

ECI extends claims, objections deadline to Oct 10 in Telangana

The Election Commission of India has extended the deadline for filing claims and objections under the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Telangana to October 10. Final publication of the revised electoral rolls has been deferred to November 9.

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Hyderabad: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has extended the deadline for filing claims and objections under the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Telangana to October 10, according to an official release from the Telangana Chief Electoral Office on Monday.

CM Revanth Demands Expulsion of BRS MLC Over Remarks Against Speaker

Hyderabad, Sept 7 Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has demanded that Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy immediately dismiss and expel BRS MLC Tata Madhusudhan from the Upper House, following his derogatory remarks against Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar. The Chief Minister also demanded that demanded BRS president and Leader of Opposition K. Chandrashekar Rao tender an unconditional apology for his party member's conduct.

Speaking in the House, the Chief Minister said that this was not only a personal insult to Prasad Kumar but to the dignity of the Speaker's chair, the House, and for all of Telangana. Calling it a 'dark day', Revanth Reddy said that the language that MLC Madhusudhan used against the Speaker and his family was unpardonable.

"Such an incident has never happened anywhere in independent India. It is high time that this type of 'wicked mannerisms' (durmargamaina pokada) should be brought under control. KCR should immediately apologise," Revanth Reddy said, to applause from the treasury benches.

He said that the time had come for the government and entire machinery take tough action against such elements. Describing this as an insult to not just Dalits, but everyone, Revanth Reddy recalled how the BRS had remained anti-Dalit even during its tenure in power.

He recalled how the BRS leadership had betrayed the community through false promises of making a Dalit community member as Chief Minister after the formation of Telangana. Revanth Reddy also recollected how Dalit community protestors were mowed down by sand-laden lorries in Nerella and farmers from the community tor-

Telangana Assembly adjourned amidst din over 22A issue

The Telangana Assembly was adjourned for 15 minutes on Monday after BJP MLAs demanded a judicial probe by a sitting judge into lands and properties included in the prohibited category under Section 22-A, despite the government offering a short discussion

Hyderabad, Sept 7

Minutes after the Assembly session commenced on Monday, Speaker G Prasad Kumar adjourned the House was adjourned for 15 minutes as BJP MLAs demanded a judicial probe into the inclusion of many lands and properties in prohibited category of 22 A.

As the Question Hour commenced, the Speaker asked Jadcherla MLA J Anirudh Reddy to pose his question. However, the BJP MLAs holding placards, insisted on a judicial enquiry into 22 A controversy by a sitting judge. They approached towards the well.

Legislative Affairs Minister D Sridhar Babu said the government was prepared for a short discussion on 22 A row. He appealed to the BJP MLAs to occupy their seats and cooperate with the Chair. Unrelenting, the BJP MLAs squatted on the floor near the Speaker's podium. Book Walking Tours

Sridhar Babu again intervened to advise the BJP MLAs to serve an adjournment motion on the first day of the House. He assured that all issues would be discussed in the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting and decision would be taken accordingly.

Despite his assurance, the BJP MLAs continued the



tured in Khammam by the BRS regime. He also recalled how a Dalit community leader —Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka — was humiliated after he became CLP leader, by stripping him of the Opposition status to a national party like the Congress.

Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar was overwhelmed with emotion broke down in tears in the House after panchayat raj minister Danasari 'Seethakka' Anasuya took up the issue. The Speaker was seen wiping his tears in the House. While condemning the remarks made against him by Madhusudhan outside of the Assembly premises before the start of the session, Seethakka said that insulting the Speaker's mother was deeply painful. The minister, who was also emotionally moved, demanded that the Legislative Council Chairman suspend the membership of Madhusudan. She also demanded that Chandrashekar Rao should suspend the MLC from the party.



sloganeering. In the middle of this, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy left the House.

The Speaker directed the marshals to take away the placards from the BJP MLAs. As they continued sloganeering, the Speaker announced that the House was adjourned for 15 minutes without even the first question being raised by the Members during question hour.

BRS MLAs did not turn up into the House. Warangal East MLA Konda Surekha who was dropped from the cabinet was absent.

Four of family have miraculous escape as car catches fire on Rajiv Rahadhari

Siddipet: Four passengers travelling in a car had a miraculous escape after they jumped out of the vehicle when it caught fire on Rajiv Rahadhari at Vantimamidi under Gouraram police station limits on Monday night.Four members of a family were proceeding towards Hyderabad from Siddipet when they spotted smoke emanating from the car. The vehicle was engulfed in flames within no time after they parked it by the roadside and jumped out.

The car was reduced to ashes before a fire tender reached the spot and doused the flames.

Sabitha, Sunitha face another controversy amid Assembly premises incident

HYDERABAD, SEPT 7

Former Ministers Sabitha Indra Reddy and Sunitha Laxma Reddy have once again found themselves at the centre of a political controversy involving the Congress government. After facing criticism and heated exchanges during the August 2024 Assembly session, the two women legislators were allegedly manhandled on the Assembly premises on Monday.

Geographic Reference

During the August 2024 session, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, without naming them, had said that some "elder sisters" had cheated the Congress and defected to the ruling party in 2019.

He had also cautioned BRS working president KT Rama Rao against trusting the "elder sisters", saying he could otherwise end up sitting at Jubilee Bus Station. Pointing towards Ministers Konda Surekha and D Seethakka in the House, Revanth Reddy had said they believed in him and subsequently became Ministers.

His remarks triggered a verbal duel between the treasury and Opposition benches. Responding to the Chief Minister, Sabitha Indra Reddy said she was being unfairly targeted.

She questioned which party the Chief Minister had joined from and reminded him that she had welcomed



his entry into the Congress, besides blessing him and saying he would become Chief Minister in the future.

Politics

Later, speaking to media persons on the Assembly premises, an emotional Sabitha Indra Reddy said the remarks of the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka had hurt her.

"I did not make any mistake and demand an unconditional apology from them," she had said.

Cut to Monday, the two former Ministers faced another embarrassing episode when they were allegedly physically manhandled on the Assembly premises.

300-km range Sukhoi missiles on list as MoD approves Rs 1.10L cr buy

NEWE DELHI, SEPT 7

The Ministry of Defence on Monday okayed a new long-range, 300-plus km missile for the Sukhoi 30-MK1 fighter jets. It also cleared a secure communication system for the IAF's fleet of jets, transport planes and helicopters.

The ministry also approved the purchase of additional helicopters for the Army, in addition to specialised vehicles designed to operate in nuclear or biological warfare contaminated areas.

The decisions were taken by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

The DAC accorded the Acceptance of Necessity — in-principle administrative approval — to various acquisition proposals at an estimated cost of about Rs 1.10 lakh crore, the ministry said in a statement.

"For the IAF, approval was granted to various proposals to enhance the war-fighting capabilities of fighter jets, transport aircraft and helicopters," it added.

Sources said the first phase of the upgrade involved modifying the Sukhoi jets to integrate them with Russian 'RVV-BD' air-to-air missiles, which could strike targets up to 300 km away at speeds exceeding '5 Mach'.

This integration significantly enhances the jet's potency, as it carries the 300-plus km range Brahmos missile for ground strikes and the 'RVV-BD' missile for neutralising enemy aircraft and long-range UAVs.

The IAF has 260-plus Sukhoi jets. These played a key role during Operation Sindoor against Pakistan.

The move comes a week ahead of the arrival of Russian President Vladimir Putin for the BRICS leaders' summit in New Delhi.

The second part of the IAF upgrade involves adding



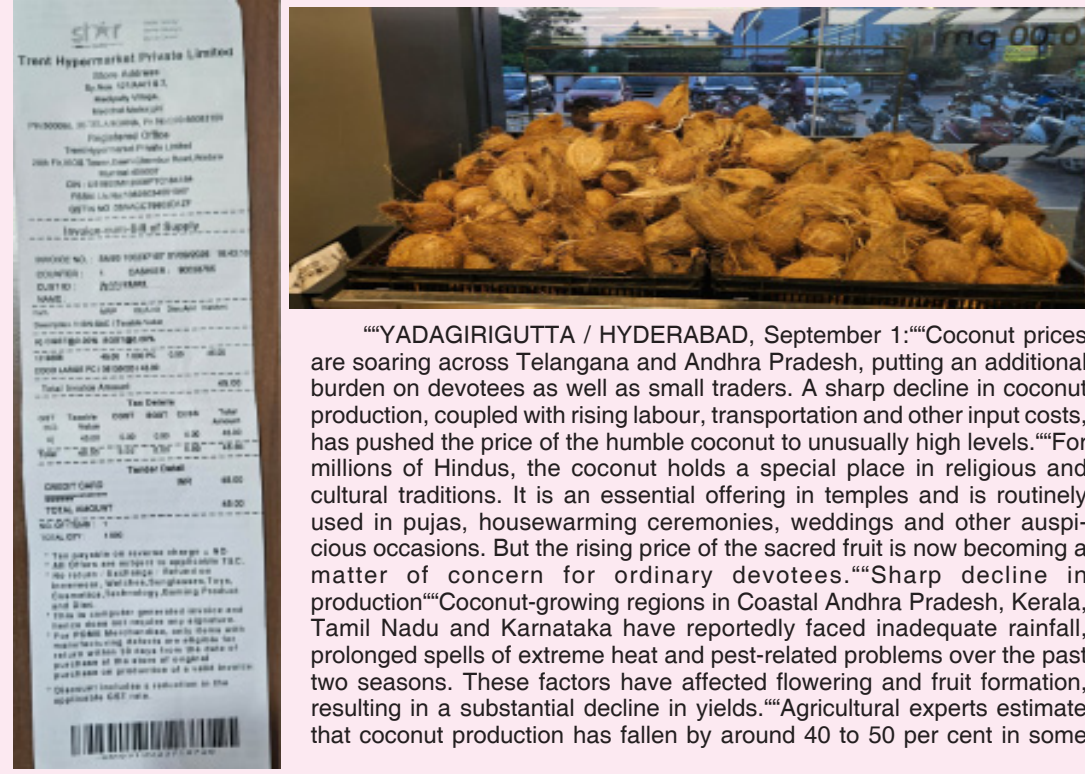
next-generation communication equipment called the Software Defined Radio (SDR). In modern combat, the SDR serves as the primary backbone for communication, electronic warfare and intelligence gathering across multi-domain operations. It enables transmission of high-bandwidth telemetry, video feeds from UAVs, and battlefield awareness updates in real time. All this is done by changing radio frequencies to bypass enemy jamming attempts. It can also scan radio frequency to detect, identify and geolocate enemy communications.

For the Army, the DAC approved the procurement of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) vehicles for reconnaissance; high mobility vehicles (HIMVs); and advanced light helicopters, among others.

The CBRN vehicles will be capable of detecting, identifying, monitoring and marking areas contaminated with CBRN agents. The HIMVs will enhance operational capabilities, logistic support and mobility in challenging terrains.

Coconut Prices Soar, Putting Devotees Under Pressure

Poor yields, rising transport and labour costs push prices higher across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh



YADAGIRIGUTTA / HYDERABAD, September 1: Coconut prices are soaring across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, putting an additional burden on devotees as well as small traders. A sharp decline in coconut production, coupled with rising labour, transportation and other input costs, has pushed the price of the humble coconut to unusually high levels.

For millions of Hindus, the coconut holds a special place in religious and cultural traditions. It is an essential offering in temples and is routinely used in pujas, housewarming ceremonies, weddings and other auspicious occasions. But the rising price of the sacred fruit is now becoming a matter of concern for ordinary devotees.

Sharp decline in production

Coconut-growing regions in Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have reportedly faced inadequate rainfall, prolonged spells of extreme heat and pest-related problems over the past two seasons. These factors have affected flowering and fruit formation, resulting in a substantial decline in yields.

Agricultural experts estimate that coconut production has fallen by around 40 to 50 per cent in some

areas, leading to reduced arrivals in major markets and putting upward pressure on prices.

Retail prices climb

The shortage is reflected in prices across different markets.

In wholesale markets, large coconuts are reportedly selling for around ₹30 to ₹38 per piece, while smaller coconuts are fetching approximately ₹28 to ₹32.

At grocery and retail outlets, prices generally range from ₹35 to ₹40 for smaller coconuts, while larger, good-quality coconuts can cost around ₹50.

Even in major supermarket chains such as D-Mart, Tata Star, JioMart and Reliance Mart, promotional prices are reportedly hovering around ₹45 to ₹50.

Prices are particularly high around major temples, where demand remains strong. Vendors in temple areas are reportedly charging ₹50 to ₹55 per coconut, adding to the expenses of devotees visiting pilgrimage centres such as Yadagirigutta.

Traders caught in a squeeze

While consumers are bearing the brunt of rising prices, small traders say they too are struggling to maintain their margins.

The cost of harvesting coconuts, removing the husk, sorting and grading the produce, loading and unloading, and transporting it to markets has increased considerably. Rising labour and fuel costs have further added to the burden.

By the time the coconut reaches us after harvesting, processing and transportation, the wholesale cost itself can be close to ₹38. It is difficult for small traders to sell it at a reasonable price and still make a profit," traders say.

Thousands of families de-

pendent on the coconut trade are consequently facing a difficult period.

Tender coconut prices also rise

Tender coconut, widely consumed during the summer and often recommended as a source of hydration, has also become expensive.

A single tender coconut is currently selling for approximately ₹50 to ₹80, depending on size, quality and location.

Festival demand could push prices higher

With the arrival of the festive season, market observers fear that coconut prices could rise further.

Agricultural experts say the supply situation may remain tight until the arrival of the next major crop, which could take another three to four months. Demand is also expected to increase during Vinayaka Chavithi, Dasara and Diwali, when the use of coconuts rises substantially for religious rituals and family functions.

If the present trend continues, market prices could potentially cross ₹70 to ₹90 per coconut during the peak festive period, according to estimates cited by agricultural observers.

Call for government intervention

Devotees and local residents say the sharp increase in coconut prices is making even routine religious offerings more expensive.

They have urged the government to take measures to support coconut growers, improve market supply and explore appropriate steps to address the shortage. Traders and temple vendors also say that timely intervention could help prevent further price escalation and protect both consumers and those dependent on the trade.

For now, a commodity once considered an inexpensive and indispensable part of everyday worship is fast becoming a costly necessity—leaving devotees to wonder how high the price of a single coconut might climb before supplies improve.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Question mark over ISRO's future

Over the decades, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has earned a global reputation for a series of successful missions. However, the recent policy shift to involve the private sector in many operations has raised concerns among its employees. The exodus of senior scientists and engineers has further raised questions over the future of the premier organisation. The private sector is no longer restricted to supplying components to ISRO. Under the new framework, private companies can potentially participate across the entire space value chain. They can design, develop and launch rockets. The most dramatic recent development was the July 2026 launch of Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1, described as India's first private orbital rocket. Private companies can now establish launch facilities and use ISRO infrastructure subject to authorisation and safety requirements. For example, Agnikul Cosmos has established a private launchpad and mission-control facility at Sriharikota. For nearly six decades, the space sector was entirely in the hands of the government. Every celebrated milestone, from Aryabhata to Chandrayaan-3, every Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) that became the workhorse of global commercial launches, every Mars and Moon mission, bore the unmistakable signature of the Indian state. That monopoly is now a thing of the past. Understandably, ISRO employees have voiced concerns over the push for privatisation and its impact on their jobs. Nine employee bodies, comprising over 5,000 members, recently wrote to ISRO chairman V Narayanan, seeking clarification about the organisation's future role. The major concern is whether ISRO itself is gradually being reduced from an organisation that designs, builds and launches spacecraft and rockets to primarily an R&D agency.

Criticism of Sridhar Babu Will Not Be Tolerated



Opposition Making False Allegations Unable to Accept Development: Seggem Rajesh""Manthani Peddapalli District, Sep07 (Indian Chronicle): Development Was Neglected During BRS Rule, "District Congress official spokesperson Seggem Rajesh strongly condemned the allegations being made by former MLA Putta Madhukar, stating that the opposition was resorting to false propaganda because it could not accept the development taking place in the Manthani constituency."Speaking at a press conference held at the Press Club in Manthani on Monday, Rajesh warned that Congress workers would not tolerate personal criticism against Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu. "He said that development works were progressing in the Manthani constituency on an unprecedented scale. He highlighted the expansion of roads, development of the Kaleshwaram temple, and initiatives in the education and healthcare sectors, stating that Minister Sridhar Babu was taking special interest in these areas."Rajesh alleged that opposition leaders were resorting to misinformation because they were unable to digest the ongoing development. He criticized the previous 10-year BRS government, claiming that the Manthani constituency witnessed virtually no development during its tenure. He said the Congress government was fulfilling the promises made during the elections one by one. "He further

stated that the government was working with commitment to provide employment opportunities to youth and ensure fee reimbursement for students. Special free training programmes were being provided to unemployed youth in the Manthani constituency, through which several students had secured jobs. He claimed that around 100 people from the constituency had recently secured software jobs in Hyderabad, crediting Minister Sridhar Babu for the achievement. "Rajesh said Sridhar Babu was working to fulfill the ideals and aspirations of his late father and was striving for the development of the constituency."He advised opposition leaders to maintain dignity while criticizing the government and said they should question the government on public issues rather than resorting to personal attacks. "Rajesh also challenged former MLA Putta Madhukar to explain what he had done for Manthani during his tenure. He said the people had given Madhukar an opportunity to serve as MLA for five years and as Zilla Parishad Chairman for another five years, giving him a total of 10 years in power. "It is shameful to criticize a leader who is now taking the Manthani constituency forward on the path of development with works worth thousands of crores of rupees, after failing to develop the constituency during his own tenure," Rajesh remarked. "He alleged that Manthani had not been adequately developed earlier and that the opposition was unable to tolerate the development taking place now."Rajesh asserted that the people of Manthani were firmly behind Minister Sridhar Babu and warned that if false allegations continued to be made, the people themselves would give an appropriate response. "Municipal Chairman Vodhala Srinivas, Municipal Vice-Chairman Musukula Sayender Reddy, INTUC National Secretary Peravena Lingaiah Yadav, Councillor yellanki Vamshi, and Congress leaders Laishetty Raju, Indarapu Anil, Akkapaka Sampath, Manthani Srinivas, and Panchika Devender were present at the press conference.

RAJITHA PARAMESWAR REDDY Couple Participate in Shikhara Pratishtha Celebrations at Sri Bhavani Shankar Temple



""UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The Shikhara Pratishtha Mahotsavam of the Dhwaya Sthambham, Navagrahas, Lord Anjaneya Swamy, Brahmambika and Nandeeshwara was held with great devotion and grandeur at the Sri Bhavani Shankar Temple in Bharat Nagar, Uppal. "As part of the celebrations on Monday, Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy and former Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameswar Reddy visited the temple and offered special prayers to the deities."Speaking on the occasion, they prayed for the blessings and grace of the Almighty and wished that all the people of Uppal constituency would be blessed with good health, longevity, happiness and prosperity. "Later, the temple priests and committee members felicitated Rajitha Parameswar Reddy and Parameswar Reddy with shawls and presented them with theertha prasadam. "Venkataramana Sharma (Kannaiah Pantulu), temple committee members, residents of Bharat Nagar Colony and devotees participated in the programme.

Congress Government Must Be Ousted for Its Tyrannical Rule in the Name of Public Governance: Uppal BRS Leaders



UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal Circle BRS leaders called upon the people to oust the Congress government, alleging that it was continuing an autocratic rule in the state in the name of public governance. They alleged that even after the Congress government completed 1,000 days in office, it had failed to fulfil the 420 promises and six guarantees made during the elections. Following the directions of BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao and the instructions of Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, senior BRS leaders and party workers from Uppal, Chilkanagar, Ramanthapur and Habsiguda divisions submitted a protest memorandum to Deputy Commissioner Anand during the Prajavani

programme at the Uppal Circle office on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, former Chilkanagar Division Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj and senior leaders Pasula Prabhakar Reddy, Pili Nagaraj and Jitender Reddy alleged that the Congress came to power by making 420 promises and announcing six guarantees, but had deceived the people of Telangana. They claimed that several welfare benefits provided to different sections of society under the previous government had now been discontinued. "The BRS leaders alleged that the government had failed to properly implement Rythu Bima and Rythu Bharosa. They also said the promise of providing two lakh jobs every year to students and unemployed youth had not been fulfilled. They criticised the government for allegedly failing to implement promises including a monthly unemployment allowance of Rs. 2,500 for women, LPG cylinders at Rs. 500, 200 units of free electricity, Kalyana Lakshmi-Shaadi Mubarak benefits along with one tola of gold, increased pensions and enhanced pensions for persons with disabilities. They further alleged that people in Hyderabad were being subjected to difficulties in the name of HYDRA and that uncertainty had been created over houses and plots that people had purchased and built with their hard-earned money due to their inclusion in the 22-A prohibited properties list. The leaders said the Congress had promised to fulfil its guarantees within 100 days, but even after 1,000 days, it had failed to fully implement the promises. They asserted that the people would soon teach the Congress government an appropriate lesson for allegedly deceiving them. "Later, the BRS leaders and workers staged a road blockade at Uppal Crossroads in protest against the arrest of BRS MLAs at the Assembly premises. They demanded the immediate release of the arrested BRS legislators. "A large number of BRS senior leaders, workers and party members from Uppal, Chilkanagar, Ramanthapur and Habsiguda divisions participated in the programme.

'Soggadila' Song from 'Mana Doctor Baabe' Released



""Presented by Sharanya-Sudhiksha, the film 'Mana Doctor Baabe' is being produced by Kruthakshi under the Skanda Films banner. Sri Skanda is making his debut as a hero with this film. Mohana Siddhi and Sruthi Shankar are playing the female leads. The film is written, screenplay-ed and directed by Theru Chalapathi Kumar Puvvala. The teaser of the movie has already impressed audiences. ""'Mana Doctor Baabe' is a family entertainer set against a village backdrop, packed with comedy and emotions. As part of the film's promotions, the makers have now released the song 'Soggadila'. "The 'Soggadila' song looks extremely pleasant and engaging. The chemistry between the hero and heroine, along with the heroine's playful antics, is sure to entertain audiences. The lyrics penned by Giridhar Ragolu, along with the vocals by Lipsika and Sudhanshu, stand out as the major highlights of the song. The catchy tune composed by Manoj Kumar Boosam adds to its appeal. The beautiful rural backdrop further enhances the visual charm of the video song. ""The release date of the film will be announced soon. Kishore Boyidapu is handling the cinematography, while Selva Kumar is the editor. ""Cast : Sri Skanda, Mohana Siddhi, Sruthi Shankar"" Technical Crew ""Banner: Skanda Films"" Presented by: Sharanya-Sudhiksha"" Producer: Kruthakshi"" Director: Theru Chalapathi Kumar Puvvala"" Cinematographer: Kishore Boyidapu"" Editor: Selva Kumar"" Fights: Devaraj Master"" Choreography: Gopi Raay"" PRO: Sai Satish

Freedom Promotes Eco-Friendly Celebrations"- 10,000 Seed Ganesha Idols to be Distributed



"Hyderabad, September 07 (Indian Chronicle) : As part of its environmental conservation initiatives, Freedom Healthy Cooking Oils, under Gemini Edibles and Fats India Ltd (GEF India), will distribute 10,000 eco-friendly Seed Ganesha idols, said P.Chandra Shekhara Reddy, Senior Vice President (Sales & Marketing), in a statement on Monday. He said 5,000 idols would be distributed in Hyderabad and another 5,000 in Bengaluru. Under the leadership of Marketing Head Chetan Pimpalkhute, distribution has commenced at Ridge Towers, My Home Jewel, One City, Sai Mithra Towers, Krishnakunz Gardeniya, Rain Tree Park, Swanlake, Rainbow Vista, Janapriya Metropolis, Satellite Apartment, Vertex Prime and Rainbow Vistas Rock Garden, among other locations in Hyderabad. Reddy said the initiative would help promote environmental protection while allowing people to celebrate Ganesh festivities traditionally. He added that Freedom has been distributing Seed Ganesha idols for the past seven years. Chetan Pimpalkhute said the Seed Ganesha initiative was an effort to bring together faith, tradition and sustainability. The idols are designed with seeds that can grow into plants after immersion, he said.

IRSHAD KHAN (UPPAL KHAN) Visits Fruit Vendor Recovering from Illness"



""UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A local fruit vendor from the Ramalayam area of Beerappagadda Division, who recently underwent treatment for heart and lung-related health problems at TX Hospital, has been discharged and returned to his residence in Narayan. Upon learning about his illness, senior Congress leader of Beerappagadda Division, Irshad Khan (Uppal Khan), visited him at his residence in Narayan on Monday and enquired about his health. The fruit vendor earns his livelihood by selling fruits from a pushcart at the Monday Market near the Hanuman Temple. During the visit, Irshad Khan offered him encouragement and wished him a speedy and complete recovery. He also met the family members and enquired about their well-being. "Irshad Khan said that standing by people during difficult times and offering them courage in times of distress is a true reflection of humanity. He wished the fruit vendor a complete recovery and a return to his normal daily life in good health. He assured the family that he would always extend his support and assistance whenever needed. Irshad Khan stated that his goal is to remain accessible to people not only in addressing public issues but also during their personal difficulties and to stand by everyone in times of need. The family members expressed their gratitude to Irshad Khan for personally visiting their home, enquiring about the patient's health and offering words of encouragement."

Michelin Opens Four New Stores in Hyd



""Hyderabad, September 07 (Indian Chronicle) : Michelin India has strengthened its presence in Hyderabad with the launch of four new 'Michelin Tyres & Services' stores in Jubilee Hills, Saroornagar, Gandimaisamma and Kompally, Michelin India Managing Director Shantanu Deshpande said in a statement on Monday. The Jubilee Hills and Gandimaisamma outlets were inaugurated by Michelin India Marketing Director B2C Benjamin Cosnan, while the Saroornagar and Kompally stores were inaugu-

rated by S.P. Director Kunal Doshi, the company said. Established in partnership with Wheel-O-City, Vighneshwara Wheels, Sachin Tyres and Lambodara Tyres, the new outlets will offer premium tyres and advanced automotive services. The availability of Michelin's 'Made-in-India Primacy 5' tyres is also expected to increase through these stores. ""With Hyderabad emerging as a key mobility market, the company said the four new outlets would bring premium products and world-class services closer to customers across the city.

KLH Hosts Alumni Meet in Hyd



"Hyderabad, September 07 (Indian Chronicle) : Around 300 alumni and industry representatives participated in the 'Hyderabad Chapter - Corporate Alumni Meet 2026' organised by KL Deemed to be University at the KLH Bachupally campus. Nikhila Koneru called upon alumni to contribute to students' skill development, research and innovation initiatives. Vice-Chancellor Dr.G.Parthasarathi Varma, Pro Vice-Chancellor Dr.N.Venkatram, Additional Head of Academics Prof. Hari Kiran Vege, Director of Alumni Relations Dr. Kavya, and KLH Bachupally Principal Dr.L.Koteswara Rao highlighted the importance of industry-academia collaboration, mentorship, research, placements and skill development. KLH Aziznagar Principal Dr.A.Ramakrishna, Head of the School of Global Business Prof. Anand Bethapudi, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations Dr.K.Sony, faculty members and alumni also participated in the programme.

Former Mayor Thotakura Ajay Yadav Inspects Baby Pond Works at Ra Cheruvu



"BODUPPAL, SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Former Boduppal Mayor Thotakura Ajay Yadav inspected the arrangements and development works being undertaken at the Baby Pond being constructed in front of Ra Cheruvu in Boduppal for Bathukamma and Ganesh immersion ceremonies. "To facilitate environmentally friendly immersion of idols during festivals, the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) is setting up several artificial Baby Ponds and portable water tanks across the city. As part of these arrangements, Ajay Yadav reviewed the progress of the Baby Pond works being carried out in front of Ra Cheruvu. "On the occasion, he urged officials to ensure adequate sanitation, lighting, security, drinking water and other essential facilities so that people arriving for the immersion ceremonies do not face any inconvenience. He also advised the officials to complete the works at the earliest and take all necessary measures to ensure that the Bathukamma and Ganesh immersion ceremonies are conducted peacefully and safely. "Division President Bommak Kalyan, Congress leaders Pulakandla Jangareddy, an Assistant Engineer and others participated in the inspection.

Will Stand by Athletes and Support Their Future”



MLA Sudheer Reddy“LB Nagar, September 7 Parents of Roller Hockey and Inline Hockey players from the Vanasthalipuram Skating Rink met LB Nagar MLA Devireddy Sudheer Reddy and brought to his attention the affiliation issue concerning the Telangana Roller Skating Associations.“The parents explained that the SAT affiliation of the two associations has been put on hold, resulting in delays in national-level selections. They expressed concern that the delay could adversely affect the sporting careers and future prospects of their children.“Responding positively to the issue, MLA Sudheer Reddy assured the parents that he would discuss the matter with Sports Minister Sri Hari and make efforts to bring the two associations together on a common platform to resolve the issue.“He further assured that even if the associations fail to reach an agreement, he would take steps to ensure that trials are conducted under SAT supervision so that the athletes do not suffer any loss in the upcoming 64th National-level competitions.““The future of athletes is my top priority. I will stand by them and ensure that no injustice is done to them,” MLA Sudheer Reddy said.“The parents of the Roller Hockey and Inline Hockey players expressed their heartfelt gratitude to MLA Devireddy Sudheer Reddy for responding positively and assuring them of support for their children’s sporting future.“Tanguturi Nagaraju, Kiran Kumar, Sunil, Lingareddy, Priyadarshini, Darshini, Suma, Sneha, Deepti, Haritha, Rajani, Shiva, Naresh, Harish, Balaraju, Madhu, Hari, Chandan, Sharath, Raghavendra, senior player Mustafa, Ahmed, Shivam, Saurav Malik, Santosh Mishra, and others participated in the programme.

ICICI Prudential Life Sees Strong Growth in Telangana

Indian Chronicle, September 07 : ICICI Prudential Life Insurance's term plan(retail protection) business in Telangana registered 60.7 per cent year-on-year growth in Q1 FY2027, Chief Distribution Officer Amish Banker said in a statement released in the city on Saturday. As of March 31, 2026, the company provided insurance protection to 6,56,032 lives in Telangana, with assets under management(AUM) of Rs.11,708 crore and a sum assured of Rs.1,52,016 crore. Over the past seven years, it has paid Rs.4,060 crore in benefits to policyholders, including Rs.1,192 crore towards death claims. The company has 11 branches, 6,172 advisors, 3,934 partner branches and 3,372 specified persons in Telangana. Banker said the Board had approved a proposal to change the company's name to 'ICICI Life Insurance Limited'. He said the company was witnessing strong demand for life insurance products across urban centres and emerging areas in Telangana and was leveraging artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics and digitalisation to improve customer services. During Q1, 54 per cent of savings policies were issued on the same day, while 58 per cent were issued through digital KYC. Around 97 per cent of services are being delivered



through digital or self-help channels.Through 'ICICI Pru Partner Stack' and 'iProo Edge', the company is strengthening digital services and enhancing advisor capabilities. The company has over 2.44 lakh agents across the country. The claim settlement ratio stood at 99.3 per cent, while individual claims not requiring investigation were settled in an average of one day. Banker said ICICI Prudential Life plans to expand its presence in Telangana by opening more branches, appointing additional advisors and undertaking wider customer outreach programmes.

Flood Situation is Grim in Bihar Yet

“Flood Situation is Grim in Bihar yet and 18 districts of state have been badly affected with the flood of the Ganga,the Gandak,the Punpun ,the Kosi,the Sone and the Budhi Gandak rivers .As the flood of the Ganga and the Punpun inundated in several areas of Danapur,Maner and other areas of Patna district. In Maner locality several houses are collapsed due to flood water ,crops are destroyed, The worst is the condition of the cattle farmers where they have been struggling for fodder .Flood affected people have got shelters in schools and other high places.As the Ganga over flows the danger mark near Hathidah, and Sultanganj where as the reducing trend of the Ganga has been recorded near Bash Ghat and other adjacent locality of Patna.As the flood expert have claimed that the flood affected people will get relief after two or three days. As in Begusarai district of Bihar the flood has marooned about 1,50,000 people and worst is the condition of the people of Matihani block area. As the government has deputed 70 boats ,the team of NDRF and SDRF to rescue of the flood victims. Flood water has entered thousand of houses in Begusarai district and people have to get sheltre on high places, schools buildings .In Bhagalpur district both the flood of the Ganga and the Budhi Gandak has created the situation panic.Several relief camps have been made by the district administration to provide relief among the flood victims.As the flood of the Gandak has also made the situation Panic in the area of Gopalganj, Saran and Vaishali. The flood of the Sone river has also inundated in several areas and crops are under flood water.“ As today on Monday the Chief Minister of Bihar Samrat Chaudhary visited Hajipur locality in Vaishali district and inspected the condition of 'Rahat Shivr'. He also met with the flood victims and offereder them food in Samudayik kitchen as well as he met with “the victim children of the flood and assured that the situation would be normalised within 2 or 3 days.As the government would provide the

compensation of 4 lac to each flood deceased family .He further started his survey work regarding flood in other areas of state.The flood of Kosi and other rivers has also badly affected the areas of Saharsa and Khagaria districts of Bihar.After the flash flood in Nepal the flood and the erosion of the Gandak have badly affected the dwellers of the Gandak basin in West Champaran, East Champaran, Gopalganj, Saran and Vaishali districts of Bihar.““NEXT“ Ram Katha Organised in Old age home““On Sunday evening a program of“ Ram Katha“ cum seminar was organised by ‘‘Arohi Kala Sanskriti Welfare Trust' at Oldage home (Briddhaashram) Bada Ramna ground Bettiah, West Champaran to make elderly people energetic and enthusiastic.which runs under Samaj Kalyan Vibhag Bihar and in this program several prominent figures of the town area participated. “

As the program started with offering flowers on the Photo of Lord Ram and plantaton work by the Mayer of Bettiah Nagar Nigam - Mrs Garima Devi Sikaria ,the Dy Mayor of the Nagar Nigam -Mrs Gayitri Devi,the Superintendent of the Briddhaashram -Aditya Madhukar,the Secretary of the Trust -Prabhat Jha alias Chandan Jha .As the Mayer met with the people of Briddhaashram and showed her love, affection and honour to them.She also praised the program. As the Superintendent of Briddhaashram-Aditya Madhukar said that Briddhaashram would be centre to offer love,respect and honour to the elderly people.As the Story teller (Katha Vachak) Dr Praveen Tiwary said that the life of lord Ram provided us the message of love,sacrifices and discipline. As the Secretary Prabhat Jha said that the service of the old or elderly people would be the service like God.“ After that a cultural program was presented there by Madan Prasad, Khushi Kumari, Anjali Kumari, Raunak Kumar, Raviraj Shukla, Ankit Kumar, Anshuman Kumar,and others.““Ajay Kr Mishra ‘Bettiah/Bihar

Gandhinagar Welfare Association Election “Laghusani Srinivas Goud Wins Gandhinagar Welfare Association Election by 55 Votes

““RAMANTHAPUR , SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Laghusani Srinivas Goud has won the elec-



tion for the president of the new committee of the Gandhinagar Welfare Association. In a keenly contested

election, Srinivas Goud defeated his rival Gudisa Suman by a majority of 55 votes and was elected as the new president of the welfare association.A total of 319 votes were polled in the election, of which six were declared invalid. Laghusani Srinivas Goud secured 184 votes, while Gudisa Suman received 129 votes. Srinivas Goud therefore won with a majority of 55 votes.Speaking on the occasion, newly elected president Laghusani Srinivas Goud expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all the residents of Gandhinagar Colony for placing their trust in him and voting for him. He said he would uphold the confidence placed in him by the residents and work for the development of Gandhinagar by taking everyone along.“Srinivas Goud said that the development of the colony and the welfare of its residents would be his top priorities. He assured the residents that he would remain accessible to every family and make sincere efforts to resolve their problems.“He stated that the development of Gandhinagar would be his primary objective and the welfare of the colony's residents his foremost commitment.Congress state leader Mohammed Rafiq, along with colony representatives, felicitated the newly elected Srinivas Goud and conveyed their best wishes to him

SANDEEP BHUSHAN Participates in Swachh Vayu Diwas Programme



“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Thummala Sandeep Bhushan, General Secretary of SBH Colony, along with Colony President Mohammed Gafoor, participated in the “Swachh Vayu Diwas” programme organised by the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation.“Speaking on the occasion, Sandeep Bhushan called upon everyone to take responsibility for protecting the environment. He urged people to plant more trees and ensure their proper care to increase green cover.“He stressed that environmental protection is essential to combat the growing threat of global warming. Referring to the recent natural disaster in Nepal, he said the incident highlights the need for everyone to recognise the importance of maintaining ecological balance.“He appealed to people to reduce activities that harm the environment and actively contribute towards ensuring clean air and a greener environment. Sandeep Bhushan emphasised that environmental protection must be given priority from now on to provide future generations with a safe and healthy planet.

Women of Bihar get Second Position in Food Processing Sector

“The Women of Bihar have got second position in the field of food Processing on the level of India.Now they have come out from their kitchen and joined hands with men in the business of street food such as Thela, Khomcha,and stall other food business to earn their bread.In this unregistered trade they are active and their performance can be seen in almost all small and big towns of Bihar.“

The government has launched e portal for their registration in 2021 and on this portal the registration has been completed 18 lac 60 thousand workers in which the highest rank is the workers of Uttar Pradesh (UP) where 3 lac 82 thousand workers have got their registration where as in Bihar 1 lac 90 thousand people have been connected with this portal regarding such trade.On third position the workers of Maharastra got registration as 1 lac 64 thousand where as on 4th position the workers Madhya Pradesh reached with the registration of 1 lac 62 thousand.As on national level 41 percent Women are connected with this trade but in Bihar Women's percentage is 52 percent where as the percentage of men is 48 percent which shows the active role of women in Bihar in the field of food processing. “

As in Bihar the number of adolescent is more related with such trade in age group 18-40 yrs and 89 percent people are active of this age group where as the people of age group 40-50 yrs are active only 18 percent and the percentage is 12 percent above the age group of 50 percent.As the

Women of Patna district is ahead where 12000 people are involved in this business ,in Muzaffarpur district 10,000 people are involved, in Bhagalpur district the number of such people is 5700,in Madhubani district 8400, in East Champaran District 8400, in West Champaran District 7300 and in Samastipur district of Bihar 7500 people are connected with this trade.“

As in Derbhanga,Madhubani, and other districts of Bihar Women are active in Makhana Processing and Mithila paintings. The Makhana of Mithila has been exported first time from Bihar .The central government has made Makhana Board for the development of Makhana farming in Mithilanchal area of Bihar.Women of Bihar have already got popularity in the field of painting and in this regard a painting exhibition regarding Mithila Paintings will be produced during BRICS Conference in New Delhi in this month where the foreign guests will be acquaintance with the art of Mithila Painting as well as see the art of Women of Bihar.“

Not only this the Women of Bihar are active in Agriculture sector. The economy of Bihar is dependent upon agriculture and Women are the backbone of rural economy in Bihar.As several youths have migrated from several districts of Bihar to other states of India to earn their bread and in this circumstances Women have to maintain their houses and children as well as they have to look after elderly people of families.““Ajay Kr Mishra ‘BETTIAH/BIHAR

BJP Assembly Siege Over Fee Dues: Leaders Arrested While Fighting for Students’ Future



“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A large number of BJP leaders and workers from the Uppal constituency participated in the Assembly siege programme held on Monday, following the state BJP's call, demanding the immediate release of pending fee reimbursement and scholarship dues that are putting students' futures at

risk.“Police arrested the BJP leaders and workers at Gun Park while they were staging a peaceful protest demanding justice for students. They were subsequently shifted to Kanchanbagh, Shalibanda, Asifnagar and other police stations.“Those arrested included BJP State General Secretary Tulla Virender Goud, Uppal BJP Assembly Convener Devasani Balachander, Macha Laxman Goud, Thalla Anand Goud, Ale Narendar, Chote Miyan, Muthyala Krishna Reddy, Jarripothula Balakishan, BJYM leader Ragam Arjun, Kamalakara Reddy and others.“Speaking on the occasion, BJP leaders said that it was the government's responsibility to clear the pending fee dues of students. They demanded that the government immediately release all outstanding fee reimbursement and scholarship amounts without playing with the future of students.The leaders made it clear that the BJP would continue its fight for the rights and future of students. They said their agitation would continue until the pending fee reimbursement and scholarship dues are fully released.

Preventing BJP’s ‘Chalo Assembly’ Programme is Anti-Democratic

Former Ramantapur Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkat Rao Placed Under House Arrest““RAMANTHAPUR , SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Former Ramantapur Division Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkat Rao strongly condemned the police action to prevent the BJP's 'Chalo Assembly' programme, organised to demand the immediate release of pending fee reimbursement dues and justice for students.“BJP leaders alleged that the Congress government was playing with the future of students by failing to clear the long-pending fee reimbursement dues, thereby pushing their educational future into uncertainty.“According to a statement issued by his office, Bandaru Srivani Venkat Rao was placed under house arrest by the police from Monday morning to prevent him from participating in the 'Chalo Assembly' programme.“The BJP leaders said that detaining leaders and activists who were fighting for the legitimate demands of students was a reflection of the Congress government's fear and inefficiency.



They criticised the government for preventing people from exercising their democratic right to stage peaceful protests, calling it an attack on democracy.They demanded that the state government immediately release all pending fee reimbursement amounts owed to students. They warned that if the government failed to respond, the BJP would intensify its agitation over student issues in the coming days.

BRS Leaders Submit Memorandum to Deputy Commissioner on Implementation of 420 Promises

“Protest Held at Uppal Ring Road Against KTR’s Arrest: Former TRS State Secretary Nerdham Bhaskar Goud““UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 7 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Demanding the implementation of the 420 promises made by the Congress government to the people during the elections, BRS leaders submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner at the Uppal Circle office on Monday.“Speaking on the occasion, former BRS state secretary and Telangana movement activist Nerdham Bhaskar Goud said that the arrest of BRS Working President KTR by the police was undemocratic. He said BRS MLAs were on their way to the Assembly under the leadership of KTR to raise public issues and speak on behalf of the people when KTR was arrested.“Bhaskar Goud alleged that the Congress government had completely ignored the 420 promises made to the people during the elections and had betrayed them. He said it was unacceptable for the government to use the police force to suppress opposition leaders who questioned the government on public issues.“He asserted that the democratic voice of the people could not be suppressed by arresting opposition leaders who were



speaking on their behalf. The people of Telangana were closely observing the functioning of the Congress government, and they would give an appropriate response in the coming days, he warned.“Meanwhile, BRS leaders and activists staged a protest at Uppal Ring Road condemning KTR's arrest and opposing the alleged attitude of the Congress government. The protesters demanded that the government immediately fulfil the promises made to the people.

Grading for third language: pro-Kannada group wants governor’s removal for urging review, says he’s working for ‘Hindi mafia’

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

Governor Thaawar Chand GehlotGovernor Thaawarchand Gehlot has written to Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh asking the Government to re-examine its decision to shift from marks to a grading system for third-language papers. The row over the Karnataka Government adopting grading for Hindi and other third-language papers in Class 10 intensified on Monday, with the pro-Kannada Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) demanding Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot’s “immediate removal” from the state for urging a review of the decision. Gehlot has written to Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh asking the Government to re-examine its decision to shift from marks to a grading system for the third-languages papers. The organisation protested in Bengaluru alleging that the governor’s letter was part of a “conspiracy to impose Hindi permanently in Karnataka”.

KRV president T A Narayan Gowda said the governor

appeared to be working in favour of a “Hindi mafia”. “We demand the immediate removal of the governor from the state,” he said while addressing the demonstration. The KRV also condemned the “haste” with which the governor responded to a letter from an “unknown organisation” called the Association of Preservation of Local Languages, which objected to the Government’s decision. Gehlot wrote to the chief secretary based on the association’s letter. “Karnataka’s education policy will be determined by the state government. We elected the state government for this purpose. Who is the governor to question this?” a statement issued by Gowda said, adding that any attempt to revert to the marking system would lead to a “blood revolution”. On March 27, School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa announced a grading system for third-language papers. Around a week later, on April 3, the governor wrote to the chief secretary, stating that the policy would weaken linguistic diversity and reduce motivation to learn Hindi.

Mumbai gets it most futuristic commute yet: Six Seats, 40 kmph, No Driver

Mumbai’s Pod Taxi Is Actually Happening

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

With the bhoomipujan of the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) pod taxi project on Tuesday, Mumbai has taken its first concrete step towards a futuristic, on-demand transit system that promises faster, more personalised travel within one of the city’s busiest business districts. In its first phase, the Automated Rapid Transit System (ARTS) will run along a 3.36-km stretch between Kurla and Bandra East, with eight stations strategically located at Bandra East, Kalanagar, MMRDA Old Building, Excise Department, Bharat Diamond Bourse Gate 11, MMRDA Pay & Park, LBS Marg and Kurla. The route is designed to connect key commercial hubs while easing congestion in BKC and surrounding areas.

But the larger vision extends beyond this initial stretch. By 2031, the network is expected to expand to 22 stations over 8.85 km. While this is lower than the earlier proposal of around 38 stations, the revised plan focuses on efficiency, with additional routes branching out into circular loops within BKC. These loops will allow commuters to choose their routes, with pods stopping only at selected

stations reducing travel time and making the system more responsive to individual needs. The system will feature air-conditioned stations spaced roughly 200 metres apart. Each pod, designed to carry up to six passengers, will travel at speeds of up to 40 kmph, with a headway of just 15 seconds. Operations will be centrally controlled, ensuring smooth and frequent service. Authorities estimate that the pod taxi will cater to over 1.09 lakh daily commuters by 2031. The fare has been pegged at ₹21 per km based on 2022 estimates, though this is likely to be revised closer to launch. The project is being developed on a public-private partnership (PPP) basis by Sai Green Mobility, it is being billed as the country’s first such system without direct government subsidy. Instead, the private operator will pay the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) ₹1 crore annually along with a 21% share of revenue. Integration with existing metro infrastructure is expected to further boost its utility. The pod taxi network will connect with Metro Line 3 at BKC and Metro 2B at key points, improving last-mile connectivity for thousands of office-goers.

Assam CM Sarma lauds Vice-President’s push for stronger Tamil Nadu ties

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

Guwahati: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday thanked Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan for his maiden visit to the state, saying his words on Assam’s progress and emphasis on strengthening cultural and academic ties with Tamil Nadu would inspire the people, particularly students. In a series of posts on social media, Sarma said Vice-President Radhakrishnan’s visit had been marked by several milestones in Assam’s education sector and expressed gratitude on behalf of the people of the state as the Vice-President proceeded with the next phase of his visit to the region.

“His guidance and words of wisdom will be a source of inspiration to all of us, especially the student community in Assam,” the Chief Minister added. He also welcomed Vice-President Radhakrishnan’s emphasis on strengthening cultural and academic exchanges between Assam and Tamil Nadu, describing the shared heritage of the two states as a bridge to new possibilities. Chief Minister Sarma said such exchanges embodied the spirit of “Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat” and could contribute to greater understanding and cooperation between the two regions.

Vice-President Radhakrishnan, addressing a programme at Gauhati University earlier on Monday, had highlighted the importance of language in preserving the memory, wisdom and identity of a civilisation. He appreciated the translation of Assamese and Tamil literary works into each other and called for greater academic and literary interaction between Assam and Tamil Nadu. During the programme, the Vice-President released “Bhupen Hazarika: Hundred Years of a Wandering Songs”, edited by Ankuran



Dutta and Nani Gopal Mahanta, along with the fifth revised and enlarged edition of “Chandrakanta Abhidhan”. Vice-President Radhakrishnan also praised Gauhati University’s research in areas including endangered languages, multilingualism, the Brahmaputra Basin, environmental sustainability and Indian Knowledge Systems. He urged students to pursue research and innovation aimed at addressing community challenges and contribute towards the vision of “Viksit Bharat @2047”. The Vice-President also appreciated Assam’s progress in education, infrastructure, connectivity, investment and employment under CM Sarma’s leadership. He highlighted more than 1.64 lakh merit-based government appointments made in Assam since 2021 and noted the commencement of the first MBA batch at IIM Guwahati. Chief Minister Sarma said the Vice-President’s message would continue to encourage Assam’s students and strengthen the state’s academic and cultural links with the rest of the country.

She lost Rs 33.50 lakh to cyber fraud. It was moved through 969 accounts, in transactions as small as Rs 29

EMS News Agency, August 12

The woman approached court seeking transfer of Rs 20.12 lakh from accounts frozen during the probe into her First Information Report (FIR), filed in January this year. The woman approached court seeking transfer of Rs 20.12 lakh from accounts frozen during the probe into her First Information Report (FIR), filed in January this year. (File photo/ Canva) A court order in Mumbai lays bare the scale of mule account networks in cyber fraud cases — 969 unique accounts were used to move money stolen from a city-based housewife cheated of Rs 33.50 lakh.

Mule accounts are bank accounts used by fraudsters to receive and pass on stolen funds, making the money trail deliberately difficult to trace. The trail of the stolen money, submitted before the court in this case, shows 978 separate transactions, with amounts as low as Rs 29, spread across multiple nationalised and private banks. The 38-year-old woman, who had worked as an accounts and finance manager and has been trading in shares for over a decade, first came across an advertisement on Instagram about stock market investments. On clicking it, she was added to a WhatsApp group of 150 members run by a person claiming to be a professor, with an assistant and a manager. The group provided regular tips on maximising profits and directed members to download a trading app. When the victim tried to withdraw her supposed profits, she was told she

had to first pay Rs 33.50 lakh as “centralised tax” to the government, at which point she realised she had been scammed and approached the police in January.

The woman approached court seeking transfer of Rs 20.12 lakh from accounts frozen during the probe into her First Information Report (FIR), filed in January this year. The list of transactions and accounts revealed 978 entries across various banks, with 969 distinct account numbers. The smallest recovered amount was Rs 29.01; the largest, Rs 45,510. Most transfers were in fragments of three and four digits, which is a technique used to make tracing harder. “After taking into consideration the say filed by the police, it is clear that the bank accounts are frozen wherein amount is transferred. Prima facie applicant appears to be entitled to get the temporary custody of the amount which is transferred,” the judicial magistrate in Borivali said in an order passed on March 27.

The court directed the woman to execute an indemnity bond of Rs 30 lakh, agreeing to return the amount if it is subsequently proved she is not entitled to it. The Borivali court has similarly permitted transfer of amounts to other cyber victims, with bank accounts involving over 500 unique accounts in those cases. A recent Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) by the Ministry of Home Affairs lays out the process for interim custody of amounts put on hold or seized during a cyber fraud probe.

‘Common man thinks anything can be done paying a bribe’: HC rejects plea to quash FIR for duping woman

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

Observing that “the common man has faith in the efficacy of corrupt practices and thinks anything can be done paying a bribe”, the Allahabad High Court dismissed a writ petition for quashing of an FIR registered for allegedly duping a woman of Rs 22 lakh by promising her a PhD degree and an assistant professor’s job at a university.

The division bench of Justices JJ Munir and Tarun Saxena said in the March 31 order, “We have carefully perused the FIR. We find that the allegations are very serious in nature and disclose a very chilling trend in society, where the common man has developed a perception that anything can be done by the payment of a bribe.” The court added, “... An educated woman herself, was taken in by the fraud, allegedly played by the petitioner into parting with a substantial sum of Rs 22 lacs and more. Admission to a PhD Course or appointment to a university cannot be done except through the procedure prescribed under rules of these universities. The PhD is earned from a university after following the PhD programme and successfully completing it.”

The appointment to a teaching post in a university is made after undergoing the recruitment process, involving advertisement of posts and applying for them, the bench said.... faith of the common man in the efficacy of corrupt ways has led the first informant (complainant of FIR) to be duped by the petitioner. It shows a very low state of moral fibre in society, and crimes of this kind, to regain and restore some morality in society, must not go unpunished,” the order read. The FIR was registered on September 14, 2024 at the Swaroop Nagar police station of Kanpur City on criminal charges, including forgery, cheating and criminal breach of trust on the complaint of Tanya Dixit against her acquaintances Vikram Singh Sengar, his mother Tripti Singh

Sengar and his friend Priyanka Singh Sengar.

According to the court order, Dixit alleged that the accused boasted of “strong connections” in government, administration and Kanpur University, and claimed to have done favours to many by securing jobs for them. She further said when she asked if she could get a job in a university if she had a PhD degree or was NET (National Eligibility Test) qualified, Vikram, Tripti, his sister Sanya Sengar and Priyanka promised to get her the degree as well as the job. For this, she was asked to arrange for Rs 22 lakh, Dixit alleged. The complainant claimed that she initially paid the accused Rs 18 lakh, following which she received a purported appointment letter from “Kanpur University” by post, asking her to join on July 22, 2024. Vikram shared with her a WhatsApp message showing the PhD degree, she said

When she enquired about the appointment letter and the degree, the accused came to her house and handed over documents to her and asked to pay Rs 3 lakh more. Dixit said after paying Rs 3 lakh, she went to Kanpur University only to find that the appointment letter and the degree were bogus and the signatures forged. The complainant further alleged that when she confronted the accused, they issued threats to her life and to implicate her in a false case. While other named accused had earlier got relief from the High Court with certain conditions, Priyanka Sengar approached the court seeking the same. The bench stated in the order, “We do not say that the allegations in the FIR are true, as possibly we cannot say that in these proceedings. At the same time, looking to the nature of the allegations, we are very clear in our mind that these require to be thoroughly and honestly investigated by the Police.” “In the totality of circumstances, we do not find this to be a fit case for interference under Article 226 of the Constitution. This petition is, accordingly, dismissed,” the bench added.

From Mughal-era women poets to electronic icons: Bengaluru’s WHAM Festival closes on a musical high

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

The Indian Music Experience Museum’s WHAM (Women’s History, Art and Music) Festival closed on a high on March 25, with performances by Hindustani classical legend Shubha Mudgal and electronic music icon Ma Faiza. The three-week festival, now in its third edition, marked a new permanent addition to the museum’s galleries in the form of an exhibit dedicated to Annapurna Devi, one of the most influential figures in Hindustani classical music.

Other events and displays included a Feminist Library Popup, film screenings, and workshops on subjects like the Chittara mural art of Karnataka. The last two days covered a wide cross-section of India’s musical traditions, such as songs of the rice cultivators of Nagaland and a combination of hip-hop and Kumaoni folk songs. On Saturday, Mudgal performed several musical pieces under the theme ‘Women, Sexuality and Song’, with many of the pieces originating from the late Mughal era in dialects such as Braj Bhasha. “Something very interesting I found was that the work of women poets was not published as much... a lot of

the wealthy elite were publishing books centred on their own collections of poetry. Women poets rarely found opportunities to be published except those women who were themselves privileged,” Mudgal said, speaking after the performance. “There is a lovely account of a woman poet called Sheikh Rangrejan. Rangrej is the profession of someone who dyes garments... she was a person who dyed clothes for a living and wrote beautiful poetry,” she added. Speaking to The Indian Express, museum director Preema John said, “This is a programme that Shubha ji has performed before, but never in Bengaluru... it fits in very well with our theme with WHAM. We also had a group of Kumaoni women singing folk songs with rapper Kranti Naari as well as percussionist Charu Hariharan.” The festival’s final performance on Sunday featured noted DJ and LGBTQ+ icon Ma Faiza, one of the pioneers of Goa’s electronic music scene. “There are also many themes and emotions that come up in a festival like WHAM when you talk about issues like discrimination and marginalisation, but there is a very real sense of hope. What we discussed with her is that the set could be something that addresses these emotions, but also a triumphal conclusion,” John said.

JJB allows police to take three minors for evidence collection in Kerala murder case



Alappuzha (Keralam): A Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) on Monday permitted the police to take three minor boys, suspected of carrying out the murder of an elderly man at Karuvatta here last month, for evidence collection in the case. The JJB passed the order on a plea moved by the prosecution, senior additional public prosecutor (APP) Manu Kallampally said. The APP said that there was no provision in the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act to hand over minors in conflict with the law to the police for evidence collection.

However, in the instant case, the JJB passed the order on the basis of provisions in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) as the special act — JJ Act —

was silent on how evidence collection can be carried out in the case of minors. The APP said that all the four suspects, including a 13-year-old girl who allegedly played a key role in the murder of the elderly man who was her relative, in the case were minors and therefore, without questioning them or taking them for evidence collection, it would be difficult to complete the investigation. Therefore, the Board decided to follow the procedure provided under the BNSS, the prosecutor said. He said that the Board permitted “escorted movement” of the minor boys, aged around 16 and 17 years, for evidence collection.

The APP also said that a plea is pending before the JJB seeking permission to question the minor girl. The girl, an eighth-standard student, was a close relative of the victim, Sivankutty (67), who was killed at his home in Karuvatta. Investigators suspect the teenagers had planned to steal gold and money from the house, with the proceeds intended for purchases, including a high-end mobile phone and a motorbike. According to the police, Sivankutty was found dead inside his house on August 17 morning. His wife and daughter were away at a hospital at the time of the incident, leaving him alone at home, police had said. According to the police, the three teenagers, including the boyfriend of the accused girl from Paravur, had allegedly entered through a space near a ventilator at the rear of the house and the victim was allegedly killed during a scuffle that followed. Police said that the investigation established that the boyfriend made a video call to the 13-year-old girl during the assault and showed her the killing. They also allegedly stole the gold kept in the house, they said.

No Durga Puja carnival this year, says Bengal CM Suwendu Adhikari

Kolkata: The first Durga Puja in West Bengal under the BJP government will be marked by a series of large-scale cultural programmes, drone and fireworks shows, while the annual carnival, introduced during the TMC era, will not be held this year, Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari said on Monday. Making it clear that organisers should not have to approach the courts for permission to conduct Durga Puja unlike the previous Trinamool Congress regime, Adhikari said his government would ensure that the festival could be celebrated in accordance with Bengali traditions and culture without unnecessary hurdles. “The carnival that was being imposed in the name of Durga Puja for the last few years will not be held this year,” Adhikari said after a preparatory and coordination meeting on the festival. Instead, the state Tourism and Information and Cultural Affairs departments will jointly organise a major programme at Eden Gardens to mark the beginning of the festive season.

The programme will feature a four-hour drone and fireworks show, he said, adding that an elaborate series of events would be organised across the state during the run-up to Durga Puja. A special programme will also be held at Digha after Mahalaya, while cultural programmes will be organised for two days in six cities across the state, Adhikari said. The carnival was introduced by the Mamata Banerjee government in 2017, months after the administration faced criticism and allegations of minority appeasement over its decision to restrict idol immersions around Muharram. In that year, Vijaya Dashami, when Durga idols are traditionally immersed, fell on September 30, while Muharram was observed on October 1. The then TMC-led state government had directed that idol immersions on Dashami be stopped by 6 pm and suspended completely on October 1, citing the need to avoid clashes between immersion processions and Muharram observances and to maintain law and order.

German Shepherd bites Ahmedabad woman for 2nd time in 4 months, owner booked



GNS News Agency, Sept 7

The owner of a German Shepherd was booked for negligence by the Ahmedabad City Police on Saturday after her pet dog allegedly bit a 54-year-old neighbour in the Ramol area of the city. An FIR was registered on the basis of a complaint by 54-year-old Kapila Mahendra Prajapati, a resident of Vastral.

In the FIR, she said that the incident occurred around 5:30 pm on September 4 when she was sweeping her front yard. When she stepped out of her house, the front door of her neighbour Dharmishtha Dinesh Prajapati was open and her dog, a German Shepherd, bit her on her right hand. Prajapati's daughter immediately called an ambulance and took her to the nearby Community Health Centre (CHC). Kapila alleged in the FIR that the same dog had bitten her on her right leg and left hand about 4 months

ago. Dharmishtha Dinesh Prajapati was booked under BNS sections 291 (negligent conduct with animals) and 125(a) (negligent act that endangers the life or personal safety of others).

Following the incident, officials of the Cattle Nuisance Control Department (CNCD) of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), along with a veterinary officer and the Ramol Police, conducted an inspection. In a statement on Saturday, the AMC said, "The pet dog 'Rani' has been vaccinated and the certificate is valid till September 30, 2026. The dog was immediately taken into custody by the CNCD department and shifted to the Dog Welfare Center at Danilimda." Speaking to The Indian Express, Naresh Rajput, Head of the CNCD, said that about four to five dogs had been seized and impounded by the AMC since the new regulations of dog registration came into force in December 2024. FIRs had been filed in all the cases of dog attacks, he said. "These dogs are placed in special hostels and the owners are supposed to pay for the same. They are kept there for at least a month and when the animal is released, we take an affidavit from the owner assuring that the dog will not be taken to the same place where the attack had taken place," said Rajput, adding, "In many instances, the dogs are given to relatives or friends." Between January 1, 2025, and August 31, 2026, a total of 17,467 pet owners had registered 19,839 dogs in Ahmedabad. Nine most popular breeds include Labrador (3,939), German Shepherd (1,527), Shih Tzu (1,497), Golden Retriever (1,416), Pomeranian (1,138), Beagle (571), Siberian Husky (476), Pug (400) and Rottweiler (356).

Sena corporator and ex-Mumbai Mayor Vishakha Raut disqualified for 6 years

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

In a big blow to the Opposition in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the Maharashtra Government has disqualified senior Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator and former Mayor, Vishakha Raut, from being elected as a corporator for six years. In a government resolution (GR) dated September 1, the Urban Development Department issued the order days after the caste certificate scrutiny committee in Palghar on August 21 cancelled Raut's OBC caste certificate for filing the certificate under wrongful jurisdiction.

Raut represents the high-profile 191 ward, which encompasses Shivaji Park and Dadar West belt. Earlier in January, Raut contested from the 191 ward – which was reserved as an OBC woman seat – against Shinde-led Shiv Sena's Priya Sarvankar Gurav. Raut defeated Priya Sarvankar – daughter of former MLA and Sena leader, Sada Sarvankar – by 167 votes, after securing 13,236 votes in a closely watched contest. "And whereas, Smt. Vishakha Sharad Raut (Smt Vishakha Moreshwar Raul) having been disqualified for being a Councillor under clause (a) of sub-section (IC) of section 16 of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act (III of 1888), his seat as such Councillor has become vacant," read a part of the GR.

Declaring the disqualification, it added, "Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (b) of sub-section (IC) of section 16 of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act (III of 1888) and of all other powers enabling it in that behalf, the Government of Maharashtra hereby disqualifies Smt. Vishakha Sharad Raut (Smt. Vishakha Moreshwar Raul) for being elected or being a Councillor for a period of six years from the 20th August,



2026." Senior UBT-Sena corporator Raut is the fifth corporator of the Opposition fold to be disqualified. However, this is the first case in which the urban development department has issued a direct disqualification order. Between June and July, at least four corporators from the opposition were disqualified after their caste certificates were declared invalid by the caste verification committee. On June 18, Deepak Sawant, Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator from ward 111 in Bhandup, lost his seat after the caste scrutiny committee invalidated his OBC caste certificate, which he had submitted while filing his nomination for the January civic elections. On June 22, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) corporator Sameer Ramzan Patel from ward 137 was disqualified on similar grounds. Later, on July 10, Mumbai Mayor Ritu Tawde announced the disqualification of two more corporators. AIMIM's Roshan Shaikh from ward 138 and NCP's Bushra Nadeem Malik from ward 170 in Kurla East were disqualified after their caste certificates were invalidated.

Bengal CM Adhikari calls for restrictions on phone use in schools, cites Gujarat model



West Bengal industrial policy, suvendu adhikari, west bengal, land acquisition, File photo of Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari. West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari Saturday advocated for restrictions on the use of mobile phones in schools. Addressing a Teachers' Day program in Newtown, CM Adhikari said, "My votes may perhaps decrease. But I will still say that the use of phones in schools needs to be regulated. In Gujarat, phones are not used in schools from Class I to Class XII."

On Saturday, the chief minister also inaugurated the 'Swami Vivekananda Merit Scheme' in higher education and launched a new transfer management policy for college teachers. During the event, Adhikari announced that two 'CM Shri' schools, modeled after PM Shri schools, will be opened in each district. "In these schools, admission will be given from Class VI based on merit. Like the Central Model School, the schools will have all modern facilities, including smart boards. Large sports-related institutions will be set

up in the western and northern regions."

The chief minister assured that the School Service Commission (SSC) teacher recruitment process will be completed within the time given by the Supreme Court. He added that greater emphasis will be given to the written test in teacher recruitment, and the marks for the oral examination should be reduced. From the stage of the Teachers' Day event, Adhikari called for an overall reform of Bengal's education system and the restoration of its 'long-lost' educational heritage. Exhorting the academia to promote patriotism, the Bengal chief minister said, "One thing should not be compromised. Those who harm the country from within, who raise questions about patriotism, who have a problem with the full Vande Mataram song, who do not protest when there is an attack in Pahalgam but raise questions when there is an attack in Pakistan – against them, the education community and nationalist citizens must remain united." Referring to the new National Education Policy, Adhikari placed special emphasis on infrastructural development in the education sector. He claimed that nearly 19,000 schools in the state lack even basic infrastructure after nearly eight decades of Independence. Describing the recent snakebite incident in Kolkata's famed Mitra Institution school as symptomatic of the neglect that the education sector faced during the previous regime, the chief minister said, "At Mitra Institution, a child was taken to SSKM hospital after a snakebite. ... They (the school) have not received the composite grant for three years. It is from this that carbolic acid is bought. There was certainly no shortage of money. There was no shortage of money for sports, fairs, or for giving money during Durga Puja."

Bihar widens CBI investigative powers, retains state nod for probes against its officials

Bihar government under CM Samrat Choudhary expands CBI's standing consent for Central staff, mandates prior state nod for probes involving state employees. Bihar government under CM Samrat Choudhary expands CBI's standing consent for Central staff, mandates prior state nod for probes involving state employees. The Bihar government's Home Department under Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary has issued a notification expanding the CBI's standing consent to investigate a broader set of offences involving Central government employees, Central PSUs and private persons, while requiring prior state permission for probes involving central and government employees working for the state government. Under the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, such state consent determines the CBI's power to exercise its investigative jurisdiction within a state. The notification changes the categories of cases the CBI can investigate in Bihar without seeking fresh state permission, and gives the agency standing consent for a wider range of offences involving Central government employees, Central PSUs and private persons. It does this while retaining case-by-case state consent for investigations involving Bihar government employees and state-controlled or aided bodies.

Under Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, the CBI cannot ordinarily exercise its powers and jurisdiction in a state without the state government's consent. That consent can be general, allowing the agency to investigate specified offences or categories of cases without seeking permission each time, or specific to an individual case. The order creates a two-tier consent regime. The CBI retains automatic authority to investigate cases involving employees of the Government of India, Central Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and private individuals implicated alongside them in Bihar. However, a proviso removes this automatic authority over public servants appointed by or working for the Bihar government, state-owned corporations, companies, state-aided banks and institutions receiving financial assistance from the state.

The Home Department notification, issued by Principal Secretary Pankaj Kumar on September 3, reads: "The Governor of Bihar, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946, and in supersession of all previous notifications on this subject, hereby accords consent for the extension of powers and jurisdiction of the members of the Delhi Special Police Establishment for cases involving offences under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, offenses under the Information Technology Act, 2000, cybercrime, and the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended), notified under Section 3 of the Act as amended from time to time, allegedly committed by employees of the



Government of India or Public Sector Undertakings under the Government of India, and private persons".

The notification regulates the CBI's jurisdiction in Bihar under Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, while expanding the range of offences covered by its standing consent. The order further stated: "Provided that when the offense related to the above pertains to public servants appointed in connection with the affairs of the State Government of Bihar, or persons appointed in connection with the affairs of any corporation, company, bank owned by, controlled by, or receiving financial assistance from the Bihar Government, it shall be mandatory to obtain the prior consent of the State Government of Bihar for the investigation of any such offense by the Delhi Special Police Establishment. Additionally, upon receiving a proposal from the Delhi Special Police Establishment, the State Government will consider and take a decision on granting powers of investigation on a case-by-case basis." It is a two-pronged order, an officer in the police headquarters told.

"The first part of it allows the CBI to investigate cases which were the prerogative of the state. The second part of the order tries to balance it out by saying that the state's permission would be required," the officer said. A CBI officer added: "Bihar might well have set a precedent for other states to follow and allow CBI a bigger scope of investigation. The order, if read between the lines, would tell that it is more about giving CBI more powers and less about restricting them." A Patna High Court advocate added that the requirement of state consent applies only to executive actions by the CBI. "It does not restrict the high courts or the Supreme Court from ordering a CBI investigation within a state without state government consent," the advocate said. Santosh Singh Santosh Singh is a Senior Assistant Editor with The Indian Express since June 2008. Expertise He covers Bihar with main focus on politics, society and governance. Investigative and explanatory stories are also his forte. Singh has 25 years of experience in print journalism covering Bihar, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. ... Read More

IIT researchers identify nine rapidly expanding glacial lakes in Himachal

Shimla: The unprecedented devastation and loss of lives in the wake of the Nepal flash floods have set off alarm bells in Himachal Pradesh, with researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi identifying nine rapidly expanding glacial lakes in the state and terming them ticking "water bombs". These lakes could pose a serious threat to downstream communities as rising temperatures accelerate the melting of glaciers across the Himalayas, IIT-Mandi researchers said. Through an analysis of satellite imagery and other datasets, the researchers found that the number of glacial lakes in the Himalayan region has increased by nearly 30 per cent over the past decade, while their size has also expanded significantly.

This raises concerns over the possibility of sudden glacial lake outburst floods that could unleash massive volumes of water and debris downstream, said Prof Dericks P Shukla, Founding Chairperson, School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, IIT-Mandi, who led the six-member research team. The study identified nine lakes — Kalikund, Chandrat, Vasuki, Surai, Kya Tso, Yoche, Samudra Tapu, Kasang and Gephag Gath — located in the high-altitude regions of Chamba and Lahaul-Spiti, as particularly vulnerable and capable of acting like "water bombs" if their natural barriers fail. A sudden drainage event triggered by a landslide, earthquake or other geological disturbance could cause widespread destruction in the valleys below. More than 15 bridges, several inhabited areas, and educational and healthcare institutions fall within the potential hazard zones of these lakes, the study warned.

The study mapped 2,076 glacial lakes situated above 3,500 metres in Himachal Pradesh in 2025 — around 710 more than those recorded in 2015 — and found that their cumulative area had increased by 28.45 per cent over the

past decade, underscoring the growing risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) in the state. Among the most significant changes, Gephag Gath lake in Lahaul-Spiti district expanded by around 244,000 square metres due to glacier melting. Kasang lake in Kinnaur grew by nearly 150,000 square metres, while Kalikund in the Kangra and Chamba districts expanded by around 120,000 square metres. Researchers flagged Kalikund as especially sensitive because of the steep slopes surrounding the lake, which could increase the risk of a sudden collapse or outburst. The study also pointed to human activity as a possible factor accelerating glacier melt and cautioned that increasing tourist activity in sensitive Himalayan regions can increase dust deposition on glaciers. Dust absorbs more sunlight than clear snow and ice, accelerating melting. Natural disasters such as earthquakes and landslides can further destabilise glacial lakes, triggering sudden flooding. Government agencies, including the Central Water Commission (CWC) and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), currently classify four glacial lakes in Himachal Pradesh as sensitive. Three of these also feature in the IIT-Mandi study. Satellite technology has made it easier to track these rapidly changing lakes, but field-based monitoring, early warning systems and stronger government intervention are urgently needed, researchers stressed. On the other hand, the Himachal Pradesh government has sought Rs 105 crore from the Centre to install early warning systems (EWS) and undertake other mitigation measures at four major glacial lakes, officials said on Saturday. Additionally, the CWC will carry out flow-path analysis and downstream risk assessment for 681 glacial lakes in the Himalayan region, while the NDMA will develop an integrated risk-categorisation framework, officials said.

‘Invalid work slips, fake certifications’: CAG flagged flaws in Haryana scheme in 2023-24

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

The Haryana government may have initiated a probe into a scam pertaining to fake work slips — Labour Minister Anil Vij has pegged it at Rs 1,500 crore — it was, however, made aware of the irregularities in 2023-24 too.

A performance audit had uncovered systemic irregularities in the registration and benefit disbursement process for construction workers, with invalid, missing, and fraudulently certified work slips emerging as a central failure point — leading to wrongful payments and exposing the government to losses worth crores. The findings formed part of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report, which scrutinised the functioning of the Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) Welfare Board and flagged serious lapses in verification, financial controls, and governance mechanisms. At the core of the audit was the misuse of “work slips”, the primary document used to certify that a worker has completed the mandatory 90 days of construction work required for registration. The CAG found that the system for verifying these work slips was deeply flawed and inconsistently applied.

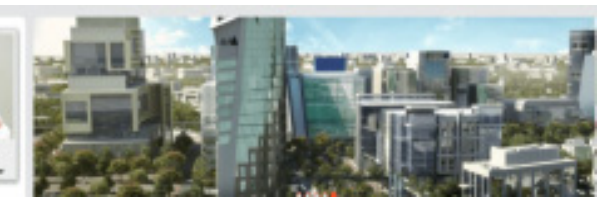
“With over Rs 1,000 crore disbursed under welfare schemes, the findings highlighted an urgent need for stricter verification mechanisms, digital authentication safeguards, and accountability at all administrative levels to prevent further misuse, but apparently it was not pursued with the seriousness that it deserved then. The scandal not only exposed financial leakages but also undermined the very purpose of welfare schemes intended to support genuine construction workers in the state,” a senior official said. The Labour Board of Haryana had then acknowledged the findings, stating that recovery notices will be issued and action taken against officials and beneficiaries involved. However, as of December 2024, “final action was yet awaited.” The CAG report underscored systemic lapses in verification, oversight, and data integrity within Haryana’s labour welfare framework. The large-scale misuse of public funds through forged work slips and fake documentation had raised serious concerns about governance and accountability. In a telling observation (Para 4.10.2), even cases where work slips were submitted and accepted were later flagged with objections such as: “upload valid workslips (ws)”. This contradiction, the audit noted, “indicates lack of due diligence by the Department in scrutinising the applications”

According to the CAG report (Paragraph 4.16), a review of welfare schemes implemented by the state’s Labour Department revealed that between 2017–18 and 2022–23, as many as “6,56,497 benefits worth Rs 1,007.56 crore were disbursed to 2,18,901 beneficiaries across 4,053 registered establishments.” However, deeper scrutiny exposed alarm-



ing discrepancies in the system. Mismatch between registered establishments and benefitsThe audit highlighted a glaring lack of correlation between the number of registered establishments and benefits disbursed. For instance, in Gurugram, with “2,786 registered establishments,” 3,408 beneficiaries availed “8,814 benefits amounting to Rs 9.94 crore.” In stark contrast, Hisar reported only “42 registered establishments,” yet “1,68,004 benefits worth Rs 243.52 crore were disbursed to 49,148 beneficiaries.” The report noted that “no attempt was made by the Board to analyse the reasons for such glaring differences.” While officials attributed the disparity to migrant worker mobility, the CAG rejected this explanation, stating that “no such study/data was available with the Board which could be used to sustain this fact.” Nearly half the benefits went to ineligible recipientsIn six test-checked districts (Faridabad, Gurugram, Hisar, Jind, Karnal and Panipat), the audit examined 1,267 benefits worth Rs 5.34 crore and found that “577 benefits (45.54 per cent) amounting to Rs 2.20 crore (41.22 per cent) were disbursed to ineligible beneficiaries.” Reasons included missing work slips, unsigned or improperly signed documents, fake certificates, and other discrepancies.Unauthorized Signatories: In “43 cases,” work slips were signed by non-competent authorities such as Sarpanchs, councillors, and clerks, leading to “211.74 lakh” in wrongful payouts;Forgery and Fake Certifications: Of 136 officials contacted for verification of 306 work slips, only nine responded. Alarmingly, six denied signing “25 work slips,” exposing clear forgery; in one case from Narnaud (Hisar), “76.04 lakh” was disbursed based on 16 work slips signed by a person who was “never a Secretary in that office; and in Barwala (Hisar), forged signatures on six work slips resulted in “Rs 8.03 lakh” being disbursed”.Bogus death certificate used to claim benefitsThe audit also uncovered a case in Gurugram where a beneficiary claimed “Rs 2.15 lakh” using a fraudulent death certificate. Upon scanning the QR code, auditors were redirected to a fake website. The issuing authority later confirmed that “the death certificate was not issued by their office.”

Royale Empire’ case: RERA Punjab pulls up builder, orders compensation



GNS News Agency, Sept 7

In a significant order, the RERA (Real Estate Regulatory Authority), Punjab, granted relief to homebuyer Anupama Dandora in her case against Royale Empire and its partner. The authority held that the promoters failed to deliver possession within the agreed timeline and did not obtain the mandatory occupation/completion certificate. The authority ruled that the complainant is entitled to interest for delayed possession starting from July 1, 2012, and directed that possession of flat no. 403, block I, be handed over only after securing the required certificates.

Advocate Mohammad Sartaj Khan said the case relates to a flat booked in 2010 in the “Royale Empire” project at Peermuchhalla, Zirakpur, for a total cost of ₹34.15 lakh. Possession was promised within 18-21 months. The complainant had already paid ₹21.10 lakh by September 30, 2011, but possession was never offered and the project remained unregistered under RERA. The respondents argued that the complaint was not maintainable due to a pend-

ing civil suit at Derabassi. However, the authority rejected this objection, observing that the civil case was unrelated to the issues raised before it. On merits, RERA found the promoters in clear violation of the Agreement to Sell and provisions of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016. The order emphasised that “interest for delayed possession is a statutory entitlement” and that buyers cannot be denied relief merely because a project remains incomplete. The authority calculated delayed possession interest at ₹31,33,350 up to March 31, 2026, and further directed monthly interest of ₹18,990 from April 1, 2026, until possession is lawfully handed over. It also ordered that the amount be recoverable as land revenue under Section 40(1) of the Act, with a Recovery Certificate to be issued after 90 days.

Additionally, the order clarified that any outstanding dues between the parties at the time of possession may be mutually adjusted. It also stated that the allottee will not be liable to pay maintenance charges until the awarded amount, along with accrued interest, is fully settled — subject to exceptions involving third-party or RWA maintenance arrangements. Advocate Mohammad Sartaj Khan said, “The ruling reinforces that delayed possession is not just a contractual breach but a statutory violation, making it clear that builders cannot retain buyers’ money without either timely delivery or lawful compensation.”

Punjab launches Mission Samarth 4.0 with attendance reform: Parents to get daily SMS alert if kid absent

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

Parents of students in the state-run schools will now receive daily SMS alerts regarding their children’s attendance, marking a shift towards real-time accountability, as the Punjab government on Thursday rolled out a tracking system under its Mission Samarth 4.0, a flagship foundational learning programme. Launching the mission, Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains, along with AAP’s Punjab affairs incharge Manish Sisodia, declared it as the next phase of the government’s flagship ‘Sikhya Kranti’.

“Already ranked No. 1 in the PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) survey, Punjab is now moving from recognition to results by tightening classroom accountability and scaling proven teaching practices,” Bains said.

He underscored that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has raised the education budget to Rs 19,279 crore in 2026-27, from Rs 12,657 crore in 2021-22, ensuring funds reach classrooms. “This money isn’t just on paper. It has reached every school. Teachers used to collect donations to repair toilets or buy brooms during past regimes. Now, they say, don’t send grants, we haven’t spent the last one,” said Bains. The minister said that textbooks now reach students on time, adding, “Earlier, teachers photocopied pages till September or October as books wouldn’t arrive. This year, the Punjab Government delivered textbooks to every child on April 1, free of cost, through meticulous planning and political will.”

He said the government has introduced the attendance-tracking system as part of Mission Samarth 2026-27. “Parents will receive daily SMS alerts on their child’s attendance, with notifications for every absence, aiming to boost regular attendance, learning continuity and classroom engagement. Any child absent for seven days will trigger a district-level parent contact, while absence beyond 15 days will be flagged to state headquarters. This will ensure both learning continuity and child safety,” Bains said.



Talking about the Mission Samarth, he said, “This phase focuses on enhancing teaching quality and accountability through attendance tracking. Our goal is to ensure that every child achieves strong foundational learning,” he said. Explaining the core focus of Mission Samarth 4.0, he said, “The programme ensures that children in grades 3 to 8 master reading, writing and mathematics.” The results, he said, are now visible in national data. “Punjab has surpassed the national average in foundational learning by 18% in grade 3 and 26–28% in grade 6. That is our real medal,” he added.

Sisodia released the Mission Samarth Compendium, documenting 38 proven classroom practices developed by Punjab’s teachers, which will now be implemented across schools to accelerate learning outcomes, particularly for students requiring additional support. “Punjab has proven that government schools can lead the nation. Being ranked number one in PARAKH 2024 is testament to that. With Mission Samarth 4.0, the state ensures every child is in school every day and learning well. Every child cannot be sent to IIT, but the government’s duty is to ensure that no child falls below the bottom line. Because if a system allows any child to remain beneath that line, the government has failed. A child is not a statistic.

Electricity bills of up to Rs 9 lakh: Phase 11 residents express outrage over inflated power charges

Massive public outrage has erupted in Phase 11 and adjoining areas of Mohali after residents of low income groups houses — mostly one- and two-room units — received exorbitant electricity bills of up to as high as Rs 9 lakh. Among the affected is Kailash Kaur, a cancer patient, who received a bill of Rs 149,090. Her son, Mandeep Singh, who works as a private driver, said, “There are only two of us in the house, and a major portion of our income goes towards my mother’s cancer treatment. These bills have pushed us into distress”. He also alleged that officials from the electricity department disconnected their connection.

Similarly, Natthu Ram from Amb Sahib Colony, who lives in a two-room house with five family members, received a bill of Rs 8,88,330. He claimed that his electricity connection was also cut off. “Our meter has been removed, while those running illegal ‘kundi’ connections by paying Rs 500 are enjoying uninterrupted electricity,” he said. Other residents, including Paramjit Kaur — who received a bill of Rs 60,000 — and Kamaljit Kaur, also reported inflated bills and repeated visits to electricity offices without any resolution. Kamaljit Kaur said that despite depositing amounts of Rs 15,000, Rs 10,000, and Rs 5,000 in instalments, “no one is explaining why such high bills have been issued”. She added that after approaching several officials, her issue was eventually resolved after intervention at Balbir Singh Sidhu’s office, where her connection was restored through a meter, though pending dues remain. Addressing the issue, senior Congress leader and former Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu held a press conference, where he stated that around 25–30 complaints from Phase 11 have already been formally recorded at his office.

“The policies of the Punjab government have pushed



common people into a severe financial crisis. This is not just a mistake but a well-planned loot,” he said. The Congress leader accused the authorities of deliberately withholding electricity bills for 4–5 months and then issuing inflated amounts at once. “This is not a ‘zero bill’ scheme but a ‘hero to zero’ failure of the government,” he said. Sidhu further claimed that in several cases, electricity meters are being removed without valid reasons, calling it a reflection of “authoritarian and high-handed governance.” He warned, “if these illegal bills are not immediately withdrawn and relief is not provided, the Congress will take to the streets and launch large-scale protests.” In response to the issue, when XEN Amandeep Singh was contacted, he denied any large-scale billing error. “There is no such matter in our knowledge that mass billing has gone wrong. These could be rare cases where a meter may have malfunctioned or there could have been an error in the reading.” “Whenever any such bill comes to our notice, it is corrected by the department. Therefore, if anyone is facing such a problem, they should contact the office and get it rectified,” the official added.

As Punjab sees 471% surplus rain in a week, concerns crop around wheat harvest



GNS News Agency, Sept 7

Punjab rainfall surplus has surged to 471% in early April, with unseasonal showers and strong winds damaging standing wheat crops and raising concerns over yield and quality. (File Photo) Punjab rainfall surplus has surged to 471% in early April, with unseasonal showers and strong winds damaging standing wheat crops and raising concerns over yield and quality. Unseasonal and intense rainfall activity during the first week of April has led to a significant surplus in precipitation across both Punjab and Haryana, raising fresh concerns for the standing wheat crop nearing harvest.

According to official data, Punjab recorded an average weekly rainfall of 21.7 mm against a normal of just 3.8 mm, marking a staggering 471% excess rainfall during the period from April 3 to April 9. Similarly, Haryana received 11.1 mm rainfall against a normal of 2.9 mm, registering a 281% surplus in the same period. In Punjab, several districts witnessed exceptionally high rainfall. Fazilka topped the chart with 50.8 mm rainfall, a massive 2018% surplus, followed by Moga (40 mm, 1639% excess) and Mohali (31.4 mm, 1208% excess). Sangrur (53 mm, 742% excess) and Barnala (22.8 mm, 743% excess) also recorded unusually high precipitation. These figures indicate one of the most intense early April rain spells in recent years. A few districts, however, saw relatively lower rainfall. Hoshiarpur recorded 4.4 mm, slightly below normal (-9%), while Ludhiana (8.7 mm, 108% excess) and Jalandhar (13.2 mm, 170% excess) received moderate rain compared to other districts but still remained above normal levels. In Haryana, Chandigarh recorded the highest rainfall at 47.4 mm, an astonishing 1430% above normal, followed by Kurukshetra

Inside ‘godman’ Kharat’s network: 130 bank accounts opened with spurious documents, Rs 63 crore moved

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

It was when he received a call from Ahilyanagar police earlier this month, says a Mumbai-based hotelier, that he came to know that more than Rs 2.43 crore had been routed through four bank accounts in his and his wife’s names — accounts he says he never opened, in a credit society he and his family had never seen or visited. He believes documents he had shared for “darshan booking” with arrested ‘godman’ Ashok Kumar Eknath Kharat had been misused to open these accounts. “We visited Kharat as we thought he was a spiritual healer,” says the hotelier.

Investigators believe he is just one of many people whose accounts were similarly used to “route” money, with the probe into Kharat — which began with charges of sexual assault, cheating, extortion and under the anti-superstition Act — expanding to his finances. Apart from 13 police cases, he faces a case of money laundering registered by the Enforcement Directorate. Complaints along with bank records accessed by The Indian Express suggest that documents collected from followers, visitors and even victims may have been used to open more than 130 such bank accounts. Transactions in these exceeded Rs 63 crore between 2021 and 2024, with Kharat listed as a nominee in at least a hundred accounts and his mobile number appearing across many of them. The pattern is the same across cases — people got in touch with Kharat, to visit him or “consult” him for “predictions”; were told to hand over documentation such as Aadhaar and PAN cards and photographs; bank accounts were opened using these documents; and funds deposited into them. Incidentally, a majority of the accounts into which the money was received were opened in the name of the Jagdamba Cooperative Credit Society and Samata Nagari Sahakari Pat Sanstha, Rahata, both linked to Kharat. While Kharat served as chairman of the Jagdamba society till 2024 as per records, the Samata society is linked to his associate and co-accused Arvind Pandurang Bawke. A bulk of the money transactions happened during their tenure. While more than a hundred suspect accounts have allegedly been traced to the Samata society, the number is

around 32 in the case of Jagdamba. Bawke is also under arrest over a cheating case in which Kharat and his wife are accused. In some cases, multiple accounts were opened in the name of the same individuals, and several appear to have been opened within a short period. Ahilyanagar SP Somnath Gharge said: “So far statements of 20 account holders have been recorded and they have said that accounts were opened without their knowledge and consent. Now we are doing a forensic examination of these accounts.” A woman who has alleged sexual assault and forced miscarriage by Kharat is believed to have told investigators that her papers, along with those of her family members, were used for documentation linked to a credit society. She said she was made to sign documents related to the society despite resistance. Another complainant has filed a case linked to a land dispute. Corporate filings show that Kharat is a director in Shree Vyankatesh Farmers Producer Company Limited, incorporated in December 2021. In March 2024, the company was empanelled as a State Level Agency for the procurement of agricultural produce under the MSP system through agencies such as NAFED. A farmer in Shirdi has alleged non-payment following procurement carried out through the company. Investigators are examining whether financial flows reflected in some of the bank accounts are linked to transactions connected to the company. Another firm, Bright Sparks Infra Private Limited, was incorporated in 2024 with the same individuals as appearing across the alleged network, including Bawke. Asked about this, Bawke told The Indian Express before his arrest that the company hoped to get government contracts, and that documentation and investment were handled by Kharat. “He took our papers and said we would start getting contracts after two years,” he said. Vallabh Ozarkar is a Senior Correspondent with The Indian Express’ Mumbai bureau, recognized as an authoritative and deeply knowledgeable voice on the politics, governance, and infrastructure of Maharashtra. With more than nine years of experience in major news organizations, his reporting delivers high standards of Expertise and Trustworthiness. Expertise & Authority

Are nicotine stains on your teeth irreversible?



Home remedies might offer minor improvements, but they often fall short when addressing the damage caused by prolonged tobacco use.If you're a smoker, nicotine stains are likely all too familiar.Nicotine stains are often one of the most visible signs of tobacco use. For many, these stubborn yellow or brown discolourations feel like a permanent fixture, a reminder of the smoking habit that might linger long after the last cigarette. While you might want to get rid of it in a jiffy, the stains don't leave that easily (just like the memories of your ex). But does that mean that the stains are completely irreversible?

Understanding the reason behind nicotine stainsTo tackle nicotine stains, it's important to understand how they form. Nicotine by itself is colourless, but when it combines with oxygen, it turns yellow and leaves stubborn traces on the teeth. Add to this the tar from cigarette smoke or residue from chewing tobacco, and your enamel—the outer layer of your teeth—becomes a prime target for discolouration.Dr Saakshi Hinduja, consultant, general and aesthetic dentist, Aster CMI Hospital, Bengaluru, explains, "Enamel is porous, meaning it readily absorbs these pigments, making the stains harder to remove over time. Even seemingly less harmful options like vaping can contribute to similar staining, leaving your smile looking dull and aged."How oral health goes for a toss

While there's no denying that smoking could be detrimental to your teeth, it isn't any better for your oral health.Dr Faisal Noor Ahmad, assistant professor at Sharda University, Uttar Pradesh, warns: Nicotine reduces saliva production, which is crucial for neutralising acids and washing away food particles, leading to an increased risk of cavities and tooth decay. Tobacco use also contributes to gum disease by impairing blood flow, making it harder for the gums to heal and fight off infections. Additionally, prolonged use of tobacco weakens enamel, making teeth more susceptible to damage, sensitivity, and decay These habits can also cause bad breath, gum recession, and, in severe cases, lead to oral cancer, underscoring the need to quit for improved dental and overall health.Smoking can also cause bad breath, gum recession, and, in severe cases, lead to oral cancer. (Photo: Unsplash)

Can whitening products help with stains?

Now, when you spot those stains appearing on your teeth, there's this moment of disbelief and casualness at first, but as and when they start showing up pretty evidently, that's when the alarm sets in – how do I get rid of them?The first thing you will probably start doing is searching for quick

remedies on YouTube and Google. When nothing works, you will look for a quick fix at a medical store near you. But does that really help? Here's what Dr Hinduja says:"Over-the-counter whitening products can help lighten nicotine stains to some extent, especially for mild staining. However, they may not be as effective as professional teeth whitening treatments, particularly for deep-seated stains."Dr Ahmad says that whitening toothpastes, strips, and gels contain mild abrasives or low concentrations of bleaching agents like hydrogen peroxide, which can lighten surface stains over time.Now, as mentioned earlier, since the enamel is porous, and if the stains have penetrated too deep, the result wouldn't be as desired. To top it all, consistent use can do some damage to your teeth."Consistent use of these products may provide gradual improvement but cause damage to the tooth surface over time. For stubborn or extensive staining, professional whitening treatments or dental cleanings are typically more effective. Additionally, overuse of over-the-counter products can lead to tooth sensitivity or enamel damage, so their application should be monitored carefully," adds Dr Ahmad.

You need professional helpHome remedies might offer minor improvements, but they often fall short when addressing the damage caused by prolonged tobacco use. While consistent care can lighten stains slightly, reversing them entirely is usually beyond the scope of DIY solutions. A more effective approach is to consult a dentist for professional treatments. Dental cleaning, including scaling and polishing, can remove surface stains caused by nicotine. For deeper discoloration, professional teeth whitening treatments are commonly used, employing proper concentration bleaching agents like hydrogen peroxide to break down stains embedded in the enamel by masking the gums Advanced options such as laser whitening enhance the bleaching process for faster and more dramatic results. In cases of severe staining or enamel damage, cosmetic procedures like veneers or capping can restore the teeth's appearance by covering the discoloured areasDental cleaning, including scaling and polishing, can remove surface stains caused by nicotine. (Photo: Unsplash)There's a butIf these treatments give you some solace, you might want to take a minute and rethink your lifestyle choices because even the treatments come with their own set of problems."The most common issue is tooth sensitivity, which occurs when the whitening agents temporarily expose the dentine layer beneath the enamel. Some people may also experience gum irritation if the bleaching solution comes into contact with the soft tissues. Overuse of whitening products, especially at-home kits, can lead to enamel erosion, making teeth more prone to decay and further staining," Dr Ahmad mentions.

So, prevention is better than cureWhile tackling stubborn stains is important, it's equally vital to address the root cause—smoking itself. "Quitting nicotine use is the most effective way to prevent new stains and improve overall oral health," says Dr Ahmad.For those unwilling to quit, adopting healthier oral hygiene habits can make a difference. Brushing your teeth at least twice a day, flossing daily, and using an antibacterial mouthwash can help reduce staining. Drinking water after using nicotine products rinses away residue while limiting foods and drinks known to stain, such as coffee and red wine, offers additional protection for your teeth.

Why pickled amla is a superfood to add to your Indian winter diet



Winters are almost here, and if you're living in or around the national capital, they bring an unwelcome guest - pollution (like every year). With the chill in the air comes a smoggy haze that no one signed up for. This toxic combination, along with modern lifestyle habits, can lead to various issues that are far from pleasant.Beyond the obvious health risks, winter and pollution often accelerate our already existing lifestyle problems like excessive hair fall, premature greying, and acne or pores on our skin, and gut issues (cold temperatures often reduce the efficiency of our digestive system).

To combat these, many people turn to supplements and medicines. But what if we told you that Instagram has rediscovered an age-old Indian kitchen favourite to enhance our winter diet?Yes, we are talking about Indian gooseberries, aka amla, and social media, especially Instagram, is filled with recipes and ways you can add them to your diet. Out of these, people seem to be having a special inclination towards the pickled ones, which can make it last longer, and also give added benefits.But should you add them to your winter diet? We asked experts.

Why is amla good for you?

Amla is rich in Vitamin C, which experts say nourishes our skin and hair.Nahid Khilji, a dietitian, diabetes educator and co-founder of Health Hatch, tells India Today that Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that helps to boost collagen production to keep skin firm, reduce wrinkles, improve elasticity, lock in moisture, and reduce dullness.According to her, amla also has anti-inflammatory properties that help to reduce inflammation, soothing acne, redness, or irritation. Vitamin C also helps with even skin tones by reducing dark spots.Dr Bhavna Garg, a senior consultant, dietitian, and nutritionist at Yashoda Super Speciality Hospital, Kaushambi, Uttar Pradesh, lists various benefits of amla, including for skin and hair."Drinking a glass of amla juice regularly can reduce hair fall and strengthen the hair follicles from the root to the tip. Drinking amla juice daily is equally beneficial in stimulating hair growth. Regular intake provides immunity, strengthens hair follicles and adds volume to the hair, besides clearing dandruff," she says.For skin, Dr Garg says that because of its high Vitamin C content, amla is an effective 'natural skin brightener'. "It can help minimise the appearance of dark spots, blemishes, and pigmentation. Amla is rich in vitamins such as Vitamin C and E which help to protect the skin from oxidative stress," she says. Dr Garg also adds that some studies suggest that the nutrients in amla can help boost melanin production in the hair follicles, potentially reversing grey hair.

Is pickled amla better?

India has a longstanding tradition of pickling. If you're from here, you probably remember those summer days when your mother or grandmother would pickle sour and tangy raw mangoes, lemons, or other citrus fruits.However, alongside these traditional Indian pickles, Instagram is currently buzzing over a more Western-inspired method of pickling amla; a technique that skips the excessive oil. This approach involves combining vinegar, water, salt, and just a touch of oil, allowing the amla to ferment naturally.This fermentation process, apparently increases the vitamin value of amla, according to some experts, while others suggested that raw amla is far more better.For instance, Kalagiri Sanjana

Reddy, diet expert manager of Freedom from Diabetes, says that pickled amla offers enhanced bioavailability, preservation, and nutritional benefits compared to raw amla. Have a look:Enhanced bioavailability: Increased antioxidant absorption and improved bioavailability of vitamins and minerals. Enhanced digestive enzyme activityPreservation and shelf life: Longer shelf life (up to 6 months). Easy storage and transportationNutritional boost: Increased Vitamin C content (due to fermentation). Enhanced anti-inflammatory propertiesDigestive health: Supports gut health through probiotics. May relieve symptoms of IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome)Kalagiri also compared the nutritional values of both pickled amla and raw ones, and concluded that pickled have better nutritional values:Nahid, on the other hand, says that raw amla has higher Vitamin C content than pickled amla, and even though pickled amla is a good source of probiotics due to the fermentation process, it has more salt compared to raw amla, making it less healthy. Moreover, the traditional method of pickling in India involves a lot of oil, so it's best to avoid excess oil and store-bought varieties."The fermentation process makes pickled amla great for gut health. During fermentation, beneficial probiotics are produced, which help balance the gut microbiome. The probiotics improve bowel movement, thereby reducing bloating and constipation. Also, pickled amla (fermented foods) enhances the production of digestive enzymes, which improves nutrient breakdown and absorption. But watch your portion size since pickled amla can be high in salt and oil," she adds.

Why should citrus pickles be a part of your diet?

If you can limit the amount of salt and oil you add to your pickles, Dr Garg says that pickles made from citrus foods like lemons or amla can offer many health benefits, including aiding digestion, as they contain probiotics - good bacteria that support gut health.Other benefits, according to her, include lower blood sugar spikes, reduced signs of ageing, and positive effects on the immune system.

What does science have to say about pickled amla and its benefits?

Although experts agree that amla provides various benefits, they also point out that many of these claims are based on anecdotal evidence, and more scientific studies are needed to substantiate the health benefits of pickled amla.For instance, Nahid notes that while limited scientific research exists on the benefits of pickled amla, raw amla has been extensively studied for its therapeutic properties."A good example is the comprehensive review published in The Pharma Journal (2022), which highlights the numerous benefits of raw amla, including its high vitamin C content, antioxidant potential, and role in managing various health conditions," she adds.Another 2015 review published in pubmed, shows that amla is one of the richest sources of vitamin C, packing 600 - 700 mg of vitamin C into each fruit.Tips for maximum health benefitsIf you're looking to include freshly picked amla in your diet, don't worry, we got you. Here are some expert-approved ways to enjoy its benefits without compromising on health:Use minimal oil: While oil helps preserve the pickle, you can reduce the amount of oil if you're looking to make a lighter version. Just make sure the amla pieces are well coated and submerged Fermentation: Allowing the pickle to ferment for a few days enhances the probiotic content, which is excellent for gut health Storage: The pickle will continue to improve in flavour and health benefits with age. Store it in a glass jar, as metal containers can react with acidity Consume moderately: Pickled amla is packed with nutrients, but due to its salty and tangy nature, it's best to consume it in moderation as part of a balanced diet."The best time to relish amla is during winter, as it's a seasonal fruit harvested at its peak. Harvested at this time, it offers the best in flavour, nutrients, and quality. It's also the season when our immune systems need extra support, and amla steps in as a natural immunity booster, helping to keep common winter ailments at bay," Nahid concludes.

Nita Ambani channels boss lady energy at IPL auction in outfit worth over Rs 50,000

Nita Ambani stole the show at the IPL Auction 2025 in Jeddah, Dubai. Her latest appearance reinforced her status as a style icon, as she blended power and poise in a stunning tweed suit that exuded sophistication.

Ambani chose a navy blue tweed suit from the luxury brand Maje. According to their website, the blazer, priced at 375* (approximately ?32,000), featured intricate metallic threading, notched lapels, shoulder pads, buttoned cuffs, and embossed silver-tone buttons. Its attention to detail included logo-jacquard lining, side flap pockets, and a straight hem.She paired it with matching wide-leg trousers, priced at around ?23,000 (255*), according to their site. The trousers showcased decorative button detailing, faux pockets, belt loops, and an elasticated waistband for a structured yet comfortable fit. Together, the ensemble, costing ?55,695 (630 *), epitomised effortless luxury.

Nita elevated the outfit with her signature penchant for opulent accessories. She adorned herself with dazzling diamond stud earrings, a statement diamond ring, and a diamond-studded M brooch, adding a touch of sparkle to her blazer. Completing her look were chic Prada sunglasses, a



stylish luxury handbag, a sophisticated wristwatch, and sleek stiletto heels.Behind Nita Ambani's flawless look were celebrity makeup artist Tanvi Chemburkar and hairstylist Hiral Bhatia. Her makeup featured nude eyeshadow, winged eyeliner, defined brows, mascara-coated lashes, a subtle blush, glowing highlighter, and nude lipstick, perfectly complementing her ensemble. Her hair was styled into soft curls, left loose in a chic side partition, adding classic glamour to her boss-babe vibe.

Kim Kardashian reflects on the bittersweet reality of being a mother: ‘The sad part about motherhood is...’

Kim Kardashian has opened up about the emotional complexities of motherhood, sharing a heartfelt post with her followers on Instagram. On Saturday, November 9, the 44-year-old mother of four posted about one of the most bittersweet aspects of parenting. "The sad part about motherhood is that you're raising the one person you can't live without... to live without you," she wrote, accompanied by a teary-eyed emoji over a background of crumpled white paper.Kim Kardashian posted about one of the most bittersweet aspects of parenting. Kim Kardashian posted about one of the most bittersweet aspects of parenting.

Kardashian, who shares children North, 11, Saint, 8, Chicago, 6, and Psalm, 5, with her ex-husband Kanye West, has always been open about her experience as a mother. According to a People report quoting a source, Kardashian has been the "primary caregiver" for their children since filing for divorce in February 2021, balancing her career, personal life, and parenting responsibilities. As children grow, parents often struggle between being supportive and encour-

aging self-sufficiency, as highlighted in Kardashian's post. To understand how parents can best approach this balance, indianexpress.com spoke with Neha Cadabam, a child psychologist at Cadabams Mindtalk, about strategies for supporting children in developing their independence while maintaining a strong, healthy bond.Fostering a strong bond with their children while also encouraging their independenceCadabam states that building a strong bond with children while fostering independence requires a balance between connection and empowerment. "Studies show that children who experience secure attachment are more likely to become confident and self-reliant as they grow."She adds, "One effective way to create this bond is through responsive parenting—listening to a child's needs, validating their emotions, and providing consistent support. This teaches children that they have a safe base to return to, giving them the confidence to venture out. Parents can nurture autonomy by setting clear boundaries and providing choices within those boundaries."

Why the Indian mindset of hoarding and cluttering is a problem

How many things can you count on your fingers that serve no purpose, yet you still hold onto them? We all struggle with hoarding and cluttering, but it's crucial not to let this habit affect your mental well-being.Cluttering and hoarding can impact mental healthWhen you buy a T-shirt, you probably think of it as just another piece of clothing—something you'll wear a few times, then pass on or discard. But your mom? She sees it differently. To her, it's not just a T-shirt; it's an investment. First, she'll insist it's still as good as new and that you should wear it a few more times. When you're reluctant, she'll take it off your hands, repurpose it into a dusting cloth, and then slowly transform it into a floor-wiping rag.

If you've got a few T-shirts to get rid of, she'll give them to the house help after carefully considering all the other ways they could be reused. This isn't just about old T-shirts. It's the same story with the jars that come with packaged products or the food delivery boxes we receive.In an Indian household, there's no room for aesthetics when it comes to stacking and storing; everything has a second, third, or even fourth life.If you think you're any better than the previous generation, take a moment to look at the things you're holding onto—those expired makeup products, the winter coats you haven't worn in years, the random bits and bobs cluttering up your drawers. Let's be real: cluttering and hoarding are problems for all of us, whether we admit it or not.The attachment to old itemsDr Arti Anand, senior consultant - clinical psychologist at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi, tells India Today that we usually associate old items with memories and emotions, which makes it difficult for us to part with them.

These items also serve as a tangible connection to the past, evoking nostalgic memories that become precious to an individual. Research has also indicated that nostalgia provides a sense of comfort, social connection, and continuity.Adding to this, Dr Sarthak Dave, an Ahmedabad-based psychiatrist, says, "For 200 years, colonisers drained India of its wealth and left its people to endure starvation. This prolonged period profoundly influenced generations, conditioning them to survive with minimal resources and make the most of what was available. That's why many of us were taught by our elders to squeeze every last bit of toothpaste from the tube or use a pencil until it's too small to hold."The doctor mentions that this history also explains why many Indians struggle with a tendency to hoard—finding it difficult to let go of old clothes, empty jars, or even expired food.There's always a lingering hope that these seemingly useless items might prove useful someday."This mindset often stems from a deep-rooted connection to the past, where poverty and resource scarcity shaped how possessions were valued. For many, discarding items feels almost wasteful, as if it dishonours the struggles and hardships endured by previous generations," he says.Psychologically, humans have an innate need for control and often panic when things feel out of control. Letting go of old items can evoke feelings of loss and separation anxiety. People often fear that discarding these items will sever connections to loved ones, memories, or experiences.Hence, hoarding becomes a coping mechanism, creating an illusion of control during times of crisis."This behaviour is driven by the emotional and financial value attached to possessions, the fear of unexplained loss, and anxiety over needing something in the future and not having it, which could lead to regret or some major problem," explains Dr Dave.



Dr Anand agrees, "Indian culture values collectivism over individualism. Holding onto old items may serve as a means to maintain family ties and social connections, as these items often represent shared experiences and histories."Clutter can impact your mental healthThe experts feel that excessive items can lead to cognitive overload, reducing clarity and productivity, and may strain relationships due to disagreements about organisation and hygiene.Clutter can also cause embarrassment, leading individuals to withdraw socially, and in extreme cases, escalate into clinical hoarding disorder, a type of compulsive disorder where individuals struggle to part with even the smallest, most insignificant objects, such as empty matchboxes or wrappers.Not just this, but constant exposure to clutter can create a chaotic environment, leading to stress, and it also hampers focus and creativity.Hoarding and cluttering often create a negative and self-perpetuating cycle. On one hand, a part of the mind clings to the idea of holding onto an item, while another part recognises its lack of utility and urges us to let it go. This internal conflict persists regardless of the decision, leaving behind a lingering sense of unease. Over time, this can lead to significant anxiety or even depression.

Dr Anand mentions that the habit of hoarding and cluttering can be problematic when it disrupts daily life or causes emotional and physical strain. While keeping items of value or memory is fine, excessive hoarding leads to a loss of living space, reduced functionality, and an overall sense of disorganisation. It can also perpetuate a cycle of emotional dependency on material possessions.Meanwhile, Dr Dave also states that hoarding and cluttering can become deeply problematic, particularly when they lead to mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, or even obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). "At their core, these behaviors often stem from an intense emotional attachment to possessions or a fear of future scarcity. This creates a persistent internal conflict—a struggle between wanting to hold onto items and recognising the need to let them go. This mental tug-of-war can leave individuals feeling overwhelmed and stuck," he adds.Break the habitThe first and most crucial step in addressing this habit is to recognise that it is creating significant challenges, both in an individual's life and in the lives of those around them. Developing this insight is essential, as change can only begin when an individual acknowledges the problem and its impact. Without this understanding, they are unlikely to feel motivated or prepared to take steps toward improvement. It's vital to become aware of the underlying reasons for holding onto items, and establish limits, such as adopting a 'one in, one out' rule Decluttering tips, such as starting small and sorting items into categories, provide a practical framework for managing clutter.

Share of AC berths doubled in last decade in long-distance trains



In the last decade, the share of air-conditioned (AC) berths/seats in non-suburban trains (long-distance trains) has doubled, while the share of non-AC berths/seats has declined considerably in India. In parallel, the share of passengers who travelled in AC coaches has tripled, while the share of those who travelled in second class has declined considerably. Suburban trains are meant for short distances, usually up to 150 kilometres, to facilitate movement within cities, suburbs, and extended suburbs. These trains operate with electrical multiple units rakes or EMUs. Non-suburban trains cover longer distances and this analysis is restricted to them.

These conclusions assume significance, given that the Indian Railways is keen on increasing the number of AC three-tier coaches in long-distance trains — the only class of travel which has fetched consistent profits for the organisation — in place of sleeper and other coaches. While news reports show that in many long-distance trains, sleeper and second class coaches are being substituted with AC three-tier coaches, the government has refuted such claims in a recent reply in the Lok Sabha. In a question answered on July 23, the Minister of Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw, had said that the share of non-AC coaches has “significantly increased to about 70%”. However, the data shared in the reply does not specify the base year from

which this increase was calculated. The data shared by the Minister also claimed that in FY25, 1,250 general coaches have been utilised in long-distance trains, while the corresponding figures for AC coaches were not divulged. However, data for non-suburban trains collated from the Indian Railways Annual Reports of 2023-24 and 2013-14 show substantial increase in AC berths/seats. In the last decade, the share of non-AC berths/seats declined from over 84% to 68% of the total available berths/seats in non-suburban trains, while the share of AC berths/seats increased from close to 16% to about 32% as shown in the chart below. The increase in berths/seats was particularly pronounced in AC three-tier coaches. The share of these in the total increased from around 10% to 24% in the last decade. On the other hand, the share of berths/seats in sleeper coaches decreased from 33.3% to 29% and the share of ‘other non-AC’ coaches came down from 51% to 39%. An analysis of the percentage increase and decrease in berths/seats over the past decade also highlights a growing preference for AC coaches. In 2023-24, the berths/seats in AC three-tier coaches had increased by 238% from 2013-14. In contrast, the berths/seats in sleeper coaches increased by only 21% and ‘other non-AC’ coaches increased by only 6.4% in the same period as shown in the chart below. A similar pattern can be seen when analysing the number of passengers who travelled across various classes of non-suburban trains. For instance, the share of passengers in AC three-tier coaches in total increased from less than 2% in 2013-14 to 7.5% in 2023-24. In contrast, the share of those in second class mail/ordinary coaches in total declined from over 88% to 75.5%. Those in sleeper mail/ordinary coaches increased from 8.3% to 13.2% as shown in the chart below. An analysis of the percentage increase and decrease in passengers carried also shows a similar pattern. In 2023-24, the number of passengers in AC three-tier coaches increased by 201% from 2013-14. On the other hand, those carried in second class mail/ordinary coaches decreased by 36%. Passengers carried in sleeper mail/ordinary coaches increased by just 18.6% as shown in the chart below.

The fact is mangroves drive business

Mangroves have, historically, been on the margins of planning and policy priorities in spite of their vital role in anchoring coastal economies and protecting millions from climate extremes. Their loss is not just an environmental concern. Their loss erodes natural infrastructure that acts as a buffer for urban coastlines, underpins fisheries, and quietly contributes billions in ecosystem services and avoided damages. As the world grapples with extreme weather events and rising sea levels, blue carbon ecosystems such as mangroves are critical to climate and economic resilience. Yet, their value rarely features in balance sheets or policy frameworks. How can businesses, governments, and communities reimagine these ecosystems as active drivers of sustainable growth and security? Three pillars of our work through the Mangrove Coalition offer ideas for the path forward.

Mapping with technologyFirst, embracing technology can help us better understand the value of “Natural Capital”. Satellite and drone data with advanced geospatial Artificial Intelligence algorithms have improved accurate mangrove mapping and blue carbon quantification. This is crucial for informing policies and restoration efforts. The economic and ecosystem services valuation of mangroves ranges from ₹3,535 million in Pichavaram (Tamil Nadu) to ₹664 billion in the Sundarbans (West Bengal). Carbon sequestration alone is valued at ₹462 million per year in the Sundarbans, reflecting the ecological and economic importance of this habitat. Communities that possess deep knowledge of mangrove ecosystems and rely on them for their livelihoods, must be prioritised and equitably benefited — socially and economically. Involving communities

Second, community-led conservation efforts are key to strengthening symbiotic and mutually respectful relationships of people and nature. Fisherfolk especially value the role of mangroves as nurseries for juvenile fish. Healthy mangroves often translate into robust fish stocks, ensuring sustainable catch. The livelihoods of these coastal communities are intrinsically linked to the quality of mangrove and estuarine systems. In dense urban settings such as Mumbai and Chennai, mangroves are often distressed, polluted and degraded. Since they are unable to support flourishing biodiversity, coastal livelihoods and socio-cultural interdependencies are compromised. However, when communities directly experience the benefits (more fish, cleaner air, protected homes) and are empowered to make decisions about their local environment, they become effective and enduring stewards. Mangroves and other coastal ecosystems can also create opportunities for alternative livelihoods such as aquaculture, beekeeping and eco-tourism. Inter-



grated ownership models such as Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) or Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) can be translated for urban mangroves. Third, citizen science can engage stakeholders to generate wonder and investment in this undervalued ecosystem and mobilise collective action for conservation. When community members from varied backgrounds are skilled to understand and monitor ecosystems, this can either supplement existing assessment efforts or substitute for formal monitoring. Mangrove health is intertwined with the vitality of associated ecosystems and wetlands, and the health of rivers from source to the sea, as they contribute freshwater, sediments and biota. Regular monitoring can provide a good indication of how the system is faring.

Platforms can play a pivotal roleKey components of a mangrove health tool should include indicators around changes in mangrove area; quantity, quality and timing of freshwater flows; avian, floral, molluscan and fish diversity; and, crucially, community dependence and a perception of the ecosystem services. Such assessments can provide key insights to support management actions. Engagement platforms such as “Mangrove Mitras” or Friends of Mangroves can open avenues for urban citizens and local communities to engage constructively in the conservation of mangroves. This could help to rebuild a people-wetland-river-mangrove connection through an immersive experience on the magical value of mangroves. Sustainable stewardship is not a top-down mandate but a symbiotic relationship where mangrove health and people’s well-being are mutually reinforcing. Policymakers and businesses must recognise mangroves as vital climate and economic infrastructure rather than mere biodiversity zones. Protecting and restoring these ecosystems demands a coalition where science, business and community voices work in harmony — each bringing unique strengths to secure their future.

What are all these microplastics doing to our brains?

Tiny shards of plastic called microplastics have been detected accumulating in human brains, but there is not yet enough evidence to say whether this is doing us harm, experts have said. These mostly invisible pieces of plastic have been found everywhere from the top of mountains to the bottom of oceans, in the air we breathe and the food we eat. They have also been discovered riddled throughout human bodies, inside lungs, hearts, placentas and even crossing the blood-brain barrier.

The increasing ubiquity of microplastics has become a key issue in efforts to hammer out the world’s first plastic pollution treaty, with the latest round of UN talks being held in Geneva next week. The effects that microplastics and even smaller nanoplastics have on human health is not yet fully understood, but researchers have been working to find out more in this relatively new field. The most prominent study looking at microplastics in brains was published in the journal Nature Medicine in February. The scientists tested brain tissue from 28 people who died in 2016 and 24 who died last year in the US state of New Mexico, finding that the amount of microplastics in the samples increased over time.

The study made headlines around the world when the lead researcher, US toxicologist Matthew Campen, told the media that they detected the equivalent of a plastic spoon’s worth of microplastics in the brains. Campen also told Nature that he estimated the researchers could isolate around 10 grammes of plastic from a donated human brain -- comparing that amount to an unused crayon.

But other researchers have since urged caution about the small study. “While this is an interesting finding, it should be interpreted cautiously pending independent verification,” toxicologist Theodore Henry of Scotland’s Heriot-Watt Uni-

versity told AFP. “Currently, the speculation about the potential effects of plastic particles on health go far beyond the evidence,” he added. Oliver Jones, a chemistry professor at Australia’s RMIT University, told AFP there was “not enough data to make firm conclusions on the occurrence of microplastics in New Mexico, let alone globally”. He also found it “rather unlikely” that brains could contain more microplastics than has been found in raw sewage -- as the researchers had estimated. Jones pointed out the people in the study were perfectly healthy before they died, and that the researchers acknowledged there was not enough data to show that the microplastics caused harm. “If (and it is a big if in my view) there are microplastics in our brains, there is as yet no evidence of harm,” Jones added. The study also contained duplicated images, the neuroscience news website The Transmitter has reported, though experts said this did not affect its main findings. Most of the research into the effects microplastics have on health has been observational, which means it cannot establish cause and effect. One such study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine last year, found that microplastics building up in blood vessels was linked to an increased risk of heart attack, stroke and death in patients with a disease that clogs arteries. There have also been experiments carried out on mice, including a study in Science Advances in January which detected microplastics in their brains. The Chinese researchers said that microplastics can cause rare blood clots in the brains of mice by obstructing cells -- while emphasising that the small mammals are very different to humans. A review by the World Health Organization in 2022 found that the “evidence is insufficient to determine risks to human health” from microplastics. However many health experts have cited the precautionary principle, saying the potential threat microplastics could pose requires action.

Agrarian Rayalaseema’s dream for an industrial future



The face of 80-year-old Munaswamy from Vijayapuram in Nagari assembly segment reflects the struggles he endured as a farmer in Rayalaseema’s parched fields. Every wrinkle tells a story of the sheer gamble he had to take with unpredictable monsoons and unkept official promises in a region ever hungry for water. As a young man, he had hoped for the situation to improve, but witnessed with dismay the steady decline of his livelihood and mourned the loss of his fellow farmers to despair.

Perhaps that’s why the old-timer meets news of potential industrial growth in the region with a quiet prayer on his lips. “I hope the younger generation doesn’t have to toil like us. With the climate increasingly becoming hostile, agriculture has lost its appeal here. We need industrial establishments that can employ our young,” he says. Munaswamy’s family is one of the few that readily accepted the government’s move to acquire a parcel of their land in Nagari revenue division. “I hope the younger generation doesn’t have to toil like us. With the climate increasingly becoming hostile, agriculture has lost its appeal here. We need industrial establishments that can employ our young” MunaswamyElderly farmerNotorious for water distressComprising the combined districts of Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa and Kurnool, Rayalaseema is known for its semi-arid climate and perennial water scarcity, both for irrigation and drinking. A senior professor of Dr. YSR Horticultural University’s Anantarajupeta campus in Annamayya district, who wished to remain anonymous, explains that Rayalaseema lacks a perennial river as it falls in the rain shadow of the Western Ghats. “The region, as such, depends on politically contested inflows from the Krishna and Penna rivers. Indecision over the execution of inter-basin water transfer projects and incomplete canals of Handri-Neeva and Galeru-Nagari projects exacerbate the crisis,” he says. Farmers cultivating groundnut, millets and pulses as well as horticulture crops like mango, as such, depend fully on fickle monsoons, which, over the years, has led to devastating agrarian crises. According to official records, nearly 550 farmers ended their lives in the combined Anantapur region between 2014 and 2018 owing to crop failure resulting from water distress. The Horticulture Department in Madanapalle revenue division observe that unreliable surface water, overexploited groundwater, high input costs and unremunerative prices have all contributed to breaking the back of the Rayalaseema farmer.

Impending industrial boom? Nonetheless, Rayalaseema is now undergoing a profound transformation driven by projects such as the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor, the Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway and the recently sanctioned Kadapa-Bengaluru double line railway project. Already, the Tirupati-Madanapalle NH-71, a four-lane road, has slashed travel time between the two cities from four hours to two. Farmers like 63-year-old Abbaiah Naidu from Piler in Annamayya district, who had contributed his farmland to the NH, hope that the project heralds industrial growth in the district. A large number of farmers who had parted with their land, be it an acre or a few cents, for various road and railway projects across Chittoor, Annamayya and Tirupati districts dream of a Rayalaseema teeming with agro-based and greenfield industrial units. Youth entrepreneurshipDisillusioned by agricultural uncertainties, most of the region’s youth pursue higher education in engineering, science and technology, with many having already migrated to cities like Hyderabad, Chennai and Bengaluru and abroad. The recent developments in the region’s infrastructure, however, have spurred renewed interest among the youth in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). General Manager of the Department of Industries C. Suri Babu says many are approaching industries officials and banks with proposals to establish enterprises in food processing, textiles, bio-energy, ethanol plants, printing, dairy development, hotel and tourism industries. Notably, some are forming groups to overcome financial hurdles and win the confidence of bank with Detailed Project Reports (DPRs). Munaswamy says his 25-year-old granddaughter, Radhika, who now resides in Australia, wants to start a groundnut oil extraction unit and a dairy.

Suri Babu says agro-based MSMEs have much potential in a rain-shadow district like Chittoor. The poultry sector, for instance, has an annual turnover of ₹7,000 crore and the dairy sector, ₹4,000 crore in the district As Amul, Mother and Shreeja dairies, which have units in Chittoor district, expand their operations, this figure is bound to rise further, he says. Forty-eight-year-old Vidyasagar from Sankranthipalle in Bangarupalem mandal of Chittoor district is a success story. He began his MSME, ‘Girish Aqua’, a mineral water plant, a decade ago. The plant now supplies

packaged drinking water across Rayalaseema and also cater to community and official functions. Vidyasagar says he invested ₹15 lakh when he started out. Now, the annual turnover of the business is ₹2 crore. When I started the unit, my objective was to supply purified water to the rural people. Now, I have expanded the business to include pet bottles as well,” he says. Suri Babu says they are trying to educate the youth, particularly engineering graduates, about the importance of entrepreneurship. The Department of Industries sensitises educated and unemployed youth on the prospects of becoming entrepreneurs. Field-level officials hold regular camps in rural areas and educational institutions. When an aspiring entrepreneur submits a DPR and seek suggestions, officials sometimes tweak the ideas to make them eligible for loans. Major ideas to have come so far include chicken processing, dairy development and textile units. A number of poultry units have already come up along the Chittoor-Bengaluru NH between Chittoor and Palamaner. In Kuppam and Palamaner areas, many youth have established small-scale dairies with half to a dozen heads of cattle, supplying milk to major players such as Heritage, Amul, Shreeja and Mother, the officer says. A revenue official, who played a key role in solving the unrest among the mango farmers in Chittoor district and who wished to be anonymous, says the prices of mangoes slipped to ₹6 a kg this season because the district does not have enough mango processing units. “The handful of units were too afraid of purchasing more fruits as they already had stocks from previous years. The same is the case with tomato cultivation. More processing units is the key to overcome this issue,” he says.

Fisheries: an unlikely growth storyAnother growing sector in Rayalaseema is fisheries and aquaculture. A number of youth from SPSR Nellore district who are beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) now transport fish and prawns to Tirupati and other Rayalaseema towns, Chennai, Bengaluru and beyond. One of them is 30-year-old Subramanyam from Nellore. He procures prawns from aqua farmers in Kavali and Gudur and the popular Korameenu fish from the Godavari districts, mainly from Bhimavaram, and supplies them to Rayalaseema towns and major cities. Subramanyam launched his business with an investment of ₹1.7 lakh four years ago and now has a monthly turnover of ₹25 lakh. He employs four youth and has plans to enter into exports to South East Asian countries in 2026. To support economic growth in Rayalaseema, Andhra Pradesh Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (APIIC) is planning to establish industrial parks at constituency levels. Land acquisition for some of these parks has begun in Nagari, Kuppam and Palamaner areas. A senior revenue official in Puttaparthi, who sought anonymity, says that once an industrial boom sets in, the governments would be forced to come up with ways to bring water to the parched regions. “This would in turn boost agriculture as well. One can see how this played out in Sri Sathya Sai district, before and after the establishment of the Kia industries,” says the officer. Challenges before MSMEsA lack of coordination between the Department of Industries and banks often leads to delays in DPR approvals. Moreover, sector other than dairy and poultry don’t get much official patronage, according to Gujjala Eswaraiah, CPI State secretariat member, Kadapa. “There is a lot of political interference in the MSME sector. A youth with political backing can venture into any field, whereas a youth from poorer sections of society find it a Herculean task to get their DPRs cleared and loans sanctioned” Gujjala EswaraiahCPI State secretariat member, KadapaMost of the young aspiring entrepreneurs in the region hail from urban areas such as Kadapa, Tirupati and Kurnool, with very few coming from rural areas. “There is a lot of political interference in the MSME sector. A youth with political backing can venture into any field, whereas a youth from poorer sections of society find it a Herculean task to get their DPRs cleared and loans sanctioned. Despite the claims of the government, SC and ST communities lag behind in MSMEs,” he says. Though the MSME revolution began two decades ago, it is yet to take root in Rayalaseema, he says. “APIIC owns thousands of acres in Rayalaseema, but they are not serious about allocating land to MSMEs. As such, it’s a big challenge for the entrepreneur to find land for their businesses and show it to banks for obtaining loans.” He also underlined how the people in Rayalaseema dreamt of an industrial revolution when the late Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy laid the foundation stone for a steel plant in Kadapa in 2007. In 2018, the then Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu laid another foundation stone for a steel plant in Kadapa. In 2019 and 2024, it was the turn of the then Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to lay the foundation stones. Yet, the steel plant is yet to come up, he says. Lack of a railway line passing through the rural areas of core Rayalaseema is another hurdle for the MSME revolution in the region, he says.

Suri Babu says that shortage of labour suitable for MSME units is another major challenge as most skilled labourers preferring to work in cities for higher wages. As Rayalaseema experiences an infrastructure boom, proper support can help usher an industrial revolution to the region, with youth as flagbearers. By addressing the challenges in capital shortage, political will and skilled labour, the government can ensure that young entrepreneurs become wealth and employment generators for a region, long plagued by economic uncertainties.

Proposed obesity redefinition may halve global prevalence, but raises health risks, say researchers

New York: An international team of researchers has found that obesity prevalence would shift significantly under proposed new criteria that could hinder the prevention and early detection of serious health conditions.

The study, published in Plos Global Public Health, analysed data from 56 countries to compare the prevalence of pre-clinical and clinical obesity using the existing BMI criteria with what the prevalence would be under the proposed criteria that requires at least one health condition to already be present before a person is considered clinically obese, such as diabetes, hypertension, or high cholesterol. “Obesity is a serious problem and the definitions we use have implications for clinical treatment, health expenditures, disease surveillance, and people’s awareness of their own health risks. So, it is important to understand how much any new definition would impact the prevalence of obesity,” said lead author Rodrigo Carrillo-Larco, assistant professor of global health at Emory University’s Rollins School of Public Health.

The study was authored by researchers from Emory University and Johns Hopkins University in the US, the University of Queensland in Australia, Zhejiang University School of Medicine in China, and Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia and Universidad Cientifica del Sur in Peru. When the additional health issues were included in the



criteria for obesity, the prevalence dropped significantly among the 142,250 adults surveyed—with some nations seeing a drop of more than 50 per cent—but the results varied by nation and gender. For example, the East African nation of Malawi had among the highest decreases in obesity prevalence under the proposed definition, but the decline was uneven among men (68 per cent) and women (53 per cent). While the new definition could be more aligned with current disease risk, the researchers urged caution before considering a shift in obesity surveillance to the proposed standard because doing so would create substantial challenges in terms of measurement, equity, and implementation.

The invisible struggle: Addressing the plight of deserted women in India



Marriage, a cornerstone of societal structure, is traditionally viewed as a fundamental institution, not only forming the bedrock of family life but also defining social roles and statuses. However, the phenomenon of desertion, the abandonment of a spouse without justifiable cause, starkly contradicts these ideals, leaving a trail of vulnerable women in its wake. A deserted woman, defined as one whose husband has denied marital co-existence, faces a unique set of challenges often overlooked in broader discussions of women's empowerment.

While India's Draft National Policy for Women (2016) acknowledges the vulnerabilities of various categories of women, including divorced, separated, and widowed, it fails to adequately address the specific plight of deserted women. This omission is not a mere oversight but reflects a systemic negligence that perpetuates their marginalisation. Despite the wealth of data on India's female population, the absence of reliable figures on deserted women renders policy responses speculative and ineffective. The 2023 survey conducted by the CEO of Zilla Parishad, Ahilyanagar district, Maharashtra, revealing that 4,582 out of more than one lakh single women were deserted, underscores the magnitude of this overlooked crisis. These women, abandoned without the legal certainty of divorce, exist in a judicial and social limbo, their voices lost in the formal policy discourse. While they may be included in general welfare schemes, the lack of a clear definition leads to fundamental lacunae in India's gender-sensitive policymaking, perpetuating their socio-economic and psychological marginalisation. Historically, India's legal and social institutions have been anchored in the normative understanding of marriage, with legal systems primarily focussed on its preservation. In a patriarchal society, the onus of maintaining this relationship falls heavily on women, making them particularly vulnerable to the fallout of marital discord. The stark contrast in treatment between divorced, widowed, and deserted women highlights this disparity. Divorced women have legal entitlements, and widows receive social and official acknowledgment and assistance. Deserted women, however, are caught in a paradoxical situation, ineligible for the benefits afforded to either group. This discrepancy necessitates a re-evaluation of gendered hierarchies and a more nuanced approach to gender-sensitive policymaking. The challenges faced by deserted women extend far beyond the legal realm, encompassing socio-economic and psychological dimensions. Economically, they struggle to achieve financial stability, often facing social ostracism that limits employment opportunities. Forced into poorly paid or irregular jobs, they lack access to credit, shelter, and essential welfare programmes. Their vulnerable economic situation is exacerbated by limited skills and education, rigid social norms, and a lack of support systems. Psychologically, the impact of desertion is devastating. These women endure severe emotional trauma, characterised by low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. The stigma of being deserted, coupled with familial and com-

munity rejection, leads to social isolation and hinders their reintegration into society. In rural areas, where patriarchal norms are deeply entrenched, these challenges are compounded by factors such as caste, religion, and geographic location.

The lack of targeted State welfare measures further exacerbates their plight. Stringent criteria for social welfare benefits, such as residency requirements, create insurmountable barriers for women who have migrated in search of sustenance. Inter-State disparities in welfare provisions leave many deserted women excluded from essential support. Housing is another critical area of concern, with significant gender disparities in property ownership. While recent initiatives such as PMAY-G mandate joint ownership, many properties remain solely in the husband's name, leaving deserted women without a secure social safety net. Similarly, while some States have categorised deserted women for ration card benefits, a lack of uniformity at the Central level hinders their formal recognition as eligible beneficiaries. Even well-intentioned schemes such as the Swadhar Greh Scheme often fail to deliver tangible benefits owing to budgetary constraints and implementation challenges. Limited access to property, low literacy rates, and childcare responsibilities further reduce their bargaining power in the labour market. While schemes such as MGNREGA have identified deserted women as a special category, these measures are insufficient to address their comprehensive needs.

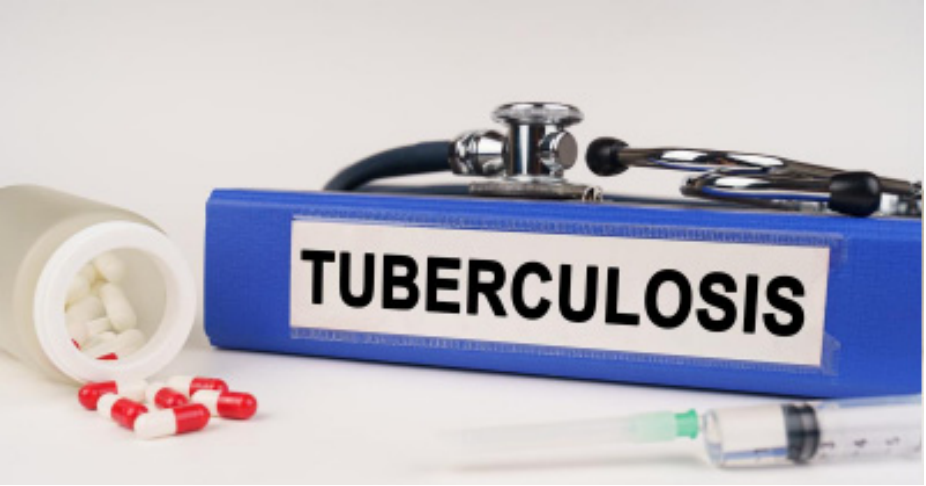
The pervasive lack of awareness regarding legal rights and personal agency compounds these obstacles. Despite the existence of laws designed to protect deserted women, prohibitive legal fees, procedural complexities, and social stigma deter many from seeking justice. Even with free legal aid, many deserted women do not file maintenance cases or receive minimal support. Studies, like the one from Sakhi: One Stop Centres in Maharashtra, show that even when cases are filed, outcomes are uncertain and prolonged. These challenges highlight the need for legal reform and sociocultural advocacy. Rules that edge out women from employment for getting married are 'coarse', unconstitutional: Supreme Court

Addressing the plight of deserted women requires a comprehensive policy intervention. Integrating them into State welfare measures and expanding empowerment initiatives through self-help groups (SHGs) are crucial steps. Improving legal literacy through dedicated legal support centres is equally essential. Community support networks and free counseling are needed to address their psychological needs. Expanded access to healthcare and insurance coverage will provide a safety net against economic- and social instability. A formal national institution dedicated to the care of deserted women would ensure uniform policy implementation and recognition of their specific needs. Legal reforms are necessary to expedite processes and remove administrative barriers. Simplifying procedures and enforcing existing legislation are key goals. Organisations such as CORO India and Ekal Stri Sangahtana are working to bring awareness to the plight of single women. Women's rights organisations must continuously challenge and transform the socio-cultural beliefs that marginalise deserted women. The plight of deserted women underscores the need for a more inclusive approach to women's empowerment. Their legal invisibility and socio-economic vulnerability highlight a critical deficiency in current gender-sensitive policymaking. A multi-pronged strategy encompassing legal reform, policy innovation, and grassroots advocacy is essential. Excluding deserted women from the policy narrative is a moral and practical failure that demands urgent correction.

Sharpening India's anti-tuberculosis fight

The omnipresence of tuberculosis (TB) in the pages of history and literature is testimony to how the disease has plagued generations across the world and continues to be a major problem even today. India bears over a quarter of the global TB burden. Political will in India has helped drive a great deal of progress in the fight against the disease. For example, in 2023, addressing the big challenge of 'missed' TB cases, 25.1 lakh patients were diagnosed in India as having TB, highlighting strengthened case finding efforts. However, as we work toward the goal of TB elimination — the Prime Minister has urged citizens to work towards TB elimination — we must look to innovate and deploy proven technologies and tools at our disposal. Regimens and issuesThe first low-hanging fruit that I believe must be invested in urgently is new shorter regimens for drug-resistant TB. It has been encouraging to learn that India will soon introduce the World Health Organization (WHO)-recommended shorter regimen for drug-resistant TB. The current regimens on offer are long and arduous, requiring patients to consume nearly 13 to 14 tablets every day if they are on the shorter nine to 11-month regimen, or four to five tablets every day if they have been put on the 18 to 24 month longer regimen. The treatment is physically and psychologically draining and has severe side effects, such as loss of hearing, and even psychosis.

Moreover, a problem with such an extended treatment regimen that requires



regular visits to a TB clinic for nearly two years is loss of employment, driving many families into poverty. In 2022, WHO recommended the shorter, safer and more effective regimens called BPaLM for all drug-resistant TB patients, and there is a lot of recent data that show this regimen to be more effective with better compliance. With only three to four tablets every day, patients can complete their treatment within six months, with minimal side effects. The success rates of this regimen are also reported to be higher — 89% as compared to the 68% treatment success rate reported in the country in the 2023 India TB Report. Given its efficacy, close to 80 countries around the world have already procured the BPaLM regimen and about 20 of the highest burden countries are already rolling it out.

Research indicates that savings from implementing this regimen will be between 40% to 90% of the cost of current treatment regimens, and that an immediate transition to BPaLM could result in an annual saving of ap-

proximately \$740 million (or approximately ₹6,180 crore) for health systems globally. This is a more effective and safer solution to treat drug-resistant TB and we must work on expediting access to this regimen to all eligible patients across the country. Making the best use of new treatmentsThe next question is this. How do we go about diagnosing more people with TB so that they can benefit from these game-changing new treatments? The answer lies in making sure that we are screening and testing quickly and efficiently to reduce delays in accurate diagnosis. For this, a proactive approach is essential. It is time we modernised and used health datasets, which include GIS mapping, to identify vulnerable populations such as those with comorbidities (for example, malnutrition, diabetes and HIV), former COVID-19 patients, and at-risk communities in slums, prisons, or those who are homeless. Targeted multi-disease focused screening drives can then be conducted to detect TB cases early, even among

those without typical symptoms. In fact, recent evidence highlights that a significant number of people with pulmonary (i.e., lung) TB may not exhibit recognisable symptoms such as cough, fever, weight loss, or night sweats.

The National TB Prevalence Survey (2019-21) highlights the importance of chest X-rays, which detected 42.6% of cases that would have otherwise been missed. Leveraging advancements in technology, portable X-ray machines equipped with AI-driven tools can significantly reduce diagnostic delays, especially in remote and under-resourced areas. Further, there is a critical need to expand the use of rapid molecular tests over less sensitive microscopy methods for faster detection and drug resistance profiling. This shift is crucial in promptly identifying TB cases and determining appropriate treatment options. In short, by proactively identifying at-risk populations and investing in and leveraging advanced/innovative diagnostic technologies,

Caught between the warp and weft of business and life



In name, Akkalkot road falls in an industrial area. But the 4-5-km potholed road, in Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) in Solapur district, is deserted. The factory units, spread across 216 hectares of the industrial area, resemble homes with white rangolis outside each gate. In the quiet afternoon, the only sound is the khat-khat of power looms, bearing testimony to still-running textile industry of the area. Here, 600-700 units operate with about 10 people in each, weaving textile for Solapuri chaddars and towels. Chaddars are used in daily life for everything from a floor spread to a blanket. In his Solapur home Govind Zanwar, 54, who produces bamboo towels now after switching out of the chaddar, says there are many reasons for its decline. Besides a change in customer tastes, cheaper synthetic textiles flooding the market, and the increased cost of production, he ascribes the downfall to the lack of innovation in design. "Aesthetics matter and the chaddar features loud colours. There is scope for a revival, but it will be difficult," he says. Zanwar, who lives in a joint family of Marwaris, who were initially trading in cloth, got into the production of chaddar and towel about 15 years ago. His daughter and son do not want to get into the business, and are looking at careers as professionals in corporate jobs.

In 2005, the jacquard chaddar made from cotton yarn got the Geographical Indication (GI) stamp, an Indian government certification that a particular craft originated in an area. That year, the Geographical Indications Journal, a government document issued for GI tags, had listed at least 15,000 handlooms and power looms operating in Solapur, employing over 2 lakh people, all producing the Solapuri chaddar. In 2004, the journal reports that exports amounted to ₹500-600 crore. Now, only 600-700 looms remain, according to data from the Textile Development Foundation (TDF), an association of manufacturers established in 1995 in Solapur. Exports have grown to ₹800-1,000 crore, as per estimates by an industry expert. The government does not have current figures.

Shrinivas Bura, 59, a textile engineer who worked in a corporate office in Mumbai, and then returned to start Bravo Kids School to train a generation to think independently and like entrepreneurs, is also the founder of TDF. He points out that chaddar production started declining from the year 2000. He blames the government and manufacturers for the downfall. "The government ignored the industry, while the producers failed to innovate. We realised only when external players from Haryana's Panipat captured our chaddar market. Now made-in-China towels are posing a danger to our towels," Shrinivas says, going through old records, covered in dust. He says Haryana producers use synthetic fibres and claim they are cotton.

Pentappa Gaddam, 65, a manufacturer and the president of the Solapur Zilla Yantramag Dharak Sangh (SOZIYA), an association that represents the community's needs to the government, says, "We complained to the government about the duplication, but no one listened to us." The association last complained eight years ago in letters, and has since stopped, since the number of producers has come down. In a grey building in Siddheshwar Nagar, Suraj (name changed to protect privacy), 53, sits in his cramped office surrounded by piles of brightly coloured cotton towels. He is a third-generation producer, who owns 12 power looms operating in two shifts. "We all are working for survival. Forget bringing the next generation into the business. I am working at a 5% margin in towels; earlier it was 20%." He has had to shift from the Solapuri jacquard chaddar to towels, because there is barely any demand for the chaddar any more. Suraj's voice is drowned in the noise of the thanabana (warp-weft) coming together to form cloth. It is Tuesday, the day he pays out weekly wages before the weekly day off on Wednesday. Suraj belongs to the Padmashali community of weavers, who repeat a legend, where people from the community made a piece of cloth from padma tantu (lotus fabric) for Lord Vishnu THEN?. Around 1877, when Solapur's first mill — Solapur Spinning & Weaving Mills — was established, they migrated here from Karimnagar, Warangal, and Siddipet, now in Telangana. It wasn't just about job opportunities, but also to escape the drought in those areas. "We are able to sustain ourselves today only because our past generations built the foundation. We own the land, so we don't take its value into account while pricing products. If we do, we will run into losses," says Siddheshwar Gaddam, 61, the owner of a chaddar and towel factory, and the third generation in the business. His grandparents worked in mills like Jam Mill, Laxmivishnu Mill, and others, which collapsed in the 1950s. They purchased looms at a low price and started small units, becoming self-employed and giving employment to others. "From grey cloth, they shifted to chaddar, and 15 years ago we started with towels, as it had an international market."

Many like Suraj and Siddheshwar have quit manufacturing Solapur chaddar and shifted to towels. Suraj asks, "When Prime Minister Narendra Modi is saying 'go local', why is the government not banning Chinese products." The decline of the Solapur chaddar is also tied to economic growth and a rise status among customers.

Gurubai is lost between the warp and the weft, as she carefully winds thread on the bobbins. Spreading her hands out as she speaks, she says, "I don't know how old I am; maybe 50. I came to Solapur when I got married and started working with the chaddar. I was 15 then." She wears a shirt over her saree, so that the cotton dust doesn't stick to her body and clothes. "It gets itchy," she adds. She earns ₹800 to 1,000 every week for a 12-hour shift, and fears losing her job, because she knows no other work. Some months though, her salary just about pays her medical bills. Her work involves concentration and the use of her eyes, back, and hands. When these body parts ache, she takes an injection to deal with the pain.

Shridhar Gudheli, 48, a member of the labour union associated with the right-wing-politics Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), pointed out that workers don't have uniforms or safety gear, characteristic of informal work in India. He started as a worker, but now he fights for the rights of workers. "The wages were last increased in 2022. Business owners will tell you the market is tight, just to avoid a wage increase," he says. On their lunch break, a group of power loom workers, all in their 30s and 40s, sit under a tree and open their tiffin boxes. They are covered in cotton dust. All the workers were in their late 30s to 40s., covered with

cotton dust. Nagesh Usapoyal, 43, a third generation chaddar maker says, "I rode a cycle yesterday; I am still riding a cycle today. That is us, the textile industry workers." He dusts off cotton threads from his torn brown vest and folded pants. Usapoyal says he earns ₹8,000 a month. Laxman Kusma, 35, is at the managerial position as he is a college graduate, but earns the same amount as a weaver. His work is to manage the weavers and look after the factory in the absence of the owner. Sitting on his bike, Laxman says, "I work double shift. In the morning I deliver milk for ₹250 a day. I come to the factory at around 8 and leave at about 7 in the evening." SOZIYA has been demanding civic facilities like water, smooth roads, drainage lines, a fire unit, and low rates of interest on loans.

The decline of the Solapur chaddar is also tied to economic growth and a rise status among customers. As incomes increase, people migrate from the chaddar to branded bedsheets that arrive in plastic packaging. Plastic mats have taken over from floor seating.

"With the chaddar, washing is problematic, and our product was perceived as a poor man's commodity," says Govind Bura, 57, a manufacturer, and Shrinivas' brother. Today, labourers prefer the towel, and those who have the chaddar say it lasts at least five years, so there are few repeat buyers. Solapur holds a geographically strategic position as it is situated in the southeastern part of Maharashtra.

Manufacturers talk about the fact that Solapur receives water only once every five days, so it's difficult for a water-intensive industry to run. For 1 kg of yarn, 60 litres of water is needed. Currently, the producers use tanker water. "Many shifted to recycled hosiery waste yarn as it is already dyed, which doesn't require water, says Zanwar. SOZIYA has been demanding civic facilities like water, smooth roads, drainage lines, a fire unit, and low rates of interest on loans. District Industries Centre (DIC) officer Santosh Kolte says, "We are aware of the water issue. The work of setting up a new pipeline has been in progress." DIC's job is to take care of Solapur's needs. In his home-balcony office, Ashok Indapure, a trader who commissions goods and sells them on Amazon.in, says, "Solapur Government Polytechnic College discontinued textile-related courses as the students did not opt for the course, given the outdated syllabus." He feels if the Maharashtra State Board of Technical Education (MSBTE) sets up diploma courses it may help. A few mill owners blame politicians for ignoring Solapur, a city of migrants with people who speak Marathi, Telugu, and Kannada. There is also a mix of Hindus and Muslims, preventing politicians from creating religion- and caste-based vote banks. One producer says, "Baramati had Sharad Pawar who made sure the region developed. We had Sushil Kumar Shinde (a former chief minister), but he did not have the political will to do anything."

Solapur holds a geographically strategic position as it is situated in the southeastern part of Maharashtra, bordering Karnataka and a six-hour road ride from Telangana. The textile industry flourished in this area because of train connectivity. "But we needed an upgrade with airline connectivity," says Shrinivas, adding that there has been an airport here for 30 years, but it has been mostly non-operational. The closest international airports are Pune and Hyderabad, both a five-hour drive away. "Buyers from other countries avoid travelling here, as they have to take various modes of transport to reach here."

Charwak Burgul, whose 2,200 square foot unit was started in 1987 by his father, says for any textile-based industry to survive generations, there must at least be a 10% year-on-year growth, so there is a cushion for the bad years. His margins have dropped from 25% WHEN to 10%. To cut the cost of production, manufacturers shifted from power looms to shuttle-less looms in 2010 or so. The speed is high and gives four times the output compared to the power loom, and requires limited manpower. Charwak runs a full-fledged chaddar production unit with 10 power looms and 20 rapiers. "This is our legacy, we have to keep it alive somehow," he says, while walking through rows of power looms that can produce 10 chaddars a day, unlike the rapiers that do double. He claims Solapur is the only place in India where everything from the doubling of yarn (twisting two yarns) and dyeing to the winding (hanks transferred to bobbins) and warping (yarn transferred to beam) is done under one roof. For the towel, the process is the same, with the dyeing being done after weaving. The entire process takes 15 days. The most common sizes are 48x90 inches, 54x90 inches, and 60x90 inches. Charwak has tried to innovate by creating wall hangings, portraits, and bags, but he is unsure of where to find a market. Youth and women in factory leadership are uncommon. Amit Bura, 25, is one of the few who has taken up his father's trade, but he does not see the Solapur chaddar as a profitable business. "We are experimenting with other products. We tried bottle-making but did not succeed. We are exploring other ideas," he says.

Science uncovers how brain interprets artistic beauty

Cambridge: Stand in front of Turner's Sun Rising Over Water (1825-30) and something odd tends to happen. The painting holds you, even though observers might struggle to say why. Maybe it is the colour, the balance, the composition, or the strange stillness the artwork seems to carry.

Whatever it is, you feel it long before you can explain why. And the stranger next to you, looking at the same canvas with the same awe in their eyes, very likely feels it too. We often say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Yet show almost anyone a misty Chinese Song-dynasty mountain landscape, or the softly brushed figure of the Mona Lisa, and nearly everyone agrees that something striking is unfolding before them.

Beauty feels intensely private, and, at the same time, we keep discovering that we collectively share it. That contradiction is one of the longstanding puzzles in "neuroaesthetics" — the science of how the brain responds to art and beauty. How does our sense of beauty actually take shape in the brain? In our latest study, published in Nature Communications, we tried to map that shared experience. We found that instead of representing it as a single entity, the brain instead splits aesthetic experience into two major strands. One strand handles what an image shows, whether a landscape, an object or a figure. The other tracks how much pleasure it gives us, drawing on the same circuits that respond to food or money. These two separate neural systems combine to shape every judgment of beauty we make when viewing visual artworks. Neuroscientists have long argued about this question, from positions that compete as often as they overlap. One camp focuses largely on perception, on how the brain takes in composition, contrast and form.

RBI approves LIC’s plan to acquire up to 9.99% stake in ICICI Bank



New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved state-owned insurer Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to acquire an aggregate holding of up to 9.99 per cent of the paid-up share capital or voting rights in ICICI Bank, the private lender said in a regulatory filing on Saturday.

ICICI Bank said it received a copy of the RBI's approval letter — dated September 4 — at 9:09 pm on the same day. The approval allows LIC to acquire the stake

within one year from the date of the RBI approval letter, failing which the approval will stand cancelled. However, the approval is subject to certain conditions, including compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory provisions, the bank said. Moreover, the central bank's nod does not mean LIC has immediately increased its holding in ICICI Bank to 9.99 per cent. Any acquisition will have to be undertaken in accordance with the conditions laid down by the central bank and other applicable regulatory norms, according to the private bank. In a separate development last month, RBI had approved LIC's application to acquire up to 9.99 per cent of HDFC Bank's paid-up share capital or voting rights. HDFC Bank had said LIC held 4.11 per cent of its total share capital as of August 14. The approval for ICICI Bank gives LIC flexibility to increase its holding in the private sector lender, subject to applicable regulatory and statutory requirements. Shares of LIC on Friday ended at Rs 415.25, a decrease of more than one per cent on the BSE. The stock has touched a 52-week high of Rs 468.30 and a 52-week low of Rs 361, according to the exchange. While ICICI Bank shares closed at Rs 1,423, down 0.14 per cent on the aforesaid exchange. The stock recorded a 52-week high of Rs 1,479.90 and a 52-week low of Rs 1,187.55.

Air India fires pilot who failed dope test after it is flagged by accidents bureau

Shortly after the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) flagged the positive drug test of the pilot-in-command (PIC) of the Air India aircraft that was involved in a sudden altitude loss incident on August 4, the airline announced the termination of the pilot's employment with immediate effect on Friday. "Safety remains Air India's highest priority. The Pilot-in-Command of the Phuket-Delhi flight tested positive for a psychoactive substance. In line with Air India's zero-tolerance approach to violation of safety, fitness or regulatory requirements, the pilot's employment has been terminated with immediate effect," an Air India spokesperson said Friday evening. According to sources, the PIC had tested positive for marijuana.

Friday morning, the AAIB released its preliminary report on the investigation into the incident involving Air India's Airbus A320 aircraft VT-EXO, flying from Phuket to Delhi. While the investigation remains underway and the preliminary report hasn't identified any definitive likely cause, it focussed on a sudden and brief triple hydraulic failure and the 34-year-old PIC's positive drug test report. The AAIB also issued a recommendation to regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to take actions deemed fit to prevent abuse of psychoactive substances. Neither the airline nor the AAIB identified the PIC. According to the AAIB's preliminary report, the PIC has over 5,000 hours of total flying experience of over 5,000 hours, all of which are on the A320 aircraft type. "Detailed investigation regarding technical and other aspects are underway. In this case, it has been observed that the PIC was found non-negative for psycho-active substance in the confirmatory test. The confirmation of use of psycho-active substance is a serious concern and AAIB recommends appropriate actions by DGCA on priority. The preliminary report is published as per ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) guidelines. The investigation is under progress. The final report will be published in due course," the preliminary report said. But it did not say whether or not the purported use of drugs by the pilot-in-command was directly linked to the incident.

The DGCA is already in the process of holding stakeholder consultations to expand the scope of random testing of pilots for drug abuse. The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has mooted a once-a-year random drug test of all pilots, up from the current norm of 10% pilots being tested per year, according to Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu. On August 14, The Indian Express had reported that an initial assessment of the digital flight data recorder (DFDR) data by Airbus had indicated that the aircraft experienced a temporary loss of all three hydraulic systems, which led to loss of key aircraft control surfaces for a few seconds. The AAIB preliminary report has not identified any underlying cause for the rarest-of-rare triple hydraulic failure, and clarity on this count is now expected only when the final investigation report is released. Conduct of the pilots has also been under scanner, particularly in view of the PIC's positive drug test report, which has now been confirmed by the AAIB.

A key question in the investigation will be whether the hydraulic systems actually failed — and if yes, why — or was it a case of spurious signals. Airbus and French aircraft accident investigation body BEA are assisting the AAIB probe. On August 4, the aircraft encountered a sudden altitude drop at cruising altitude over Odisha, resulting in injuries to 20 passengers and four cabin crew members. The aircraft had 137 passengers, six cabin crew members, and two pilots on board. The incident also damaged the aircraft cabin including ceiling panels, overhead bins, and handrails, among others. A series of snags involving the aircraft's hydraulic systems and flight control surfaces have emerged as a key focus area for investigators. According to the preliminary report, some hydraulic components and samples



of VT-EXO have been collected for further analysis following the aircraft's inspection by Airbus technical experts.

Its maintenance records have also been collected by the AAIB from Air India for further scrutiny, and investigators also have the data from the plane's DFDR and cockpit voice recorder. Other pieces of evidence and records collected from the airline, airport authorities, and ATC are also being evaluated. The Airbus A320 aircraft has three independent hydraulic systems — coded green, blue, and yellow — built as a redundancy so that the loss of one such system doesn't result in total loss of hydraulic control. According to the preliminary report, the incident occurred while the aircraft was cruising at 36,000 feet at 09:32:43 am India time, when the aircraft's flight control system detected loss of green hydraulic system. About four seconds later, loss of blue and yellow hydraulic systems were detected, followed by the autopilot getting disengaged. Shortly thereafter, the stall warning triggered for two seconds.

"The Co-Pilot, who was the Pilot Flying (PF) responded and tried to control the prevailing situation. Subsequently, PIC took over the controls. Meanwhile, the aircraft encountered altitude upset. Initially, it gained 372 ft and fell by 292 ft from its assigned FL360 during the event," it stated. "At around 04:02:52 UTC (09:32:52 India time), the Blue hydraulic system was recovered, and a few seconds later, the Yellow hydraulic and the Green hydraulic systems were also recovered. Consequently, this led to the recovery of the Flight control (F/CTL) surfaces. Subsequently, the aircraft operation returned to its normal operating condition," the report stated.

The AAIB noted that since seatbelt signs were off at the time of the incident, some passengers and cabin crew members sustained injuries. "The flight crew assessed the cabin situation and took the decision of continuing the flight to its planned destination i.e. Delhi airport and did not divert to the nearest enroute airport. Later, the flight crew contacted ATC Delhi and sought medical priority. ATC responded accordingly and provided requisite assistance. At 05:30 UTC aircraft landed safely on runway 11 L at IGI airport, Delhi," the report stated. Following the release of the preliminary report, Air India said it continues to extend full cooperation to the investigation, including providing access to all relevant operational, maintenance and technical records. Friday morning, an Air India spokesperson said, "Our pilots undergo rigorous training, regular proficiency checks, medical examinations and other regulatory assessments in accordance with applicable national and international requirements. Following the incident, Air India has started voluntary testing of 100% of its pilots as a further step to reinforce its safety-first approach. The airline maintains zero tolerance for any breach of safety, fitness or regulatory requirements and will take appropriate action wherever warranted. Air India remains committed to implementing any recommendations arising from the investigation."

pend on the price band of the issue. Rival BSE had raised Rs 1,243.43 crore through its public issue back in 2017. The stock has since gained nearly 29 times from its listing price, becoming among the most lucrative stocks in the market. NSE dominates India's equity derivatives market and is the world's most active derivatives exchange by contracts traded. It also leads BSE in terms of revenues, market share, and liquidity. It will also be interesting to see if the regulator allows NSE's shares to trade on its own exchange through the "permitted-to-trade" route. What is the IPO structure? The issue will entirely be an offer for sale (OFS) of 14.89 crore shares, representing around 6% of the exchange's stake. Funds raised via OFS are pocketed by selling shareholders and are not utilised in a company's business. SBI will offload up to 2.48 crore shares in the OFS. MS Strategic (Mauritius) will sell up to 1.6 crore shares. Other major listed entities offloading some of their stakes include Bank of Baroda, General Insurance Company of India, and the New India Assurance Company. Shares of many of these companies have skyrocketed in the run-up to the issue. For example, shares of New India Assurance shot up over 18% on Friday. In fact, the stock has gained 34% over just a month. Having bought shares early on at an average cost of under a rupee, the IPO, which targets high valuations, is expected to unlock significant cash for the likes of SBI, Bank of Baroda, and the insurance companies.

How Gloria Steinem helped change the way women’s health is researched



For much of the 20th century, medical research was conducted largely through a male lens. Women were often excluded from clinical studies, reproductive health was treated as a private matter, and illnesses disproportionately affecting women received comparatively little scientific attention. Gloria Steinem did not create the women's health movement, nor did she single-handedly transform medical research. But as one of feminism's most influential public voices, she helped make women's health a political issue and helped create the pressure for medicine and research institutions to change.

Reproductive rights: Health as a matter of autonomy Steinem's campaign for reproductive rights placed control over women's bodies at the heart of the feminist movement. She argued that access to contraception and abortion was not simply a social or moral question but fundamental to women's equality. That argument helped shift reproductive health from the private sphere into public policy. The growing political movement around reproductive autonomy also encouraged greater attention to contraception, pregnancy, fertility and the health consequences of reproductive decisions. For Steinem, the underlying principle was straightforward: women could not have genuine equality without control over their own bodies.

Menstruation: Breaking the silence Steinem brought another neglected subject into public conversation: menstruation. Her celebrated 1978 essay, "If Men Could Menstruate," used satire to expose the stigma surrounding periods and the cultural tendency to regard women's biology as embarrassing or inconvenient. The essay was more than a feminist joke. By making menstruation discussable, Steinem challenged the silence surrounding menstrual symptoms and disorders. That mattered because conditions associated with menstruation had often been normalised rather than investigated. Her broader message was that women's everyday physical experiences deserved to be taken seriously—and, ultimately, scientifically understood. The women's health movement gave political force to a common complaint: women were not always believed when they described pain.

It helped shift the lens to conditions such as endometriosis, a chronic condition in which tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus, often caus-

ing severe menstrual and pelvic pain, inflammation, and sometimes infertility. Endometriosis can cause severe pelvic pain, infertility and other complications, yet diagnosis has historically been delayed and the disease remains incompletely understood. In fact, earlier this year, Steinem spearheaded conversations around it. By challenging the dismissal of women's bodily experiences, she helped establish the principle that women's pain should be investigated rather than simply endured. That cultural shift helped create an environment in which neglected conditions could become legitimate research priorities. Challenging the male model of medicine Perhaps Steinem's most important contribution was challenging the assumption that medical knowledge derived from men could simply be applied to women. By the 1970s and 1980s, women's health advocates were exposing the consequences of women's underrepresentation in research. The issue was not merely fairness: biological differences could affect symptoms, disease progression, drug responses and treatment outcomes. In 1986, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the US agency for biomedical and public-health research, introduced a policy encouraging the inclusion of women in clinical research. In 1990, it established the Office of Research on Women's Health, giving women's health a permanent institutional presence within the nation's leading biomedical research agency.

The Women's Health Initiative The new emphasis on women's health produced large-scale research. In 1991, the NIH launched the Women's Health Initiative, ultimately enrolling more than 150,000 postmenopausal women. The programme investigated major causes of illness and death among women, including cardiovascular disease, cancer and osteoporosis, while also examining the effects of hormone therapy and dietary interventions. Its scale was significant not simply because of the findings it produced, but because it demonstrated that women's health questions warranted major, long-term scientific investment.

The movement's influence eventually became embedded in federal policy. The 1993 NIH Revitalization Act required women and minorities to be included in NIH-supported clinical research and required researchers to examine whether treatments affected different populations differently. This represented a fundamental change. Women's participation in research was no longer merely encouraged as a matter of representation; it became part of the structure of federally funded clinical science. Steinem's most important contribution to women's health research was, therefore, indirect but profound. She helped turn women's experiences — from reproductive choices to menstruation and bodily pain — into subjects of public debate and demands for institutional accountability. Her enduring message was ultimately a scientific one as much as a political one: Women's experiences are evidence, women's health questions deserve investigation, and women's bodies cannot be understood adequately by treating men as the default patient.

Living with Type 1 diabetes since age 7, he overcame limits to become a cyclist



During a recent visit to India, Dacal met Dr V Mohan, founder-chairman of Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre, and spoke about the realities of living with the condition. During a recent visit to India, Dacal met Dr V Mohan, founder-chairman of Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre, and spoke about the realities of living with the condition. When Brais Dacal was seven, he was told that his life would have to be different. Diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at that age, the Spanish cyclist remembers being advised to lead an easy life and avoid pushing himself too hard. For a child with dreams of sport, it could easily have become a sentence of limitation.

Instead, Dacal chose to test those limits. Years later, he would go on to become a professional cyclist, spending five seasons with Team Novo Nordisk, a team whose riders all live with diabetes. Although he no longer races professionally, Dacal remains one of the team's prominent ambassadors, travelling to speak about his experiences of competing at the highest level while managing Type 1 diabetes.

"I have always believed that I should own my diabetes, rather than let it own me," Dacal says. "Living with Type 1 diabetes has added an extra layer of discipline, anticipation and courage to my cycling career and to life in general." During a recent visit to India, Dacal met Dr V Mohan, founder-chairman of Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre, and spoke about the realities of living with the condition. For him, the message to children with Type 1 diabetes is straightforward: a diagnosis should not mean giving up on their ambitions. He encouraged them to continue pursuing their dreams — and, in his words, to strive to become champions. For Dr Mohan, that message is particularly powerful because children often need to see possibilities rather than simply hear about them. "We have several children who are living with Type 1 diabetes and have excelled in their fields," he says. "Hence, those living with the condition are often able to relate more closely to others who have undergone similar symptoms, challenges and emotions." That is where peer support becomes important, he says. Sharing experiences with others who understand the daily demands of the condition can provide reassurance and a sense of belonging, while reminding people with diabetes that they are not alone. For Dacal, however, managing diabetes has never been about simply overcoming a medical condition. It has been about learning to live with it — and planning for it — without allowing it to take over.

Professional cycling is demanding even for a healthy athlete. For someone living with Type 1 diabetes, a long, steady ride does not place the same demands on the body as a short, intense effort. Insulin requirements, food intake and blood glucose levels have to be considered before the cyclist even gets on the bike. "For example, long and steady rides will require different insulin and food intake than short and intense rides," Dacal says.

His approach is methodical. He follows his doctor's advice, trains, records his blood sugar levels and keeps

track of what he has done. Then he studies the results and adjusts. "I keep learning through trial and error," he says. Preparation extends to what he carries on the bike. Extra food is essential to maintain carbohydrate intake during exercise and to deal with possible hypoglycaemia or low blood sugar levels. Insulin has to be available in case of hyperglycaemia or high blood sugar level.

"The most important thing is to be prepared for anything that can happen," he says. The same philosophy applies when he travels. Different countries mean different foods, schedules and temperatures — variables that can complicate diabetes management. "Again, it is about planning ahead and prevention," Dacal says. "You need to learn about the foods you will find, plan your trips and always have a Plan B." His version of a Plan B is deliberately generous. "I carry enough supplies to cover a couple of end-of-the-world situations," he says. Dacal's years as a professional cyclist also taught him that elite sport cannot be separated from health. "An unhealthy athlete will never be a good athlete," he says. While managing Type 1 diabetes is only one part of the equation, eating well, recovering properly, avoiding illness and monitoring the body are equally important. The difference at the professional level is that pushing the body to its limits is deliberate. Training loads, weight loss and harder efforts are not left to chance. They are planned with coaches and medical professionals. "If we need to lose weight, we plan it along with the medical staff and the coaches. If we need to go harder, again, we plan it well. We don't do random," he says. For all the emphasis on pushing boundaries, Dacal is equally clear about the importance of knowing when to rest. "Working more does not translate into results if you are not effective and efficient, or if you do not take enough rest," he says. For an athlete managing Type 1 diabetes, listening to the body becomes even more critical. Today, Dacal's career has moved beyond racing. As the general manager of a large sports organisation, he spends much of his time travelling, managing people and juggling different responsibilities. His days are no longer structured entirely around training but the principles remain familiar: plan ahead, stay flexible and pay attention to what the body is saying. Dacal's visit to India also gave him an opportunity to reflect on the future of cycling in the country. He sees enormous potential in India's growing interest in professional cycling and hopes the sport will become increasingly visible on the international stage. "Without health, there is nothing you can do to perform, no matter what the discipline," he says.

ECLGS 5.0 issues 6.73 lakh guarantees worth Rs 2.5 lakh crore

New Delhi: Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0 has issued 6,73,979 guarantees covering a guaranteed amount of Rs 2,50,024 crore, an official factsheet said on Saturday. Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) accounted for 97.3 per cent of guarantees by number and 80.79 per cent of the total value. Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme 5.0, implemented by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company, provides targeted credit guarantees to Member Lending Institutions to extend additional working capital to eligible borrowers affected by external disruptions. It supports MSMEs, eligible non-MSME businesses and scheduled passenger airlines through government-backed guarantees.

‘They shouldn’t have closed the door on Mohammed Shami’



It has been 545 days since Mohammed Shami last played for India. It has been 1,182 days since he last did it in a Test, steaming in with that rhythmic run-up and smooth action, seam upright, making the ball talk the way only he can. Since then, the wickets haven’t stopped. Just not for India. Ranji Trophy, Duleep Trophy, empty stands, different corners of the country, Shami has kept turning up and kept taking wickets, toiling away with every door to the dressing room seemingly shut. He isn’t giving up. Unlike some of his younger, similarly exiled peers, he hasn’t retreated into the IPL alone. At 36, the fire is still there, still asking questions of batsmen, still reminding the selectors he exists, just in case an opening appears out of nowhere. On Sunday, when he walks out for East Zone in the Duleep Trophy final against South Zone at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, it will be his 100th first-class match. A number that says everything about how long he has kept doing this without an audience that matters to selectors.

His captain has noticed. Whenever East Zone have needed a wicket, in the quarterfinal against North East Zone, in the semifinal against Central Zone, Ishan Kishan says Shami would ask for the ball himself. Not sulking about the omission. Not turning his back on the system that made him. Mohammed Shami Bengal Bengal pacer Mohammed Shami holds up the ball in celebration after claiming a five-wicket haul on the fourth day of the Ranji Trophy match against Gujarat, at Eden Gardens, Kolkata,

Which leads to the obvious question. Why?

Bharat Arun, the former India bowling coach who knows Shami as well as anyone, has an answer. “He loves bowling,” Arun tells The Indian Express. “It doesn’t matter whether it is in the nets or in the middle of a game. You give him the red ball, or any ball for that matter, he would mark his run-up and start bowling.” Arun remembers trying to manage Shami’s workload during his time with the Indian team, and mostly failing. “Some days he would turn up at

the nets and say ‘I don’t want to bowl’. But in a matter of a few minutes, he would grab the ball and start bowling. And then you can’t stop him unless he bowls for 45 minutes to one hour. So that’s what makes Shami. He loves bowling irrespective of where he is.” Eventually Arun found only one method that worked. “So the best way to stop Shami from bowling is, before he leaves the hotel, I will ensure he doesn’t wear his spikes to the ground.” The spikes are the tell. Shami and his spikes are inseparable, the way a Bharatanatyam dancer is inseparable from her anklets, the start of the same rhythmic act.

“If he wears the spikes, then you know he is in the mood to bowl,” Arun says. “He doesn’t talk much or share his emotional side, but he is someone who takes immense pride in being the fast bowler with the best seam position in the world.” That pride survived the thing that should have ended his career. At the 2023 World Cup, Shami took 23 wickets in seven matches at an average of 10.70, before an ankle injury and the surgery that followed took nearly a year away from him. He came back to deliver the 2025 Champions Trophy, and has lived on the domestic circuit since. “At the start, he used to try a lot. But he kept learning. And once he realised the seam position is his strength, he just worked around it. He started relishing making batsmen uncomfortable with his movements,” Arun says.

Mohammad shami India australia Mohammed Shami of India during the 2nd ODI match between India and England held at the Barabati Stadium, Cuttack, India on the 9th February 2025. (Sportzpics) It was never supposed to last this long. When Shami first appeared on the scene, there were doubts about whether he’d sustain it, given how late he’d come to organised coaching, well past his teenage years. The answer was written into his body before it showed up in his numbers. In Sahaspur, he ran on ploughed agricultural fields to build the endurance that carries him, at 36, into his hundredth first-class match, still bowling long spells for a East Zone side chasing its first Duleep Trophy title since 2012-13. “As a captain, looking at the effort, I felt very nice, because Shami bhai coming in, asking me for those extra overs to get the wickets, it always gives confidence,” Ishan says. “Looking at Shami bhai this season, I feel he has been very different. I’ve seen him in the past, but his approach towards the game, his intensity, his energy has been very different. When you are not regularly playing for the Indian team and to again have that same kind of motivation for your domestic games, it is tough but I feel I see that hunger in him. I think he has that hunger and that motivation right now like he wants to do that comeback, he wants to be part of Indian squad again and which you can see in him.”

Uruguay announce star-studded squad for India match in Kolkata

GNS News Agency, Sept 7

Uruguay coach Diego Forlan on Saturday announced a star-studded squad for the October 6th friendly vs India in Kolkata with Real Madrid’s Federico Valverde and former Liverpool striker Darwin Nunez headlining. The match is a part of a high-profile series of international friendlies which India will play in September-October, which also includes clashes with 5-time world champions Brazil and Panama in October 3 and September 25 respectively. “The announcement comes at the beginning of a new chapter for Uruguay following Marcelo Bielsa’s departure, with legendary former striker Diego Forlan taking charge of the senior national team and the Under-20 side,” said All India Football Federation (AIFF) in a statement.

“Now, as Uruguay’s head coach, Forlan faces a new challenge as he prepares his side for the upcoming clash against India. With established stars such as Valverde, Nunez, Araujo and Gimenez featuring alongside a new generation of talent, Uruguay’s September-October window promises to offer an early glimpse into Forlan’s vision for the next chapter of La Celeste,” the statement added. Valverde is among several marquee names in the Uruguay squad, which also includes Rodrigo Bentancur, Lucas Torreira, Giorgian de Arrascaeta, Facundo Pellistri, Maximiliano Araujo and Brian Rodriguez. The defence boasts plenty of international experience, with Ronald Araujo, Jose Maria Gimenez, Nahitan Nandez, Guillermo Varela, Mathias Olivera and Sebastian Caceres named in the squad.

Santiago Mele, Cristopher Fiermarin and Ignacio de Arruabarrena are the three goalkeeping options, while the attack features Nunez, along with Miguel Merentiel, Rodrigo Aguirre, Federico Vinas, Martin Satriano and Alvaro Rodriguez. The match in Kolkata will also mark Forlan’s



first assignment at the helm of Uruguay, with the former World Cup star taking charge of the national side as coach. Forlan, who has played in India before as part of the Indian Super League (ISL) outfit Mumbai City FC is also 2010 FIFA World Cup Golden Ball winner and 2011 Copa America champion.

Defenders: Kevin Amaro, Jose Luis Rodriguez, Guillermo Varela, Nahitan Nandez, Santiago Mourino, Nicolas Marichal, Ronald Araujo, Alexander Barboza, Jose Maria Gimenez, Juan Rodriguez, Sebastian Boselli, Santiago Bueno, Sebastian Caceres, Mathias Olivera, Joaquin Piquerez, Lucas Olaza, Marcelo Saracchi, Juan Manuel Sanabria. Midfielders: Emiliano Martinez, Lucas Torreira, Rodrigo Bentancur, Facundo Bernal, Santiago Homenchenko, Federico Valverde, Agustin Canobbio, Matias Abaldo, Facundo Pellistri, Luciano Rodriguez, Maximiliano Araujo, Lucas Villalba, Brian Rodriguez, Rodrigo Zalazar, Diego Rossi, Giorgian de Arrascaeta. Forwards: Martin Satriano, Agustin A. Martinez, Rodrigo Aguirre, Federico Vinas, Miguel Merentiel, Darwin Nunez, Alvaro Rodriguez.

Serena and Venus Williams crash out of US Open after dramatic tiebreaker



GNS News Agency, Sept 7

Serena and Venus Williams crashed out of the US Open women’s doubles event after blowing up a 5-0 lead in the tiebreaks to lose to Hao-Ching Chan and Maya Joint in the first round of the season-ending Grand Slam which the sisters have won twice as a team. Serena made a return to tennis this year at the age of 44 while elder sister Venus has continued to play on the tour at 46. It was the first US Open match since 2022 for the pair.

The Williams sisters clawed their way back in the final set and the match to force a 10-point match tiebreaker after being down 4-1 at one stage. But in the tiebreaker, they were leading 5-0, before losing the match 6-3, 6-7 (6), 7-6 (10-7) to Chan and Joint. The momentum the pair had gained in the third set and in the first half of the tiebreaks was squandered when they both double-faulted in the second half of the tiebreaker. The Williams sisters were supposed to play women’s doubles at Wimbledon earlier this year, but had to pull out after Serena injured her knee in her singles defeat to Joint.

“I think the crowd is pretty much what we expected. We expected a full stadium, everyone cheering for them, which, pretty much was that,” Joint said after the victory over the Williams sisters. “But the atmosphere is something that, yeah, it’s super special. Not really going to get again with many other players.” The match was played under the bright spotlight of the Arthur Ashe Stadium in the night session, a spot unheard of for first-round doubles matches. At the Grand Slam held in New York, the Williams sisters had won in 1999 and 2009. Friday night’s defeat brings their record at the season-ending Grand Slam to 27-8 in their 10 appearances.

Shreyas Iyer (C) of India with teammates during the 2nd T20 International match between India and Ireland at the Civil Service Cricket Club in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on June 28, 2026. Asian Games Shreyas Iyer (C) of India with teammates during the 2nd T20 International match between India and Ireland at the Civil Service Cricket Club in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on June 28, 2026. India’s decision to name a full-strength team for the forthcoming three-match T20I series against Afghanistan, even before four squad members have attained full fitness, has raised eyebrows.

The BCCI’s national selection committee picked pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Nitish Kumar Reddy and Washington Sundar for a return during India’s

Ricky Ponting’s bold rebrand to woo US fans to sport



Despite USA being the co-host of the T20 World Cup in 2024 where its cricket team scored an upset win over Pakistan in the group stage to advance to the Super 8s, cricket still finds itself among emerging sports in the USA. While the nation has a league like Major League Cricket, cricket in general is yet to find a major foothold in the country. Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting believes rebranding cricket as T20 in the USA will work in a country like the USA.

“If I was bringing it here wholly and solely to sell and promote the game, I wouldn’t call it cricket. It’d just be rebranded as T20 (Twenty20 cricket) only. Leave the cricket thing aside. As soon as young people hear cricket in parts of the world where they’re not brought up on the game, they think about it being a long, drawn-out, five-day game, and it’s not that. I would compare it to baseball as much as I could and give kids that chance to understand you’re hitting 15 sixes per game in a game of T20 cricket, but you are hitting less than one home run a game in the game of baseball,” Ponting told The Athletic. When asked about how ODI

and Test cricket could also be promoted in the USA, Ponting was cynical.

“Not in a market like this, where you’re trying to have a sport emerge and break through. I’ve got no worry about that at all. I love the game of Test cricket. I played a lot more Test cricket than I played T20, but I’m working a lot on the T20 game now,” said Ponting. Major League Cricket was started in 2023 and currently sees a total of six city-based franchises play in a six-week-long tournament hosted in California and Texas. Despite all teams not having home venues, the league still draws big names as investors with Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen apart from India’s Ambani family as owners of a MLC team. The league, which will expand to eight teams in coming years, is also seeing participation of players like Steve Smith. Ponting, who is the head coach of Washington Freedom, shared how the growth of cricket in the USA has been slower than he expected. “One of the reasons I got involved in MLC at the start was because I wanted to be here in the USA and be part of the growth, and it’s just been a little slower than I would have liked. I don’t think they’ve been active enough in getting out there and promoting it at the grassroots level,” said Ponting. The former Australian captain also spoke about how more kids can be poached away from a game like baseball at a young age. “There are more kids we can get involved with at a young age and we can start poaching some kids away from baseball to play T20. That’s where it’s got to go if we want the game to really grow quickly here in the US, tapping into the entertainment package that T20 provides. If you compare it to a game of baseball, they’re similar lengths of time, but you’ve got so much more happening in T20 cricket than baseball,” said Ponting.

‘Nothing’s changed’: Hayden on chaos in Pakistan cricket



Over the last week, Pakistan cricket has once again courted chaos after seven players, including Muhammad Rizwan, were released along with head coach Sarfraz Ahmed and assistant coach Umar Gul following the team’s loss against England in the second Test at Lord’s. Former Australian opener Matthew Hayden, who has been the batting coach as well as a team mentor for Pakistan in the past, has said that nothing has changed in Pakistan cricket and that players are always under pressure.

“I really enjoy and enjoyed my time working with Pakistan. Nothing’s changed, though. You know, that is always the trouble. That’s not an environment, you know; a pressure cooker is an environment for the middle, not for all the other peripheral things that happen outside. And it’s just too difficult an environment to be consistent because this is the formula,” Hayden said on the Wisden Cricket podcast. Hayden had worked with Pakistan ahead of the

2021 ICC T20 World Cup as batting coach. The Babar Azam-led team reached the semi-finals before they lost to Australia by five wickets. The following year, Hayden worked as a mentor with Pakistan for the ICC T20 World Cup, and the team reached the finals. “Pakistan are always dark horses, because their natural talent is phenomenal. I mean, anyone who can see athletic ability can see that Pakistan has an abundance of it. The trouble is, it never gets focussed because it’s never allowed to get focussed. It’s always in chaos. They’re always standing on one toe, let alone two feet. So there’s no grounding. And that’s, you know, something that I did enjoy doing in the short time that I was with Pakistan. It’s just getting things back on an even keel and not so frantic. So it’s very difficult for them,” added Hayden.

Post the Lord’s loss, Pakistan dropped Muhammad Rizwan, Imam-ul-Haq, Salman Ali Agha, Ali Usman, Khurram Shahzad, Aamir Jamal and Muhammad Awais Jafar. Jamal and Jafar did not play in the first two Tests of the three-match series and were sent home without playing in the series. “Pakistan is that like the West Indies, who I specially mentioned, I would especially mention Pakistan as well, because you’ve got 350 million people in one country that adore cricket and yet every opportunity, cricket doesn’t allow cricket to get played. And that old saying, it’s just not cricket that is so important for this conversation with Pakistan. Because if you allow Pakistan and Pakistan allows Pakistan to just play freely and with trust, then they’ll take on anyone as simple as that because purely their athletic ability like the West Indies is supreme,” said Hayden.

Why Hayden believes Dinesh Karthik would be ‘really good choice’ as CSK coach



After Stephen Fleming ended his long-term association with Indian Premier League (IPL) side Chennai Super Kings (CSK) earlier this year to join England as head coach, the five-time IPL winners are still without a head coach. While names like former England captain Eoin Morgan are doing the rounds, former Australian opener and CSK star Matthew Hayden has once again battled for Royal Challengers Bengaluru batting coach and mentor Dinesh Karthik for the CSK role, pointing at Karthik’s local connection with Chennai being the biggest factor.

“Well, I feel like Dinesh Karthik would be a really good choice for CSK. He has been kind of under the tutelage of other world-class coaches, including names like Andy Flower, for example, who have had very successful playing and coaching careers. But being a local Tamil boy, I feel like that is a really important piece. It’s not a must have, but for Tamil Nadu cricket in particular, I just felt like CSK has always been backed by the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association. So I feel like some local flavour would be the next best

step for CSK,” Hayden said while speaking on Wisden Cricket podcast. Chennai Super Kings won their fifth IPL title in 2023 but finished eighth in the points table the previous IPL season with MS Dhoni not playing a single match. With the Ruturaj Gaikwad-led side not qualifying for the play-offs, it was a disappointing campaign for the side. Hayden explained how any foreign coach with an IPL side faces the language barrier and how having Karthik as the head coach would benefit CSK.

“CSK notoriously picks from afar. You know, they drive over fish to get to fish. There have been very few players that have actually come from Tamil Nadu itself. They play everywhere else. But, I mean, our side at Gujarat (Titans), it’s full of Tamil boys, which we love because they love the game. The one thing I’ll say is it’s very difficult to be a foreign coach in the IPL as well. I give great credit to those that do it because there are some natural language barriers, especially not so much the seasoned campaigners and veterans of Indian cricket, but which sides are littered with. But to have that impact with the next level players, where it’s difficult to communicate at times, is a little frustrating. So having that local element that can be almost a translator, who can manage up and manage down with no language barriers, I think that’s a big factor in the IPL,” said Hayden. Earlier, former Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin had spoken about former England captain Eoin Morgan taking over as CSK coach. “I have a feeling Eoin Morgan might be coming. His name is doing the rounds strongly. Early discussions are on, no doubt. In this, two scenarios: Eoin Morgan - will he take it this year? Or someone else builds the team in a mini auction, and he takes it later?” Ashwin said on his YouTube show Ash ki Baat.

Former captain slams full-strength T20I squad selection for AFG series

unique ‘away’ series against Afghanistan in Delhi, starting September 13. The same contingent will also travel to defend India’s gold medal at the Asian Games in Japan later this month. However, former India captain Krishnamachari Srikkanth has criticised the decision to field a full-strength squad for the three-match series against Afghanistan. Srikkanth claimed that the team management is apprehensive of the results after India suffered twin series defeats under Shreyas Iyer in Ireland and England, losing all six completed matches on the tour. A second-string unit then blanked Zimbabwe 3-0 in July.

“After the series losses in Ireland and England, the selectors have decided not to take a chance and picked a full-strength squad for Afghanistan. They are going all guns

blazing, but this is a mistake. It’s against teams like Afghanistan that you should try out youngsters. Instead, you’ve picked a full-strength squad out of fear,” Srikkanth said on his YouTube channel. “It feels like a desperation move after the Ireland and England losses. But this squad is almost the same as the one they picked for England.” Srikkanth also questioned the inclusion of Bumrah, Rana, Reddy and Sundar without proving their match fitness. “These four have not proved match-fitness. So on what basis are they subject to fitness? Just because you prove your fitness at the Bengaluru CoE, are you fit? That’s how Harshit Rana went to England, and then what happened to him there? So match-fitness is important,” said Srikkanth. “This is not a question of ability.

‘Young Amitabh’ Mayur Verma quit Bollywood to follow wife’s dream, now runs restaurants



There are some people who seem destined for one particular path, and then there are those who manage to take on multiple roles in a single lifetime. Very few succeed at each of them. Such is the story of Raj Mayur Verma, who entered Bollywood as a child actor, found fame as ‘young Amitabh Bachchan’, became one of the highest-paid child artistes of his time, went on to become one of the founding members of Amitabh Bachchan’s TV Asia, and is now a successful entrepreneur running multiple restaurants in the UK. He is also the actor who played Abhimanyu in BR Chopra’s iconic Mahabharat—a role that was initially offered to Govinda and Chunky Pandey. Yet, at the height of his career, Verma chose to walk away from the limelight and move to Wales to give his children a quieter, more ordinary life.

Raj’s journey as Master MayurBorn to Sneha Latha Verma, a well-known figure in Indian theatre and the writer of Rekha-starrer Mangal Sutra, Raj was introduced to cinema by his mother at 11 when he desired to act after watching an Amitabh Bachchan film.

Speaking to Prasara Bharati, Mayur Verma said, “Much before entering the film industry, I was a stage actor. I started at the age of three. You won’t believe it, but even before I was born, my mother had decided that her son would become an actor. Since she was a playwright, she often wrote roles for me. At five, I did my television debut.” Mayur made his film debut in the 1978 blockbuster Muqaddar Ka Sikandar. He was subsequently cast as the younger version of Amitabh Bachchan in films such as Laawaris and Bemisaal. He also played the younger version of Rajesh Khanna in Red Rose. Master Mayur, Rashid Lakdawala (who presents the movie), actor Amitabh Bachchan, producer Shanti Chopra, director M Hanif and Bashir Ahmed (producer of Raste Aur Riste) on the set of BR Chopra film AMAR MILUN.. Express archive photo Master Mayur, Rashid Lakdawala, actor Amitabh Bachchan, producer Shanti Chopra, director M Hanif and Bashir Ahmed.

For Mayur, Red Rose proved to be an important turning point as it established his ability to play characters beyond the image of a young Amitabh Bachchan. “This film bagged me multiple awards and also proved that there is more to me than just being typecast as Young Amitabh Bachchan. It proved that I am not just a look-alike of a young Big B, but also a good actor,” Mayur told Mukesh Khanna on his YouTube channel Bheeshm International. A few years after his debut, Mayur was introduced as a teenage hero in Harsh Kohli’s Love in Goa (1983). However, the film failed at the box office. He subsequently appeared in films featuring stars such as Dilip Kumar and Jeetendra, eventually reaching an age where he could neither comfortably play younger versions of actors nor take on older roles.

At this stage, his mother began worrying about his future. She wanted to keep him close to the film industry, fearing that a prolonged break could lead him towards bad habits. It was then that Amitabh Bachchan played an important role in shaping Mayur’s career. “When my mother approached Amitabh Bachchan for his suggestion, as we shared a very close bond with each other’s families, he suggested that I assist directors on set,” Mayur recalled.

Film star Mayur Verma. Express archive photo Following Bachchan’s advice, Mayur joined filmmaker Prakash Mehra as an assistant director on Namak Halaal. “From being the star of a film to becoming someone standing outside an actor’s makeup room, the transition was huge, but I started to enjoy the process,” he said. When Mayur made the impossible possible after assisting Prakash Mehra on several projects, Mayur developed an interest in directing and wanted to create his own show. His determination eventually landed him the opportunity to direct Variety, India’s first video magazine, for Lehren. However, getting the show off the ground was not easy. The producers at Lehren were initially hesitant until Mayur made a bold promise: he would bring Amitabh Bachchan to launch his show. The promise was easier said than done, considering Bachchan was not known to feature in videos of this kind at the time. “They asked me, ‘You very casually mentioned the names of Amitabh Bachchan and other stars, but have they even

confirmed to you that they will be part of your show?’” Mayur recalled. An ambitious and determined Mayur replied, “They haven’t confirmed, but they won’t refuse me either.” Film star Mayur Verma. Express archive photo Film star Mayur Verma. He was confident about the relationships he had built within the industry since making his debut in 1978. But the biggest challenge remained convincing Bachchan. “It was an impossible task. It was famously known that he doesn’t do videos, especially because a lot of his filmmaker friends had ventured into TV and he knew that making a video for one person would make him obliged to do it for others too,” Mayur said. Nevertheless, Mayur took up the challenge. He went straight to Bachchan’s house and tried to convince him. “It was my emotional blackmail and his love for me. I blackmailed him that if he wouldn’t star, I would never take up direction,” he said.

Bachchan eventually agreed to feature in the video. However, there was another hurdle. He was shooting for Khuda Gawah and was not supposed to reveal his look from the film before its release. Mayur, however, had another advantage. He was close to Khuda Gawah producer Manoj Desai, who not only gave him permission to use Mehboob Studio but also allowed him to film Bachchan in his Khuda Gawah look. The project marked Mayur’s debut as a director. Soon, Variety featured several leading actors and became a stepping stone to the next phase of his career.

When Big B sent him to the UK The show eventually helped take Mayur to the UK. Around the same time, Amitabh Bachchan and his brother Ajitabh Bachchan had launched TV Asia for South Asians in the UK. Mayur became the host of The Breakfast Show, where he interviewed personalities from entertainment, sports, business and politics. He soon became a familiar face among South Asian audiences in the UK. During this period, he interviewed personalities including Imran Khan, Joseph Carvo, Rahul Roy, Bappi Lahiri, Dev Anand and Hariharan, among others. Around the same time, he took on the role of Abhimanyu in BR Chopra’s iconic television series Mahabharat. Mayur as Abhimanyu Mayur as Abhimanyu in BR Chopra’s Mahabharat.

“This role was first offered to Govinda, followed by Chunky Pandey. It was because of Goofy Paital sir that I could bag this role. If it wasn’t for his casting, I wouldn’t have gotten the role,” Mayur said. After acting in Mahabharat and hosting The Breakfast Show for TV Asia along with In the Hot Seat, and Bombay Calling, Mayur continued to work across television and content, creating programmes for Zee TV, B4U and Sony TV. In 1991, he also successfully bought his first property in the UK. However, around 2007, Mayur made a decision that would change the course of his life. After years of being in front of the camera, he chose to leave the limelight behind and lead a quieter life.

He moved to Wales with his wife Noori and mother Sneha Latha. “Long ago, I had come to Wales for a holiday when I wished to have a house here. I wanted to live a simple life among original people. I wanted to give a quiet life to my children. I didn’t want to wait until my retirement to move to something so beautiful. Soon, I discussed it with my wife and mother, and without a second thought, we moved,” he recalled.

Mayur is now the owner of multiple restaurants in the UK. After leaving the film industry, Mayur and his wife started an Indian restaurant in Wales, supporting Noori’s dream of becoming a professional chef. “It is called Indiana Cuisine. I often used to get bothered when star’s wives are identified by the star’s name, but what about their individuality? That’s when I thought it was time Noori followed her dream, while I became her support system. Noori is a gifted cook as her father was a chef,” Mayur said. The restaurant has now been running for over two decades. It was originally located in Fairbourne but was relocated two years ago to Macdonald Plas Talgarth Resort in Pwllheli, near Machynlleth.

Speaking about his transformation and decision to leave acting, Mayur told North Wales Live, “I was at the peak of my acting career in London in 2007. I couldn’t even walk down the street without being recognised. But I was very sure that I did not want my children to see me as someone larger than life. So we moved to North Wales where nobody knew who I was.” He added, “Both of our children started their education in North Wales and I was embraced by the lovely Welsh community when we first arrived in 2007. Well, it’s been one heck of a journey since then.” According to Raj’s LinkedIn profile, the couple also runs a cafe in Abergynolwyn. Mayur couldn’t complete his education, but has no regrets.

With acting becoming his passion from a young age, Mayur eventually could not complete his studies. “I have completed just higher secondary. I was never interested in studies. I was more focused on manners and ethics,” he told Prasara Bharti. Even before he decided to move away from acting, Mayur believed that formal education was not the only route to financial success. “If you have a smart brain, then you can use it to do business,” he said. Today, Raj and Noori continue to live in Wales with their children. From a child actor sharing screen space with Bollywood’s biggest stars to an actor in Mahabharat, a television presenter, director and eventually a restaurateur, Raj Mayur Verma’s journey has taken him through several lives—and he seems to have found his happiest chapter away from the spotlight.

Hyderabad: Four promising Indian junior pickleball players — Aadya Vinod, Keerthi YS, Anjali Bhupendra Pol and Stuti — have earned invitations to compete at the 2026 Junior Pickleball World Championships following their medal-winning performances at the Asia Pickleball Junior Open 2026.

The invitation, extended by the Asia Federation of Pickleball (AFP), gives the medalists an opportunity to compete on the global stage at the Junior Pickleball World Championships, scheduled to be held from November 5 to 8, 2026, at Brookhaven Country Club in Dallas, Texas.

Aadya Vinod and Keerthi YS secured bronze in the Girls Doubles 12U category at the Asia Pickleball Junior Open 2026. Meanwhile, Anjali Bhupendra Pol and Stuti emerged as champions in the Girls Doubles 18U category. The AFP invitation provides the medalists with exclusive benefits, including registration discounts, free access to a youth clinic led by PPA Tour professionals, courtside tickets and the opportunity to participate in player development initiatives. The World Championships will fea-

ture 12U, 14U, 16U and 18U divisions. “This is a proud moment for Indian pickleball and, more importantly, for our young athletes who are showing that India has the talent and potential to compete at the highest levels of the sport. Aadya, Keerthi, Anjali and Stuti have earned this opportunity through their performances, dedication and hard work. Competing at the Junior Pickleball World Championships will give them invaluable international exposure and experience, and I am confident that they will represent India with pride. We hope their journey inspires many more young players across the country to take up pickleball and dream bigger.” The Junior Pickleball World Championships will bring together young players from across the world, offering the Indian contingent an opportunity to gain valuable international tournament experience and compete against some of the best junior talent globally. The event will also feature a USA vs Asia Junior Showcase, with two boys and two girls from Asia selected to compete against four players from the USA in a team-style competition, which will be livestreamed on Pickleball TV.

‘It’s shocking’: Isha Rikhi breaks silence after announcing separation from Badshah



Punjabi actor Isha Rikhi has spoken out after she and rapper Badshah confirmed their separation, urging the media and public not to believe unverified claims about the details of their personal lives. In a statement shared on Instagram, Isha said she was shocked to see reports about her marriage and urged people to rely only on information shared by her directly or through her official social media accounts. Isha’s statement comes just days after she and Badshah confirmed that they had mutually decided to part ways. It also comes amid growing speculation about her possible participation in Bigg Boss 20, after a new promo featuring a mystery female contestant left viewers convinced that the blurred face belongs to the actor.

Isha Rikhi addresses reports related to her separation. Taking to Instagram on Saturday afternoon, Isha addressed the reports doing the rounds about her marriage and separation. However, rather than revealing details about what happened between her and Badshah, she made it clear that she did not want unverified information about her personal life to be circulated. She wrote, “There are many rumours circulating about my marriage. Its shocking to hear and read the news reports appearing in certain quarters. I request certain sections of the media not to spread any rumours regarding my marriage or separation. I also urge the general public not to believe anything they read or hear unless the information comes directly from me or through

How Steve Jobs led 21-year-old Anupriya Nagar to produce Rs 100-crore hit Hanuman Ansh



What makes the story even more interesting is that the film’s producer is 21-year-old Anupriya Nagar, who had never planned to make a film. She was comfortably pursuing a degree in Economics in the UK when something brought her back to India and eventually led her to the film’s director, Vishal Chaturvedi. And the unlikely starting point of her journey was Steve Jobs, the late Apple co-founder. With Hanuman Ansh gaining immense popularity in its fourth week, Anupriya has opened up about her unusual journey in several interviews.

Speaking to Doordarshan, she said, “It was a risk to make a film on Maharaj Ji, but to be honest, it was never my intention to make it for box office collections. I am glad that people are loving it and watching it. I am just 21, I don’t even know what I will do with so much money.” How Steve Jobs led Anupriya Nagar to Neem Karoli Baba

Revealing more about her background, Anupriya told ABP Live that making a film was never part of her plans. She had completed her education in the UK and was preparing to move to Switzerland for a job in the art industry. “I have done my graduation in Economics from the UK. I was there for three years. I just graduated last year. It was never part of my plan to make a film or return to India. I was planning to shift to Switzerland, where I had bagged a great job in the art industry because I have grown up among art all my life.” Recalling how she ended up producing a film on Neem Karoli Baba, Anupriya said that she discovered the saint while researching technology companies and their founders during her final year in college. “In my final year in college, I was researching several tech companies. I was researching where founders of Apple, Meta got these ideas from. While reading one such article, I found out that Neem Karoli Baba had influenced Steve Jobs, who at Kainchi Dham came up with the idea of making the world’s colour computer. Reading that article, I wondered why I was getting information about an Indian saint from a foreigner? That triggered me to do more research on that.” She initially considered turning her research into a book or comic book. However, things changed after she returned to India.

“I first thought to write a book or comic book. I was just 20. But when I came to India, I came across Vishal Chaturvedi, who was making a film on Neem Karoli Baba. It was all unplanned — pure coincidence,” she added. The film’s phenomenal box-office performance has also brought significant financial returns for its young producer. However, Anupriya said that profit was never her primary motivation. “Maharaj Ji has blessed us with a lot since the very beginning. I didn’t really expect to earn any profit from this film. Yet, he has blessed us with so much with this film. I want to make use of this money to help underprivileged kids and do charity,” she said. Talking about how the film’s fortunes changed almost overnight, Anupriya recalled that it was initially written off by the industry. “After the first week, the industry had announced our film as a flop. Our morale was down that our film didn’t reach people. It is a miracle that it turned overnight and, secondly, the viewers and influencers with word-of-mouth have helped make it a phenomenon,” she said. Anupriya also revealed that the team has two more parts planned in the Hanuman Ansh franchise, although discussions around their scale and budget

my official social media handles. Thank you.”

The actor’s statement is her first direct response to the reports surrounding her marriage since she and Badshah announced their decision to separate. Isha’s statement has come at a time when her name is also being linked to Bigg Boss 20. The reality show is set to premiere on September 6, and the makers have been releasing promos introducing contestants while keeping some of their identities under wraps.

One of the promos features a female actor with her face blurred. She describes herself as someone who has worked in both Punjabi and Hindi films before becoming emotional while talking about a painful experience in love. The contestant says, “Mujhe pyar hua, aur jo kuch bhi maine face kiya (breaking down in tears). Jab apka trust toottha hai kuch rishon se toh...” The promo does not reveal her identity. However, several viewers on social media have speculated that the mystery contestant is Isha. There has been no official confirmation from either Isha or the Bigg Boss 20 makers that she is the contestant shown in the promo.

Badshah and Isha reportedly dated for nearly four years before getting married in a private ceremony. Their marriage became public in March 2026 after Isha’s mother shared pictures from the wedding online. However, the marriage lasted only a few months. On September 1, Badshah and Isha confirmed that they had decided to part ways and requested privacy. In their joint statement, Badshah wrote, “I and Isha Rikhi have mutually decided to part ways and move forward on our separate paths. This decision has been made with mutual respect, and we request everyone to kindly respect our privacy during this time.” “This will be our only statement on the matter. We sincerely request that there be no further speculation or assumptions regarding our relationship,” they said.

Bigg Boss 20 will premiere on September 6 with Salman Khan returning as the host. Ahead of the launch, the makers have released a series of promos featuring contestants with identities being teased through blurred faces. The names doing the rounds include Kushal Tanwar, popularly known as Gullu, Qazi Touqeer, rapper Yung DSA, Mahi Vij, Khushi Dubey, Aman Gandhi, Amrapali Dubey, Geeta Basra, Uditi Singh, Rohed Khan, Rhiya Ahir, Love Gill and Rithi Tiwari.

are yet to begin. “We believe that the film is doing good because we had a limited budget. If we had more, maybe the outcome wouldn’t have been the same. Speaking about the upcoming parts of it, we are yet to sit down and talk about it. We haven’t really found the time yet with the film doing so well. We are yet to figure out OTT and satellite,” she said. Talking about how the film was financed, Anupriya said, “We are three producers who, along with co-producers, financially helped the film. There were multiple obstacles, but they were getting solved one after another because of Maharaj Ji. All of us are Maharaj Ji’s devotees.”

Who is Hanuman Ansh producer Anupriya Nagar?

Apart from holding a degree in Economics, Anupriya has also been an artist and comes from a family of art collectors and said she grew up around artists and art. She has also held multiple exhibitions. “I have grown up around the biggest of the biggest names — Jagdish Swaminathan, MF Husain, Gaitonde to Raza. I have grown up around this because my family is an art collector. So storytelling has always been a part of my life,” she said. She added that the success of Hanuman Ansh has made her family extremely proud. Recalling the difference in her father’s reaction before and after the film’s success, Anupriya said, “When I first told him that I am making a film, my dad was like... ‘You are studying Economics. How are you going to get into this industry?’ But when I told him it was on Neem Karoli Baba, he immediately agreed. They are so proud today.”

Anupriya Nagar recalls meeting Premanand Maharaj in the same interview, Anupriya also recalled meeting Premanand Maharaj and said he advised the team not to dramatise or “spice up” the story. “I was fortunate to meet him. It was after the film’s shoot. I asked him that we are making a film for society, will that be considered a seva? He said it is a good thing to make a film with a good cause. But he told us to be aware of the responsibility that comes with the film and its theme. He said, ‘Don’t dramatise it and make sure the casting is good and don’t add anything unrealistic to the film.’”

‘Lust Stories 3’ to stream on Netflix from September 18

Mumbai: The third instalment of Netflix’s popular anthology franchise “Lust Stories”, featuring four short films from filmmakers Vikramaditya Motwane, Kiran Rao, Shakun Batra and Vishal Bhardwaj, will premiere on September 18, the streamer announced on Saturday.

Produced by RSVP and Flying Unicorn Entertainment, “Lust Stories 3” will explore stories of love, lust, relationships and repressed desire through deeply personal and contemporary lenses, Netflix said in a statement. The anthology boasts an ensemble cast comprising Radhika Apte, Konkona Sen Sharma, Aditi Rao Hydari, Radhika Madan, Sana Thampi, Vijay Varma, Abhishek Banerjee, Siddharth, Ali Fazal and Gurfateh Pirzada. Ruchika Kapoor Sheikh, director, original films, Netflix India, said the franchise has endured because of its ability to reinvent itself with every instalment. “What gives ‘Lust Stories’ its enduring appeal is its ability to reinvent itself. Each chapter begins with a shared human impulse and arrives at a completely different emotional truth. Here, desire opens a window into power, vulnerability, agency, compromise, and the things people struggle to say aloud,” she said. The four filmmakers bring distinct perspectives to the theme while allowing audiences to interpret the relationships through the lens of their own experiences, Kapoor Sheikh added. Ronnie Screwvala, producer at RSVP, said the anthology has evolved with every edition while reflecting the changing nuances of relationships and modern intimacy. “With every edition, ‘Lust Stories’ has challenged conventions by bringing together exceptional filmmakers to tell deeply human stories. Over the years, the anthology has continued to evolve, reflecting the changing nuances of relationships and the many shades of modern intimacy,” he said.