

Rs 45 Lakh Promise for Old Currency Note, Hyderabad Man Loses Rs 7.9 Lakh

Hyderabad: A 49-year-old man from Qutbiguda was allegedly duped of more than Rs 7.9 lakh by cyber fraudsters who lured him with a promise of Rs 45 lakh in exchange for an old Rs 1 currency note.

According to police, the victim came across a social media advertisement on September 20 claiming that an old Indian one-rupee note could be sold for Rs 45 lakh. He contacted the phone number provided in the advertisement.

The fraudsters asked him to send photographs of the currency note along with his personal details, claiming that the information was required to transfer the money. Believing their claims, the victim shared the requested details.

Kohli, Gill Tons Give India 8-Wicket Win Over West Indies in 1st ODI

Thiruvananthapuram: Virat Kohli scored his 55th ODI century and Shubman Gill made 110 as India crushed the West Indies by eight wickets in the first match to take a 1-0 lead here on Sunday.

Kohli completed his 15,000 ODI runs during his record-extending century and remained unbeaten on 139 off only 88 balls (10 fours, 9 sixes) as India scored 300/2 in 41.4 overs in reply to the West Indies' 295/7.

India's chase was also spruced up by a 10th ODI hundred from skipper Gill, who scored 110 off 108 balls with 13 fours and a six. Gill and Kohli added 151 runs for the second wicket after the Indian skipper had put on 74 for the first with Rohit Sharma (32).

Woman Killed Following Argument With Husband in Chikkadpally

Hyderabad: A 26-year-old woman was allegedly killed after her husband attacked her with a heavy stone in Chikkadpally on Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Teja Sri. According to reports, the couple had moved to Chikkadpally four months ago and had been staying in a rented house.

The incident occurred following an argument between the couple. In a fit of rage, the man allegedly attacked Teja Sri on the head with a heavy stone, leaving her with severe injuries. She died on the spot.

Police reached the scene after receiving information from locals and shifted the body to a government hospital for post-mortem examination.



Telangana decides to resolve Urban Land Ceiling applications

Hyderabad, Sep 27 (IANS) Telangana Minister for Revenue, Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, on Sunday announced that the state government has taken a crucial decision to resolve Urban Land Ceiling (ULC) applications that have been pending for decades.

He stated that although the previous government had issued a Government Order (GO) in 2016 to resolve pending ULC applications, it was not implemented, leaving thousands of applications pending for years. As a result, people faced numerous difficulties regarding rights and transactions concerning their lands, he said.

The minister said in a statement that, in line with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's resolve to provide a per-

manent solution to the land-related issues, the government, after due consultations, initiated measures to resolve issues related to Section 22A of the Registration Act through a fast-track process.

Srinivasa Reddy said clear instructions have been issued to expeditiously review pending applications regarding colonies—whether partially regularised or unregularised—under the Telangana Urban Land Ceiling (ULC) Act and to regularise eligible cases in accordance with the rules.

He announced that a memo was issued on Sunday to facilitate the review and resolution of pending ULC applications filed under previously issued Government Orders (GOs) 455, 456, 747, and 92.

Officials have been directed to immediately initiate regularisation measures for eligible cases after completing all necessary procedural formalities as per the regulations.

It was noted that although the previous government issued a GO in 2016 to resolve ULC-related issues, the failure to implement it resulted in applications remaining pending for years.

The government is taking action in line with the assurance given by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy in the Legislative Assembly on September 16 —promising to resolve 10–12 key issues linked to Section 22A through a fast-track process.

Crops drying up despite availability of water in Palamuru, claims KTR

Hyderabad, Sep 27 (IANS) BRS Working President K. T. Rama Rao expressed concern over crops drying up across the erstwhile Palamuru (Mahabubnagar) district in Telangana despite the availability of water.

He said more than 40 per cent of crops had been damaged.

During his visit to Deshitikyall village in Nagarkurnool mandal, KTR met farmers and inspected cotton and maize fields.

Farmers told him that crops had suffered severe damage and that they were unable to recover even their cultivation costs.

KTR, as Rama Rao is popularly known, said farmers had stopped him on the road while he was returning

to Hyderabad after attending a programme in Kollapur and requested him to inspect their fields. He said the condition of cotton and maize crops clearly indicated the extent of the damage.

Farmers also raised concerns over inadequate irrigation and power supply.

The BRS leader said that despite water being available in the Krishna and Godavari rivers, irrigation water was not reaching farmers. He alleged that the government was not operating the Kaleshwaram and Palamuru-Rangareddy projects to their full potential.

Rama Rao demanded that the government immediately conduct a comprehensive crop-loss survey across the erstwhile Palamuru district and provide com-



pensation to affected farmers. He also demanded a special package for farmers who had suffered heavy losses after investing through loans and pledging gold.

He assured farmers that BRS would continue to raise their concerns and pressurise the government until adequate compensation was provided.

Rama Rao, who is an MLA from Sircilla, welcomed Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's visit to Sircilla and said the Chief Minister must answer the questions and problems of the people instead of indulging in political criticism. Nearly three years after coming to power, the Congress government has failed to fulfil its promises, he said.



56 Killed In Rain, Storm-Related Incidents Across Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh, Sept 27

Fifty-six people were killed in rain-and storm-related incidents in Uttar Pradesh since Friday, while several districts were grappling with a flood-like situation after an intense three-day wet spell, officials said. The depression over the state weakened into a well-marked low pressure area on Sunday, bringing some respite from rainfall, they said. Rescue teams were conducting operations in waterlogged areas to evacuate stranded people to safer locations, the relief department said, as strong winds and heavy downpour uprooted trees and electric poles and inundated roads and villages, damaging over one thousand houses and standing crops.

The state received 45.1 mm rainfall in the 24 hours ending Sunday, against the normal 1.8 mm, officials said.



Centre launches Dekho Apna Desh 2.0 campaign in fresh push to tourism

New Delhi, Sep 27 (IANS) Union Minister of Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Sunday launched the National Digital Tourism Stack and National Mission for Alternative Destinations—Dekho Apna Desh 2.0 campaign on World Tourism Day 2026. The Ministry also exchanged five Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with industry partners for joint tourism promotion and marketing. Addressing the event at Bharat Mandapam here, the minister said, “The next phase of India’s tourism journey must ensure that growth reaches beyond popular destinations, creating opportunities for local communities, entrepreneurs, women and youth while making tourism more balanced, inclusive and sustainable.” “Tourism is no longer just about visiting places; today’s travellers seek authentic experiences—local cuisine, local art, local traditions and meaningful connections that create memories, not merely photographs,” he observed.

Vice President praises Amritanandamayi’s service as 50 crore initiatives begin

Kollam (Kerala), Sep 27 (IANS) Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan described Mata Amritanandamayi Devi as an embodiment of universal love on Sunday, praising her charitable work for reaching people across communities and addressing both material and emotional hardship.

Speaking at the Vishwa Seva Dinam celebrations in Amritapuri, held to mark her 73rd birthday, Radhakrishnan said money, food and other assistance could relieve material poverty. Overcoming what he called “inner poverty,” however, required love, trust and human values. Her work addressed both needs, he said, calling her a great spiritual figure.

The Vice-President said Amritapuri had become a centre for service with a global reach. He commended the Mata Amritanandamayi Math for sup-

porting disaster survivors and people who needed medical treatment or financial help. Charitable programmes worth Rs 50 crore were launched during the celebrations. The Math handed over Rs 2 crore for relief work in areas of Nepal affected by flash floods.

Nepal's Ambassador to India, Surendra Thapa, received the assistance at the function. Financial aid was also distributed to families of those killed in a fireworks accident at Thrissur's Pooram grounds and to the families of fishermen who died in accidents off Neendakara in Kollam and Muthalapozhi in Thiruvananthapuram.

Beneficiaries received certificates for free medical assistance provided through Amrita Hospital, including organ transplant surgery. Financial



support was distributed to self-help groups working under the Math.



NRC could be conducted based on SIR of electoral rolls: Owaisi

Hyderabad, Sep 27 (IANS) Reiterating his claim that Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is the National Register of Citizens (NRC) through the backdoor, AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi on Sunday appealed to people to respond to notices being issued under SIR.

The Hyderabad MP said all those who received notices need to take this with all seriousness.

“(Union Home Minister) Amit Shah has stated that the NRC will be implemented. It is possible that the NRC could be conducted based on the SIR electoral roll,” he told media persons here.

He appealed to those who received notices to respond to notices, go to hearing centres with documents and fill up their Form 6. “You could lose not only your right to vote but also your citizenship,” he said.

Owaisi said the BJP has formed a Commission headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court to visit areas where demographic changes have come. “They will visit the places where SIR has been completed; they will see the final list and illegal migrants will be apprehended,” he said.

On the current controversy surrounding the Election Commission of India, he said a Constitutional body has totally gone into the executive’s control.

He recalled that while speaking in the Parliament on the Bill for appointment of Chief Election Commissioner by a panel comprising the Prime Minister, a Union Minister, and the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, he had told the government that it was undermining the credibility of the Election Commission in the eyes of the Parliament.



TELANGANA GRAMEENA BANK
BRANCH: ADILABAD MAIN
H No.4-3-67/2/1, 4-3-67/2/2, Ground Floor, Ward No.21, Dwarakanagar, Adilabad-504001.TS.

DEMAND NOTICE TO THE BORROWER
(Notice under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 Section 13(2))
It is hereby inform that borrower **Sri.MD Tajuddin S/o Sri.Ahmed Mohiuddin** availed loan facilities from the bank and failed to repay Principal and interest to the concern loan and the loan has been classified as non performance asset (NPA) Under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 notice has been issued to this last known address. But the same has been returned without handover to him. Hence this information has been informing through this public noticed.

Name of Borrower	Property details	Notice Date	Outstanding Amount (As on Notice date)
MD .Tajuddin S/o Ahmed Mohiuddin H No.1-4-49/9/a, Masood Nagar, Adilabad-504001. Mob. 9898520350, 9494312139, 8919913209	Door No: 4-4-120/2/4 (4-7-120/1) Commercial Complex, Sy. No: 31, Plot No: 77 admeasuring 385 Sy.Yds =3465 sft, situated at Revenue village, Bhuktapur, Adilabad. North: Road, South: land of Khaja Moinuddin, East: Road, West : Road.	17-07-2026	Rs. 1,67,524/-

The above person has failed to pay the above mentioned amount along with future interest and incidental expenses. Hence for the rules SARFAESI Act Section 13(2) of within 60days from the notice date the above mentioned person failed to pay the above mentioned amount along with future interest and incidental expenses the bank may take SARFAESI Act Section 13(4) and any available provisions in the act. This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the Bank under available provision of any other act or any acts or legal acts.

Date: 27-09-2026
Place: Adilabad

Sd/- Authorised Officer,
Telangana Grameena Bank,
Adilabad Main Branch

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Reality check for private universities

The growing demand for higher education cannot be met by government-funded institutions alone. The private sector has an equally important role to play in expanding educational opportunities for the country's youth. However, unbridled commercialisation of the education sector by profit-driven private players is a major cause for concern. More often than not, they impose exorbitant fees that are not matched by infrastructure and amenities and resort to misleading self-promotion. While the contribution of the private sector to promoting and expanding higher education cannot be overlooked, what is needed is a proper balance between regulation and responsibility. The Supreme Court's latest order directing private universities across the country to disclose their financial records is a welcome development. The landmark order ruled that no private university should be allowed to run as a profit-making institution and sought details of how universities generate, manage and use their financial resources. The audited financial records covering the last five years, utilisation of funds, fee structures, surplus investments and payments made to persons not directly involved in educational functions are among the details that have to be presented before the apex court. It has also directed the Centre and State governments to collect detailed information about admissions, fees, use of surplus funds, staff recruitment and grievance-redressal systems of private universities and colleges. With this unprecedented order, the stage is set not only for intense scrutiny of the financial management by private universities but also the conduct of regulators. It's a reality check that was long overdue.

The top court's observation that private universities must serve the larger public purpose of education and not operate for profit hits the nail on the head. Robust regulatory oversight to check any exploitation of students is essential. Over the years, a highly competitive private sector has relied on exaggerations and half-truths to attract students. With minimal focus on impactful academic research, there is often misrepresentation of the facilities available and placement statistics. If the lack of faculty development is problematic, more worrying is the reliance on under-qualified and overworked staff. Ultimately, students bear the brunt as their interests are compromised. There are over 470 private universities in the country, apart from several 'Deemed to be Universities' that operate under private management. Within a span of 10 years, enrollment in private universities nearly tripled to over 34.6 lakh students, moving their market share from 20 per cent to one-third of all higher education students in India. The University Grants Commission (UGC) regulates private universities primarily through the UGC (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations to ensure educational quality and transparency. Unlike public universities, private entities receive minimal state or central research grants and have to depend heavily on tuition fees to fund research labs. Navigating overlapping compliance checklists between the UGC, AICTE, and state-level councils is a major challenge for private universities.

HCL Group Celebrates 50th Anniversary with Grand Musical Concert

“Hyderabad, September 27 (Indian Chronicle) : HCL Group continued its 50th anniversary celebrations with a grand musical concert featuring renowned singer and music composer Devi Sri Prasad at the Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad, HCL Group and HCLTech Chairperson Roshni Nadar Malhotra said in a statement on Sunday.



day. More than 15,000 employees of HCL Group and the Shiv Nadar Foundation participated in the event, singing along and dancing enthusiastically to the songs performed by Devi Sri Prasad. The Hyderabad event was the sixth in a series of musical concerts being organised as part of HCL's 50th anniversary celebrations, following events held in Noida, Lucknow, Chennai, Vijayawada and Madurai. HCLTech COO Rahul Singh, HCLTech Digital Foundation Services President Jagadishwar Gattu, and HCLTech Digital Business Services Global Head and CVP Pavan Vadapalli were among those who attended the event.

Government Must Give Due Recognition to Telangana Activists: FORMER BRS STATE SECRETARY NERDAM BHASKER GOUD

“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): On the occasion of the 9th anniversary of the Telangana Movement Forum, a bus yatra of Telangana activists was flagged off on Sunday at Uppal Ring Road by Telangana activist and former BRS State Secretary Nerdam Bhaskar Goud, who attended the programme as the chief guest. Before flagging off the bus yatra, Bhaskar Goud paid floral tributes to the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar at Uppal Ring Road. The activists subsequently departed for Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Function Hall in Yadadri, where the anniversary programme was scheduled to be held. The programmes were organised under the leadership of Telangana Movement Forum president Dr. Cheema Srinivas. Speaking on the occasion, Bhaskar Goud said that the struggle undertaken by Telangana activists for the formation of the state would remain etched in history forever. He said activists had stood at the forefront of the movement to achieve Telangana as a symbol of self-respect and as the 29th state of the country. He particularly highlighted the crucial role played by the families of martyrs, poets, artists, employees and journalists in the Telangana movement, stating that Telangana became a reality as a result of their collective struggle. Bhaskar Goud said that the major aspirations behind the movement for statehood were water, funds, employment opportunities and social Telangana. However, he said the governments needed to pay greater attention to fulfilling these objectives after



the formation of the state. “Expressing concern that activists who played a crucial role in achieving statehood were still not receiving even basic recognition, he said the 9th anniversary programmes were being organised by the Telangana Movement Forum to once again recall the historic struggle and sacrifices made by Telangana activists. “He said it was the responsibility of the governments to provide due recognition, respect and support to every martyr's family and every Telangana activist. Nirdham Bhaskar Goud urged the government to acknowledge the services of the activists and extend them appropriate honour and recognition to ensure justice for the families of the martyrs.

Konda Laxman Bapuji Dedicated His Life to the Telangana Statehood Movement - UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY

“CHILKA NAGAR, SEPTEMBER 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A grand programme was organised at Chilkanaagar Crossroads in Chilkanaagar Division on Sunday to commemorate the 111th birth anniversary of freedom fighter and Telangana movement leader Konda Laxman Bapuji. The programme was organised under the leadership of Sakinala Prasad, President of Sri Bhakta Markandeya Chilkanaagar Padmashali Association. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest and paid floral tributes to the portrait of Konda Laxman Bapuji. “Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that Konda Laxman Bapuji was a great leader who dedicated his life to serving the people and fought continuously for their cause, from the Telangana Armed Struggle to the movement for the formation of a separate Telangana state. He said Konda Laxman Bapuji devoted his entire life to the cause of Telangana statehood and sacrificed even his positions as an MLA and Minister to dedicate himself to public movements. His struggle for the rights of weaker and underprivileged sections would remain memorable for generations, he added. “The MLA said that Konda Laxman Bapuji's path and spirit of public service for the welfare of Telangana society would con-



tinue to inspire future generations. He called upon everyone to work towards social equality, social justice and the advancement of disadvantaged sections of society. Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that carrying forward the ideals and aspirations of Konda Laxman Bapuji would be the true tribute to his legacy. Padmashali association leaders, leaders and activists from various political parties, and others participated in the programme.

Konda Laxman Bapuji's 111th Birth Anniversary Observed with Grandeur



“HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “The 111th birth anniversary of freedom fighter and Telangana movement leader Konda Laxman Bapuji, who dedicated his life to the cause of Telangana self-respect and the formation of a separate state, was commemorated in a grand manner on Tank Bund in Hyderabad on behalf of the Telangana government. “On the occasion, floral tributes were paid to the portrait of Konda Laxman Bapuji. Former MP and Telangana Government Advisor V. Hanumantha Rao participated in the programme and recalled Bapuji's dedicated services. He said that Bapuji's sacrifices for Telangana and his lifelong struggle for social justice would remain memorable forever. “National Backward Classes Association, Greater Hyderabad General Secretary G. Raghu, Dasa Suresh, Mohammed Jahangir and a large number of Padmashali community members participated in the programme and paid rich tributes to Konda Laxman Bapuji. “The participants called upon people to uphold Bapuji's ideals and continue working for social justice and the development of Telangana.

Manjeera Crucial to Hyderabad's Drinking Water Supply : Vedakumar

“Hyderabad, September 27 (Indian Chronicle) : A river is not merely a flow of water but is closely connected



with drinking water, agriculture, groundwater, nature and the lives of people, said Forum for a Better Hyderabad (FBH) Chairman Prof. Manikonda Vedakumar. He said understanding a river is the first step towards its conservation and stressed that the Manjeera River plays a crucial role in Hyderabad's drinking water supply. On the occasion of World Rivers Day, students, faculty members and river conservation enthusiasts visited the Singur Project under the aegis of FBH. They studied the Manjeera River, ayacut, drinking water supply system and the his-

tory of the project. Speaking on the occasion, Vedakumar said World Rivers Day Chair Mark Angelo had conveyed his greetings through email and appreciated the efforts of the Forum for a Better Hyderabad. Singur Dam Deputy Executive Engineer Madhusudhan explained the construction of the project, its reservoir capacity of 29.9 TMC, drinking and irrigation water supply systems and power generation. Engineer Nagendra explained the drinking water supply system under Mission Bhagiratha. The participants also visited the Open Museum of the Archaeology Department and examined the Veeragallu (hero stones) and sculptures displayed there. It was informed that the Deccan Heritage Academy Trust would take up the responsibility of maintaining the museum. Vedakumar expressed his gratitude to Archaeology Department Director Prof. Arjun Rao and Deputy Executive Engineer Madhusudhan for their support. FBH Secretary Shobha Singh, members Venugopal, Subhash Reddy, Ramaraj and Katta Prabhakar, JBR Group faculty members Mounika Yadav, Gangaram Singh, Sudhir Kumar and Harinath, students, representatives of the Deccan Heritage Academy Trust, staff and students of Oxford Grammar School, and river conservation enthusiasts participated in the programme.

MLC Dande Vittal Attends Naming Ceremony in Kagaznagar

““Blesses the Newborn and Extends Wishes to the Family” “Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.28. “Kagaznagar: A naming ceremony of the grandson of Lendugure Shyam Rao, State President of the Mali Sangham, was held grandly at the Padmashali Function Hall in Kagaznagar. The ceremony was attended by MLC Dande Vittal of the erstwhile Adilabad district, who blessed the newborn and conveyed



his best wishes to the family. On the occasion, MLC Dande Vittal congratulated the family members and blessed the child. He wished that the newborn would grow up with good health, happiness and prosperity and achieve success in life. Family members, relatives, friends, Mali Sangham representatives, community leaders and prominent citizens attended the ceremony and extended their blessings to the newborn. The family members expressed their happiness over the presence of MLC Dande Vittal at the naming ceremony.

Acharya Konda Laxman Bapuji's 111th Birth Anniversary Celebrated Under the Auspices of Ramanthapur Padmashali Association

“““RAMANTHAPUR , SEPTEMBER 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The Ramanthapur Padmashali Association celebrated the 111th birth anniversary of Acharya Dr. Konda Laxman Bapuji, a prominent leader of the Telangana movement and a distinguished member of the Padmashali community, with great reverence on Sunday. Members of the association paid floral tributes at the statue of Konda Laxman Bapuji located on the Ramanthapur Main Road. The gathering remembered his contribution to the Telangana movement and his lifelong commitment to public service. Former Uppal MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar, State Executive Member Gorige Krishna, Devasani Balachander, Pothagani Gopal Goud, Vemulakonda Somashekar Goud, Ravinder Reddy, Uppal Congress Working President Vallapu Srikanth Yadav and Gandham Nageswara Rao attended the programme as prominent guests. “Padmashali Association President Konda Krishnamurthy, General Secretary Sirisala Vijaya Prakash, Treasurer Kongari Balachandraiah, Advisors P.V. Ram Narsaiah and Gundla Ravindra Kumar, Vice Presidents Varkala Swamy, Ele Ramesh and Sangishetti Yadagiri, Assistant Secretary Rapolu Shekhar, Joint Secretary Gajam Murali, Assistant Treasurer Dunuka Murali, Executive Members Sangam Venu and Munagapati Narasimha, and other office-bearers and members participated in the programme. “Founder Members Sakinala Krishna, Rapolu Ramulu, Tirandasu Venkatesh and Gurram Ambayya, Disciplinary Committee Chairman Vanam Yadagiri, Vice Chairman Rapolu Ramachandram, along with Founder Members Chintala Satyanarayana, Tirandasu Sheshaiah, Chikka Satyanarayana, Bikshamaiah, Veeresham, Ganji Venkatesh and Chintakindi Praveen, among others, were present. “Later, senior members spoke about Konda Laxman Bapuji's sacrifices, services and significant contribution to the Telangana cause. They recalled his dedication to the people and his role in the movement for the self-respect and aspirations of Telangana.



111th birth anniversary celebrations of Konda Laxman Bapuji

: INDIAN CHRONICLE KHAMMAM K SANJAY Tributes were paid to Sri Konda Laxman Bapuji on the occasion of his 111th birth anniversary at Khammam Municipi-



pal Corporation office. "On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Srinivas and Manager G. Srinivas Rao paid tributes to Konda Laxman Bapuji's portrait by placing flowers. After that, the municipal staff offered floral tributes. "Konda Laxman Bapuji's struggle for the achievement of Telangana state and his services in public service were remembered on this occasion." Municipal staff of Khammam city government participated in this program.

First Urdu Digital News Platform Launched in Asifabad

"Asifabad Fast News" officially launched

"Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September 28. "Asifabad: The first dedicated Urdu digital news platform from Asifabad, "Asifabad Fast News," was officially launched in the presence of Ustad Ulama, Hafiz Hazrat Hafiz Syed Muneer Ahmed Shatashi. The launch was attended by religious scholars, mosque Imams, presidents, political and social leaders, officials, intellectuals and prominent citizens, who extended their blessings and congratulated the organisers. Speaking on the occasion, the guests said that the launch of a dedicated Urdu digital news platform from Asifabad marks a



new chapter in local Urdu journalism. They said there is a growing need to make local news and public information available quickly through digital platforms. The platform aims to provide people who follow Urdu with timely information about important developments in the district. The organisers said that Asifabad Fast News will focus on local, social, educational, religious, administrative and political developments, along with public issues and important events across Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district. News from both rural and urban areas will be presented in Urdu with an emphasis on accuracy, responsibility and journalistic standards. On the occasion, Asifabad Fast News Admin Hafiz Mohammad Sajid Khan said the platform would continuously work to bring news related to public interest to people in accordance with journalistic values and ethical standards. He said the digital news platform was launched with the objective of creating a dedicated space for local news in the Urdu language and sought the cooperation of the public, elected representatives, officials and social organisations. The programme was attended by Municipal Vice-Chairman Mohammad Ahmed, Single Window Chairman Ali Bin Ahmed, Floor Leader Abdullah Bin Ahmed, District Congress Committee Vice-President Obaid Bin Yahya (Tariq), BRS Town President Ahmed Bin Abdullah, municipal councillors, public representatives, journalists, social leaders, intellectuals and other prominent citizens. The guests congratulated the organisers of Asifabad Fast News and expressed their wishes for the platform to grow further while providing reliable and quality local information to the public in Urdu.

TPJRP Ready to Contest Khairatabad By-Election

"Hyderabad, September 27 (Indian Chronicle) : The Telangana Praja Jeevana Rythu Party (TPJRP) is gearing up to contest the Khairatabad Assembly by-election, the party's founder and state president Chundi Shobhan Babu said in a statement on Sunday. He said the party would work for public welfare and extend support to farmers and farming families. Shobhan Babu stated that the Khairatabad constituency was facing several issues and that the party would take up those problems with the government on behalf of the people. He appealed to the people of Khairatabad constituency to support the Telangana Praja Jeevana Rythu Party and ensure a victory for its candidate with a huge majority. He urged voters to bless the party through their votes.



Agrarian crisis, struggles over issues of tenant farmers

Mahasabhas for three days from today

Designing future activities in conferences

A huge gathering and demonstration in the city today

AIKMS National Vice President JV Chalapathy Rao
INDIAN CHRONICLE KHAMMAM K SANJAY

"Khammam, September 27: National Vice-President JV Chalapathirao has clarified that the main purpose of the All India Rythu Kooli Sangam (AIKMS) Mahasabha is to comprehensively discuss the long-standing agrarian crisis in the country, farmers' problems and the rights of tenant farmers and formulate future activities. He explained the schedule of the three-day National Congress in a press conference held at the local TNGOS function hall on Sunday. He said that the first day will begin with a huge public meeting and demonstration, followed by an introductory meeting and representative meetings on the next day. He explained that a comprehensive review of the movements and struggles conducted across the country during the last ten years from the last Allahabad Mahasabha to the Barampur General Council meeting will be conducted in these meetings. "He said that since 1980, the agricultural crisis in the country has worsened due to the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements and policies. He said that for many years, many farmers' associations have joined together to fight against WTO policies and for the welfare of farmers. He criticized that even after the implementation of the Land Reforms Act of 1972, the benami lands increased due to improper sealing, the form of landlordism has changed and continues to this day, and the dominance of corporate forces has infiltrated the agricultural sector. He expressed concern that the investment costs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and machinery have increased tremendously, farmers are burdened with debt, and after six years of hard work, they are suffering serious losses due to lack of affordable price in the market. He recalled the 13 to 14 months of heroic struggle of the farmers on the borders of Delhi, from the 2017 Mandasaur struggle to the historic farmers' movement of Samyukta Kisan Morcha in central Punjab. About 750 farmers were martyred in this struggle. As a result, three black agriculture laws brought by the central government had to be withdrawn, he said. However, the central government has not fulfilled the promises made at that time, especially as per the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission, they are deceiving the farmers by saying that support price will be given on the basis of 'C2+50%' and only 'A2+FL+50%'. Chalapathy Rao said that farmers' suicides have been going on for the past thirty years due to non-legislation of comprehensive support price to double the income of crop production cost. Chalapathy Rao said that special attention will be given to the problems of tenant farmers in these national conferences. Although tenant farmers account for 40 percent of the total agricultural production in states like Telangana, they are concerned that they are not getting any government recognition. Despite the existence of the Tenant Farmers Act, 2011, it has not been properly implemented and the tenant farmers are not getting loans from banks, seed subsidies, insurance, crop compensation and purchase recognition in the markets, he criticized. Also, criticizing the changes proposed by the Central Government in the Employment Guarantee Scheme, laborers were given



Rs. 600 salary and 200 working days per year were demanded. He reminded that during the covid lockdown, when there was migration from cities to rural areas, the agriculture sector in the villages was the support of the country. He said that more than 60 percent of the country's population depends on agriculture and the share of agriculture in the national production is 18 percent. He appealed to give full support to the success of these National Congresses which will formulate action on major demands like loan waiver, implementation of Swaminathan Commission, recognition of tenant farmers and strengthening of employment guarantee. Rythu Kooli Sangam State Honorary President V. Koteswara Rao said "He said that the National Congress of the All India Peasant and Labor Union (AIKMS) will begin in the city center of Khammam from Monday and requested that those meetings be made a success. People are requested to cooperate fully to make this National Congress a success. The agenda of this fourth National Congress which will be held for three days has been explained. Association State President M. Bikshapati said that the Modi government at the center has become a slave to the corporate forces, as a result of which the imports have decreased and the agricultural sector has been weakened, and as a part of that, black agriculture laws have been brought in. Revanth Reddy, who wrote a long letter on KC R Hyalo's tenant farmers' problems, questioned why he remained silent today. He said that all the major issues will be discussed in the Mahasabhas and the future activities of the movement will be formulated and struggles will be built for their achievement. He said that more than 400 representatives from 18 states are participating in these conferences, intellectuals and agricultural experts are also participating. "National Committee members Mandala Venkanna, State Secretary Gauni Ilaiyah, Bandaru Ilaiyah, Vipalkumar, Invitation Committee Secretary Venu and others participated in this press conference.

Implement Ayushman Bharat Scheme in Telangana: Senior Citizens Association

State Vice-President Anjaneyulu Calls for

Chalo Ravindra Bharathi

on October 1 "Mallapur, September 27 (INDIAN CHORNICLE): "The Telangana Senior Citizens Association (TASCA) has demanded that the State Government implement the Ayushman Bharat health scheme in Telangana to ensure better healthcare facilities and financial protection for senior citizens. "Speaking on the issue, TASCA State Vice-President and former councillor Keshavaram Anjaneyulu said that senior citizens across Telangana are facing several health-related and financial difficulties due to the non-implementation of the Ayushman Bharat scheme in the state. He said healthcare expenses have become a major burden for elderly people, particularly those who depend on limited pensions or family support. "Anjaneyulu stated that around 47 lakh senior citizens in Telangana could potentially benefit from the scheme if it is implemented in the state. The scheme



would provide elderly people with greater access to medical treatment and help reduce the financial burden caused by hospitalisation and other healthcare expenses, he said. "He appealed to the State Government to consider

the issue from the perspective of the health and welfare of senior citizens and take necessary steps to extend the benefits of Ayushman Bharat to eligible beneficiaries in Telangana. "The health and welfare of senior citizens should be given priority beyond political considerations. A healthcare scheme that can benefit a large number of elderly people should be implemented in the state," Anjaneyulu said. "He further stated that senior citizens have contributed significantly to society and the development of the state throughout their lives and that the government has a responsibility to ensure adequate healthcare and social security for them. "The association has been demanding the implementation of the scheme in Telangana and plans to intensify its efforts to draw the attention of the government to the issue. Anjaneyulu said that if the government failed to respond positively to the demand, the association would consider launching a statewide agitation in support of senior citizens. "As part of the campaign, the Telangana Senior Citizens Association has called upon senior citizens and its members from across the state to participate in the "Chalo Ravindra Bharathi" programme to be held on October 1. "Anjaneyulu appealed to senior citizens to participate in large numbers and make the programme a success. He said the programme would highlight the demand for better healthcare facilities and the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat scheme for eligible senior citizens in Telangana.

ULLAS Examinations Held at Chichupalli

MPDO Jyotsna Patil Inspects the Examination Centre



examinations. Speaking on the occasion, the officials said the government was making special efforts through the ULLAS programme to transform non-literate people into literate citizens. They explained that developing basic skills such as reading, writing and elementary arithmetic can provide several benefits in day-to-day life. They encouraged everyone to make use of the ULLAS programme and achieve literacy. Local staff, VOA Shankaramma, Bojirao, Petkar Kiran Kumar, villagers and examination candidates were among those who participated in the programme

"Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September 28. "Wankidi: ULLAS examinations were conducted peacefully on Sunday at Chichupalli village under Sonapur Gram Panchayat in Wankidi mandal. The examinations were organised as part of the literacy programmes being implemented by the Central and State governments. Several candidates from the village attended the examination and wrote their tests enthusiastically. The organisers made necessary arrangements to ensure that the candidates faced no difficulties. Wankidi MPDO Jyotsna Patil, along with CC Jadi, Venugopal, visited the examination centre and inspected the arrangements and conduct of the examination. They instructed the staff to ensure that the examinations were conducted peacefully and transparently. They also directed the organisers to provide all necessary facilities to the candidates and take precautions to avoid any inconvenience during the

Tributes Paid to Konda Laxman Bapuji

Bapuji's 111th Birth Anniversary

Celebrated at TELANGANA JANA

SAMITHI OFFICE

"HYDERABAD SEPTEMBER 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Telangana Jana Samithi Theatre Hyderabad President M. Narasaiah paid rich tributes to Acharya Konda Laxman Bapuji, describing him as a fearless freedom fighter who tirelessly fought for Telangana's self-respect, statehood and social justice. "The 111th birth anniversary celebrations of Konda Laxman Bapuji were organised in a grand manner by the BC Jana Samithi, an affiliated organisation of the Telangana Jana Samithi. On the occasion, Narasaiah garlanded Bapuji's portrait and paid floral tributes. "Speaking on the occasion, Narasaiah said that inspired by his participation in the freedom struggle and various movements against injustice, Konda Laxman Bapuji played a leading role in the Telangana movement as well. "He recalled that Bapuji resigned from his ministerial position in 1969 and pledged not to accept any political office until the separate state of Telangana was achieved. Narasaiah described him as a principled and honest political leader who remained com-



mitted to his ideals throughout his life. He said that continuing the struggle for social justice would be the true tribute that the Telangana Jana Samithi could offer to the memory of Konda Laxman Bapuji. "Telangana Jana Samithi Greater Hyderabad Vice-President M. Laxman, P. Jayapal Reddy, city leaders Kakunuri Sudhakar, Sadanand, Vasanth Kumar and others participated in the programme. "[6:04 PM, 9/27/2026] +91 93911 09207: End

Uppal Government Degree College Students Excel in District-Level Competitions

"Second Prizes in Short Film and Singing Competitions; Third Prize in Reels Competition

"UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Students of Government Degree College, Uppal, showcased their talent by securing two second prizes and one third prize in the district-level competitions organised as part of the World Tourism Day celebrations conducted by the Telangana Tourism Development Department at the Medchal-Malkajgiri District Collectorate. "The winners were presented with mementos and certificates by Medchal Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Mr. Faizan Ahmed, IAS. "In the short film competition, C.H. Akhila, P.



Dinesh and B. Praveen won the second prize. In the singing competition, S. Lakshmi, B. Lavanya and Deepika secured the second prize. In the reels competition, G. Shadonix, S. Bharat and B. Jaswanth won the third prize. "College Principal Dr. K. Vijay Kumar congratulated the students on their achievements and said it was a matter of pride for the institution that its students had secured prizes at the district level. "The programme was led by Youth Tourism Club Convenor Dr. N. Rajashree, Associate Professor of Economics P.V.S. Vijay Kumar, Political Science faculty member Dr. P. Venkateshwarlu, History faculty members and members of the Youth Tourism Club. District Tourism Officer, DRDO Sambasiva Rao, DIO Kishan, DGO Renuka, District Youth Welfare Officer Damodar, LDM Shivaprasad and others participated in the programme.

Tributes Paid to Konda Laxman Bapuji Under the Auspices of Telangana Movement Activists Forum

"Former BRS State Secretary and

Telangana Activist NERDHAM BHASKER

GOUD Attends as Chief Guest

"UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 27 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The birth anniversary celebrations of Konda Laxman Bapuji, a first-phase Telangana movement activist and freedom fighter, were held with great respect under the auspices of the Telangana Movement Activists Forum at Uppal Ring Road on



Sunday. On the occasion, floral tributes were paid to the portrait of Konda Laxman Bapuji. Telangana activist and former BRS State Secretary Nerdham Bhaskar Goud, along with Dr. Cheema Srinivas, attended the programme as chief guests and recalled Bapuji's contributions. "They said that Konda Laxman Bapuji's lifelong struggle for the self-respect of Telangana and the achievement of a separate state would always be remembered. They also stressed the need to make future generations aware of his contributions to the history of the Telangana movement. Narender, Lakshmi, Surender Reddy, Santosh, and others participated in the programme and paid tributes to Konda Laxman Bapuji.

Flood Situation is Grim in North Bihar

Journalist-Ajay Kr Mishra “BETTIAH/BIHAR, SEPTEMBER 27(INDIAN CHRONICLE)”

“Heavy rain in the catchment area of Nepal and north Bihar the flood situation has grim again in several district of Bihar.As the flood water of the Gandak, and the Bagmati has inundated in several areas of Bagha Subdivision in West Champaran and the flood of the Bagmati has inundated several areas of SitaMadhi and Shivhar districts of Bihar.Besides these rivers several shallow rivers which originate from Nepal also made the situation alarming.Three community kitchen centre have started for the flood victims. The flood water has also disturbed the wildlife of VTR (Valmiki Tiger Reserve) .Several herbivores were spotted towards human habitation. “

As the flood water of the Gandak has badly affected several villages of Madhubani and Bagha 2nd block of Baigha Subdivision. Crops are under flood water and several houses are affected. People of several villahes have been shifted on high lamd. The flood water has overtopped Bagha Valmikinagar road in Bagha block area. The flood water of the Masan river has also inundated in several villages of Ramnagar block area. People are badly affected and destroyed of their crops made them worried. The DM West Champaran Taranjot Singh visited the several flood affected areas of Bagha Subdivision with other officers and directed the officers and staff of the disaster management to be alerted against the bad situations regarding flood.”

As the DPRO West Champaran Mrs Rochna Madri said that Valmikinagar barrage had discharged 4,74,950 Cusesecs water in the Gandak on

Sunday afternoon where as Devghat (Nepal) discharged 622800 Cusesecs water. The U/S level of Valmikinagar barrage is - 363.80 ft, the D/S level is - 362.10 ft. A team of 30 members of NDRF with 4 boats has been deputed in the flood affected atea of Bagha 2nd block ,2 boats are deputed in flood affected area of Madhubani block. In Bettiah Subdivision 8 rescue team with 2 boats are in stand by mode.”

As the flood water of the Bagmati river has also inundated several areas of SitaMadhi and Shivhar districts of the state.crops are under flood water. The flood of the Kosi river has also affected several areas of Purniya and Saharsa district of state.As the MP Purnia Pappu Yadav distributed relief items among the victims to reach among them by Tractor Trolley and on foot. He also alleged that the officers, politicians and contractors devoured the amount of flood safety work so he would raise his voice against them.”

Meeting of the Jansuraj Party organised

“ “On Sunday a meeting of the workers of the Jansuraj Party was organised in the Party Office ,Banhu Chhappar Bettiah in which several workers and leaders of the party participated and discussed the elec

3D Art Workshop at Vijayawada Ramakrishna Math Draws Enthusiastic Response

““By Our Special Correspondent“VIJAYAWADA, SEPTEMBER 28:

An interactive 3D art workshop conducted by internationally acclaimed artist S.S.R. Krishna at the Ramakrishna Mission premises in Vijayawada received an overwhelming response from young learners over the weekend. The initiative is part of Mr. Krishna’s ongoing nationwide campaign to revive and popularize traditional three-dimensional art techniques among the youth.“On Saturday, over 500 students assembled at the Ramakrishna Mission School to participate in an intensive masterclass designed to impart the fundamentals and optical nuances of perspective drawing. As part of the practical demonstration, the artist guided participants in rendering a vivid 3D representation of the mythical Maya Kolanu (Illusionary Pool) from the epic Mahabharata. Another key highlight of the session was a realistic three-dimensional depiction illustrating Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa imparting spiritual instructions to his disciple, Swami Vivekananda. The rare artwork left the young audience spellbound.“The educational drive continued on Sunday with a specialized training session organized at the Human Excellence Cell within the math premises. Expressing satisfaction over the enthusiasm demonstrated by the young participants, Mr. Krishna extended his heartfelt gratitude to the resident monastics, Sri Chitikantananda Swamiji and Bharadwaj Swamiji, for extending support to the venture. He also acknowledged the school principal, teaching staff, and program coordinator Jeevan for facilitating the smooth conduct of the event.



Special Bus from Tarnaka for Telangana Activists’ State Conference Former Deputy Mayor Mothe Srilatha Shobhan Reddy Flags Off the Bus



““Tarnaka, September 27(INDIAN CHORNICLE)““ Telangana activists from the Tarnaka area left in a special bus to attend the Telangana Activists’ State Conference being held on Sunday at Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Function Hall in Yadagirigutta.“At the request of the activists, former Greater Hyderabad Deputy Mayor Mothe Srilatha Shobhan Reddy reached Tarnaka crossroads and formally flagged off the special bus.“Speaking on the occasion, Mothe Srilatha Shobhan Reddy said that the struggles, sacrifices and contributions made by Telangana activists in the movement for the formation of Telangana state would always be remembered by society. She said that the protests, public programmes and various forms of agitation organised by activists at different stages of the Telangana movement would remain an important part of the state’s history.’She further stated that state-level conferences of this nature provide an important platform to introduce the spirit of the Telangana movement, the aspiration for self-governance and the sense of self-respect associated with the movement to future generations.“She expressed the hope that comprehensive discussions would be held on issues concerning Telangana activists, including their welfare, recognition and dignity, and that an appropriate action plan would be formulated in accordance with their aspirations.“Mothe Srilatha Shobhan Reddy assured the activists that she would continue to extend her support towards initiatives aimed at safeguarding their welfare and honour. She also wished for the successful conduct of the state conference and for all Telangana activists to receive due recognition.“Several Telangana activists, leaders and supporters from the Tarnaka area participated in the programme. They expressed their gratitude to former Deputy Mayor Mothe Srilatha Shobhan Reddy for facilitating the special bus to transport activists to the state conference.“With discussions expected at the conference on the welfare, recognition and various issues faced by Telangana activists, the event has generated considerable interest among activists.

Land controversies mount for Congress government in Telangana



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

Infusing mitochondria helps renew tissues deprived of blood: research



James McCully was in the lab extracting tiny structures called mitochondria from cells when researchers on his team rushed in. They'd been operating on a pig heart and couldn't get it pumping normally again. McCully studies heart damage prevention at Boston Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School and was keenly interested in mitochondria. These power-producing organelles are particularly important for organs like the heart that have high energy needs. McCully had been wondering whether transplanting healthy mitochondria into injured hearts might help restore their function.

The pig's heart was graying rapidly, so McCully decided to try it. He loaded a syringe with the extracted mitochondria and injected them directly into the heart. Before his eyes, it began beating normally, returning to its rosy hue. Since that day almost 20 years ago, McCully and other researchers have replicated that success in pigs and other animals. Human transplantations followed, in babies who suffered complications from heart surgery — sparking a new field of research using mitochondria transplantation to treat damaged organs and disease. In the last five years, a widening array of scientists have begun exploring mitochondria transplantation for heart damage after cardiac arrest, brain damage following stroke and damage to organs destined for transplantation.

Mitochondria are best known for producing usable energy for cells. But they also send molecular signals that help to keep the body in equilibrium and manage its immune and stress responses. Some types of cells may naturally donate healthy mitochondria to other cells in need, such as brain cells after a stroke, in a process called mitochondria transfer. So the idea that clinicians could boost this process by transplanting mitochondria to reinvigorate injured tissue made sense to some scientists. From studies in rabbits and rat heart cells, McCully's group has reported that the plasma membranes of cells engulf the mitochondria and shuttle them inside, where they fuse with the cell's internal mitochondria. There, they seem to cause molecular changes that help recover heart function: When comparing blood- and oxygen-deprived pig hearts treated with mitochondria to ones receiving placebos, McCully's group saw differences in gene activity and proteins that indicated less cell death and less inflammation. About 10 years ago, Sitaram Emani, a cardiac surgeon at Boston Children's Hospital, reached out to McCully about his work with animal hearts. Emani had seen how some babies with heart defects couldn't fully recover after heart surgery complications and wondered whether McCully's mitochondria transplantation method could help them. During surgery to repair heart defects, surgeons use a drug to stop the heart so they can operate. But if the heart is deprived of blood and oxygen for too long, mitochondria start to fail and cells start to die, in a condition called ischaemia. When blood begins flowing again, instead of returning the heart to its normal state, it can damage and kill more cells, resulting in ischaemia-reperfusion injury. Since McCully's eight years of studies in rabbits and pigs hadn't revealed safety concerns with mitochondria transplantation, McCully and Emani thought it would be worth trying the procedure in babies unlikely to regain enough heart function to come off heart-lung support.

Parents of 10 patients agreed to the experimental procedure, which was approved by the institute's review board. In a pilot that ran from 2015 to 2018, McCully extracted pencil-eraser-sized muscle samples from the incisions made for the heart surgery, used a filtration technique to isolate mitochondria and checked that they were functional. Then the team injected the organelles into the baby's heart. Eight of those 10 babies regained enough heart function to come off life support, compared to just four out of 14 similar cases from 2002 to 2018 that were used for historical comparison, the team reported in 2021. The treatment also shortened recovery time, which averaged two days in the mitochondrial transplant group compared with nine days in the historical control group. Two patients did not survive — in one case, the intervention came after the rest of the baby's organs began failing, and in another, a lung issue developed four months later. The group has now performed this procedure on 17 babies. The transplant procedure remains experimental and is not yet practical for wider clinical use, but McCully hopes that it can one day be used to

treat kidney, lung, liver and limb injuries from interrupted blood flow.

The results have inspired other clinicians whose patients suffer from similar ischaemia-reperfusion injuries. One is ischaemic stroke, in which clots prevent blood from reaching the brain. Doctors can dissolve or physically remove the clots, but they lack a way to protect the brain from reperfusion damage. "You see patients that lose their ability to walk or talk," says Melanie Walker, an endovascular neurosurgeon at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle. "You just want to do better and there's just nothing out there." Walker came across McCully's mitochondrial transplant studies 12 years ago and, in reading further, was especially struck by a report on mice from researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School that showed the brain's support and protection cells — the astrocytes — may transfer some of their mitochondria to stroke-damaged neurons to help them recover. Perhaps, she thought, mitochondria transplantation could help in human stroke cases too. She spent years working with animal researchers to figure out how to safely deliver mitochondria to the brain. She tested the procedure's safety in a clinical trial with just four people with ischaemic stroke, using a catheter fed through an artery in the neck to manually remove the blockage causing the stroke, then pushing the catheter further along and releasing the mitochondria, which would travel up blood vessels to the brain. The findings, published in 2024 in the Journal of Cerebral Blood Flow & Metabolism, show that the infused patients suffered no harm; the trial was not designed to test effectiveness. Walker's group is now recruiting participants to further assess the intervention's safety. The next step will be to determine whether the mitochondria are getting where they need to be, and functioning. "Until we can show that, I do not believe that we will be able to say that there's a therapeutic benefit," Walker says. Researchers hope that organ donation might also gain from mitochondria transplants. Donor organs like kidneys suffer damage when they lack blood supply for too long, and transplant surgeons may reject kidneys with a higher risk of these injuries. To test whether mitochondrial transplants can reinvigorate them, transplant surgeon-scientist Giuseppe Orlando of Wake Forest University School of Medicine in Winston-Salem and his colleagues injected mitochondria into four pig kidneys, and a control substance into three pig kidneys. In 2023 in the Annals of Surgery, they reported fewer dying cells in the mitochondria-treated kidneys, and far less damage. Molecular analyses also showed a boost in energy production. It's still early days, Orlando says, but he's confident that mitochondria transplantation could become a valuable tool in rescuing suboptimal organs for donation.

The studies have garnered both excitement and skepticism. "It's certainly a very interesting area," says Koning Shen, a postdoctoral mitochondrial biologist at the University of California, Berkeley, and coauthor of an overview of the signalling roles of mitochondria in the 2022 Annual Review of Cell and Developmental Biology. She adds that scaling up extraction of mitochondria and learning how to store and preserve the isolated organelles are major technical hurdles to making such treatments a larger reality. "That would be amazing if people are getting to that stage," she says. "I think there are a lot of thoughtful people looking at this carefully, but I think the big question is, what's the mechanism?" says Navdeep Chandel, a mitochondria researcher at Northwestern University in Chicago. He doubts that donor mitochondria fix or replace dysfunctional native organelles, but says it's possible that mitochondria donation triggers stress and immune signals that indirectly benefit damaged tissue. Whatever the mechanism, some animal studies do suggest that the mitochondria must be functional to impart their benefits. Lance Becker, chair of emergency medicine at Northwell Health in New York who studies the role of mitochondria in cardiac arrest, conducted a study comparing fresh mitochondria, mitochondria that had been frozen then thawed, and a placebo to treat rats following cardiac arrest. The 11 rats receiving fresh, functioning mitochondria had better brain function and a higher rate of survival three days later than the 11 rats receiving a placebo; the non-functional frozen-thawed mitochondria did not impart these benefits. It will take more research into the mechanisms of mitochondrial therapy, improved mitochondria delivery techniques, larger trials and a body of reported successes before mitochondrial transplants can be FDA-approved and broadly used to treat ischaemia-reperfusion injuries, researchers say. The ultimate goal would be to create a universal supply of stored mitochondria — a mitochondria bank, of sorts — that can be tapped for transplantation by a wide variety of health care providers. "We're so much at the beginning — we don't know how it works," says Becker. "But we know it's doing something that is mighty darn interesting." Jackie Rocheleau is an independent science journalist covering the life sciences and medicine with a particular focus on the brain. This article is republished from Knowable Magazine.

Indian teen's family sues NYC for USD 105M over carriage tragedy

New York: The family of Indian teenager Romanch Mahajan, who was killed when the horse drawing their carriage bolted in June last year, has initiated legal proceedings demanding \$105 million in compensation from the New York City government. The family claims in a notice to the city filed last week that stray electricity in Central Park spooked the horse and that it was a result of the city government's negligence. Mahajan's family was on a holiday in the city celebrating his graduation from high school and took a ride on a horse carriage on June 17. Applying For Government Grants

When the carriage driver got out to take a picture, the horse suddenly bolted, throwing Mahajan's mother Priya off the vehicle. Mahajan dove after her in an attempt to save her, but hit his head on the ground and died from the injury. The family filed notices against the city and four of its departments in the first step towards suing them in court, alleging that their negligence caused the accident. The stray voltage, among other factors, "caused, precipitated, contributed to and/or was a substantial factor" that made the horse bolt, they allege.

Downloading Interactive Geographic Maps The allegation about the electric voltage echoes a claim made by the Transport Workers Union, to which carriage driver Ertan Gokdepe belonged. Defending him, the union's local unit Vice President Alexander Kemp said last month: "Blue-collar carriage drivers should not be punished for an unforeseeable hazard caused by flaws in the city's power grid." Eighteen-year-old Mahajan, who was from Pathankot, had recently completed his 12th standard from Angel's Public School and was set for college when the tragedy struck. Exploring Equestrian Gear And Supplies His death

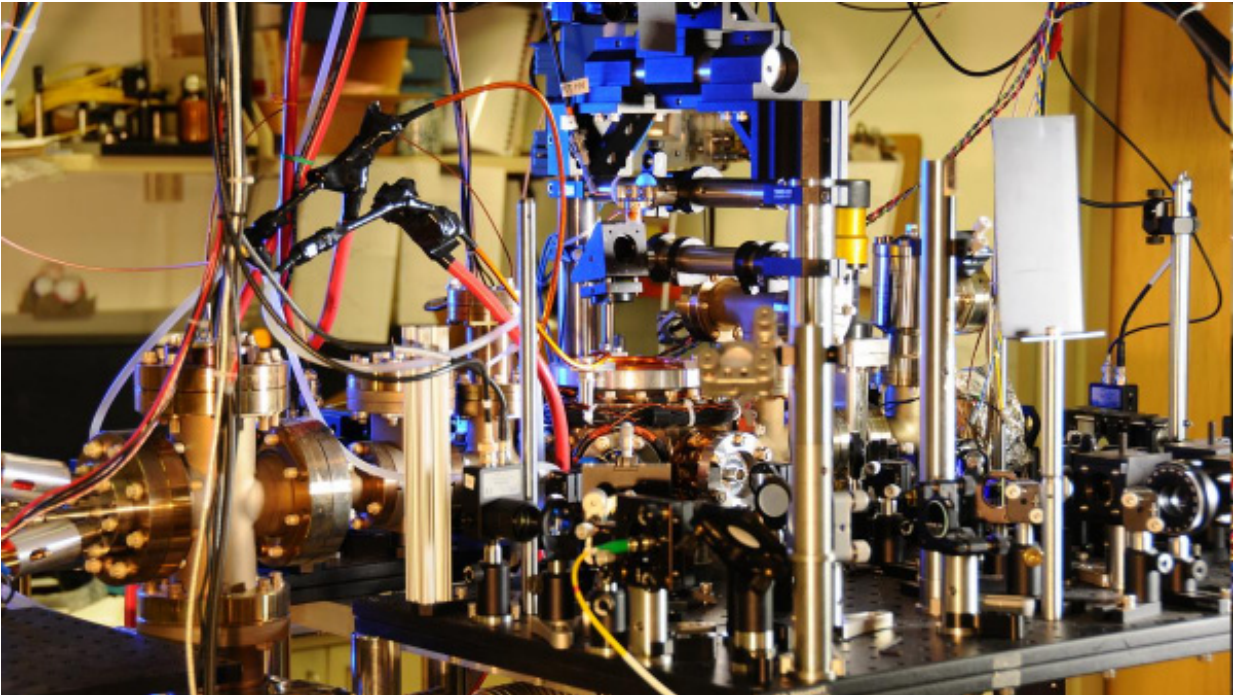


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gave momentum to the campaign to ban horse-drawn carriages, a tourist attraction in the city.

Named the Romanch Mahajan Bill in his memory, the City Council is expected to vote on the ban soon, and supporters say the proposed legislation has majority support to pass. His father Deepak Mahajan made a tearful plea to the Council through a video link last month to ban the carriages. "A young boy came to America full of dreams and left us far too soon," he said. Comparing New Electric Vehicle Leases "This was not an unpredictable accident," he said. "It was a safety violation, a system's failure to protect the people who visit our city, your city, and everyone responsible has admitted the driver should never have left that carriage."

Intercontinental optical clock comparison sets stage to redefine the second



Researchers from around the world have completed the world's largest, most demanding head-to-head comparison of clocks in history to build confidence for the upcoming redefinition of the second. The duration of a single second is currently defined by caesium (Cs) atomic clocks. Lasers 'count' the radiation emitted by Cs atoms in these devices to measure one second, give or take a few billionths. As the applications of atomic clocks have expanded — including GPS navigation, climate science, and radio astronomy — expectations of their performance have also increased, necessitating the more advanced optical clocks. Scientists around the world have been studying and testing these next-generation devices. Because they can enumerate one second up to around 18 decimal places, scientists expect optical clocks will replace Cs atomic clocks as the world's new time standard around 2030. Until then, however, optical clocks will have to pass rigorous tests attesting to their ability to work in step from different parts of the world. The new effort presents the largest, most sophisticated such test to date. It involved 10 optical atomic clocks on three continents and 65 researchers.

To measure the passage of time, strike up a conversation with the person next to you. If it's riveting, time will fly. But if it advances in painstaking steps, time will slow to a crawl. For better or for worse, this isn't good enough for scientists. To understand how much time one second denotes, they use natural phenomena. In the early 20th century, the definition of a second was one-86,400th of a mean solar day. The first quartz crystal clocks that appeared in the late 1940s could measure time more accurately than the earth's rotation. So scientists switched to the earth's revolution around the sun. In 1956, one second became equal to one-31,556,925.9747th of the time the earth took to go once around the sun from January 0, 1900. Since then, scientists have been building better clocks that, at each step, also incentivised them to refine the time standard. The current standard is based on atomic clocks. These clocks don't directly measure time. Instead, they are complicated set-ups scientists put together to generate radiation of a fixed frequency. (Frequency is nothing but the inverse of time.) In 1967, the SI unit of time was defined thus: "the duration of 9,192,631,770 periods of the radiation corresponding to the transition between the two hyperfine levels of the ground state of the caesium-133 atom". This verbose definition really communicates a simple meaning.

An atom's internal energy comes in fixed steps, like rungs on a ladder. It can jump up a rung by absorbing the right amount of energy and jump back down by giving that energy up again. In a Cs atomic clock, the energy that makes the jump is supplied by a finely tuned microwave signal. The atoms react most strongly when the microwave frequency is 9,192,631,770 Hz. Electronics watch how many atoms make the jump. If that number slips below a peak, the equipment nudges the microwave setting until the jump rate is back to the maximum. When that happens, the microwave signal itself is guaranteed to be exactly 9,192,631,770 Hz, i.e. composed of 9,192,631,770 waves per second. Chips called frequency dividers count these microwave waves and pass on only every 9,192,631,770-th one. This wave comes along every one second — and is the SI definition of the second. Around the world, many countries have set up their own Cs atomic clocks to define their respective national time standard. In India, the National Physical Laboratory in New Delhi maintains five Cs atomic clocks. The clocks' output is disseminated to various applications around India via the INSAT satellites, telecommunication signals, and fibre links. The wall clock hanging in your house is likely powered by two AA batteries and uses a quartz crystal oscillator. After a few months, the clock will start losing a few seconds. The Cs atomic clock that defines the US national time standard loses only one second every 300 million years, however. This is stupendous, yet in some cases it isn't good enough. As their application in defining the time standard suggests, atomic clocks are used in many technologies that we encounter every day. The American GPS network, Russia's GLONASS, Europe's Galileo, and India's NavIC constellation use atomic clocks onboard satellites to accurately measure distance and location data for both civilian and military use. Astronomers use it in radio-astronomy to piece together signals received on different parts of a large telescope. This is how they captured history's first photograph of a black hole in 2019. Climate scientists use atomic clocks for ultra-precise measurements of the earth's gravity that reveal where ice and water have been lost. As these applications have expanded, the expectations of atomic clocks have, too. The definitive

emission in Cs atomic clocks, of 9,192,631,770 Hz, is in the microwave range of the electromagnetic spectrum. In optical atomic clocks, it's in the optical (or visual) range. The radiation emitted when a strontium atom jumps between two particular energy levels is 429,228,066,418,009 Hz. When a ytterbium-ion jumps between two levels, the radiation has frequency 642,121,496,772,645 Hz. Because this radiation contains 10,000-times more waves per second, a device that can count them out can also measure one second more precisely. The frequency of the radiation emitted is also proportional to the clock's stability. In 2014, one optical atomic clock that used strontium atoms would reportedly drift by less than one second in 15 billion years. This is why optical atomic clocks are set to become the next global time standard. But ahead of the milestone, scientists must prove that clocks in different countries agree with one another to the 18th decimal place.

Enter: the new test. It involved 10 optical clocks based on five atoms: strontium-87 (Sr), ytterbium-171 (Yb), charged ytterbium-171 ions in two states (Yb⁺ E2 and Yb⁺ E3), charged strontium-88 (Sr⁺), and indium-115 ions (In⁺). The clocks were located at six national metrology institutes in Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the U.K., and Japan. The two clocks participating from Germany were in the same building, so the scientists linked their outputs through short optical fibres. The clocks across France, Germany, and Italy were linked with telecommunication fibres that already run through these countries. To prevent any noise or distortion from corrupting the data, scientists installed bespoke repeaters and amplifiers. Finally, to link the clocks across the English Channel, the Baltic Sea, and all the way to Japan, the teams used an advanced GPS technique called integer precise point positioning (IPPP). Because optical clocks occasionally take breaks for maintenance, the teams set up simpler backup clocks that stepped in temporarily to keep time using GPS data. When the optical atomic clocks were back in operation, the backups would handover and step back. In this way, all the clocks ran for 45 days between February 20 and April 6, 2022. Every time two different clocks were running and connected, the researchers divided their laser frequencies to make a ratio. In total the teams reported 38 independent optical-frequency ratios, far more than any earlier project. Four of these ratios — Yb⁺(E3) to Yb, In⁺ to Yb, Sr⁺ to Sr, and Sr⁺ to Yb — had never before been measured directly. The tightest single result was the ratio between the In⁺ and Yb⁺(E3) clocks in Germany, measured locally with an uncertainty of just 4.4 × 10⁻¹⁸.

The teams found that the fibre and satellite links told the same story for most ratios. For example, the Sr clocks in Germany and France differed by a factor of less than 2 × 10⁻¹⁶ via both technologies, showing that long fibres and IPPP could both support ultra-precise timing in good conditions. Similarly, same-atom ratios — Sr to Sr, Yb to Yb, and Yb⁺ to Yb⁺ — confirmed that many clocks were healthy. The Germany and the U.K. clocks were compared by GPS across the North Sea and matched within 3 × 10⁻¹⁶ even after accounting for downtime. Combine results responsibly The researchers were also able to reveal gaps they will have to fix before 2030. Every GPS-based ratio that involved the Italian Yb clock was off by about 4 × 10⁻¹⁶ compared with fibre measurements, pointing to a previously unnoticed signal distribution glitch at the Italian facility. The strontium clocks in France and Germany showed small but real offsets, up to 2 × 10⁻¹⁶, when the teams checked them against other clocks and each other. These shifts were large enough to matter for a future definition of the second and will need further study. The authors of the paper describing the test, published in Optica on June 12, noted that recognising such hiccups is exactly why large, redundant campaigns are valuable. Because many ratios shared the same clocks, fibres, backups or GPS receivers, the teams noted that their errors were correlated. To address this, they developed a 38 × 38 matrix capturing 242 non-zero correlation coefficients. These coefficients captured the degree to which any two variables were related, e.g. it was 0.94 when two ratios shared a common clock on the same fibre. The teams said publishing these correlations will allow future analysts combine results responsibly instead of double-counting information. In the final analysis, by showing that 10 heterogeneous clocks across three continents could agree with each other to within a factor 10⁻¹⁶ to 10⁻¹⁸, and by identifying the rare cases when they didn't, the test has cleared many obstacles en route to redefining the SI second with optical atomic clock standards.

Google introduces photo-to-video generation in Gemini with Veo 3 model rollout

Hyderabad: Google has introduced a powerful new photo-to-video generation feature in its Gemini platform, allowing users to transform static images into eight-second AI-generated video clips with sound. The tool, powered by the company's Veo 3 video generation model, is now rolling out to Google AI Pro and Ultra subscribers in select countries. The feature is accessible via the Gemini app and Flow — Google's AI filmmaking tool — by selecting the "Videos" option from the tool menu and uploading a photo. Users can then describe the scene and sound to animate everyday objects, drawings, nature scenes, or personal moments. "From reimagining fairy tales to ASMR content with lava textures, users are pushing the boundaries of creativity," Google said. In just seven weeks since Veo 3's wider rollout in May, more than 40 million AI-generated videos have been created using Gemini and Flow. The feature

expands Gemini's growing role as an everyday creative companion. Once a photo is uploaded and the prompt is entered, Gemini animates it into a short, shareable video. Users can preview, download, or share the output via a single tap. The tool is designed for quick creative expression, whether it's turning sketches into motion art or adding visual depth to photo memories. The photo-to-video feature is currently available in over 150 countries. Google said it has integrated extensive safety protocols into the tool's backend, including "red teaming" (proactive stress testing), misuse detection, and strict policy enforcement. All videos feature a visible AI-generated watermark and an invisible SynthID digital watermark to maintain transparency. Users can also give direct feedback through thumbs-up or thumbs-down buttons, helping Google fine-tune its safety measures and video quality in future updates.

Preity Zinta relishes her favourite Kadhi Chawal in Paris while down with fever



Mumbai: Actress Preity Zinta recently shared a heart-warming glimpse of a kind gesture that brought some comfort to her while she was unwell in Paris. Taking to Instagram, the ‘Soldier’ actress revealed that she had been down with a fever and was not feeling well. Her friend happened to mention her condition to a neighbour, who went out of her way to send the actress her favourite comfort food — Kadhi Chawal. Sharing her gratitude, Preity gave a shout-out to what she called the “sweetest & kindest family” living in Paris. Preity said the thoughtful gesture not only lifted her spirits during a difficult day but also left a lasting impression on her. Sharing her video, the ‘Kya Kehna’ actress wrote, “A big shout out to the sweetest & kindest family that lives in Paris. I was down with fever & not feeling great at all. My friend mentioned that to her neighbour & Wow! She sent me my favourite Kadi Chawal to brighten me up This little act of kindness & warmth not only brightened my day but will stay with me forever.” “There is a reason we say Punjabi Hospitality is the best If you are in Paris check out the goodies folks & thank me later Ting.” The video shows Preity Zinta opening a box containing aloo gobi ki sabzi, followed by a tiffin filled with her favourite Kadhi Chawal. Reacting to the thoughtful gesture, she said, “Oh my God, Kadhi Chawal! This is so sweet. I loved it. When you are ill, you want only comfort food. Thank you.” A few days ago, Preity Zinta visited the Kanapathy Temple in Paris on the last Monday of Sawan and shared glimpses of her spiritual outing on social media. In a video, the ‘Mission Kashmir’ actress documented her visit to the temple,

Spinal muscular atrophy patients welcome development of generic drug; call for government intervention to ensure access



A generic version of Risdiplam, a medicine used to treat spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), could soon be available in India at \$183.47 dollars per bottle, a sharp 97% drop from the current rate of \$7,150. The news has been welcomed by healthcare activists and patients as a significant development. Government intervention at this juncture is critical, says K.M. Gopakumar, a legal researcher who works in the area of access to medicines. “Even with this possible cost cut, the drug will remain expensive and out of reach for a large proportion of patients. The Central government can intervene, procure these medicines and reduce the price in a manner that is more affordable. They can also invoke Section 100 of the Patents Act, 1970 that would allow the manufacture of the generic version of the drug and ensure procurement of medicine for all SMA patients,” he said.

Indian generic manufacturer Natco Pharma announced that it could commercialise a generic version of Risdiplam at 15,900, equivalent to \$183.47. Natco released this information within the context of its legal battle with Roche Pharma, the current patent holder for the drug. The Delhi High Court has rejected Roche’s plea for an interim injunction against Natco for alleged infringement of its patent. Patients and their families are all waiting for an af-

fordable treatment option, says Saifullah Khalidi, an SMA patient representative and disability rights advocate. “SMA is a lifelong condition and Roche’s drug improves quality of life. Currently, the drug costs upwards of 770 lakh annually for an adult patient. This makes sustained access to the drug an impossible task. As of now, we don’t have any idea about when production would start or when the generic medicines would be available for patients. However, we welcome the possibility of having multiple companies making the generic version of the medicines and bringing down the cost to a point that it becomes affordable for all SMA patients,” he said.

Mr. Khalidi added that, without treatment, SMA patients struggle with reduced mobility, encounter respiratory challenges, and typically have a shortened lifespan. “This medicine is critical for ensuring quality of life for SMA patients,” he emphasised. SMA is a genetic disorder that causes weakness and wasting, or atrophy, of the muscles used for movement. It is caused by a loss of motor neurons, the specialised nerve cells in the spinal cord that control muscle movement. Symptoms vary depending on the type of SMA, but can include muscle weakness, difficulty with movement, breathing problems, swallowing difficulties, and scoliosis. There is currently no cure for SMA, but treatments can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life, with some therapies. Evrysdi (Risdiplam), a small molecule oral medication, is the first and only approved treatment for SMA in India, manufactured by Roche.

Additionally, Nusinersen (Spinraza), another disease-modifying therapy, is available in India through a special program for select children. “Access to medicines means improved quality of life. I was able to raise 761 lakh through crowd-funding in 2022 which gave me access to Roche’s medicine for close to a year. However, I have been without this medicine due to the high cost ever since. An easily accessible generic medicine would ensure a better life for people living with SMA,” said writer and SMA patient Sarmista, who hails from Assam.

The link between leprosy and climate-change that we did not know about: an Indian story

When Sharadindu Ghosh* was young, he was taught not to speak about his father’s leprosy. He, like many others, grew up in the lanes of Jamuria Leprosy Colony, in West Bengal, facing stigma and discrimination. Today, years after his father’s passing and an endless struggle through poverty, Ghosh is an electrical supervisor and a mentor to local children. “Among the uneducated population in India, people believe that this disease is given by God,” said Mervyn Basil, communications specialist at NGO Until No Leprosy Remains-India (NLR-India). Leprosy was eliminated as a public health problem in India as per the World Health Organization’s criteria of less than 1 case per 10,000 population, at the national level, in 2005. However now, experts say, it is quietly resurfacing, particularly in climate stressed States including West Bengal and Bihar. Floods, displacement and overcrowding have become frequent, leading to these States seeing the disease re-emerge in pockets. India reported total 1,03,819 new leprosy cases for the year 2022-23 out of which grade 2 disability (G2D) cases were 2,363 (2.28%), amounting to 25% of the new G2D cases of the world, as per a statement given in the Lok Sabha in February 2024. Extreme weather events do not affect all communities equally, and people affected by leprosy often face risks far beyond those encountered by the general population. Research presented by James Pender at the 21st International Leprosy Congress in 2022 highlighted how climate -induced disasters disproportionately affect leprosy-affected communities. Floods cause the loss of homes, crops and in some cases even access to shelters. Those with leprosy-related disabilities are often left behind in evacuation efforts and many face discrimination at relief camps. In Bangladesh, for instance, over 4,000 people affected by leprosy were impacted by severe flooding in 2017 and many were denied basic disaster relief. India is ranked amongst the most climate-vulnerable nations globally and the intersection of disease, climate change and economic deprivation can further deepen the gaps. According to a report by the Leprosy Mission Trust India, States including Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Chhattisgarh are also home to the largest proportion of people living in multidimensional poverty, meaning poverty that goes beyond money and wealth. “Leprosy is a tropical disease and in tropical areas, there is a higher chance of this bacteria multiplying at a very rapid pace, and it’s quite possible that it will multiply quickly,” said Mr. Basil.

Eight districts across Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha and Maharashtra report a high climate vulnerability, widespread multidimensional poverty and endemic levels of leprosy prevalence. According to Bihar’s State Water Resources department, 68.80 lakh hectares or over 76% of north and

73% of south Bihar are regularly affected by floods. A total of 28 of the State’s 38 districts are declared flood-prone.

In Odisha, the situation may be worse: it remains one of India’s most climate disrupted states. According to the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, 26 districts in Odisha are exposed to extreme climate events. The State has witnessed an increase in cyclonic events of late, with Koraput routinely facing floods that disrupt agricultural productivity and impact village residents who are primarily agricultural workers. With high risks of flood and drought, the State has a leprosy prevalence rate of 0.89. Chhattisgarh is also emerging as a key hotspot, with multiple districts like Bijapur, Kabirdham and Mahasamund having high prevalence rates of leprosy and deep rooted poverty. Kishanganj in Bihar, Raigarh in Chhattisgarh and Nuapada in Odisha have reported leprosy prevalence rates above 3% coexisting with poverty levels that exceed 60% in some cases. Even in relatively better-off states like Maharashtra and West Bengal, vulnerability in clusters exists especially in tribal areas like Nandurbar and Jhargram. Shubhojit Goswami, senior programme manager at Leprosy Mission Trust India said: “Our report does not claim or suggest that changes in climate patterns lead to leprosy transmission. But extreme climate events like floods, cyclones and droughts increase risk factors like malnutrition, limit access to clean water and poor hygiene which are known to contribute to leprosy spread” Displacement emerges as another key concern. When residents of rural areas face climate shocks like floods or droughts, they tend to migrate to urban areas. “Many can only afford to live in overcrowded slums and high population density increases the transmission risk,” said Mr. Goswami. He cites the example of Shravasti district in Uttar Pradesh, where heavy floods in October 2022 came just months after a drought had already devastated agriculture. “This kind of back-to-back climate shock is becoming the new normal,” he pointed out. Shravasti is a high-endemic district for leprosy where more than 70% of the population lives in multidimensional poverty. The need for interventions Urgent interventions by government and NGOs are needed. Three steps that Mr. Goswami states as urgent are: building community resilience alongside awareness programmes on climate-adaptive health behaviour; strengthening health systems in leprosy endemic districts to mitigate climate shocks as well as hyper-local climate and health risk assessments. A total of 30 districts across India are at the risk of ‘triple jeopardy’ i.e. the disease, climate change and poverty coexisting. “These triple burdens often affect specific districts and not entire States,” said Mr. Goswami. Muzaffarpur in Bihar for instance,

Telemedicine guidance on WhatsApp helps govt. doctors bridge cardiac care gaps in Tamil Nadu



. Can telemedicine guidance on a messaging platform like WhatsApp help doctors improve treatment outcomes in patients presenting with major heart attacks? The Tamil Nadu Government Heart Attack Management Programme - operationalised in a hub-and-spoke model networking 18 government medical college hospitals and 188 district/taluk government hospitals - has the answer. A study analysing the five-year experience (2019-2023) of the programme has found that it has demonstrated that WhatsApp groups are a cost-effective way of networking larger and smaller hospitals in a hub-and-spoke model to provide telemedicine guidance for early diagnosis and treatment of major heart attacks (STEMI-ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction). Through this, cardiologists in larger hub hospitals offered telemedicine guidance to smaller spoke units. Additionally, these groups were used to coordinate patient transfers between hospitals and to monitor the entire process.

Putting out the key findings in an article published recently in the Indian Journal of Medical Research - ‘Impact of telemedicine in STEMI care system: A five-year experience from Tamil Nadu, India’ - government cardiologists and health officials reported that the government-sponsored STEMI care system in a hub-and-spoke model, guided by telemedicine via WhatsApp groups, significantly improved guideline-directed treatment for STEMI care in a resource-limited setting. Talking about the implementation of the initiative, G. Justin Paul, professor of cardiology, Madras Medical College, and the programme’s nodal officer, explained that the 18 government medical college hospitals in T.N. were equipped with cardiac catheterisation labo-

ratories to offer Percutaneous Coronary Interventions (PCI), thereby serving as hub hospitals. Additionally, 188 district and taluk-level government hospitals lacking PCI capacity were enabled to administer clot busting medicines and were linked to these 18 hubs as spoke hospitals. Eighteen STEMI clusters were established by networking 10-15 spoke hospitals with each hub based on geographical proximity and transport logistics.

The networking was done in two phases - 12 hubs linked to 154 spokes to form 12 clusters in phase I (2017-2018) and six hubs linked to 34 spokes to create six more clusters in phase II (2019-2020). The authors noted that 18 WhatsApp groups - one for each cluster - were created to facilitate case-specific management of persons with suspected heart attacks. These groups enabled seamless communication between cardiologists at hub hospitals and teams at spoke hospitals. In total, 71,907 individuals with STEMI were treated over the five years. There was a 67% annual increase in the total number of individuals treated for STEMI. The proportion of individuals receiving pharmacoinvasive therapy increased from 7.9 to 31.7%. There was a 68% increase in the number of individuals receiving primary PCI. The number of individuals who did not receive guideline-directed treatment decreased by 20%.

The analysis found that there was a 6.7-fold rise in the individuals referred from spoke to hub hospitals for catheter-based revascularisation. The overall mortality showed a marginal decrease from 8.7 to 8.3%; phase-II hubs achieved a 68% reduction from 8.5% to 5.8% aligning with a rise in guideline-directed treatment. Dr. Paul said that in developed nations, STEMI care was centred on timely primary PCI, which must be done within 90-120 minutes by a specialist team in a cath lab. But this set up requiring 24x7 infrastructure and trained interventional cardiologists was not feasible in many developing nations including India. “The current study highlights that any timely treatment to restore blood flow is lifesaving, even if limited to fibrinolysis. Any form of revascularisation is definitely better than no revascularisation at all. Healthcare systems in developing nations must focus on early heart attack and at least start with fibrinolysis. This forms the foundation in which a pharmacoinvasive system can be built, as healthcare capabilities expand,” he added.

When Parkinson’s strikes early



Parkinson’s disease, often viewed as an ailment of the elderly, is manifesting with alarming frequency among younger individuals in India. This shift not only challenges existing clinical perceptions of the disease but also poses significant socio-economic and public healthcare implications for the nation. The tremors, stiffness, and slow movement commonly associated with the disease in old age are increasingly observed even in adults in their twenties, thirties and forties — at the prime of their lives. This unsettling trend demands more than just clinical attention; it calls for a systemic recalibration of how we understand, detect, and treat the second-most recurring neurodegenerative disorder in the world. The question is how can India redefine its healthcare strategies to include proper palliative care for Parkinson’s without compromising on its younger demographic, which is leading the country’s charge?

India is facing what can only be described as a dual burden — the expected increase of Parkinson’s disease in older adults and a growing tide of early-onset Parkinson’s disease. Compared with the global average age of diagnosis at around 60, India’s average is 51 — nearly a decade earlier. What is even more startling is that recent cohort studies in the Parkinsonism & Related Disorder Journal show that nearly 45% of patients develop symptoms between the ages of 22 and 49, a statistic that should trigger national concern. It means that India will have the highest absolute number of people with early-onset Parkinson’s disease, given its status as the most populous country. The younger patients experience the disease differently. They are more likely to suffer from dystonia (abnormal muscle contractions), early onset of levodopa-induced dyskinesias (involuntary movements), and psychiatric complications such as depression and anxiety. Because they are younger, they face longer disease durations, years of medication adjustments, employment disruptions, and emotional strain. In short, they are neurologically compromised while still economically and socially active, making the ripple effect of the early onset far wider than it appears.

Despite these shifts, community-level data in India remain sparse, particularly from rural areas where access to care is limited. A 2021 Lancet Global Health review noted the need for comprehensive neuroepidemiology surveys in India, particularly those that factor in region-specific exposures and lifestyles.

Patients often go through years of misdiagnosis or dismissal, partly because physicians themselves are conditioned to rule out Parkinson’s in younger individuals. In women, symptoms are even more likely to be misattributed to stress or hormonal changes. This results in delayed intervention, missed therapeutic windows, and irreversible neurological damage. To address this, India needs structured rehabilitation models and public health messaging around Parkinson’s, especially for young patients.

Strengthening early detection India’s expanding network of Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (erstwhile HWCs aka SHC) under the Ayushman Bharat programme offers an important opportunity to bring neurological screening closer to communities. Training primary care providers to recognise early signs of Parkinson’s, especially in younger individuals, can help improve early diagnosis and referral. Simple clinical checklists, community health worker sensitisation, and public awareness drives can reduce the delay in care-seeking and improve outcomes.

From a clinical standpoint, India presents a different biological profile. A recent paper on npj Parkinson’s Disease observed that genetic mutations common in Western patients (such as LRRK2 and SNCA) are rare among Indians, which suggests that environmental triggers such as pesticide exposure (notably paraquat), industrial pollutants, and air pollution could play a more significant role in this context. Yet these hypotheses remain underexplored due to the lack of large-scale, India-specific studies. It is equally important to recognise that early-onset Parkinson’s often remains undiagnosed in rural and underserved populations, where access to specialised neurological care is limited. Women, in particular, face a higher risk of misdiagnosis or delayed diagnosis. Addressing these inequities requires focused public health messaging, telemedicine outreach, and mobile diagnostic camps in remote areas. Ensuring that Parkinson’s care reaches every corner of the country must be considered a public health priority. Shifting the paradigm India is driving a mixed approach towards tackling Parkinson’s disease, which relies on broad-based government health schemes and healthcare efforts made by private hospitals. However, the growing challenges, especially those related to young-onset and early-onset

Parkinson’s disease, require a targeted response. The National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly is strengthening geriatric care. Yet, these schemes must be broadened to address the growing complexity of the disease arising from inconsistent implementation and a lack of disease-specific strategies. Promising models, such as Himachal Pradesh’s telestroke programme, demonstrate how telemedicine can bridge access gaps and could be adapted to enable remote Parkinson’s disease care and follow-ups. India can explore integrating patient-specific registries into the National Health Mission, expanding centres of excellence, and forging public-private partnerships to scale comprehensive, multidisciplinary care. The country should include Parkinson’s under Ayushman Bharat for insurance coverage, neurological diagnostics, and medications. Subsidising advanced therapies, such as deep brain stimulation, and supporting gene therapy trials can help India leverage its biotech capabilities while furthering advancements. Comprehensive strategy

India has already recognised brain health as part of the expanded National Mental Health Programme, a welcome step. However, there is a strong need to operationalise and strengthen services for neurological disorders such as Parkinson’s disease within this framework. Tackling the dual burden of Parkinson’s calls for better integration under existing non-communicable disease initiatives, expansion of insurance coverage under PM-JAY to include neurological care, and building stronger referral systems from primary to tertiary care. Public-private partnerships, multidisciplinary care models, and investments in research and national registries will help India move from reactive care to proactive, equitable management of Parkinson’s and related conditions. With a focused approach to genomics, gene therapy, early detection, de-stigmatisation.

All you need to know about: Eating disorders

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), eating disorders can lead to severe health complications and even death if untreated. The most common types include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating disorder. What are eating disorders? Eating disorders are mental and behavioral conditions involving persistent disturbances in eating behavior, often stemming from an obsession with food, body weight, or shape. The six main types of eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder (BED), pica, rumination disorder, and avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID). These are complex mental health conditions that can have severe physical and emotional consequences. Anorexia nervosa, for instance, involves restrictive eating, an intense fear of gaining weight, and a distorted body image. This condition has two subtypes: the restricting type and the binge eating/purging type. Bulimia nervosa is characterised by recurring episodes of binge eating followed by purging behaviors, such as vomiting, laxative use, or excessive exercise. These behaviors can lead to side effects like an inflamed throat, swollen salivary glands, and tooth decay. Binge eating disorder (BED) involves consuming large amounts of food rapidly and secretly, often accompanied by feelings of distress and guilt. In contrast, pica involves eating non-food substances, which can result in poisoning, infections, and nutritional deficiencies. Rumination disorder is marked by regurgitating food, re-chewing, and re-swallowing or spitting it out, potentially leading to weight loss and severe malnutrition. Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID) is characterised by a lack of interest in eating or a distaste for certain foods, resulting in restrictive eating habits and potential nutritional deficiencies.

Why PM2.5 and PM10 affect children more than adults? Here’s how you can protect your kid



Severe air pollution has serious consequences for children, particularly those between one and five years of age. Their lungs and immune systems are developing at this stage and make them highly vulnerable to the harmful effects of airborne pollutants such as particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

According to Dr Rajesh Chawla, senior consultant, respiratory and critical care, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, Delhi, studies indicate potential permanent reduction in lung capacity among children by 10 to 15 per cent. “Children aged 5-10 years may experience decreased lung function growth, increased susceptibility to respiratory infections and higher risk of developing chronic respiratory conditions in adulthood. Research shows that exposure during these critical periods can lead to structural changes in airways and altered immune responses,” he says. “Children are more vulnerable to air pollution because they breathe faster and are closer to the ground. They inhale more air per kg of body weight than adults. When they do so, the pollutants can penetrate deep into the lungs, causing inflammation and irritation of the airways. Children may have reduced lung function that’s four times worse than adults. Sometimes pregnant women become more prone to premature births,” says pulmonologist Dr Nikhil Modi.

What can particles like PM2.5 and PM10 do to their lungs?

Fine particles (PM2.5 with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less) can cross the alveolar barrier, which protects the lungs from damage, and get into the bloodstream, potentially impacting other organs and exacerbating systemic inflammation. “Studies have shown that children living in areas with high levels of PM2.5 have smaller lungs when they turn 18 than those living in areas with low levels. They run the risk of developing asthma and respiratory infections,” says Dr Modi. PM10 exposure can increase the risk of upper and lower respiratory infections in children of any age. This is evident from bouts of coughing, stuffy nose, stinging eyes, wheezing, chest tightness and breathlessness. “The damage caused by pollution can be both immediate and long-term, with studies showing that exposure during early childhood may predispose individuals to chronic lung diseases like COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) in adulthood,” says Dr Modi.

What can be day-to-day preventive strategies for children?

Limit outdoor exposure. Restrict outdoor activities during peak pollution hours, typically early mornings and late evenings. Use air quality apps to track pollution levels and plan the day accordingly. “Duration of outdoor exposure should be limited to 15-30 minutes during moderate pollu-

tion levels (Air Quality Index or AQI 101-150) and avoided entirely during severe pollution episodes. Indoor play areas with air purification systems can serve as alternatives. When outdoors, children should wear appropriate masks (above age 2), and activities should be less strenuous to reduce deep breathing. Parents should monitor children for any respiratory symptoms and maintain a daily log. Post-outdoor activity, children should undergo thorough cleaning including nasal irrigation with saline solution and changing clothes. Activities should be planned in areas with more vegetation and away from traffic. Swimming in indoor pools with good ventilation can be a suitable alternative for physical activity,” says Dr Chawla. Use air purifiers with HEPA filters to minimize indoor pollution from dust, smoke, and cooking. “Parents should keep children indoors when AQI exceeds 150. Indoor air should be purified using HEPA filters, and regular cleaning to remove dust and particulate matter is essential. Windows should remain closed during high pollution periods, and air purifiers should run continuously in children’s rooms. When outdoors is necessary, N95 masks (for children above 2 years) should be used, though they may not fit perfectly on small faces. Regular vacuuming with HEPA-filtered machines, wet mopping, and maintaining indoor humidity between 30-50 per cent can help reduce indoor pollutants. Parents should avoid using harsh cleaning chemicals or air fresheners that can contribute to indoor air pollution. Regular maintenance of air conditioning systems and changing air filters monthly is crucial. Additionally, keeping indoor plants known for air purification, such as spider plants or snake plants, can help improve air quality naturally,” says Dr Chawla. Provide an antioxidant-rich diet, including fruits and vegetables like spinach, carrots, and citrus fruits, to boost lung health and combat oxidative stress caused by pollutants. “Children should maintain optimal hydration with 1-1.5 litres of water daily (age-appropriate). Diet should be rich in antioxidants including vitamins C, E, and A. Foods high in Omega-3 fatty acids help reduce inflammation from pollution exposure,” says Dr Chawla. Develop green spaces around your homes or even balconies, because foliage acts as a natural air filter.

What about children with pre-existing health conditions?

Parents should establish a comprehensive healthcare plan with their pediatrician, including regular monitoring of respiratory function and allergic responses. “Maintain detailed records of pollution-related symptoms and responses to interventions with the child’s doctors. Regular spirometry testing (for children able to perform it) can help track lung function changes,” says Dr Chawla. He even recommends that healthcare providers be trained in recognising early signs of pollution-related health issues. “Telemedicine options should be available for quick consultations during high pollution days. Regular health education sessions for parents and caregivers about pollution-related health impacts and preventive measures are essential,” he adds.

How does pollution impact them and what should pregnant women do?

Prenatal exposure to air pollution can significantly impact foetal development. Studies show increased risks of low birth weight, premature birth and developmental issues. Dr Chawla advises that pregnant women should minimize outdoor exposure during high pollution periods and use air purifiers at home and workplace. “Regular prenatal check-ups should include monitoring for any pollution-related complications. Antioxidant-rich diet and proper supplementation under medical supervision is crucial. Pregnant women should wear N95 masks when outdoors and limit physical activity during high pollution periods. Indoor exercise in a filtered air environment is recommended. Regular monitoring of foetal growth and development should be conducted. Stress management is important as pollution-related anxiety can impact foetal development,” he adds.

Jiribam family at centre of spiralling violence in Manipur wants to move to safety – but can’t



morning, shortly after the body of a woman was found in the Barak river in Assam’s Cachar district, photos and videos spread like wildfire on social media. Sandhya Devi (33) saw these images too, sitting at a relief camp in Borobekra in Manipur’s Jiribam district, where she finds herself trapped now. She immediately recognised who it was – her 61-year-old mother Y Rani Devi, who had been abducted from the camp last week. It was on November 11 that the relief camp came under attack by armed men – the Manipur police claim they were Hmar militants – and by evening, residents found that her mother, two sisters Thoibi and Heitonbi, and three nieces and nephews were missing. On Thursday night, the bodies of a woman and two children, believed to be from the same family, were found floating on the river. And on Sunday, two more bodies were found – of another child and Rani Devi – in the river in Lakhipur. The abduction and death of members of this Meitei family is at the centre of massive protests that have enveloped not just Jiribam but also capital Imphal, where the homes of ministers and MLAs, mostly with the ruling BJP, were attacked by mobs. But at the relief camp, Sandhya has another worry – she, along with 108 other residents of the camp, including two more of her sister Thoibi’s children, are stranded, unable to leave for the district headquarters.

The inmates are residents of a small cluster of nearby Meitei villages in Borobekra sub-division of Jiribam district, which borders Hmar-majority Pherzawl district. This cluster of villages is surrounded by Hmar and Bengali villages. Jiribam, manipur violence, indian express A bullet-riddled CRPF vehicle. “We don’t know where we can go but we want to leave from here as soon as we can. If the CRPF were not here that day, we would have all died. If something like that could have happened during the day, what can hap-

A gangster’s shadowy trail from Moga to Surrey



In 2020, two years after he left for Canada, gangster Arshdeep Singh Gill aka Arsh Dalla made a trip to India. Investigations later revealed that the visit was to kill his friend-turned-rival Sukha Lamme. Police say Dalla allegedly injected Lamme with poison, mutilated the body, and discarded it in a canal in Moga. For months afterwards, he allegedly operated Lamme’s social media handle, using the dead gangster’s identity to expand his extortion and smuggling rackets. The deception came to light in May 2021, when the Punjab Police arrested one of Dalla’s gang members, who confessed to Lamme’s murder. By then, Dalla had returned to Canada, orchestrating a sprawling crime syndicate from his base in Surrey.

Over time, his ability to exploit legal loopholes and hide behind fake identities became his signature as he allegedly coordinated crimes across Moga and adjoining districts from the safety of his Canadian hideout. The 27-year-old Dalla, designated a terrorist by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in January 2023, has over 70 cases registered against him in India. With Dalla reportedly being detained in Canada on October 29, the Indian government is all set to seek his extradition. Police say his network, which allegedly included his father Charanjit Singh and brother Baldeep, thrived on extortion, arms smuggling, and targeted killings, with victims ranging from small traders to prominent figures, both in Punjab and Canada. Dalla’s reported arrest in Canada came a day after a grenade attack at a petrol pump in Punjab’s Mansa district — a rare and alarming escalation in extortion tactics. It was the second FIR against the 27-year-old Dalla that week and the third in October. An FIR filed on October 23 accused him of making threatening calls to a rice sheller in Faridkot. On October 9, he was accused of carrying out the murder of a Sikh activist, Gurpreet Singh Hari Nau, in Faridkot district. Member of Parliament from Khadoor Sahib and Warris Punjab De head Amritpal Singh, who is in Dibrugarh jail, was also named in the case along with Dalla. But Dalla later released an audio clip in which he claimed responsibility for the murder while clarifying that Amritpal Singh was not involved. His “arrest” in Canada remains shrouded in mystery. Canadian authorities have yet to confirm his detention, but reports suggest his name has surfaced in a case involving a shooting in Ontario on October 28.

A family of sarpanches Born in 1996 into a family of sarpanches — both his grandfather and father held the post in his ancestral Dalla village near Moga — Dalla and his younger brother Baldeep went to the tony Sacred Heart School in Moga, where they did their matriculation from the ICSE Board. Villagers say a financial crisis forced his father, who tilled land on lease, to move Dalla to the village government school, where he studied till Class 12. His descent into crime began soon after. He was 19 when the first FIR was filed against him for snatching a rifle from a security guard in Barnala in 2015. Despite this case and another

pen at night?” asked S Thaballei (50), another resident. Following the attack on the relief camp, the CRPF had gunned down 10 armed men.

The relief camp, inside the premises of the Borobekra police station and next to a CRPF post, is located around 30 km from Jiribam town, where other Meitei residents of the area have been staying since tensions first gripped Borobekra in June. The distance may not look like much, but the long, mostly kachcha road to Jiribam involves crossing many Hmar villages. “There is no way for them (residents of the relief camp in Borobekra) to travel safely on this route now. The inmates have demanded that they be evacuated to Jiribam town. But arrangements have to be made for that – either special security arrangements or a chopper,” said a Jiribam district police officer. Sense of safety shattered While most of the residents of Meitei villages in the area had been evacuated to Jiribam town in June itself, 156 had stayed back in the relief camp in Borobekra. “Most of the women and children had left but some of us stayed back to look after villages. We were afraid that our villages would get occupied if we all go,” said Oinam Ranjit (45), whose home is in the nearby Harinagar village. These residents had largely remained in the confines of the relief camp, which they believed to be secure until a couple of weeks ago. N Biramohan Singh, secretary of the camp, said that in October-end, the camp’s residents began to venture out to their villages for work because of a period of relatively calm and the presence of a CRPF post in the market. Those who ran shops in Jakuradorh market, which was burned down in Monday’s attack, started to resume their businesses in the weeks preceding the attack. Y Rani Devi and her daughters also revived their tea and snacks shop during this period, which is where they were during the time of the attack. Sandhya, who runs another shop, was in her house at the time. Jiribam manipur Sandhya Devi (33) saw these images too, sitting at a relief camp in Borobekra in Manipur’s Jiribam district, where she finds herself trapped now. “Suddenly I got a call from my mother in the afternoon, telling me that attackers are coming and I should run. That was the last contact I had with her. When I tried calling her after that, her phone was unreachable,” she said. Biramohan said that people would leave for work by 6-7 am and return before dark. “They (the attackers) knew that we would be outside during that time,” he said. Since the attack, none of the residents have even left the gate of the police station premises. A security source said that despite the presence of six CRPF posts around the relief camp and personnel from Borobekra police station, people in the camp were the target of the attackers. The attack, security officials believe, was in retaliation for the killing of a 31-year-old Hmar woman in Zairawm village.

of attempted murder, he managed to obtain a passport from the Jalandhar Regional Passport Office in 2017 following a ‘paper marriage’ with a woman from Rajasthan and, in 2018, left for Canada. Investigations revealed that Dalla allegedly operated his syndicate from his base in Surrey, Canada, where he lived with his wife and minor daughter. As Dalla’s influence grew, so did his family’s alleged involvement.

Charanjit was accused of exploiting his son’s notoriety for extortion in Moga and nearby areas. Baldeep Singh, meanwhile, operated as a key accomplice, reportedly handling extortion and crime logistics. “His father Charanjit and brother Baldeep funnelled the money they extorted in his name through wire transfers. This helped him sustain his network in India and Canada,” said Assistant Sub Inspector with Moga Police, Kiker Singh, who has investigated many of the cases against Dalla. Police say Baldeep’s cautious use of disposable phone numbers and encrypted communications allowed him to evade police scrutiny for years. In August 2021, Baldep was arrested at Delhi airport while attempting to flee to Canada. However, he got out on bail and, embarrassingly for the Punjab Police, managed to secure a forged passport and flee to Australia in January 2023. An FIR revealed that Charanjit and four others allegedly assisted him in obtaining the passport. Police sources say Baldeep is believed to be in Australia. They say Baldeep, who lived lavishly while in Moga despite being unemployed, maintained communication with Dalla through untraceable WhatsApp calls, complicating police efforts to track him. Charanjit is at present lodged in the Faridkot jail. Dalla’s world

Dalla allegedly orchestrated his syndicate of over 300 operatives who executed crimes on his orders, including the murder of Moga businessman Jitendra alias Pinka in 2020. Police say Dalla got weapons, ranging from tiffin bombs to grenades, smuggled across the Indo-Pak border for use by his network in India. In January 2023, Punjab police seized pistols, grenades, and live cartridges linked to Dalla’s network. Over 60 of his associates have been arrested, with most weapons traced to Pakistan. On January 7, Punjab Police’s Special Branch apprehended Gurpreet Singh alias Gopi and two others at a checkpoint near Mehna village in Tarn Taran. The three were allegedly found with two pistols, two grenades and 12 live cartridges. Investigations linked them to Dalla, with the weapons reportedly originating from Pakistan. This arrest shed light on Dalla’s expansive cross-border arms supply network. Dalla’s enmity with other designated terrorists underscores the infighting within Punjab’s gangster networks. Dalla is at daggers drawn with the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, which allegedly assassinated his close aide Sukhdul Singh, alias Sukha Dunike, in Winnipeg, Canada in December 2023. Dalla accused Landa of betrayal, claiming that Landa initially relied on him for weapons but later turned against him. Dalla also targeted the late Harvinder Rinda, alleging that Rinda sided with his enemies and facilitated the supply of weapons used in the Sidhu Moosewala murder. Dalla’s criminal activities took on a communal angle in December 2020 when a post on Sukha Gill Lamme’s Facebook account — then being operated by Dalla — claimed responsibility for the murder of Manohar Lal, a Dera Sacha Sauda follower, as “revenge” for the 2015 sacrilege incidents. The killing was seen as an attempt to garner sympathy from the Sikh community. Investigative agencies linked this murder to pro-Khalistan groups, further deepening Dalla’s ties to extremist networks.

In July 2022, the NIA filed a chargesheet implicating Dalla and Hardeep Singh Nijjar in a conspiracy to kill Hindu priest Kamaldeep Sharma in Jalandhar. The attack was allegedly part of a broader plan to disrupt communal harmony in Punjab. Dalla’s name surfaced in another case in January 2023 when Delhi Police arrested two operatives linked to the Lashkar-e-Toiba for a murder intended to instill fear and communal discord. Later that year, the NIA declared Dalla a terrorist under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and as a key operative of the Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF). A Red Corner Notice was issued against him by the

Does ‘blood money’ have a legal standing? | Explained

The story so far: The death sentence awarded by a Yemen court to nurse Nimisha Priya from Kerala for murdering her business partner, and the subsequent debates and efforts surrounding her acquittal and repatriation, which involves monetary compensation paid to the victim’s family, have brought the focus back on ‘blood money’ and its implications.

What is ‘blood money’?

‘Blood money’, or ‘diyya’, finds footing in the Islamic Sharia law, and is followed in countries that incorporate these laws in their legislation. Under the rule of ‘diyya’, a select quantity of a valuable asset, primarily monetary, has to be paid by the perpetrator of the crime to the victim, or the victim’s family if the latter has died. The custom is practised predominantly in cases involving unintentional murder and culpable homicide. It is also invoked in murder cases wherein the victim’s kin chooses not to retaliate through ‘qisas’ (a way of retribution under the Sharia). The end-goal, as the law says, is not to put a price tag on human life, but to alleviate the plight and suffering of the affected family and their potential loss of income. However, it is to be noted that even if the concerned parties reconcile through ‘blood money’, the community and the state will retain the right to impose a deterrent punishment, including penalties. In its contemporary applications, ‘blood money’ is upheld in several Islamic countries with factors such as gender, religion and nationality of the victim coming into play. Islamic scholar-researcher Mohammad Hashim Kamali outlines several cases in his book Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: A Fresh Interpretation. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, the traffic regulations specifically mandate payment of ‘blood money’ to heirs of the victims who die in road accidents. In addition, the perpetrator shall be liable to a prison term. The statutory legislation and the Sharia work hand in hand in such cases. While the police determine the guilty parties, a Sharia court fixes the amount of ‘blood money’ to be paid. As for accidents in workplaces, the rates are fixed by a special committee. In 2022, talks had surfaced that Saudi Arabia was on the course to amend its ‘blood money’ laws, proposing equal monetary payments for men, women, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. However, efforts towards this are yet to come to fruition. In Iran too, a country where the practice is rigorously upheld, ‘blood money’ varies with respect to religion and gender. A woman’s compensation is fixed at half of that of a man’s. In 2019, the country’s Supreme Court upheld a law that sought equalisation of ‘blood money’. However, the country is yet to see its full-fledged implementation. India’s neighbour Pakistan, too, provides a place for ‘diyya’ and ‘qisas’. Through the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 1991, these provisions were brought into mainstream law. In Yemen, the country in question, the consensus for compensation can be arrived at by the parties, and there might be a judi-

cial oversight over the fairness of the compensation.

What’s India’s stand on ‘diyya’?

Provisions for the grant or receiving of ‘blood money’ do not find a place in India’s formal legal system. However, the system does provide a way for the accused to negotiate with the prosecution through ‘plea bargaining’. Though the concept cannot be directly equated with ‘blood money’, the scheme lays out a procedure whereby the defendant agrees to plead guilty for a particular offence in return for a concession from the prosecutor. The concessions can be offered on a charge or a sentence. In the former, the defendant may plead guilty for one of the several charges or a less severe charge in return for dismissal of other charges, and in the latter, for a reduced sentence than what is prescribed for the concerned offence. Introduced into legal parlance through the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2005, which added Chapter XXI A to the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, plea bargaining comes with an array of limitations unlike ‘blood money’, which has a broader purview. For instance, plea bargaining can be taken up only for offences that are penalised with imprisonment of less than seven years. It cannot be invoked if the accused has been previously convicted for a similar offence. Besides, the provision is not available for crimes against women or children aged below 14; heinous crimes such as murder or rape; and offences involving socio-economic conditions, including civil rights. Moreover, the accused has to voluntarily come forward to plead guilty, and must not be coerced. However, on the lines of ‘blood money’, plea bargaining may also allow for the victim to receive compensation under clause Section 265E. Besides, much like the efforts in Islamic nations towards making ‘blood money’ more inclusive and egalitarian, discussions have been under way to make plea bargaining more refined. Though its use has been minimal in India, experts have pointed out that owing to judicial delays and prolonged trials, accused persons, even if innocent, may be pushed to a situation to plead guilty under the plea bargaining clause.

What are some historical practices which are similar to ‘blood money’?

Striking similarities to ‘diyya’ can be found in the historical records of several other cultures across the globe. In the ancient legal system of Ireland, the Brehon law (seventh century AD) provided for the system of ‘Éraic’ (body price) and ‘Log nEnech’ (honour price). The law shunned the notion of capital punishment for crimes, and allowed resolution of matters through amicable payment. In Éraic, the amount was determined by the severity of the offence, while in Log nEnech, the price varied depending upon the victim’s social status. ‘Galanas’ was an early Welsh law wherein the compensation was determined according to the status of the victim. Under the ruling, ‘blood fine’ was always to be paid, especially in cases of murder.

Decolonising the Indian mind: Beyond political freedom



I do not agree with many things that RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat says, but I have no hesitation in endorsing what in my view is right. Recently, in a speech in Indore, he said that political freedom may have come to us on August 15, 1947, but even after that we remained prisoners of the legacy left by colonialism and were not truly free in the cultural sense.

In this column, I keep away from political matters, but consider the cultural dimension even of politics my legitimate arena. I have consistently argued that it is the inevitable fate of all successfully colonised countries to remain culturally enslaved to their colonial rulers, long after political freedom has been attained. This is because colonial rule is not only about the physical subjugation of a people. It is as much—if not more—about the colonisation of the mind. Thus, political freedom is only one part of the project of decolonisation.Undoubtedly, it is a very significant part. Decades of political struggle and the most remarkable acts of courage and sacrifice of countless Indians preceded the proud unfurling of the Tiranga and the descent of the Union Jack on August 15, 1947. It was not easy or quick to defeat the mightiest military power of the time, and that too principally through non-violence and satyagraha under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. It is, therefore, not my intent, even remotely, to downgrade the political importance of our Independence Day.But the colonisers—at least the more farsighted among them—knew that the real purpose behind their political conquest was to achieve far more long-lasting goals. Nobody could have stated it with greater honesty than Thomas Babington Macaulay in his Minute on Education of 1835. Derisively, even damningly, dismissive of the civilisational refinements and achievements of anything Indian, he stated the coloniser’s purpose with clinical clarity: ‘We must at present do our best to form a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and intellect’. This class, he added, would in time become “by degrees fit vehicles for conveying (our) knowl-

edge to the great mass of the population". In saying this he was only echoing what he had said earlier—and again without the slightest ideological prevarication—in a speech in the House of Commons: ‘There are triumphs which are followed by no reverse. There is an empire exempt from the natural cause of decay. These triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism; that empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws.

It is this ‘imperishable empire’ in the cultural field that, I think, Bhagwat was talking about. And that empire does not cease to exist with political freedom alone. How true this is can be gauged by even a cursory evaluation of the continuing cultural consequences of colonialism. Decades after colonialism has ended politically, English is still the language of the elite; we judge a person’s ability by his or her ability to speak English with the right degree of accent and fluency; most of the Anglicised elite cannot count on a hundred in their own language; our education curriculum ensures—especially that of elite schools—that we have read Shakespeare but not Kalidasa; very few of us have actually read—leave alone studied—our own linguistic classics; we don’t know—and this surprised me—even such basics as who was Adi Shankaracharya, what did he write, and when did he live; we effortlessly mimic western cultural choices; in short, so many of us have shallow roots in the immensely fertile landscape of our own culture.

The process of reclaiming our cultural roots with authenticity is time-consuming. It can take decades, and sometimes even much more. For instance, in Africa, people in the countries that were under French colonial rule, now speak predominantly French. In spite of so many years of political independence, they have not resurrected their own languages, and in many cases, these are lost forever, and along with them, an entire corpus of cultural memory, symbolism, folklore, proverbs and way of life. Therefore, I do not agree with Mohan Bhagwat that one event, the Pran Pratishtha of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, is sufficient to dismantle colonial cooption and ensure true freedom. Culture has a correlation to religion, but it is not only about religion, and thus much more still needs to be done by us to become a culturally rooted, independent and autonomous civilisation. We have been tardy even in doing what was—and is—possible to expedite this process. A good example of this neglect is our education system. Too little has changed in its content and syllabus in an imaginative and enduring manner for our new generations to be sufficiently familiar with their own remarkable cultural heritage.It is true that things are changing, and slowly but surely, we are inching towards reappropriating our own cultural space. But this is still a work in progress.

Jharkhand Forest dept plans to revive dwindling Bison population at PTR

Ranchi: The Jharkhand Forest Department has initiated a study to revive the dwindling population of Bison, popularly known as Gaur, at Palamu Tiger Reserve (PTR), an official said. The bovine, a food source for big cats, has already gone extinct from across Jharkhand, excluding the PTR where merely 50-70 bison are surviving, he claimed.According to wildlife experts, poaching, infection and habitat disturbance by local cattle have been the major reasons for the vanishing of bison from Jharkhand.“Once Bisons were abundant in Jharkhand’s Saranda, Dalma, Hazaribagh, Gumla and some other forests. But, they went extinct from across the State. PTR, mainly Betla range, is the last destination where it is surviving but numbers are on the decline,” said former State wildlife board member DS Srivastava.

He alleged domestic cattle was posing a major threat to the animal in PTR.“Over 1.5 lakh domestic cattle from around the villages in PTR have occupied most of the space of Bison. They are eating food of the Bison and are also spreading several infections such as mouth and foot diseases. The Forest Department needs to check the cattle grazing,” he said.PTR Director Kumar Ashutosh said they are carrying out a study to ascertain the parameters that impact the animal. “Various aspects are being studied right from their behaviour to survival requirements so that their population could be increased,” Ashutosh said.Giving more details, PTR Deputy Field Director Prajesh Jena said, “We are also studying species of grass they prefer, how to improve their habitats and grow their population. After the study, we will prepare a comprehensive plan for their revival.” He said that the bison population in PTR was around 150 in the 1970s.“The population is currently between 50 and 70. Its revival is also important from a tiger point of view. They are a good source of food for tigers, other than the Sambar and Cheetal,” he said.The tiger count in Jharkhand’s Palamau Tiger Reserve (PTR) rose to one in the latest tiger estimation report, released in 2023, from nil recorded in 2018. The reserve official, however, claimed that currently, the population of tigers in the reserve is around five.

“We have evidence of five tigers in camera trapping captured recently in the reserve,” Jena said.In a bid to protect bison and other animals from zoonotic diseases, the



PTR authority in association with district administration has also initiated a massive vaccination drive under which around 1.5 lakh domestic cattle will be vaccinated.Around 190 villages spread around the reserve area. The villagers let out their cattle inside the reserve area, which spread various diseases, mainly mouth and foot disease, through water bodies, Jena said.“So, we have decided to vaccinate them to protect bison and other animals in the reserve area,” he said.The PTR authority has already started the grassland improvement work and strengthening anti-poaching centres for the protection of bison and other animals in the reserve.“We have 32 anti-poaching centres in the PTR where 24x7 security guards are providing a protective environment to wild animals and it is also helping grow their population. We are observing Bison count is now rising due to such centres,” he said.

He said that they were also working to relocate the villages from the core area of the reserve.Jena added that if they were successful in repopulating the bison and sambar, tiger population could also rise by 15-17 per cent. There are around 34 villages within the PTR limits. The forest department has identified eight villages that need to be relocated outside the PTR in phases, a forest official said.Of the 1,129.93 sqkm area of PTR, 414.08 sqkm is marked as a core area (critical tiger habitat) and the remaining 715.85 sqkm as a buffer zone. Of the total area, 226.32 sqkm is designated as Betla National Park. In the buffer zone, 53 sqkm is open for tourists.

Dhamtari churches restrict entry to non-Christians

Dhamtari: Churches in Chhattisgarh’s Dhamtari city have put up banners outside their premises stating that entry for worship is restricted to Christians and that those from other faiths who enter voluntarily will be responsible for their own actions. The churches cited safety concerns for the move, which comes amid recent controversies in the district over allegations of religious conversion at Christian prayer meetings and disputes concerning the final rites of converted persons.The notices have been put up at eight churches in the city, while the Dhamtari District Christian Forum has asked community members to display similar directives outside churches and prayer meeting halls elsewhere in the district.One such notice displayed at the 116-year-old Sunderganj Mennonite Church in Dhamtari reads: “As per the rules of the church management, entry into the church building for worship is only for Christians. Others, if they enter voluntarily, will (themselves) be responsible for it.”The notices have been put up for the security of members of the Christian community, Dr Diamond Filus, general secretary of the Dhamtari District Christian Forum, told PTI over the phone on Thursday. The decision to put up the notices was taken earlier this month but was strictly implemented after a September 15 meeting involving representatives of Hindu organisations, the Sarva Adivasi Samaj and the Christian Forum at the district Collectorate, he said.

Filus alleged that some officials were not upholding the Constitution and were instead siding with fringe elements.He said Christian representatives had been asked by officials to attend the September 15 meeting but were not informed that members of right-wing organisations would also be present.The issue of non-Christians visiting churches was raised by representatives of Hindu organisations at the meeting, who said those who had not converted should not be allowed to enter churches.Some officials present at the meeting also supported the demand, he claimed.Filus said incidents in the past in which right-wing activists allegedly created disturbances during prayer meetings over allegations of religious conversion had prompted the Christian community to take precautionary measures.“We decided to put up the banners for our safety. If a non-Christian wants to enter, they can do so at their own responsibility, so that we can avoid legal complications if any issue arises,” he said.The Christian Forum said the September 15 meeting was held after more than 1,000 people submitted self-declaration forms under the state’s new anti-conversion law at the district Collectorate, stating that they were attending religious meetings at churches or prayer halls voluntarily and at their own responsibility.When contacted about the self-declaration forms, Dhamtari Additional Collector Indira Singh Dehari said she was not authorised to speak on the issue.

70 Vs 90 hours workweek



“I regret I am not able to make you work on Sundays. What do you do sitting at home? How long can you stare at your wife?” These appalling words from L&T chairman SN Subrahmanyam sparked outrage across the country after he called for the enforcement of a 90-hour workweek.Social media erupted in fury, intensifying the ongoing discussion about the glorification of exploitative work hours in the country. Subrahmanyam’s comments came shortly after Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy publicly endorsed a 70-hour workweek, and shunned the entire concept of work-life balance. These remarks reveal a deep-seated cultural acceptance of overwork and a complete disregard for employee well-being, an ongoing issue in India that progressively seems to be getting worse, one comment at a time.

The tragic consequences of India’s toxic work culture became evident through the heartbreaking story of 26-year-old Anna Perayil, a chartered accountant who died just four months into her job. In a now-viral letter, her mother blamed the high-pressure work environment for Anna’s death, exposing the devastating consequences of toxic workplace cultures. (Ellis-Petersen, 2024). Anna’s story resonated deeply with many, symbolising the emotional and physical toll of India’s brutal hustle culture. Together, these incidents have reignited a crucial conversation: is work-life balance in India achievable, or is it destined to remain an unattainable ideal?Workplace Culture

The corporate environment in India is defined by its long working hours, rigid hierarchies and hazy boundaries between work and personal life. According to recent labour data, India has one of the world’s most overworked labour groups, with employees putting in far more hours than those in China, Singapore, and even Japan — a country known for its gruesome work culture (Ellis-Petersen, 2024).On average, Indian workers put in 13 extra hours a week than German workers. A McKinsey Health Institute survey also found India to be the global leader in workplace burnout, with 59% of respondents reporting burnout symptoms (Tewari, 2024). These numbers don’t just point to superficial issues but indicate a larger problem: India’s relentless pursuit of economic growth comes at the expense of individual well-being.This toxic work culture does not just affect employees, it also takes a toll on organisations. According to BRSR (Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report) data, the average employee turnover rate (the number of employees leaving an organisation during a specified period, typically in one year) increased from 24% to 31% in the fiscal year 2024, signaling a growing dissatisfaction with toxic work conditions. Yet, the fact remains that despite the painfully evident drawbacks of overwork, change feels so elusive.“This Saturday-Sunday off is not an Indian thing. This is a Western thing,” declared Ola CEO Bhavish Aggarwal, backing the viewpoints of the other aforementioned influential figures. When leaders openly support extreme workweeks, it sends an alarming message to both employees and organisations. This creates an environment where excess hours are glorified as a symbol of commitment and productivity. As a result, employees often feel pressured to keep up with these unrealistic expectations, worried that they’ll be seen as uncommitted or lacking ambition if they don’t. If we choose to accept this reality and simply conform to it, the very idea of a ‘day off’ is sure to appear mythical in the future, a tale of what once was.In India, the push for rapid economic growth has created a culture that values productivity and competition above all else. Organisations, eager to maximise profits and achieve targets, often exploit the labour force. Employees, trapped in this cycle of proving themselves by working extra hours, often feel threatened with the prospect of losing something crucial in case they leave: promotion, job security or financial stability.A McKinsey Health Institute survey also found India to be the global leader in workplace burnout, with 59% of respondents reporting burnout symptoms.Moreover, large corporations have no real incentive to change their practices because executives are aware that if one person quits or fails to do the job according to their standards, thousands of others will step in to take their place (Ellis-Petersen, 2024). This relentless focus on efficiency may drive results, but is it worth the price we pay for it?Cost of OverworkThe toll that toxic work environments can take on health is undeniable. It is well-known that prolonged stress can lead to serious issues like heart disease, depression and anxiety. A 2022 Deloitte survey revealed that a shocking 80% of the Indian workforce experience mental health issues. In a country where conversations around mental health still face a lot of backlash, the constant pressure to perform often pushes people to the point of burnout, taking a toll not just on individuals but on their families as well.Ironically, the obsession with working long hours may even be counterproductive. Research shows that overworked employees are less efficient, more prone to mistakes, and ultimately less productive. Countries like Germany and Sweden, which value work-life balance, consistently outperform nations that demand longer workweeks, proving that prioritising balance isn’t just kinder, it’s smarter for the economy too (Rituparna, 2024).Gen Z: Self-Awareness or Self-Sabotage?

The entry of Gen Z into the workforce has brought a

drastic shift in workplace dynamics, with an increase in conversations about work culture and challenging traditional norms. This younger generation, which has grown up in the age of rapid technological advancements and a growing awareness of mental health, is unafraid to call out toxic workplace practices. In the aftermath of Anna Perayil’s tragic story, a wave of younger employees took to social media to air their grievances through reels, tweets and viral posts that shed light on their struggles. Their openness about challenges has forced employers to focus on issues previously brushed under the carpet.Gen Z’s rejection of rigid work structures has given rise to phenomena like “quiet quitting,” where employees disengage and do only the bare minimum required due to dissatisfaction with workplace conditions. According to a Genius Consultants report, over 48% of Gen Z workers cited toxic work culture as the primary reason for quiet quitting (Kartik, 2024).

India has one of the world’s most overworked labour groups, with employees putting in far more hours than those in China, Singapore, and even Japan — a country known for its gruesome work culture.However, this shift in mindset has also garnered some criticism. Industry leaders, like Neeti Sharma of TeamLease Digital, argue that many Gen Z workers fail to understand the professional standards required in the workplace. “A job is not an extension of college,” she explains, noting that younger employees often lack an understanding of the varying demands across sectors. This generational clash poses a significant challenge for the future of India’s work culture.Striking A Balance

The need for work-life balance in India is dire, now more than ever, but its implementation faces several significant hurdles. For balance to become a reality, systemic changes are necessary, starting with leadership. Leaders must model healthy behaviours, emphasising productivity and well-being over hours logged and should be held accountable when failing to do so. Organisations must invest in employee well-being, offering genuine flexibility, mental health support and fair performance metrics. Companies must move beyond token initiatives, instilling work-life balance into their core values. It is easy to point fingers at leaders and big corporations, but it is important to understand the complex reality of the situation and realise that change starts at an individual level. In the rat race of life, many employees voluntarily push themselves to unhealthy limits to attain more promotions and achievements than their peers (Rituparna, 2024).

On average, Indian workers put in 13 extra hours a week than German workers. A 2022 Deloitte survey revealed that a shocking 80% of the Indian workforce experience mental health issues.Instead, employees need to take a step towards challenging toxic norms and advocate for their boundaries. While this is easier said than done, collective action from companies and policymakers can help break barriers and lead the way to a happier, thriving workforce — one where human well-being is prioritised the same amount as economic objectives.Psychological Perspective

In today’s fast-paced corporate environment, it is an undeniable fact that mental health stands at the crux of workplace well-being. A healthy workforce is not just a moral necessity but is also advantageous for employee well-being, directly impacting productivity, creativity and retention. The discourse around overwork and burnout in India often focuses on individual experiences or corporate policies, but an overlooked solution lies in Industrial-Organizational (I-O) Psychology. As a field dedicated to studying and optimising workplace behaviour, I-O psychology provides evidence-based tools to tackle toxic work cultures at their root.Toxic cultures in India often persist because organisations lack insight into how their structures and policies harm employees. I-O psychologists can conduct detailed workplace assessments, identifying inefficiencies like poor task delegation, inequitable workloads or ineffective time management. India’s corporate culture is known to mistake excessive hours for a marker of dedication. I-O psychologists can also challenge this mindset by advocating for policies that prioritise outcomes over hours worked (Freedman, 2018). These interventions, grounded in psychological research, can create environments where employees feel valued and supported.Redefining SuccessOur people are the heart of our nation, and using them solely for generating profits leads to a burnt-out and exhausted population, unlikely to drive innovation or long-term prosperity. We need to redefine what success means, shifting the focus from just professional achievements to also valuing quality of life. When we celebrate balanced, holistic success, we can change the way society views work, encouraging people to prioritise their well-being without feeling judged. This also means letting go of the misguided idea that overwork is a sign of dedication.Countries like Germany and Sweden, which value work-life balance, consistently outperform nations that demand longer workweeks. France’s “right to disconnect” law gives employees the freedom to step away from work and reclaim their time

Beyond changing mindsets, legislative policies that ensure fair work practices are imperative. Take France’s “right to disconnect” law, which gives employees the freedom to step away from work and reclaim their time (Lerouge & Pons, 2022). Adopting similar policies in India could help create a healthier, more balanced way of working and living.“Make your work and life meaningful and fulfilling and they will complement each other.” These words from the celebrated business icon Ratan Tata serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of balance. By rethinking priorities and embracing change, India can take a step towards creating a culture where work and life are in alignment. All we have to do, you and I, is care. Care enough for our people’s well-being to push for change and fight against the system that is adamant about working against us. The question is no longer whether work-life balance is achievable but whether we, as a society, are willing to demand it.

Four arrested after purported video of girl being harassed goes viral in Bihar

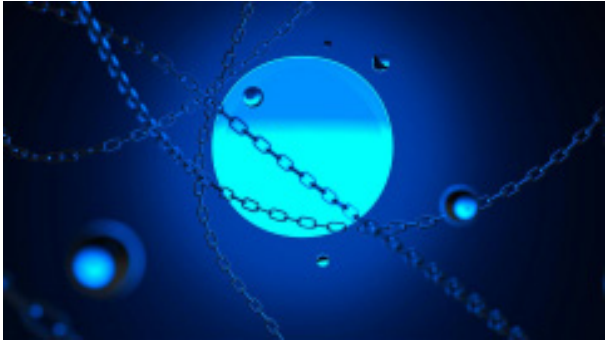
Samastipur (Bihar): A girl was allegedly harassed in public by a group of people who behaved indecently with her in Bihar’s Samastipur district, following which four accused were arrested, police said on Thursday. The incident bore a resemblance to cases of molestation reported in Jamui and Darbhanga over the last several days.

The latest incident came to light on Monday after a video purportedly showing three to four people behaving indecently with the girl went viral on social media. PTI could not independently verify the authenticity of the video.A statement issued by Samastipur Police on Thursday said, “The video, which went viral on social media, was technically verified, and the incident occurred near a bridge in Jagat Singhpur village. The incident is believed to be about a week old. An FIR was registered under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, POCSO Act and IT Act in connection with the incident.”

“During social media monitoring on Wednesday

evening, police noticed a video purportedly showing three to four persons behaving indecently with a girl, who appears to be a minor. As her identity could not be immediately established, police registered a case based on the available facts and swiftly identified and arrested all four accused allegedly involved in the incident,” it said.Leader of Opposition in the Bihar Assembly Tejashwi Yadav condemned the incident and questioned the law and order situation in the state.“The public molestation of a minor girl in Samastipur is yet another grim indictment of the law and order situation in BJP-ruled Bihar. Will the shameless minister dismiss this too as a ‘stray incident?’” he said.“When the chief minister is accused of protecting criminals on the basis of caste, such lawlessness is bound to flourish. Will the ‘caste expert’ CM first check the accused’s caste before acting — or try to suppress the case? And will Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi now find some ‘kinship’ in this case too? Shameful,” Yadav added.

‘Strange’ particle found to have mass when moving in one direction, not another



Since the start of the 20th century, physicists have discovered a veritable zoo of subatomic particles. Matter can be both wave and particle. If you take the particle route, these subatomic particles are what you could say the universe and everything in it is made of. There are many ways to further categorise them. A common one is as fermions and bosons: fermions make up matter and bosons mediate the forces between matter. For example, electrons and protons are fermions whereas photons are bosons.

Fermions can be further classified as Dirac or Majorana fermions. Dirac fermions are fermions that may or may not have mass but are always different from their anti-particles. Majorana fermions are fermions that are also their own anti-particles (neutrinos are suspected to be Majorana fermions). The zoo smells funny

Even if these distinctions seem too fine, they’re of considerable interest to physicists. They know something’s up in the subatomic zoo. Some animals that should obviously be there are missing, like the particle for the force of gravity. Some animals are much heavier than they should be (Higgs bosons and neutrinos). One enclosure, dark matter, remains empty even though physicists have been looking for it under every rock and leaf. Their knowledge of quite a few animals is just incomplete or at odds with what they studied in school. There’s a lot of work left if the zoo is to be a fully understood place without any surprises. To do this physicists have one advantage: a common theory that collects all these animals under a single, unified description, called the Standard Model (SM) of particle physics. Physicists can explore ‘new physics’ in terms of whether it agrees or disagrees with the SM. Right now it’s like a big jigsaw puzzle with a few important pieces missing. If physicists find a new piece in their calculations or their particle collider experiments, they can check if it fits into the puzzle. If it doesn’t, maybe the puzzle itself needs to be changed. In a sense, grouping fermions into fine categories is an exercise in meticulously cataloguing the exact shapes of the puzzle’s pieces. This way, if physicists find a piece whose shape is new even in a very small way, they stand to make a big update. Something strange comes this way

A particle as it exists in the wilderness of space is slightly different from a particle that exists inside solids and liquids. “In condensed-matter physics, every material can behave like a new universe,” IIT Kanpur assistant professor Adhip Agarwala said. “Here strange particles can arise and be experimentally detectable, which are otherwise not usually seen in three dimensions.” For example, two-dimensional materials can host particles called anyons whose properties lie somewhere between those of fermions and bosons. Recently, physicists at Columbia University and Pennsylvania State University reported finding another strange particle called a semi-Dirac fermion. Dirac fermions have mass and aren’t their own anti-particles. A semi-Dirac fermion has mass when it’s moving in one particular direction but not in a perpendicular direction. This unusual characteristic, which makes semi-Dirac fermions very exotic, is the result of the fermion’s interaction with the electric and magnetic forces acting on it in certain materials.

The semi-Dirac fermion reported in the experiment is technically a quasiparticle. A quasiparticle is a clump of

particles or energy-packets that, in some given conditions, behaves like a single particle. Protons are quasiparticles, for example: each proton is made of three quarks and the gluons holding them together. In most settings, what separates particles from quasiparticles is a distinction without a difference. If a quasiparticle is a fermion, it’s a fermion in the same way an electron is a fermion.

Location, location, location When trying to find puzzle pieces with new shapes, physicists need to know exactly which material to look in or they could be searching forever. This is much like in life sciences research. By studying the 1-mm-long roundworm *Caenorhabditis elegans*, for example, scientists have discovered many fundamental principles of biology and have won four Nobel Prizes so far. The locale of choice in the new study was a layered crystalline material called zirconium silicium sulphide (ZrSiS). When a magnetic field is applied to a metal, the electrons inside are accelerated along a curved path. (The protons are confined to the atomic nuclei.) The energy of these electrons is called cyclotron energy. In the metal, the cyclotron energy increases linearly with the strength of the magnetic field. This relationship can be denoted as B¹, where B is the strength of the magnetic field and 1 is the exponent to which it is raised. In graphene, which is a single-layer sheet of carbon atoms linked together, the cyclotron energy increases in step with the square-root of the magnetic field strength. The relationship is thus B^{1/2}. In ZrSiS, the researchers found the cyclotron energy to increase as B^{2/3}. Previous theoretical research has found that this scaling factor is a unique signature of semi-Dirac fermions. Comparison of the power law of transitions for different fermions in a log-log scale plot. Power-law fitting associated with the semi-Dirac fermions in ZrSiS shown as purple dashed line. Orange and black lines show the power-law scaling for other fermions. Comparison of the power law of transitions for different fermions in a log-log scale plot. Power-law fitting associated with the semi-Dirac fermions in ZrSiS shown as purple dashed line. Orange and black lines show the power-law scaling for other fermions. | Photo Credit: PhysRevX.14.041057

‘The same laws of nature’ The researchers didn’t land up at ZrSiS by accident; the locale is crucial, after all. Physicists in general knew for some time that there could be semi-Dirac fermions in graphene. But to reveal the quasiparticles’ presence, they had to first stretch graphene to such a degree that they often ended up tearing it apart. (Curiously, non-stretched graphene is a material that hosts a Dirac fermion, so its power law is denoted by the orange line in the graph above.) An older study also revealed some unusual electronic properties in zirconium silicon selenide (ZrSiSe), which has a similar structure, in the presence of a magnetic field. The authors of the present study put these and other indications together and decided to look for semi-Dirac fermions in ZrSiS — and voila. “This shows the magic of condensed matter physics, where every material, be it graphene or ZrSiS, can host exotic particles that one can discover in table-top experiments — whereas to discover subatomic particles we often need huge colliders,” Agarwala said. “It is the same laws of nature that guide them all.”

Physicists regularly subject subatomic particles to extreme conditions to elucidate the laws of nature at the edge of reality. The Large Hadron Collider in CERN in Europe smashes billions of protons head on with as much energy as there was just 0.000000000000004 seconds after the Big Bang. Even in the present study, the researchers subjected ZrSiS crystals to a magnetic field of up to 17.5 tesla — about 270,000-times stronger than the earth’s magnetic field. The researchers have said they plan to continue their studies calculations to understand more about ZrSiS and try to explain some other unusual electronic behaviour they observed in their study. The finding is a new animal in the particle zoo. As one more enclosure awaits its occupant and zoo authorities fill out the paperwork, the question arises: how will it change the zoo?

The battle for prestige - New Delhi constituency

With around 109,000 voters, the New Delhi constituency is among the smallest in the Capital but commands outsized attention. Few seats in the upcoming elections carry as much drama, prestige, and political legacy as New Delhi — where a former chief minister and the ruling party’s chief ministerial candidate is facing off against the sons of two former Delhi chief ministers. This constituency has become a battlefield where AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal faces a fierce contest against Parvesh Verma of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Sandeep Dikshit of the Congress.

Another fact that makes New Delhi critical is that this has historically served as the city’s bellwether seat. In the 10 elections held since the assembly’s establishment in 1993, the party winning here has invariably gone on to form the government. Since 1998, every victor of this seat has held the chief minister’s office. This makes the seat the home to the ultimate battle of prestige in 2025. With approximately 109,000 voters, the New Delhi constituency is among the smallest in the capital. Yet, it commands outsized attention, with parties pouring disproportionate resources into a campaign marked by sharp rhetoric and a series of controversies. The candidates

Arvind Kejriwal, 56, the AAP chief, seeks a fourth consecutive term. A retired bureaucrat-turned-politician, Kejriwal first entered the electoral fray in 2013, defeating three-term chief minister Sheila Dikshit by a significant margin. Since then, he has established a strong electoral base, securing victories in 2015 and 2020 with vote margins of 31,583 and 21,697, respectively. His journey from an anti-corruption crusader to the head of Delhi’s government has been marked by both disruption and dominance. This time, however, Kejriwal faces a more formidable contest.

The AAP has accused the BJP of manipulating the electoral rolls, alleging the addition of 13,000 new voters and the deletion of over 5,500 existing ones. “If 18.5% of the votes in the assembly are altered, what’s the point of the election?” Kejriwal lamented, calling it an attempt to rig the outcome. Representing the BJP, Parvesh Verma, 47, is no stranger to controversy. The son of former chief minister Sahib Singh Verma, he is known for his fiery rhetoric and strong base among Jat voters. After being denied a ticket in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Verma is looking for a political comeback. His campaign has focused on making inroads into AAP strongholds, particularly in slum clusters. Rebutting Kejriwal’s accusations, Verma retorted, “These allegations are a sign of desperation from someone sensing defeat.” Verma has also accused the AAP of “dividing Hindus” by filing complaints with “voters registered at temples” — allegations that the AAP has consistently denied.

Meanwhile, Congress has fielded Sandeep Dikshit, 60,

the son of Sheila Dikshit, who served as Delhi’s chief minister for 15 years. Dikshit has taken a grassroots approach, conducting door-to-door campaigns. In a recent interview with HT, Verma himself acknowledged Dikshit’s potential to split the anti-BJP vote, stating, “Congress is very much in the game because Dikshit’s mother was a popular CM in power for 15 years, and he has been an MP twice.” The constituency stretching from Lutyens’ Delhi to nearby slums, the New Delhi constituency represents a socio-economic cross-section of the Capital’s populace. The area encompasses the Presidential Estate, Janpath, and upscale neighbourhoods like Golf Links and Sujana Singh Park, alongside government accommodation colonies in Kidwai Nagar and Sarojini Nagar. It also includes slum clusters such as Sanjay Camp and villages like Pillanji. With its diverse demographics — government employees, traders, Dalits, and slum dwellers — New Delhi presents unique electoral dynamics. The constituency’s floating population, estimated at 1.6 to 2 million people daily, far exceeds its 109,000 registered voters. This influx creates significant pressure on infrastructure, leading to perennial issues like congestion, traffic snarls, and lack of parking. Campaign and controversies The campaign for New Delhi has been marred by bitter exchanges and allegations. AAP leaders claim that BJP candidate Verma has been caught distributing cash in exchange for votes. Verma defended the act, stating that he was merely providing aid to destitute women through an NGO founded by his father 25 years ago. On Wednesday, Delhi Police have filed a non-cognisable report after a complaint against Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma for allegedly distributing shoes to voters near Valmiki Temple in Lutyens’ Delhi. The complaint, lodged by a returning officer, alleges a violation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), police said. Adding to the tension, the Election Commission has called for enhanced police presence, citing multiple incidents of ruckus and intimidation during the campaign. Meanwhile, Kejriwal’s camp has repeatedly raised concerns about voter list manipulation and alleged violations of the Model Code of Conduct by BJP workers. Residents and their issues Despite its political significance, residents of New Delhi lament that local issues often take a backseat during elections. Gopal Krishan Kotwal, 75, who heads the Federation of New Delhi RWAs, highlighted the constituency’s infrastructure woes. “New Delhi might be one of the most affluent areas in the country, but our infrastructure hasn’t kept pace with the rising population. Daytime congestion due to office-goers and tourists creates chaos. Parking is a nightmare,” he said. He pointed out the stark disparity within the constituency, where bungalows exist beside slum clusters. “You can’t have a healthy constituency with areas like Sanjay Camp and Princess Park in shambles. The authorities need to address the basic needs of these residents,” he added.

Here's how Fatima Sana Shaikh almost 'killed' her 'friends'



Mumbai: Bollywood actor Fatima Sana Shaikh said that she almost killed her friends with heat stroke after hiking for hours to catch a glimpse of a beautiful lake. Fatima took to Instagram, where she shared a string of pictures posing with her friends, from the hike and even boating on the lake. She wrote as the caption: “I am not a sadist, but... Waking up at 4am, hiking for hours, and almost killing my friends with heatstroke (one got an ankle sprain, another hurt his knee, and one poor guy had no idea what he was getting into – I lied to him!). I pushed my friends to the limit, but somehow they still haven’t disowned me. Kaafi acche dost hai mere! (sic)”

“And that lake at the end of our hike... Uff! Heavenly!

Tensions simmer at Bengal’s border as India, B’deshe spar over frontier fencing

Uttam Mondal, 41, a farmer from Sabdalpur village in West Bengal’s Malda district, was still all charged up as he narrated details of the January 5 face-off between the Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) that saw villagers from the bordering areas of both countries gathering at the spot as tensions ran high over the construction of a fence on the Indian side along the Indo-Bangla border.

“I haven’t seen anything of this sort in my life. Hundreds of villagers from Sabdalpur and Sukhdevpur gathered on the road, which runs along the border fence, chanting Bharat Mata Ki Jai,” Mondal said, waving his arms passionately as he described the incident that happened in the two villages standing right on the edge of the Indo-Bangla border, around 50km south of Malda town. “Fencing already exists along the border in this area, barring a small stretch of 1.2km. BSF was trying to install the fences to plug the gap, when BGB objected. The situation flared up when a few hundred Bangladeshi villagers intervened and tried to confront BSF. When the news reached us, we all took up whatever arms we could find to confront them and help BSF,” added Jiten Mondal, 26. BSF officials explained that if any permanent structure, such as a border fence, has to come up within 150 yards of the international border, it has to be agreed upon by the border guarding agencies of both countries after a joint verification. HT visited the spot to find out what prompted BSF to construct a fence within 150 yards of the border (although it is on Indian land). Much of this area is low-lying, and is a wetland for most of the year. The fencing couldn’t have come up on this land forcing the BSF to construct the fence closer to the border. “BGB had agreed to our proposal of constructing fence on our land way back in 2016. Land acquisition was done over the next few years. In March 2024, we informed BGB that we would start constructing the fence. Work started in April 2024. They never raised any objections. During the monsoon the area was waterlogged and work was stalled. In November when the work resumed, BGB suddenly started raising objections,” said a senior BSF official who asked not to be named.

That’s likely because of a regime change. In August, Bangladesh witnessed a massive political turmoil. Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina had to step down on August 5 and fled to India. An interim government headed by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus took over. Since then, relations between the two countries have chilled. “We man around 52km of the international border, a major portion of which has been already been fenced. This 1.2km stretch is located within 150 yards of the border. In some areas it is as close as 70 yards to the border,” a BSF official posted in Malda said on condition of anonymity. The fencing work has now been stalled, with efforts on to resolve the impasse, officials said.

On Sunday, India’s envoy in Dhaka, Pranay Verma, was told by Bangladesh foreign secretary Mohammad Jashim Uddin that the “unauthorised” construction of border fencing by the BSF was a matter of “deep concern”. On Monday India summoned Bangladesh’s most senior diplomat and informed him that all security measures on the frontier were in keeping with existing agreements and protocols. But even as diplomats attempt to resolve the issue, tension is simmering in the area. Indian farmers complain of Bangladeshi miscreants destroying crops. The metal border road runs parallel to the barbed-wire fence. Green swathes of cropland growing maize, wheat, pulses, and mustard lie across the fence in some cases. The bor-

(Also, bijlee swam for the first time) By far the most exciting and fulfilling birthday ever,” she added. On the work front, the actor has several exciting projects lined up. She will soon be seen alongside R Madhavan in Vivek Soni’s upcoming untitled film, an age-defying love story.

Additionally, she has ‘Metro In Dino’, directed by Anurag Basu, co-starring Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan. It is the spiritual sequel to Basu’s previous critically-acclaimed hit film ‘Life in a... Metro’, which was released in 2007. The film is an anthology of four different heart-warming stories of contemporary couples. The film draws its title from the popular song ‘In Dino’ from ‘Life in a... Metro’. She also has ‘Ul Jalool – Ishq’, featuring Naseeruddin Shah and Vijay Varma. Fatima will also appear alongside Akshay Kumar in the biopic of C Shankaran Nair. Fatima Sana began her career as a child artiste in films ‘Chachi 420’ and ‘One 2 Ka 4’. She rose to fame with her performance in Nitesh Tiwari’s biographical sports film ‘Dangal’, which also starred Aamir Khan and Sanya Malhotra. She later portrayed Zafira Baig, a fierce warrior-archer, in the epic action-adventure film ‘Thugs of Hindostan’. Most recently, she was seen as Indira Gandhi in the Vicky Kaushal-starrer biographical war drama ‘Sam Bahadur’, biographical war drama film based on the life of India’s first field marshal, Sam Manekshaw. Directed by Meghna Gulzar, the film stars Vicky Kaushal in the title role, alongside Fatima Sana Shaikh, Sanya Malhotra, Neeraj Kabi, Edward Sonnenblick and Mohammed Zeeshan Ayyub.



der itself is marked by pillars (or posts) that are farther away.

“You see these farmlands right across the fence. From the fence, right up to the border pillar, it is our land. We have croplands here and there are also some families living in these intermediate lands. But often Bangladeshi miscreants come and destroy our crops and water pumps,” said another farmer, Subhas Mondal, who has three bighas (around 2 acres) of farmland across the fence. Along the barbed wire fence, which run for several kilometres, are huge iron gates. The BSF issues permits and identity cards to villagers living in these areas to cross the fenced boundary and cultivate their land. The farmers are allowed to go in every morning and required to come back before sunset. There are also a couple of Indian households, which are located in this intermediate land between the fence and the international border. “Bangladeshi miscreants sometimes come at night and steal our crops. If we spot them, we chase them away with the help of BSF. Such incidents seem to have increased over the past few months,” said Kshitish Mondal, 46, a villager. India has always maintained that the fence is needed to check smuggling. Until the regime change, Dhaka agreed.

“It may seem very peaceful during the day. But at night the situations change. Miscreants smuggle items such as cough syrup, cattle, gold and fake Indian currency,” said a senior BSF official who asked not to be named. The first two are smuggled into and the other two, in. Then, there are infiltration attempts. “BSF has foiled several such attempts in recent weeks. BSF personnel have also been attacked,” said a senior official. On the night of January 11, patrolling units of the 119 battalion seized a consignment of 565 bottles of cough syrup. On January 10, around 15-20 people from the across the border attacked a BSF patrol with sharp weapons while flashing high-beam torches in the eyes of the soldiers, trying to cause temporary blindness. BSF had to fire in the open to thwart the bid. BSF and BGB on Wednesday held a sector-commander level border coordination meeting at the Petrapole-Benapole frontier. “Important issues of mutual interest including developmental projects, construction of border fencing and measures to combat cross border crime were discussed,” said a senior official of BSF’s South Bengal Frontier. West Bengal shares a 2,216 km-long border with Bangladesh — the longest stretch of international border shared by any state in India with a neighbouring country. Some stretches are still unfenced making this border highly porous. “Fencing has helped to bring down criminal activities along the border. The fence would have helped both the nations to check cross-border crimes. We really don’t know why BGB is objecting. Even they are not convinced with their own reasons sometimes, it appears,” said another BSF official who asked not to be named.

Data localisation, parental verification in data protection rules weigh most on tech industry’s minds

data protection The government-appointed committee will act as a central body, which will collate requests from all other sectoral regulators and ministries, which see the need for certain data to be localised.

During a IT Ministry organised consultation with the tech industry Tuesday on the recently released draft data protection rules, a few concerns stood out: apprehensions over data localisation, consent verification and behavioural tracking of children, and worries over cross-border data flows to foreign jurisdictions.

The consultation that went on for over two hours saw representation from tech companies such as Meta, Google, Microsoft, Snap and a myriad of industry lobby groups and consultancies which represent them. It was chaired by IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, and IT Secretary S Krishnan. At the meeting, the government assured the industry of holding extensive consultations with the industry, and giving ample time to submit comments.

Some industry bodies are learnt to have expressed reservations around potential data localisation requirements that could be imposed on significant data fiduciaries under the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025.

Data localisation has been a bugbear for the tech industry for several years now, and the data protection rules envision the creation of a government appointed committee which would recommend the classes of data and traffic patterns pertaining to them which would not be able to be exported from India. This requirement has only been proposed for significant data fiduciaries, which will be determined on the basis of the volume and sensitivity of personal data they process, and the risks they might have on sovereignty and integrity of India, electoral democracy, security, and public order. All major tech companies including Meta, Google, Apple, Microsoft, and Amazon are expected to be classified as significant data fiduciaries. However, the government has clarified that the committee has been proposed to create a central body which works with other ministries and sectoral regulators to effectively implement local storage of data without causing any disruptions to the industry. “The government-appointed committee will act as a central body, which will collate requests from all other sectoral regulators and ministries, which see the need for certain data to be localised. Based on that, the committee will first hold industry consultations and then come up with its recommendations,” Vaishnaw had earlier told this paper.

Nuclear power operator plans new design unit to support private players



nuclear power, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd, NPCIL, nuclear power new design unit, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd new design unit, NPCIL new design unit, Indian express news, current affairsBoth Adani Group and Jindal Steel are planning to develop 10 GWe and 18 GWe of nuclear capacity, respectively, in the coming years.Months after the country's tightly regulated nuclear power sector was opened to private participation, the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) plans to set up a new design vertical which will provide technological support to private players and state governments seeking to deploy indigenous nuclear reactor technology.

The proposal for the new vertical is currently under process, The Indian Express has learnt.With the draft rules under the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act — it was enacted in December 2025 — now released and expected to provide greater clarity on the legal framework around licensing for new nuclear projects once notified, the state-owned company plans to streamline its functions through the new vertical.

This vertical will be a gateway for entities seeking access to pressurised heavy-water reactor (PHWR) technology and technical expertise, including technology support, design reviews and quality assurance.The move comes amid growing interest in PHWRs among prospective public and private sector entrants as a preferred technology for the initial phase of India's nuclear capacity expansion, given its established domestic supply chain and ecosystem.Currently, NPCIL implements PHWR-based nuclear power projects through indigenous technology developed in India. The country has a nuclear power capacity of 8.7 gigawatt-electric (GWe), all of which is run and operated by NPCIL.Earlier, the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), in its roadmap for achieving 100 GWe nuclear capacity by 2047, had also identified PHWRs as a prime candidate for adoption by other public sector undertakings and private companies.

“However, NPCIL having in its own pipeline expansion plans may find it difficult to hand hold all the new en-

trants interested in setting up PHWR plants. Therefore there is a compelling requirement for a dedicated and independent entity to provide technical support to other utilities,” the CEA said.It suggested that the proposed agency could be established under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), with experts drawn from the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research and other specialised DAE units.Queries sent to the DAE and NPCIL by The Indian Express did not elicit a response.Among global nuclear reactor technologies, India's indigenous PHWR is seen as the most cost-effective option for its price-sensitive power market, where high project costs can undermine nuclear power's competitiveness.India has seen similar challenges previously. The proposed French-assisted nuclear power project at Jaitapur in Maharashtra has remained stalled for years, with the high projected cost of electricity emerging a key hurdle to its progress.

Industry insiders said foreign reactor technologies such as light water reactors (LWRs) or pressurised water reactors (PWRs) are more expensive than indigenous PHWRs. Some estimates peg the cost of Indian reactors at around Rs 18 crore per megawatt-electric (MWe), compared with about Rs 34 crore per MWe for Russian reactors, while reactors from France and the US are estimated to cost much more.Domestic PHWRs are considered the most viable nuclear option, at around Rs 18 crore/MWe, for the price-sensitive Indian power market. Imported Russian, French and US technologies cost a lot more. Established design standards and a mature domestic supply chain are being flagged as key advantages for deployment of PHWRs in the initial phase of nuclear expansion.“The cost of foreign technologies can be viable in India only with bulk purchases. But that is difficult at this stage as no one is likely to order 15 or 25 reactors in one go. So, unless the cost of foreign reactors comes down, private players are most likely to initially opt for PHWRs, which are currently more cost-effective,” a nuclear industry sector expert told The Indian Express.

Industry executives also point to established design standards and a mature domestic supply chain as key advantages for deploying PHWRs during the initial phase of India's nuclear expansion.Last week, executives from two leading Indian private companies, Adani Atomic Energy and Jindal Steel, said the existing 700 MWe PHWR design could provide a practical starting point for scaling up nuclear capacity, given the availability of established design standards, a mature domestic supply chain and an established ecosystem of vendors and technical expertise.According to them, foreign reactor technologies and small modular reactors (SMRs) could play a role at a later stage as the sector matures.Both Adani Group and Jindal Steel are planning to develop 10 GWe and 18 GWe of nuclear capacity, respectively, in the coming years.

In ten months, Japan invested Rs 1 lakh cr out of Rs 7 lakh cr targeted for 10 yrs: Goyal

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday said that Japan is one of India's most strategic partners and India is working to expand the scope, scale and extent of the engagement.The statement came at a time when India and Japan are expected to review their 2011 trade deals. New Delhi is concerned over a widening trade deficit with Tokyo.Japan has announced to invest 10 trillion yen (about Rs 7 lakh crore) in India over one decade. He said that India has received about Rs one lakh crore in investments from that target in about 10 months.

“We haven't got down to work on terms of reference, but I think once the teams have discussed, we will be open to expanding the scope, scale and the extent of the engagement because Japan today is one of our most strategic partners,” he added.Terms of Reference (ToR), in trade parlance, set the roadmap, boundaries, and rules for trade talks between countries.The commerce ministry is also supporting industry and exporters in registering their products to meet regulatory requirements, the minister said, adding that under the export promotion mission scheme, the ministry will facilitate and support micro and small businesses in undertaking expensive registrations such as the European Union's registering chemicals in the EU (REACH) regulations for chemicals.“For the pharma industry, I have also requested to start registrations all across the world...they should all look at registering all across the world, including Japan,” he said.The two-way commerce between the two countries grew 9.18% to \$27.47 billion in 2025-26 from \$25.16 billion in 2024-25.The trade deficit between the countries increased to \$15.4 billion in the last fis-



cal year from \$12.66 billion in 2024-25. It was \$12.53 billion in 2023-24 and \$11 billion in 2022-23.

He, however, said that “we also have to see what kinds of goods we are importing...which are the things we need, like equipment...which help us in promoting economic activities”.The minister said he has asked different industries to submit challenges they are facing in exporting goods to Japan.“Many times these challenges are more about process and language and time, and our mission stands ready to support all sectors,” he said.Earlier, in the day while addressing a round table on start ups which was attended by start ups from India and investors from Japan, Goyal called for four areas of focus — deeptech capital corridor for early-stage funding, leveraging India's design-to-deployment ecosystem, building a two-way innovation bridge across universities and industry, and launching an India-Japan Shark Tank-style pitching series.

lakh under BaaS, with a battery rental of Rs 3.20 per km, while its introductory ex-showroom price starts at Rs 25.69 lakh.

The company said the new SUV is aimed at giving consumers a choice between different electrified powertrains while combining technology, safety, comfort and connected features.“The future of mobility will not be defined by a single technology solution but by providing customers the freedom to choose the pathway that best suits their needs,” said Anurag Mehrotra, Managing Director, JSW MG Motor India.The Hector Tomahawk measures 4,745 mm in length, 2,130 mm in width and 1,770 mm in height, with a 2,810-mm wheelbase and 230-mm ground clearance at the battery. It will be offered as a five- and seven-seater in the EV version, while the PHEV will be available only as a seven-seater.

The PHEV combines a 1.5-litre petrol engine, a dedicated hybrid transmission and a 20.5-kWh battery, offering more than 115 km of pure-electric range. Its 148-kW electric motor enables acceleration from 0-100 kmph in about nine seconds. The company claims a combined driving range of more than 1,100 km.The EV is powered by a 69.2-kWh battery and a permanent-magnet synchronous motor producing 150 kW and 310 Nm. It has a certified range of 517 km and supports DC fast charging of up to 90 kW.The SUV also introduces vehicle-to-home (V2H) capability, allowing the vehicle's battery to power appliances and other equipment.The SUV also comes with MG's i-SMART 3.0 connected-car system, more than 80 smart features, gesture controls and a GenAI-powered voice assistant.The company is offering a lifetime battery warranty to the first owner of both EV and PHEV versions.Deliveries of the EV will begin in September, while PHEV test drives and deliveries will start in November 2026.

Climate change heat stress puts 145 m Indian children at risk of dehydration, heatstroke: Study



For parents, extreme heat is no longer simply a matter of checking the weather forecast. It is beginning to shape everyday decisions about whether children can walk to school, play outdoors or even spend time outside in the evening. “Extreme heat must be treated as a disaster, not just a weather warning,” says Bhavreen Kandhari, a Delhi-based mother of two. She is deeply worried that cities are becoming increasingly unliveable for children.

“We worry about children falling sick, dehydration, whether their journeys to school can be safe with worsening air pollution now mixing with extreme heat. Childhood shrinks in this extreme heat. It is a loss of play, a loss of outdoor childhood. We used to check the AQI (air quality index) before sending children outside, and now we are also checking the temperature. At 6:30 pm, the temperature still hovers at 38 or 40 degrees — can we even send the children out to play? This captures the reality of parenting in urban India right now, and it is not good,” Kandhari told The Indian Express.

Kandhari, who has set up Warrior Moms, a nationwide network of mothers and citizens fighting for children's right to breathe clean air, is now seeing another threat converge with air pollution: extreme heat. Her concerns resonate with new research from Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), which finds that up to 560 million children aged 0-9 globally — 43% of all children in this age group — are experiencing at least one additional month, or 30 or more days, of heat stress every year because of human-induced climate change. In India, the number is 145 million children, or 61% of those aged 0-9.The study, published in Science Advances, combined population data with state-of-the-art climate models and attribution science to determine how much of this exposure can be linked specifically to human-induced climate change.

According to Rosa Pietroiusti, lead author of the study and a PhD researcher at VUB, children's exposure is higher than that of any other age group. It is also nearly three times the number of people aged 60-69 — about 190 million, or 30% of that age group — experiencing at least one additional month of heat stress.

Why are the findings significant?

The findings are particularly concerning because children are physiologically more vulnerable to extreme heat. Their bodies heat up faster than those of adults, they sweat less efficiently and they depend on adults to keep them hydrated, rested and protected. Excessive heat can disrupt the body's normal functioning and, in severe cases, cause dehydration, heatstroke and organ failure. It can also interfere with learning and cognitive development.The study fo-

cuses on humid heat, which can be more dangerous than dry heat because high humidity prevents sweat from evaporating efficiently, making it harder for the body to cool itself. As climate change makes heat waves more frequent and intense, children are increasingly exposed to conditions in which their bodies struggle to regulate temperature.

The risks are not evenly distributed. Children from low-income families can be particularly vulnerable because they may have fewer options to escape the heat — whether through air-conditioning, reliable electricity, access to cool spaces or the ability to alter school and travel routines.Dr Harshal Salve of AIIMS, New Delhi, said the research adds to the growing evidence of the health impacts of climate change on children. “UNICEF has warned that nearly half of the world's children face at least three major climate-related threats, including extreme heat and heat waves. In India, rising temperatures and more frequent heat waves are making it increasingly difficult for children to stay safe and healthy. Children from low-income families are at even greater risk because they often have fewer ways to protect themselves from the heat. When children's health suffers, it can affect their education, growth and, ultimately, our future,” he added.

What does heat stress mean?

Heat stress days in the study are days of humid heat stress, defined as a wet-bulb globe temperature in the shade of more than 28°C. At these levels, protective measures such as reducing physical activity and taking structured rest periods are recommended to prevent heat-related illness.Additional heat stress days are those attributable to human-induced climate change — days that would not have occurred in the absence of climate change. Researchers estimate these using attribution methods applied to observation-based reanalysis data or global climate models. Total heat stress days include both days attributable to climate change and those that would have occurred even without it.The VUB analysis shows that climate change has already doubled the number of Indian children aged 0-9 exposed to at least five total months of dangerous heat stress each year — from 59 million to 118 million, or 50% of children in this age group.

The projections become starker with further warming. In a 1.5°C warmer world, around 166 million Indian children (74%) aged 0-9 are projected to experience at least one additional month of heat stress each year. Around 123 million (55%) could experience at least five total months, or 150 days, of heat stress.In a 2°C warmer world, the number experiencing at least one additional month of heat stress could rise to 169 million (96%), while around 120 million (68%) could experience at least five total months.Globally, the pattern is similar. In a 1.5°C world, around 620 million children (49%) aged 0-9 are projected to experience at least one additional month of heat stress per year. At 2°C of warming, this could rise to around 650 million (59%). South Asia, Southeast Asia and West Africa are projected to have the highest numbers of children exposed to dangerous heat stress.For Wim Thiery, senior author of the study and professor at VUB, the findings underline the need for urgent action. Protecting children from the worst impacts of climate change will require policymakers to drastically reduce fossil-fuel emissions and limit warming in line with the Paris Agreement.

Pancreatic cancer's once daily pill gets US FDA nod: What it means for therapy and India?



The FDA has approved daraxonrasib for certain advanced pancreatic cancer patients. Here is what the new treatment means and what trial results show.The FDA has approved daraxonrasib for certain advanced pancreatic cancer patients. Here is what the new treatment means and what trial results show.For people with advanced pancreatic cancer, a new treatment could mean more time to live, as it represents a breakthrough in an area scientists have struggled with for decades. The US Food and Drug Administration approved daraxonrasib (brand name Rasonque), an oral pill taken once a day, for certain patients whose cancer has spread and stopped responding to earlier treatment.

It is the first approved pancreatic cancer treatment aimed at suppressing the RAS protein, one of the key drivers of the disease. In a major trial, patients taking the drug lived a median of 13.2 months, compared to 6.7 months with chemotherapy. The hazard ratio for death was about 0.40, indicating a substantial reduction in the risk of death during the study period.But there is an important distinction between doubling median survival and doubling an individual's life expectancy. The trial result is a population median: some patients will live considerably longer, while others will not respond or may have to stop treatment because of toxicity.

Why the drug approval matters so muchPancreatic cancer is one of the most challenging types of cancer to treat. A large proportion of patients are diagnosed only after the cancer has spread, limiting the possibility of surgery. The tumour itself is also biologically difficult to treat, with a dense surrounding microenvironment — the stroma — that has been resistant to many treatment strategies.As Professor Anant Ramaswamy, specialist in gastrointestinal cancers and Geriatric Oncology at Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai, noted in our earlier explainer, advanced pancreatic cancer has historically offered only incremental improvements despite decades of research. Against that background, a treatment that produced a median survival of 13.2 months after earlier therapy — compared with 6.7 months for chemotherapy — represents a meaningful change in the treatment landscape.

What does the pill actually do?

The drug targets RAS, a family of proteins that act like a signalling switch inside cells. As cells mutate in cancers, they impact RAS, leaving this signalling system stuck in an abnormal growth-promoting state. KRAS, one member of the RAS family, fuels pancreatic cancer.Daraxonrasib belongs to a new generation of medicines designed to switch off RAS proteins. The FDA describes it as targeting multiple forms of RAS, a key driver of tumour growth. For decades, RAS was regarded as one of cancer biology's most difficult targets. Researchers could identify the problem but struggled to block the protein effectively without risking toxicity. Daraxonrasib shows that the target can, in fact, be attacked successfully in patients.The trial met its primary and key secondary endpoints, including overall survival and progression-free survival. Patient-reported quality-of-life measures also favoured daraxonrasib.

Daraxonrasib is not currently approved as an across-the-board first treatment for pancreatic cancer. The approved population is adults with metastatic pancreatic adenocarcinoma who have received at least one previous systemic treatment, or are not candidates for multiagent

systemic therapy.So, a newly diagnosed patient with potentially operable pancreatic cancer does not simply replace surgery or chemotherapy with this pill. The old therapies — surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy where appropriate — remain important. Targeted therapy is being added to the arsenal.Trials are continuing to examine whether daraxonrasib can move into earlier lines of treatment and potentially into combination approaches. Revolution Medicines, the manufacturer, is also developing other RAS-targeting drugs and studying the class in cancers beyond pancreatic cancer.The convenience of a tablet should not be confused with the absence of side effects. The FDA lists rash, diarrhoea, inflammation/ulceration of the mouth (stomatitis), nausea, fatigue, vomiting, abdominal pain, swelling (edema), decreased appetite and haemorrhage among the common adverse effects.

Earlier clinical data also showed that dose reductions were sometimes necessary. Doctors will have to assess whether, for an individual patient, the balance between tumour control, survival, side effects and quality of life is better with daraxonrasib than with available alternatives.The reported US wholesale acquisition cost is \$39,800 for a 30-day supply at the recommended daily dose (roughly ?38 lakh at current exchange rates). That translates to roughly \$477,600 a year (roughly ?4.5 crore a year) before insurance discounts, rebates or other adjustments. But the list price is not the same thing as what an insured patient necessarily pays. Actual out-of-pocket costs depend on insurance coverage, deductibles, co-pay or co-insurance arrangements and assistance programmes.

For India, there is an additional issue: US FDA approval does not automatically make it an approved or routinely available medicine in India. Regulatory approval, importation, local marketing arrangements and reimbursement would all affect eventual Indian access. That makes accessibility one of the next big questions for Indian oncologists and patients.

What does this then mean for India?

For Indian patients, the FDA decision is best viewed as a major scientific development rather than an immediate guarantee of access.

There is, however, a larger reason for optimism. RAS mutations are found across several major cancers. Daraxonrasib is being investigated not only in pancreatic cancer but also in other RAS-driven malignancies, including lung and colorectal cancers. The pancreatic-cancer approval therefore validates an entire therapeutic strategy rather than a single drug. The drug is “one more option” rather than a cure for a stubborn kind of cancer.



The Hector Tomahawk EV will be priced at an introductory Rs 13.99 lakh under the battery-as-a-service (BaaS) model, along with a battery rental of Rs 4.90 per km. The full-ownership price starts at Rs 19.49 lakh.

JSW MG Motor India on Wednesday unveiled the Hector Tomahawk, the first vehicle built on its newly-developed Advanced Drive Architecture Platform Technology (ADAPT), which the company describes as India's first multi-new-energy-vehicle platform.The SUV will be available in both electric vehicle (EV) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) versions with a range of over 1100 kms.The Hector Tomahawk EV will be priced at an introductory Rs 13.99 lakh under the battery-as-a-service (BaaS) model, along with a battery rental of Rs 4.90 per km. The full-ownership price starts at Rs 19.49 lakh.The PHEV starts at Rs 21.79

Anahat Singh and Tanvi Khanna set up all-India quarters to guarantee a medal at Asian Games



Anahat Singh has bigger goals than that at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, but there were little hiccups at the start as India's No.1 and No.2 squash players set up a women's singles quarter-final by winning their Round of 16 clashes against the Singapore sisters on Thursday.Tanvi Khanna played her part in that. Ranked 71st in the PSA charts, India's second-highest ranked women's player had to dig deep against Au Yeong Wai Yhann before winning 3-1 (5-11, 11-4, 11-5, 13-11). On another court around the same time, Anahat, India's top medal hope and world No.17, breezed past Au Yeong Wai Lynn 11-4, 11-5, 11-7.

Yhann, a graduate in psychology from the University of the West of England, was Singapore's first female squash pro to win a PSA Challenger title. The 27-year-old's teen-aged sister, Lynn, is a product of the Singapore Sports School and is just starting out at the PSA level.Chasing her first individual medal at the Asian Games, third seed Anahat

received a first-round bye. Tanvi had to come through by beating South Korea's Kim Dami 3-0 in her opening round. The Indians will clash on Friday for a place in the semi-final, which assures a bronze.

Anahat, 18, and Tanvi, 30, have played each other multiple times on the national circuit before Anahat leaped to the elite PSA level. The two crossed paths earlier this year in the semi-finals of the JSW Indian Open, a PSA Copper event, in Mumbai, where Tanvi took a game off Anahat before losing 3-1.India's men's singles hopefuls too had a good day as Abhay Singh and Veet Chotrani moved into the last eight. Abhay, the world No.26 seeded second in Japan, brushed aside Sri Lanka's Ravindu Laksiri 3-0 (11-3, 11-5, 11-6) for another straight-games win. The 38th-ranked Veer was given a scare by Sanjay Jeeva, the world No.59 Malaysian, in a topsy-turvy contest where the Indian came through 3-2 (11-9, 8-11, 11-6, 15-17, 11-6).Veer will battle with Pakistan's Irfan Muhammad in the quarter-final on Friday, while Abhay will face Japan's No.1 Ryunosuke Tsukue.In mixed doubles, where India is defending a gold medal, the pair of Joshana Chinappa and Velavan Senthilkumar defeated the younger Indian combine of Shameena Riaz, daughter of India's former hockey captain and two-time Asian Games medallist Mohammed Riaz, and Suraj Chand 2-0 (11-7, 11-10). Joshana, playing in her seventh Asian Games, and Velavan will take on The Philippines' David Pelino and Jemyca Aribado for a place in the semi-finals.

A 0-0 win, a \$500 review and Asian Games heartbreak: How Mongolia's no-show cost India's eFootball medal hopes

India suffered a cruel twist of fate on Wednesday in Aichi-Nagoya after Mongolia's no-show in a decisive group-stage match saw the eFootball team of Dania Patel and Chinmay Sahoo get eliminated, ending their medal hopes at the 2026 Asian Games.Patel and Sahoo had begun their campaign with a 0-0 draw against Uzbekistan, who then beat Mongolia 6-3 and 12-0 across the mobile and console games, leaving them with a substantial positive goal difference of +15.Uzbekistan's results meant India needed a strong result against Mongolia to progress to the knockouts and keep their medal hopes alive. But the Mongolian team failed to report within the stipulated check-in time, arriving three minutes late and resulting in a forfeit.Under the tournament rules, India were awarded the win, tying them with Uzbekistan on points in Group F. But because it was recorded as a 0-0 forfeit win, India gained no goal-difference advantage, resulting in their elimination as Uzbekistan progressed from Group F.India's console player Sahoo told The Bridge that India did protest the decision, but it led nowhere."We protested and said that we want to play the games instead of a forfeit win, but they [officials] said a forfeit win is what the rules say," he said. "We were told we could pay \$500 for a judge panel check."India eventually decided against going ahead with the review."The thing is \$500 is kind of a waste of money, because they have mentioned that com-



ing late is a forfeit according to the rules," he added. "Unless they gave us a 3-0, 3-0 walkover with a +6 goal difference, we were not qualifying."India also missed out on qualification as one of the best second-placed teams in the draw, with Thailand (+3) and Saudi Arabia (+2) progressing to the quarterfinals.This was a frustrating end for India, with Patel being the reigning Asian eFootball champion. The exit ended India's hopes of winning a first Asian Games esports medal after they failed to win one at the 2022 edition.Uzbekistan eventually reached the semifinals but lost to Malaysia. Iran emerged as the eFootball champions.

Tough draw for Lakshya, Sindhu; Satwik-Chirag have it easy

In men's singles, while top Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen received an opening round bye, he will face former world champion Loh Kean Yew, who also received a bye, in the second round. If Sen gets past Yew, the world No. 14 will easily reach the quarter-finals where he will likely face world No. 1 Jonatan Christie of Indonesia.Ayush Shetty also received a first-round bye but will face his first real test in Round 3 against Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei.PV Sindhu also received a first-round bye in women's singles and is likely to easily progress to the quarter-finals where she could face Tokyo Olympics champion Chen Yufei.

Young Unnati Hooda will open her campaign against North Korean Yu Mi Song and will likely run into world No.6 Putri Kusuma Wardani of Indonesia in Round 3.The discipline to watch out for — men's doubles — will see Satwiksairaj Rankireddy/Chirag Shetty open against the Thai combine of Peeratchai Sukpun/Pakkapon Teeraratsakul. The defending champions have an easy route to the semis where they will likely face top seeds Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae of South Korea.Hariharan Amsakarunan and MR Arjun have a very tough opener against second seeds Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri. In women's doubles, Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand will open against Lok Lok Lui and Hiu Yan Tsang of Hong Kong. If they win they run into Japanese world No.3 Yuki Fukushima and Mayu Matsumoto in Round 2. The Indian combine beat Yuki and



Mayu in the team quarter-finals earlier this week.Kavipriya Selvam and Simran Singhi will start against Indonesians Febriana Dwipuji Kusuma and Meiliyssa Trias Puspitasari. If they win, they will run into South Korean second seeds Hana Baek and Sohee Lee.In mixed doubles, Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto will face Nibal Ahmed and Abdul Razzaq Aminath Nabeeha of Maldives in Round 1.The individual competitions begin on Friday.Indian badminton has already secured a medal with the men's team claiming bronze.At Hangzhou 2023, Indian shuttlers won three medals, including a first-ever badminton gold. While Rankireddy and Shetty claimed the top prize in men's doubles, the men's team won silver, and HS Prannoy won bronze in men's singles.

Roshibina Devi Naorem's third Asian Games medal: A historic hat-trick after a dramatic road to Nagoya

Three consecutive Asian Games appearances, three consecutive medals. Roshibina Devi Naorem became the first Wushu player from India to win a hat-trick of Asiad medals. But this time, she had to fight just to make the squad, arriving as a last-minute injury replacement after a selection process that was itself mired in controversy, before clinching silver on Thursday at the Aichi Prefectural Martial Arts Hall in Nagoya.At 17, Roshibina had bagged bronze at the Jakarta Games in the women's Sanda 60kg division and improved to silver at the 2022 Hangzhou Games.Now 25, the Manipuri secured silver for the second time in the same weight division of Sanda, the combat-sport discipline of Wushu. She had earlier defeated Macao's Chu Man Sin 5-0 in the quarterfinals to assure herself of a medal. In the Sanda category of Wushu, semifinalists are guaranteed at least a bronze. But Roshibina was looking to better her 2022 performance. She prevailed 2-0 against Indonesia's Thania Kusumaningtyas to progress to the final, but eventually succumbed 0-2 to China's Zhang Xiaoyu in the gold-medal bout.The silver, nonetheless, has etched her name in the record books in a sport where China and Iran have remained dominant forces for years. Wushu originated in China and dates back to ancient times. It consists of two categories — Taolu, which focuses on precision and the execution of choreographed movements, including both unarmed and

weapon events; and Sanda.This was India's 11th medal in Wushu at the Asian Games -- one gold, two silver and eight bronze.The selection drama before a historic thirdOut with a knee injury a year ago, Roshibina had lost to Divyanshi Choudhary in the trials and, as a result, missed the cut for India's seven-member Wushu squad approved by the Sports Ministry on August 22.Divyanshi was picked in the women's 60kg Sanda category. However, she suffered a partial high-grade ACL tear, resulting in the Wushu Association of India (WAI) picking Roshibina as her replacement.Divyanshi strongly protested against the decision in a highly charged video posted on social media, in which she alleged that Roshibina had mentally and physically harassed her and her family."I am really fed up. I have been harassed so much mentally from June, July to now, it's September, I am being harassed, because she (Roshibina) wanted to go (to the Asian Games)," she had said in the video.Divyanshi also questioned her removal from the Wushu squad, saying doctors had cleared her to compete with her knee taped and that the decision by the WAI was taken without adequately informing her. The WAI rejected the allegations and revealed that the selection change was made purely on medical grounds, clarifying the seriousness of Divyanshi's injury. She had sustained the injury during the 2026 SCO Wushu Sanda Championship in Hubei, China.

Satnam, Salman claim historic bronze in men's double sculls at Asian Games



Nagoya: Satnam Singh and Salman Khan's men's double sculls bronze turned out to be the saving grace as the embattled Indian rowing team produced one of its worst performances in Asian Games history here on Thursday. The duo's bronze was India's first-ever men's double sculls medal at the continental Games.Rowing was introduced at the Asian Games in 1982. India won its highest medal tally in the sport at the 2010 Guangzhou and 2023 Hangzhou editions.

India won five medals in 2010, including one gold, three silver and one bronze. The tally remained the same in 2023, but there was no gold, with the rowers winning two silver and three bronze medals.The 2018 Games yielded three podium finishes, including one gold.India's performance in this edition equalled its tally from the 1982, 1994 and 2002 editions.The Indian pair stayed in second place until the 1,500m mark before slipping to third in the final 500m, clocking 6:13.25 at the Nagaragawa International Regatta Course.China's Yi Xudi and Yide Nie won gold in 6:09.37, while Uzbekistan's Pavel Sorin and Mekhrobek Mamatkulov claimed silver in 6:10.49.The Indian duo finished 3.88 seconds behind the gold medallists.Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the duo after their bronze-winning performance at the Games.A fine performance by Satnam Singh and Salman Khan in the Men's Double Sculls, earning India a well-deserved Bronze medal. Their composure and coordination stood out. May this achievement inspire them to scale even greater heights in the years ahead," the Prime Minister posted on X.

Satnam, who had won a bronze at the Hangzhou edition in the men's quadruple sculls, added another Asian Games medal to his collection."I feel very proud because India had never won an Asian Games medal in the men's double sculls, and now I have been part of winning that first medal," Satnam said after the event.On the controversy surrounding the rowing team, he said, "I am sad about what happened with my partner (old partner). We had a chance for a better medal, but the decision has already been made and cannot be changed now.""We only came together in the men's double sculls five days ago. I feel proud that, after only five days together, we have managed to win an Asian Games medal in this event," he added.There was disquiet among the rowers two days before the start of competitions on Wednesday, with some claiming they had been shifted from the events they were originally entered in and that reserves had been included in the first team.The changes were made after a meeting of the team managers of different participating countries on Monday.Another rower said players

Unbeaten centuries and five-wicket hauls mark HCA league action

Hyderabad: Centuries by C Tej Charan (101 not out, 85b, 13x4, 2x6) of Mahbub College and R Shanmukh (103 not out, 116b, 12x4) of Adams XI, along with fine spells by V Supreeth (5/15) of HCA District, S Aarya Harinath Reddy (5/17) of Sri Shyam and Md Sofi (5/6) of Sunshine, were among the highlights of the HCA C-Division one-day league cricket championship here on Thursday.

The scores:C-Division one-day league:Akshit 142 in 29.4 overs (Aditya Daga 39, E Durga Prasad 58, AC Ashish Kumar 3/22, Shetty Vicky 3/23) bt Consult 118 in 24.2 overs (V Varun 30, B Srikanth 3/9, S Apoorv 4/15).Vijaynagar 131/3 in 30 overs (Iraj Ikshwaak 56 not out) lost to Deccan Colts 132/2 in 28.1 overs (Abdul Raheem 40, B Harshith 57 not out).CK Blues 112/9 in 25 overs (V Supreeth Goud 38, B Veerabadra 4/13) lost to Nizam C Club 116/3 in 14 overs (Mirza Maqbool Baig 50 not out, Md Mudassir 33 not out, D Sai Uddiran Raj 3/28).Picket 125/6 in 25 overs (V Bhanu Teja Reddy 30) lost to Team Kun 128/6 in 24.1 overs.Victoria 50 in 16 overs (Abdul Hanif 3/10, Pawan Kumar 3/9) lost to Red Hills 56/2 in 9 overs.Hyd Panthers 110/6 in 33 overs (Sai Varshith P 34) lost to Yadav Dairy 111/1 in 24.5 overs (A Jayadeep Karthik 57).Abhinav Colts 104 in 29.4 overs (Risheek R Mandapuram 4/21) lost to Hyd Patriots 108/1 in 17 overs (Ritvik N 34, Raghaav Narayan 51 not out).Young Masters 182 in 29.5 overs (Md Farhan Shareef 58, Arshad Khan 41, Kevin Phillips 3/54, Shashwat Reddy 3/0) bt Shanti Associates 134/7 in 42 overs (R Shiva Ram Charan 45, Shaswat Reddy 36, Abdul Raqeeb 3/28).HCA Dist 8 205/7 in 26 overs (Oni Sukumar 62, Ashwith U 50, Bhanu 3/40) bt Ranga Reddy Dist 34 in 15.3 overs (N Manesh Kumar 3/5, V Supreeth 5/15).St Andrews 189/9 in 32 overs (K Thrishul

who had either been dropped or shifted to other events were "very disturbed" and had not taken food after the development earlier in the day.

The controversy appeared to have died down as the rowers competed on the first day of events on Wednesday, but a few players said they were contemplating making a representation to the Sports Minister.Even as rowing competitions began on Wednesday, at least two rowers said some players were considering making a complaint to the Sports Minister once the contingent returned to India.Rowing Federation of India (RFI) president Balaji Maradapa, meanwhile, accused a former coach of "influencing" the athletes. He also said the changes in crew members were made in the interest of the team by the coaches after the duration of the rowing competition was compressed from four days to two due to weather disruptions caused by Typhoon Dujan.Earlier, India narrowly missed another rowing medal when Balraj Panwar finished fourth in the men's single sculls final in 6:54.80.Panwar stayed in second place at the 500m, 1,000m and 1,500m marks but slipped to fourth in the final 500m.China's Deng Zhiwei won gold in 6:38.98, while Panwar finished 15.82 seconds behind the winner.The lightweight men's double sculls duo of Rohit and Ujjwal Kumar Singh also finished fourth, while the men's quadruple sculls team ended fifth.India's last Asian Games medal in the men's single sculls came at the 2014 Incheon Games, when Sawarn Singh won bronze.Bajrang Lal Thakkar remains the only Indian to win gold in the event, claiming the historic title at the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games.

In the women's four final, India's Gurbani Kaur, Aleena Anto, Tendenthoi Devi Haobijam and Poonam finished sixth in 6:55.32, 20.45 seconds behind gold medallists China. Uzbekistan won silver in 6:38.05, while Vietnam took bronze in 6:43.86.In the lightweight men's single sculls Final B, Ajay Tyagi topped the 7-12 classification race in 7:01.54.For 26-year-old Satnam, the journey to the Asian Games rowing podium began away from the water.A former national-level handball player, he took up rowing around eight years ago after being inspired by Olympian Swarn Singh Virk, who won gold in the men's lightweight double sculls at the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia.Hailing from Punjab's Mansa district, Satnam quickly emerged as one of India's promising rowers.Download Interactive MapsHe represented India at the 2018 Youth Olympics, finishing eighth.He later won the men's single sculls title at the 40th Senior National Rowing Championships, becoming the first Indian Navy rower to claim the event.Satnam was also part of India's gold-winning men's quadruple sculls team at the Senior Asian Rowing Championships last year.A first for SalmanFor 28-year-old Salman, who won his maiden Asian Games medal, the rowing journey began in 2018 after he joined the Bombay Engineering Group of the Indian Army.Coaches Satywan, Satish Siraat and Prabhat Mishra introduced him to rowing and selected him for the centre's team.He went on to represent his battalion and compete in inter-centre championships.Salman twice came close to giving up the sport, but his coaches encouraged him to continue. He won gold at the 2022 National Games in Gujarat and also claimed the indoor national title the same year.He was subsequently inducted into the Army Rowing Node (ARN), where he trained under senior coach Kudrat Ali.In 2023, Salman won gold at the Senior Nationals and the Open Sprint Nationals.



32, Syed Sufiyan Abdul Kareem 41, Suhas Yadav G 3/33, Pawan Kumar Sharma 3/48) lost to Mahbub College 191/3 in 28.1 overs (C Tej Charan 101 not out, Harshavardhan 42 not out).Ameerpet 94 in 40 overs (Sardar Parmeet Singh 33, JLN Meher Prasad 3/15, Md Sofi 5/6) lost to Sunshine 95/1 in 9.2 overs (Ishaan Virani 60 not out).Lucky XI 103/9 in 33 overs lost to Reliance 104/0 in 11.2 overs (Md Suleman Uddin 91).Sri Shyam 151/3 in 20 overs (M Varun Sandesh Goud 71, B Aarav Goud 45) bt SK Blues 72/10 in 14.4 overs (S Aarya Harinath Reddy 5/17).PJLCC 145/7 in 20 overs (M Shiva Naga Koushik 44, J Anshul 40, Virat Kashyap 4/33) bt Bharat 72/7 in 20 overs (Parv Soni 4/11).Gaganmahal 119 in 39.5 overs (Syed Waleed 31, C Dayanand 4/14) lost to HCA Dist 7 122/5 in 21.3 overs (Aryan Rathod 70, Syed Waleed 4/35).Adams XI 242/4 in 40 overs (R Shanmukh 103 not out, S Jenith Ram Reddy 41 not out) bt Anu CC 96/8 in 40 overs.

Sehrawat's record caps another India goalfest vs Thailand

Mumbai: With each goal India scored, the celebrations remained rather muted, both on and off the pitch. Except for that one goal late in the 57th minute.The Indian women's hockey team has been growing in confidence since June. They won the Nations Cup to earn promotion to the top-flight FIH Pro League, then they finished an impressive fifth at the World Cup last month.

Their campaign at the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya started with comprehensive wins over minnows Uzbekistan (19-0) and Indonesia (13-1). On Wednesday, at the Gifu Prefectorial Green Stadium, another goalfest was expected of them. And they delivered, beating Thailand 20-1.India knows though, that these results are coming against teams well below their standard, and there are bigger challenges ahead as they head to the latter stages of the tournament. And so they celebrated each goal with a smile and a few high-fives.Then came that goal by Deepika Sehrawat towards the end. It was her ninth of the day, and it helped her break her own record of scoring the most goals by an individual player in a women's hockey match at the Asian Games.Teammates rushed towards her to offer a hug in celebration for a personal milestone.But the bigger picture still remains unchanged.The team may be in good form, but the target at the Asian Games is to win the country's first gold medal in the women's hockey tournament since the event was introduced to the Asiad roster in 1982. And with

that gold comes the coveted quota for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.Matches against minnow teams may have come early for India, yet they still need to be won. And once again, the Indian team got off to a flying start with Sehrawat scoring in the second minute through a penalty corner.The team's designated drag-flicker, in fact, scored each of her nine goals through penalty corners.There was no keeping away Navneet Kaur from scoring though. The bonafide goalscorer scored four goals — one in each quarter — while Rutuja Pisal also picked up a hat-trick with two first quarter goals and her last coming in the 47th minute.Lalremiami, Sakshi Rana, captain Salima Tete, veteran Neha Goyal chipped in with goals as Thailand struggled to string together any passes to threaten the Indian goal.In fact, the Indians did not face any circle entries in their own half throughout the first half.In the 57th minute though, there was a major celebration on the pitch. A rookie error in defence saw a wayward pass being misstrapped by an unchallenged Lalhantluangi, with the ball striking her foot and giving Thailand its only penalty corner of the match.Supansa Samanso slammed a drag-flick hard towards goal, and a deflection off the Indian stick saw the ball hit the back of the net.Thailand trailed by 19 goals at the time, but there was a volley of celebration from the players and coaching staff.Moments later, the Indians celebrated Sehrawat's Asian Games record to bring to an end a comfortable outing.

Richa Chadha feels 2026 is the year of Ali Fazal: ‘He lived in a shanty, had just a bicycle’



A couple of years after becoming a mother to her and husband Ali Fazal's daughter Zuneyra Ida Fazal, Richa Chadha is taking it slow. She's shooting for a Netflix India show, and is all set to launch her travel show Musafiri on her new YouTube channel this Friday on September 25. The weekly series is both written and narrated by Richa, the first season of which explores Mumbai in all its rich cultural, architectural, and anthropological glory. The series starts with a confession that she felt the need to make it after motherhood changed her forever. While she's always been vocal against environmental and sociopolitical excesses, she's found another reason to double down on that. "Questioning the world also comes from motherhood. That's why people ask, 'What will we leave behind for our children?' This is a big reason for me to do the show. I've had this research document for 12 years, but I finally acted on it after becoming a mom," Richa tells SCREEN in an exclusive interview. The first two episodes of the show explore gems hiding in plain sight — an Armenian church in Kala Ghoda and Gilbert Hill in Andheri, a 66 million years old rock formed by cooling molten lava from a volcanic eruption.

Richa admits that while content creators like Archana Puran Singh and Farah Khan now make more money a year through YouTube than they do from their respective film careers, she doesn't have a revenue model for her travel show yet. In fact, Phull Stop, her new YouTube channel on which Musafiri will stream, has just been started from scratch. "I feel I make money, yaar. I'm not chasing money otherwise I'd do a platform deal before putting it out. But instead, I have a new channel with no subscribers that I'm launching it with. But I feel people would take to it because there's a lot of curiosity around India," argues Richa. While she has no sponsors onboard yet, she wouldn't mind seamless brand integrations because her travel show does have the scope for that. "The fourth episode is about how Mumbai got rich, and it's all about the big business families. It'll mention the Wadias and the Tatas. So, if it's a seamless integration, I'd be up for it," says the actor. More seasons of the show will explore other cities of India and the world. "As of now, it's just Mumbai. Because we don't have the money for boarding and lodging of my crew in other cities," she adds, channeling her signature candid humour. Richa Chadha on getting back in action post motherhood

Richa becoming a mother coincided with her and Ali starting a production house, Pushing Button Studios, which has also bankrolled Musafiri. The banner, which also pro-

duced Shuchi Talati's 2024 critically acclaimed coming-of-age film Girls Will Be Girls, is still in a nascent stage. Richa admits balancing both her babies — her daughter and her production house — is no cakewalk. "It's very difficult. I cry out of frustration. I've come back from something so transformative, and now have to multitask like a pro. "This is just that phase of my life where I have to raise a child, run a production company, focus on my acting career, and get back to my own health," she says. Richa recalls obsessively raising her first baby — her production house — till moments before she delivered her second. "I was unable to relax even on an epidural because I realized, 'Oh my god, this email has grammatical errors!' So, I snuck my phone into my hospital gown, went to the washroom, and started to type out while taking a leak. Only then I went for my delivery. I felt like I was just buzzing for a few months after that, and then my health forced me to take rest. But this is also the modern surroundings that you almost feel guilty taking a break for yourself. It's capitalism," asserts Richa. What helped Richa was a realization that probably every mother goes through after giving birth — that their life is not their alone anymore. "In the very first few days after giving birth, I realized as far as this relationship is concerned, the 'selfish' part of my personality will just have to melt away. I'm just a service provider for this being, who'll need to be fed every few hours. Whether I've had sleep, rest or food, it doesn't matter. When that dawns on women, that there are no off days on this job, it's a big shift to realize that this one thing is insular and everything will cater to this being now," confesses the actor. But taking a backseat from her primary occupation of acting hasn't stopped Richa from championing Ali, who's arguably had his career-best year with three critically acclaimed and commercially successful consecutive projects — Prosit Roy's Prime Video India crime show Raakh, Shakun Batra's segment in Netflix India's romantic anthology Lust Stories 3, and most crucially, Gurmeet Singh's crime thriller Mirzapur: The Movie, which has amassed over Rs 220 crore at the domestic box office so far. "What a year he's having! How can I not champion him?," says an elated Richa. With a slower return to acting, and her partner's career flourishing, is her state of mind not more complex than just harbouring boundless pride? "Of course, it's more complex than just being supportive, but not this year. We've been together for a long time. We've been married for six years. When I see the culmination of all the hard work he's done over the years in 2026, there's no complexity. There's just pure happiness. I've seen him at the time when he lived in a shanty and owned a bicycle. He's not only my partner, but also my friend. To see him overcome everything is just a very different feeling. I feel like maine iss din ke liye isko paal pos ke bada kiya hai," says Richa. Richa hails it as a collective win because not just Ali, but also she has been at the receiving end of naysaying towards him. "When I announced my relationship, two members from the film industry called me and said, 'Iss ladke ka kuchh nahi hoga'. From everyone writing him off to almost making fun of him when his film with Judi Dench came out, to see him get both critical love and box office success, I'm very happy," she adds, referring to Stephen Frears' 2017 Hollywood period film Victoria & Abdul. "I can tell you that two people had said about that film, 'Isko kaise mil gaya?' To hold your own in front of Judi Dench is very hard," argues Richa.

Meghna Gulzar's powerful film is a call to reconsider the system



Bollywood cinema has given us a host of quick-on-the-draw cop dramas, where the policeman dispenses justice with his fists—a vigilante who doesn't function inside the realm of law, at the heart of a film that shouts for attention. In this world of black and white, Meghna Gulzar invites you to a nuanced discussion on crime and punishment, the cost of extra-judicial justice and why the humdrum procedure matters with Daayra.

Daayra is an exception in the loud and angry mainstream Bollywood cinema of today. It is not a revenge drama where one man exacts violent retribution, nor is it a courtroom drama where justice is demanded with heavy theatrics. Instead, it features two cops, played by Kareena Kapoor and Prithviraj Sukumaran, dedicated to the uniform but divided by what they perceive as justice. One believes justice delayed is justice denied, while the other believes the rule of law takes precedence even when an interminable wait is part of the process. The film showcases the minutiae of police procedure and asks difficult questions along the way. The most important question comes early in the film and leaves you uncomfortable: what happens when those supposed to implement the law believe it's not enough?

While you are dealing with the horror of watching a young woman being kidnapped, abused and burnt, you are hit by visuals of people celebrating the police for killing the suspects the same week the crime was committed. Visuals of fireworks, dhols, dancing and celebration recreate the public reaction to the 2019 Hyderabad case in which four suspects in a rape and murder case were killed by the police in an alleged encounter. As you watch the film, you don't feel the happiness or relief that 'justice' was quickly dispensed; instead, Daayra makes you examine the system and procedure that led to that moment. And perhaps that's the biggest takeaway from Daayra — it is time to reconsider the laws, procedures and systems that deal with crimes against women, right from the moment a distressed family member walks into a police station.

The encounter is the last chapter of this film, the story

starts much earlier when a scared woman calls her brother to say that she is stranded on a highway at night, and a truck driver has offered help. Her worried mother approaches the police, only to be turned away. The police officer quotes his 25 years of experience to announce that most missing girls eventually return home. His attitude is summed up in the line: "100 baar mein 99 baar ladki ghar aa jaati hai." The mother is asked inappropriate questions, made to go through unnecessary procedures and then told the case doesn't fall under that particular police station's jurisdiction. This is where the film made me question the procedure itself. When a family member walks into a police station saying that their daughter is missing and potentially in danger, should the first response really be about jurisdiction and paperwork? Shouldn't the first response be to find her? The concept of a Zero FIR exists precisely to ensure that a complainant is not made to run from one police station to another simply because an incident falls outside territorial jurisdiction. But Daayra makes you think about something beyond whether a provision exists on paper: how quickly and humanely is the system actually able to respond when a person walks through that door in distress? In the film, by the time the system begins moving, the girl has been abducted, raped, killed and burnt. And that is where the question becomes much bigger than one police officer. One of the most uncomfortable things that Daayra raises is that almost everyone appears to be operating within a system that has its own rules, procedures and explanations. But somewhere in that process, the person at the centre of the case disappears.

The mother is not looking for an FIR number, she is looking for her daughter. That distinction seems simple, but it is important. The question becomes even more pertinent when we remember what happened after the 2012 Nirbhaya case. The public outrage led to the Justice JS Verma Committee, followed by the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013. The law introduced new offences such as stalking and voyeurism, strengthened punishments for several sexual offences, and brought in procedural safeguards for victims. It also made the failure of a public servant to record information relating to certain sexual offences punishable. And yet, Daayra takes us to a police station where the problem seems to begin with something much more basic: whether the person in distress is being heard and whether the system is responding with the urgency that the law intends. There is a line in the film that stays with you. Kareena Kapoor's character says: "The laws changed, but the people are the same." This is where the encounter becomes complicated; when the police kill the four suspects, the public celebrates. There are fireworks, dancing and applause. The officers are treated as heroes. But the victim's family doesn't celebrate as their daughter is still dead. And through that contrast, Daayra asks a larger question: what exactly are we celebrating when the supposed "justice" arrives only after the worst has already happened? The encounter may provide the appearance of immediate justice, but it cannot undo whatever failures preceded it. At the same time, the film does not simply replace one easy answer with another.

Yami Gautam pays tribute to Maheshwari handloom tradition



Mumbai: Actress Yami Gautam celebrated traditional Indian craftsmanship as she wore an elegant black Maheshwari sari, showcasing the heritage of the traditional handloom. In a recent Instagram post, the 'Bala' actress revealed that the saree was woven by a seventh-generation Salvi family weaver from Maheshwar, who has carried forward the family's legacy of handloom craftsmanship. The saree was crafted using silk, cotton and zari.

Sharing details about the traditional weave, Yami highlighted the history of Maheshwari handloom and the generations of artisans who have helped preserve the craft. She also emphasised that the beauty of the craft lies in the

hands of artisans who have kept the weaving tradition alive across generations. Sharing a series of photographs, she wrote: "The black Maheshwari sari is woven by a seventh-generation Salvi family weaver from Maheshwar, carrying forward a family legacy of handloom craftsmanship. Woven in silk, cotton and Zari. Maheshwari weaving was nurtured by Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar, who brought skilled weavers to Maheshwar. The beauty is in the hands that have kept this craft alive for generations." In the photographs, the 'Kaabil' actress is seen posing in a black sari featuring golden embroidery along the sides. She paired it with matching earrings and wore her hair in a high bun. She completed the look with subtle makeup. Through her look, Yami celebrated the artistry and heritage of Maheshwari handloom while drawing attention to the craftsmanship behind the traditional sari. Yami also wore the same black Maheshwari sari while receiving the National Award for Best Actress for her performance in 'Article 370'. The 72nd National Film Awards were held on September 22 in Kevadia, Gujarat. Maheshwari weaving is a traditional handloom craft that originated in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh. The craft was promoted in the 18th century by Queen Ahilyabai Holkar of the Holkar dynasty, who invited skilled weavers from Surat and South India to create special sarees for royal guests.

Manasa Varanasi announced as female lead in Sharwanand-Sreenu Vaitla's 'George Krish'



Hyderabad: The makers of director Sreenu Vaitla's upcoming Telugu film 'George Krish', featuring actor Sharwanand in the lead, have announced that actress Manasa Varanasi will play the female lead in the film. For the unaware, Manasa Varanasi's most recent film, 'Couple Friendly', went on to emerge as a huge hit, and the actress was praised for her performance in the film. Sources say that Manasa's role in 'George Krish' will have great significance.

The film has generated excitement among fans ever since it was first announced, with Sharwanand, who is riding

high on the success of his recent films 'Nari Nari Naduma Murari' and 'Biker', teaming up with director Sreenu Vaitla for the first time. Presented by ATV, the film is being produced by Ramabrahmam Sunkara under Anil Sunkara's AK Entertainments banner, with Ajay Sunkara as co-producer. It may be recalled that the makers unveiled the title and release date through a colourful and eye-catching poster in August this year. The Sankranti sentiment is particularly special for Sharwanand, as films featuring the actor that have released during the festival have gone on to emerge as huge successes. Films such as 'Shatamanam Bhavati', 'Express Raja' and 'Nari Nari Naduma Murari' were all released during Sankranti and emerged winners. Now, 'George Krish' is also set to be released during the festival. 'George Krish' was launched in a grand fashion with a traditional pooja ceremony. For the muhurat shot, producer Suresh Babu switched on the camera, while MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav sounded the clapboard. Sreenu Vaitla himself directed the first shot. The film boasts a strong technical crew. KV Guhan will be the cinematographer, while Anup Rubens will score the music. Avinash Kolla will serve as the production designer, and Amar Reddy Kudumula will take care of the editing. Nandu Savirigana and Gopi Mohan have written the script, while Kishore Garikipati will serve as the executive producer. For the first time, the worldwide theatrical distributors of a film were announced on the day of its launch. Asian Suresh Entertainments will distribute the film in Nizam, Vaasudeva Movie Creations in Vizag, Vintage Creations in East, Adithya Films in West, Vyom Cinemas in Krishna, RK Entertainments in Guntur and Abhi Cinemas in Nellore. Overseas distribution will be handled by VYOM Cinemas and Cinema Paradiso.

Ivy League university graduate fails to answer Rs 25 lakh Ramayana question



KBC 18: Amitabh Bachchan-hosted Kaun Banega Crorepati 18 saw a contestant from Delhi take the hot seat on Wednesday's episode. Aman Sharma, who is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania (an Ivy League university in the US), spoke about his love for nature, birds and wildlife during his time on the hot seat and encouraged Bachchan to nurture a few plants in his home. Aman man-

aged to successfully answer all questions till Rs 12.5 lakh, but it was the question for Rs 25 lakh that left him puzzled. The question was: According to the Valmiki Ramayana, which maternal uncle accompanied Bharata to his grandfather's kingdom? The options were: Shoorasena, Yudhjit, Panchashikha, Japaka

Check this space tomorrow to learn more about the toughest question on the latest episode of Kaun Banega Crorepati 18. We will be bringing you the question and the story behind it. Since Aman did not know the correct answer, he quit the game and won Rs 12.5 lakh. Upon quitting, he guessed Shoorasena as the answer, which was incorrect. The correct answer was Yudhjit. About Yudhjit: As per Valmiki Ramayana, Yudhjit was the twin brother of Kaikeyi, who is the mother to Bharata and the youngest queen of King Dashratha. It was Kaikeyi who demanded that the king send Lord Rama to exile for 14 years. She also demanded that her son Bharata must be crowned king. Aman Sharma's dream to save Indian wildlife: Aman Sharma, during his time on KBC, shared that he started taking an interest in photography when he was a teenager, and since then, he has travelled to various national parks and jungles to click rare, exotic species of birds and animals. He shared that he developed a gradual interest in plants and nature and started gardening at his home, and now, he has over 500 plants on his terrace. Aman shared that he completed his education from the Ivy League University, University of Pennsylvania in the US and came back because he wants to work at a grassroot level in India and help in saving the wildlife of the country. He suggested that if each home starts gardening, it can help in constructing a migration corridor for various species of birds.

Bhuvan Bam says 'Dhindora 2' stays true to its roots

Mumbai: Actor and content creator Bhuvan Bam has opened up about the challenges of creating the much-awaited second season of his popular series 'Dhindora'. In an exclusive interview with IANS, he revealed that the process involved rewriting several drafts, jokes and storylines as he worked on bringing 'Dhindora 2' to the screen.

Speaking about the first glimpse, Bhuvan said, "Dhindora is extremely personal to me because these characters have grown with me and the audience over so many years. We've been working on Season 2 for a long time, so finally seeing the first glimpse out there feels special. It's bigger and crazier, but still has everything people love about this world." He added, "I feel right now it's in a space that resonates with my current maturity level, and it also touches

upon topics that I strongly believe in. I hope it resonates with my existing audience as well as the newer audience that's watching." Rohit Raj, Founder and Producer at BBKV Productions, added, "Taking Dhindora from an independent YouTube series to Netflix has been an incredible journey. We wanted to make Season 2 bigger without losing the madness and familiarity that made the first one special. This glimpse is just the beginning." Netflix had recently dropped the first glimpse of 'Dhindora 2', marking the return of the much-loved world and characters of BB Ki Vines on a bigger canvas. The second season follows the massive success of 'Dhindora', which was first released independently on YouTube in 2021