colony Welfare Association president Bikshapathi Goud, general secretary P.R. Subba Reddy, vice-president Yugandhar Reddy, Sunitha Narasimha Reddy, Tummala Devi Reddy, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Ramachandraiah, Srikanth, Naresh Goud, Maulana, Ramachari, Uppender Yadav, Ramana Reddy, Lakshma Reddy, Srinivas, Venkat Reddy, Suresh, Venkatesh, Damodar Reddy, Biksham Reddy, Anji Reddy, Narasimha and Satti Reddy, among others, participated in the programme.

Former Mayor Thotakura Ajay Yadav as Chief Guest at Chittaramma Pochamma Temple Re-consecration Ceremony

"BODUPPAL, AUGUST 21 (INDIAN CHRONICLE) The re-consecration ceremony of the Chittaramma Pochamma Temple in Indira Nagar Colony was held in a grand and devotional atmosphere. Former Mayor Thotakura Ajay Yadav attended the ceremony as the chief guest, offered prayers, and performed special rituals at the temple. "Speaking on the occasion, Thotakura Ajay Yadav wished that, with the blessings of Goddess Chittaramma Pochamma, all people would be blessed with happiness, prosperity, good health, and longevity. "Former Division



President Pogula Narasimha Reddy, Division President Bommak Kalyan, Kotha Kishore Goud, Chengicherla Division

President Pogula Dileep Reddy, Jakka Ramulu, Pullakandla Jangareddy, Dhanagalla Yadagiri, Vishwam Gupta, and others

participated in the programme. Temple committee members, local leaders, devotees, and a large number of colony residents attended the ceremony.

Action Taken to Replace Dangerous Electricity Poles...Chairperson Akash and Vice Chairperson Ahmed Inspect Wards

"Kumrambheem, Asifabad.District.Indian Chronicle August.22." "Asifabad: Asifabad Municipal Chairperson Akash and Vice Chairperson M.D. Ahmed conducted a special inspection in Wards 7 and 20 of Asifabad Municipality on Thursday. Accompanied by Electricity Department AE Lakshmirajam and local leaders, they visited several streets in the respective wards and inspected various civic and electricity-related issues. During the visit, they specifically examined old and damaged electricity poles that had become dangerous to the public. They interacted with local residents and assessed the condition of the poles and the risks they posed to pedestrians and residents. Speaking on the occasion, the municipal representatives said that the safety of the people is their top priority. They directed the concerned officials to remove the electricity poles that are in a dangerous condition at the earliest and replace them with new poles to prevent any untoward incidents. "They assured the residents that electricity-related problems in the wards would be addressed promptly and that necessary steps would be taken in coordination with the Electricity Department. BRS leaders Ettesham and Samad, along with ward residents and others, participated in the inspection programme.

Action Taken to Replace Dangerous Electricity Poles...

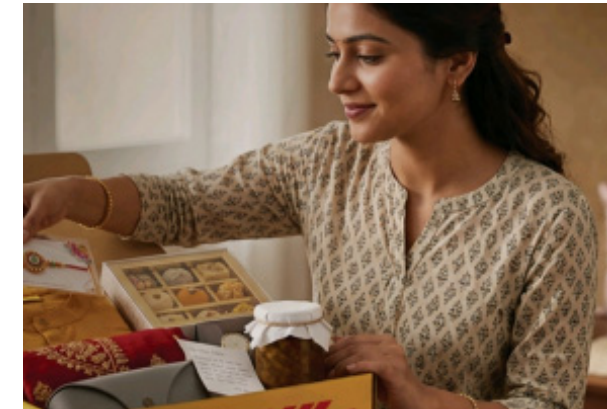
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Rare Kidney Transplant Successfully Performed at CARE Hospitals



"Hyderabad, August 21 (Indian Chronicle) : CARE Hospitals, HITECH City, has successfully performed an ABO-incompatible kidney transplant on a 60-year-old teacher, despite the patient and his wife having incompatible blood groups, CARE Hospitals COO Dr. Pramod Gupta said in a statement on Friday. The patient had been undergoing dialysis for the past two years and was also suffering from diabetes and hypertension. His wife donated her kidney for the transplant. The complex procedure was performed under the leadership of Dr. B.R.G. Aravind Reddy, Dr. Sushanth Kulkarni and Dr. J. A. I. Ranganath. The medical team used plasmapheresis and immunosuppressive therapy to overcome the blood group incompatibility and successfully complete the transplant. Dr. Gupta said that although the case was medically challenging, the transplant was successfully completed. The kidney donated by his wife has given the patient a new lease of life, he added.

DHL Offers 50% Discount Under 'Rakhi Express' Campaign



Hyderabad, August 21 (Indian Chronicle) : DHL Express is offering a flat 50 per cent discount on international shipments from India under its cRakhi Express' campaign, DHL Express India Vice President (Commercial) Sandeep Juneja said in a statement released in the city on Friday. He said the offer is valid until August 28 and can be availed using the promo code RAKHI-50. Customers can book shipments through DHL Express and Blue Dart retail service points, MyDHL+ or customer service. For further details, customers can contact 9833163620 or 9007264050, he added.

Janakapur School Teacher Vadluri Rajesh Selected for Singapore Educational Visit“



“Kumrambheem, Asifabad.Reporter. "Indian Chronicle"August. 22.“Wankidi: Vadluri Rajesh, a Biology teacher from the District Parishad High School at Janakapur in Wankidi Mandal, has been selected for the Teachers Exposure Visit and Education Exchange Programme to Singapore, organized by the Telangana School Education Department.A total of 29 teachers from across Telangana have been selected for the educational visit, including two teachers from Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district. Vadluri Rajesh is one of the selected teachers. The school Headmistress Uma Bala and the teaching staff congratulated him on this achievement and expressed their happiness over his selection.Rajesh is known for his dedication, commitment and innovative approach to teaching. He has been continuously encouraging students to participate in various competitions at the district, state and national levels. His efforts and achievements have also been recognized

through the publication of success stories in the SCERT e-Magazine and the NGC e-Magazine. With the aim of providing students with better practical learning opportunities, Rajesh established a Biology Laboratory at his own expense of around ₹50,000 at the school. It is considered one of the notable initiatives in the district to strengthen practical science education. For the past five years, Rajesh has been spending even his vacation time working with students and preparing them for various competitions. He has developed nearly 200 low-cost and no-cost Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) for effective science teaching and uses them to provide students with practical and field-based learning experiences.He also authored a useful educational book titled "From Thought to Practice", covering General Science, Soft Skills and Moral Values, which can benefit students from Class VI to XII as well as teachers. The book was formally launched by Director of School Education Dr. Naveen Nicholas.As an Impact Motivational Trainer, Rajesh has also conducted motivational sessions for students and teachers across the district.In recognition of his services,he received appreciation and a felicitation certificate from former Collector Venkatesh Dhotre."The Headmistress and teaching staff said that Rajesh's dedication, innovative teaching methods and commitment to students make him an inspiration to many teachers across the district. They congratulated him on his selection for the Singapore educational visit and expressed confidence that the exposure would further enhance his teaching practices and benefit his students.

Massive Influx into Congress Party

“Kumrambheem, Asifabad.District. Indian Chronicle. August.22.“Wankidi: Several BRS leaders and workers joined the Congress Party, believing that public welfare and development are possible only under the leadership of the Congress Party, said DCC President Atram Suguna.“A joining programme was held on Thursday at Ganeshpur village in Wankidi Mandal. During the programme, several BRS leaders and workers from Goyagaon village joined the Congress Party. DCC President Atram Suguna welcomed them into the party by presenting them with Congress party scarves.“Among those who joined the Congress were Sheikh Jameer, Sheikh Nabi, Sheikh Khaja, Syed Jalani, Sheikh S. Ship, Feroz, Dinesh, Chand, Rafiq, Wajid, Mohammed Khan and others. Around 100 people reportedly joined the Congress Party.“Speaking on the occasion, Atram Suguna said that the Congress government was giving priority to public welfare and development and was working towards the overall progress of the people. She called upon party leaders and workers to work collectively to fur-

ther strengthen the Congress Party from the grassroots level.“The newly joined leaders and workers assured that they would actively work for strengthening the party and taking the welfare and development initiatives of the Congress government to the people.“The programme was attended by Wankidi Mandal Congress President Gurunule Mengaji, former Mandal President Gurunule Narayana, DCC Vice-Presidents Tariq and Bhimrao, Selvatkar Penttu, Kadapa Maruthi, Samala Ramesh, Mandal Working President Dikonda Mahesh, Town President Dhanwalkar Kamallesh, Mandal Secretaries Upe Dharmaji and Jodi Prabhakar, Youth Congress Mandal President Uppala Krishna, and senior leaders Chidupudi Venkata Reddy, Durgam Hamsaraj, Porla Shankar, Kobragade Vilas, Bottipelli Jairam and Pandirala Gundaiah.“Sarpanches Bendare Krishnaji, Jabre Ganesh, Vadugure Santosh, Sedmaki Amrutha Ambarao and Pole Jyothi Patru, along with Wankidi Deputy Sarpanch Deepak Munde, and other Congress leaders and workers were also present.

Revant Reddy Faced Immense Struggles: SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER JANUMPALLY VENKATESWAR REDDY



“UPPAL, AUGUST 21 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Senior Congress leader Janumpally Venkateswar Reddy said Minister Konda Surekha needs to clarify several issues regarding the remarks made by her daughter, Sushmitha Revanth.“He demanded that the Minister explain why a political discussion arose during a family function and why she did not stop the remarks while they were being made. He also questioned why the Minister did not immediately condemn the comments after the video went viral. Venkateswar Reddy further sought clarification on whether

Sushmitha has any association with the Congress party.“Venkateswar Reddy said Chief Minister Revant Reddy had worked extremely hard to bring the Congress party to power in Telangana. During the party's time in opposition, Revant Reddy travelled extensively across the state, fought for public issues and faced police cases, arrests, detentions and humiliation while strengthening the party, he said.“He stated that Revant Reddy instilled confidence among party workers and helped restore public faith in the Congress. Thousands of workers like him stood by Revant Reddy because of their faith in his leadership, spending their own money for the party and facing hardships, including police action, he said.“Ultimately, the people of Telangana trusted Revant Reddy's leadership and handed over power to the Congress, Venkateswar Reddy said. In such a situation, speaking about Revant Reddy as if asking, “Who is Revant?” is painful and disrespectful, he remarked.“He said they knew where they stood during Revant Reddy's struggle and how much they worked for the Congress when the party was going through difficult times. He urged those who had attained positions not to forget the past and to respect the sentiments of party workers who made sacrifices for the Congress.“Venkateswar Reddy warned that they would not remain silent if there were attempts to conspire against Revant Reddy. If necessary, he said, they would place the political histories of individuals before the people.

Another Award for Photographer Datrupu Deva: Camera Reflects Society



---Recognition for 15 Years of Photojournalism; Honoured for the Second Time by the University of Hyderabad““UPPAL, AUGUST 21 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Eenadu photojournalist Datrupu Deva, who has been serving in the field of photojournalism for the past 15 years, has received another prestigious honour. On the occasion of World Photography Day–2026, he was presented with an award at a special programme organised by the Department of Communication, University of Hyderabad.“Deva received the award from Dr. Chelli Janardhan Rao, Associate Professor at the University of Hyderabad and Con- vener of the programme. It is noteworthy that this is the second time Deva has been honoured with an award by the University of Hyderabad.“Over the past 15 years, Datrupu Deva has earned recognition in photojournalism by bringing public issues, social injustices and the problems faced by ordinary people to the attention of society through his camera. His photographs have not only highlighted public issues but have also reflected his commit-

ment to social responsibility and journalism.“Journalists, photojournalists and media representatives congratulated Datrupu Deva on receiving yet another prestigious award and expressed their wishes for him to receive many more honours in the future.

Beerla Foundation Chairman Beerla Anitha celebrated Varalakshmi Vratam in a grand manner.. Government Whip..

Aleru MLA.. Beerla Ailaiah participated in the Vratam ““(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 21):-““On the occasion of Varalakshmi Vratam, Telangana State Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah's wife Beerla Foundation Chairperson Beerla Anitha installed Goddess Varalakshmi at her official residence in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad and performed special pujas. On this occasion, along with family members, they performed pujas and abhishekam to the Goddess according to the scriptures and prayed that all the people of the state may prosper with happiness, good health and wealth. Beerla Ailaiah extended his best wishes to all the people on the occasion of Varalakshmi Vratam. They wished that with the blessings of the Goddess, wealth, happiness, and peace would spread in every family.

Former MLA NVSS Prabhakar Reviews SIR Implementation with GHMC Officials in Uppal Constituency



““UPPAL, AUGUST 21 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): BJP leader and former MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar reviewed the implementation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of

electoral rolls in the Uppal constituency, the process of establishing new polling stations, pending works, and various public issues with the concerned officials.“As part of the review, Prabhakar separately met Malkajgiri Municipal Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy and Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta and held detailed discussions on several issues.

“He discussed measures to ensure that the SIR process is completed transparently and smoothly without causing inconvenience to the public, besides reviewing matters related to the establishment of new polling stations.“Prabhakar also brought pending development works and various problems being faced by residents in the constituency to the officials' attention and urged them to take immediate steps for their resolution. He called for expediting development works and ensuring speedy redressal of public grievances.

Former Councilor Padigela Renuka conducted the Varalakshmi Vrata Puja program in a grand manner

“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 21):- On the second Friday of the Shravan month, the Varalakshmi Vrata Puja program was conducted under the auspices of former Councilor Padigela Renuka. The goddess was decorated beautifully and various offerings were made. All the women performed the Varalakshmi Puja in a grand manner. After the Puja, the women gave each other musical instruments and took a bath. Speaking on the occasion, former councilor Padigela Renuka said that the Varalakshmi Vrata Puja, which comes once a year in the month of Shravan, has special importance. Especially on the occasion of Varalakshmi Vrata, women dress up the goddess in the form of Gouramma, decorate her beautifully, and observe the Varalakshmi Vrata with devotion and devotion. All the women wish for auspiciousness. They exchange turmeric, saffron, and vayanans with each other. With the blessings of the goddess, all the people of Bhuvanagiri town may be happy, healthy, and prosperous, especially for good rains. Revathi Ramana



Anasuya Lakshmi Lavanya Manemma Kalyani Mallamma Shyamala Latha Hariitha Sravanti Viveka and others participated in the program.

The pending land acquisition process under the projects should be completed expeditiously...



State Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy instructs district collectors““(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 21):- State Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy has instructed district collectors to complete

the pending land acquisition process under the projects as soon as possible so that the work of irrigation projects in the state can continue smoothly.“On Friday, State Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy held a review through video conference with the collectors of all districts from Hyderabad on the pending land acquisition under the irrigation projects.“In this context, Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy said that it is necessary to complete the pending land acquisition for the timely completion of the irrigation projects. He said that the government has immediately released Rs. 2,800 crore for the pending land acquisition, and the Chief Minister has approved this.“The Minister ordered the expeditious completion of pending land acquisition and rehabilitation works to create new ayacut. Since the necessary funds for land acquisition are available, the collectors were advised to complete the process without any delay and take steps to ensure that the project work is not hampered in any way. District Collector Anurag Jayanthi, Irrigation Department SE Ravinder and concerned officials participated in this video conference.

Land-related details and survey records should be examined at the field level and the problems should be resolved immediately

- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Anurag Jayanti““(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 21):-““District Collector Anurag Jayanti, who examined the land-related details and survey records at the field level, inspected the land-related details, survey records and field conditions of Vangapalli, Yadagirigutta mandal on Friday. The land details, boundaries and records related to the respective survey numbers in the village were examined and necessary suggestions were made to the concerned authorities.“The District Collector suggested that the authorities should take coordinated steps to examine the actual conditions at the field level and comprehensively resolve the land-related problems. AD Survey Sujatha Tahsildar and villagers participated in this inspection.



Formation of District Vigilance and Monitoring Committee



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Anuraga Jayanthi““(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 21):- District in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District District Collector Anurag Jayanthi has issued orders setting up the Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (DVMC). The district collector is chaired by the district collector, district public representatives, honorary members of parliament, members of the legislative council, legislators, district SP, SC, ST, district officials of women welfare departments, district agriculture department officer and others are members. Similarly, social perspective, public issues, rights of SCs, STs. Eight people in the district who are aware of the problems of conservation and victims have been ap-

pointed as committee members. The District Scheduled Caste Development Officer acts as the Member Secretary of the Committee. Committee meetings will be held once every three months. Protection of the rights of victims belonging to Scheduled Castes and Tribes, prevention of attacks on them, strict measures against the accused, rehabilitation of the victims, compensation etc. will be reviewed in the meetings and appropriate decisions will be taken.

Hyderabad wakes up to ‘tunnel’ discovery near Qutb Shahi tombs

Hyderabad: The city on Friday woke up to the discovery of a ‘tunnel’ near the historic Qutb Shahi tombs at Golconda. As the news spread across the city, people began thronging the Athara Seedi (18 Seedi) area, close to a playground adjoining the 400-year-old majestic royal necropolis.Initially, the ‘tunnel’ was found when the Indian Army personnel were clearing the vegetation and levelling the ground on Thursday evening.A sense of excitement and sensation prevailed as a team from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), along with the Revenue department and Indian Army, jointly conducted a survey at the site.

Congress government will resolve the issue of 22A prohibited lands



Telangana State Government Whip Beerla Ailaiah (Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 21):- Telangana State Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah spoke at a media conference at the Hyderabad Assembly Media Point. He made key comments on the issue of lands included in the list of 22A prohibited lands in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Beerla Ailaiah said that he had raised the issue of 22A prohibited lands in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district in the Assembly about four months ago. He said that he had requested the relevant Minister,

Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, and the State Minister, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, to resolve this issue. He said that the Minister responded positively to this and assured that justice would be done to the victims and the issue would be resolved.“ Beerla llayya said that due to the negligence and mistakes of some officials, many lands in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district have been included in the 22A prohibited list. He explained that the lands were registered as prohibited lands after the registration offices were informed that the relevant lands were within the scope of 22A as per the orders of the High Court. Beerla llayya clarified that it is not the intention of the Congress government to snatch the land of any poor person or cause trouble to anyone. He said that the Congress government is working for the welfare of the poor, SC, ST, BC, minorities and the weaker sections. He said that the Congress government is a government that provides lands to the poor and builds houses for them.“He criticized that the opposition parties are unnecessarily making a fuss about the government's many programs for the welfare and development of the people.“He said that the government has the responsibility to explain the facts to the people.“ Beerla llayah said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has assured that the eligible lands in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district will be removed from the 22A prohibited list and justice will be done to the victims. He said that due to the negligence of the authorities, the lands of about 39 thousand families have been caught in this problem. Beerla llayah clarified that the government is looking into this issue positively and will take steps to ensure justice to the eligible land owners. He stated that the aim of the Congress Praja Government is to protect the lands of the poor and provide justice to them.

Make padayatra a success for securing funds for pending projects in the district



CPI(M) State Committee Member Battu Palli Anuradha (Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. August 21):- A pamphlet was released at the Martyrs' Stupa under the auspices of the CPI(M) Bhuvanagiri Town Committee.“Bhuvanagiri town will organize a padayatra from Bhuvanagiri Ambedkar Square to Hyderabad Indra Park on the 29th, 30th and 31st of this month, demanding the release of funds for pending irrigation projects in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district and immediate completion of the work. Releasing the pamphlet on this occasion, State Committee Member Battu Palli Anuradha said that the non-completion of pending irrigation and drinking water projects even after ten years of the formation of the

district is a sign of government negligence. They demanded that funds be allocated for the works of Pillaipally, Dharmareddypalli, Gandhamalla and Basvapuram without any shortage and that they be completed as soon as possible. After the padayatra to be organized on the 29th and 30th, farmers, residents, people and party ranks have called for a large number of farmers, residents, people and party ranks to participate in the Mahadharna to be organized at Indira Park in Hyderabad on the 31st and make the program a success. CPI(M) city secretary Maya Krishna, city secretariat members Gandha Malla Mataiah, Bandela Yellaiah, Vanam Raju, city leaders Barla Venkatesh, Nara Narasimha, Kotha Lalitha, Manne Raju, DYFI city president Meda Pone Sundar and others participated in this program.

TG government upgrades Polytechnic colleges to create more opportunities““

Polytechnic colleges brought under the ambit of Young India Skills University“Enhanced employment opportunities for students through industry linkages“Conspiracies to create confusion under the guise of privatization“ Advanced Technology Centers (ATCs) emerging as hubs for employment in Telangana“Hyderabad:“In the fast changing competitive world to keep pace with evolving technological landscapes, one has to possess required skills and quickly adapt to the changes to grab the opportunities. Amidst the Artificial Intelligence (AI) is shaping the technological world, securing employment through outdated courses is impossible. Against this backdrop, honourable Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy established the Young India Skills University (YISU) with the resolve to create excellent employment opportunities for the youth.“Established under the Chief Minister's guidance, the Advanced Technology Centers (ATCs) were offering modern industrial training and courses designed to meet the needs of contemporary industries. Today , the ATCs have become hubs for employment and those trained at these ATCs have successfully secured jobs with attractive compensation packages. Now, the state government decided to bring polytechnic courses under the purview of the YISU with the aim of redesigning them to meet modern requirements.“ As employment opportunities for the youth improved and the government gained a positive reputation, opposition leaders hatched conspiracies for their own selfish political interests. They are creating confusion by spreading misconceptions that students and teaching staff would be adversely affected.“The rapid rise of AI is causing apprehension across all sectors. In this context, securing future employment requires proficiency in modern courses such as space technology, aeronautics, data center operations and management, banking, financial services, insurance, medical coding (combined with soft skills), data analytics, nursing excellence (finishing skills), industrial robotics, and automation in manufacturing.“Staying updated in these fields is essential for survival, as modern industries prioritize skilled professionals. The government decided to replace conventional polytechnic courses with advanced training to meet international standards. As part of this initiative, it has been decided to bring polytechnic institutions under the ambit of the Young India Skills University to foster partnerships with the industry. This move will not only enhance the quality of education but also equip students with the skills required by the industry, thereby opening up excellent employment opportunities for them in both domestic and international markets.““ Opportunity for Lateral Entry” “The state government is moving forward strategically with the aim of ensuring a bright future for Telangana students. At the same time, it is not undertaking any radical overhauls. The government clarified that there

would be no changes to the current status of the diploma education offered in polytechnics; AICTE regulations, curricula, academic standards, examination processes, and certification procedures will remain unchanged. The government has no plans to convert the diploma course into a short-term skill training programme. Opposition parties are causing anxiety among students by spreading the misconception that the ECET (Engineering Common Entrance Test) will be discontinued. However, the government is maintaining the ECET and the associated lateral entry opportunities into B.Tech programs based on the ranks secured in the exam.““ All assets of Polytechnic institutions are owned by the government” ““Even if polytechnic colleges come under the purview of YISU, the lands, buildings, laboratories, and other infrastructure belonging to these colleges will remain entirely under the control of the government's SHAKTI Department. The government is entering partnerships with industries solely to provide students with modern laboratories, access to new technologies, guidance from industry experts, internships, apprenticeships, and better employment opportunities. “ Service conditions remain unchanged.““Lecturers and other staff working in polytechnic colleges will get full protection of their service rules, cadre, promotions, and transfers. The staff will continue to be government employees. Polytechnic fees cannot be altered without government approval. Benefits such as scholarships, fee reimbursements, and reservation quotas for underprivileged students will continue as usual.“ “ Reforms are the primary objective” ““The Government also clarified that that GO 97 to abolish or privatize government polytechnics or alter their academic structure was false. These are merely misconceptions created deliberately. The government has initiated changes solely to further strengthen the technical education that government polytechnics have been providing for decades. The main goal of these reforms is to establish strong industry linkages and create better skill-development and employment opportunities for students.““ Securing Jobs are proof““Polytechnics are set to be revamped along the lines of ATCs (Advanced Technical Centers) to upgrade skills of the youth in tune with evolving market demands. More than a 1000 students who completed courses offered by various organizations at the Young India Skills University have secured placements with companies like Microsoft, Tech Mahindra, and Dr. Students have secured jobs in companies such as Dr. Reddy's, Power Mech, and Apollo Hospitals. Industries are providing training tailored to their specific needs at Advanced Technical Centers (ATCs) and the Skills University. Companies are offering attractive compensation packages to those who complete this training. With these recent changes, polytechnic students will undergo training in cutting-edge technologies and secure employment with leading organizations.

Welfare and Care of Elderly Are the Responsibility of Heirs



Junior Civil Judge Aparna Malladi“Manthani, Peddapalli District, August 21 (Indian Chronicle): A legal awareness programme was organised at the court premises in Manthani on the occasion of World Senior Citizens' Day, highlighting the rights and welfare of elderly persons.“Speaking at the

programme, Manthani Principal Junior Civil Judge Kumari Aparna Malladi said that the welfare and care of senior citizens is the responsibility of their legal heirs. She explained that under the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) can conduct an inquiry into complaints concerning elderly persons and issue appropriate orders.“She further stated that courts may impose a maximum punishment of three months' imprisonment and a fine of up to ₹5,000 for violations of the provisions of the Act.“Senior advocates K. Raghotham Reddy and Suvama Chandrasekar explained the provisions of the senior citizens' welfare legislation and the legal protections available to elderly persons.“Members of the State Government and Singareni Workers' Pensioners Association, along with advocates Katakam Srinivas, Sadan Kumar, Shashibhushan Kache and others, attended the programme.

If you have a fever don't be negligent get tested right away..

Central team's take on malaria control.““Mulugu/Venkatapuram.indian Chronicle.August 21.““ Laxman, Ashok, Suresh, the representative of Malaria Central Team on Friday looked into prevention and control measures for diseases such as malaria, dengue, typhoid at Venkatapuram Primary Health Centre. The medical officer checked the lab following a meeting with Ujistar Goud and looked at patient tests, records and actions taken on fever cases.“Staff were instructed to identify suspected cases of malaria in rural areas early and collect blood samples for testing, while those who tested positive should be treated promptly. People were made aware that mosquito nets must be consumed in addition to keeping the surroundings clean and they should contact health workers and hope activists as soon as there is a fever.“The event was attended by CHC medical staff such as SUO Narasimharavu, HEO Kotireddy, Lab Technician Ganesh, Health Assistants Raghav, Bhaskar etc.



Deputy Sarpanch Thanks Minister Sridhar Babu for Sanctioning 29.94 Crore for BT Road

“Manthani, August 21(Indian Chronicle): Surayyapalli Deputy Sarpanch Arelli Suchitha Varun Goud expressed gratitude to Telangana Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu and TPCC State General Secretary Srinubabu for sanctioning ₹29.94 crore for the construction of a BT road connecting Surayyapalli, Meeduga Kakarlapalli, Ramakrishnapur and Seethampalli in Manthani mandal of Peddapalli district.“The leaders said the foundation stone for the BT road works had been laid and appreciated Minister Sridhar Babu for his continued efforts towards the development of Surayyapalli village.“Varun Goud said he had requested Minister Sridhar Babu to sanction three metal roads in the village, which would greatly benefit farmers by providing better transportation facilities for agricultural activities.“He appealed to the minister to sanction the proposed roads keeping the interests of farmers in mind. He also urged the people of Surayyapalli village to extend their cooperation during the road widening works.



Devotees Offer Special Prayers at Mahalakshmi Temple on Varalakshmi Vratam



Manthani Peddapalli District, August 21(Indian Chronicle): On the occasion of Varalakshmi Vratam, celebrated during the auspicious month of Shravan, devotees offered special prayers at the local Sri Mahalakshmi

Amnavari Temple.“Temple priest Marupaka Prashanth Sharma performed special abhishekam and archana to Goddess Mahalakshmi. The deity was beautifully decorated with a variety of flowers, attracting the attention of devotees.“Women devotees performed Kumkumarchana in large numbers on the temple premises and offered saare and odi biyyam to the goddess. Many women also performed the Varalakshmi Vratam at their homes and exchanged vaayanam with married women, seeking their blessings.“The Mahalakshmi Temple, along with several Shaiva and Vaishnava temples across the town, witnessed a steady flow of devotees from morning until night. Bhajan programmes were also organised in the evening, with a large number of devotees participating in the celebrations.

Man Held for Cheating Woman on Marriage Promise, Threatening Her



““MEDIPALLY , AUGUST 21 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally police have registered a case against a man for allegedly having a physical relationship with a woman after promising to marry her, later refusing to marry her and threatening her.“According to police, Dhanavath Akhila (24), a staff nurse residing in Mallikarjun Nagar, Boduppal, became acquainted with Tejavath Sai Kiran (29), a native of

Peddathanda in Turkapally mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, in 2021, and their acquaintance developed into a relationship. In her complaint, Akhila alleged that Sai Kiran promised to marry her in 2023 and subsequently had a physical relationship with her at a lodge in Uppal and at his residence. She also alleged that he received financial assistance from her.“Police said that when Akhila questioned him about marriage in 2025, Sai Kiran refused. She then approached the police, following which he reportedly gave a written assurance in the presence of elders that he would marry her. Despite this, he allegedly continued the relationship but again refused to marry her when she raised the issue. He subsequently blocked her phone number and allegedly threatened her, according to the complaint.“Based on Akhila's written complaint, Medipally police registered Crime No. 1205/2026 under Sections 69 and 351(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The investigation is being conducted by SI Anandapu Ravi under the directions of Inspector D. Jalender Reddy.

Power Supply Disruption in Habsiguda Section Today — Habsiguda Electricity Department AE V. Ganesh

“HABSIGUDA August 21 (Indian Chronicle): Power supply will be disrupted in two 11 KV feeders under the Habsiguda electricity section due to tree-cutting and maintenance works, Habsiguda Assistant Engineer V. Ganesh said.“11 KV ISI Feeder: Power supply from this feeder, emanating from 33/11 KV Substation No. 8, will be suspended from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM. The affected areas include JSN Colony, Vignaanpuri, Shobhanagar, Vivekanandanagar, Ravindranagar 19th to 27th lanes,

Brindavan Colony, Snehnagar and surrounding areas.“11 KV CCMB Feeder: Power supply from this feeder, emanating from the 33/11 KV IICT substation, will be suspended from 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM. The affected areas include Bhavani Nagar, Rajiv Nagar, VST Colony, Srinagar Colony and areas along Nacharam Main Road from HMT Kaman to Poleramma Temple.“Electricity department officials appealed to consumers to take note of the scheduled interruption and cooperate with the department.

Only elite members, 93.72% commercial functions: BMC’s action against prime NSCI explained

GNS News Agency, August 21

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Thursday ordered the National Sports Club of India (NSCI) in Worli to suspend all non-sporting events within the club for 30 days over multiple lease violations, including unauthorised construction, and pending property tax dues. The development comes at a time when the Maharashtra government has initiated a major crackdown against all Gymkhanas and clubhouses in Mumbai that stand on leased public lands and a month after two individuals died from drug overdose during a concert at the NSCI dome. “We have given the NSCI 30 days to submit a response to our notice. Failure to which will lead to revocation of the lease. In the meantime, all commercial activities in the stadium will be stopped,” an official told the Indian Express. Members and spokesperson of the NSCI have remained unavailable for comments.

IThe NSCI stands on a prime 18-acre land facing the Arabian Sea in south Mumbai’s Worli. Originally owned by the BMC, the land was handed out to the club in 1953 for a 99-year lease to promote sporting events in Mumbai. However, the club started catering to a handful of citizens, limiting its membership to the city’s elite. But an audit by the Comptroller and Audit General (CAG) and Public Accounts Committee (PAC) revealed that 93.72% (194 out of 207) of events hosted at the facility between 2020 and 2025 were commercial functions rather than athletic activities – a breach of the 1993 lease agreement. According to the notice issued to the NSCI administration, the BMC had carried out multiple site inspections at Worli where it found municipal land earmarked specifically for promoting sports and public athletic development was being used almost

Amend plea against metallic pellet guns: SC tells petitioners

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the petitioners seeking a ban on the use of metallic pellet guns for dispersing civilian assemblies to amend their plea to specifically challenge the police regulations permitting the use of such weapons in exceptional circumstances, while directing the Delhi government to ensure medical treatment for those injured during the July 20 student protests. A Bench of Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana was hearing a plea filed by former Intelligence Bureau (IB) Special Director Yashovardhan Azad and two persons who allegedly suffered pellet injuries during the ‘Sansad Chalo’ protest at Jantar Mantar.

Advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for the petitioners, submitted that the plea was specifically concerned with metallic pellets fired from pump-action rifles or projectile action guns, which had allegedly been recovered from the bodies of two injured petitioners. During the hearing, Justice Bagchi observed that police regulations permit the use of pellet guns in exceptional circumstances as part of a graded response and told the petitioners that their prayer seeking a blanket ban was “vague” unless the validity of the relevant regulations was challenged. “We are not averse to examining use of pellets in an individual use. But you must show us if under the graded response use of pellets can be allowed,” Justice Bagchi observed. Grover submitted that there was a distinction between rubber, plastic and metallic pellets and said the present case concerned metallic pellets allegedly fired at students who were protesting peacefully.

She also told the CJI Kant-led Bench that she could not find any standing order of the Delhi Police permitting the use of pellet guns and urged the Centre to place any such order on record. “I am sure the Union and the Delhi Police do not wish to fire pellets at innocent youngsters,” Grover submitted. The Supreme Court indicated that instead of seeking an absolute prohibition, the petitioners could seek appropriate safeguards or a protocol governing the use of pellet guns in light of allegations of excessive force. “In light of alleged excessive use, your prayer should be that the Court lays down a protocol regarding the use,” the CJI Kant-led Bench observed. Justice Bagchi also referred to an ear-

‘Can’t study when it rains’: Kids in this Yavatmal village share study space with garlic, hula hoop

GNS News Agency, August 21

“When it rains, the sound on the plastic roof is so loud that we can hardly study. Sometimes, we cannot study at all” – These words came from Ruchika Diwalkar, a nine-year-old Class 3 student in the Marki-Khurd village of Zari Jamni taluka, Yavatmal district, Maharashtra. Like her classmates, Ruchika knows the struggles of being a student during monsoon season in this Yavatmal village. Monsoon in Maharashtra typically stretches until the end of September. Ruchika does not have a normal classroom with a blackboard and some chalk. Instead, she studies in a temporary shelter at the Zilla Parishad’s primary school, with a green shade net and plastic sheets stretching over bamboo poles, tied together to serve as a classroom.

Inside, some students sit in a circle on the floor with the teacher as multiple bulbs of garlic, a cricket bat, a hula hoop, school supplies, some games, cardboard boxes, and a stack of plastic chairs lie in the background. Yavatmal village school, teacher student sit on floor Inside the classroom, some students sit in a circle on the floor with the teacher (Express photo) Until last year, the Zilla Parishad had two school buildings, accommodating two classrooms (varga-kholi), but one was declared unsafe and later demolished. In 2026, when schools are being made tech-enabled, this Yavatmal school continues to seek basic infrastructure to continue education. This is also the district that drew national attention for a number of farmer suicides.

The story of this Yavatmal school At least 21 students, between Classes 1 and 5, study at this government-run Zilla Parishad (primary school). The school originally had two classrooms in two small buildings. In 2025, one was demolished after being declared dangerous, leaving the two teachers and the students with only one single room. One room to accommodate students of five grades, teaching materials, and also run a kitchen for the mid-day meal scheme. “We have Classes 1 to 5 with only 21 students, but after one building was demolished, we were left with just one classroom. The remaining room stores mid-day

exclusively as an entertainment and revenue-generating venue.

“Clause 12 specifies that while the clubhouse is reserved for club members, the Olympic Oval Stadium must remain open to school children and registered sports organizations on non-event days. Additionally, the stadium must be made available for at least 15 special events annually for activities organized directly by the BMC or under the direction of the Municipal Commissioner,” the BMC’s notice states, highlighting that NSCI failed to produce any documentation proving that rules for public usage were ever submitted to or approved by the Municipal Commissioner, while the stadium was routinely blocked for commercial functions. Furthermore, municipal queries found that NSCI owes pending property tax dues around Rs 61.5 crore. The BMC’s notice also states physical inspections conducted by the civic body’s estate department and ward officers, revealing extensive unauthorised structural alterations. These violations include the construction of a 20-foot-high wall in the front open space of the Palace Hall and Ballroom to subdivide the plot for generator placement, an unapproved temple built within the premises, and site offices and storage godowns constructed directly touching the compound wall near Entrance D and T-3 gate. Furthermore, two large areas marked on sanctioned architectural plans as “sports halls” were illegally converted into banquet venues serving food and alcohol, while an equipment storage room was transformed into a 200-seat multiplex movie hall operating without a Fire Department No-Objection Certificate (NOC) or an Urban Land Ceiling (ULC) clearance required for a full Occupation Certificate.

lier case concerning police regulations in Kolkata, observing that a rule prescribing where bullets should be fired had been struck down, and said the petitioners would have to demonstrate how the rules permitting the use of pellets were arbitrary. The apex court agreed with the petitioners that peaceful protests should not be met with violence and stressed the need for a proportionate response by law enforcement agencies.

“We are agreeable to a non-violent approach when students protest. But a graded response may be required in some cases. Arm your police in such a way that they don’t have to revert to such actions,” Justice Bagchi observed. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, submitted that police personnel at the protest site were equipped with protective gear and that the forces had to take decisions based on the situation prevailing at the spot. The petitioners also raised concerns regarding the medical treatment of the injured protesters. Grover submitted that while one petitioner was receiving proper treatment, the medical records of another injured petitioner had not been released by the hospital. The top court asked the Solicitor General to look into the issue. In its interim direction, the CJI Kant-led Bench ordered that the “Government of Delhi shall provide medical treatment to the injured petitioner or other similarly placed individuals.”

Grover further sought preservation of duty logs, weapon and ammunition logs and registers relating to the deployment of the Rapid Action Force in New Delhi on July 20, particularly records concerning the use of pellet guns. SG Mehta agreed that the relevant records could be preserved, following which the CJI Kant-led Bench impressed upon him to ensure their preservation. The plea, filed by Azad, a former Special Director of the Intelligence Bureau and former Central Information Commissioner, has challenged the use of metallic kinetic projectiles or pellets fired from pump-action rifles and projectile action guns for dispersal of civilian assemblies. The petitioners have sought compensation for persons injured by pellets during the July 20 protest, besides medical treatment for the victims. They have alleged that the Rapid Action Force used pellet guns against protesters who had gathered at Jantar Mantar for the ‘Sansad Chalo’ march, resulting in pellets penetrating the bodies of at least two persons who required medical intervention.

meal supplies, school cupboards and also accommodates students. To ensure children have enough space to sit, we put up a plastic sheet and green net outside and conduct classes there,” one of the school teachers, Avinash Kudmete, said. Yavatmal school kids studying in makeshift tent Some students are forced to study outside the only classroom (Express photo) Since there are only two teachers in this Zilla Parishad School, it has to follow a multi-grade teaching model – some kids are slotted to sit outside the classroom under a green net shed, while some sit inside, depending on the timetable. “Sometimes one teacher teaches Marathi while the other teaches English, and students of another class solve mathematics simultaneously. This is how we manage multi-grade teaching,” Kudmete said. Of the 21, at least two children have to march to the school every day from the neighbouring hamlet of Salebhathi as their village does not have a primary school. Reason? Its low population. Yavatmal school classroom Until last year, the Zilla Parishad had two school buildings accommodating two classrooms (varga-kholi), but one building was declared unsafe and later demolished (Express photo) The situation has, however, remained even as construction of a new classroom has been sanctioned by the authorities. “We have been told that a new building has been sanctioned, but construction has not started. Even the place where we are currently conducting classes has been marked as unsafe. We have no alternative space,” the teacher said. Tender process is underway: Zilla Parishad officials “The school had two classrooms. A demolition notice for one classroom was issued on March 21, 2025, and it was subsequently demolished. The administrative approval for the construction of a new classroom was granted on January 30, 2026, by the previous Zilla Parishad CEO. The process is in its final stages and the tender process is underway,” Dhotre told He told this newspaper that the construction of a new school building is expected to begin within two months, adding that the remaining classroom requires only minor repairs.

How Gurgaon’s 28-km Metro line will make your daily commute easier

GNS News Agency, August 21

For commuters in Gurgaon, changing Metro lines could soon mean a walk across platforms instead of a trip outside the station. The city’s upcoming 28.5-km loop will create seamless interchanges with existing and upcoming transit networks while extending connectivity to areas of Old Gurgaon that have remained outside the Metro grid. Running in a continuous loop, the line will start at Millennium City Centre on the Delhi Metro’s existing Yellow Line. It will cover areas such as Sector 45, Cyber Park, Subhash Chowk, Palam Vihar, Udyog Vihar Phase 1, Cyber City, before terminating at Sector 101 on the Dwarka Expressway spur. (see map) After inspecting the entire alignment on Monday, Chander Shekhar Khare, Managing Director of Gurugram Metro Rail Limited (GMRL), outlined the project’s two key engineering solutions: high-capacity multi-modal transfer hubs that will allow passengers to change trains within a common concourse, and double-decker elevated tracks for the narrow stretches of Old Gurgaon.

Interchanges for quicker transfers The biggest interchange points on the 27-station ring line are planned at Cyber City and Millennium City Centre. At Cyber City, engineers are designing a terminal station equipped with a double vestibule. It will allow commuters to hop directly between the new GMRL line, the existing Rapid Metro, and the upcoming Delhi-Alwar rapid rail corridor inside a single, paid concourse. At Millennium City Centre, the new line will connect directly with the Delhi Metro’s Yellow Line through a platform-to-platform interchange, allowing passengers heading towards Samaypur Badli to switch trains without exiting through gates or undergoing security checks again. Additional multi-modal integration points are planned at Subhash Chowk to link with the proposed Bhondsi line; at Hero Honda Chowk for the Delhi-SNB RRTS; at Sector 5 for the Gurugram Railway Station; and at Sector 10 for a planned mega bus terminal.

54 arrests in 90 days: Thailand, Vietnam drug routes under scanner at Kolkata airport

GNS News Agency, August 21

In the first quarter of the 2026–27 financial year alone, 54 people—53 Indian nationals and 1 foreign national—were arrested at the Kolkata airport as authorities cracked down on massive drug smuggling networks. As per data available with from April to June, the Air Intelligence Unit (AIU) under the Office of the Commissioner of Customs (Airport and Air Cargo Complex Commissionerate) registered 58 individual cases and seized a staggering 396.745 kilograms of ganja. This high-volume recovery points to an aggressive, intelligence-led enforcement drive aimed at shutting down key international drug transit routes operating through the region. Investigation into these smuggling operations revealed that the vast majority of the intercepted narcotics originated in Thailand’s capital, Bangkok, with secondary streams arriving on international flights from Phuket, also in Thailand, Vietnam’s capital Hanoi, and Singapore.

As per officials, the quarter saw a rapid, month-over-month surge in both detections and intercepts. The trend began in April 2026 with 10 cases logged, resulting in 10 arrests of Indian nationals and the recovery of 37,811 grams (roughly 37.8 kg) of ganja. By May, operations accelerated as cases more than doubled to 23, yielding 168,175 grams (around 168.2 kg) of seized contraband and leading to 19 arrests, of which 18 were Indian nationals and 1 was a foreign national. Enforcement reached its peak in June 2026 with 25 distinct cases registered, an interception of 190,759 grams (nearly 190.8 kg) of ganja, and the arrest of 25 Indian nationals. Across all three months, official preliminary

Rs 28.5 crore cash, 15 kg gold bars found at ex-Bengal bus driver’s home



GNS News Agency, August 21

At daybreak police in Bengal’s Birbhum loaded Rs 28.5 crore in cash and 15 kg in gold bars – worth an estimated Rs 21.3 crore – into six vans and a large transport vehicle, and drove away. The money and gold had been seized from the home of a local businessman – Muhammad Minar Mandal, a former West Bengal government bus driver – whose family is known to be closely associated with senior Trinamool leader Anubrata Mondal.

Mandal was arrested Thursday. He has not commented, so far, on the cash and gold recovery but his son has claimed the family did not know of the fortune hidden inside their home. The police have said Mandal is related to Muhammad Najibuddin – also called ‘Tulu’ Mandal – who is

Mirage 2000, MiG-21s strike turned tide of war in Kargil

Dras/New Delhi: The deployment of Mirage 2000 jets, which carried precision laser-guided bombs, as well as the MiG-21s and MiG-27s under Operation Safed Sagar dealt a “decisive and crushing blow” to the adversary and hastened their withdrawal from strategic heights in the 1999 Kargil conflict, a senior IAF officer said. Under Operation Safed Sagar, the Indian Air Force used high-precision bombs to target the enemy for the first time. The nation marked the 27th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas on July 26, and many Kargil war veterans, including a retired IAF officer who was part of the operation, attended the commemoration at the Dras memorial. Also, a new webseries — ‘Operation Safed Sagar: The Untold Story of the Kargil War’, which depicts the tale of the then Golden Arrows squadron, is set to premiere on August 7. “During Operation Safed Sagar, the IAF was pressed in for providing air support to take out intruders at strategic heights. The weight of the attack was deliv-

GMRL is attempting an ambitious spatial fix along the stretch from Sector 7 to Cyber City. As the line will pass through congested residential pockets where roads are narrow, GMRL and the Gurgaon Metropolitan Development Authority are evaluating double-decker station designs at Bajghera Road and Sector 21. By stacking Metro tracks directly above existing road flyovers within the same median footprint, the project aims to avoid aggressive land acquisition while preventing severe traffic chokepoints. Metro to expand into underserved areas While the ring completes a full circuit through the city’s commercial nerve centers, Old Gurgaon and the Dwarka Expressway belt are set to gain the most from this layout. For decades, densely populated areas such as Sectors 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, Basai, and Palam Vihar were entirely omitted from the Metro grid, forcing lakhs of daily commuters onto congested arterial roads or autorickshaws. This loop brings Old Gurgaon directly onto the map, connecting residential neighborhoods directly to office hubs in Cyber City and Udyog Vihar. The Dwarka Expressway belt, which has seen rapid growth of high-rise housing societies, will also get a direct link through a two-station spur line from Basai Village to Sector 101. The first Rs 1,503-crore package (Package CC-01), awarded to the Dilip Buildcon-Ranjit Buildcon joint venture, covers a 15.2-km stretch and has a 30-month construction timeline. Casting yards are operational, producing precast concrete segments for the elevated viaduct, while piling and pier work is underway between the GMDA office and Hero Honda Chowk. The narrow Old Gurgaon stretch, designated as Priority-2, is being prepped for the next phase with World Bank funding assistance. According to timelines discussed in meetings chaired by Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh, GMRL has set August 2028 as the completion deadline for the primary Millennium City Centre-Sector 9 corridor. Officials are pushing contractors to complete major civil structures in Package 1 by late 2027 to allow early trial runs.

financial valuations remained documented at zero pending formal market assessments.

Mode of smuggling The illicit cargo was split across both checked luggage and hand baggage, officials said. Smugglers used sophisticated concealments to mask the contraband during transit and obscure it from standard X-ray screening or physical Customs checks, they added. “We have uncovered ganja hidden inside commercial chocolate packets and wrapped sweet containers, built directly into the hollow inner side-walls and lining of trolley bags, packed in multi-layered plastic and vacuum-sealed airtight pouches, and layered between ordinary personal belongings,” said an official. To defeat these complex concealment techniques, Customs officials said they rely on real-time actionable intelligence, scientific passenger profiling, advanced risk assessment matrices, and continuous physical surveillance. Beyond analytical methods, teams at the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport operate alongside eight dedicated, highly trained K-9 sniffer dog units on the floor, who play a major role in pinpointing hidden organic substances inside tightly sealed baggage. As per officials, Kolkata Customs has expanded public prevention efforts by placing dedicated awareness standees throughout airport passenger areas. These displays educate travellers on the severe legal penalties surrounding drug trafficking, emphasise full compliance with narcotics laws, and underline the department’s firm stance on keeping international flight paths secure while encouraging travellers to share credible tips on illegal operations.

a prominent local businessman with ties to the TMC’s Mondal. Mondal was earlier heading the Trinamool’s Birbhum district office and was once close to ex-chief minister and party boss Mamata Banerjee. In August 2022 he was interrogated and arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation for not co-operating with its probe in a cattle smuggling case.

‘It began as a routine robbery probe’ On Tuesday the police arrested seven suspects – Arjun Lohar, Sheikh Giyasuddin, Sheikh Farjuddin, Pulok Saha, Sheikh Firoz Ahmed, Abhinav Bhatsa, and Rabi Kumar Gupta. On interrogation the suspects led the cops to Mandal’s home in the Deucha neighbourhood. The police then discovered the large amount of illegally amassed cash and gold. Informants told the cops it had been amassed by an organised crime syndicate led by ‘Tulu’ Mandal. “During the search at the house of Muhammad Minar Mandal, police recovered approximately Rs 28.5 crore in cash and 15 kg of gold bars...” Vidity Raj Bhundesh, Superintendent of Police (Birbhum), said. What the Bengal government said Addressing the media on Wednesday, Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari issued a stern warning against corruption and targeted the previous administration, i.e., led by Mamata Banerjee. “Our government will maintain a zero-tolerance policy against corrupt individuals. No one involved in corruption will be spared. Anyone who has amassed wealth through wrongdoing, looting public assets, or colluding with the then-ruling party will face the full weight of the law.”

ered to the enemy positioned at very high altitude — one of the highest altitudes where air power was used, world over then,” IAF spokesperson Wg Cdr Jaideep Singh told PTI. The IAF used MiG-21s, MiG-27s, and Mirage 2000s — which carried the precision laser-guided bombs (LGBs) — that dealt a “decisive and crushing blow to the adversary and hastened their withdrawal from those heights in Kargil,” he said. Also, the helicopters of the IAF provided crucial support and helped in casualty evacuation while transport aircraft supplied heavy lift logistic load to the forward airfields, the officer said. The Kargil War Memorial at Dras stands in testimony to the supreme sacrifice of over 500 bravehearts who laid down their lives in the line of duty. A monumental obelisk at the centre of the memorial carries the words ‘Op Vijay’ — under which the Indian Army fought nearly three-month-long battles in rugged terrains and difficult peaks.

Karnataka rights panel to visit families of ‘poachers’ killed in ‘encounter’



GNS News Agency, August 21

The Karnataka State Human Rights Commission (KSHRC) visited the Hanur forest in Chamarajanagar district on Wednesday as part of an inquiry into the alleged encounter killings of three suspected poachers and the subsequent violence. Its team will also meet the three men’s families, an official said.

Three suspected poachers—Antony Swamy, 50, Jone Rose Peter, 42, and Kumar Sawariyappan, 35—were killed and a fourth—Joseph Das, 44—was injured in a shootout that took place inside Hanur forest range early on August 15. This triggered a massive protest in Hanur town by the relatives of the victims. The government has defended forest officials involved in the shooting, saying the alleged poachers refused to surrender and attacked the officials. The victims’ families, however, say the men were searching for cattle when they were shot.

The commission took suo motu cognisance of the in-

cident and directed a team led by Deputy Superintendent of Police Ashwath Narayana to inspect the “encounter” spot and examine whether there were any procedural or human rights violations by the authorities. The KSHRC team is examining the sequence of events leading to the deaths, the alleged vandalism of forest department watchtowers by a mob following the incident, and the response of forest personnel. Investigators are also collecting physical evidence, examining departmental records and recording statements from villagers, eyewitnesses, and forest officials. The killings were condemned in Tamil Nadu due to the victims’ Tamil origins. They also drew questions from the Opposition BJP in Karnataka.

A senior police officer familiar with the KSHRC inquiry told indianexpress.com that the team would first visit the Hanur police station and the forest department office to review the investigation carried out so far. “The inquiry will examine the circumstances leading to the deaths of the three suspected poachers, the alleged attack on forest department watch rooms and any procedural lapses by forest officials or other government authorities. It will also assess the families’ eligibility for compensation and recommend suitable relief to the government, if necessary,” the officer said, adding that the commission would supervise the investigation. The team will also verify whether the sequence of events described by officials is technically possible. This includes verifying the distance from which the bullets were fired and whether it is consistent with the accounts provided to the investigators. The team will also collect relevant records from the victims’ families, including their communication details and other information that could assist the inquiry.

14 gunshots fired in public: Gangster shot dead inside Haryana court complex

GNS News Agency, August 21

Gangster Vinod Panu alias Kana was shot dead, and one of his associates was injured after two men opened indiscriminate fire inside the Hisar court complex in Haryana on Thursday afternoon. The police said around 14 rounds were fired, triggering panic and chaos across the premises. The incident occurred around 2.30 pm when Kana and his associate entered through the court gate for a court appearance in a case. According to preliminary information, two men riding a motorcycle opened fire on them. According to eyewitnesses, lawyers and litigants were seen running for cover during the firing. Police rushed to the spot and shifted the injured men to a government hospital, where doctors declared Kana dead.

“The police have arrested one of the accused allegedly involved in the firing. His identity cannot be revealed now as he is being interrogated,” Mayank Mudgil, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Hisar, said. The police said 31 criminal cases had been registered against Kana. His record included the murder of Sanjay alias Bittu Sharma, the nephew of Lalit Sharma, who serves as the personal assistant to Hisar MLA Savitri Jindal. The police said Kana had operated across several areas, including Delhi-NCR.

Kana was arrested from Jhajjar in 2017. A reward of Rs 7 lakh was reportedly announced for Kana at the time of



his arrest. How did the attackers enter?: Bar Association chief Hisar Bar Association president Pradeep Bajja criticised the police, saying the shooting inside the court complex was a “total failure” of security. He said the premises are supposed to have tight security and questioned how the attackers managed to enter and open fire. He further pointed out that the police and district administration were aware that a hearing linked to a gang dispute was scheduled on Thursday and that rival gang members could be present. “Gang wars are increasingly taking place at different locations. There was an incident in Dadri recently, and today it has happened at the Hisar court,” he said.

Food safety violations reported in Karnataka railway canteens; Vande Bharat pantry clean



GNS News Agency, August 21

A statewide inspection drive by the Karnataka Food Safety and Drugs Administration (KFSDA) across railway premises uncovered severe hygiene violations, expired dairy products, and unpermitted food colours. In contrast, pantry conditions aboard the state’s Vande Bharat express trains were found to be clean and well-maintained. The operation covered 36 railway stations and 112 food establishments, including canteens, platform stalls, and train pantries, to inspect food safety, storage, labelling, and handling practices. Key findings flagged during the operation include expired Nandini curd and Doodli milk packets being used at the Haveri railway station.

According to officials, idlis were found being prepared using plastic materials at Mysuru railway station. Samosas

were stored in cardboard boxes, and chutney was kept in non-food-grade plastic buckets. They claimed that fungal growth was observed on onions and other vegetables, and unhygienic conditions were documented at a hotel on the K R Puram railway station premises. Expired food articles were also kept for sale in some establishments, said officials. They noted suspected non-permitted synthetic colours, including yellow colouring used in jalebi and pink in khoa peda. The food inspectors also found that savoury food packets lacked mandatory labelling details, and food business registration certificates were not prominently displayed.

Vande Bharat passes test However, inspections aboard two Vande Bharat trains operating on the Mangaluru-Kerala and Hubballi-Bengaluru routes found the pantry facilities to be clean and hygienic. When approached for comment, a South Western Railway official said that information regarding the inspection was still being collected. KFSDA stated that findings will be shared with railway authorities and designated officers to initiate legal action against non-compliant operators. The railway station drive follows recent KFSDA raids across the state that resulted in massive seizures of non-compliant food. Previous seizures included 429 kg of mutton and chicken, 203 kg of fish, 200 kg of vegetarian food stored with non-vegetarian items, 76 kg of rotten or mouldy vegetables, 45 litres of expired milk and curd, 12 kg of expired bakery products, 67 kg of mislabelled or expired cereals, and 49 litres of used or non-compliant cooking oil.

Chandrababu Naidu calls for southern states’ cooperation, proposes regional bullet train

GNS News Agency, August 21

Chennai: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday outlined a roadmap for the comprehensive development of the southern states at the 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, proposing among others, a regional bullet train corridor.

He also called for greater cooperation and coordination between the Centre and the states. Addressing the meeting attended by the Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala, besides the LG of Puducherry, Naidu said the southern states should resolve the inter-state issues through trust and mutual cooperation. “The development of the southern states can be achieved only through cooperation and coordination,” he said. The CM proposed a bullet train corridor connecting Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu via Kuppam, alongside a transit network linking Amaravati, Bengaluru and Chennai. Naidu suggested creating a common logistics network, dry ports in the southern states, and full integration of the southern power grid with the national grid to strengthen regional infrastructure and energy security. He also proposed setting up a joint consortium with universities and skilling institutions in the

southern states and a mutual aid force to share resources during disasters. The chief minister sought the establishment of a common spiritual tourism circuit connecting Tirupati with northern sites like Kashi, Ayodhya and the Char Dham. According to him, the southern states contribute 31 per cent of the country’s GDP and could achieve a USD 10 trillion economy by 2047 through strategic cooperation. The text of his speech was released in Amaravati by the Andhra government. On Andhra Pradesh’s pending bifurcation-related issues, he said institutions listed under Schedules 9 and 10 of the bifurcation Act have not been divided even after 12 years and urged the Centre to take speedy action to resolve them. He thanked the Centre for Polavaram projects, the South Coast Railway Zone and Amaravati. Naidu sought the resolution of the state’s resource deficit and issues related to Section 56 of the bifurcation Act, besides urging the Centre to expedite clearances for the Dugarajapatnam port and refinery proposals. He also requested approval for the Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada metro rail projects and the Kadapa JSW railway link. On water management, Naidu advocated diverting more than 500 TMC of water through the Godavari-Cauvery river-linking project, saying it would provide a permanent solution to Tamil Nadu’s water problem.

All-night search, a panicked guard: What led to deaths of 3 men in Karnataka forest



“As our staff approached, one of the poachers—the one who fled and later got admitted to the hospital—spotted our men and immediately fired his weapon at them,” the source said. Seeing the flash of gunfire, the forest guard at the front of the forest search party let fly a burst of gunfire, sources said.

GNS News Agency, August 21

A forest guard who panicked after encountering suspected poachers during an all-night search in the Hanur forest in the Cauvery Wildlife Reserve on the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border in the early hours of August 15 fired a shotgun at close range, killing three men, preliminary investigations and forensic findings have revealed. What began as a forest department search operation in the poacher-infested territory, based on a tip-off received around 8 pm on August 14, ended with the deaths of Anthony Swamy, 50, John Rose Peter, 43, and Sebastian David Kumar, 35, residents of three villages on the forest fringes.

A fourth suspect, Mahima Das alias Benjamin, 45, from another village, escaped. Based on his account, Lourde Mary, wife of Anthony Swamy, filed a police complaint, alleging the four men were sleeping in the forest after venturing “to find lost cattle” when forest staff chanced upon them. Amid a political controversy and rival narratives over whether the men were poachers or farmers looking for cattle, Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar ordered a magisterial inquiry.

According to government sources familiar with the investigation, a post-mortem has indicated that the fatal bullets were fired from a “slide action gun” (also known as a pump shotgun) at a “near range” to the victims, but not point blank. Karnataka Forest Minister Ramalinga Reddy stated in the Karnataka Legislature on August 17 that bullets were fired in the forest encounter with the alleged poachers from a forest department shotgun with the number R721035—issued to a forest guard identified as Shivraj S—after a forest patrol group chanced upon the suspects. “There was firing from only one gun of the forest staff,” Mariswamy, Assistant Conservator of Forests in the Hanur wildlife division, said.

Wounds indicate firing from close range, spark row The nature of the wounds on the victims indicates firing from a shotgun from a near distance, sources familiar with investigations of gunshot cases said. In the case of wounds from shotguns fired from a long distance, there would be multiple perforations on the body caused by small pellets bursting from the cartridge and piercing the body. Close-contact firing will leave burn and gas marks along with a large entry wound for the pellets and cartridge.

In the case of intermediate range firing of shotguns—as suspected in the Hanur shootings—a single large hole is seen for entry of pellets without traces of burn marks and gases, sources said. The analysis of photographs of the bodies of the three victims indicates that one victim has a large single entry wound on the left side of his neck, a second victim has similar wounds on his thigh and chest, and the third victim has a large bullet wound on the right side of his ribs. Questions have been raised by several family members of the victims on the nature of the wounds, suggesting that the men were shot at a very close range after capture. Karnataka BJP Leader of Opposition R Ashok has asked: “Why were they shot in the chest?” “We have seen the wounds. It looks like firing at a close range,” said Chinnappa, a relative of one of the victims after the deaths on August 15.

While post-mortem reports are indicative of the approximate range of firing that caused wounds, they would have to be corroborated with findings of ballistics and crime scene forensic teams for exact firing distances, sources said. According to the Karnataka forest department and forest officers who served in the Hanur range for many years and were briefed on what happened, the Hanur incident was an accident.

“There was a flash of gunfire when the search team approached the Karadikalu (Bear Rock) in the early hours of Saturday. The poachers were at a higher altitude on the rocks and the forest staff were below. The forest staff fired three rounds from a slide-action gun,” Forest Minister Ramalinga Reddy said. “At the time of the incident, the hunters were at a higher point than the department staff at the Karadikalu rocks. Since the hunters were not clearly visible to the department staff, they were shot in the upper part of the waist when the staff retaliated. The staff did not take the action with any malicious intent,” he added. “They were conducting searches, and when they chanced upon the persons who had come with the intent of poaching, both groups became alert. They have fired, and we have fired,” Mariswamy said.

“A warning was issued, but they did not heed. The suspects fired, but it was a misfire and there was a flash. At this time, our people have fired immediately; if they had not fired, our staff would be victims,” Mariswamy further claimed. Karnataka Hanur forest 3 men killed shooting Around 8 pm on August 14, a group of 10-15 personnel, including guards, foresters, and Anti-Poaching Camp watchers, gathered. Two teams were formed to search the Hanur forest for ‘poachers’. (Representational image)

According to sources who have worked in the Hanur forest region and visited the Hanur division to interact with forest staff after the August 15 incident, the firing was the culmination of an entire night’s search for poachers in the forest. After the forest department received “actionable intelligence” of poachers entering the forest around 8 pm on August 14, a group of 10-15 personnel, including guards, foresters, and Anti-Poaching Camp watchers, gathered. Two teams were formed to search the forests for the poachers.

“Shortly after entering the forest, one team encountered the first batch of poachers. Shots were fired at a distance, and the poachers retreated and fled. Thinking the intruders had fled, the forest staff regrouped on a strategic ridge. While standing on that ridge, they heard gunshots in the valley below. This confirmed to the staff that a second gang was active down in the valley,” a source familiar with the August 14 operation said.

A few forest staff stayed behind at the ridge, and a few proceeded towards the area where the gunshots were heard, led by a forest guard. Since using flashlights would alert the poachers, the forest staff reportedly waited “along

the main exit trail to lay an ambush on the exit route”.

The alleged poachers, however, did not leave the forest and instead prepared their poached game and rested at the rocky outcrop called Karadikalu where mobile network signals are available. The rock also provided long-distance visibility for flashlight beams of forest searchers. “They were resting on the rock. Around 5 am, seeing that no one had emerged from the trail, our staff decided to head back toward where the initial gunshots were heard. As they approached Karadikalu, our staff had no idea the poachers were resting right above them on the rock formation,” a source said.

“As our staff approached, one of the poachers—the one who fled and later got admitted to the hospital—spotted our men and immediately fired his weapon at them,” the source said. Seeing the flash of gunfire, the forest guard at the front of the forest search party let fly a burst of gunfire, sources said. “The guard who was carrying a slide-action gun loaded with cartridges (minimum 6 rounds at a time) reacted under intense panic from the poacher’s sudden close-range gunfire,” a source said. “He forcefully pulled the trigger hard and because he held the trigger down tightly the weapon continuously discharged all its loaded rounds in rapid succession,” the source added. The bullets sprayed around the area where the alleged poachers were resting and hit three of them above the waist, causing fatal “near range” injuries, sources said. “The firing from lower elevation at an upward angle, when the poachers jumped up on the rock to flee, resulted in the bullet spray striking the upper bodies,” the source said. “If the poacher had not opened fire first, our staff would not even have noticed them up there. So when shot at, our guard held down the trigger in panic. Only one department weapon was fired from our side,” the source added. In a video statement from the hospital, Mahima Das, who has a prior record for violation of forest and wildlife laws, broadly corroborated the forest department version without admitting that any shots were fired by the alleged poachers. “At around 5.30 or 5.45 am, they came upon us. I got scared when they fired, so I ran away. I got down (from the rock) and ran away. After five minutes, there was no sound. I was tired, unwell and had a stomach ache, so I reached home and got myself admitted to a hospital,” he said. In her complaint to the Hanur police, Lourde Mary has quoted Mahima Das as saying that the four men who had entered the forest “to look for their lost cattle” were sleeping on the rocks located around 4 km from their homes when he heard a sound and woke up while the others remained asleep.

“The forest staff had arrived at the location where we were sleeping. When they fired shots, I slipped to the side of the rocks and ran away. The other three who were still on the rocks were shot by the forest staff,” her complaint says, citing Das. “They came with the intent of poaching and were equipped with all the items required for hunting. They ventured deep into the forest up to a distance of 8 km. What is the need for venturing so deep with two country-made weapons if they were searching for lost cattle?” Mariswamy said. The forest authorities have claimed the finding of 34 kg of deer meat poached by the four men at a small distance from where they were shot. “Around 75 metres from the place where they were found, two bags of deer meat were found. It was the meat of the animal they hunted in the night,” he added.

Once Veerapan’s stronghold, poachers a menace Karnataka Hanur forest shooting poachers Since Veerapan’s death, dozens of smaller groups of poachers have emerged from the villages surrounding the forests—inhabited primarily by migrants from Tamil Nadu. In the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary, the Hanur sub-division spanning 156 km in length and 10 km in width is one of the largest forest sub-divisions in Karnataka. The forest range is notorious for the presence of poachers—the most infamous being the forest brigand Veerappan, who dominated the region from the 1990s till 2004, when he was shot dead by the Tamil Nadu Police Special Task Force (STF).

Since Veerappan’s death, dozens of smaller groups of poachers have emerged from the villages surrounding the forests—inhabited primarily by migrants from Tamil Nadu who moved into the region after the Mettur dam built on the Cauvery river inundated villages 100 years ago, say Karnataka forest staff. According to official court records for the Kollegal taluk, where the Hanur forest is located, there have been over 300 cases registered under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, in the last 10 years in the region—involving primarily Tamil Christians from border villages. There are 107 cases under trial at present.

“When Veerappan was present in this region, there weren’t many forest cases. The cases were focused on Veerappan, the STF was present in the forest, and locals would not venture to hunt in the forest. Now, the situation has changed, and there has been an exponential rise in forest cases,” said S Shashi Bimba, an advocate who has represented several accused from the forest villages in poaching and forest cases.

“There are people who come from the Anekal region near Bengaluru to hunt over here. They come from Tamil Nadu as well to hunt. Since the Cauvery river flows in this forest region, people come from other parts in boats for hunts at night,” he said. “The forest department does not have the requisite amount of staff. They are understaffed in comparison to the rise in wildlife cases. In the interior forest, nothing is visible at night. When there is fear that poachers will fire at the guards, shots are fired by the guards. There are a lot of habitual forest offenders in the region,” Bimba added.

On June 1 this year, a Kollegal court acquitted three poachers in a case of hunting a baby sambar in 2016 in the forest for lack of strong evidence. The 2016 case was registered after forest staff on patrolling duty at night near the Karadikalu region noticed a torch light around 2.30 am and saw three persons running away. The forest staff found the dead body of a “baby female sambar” at the spot. The forest probe revealed that John Peter, Gnanaprakash and Arogyaswamy were the local poachers involved in hunting the sambar. John Peter incidentally hailed from the same village, Jaganathadoddi, as John Rose Peter, one of the three victims in the August 15 firing. The Kollegal court acquitted the alleged poachers by pointing out that none of the accused was arrested by the forest department from the spot where the poached meat was found. “When there is no proper evidence, we can obtain acquittals in these cases. There will usually be no eyewitnesses, and the recovery by the forest authorities cannot be proven,” Bimba said. An analytical study of all forest offence cases registered over the last 10 years in the region by N H Ankaraju, a former Hanur assistant conservator for forests who served over seven years in the region, revealed that “99 per cent of the booked cases were against the same local Tamil Christian poachers”. “The cases we actually managed to register represent barely 5 per cent to 10 per cent of actual poaching. Nearly 90 per cent goes unnoticed, or people escape. We only catch them when we chance upon them or receive specific intelligence. It is their business—they survive by eating and selling wild meat,” he added.

India, Japan to work together in field of naval shipbuilding and repairs



GNS News Agency, August 21

Kolkata: India and Japan will explore the possibility of joint development in naval shipbuilding and design by leveraging Japan's technological expertise and India's production capabilities in accordance with their respective relevant policies. This was announced in a joint statement issued by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Japanese counterpart Shinjiro Koizumi after a bilateral meeting in New Delhi on Thursday. The use of India's production capabilities by Japan under the "Make in India" framework was also discussed. This comes at a time when India is laying stress on further developing both Naval and commercial shipbuilding capabilities at its shipyards.

Japan ranks third among the shipbuilding nations in the world with a share of nearly 11 per cent. India has set a steep target of building five per cent of the world's fleet by 2035 and making it to the list of the top five shipbuilding nations by 2047. The two Ministers affirmed their commitment to strengthening maritime security cooperation and signed the Memorandum of Arrangement on the matter between the Ministries of Defence of the two nations. "The Memorandum provides a framework for further advancing

cooperation between the two countries in the field of maritime security. Specifically, it includes the strengthening of cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy, including information sharing in the field of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), as well as enhanced cooperation in areas such as Search and Rescue (SAR) and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)," the joint statement said.

The Ministers also spoke on strengthening coordination for the protection of sea lines of communications through mutual visits by naval ships and units, joint exercises, personnel and Subject Matter Expert (SME) exchanges and logistical support, including use of ports, maintenance and repair facilities. Such cooperation is vital not only to Japan and India, but also to the region and the international community. "The two Ministers concurred on moving swiftly to realise concrete maritime security cooperation that serves the strategic and operational needs. They further shared the view that both sides should maximise synergies to enhance mine countermeasures capabilities," it said. Reciprocal provision of ship repair facilities, including the conclusion of ship repair arrangement in the near future, was also discussed. "The two Ministers welcomed the steady expansion and deepening of bilateral exercises conducted by Japan and India, including the Japan-India Army exercise 'Dharma Guardian' and the Japan-India Maritime Exercise 'JAIMEX'. They particularly welcomed the steady progress in coordination for the Japan-India Air Force exercise 'Veer Guardian 26?', scheduled to be held this year, under which Japan Air Self-Defence Force fighter aircraft will, for the first time, visit India and participate in the exercise. The two Ministers concurred on further deepening co-operation in bilateral exercises through enhanced complexities, integration of unmanned systems and pursuing joint exercises at short notice, whenever the opportunities arise," the statement said.

Russian missile barrage kills 12, injures dozens in Kyiv

GNS News Agency, August 21

Kyiv: A Russian missile barrage overnight Thursday killed at least 12 people in Kyiv as explosions echoed across Ukraine's capital throughout the night, local authorities said. At least 33 people were wounded, according to Ukraine's Emergency Service. The air raid alert remained active into the early morning hours Thursday.

The strikes hit 12 locations across Kyiv's Darnytskyi, Sviatoshynskiy and Solomianskyi districts, damaging residential buildings, a medical facility and an educational institution. Emergency crews were at the scene and pulled people out from under the rubble. In Solomianskyi district, the top two floors of a 9-story residential building were destroyed and fires broke out on other floors. People were also trapped in two residential buildings and a school shelter. 60-year-old Larysa Bondaruk sat on the ground, holding her cat, Chanel, which had been rescued by firefighters.

With tears in her eyes, she said that her neighbour's grandson had been trapped under the rubble and died. Her apartment was badly damaged. "A rocket hit the roof. It was incredibly loud, immediately, debris and doors were blown out. There were columns of smoke, columns of fire, screams, crying and despair," she said. "Two people were killed in our building, but the rescuers responded quickly and professionally. I am grateful to them for that." Russia



has intensified ballistic missile attacks on the capital to wear down Kyiv's air defence stocks. Kyiv has limited systems capable of intercepting ballistic threats, while supplies of missiles for its US-made Patriot air defence systems remain chronically constrained. US President Donald Trump had authorised Ukraine to obtain licenses to produce Patriot air-defence systems, but later reversed that decision. Ukraine, meanwhile, has intensified its own campaign of long-range strikes against weapons depots, military facilities and other strategic targets deep inside Russian territory, seeking to degrade Moscow's ability to sustain its attacks on Ukrainian cities.

Prince Harry, Meghan are returning to UK with their children, British newspaper says

GNS News Agency, August 21

London: Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, have decided to return to the United Kingdom, but they won't resume their roles as working members of the royal family, British news media reported late Wednesday. The couple's children, Prince Archie, 7, and Princess Lilibet, 5, have already enrolled at British schools and will start classes in September, according to the Daily Telegraph, which broke the story. The family plans to live at a private, non-royal residence outside of London, the newspaper said.

Harry and Meghan gave up their royal duties and moved to California more than six years ago to earn their living through lucrative contracts with Netflix and Spotify. Although relations with the rest of the royal family have soured since then, Harry has recently expressed an interest in reconciliation so he could spend more time with his father, King Charles III, who is being treated for an undisclosed form of cancer. Charles was informed of the couple's plans on Sunday and wasn't told about them during Harry and Meghan's visit to the UK last month.

Buckingham Palace has a policy of not commenting on speculation about non-working members of the royal family. A representative for Harry and Meghan declined to comment. Harry and Meghan have had a stormy relationship with the royal family ever since they decamped to a mansion in the exclusive Southern California enclave of Montecito.

In a series of interviews and Harry's memoir "Spare," the couple said they left Britain to escape the restrictions of royal life and criticized palace officials for being insensitive to Meghan's mental health while alleging that at least one member of the royal family had expressed racist views when she was pregnant with their first child. Meghan describes herself as biracial. Those tensions were exacerbated by Harry's long-running legal battle with Britain's tabloid newspapers, which he alleges illegally hacked his phones and invaded his privacy when he was younger. The prince has lost a series of lawsuits against the media, including one against the publisher of the Daily Mail, which concluded last month. The latest trial has left Harry facing a potential bill for millions of pounds after the court ruled he and other plaintiffs in the case were liable for the publisher's legal fees. Associated Newspapers has filed documents showing that its legal costs amounted to 34.5 million pounds (USD 47 million). Harry has also been embroiled in a legal wrangle with the British government after a government committee refused to authorize police protection for the prince and his family when they are in the UK. The prince says he and his family need armed police protection because they are at risk simply because they are members of the royal family, regardless of whether or not they are working royals.

After losing a court battle over the security issue last year, Harry said he hoped to rebuild relations with his



family. "I would love reconciliation with my family. There's no point in continuing to fight anymore," Harry told the BBC. "I don't know how much longer my father has." A tentative step toward that reconciliation came last month when Harry returned to the UK for a series of charity engagements. Meghan and the children joined Harry for part of the visit and they spent time with the king at his Highgrove estate in western England. It was the first time Archie and Lilibet had seen their grandfather since the late Queen Elizabeth II's platinum jubilee in 2022. While Harry has recently met with his father, there are no signs of a warming of relations with his brother, Prince William, the heir to the throne. Peter Hunt, a former BBC royal correspondent, said the surprise announcement would make William "apoplectic." "In the short term, Harry will be able to deepen his rapprochement with his father," Hunt told Britain's Press Association. "And his presence back home will make it harder for his brother to duck a reconciliation."

Pakistan protests US envoy's remarks on Jammu and Kashmir

Islamabad: Pakistan on Wednesday summoned the US Chargé d'Affaires in Islamabad and lodged a demarche over remarks made by US Ambassador to India Sergio Gorrer during his recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir. According to a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan delivered the demarche over what it described as the US Ambassador's "factually incorrect" remarks on the status of Jammu and Kashmir. Islamabad condemned and categorically rejected the characterisation of Jammu and Kashmir as an "important part of India." Gorrer had also said it would reconsider travel advisories. Pakistan underscored that Jammu and Kashmir is an internationally recognised "disputed territory", awaiting "final disposition" in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Tech leaders rally behind Trump's crypto push



Washington: Leaders of major US technology, cryptocurrency and financial companies have backed President Donald Trump's push for lighter regulation and clearer digital-asset rules, saying his policies were bringing investment and innovation back to the United States. Executives from Coinbase, Robinhood, Kraken, Chainlink Labs, Gemini and the Intercontinental Exchange joined Trump at the White House ahead of the first meeting of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's Innovation Advisory Committee. Coinbase co-founder Brian Armstrong said Trump had recognised during the 2024 presidential campaign that millions of cryptocurrency supporters felt excluded by the previous administration. "He made a commitment at that time to make America the crypto capital of the world and within weeks of taking office, delivered on that promise," Armstrong said.

Armstrong cited the creation of a Strategic Bitcoin Reserve, enactment of the GENIUS Act and the appointment of pro-innovation regulators. He said the next major step was passage of the CLARITY Act, with a congressional vote expected on September 15. "This would make all of the progress that this administration has made durable into the future, so it could survive for decades and decades to come," he said. Armstrong said some large banks could oppose the legislation because of competition from cryptocurrency companies. He nevertheless described the measure as bipartisan. "There are hundreds of pages of changes that have come in from the Democrat side as well," he said. "It's a true bipartisan compromise." Intercontinental Exchange founder Jeffrey

Sprecher, whose company owns the New York Stock Exchange, credited Trump's trade, energy and tax policies with contributing to record market activity. "Your trade policies of fair trade to bring back jobs and businesses from overseas, your energy dominance policies to fuel the next generation of technology in the United States, um, your big, beautiful bill that created incentives for investments has, um, led to the records that you're hearing about in our stock markets," Sprecher said.

Robinhood CEO Vlad Tenev called for wider access to investments through tokenisation, including assets in privately held companies. "Today, too much economic value is being created before ordinary investors get a chance to participate," Tenev said. He said American investors should not be the last to benefit from technology developed and powered in the United States. "American companies are building this technology, American markets are powering it, American assets are also at the centre of it; American investors should not be the last to benefit," he said. Kraken co-CEO Arjun Sethi recalled telling Trump that his company moved at "warp speed". "The first thing he said is, 'Why not at trump speed,'" Sethi said. "So we started acting in that way."

Gemini co-founder Cameron Winklevoss said the United States should lead both cryptocurrency and prediction markets. His brother and fellow Gemini co-founder Tyler Winklevoss praised the work of the SEC and CFTC chairmen. Chainlink Labs co-founder Sergey Nazarov said stablecoins were increasing the international use of the US dollar. He also said tokenisation would expand global access to American equities. "There's actually a very real and tangible outcome that's really now benefiting the US and adoption of US-issued assets and the US dollar," Nazarov said. The White House event brought together companies that operate cryptocurrency exchanges, trading platforms, blockchain infrastructure and traditional securities markets. Their businesses would be directly affected by legislation dividing oversight between the SEC and CFTC. The CLARITY Act is intended to establish a federal regulatory framework for digital assets. Its progress is being watched internationally, including in India, where technology workers, investors and blockchain companies have significant exposure to American clients and financial platforms.

Russian missile barrage kills at least 6 in Kyiv, injures 33

Kyiv: A Russian missile barrage overnight Thursday killed at least six people in Kyiv as explosions echoed across the capital throughout the night, local authorities said. At least 33 people were wounded in the attack, according to Ukraine's Emergency Service. The air raid alert remained active into the early morning hours Thursday. The strikes hit 12 locations across Kyiv's Darnytskyi, Sviatoshynskiy and Solomianskyi districts, damaging residential buildings, a medical facility and an educational institution. Emergency crews pulled people trapped under the rubble. Russia has intensified ballistic missile attacks on the capital to constrain Kyiv's air defence stocks. Kyiv has limited systems capable of intercepting ballistic threats, while supplies of missiles for its US-made Patriot air defence systems remain chronically constrained. US President Donald Trump had authorised Ukraine to obtain licenses to produce Patriot air-defence systems, but later reversed that decision. Ukraine, meanwhile, has intensified its own campaign of long-range strikes against weapons depots, military facilities and other strategic targets deep inside Russian territory, seeking to



degrade Moscow's ability to sustain its attacks on Ukrainian cities. In Solomianskyi district, the top two floors of a nine-story residential building were destroyed and fires broke out on other floors. People were also trapped in two residential buildings and a school shelter.

Bangladesh all set to elect new president; BNP's Mirza Alamgir frontrunner

Dhaka: Bangladesh is all set to elect its new president on Thursday, with ruling BNP stalwart Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir the frontrunner in a contest that marks the country's first presidential election in 35 years. Lawmakers will choose between Alamgir and Colonel (retd) Oli Ahmed, the candidate of the 11-party opposition alliance. The voting will be held at the parliament (Jatiya Sangsad) from 2:00 pm to 5 pm, according to the Election Commission. Alamgir, 78, is the candidate of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), while Ahmed, 84, chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), is contesting as the candidate of the Jamaat-e-Islami-led alliance. The Election Commission declared the nomination papers of both candidates valid on August 16.

It is the first contested presidential election in Bangladesh since 1991, as the office had largely been filled through consensus and uncontested polls in recent decades. Speaking at the BNP parliamentary party meeting on Wednesday, Alamgir appealed to the BNP lawmakers to vote for him in Thursday's presidential election. "If I have made any mistake or unintentionally hurt anyone during my tenure, I seek forgiveness," said Alamgir, who has served as BNP's Senior Joint Secretary General, Acting Secretary General and Secretary General. Several lawmakers present at the meeting said the veteran leader became emotional and broke down in tears several times. Alamgir pledged that he would never compromise on the country's independence and sovereignty. The president-elect will take the oath as Bangladesh's new president on Friday evening at the Darbar Hall of Bangabhaban. The Daily Star reported, citing sources at the Secretariat and Parliament Secretariat. The presidential election was necessitated after Mohammed Shahabuddin, a close aide of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, resigned last month on health grounds before completing his five-year tenure.

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, who is also the BNP chairman, had nominated Alamgir, a longtime secretary general of the party and a close ally of former premier Khaleda Zia, as its presidential candidate. Under the Constitution, a new president is required to be elected within 90 days of the office falling vacant. Parliamentary Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad is currently serving as acting president, as required under the Constitution following a vacancy in the office.

The Constitution provides for the president to be elected by Parliament. The BNP, which was voted to power in the February 12 elections, currently commands a two-thirds majority in Parliament, putting Alamgir in a strong position to secure the presidency. If elected, Alamgir will become Bangladesh's 23rd president. He has been one of the BNP's most prominent leaders for more than two decades, having served as acting secretary general from 2011 before for-



Bangladesh is set for its first contested presidential election in 35 years, with ruling BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir the frontrunner against opposition candidate Oli Ahmed. Parliament will vote Thursday, with Alamgir expected to become the country's 23rd president

mally taking over the post in 2016. He played a prominent role in leading the BNP during the imprisonment of its then-chairperson and former prime minister Zia and the absence of Rahman, who was abroad at the time. The president is largely a ceremonial head of state under Bangladesh's parliamentary system, with key constitutional powers, including appointing the prime minister and the chief justice. Though the president is the supreme commander of the armed forces, those powers are generally exercised on the advice of the prime minister. Political analysts, however, said the presidency could assume greater significance under the caretaker government system recently reintroduced to oversee general elections, when the president's power would increase significantly in commanding the armed forces during such a period. The analysts also opine that Alamgir's nomination could be a well-calculated move of BNP, which in its election manifesto had promised to equip the president with more power by amending the Constitution. An economist by training, Alamgir made his political debut as a left-leaning student activist when Bangladesh was still East Pakistan. Bangladesh was liberated from Pakistan with India's help in 1971. After joining the BNP in the early 90s, Alamgir served as state minister for agriculture and civil aviation. When the BNP returned to power in the February 12 elections this year, Alamgir was made the local government minister.

BSE expects record-breaking IPO run to continue unabated in 2025, CEO says



India's record-breaking capital-raising spree will continue in 2025 given the strong pipeline of firms looking to go public, the head of the country's oldest exchange told Reuters. "There are 90-plus companies that have already filed their draft prospectus with the regulator, looking to raise an estimated 1 trillion rupees (\$11.65 billion) at some point this year," Sundararaman Ramamurthy, the CEO of BSE said on Thursday. Last year, 91 large firms went public on the BSE, earlier known as the Bombay Stock Exchange, and the NSE, or National Stock Exchange, raising a record 1.6 trillion rupees via initial public offerings (IPOs), according to analytics firm Prime Database. Overall public equity fundraising more than doubled to 3.73 trillion rupees. Mr. Ramamurthy said the IPO boom has more Offers for Sale (OFS), where large shareholders sell existing shares, with the proceeds going to them, instead of fresh issues that provide firms with capital to invest. "I would like to see the OFS percentage coming down and fresh capital raising go

up."BSE earned 1.57 billion rupees in listing fees in the first-half of 2024-25, according to East India Securities. This compares to 1.3 billion rupees in fees reported a year earlier.

Mr. Ramamurthy declined to comment on BSE's financials ahead of its upcoming quarterly earnings. The gains from the IPO pipeline, however, are being tempered by tighter rules for trading derivatives. The notional value of derivatives traded in India has declined 40% since September, in anticipation of the new rules, while premiums have fallen 15%-20%, Mr. Ramamurthy said. A further decline could be expected since three of the six new rules introduced by the markets regulator will be implemented by April. "We have to wait till April to judge the final impact," he said. BSE's shares have doubled since November 20 when the rules were implemented as analysts expect a lower impact on the exchange compared to the NSE, which has larger derivative trading volumes. DIVERSIFYING REVENUE STREAMS BSE, which earns a major chunk of revenue from transaction charges and services to firms including listings, is looking to diversify its income streams, Mr. Ramamurthy said. It aims to grow its index business, which licences indexes used by funds to benchmark investments. "We have launched 15 indices since the middle of last year and there is room to continue working on that front," he said. It is also considering expanding its co-location services, which are in demand as high-frequency and algorithmic trading increase. "There is good possibility of generating revenue (in co-location), but we have not made a decision yet. We will look at it after April once market volumes settle down."

All about the utility of hybrid mutual funds

When we think of mutual funds (MFs), we think of equity funds. There are also hybrid funds with their own utility. These funds can add to tax efficiency. To recap, taxation of equity funds, for a holding period of more than one year, is 12.5% plus surcharge and cess. For a holding period of less than one year, it is 20% plus surcharge and cess. For debt funds, it is your marginal slab rate, irrespective of the holding period. For most investors, it is 30% plus surcharge and cess. Hybrid funds with allocation of more than 65% of portfolio to equity, are equity funds for tax purposes. In the process, the debt component of the fund also gets taxed at a lower rate i.e. 12.5%..

Fund details There are six hybrid fund categories defined by Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI). We start with the category called Aggressive Hybrid funds. These funds are mandated to have allocation to equity in the range of 65 to 80% of the portfolio. It is compulsory to have this allocation to equity, hence, this category is just one notch below equity funds. The allocation to debt, 20-35 % of portfolio, leads to lower volatility than pure-play equity funds. Equity allocation being more than 65% of portfolio, taxation is that of equity. Then there are Balanced Hybrid funds with equity allocation 40-60%. As per rules, an Asset Management Company (AMC) can have either Aggressive or Balanced Hybrid fund not both. Given a fund with over 65% allocation to equity is taxed as equity and investors prefer equity taxation, AMCs have not initiated Balanced Hybrid funds. SEBI defines Dynamic Asset Allocation or Balanced Advantage Funds (BAFs) as 'investment in equity/ debt that is managed dynamically'. However, the MF industry has positioned BAF in a particular manner.

Equity component is maintained at over 65%, to be eligible for equity taxation. A part of the equity exposure is 'hedged'. Hedging is done by taking a contra position i.e. sell/short position in stock futures. The effect is the net equity exposure, subject to market volatility, is much lower. As an illustration, let us say the in a BAF with a corpus of ₹100, equity exposure is ₹75 and debt exposure is ₹25. There is a short position in equity of say ₹35. Thus, the net equity exposure is ₹40. The extent of the hedge is decided by the fund manager as per market valuations. The reason to make the net equity exposure lower than the apparent exposure is to make it defensive. If the equity market were to correct, the adverse impact would be to the extent of ₹40 and not ₹75. In Equity Savings Funds, SEBI norm sets minimum investment in equity and equity-related instruments



at 65% of total assets and minimum investment in debt at 10% of total assets.

There has to be an usual or unhedged exposure to equity, and a hedged exposure to equity adding up to minimum 65% of portfolio. The balance portfolio is in debt. The industry practice is the usual equity component is maintained in the range of 20-40%, and so is the hedged portion. Though Equity Savings Funds are equity funds from a tax perspective, the equity (unhedged) portion in the range of 20- 40%, resembles fixed income or debt-oriented funds. Arbitrage Funds earn returns from the price differential between equity stocks in cash market and stock futures market, for 65% of the portfolio.

The price at which a stock is sold in the stock futures market is higher than the price at which it is purchased in the cash or spot market. These funds have 65% or more of the portfolio in cash-futures arbitrage and 35% or less in debt or money market instruments. Returns come from price differential between the two segments. Multi Asset Funds (MAFs) are those with exposure to a minimum of three asset categories and minimum 10% in each category. Here as well, most AMCs run portfolios with equity exposure of over 65% to be eligible for equity taxation. The balance is invested in debt and gold, or some other asset class. As we can see in the above fund categories, exposure to equity being less than that of pure-play equity funds, you have diversification built in the fund. At the end of the holding period, you may end up with returns less than equity-only funds, but volatility during holding period will be relatively lower. If you want to maintain equity exposure at a certain level, in a disciplined manner, you may resort to the relevant hybrid fund.

Why are fertility levels declining in India? | Explained

GNS News Agency, August 21

The story so far: A comprehensive demographic analysis of global fertility in 204 countries and territories from 1950-2021 has found that fertility is declining globally and that future fertility rates will continue to decline worldwide, remaining low even under successful implementations of pro-natal policies.

What has it noted about India?

The Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study (GBD) 2021, noted that India has moved from a fertility rate of 6.18 in the 1950s to a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 1.9 in 2021. This, it pointed out, was below the replacement fertility level of 2.1 (which is the average number of children a woman should have to replace herself and her generation, for population stability). The GBD study projected that the TFR could fall further to 1.04 — barely one child per woman — by 2100. The steep fall in fertility levels has triggered concerns about the political and socio-economic fallout, especially in the southern States, which fear the loss of parliamentary seats post the delimitation exercise in 2026.

Why is fertility falling?

Even though the country has had one of the oldest birth control/family planning programmes, increased female literacy, workforce participation of women, women's empowerment and improved aspirations could have contributed more to the steady drop in fertility rates over the decades than the faithful adoption of family planning initiatives. The decline in fertility rate has also a lot to do with changing societal attitudes towards marriage and reproduction, with women increasingly exercising their choice. They often prefer to marry late or not at all, often choosing career and financial independence over motherhood. Rising rates of infertility in both men and women and abortions are important factors which could be contributing to this decline in fertility though no absolute data is available. With an increasing number of young men and women opting to go abroad for higher studies and jobs and choosing to settle down and raise their families there, migration is another key factor that could be in play when one considers the decline in fer-

tility levels. Declining fertility rates have resulted in a rapid demographic transition in many southern States. The consequences of this — an ageing population, a declining young workforce and increased demands on healthcare and social security measures for the care of an increasing population of the elderly — are being acutely felt in States such as Kerala. Migration of youngsters in search of better prospects is also an issue.

What is happening in the southern States?

There is concern over the irreversible fertility decline across the country, but more so in the southern States, where fertility rates had dropped below the replacement levels much earlier than the rest of India. Kerala led the demographic transition in the South, achieving the replacement level fertility rate in 1988, with the other four States achieving this by mid-2000. Along with education and women's empowerment and development in the social and health sectors, which were the hallmark of Kerala's high human development index, the State has also seen low economic investments and growth. Educated youth are leaving the State; the proportion of the aged population is expected to surpass that of children (23% in 2036). Changed attitudes towards marriage and motherhood are beginning to reflect in the health of women, leading to an increasing proportion of older mothers and pregnancy-related morbidities. Kerala's high labour wages and high quality of life index are attracting internal migration from other States to supplant a shrinking workforce. The State Planning Board reckons that by 2030, the proportion of migrant labour could be close to 60 lakh, about one-sixth of the State's population. Fertility decline is almost always irreversible and the graph, once it starts going down, may never bounce back. Countries like South Korea, which tried to stem the demographic crisis by pumping in millions have failed and the fertility rate plunged from 0.78 in 2022 to 0.73 in 2023. Demographers suggest that socio-economic policies that propel the growth of the economy, improve job prospects for the youth and tap the potential of a growing population of senior citizens, can help in reducing the impact of a long spell of low, sub-replacement level fertility rates on countries.

Reiterating the cancer risks of alcohol consumption



Alcohol consumption is the third-leading preventable cause of cancer in the U.S., after tobacco and obesity. Photograph used for representational purposes only. In early January, United States Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, who released the new Surgeon General's Advisory on Alcohol and Cancer Risk, called for cancer risk warnings on alcohol-containing beverages.

The health risks associated with alcohol consumption are well-known; with the advisory stating that alcohol consumption is the third-leading preventable cause of cancer in the U.S., after tobacco and obesity. The World Health Organization (WHO), in its Global status report on alcohol and health and treatment of substance use disorders, noted that "the global burden of disease and injuries caused by alcohol consumption can be quantified for 31 health conditions on the basis of available scientific evidence for the role of alcohol use in their development, occurrence and outcomes." "When it comes to alcohol consumption, there is no safe amount that does not affect health," the WHO said in a statement published in The Lancet Public Health.

However, how far this message has penetrated and how much of it was understood, especially in a setting like India, remains debatable. The fact remains that consuming alcohol increases the risk of at least seven types of cancer -- mouth, pharynx, voice box, esophagus, breast (in women), liver, colon and rectum. According to the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-2021), 18.8% of men and 1.3% of women aged 15 and above consume alcohol in India. Myths surrounding alcohol Surendran Veeraiah, professor and head, Psycho-oncology and Resource Centre for Tobacco Control, Cancer Institute (WIA), said that there was confusion among the people due to misinformation about alcohol and cancer. "Some doctors say that drinking alcohol in moderation or drinking red wine is good. Such myths and misconceptions only mislead people. It is clearly established that alcohol is carcinogenic. So, it is important for healthcare professionals to take this up seriously and communicate to people that alcohol is carcinogenic. They should discourage alcohol consumption," he said. Reducing the availability of alcohol is not a deterrent, he said, adding: "Policy makers should understand that alcohol is not a substitute for revenue generation. Revenue making was how it started off for tobacco -- stating that tobacco companies pay tax," he said.

India's real growth rate and the forecast

The First Advance Estimates (FAE) of National Accounts for 2024-25 show a real GDP growth of 6.4% and a nominal GDP growth of 9.7%. These numbers have fallen short of the Reserve Bank of India's revised growth estimate of 6.6% for real GDP, as in its December 2024 monetary policy statement and 10.5% for nominal GDP growth as in the 2024-25 Union Budget presented in July 2024. The annual growth of 6.4% can be seen as consisting of 6% growth in the first half and 6.7% growth in the second half. There is, thus, a clear improvement expected over the Q2 growth of 5.4%. The sharp fall in 2024-25 annual GDP growth from that of the previous year at 8.2% is seen only in the case of GDP. With respect to Gross Value Added (GVA), this difference, between 7.2% and 6.4%, is much less. On the GVA side, it was the manufacturing sector which suffered a sharp fall in sectoral growth from 9.9% in 2023-24 to 5.3% in 2024-25. Growth prospects for 2025-26

The Gross Fixed Capital Formation rate at constant prices has ranged between 33.3% and 33.5% during 2021-22 to 2024-25. Thus, it appears to have stabilised around 33.4%. It is expected to continue at this level in 2025-26. The average Incremental Capital Output Ratio (ICOR) has been marginally higher than 5 in recent years. Assuming ICOR to be 5.1 in 2025-26, we may consider a 6.5% real GDP growth to be realistic. There may not be much change in the global economy even though Donald Trump's assumption of office may create more uncertainty. India will have to largely depend on domestic demand. In particular, the Government of India has to ensure that there is no relaxation in its investment expenditure. In fact, the slightly lower growth in 2024-25 is largely linked to the slowdown in the Government of India's investment growth which has remained negative at (-)12.3% even after eight months into the fiscal year.

With a lower nominal GDP growth in 2024-25 of 9.7% as compared to the budgeted nominal GDP growth of 10.5%, the budgeted Gross Tax Revenue (GTR) of ₹38.4 lakh crore may not be realised if the budgeted buoyancy of 1.03 is maintained. As per Controller General of Accounts (CGA) data, GTR growth for the first eight months was 10.7%. If this growth is maintained for the remaining months also, the realised buoyancy would be about 1.1, which is higher than the budgeted buoyancy. In such a case, tax revenue shortfall will be minimal. In other words, any revenue constraint or likely pressure on fiscal deficit would not constrain the government's ability to achieve its capital expenditure target of 11.1 lakh crore.

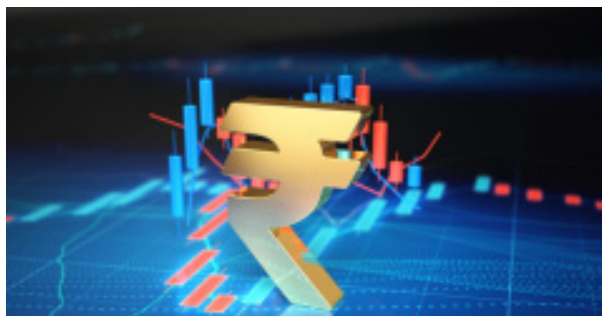
Reason for the dip However, after the first eight months, the level of the Government of India's capital expenditure has remained limited to ₹5.14 lakh crore, that is 46.2% of the Budget target. In the remaining four months, the Government of India's capital expenditure may be accelerated. It may still fall well short of the target. This has been the main reason for the dip in overall real GDP growth in 2024-25. Going forward in 2025-26, the Government of India will have to continue to rely on an accelerated capital expenditure growth which can be kept at least at 20% on the revised estimates for 2024-25. Sustained government capital expenditures can have a favourable effect on private investment. The size and the pattern of investment expenditure of the government should be designed to accelerate private investment as well. Medium- to long-term growth prospects Over a period of next five years, the best that India may hope for is a steady real GDP growth rate of 6.5%. This is in line with the International Monetary Fund's real GDP growth projection for the Indian economy, as in its October 2024 release, which is at 6.5% over the period 2025-26 to 2029-30. This real GDP growth may be accom-

Senior surgical gastroenterologist R. Surendran, who was formerly the director of Institute of Surgical Gastroenterology, Government Stanley Medical College Hospital, said alcohol is the main cause of cirrhosis of liver in India. "Nearly 20% of cirrhosis cases could progress to liver cancer. So, alcohol is directly a cause for liver cancer. Alcohol is definitely dangerous to health and there are many myths that surround its consumption," he said. He added that consuming alcohol was bad for the health and both drinking in moderation or binge drinking were an absolute no-no.

Treatment for alcohol use disorder remains low The WHO observed that access to screening, brief intervention and treatment for people with hazardous alcohol use and alcohol use disorder remains very low, as well as access to medications for treatment of alcohol use disorders. "Overall, the proportion of people with alcohol use disorders in contact with treatment services varies from less than one per cent to no more than 14% in all countries where such data are available," it said.

India's Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had developed standard treatment guidelines for management of alcohol dependence in 2017. The objectives were: to provide advice on assessment, investigations, short-term and long-term medical management of individuals presenting with alcohol dependence and provide advice on psycho-social interventions for patients with alcohol dependence. Talking about support services in Tamil Nadu, P. Poorna Chandrika, professor of psychiatry, Institute of Mental Health, said the psychiatry departments in all government medical college hospitals offered special de-addiction services that included inpatient de-addiction services. "In every district, the District Mental Health Programme provides de-addiction services. All psychiatrists are also trained in de-addiction," she said. Motivation, a key factor for de-addiction

Motivation is key in alcohol de-addiction, she said, adding that people come for treatment for various reasons: insistence by relatives, financial constraints, workplace consequences and a small percentage walk in wanting to quit. "There may be multiple relapses and slip-ups may occur. It is a difficult path but regular follow-up, medication along with motivation and a support system will help.," she said. In addition, co-morbidities associated with alcohol dependency including anxiety and other mental health issues should be addressed. "Pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments should go hand in hand. Attending alcoholic anonymous meetings alone without medication is also a risk factor for relapse," she said. There are many concerns. One of the main causes for worry is the early initiation of drinking, doctors said. Lack of continuous monitoring of private de-addiction facilities is another area of concern, they say. As a result, human rights violations do occur. There have been instances of patients crowded in a single room, scabies as well as deaths. The only solution is continuous monitoring and regular review of these centres. Increasing awareness among the public is also crucial, doctors say.



panied by an implicit price deflator (IPD)-based inflation of about 4% which can give a nominal GDP growth in the range of 10.5%-11%. In years in which global conditions improve and the contribution of net exports to GDP growth becomes significant, real GDP growth may touch even 7%. If a real growth of around 6.5% and a nominal growth in the range of 10.5%-11% are maintained over the long run with an average exchange rate depreciation of 2.5% per annum, India should be able to reach a per capita GDP level consistent with a developed country status in the next two and half decades. But the task is not going to be easy. It will be hard to grow at 6.5% as the base keeps on increasing. In fact, in the earlier years, the growth rate will have to be higher. But, at present, the potential rate of growth appears to be 6.5%. However, it can change. In the light of a potential growth rate of 6.5%, the achievement of 6.4% in 2024-25 should not be considered as disappointing. In fact, the achievement of 8.2% in 2023-24 should be considered as a flash in the pan. The current year's growth rate of 6.4% as in the first advance estimates should be seen in the context of India's potential growth rate. C. Rangarajan is former Chairman, Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, and former Governor, Reserve Bank of India. D.K. Srivastava is Honorary Professor, Madras School of Economics, and Member, Advisory Council to the Sixteenth Finance Commission. The views expressed are personal

TGSPDCL invites firms for installation of underground cables in Greater Hyd

GNS News Agency, August 21

HYDERABAD: The Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (TGSPDCL) is inviting firms for replacing the existing overhead lines with underground cables in the entire GHMC area and adjoining municipal corporations, municipalities and panchayats within Outer Ring Road (ORR). There are 498 substations of 33/11 KV, 1,280 kms of 33 KV underground cables, 3,725 kms of 33 KV Overhead (OH) lines, 1022 Power Transformers (PTRs) provided in substations, 957 kms of 11 KV UG cables, 21,463 kms of 11 KV OH lines, 1,50,992 distribution transformers and 58,271 intermediate poles in the region. TGSPDCL intends to implement the underground power cabling project under the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) or any other feasible funding model. As part of the project work, a detailed survey and feasibility study would have to be conducted, besides design and engineering, procurement and installation, integration with existing infrastructure, testing and commissioning and Operation & Maintenance (O&M).

Can you lose weight without working out?



In the realm of small talk, comments about weight - whether gained or lost - are among the most common. While we may think we've heard every response to "How did you manage to lose all that weight?" there's always a new diet or hack going viral. Today, it has become increasingly difficult to keep up and figure out what truly works for weight loss. The latest one? Losing weight without working out. Yes, you read that right! From Vidya to Madhavan: Losing weight without going to the gym Losing weight without breaking a sweat at the gym sounds like a dream, doesn't it? Interestingly, a lot of Bollywood celebrities are now adopting this approach to achieve major weight transformations. One of the first stars to talk about this method was R Madhavan, who underwent dramatic weight loss simply by eating right. In July 2024, the actor shared his journey on X, detailing the steps he followed to shed the extra kilos.

Intermittent fasting, heavy chewing of food 45-60 times (drink your food and chew your water) .. last meal at 6.45 pm. (.only cooked food -nothing raw AT ALL post 3 pm) .. early morning long walks and early night deep sleep(no screen time 90 min before bed) ... plenty of fluids... https://t.co/CsVL98aGEJ — Ranganathan Madhavan (@ActorMadhavan) July 18, 2024 Intermittent fasting, chewing food 45-60 times (drink your food and chew your water), having the last meal at 6:45 pm (only cooked food—nothing raw after 3 pm), early morning long walks, early night deep sleep (no screen time 90 minutes before bed), plenty of fluids, lots of green vegetables, and food that's easily metabolised and healthy. Nothing processed at all," Madhavan explained. Then came Vidya Balan, who revealed that her sudden weight loss was due to an 'anti-inflammatory' diet she had adopted. "You know, all my life, I've struggled to be thin. I've dieted and exercised like crazy, and sometimes I'd lose weight, but it would come back. Then, earlier this year, I met a nutritional group called Amura (Amura Health) in Chennai. They said, 'It's just inflammation; it's not fat.' So, they put me on a diet to eliminate the inflammation—it's called the elimination of inflammation—and it worked beautifully for me. The weight just went like that because they removed foods that didn't suit me," she shared in a viral interview. She also mentioned that she hasn't worked out for almost a year now. The latest to join this trend is Himanshi Khurana. Speaking at ABP Live's Health Conclave Punjab 2024, she discussed her weight loss journey, sharing how she shed 11 kilos through a simple diet. Another key factor, she said, was managing her stress, which played a significant role in her transformation.

Exercise: essential or optional?

Exercise often comes to mind as a cornerstone of any weight loss journey, but experts clarify that while it's beneficial, it isn't the only way to shed those extra kilos. Weight loss is fundamentally about creating a calorie deficit, i.e, burning more calories than you consume. This can be achieved through diet alone, but incorporating exercise offers significant advantages. Dr Siddhant Bhargava, co-founder of Food Darzee, notes, "Exercise is not essential for weight loss, as weight loss is primarily driven by a calorie deficit. However, the absence of exercise, particularly resistance training, can lead to muscle loss. Muscle is metabolically active, so maintaining it is crucial for sustaining weight loss and a healthy metabolism." Building lean muscle through activities like weightlifting and bodyweight exercises increases your resting metabolic rate, meaning you burn more calories even when at rest. This is a critical factor for long-term weight management. Chetan, a fitness content creator, adds, "You can lose weight with just diet, but exer-

cise accelerates the process. It's not just about shedding fat; exercise strengthens your muscles, improves stamina, and enhances your overall health." Moreover, physical activity has benefits beyond calorie burning. Regular exercise improves cardiovascular health, reduces stress, enhances mood, and strengthens bones and joints. Even low-impact activities like yoga, brisk walking, or swimming can contribute to weight loss while boosting mental well-being.

The role of diet in weight loss While exercise can fast-track weight loss and improve overall fitness, experts agree that diet plays the most significant role in the process. Palak Koradia, RD, CDE, and co-founder of Health Hatch, explains, "Weight loss is fundamentally about creating a calorie deficit, which can be achieved solely through diet. However, for sustainable results, a balanced diet is key." A calorie deficit doesn't mean starving yourself or drastically cutting food groups. Instead, it involves making thoughtful dietary choices that ensure you're consuming fewer calories while meeting your nutritional needs. Key dietary strategies for weight loss: Portion control: Eating smaller servings prevents overeating while still allowing you to enjoy your favourite foods. Include fibre-rich foods: Adding vegetables, fruits, and whole grains to your meals promotes satiety and aids digestion, keeping hunger at bay. Prioritise protein: Foods like lentils, eggs, chicken, and tofu keep you feeling full and support muscle preservation during weight loss. Stay hydrated: Drinking water before meals can reduce calorie intake, while staying hydrated supports metabolism. Limit high-calorie, low-nutrient foods: Minimise sugar, fried foods, and processed items to avoid consuming empty calories. Dr Preeti Seth, founder and CEO of Pachouli Aesthetics and Wellness, says, "Extreme calorie restriction is not the answer. While it may lead to quick weight loss, it often results in nutritional deficiencies, weakened immunity, and hair or skin issues. A balanced diet that includes complex carbohydrates, healthy fats, and protein is crucial for sustainable weight loss."

Stress and weight loss: A deeper look Stress has long been linked to weight gain, with numerous studies reinforcing its impact (social media and Bollywood suggest it too). According to research published in Obesity Reviews, chronic stress triggers elevated cortisol levels, which increase appetite, promotes fat storage (especially around the abdomen), and can even lead to unhealthy food cravings. Dr Sujith, the functional medicine specialist and senior medical officer at Vieroos Biohack Centre, explains, "Stress does not directly cause weight gain; however, obesity can increase sensitivity to stress. When an obese individual experiences stress, their body releases excess cortisol, triggering the mobilisation of polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) into the bloodstream. This creates a feedback loop that amplifies stress responses."

Furthermore, a study by the American Psychological Association found that individuals under chronic stress are more likely to engage in emotional eating, turning to high-calorie comfort foods. This behaviour disrupts calorie balance, leading to weight gain. Managing stress is not a stand-alone solution but an integral part of a broader weight-loss strategy. Dr Sujith emphasises the need for "a holistic approach that includes addressing stress, following a balanced diet, and improving gut health to break the cycle of stress and obesity effectively." Stress management techniques, such as mindfulness, yoga, and ensuring adequate sleep, can help regulate cortisol levels. Simple lifestyle changes - like deep breathing exercises, walking in nature, or reducing screen time before bed - also contribute to better stress control. The combination of a balanced diet and regular exercise creates a synergy that accelerates weight loss while enhancing overall health. Exercise burns additional calories and supports muscle growth, while diet ensures you're fueling your body with the nutrients it needs to recover and thrive. Dr Preeti Seth, says, "Diet plays a major role, but combining it with simple activities like walking or yoga makes weight loss faster and more sustainable. Managing stress and staying active ensures long-term success." So, can you lose weight without working out? The answer lies in finding what works best for you - whether it's focusing on diet, managing stress, staying active in everyday life, or embracing exercise for faster results and overall health benefits.

Detox bars, IV drips: Indian wedding hangovers get a swanky cure

Wedding planners and modern couples have introduced the ultimate antidote to keep the wedding festivities alive the morning after the party: detox bars and IV drips. The morning after a night of a wild cocktail bash is inevitably about a bad hangover and a regretful headache. Not anymore, though. Wedding planners and modern couples have introduced the ultimate antidote to keep the wedding festivities alive the morning after the party: detox bars. From fresh juices to wellness drinks and even IV drips, these detox bars offer everything needed to cure a hangover. Just like a chaat corner or a wedding favours stall, detox bars are a dedicated space at the venue to help you recover from the effects of alcohol.

"Indian weddings are known for being grand and indulgent, but now, couples are looking to balance all that fun with wellness touches. Detox bars add a thoughtful twist, something modern and unique that makes guests feel cared for. It's a trend we're seeing more and more, especially at weddings that want to stand out," says Reshma Ramaiah, co-founder, director, and partner for US Operations at luxury wedding planning company Resh&Co. "Detox bars play a crucial role, especially at destination weddings, where multiple functions feature an array of amazing cocktails. In such settings, detox bars



serve as a much-needed saviour," Ruchin Kohli, director and founder of Occasion Xperts, and vice president of North EEMA (Event and Entertainment Management Association of India), tells India Today. Aesthetics are not a problem. These detox bars are often adorned with fresh fruits, vegetables, lush greenery, and charming signage, ensuring top-notch visual appeal. In fact, they often double as another Instagram-worthy spot at the wedding.

"You'll usually find infused waters with fruits and herbs, fresh juices, electrolyte drinks, natural or flavoured options for quick rehydration, and maybe even wellness shots like apple cider vinegar and chlorophyll shots," Reshma Ramaiah shares. Some couples take it a step further with rose or lavender-infused teas for a touch of luxury, or healthy smoothies. The idea

is to essentially create a space where guests can recharge in style. These shots aren't just popular at weddings; they've also become a trend at corporate offsite gatherings, helping individuals feel refreshed the next day," says Ruchin Kohli. "A detox bar should look beautiful - imagine fresh fruits, vibrant drinks, and maybe even some flowers or greenery to tie it into the wedding theme. Variety is key too; offering a mix of juices, waters, and other options ensures there's something for everyone," suggests Reshma.

You can also add interactive elements, like a make-your-own smoothie station, to make it a more fun experience for guests. Not just morning functions, these detox bars work just as well for late-night parties. "Detox bars have also become a kind of extension to main bars, allowing people to take wellness shots before they

go to sleep," Kohli shares.

What's the buzz about IV drips? IV drips — intravenous infusions meant to deliver a mix of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals straight into the bloodstream for health benefits — have also made their way to weddings. Popular for boosting health and providing an instant glow, these drips are increasingly seen as quick fixes to cure hangovers at weddings. For instance, influencer Alanna Panday included this at her bachelorette party for her bridesmaids, and she herself was also spotted receiving an IV drip while having her hands adorned with mehendi. Wedding planners often collaborate with wellness centres, which bring their staff and equipment to offer IV drip services at weddings. "IV drips are becoming a thing, especially at luxurious or destination weddings! Before,

Lindt, who? Indian craft chocolates are stealing the show one bar at a time



A couple of days ago, a piece of information shocked chocolate connoisseurs worldwide. To settle a class action lawsuit, Swiss chocolatier Lindt & Sprüngli - a chocolate lover's favourite - admitted that their products may not be "expertly crafted" after all and could contain heavy metals like lead and cadmium. A few weeks ago, grabbing a chocolate bar was as casual as it could get. But who would have thought that a simple treat could pose potential health risks? Experts have long touted dark chocolate as a great source of antioxidants, so this revelation came as a surprise. Perhaps it's a reminder of why it's more important than ever to stay aware of what we put into our bodies.

While our love for Swiss and Belgian chocolates may linger for years to come (and may never die), it's worth taking a moment to look closer to home. The Indian chocolate scene is undergoing a serious transformation, and you should take a moment to witness, love and celebrate. "Mind share comes before market share," says Vikas Temani, founder of Paul and Mike (farm-to-bar chocolates). For him, it's not just a marketing mantra - it's the heart of a growing revolution in India's chocolate industry. Over the past decade, the market has quietly shifted. Once dominated by mass-produced brands like Cadbury, it's now thriving with home-grown, craft chocolate makers like Temani and others who are carving out a niche and reshaping how we experience cocoa in its best form.

For decades, cocoa farming in India was a low-margin business, dominated by bulk buyers with little regard for quality. But in the last ten years, a new breed of chocolatiers has emerged - crafting bean-to-bar chocolates that rival global brands are putting Indian cocoa on the world map. From hand-harvested beans in the southern states to elegantly packaged bars in luxury stores, these craft chocolate makers are reshaping how Indians indulge in chocolate. A new wave of chocolate makers Back in 2015, India barely had any bean-to-bar chocolate makers. According to Karthikeyan Palaniswamy, founder of Soklet, brands like Naviluna and Mason & Co. were amongst the first to emerge around 2012-2015. These early players disrupted a market where nearly 90 per cent of Indian cocoa production was controlled by just two companies - Campa and Cadbury. "They essentially functioned like a cartel," says Palaniswamy. "Farmers had no say in pricing, as domestic cocoa production was minuscule and couldn't meet local demand." The reason, he mentions, behind this was because India was a net importer of cocoa beans. "The domestic production was minuscule and couldn't even meet the local demand. With just two major buyers in the market, there was little competition. The price difference between the two buyers during the season was negligible. Farmers got the same price irrespective of the bean's quality, fermentation, drying, or sorting," he adds. Fast forward to today, and the landscape looks very different. Craft chocolate brands have not only created new demand but also helped farmers improve post-harvest processes, such as fermentation and drying. Why Indian craft chocolate is gaining traction

For years, luxury chocolates were synonymous with global giants like Lindt and Ferrero Rocher. However, a shift in consumer preferences is driving growth for local craft brands. "Consumers are becoming more aspirational across

A move that endangers the right to vote

The Election Commission of India (ECI)'s renewed push to link Aadhaar with voter ID endangers the right to vote. It is being justified as a measure to clean electoral rolls, eliminate bogus voters, and improve electoral integrity. Yet, experience and data show that Aadhaar linkage has resulted in mass disenfranchisement, systemic errors, exclusions, arbitrary welfare disentanglements, and far-reaching infringements on the fundamental right to privacy of citizens.

Questionable claims The claim that Aadhaar-voter ID linkage is voluntary is questionable. Presently, Form 6B offers no meaningful opt-out — voters must either submit their Aadhaar number or declare they do not have one, coercing even those unwilling to share it into compliance. Unsurprisingly, by September 2023, over 66 crore Aadhaar numbers had already been seeded. This was enabled not only by a coercive legal framework but also by data-sharing practices of questionable legality and constitutional, ethical propriety. These included the use of the DBT Seeding Data Viewer, which permits third-party access to non-biometric identity data held by UIDAI, as well as the repurposing of data collected for the National Population Register and by other government departments for unrelated administrative purposes. The ECI's latest proposal fails to rectify this position. On the contrary, it makes the process more restrictive by requiring citizen-voters who do not provide Aadhaar to physically appear before an Electoral Registration Officer to justify their decision. In 2023, in G. Niranjan v. Election Commission of India, the ECI had assured the Supreme Court that Aadhaar-voter ID linkage is not mandatory and that appropriate clarifications would be introduced for that purpose; its latest proposal walks back on this commitment.

The new proposal also erodes the commitment to universal and equal suffrage by imposing barriers on those unwilling or unable to furnish Aadhaar. It places a disproportionate burden on the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and individuals in remote areas for whom attending an in-person hearing before the Electoral Registration Officer is often neither practical nor reasonable. This not only compromises individual dignity but also diminishes the trust that is foundational to democratic participation. The problem is further exacerbated by the lack of a clear, accessible, and time-bound appellate mechanism for the citizen-voter, if their justification for not submitting Aadhaar is arbitrarily rejected. The Supreme Court, in Lal Babu Hussein and Others v. Electoral Registration Officer (1995), unequivocally held that any decision to delete a name from the electoral roll must comply with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. The Union government and the ECI argue that Aadhaar-voter ID linkage will eliminate duplicate voters and electoral fraud. However, this claim does not withstand scrutiny. Aadhaar was never designed to serve as proof of citizenship. Section 9 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, explicitly states that Aadhaar is a residence-based identification system, which means that an

categories, from cars to coffee—and now chocolates," explains Temani. "People are looking beyond Ferrero Rocher and Cadbury for something better." But it's not just about aspiration. The desire for quality, sustainability, and healthier options is playing a significant role. Urban consumers, in particular, are becoming more informed about what they consume. Each chocolate is crafted with a lot of precision at Manam Chocolate Karkhana. "Health consciousness is a major driver," says Palaniswamy. "Consumers today want products that are natural, minimally processed, and free of harmful additives. This aligns well with what craft chocolate brands offer." Many consumers today are very conscious of the carbon footprint of the products they buy and are unwilling to compromise on this. Take, for example, the cocoa sourced from Africa, which is then processed into chocolate in Switzerland before eventually landing on your supermarket shelf. That's a journey of thousands of kilometres, contributing significantly to the carbon footprint. This growing awareness is one of the reasons why homegrown craft chocolates are gaining a better response - they offer a more sustainable alternative. How farmers benefit from the chain Chaitanya Muppala, co-founder of Hyderabad-based Manam Chocolate, doesn't like his brand to be associated with the cliché term bean-to-bar because he believes the journey begins much before, with the genetics of the cacao trees, the soil, and the fermentation process. The brand works with over 150 farmers, providing them with education on soil management and cultivation techniques to increase yield and quality. Breaking of cacao pods by workers at Distinct Origins Cacao Fermentary in West Godavari District owned by Manam Chocolate.

"We actually work very closely with over 150 farmers and have developed a new model around cacao procurement. We don't just buy the beans from farmers, but we actively collaborate with them on genetic selection, farming practices, soil management, and all other factors that contribute to creating complex, flavourful cacao. For us, chocolate making begins on the farm, not with the bean," he explains. In July this year, Manam Chocolate was featured on TIME's list of the World's Greatest Places, becoming the first Indian craft chocolate brand to achieve this recognition. Indian craft chocolate makers are creating a positive impact on farmers by establishing direct, fair relationships and promoting sustainable farming practices. This has also helped farmers get a fair price for their produce and hard work which was earlier not even considered by the big players as the yields were bought by industries at throwaway prices. "We pay a fair price to farmers — unlike industrial chocolate, which compensates farmers poorly. In our system, farmers get around 25-30 per cent of the profit, whereas in the global value chain, only about 6 per cent goes to them," states Chaitanya. Dr Arun Viswanathan SK is the founder and CEO of Chitram Craft Chocolates based in Coimbatore, another brand taking the Indian chocolate game a notch higher. He mentions that one thing that each brand is trying to work towards is collaborating with farmers who have not been associated with or supported by any big brand. "For instance, we work with a farmer from a region called Pachamalalai in Tamil Nadu. Not many people know that cocoa is grown there. Our motive is more towards reaching out to those farmers and improving their fermentation practices to develop better products, helping them reach the bigger market. For us, it's about giving customers another opportunity to choose a lesser-known region.

Through these partnerships, craft chocolate brands are not only improving the quality of Indian chocolate but also benefiting farmers by ensuring they receive proper training, better compensation, and a fairer share of the value chain. The appreciation for Indian flavours You've probably heard of kunafeh, and if you haven't, you must be living under a rock. This Arabic dessert has taken the world by storm, largely thanks to Dubai-based chocolate brand Fix, which has pushed it into the spotlight.



Aadhaar holder may not necessarily be an Indian citizen. Multiple High Courts have ruled that Aadhaar is not proof of Indian citizenship. The UIDAI itself has affirmed that even non-citizens residing in India for 182 days are eligible for Aadhaar. Importantly, the Supreme Court in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) v. Union of India (2018) had limited the use of Aadhaar for welfare programmes paid out of the Consolidated Fund of India per Section 7 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016.

By linking Aadhaar with the voter ID, the ECI is creating a mechanism that introduces an unreliable filter into the electoral process, risks mass disenfranchisement of citizen-voters, and eroding the sanctity of universal suffrage and democratic participation guaranteed by the Constitution. These dangers are not hypothetical; they have been documented. In 2015, the ECI attempted a similar Aadhaar-voter ID linkage under the National Electoral Roll Purification and Authentication Programme. As a result, in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh alone, 55 lakh voters were arbitrarily removed from electoral rolls due to Aadhaar mismatches. Voters discovered their names missing only when they arrived at polling stations on election day. The ECI was forced to abandon the exercise after the Supreme Court issued a stay through its August 11, 2015 order.

Aadhaar-voter ID linkage also poses a severe risk of dragnet surveillance and voter profiling. The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, contains sweeping exemptions for government entities, raising the possibility that voter data could be accessed and exploited for political purposes. Once Aadhaar is linked to voter IDs, it becomes possible to cross-reference electoral data with other databases, allowing ruling parties to monitor voter demographics. The implications are concerning. Political actors could use this data to micro-target voters, suppress opposition strongholds, or even manipulate electoral rolls to achieve predetermined electoral outcomes. Seeding Aadhaar with electoral roll data subverts core principles of constitutional design. The ECI, vested with the powers of "superintendence, direction and control" over elections, is a constitutionally independent authority. In contrast, the UIDAI is a statutory body operating under executive control — bound by government directives under Section 50 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, and subject to supersession under Section 48. Entrusting it with electoral data undermines the separation of powers.

RBI flags gaps in customer transaction policies, tells banks to fix them



GNS News Agency, Sept 21

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Rohit Jain has flagged gaps in banks' policies governing customer transactions, saying a recent review of banks' websites found basic shortcomings that could affect customers' ability to access information and complete transactions. In some cases, banks referred customers to their schedule of charges or grievance redressal policies as being "available on the bank's website" without providing a direct link, while documentation requirements for outward remittances were described so broadly that they offered little practical guidance.

Jain said these were not difficult problems to fix, and could be addressed if authorised dealer (AD) banks themselves went through the customer experience and made the necessary improvements. Jain said a customer does not experience the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) as an Act or a Master Direction, but through his lived experience with the AD bank in terms of the documents a branch asks for, the quoted price, the time taken, and the quality of the explanation when a transaction cannot be done.

"As part of our supervisory exercise, we have found multiple documentation requirements and cases of delay in executing cross-border remittances," Jain said while addressing the Annual Day of Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association of India (FEDAI). "Accordingly, we have advised AD banks through FEDAI to put in place a clear policy governing documentation, process and approving authority, charges, timelines, escalation, and grievance redress to be displayed on their websites and at branches offering cross-border services. The progress on this needs to be better," Jain said. Similarly, transparency is not a one-time disclosure exercise, he said. "Policies must be complete, current, intelligible and actually followed at the bank's counter; compliance tested through internal or concurrent audit; staff trained, with proper succession planning so that capability does not sit with one officer; and customer feedback taken regularly and examined by people with requisite authority to change the process. No customer should suffer for a delay that arises from internal processing at the AD end," he said.

On cross-border trade in local currencies, Jain said local currencies will play an ever increasing role in cross-border trade and payments. The Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) framework for invoicing, payment and settlement of international trade in rupees has been implemented keeping in view the evolving dynamics of our international trade, he said. "Its success will depend on commercial viability, emphasis on trade settlement in local currencies, offering market-determined rates, and strengthening confidence in the settlement ecosystem. Opening a SRVA account is the easy part," Jain said. Jain said the harder task is identifying corridors with genuine two-way flows, building reliable correspondent relationships, quoting competitive conversion and hedging solutions, explaining the mechanics to first-time users, and finding avenues for the productive deployment of rupee balances — all resting on robust internal processes, AML/CFT controls, operational resilience and, above all, a willingness to facilitate these transactions, he said. "I would encourage you not to see it only as a way of reducing reliance on international currencies. The settlement of cross border transactions in local currencies results in lower transaction costs, fewer currency mismatches, better settlement efficiency, and the ability to trade where correspondent banking is costly or constrained," he said. "Policy can create the option. It is the authorised dealers who will determine whether this happens. I am confident that our banks can, and will rise to the occasion."

Cabinet clears rail projects to decongest Howrah-Chennai route, Bihar highway

Cabinet also approved the development of the 4-lane brownfield Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa Corridor (NH-22) in Bihar at a cost of Rs 3591 crore. Cabinet approved the development of the 4-lane brownfield Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa Corridor (NH-22) in Bihar at a cost of Rs 3591 crore. The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved four railways multi-tracking and one four lane highway project at a cost of Rs 13041 crore.

The multi-tracking railway projects have been approved to decongest Howrah-Chennai high density route. These are 173-km Kharagpur-Bhadrak (Ranital) 4th Line in West Bengal and Odisha, 75-km Bhadrak-Haridaspur 4th Line, 90-km Gummidipundi-Gudur 3rd and 4th Line in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, and 72-km Cuttack-Paradeep (Badabandha) 3rd and 4th line in Odisha. These four projects together will cost around Rs 9,450 crore. The Cabinet also approved development of 4-lane brownfield

Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa Corridor (NH-22) in Bihar worth Rs 3,591 crore. This is expected to reduce the current travel time between Muzaffarpur to Sonbarsa from two hours to one. Kharagpur-Ranital railway line is one of the main corridors connecting eastern and southern India. It carries long distance passengers and freight traffic. Officials said the section is projected to remain saturated even after the commissioning of the third line, which has necessitated the construction of the fourth line as well. The project links to the steel hubs at Jakhapura, Tatanagar and Durgapur with Paradip and Dhamra Ports for efficient movement of raw materials and finished goods. Similarly, the existing Bhadrak-Haridaspur line is nearing saturation at 91% and further saturation expected from projected port and steel



plant demand. The Gummidipundi-Gudur section is an existing double line forming part of both the Delhi-Chennai and Howrah-Chennai High Density Network (HDN) routes. The section falls under the Vizag-Chennai Industrial Corridor (VICIC) and forms a key part of the planned East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC), India's first coastal corridor. The line capacity utilization is expected to reach 131%. The fourth project, Cuttack-Badabandha, is a strategic corridor and part of the Jharsuguda-Cuttack-Paradeep Highly Utilised Network (HUN). It connects Paradeep Port to key hinterland areas of major steel clusters, iron ore mines and coal fields. Officials said the existing section is saturated at up to 101% utilisation, and is projected to rise further to 177%. The multi-tracking works will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 410 km and result in additional freight traffic by 76 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), said the Railways.

SEBI to launch pilot for bond tokenisation; eases FPI onboarding process



The regulator also plans to improve distribution of the corporate bond market and will "shortly" come up with a framework for fixed income channel partners, similar to the distributors seen in the case of mutual funds. The regulator also plans to improve distribution of the corporate bond market and will "shortly" come up with a framework for fixed income channel partners, similar to the distributors seen in the case of mutual funds.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) plans to launch a pilot for tokenising bonds "in the near future" in a bid to improve accessibility, transparency, and efficiency in the market. The regulator has been coordinating with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on the pilot project. "The idea is, can a shared ledger be used to enable simultaneous transfer of the security and money, thereby making settlement more efficient and reducing reconciliation costs. The pilot is expected to examine this aspect along with the feasibility of automated coupon payments and other servicing events through smart contracts," SEBI Whole-Time Member Amarjeet Singh said at an event in Mumbai on Thursday.

"Let me clarify that this is not about creating a separate trading market. It is about examining whether technology can make the existing bond market simpler, faster and more efficient," Singh said. The comments come as the regulator has been pushing to deepen the bond market to provide capital to fuel growth in the country. It is also consulting on a "Credit Risk-o-Meter" for debt securities to improve investor protection in a market that has been gaining traction. The Risk-o-Meter would be a "standardized, color-coded visual scale mapped to existing credit-rating symbols. It would be displayed in the offer document as well as

on platforms through which the securities are sold, together with the rating and the name of the credit-rating agency," Singh said. The regulator also plans to improve distribution of the corporate bond market and will "shortly" come up with a framework for fixed income channel partners, similar to the distributors seen in the case of mutual funds. These channel partners will be certified through the National Institute of Securities Markets. "Channel partners would neither handle client funds or securities nor charge investors separately. The objective is to expand reach while maintaining clear accountability and investor safeguards," clarified Singh. In a separate development, the regulator on Thursday eased the onboarding process for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) by allowing them to submit a digitally signed Power of Attorney to their custodians. A Power of Attorney is a document that allows FPIs to authorise custodians to act on their behalf. Custodians, meanwhile, are SEBI-registered financial institutions that are responsible for holding, safeguarding, and managing the investments of FPIs. This measure, which comes into effect immediately, "eliminates the need for notarisation, apostillation or consularisation of Power of Attorney, thereby reducing the overall time taken for FPI onboarding and improving ease of doing business for FPI applicants," the regulator noted in its circular on Thursday. It comes as part of measures introduced by SEBI — like a common application form for registration — to reduce compliance and enhance the ease of business for FPIs.

Rupee gains 3 paise to 95.70 against US dollar amid high crude prices

Mumbai: The rupee pared initial gains and settled for the day with gains of just 3 paise at 95.70 against the US dollar on Thursday, as the support from the weaker dollar index was negated by elevated crude oil prices.

Forex traders said while a weaker US dollar eases some depreciation pressure on the domestic currency, crude oil hovering above USD 90 would continue to keep a pressure on India's import bill.

AI adoption essential for banking, but human judgement remains key: RBI Deputy Guv



Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Deputy Governor Shirish Chandra Murmu on Wednesday underlined the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) in the banking system but emphasised that human intervention remains necessary in implementing the technology and identifying the loopholes. "Its purpose is not to pull governance into day-to-day execution. It is to see where institutional capability or risk appetite is falling behind changing needs, and where separate weaknesses, each individually manageable, might combine into something larger," said Murmu, speaking at an event in Mumbai. "A model that performs well overall can still fail a small but already vulnerable group. Intelligence, therefore, demands clarity — about what a technology delivers, what it leaves out, and whether its output fits the decision at hand," Murmu said, adding that this is what makes human judgement indispensable.

He highlighted that intelligence should not just be limited to AI but also take into account multiple components — analytical intelligence, human intelligence, governance intelligence, and collective intelligence, which entails information being pooled across banks. Murmu emphasised that

banks should use AI and technology to reach and understand new borrowers. "Where a lender genuinely lacks reliable information about a borrower, the absence of information should not, by itself, be mistaken for adverse information," said Murmu. "Treating 'we don't know' as though it meant 'we know it's bad' leads to credit being denied where it need not be. This is precisely where banks must put their technological capabilities to work," he added. Measures against fraud risk, AI productivity in banking While uniform adaptation of technology and models increases efficiency across the banking system, this "undue concentration" also raises the risk of digital fraud, which can move through multiple accounts and institutions.

"When risk becomes collective, the intelligence marshalled against it must become collective too. MuleHunter.ai and the Digital Payments Intelligence Platform are the Reserve Bank's answer to exactly this challenge — drawing together dispersed signals, with the help of AI, so that detection comes earlier and the response is better coordinated," said the deputy governor. Furthermore, AI's pattern recognition abilities should be used in banking to identify and act on emerging weaknesses related to fraud, conduct, operations, and cyber risk before it becomes a disruption. Murmu highlighted how AI-driven productivity should have a different barometer when it comes to the banking system. "Productivity in banking is not merely output per employee or the cost-to-income ratio; it is whether the same institution, with the same resources, reaches a borrower it could not reach before, resolves a grievance that would earlier have remained pending, prices risk more accurately," according to Murmu. "If AI compresses costs without widening reach or improving the customer's experience, we shall have automated the existing system rather than improved it," he added.

IndiGo's online bookings and check-in hit snag, but flight ops 'normal'

The reservation platform of the country's largest airline IndiGo was hit by technical issues on Wednesday, affecting its online booking and web check-in services. Numerous people complained on social media that they were unable to make bookings or perform web check-ins on the IndiGo website and mobile application, and even on some of the third-party online travel booking portals. The airline, which has a domestic market share of over 65% and operates about 2,200 daily flights, said that the issues were intermittent and its teams were working with the service provider to fix them on priority basis.

According to sources in the know, while the issues — which they said prima facie don't appear to be major — impacted the booking platform servers, IndiGo's airport and flight operations remained unaffected. They didn't elaborate on what may have caused the outage or identify the service provider, saying that the airline's immediate priority was to restore the affected services. "We are currently experiencing intermittent issues with our core reservation platform, which may make it difficult for some customers to access our online services. Our teams are working on priority, with our partner, to fix the issue as soon as possible," IndiGo said in an advisory late afternoon on Wednesday.

"Customers requiring immediate travel assistance may reach out to our Contact Centre for support. Those customers who have a later travel are advised to try accessing the website or app again after some time. We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused and appreciate your patience and understanding. We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused and appreciate your patience and understanding," the airline added. Following its operational meltdown in early December, which attracted severe public criticism and regulatory scrutiny, the airline has been focussed on maintaining operational and service reliability. The severe disruption led to thousands of flight cancellations over the course of a few days. While IndiGo managed to stabilise operations shortly thereafter, the crisis — primarily brought about by improper planning for new and more stringent pilot



duty and rest duration rules — damaged the reputation of the carrier, which had an unblemished record in terms of operational reliability for its two decades of existence. IndiGo faced massive backlash from flyers, with the government also taking a tough view on the operational meltdown, given its impact on the country's overall aviation operations. Three months later, in March, Pieter Elbers stepped down from the post of IndiGo CEO. Aviation industry veteran Willie Walsh, until recently the director general of the global airline trade grouping International Air Transport Association (IATA), took over as IndiGo earlier this month.

The large-scale operational disruption, which erupted on December 3, peaked on December 5 with over 1,600 of the airline's 2,300-plus daily flights getting cancelled in a single day. With the DGCA granting specific exemptions, the airline was able to swiftly stabilise operations over the course of the next few days. The regulator had also ordered IndiGo to curtail its approved domestic flight schedule by 10% for the ongoing Winter Schedule. In January, the DGCA imposed financial penalties totalling Rs 22.20 crore on the airline for the operational meltdown, apart from issuing warnings to its top management personnel, including Elbers. The fine was the highest-ever regulatory penalty imposed by the DGCA on an airline, and was slightly higher than IndiGo's average daily net profit for financial year 2024-25.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman meets bankers: Banking for Gen Z, deposit mobilisation in focus



Addressing the banking needs of Gen Z and ways to boost deposit mobilisation took centre stage at a key two-day meeting of the public sector banks and the Ministry of Finance starting Monday, where heads of key financial institutions are expected to produce "workable ideas" for banking sector reforms.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that banks are in a better position to take up reforms as non-performing assets (NPAs) are at the lowest level ever, adding that the future of banking must reflect the aspirations of India's youth, with 29% of the country's population between 15 and 29 years of age. The 'high-level committee for banking' with a focus on "banking for Viksit Bharat", which was announced in this year's Budget, will be announced soon, she said. "Intensive discussions today and tomorrow come at a time when we expect the announcement of the high-powered committee to look into banking for Viksit Bharat. The recommendations [after this discussion] would help us to clearly understand where the committee wants India to go towards Viksit Bharat and in that the role of banks," Sitharaman said. The finance minister further said, "it is your output that I am keenly looking forward to because once the committee gives its input, it's for us to rapidly move in that direction, understanding that the Viksit Bharat 2047 is actually not too far away. We are in 2026, so less than or short of 20 years is what we have before us".

The meeting was structured around seven themes covering key areas of opportunity for PSBs and PFIs, including 'deposit mobilisation', 'banking for youth', 'supporting the investment cycle', 'global capability centres', 'agriculture and horticulture value chain infrastructure, priority sector lending and 're-imagining credit card business'. A banking sector executive who participated in the meeting

told The Indian Express that several ideas were discussed, particularly on how to mobilise deposits and "finance the aspirations of the youth". "There have been discussions on new structured products which give more flexibility and better returns. For instance, when we talk about mobilisation of deposits, we are looking at what type of credit flows are required to achieve the kind of GDP needed for Viksit Bharat," the executive quoted above said. "It won't be easy to attract deposits... but if you look at how the average Indian is earning and how more and more people are getting added to the workforce, each of them has some part of their savings in deposits as it is the safest asset. So, the growing base of income earners would be beneficial," the executive said.

Another banker said the meeting was very focused on addressing the needs of the youth at every level, starting from education to various levels, particularly in the age group of 15-29 years. Average outstanding debt per borrower rose to Rs 4.78 lakh as of March-end 2025, from Rs 3.41 lakh as of March-end 2018, according to Ministry of Finance data. Average outstanding debt per borrower rose to Rs 4.78 lakh as of March-end 2025, from Rs 3.41 lakh as of March-end 2018, according to Ministry of Finance data. The discussion comes as India's household debt has surged in recent years, and financial sector regulators are particularly concerned about the composition of that debt. Non-housing retail loans — largely used for consumption — now account for more than half of household borrowings, and have grown faster than housing, agriculture and business loans, a trend flagged in internal discussions among policymakers, as this newspaper had reported earlier. As of March 2026, non-housing retail loans — primarily the consumption segment — constituted 58.4% of households' total borrowings, up from 54.9% of total household debt in March 2025. Average outstanding debt per borrower rose to Rs 4.78 lakh as of March-end 2025, from Rs 3.41 lakh as of March-end 2018, according to Ministry of Finance data. Unsecured personal loans remain a particular vulnerability: In the small-ticket personal loan segment of less than Rs 50,000, fintech firms have gained a higher 56.8% market share, after strong 41.6% credit expansion, well above the overall segment growth of 20.1%. Delinquencies stood at 6.4% as of March 2026. About 70.5% of fintech loan books are unsecured, with roughly half of these loans extended to borrowers under 35. The two-day PSB Confluence 2026 saw officials from the Department of Financial Services.

Manchester City looked lost without Guardiola. Arsenal made sure everyone noticed



GNS News Agency, August 21

It was the last match of the 2020/21 season. The outgoing Sergio Agüero had just scored twice as champions Manchester City demolished Everton 5-0. Yet coach Pep Guardiola was in tears. "We cannot replace him, we cannot," Guardiola said of the Argentine forward after the match. Five years later, City face the unenviable task of replacing Guardiola himself, who stepped down at the end of last season after a decade in charge. His successor, Enzo Maresca, a former Guardiola assistant who left Chelsea in January, signed a three-year deal at the Etihad, with City reportedly paying around £17m in compensation to get him. He was badly exposed last Sunday, when City were thrashed 3-0 in the Community Shield by defending champions Arsenal. They looked so underprepared that they went a goal down in just 23 seconds.

The Community Shield loss isn't the end of the world on its own, but if City aren't careful, they could be staring at a period of irrelevance similar to what neighbours Manchester United went through after losing Alex Ferguson. United still haven't found a suitable replacement, having changed managers 11 times since, including permanent, interim and caretaker appointments. City have the money to sign almost any player Maresca wants from the current market, but finding someone who can replicate Guardiola's success will be a different problem entirely. Maresca found that out the hard way at the Community Shield. His City side, who were challenging for the title last season under Guardiola, looked lost against the Gunners, outrun in midfield and shaky at the back. Goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma had a below-par outing too, and should have done better to pre-

vent Arsenal's second and third goals, scored by Kai Havertz and captain Martin Ødegaard. Erling Haaland and record signing Elliot Anderson, both returning from a post-World Cup break, looked well off the pace. Nico O'Reilly, playing in midfield alongside the underused Mateo Kovacic, struggled to contain Arsenal's movement, leaving space for their wingers to exploit. With the City forwards short of rhythm, Maresca's side pressed reluctantly while the defence held a high line, and Arsenal took full advantage of the space that created, cutting through the City backline with ease. "We are quite clear about what we need to do. And for sure, as I said, we are going to do something before the transfer window closes," Maresca said after the match.

That something, reportedly, is a move for Chelsea's Enzo Fernández, whom Maresca worked with previously at Stamford Bridge, and who he may see as a way to fill the hole left by World Cup-winning Spain captain Rodri, who signed for Barcelona on Tuesday. Their styles differ, Fernández pushes forward more than Rodri ever did, but the Argentine offers a steady hand in midfield, with assertive passing and an eye for goal, something City need after losing both Rodri and Bernardo Silva. City are also pursuing Ayoub Bouaddi, Morocco's World Cup breakout from Lille, while offloading Tijjani Reijnders to Al-Qadsiah after a single season in Manchester. Manuel Akanji, Nathan Aké and John Stones have already left, and Tottenham are reportedly interested in taking Savinho and Omar Marmoush off City's hands, as the club prepares for life after Guardiola. As all this suggests, it will be easier said than done. Guardiola was a master of adapting and evolving; even in the seasons considered failures by his own standard, 2024/25 and 2025/26, when he conceded the title to Liverpool and then Arsenal, City still finished second in the table. "Ten years is a lot of time, and I think the club needs a new manager, new energy. These incredible players we have right now, and start to write another chapter," Guardiola had said in his final pre-match press conference. Guardiola's legacy will hang over every manager who succeeds him, whether they like it or not. They will be measured against the man who transformed City, leading them to four back-to-back Premier League titles and their first-ever Champions League, in 2023. That is the weight Maresca must carry as City begin a new season without the Spaniard in the dug-out for the first time in a decade.

Ayush Shetty brought down by old nemesis Alwi Farhan



GNS News Agency, August 21

The Chinese World No. 1 could be brought under pressure. But Ayush Shetty had fewer tricks up his sleeve when he ran into Indonesia's heir apparent Alwi Farhan. The two have battled plenty in their junior years, with the technically solid Alwi using his overhead deception from a jump smash to bring down many stars. The 21-year-old, expected to take over the mantle from Jonathan Christie and Anthony Ginting, put on a seamless display of technical badminton, as Ayush seemed restricted in his smashes and unable to hassle his opponent with just net prods on his World Championships debut. Alwi comfortably won 21-19, 21-11 in 45 minutes, as the Indian challenge in men's singles ended at the Round of 16 stage.

Ayush's new-found and nascent stardom filled up four levels of the Indra Gandhi stadium. It got the Delhi decibel amplified as crowds trooped in to watch the new slayer of the Chinese dragon, hoping he would go deep into the weekend. But though he is a name that can fill up an Indian arena, he isn't quite someone who will get them to return towards

the business end of the Worlds, yet. Alwi crouches low like a wrestler and soars for a smash as a habit. What Ayush did early was simply take the pace off the returns and induce in the Indonesian restlessness as he thrashed them into the net. An early Alwi jump-smash and net-kill were a sampling of what the young Indonesian could unleash. But Ayush was determined to use the net as a party-poopng trick. Alwi's overhead deception is going to pose problems to everyone in the coming years, and the lifts the Indian sent up to gauge lengths often got him punished with his opponent ferocious in his attack. Trick didn't work it was pretty evident that Ayush's best bet was at the net from where his angled pushes and flicks could find Alwi out of position. Or trapped on the parallels. Alwi had defeated Ayush in the semi-finals of the Junior World Championships and has transitioned to seniors seamlessly. He plays a simple game with speed and a steep smash which is formidable in how he can find numerous ways to hit straight to the back court. It gave him an 18-14 lead, but also provided Ayush the trigger to switch up his game. He cut down on lifts and pushed flat crosses to navigate the critical period from 14-18 down to taking a 19-18 lead. It wasn't enough, however, to stall Alwi, who picked the opener 21-19. There wasn't a single smash-winner from the Indian in this end phase. The second game ended even more tamely as Alwi was comfortably striking from the faster side, and didn't need massive variations as he took the net out of the equation. He kept a steady stream of back court winners with Ayush extremely tentative on the side lift and never quite finding his range, trailing from start to finish against the 11th seed. Ayush, the disruptor, was evident on Day 1 when he took out Shi Yuqi. Alwi might well thank him for clearing the path. Ayush, the destructor, though, isn't quite the finished product yet. His endurance still leaves a lot to be desired.

Babar Azam slammed for Pakistan's pace bowling decline: 'He wanted flatter tracks'



GNS News Agency, August 21

Even though Babar Azam is not part of the first Test between Pakistan and England, having been ruled out due to injury, he still remains the centre of discussion, not for all the right reasons. Former Pakistan women's cricketer Urooj Mumtaz has slammed Babar's captaincy and approach, arguing that his preference for flatter surfaces over pace-friendly ones has contributed to Pakistan's failure to produce any world-class pacers in recent years.

Pakistan have a proud history of producing some of the game's greatest fast bowlers like Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis and Shoaib Akhtar but modern-day cricket has seen a steep decline in the quality of their pace attack. Mumtaz believes the sudden disappearance of Pakistan's pace threat has a lot to do with domestic pitch conditions. "There's obviously a problem with the pitches that we prepare back home. One of the examples of that was England touring Pakistan both times around," she told Sky Sports. "Now, I think there's also a lot of haze in understanding where Pakistan's strength lies now, or has been in the last five years. For me, it is very hard to believe to say that Pakistan's quick bowling is not the strength. It has always been the strength," she said. Mumtaz spoke on how batting-friendly conditions, particularly during Babar's time as captain, contributed to the decline.

"We've gone so far away from it because our batters, especially when Babar was captain, wanted flatter tracks, wanted the batsmen to dominate the way things ran more

Even in first-class cricket, grass was taken off. So, you were almost putting the fast bowlers up against the wall, giving them zero assistance in first-class cricket, and providing a lot of batters to score runs without any test, really. And that's where I feel they've just fallen off the boil," she said. "Shaheen Shah Afridi broke onto the scene; everyone thought he was the next best thing. After the injury, he fell off. Naseem Shah is nowhere to be found. Haris Rauf is not bowling as quickly, or doesn't have the capacity to bowl as quickly for long periods of time. There are a few bowlers – Ali Raza, 17 years old – but they're few and far between in terms of pace. And I think it has to do with what we've done at the international and domestic level, providing zero assistance to quick bowlers, moving away from that, and going a lot into all-rounders," she added.

'First time I've seen it': England pacers cut ball in half after 5-fers vs Pakistan

The debate found a simple yet ingenious resolution during England's first Test against Pakistan at Headingley on Wednesday as seamers Ollie Robinson and Josh Tongue decided to simply cut the dark Dukes ball in half.

Sticking true to one of cricket's oldest traditions of a bowler claiming the ball after bagging a five-for in an innings, Robinson and Tongue came together to their unique resolution after demolishing Pakistan with figures of five for 51 and five for 46 respectively. The duo's combusive energy dismantled the entire Pakistan order within 49 overs, bundled out for 171. The hosts then entered stumps at Day 1 after putting 112 for two on board. Robinson and Tongue also became the first English pair to bag five-wicket hauls in the same innings of a Test in 20 years since Steve Harmison and Monty Panesar against Pakistan at Old Trafford in 2006. "Robbo said we can split the ball in half," Tongue told Test Match Special. "The groundstaff have kindly done that.

Padikkal hails Suthar's 'exceptional' control after 10-wicket haul



Galle: Player of the Match Devdutt Padikkal praised young left-arm spinner Manav Suthar for his exceptional control after India defeated Sri Lanka by 165 runs in the opening Test at the Galle International Stadium in Galle, Sri Lanka. Suthar, playing only his second Test, produced a match-winning performance on a sluggish surface, claiming 6-55 in Sri Lanka's second innings to complete a ten-wicket haul in the match. His figures of 10-101 helped India bowl Sri Lanka out for 206 while defending 372.

"You can tell that he's meant for this level. I think the amount of control he has in his bowling is exceptional, and when you have something like that, who can just keep going at the same spot again and again, it's really, really special," Padikkal said in a video released by the BCCI on X. "I'm sure he'll continue to develop, and I think we have a really good left-hand spinner in our hands," he added. Suthar's decisive spell came after Sri Lanka had threatened to frustrate India through Sonal Dinusha and

Dhananjaya de Silva. Dinusha made 84 in the second innings after scoring a century in the first, while de Silva contributed 59. Padikkal said India's patience and discipline were crucial on a surface that was not easy to bowl on. "It wasn't the easiest of wickets to bowl on. I think we needed a lot of patience to just keep chipping away as long as possible because they were playing some really good cricket as well," he said.

"I think they batted really well, especially Sonal. I think in both innings he was exceptional, and when you have people playing at the highest level, it's important that we continue to keep working on our things. We did that really well. We kept plugging away, and I think eventually the patience showed in one over," he added. Padikkal also highlighted the importance of winning the toss and India's first-innings batting effort in setting up the victory. He scored a magnificent 167 as India posted 462 and secured a 178-run first-innings lead. "On the first day, I think winning the toss was really important. It has always been key when you're playing at Galle, and we started well with the bat. I think putting on a really big total was the most important part of this Test match. It set us up pretty well for the rest of the match for us," he said. The India batter also praised the way the team maintained its discipline with the ball throughout the Test. "I think we were again really clinical, did our jobs pretty well. And I think that's the key, you know, when you're bowling in such conditions, it can get tough. I think everyone was really patient, really disciplined, and that gave us the best result," he said. India's victory gave them a 1-0 lead in the two-match series, with the second Test scheduled to begin in Colombo on August 23.

Praggnanandhaa finishes joint-top at Sinquefield Cup, secures GCT final berth

GNS News Agency, August 21 Continuing his impressive run of form, R Praggnanandhaa finished joint-top of the Sinquefield Cup 2026 on Thursday while also securing his spot in the Grand Chess Tour final. The Indian Grandmaster drew his final round against Dutch GM Anish Giri, ending his campaign on level terms with American Grandmaster Wesley So, both tying for the top spot with 5.5 points from 9 rounds.

Wesley So eventually bagged the bragging rights and a handsome prize money of \$87,500 after claiming the title against Pragg in the tiebreaks. After the first two rapid play-off games ended in draws, Wesley nailed the hammer in a nervy Armageddon game, playing with draw odds to clinch the tournament. For Pragg, however, the result still meant a second straight GCT final appearance. This joint-top finish in the Sinquefield Cup comes on the back of an exceptional run that included victory at Norway Chess and a title at the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz.

Pragg notched up wins against Candidates winner Javokhir Sindarov and French GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, while his solitary loss in the event came at the hands of Germany's Vincent Keymer. Pragg's consistency across formats has cemented his position as one of the most reliable performers on the global circuit. Joining



Praggnanandhaa in the GCT finals are Fabiano Caruana, Wesley So, and Vincent Keymer. World Championship challenger Sindarov needed a top-two finish at the Sinquefield Cup to qualify. A win in the final round would have helped Sindarov tie for the top spot, but eventual champion Wesley held him to a draw, denying him both a shot at the Sinquefield title and a place in the GCT finals. The GCT finals, featuring the top four players of the season, will begin on Saturday, where Praggnanandhaa will be eager to go one better than last year and become the first Indian to win the overall tour title.

Lakshya Sen knocked out by unknown American as home favourite disappoints again



The 18-year-old has no fixed training base and no permanent coach. He moves to and from Taiwan, camping at his grandparents' because quality sparring is difficult to get in California. Tan isn't even firmed up yet on singles and won the mixed doubles at Junior All England. His childhood coach Paula Lynn travelled to Delhi to sit for his matches at his debut Worlds.

Saipan, Fullerton, Aguascalientes, Lima, Sao Paulo, Uppsala, Markham, Jotunhallen, Council Bluffs, San Salvador. These are some of the venues where American teenager Garret Tan, who defeated Lakshya Sen at his first-ever World Championships, has been plodding away, playing lower-level tournaments. The 18-year-old has no fixed training base and no permanent coach. He moves to and from Taiwan, camping at his grandparents' because quality sparring is difficult to get in California. Tan isn't even firmed up yet on singles and won the mixed doubles at Junior All England. His childhood coach Paula Lynn travelled to Delhi to sit for his matches at his debut Worlds. Fellow American shuttler Lauren Lam completed an all-women coaching bench, with his mother helping out with assorted support, while he evicted the big Indian hope, ranked 14th, 19-21, 21-19, 21-17, sending shockwaves through the arena.

The next generation isn't creeping up on Sen. They are at his throat. His potential roadblocks were expected to be batchmate Kunlavut Vitidsarn (25) or junior Alex Lanier (22). Not Tan, who played the World Juniors in Guwahati last October and put the twice All England finalist through the wringer. India's Lakshya Sen plays against United States' Garret Tan during the Badminton World Championships in New Delhi, India, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2026. India's Lakshya Sen plays against United States' Garret Tan during the Badminton World Championships in New Delhi, India, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2026. There were no glaring injury concerns for Sen, though the shoulder was strapped like usual. He had trained for a week in Guwahati, though on this day, it wasn't the winds wounding or winding up his judgment. It was his wobbly confidence, and wrecked intent.

Tan plays the typical doubles player's aggressive ambush – a whacking smash when he's offered the length to hit. It's not Sen's favourite style to tackle, but it's nothing he hasn't doused before. What was inexplicable was Sen offering his rookie opponent lollipop low lifts – the length so short that he contributed to his own downfall. "There is no excuse for this performance," coach Vimal Kumar would say. Sen simply couldn't close out the match in two games, as he repeatedly blundered through needlessly rushed

brawny rallies, prolonging which would've given him the space to bring his brains to the table. Vimal had been peeved by Sen's approach in Round 1 too, in which he dropped the opening game. On Wednesday after he was edged out 21-19 in the second, it was assumed he would blitz past Tan in the decider, once sides changed. But it was never about the drift. The short lifts were such a tactical trip-up that the passive, pensive, ponderous Sen stood no chance as long as he was serving them up as if he was Tan's junior sparrer. They betrayed a crisis of confidence, as he looked like he was in no mood to grit it out in rallies. He had spoken of avoiding nasty surprises early on, but Sen simply gets bogged down when he runs into anyone with a half-decent power-attack. He has the mind, the manipulation smarts, the montage of tricks to outlast the best. But he seems to tie in his game's self-worth to muscle, like he's some gym-bro. It meant if he couldn't match Tan in style and swagger, he wouldn't put in the court mileage to get under the shuttle and belt the downward shots. If he was on a wrestling mat, he would've been warned for passivity, such as his phlegmatic play. Tan, an unusually tall Asian-American, who is in the habit of asking his coach many questions since he was young, happily took the initiative and went the distance. Sen restored parity by winning the second game with a start-to-finish lead. But it still went to 21-19. Later, Sen would say he was always playing catch-up.

"Always covering the leads, and under pressure. He was solid on the attack game," the Indian would say. India's Lakshya Sen plays against United States' Garret Tan during the Badminton World Championships in New Delhi, India, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2026. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup) India's Lakshya Sen plays against United States' Garret Tan during the Badminton World Championships in New Delhi, India, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2026. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup) If only Sen had known that Tan had his return tickets booked for Friday – Thursday mostly penciled in for Qutub Minar and Janpath – and paced himself better and calmly. When his reflexive defence came under heavy shelling, Sen folded. Yet again. Just like he did against Viktor Axelsen and Lee Zii Jia at the Olympics and Lin Chun Yi at All England.

In the decider, he fell to a 4-12 deficit. One would back Sen to rumble back. And he did till 10-13. But the aggressive gear kicked in far too late, far too desperately. The American women had done a smart SWAT on Sen – given the Indian puts pressure on opponents with his explosive stomp from the front court, using his half-smashes and net tricks, he needed to be pinned to the backline. All Tan did was keep ping-pong tosses and clears to Sen's forehand back corner – where countless upstarts have fancied their chances to bury him. "We noticed," coach Lynn would say with a smile. The Orange County coach from south California – where the next Olympics will be held – would also discern that tan's athletic attitude was bound to hassle Sen.

What sets him apart as a shuttler not to be trifled with is how Tan switched up his attack zone when Sen cut the lead to 16-18. "Last couple of points I changed my flank," he would disclose. A slide in defence saw Tan glaze out, checked out by the doctor for concussion. What was unmissable though was Sen heading to the coach's bench, sitting down panting heavily himself. He played a disastrous floater to go 16-19 down. Tan wrapped up with two slashing smashes. Sen wasn't even in the same frame.

Prithviraj’s actioner is a hollow spectacle that even Mohanlal can’t save



Khalifa Movie Review: Pretty much every frame in director Vysakh’s Khalifa exudes opulence. The settings are majestic and ornate, but rarely artificial. Be it Aamir Ali’s (Prithviraj Sukumaran) Mambarakkal tharavadu (ancestral home) or the empire he builds through gold smuggling, the settings are as grand as they can be. Yet, the movie starts to feel meretricious early on itself, and Vysakh never really manages to prove otherwise.

A hollow spectacle, Khalifa might even make one wonder where it all went wrong, particularly since, in retrospect, it would appear that the story had pretty much all the elements for a serviceable mass entertainer. However, Jinu V Abraham’s shallow writing and Vysakh’s uninspired direction strip the film of its little potential.Cinema Anatomy | How Prithviraj and Classmates beat 4 superstars to become Onam winner, cultural phenomenonDespite being the grandson of notorious smuggler Mambarakkal Ahmed Ali — often cited as one of the people whose illegal activities prompted the government to implement the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act (COFEPOSA) — Aamir Ali has chosen a peaceful life like his father, businessman Younus Ali (Renji Panicker). However, certain setbacks to Younus push Aamir into gold smuggling, making him a rival to Harris (Neil Nitin Mukesh) and politician Raghavan (Shammi Thilakan). Although Aamir slowly grows big, he too begins facing personal losses. Once he realises that “ithu oru vazhi paadhai; thirumbi porath uyir mattum thaan (This is a one-way path; only the soul returns),” a battle for survival begins.Khalifa delivers one of the most impressive, well-choreographed hero-introduction fight sequences in recent Malayalam cinema. In the streets of London, as Aamir takes on a bunch of ruthless thugs, Khalifa creates the feeling that the movie will only soar from here. And it’s impossible not to appreciate Prithviraj for executing such sharp-edged stunt moves with precision and giving them the energy they deserve, even at 43.

However, Khalifa fails to capitalise on the momentum it establishes here, taking a nosedive shortly thereafter. One major reason is the lack of freshness in the events and plot points. From Aamir’s bond with his family and conversations about his marriage to scenes showing him finding the love of his life, Fiza (Malvika Sharma), and their romance blossoming, everything feels very familiar. Although billed as a family drama thriller, the movie lacks drama and thrills.Even if the ordinary moments, meant to move the story forward and build eventual drama, don’t feel fresh, they could have done their job if they had been well crafted. Unfortunately, Jinu’s writing is so dull that these scenes never quite pique interest. In fact, there are several reasons to feel that little effort went into the script, chief among them being the inconsistency in the actors’ dialects.Khalifa stars Prithviraj Sukumaran. Khalifa delivers one of the most impressive, well-choreographed hero-introduction fight sequences in recent Malayalam cinema. (Credit: Facebook/@PrithvirajSukumaran)

Inconsistent writing and flat charactersDespite being set in Malabar, most characters do not adhere to the local dialect properly, aside from uttering a few stereotypical words. Worse still, while his parents and friends seem to have at least a trace of the dialect, Aamir’s is quite inconsistent, coming and going as Prithviraj feels. It is when we compare Khalifa to a film like Khalid Rahman’s Thallumaala that the importance of accurate representation becomes evident, and it might also evoke a sense of frustration towards Jinu and Vysakh in us for the little to no effort they put into sharpening this aspect.Although Vysakh inflates the visuals disproportionately, none of the scenes quite capture the intended emotions. Even the sequences showcasing Aamir’s so-called brilliance in smuggling through airports are dull and don’t even come close to the captivating moments director KV Anand created in Ayan (2009) over 17 years ago.

Considering the rampant gold smuggling cases across the country, and how the names of even those

with high connections crop up in them, Khalifa had quite a bit of potential. However, the makers never achieve anything substantial.

Vysakh’s inefficiency as a director is evident at several points in the movie, as certain shots — including a few showing Prithviraj walking with swagger — are used more than once, highlighting a lack of planning. Besides, there’s a scene where Harris and Raghavan indirectly murder one of Aamir’s couriers. Although the movie had shown her a few times before, it never gave her prominence. Suddenly, after her death, Khalifa shows Aamir recalling a heartfelt conversation with her, underscoring their closeness. But by that point, the character is dead, and this new piece of information is useless to us. Why did Vysakh not use these shots earlier, which could have helped build some drama? No clue.Similarly, when a fight is progressing at full throttle towards the end, the film immediately cuts to show the police rushing to the spot. Upon arrival, they see Aamir sitting there after having finished off his enemies, followed by a flashback of the rest of the fight. But once we know he’s won the battle, how does simply seeing the fight give us more of a thrill? Vysakh also doesn’t seem to have an answer, and he’s used this gimmick for nothing.Even though Prithviraj is as stylish as he could be throughout the film, the makers never really manage to elevate him or Aamir Ali the way they deserve. While there isn’t enough material on paper to do so, the director also fails to provide a visual uplift. Even the bonds Aamir shares with the people around him, including his best friend Samad (Sanju Sivram), aren’t well fleshed out; nor are the characters.

Weak characterisations and performancesMalvika Sharma is wasted in one of the most pointless characters in the film, who exists solely for Aamir to romance and bear a boy as his heir. Aside from the fact that she has only a few lines in the entire film — possibly because of her atrocious lip-syncing, which may have led the makers to realise that they can’t afford to include more of that — Fiza doesn’t even get a proper identity. She makes sporadic appearances, much like Aamir’s mother Noorjahan (Mohini), but I doubt it would have mattered whether she was in the movie or not.

Renji Panicker’s performance, meanwhile, is comical at best, and there were several moments when his expressions, particularly helplessness, made me wonder if he was mocking us and director Vysakh for expecting too much from him. Equally disappointing is Shivajith, who plays Raghavan’s son Vinayakan. I am not being unfair, but his expressions and overall body language whenever he attempted to look like the “tough guy” made it appear as if Vinayakan suffered from constipation.While it is evident that by bringing Neil Nitin Mukesh, the makers of Khalifa aimed to emulate what Prithviraj Sukumaran did in Lucifer (2019) with Vivek Oberoi as the antagonist, the character of Harris here is far too uncharismatic and middling, let alone menacing. While Neil brought magnetic villainy to his Chirag in AR Murugadoss’ Kaththi (2014), Khalifa’s Harris has almost no aura, and the makers never quite convey why he is regarded as a significant villain, as the film claims. Even Raghavan is rather superficial, and Shammi Thilakan’s performance is, at best, serviceable.(Spoilers ahead) The only moment Khalifa truly gives an irresistible high — an absolute adrenaline rush — is when Mohanlal makes his cameo in the epilogue as Mambarakkal Ahmed Ali, strongly reminding one of Rajinikanth’s intro in Pa Ranjith’s Kabali (2016). Although he is on screen for only a few minutes, the swagger and acting sharpness Mohanlal delivers are almost the cumulative total of what most other actors bring to the entire film.

Vysakh doesn’t stop there. He includes a special appearance by Tovino Thomas, too, in the same sequence, presenting him as the villain in a potential sequel by intercutting his shots with those featuring Ahmed Ali. Not to forget that Soubin Shahir also makes a cameo alongside the Big M, but it’s honestly pointless.While there’s no denying that Mohanlal and Tovino’s appearances offer exhilaration after an unsatisfactory climax, it’s hard not to point out how disrespectful it is to exploit people’s love for these stars in this manner. By placing them in roles inconsequential to the current movie and hinting at bigger parts in a potential sequel, while failing to deliver even one solid film, the creators are essentially being unscrupulous.Much like the cameos by Karthi in Kanguva (2024), Prithviraj Sukumaran in Pallichattambi (2026), and SJ Suryah in Bha Bha Ba (2025), those by Mohanlal and Tovino Thomas in Khalifa are also futile, as they can’t save the entire train wreck in just a few minutes. Plus, the resemblances between Khalifa’s epilogue and those of Lucifer and Animal (2023) are hard to overlook.Mohandas’ production design steals the show, and as mentioned at the beginning of the review, no frame in Khalifa passes by without exuding opulence. Jomon T John’s cinematography is impressive at several points. While Jakes Bejoy’s songs are good, his background score feels somewhat on the nose at times. Chaman Chakko’s editing shines during the stunt sequences.

Rajpal Yadav claims he suffered Rs 250 crore loss in 13 years: ‘Nobody can buy me’

Rajpal Yadav has claimed that he suffered losses of Rs 250 crore in the last 13 years. The actor has been embroiled in a cheque-bounce case since 2013, and has also served jail terms on multiple occasions with regard to the case. Now, the actor has, once again, denied the allegations made against him in the cheque bounce case and said that “nobody can buy him.”Speaking to ANI, the actor said, “From 2013 to 2026, I have suffered a personal loss of Rs 200-250 crore. I am saying this from my heart. I missed at least 50 of my tours abroad. And whatever fees I should have been getting was reduced. For instance, instead of Rs 100, I got Rs 10. I have never gotten into these things. I am a student of the arts. I chase perfection in my art. Fees will come running behind.”

Speaking about his debts, the actor shared, “Whosoever I owe money to, I have cleared it... or I will clear it. Even if I have borrowed from 200 people, I have paid them and if I haven’t, the money will reach their house.” He then called himself “responsible” and said, “Nobody can buy me out for Rs 5 crore or even Rs 250 crore. I am with the arts since childhood. Money can’t buy me.”In the same conversation, Rajpal went on to claim that his financial challenges cannot define his entire career or existence as an actor. “I still have 500 people clicking selfies with me at airports,” he said. He also claimed that he was never “lost” and will prove the same to the world.

In July, the Delhi High Court upheld the conviction and sentence of actor Rajpal Yadav and his wife, Radha, in



multiple cheque-bounce cases arising from a financial dispute with Murl Projects Pvt Ltd.According to the judgment, Rajpal repeatedly sought time to arrange funds and, both personally and through his senior counsel, assured the court on several occasions that he would repay the complainant. Relying on these assurances, the court granted him repeated adjournments and extended protection by suspending his sentence. However, the court found that despite being given multiple opportunities over a considerable period, Yadav failed to honour the undertakings made before it.

Niki Walia recalls Shah Rukh Khan’s secret hospital visit after car accident: ‘He saw the van’



Actor Niki Aneja Walia, who has featured in TV shows such as Gharwali Baharwali and Astiva, met with a near-fatal car accident on the sets of a serial in the year 2000. In a recent interview, she recalled how superstar Shah Rukh Khan helped her during that difficult period in her life. Niki also revealed that it was because of SRK that she was able to uncover the truth behind the show’s production manager’s “carelessness” that led to the accident.

During a chat with Buzzzooka Prime, the host referred to Shah Rukh as Niki’s close friend, but the actor clarified that they were merely acquaintances. “He has been my friend, my colleague. But, you all need to please stop thinking that he is my best friend,” she said.Niki Walia and Shah Rukh Khan have worked together on several live shows. She was also supposed to play the female lead in Shah Rukh’s Yes Boss (1997), but had to step

Govinda’s manager slams divorce drama after Sunita Ahuja withdraws case: ‘This saddens me’



Actor Govinda’s manager Shashi Sinha has expressed disappointment over Sunita Ahuja filing for divorce in the first place after she withdrew her petition. He also criticised the media attention surrounding the couple’s marital issues.After confirming that Sunita Ahuja

‘Not even a little bit close’: Josh Radnor on his bond with How I Met Your Mother co-stars

Josh Radnor, best known for playing the protagonist Ted Mosby in Carter Bays and Craig Thomas’ popular sitcom How I Met Your Mother (HIMYM), has confessed he’s “not even a little bit close” to his co-stars from the show today. It’s been 12 years since How I Met Your Mother concluded its memorable nine-year television run.

Josh Radnor’s differences with Neil Patrick HarrisOn the Half the Picture podcast, when asked if he is still close to his How I Met Your Mother co-stars, Josh Radnor said, “No. Not even a little bit. I don’t mean that in any dramatic way. It’s just... We had Neil (Patrick Harris) on the podcast, and he and I had a really interesting conversation about some of the tension we had on set that was fascinating and kind of healing.” Neil Patrick Harris broke through with HIMYM, playing Ted’s close friend and playboy Barney Stinson.Earlier this year, Neil was a guest on How We Made Your Mother, a podcast hosted by Radnor and How I Met Your Mother co-creator Craig Thomas. “I always kind of felt that that my performance annoyed you, Josh,” Neil told his co-star on the podcast, much to his pleasant surprise.“I was very indifferent to the heart and the pathos of it because I wasn’t written that way. And I know that was your job, right? I remember often when we were filming, and I sensed frustration from you because you wanted the scene to be like a good scene and I was looking at you like, ‘Motherfu’ker, I’m doing spit takes,” added Neil.He clarified that his intention wasn’t to air any “dirty laundry”, but point out to the fact that their different perspectives coming and clashing together is probably what made the show memorable.

How I Met Your Mother aired from 2005 till 2014. How I Met Your Mother aired from 2005 till 2014.Josh Radnor also acknowledged that, but attributed it to the blurring of the lines between the character and the actor. “Barney was often incredibly almost dismissive of Ted, and you were so good at playing that. I think sometimes I felt dismissed by Neil, but I was being dismissed by Barney,” argued Radnor, adding that he was “delighted by our weird chemistry.”

Neil Patrick Harris also clarified that it’s not an “unsolved issue” he’s been harbouring all along, but just an observation in hindsight because at the time they were in the thick of the show, there was a “disconnect” that he could feel. “I just remember being at craft service or something

down due to personal reasons.Recalling the horrific incident where she was run over by a car, Niki shared how Shah Rukh Khan realised the crash was caused by an untrained driver. She said, “I was in such a bad state. I was in the hospital for over a month. He was shooting in Film City at that time, and he had witnessed certain things, so he wanted to meet me personally and know how I was doing.”

The actor added, “He also wanted to ask me if this was actually an accident or someone’s carelessness. He gave me some information. It was his goodness that he didn’t come till 12:30 am because there was paparazzi outside the hospital. There were rumours that I wasn’t well. Some even said that I was dead, and that was very disturbing. So, Shah Rukh wanted to see the truth with his own eyes.”While shooting for Devdas in Film City around the time Niki Walia was hospitalised, Shah Rukh Khan happened to witness the exact vehicle involved in the incident. “He also wanted to tell me the reality – he saw a man learning how to drive on Khandala bridge. He was shooting for Devdas at that time and his car got blocked for a moment because that man was learning how to drive a car,” she said.The veteran actor continued, “When he heard about my accident and realised it was the same red Maruti van, he knew it wasn’t a simple accident. After he gave me the news, I asked around and got to know that it happened because of the carelessness of a production manager. He picked a non-driving common man for the scene because the per day artiste couldn’t come. He thought of teaching driving to that man then and there, right before the shoot. Instead of a brake, that person pressed the accelerator, so the car didn’t stop and it ran over me.”Shah Rukh Khan’s intervention also helped Niki Walia seek financial compensation for the accident. “Shah Rukh came to give that news to me. I used to do live shows on world tours with him, so I was friends with him. And, he has a big heart and he felt that I should know this. It helped me claim money from the producers. All my 5 TV shows during that period had gone off air. Paying those bills for over a month became easier for me because of SRK,” she concluded.On the professional front, Niki was last seen in Bhai Tera Star Hai, starring Raghav Juyal and Niharika NM in lead roles.

had withdrawn the divorce case, Sinha told NDTV in Hindi, “What I’m saying is, if all of this was going to happen today, then why, after taking the matter forward for so many days, has it now come to a point where they are taking a step back and have applied to withdraw the case? It is certainly a matter of happiness, but the unfortunate part is that all the drama that has played out in the media over the past one-and-a-half to two years — all of this could have been avoided.”

He added, “We wouldn’t have had to take this matter to the streets or into the public domain, and we could have avoided the damage to the family’s reputation that has happened in the marketplace. Fights happen between many people; they continue and are dealt with privately. But once you go to court, the whole world knows about it.”Govinda’s manager further expressed his view that the world did not need to know that all was not well between the couple.“If the case was ultimately going to be withdrawn, why was it filed in the first place? This saddens me,” he said.

Both Govinda and Sunita Ahuja are yet to share a statement on the development. The couple tied the knot in 1987 and have two children, daughter Tina and son Yashvardhan.Sunita Ahuja made headlines in December 2024 when she filed for divorce from Govinda at the Bandra Family Court in Mumbai, reportedly citing adultery, cruelty and desertion as grounds for dissolving their nearly 40-year marriage.

and you were personally just more like buddy buddy with Jason (Segel), and that we’d say hey to each other or whatever, but like we were sort of doing different shows when we were filming it. I remember thinking ‘Is Josh mad at me?’ a lot. Like ‘Am I doing something to annoy him?,” confessed Neil.Radnor also revealed that he did feel as the show’s protagonist, yet having done lesser shows than most of his co-stars, that he had a “harder adjustment with losing my anonymity.”“I didn’t know how to process this in a way that felt healthy, other than kind of trying to keep it at arm’s length,” he added, apologizing to Neil for being “a little pissy.”How I Met Your Mother had a run of nine seasons and 208 episodes. How I Met Your Mother had a run of nine seasons and 208 episodes.He also confessed to doubting whether his “heart-forward thing” was less “valuable” than Neil’s comedy. “It took me a long time to realize that the task that I was given, I was doing it really well. And I’ve actually gone back and kind of forgiven myself for being so hard on myself in those years,” said Radnor.

Josh Radnor’s equation with other How I Met Your Mother co-actorsAfter confessing to having “healed” from the friction he had with Neil Patrick Harris during the filming of How I Met Your Mother, Josh Radnor pointed out that he isn’t terribly close to his other co-stars either. He revealed that him and Jason Segel, who played Marshall on the show, exchange texts to each other “once in a while”, but haven’t seen each other in a “really long time.”Cobie Smulders, who played Robin on How I Met Your Mother, has been a guest on Radnor’s podcast a few times, but as a result, they’ve only interacted with each other over Zoom. As far as Alyson Hannigan (Lily) is concerned, he last met her in his 2024 wedding with psychologist Jordana Jacobs. He compared his bonding with his former co-stars to what one has with one’s college batchmates.“I have love for all these people. It’s like college, where you have this very intense time together, and you think you’re going to be... You can’t imagine not seeing each other every day because you’ve seen each other every day for so long. And then it just disperses, and you just go out and live your life,” explained Radnor.More than friends, he looks at them as his “family” whom he didn’t get to choose when they were cast together in How I Met Your Mother 21 years ago. “And family dynamics come out to play when you’re in an environment like that for so long.