

**KTR, Harish Rao recall Sagaraharam on 14th anniversary**

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao and BRS legisla-  
ture party deputy leader T Harish Rao on Wednesday recalled the  
Sagaraharam protest of September 30, 2012, marking its 14th anniver-  
sary. They hailed the spirit of the movement and those who participated in  
the historic protest.

Taking to X, Rama Rao described the protest as a historic phase of  
the Telangana movement, during which activists defied restrictions, bar-  
ricades, lathi charges and rubber bullets to press the demand for a sepa-  
rate State.

**Preventable infections linked to thousands of cancer cases in Telangana**

Hyderabad: A significant number of cancer cases in India are linked  
to infections, many of which can be prevented through timely vaccina-  
tion, screening and appropriate medical treatment.

Reflecting this, a recent analysis published in The Lancet Oncol-  
ogy indicated that nearly 1.9 lakh cancer cases in India in 2024 were  
linked to infections rather than genetic factors or other causes. Similarly,  
based on the study's baseline data and an extrapolation using present  
oncology trends, over 6,000 such cancer cases could occur in  
Telangana, linked to bacterial infections such as H. pylori and viral  
infections including Hepatitis B and C, Human Papillomavirus (HPV)  
and Epstein-Barr virus.

**Four Telangana men trapped in Russia war zone, say families**

Hyderabad: Four persons from Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts  
of Telangana were misled by agents and ended up performing military  
duties at the warfront in Russia, their family members have claimed.

The family members of Bhukya Ravinder, Sirushu Ashok, Megavath  
Prakash and Mohammed Afzal Khan have submitted a representation at  
the 'CM Prajavani' (people's grievance redressal programme) here, seek-  
ing Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's immediate intervention for their safe  
repatriation.Mandha Bheem Reddy, Vice Chairman of the Telangana  
Government's NRI Advisory Committee, who received the representation,  
told PTI on Wednesday that it has been forwarded to the top state govern-  
ment officials for taking up the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs.

# Telangana CM accuses KCR family of amassing massive wealth

Hyderabad, Sep 30 (IANS) Telangana Chief Min-  
ister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday accused former  
Chief Minister and BRS President K. Chandrasekhar  
Rao (KCR) and his family members of amassing mas-  
sive wealth while holding key positions of power.

He claimed that KCR and his family cashed in on  
the Telangana movement to amass assets worth thou-  
sands of crores. They built farmhouses on hundreds of  
acres and are living a lavish life, he remarked.

Addressing a public meeting in the Sircilla con-  
stituency, represented by Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS)  
Working President K. T. Rama Rao (KTR), CM Revanth

Reddy launched a scathing attack on him and his father,  
KCR.

On his maiden visit to Sircilla as the Chief Minister,  
Revanth Reddy held a roadshow. It was a big show of  
strength by the ruling Congress in the BRS stronghold.

CM Revanth Reddy took a broadside at KCR for  
encouraging his family members to ascend to top posts  
and enjoy power during the 10 years of BRS rule in the  
state.

The Chief Minister said KCR called KTR from  
America to give him the Sircilla MLA ticket in 2009. "From  
2009 to 2026, people of Sircilla have elected KTR six

times, but why have the suicides of weavers and workers  
in this region not stopped? Why has the migration of work-  
ers to the Gulf in search of a livelihood not stopped?" he  
asked.

He stated that KTR won the Sircilla seat by a margin  
of just 172 votes in the 2009 elections and exploited his  
power to amass assets worth a staggering one lakh crore  
rupees.Revanth Reddy asked people if the KCR family  
extended any help to them all these years.

Revanth Reddy appealed to people to wipe out BRS  
from Sircilla and promised that the Congress candidate  
winning from here in the next elections will be made a  
minister.





## DRI seizes cocaine valued at Rs 24.5 crore at Hyderabad Airport

Hyderabad, Sep 30 (IANS) In a major drug haul, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) seized 4.9 kg of cocaine valued at Rs 24.5 crore from a passenger at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) here on Tuesday.

The contraband was concealed inside chocolate tubes carried in the baggage of a passenger who arrived from Doha, Qatar.

The unusual weight of the chocolate tubes during bag-  
gage screening led DRI officials to uncover the cocaine con-  
signment, which is estimated to be worth Rs 24.5 crore in  
the illicit market.

The DRI Hyderabad Zonal Unit (HZU) acted on spe-  
cific intelligence regarding an Indian passenger arriving  
at RGIA from Doha who was suspected of carrying co-  
caine in his baggage.

A team of DRI HZU officers intercepted the passen-  
ger and examined his baggage.

During the baggage check, officers found the pas-  
senger carrying seven Lindt Lindor Assorted Filled Dark  
Chocolate selection tubes, each marked as weighing 387  
grams.

Officials became suspicious after noticing that the  
tubes appeared significantly heavier than their stated  
weight.

After opening and examining the tubes, officers re-  
covered 207 capsules concealed with the chocolates.

The capsules were light-yellow, oval-shaped, and  
contained a white powdery substance suspected to be  
cocaine.

According to the DRI, the substance tested positive  
for cocaine when examined using a Narcotic Drug De-  
tection Kit.

## Flydubai cockpit brawl: Indian captain fought co-pilot to prevent plane crash, says report

Dubai,Sept 30

An Indian national was the captain of a Flydubai flight who fought with his co-pilot during a violent cock-  
pit confrontation that forced the aircraft to make an emer-  
gency landing in Saudi Arabia, Israeli news website  
Ynet reported on Wednesday.

Related news: 'Pilot was stabbed, there was blood  
inside cockpit': flydubai passengers recount chaos, say  
they feared for their lives

Pilots 'fight' mid-air, Israel-bound flydubai flight  
diverts to Saudi Arabia, lands at Tabuk airport

Ynet, citing Israeli officials, reported that the co-  
pilot was an Omani national and was suspected of try-  
ing to crash the aircraft. The captain fought with him to  
prevent the aircraft from crashing, with Israeli passen-  
gers later helping subdue the co-pilot, the report said.

The Flydubai flight FZ1073, travelling from Dubai  
to Tel Aviv, had transmitted emergency signals and  
made a sharp descent before diverting to Tabuk in Saudi  
Arabia.

Both pilots were injured and hospitalised, accord-  
ing to Tabuk airport authorities cited by Ynet.



Flydubai confirmed that the aircraft had experi-  
enced an in-flight incident and landed safely in Tabuk.  
The airline said it was cooperating with the relevant  
authorities and that all passengers were safe.

The airline has not released the identity or nation-  
ality of the pilots.

Israeli authorities feared a possible hijacking and  
scrambled fighter jets. The incident remains under in-  
vestigation.

## Telangana taking steps to transform Hyderabad into Gaming, VFX hub: Chief Secretary

Hyderabad, Sep 30 (IANS) The government of  
Telangana is taking special  
measures to transform  
Hyderabad into a national  
and international hub for  
the Gaming, VFX and An-  
imation industries, Chief  
Secretary Sanjay Jaju  
said.

The Chief Secretary  
on Wednesday held a re-  
view meeting at the Dr  
B.R. Ambedkar  
Telangana State Secre-  
tariat on the arrange-  
ments for the Telangana  
Global Summit, sched-  
uled to be held in Decem-  
ber at Bharat Future City,  
Hyderabad.

Speaking on the oc-  
casion, the Chief Secre-  
tary said the Telangana  
Global Summit is being



organised as part of the  
State's initiatives towards  
achieving the goal of a  
one-trillion-dollar  
economy.

Special programmes  
are being planned to attract  
globally renowned com-  
panies from the Animation,  
Gaming, VFX and other  
creative and entertainment  
sectors and facilitate the

establishment of their cen-  
tres in Hyderabad, he said.

Under the theme "Sto-  
ries, Games & Dreams,"  
several programmes  
aimed at engaging and in-  
spiring the youth will be  
organised. A Comic, Gam-  
ing & VFX Business Day  
will also be held as part of  
the Summit.

He said Comic Con,  
DreamHack and India  
Game Utsav will be  
organised along with a  
B2B Expo, Innovation  
Zone and Animation  
Stalls, providing a plat-  
form to showcase technol-  
ogy, innovations, invest-  
ment and business oppor-  
tunities in these sectors.



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ఉదయం గం. 9.54 ని.లకు

షోరూం ప్రారంభకులు:



Sri. Devireddy Sudheer Reddy గారు  
LB Nagar MLA - BRS



Sri. Manthi Yashki Goud గారు  
All India Professionals  
Congress Chairman, Ex. MP



Sri. Malreddy Ram Reddy గారు  
Chairman Telangana State Road  
Development Corporation



Sri. Sama Ranga Reddy గారు  
LB Nagar BJP Incharge



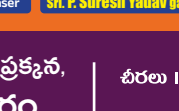
Sri. Koppulla Narsimha Reddy గారు  
Ex-Corporator, Mansorabad



Smt. P. Eshwaramma Yadav గారు  
Landlord, Ex-Councillor,  
Yadagiri Gutta Board Member



Sri. P. Krishna Yadav గారు  
Landlord and first purchaser



Sri. P. Suresh Yadav గారు



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Indian Chronicle

English Daily

EC forced into damage-control mode

The damage-control exercise initiated by the Election Commission in the wake of widespread criticism over its handling of the revision of electoral rolls falls short of public expectations. The show of unity put up by the poll panel—Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi—by holding an all-member meeting and later issuing a slew of clarifications has not adequately addressed the issues pertaining to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls across the country. The core issue is whether the electoral process is being conducted transparently, in accordance with the law, and with adequate safeguards against the wrongful exclusion of eligible voters. The EC has not come up with a satisfying response to the question of fixing accountability for the severe hardships inflicted on citizens by the whimsical and authoritarian acts at the behest of the ruling dispensation. Not surprisingly the opposition parties and rights activists are persisting with their demand for the resignation of the CEC and a halt to the SIR process, which has already been completed in 20 States and Union Territories. The poll panel came under intense scrutiny following media reports revealing that the two Commissioners—Sandhu and Joshi—had objected on record at least 14 times over 10 months to decisions and orders concerning the SIR exercise, including changes to the statutory Form 6, the handling of additions and deletions from electoral rolls and centralised control over the electoral roll database. Apparently bowing to public pressure, the EC has announced a slew of measures, including stopping physical hearings for un-mapped voters or those with logical discrepancies in their enumeration forms.

Awareness Walks Held on World Heart Day



“Hyderabad, September 30 (Indian Chronicle) : Care Hospitals organised awareness walks across Hyderabad on the occasion of World Heart Day to promote heart health. As part of its ‘Time to Break Up’ campaign, doctors urged people to break away from smoking, unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles, inadequate sleep, stress and neglect of regular health check-ups. A 2-km awareness walk was held in Hitec City, while a community awareness walk was organised in Malakpet. In Musheerabad, participants walked from Care Hospitals to Gandhi Hospital as part of the campaign. Care Hospitals Regional Director-Cardiology Dr.Gulla Suryaprakash, along with Dr.Krishnamohan, Dr.Naveen Kumar, Dr.Bhavani Prasad, Praveen Kumar Edla, Dr. Sudheer Gandrakota, Dr.Rajendra Vajrapu and Dr.Bharathi Jetty, among others, participated in the awareness activities.

Every Person Who Has Attained 18 Years Must Enrol as a Voter:



Former MLA NVSS Prabhakar”HABSIGUDA , SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Former Uppal MLA and Uppal Constituency SIR Special Drive In-Charge N.V.S.S. Prabhakar called upon every eligible citizen to exercise their right to vote and ensure that their electoral details are correctly recorded.”

As part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Phase-II Special Drive, the programme was organised in Habsiguda Division of Uppal Assembly Constituency under the leadership of Division General Secretary Chintakindi Praveen Kumar, following the directions of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Addressing the programme as the chief guest, N.V.S.S. Prabhakar urged every voter in the Uppal constituency to verify their electoral details during the SIR process. He called upon eligible citizens to take the necessary steps to ensure that they are enrolled as voters and able to exercise their franchise.

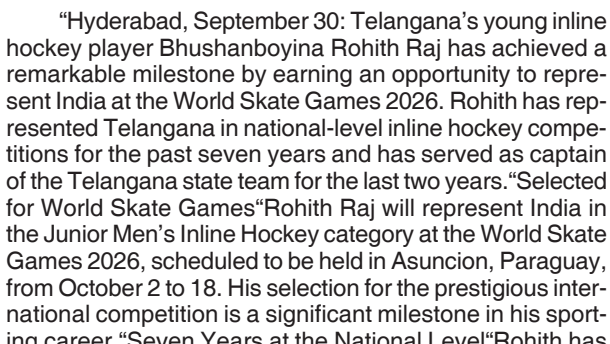
He particularly appealed to all young men and women who have attained the age of 18 to enrol themselves as voters without delay. He also urged citizens to verify whether their names and other details in the electoral roll are accurate and up to date.”Prabhakar called upon party workers to create awareness among the public and assist all eligible citizens in securing their right to vote.”State party leaders Vemulakonda Somashekar Goud, Jillela Ravinder Reddy, Bommagoni Raghupathi Goud, Sanjay Patel, Bandi Padmakka, Ranga Ravi Padathiya Naik, Raju Naik, Suresh Alkapuri, Katta Bhaskar, Shanthikumar, Geetha Sadineni, Konderu Sravanthi, Lakshmi, Bharat G, Gundeti Venkatesh, Karunakar Reddy and others participated in the programme.

1.30 Crore Development Works Launched in Meerpet-HB Colony Division



Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy lays foundation for CC road works in several colonies”HB Colony, September 30(INDIAN CHORNICLE):” Development works aimed at improving basic infrastructure in the Meerpet-HB Colony Division have received another boost, with Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy laying the foundation stone for CC road construction works at several locations on Wednesday.”The CC road works are being taken up at an estimated cost of ₹1.30 crore to provide better road connectivity and improve the living conditions of residents in various colonies.”The MLA laid the foundation stones for the proposed CC road works at Ammavari Chourasta in Annapurna Colony, near Mother Mira High School in Narasimha Nagar, near the Dargah in Old Meerpet, and near the Ammavari Temple in NTR Nagar.”Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that priority was being given to strengthening basic infrastructure across the Uppal constituency. He said that development works relating to roads, drainage, drinking water and other essential civic facilities were being taken up in a phased manner based on the needs of the people.”He stated that efforts were being made to identify local issues and provide permanent solutions. The MLA said that development works were being undertaken in response to the problems and requests raised by residents and assured that necessary steps would continue to be taken to improve civic amenities in the constituency.”Local residents expressed their happiness over the commencement of the road development works and appreciated the efforts being made towards improving infrastructure in their respective colonies.”Former corporators Jeripothula Prabhudas and Gundarapu Srinivas Reddy, along with BRS leaders Vanjari Praveen Karape, Ullem Balaraju, Narasimha Goud, Sanjay Naik, Vasu Chary, Madhu Mudiraj, Harinath Reddy, Bhupal Goud, Jayapal, Beerappa, Krishna Yadav, Shekar Goud, Kittu, Arun and Srikanth, party workers and local residents participated in the programme.

Telangana Young Athlete Bhushanboyina Rohith Raj to Represent India at World Skate Games 2026



“Hyderabad, September 30: Telangana’s young inline hockey player Bhushanboyina Rohith Raj has achieved a remarkable milestone by earning an opportunity to represent India at the World Skate Games 2026. Rohith has represented Telangana in national-level inline hockey competitions for the past seven years and has served as captain of the Telangana state team for the last two years.”Selected for World Skate Games”Rohith Raj will represent India in the Junior Men’s Inline Hockey category at the World Skate Games 2026, scheduled to be held in Asuncion, Paraguay, from October 2 to 18. His selection for the prestigious international competition is a significant milestone in his sporting career.”Seven Years at the National Level”Rohith has been participating in national-level inline hockey competitions for the past seven years. Representing Telangana in several national tournaments, he has consistently demonstrated his skills and gained valuable experience competing against players from across the country.”His dedication, discipline, regular practice and rigorous training have helped him establish himself as a promising inline hockey player.”Telangana Team Captain for Two Years”Along with his sporting abilities, Rohith has also demonstrated strong leadership qualities. He has been serving as the captain of the Telangana state inline hockey team for the past two years. He has led the team by coordinating with fellow players and guiding them during competitions.”His experience

as a state team captain has also contributed to his selection for the Indian team.”From Telangana to the World Stage”After seven years of competing at the national level, Rohith’s sporting journey has now reached the international stage. His opportunity to represent India at the World Skate Games is a proud moment for Telangana.”His family members, coaches, fellow athletes and well-wishers expressed happiness over his selection and wished him success at the international competition. They expressed hope that he would deliver his best performance and bring recognition to both India and Telangana.”Sports circles believe Rohith’s achievement will inspire more young athletes in Telangana to take up inline hockey and other roller sports.

Awareness on Aerobin Method to Convert Waste into Organic Manure



Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation. The initiative was jointly organised by MAARI NGO, Mother Son and S.O.R.T. organisations. Participants were explained how household wet waste could be scientifically composted at source and converted into useful organic manure.”Representatives of Vista Homes and Kamalanagar Welfare Association from Kapra Circle, along with members of Panchavati Colony, Habsiguda and Srinivasa Heights Uppal Welfare Associations, attended the programme.”Officials explained that household wet waste should be segregated at source instead of being mixed with other waste and can be converted into quality organic manure through the Aerobin composting method. They said extensive awareness campaigns would be conducted in residential colonies, gated communities, apartment complexes and commercial establishments to promote the method among the public.”Welfare Association members observed that converting household waste into manure and using it for plants would not only help maintain cleanliness in residential surroundings but also contribute to environmental protection.”Swachh Bharat Uppal Zonal Coordinator A. Premalatha, Uppal Circle Assistant Engineer, Solid Waste Management official Jai Pushpalatha, MAARI Project Director, S.O.R.T. representative Poorna Chandrika, Kapra Circle Sanitary Supervisor Sudarshan and others participated in the programme.

-Extensive Awareness Campaign Planned in Colonies, Gated Communities and Apartments: Officials”UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“ As part of the Swachh Bharat programme and the “Swachhata Hi Seva” campaign being conducted from September 17 to October 17, an awareness programme on the Aerobin method of converting household wet waste into organic manure at low cost was organised at the Uppal Zonal Office on Wednesday.”The programme was conducted to create awareness among members of Residential Welfare Associations from various circles under the Uppal Zone of the

Every Eligible Graduate Must Be Enrolled as VoterUPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY



”UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“ A key meeting was held in Uppal Assembly constituency on Wednesday at the MLA camp office under the chairmanship of Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy.During the meeting, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy discussed voter registration for the Graduate MLC elections, election preparedness, coordination among party cadres and other related issues with party leaders, workers and office-bearers.”He particularly instructed the party cadre to create widespread awareness among eligible graduates and ensure that every eligible graduate is enrolled as a voter.”As the process of revision of the electoral roll for the Mahbubnagar–Rangareddy–Hyderabad Graduate Constituency is underway, eligible graduates were advised to register their names as voters by submitting Form-18.”MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy called for extensive awareness campaigns at every level regarding the voter registration process. He urged party leaders and workers to work in coordination to ensure that no eligible graduate is left out of the electoral roll.”BRS party leaders, workers and office-bearers attended the meeting.

Resonance Srinivasa Nagar is a great success for students



“Khammam mandal level 6 SOUTH MANDAL 70 SGF SCHOOL GAMES Resonance students were selected in mandal level on 29-09-2026 at Sardar Patel Stadium. In these competitions, our students were selected in Under 17 category Pawan Kumar Kabaddi, Under 17 category Krishna Chaitanya Prashanth, Shravan Kumar Volleyball, Under 14 Krishna Prasad, Gyaneshwar were selected in Volleyball competition. For the success of the students, the director of the school R.V. Mr. Nagendra Kumar and Mr. Neelima Ms. Garu spoke and expressed their best wishes to all the students by encouraging them to achieve many more such successes and improving the talent of the students from time to time. Special”In this program the principal, teachers,Students and parents participated

Special RTC Enquiry Number Introduced at Ghatkesar Bus Station



Passengers Can Call 7382019193 for Bus Timings, Routes and Arrival and Departure Details”BODUPPAL, SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A dedicated enquiry number has been introduced at Ghatkesar Bus Station from Wednesday to help passengers easily obtain information regarding bus services, timings, routes, arrivals and departures, Depot Manager S. Swathi said.Passengers can call 7382019193 to get information about bus timings, routes and arrival and departure schedules, she stated.”The special enquiry facility has been introduced with the objective of providing passengers with quick, convenient and reliable information about bus services, the Depot Manager said.

Power Supply Disruption on October 1 Due to 33KV Tower Erection Works



— Chikanagar Electricity Department Operation AE Vinay Kumar Reddy”CHILKA NAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):Power supply will be interrupted on Thursday, October 1, due to 33KV tower erection works, Chikanagar Electricity Department Operation AE Vinay Kumar Reddy said in a statement.According to the AE, power supply under the Hema Nagar feeder will be suspended from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The interruption will affect Sai Bhavani Nagar, Gayatri Hills, Mallaiah Nagar, Vasavi Nagar, Saphthagiri Colony, North Balaji Hills, Hema Nagar, Tirumala Meadows and Reddy’s Colony.The officials advised electricity consumers in the affected areas to make necessary arrangements in advance and cooperate with the electricity department staff. They expressed regret for the inconvenience caused due to the power interruption.

Talent of Narayana School students in National Level Karate Championship

“Khammam: National Level Open Karate Championship – 2026 Students of Narayana School showed excellent performance and got Akshara Gokula, Rushita, Jaitra Yadav, Karthik Nandan, Gold Medal and Gnana Sri, Rishita, Bhavish, Vishanth, Krishna Sai, Satya Sandesh won Silver Medals. In this national level competition held at AGR Gardens Bhattupalli in Kazipet, Hanmakonda district on September 27, students participated in various karate disciplines and won medals. The principal and teachers of Khammam Narayana School congratulated the students for achieving this feat by competing among the athletes who participated across the country. The parents thanked the management of Narayana School for encouraging the sports talent of the students and providing them with the necessary support. School Principal Ji Naveen Kumar, Karate Master Upender and school staff participated in this program.

## Unrestricted tobacco sales at small shops.



small packets as soon as customers ask for them. They say this situation is particularly visible in areas where there is a heavy youth crowd during the evening hours."There is also a legal ban on the sale of tobacco products near schools and colleges and around educational institutions. Under Section 6B of the COTPA Act, the sale of tobacco products within 100 yards of the boundary of an educational institution is prohibited. Selling tobacco to those below 18 years of age is also an offence. However, complaints are being received that tobacco products are available at shops near schools and colleges in some areas. If students can easily purchase them, questions are being raised about the monitoring system."?" Playing with the future of youth for profit."There is criticism that some shop owners are viewing addiction among youth as a business opportunity. Health experts warn that there is a risk of gradually becoming addicted at a low price"ACCO gradually becoming a habit". The Union Ministry of Health states that tobacco consumption occurs not only in the form of smoking but also in forms such as gutka, khaini, and tobacco-containing pan masala. FSSAI regulations prohibit the use of tobacco or nicotine as ingredients in food products under special provisions concerning gutka. The National Tobacco Control Programme clarifies that the sale of gutka has been banned due to these regulations."?" Officials should increase surveillance."?"Locals are demanding that police, excise, relevant enforcement departments, food safety officials, and the health department conduct surprise inspections together. They particularly want the area within 100 yards around educational institutions to be inspected to check whether sales to minors are taking place or not. Central government statistics show that enforcement teams are being deployed and challans are being registered across the country for tobacco control."?" Who will protect the youth."?"On one hand, awareness programmes are being conducted to keep youth away from addictions, while on the other hand, if tobacco products are easily available right before their eyes, questions arise as to how effective those efforts can be. People are demanding that merely having a law is not enough, continuous inspections, action against violations, and strict surveillance around schools are necessary.

"Praneeth Kumar Pathakamudi (Khammam Staffer), September 30, Indian Chronicle."At first glance, a small shop looks ordinary. But allegations that tobacco products that lead youth toward addiction are being sold indiscriminately in Khammam Urban and Rural areas at the same shops are causing concern. With products such as Pan Parag, gutka, khaini, tobacco-containing pan masala and others being readily available, criticism is being voiced that youth and students are becoming accustomed to them."?" Sales along the lines of belt shops."?"There are allegations that some small shops have turned into tobacco product sales centers, just like liquor belt shops. Locals say that business is being carried out by supplying the products in

## Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak Cheques Distributed UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Hands Over Cheques to 71 Beneficiaries“

"UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"The distribution of cheques to beneficiaries of the Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak welfare schemes was held at the Uppal MRO office on Wednesday. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest and handed over cheques to 71 beneficiaries.Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said the Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak schemes provide financial support to economically weaker families. He directed the officials to ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive the government assistance in a timely and proper manner.He stated that the financial assistance provided by the government at the time of marriage is of considerable help to poor and middle-class families. He also instructed the officials to ensure that the cheque distribution process is transparent and free from any irregularities.Uppal MRO



Pool Singh, along with BRS leaders, party workers, beneficiaries and others, participated in the programme.

## Medipally Police Solve Nine Theft Cases One Suspect Arrested; Property Worth 2.50 Lakh Recovered



"MEDIPALLY, SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medipally Police have solved nine theft cases registered under the Medipally Police Station limits. Circle Inspector D. Jalandhar Reddy disclosed the details. In connection with the cases, police arrested one suspect and recovered four two-wheelers and three mobile phones from his possession. The total value of the recovered property is estimated at approximately 2.50 lakh, police said."According to the police, the arrested suspect was identified as Bablu Paswan (45). He works as a daily-wage labourer and is currently residing at Ganesh Nagar in Chintal. He is a native of the Giridih region of Jharkhand, police said."As part of the investigation, police recovered four two-wheelers and three mobile phones from the accused and confirmed that nine theft cases had been solved.CI Jalandhar Reddy said that special measures were being taken to prevent crimes and advised the public to remain vigilant and take necessary precautions to prevent thefts."

## C M Meets with the flood Victims

"On Wednesday the Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary arrived in the area of Baria block of West Champaran District and saw the plight of flood as well as met with the flood victims at Bathna flood relief centre..He also inspected the erosion site of the embankmentThe CM also reviewed a meeting with the officers regarding flood.He heard the problems of the flood victims and assured them to provide all helps by the government. He directed the officers that the kitchen community centres would be functional for the welfare of the victims He also served food among the flood victims. Dry ration distribution work would be continued. The government would provide compensation 7000/ each victim family and the amount would reach in their accounts before Durga Puja.He asured the victims that repair work of the breaches in the Embankment would be completed soon.The flood victims demanded the pucca construction of the embankment.After that he completed an ariel survey of other areas of the flood."As it is noted that the heavy flood of the Gandak breached the Embankment in several areas of West Champaran and flood water entered hundred villages of the district and made the people maroon on Tuesday. The victims got shelter on the National Highway ,relief camps and other high places.In several areas their cattle washed away in flood water.Crops are destroyed and flood water also damaged their houses in the villages.As in diara belt of West Champaran several houses were submerged in the Gandak.As in East Champaran the Gandak flood also affected the people of Sangrampur block area where the people were made maroon in several villages and got shelter in the relief camp.As the Gandak originates from the Himalyan range of Tibet and reach in Indian territory to cross the area of Nepal and falls into the Ganga near Sonpur in Vaishali district. So the flood of the Gandak affects the districts like West Champaran, East Champaran, Gopalganj, Saran and Vaishali. As in West Champaran District 150 Jivika Didi are active to make dry ration pockets and 5000 dry food pockets are being prepared in a day by them.As on Wednesday the receding trend of the Gandak provided relief to the victims of East Champaran district. "As theJansuraj Party leader West Champaran Er Sikander

Chandra alleged that the elected representatives could not realise the importance of the safety of the people in their respective areas from the havoc of flood and they could not raise their voice regarding the maintenance of the embankments before monsoon. "" Tigress Rescues in VTR"A tigress rescued from the area of Manguraha forest range of VTR ( Valmiki Tiger Reserve) in West Champaran district of Bihar by the forest department and she was sent to Buxa Tiger Reserve of Alipur district in West Bengal.As the rescued tigress was sent away to Gorakhpur in (UP) after medical examination on Wednesday and from Gorakhpur the forest authority would take away the tigress by plane. As in Buxa forest range the forest department want to increase Tiger's population so the rescued tigress was brought there."As a Social worker of Gaunaha block area Mobin Ahmad said that the climate of VTR ( Valmiki Tiger Reserve) is suitable for tiger's breeding.In VTR the rising number of tigers has made enthusiastic to wild lovers of the district. School Building's stairs Collapsed "On Wednesday a the stairs of a government school building collapsed in Khagadiya district of Bihar in which a student died. and four others were injured.As soon as the administration got information about the incident the SDO and the SDPO rushed to the spot .The injured students were rushed to Sadar Hospital for treatment. After that a surging crowd assembled on the spot and showed their anger. As it is noted that several schools of Bihar are running in delapidated buildings and students and teachers have to spend their time under fearful atmosphere. As the Principals of several delapidated school buildings have already written to their concerned authority about the present condition of the buildings. But the government could not take any immediate action in this regard."Gaya police cracked the case"Gaya police cracked the incident regarding the misbehave of a couple who becme the victims of some youths in connection with making reels in mobile in Gaya district of Bihar. As a young couple came to Gaya to visit the historical and religious places.On the way some miscreants forced their four wheeler to stop and made puncture the wheels of their vehicle.After that the miscreants made their reels in mobile and went away.

## Family Financial Dispute Turns Fatal.. Wife and Son Arrested for Husband's Murder



"Alwal, September 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE)""Alwal Police of the Malkajgiri"Commissionerate have arrested a woman and her 24-year-old son in connection with the murder of Boddu Srinivas (51), a share market trader, at their residence in Pedda Pharma Reddy Colony, Machabollaram, Alwal. The accused were identified as Boddu Ramadevi (45), wife of the deceased, and Boddu Nikhil (24), his son."According to police, Srinivas married Ramadevi in 2001 and the couple had two children — son Nikhil (24) and daughter Nikitha (22). Srinivas had earlier been involved in business at Balanagar and had reportedly suffered substantial financial losses in share market transactions over the past few years. The financial difficulties allegedly led to frequent disputes within the family. Police said Ramadevi had earlier approached the police and court over domestic issues, which were later settled with the intervention of elders."Attack While He Was Asleep"Police

said a dispute reportedly broke out between Srinivas and his family members over financial issues on the night of September 27. After the dispute, Srinivas went to sleep. In the early hours of September 28, Ramadevi and Nikhil allegedly entered the bedroom and attacked him with an axe with a wooden handle available at the house. As per the investigation so far, Ramadevi allegedly restrained Srinivas while Nikhil assisted her by holding him. Srinivas sustained multiple injuries to his neck, shoulder and back and succumbed to the injuries.'Case Registered on ComplaintFollowing the incident, Srinivas's father, Boddu Krishna (78), a resident of Taramathipet, approached the Alwal Police and lodged a complaint at around 10:30 a.m. on September 28. Based on the complaint, police registered Crime No. 954/2026 under Section 103(1) read with Section 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and took up the investigation."During the investigation, police gathered evidence regarding the alleged involvement of the two accused. A police team led by Alwal Police Station Inspector A. Prashanth apprehended Ramadevi and Nikhil on September 30.Police said the accused allegedly provided information leading to the identification and recovery of the weapon believed to have been used in the offence and blood-stained clothes. The recovery proceedings are being carried out in accordance with law in the presence of mediators and panch witnesses.The investigation is continuing. Police are collecting and preserving forensic, medical, technical and other corroborative evidence and completing the required legal formalities. The accused will be produced before the competent court in accordance with law.

## Let Us Make the October 2 Journalists' Protest a Success: TUWJ Medchal District Secretary Venkatram Reddy

"UPPAL, SEPTEMBET 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Telangana Union of Working Journalists (TUWJ) Medchal District General Secretary Venkatram Reddy has called upon journalists to make the peaceful protest programmes planned at Gandhi statues on October 2 a success, demanding the resolution of long-pending issues concerning journalists."As per the call given by the TUWJ State Committee, journalists from Uppal, Malkajgiri and Medchal Assembly constituencies will participate in a programme at 10 a.m. on Friday near the ECIL Crossroads. A memorandum highlighting journalists' demands will be submitted at the Gandhi statue located near the Kapra Municipal Office."Venkatram Reddy said that the issues concerning journalists and media organisations across the country have remained unresolved for a long time. He stated that, in view of the revolutionary changes that have taken place in the media sector over the past four decades, there is a need for the Central Government to establish a special Media Commission to examine the changing nature of journalism and make recommendations concerning journalistic ethics and professional standards."He said the protest is also being organised with demands including the establishment of a Wage Board and legislation for the protection and welfare of journalists."Reddy expressed concern that, despite three years having passed since the present government came to power, adequate measures have not been taken for the welfare of journalists. He said it was particularly disappointing that effective steps had not been taken to ensure the health security of journalists during the past three years."He said the TUWJ had been consistently requesting the government to restore the health schemes previously available to journalists, but the issue had not been addressed. He stated that the government's assurances of providing journalists with health security on par with government employees had remained limited to announcements."He said journalists had been compelled to take up agitation to se-



cure health protection for themselves and their families. He also alleged that the long-standing issues relating to houses and house sites for journalists had not been resolved.Reddy appealed to journalists from the respective constituencies to participate in large numbers and make the October 2 peaceful protest programme a success.

## Public Grievance Redressal Is the Main Agenda:

PARMESWAR REDDY"Public Service Is the Goal; People's Trust Is the Priority



UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 30 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Congress Party Uppal Constituency In-charge Parameshwar Reddy stated that resolving the problems faced by the people of the Uppal constituency is his pri-

mary agenda. He said that he considers it his responsibility to remain accessible to the public, understand their concerns and continuously work towards finding solutions."He stated that residents across various parts of the Uppal constituency are facing local issues related to roads, drainage, drinking water, street lighting and sanitation. He also said that efforts would be made to bring to the attention of the concerned officials the problems faced by people who are unable to access pensions, ration cards and other government welfare schemes, and to work towards resolving them."Parameshwar Reddy emphasized the need to work together with the people to ensure that every genuine public grievance receives an appropriate solution. He stated that positions are not important, but the trust of the people is what matters most. He made it clear that he would give priority to resolving public issues rather than political considerations."He said that his goal is to stand by the people during their difficulties and work towards taking the Uppal constituency forward on the path of development. Parameshwar Reddy reiterated that he would continue working with and for the people to address their concerns and improve public welfare.

## Commissioner of Police Honors Retired Police, Home Guard Officers

"Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt honored the retired Police and Home Guard officers with garlands and shawls and handed over mementos. The Police Commissioner, who participated in the honoring program held at the Police Commissioner's Office, said that he has rendered immeasurable service to the Police Department by performing responsible duties in various departments for a long time. On this occasion, the family members who provided support in the performance of duty were appreciated. Retired, I wish you to spend your future life happily with your family members with good health and happiness. "Retired people.."SK. Sardar, Essay Three Khammam."D. Haimavathi, Seeper (Police Headquarters) "G. Saidulu (Home Guard)""AR ACP Sushil Singh, RIs Kamaraju, Suresh, Police Association President Hemanad, Home Guard

Welfare Association President Banka Srinu, National Vice President CC 21 E. Venkateshwarlu, Welfare Associa-



tion Senior Advisor D. Ramesh, V. Apparao, K. V. R. K. Reddy and other Home Guard Officers participated in the program.

# Two men die after suspected gas leak near public toilet in Mumbai



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

Two men died after allegedly being exposed to a strong chemical smell inside a public toilet in Mumbai's eastern suburbs in the early hours of Sunday. According to Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) officials, the incident occurred near the Parsi Panchayat Gate, close to

Mrunaltai Bridge in Ram Mandir (East).

BMC officials identified the men as Prabhakar Dhanivar, 24, and Bhavin Desai, 18. Both men were taken to Trauma Care Hospital around midnight and declared dead at 3.49 am, according to doctors there. Locals alerted the authorities after noticing a strong chemical odour coming from the public toilet and reported that two people had suffered suffocation. The Vanrai police have registered an accidental death report and await the post-mortem analysis to establish the exact cause of death. "Prima facie, it looks like gas emitted by a small-scale industrial unit near the toilet might have come in contact with the two individuals," a police officer said. BMC officials said the incident was reported to the authorities at around 8.30 am, following which teams from the fire brigade, police, 108 ambulance services, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, and the BMC ward staff were mobilised and sent to the spot. Officials were also expected to examine the toilet premises and ascertain the source of the smell. A detailed inquiry is likely to establish the sequence of events and the cause of death.

# 'Two girls missing, priest at hostel': Ghost rumours trigger panic at Chitkara University

GNS News Agency, Sept 30

Unverified claims about two girls studying in Chitkara University triggered panic and unrest on the campus late Friday night, with hundreds of hostel students gathering and demanding clarification from the university management. The situation remained tense for nearly two hours before being brought under control by the police. Chitkara University is located in Rajpura in Patiala district, close to the Patiala-Mohali district boundary. The unrest began around 10.30 pm on Friday after an unverified message went viral among students. While one version claimed two girls were missing, another said they had died. The conflicting reports sent students rushing to confront university authorities, who were asked to show CCTV footage.

The situation turned tense after a large number of students gathered on the campus amid the rumours. The university called the police to control the situation. During the commotion, two police vehicles were damaged and an inspector, Ajay Kumar, was allegedly manhandled by some students. Additional police force was subsequently called to the campus to bring the situation under control. Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), Banur, Sukhdev Singh, said no one who had raised the alarm could identify the girls or confirm whether anyone was actually missing. "We have taken the complaint seriously and will inquire into the matter in detail. We will also check the university records to ascertain whether any student is actually missing," he said. The DSP said the situation was later brought under control. "I want to tell the parents that things are under control on the campus now and everyone is safe," he said. "The situation is calm. Two police vehicles have been damaged. Considering the students' age, we are not taking action against them and will instead counsel them. Our investigation found nothing supporting the rumour of suicide or missing girls," SHO (Banur) Gursewak Singh told. According to sources, an ambulance had arrived at the girls' hostel on Thursday morning, causing confusion among students. Some girls had also been talking about a ghost in the hostel, and a priest had reportedly arrived at the hostel on Thursday afternoon.

"Nothing happened on the campus. The rumour travelled among the students. Everything is okay on the campus as of now," University Registrar Col. Rakesh Sharma told media persons. Gursewak Singh on Saturday said the rumours about ghosts and alleged incidents at the hostel had started on September 23 after some girls allegedly played a prank by creating horror sounds using a speaker inside the hostel from some undisclosed location. "Eventually, checking of all rooms was conducted



by the hostel warden, but nothing was found. However, the fear continued to grow among the students, with another rumour circulating that a suicide had taken place in the hostel a few years ago and that a spirit was visiting the hostel," the SHO added. He said that on Friday, rumours about a suicide and missing girls began circulating on social media, triggering panic among students, many of whom came out of their hostels. "We have held meetings with the students, addressed their concerns and told them there was no need to panic. Students were planning to organise another gathering on Saturday evening, but that has now been cancelled. Such pranks are common in hostels, but we have addressed the concerns of the students and will continue to keep a vigil on the campus as the safety of students is of utmost importance," the SHO added. In a statement evening on Saturday, Chitkara University stated that no suicide or death has taken place at the girls' hostel, and the claims circulating on social media are false.

"The university has verified the facts concerning the incidents and would like to clarify that an ambulance did arrive at the hostel in the early hours of September 24 in connection with a student who had returned from the hospital. The student was brought back to the hostel at approximately 2.50 am. There was no death or suicide associated with this incident," the statement added. The institute also clarified social media posts referring to the presence of a priest at the girls' hostel, saying that he had come to the hostel at approximately 3 pm to meet his daughter, who is a student at the university. "Chitkara University appeals to everyone to verify information through official and credible sources before sharing or amplifying claims, particularly when such claims concern the safety and well-being of students," the statement added. Despite the clarification, many students returned home on Saturday morning for a break and many parents were also seen arriving at the campus to pick up their children.

# Widowed 19 years ago, 54-year-old Sukhpal now runs Rs 50-lakh worth enterprise

GNS News Agency, Sept 30

Nineteen years ago, Sukhpal Kaur, at the age of 35, lost her husband. But she still had two young sons and a family to support. Today, at 54, she has a dairy herd valued at more than Rs 70 lakh, an enterprise that generates over Rs 50 lakh annually, adequate savings, and a livelihood that employs two permanent workers. She has enough to live on and hasn't lost her passion to keep building. A resident of Guradi village in Budhlada tehsil, Mansa, Sukhpal has turned dairy farming into more than a means of livelihood. It has become her business, her financial independence and, even at 54, the work that she still wants to do.

With an intermediate education, she has also acquired years of practical experience in managing cattle. She understands their feed requirements, monitors their health and nutritional needs, and keeps track of their disease. At present, her herd has around 40 cattle — 26 adult animals and 14 young ones, including Murrah and Neeli Ravi buffaloes, and Punjab and Himachal Jersey cows. Farmers At present, her herd has around 40 cattle — 26 adult animals and 14 young ones, including Murrah and Neeli Ravi buffaloes, and Punjab and Himachal Jersey cows. For Sukhpal, they are not simply livestock. They are assets that she has built over years of work. Sukhpal said, "I sell 150 to 200 litres of milk daily currently, which increases to even 300 litres during some months of the year, supplying households as well as village dairy channels. The rate I get is around Rs 80 to 85 per kg." The dairy generates approximately Rs 50 lakh annually from milk sales. After feed, labour, and other expenses, she says she retains around 50 per cent of the sales value. Two permanent workers assist her with the dairy.

She owns around 12 acres of familial land and keeps only about one acre of her land for green fodder, while purchasing most of the remaining fodder. Feed management remains one of the major costs of the enterprise, she says. Yet she considers the dairy profitable and increasingly valuable for another reason. "The animals themselves have become a substantial asset." Most of her well-maintained adult cattle could fetch Rs 3 to 4 lakh each if sold today. However, she says she is not looking to cash out. "My focus now is on retaining animals and expanding the herd. That marks a change from my earlier years, when livestock sales were an important part of my income. I would sell around six animals a year, earning approximately Rs 12 to 13 lakh from livestock sales, apart from milk income." After she lost her husband, she started her journey with only a



couple of cattle, which they had as a couple. Managing a large dairy alongside farming became difficult, so she leased out around 11 acres of her agricultural land, earning around Rs 6 lakh annually from the lease rent. The land could have provided her a relatively secure livelihood. "But I chose dairy farming over agriculture; I love being among them and taking care of them," she said. She does not describe work as something she needs to escape from after accumulating enough assets. For her, continuing to earn and build is part of remaining independent. One of her sons has been working in Canada for the past seven years, while the other runs a travel business in India. "My sons are very supportive, but still I want to work." She says, "Their independence has not changed mine. I manage my dairy, maintain my savings and earn my own income." Sukhpal also says she has never made government financial assistance the basis of her livelihood, has not sought enrollment in monthly-benefit schemes, and has never travelled free on a bus despite the government's scheme of free travelling in public vehicles. Women must not take pride in getting Rs 1,000 per month from the government but should first overcome their own idleness, she says. Sukhpal believes every rural woman should have an income of her own — not necessarily through a job, but by creating self-employment. Even two cows or buffaloes can be the beginning of a dairy that grows into a herd of 10 within a few years; where that investment is difficult, even two goats can provide a woman with her own income and lead to a huge expansion in a few years. She believes livestock can also give children fresh milk and milk products, which mitigates several types of malnutrition, while involving them in productive dairy work after studies can keep them away from excessive social media use, idleness, and harmful influences, including drugs.

# Karnataka job fraud case: ED gets extended custody of IAS officer, alleges wider fraud



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has claimed to have found evidence of widespread fraud involving multiple exams and officials after interrogating arrested IAS officer Gyanendra Kumar Gangwar in connection with the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) veterinary doctors recruitment. During a hearing seeking an extension of custody for the former KPSC exam controller, who was taken into custody for six days on September 21, the agency submitted its findings in a sealed envelope to a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court on Saturday. The agency revealed a larger conspiracy extending beyond the recruitment of 400 veterinary officers to other exams conducted by the KPSC in recent years. "Disclosures have opened new lines of probe which require verification and confrontation, making further interrogation necessary," the special court noted while summarising the plea.

The agency said it found evidence of payments to KPSC officials for other examinations during searches at an official's property. Gangwar further disclosed during questioning that multiple officials collected bribes to facilitate candidate selections during examination and interview

stages. "The findings extend beyond the CID's initial probe into the veterinary officers recruitment case," ED prosecutors Madhu N Rao and Maheshwari D M told the court. Analysis of material seized from a KPSC official's residence last month confirmed widespread involvement in bribery. The agency stated that Gangwar facilitated deposits totalling Rs 26 lakh into the bank accounts of two relatives last year without explaining the source of funds. The suspended IAS officer also admitted leaking 70 to 80 questions with answers for the veterinary officers exam held on January 8 and 9 to middleman Basavaraj Kannale on January 7 using a pen drive. Gangwar claimed he obtained the draft questions under the impression they would reach one or two individuals, but later learned Kannale distributed them to 10 candidates. Seeking extended custody, ED prosecutors argued it was necessary to recover the device used to copy the question paper, identify other beneficiaries, investigate financial transactions, trace documents for gold purchases worth Rs 23 lakh, and verify the proceeds of crime. Defence counsel Siri R opposed the extension, arguing the agency could not expand its investigation beyond the predicate case and cited a lack of incriminating material.

The court also issued a fresh production warrant for middleman Basavaraj Kannale, who allegedly collected bribes ranging from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 40 lakh from 20 aspirants to supply leaked question papers. The agency previously cited Kannale's statements, alleging he paid Rs 1.30 crore in cash to Gangwar and sponsored his jewellery purchases, to secure custody under PMLA. Gangwar has denied the payment claims. Before the High Court directed the setup of an SIT, the Karnataka CID reported in court that Rs 52 lakh collected from aspirants by Kannale was used to buy expensive jewellery for Gangwar's girlfriend at a Bengaluru showroom. Probes revealed that 20 candidates were housed at four Airbnb villas rented by Kannale on the outskirts of Bengaluru on the eve of the exams, where they received leaked question papers before being transported to exam centres. Out of 1,400 candidates who appeared for the 400 government vacancies, 329 were selected. The role of suspended KPSC chairman Sahukar Shivashankarappa and other members in laundering the proceeds of fraud remains under investigation. The matter came to light after an FIR was filed on July 24 by an unsuccessful candidate, Dr S Manjunath, who noted that 29 candidates with poor academic records scored above 450 out of 600 marks to secure selection.

# Why BJP govt in UP is giving fillip to Yadav warrior's folklore in poll season



A folklore hero of the Yadav-Ahir community, known for his valour and fight against caste oppression, is the new icon to be celebrated by the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh as the state gears up for the Assembly elections early next year. The state's Culture Department is constructing a 350-seat auditorium and a library in the honour of Veer Lorik at Hasanpura village in Bansdih tehsil of Ballia district, associated with the legend. The government is planning to promote the legend of Veer Lorik, popular in the Bhojpur region as Lorikayan, across the state.

Sources said the idea for constructing an auditorium after Veer Lorik in Ballia district was proposed by BJP MLA from Bansdih, Ketki Singh. "The proposal has received administrative and financial approval of around Rs 4.97 crore. The first instalment of Rs 1.36 crore has been released, and the foundation work has begun," said an official of the Culture Department. According to the government's project document, the 350-seat auditorium will have sound reinforcement, HD cinematic projection, intelligent LED stage lighting, motorised curtains and acoustic and interior works. Officials said the facility is intended to host theatre, folk music, storytelling and other cultural performances, taking Lorikayan from an oral tradition to a contemporary performance space and making the story accessible to younger audiences. Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh has described Lorik's story as part of Uttar Pradesh's cultural inheritance, highlighting its themes of courage, bravery and resistance to injustice.

Political significance of the projectThe project is significant in a district where Lorik's story has deep roots in

the Yadav-Ahir folk tradition. Ballia already has Veer Lorik Akhara, a statue, and the Veer Lorik Sports Stadium. Not just in Ballia, Lorikayan is a recognisable folk tale in the entire Bhojpur region. There is an actual Lorik Patthar in Robertsganj in Sonbhadra district, which is believed to have been cut in half by Veer Lorik to prove his love for Manjari," said an official.

For a folk hero whose story has survived through generations of oral history, the BJP government's decision to greenlight the project represents a shift: A Yadav warrior is being given a permanent stage in Ballia at a time when political parties are preparing for the Assembly election in the state. The Yadav community is among the politically significant OBC groups in Uttar Pradesh and has traditionally been strongly associated with the Samajwadi Party. Ballia, which borders Bihar, has seven Assembly constituencies. In the 2022 Assembly polls, three were won by the Samajwadi Party (SP), two by the BJP and one each by BJP ally Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party and the BSP. With the death of Uma Shankar Singh, the BSP's lone MLA from Rasra, the BJP is eyeing to win his constituency as well. The BJP, however, says the project should not be viewed through a caste or electoral lens. "There is no politics involved in this. People from Ballia to Sonbhadra and adjoining districts connect with the tales of bravery of Veer Lorik," BJP's Ballia district unit president Sanjay Mishra told. "Mahapurush ki koi jaati nahi hoti. His caste has nothing to do with it. He is the heritage of the district. We want to give this old folklore a modern connect for the youth," Mishra said.

Veer Lorik is the central warrior figure in the Bhojpuri folk epic Lorikayan, traditionally passed down through folk songs, oral performances, and storytelling across eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. He is celebrated in the folklore for his extraordinary strength and bravery, and is portrayed as a warrior who challenges powerful rulers and stands against caste injustice. The most popular strand of the story revolves around Manjari, a princess associated with Sonbhadra. According to the folk narrative, Lorik rescues her from a tyrannical local ruler, King Molagat; defeats him in a battle and eventually marries her. Another part of the legend is associated with the Veer Lorik stone in Sonbhadra's Markundi area. According to local tradition, the huge stone was split in two with a single stroke of sword by Veer Lorik at Manjari's request.

# Russia backs India's candidature for UNSC permanent seat



Russia backed India and Brazil for permanent seats on the UN Security Council, while opposing additional seats for Western countries, particularly Germany and Japan. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov called for greater representation of Asia, Africa and Latin America in reforms

United Nations: Russia has backed India's candidature for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council, saying that any reform of the UN body cannot involve additional seats being allocated to Western countries, especially Germany and Japan. "Our principled approach is the following: UN Security Council reform cannot involve any additional seats being allocated to Western countries, especially to Germany and Japan, who are now on the path to militarism and revanchism," Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in his address to the UN General Assembly. "We are in favour of broadening the representation of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We support Brazil's and India's candidatures for a permanent seat, and at the same time, I wish to emphasise this: we must satisfy the interests of the African continent," he said. Lavrov added that through its foreign policy, "Russia is trying to fix the situation in the world, working together with its allies and strategic partners: the BRICS, the SCO, and the Eurasian Economic Union." "We are promoting an agenda which we can all get behind - a unifying agenda, concrete ideas and projects. Today, what's coming to the fore is the topic of international information security. Clearly, the UN should play a central role in these discussions, not other narrow fora," he said.

# Delhi SIR deadline revised for fourth time, final roll now on December 4



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

SIRResidents can now file claims and objections until October 30, while the deadline for disposal of notices, claims and objections has been extended to November 30.The deadline for the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Delhi was revised for the fourth time on Saturday, with the Election Commission of India (ECI) pushing the publication of the final electoral roll from November 4 to December 4 and giving residents one more month to file claims and objections.

Residents can now file claims and objections until October 30, while the deadline for disposal of notices, claims and objections has been extended to November 30.Also, the ECI eased the process for voters who have received notices over discrepancies in their records. From now on, they will not have to appear at an election office for a hearing but booth level officers (BLOs) will visit their homes to collect documents and upload them on the ECINet platform for a decision by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO).

The revised schedule was issued "in view of the request received from CEO Delhi", the ECI said. It followed a request from the Delhi Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) in a letter dated September 23, it added.The latest change is the fourth revision of the SIR schedule since the exercise was ordered on May 14. The deadline to issue the final roll

# Since Satya Niketan collapse, 596 properties razed, 190 sealed over violations: Delhi Corporation



Satya Niketan collapseAccording to the MCD's recent submissions before the Delhi High Court, the civic body identified 2,453 buildings in the Capital being used as PG accommodations.At least 596 properties have been razed, 190 have been sealed and over 200 show-cause notices and nearly 100 demolition orders have been issued so far amid a Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) crackdown after a five-storey building collapsed in Southwest Delhi's Satya Niketan on September 6, killing seven persons.

In an official statement on Saturday, the civic body said, "The MCD continued its ongoing city-wide enforcement drive against dangerous buildings, unauthorised constructions and violations of the Master Plan of Delhi (MPD) and building bye-laws. Strict enforcement action is being undertaken across all 12 zones of the Corporation to ensure compliance with building norms and safeguard public safety."The enforcement drive follows a citywide survey of paying guest (PG) accommodations, which revealed widespread gaps in building approvals and safety clearances.According to the MCD's recent submissions before the Delhi High Court, the civic body identified 2,453

# 'How can body be cremated with belongings?': Court slams Gurugram Police in realtor murder



"How can a body be cremated along with belongings? How can the law not be followed," Judicial Magistrate Rahul Jain of Saket court asked the Gurugram Police in response to a submission by senior advocate Amit Prasad, who appeared for Yuvraj's sister, that a burnt watch and kada were recovered from the cremation site.

GNS News Agency, Sept 30

A Delhi court on Saturday pulled up the Gurugram Police, asking how it cremated the body of real estate professional Yuvraj Singh Manchanda along with his belongings without following mandatory legal procedures.

How can a body be cremated along with belongings? How can the law not be followed," Judicial Magistrate Rahul Jain of Saket court asked the Gurugram Police in response to a submission by senior advocate Amit Prasad, who appeared for Yuvraj's sister, that a burnt watch and kada were recovered from the cremation site. The remarks came after the court on Thursday said the Gurugram Police had "botched up" the case and described its handling of the body as a "complete hotch potch". Yuvraj was allegedly killed by his former colleague and her partner in Gurgaon on September 6 and thrown into a drain.Describing the sequence of events as a "shocking state of affairs", the court asked, "Do you not upload details of an unidentified body on ZIPNET

was earlier October 7, which was then revised to October 19, October 27 and November 4.The extension comes as the claims and objections phase has seen a relatively low number of applications from people seeking fresh enrolment. Since the draft rolls were published on August 31, only 1.21 lakh Form 6 applications – used to seek registration as new electors – have been filed, according to Delhi CEO office data.The figure assumes significance in the context of the number of deletions in the draft electoral roll.

Delhi had around 1.45 crore electors before the exercise. Among them, 97.5 lakh were included in the draft electoral roll, while around 47.5 lakh electors were classified as "uncollectible" – after BLOs found them absent, shifted, dead or having duplicate entries, among other reasons – and were struck off the roll.Among the 97.5 lakh who did make it to the draft roll, one-third or around 33.1 lakh electors were issued notices to prove that they are eligible to be on the final roll. While 13.79 lakh electors got notices because they could not link themselves to the electoral roll of the last SIR, 19.33 lakh were flagged for "logical discrepancies" in their enumeration forms.Several prominent voters, including former deputy prime minister L K Advani, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Election Commissioner S S Sandhu, former Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, have received such notices. Officials said the details of most had been validated through field verification and their names had been reserved for inclusion in the final roll.Sources in the Delhi CEO's office said the decision to seek more time was taken after a meeting with representatives of political parties earlier this week. "All parties requested that more time be given for filing claims and objections," an official said.Further, the ECI directed district election officers to create adequate helpdesks and hold special camps for people living in night shelters, labourers, poor people and the homeless, as required. The Delhi CEO's office has been trying to increase enrolment among vulnerable communities, including the homeless, sex workers, and transgender persons, through special camps at night shelters and other locations.

buildings in the Capital being used as PG accommodations.However, building plans or sanctioned plans could be traced for only 730 buildings. MCD officials told the court that some of the buildings are 50–60 years old and that ownership of several properties has changed hands multiple times, making it difficult to trace records.The survey had earlier highlighted several other regulatory gaps. Of the 2,453 PG buildings, only 31, or 1.2%, had a No Objection Certificate from the Delhi Fire Service, while sanctioned building plans were available for only 729 buildings. Just eight buildings had structural stability certificates, according to the survey findings, as reported by The Indian Express earlier.The latest MCD submission also stated that only four of the 2,453 PG buildings had been classified as "dangerous". Separately, its survey of 3.99 lakh residential properties found more than 21,099 instances of commercial activity in residential areas, with around 30–40 properties sealed for such violations.

The affidavit filed by the MCD before the High Court gave a closer picture of the situation in Satya Niketan. The civic body said it had conducted a detailed inspection of around 300 properties, of which 101 were being used as PG accommodation. Three of these buildings were declared dangerous and vacated after proceedings under the DMC Act. Their owners challenged the notices in the High Court, which, while staying the notices in separate proceedings, directed that no PG could operate from the properties until they were found structurally safe.The affidavit further said 10 buildings were found vulnerable, with owners and occupants directed to undertake strengthening, renovation, and major repairs recommended in structural audit reports. Another 14 properties required minor repairs, according to the MCD.

in cases of murder or otherwise? Isn't that the procedure followed by Gurugram Police?"Yuvraj's details, including a photograph, were uploaded by the Delhi Police on ZIPNET — an interstate police database — on September 12, two days after Gurugram Police recovered an unidentified body from a drain in Badshahpur. However, the body, which later turned out to be Yuvraj's, was cremated on September 14 without being identified.The court was hearing an application moved earlier by Yuvraj's sister, in which she had raised concerns over the handling of the body by Gurugram Police and alleged that vital forensic evidence and personal belongings were mishandled or destroyed during the cremation. It reserved its order on the application.

According to PTI, questioning an officer from Gurugram's Badshahpur police station, the judge asked why the nearest executive magistrate or sub-divisional magistrate was not informed on the second day after recovery of the unidentified body for the inquest proceedings. "Isn't it the norm to inform the nearest executive magistrate... regarding inquest proceedings for the unidentified body? Why wasn't it carried out," the court said.The judge further raised serious questions over the post-mortem process, noting that two reports appeared to contain materially different findings. While one report mentioned bullet injuries, the other attributed the cause of death to asphyxia due to antemortem drowning."The postmortem reports are different... How can such basic procedures be skipped," the court asked, while also taking note that the viscera had not been preserved.The court observed that the lapses had resulted in Manchanda's family being deprived of the right to perform his last rites. "The complainant not only lost her brother by cremating his body, you snatched away her family's right to dutifully carry out his last rites," it said.Police have alleged that Yuvraj met Anya and Sanyam in Gurugram on September 6, when he was shot inside their car. They allegedly drove for two days with his body before dumping it in a drain on September 8.Gurugram Police recovered the body on September 10 and, according to the sister's plea, cremated it as an unidentified person on September 14, despite an FIR concerning Yuvraj's disappearance having been registered at Lajpat Nagar police station on September 11.

# Six decades, 88 deaths: The dangers that come with a police uniform



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

The death of 56-year-old Police Sub-Inspector Kisan Kamlakar Bhoir after he was allegedly attacked with a cement brick during a night patrol has added another name to a long roll of policemen who have lost their lives while performing their duties across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.Bhoir's death takes the number of police personnel from the Mumbai, Thane and Navi Mumbai commissionerates listed in the police memorial records examined for this story to at least 88. The records include 76 personnel from the Mumbai Police commissionerate, six from Thane police units and five from the Navi Mumbai commissionerate over the last six decades. Bhoir is the latest addition to the list.

But the numbers tell only part of the story. The circumstances in which these policemen died have changed dramatically over the decades — from communal violence and encounters with armed criminals to terrorism, crowd-control operations, rescue missions, traffic enforcement and, in Bhoir's case, an apparently routine intervention during Ganpati security duty.The deadliest year in the Mumbai-related memorial records was 2008, when 12 Mumbai Police personnel were killed. When Mumbai Railway Police and ATS personnel included in the Mumbai-linked records are added, the number rises to 14.Most of those deaths occurred on the night of November 26, 2008, when 10 Pakistani terrorists carried out coordinated attacks at multiple locations in Mumbai.The 26/11 attack therefore accounts for the single largest concentration of police deaths in the Mumbai-linked records.However, this was not the first time that policemen were targeted by terrorists. In 1990, Sub-Inspector Lakhmersingh Sardar, who was on traffic duty, was shot at by Sikh terrorists in Ghatkopar and later suc-

# Protest over alleged rape turns violent at Punjab university; police file FIR



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

A protest by students of Lovely Professional University (LPU) in Punjab's Phagwara over the alleged rape of a female student by an outsider on the university campus turned violent early Sunday morning. The protesters damaged property on the campus, set some objects on fire and blocked the Jalandhar-Phagwara National Highway outside the university.Following the protests, the police have registered an FIR on charges of rape against an unknown suspect based on students' statements."We are verifying the facts. Student leaders and LPU management will have a meeting at noon to resolve the issues being raised by students," said Naveen Singla, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Jalandhar range, who visited the spot and talked to the protesting students.Meanwhile, Lovely Professional University, in a statement to the media, said that "there is no truth in the rumours presently being circulated" and urged students and the public not to amplify them.

The students claimed that the alleged rape had taken place around three days ago and alleged that the university administration had taken no action. They said they would not lift the blockade until a copy of the FIR was handed over to them.According to the DIG, the protesting students alleged that the victim had been sent home from the hostel and that no action had been taken against the alleged accused.The DIG assured the students that a copy of the FIR would be handed over to them and promised a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the matter."The investigation will be conducted scientifically. Forensic and technical aspects will be examined, and student representatives will also be associated with the investigation," said DIG Singla.

The protest caused major traffic disruption, with the highway blocked from both the Jalandhar and Ludhiana sides. Several kilometres-long queues of vehicles were seen on both sides of the highway, leaving commuters stranded and facing considerable difficulty. The blockade caused significant inconvenience to motorists travelling on the Delhi-Amritsar National Highway, with traffic movement coming to a standstill at several points.The unrest, which

# Supreme Court to examine plea challenging new UPI merchant charges

New Delhi: The Supreme Court will on Monday hear a plea challenging the Centre's decision to impose a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on specified UPI person-to-merchant transactions of over Rs 2,000.The new framework, which is scheduled to come into effect from October 15, imposes a 0.4 per cent MDR on specified person-to-merchant (P2M) UPI transactions above Rs 2,000. The MDR will be capped at Rs 300 for transactions of Rs 75,000 and above.Essential and thin-margin sectors, including railways, telecom, insurance, fuel and agricultural inputs, will attract a flat MDR of Rs 5 per transaction above Rs 2,000. Payments into mutual funds, securities and through stock-brokers and dealers will attract an MDR of 0.02 per cent, capped at Rs 300.Person-to-person (P2P) UPI transfers will continue to remain free irrespective of the amount, while payments to merchants up to Rs 2,000 will also remain free. The government has said around 96 per cent of P2M transactions will remain unaffected under the new framework.According to the Supreme Court's cause list for

cumbed to his injuries.

The other major spike came during 1992 and 1993, when Mumbai was engulfed in communal violence.The Mumbai Police memorial records list 10 personnel who died in 1992 and one in 1993. Six of these deaths occurred after policemen were targeted during the 1992-93 riots.When mobs turned on the policeApart from terrorists and armed criminals, the police have also faced the threat of large crowds, with several incidents in which policemen were specifically targeted.

One of the earliest such cases was in 1972, when Police Constable R M Rane was lynched by criminal elements during a factory workers' protest in Vikhroli.Nandkumar Gokhale, a 28-year-old Sub-Inspector of the Mumbai Police, was brutally lynched in Kamathipura's Fifth Lane.On May 18, 1984, a rampaging mob, amid communal riots that had engulfed parts of erstwhile Bombay, Thane and Bhiwandi, inflicted 38 wounds on the officer. Despite being off duty and dressed in civilian clothes, Gokhale had decided to help his fellow policemen control the mob.Known as a dashing officer who suffered from an extreme fear of heights, Gokhale was killed when his attackers, many of them allegedly affiliated with the Mumbai underworld, took him to the terrace of a building and threw him from the top. His body was subsequently hidden inside a sewer and covered with a lid. It was discovered after an extensive search.On the same day, his colleague, Police Constable Shaikh Gula Shaikh Amir, was also lynched in Peru Lane, under the jurisdiction of Dongri police station.The Thane region has its own history of policemen being killed during communal violence.On July 5 and 6, 2006, Police Naik Balu Sukhadev Gangurde and Head Constable Ramesh Yashwant Jagtap, both attached to Thane Police, were lynched while deployed for bandobast duty in Bhiwandi amid rioting and arson.The incident unfolded on July 5, 2006, when hundreds gathered near the proposed Nizampura police station site in Bhiwandi amid opposition to its construction. As tensions escalated, the mob attacked the structure and clashed with police, who opened fire, killing two youths. News of the firing triggered further violence elsewhere in the city, where two policemen, Ramesh Jagtap and Balasaheb Gangurde, encountered a mob near the Baug-E-Firdous mosque while trying to prevent attacks on state transport buses. The two were overpowered, beaten and stabbed, and their bodies were subsequently mutilated and an attempt made to burn them before other policemen reached the spot.

reportedly began near the girls' hostel, intensified as students from different hostels joined in. By 2 am, a large number of students had gathered and moved towards the main entrance of the university. Students began sharing videos from inside the campus on social media, prompting the police to reach the spot.Videos circulating from inside the campus also showed protesters moving through the university mall and other areas amid the escalating protest. Some objects were set on fire during the unrest.Outside the campus, students blocked the National Highway around 4 am, disrupting traffic on the busy Jalandhar-Phagwara stretch. Protesters raised slogans of "We want justice", demanding action over the alleged crime.

"The protest was triggered after information about an alleged sexual assault of a female student began circulating among students. Different versions of the incident were being shared, both among students and on social media," a BSc student told Kapurthala Senior Superintendent of Police Gaurav Toora reached the spot as the situation escalated and told students that the police had not received any complaint regarding the alleged sexual assault at that point.Dr Monica Gulati, registrar, Lovely Professional University, in a statement to the media said, "The University categorically clarifies that there is no truth in the rumours presently being circulated. Students, parents and members of the public are requested not to believe, circulate or amplify such rumours. They should rely upon information communicated through official channels of the University only".

The protest at LPU came a day after a protest at Chitkara University, another private university, in Punjab's Rajpura over claims of two girls missing.The protesting students raised several other demands concerning the functioning and security of the university's boys' and girls' hostels.Singla said a meeting with the university management was scheduled for Sunday afternoon to discuss these issues. The police would also look into students' concerns about security arrangements in the hostels.One of the students' demands was that all female staff be deployed in the girls' hostel. The DIG said the demand would also be considered.During his interaction with the protesters, DIG Singla was also informed about the alleged suicide of a female student at LPU around 15 days ago. He said that the student was from Telangana, and the police had registered criminal proceedings regarding the unnatural death. The student's parents had also arrived at the university after the incident.The DIG said that the police had taken possession of the student's mobile phone and sent it for forensic examination. He said the forensic findings would be reviewed and further action taken based on the evidence.Singla further said that if the investigation revealed any indication of foul play, or if credible information was brought before the police suggesting wrongdoing, appropriate action would be taken in accordance with the law.

# Russia backs India’s candidature for UNSC permanent seat



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

United Nations: Russia has backed India’s candidature for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council, saying that any reform of the UN body cannot involve additional seats being allocated to Western countries, especially Germany and Japan.

# 2 giant pandas set off to Atlanta zoo from China after Xi-Trump summit

GNS News Agency, Sept 30

Bangkok: Two giant pandas departed Chengdu in southwestern China early Sunday for their new homes in Atlanta as part of an agreement between the Chinese and American governments.While in Washington for a three-day summit with US President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that the pandas would arrive in Atlanta in the coming days.

The loan of the pandas to the Atlanta zoo was one of the few concrete outcomes to come out of the state visit, which saw expressions of goodwill between the leaders, but no fixes to any of the long-standing differences between the two countries.Atlanta said farewell to its last pandas in 2024, leaving the zoo without the bears. The new agreement was announced back in April, but without any dates.Ping Ping and Fu Shuang are the two adult pandas that will be on loan to Zoo Atlanta for 10 years as part of the agreement. Both pandas were born in 2020 and were kept at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding.

Ping Ping, the male, has dark black circles around his

“Our principled approach is the following: UN Security Council reform cannot involve any additional seats being allocated to Western countries, especially to Germany and Japan, who are now on the path to militarism and revanchism,” Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in his address to the UN General Assembly.“We are in favour of broadening the representation of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We support Brazil’s and India’s candidatures for a permanent seat, and at the same time, I wish to emphasise this: we must satisfy the interests of the African continent,” he said.Lavrov added that through its foreign policy, “Russia is trying to fix the situation in the world, working together with its allies and strategic partners: the BRICS, the SCO, and the Eurasian Economic Union”.“We are promoting an agenda which we can all get behind- a unifying agenda, concrete ideas and projects. Today, what’s coming to the fore is the topic of international information security. Clearly, the UN should play a central role in these discussions, not other narrow fora,” he said.



eyes, while Fu Shuang, the female, has a forehead that protrudes a bit, according to the Xinhua News Agency.China has long used the pandas as part of its diplomacy globally, deploying the bears in loan programs as expressions of goodwill and letting loan agreements lapse when tensions arise.Xi had said the loan program was an example of “friendship between the Chinese and Americans.”

# Iran insists on diplomatic solution after Trump rejects peace plan

WASHINGTON/UNITED NATIONS/CAIRO, GNS News Agency, Sept 30- Iran on Sunday insisted that only diplomacy ?can solve its conflict with the United States and Israel after US President Donald Trump said he rejected an Iranian proposal to reopen the Strait ?of Hormuz and end fighting.“Our conditions are clear, and any move toward reopening the Strait of Hormuz is contingent on these conditions being met,” Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi posted on social media. “Only a negotiated solution can get them out of this deadlock.”Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here.

Iran announced a peace proposal last week at the UN General Assembly in New York, saying it had been transmitted to the Americans via Qatari mediators. ?Trump said on Saturday he rejected the plan and argued that desperation was driving the Iranians’ push for an agreement on the key waterway.

“They want to make ?a deal to open the Hormuz Strait immediately because they’re losing so badly,” Trump told reporters at the White House.Despite Trump’s ?public statements, mediators facilitating Iran’s talks with the United States have not officially relayed a US rejection of the plan, according to Araqchi.“We are waiting for the mediators to ?convey the definitive views to us, and we will make a decision based on them,” Araqchi posted.

The US has imposed an economic blockade on Iran to put pressure on ?Tehran to stop Iranian attacks on vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, which have drastically reduced shipping through the area even as Trump repeatedly asserts that the US controls the waterway.The Wall Street Journal first reported that Trump had rejected the Iranian proposal, citing unnamed US officials.

It said Trump was privately skeptical that Iran would meet his demands and had told his staff that he sees ?a renewed bombing campaign as likely after the November US midterm elections.A US official had said earlier that discussions with Iran through mediators were “positive and constructive”The Iranians also engaged their Saudi rivals regarding the Strait of Hormuz, underscoring the stakes of a seven-month-old conflict that has disrupted oil flows through a critical shipping ?lane and ?taken a toll on the global economy.Araqchi told reporters at the United Nations on Friday the proposed deal would trigger a seven-day countdown to reopening the strait and a pause in regional fighting.

# India joins UN push to secure sea lanes

United Nations: India has joined maritime and Gulf nations in calling for the protection of international sea lanes as leaders at the UN warned that attacks on ships and disruptions at strategic waterways were threatening energy supplies, food security and global trade.External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar voiced deep concern over continuing hostilities in the Gulf and the targeting of commercial vessels and maritime crews in international waters. He called for restraint, de-escalation and the uninterrupted movement of energy and commerce.India also sought greater protection for ships and seafarers caught in regional conflicts. The warnings extended across speeches delivered during several days of the UN General Assembly debate this week.

Ministers from Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Singapore, the Philippines, Djibouti and other countries described maritime security as a global economic and humanitarian concern. Oman said the recent regional war had paralysed navigation and trade through the Strait of Hormuz.The disruption had affected energy security, price stability and confidence in the international order, Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi said.

Oman remained committed to safeguarding navigation through the strait under international law and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. he said. He urged all

parties to cooperate in protecting the interests of countries dependent on the route.Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud also linked Gulf stability directly to global energy security and trade. “Safeguarding international navigation and the resilience of global supply chains is a shared responsibility,” he said.Saudi Arabia opposed fees or restrictions on movement through the Strait of Hormuz. It also rejected the use of critical waterways as instruments of pressure against other countries. Bahrain Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani said the effects of a maritime disruption extended far beyond coastal states. “A waterway is not merely a security issue of concern for coastal States,” he said. Such routes carry food, medicine and energy, he said, and their disruption affects families even in landlocked countries.Bahrain opposed permit and fee systems for passage through strategic straits. The Philippines placed seafarers at the centre of the debate.Foreign Secretary Theresa Lazaro said nearly 90 per cent of world trade moved by sea with the support of about two million seafarers. More than a quarter of them were Filipinos. She referred to a recent incident in the Strait of Hormuz that killed two Filipino seafarers and injured others. “Their tragedy reminds us: maritime security is human security,” Lazaro said.“Open and secure seas, free from interference and coercion, are vital to our security, our economy, and our people,”

# Relentless rainfall triggers floods, landslides across Nepal



Kathmandu: Relentless rainfall across Nepal since Thursday has triggered fresh floods and landslides, swept away houses and disrupted road traffic, according to a media report, as the Himalayan country reels from the disaster that killed at least 1,453 people and more than 5,000 remain missing.The bodies of 1,451 people have been recovered till Saturday a month after flash floods, originating near the Nepal-Tibet border, devastated towns and villages in northern and central Nepal, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA). Two others had died while undergoing treatment.

A total of 13,795 people have been rescued till Saturday, the NDRRMA said.In Rupandehi district, a part of Lumbini province, floodwaters from the Tinau River swept away six houses along the riverbank in Butwal on Saturday night as the river rose above its danger level, the Kathmandu Post newspaper reported.

A police official was quoted as saying that around 200 houses along the riverbank in Butwal were at risk, with security personnel evacuating about 1,000 people overnight after the Tinau and nearby streams swelled amid continued rain.Authorities initially moved around 500 residents from Majhuwa, a high-risk area in Butwal Metropolitan City-13, to the Durga Temple holding centre, the report said. They were later transferred to safer locations, in various schools in Butwal-11.The Tinau River crossed its danger mark at around 8 pm on Saturday, prompting security personnel to begin rescue and evacuation operations.The Rupandehi

district administration has urged people living near rivers and streams to remain alert and move to safer areas if water levels rise further.In Chitwan district of Bagmati province, the Narayani River and the Riu stream crossed their danger levels early Sunday as rain continued.At the Devghat gauge station, the Narayani River reached 9.23 metres at around 5.15 am, according to the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology. The warning level there is 7.3 metres, and the danger level is 9 metres.The Riu, which flows along the boundary of Madi and Chitwan National Park, reached 3.92 metres. Its warning level is 3.4 metres, and its danger level is 3.8 metres, the Kathmandu Post reported.The Riu flows through southern Chitwan before joining the Rapti River near Meghauli and eventually draining into the Narayani.Heavy rain has also triggered landslides and mudslides at several points in Chitwan, disrupting road traffic.At Dharapani in Ichchhakamana Rural Municipality-4, part of the road subsided further, and a mud-laden landslide blocked traffic in both directions, a police official said.A landslide at Simaldhara in the same municipality has also blocked the road in both directions.Flood and landslide risks also remain high in Karnali, where river levels have continued to rise.The Thuli Bheri River in Dolpa had reached 3.46 metres, just below its 3.56-metre warning level and 3.76-metre danger level, with the water level still rising.

In Humla, the Karnali River at Sarkegad stood at 2.74 metres, below its 4-metre warning level, but was rising. The river level at Biunhidhanda was 2.42 metres.The Mugu Karnali stood at 5.1 metres, below its 7.5-metre warning level and 9-metre danger level, with the water level rising.A landslide has blocked the Nagna-Gamgadhi road at Jharikhola in Mugu, the report said.In Kalikot, a mudslide at Gagne Khola in Shubhakalika Rural Municipality-1 has blocked the Karnali Highway. The Tila Karnali there stood at 3.27 metres, below its 5-metre warning level and 5.45-metre danger level, with the river level falling.Landslides have also disrupted traffic along the Karnali Corridor at Khaccha in Sarkegad-1, Gopchegauda in Kharpunath-1 and Yalwang in Namkha-4 in Humla.In Jumla, water levels in the Tila Karnali and Sija rivers remained stable at 3.74 metres and 2.86 metres, respectively.With rain continuing, authorities across affected districts have urged residents in flood- and landslide-prone areas to remain alert and move to safety when necessary.

# New 737 MAX glitch raises landing concern

Washington: A newly identified Boeing 737 MAX software glitch could disable an automated navigation feature after a missed approach, raising fresh safety questions for a jet widely used by Indian carriers, The Wall Street Journal reported.The problem emerged from an update to cockpit software. It can occur when pilots change their planned flight path after abandoning a landing attempt, according to the Journal.In one scenario, pilots may have to fly manually without some autopilot functions. Industry officials said that could increase the crew’s workload at a critical stage, when the aircraft is at low altitude and may also be encountering bad weather.Boeing has acknowledged the glitch but said it does not pose a safety risk. It notified 737 MAX operators about the issue in late August, the Journal reported, citing a company document.“We shared information with operators that reinforced existing pilot procedures for safely handling such cases,” Boeing said. “Our engineers are working on a software update to permanently address the issue.”The company is also developing a procedure that would allow pilots to restore the automated navigation feature if it becomes unavailable. Southwest Airlines and United Airlines have told Boeing they do not want to accept new 737 MAX aircraft carrying the affected software, according to industry officials cited by the Journal.

The airlines instead requested an earlier software version. The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating the problem and will act if necessary, a senior agency official told the newspaper.The review could affect approval of Boeing’s newest variants, the MAX 7 and MAX 10, if regulators determine that the glitch creates an unsafe condition. The FAA approved the MAX 7 for passenger service last month.Boeing Chief Executive Kelly Ortberg has said he expects the MAX 10 to receive regulatory approval soon. The issue presents a complication for Southwest, which has waited years for the smaller MAX 7 and plans to place it in service next year.Delta, United, American and Alaska Airlines have MAX 10 aircraft on order. It is not known how many aircraft may be operating with the affected software. Boeing said it was seeking an accurate count because air-



lines are not required to tell the manufacturer when they install an update. There are 2,422 MAX 8 and MAX 9 aircraft flying worldwide, according to aviation data firm Cirium.

Alaska, American, Southwest and United said none of their aircraft carries the flawed software. Boeing has told airlines they can return to an earlier version. Boeing told operators in August that it expected to issue further guidance by November and provide a permanent fix in early 2028.The company now says it is trying to accelerate both timelines. The manufacturer said it first learned of the problem from a MAX operator in November 2024. The issue did not initially meet Boeing’s threshold for a safety review.It began a formal review this month after receiving additional feedback and shared its findings with the FAA. WestJet offered a different assessment. “This is not considered a safety issue, we have standard operating procedures and training to mitigate this type of event,” the Canadian airline said.GE Aerospace, which developed the software, said it was supporting the FAA’s evaluation. The development is closely watched in India because Akasa Air operates an all-Boeing 737 MAX fleet, while Air India Express uses the 737-8 alongside older 737 models.The Journal did not identify any Indian carrier as having aircraft equipped with the affected software, and there is no public indication that flights in India have been disrupted.

# US intel flags Saudi nuclear weapons option

Washington: Saudi Arabia has not ruled out developing nuclear weapons, according to a classified US intelligence assessment that has intensified congressional concern over President Donald Trump’s civilian nuclear cooperation agreement with Riyadh, The Washington Post reported.The assessment was contained in classified documents sent to Congress last month, US officials told the newspaper. The intelligence findings have not been made public, and the CIA declined to comment.The documents were provided as Congress reviews an agreement that would permit American companies to begin nuclear energy projects worth tens of billions of dollars in Saudi Arabia.The Trump administration says the partnership would strengthen relations with Riyadh, create opportunities for US companies and prevent Saudi Arabia from turning to Russia or China for nuclear technology.The State Department defended the agreement and said Washington “does not and will not support a Saudi nuclear weapon program”.It said the agreement combined expanded nuclear energy cooperation with the strongest non-proliferation standards that were diplomatically achievable.The Saudi government did not answer the Post’s questions about the intelligence assessment. It referred the newspaper to an earlier statement by Energy Minister Abdulaziz bin Salman, who said the kingdom’s nuclear programme would be “peaceful” and developed with “the highest levels of responsibility and transparency”.The agreement initially limits Saudi uranium enrichment to below 5 per cent. But it could eventually permit enrichment of up to 20 per cent after an additional study and a separate written agreement, according to details reported by the Post and The Wall Street Journal.Uranium enriched to 20 per cent is below weapons grade. However, experts say reaching that level substantially reduces the time and technical work needed to produce material suit-

able for a nuclear weapon.Lawmakers have also raised questions about inspections. The agreement does not require Saudi Arabia to adopt the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Additional Protocol, which gives inspectors broader access to nuclear fuel-cycle facilities, research sites and suspected undeclared locations.A group of Democratic senators led by Edward Markey and Jeff Merkley wrote to Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Friday and demanded that the administration abandon the agreement. “With this deal, the Trump Administration is departing from precedent, adopting looser restrictions, and caving to Saudi demands,” the senators said. They argued that Riyadh should accept what lawmakers call the non-proliferation “Gold Standard”.That would prohibit domestic uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing while requiring the kingdom to implement the IAEA Additional Protocol. The letter was also signed by Senators Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen, Peter Welch and Ron Wyden. Congress is in a 90-day review period.Lawmakers may introduce legislation rejecting the agreement. However, supporters would need a two-thirds majority to override a presidential veto and prevent it from taking effect. Supporters of the agreement say US participation would provide Washington with more influence over Saudi nuclear activities than allowing Russian or Chinese companies to build the kingdom’s programme.Trump has also made Saudi normalisation of relations with Israel a condition of the nuclear agreement, according to the Post.Riyadh has said it will not establish diplomatic relations with Israel without progress towards a Palestinian state. Saudi Arabia is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and is subject to IAEA safeguards.Civil nuclear cooperation agreements under Section 123 of the US Atomic Energy Act establish the conditions under which American nuclear technology and material may be transferred to another country.

# Athletes see climate change as threatening their sports and their health. Some are speaking up



Pragnya Mohan has been a professional triathlete for nearly a decade, but summers in her native India are now so hot that she can't train there anymore. She escaped the heat to train in the United Kingdom but worries about a day when a warming world kills her sport entirely. American discus thrower Sam Mattis described temperatures as high as 44 Celsius (111 Fahrenheit) at the 2021 U.S. Olympic trials in Eugene, Oregon, caused some fans, officials, and athletes to pass out. New Zealand soccer player Katie Rood recalled training in heat chambers to prepare for the Tokyo Olympics, and warmups cut short in high heat and humidity. All three spoke at the United Nations climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan to talk about the threat that climate change poses to them, to fans, and to sport itself. With billions of fans worldwide, they're among athletes and leagues trying to get more people to care, and act, on climate change. "In the future, if climate change is not addressed and is not thoughtfully handled, triathlons can cease to exist," Mohan said at a panel discussion. It's not all about heat. Mohan noted this year's Paris Olympics had to delay some triathlon events because heavy rains — which have increased as a warming atmosphere holds more water — contributed to high bacteria levels in the Seine River. Some top soccer clubs have gotten together in a climate action alliance aimed at reducing emissions and inspiring fans to act on climate change. One of those is La Liga club Real Betis. Rafael Muela Pastor, general manager of the club's foundation, said at another panel in Baku that soccer is "the most powerful and massive sport in the world" and it's crucial that "we have to do something."

"We have a superpower and we have a responsibility with that," he said. Leslie Mabon, a lecturer on environmental systems at the United Kingdom's Open University, said athletes can raise awareness on issues like global warming, but the most transformative activism often comes from elsewhere. "I do think athletes can move the needle, but sometimes it's away from the very highest levels," said Mabon. Climate change is also making sports more expensive and widening disparities. Climate change is also making sports more expensive and widening disparities. (Source: Freepik) The financial implications of what's at stake do make it very difficult, and particularly the governing bodies — the leagues, the FIFAs of this world — it's very hard to get them to take action." FIFA — the governing body for world soccer — was unmoved by concerns about heat and human rights in holding the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, a country criticized for its treatment of migrant workers, among other issues. And at times, outwardly positive actions from sports leaders can be little more than greenwashing. FIFA President Gianni Infantino attended COP29 and posted on Instagram about extending a partnership with Pacific Island nations to foster "climate-resilient football development" and raise awareness about climate change. That came just months after FIFA signed a sponsorship deal with Saudi Arabia's state oil giant Aramco. Women soccer players from around the world signed an open letter urging FIFA to end the deal, citing both the country's record on the rights of women and LGBTQ+ people and the impact of fossil fuel production on climate change. FIFA did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press. "It's very hard for anything that comes from the top levels to be taken seriously or to be taken credibly when you still have these kind of deals in place," Mabon said. Climate change is also making sports more expensive and widening disparities. Jessica Murfree, assistant professor of sports administration at the University of North Carolina, said athletes will have to travel farther and spend more to train and compete as some places become incompatible with sport because it's too hot or there isn't enough snow. "That's going to have a massive impact on athletes and athlete hopefuls," she said. "It drives a bigger socioeconomic wedge between the haves and the have-nots, which then becomes a justice issue." Sports are seeking to adapt to a hotter planet. Sometimes competitions get moved to different places, or starting times get shifted to cooler parts of the day. Then there's technology: Qatar spent billions on air-conditioned stadiums at its World Cup to keep fans and players cool. But sports can't air-condition its way out of the climate crisis, said Rood, the New Zealand soccer player. The energy it requires "is a huge cost to the environment," she said in an interview, adding: "It's not just the isolated events that happen once or twice a year. It's the training and the lead-up ... those conditions can't necessarily be created every time." And that's concerning for Tina Muir, a former elite runner from the United Kingdom who talks about the threat of climate change through the business she founded, Running for Real. Athletes are conditioned to push themselves beyond their limits, she said. "It's going to be almost like a war of attrition for many athletes," Muir said. "It's who can handle these tough conditions the most. ... but also becomes a bit of a safety game, being able to tough it out but doing long-term damage to yourself in the process."

# Democratising AI needs a radically different approach

The growing power and influence of Big Tech companies is a concern for policymakers worldwide. To break Big Tech's hold over the Artificial Intelligence (AI) ecosystem and democratise AI development, India, like many other countries, is investing in sovereign cloud infrastructure, creating open data platforms and supporting local start-ups. However, these efforts are unlikely to be enough and may even deepen Big Tech's dominance.

The enormous computational costs of building deep learning models make it nearly impossible for smaller players to compete. Deep learning is now the popular form of AI because it has generalised capabilities. But this is precisely also what makes it computationally expensive. As of 2023, Gemini Ultra was the most costly model, costing about \$200 million to train. To make it affordable, any new entrant would necessarily be beholden to Big Tech companies for compute credits. These costs also incentivise Big Tech companies to keep advocating for deep learning as the future and pushing out larger and larger models — it locks in their position as the dominant actors and provides the primary revenue stream through which they can recover their costs. Some recent policy proposals suggest investing in public compute infrastructure or developing a federated model, taking a leaf out of India's Digital Public Infrastructure model. However, it is not enough just to provide alternate infrastructure. This infrastructure also has to be competitive with the Big Tech offering. Big Tech companies offer a wide range of developer tools which make workflows easier and more efficient, and these tools are optimised for their cloud infrastructure. Along with access to cloud infrastructure, they give companies access to the latest algorithmic models, making tasks such as image or video analysis far easier, along with tools to simplify data preparation and labelling. Big Tech's end-to-end service offering makes development cheaper and easier and drives up the costs of switching to other providers. Big Tech's data monopoly is even harder to contend with. These companies access a continuous data stream across various domains, social interactions and geographies. This "data intelligence" is likely to be more sophisticated than what other players can achieve, giving them a substantial competitive edge. Unsurprisingly, many smaller AI companies find their end game is to sell to Big Tech, further entrenching the cycle of dominance. While public data initiatives aim to democratise data access and create a more equitable playing field, they often fall short. Open data initiatives are prone to commercial capture, where the better-resourced actors — here, Big Tech with its advanced computational infrastructure and data intelligence — are positioned to best leverage these open data architectures. The shift toward deep learning as the most popular form of AI has also meant that commercial firms, particularly Big Tech, now dominate AI, and academia has a diminishing role. Industry players now have more academic publications and citations and are shaping the direction of AI research. Prioritising a theory of change We need a radically different approach to AI development that does not aim to compete with or replicate the Big Tech model but changes the rules of the game altogether. As long as we are locked into a 'big-data' and 'larger is better' imagination of AI, we will only keep chipping away at an exploitative model of commercial surveillance and even a wasting of precious public resources. A model of AI development whose starting point is a theory of change, i.e., understanding the causal mechanisms through which various factors link together and developing hypotheses about how potential interventions may contribute to change. In this model, domain expertise and lived experience guide AI development rather than statistical patterns in Big Data alone. This knowledge and experience are harnessed to develop theories of change and build purpose-driven and smaller models that reflect frameworks for progressive change. Data collection is then targeted and curated to test and further refine the theory of change.

sive and widening disparities. Climate change is also making sports more expensive and widening disparities. (Source: Freepik) The financial implications of what's at stake do make it very difficult, and particularly the governing bodies — the leagues, the FIFAs of this world — it's very hard to get them to take action." FIFA — the governing body for world soccer — was unmoved by concerns about heat and human rights in holding the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, a country criticized for its treatment of migrant workers, among other issues. And at times, outwardly positive actions from sports leaders can be little more than greenwashing. FIFA President Gianni Infantino attended COP29 and posted on Instagram about extending a partnership with Pacific Island nations to foster "climate-resilient football development" and raise awareness about climate change. That came just months after FIFA signed a sponsorship deal with Saudi Arabia's state oil giant Aramco. Women soccer players from around the world signed an open letter urging FIFA to end the deal, citing both the country's record on the rights of women and LGBTQ+ people and the impact of fossil fuel production on climate change. FIFA did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press. "It's very hard for anything that comes from the top levels to be taken seriously or to be taken credibly when you still have these kind of deals in place," Mabon said. Climate change is also making sports more expensive and widening disparities. Jessica Murfree, assistant professor of sports administration at the University of North Carolina, said athletes will have to travel farther and spend more to train and compete as some places become incompatible with sport because it's too hot or there isn't enough snow. "That's going to have a massive impact on athletes and athlete hopefuls," she said. "It drives a bigger socioeconomic wedge between the haves and the have-nots, which then becomes a justice issue." Sports are seeking to adapt to a hotter planet. Sometimes competitions get moved to different places, or starting times get shifted to cooler parts of the day. Then there's technology: Qatar spent billions on air-conditioned stadiums at its World Cup to keep fans and players cool. But sports can't air-condition its way out of the climate crisis, said Rood, the New Zealand soccer player. The energy it requires "is a huge cost to the environment," she said in an interview, adding: "It's not just the isolated events that happen once or twice a year. It's the training and the lead-up ... those conditions can't necessarily be created every time." And that's concerning for Tina Muir, a former elite runner from the United Kingdom who talks about the threat of climate change through the business she founded, Running for Real. Athletes are conditioned to push themselves beyond their limits, she said. "It's going to be almost like a war of attrition for many athletes," Muir said. "It's who can handle these tough conditions the most. ... but also becomes a bit of a safety game, being able to tough it out but doing long-term damage to yourself in the process."



By championing "small AI", firmly anchored in a theory of change, we can carve out a space for AI development that is inherently more democratic and effective. Historically, significant advancements in medicine, aviation, or weather forecasting typically relied on theory-driven models, where hypothesis testing and scientific rigour in fields such as biology, physics, and chemistry were prioritised over sheer volumes of data. In our obsession with 'bigger is better' we seem to have forgotten this entirely. Another missed opportunity We need to change course urgently, and we cannot do that as long as we keep viewing Big Data and deep learning as the holy grail. On this current path, we only increase our dependence on Big Tech. The recently signed Global Development Compact is a missed opportunity to re-think the current paradigm. While it makes all the right noises about democratising AI, it ultimately falls back into the same trap of assuming that if countries build large enough data sets and are given access to computational power, we will magically be able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and address Big Tech monopolies.

# Mahindra may hike SUV prices again in coming weeks amid rising commodity costs

New Delhi: Mahindra & Mahindra is weighing another price increase across its SUV portfolio amid recent increases in commodity prices, with a decision expected in the next couple of weeks, said Nalinikanth Gollagunta, CEO, Automotive Division, Mahindra Group. In an interview with PTI, Gollagunta said the company has already taken three price increases this year — in January, April and July, with the July increase being about 2.7 per cent on sports utility vehicles (SUVs).

"We're watching it very closely. As you know, we've already taken three increases — one in January, one in April, and a fairly significant one in July, about 2.7 per cent on SUVs. That said, it's something that can be very dynamic, so we continue to watch it," he said.

Elaborating further, Gollagunta said, "We'll probably take a call in the next couple of weeks on whether we need a price increase... I can't say we will or we won't, but it's something we're looking at closely, given the recent price increases in commodities." He said recent price increases across the auto industry have not affected customer inquiries or bookings, with vehicles still priced below pre-GST levels.

"No, primarily for a couple of reasons — we're still well below pre-GST prices, so demand continues to be quite intact and robust at this point," Gollagunta said.

# Night lights vs. pitch black: How your sleep environment affects health and longevity



Sleep quality has long been linked to overall health and longevity, but recent discussions have shed light on the impact of sleeping environments on well-being. Dr Sudhir Kumar recently shared a video on X, mentioning that sleeping in complete darkness, as opposed to sleeping with a night light or in a dimly lit room, may significantly lower the risk of premature death. He wrote in the caption, "Those sleeping in completely dark rooms have 30% lower risk of premature death, as compared to those who sleep with lights on (even if the room is dimly lit)." Three secrets for longer and healthier life

1. Sleep in pitch darkness Those sleeping in completely dark room have 30% lower risk of premature death, as compared to those who sleep with lights on (even if the room is dimly lit),
2. Maintain a regular sleep schedule. So what exactly happens to the body when you sleep in total darkness, and how does this compare to sleeping with a night light? Dr Kadam Nagpal, senior consultant neurologist at Salubritus Medcentre, tells indianexpress.com, "Circadian rhythm is a 24-hour biological clock that usually coordinates the time of sleep." He explains that light plays a crucial role in regulating this internal clock. "Whenever light enters the eye, there are special cells in the retina where the inputs are being generated and carried out to the brain, and it is being interpreted as information about the time of the day."

How does sleeping in complete darkness affect the body's natural circadian rhythm compared to sleeping with a night light? The impact of light exposure on our sleep patterns is significant. Dr Nagpal reveals, "When a person is being exposed to natural light, a person's circadian rhythm becomes synchronised with sunset and sunrise." This natural synchronisation can be disrupted by artificial light sources.

He continues, "Whenever poorly timed artificial light exposure, such as light from a device or light from a mobile phone, is given to a person or a patient, especially at night, it can affect the sleep and wake cycle of the person and can thereby affect the circadian rhythm or the biological clock." Impact of exposure to light during sleep on hormone production, overall health and longevity Light exposure significantly affects the production of melatonin, a crucial hor-

# Indian researchers find new method to detect Monkeypox virus

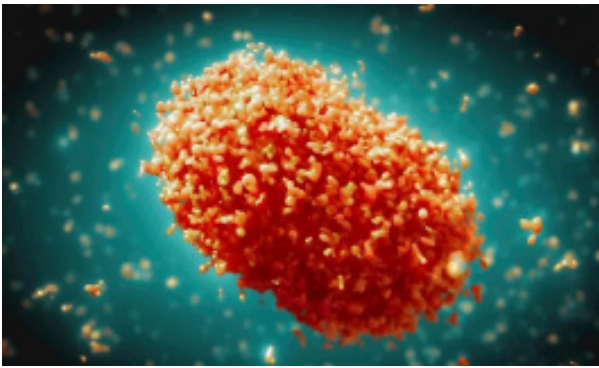
New Delhi :Researchers from JNCASR, an autonomous institution of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), have identified a new method to understand the virology of monkeypox virus (MPV). The new findings can help develop diagnostic tools for the deadly infection, declared a global health emergency twice by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the last three years. The 2024 global outbreak saw the disease spread to about 15 countries in Africa, and three out of Africa. The outbreak has raised serious concern about its unanticipated spread across the globe, as the modes of transmission and symptoms are not well understood. A comprehensive understanding of virology, alongside the rapid development of effective diagnostic and therapeutic strategies, is of paramount importance.

"MPV is a double-stranded DNA (dsDNA) virus. The detection of the extracellular viral protein gene through polymerase chain reaction (PCR) is a widely established technique for identifying MPV in clinical specimens," said the researchers. Currently, the disease is detected via PCR, relying on the amplification of double-stranded DNA (dsDNA), which also employs fluorescent probes for quantifying amplification. The team identified and characterised highly conserved GQ — a four-stranded unusual and characteristic DNA structure within the MPV genome. They specifically detected a specific GQ sequence using a tailored fluorescent small-molecule probe, enabling precise detection of MPV. "These GQ sequences are stable under physiological conditions, highly conserved, and are not present in other pox viruses, other pathogens, and the human genome. These characteristics make the GQ sequences valuable targets for the development of diagnostic tools and therapeutic intervention," explained the team. Their fluorogenic molecular probe (BBJL) delivered "more than 250-fold en-

hancement in fluorescence output upon binding with MPV GQs (MP2). The ability of BBJL to selectively detect this highly conserved sequence in the MPV genome sets a precedent for the development of detection techniques targeting noncanonical nucleic acids." Additional mapping of the MPV genome is being performed to identify potential GQ targets for future therapeutics.

hancement in fluorescence output upon binding with MPV GQs (MP2). The ability of BBJL to selectively detect this highly conserved sequence in the MPV genome sets a precedent for the development of detection techniques targeting noncanonical nucleic acids." Additional mapping of the MPV genome is being performed to identify potential GQ targets for future therapeutics.

Consequently, this study augments the development of potential detection platforms based on GQ, and the GQs identified can be further investigated for their anti-viral properties. Such molecular probes with superior conformation or sequence-specific recognition of nucleic acids could alleviate the challenge in existing amplification-based techniques, in discriminating false-positive results arising from non-specific amplification. The identification and characterisation of new GQ sequences in the MPV could help the broader scientific community seeking to understand the virology of MPV or develop diagnostic and therapeutic interventions, said researchers.



# Seven tips to be safe while using social media platforms

Hyderabad: In today's digital age, there are very few individuals who do not have a social media account. From children to elderly everyone are glued to social media leaving lesser scope for safety and privacy. Moreover, having a social media account and marking your digital presence have grown to become a mainstream profession. As social media has become an integral part of our life and hard to be ignored, it is at least necessary to remain safe while using the public platform. Just with a mere click, you can fall prey to crimes such as identity theft, blackmail, cyber bullying, or even having to compromise on your personal information. Here are a few guidelines listed to make sure you are shielded and empowered in this digital age:

1. Keep your Information Private: While opening a social media account, the networks request details regarding your personal information such as address, phone numbers, emails, and birthdays. Make sure you have not disclosed any information that might become a potential threat. Always keep your account private.
2. Strong Passwords: It is a common practice to keep our birth dates as our passwords. Do not do that. It is important to have a strong password which is a mix of letters, numbers, and signs.
3. Accept Requests only from your Friends: It is common to receive follow requests on your social media account, but make sure you accept requestes only from your friends or acquaintences.
4. Do not open Unwarranted Links: Be cautious while clicking on links as you may fall prey to a devious crime just by opening a random link sent to you either by your friend or a follower.
5. Be Mindful of Sharing Information on Social Media: It is good



to be active on social media and share about your life. But make sure you are being mindful about the information your sharing in the public platform. Remember, the internet is permanent.

6. Do not Enable Auto Log in: Ensure that you do not have applications set to auto log in by default. It is always not recommended to have the option of auto log in on to remain on the safer side.
7. Close other Social Media Networks you do not use anymore: If you have an account in other social media platforms that you hardly use anymore, then remember to log out and close the account. Do not risk leaving personal information on platforms you no longer use.

The internet has boomed so as the social media in the past decade creating space for newer crimes. It is important to understand the security tools, safety tips, and guidelines in order to remain safe and private while also making your mark in the growing digital age.

# The need for gender equity in urban bureaucracy

India is in the midst of a profound urban transformation. By 2050, over 800 million people, about half the population, will live in cities, making India the largest driver of global urban growth. As cities expand spatially, economically and demographically, they are rewriting the social contract of a modern India and shaping the future of its democracy and development. In the last three decades, progressive constitutional reforms have advanced gender equity. The 73rd and 74th Amendments mandate 33% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Governments (ULGs), further strengthened to 50% by 17 States and a Union Territory. Today, women comprise over 46% of local elected representatives (Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 2024), as a rising presence of mayors and councillors. However, the bureaucratic apparatus that implements their decisions remains overwhelmingly male. While women's representation in grass-root politics has increased, administrative cadres (city managers, planners, engineers, police) exhibit a stark imbalance, limiting the ability of cities to respond equitably to all citizens. As we invest in highways, metros, and smart cities, we overlook a foundational aspect of inclusive development — gender equity in bureaucracy. The bureaucratic gender gap

Despite more women entering the civil services, the urban administrative architecture remains male-dominated. As of 2022, women constituted just 20% of the Indian Administrative Service (IndiaSpend-2022), with even lower representation in urban planning, municipal engineering and transport authorities. In policing, only 11.7% of the national

force are women (Bureau of Police Research and Development-2023), and often confined to desk roles. This gap is cause for concern. In cities, the engagement of women is different. They rely more on public transport, make multi-stop journeys for work and caregiving, and depend on neighbourhood-level infrastructure. An Institute for Transportation and Development Policy and Safetipin study found that 84% of women in Delhi and Mumbai used public or shared transport; it was 63% for men. Yet, urban planning prioritises mega-projects over safe, accessible, neighbourhood-level mobility. A 2019 Safetipin audit across 50 cities found over 60% of public spaces were poorly lit. With few women in policing, community safety initiatives often fail to resonate with women. This underrepresentation is not superficial; it affects outcomes. Women officials bring perspectives shaped by lived realities. Studies by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations and UN Women show that they prioritise water, health and safety, and improve public trust in law enforcement through empathetic enforcement. Gender-sensitive design requires gender-diverse institutions. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), which integrates gender considerations into public finance, is a promising but underutilised tool in India's urban governance. Introduced globally in the 1990s, GRB recognises that budgets are not neutral and can reinforce inequities if left unchecked. India adopted a Gender Budget Statement in 2005-06, with Delhi, Tamil Nadu and Kerala leading efforts. Delhi has funded women-only buses and public lighting;

# Widely used fungicide found to be driving C. tropicalis infections

Candida tropicalis is an important fungal pathogen in India and many parts of the world. Its infections are associated with a mortality rate of 55-60%. Anti-fungal drugs called azoles, such as fluconazole and voriconazole, are used to treat its infections. But there is a growing concern in medical circles that clinics are seeing an increasing number of infections by strains of C. tropicalis that exhibit high resistance to these drugs. What is driving this alarming increase in drug resistance? A paper published recently in PLOS Biology by researchers from Fudan University in Shanghai has provided the answer. They found that an azole-related fungicide called tebuconazole widely used by farmers and gardeners, and which can accumulate and persist in the environment has driven the increase in azole-resistant C. tropicalis infections seen in clinics. The team also found that tebuconazole-resistant strains exhibited aneuploidy — meaning their chromosome number showed differences from the normal chromosome count for the organism. Such deviation from the normal chromosome complement is known as ploidy plasticity.

In the human body, most cells have two sets of the genome: thus they are diploid. One set of 23 chromosomes comes via the father's sperm and the other set of 23 from the mother's egg. When we, in turn, make eggs or sperm, a process called meiosis ensures only one set of chromosomes each of the 23 pairs is transmitted to them. Eggs or sperm are the only haploid cells in us — meaning they each have one copy of the genome. When a sperm fertilises an egg to make the zygote, diploidy is restored. The zygote then develops into the baby. On rare occasions, meiosis isn't as efficient and produces sperm or eggs that contain one copy more or one copy less of one or more chromosomes. Such eggs and sperm are said to be aneuploid. Aneuploidy can have serious consequences. A zygote with three copies instead of two of the smallest chromosome leads to the development of Down syndrome. These individuals have delayed development, characteristically aberrant physical features, and mild to moderate intellectual impairment. Aneuploidy for any of the other chromosomes almost invariably ends in prenatal death. In short, humans don't tolerate ploidy plasticity well — nor do most other animals, plants, and fungi. For a long time, C. tropicalis was also thought to be a diploid organism. Thus, finding that in most tebuconazole-resistant strains the ploidy was altered surprised the researchers. Enhanced resistance to antifungals The team started with five different C. tropicalis strains that were susceptible to tebuconazole and also to clinically-used fluconazole and voriconazole. They exposed the strains to incrementally more tebuconazole concentrations from 0.125 to 16 micrograms/millilitre in liquid medium, then grew them on tebuconazole-containing semisolid media in Petri plates. Finally, they picked 35 tebuconazole-resistant colonies. All these colonies exhibited cross-resistance to fluconazole and voriconazole.

The tebuconazole-resistant strains showed slower growth than their progenitor strains in the absence of antifungals. But in the presence of antifungals, they grew much better. It seems the resistant strains had traded cell growth for antifungal resistance. The researchers found that the ploidy of tebuconazole-resistant strains ranged from haploid to triploid (that is, three copies of the genome). Those



identified as diploid or close to diploid were found by more detailed analyses to, in fact, be segmental aneuploids: they carried duplications or deletions of some chromosome segments.

The duplicated chromosome segments carried genes whose overexpression was known from other studies to increase resistance to azoles. For example, several TBZ-resistant strains had duplications of a chromosomal segment carrying a gene named TAC1, which encodes a protein that helps the cell to produce more of another protein named the ABC-transporter. The ABC-transporter pumps toxic compounds such as the azoles out of the cell. Conversely, other segmental aneuploids showed haploidisation, that is, deletion of one copy of a segment of another chromosome that carried the HMG1 gene. The overexpression of HMG1 decreased the biosynthesis of a chemical in cell membranes named ergosterol.

Previous studies had shown that in budding yeast, HMG1 overexpression led to lower synthesis of ergosterol and a lower resistance to fluconazole — whereas reduced expression of HMG1 stimulated ergosterol synthesis and elevated resistance to fluconazole. Thus, although the aneuploidies created imbalances in the C. tropicalis genome that reduced their growth rate, they enabled the strains to better resist antifungals. The researchers also verified that the strains with altered ploidy were more virulent than the progenitor strains in mice treated with fluconazole. An unanticipated haploidAnother unexpected bonus from the new study was the discovery that tebuconazole-resistant strains included stable haploid strains of C. tropicalis. The haploid cells were able to undergo mating. These serendipitous findings now provide researchers a useful tool for future genetic analyses. The researchers recovered a haploid cell from among the tebuconazole-resistant strains generated in the laboratory. They wondered whether any of the 868 C. tropicalis strains recorded in clinical visits around the world might include any haploids (that is, naturally haploid rather than as an abnormality). They examined publicly available genomic sequences of these strains and found that two of them, isolated from Spain, were indeed haploid.

In conclusion, the research showed that the reckless use of triazole antifungals in agriculture can unwittingly promote the emergence of pathogenic strains showing cross-resistance to azoles of clinical importance. Further, some of the resistant strains were haploid, like our sperm and egg cells, and could likewise mate and hence be capable of introducing their resistance mechanisms into new genetic backgrounds. This exemplifies the prophetic warning: "sow the wind, reap the whirlwind".



tional six to eight 8 GI applications from handicrafts and horticulture products in the coming days. Project principal investigator Dr. Saidaiah worked on grass root level and investigated and gathered the requisite information from the Balanagar custard apple growing areas, interacted with the farmers and cultivators for filing application.

Saha said Telangana is also gearing up to file an addi-

# A reset in West Asia, a ‘de-escalation’ for the world



West Asia has been reset with the bombing of Iran by Israel and the United States. It has been done with the tacit or open approval of almost all countries in the region and beyond. The Europeans have been their usual contradictory noisy self, but made no difference to what is unfolding in West Asia. Even Russia and China, which signed, with much fanfare, Comprehensive Strategic Partnership agreements with Iran in January 2025 and March 2021 respectively, were silent spectators. It is not that all these countries were helpless. They made a conscious decision not to interfere when Iran and its proxies are being dismantled in the region. Now with the so-called Iranian nuclear threat being rendered ineffective, West Asia is faced with a sole dominant nuclear power — Israel. The region has 40,000 American troops stationed on its soil in addition to numerous air and sea assets. They will make sure that there is no more military challenge to Israel. West Asia will now live with this reality.

Initially, the Gulf and other countries of West Asia feared, probably rightly, Iran and its proxies as much as the Israelis. The Iranian strategic and military depth in the region, when seen through the prism of its political ideology, made it the predominant threat in the region. In some ways, the presence of an aggressive Iran made the Gulf countries soft pedal, and even make compromises on many other issues which the region has been plagued with, including Palestine. They needed Israel and the U.S. to balance their vulnerability vis-à-vis Iran, which only encouraged Israel to go all the way out to dismantle the Iranian proxies, both state and non-state actors, in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza. The threat has receded except perhaps for the Houthis in Yemen and the militias in Iraq. In the meantime, the Gulf countries have been busy building bridges with the U.S. administration and waiting to operationalise Abraham Accords, which normalised their relations with Israel. They have made U.S. President Donald Trump happy by doling out goodies. But, with the cutting down of Iran to size in West Asia, do they relish the prospect of an Israel without any checks? Probably not. Can they do something at least now? Iran has hit back. Its missiles have targeted U.S. military bases in Qatar — the biggest U.S. base in West Asia with 10,000 personnel, and in Iraq. Iran claimed proportional retaliation in that the number of missiles used was equal to the number of bombs the U.S. used to attack Iran's nuclear facilities. This represented a dangerous escalation, violating the territorial integrity of one of its own "brotherly" countries, Qatar, and with the situation threatening to spiral out of control. The retaliation was not entirely unexpected. For Iran's leadership, it is an existential crisis. For the Supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the leadership, surrendering or keeping quiet in the face of these attacks are not options if they must survive politically. They know that the end game is regime change to dismantle their theological foundation and political ideology — an ideology which threatens everyone in the region. To that extent, the war with Iran is still a work-in-progress for Israel and the U.S. They will not stop until they do a "Syria" on Iran. But there is no alternate "regime" waiting to take their place. Consequently, for their own good, the Gulf states need to step up now to prevent an Iraq- or a Libya-like collapse, which will destabilise everyone in the region. Destabilising regimes in the region has only given a fillip to Islamic fundamentalism and to terrorist organisations such as the Islamic State and al-

Qaeda. As one spat ends another crisis begins. The dramatic announcement by the U.S. of an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Iran is a surprising voice of reason, at a time when reason has become the biggest casualty in West Asia. After retaliation for the U.S. bombing and proving to the world — and more importantly to its people — that it will not be cowed down, the ceasefire call gives Iran a way out to back down. Let us not forget that Israel too has been hit hard though the western media has played it down. The fact that Iran was ready to hit American bases in the Gulf would have weighed on the U.S. to pressure Israel to stop.

It is also a wakeup call for the Gulf leadership that they are not immune. Hopefully, this should stop Iran from making good on other threats such as closing the Strait of Hormuz or exiting the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The focus shifts back to the nuclear deal, where both the U.S. and Iran may well be in a mood to find a solution. It is time for the Gulf states to support this process, even if it is late, to save the region from further conflagration. While this spat sputters to an end, the next crisis in West Asia is in the making. With the long-cherished dream of Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu realised under Mr. Trump — to take out Iran's nuclear programme — his domestic political fortunes have been revived dramatically. There are hardly any obstacles now for him to realise his "Eretz Israel" dream — the promised land from the Jordan river to the Mediterranean Sea. This is the New Middle East map which Mr. Netanyahu waved before the UN General Assembly to 193-member states — a map without Gaza or the West Bank. Israeli plans to annex them very soon and certainly before the U.S. presidential elections in 2026. If his main ultra-right coalition ministerial colleagues Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich are to be believed, and there is no reason why they should not be, this annexation will happen this year. All state and non-state actors, which can potentially oppose the move, have been defeated or chastised. The U.S. is also in sync with Mr. Netanyahu in his ambitions. The question will then boil down to these: After its annexation of Palestinian territories, will Israel continue to be an apartheid state by choice to preserve its Jewishness, where the Palestinians will not enjoy equal citizenship and remain second class citizens? Or it will become a genuine democracy by giving the Palestinians equal rights as its Jewish citizens. History indicates that it will be the first. While the opposition to this annexation should come from countries within the region, the Gulf leadership has almost given up pushing Israel for a Palestinian state or even stopping the Gaza war as the price to pay for regional stability and integration with Israel and the outside world, their noisy protestations within and outside the UN notwithstanding.

However, if they think that peace and security will be restored by annexing Palestinian territories or even status quo of occupation retained (56,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, those displaced, face daily threats, starvation and displacement, while people in the West Bank are driven out of their homes to make way for Jewish settlers), they may be forced to rethink their strategy.

Expectedly, India has neither made pronouncements on the Israeli preemptive strikes on Iran nor taken an active role — just as it has not in other wars elsewhere. Israel was one of few countries to stand by India during Operation Sindoor. However, India's joint initiatives with Iran, including Chabahar port connectivity, are equally important. India's stakes in the region are high and it is doing all it can to minimise the impact. India has, tongue in cheek, called for a "de-escalation", giving the same advice to warring parties which it received during Operation Sindoor from many parts of the world, asking India and Pakistan to de-escalate. It was a case of equating the aggressor and the aggressed. It matters no more to the world, whether one is right or wrong or whether international law or territorial integrity have been violated, as long as the warring sides "de-escalate". T.S. Tirumurti is former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs in-charge, inter alia, of West Asia and former Representative of India to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza

# Tamil Nadu InFocus | When a prisoner was made to ‘run like a horse’



In his autobiography Ungail Oruvan, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin described the Madras Central Prison during the Emergency as a "torture camp" that echoed with wails. Accounts presented to the Justice M. M. Ismail Commission in 1977 appear to validate that grim depiction. According to testimonies, prison staff seemed to take pleasure in humiliating detainees. "When one of them returned after a visit to Bangalore, he was made to run like a horse while being beaten," recounted K. Vezhavendan, a former DMK Minister who later founded the Makkal DMK. He also alleged that the staff used "disrespectful language." Even refused water

"Mr. Vezhavendan said they were not even given a bedsheet or mat. They were not given water to drink when they wanted. They were in the lock-up for 24 hours for nine days after their imprisonment till the DIG visited them. On February 2, 1976 night, he was shocked to hear shrieks and cries from other cells and the prisoners asking the staff not to beat them... The next day, the doctor, on his routine check-up, saw his condition, but he (Vezhavendan) was afraid of complaining. He was warned not to, lest more cruelty be unleashed on them. The inmates did not have a change of clothes for about eight days," reported The Hindu on the Commission proceedings. Vezhavendan said one prisoner was so desperate he contemplated suicide. After his release, Jail Superintendent K. Vidyasagar and his father K. Kolandaivelu, a former Deputy Commissioner of Police, met him in May 1977, asking him to "forget the incidents and forgive them." [Vidyasagar, however, told the Commission it was Vezhavendan who had visited him at his home.]

Dravidar Kazhagam general secretary (now president) K. Veeramani, in his deposition, told the Commission that the jail warders ignored his plea not to assault V.S. Sambandam, who had recently undergone spinal surgery. "I warned them it might kill him," Mr Veeramani said.

Sambandam confirmed he collapsed after being struck. But the warders showed no sympathy, allegedly telling him to "stop pretending" and get up. Senior DMK leader Arcot N. Veeraswami, arrested on February 1, 1976 — a day after the DMK government was dismissed — said detainees were subjected to "indecent and demeaning" language by staff. Seven inmates were packed into one cell, beaten, and denied drinking water or basic amenities for days. "New arrivals were beaten... were allowed to bathe and change clothes only on February 9," he deposed. According to The Hindu Archives, Mr. Veeraswami added that on one occasion, a large amount of salt was deliberately mixed in the soup. "On another occasion, sand was sprinkled on the food. Once the orderlies who used to help them in the kitchen were suddenly removed and replaced by four others, one of whom used to do scavenging work. Another had scabies and eczema on his hand, and the third suffered from a skin disease. The detenus protested and did not take tea in the morning. After representations, the original batch of orderlies was sent to the work. The Superintendent warned them that it was an offence to refuse food and they were liable to be punished." However, the jail staff's counsel denied the allegations, calling the salt-in-soup claim "imaginary." He accused the prisoners of spreading propaganda for political purposes. The counsel also alleged that it was Mr. Veeraswami who had shared "valuable information" to the superintendent to secure favourable treatment and release — a charge echoed by Vidyasagar.

# Andhra Pradesh simplifies building norms for small structures, offers relief to plot owners and developers

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Minister P Narayana has said that the State Cabinet has approved key relaxations in building rules to support small constructions. Narayana, the Municipal Minister, said earlier, norms applied only to buildings above five floors, but now structures below five floors will also benefit from simplified approval. "Builders can mortgage 10 per cent of the plot area and construct as per the rules. For government lands, submitting an affidavit will be sufficient," said Narayana, addressing a press conference after the Cabinet meeting

# Number of cancer cases being diagnosed in India



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

The number of cancer cases being diagnosed in India every year is a whopping 14 lakh. Immunotherapy research and treatment in the country has come a long way, making it an effective treatment for certain types of cancer. However, the prohibitively high costs associated with it have made the treatment inaccessible for a large population. NKure Therapeutics, a Bengaluru-based cell and gene therapy start-up, is trying to address this problem by working on immunotherapy solutions that they say could potentially provide off-the-shelf affordable alternatives in cancer care. A relatively nascent field of cancer research, it was only as recently as 2020 when the Indian government approved the first immunotherapy drug in India. Immunotherapies like CAR-T cell therapy, where T cells (a type of white blood cell or immune cell that helps the immune system) are used to fight cancer, have seen advancements, but pose certain challenges in terms of side effects as well as affordability. NKure attempts to address this by using a different set of immune cells known as Natural Killer cells or NK cells.

“In CAR-T therapy, right now, blood is taken from a patient, the T cells are genetically modified and this is then given back to the patient. This is used for specific lymphomas and the whole process takes 8 to 10 days,” explains Lalit Pai, CEO at NKure. However, given the treatment is specifically engineered for one person, the cost shoots up to about 1 crore.

“While the efficacy is very good, given the high costs associated with it, it cannot become mainstream. We need to go down a different pathway to get more affordability in immunotherapy,” says Pai. “The hypothesis that we are working on is to get affordable immunotherapy to India.” One challenge is the difficulty in culturing these cells outside the body. But the team now has a patent for the technology they developed for doing the same. Using this, one NK cell can grow 600 to 1,000 times over a 15-day period, says Lalit Pai, CEO at NKure. One challenge is the difficulty in culturing these cells outside the body. But the team now has a patent for the technology they developed for doing the same. Using this, one NK cell can grow 600 to 1,000 times over a 15-day period, says Lalit Pai, CEO at NKure.

The donor alternative Instead of taking the blood from a patient, the NKure team explores the possibility of extracting it from healthy donors. Each person could donate for around 100 patients, helping to make the solution off-the-shelf and significantly bringing down the costs to around 10-15 lakhs, say the people behind the initiative. If the first part of the research is about affordability, the second is about efficacy of the solution. This depends on correctly identifying the type of immune cell to be used from the extracted blood and the kind of genetic modification to do on it. “We have focused on NK cells. They are of a smaller proportion -- typically 5-15% of the white blood cells, whereas T cells are around 70%. So obviously everyone first looked at T cells, but now people are looking at the other subgroups,” Pai notes. But why NK cells? “NK is a much more active cell. It has a way of identifying body-versus-non-body and self-versus-non-self, and it destroys the non-self. So, it doesn't really require targeting,” he explains. One challenge is the difficulty in culturing these cells outside the body. But the team now has a patent for the technology they have

# Thought-reading tech revolution priced at Rs 8000, now available for pre-order



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

Hyderabad: Omi artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled wearable, demonstrated by CES 2025, is being marketed as a breakthrough device that will help enhance productivity and automate everyday activity. Priced at Rs 7,640 (approximately \$89), the device is available for pre-order and is set to ship in Q2 of 2025. The wearable is designed by San Francisco-based startup Based Hardware and can be worn in several forms. It can be worn as a necklace (which reacts to the voice command such as “Hey Omi” or attached to the back of your head with medical tape (providing an “brain interface” reading the brain waves and analyzing information without verbalization and speech). The product can be used as an augmentation to smartphones with content applicable to the user's context, thus where it can increase the efficiency of the user. It is supported in both Android and iOS devices where it continuously listens to the user's environment and provides appropriate answers via a companion app. Omi works on the open-source platform, where each developer builds his custom apps or integrates his models in without a hitch. Power-packed AI processes conversations, retains context controls, and provides a personalized answer for help. Whether it is answering questions, summarizing conversations, creating to-do lists, or tracking your meetings, the wearable is what you use every day. Besides its remarkable AI power, Omi also

developed for doing this. Using this tech, one NK cell can grow 600 to 1,000 times over a 15-day period, according to Pai. These cells can then be cryopreserved and thawed when needed without loss of functionality, he says. While developing genetically modified NK cells from healthy doses helps to make the treatment more affordable and off the shelf, Pai admits that there are certain flip sides to it. A major one is rejection of the cells by the patient's body. “If you are giving back a patient's blood cells to the same body, you don't expect too much rejection. But when you are giving the blood cells of a healthy person, it could be perceived as foreign by the patient's body. You need to see how the body reacts to it, whether the cells are creating any safety issues and so on.”

That said, Renjitha Gopurrapilli, Chief Scientist at NKure, points out that the side effects like a Cytokine storm (a severe immune reaction in which the body releases too many cytokines – a type of protein - into the blood abruptly) that one may face during the administration of T-cells into the body do not happen with NK cells and hence it's a “safer therapy.” What studies indicate

While there are no marketed NK cell therapies by which one could determine the efficiency of the treatment, studies so far point in that direction, says Gopurrapilli. “It is shown to be as effective (as CAR-T cell therapy). There's no marketed NK cell therapy anywhere in the world yet. Phase-2 trials have been going on in some places. But there are multiple institutes in the U.S. for example who have conducted credible studies showing the effectiveness of the therapy,” she notes.

While the NKure team's current research focuses on developing NK cell therapies that can fight lymphoma, they also have an in-licensed technology to fight colon cancer. The rights for the latter have been purchased from a Taiwanese firm. Gopurrapilli explains the difference between the two. “In the in-licensed product, we take the patient's own blood, develop NK cells from it and put it back into the patient every two weeks or three weeks. When it comes to our own product, we are trying to make an allogenic off-the-shelf product from healthy dose and engineer it to put it in the CAR for targeting mechanism.” “Our aspiration is to get approval for the phase-two study of the in-licensed technology, which, in two years' time we hope to take to market. And for our own product, we hope to get approval for phase-one study,” she says Pai.

Founded by regenerative medicine expert Mahendra Rao about two years ago, NKure has tall ambitions and hopes to bring down the cost of immunotherapy to one tenth of what is in the market currently. They believe that with the advancement of technology the price will further reduce. “We also need to scale up without compromising on the function. We don't want to keep on growing NK cells forever or bring it to a number where the cytotoxicity or the functionality is compromised. The ideal expectation would be to develop the least number of cells in in-vitro condition that would efficiently eradicate the tumour. That's what we have been working on,” Gopurrapilli notes.

Would that pose a challenge to the ambitions of introducing it as an off-the-shelf product? “It's a question of logistics and how we scale the product,” answers Pai. “The manufacturing will be centralised. It will take 15 days to make the product from a healthy dose and then we can cryopreserve it. This way, we can build a stock at a central place and distribute it when required. We'll have to do some demand forecasting for various centres and keep stock accordingly.” According to him, existing CAR-T cell therapy takes about two weeks of hospitalisation which adds to the expenses. NKure, on the other hand, aims to offer its NK-cell therapy as a daycare procedure involving an IV of about four hours. With more studies pointing to the ability of genetically modified NK cells to treat even other serious conditions such as Parkinson's disease, the team plans to venture into such areas after the completion of the ongoing research. The hope is that, with the skill sets that we are building, we will be able to apply this to other cells and for other genetic modifications,” Pai notes.

tackles the issue of privacy by allowing users to have control of their data. The open-source platform enables the user to track whether and where the data is sent, or to retain the data locally. Even though the technology in Omi's “brain interface” is still in its infancy, it shows a potential. The device uses a single electrode to detect brain activity, distinguishing user interaction from unrelated thoughts, and processes this data to provide relevant responses. Initially a project on Kickstarter called “Friend,” Omi was rechristened following a change in ownership of the domain name by a different company. Even with competition from other AI devices, Omi will try to differentiate itself by positioning itself as a tool to augment rather than replace throughput.

# TGRERA cautions buyers against illegal sale of plots by real estate firm

Hyderabad: The Telangana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TGRERA) has cautioned buyers and general public not to enter into transactions or purchase any plots in real estate projects purported to be promoted by Krithika Infra Developers. TGRERA imposed a penalty of Rs.9.96 lakh on Krithika Infrastructure Private Limited for engaging in marketing and advertising in violation of different rules. This was after several people lodged complaints with the TGRERA stating despite receiving the amount, the firm failed to execute and register the sale of deeds. TGRERA said the complainants had entered into agreements of sale with Krithika Infra Developers Private Limited for purchase of plots in “Sheshadri's Silver Oak” at survey no 215, Boduppall Village, Medchal-Malkajigiri. Following complaints, TGRERA observed that “Sheshadri's Silver Oak” project at Boduppall was not registered with the authority. No application was submitted by the promoters for registration and the management did not obtain requisite building permission and layout permissions from HMDA and GHMC. Further, the management collected amounts exceeding the prescribed limits from allottees without executing and registering any written agreement for sale. “The entity has fraudulently collected substantial amounts from the general public without fulfilling their legal obligations, thereby cheating and misleading innocent allottees,” TGRERA said in a press note.

# Key trends to look out for in Data Centres in India



GNS News Agency, Sept 30

India's data centre market continues to grow robustly, with the total capacity projected to rise to 2 GW by 2026. There is nearly 525 MW capacity under various phases of construction across top cities like Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. Cloud computing, technology advancements, 5G rollouts and the digitalisation of BFSI continue to be the growth drivers with artificial intelligence (AI) workloads to ramp this demand up further. These growth drivers are projected to push the India data centre market value to USD 11.6 billion by 2032.

Data centres have also emerged as an attractive asset class for institutional investors in the last few years, with a large capital pool being committed and deployed in this sector. The industry has seen advancements on various fronts and will continue growing exponentially in the next 2-3 years. Some of the key trends to look out for in 2025 and beyond:

Data centre operators are increasingly investing in large-scale projects with capacities of over 100MW, specifically in Navi Mumbai. Apart from Mumbai, Chennai is another preferred market for these operators to set up facilities. Hyderabad will also see significant hyperscaler capacity development in the next few years, with two major hyperscalers — each with 100-plus acres of land — having projects in various stages of development. With the increase in cloud computing and large-scale AI-led demand, the industry will see various large campuses to house this growing demand. Creation of New Availability Zones & Micro-markets

Mumbai and Chennai continue to be the preferred markets for data centre operators. However, due to the scarcity of suitable land parcels and the exponential rise in land prices in the existing DC clusters, the focus is on exploring alternatives slightly away from the conventional hubs in these cities. Surge in AI-led Data Centre Demand and Infra Changes As per NASSCOM, India's AI market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 20 per cent between 2023 and 2028. This will strengthen the data centre demand. With rising AI workloads, data centres are becoming increasingly dense and power-consuming. The average rack density is anticipated to increase up to 30 KW/rack compared to the existing 8-10 KW/rack server density. Advanced and Sustainable Cooling Solutions To incorporate AI-led changes in data centre infrastructure, the industry is gearing up for the adoption of newer, more energy-efficient technologies. This includes incorporating cooling techniques like liquid immer-

# Delhi HC ponders if CAG reports can be made public before tabling in the House; say such a step ‘may violate Constitution’

GNS News Agency, Sept 30

The Delhi High Court Friday orally enquired that unless CAG reports are tabled, how can they be brought out in the public domain with a court direction. The court also mulled that directing to make Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports public before their tabling may violate Article 151 of the Constitution. Article 151 prescribes the powers of the President and the Governor/ Lieutenant Governor for tabling audit reports in Parliament and Assembly, respectively. The division bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela made the observation while dealing with a public interest litigation by one retired civil servant Brij Mohan seeking the court's directions to make public 14 audit reports of CAG on the Delhi Government's functioning. CJ Upadhyaya orally enquired from the petitioner's counsel senior advocate Geeta Luthra as to under what provisions of law she was pressing for the petition.

After she responded that she was relying on the “fundamental right to know, as a citizen, as a voter,” which flows from Article 19, CJ Upadhyaya orally remarked, “These generalised arguments will not do... we are dealing with reports prepared by a constitutional body, we have to be conscious.”

CJ Upadhyaya pointed out, “Article 151 (of the Constitution) does not say that reports once placed before the house, whether they shall be made public or not... they have provided in some circular/manual that they can be made public once it has been laid. Since you're saying circulars are not sacrosanct we want to know under what provision (you are seeking the direction in the PIL)... Unless we comply with Article 151, how can it be brought out in the public domain... we want to know on what premise is your prayer based... Article 19 is subject to certain limitations... and right to know is a statutory right flowing from Right to Information Act... you have to establish that there is a public duty on the authority... where's that authority?... Public has a right to know but not in violation of any constitutional provision... if your prayer is granted, Article 151 will be violated... we are just trying to understand the whole gamut in which you've filed the petition.” Justice Gedela, too, orally remarked, “It has to fall within RTI Act, for that it has to be information first... we don't think it is information before (being tabled in the house).” The petitioner, Mohan, who retired as a Senior Administrative Grade (SAG) officer in 2013 from the Indian Audit & Accounts Department (IA&AD), has submitted that the 14 CAG reports “should be made public urgently and they should be discussed and debated before Delhi goes to polls before Vidhan Sabha elections are held.” Mohan, in his PIL, has also contended that the PIL is filed for the “benefit of the voters in Delhi”, as they “must be aware of the state of affairs in Delhi and financial health of Delhi before they cast their votes in the forthcoming elections in Delhi.” CJ Upadhyaya further enquired from Luthra, “Why do you want this info before elections? Are you interested in knowing the information for the purpose of choosing the

sion cooling which offer significant power efficiency and substantial cost savings. The upcoming hyperscale and purpose-built AI data centres are expected to adopt this technology. Tie-ups between Chipmakers, Infra Providers

Over the past two years, India's data centre industry has witnessed collaborations between chip developers and infrastructure providers (for instance, the partnerships between NVIDIA and Yotta and Tata Group and Reliance Jio Infocomm on various fronts). These collaborations aim to build sustainable, energy-efficient, future-ready data centres and are expected to take shape in the next two years. Such collaborations align with the government's India AI mission, and the data centre ecosystem will benefit immensely. Edge Data Centre Facilities Development

Another important development in the Indian data centre industry which will witness incremental growth in the next couple of years is the setting up of edge data centre facilities closer to end-users and devices generating data. These facilities are expected to manage the growing data traffic from tier II and tier III cities and support applications like OTT (over-the-top) platforms, IoT (Internet of Things) devices, gaming and Smart Cities with reduced latency and a better consumer experience. Tier II cities like Patna, Jaipur, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Bhubaneswar have already started getting commitments from the data centre operators to set up such edge facilities. Migration from On-Premise to Cloud

Many companies increasingly prefer hosting on a hybrid cloud rather than relying on traditional on-premise infrastructure. Cloud computing reduces costs and maintenance needs associated with traditional IT infrastructure. This also offers improved scalability and better security solutions, and will, in turn, accelerate data centre demand from cloud companies. Focus on Green Data Centres

The data centre industry is becoming increasingly committed to its Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) considerations. Operators have started using renewable energy to support a part of their power demand via wind and solar energy through strategic power purchase agreements. Some data centre operators plan on 100% green facilities in the next few years, and continuous efforts are being undertaken to meet this goal. There is backward integration by data centre operators to develop their own sources of green power by investing in renewable energy projects. Efforts related to water and waste management are focused on adopting circular economy principles. The government is also exploring the feasibility of using nuclear energy to power data centres, and 2025 could be the start of this vision.

Enhanced Security Measures The industry continues to improve on the security aspects of data centres to prevent cyber threats and security breaches by integrating advanced security measures like AI-powered security tools, Zero Trust Architecture and multi-factor authentication. Skill Development and Enhancement of Talent Pool

Efforts on training programmes and learning centres for skill development in hardware, software and data centre operations and IT infrastructure management have improved. Both private operators and the government are focusing on creating a talent pool to align with the country's digital growth. Overall, the Indian data centre market is on an exponential growth trajectory, driven by institutional capital, technological innovation, regulatory support and the country's vast digital ecosystem.



government?” Luthra responded in the affirmative, to which CJ Upadhyaya responded orally, “Sorry. You should be concerned with the information contained in the report, you should be concerned with the report... we ourselves feel that it is very important... but (we are) confronted by constitutional provision... it is a constitutional requirement (to table the report)... You're before a court of law, your arguments should be legal.”

# Telangana High Court seeks response over lack of emergency healthcare facilities at court premises

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court on Wednesday called for a detailed response from the Registrar of the Telangana High Court over the lack of emergency healthcare facilities in court complexes across the State. The direction came while a division bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Sujoy Paul and Justice Renuka Yara was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Advocate Harsha Vardhan Gujjeti.

The petitioner raised concerns about the absence of basic medical infrastructure such as on-site health centres and ambulances at court premises, with the exception of the High Court itself. He urged the Court to intervene and ensure the deployment of trained personnel and life-saving equipment in each judicial complex to respond swiftly to medical emergencies involving lawyers, litigants, or court staff. Referring to a tragic incident on February 18, the petition highlights the sudden death of Advocate P. Venugopal Rao, who suffered a heart attack while arguing a case before a single judge bench. Though fellow lawyers attempted to administer CPR and rushed him to Osmania General Hospital, he was declared dead upon arrival. The petitioner argued that the outcome might have been different if appropriate emergency medical support had been available within the court premises.



New Delhi: Excessive screen use, prolonged sitting and poor posture could be contributing to back, neck and other spinal issues among children and adolescents, physiotherapy experts said, calling for regular movement breaks, ergonomic awareness and preventive physiotherapy. Experts from the Indian Association of Physiotherapists (IAP) raised the concern at the World Physiotherapy Asia Western Pacific (WPAWP) Regional Conference 2026 being held at Yashobhoomi in Delhi on Thursday. The conference brought together more than 10,000 physiotherapy professionals and delegates from India and 32 countries to discuss emerging challenges in physical health, rehabilitation and preventive care.

# India could advance if rain washes out Afghanistan QF



Nisshin: Rain threat looms large over the Asian Games cricket quarterfinal between defending champions India and a second-string Afghanistan side at Korogi Sports Park here on Monday. The match is scheduled to begin at 1:30 pm local time, or 10 am IST, but weather forecasts have raised doubts over whether the game will be completed.

According to AccuWeather, there is a 97 per cent chance of precipitation in Nisshin on Monday. Pakistan will

face Hong Kong, China in the first quarterfinal before India take on Afghanistan. The Pakistan-Hong Kong, China match is scheduled to begin at 9 am local time, or 5:30 am IST. AccuWeather has forecast a 69 per cent chance of precipitation at 8 am local time, rising to 70 per cent at the scheduled start of the first quarterfinal.

The rain chances are forecast at 49 per cent at 10 am, 75 per cent at 11 am and 71 per cent at noon. They are expected to fall to 40 per cent at 1 pm, when the toss for the India-Afghanistan match is scheduled, before standing at 34 per cent at 2 pm and 40 per cent at 3 pm. The precipitation probability is forecast to rise to 58 per cent at 4 pm, followed by 49 per cent at 5 pm, 60 per cent at 6 pm and 49 per cent at 7 pm local time. If rain washes out the match, India and Pakistan will advance as the winners of the two quarterfinals by virtue of their higher T20I rankings. According to the ICC rankings, India are No. 1 in T20Is, while Afghanistan are ranked 10th. Pakistan are sixth and Hong Kong, China are 24th. A similar situation occurred at the 2023 Asian Games, when rain washed out the final between India and Afghanistan. India were awarded the gold medal based on their superior ranking.

## ‘I still can’t believe it’: Prachi Choudhary reflects on Asian Games bronze

New Delhi: Prachi Choudhary reflected on her Asian Games bronze medal in the women’s 400m race, calling her achievement something she found hard to believe but gave everything for it. Prachi has tasted success in the team events previously, having won a silver with India’s 4x400m relay team at the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou and had earlier claimed relay silver at the 2019 Asian Championships as well, but the Asian bronze marks a significant achievement for the Uttar Pradesh-born sprinter. “I still can’t believe it. This is a moment I have worked towards for a long time. I gave everything I had in that race, and to see it turn into an individual medal for the country means so much to me. It hasn’t fully sunk in yet,” said Prachi.

The 29-year-old took the bronze after clocking a time of 53.21s as Bahrain’s Salwa Naser won gold with a timing of 49.20s and Iran’s Zahra Zarei Manoujan clinched silver with a time of 52.38s. The athlete reflected on her journey, crediting the consistent support system that has backed her through her training. “This medal is the result of a lot of hard work, not just from me, but from everyone who has stood by me through this journey. Inspire Institute of Sport has supported me throughout my training and preparation, and I want to thank them for standing by me through every step of it. Whatever I have needed, they have always made sure I had it,” she said. She is an Olympian too, having rep-



resented India in the 4x400m relay at the Paris Games and has continued to build her experience on the international stage. Prachi has already set her focus towards the future as she does not want to stop anytime soon. “This medal means a lot to me, but I don’t want to stop here. I want to keep working hard and keep improving, so that I can achieve even bigger results for the country in the future,” she said.

# India eye Asian Games semifinal against Afghanistan



Nisshin: A near-full-strength India will face a second-string Afghanistan side in the second quarterfinal of the cricket event at the Asian Games 2026 at Korogi Sports Park here on Monday, with the defending champions beginning their gold-medal defence. India have opted to send their first-choice T20I team for the continental showpiece, meaning some of their ODI regulars will miss the ongoing three-match ODI series against the West Indies at home.

India are not only the defending Asian Games champions but also the reigning T20 World champions. This is a stronger side than the one India sent to the Hangzhou Games in 2023, where a second-string team led by Ruturaj Gaikwad won the gold medal. India have since set several batting benchmarks in T20 cricket and now also have teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who has made an impact early in his international career. Afghanistan, mean-

while, are fielding a second-string side led by 33-T20I veteran Darwish Rasooli, with several relatively new faces in the squad. They reached the quarterfinals after a win over Japan and a loss to Nepal in the group stage, finishing second in Group A. Afghanistan were beaten heavily by Nepal in their second game and now face a much stronger Indian side on paper.

However, India have not had everything go their way in Japan. They were given a major scare in the rain-hit one-off T20I against Japan, managing just 32/4 in five overs before scraping through with a two-run win. The Indian team will need to adapt quickly to the conditions, having struggled to do so during their recent tours of Ireland and England, where they lost all six completed T20Is. The playing combination will also be closely watched. Sanju Samson is likely to continue opening alongside Abhishek Sharma after the duo registered half-centuries against Afghanistan, which could leave Sooryavanshi waiting for his opportunity in Japan. It will also be interesting to see whether Jasprit Bumrah returns to the playing XI after being rested for the Japan T20I. India: Shreyas Iyer (c), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma, Vipraj Nigam, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. Afghanistan: Darwish Rasooli (c), Abdullah Ahmadzai, Mohammad Akram, Ismat Alam, Faridoon Dawoodzai, Hassan Eisaikhil, Mohammad Ishaq, Karim Janat, Faisal Khan, Nangyal Kharoti, Imran Mir, Arab Gul Momand, Farmanullah Safi, Khalid Taniwal, Najibullah Zadran

# Sindhu questions recovery time after playing three matches in 24 hours

Nagoya: Ace Indian shuttler PV Sindhu on Sunday expressed her displeasure at playing three singles matches within 24 hours, saying the cramped badminton schedule at the Asian Games was “not really well organised” and did not provide enough recovery time. Sindhu was scheduled to play two matches on Saturday, with her second match ending after midnight. She returned to the court on Sunday for her quarterfinal against China’s Chen Yufei, which she lost. “Not really, because the scheduling was not really well organised is what I feel,” Sindhu said when asked if she had played two matches in a day at any major championship earlier. “We literally slept really late and then came back in the morning (on Sunday), playing two matches in a day. Recovery is the most important priority.” The two-time Olympic medallist played her second-round match on Saturday afternoon. Her third-round match ended around 1 am local time on Sunday, while her quarterfinal started around 1.30 pm. Asked how she prepared herself mentally to play three matches in 24 hours, Sindhu said it was more about recovery than mental preparation. “It’s more than mentally preparing, you need to recover. Even though you think you are doing good, physically you might not be able to go there or you might not be able to play,” she said. “When there are long rallies, definitely, yes, recovery. When you have a good thing, you would automatically (go), but your legs don’t move.” But I think apart from that it was a good game overall, but it’s just that the scheduling should have been a bit better. Another Indian shuttler, Unnati Hooda, was also unhappy with the scheduling, with several players having to play more than one match in a day. “I will not blame my loss (in the quarterfinals) on that, but the scheduling could have been managed better,” Hooda said. Sindhu also raised concerns over the absence of the Hawk-Eye review system

on Court 4, where she played her quarterfinal. The system was available only on Courts 1 and 2 at the Ichinomiya Gymnasium Hall. “There were no cameras here. That was really sad. I felt that two-three shots were on the line. In the quarterfinals in the Asian Games, there should have been a camera, is what I feel. Because these are the crucial matches,” she said.

Asked whether the line calls she felt went against her had unsettled her, Sindhu said the review system could provide an advantage to players. “If you get that point, it is good. You have the upper hand. You are playing with the cameras, playing with reviews. “We can challenge it or if that’s your point, you have a one-point advantage. Sometimes an opponent is not able to move and the shuttle falls there and the line judge gives out. And you challenge, you get a point. “So it’s an advantage in a way. In the second game, I felt two-three shots were clear. But the line judge, you can’t do anything about it.” Sindhu kept her participation in the 2030 Asian Games open, saying she would take her career “one year at a time” and focus on remaining injury-free. “If I have it in me, definitely yes. I just need to stay injury-free. It’s just, what’s next? That’s very important. Step-by-step is important. “Yeah, definitely one year at a time. It’s important that I just focus on what’s next. Because you’re not 20 anymore, right? You need to take care of your body, take care of everything. So it’s very important. “We’ll have to pick and choose tournaments. What to do, what to play and what not to play. Because taking care of your body is also important,” said Sindhu, who is expected to compete in the European circuit later this year. Asked what keeps her motivated, Sindhu said her passion and love for the sport continued to drive her. “I have it in me, the passion and the love towards sport. That keeps me going irrespective of how many medals I’ve got. I think that’s important.

# Late night, early start and Asian Games exit



PV Sindhu’s Saturday began at 3pm and stretched well past midnight. Her first match was delayed, while the second was shifted from Court 1 to Court 2. By the time she finally walked off court, the clock was edging towards 1 am. She could not return to her hotel, in the city centre, until around 1.30 am. After ordering dinner and completing her recovery routine, she finally went to sleep at almost 3 am. She was back up at 9 am on Sunday, getting ready to face Chen Yufei in the quarterfinals. “I haven’t experienced something like this at a major championship,” Sindhu said after losing to the Chinese. “The scheduling was not really well organised is what I feel.”

Gruelling schedule Sindhu’s gruelling Saturday appeared to catch up with her in the quarterfinal against Chen on Sunday. After a promising start, in which she produced sharp, steep smashes and dominated proceedings, she lost 21-11, 18-21, 10-21, bringing India’s badminton campaign to an end. Yufei indulged in long rallies in the second and third games, tiring an already fatigued Sindhu to end India’s badminton campaign. Minutes earlier, Unnati Hooda had also lost her women’s singles quarterfinal, going down 16-21, 21-14, 17-21 to Japan’s Akane Yamaguchi. India finished with just the men’s team bronze and failed to win an individual medal at the Asian Games for the first time since 2014. Sindhu did not directly blame the scheduling for her loss but pointed to inadequate recovery as a key factor. She was hardly alone in her frustration over the schedule. Japan’s Kodai Naraoka woke up on Sunday feeling “extremely fatigued” after playing twice on Saturday, while Indonesia’s Jonatan Christie, who finished his third-round match at 2 am, said he was “very disappointed” with the organisers. Thailand’s Ratchanok Intanon, meanwhile, said she had not properly recovered after playing twice the previous day before facing world No. 1 An Se-young.

The complaints have put the spotlight on a schedule that left players juggling multiple matches, late finishes and early starts, with little time to recover between them. “We don’t usually practise playing two matches a day, so it was

challenging to adjust,” Naraoka said. Christie’s experience was even more extreme. He went to bed at 3.30 am after finishing his previous match at 2 am, woke up at 9 am and then rushed to prepare for his next match. “I’m very disappointed with the organiser. I think they have done a bad thing for the athletes. They don’t care about the athletes. That’s it,” he said after his defeat. Intanon, who lost to defending champion An, who herself claimed she was “tired”, said she had reached her hotel at 11 pm after playing twice on Saturday. The early start the following morning left her with little time to recover. “My body was not very fit,” she said. “After yesterday (two singles matches in one day), I was a bit tired, and we finished a bit late last night. Today we played quite early and I was not properly recovered.” While the turnaround times have also been punishing for doubles players, singles players have borne much of the burden, particularly those who competed in the team event, which ended on Thursday, before moving straight into the individual competition.

Women’s doubles world No. 1 Tan Ning of China also criticised the scheduling, alleging that complaints from different teams had been treated differently. “I feel the schedule is unfair. We went to make an official complaint, but the chief referee didn’t do anything about it. But when the Japan team complained, they actually changed the time schedule,” she told Chinese media. The organisers had already revised the badminton schedule before the competition began. On September 17, the Aichi-Nagoya organising committee announced changes to several sessions, citing changes in the number of participating athletes. For badminton, the September 26 programme was altered, with the mixed doubles second round moved out of that session. There has been no official explanation, however, following the players’ complaints. For Sindhu, the problem was not simply the number of matches but the physical toll of having to play again before her body had recovered. “Even though you think you are doing good, physically you might not be able to go there or you might not be able to play,” she said. “When there are long rallies, definitely, yes, recovery. When you had a good thing, you would automatically, but your legs don’t move.” She acknowledged that the matches themselves had been good but felt the scheduling needed to be better. “Three matches in 24 hours, is it some kind of, not just first time, mentally how do you prepare yourself?” she said. “I think more than mentally, you need to recover.” By the time she left the stadium on Sunday, it was nearly 3 pm, bringing to a close a gruelling 24 hours that had included three energy-sapping matches and a heartbreaking exit.

# Sarvesh Kushare ends 56 year wait for medal, Parul breaks NR to win bronze



National record holder Sarvesh Anil Kushare became the third Indian jumper to win a medal at the Asian Games ending a 56-year wait for a medal in the event. The 31-year-old from Maharashtra won a silver medal at the 2026 edition in Aichi Nagoya with a best jump of 2.25m. He was tied with Chao-Husan Fu of Chinese Taipei at 2.25m but the Taipei jumper won gold on the count back.

This is India’s fourth medal at the event and the last

medal came in 1970 when Bhim Singh won a bronze medal. Before that, India won two gold medals with Bhim winning in the 1966 edition and Ajit Singh Bhalla winning in the 1954 edition. Sarvesh, who created a new national record of 2.31m earlier this year at the Inter-State National Championships, is enjoying the breakthrough season for himself. He won a silver medal at the Commonwealth Games, broke the national record, and made his debut at Diamond League finishing third at Monaco.

Parul Chaudhary breaks NR to win bronze Parul Chaudhary ran a fabulous race to clock 9:08.67s in the women’s 3000m Steeplechase to clinch the bronze medal. She finished behind Winfred Yavi of Bahrain who clocked 9:04.36 to create a new Games record and Norah Jeruto of Kazakhstan who clocked 9:06.82. Parul broke her previous national record of 9:12.46 and won her second medal in the event at the Asian Games. She won a silver medal at the 2023 edition. She will compete next in the women’s 5000m where she has another chance to win a medal. Another Indian in the event, Ankita Dhyani also clocked a personal best 9:19.24 to finish fourth in the event.

# Ancy Sojan wins silver as Chinese jumps end India’s hope of double podium

GNS News Agency, Sept 30

National record holder Ancy Sojan became the second Indian woman after Anju Bobby George to win two medals at the Asian Games in women’s long jump. Ancy jumped recorded a best jump of 6.53m to clinch the silver medal and this is her second medal at the continental showpiece after she won the same medal. However, it was heart-break overall for India as the hope of double podium and gold medal was swept off in the last jump by the Chinese jumpers.

Till the last round of jumps, Ancy was in the gold medal position while Shaili Singh was in bronze medal position. But on the sixth attempt, Mengyi Tan of China jumped 6.46m to displace Shaili and Huang Y jumped 6.55m to displace Ancy from the gold medal position. Ancy can only manage 6.49m in her last jump ending with the silver medal.

Ancy jumped 6.49m in her first attempt to occupy the gold medal spot and didn’t let it go until the last jump of Huang. She improved it further in the fifth attempt as she jumped 6.53m. Ancy is experiencing one of the best years of her career and came to the Asian Games on the back of a superb domestic run. She broke the 22-year-old national record of Anju earlier this year by jumping 6.88m at the



National Inter State Championships earlier in June. “This national record is a statement that India has jumpers who have range and are rising,” Ancy had said after her record-breaking moment. The other Indian athlete, Shaili, had an interesting progression where she registered all legal jumps and improved on every attempt. Starting with 6.25m in her first attempt, Shaili jumped 6.34m in her next two and improved to 6.41m and 6.42 in the subsequent two jumps to strengthen her position at the bronze medal position. But as heartbreaking as it could get, Shaili finished fourth after Tan M surpassed her on the last jump.

# India could advance if rain washes out Afghanistan QF

Nisshin: Rain threat looms large over the Asian Games cricket quarterfinal between defending champions India and a second-string Afghanistan side at Korogi Sports Park here on Monday. The match is scheduled to begin at 1:30 pm local time, or 10 am IST, but weather forecasts have raised doubts over whether the game will be completed.

According to AccuWeather, there is a 97 per cent chance of precipitation in Nisshin on Monday. Pakistan will face Hong Kong, China in the first quarterfinal before India take on Afghanistan. The Pakistan-Hong Kong, China match is scheduled to begin at 9 am local time, or 5:30 am IST. AccuWeather has forecast a 69 per cent chance of precipitation at 8 am local time, rising to 70 per cent at the scheduled start of the first quarterfinal.

The rain chances are forecast at 49 per cent at 10 am, 75 per cent at 11 am and 71 per cent at noon. They are



expected to fall to 40 per cent at 1 pm, when the toss for the India-Afghanistan match is scheduled, before standing at 34 per cent at 2 pm and 40 per cent at 3 pm.

## ‘I already act for a living, I cannot act in my political views’



this kind of complaint and comment absolutely bizarre because I'm like, who is making me viral? I am not hiring PR agencies and social media agencies and making myself viral, right? Because if I wanted to do that, I would make positive things viral. It's not like I have 24/7 PR. I don't have a digital media team. I'm not hanging around with cameras.”“I don't have a problem with people who do that, but that's not what I'm doing. You are giving the comment attention and making it viral. Don't give it attention. I don't have a house to run. I don't get paid for it. I don't get work from it. The money is going to those people who are making this content viral. You know that by trolling Swara Bhasker, by putting my name in your headline, you are going to get views, and you are going to eventually get money. So, Puneet Sir, somebody else is getting the money from my comments; it's certainly not me,” the actor added.

Swara Bhasker on her unabashed opinionsSwara Bhasker has rarely shied away from expressing her views, even when they have landed her in controversy. Explaining why she continues to speak her mind despite the backlash, Swara said, “I wish I had a little less courage. I'm constantly landing in trouble without realising that it's going to happen. Honestly, I was never trying to be brave. The context made it seem like I'm courageous because nobody else is speaking up or speaking up enough. I'm a straightforward person. And I'm also a very privileged person who has this kind of confidence, or delusional confidence, that I come from the privilege of always being safe.”Swara also acknowledged that much of this fearlessness comes from the privileged background she grew up in. “Even in terms of my identity, I come from the most privileged identity in India, which is being upper middle class, generationally English educated, government secure jobs of my parents, a stable life, Hindu, majoritarian, Samaritan. Every privilege you can think of in India, I have it. I grew up in Delhi sharing a pin code with the president of India. Humare yahan bijli, paani kabhi nahi katta tha because the lines were the same ones going to VIP houses. So, how can I claim to be scared when there are so many people...” Swara added.She contrasted her own position with those who, she said, continue to speak up despite facing far greater consequences. “I'm not talking about our industry, but there are so many people in less privileged circumstances than me, taking a stand, who are actually paying the price for it. People from persecuted identities – look at Umar Khalid. He's been in jail for six years. So many people like all these other activists and even like students from Bihar, or the students who were protesting in July. They come from such simple backgrounds. So on what basis do I have a right to feel scared? I have so much security and privilege.”For Swara, that is also why staying true to her political views is more important than avoiding controversy. “I already act for a living. I cannot act now in my political opinions and when I'm off camera. I already do the lies and the pretense on camera as an actor. So for the rest of the time, to be sane, I need to be authentic. That's who I am. Sometimes I wish I was a different person altogether. Then I wouldn't have landed in so much trouble. But then I feel like I wouldn't have had this life. I wouldn't have met Fahad and married him. That was also an unusual choice for both of us. And then I wouldn't have had Rabu (her daughter),” the actor concluded.

After facing backlash for her comments about Padmaavat's Jauhar scene, Swara Bhasker once again made headlines after she revealed on a podcast that she texted Aamir Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, and her other Muslim friends after the Ayodhya verdict. Veteran actor Puneet Issar criticised her comments, saying that actors should stick to their profession. Now, ahead of entering Rise And Fall 2, in an exclusive interview with SCREEN, Swara has reacted to the scrutiny over her comments. She also responded to Puneet Issar's remarks.

What did Swara Bhasker say about texting SRK, Salman, and Aamir after the Ayodhya verdict?

In the The Midnight Hour podcast, Swara Bhasker shared, “I was so upset when that verdict came out. I felt it was very unfair. I messaged all the Muslims in my phone book- from Aamir Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Salman sir to Fahad. I was like, I want to reach out to all the Muslims I know – as a Hindu, I just want you to know that I'm really sorry, I am really ashamed, and I don't agree with this.”Reacting to this, veteran actor Puneet Issar told IANS, “First of all, one should not get involved in such controversies. We are artistes. We should take care of our 140 crore people. Your job is to entertain. You just entertain. You just perform. If you want to be a social activist, if you want to go into politics, then you should do that. Just to get into the news, or if someone is supporting you, or if someone is funding you, and you follow someone for your personal gain and give such a shocking statement, I think that is in very bad taste.”

Swara Bhasker reacts to Puneet Issar's commentSwara Bhasker, however, dismissed the suggestion that she makes controversial statements for attention or personal gain. Talking exclusively to SCREEN before entering Rise and Fall 2, Swara said, “I wish somebody was funding me. If you have a problem with me being in the news, do not give my comments attention. I wasn't talking to you, was I? I was talking to an interviewer. You don't want to pay attention. You don't listen to podcasts. Why do you keep giving me attention by making that clip viral? I find

## After Salman Khan, Suriya speaks out on dealing with online trolls: ‘Don’t waste your energy’



Bollywood superstar Salman Khan recently slammed the culture of trolling on social media, calling trolls “parasites.” Now, Tamil star Suriya has spoken about the negativity on social media and shared his advice on how people should deal with it.At a meet-and-greet event organised by the All India Suriya Fans Club in Chennai, Suriya urged his fans to “spread love” and not give trolls attention by acknowledging or responding to them.

The Soorai Pottru actor said, “Let's spread only love. Just because some fool puts up a post on social media, the moment we start responding to it, we are the ones who end up getting hurt. Let's just be ourselves and let them be who they are. We don't need to say anything. Trying to make them understand or change their minds can be difficult. Some people will understand, but most won't. So, don't waste your energy on them. Just sincerely keep doing what you love every single day. Success will definitely come.”Whether Suriya was speaking generally about the negative impact of social media or referring to a particular post remains unclear. He urged his fans not to engage in online wars and instead focus on their families and spread love among the people who matter to them.On the work front, Suriya is currently basking in the success of Vishwanath and Sons. According to industry trade tracker Sacnilk, the film has earned Rs 209.46 worldwide. Reflecting on the film's box-office performance at the Vishwanath and Sons success meet, the actor said, “Success can't be measured with number of tickets sold. What happens to the conversations after the film? What happens to the emotions people carry after the film? What happens to the tears, the smiles? All these emotions can't be put in a balance sheet. Money is very, very important. But this kind of emotion which you might talk about after two years, that is very,

very important.”Suriya has several projects in the pipeline, including Scene, which marks Malayalam filmmaker Jithu Madhavan's Tamil directorial debut. The action drama stars Suriya as DSP Inbaraj, alongside Naslen, Nazriya Nazim, John Vijay and Anandaraj. He will also reunite with Jai Bhim director TJ Gnanavel for Suriya 48, slated for 2027. Also in the works is Lokesh Kanagaraj's highly anticipated Rolex, which will expand on Suriya's antagonist from Kamal Haasan-starrer Vikram.

## A world where daughters need not fear walking home alone



Mumbai: Actress Kriti Sanon used Daughter's Day to raise concerns over women's safety in the country, highlighting the everyday fears and precautions many women face while navigating public spaces.On Sunday, Kriti shared a post on Instagram describing situations such as walking alone at night, informing loved ones about their whereabouts and taking precautions to feel safe.“This Daughter's Day, Imagine your daughter calling you saying, 'I think I'm being followed by some men.' Imagine her walking home alone at night, constantly looking over her shoulder. Imagine her phone dying before she reaches home. Now let that sink in,” she wrote.

The “Cocktail 2” actress said women have been forced to make safety precautions part of their daily lives, including sharing live locations, carrying pepper spray, booking cabs instead of walking and calling someone for reassurance.She said the day a daughter can walk home alone at night, sit in a park after dark, wear what she wants, use public transport or simply be in a public space without fearing assault should be the day Daughter's Day is truly celebrated.“To every daughter who has ever called home and said, 'I've reached.' May you one day live in a world where you don't have to. That is the world our daughters deserve! And that is the world we owe them!” Kriti wrote.

## Kareena Kapoor sweats it out with intense ‘KKK Flow’ workout



Mumbai: Bollywood actress Kareena Kapoor enjoyed her Sunday with an intense workout session.Providing netizens a glimpse into her latest workout routine, Bebo shared a short clip of her ‘KKK Flow’ whiteboard.Sharing

her workout routine for the day, Kareena shared that she will be performing Bell Complex, Pull Overs, Gun Slingers, Halos, and Oblique Rotations as part one of the routine, while Zone 2 will have Db Lift Over Core.

However, this is not the first time that Bebo has shared such a motivational post regarding her workout.On Friday, the ‘K3G’ actress uploaded a whiteboard titled ‘KKK Flow’. An amalgamation of strength training, conditioning and cardio exercises, Kareena divided her workout into two parts. Part A included 10 step-back kettlebell chops, 10 wide-stance kettlebell lift-to-row repetitions, and two laps of sled pushes, whereas Part B comprised 200 metres on the ski erg, 200 metres of rowing and a one-minute bear hold.Kareena has been a constant motivation for fitness enthusiasts.

Her fitness journey made headlines when she transformed for her 2008 release ‘Tashan’ and made ‘size zero’ a nationwide phenomenon.However, Bebo has repeatedly said that she did not starve herself to achieve ‘size zero’. Kareena claims that she enjoyed her favourite foods, including parathas while on her journey to achieving that physique.On the professional front, Kareena recently graced the screen with Meghna Gulzar's crime thriller ‘Daayra’.Released in theatres on September 18, the movie marked Bebo's first on-screen association with Malayalam star Prithviraj Sukumaran.Their co-actor, Saksham Dayma, also shared his experience of working alongside Kareena and Prithviraj in the film.He revealed that neither of them made him feel intimidated on set. Saksham recalled the atmosphere on the set as comfortable and collaborative, which allowed him to work with the two accomplished actors without feeling overwhelmed.

## Salman Khan schools Rhiti Tiwari: ‘You are Manoj Tiwari’s daughter, not Dolly Bindra’s’



On the latest Weekend Ka Vaar episode of Bigg Boss 20, host Salman Khan schooled Rhiti Tiwari over her behaviour and language on the show. Last week, Rhiti, who is actor-politician Manoj Tiwari's daughter, used abusive and derogatory language against fellow contestants Uditi Singh and Qazi Touqeer during a task. While her remarks stirred up considerable drama among the contestants, Salman also weighed in on the controversy. He slammed Rhiti for her conduct and warned her to change her behaviour.

This week on Bigg Boss 20, contestants took part in a diss battle as part of the captaincy task. Divided into Team Qazi and Team Yung DSA, they had to take the stage and roast their opponents through rap. When Rhiti faced Uditi, Qazi stepped in to help Uditi with the diss battle. However, Manoj Tiwari's daughter targeted both of them with personal remarks, abuses and derogatory comments.Qazi eventually lost his cool, and the situation escalated into a heated argument. During the confrontation, Rhiti threatened Qazi, saying that her father would deal with him outside the house. She later defended her remarks and said she was proud of what she had said during the task.

On the latest Weekend Ka Vaar, Salman Khan schooled Rhiti Tiwari for her abusive language and behavior. He said, “Rhiti is the most jealous person in the house. Everyone outside is also saying that Rhiti is very insecure about Qazi. Rhiti, you said that everything that's happening for Qazi on this show, you wanted that to happen for you. How is Qazi at fault here?” Defending herself, Rhiti said, “I found him very cool in the beginning, but after he was exposed, and then our friction in the tasks, personally made me dislike him. But I am not jealous of Qazi. Qazi is not at fault. I said that statement in my vulnerable moment.”Salman further gave a reality check to Rhiti over her claims of being a rockstar and said, “Whatever Qazi did in the beginning, he took the audience in confidence. They really liked it, and after that, when everyone was against him, he handled it very gracefully. I confronted him because I knew he would do that, because for 20 years, after being a rockstar, he didn't get work. He didn't get the respect or fame he wanted, and he lived through that. The problem is that only you are calling yourself a rockstar; no one else is. The term rockstar is used for someone who has suffered challenges and fought their way to achieve a status; that person is called a rockstar. Qazi is one because he has been through it all, destroyed every opposition and obstacle in life, and come to the number 1 position. In the film industry, Sanjay Dutt is a rockstar.”Rhiti replied, “Qazi's life is incomparable. I am half his age, just starting. Everyone has a personal journey. Even though my father has been loving and supportive, my parents are divorced, and I don't live with them. My father very clearly told me that he won't help me build my career, or else it will make me less competent. I have strived for the last 6 years to build my career.”

‘Nobody knew you before Bigg Boss 20’: Salman KhanSalman went on to slam Rhiti and said, “Nobody knew you till the time you came on Bigg Boss. 20 years back, when it cost Rs 4 per vote, Qazi won that show by a huge margin; he defeated Arijit Singh. Rhiti, you said you are a great singer, composer, songwriter, and music producer. How can someone say all these things about themselves? It should come from people. People said that since you are a nepo kid, I won't scream at you. I don't think that's the right thing to do right now. But Rhiti, your language is very

bad, and it's impacting your father too.”The host also pulled up Rhiti Tiwari for threatening Qazi Touqeer. He said, “What is it with you threatening Qazi? From what I know, Manoj won't support this attitude. Your grandmother is also watching this show, and you are Manoj Tiwari's daughter, not Dolly Bindra's. Remember when she fought with your father; he just kept quiet. Had he reacted, everything would have gone against him. You reacted and became the Dolly Bindra of the house. Your father is not in the house. He is now a politician, a respected man, a 3-time MP. Had you been anyone else's daughter, that father wouldn't have liked your threat. Rhiti, I take women's issues very seriously. You all are my responsibility, and you accused him of coming on to you and said that you didn't feel safe. But we saw the clips in slow motion, and he was never around you. We have watched everything. In the diss track, you again made the same allegations. You crossed the line of disrespect. Imagine how it would have come across on OTT. Are you still defending this?”

Salman lastly slammed Amrapali Dubey and lauded Uditi Singh for their stance on the Rhiti Tiwari and Qazi Touqeer fight. He said, “Amrapali, we expect sensible things from you. You put it on me rather than explaining it to her. Is it because she is your friend's daughter? Someone from the Bhojpuri industry, so you let it go. You got carried away by group pressure. I loved the way Uditi handled herself, even though she was in an uncomfortable position. Rhiti, you are proud of it, but it was the worst diss ever. Maybe your father or mother has not corrected you. Most people from a disturbed family turn out fantastic; only weak ones use these reasons for their behavior. People who made it big have been from broken homes. We have all messed up. I have done these things when I was young. I learned it the hard way. I don't want you to go through that. Rhiti, did you have the heart or mind to say sorry? Change your behavior if you want to become a rockstar.”

## Shankar Mahadevan reveals unique recording process behind ‘Koi Kahe’

Mumbai: Music composer Shankar Mahadevan has revealed that he, KK and Shaan each recorded the entire song ‘Koi Kahe’, after which their respective parts were divided and assembled during post-production.In a special video hosted by Meiyang Chang, Shankar sat down for a conversation with fellow composers Ehsaan Noorani and Loy Mendonsa, along with playback singer Shaan.

When Chang asked whether the singers had recorded the song together in the booth, Shaan said they were in the room together but recorded their parts separately. “I think we were there in the room together. But we recorded it separately. And KK, of course, was there. If you listen to it, you can't tell it was done separately. There is something about it that feels as if we were together,” Shaan said.

Shankar explained that all three singers had recorded the entire song before the individual portions were divided.“Actually, all of us had sung the whole song. Everybody sang the whole song and then we made the divisions. So, that's why it sounds very seamless,” he said.

‘Dil Chahta Hai’, which marked Farhan Akhtar's directorial debut, went on to become a defining film of modern Hindi cinema, particularly for its portrayal of urban friendship, romance and youthful independence. Its Goa road trip also became a cultural touchstone, inspiring generations to recreate the journey with friends.Ehsaan later shared an anecdote about the song's success. He recalled an evening at a club called Athena, where ‘Koi Kahe’ was played as the final song of the night.

“There used to be a club in town called Athena. We were having dinner there. There was a glass division where you ate dinner and stuff and on the other side people were dancing. And the last song that they played was ‘Koi Kahe’. Everybody there got on to the dance floor. The dance floor was packed. We couldn't get out of there,” Ehsaan said.

He added that the DJ later approached him and blamed him for creating a song that had got everyone onto the dance floor.Ehsaan also recalled that another music company had predicted that the ‘Dil Chahta Hai’ album would appeal only to listeners in Mumbai's Malabar Hill area.