

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Rana's extradition

Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana's imminent extradition from the US is a defining moment in India's war against cross-border terrorism. It comes nearly two months after US President Donald Trump, during a joint press conference with PM Narendra Modi at the White House, announced his administration's nod to sending the "very evil" Rana "to face justice in India". The onus will now be on India's probe agencies to make him specify the role of Pakistani state actors in the attacks that claimed 166 lives in November 2008 — arguably the most audacious act of terrorism on Indian soil.

Rana's interrogation is of vital importance as he had links not only with the internationally banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) but also with Pakistan's spy agency ISI. The chargesheet against Ajmal Kasab, the lone surviving 26/11 terrorist (he was executed in 2012), clearly mentioned that the Mumbai strikes were plotted in Pakistan by the LeT. Kasab and his partners remained in contact with their handlers and co-conspirators through satellite phones while they went on the rampage in India's financial capital. Former Pakistani Ambassador to the US Husain Haqqani had left no room for doubt about the deep state's role when he claimed in his 2016 book that shortly after the carnage, then ISI chief Gen Shuja Pasha admitted that the planners of the 26/11 attacks were "our people" but it wasn't "our operation". It is apparent that the plotters had the backing and blessing of the Pakistan Army, but will Rana say it in so many words and also name the big fish? The chickens have come home to roost in Pakistan, which is itself being scorched by terrorism. However, despite repeated warnings by New Delhi and Washington about not letting its territory be used to plot cross-border terror attacks, Pakistan is persisting with its misadventures — in line with its policy to bleed India with a thousand cuts".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's portrait should be in government offices: Samanchi Srinivas.



April 10, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator""BJP District President Samanchi Srinivas has demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's portrait should be put up in every government office along with the portraits of the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister. Under the leadership of Samanchi Srinivas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's portraits were put up on the walls in the Tuda and Sub-Registration offices in Tirupati. "Speaking on the occasion, District President Samanchi Srinivas asked the officials to immediately take the initiative to put up the Prime Minister's portrait in all government offices and to issue orders accordingly. Everyone should respect the Prime Minister." "If not, he said that in every mandal, under the leadership of the mandal president, they will start putting up the Prime Minister's photos in government offices at the expense of the workers." Along with the district presidents, BJP state representative Bhanuprakash Reddy, District General Secretary Varaprasad, Yuva Morcha leaders Parthasarathi Jeevan Royal Chintakayala Ravi, Om Prakash, Chandrashekar, Deepak Yadav, Neha Prasad, Ravi Prasad and other leaders participated in this program.

Uday Kiran wishes Veerender Goud on his birthday



Miyapur April 10 In commemoration of Elders Veeramalla Veerender Goud birthday, Yalamanchi Uday Kiran and team organized a cake-cutting ceremony in Miyapur, where he was felicitated with a shawl and extended warm birthday wishes in a grand manner, with active participation from well-wishers, elders, and youth members and Om Prakash, Miyapur Vice President Tandra Ramchander Goud, Bhaskar Goud, Vijay Mudiraj, Narasimha, Prasad, Bhasha, Nani, Ashok, Vinod, Vamsi, Krishna, Praveen, Santosh, Gurus, Nagasai, Simhachalam, Abhiram, Chari, Prasad, and youth enthusiastically participated in this program.

Govt's goal is to ensure fiber connectivity reaches every home in next 6 months: Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, April 10 Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu announced that the State government is focused on delivering fiber connectivity and smart TV services to every household in Telangana within the next six months. During a media briefing at the T-Fiber office on Thursday, he explained that T-Fiber stands out because it integrates internet, telephone, and television services into a single offering. He noted that this is the first initiative of its kind in the country.

JAGANMOHANAKARA MESMERIZES AS MOHINI



April 10, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator""Sri Ramachandra Murty decked up as the Universal Celestial Damsel, Jagannamohini mesmerized devotees on fifth morning of the ongoing annual Brahmotsavams on Thursday at Vontimitta in Kadapa district. ""The devotees were mused to witness the divine beauty of Mohini. ""The Palanquin moved along the mada streets carrying the deity with majesty amidst the grandeur of dance performances by various artistes, colourful paraphernalia. ""Temple officials were also present.

ELABORATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR KALYANAM -TTD EO



""April 10, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator""As the most important festivities and state festival of Sri Sitarama Kalyanam is set to take place at the Kalyana Vedika in Vontimitta of Kadapa district on April 10, the TTD EO J Syamala Rao reviewed the arrangements on Thursday. ""The EO had a detailed review meeting with the sectoral officers and deputation staff along with the Srivari Sevaks. ""He said as the CM of AP, Nara Chandrababu Naidu is taking part in the celestial Kalyanam, everyone should be in their respective roles. ""The EO along with the JEO Veerabrahmam and CVSO Incharge



Harshavardhan Raju, reviewed the Annaprasadam, Sanitation, Security and Parking arrangements besides, Kalyanam Stage, VIP galleries, devotee galleries, Kiosks for distribution of Talabralu and Prasadam and many more. ""He complimented the Srivari Sevaks for their impeccable services to the devotees.

He asked the police and security to handle the devotees with patience and care. ""Departmental heads, sectoral incharges, officers, deputation staff, vigilance and security sleuths, Srivari Sevaks were also present.

Union Tribal Affairs Minister, Jual Oram visited NSU



""April 10, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator""Jual Oram Union Minister, Tribal affairs, Govt. of India visited today National Sanskrit University, Tirupati. Prof.GSR Krishnamurti Vice-Chancellor, NSU received minister with Purnakumbha Swagat. ""Later, the Minister Jual Oram interacted with officials of NSU and tribal students assured for central tribal scholarships. After that he visited Sri Jagannath temple and praying for the welfare of the Nation. He congratulated to VC for upper mative steps taking for



the Sanskrit language promotion. NSU is excellent in Sanskrit Studies leading top position in India. Each and every student study well and protect our Indian Knowledge and culture. ""Later, Vice-Chancellor felicitated with shawl and bouquet along with other officials. Prof. Krishnamurti said that it's a proud movement because of visiting NSU and showing interest on our Sanskrit Sastras and Indian culture. ""In this programme Odisha Chair Director Dr. Jnanaranjan Panda and University faculty, officials took part and grandly welcomed to Minister.

NZ experts aid global report on hydrogen storage techEducation New Zealand - Media Release



Hyderabad: University of Canterbury experts have contributed to a significant new international report on the state of underground hydrogen storage technology. The University of Canterbury | Te Whare Wananga o Waitaha (UC) Earth and Environment scientist Professor Andy Nicol and Natural Resources engineer Associate Professor David Dempsey have contributed to a pivotal International Energy Agency (IEA) report, published on 12 March 2025 into the advancements and future potential of underground hydrogen storage (UHS) in the global energy landscape.

Led out of the Netherlands, with global expertise across industry and academia, the IEA report on UHS technology addresses the growing need for sustainable and efficient energy storage solutions. As the world transitions to renewable energy sources, the ability to store hydrogen underground offers a promising method to balance supply and demand, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance energy security. With the right infrastructure, hydrogen can be used to power transport, buildings, and industry. It can be used to store electricity for peak winter electricity demands, to generate off-grid electricity, and decarbonise industrial

chemical manufacture. "This is about decarbonising economies and energy systems and to do that we've got to work together. Teamwork is incredibly important but that's the overarching goal – we need to decarbonise. If we don't, sea levels are going to keep rising and it's going to get hotter, with more natural hazards," Professor Nicol says. The report provides an in-depth analysis of the latest technological advancements in UHS, comparing them to previous methods in terms of efficiency and safety. It also explores the environmental and economic impacts of adopting UHS on a large scale. The focus on UHS stems from its potential to support renewable energy integration and contribute to a low-carbon future. "Underground hydrogen storage is not widely deployed but in the future, we may need a lot more of it, so part of the job is to assess where the technology sits currently," says Professor Nicol, an expert in Structural Geology. "Is it ready to be widely rolled out? If not, what are the challenges and what science needs to be done? What are the economics looking like? That detailed background on where it is and where it's going."

Elaborate Arrangements for Kalyanam -TTD EO

Vontimitta, April 10 : As the most important festivities and state festival of Sri Sitarama Kalyanam is set to take place at the Kalyana Vedika in Vontimitta of Kadapa district on April 10, the TTD EO J Syamala Rao reviewed the arrangements on Thursday. The EO had a detailed review meeting with the sectoral officers and deputation staff along with the Srivari Sevaks. He said as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh N Chandrababu Naidu is taking part in the celestial Kalyanam, everyone should be in their respective roles.

Uday Kiran team wishes Srinivas Mudiraju on his birthday



Miyapur April 10 to commemorate Bandaru Srinivas Mudhiraj's birthday, Yalamanchi Uday Kiran and team organized a cake-cutting ceremony in Miyapur, where he was felicitated with a shawl and extended birthday wishes in a grand manner, with enthusiastic participation from well-wishers, elders, and youth members.

ADDITIONAL EO REVIEWS ON TUMBURU THEERTHA MUKKOTI

""April 10, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator""The TTD Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary on Thursday reviewed in detail the arrangements to be made for the devotees trekking Tumburu Theertham on April 11 and 12. ""The review meeting took place at Annamaiah Bhavan in Tirumala on Thursday afternoon with various departments in Tirumala. ""The Additional EO said the devotees need to be sensitized properly on do's and don'ts before allowed for trekking. ""In view of the safety of the devotees, APSRTC will run buses carrying pilgrims from Octopus junction to Papavinasanam point. ""Devotees who have chronic heart and other diseases, obesity, asthma, below 10 years will not be allowed for trekking. ""The path will be open for trekking on April 11 and 12 from 5am to 10 am only on both days. ""Annaprasadam, water and buttermilk

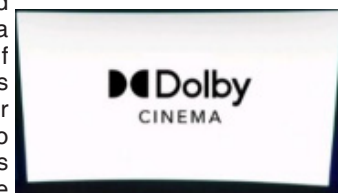


distribution, security and medical arrangements have been made for the safety of sevaks and over 300 Srivari Sevaks have been deployed for this task. ""The Additional EO instructed TTD forest and vigilance sleuths to be vigilant and also keep a watch on fire safety measures while the devotees are trekking Tumburu Theertham. ""All the department officials in Tirumala were present.

Dolby Laboratories to Bring Dolby Cinema to India, Delivering a Premium Cinema Experience for Moviegoers

Hyderabad: Dolby Laboratories, Inc. (NYSE: DLB), a leader in immersive entertainment experiences, announced that it will bring Dolby Cinema® to India this year, marking a new era in premium cinema going experience. City Pride in Pune, Allu Cineplex in Hyderabad, LA Cinema in Trichy, AMB Cinemas in Bengaluru, EVM Cinemas in Kochi, and G Cineplex in Ulikkal will be the first six exhibitors to open Dolby Cinema screens in India. Dolby Cinema is set to transform how Indian audiences experience movies, offering them the opportunity to see and hear stories exactly as the filmmakers intended. This milestone not only sets a new benchmark for premium cinema experiences in India but also reinforces Dolby's commitment to elevating entertainment through innovation. A premium cinema offering for moviegoers, Dolby Cinema combines state-of-the-art picture and sound. With Dolby Vision, the picture comes alive with amazing brightness and darker darks to offer a more lifelike sense of depth, rendering colours and detail unlike other movie screens. Studio grade Dolby Atmos transports guests inside the story with sound that flows all around them, including overhead. The sound in the cinema envelops viewers, making the story their reality. Dolby Cinema fully realizes the filmmaker's intent, putting moviegoers in the middle of the action. Combined with the Dolby Cinema design, all seats in the auditorium will be optimized to ensure every seat offers a "best seat in the house" experience for movie fans.

"The launch of Dolby Cinema in India is a pivotal moment for the country's entertainment sector," said Michael Archer, Vice President of Worldwide Cinema Sales and Partner Management, Dolby Laboratories. "Indian audiences are passionate about movies, and Dolby Cinema is the ultimate moviegoing experience. Since the opening of the first Dolby Cinema in 2014, Dolby Cinema has grown rapidly, encompassing 35 exhibitor partners and 14 countries. This announcement underscores our commitment to advancing cinematic storytelling, working closely with filmmakers, studios, and exhibitors to deliver extraordinary entertainment experiences." A crucial step in bringing Dolby Cinema to India has been ensuring filmmakers have access to world-class post-production facilities. In addition to 24 Dolby Atmos theatrical mix facilities in India, Dolby recently collaborated with Annapurna Studios in Hyderabad, to setup India's first Dolby Vision colour grading facility for cinema, empowering Indian filmmakers with cutting-edge tools to enhance their visual storytelling.



Venue Ready to host“Sitarama Kalyanam in a big way-TTD Board Chief



TTD and District Authorities Coordinated Elaborate Arrangements“– Annaprasadam, Drinking Water, Butter-milk for Devotees“– Talambralu Packets Ready for Devotees“April 10, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator“TTD Chairman BR Naidu said that all arrangements have been completed to conduct the celestial Sri Sita Rama Kalyanam in a grand manner at Vontimitta on Friday, the April 11 between 6:30 PM and 8:30 PM. ““A press conference was held at the meeting hall in the Vontimitta temple premises along with the TTD EO J. Syamala Rao, District Collector Sridhar, JEO Veerabraham, JC Adhithi Singh, SP Ashok Kumar, CVSO Harshavardhan Raju. ““Some Excerpts from the press meet:““– Sri Sita Rama Kalyanam to be held in Ekashilanagaram on April 11 in coordination with TTD and the district administration.““– On the occasion of the State Festival of Sri Sitaram Kalyanam, the Chief Minister of AP, Nara Chandrababu Naidu will present the “Sare” on behalf of the state government on April 11 at 6 pm.““– Arrangements made for 60 thousand devotees to sit comfortably in 147 galleries at the Kalyana Vedika premises.““– steps to ensure that paramedics, TTD employees, police and Srivari Sevaks are present in each gallery so that the devotees do not face any inconvenience.““– For the first time, 28 counters have been specially set up at the entrance of the Kalyana Vedika for the distribution of Talambralu““– Arrangements



to provide pearl thalambralu, Srivari laddu prasadam, bangles and anna prasadam to every devotee who comes to the wedding ceremony.““– special sheds in 11 areas for the convenience of the devotees who come on foot.““– German sheds near the temple so that 3 thousand devotees can wait and avoid queues.““– 23 LED screens set up at the Kalyana Vedika““– 400 security personnel from the TTD Vigilance Department and 2500 from the district police.““– Similarly, 130 CCTV cameras and 07 drones have been installed.““– command control room set up to ensure continuous monitoring.““– fire engines and disaster management teams.““– set up 2 parking areas at Salabad and 3 at Sai Nagar for the vehicles of devotees coming to Kalyanam.““– Lighting, signboards, mobile patrolling and surveillance teams have been set up for about 21 km from Salabad Junction to Sainagar““– Annaprasadam is being distributed to the devotees attending the Brahmotsavam from morning till night in the temple premises and at the Kalyana Vedika.““– Lemon rice, Chakkera pongal, biscuit packets and Karasev will be provided to the devotees waiting in the galleries to watch the Kalyanam from the evening.““– About 3 lakh drinking water bottles and butter-milk packets will be provided.““– transport facilities to the devotees through 425 trips with 85 APSRTC buses from Kadapa to Vontimitta and 220 trips with 40 RTC buses from Rajampet to Vontimitta, making a total of 645 trips.““– TTD has arranged 20 free buses from traffic diversion areas to the Kalyana Vedika.““– Special decoration at the Kalyana Vedika, temple and surrounding areas with 12 tons of traditional flowers and 1 lakh cut flowers.““– 13 medical camps, 250 paramedical staff, 35 medical experts, 8 ambulances, fire brigade personnel are on duty.““– 250 toilets in the vicinity of the Kalyana Vedika and temple, 3,268 sanitation workers are on duty in coordination with the district administration.““– 500 TTD deputation employees, 2500 Srivari Sevaks will provide services without any inconvenience to the devotees.““– Live broadcast of Sri Sita Rama Kalyanotsavam in HD quality so that devotees from all over the world can watch the celestial event.““Earlier, the Chairman reviewed the arrangements with the TTD and district officials. He made several suggestions to the officials on this occasion.

WAM! Hyderabad Set to Celebrate India’s Rising Talent in Anime, Manga, Webtoons & Cosplay on April 12th

Telangana Academy For Skill and Knowledge (TASK), Masabtank, Hyderabad
Co-hosted by Telangana VFX, Animation and Gaming Association (TVAGA)

Hyderabad, April 8, 2025 —Following blockbuster editions in cities like Guwahati, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Delhi, Varanasi, Mumbai, Nagpur, Ahmedabad and Chennai, the Media & Entertainment Association of India (MEAI) is bringing the excitement of WAM! (WAVES Anime & Manga Contest) to the vibrant city of Hyderabad. The event is being co-hosted by the Telangana VFX, Animation and Gaming Association (TVAGA) and will take place at Telangana Academy For Skill and Knowledge (TASK), 1st Floor, Sanketika Vidya Bhavan, Masabtank, Hyderabad – 500028 on April 12, 2025

What's WAM!? WAM! is India's first-of-its-kind national contest promoting original Indian IPs in:

- Anime (Japanese-style animated concepts)
- Manga (Japanese-style comics)
- Webtoons (digital vertical comics)
- Cosplay (costume play with character performances)

This event is part of WAVES (World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit), India’s largest AVGC-XR and media platform. It aims to nurture homegrown talent in anime and comics and aligns with the Create in India vision backed by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India.

What Participants Can Win: Winners of WAM! Hyderabad will qualify for the National Finale at WAVES 2025 and stand a chance to win:

- WACOM Pen Tablets
- Faber-Castell Art Goodies
- Official WAM! Merchandise
- Cash Prizes
- Distribution & Career Opportunities:



- Webtoon winners may be published on Toonsutra
- Anime winners will receive support to dub pilot episodes in English, Hindi, and Japanese
- WAM! Finale winners will get an all expense paid trip to Anime Japan 2026

A Platform for Young Creators

“WAM! is more than just a contest—it’s a movement to recognize the next generation of anime and manga creators in India,” said Ankur Bhasin, Secretary of the Media & Entertainment Association of India (MEAI). “With Hyderabad being a hotbed of animation and gaming talent, we are excited to discover exceptional creators from this region.”

- Participation Details
- Entry is Free
 - Open to students and professionals
 - Pre-registration is mandatory via <https://meai.in/wam>

Jupally highlights tourism investment opportunities in Telangana

Mumbai, April 10 : Minister for Tourism Jupally Krishna Rao presented Telangana's tourism policy, which he described as exceptionally conducive to attracting investors and fostering an unparalleled environment for India's hospitality industry. Speaking at the 20th South Asia Hotels Investment Conference at Powai Lake in Mumbai on Thursday, the Minister encouraged investment opportunities within Telangana's tourism sector, emphasizing the state's commitment to development through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) approach. He assured potential investors that they would receive substantial incentives, concessions, and comprehensive governmental support to enhance tourism development. During a targeted meeting with representatives from prominent hotels and travel firms, Minister Jupally outlined initiatives aimed at positioning Telangana as a premier destination for both domestic and international tourists.

He mentioned that the state's updated tourism policy aims to promote various types of tourism, including temple,



adventure, eco, heritage, medical, and wellness tourism to draw in more visitors. By the year 2030, Telangana is setting its sights on attracting Rs. 15,000 crore in investments, generating 3 lakh jobs, doubling its tourism growth, and achieving a place among the top five Indian states for tourist arrivals," stated Jupally.

Mana illu Mana kuragayalu program

Hyderabad, April 10 : Vegetables play an important role in supplying adequate vitamins and minerals required for the human body. For a balanced diet, an adult should have an intake of 400 gm of vegetables per day (tubers/ root vegetables - 100g +leafy green 100 gm+other vegetables - 200 gm) as per ICMR recommendation. Keeping in view of rapid urbanization, unavailability of required area main constraints for cultivation of vegetables, escalating vegetables prices and medicinal & aromatic plants are crucial for human health, serving as a source of natural medicines, food flavourings, fragrances with bioactive compounds used to treat various ailments and improve well-being.

Hence, the Horticulture Department, Telangana is organizing training programme on April 12 i.e. on Second Saturday of this month from 10 am to 1 pm at Telangana Horticulture Training Institute, Red Hills under 'Mana illu Mana kuragayalu program, which was launched to create awareness on growing good quality, pesticide residue free vegetables on terrace, thereby promoting Public Health and



reducing carbon emissions. Registration fee is Rs 100. For details contact Nos 8977714411/8688848714. (NSS)

Hyderabad Airport wins 'Best Airport Staff in India & South Asia 2025' Award from Skytrax



Hyderabad: GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd (GHIAL) has been honoured with the 'Best Airport Staff in India & South Asia 2025' award by Skytrax for the fourth

time. The announcement was made during a ceremony at the Passenger Terminal EXPO 2025 in Madrid, Spain, where Hyderabad Airport distinguished itself as the premier airport among all competitors across India and South Asia. This distinguished accolade celebrates the airport's dedication to creating a passenger journey that is smooth, convenient, and truly exceptional.

The award follows rigorous audits evaluating the quality of staff service, including attitude, friendliness, and efficiency across all customer touch points, a press release said. The airport has implemented numerous passenger-centric innovations, including city-side check-in, digital solutions that minimize wait times, comfortable lounges designed for relaxation, diverse dining and shopping options catering to all preferences, and specially trained staff dedicated to assisting passengers with special requirements to name a few.

The state has nothing to do with Delhi parties.. BRS Party should win in local body elections..Former MLA Challa Dharmareddy



“Atmakur, April 10 (Indian Chronicle):““Former legislator Challa Dharmareddy said that.. the state has nothing to do with the Delhi parties. Former MLA Challa Dharmara Reddy participated in a preparatory meeting organized by BRS activists of Atmakur and Damera Mandal at the GRS Gardens in Agrampahad Village, Atmakur Mandal, on 27th during the BRS Rajathochava Sabha in Elkathurthi Village of, Hanumakonda district.

The Wall Poster was unveiled on this occasion. Afterwards, Challa Dharmara Reddy said that.. the 25 -year -old Silver otsava rose festival has gone to millions and calls for the success of the House. On the 27th of this month, a festival in each village should be held in the festival and will be held to the House. Every activist is called to act like a military for the strengthening of the party. Every activist is responsible for the failures of the Congress government, which came to power with fraudulent guarantees. The local body in the coming days was asked to be in the polls. The BRS party has not been able to take office and cheated the party and take the party under any circumstances. Senior leaders of the existing BRS party should encourage youth



in politics. The ruling party leaders and the police are not afraid of illegal cases. KCR has been credited with implementing the development and welfare schemes that no chief minister in India has done transparently. If Telangana is brought to the notice of the KCR death note, the posts of the Congress leaders today are due to the KCR .. KCR and KTR have established the Kakatiya mega textile industry today. Today, the poor workers who work in it are being removed to Congress activists. The people and farmers of the state are facing severe difficulties due to the failure of the Congress government today. Congress falls with the BRS Silver House.

The name of the House is shaking with other parties. That is why the Congress in power is conspiring not to let go. No one can stop the management of the House. Telangana troop, Telangana strength .. Telangana strength .. BRS party is the only one. That is why millions of flock to the Silverotsava Sabha have been called to be successful. The event was attended by former representatives of Atmakur and Damera zones, BRS party councils, village leaders, activists and youth leaders participated.

Srivari Vasanthotsavam begins in a grand style



“April 10, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator““Srivari Salakatra Vasanthotsavam began in a grand style on Thursday at the Vasanthotsavam Mandapam in Tirumala.““As this festival held in the spring season for Sri Malayappa Swamy, to relieve from the scorching heat, it is also called Upasamanotsavam. ““In this festival, fragrant flowers and various types of fruits are offered to the deity. The Mandapam has been tastefully decorated recreating a forest look.““As part of this, Sri Malayappa Swamy, along with Sridevi Bhudevi, reached in a procession to the

Vasanthotsava Mandapam.““Later, the holy water bath, Snapana Tirumanjanam was held for Sri Bhu sametha Sri Malayappa Swamy from 2 to 4 pm. ““First, the Vishwakshena Aradhana, Punyahavachana, Navakalashabhisheka, and Rajopachara were performed. After that, the offerings of Chhatra Chamara Vyajana Darpanadi, Mukha Prakshalana, and Dhooa were performed. ““As part of the Arghyapada Nivedana, the holy water bath was performed with Ksheera (milk), Dadhi (curd), Madi (honey), Narikelam (coconut water), Haridrodakam (turmeric), and Gandhodakam (sandalwood). ““With these, the conch shell, chakradhara, sahasradhara, and Mahakumbha Abhishekam were performed as per Vaikhanasa Agama. ““On this occasion, the Vedic scholars recited the Taittiriya Upanishad, Purushasukta, Srisukta, Bhusukta, Neelasukta, Panchasanthi mantras, and the connecting verses of the Divya Prabandha during the Abhishekam. ““During this ceremony, various garlands were decked to the deities in each ritual. After that, the Utsava Murthies reached the temple.““On the second day of the Vasantotsavam, on April 11, from 8 to 10 am, Sri Malayappa Swamy, accompanied by Sri Bhu Devis, will take a procession along the four mada streets on the golden chariot. ““Later, the priests will conduct the Vasantotsavam in the Vasantotsava Mandapam. ““HH Tirumala i Peddajiyar Swamy, Chinaijiyar Swamy, Additional EO Ch. Venkaiah Chowdary, Deputy EO Lokanatham, Peishkar Rama Krishna and other officials participated in this program.

Man caught for smuggling liquor in train

Hyderabad: The Government Railway Police (GRP) along with the Railway Protection Force (RPF) caught a man allegedly smuggling liquor from Haryana into Hyderabad at the Hyderabad railway station on Thursday. Officials seized 28 liquor bottles, altogether worth Rs 13,000 from him. Shiva Kumar from Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh concealed the liquor bottles in luggage and arrived at the Hyderabad railway station in Hisar Express from Haryana.

Karnataka High Court orders suspension of Rapido, other bike taxi services in state within 6 weeks



GNS News Agency, April 10

In a huge setback for bike taxi aggregator app Rapido, the Karnataka High Court on Wednesday ruled that bike taxi aggregators cannot operate in the state unless the government notifies relevant guidelines under Section 3 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, along with the necessary rules. The court has directed the state government and the transport department to ensure that all bike taxi operations cease within six weeks. Justice B M Shyam Prasad stated that

the petitioners, including Rapido, Uber, Ola and other bike taxi aggregators, must halt their operations within the stipulated period. The state government has been given three months to frame the necessary rules and guidelines for bike taxi operations.

Reading out the order, Justice Prasad emphasised, "The transport department cannot be directed to register motorcycles as transport vehicles or issue contract carriage permits for such services until appropriate government regulations are in place." During the proceedings, Senior Advocate Arun Kumar, representing one of the parties, noted that Ola began offering bike taxi services only in April 2024. The court acknowledged this but maintained that all petitioners must comply with the directive and cease their bike taxi operations. The judgment also referenced an expert committee report in 2019, which examined the impact of bike taxis on traffic and safety. The court highlighted that regulatory clarity is essential before allowing such services to continue. Justice Prasad concluded by stating that resisting change could lead to stagnation, quoting the famous adage, "A person who denies change becomes the architect of decay."

Bombay High Court registry told to assign plea for fresh probe to appropriate bench

GNS News Agency, April 10

Disha Salian, mumbai news, indian express Disha Salian, 28, died on June 8, 2020, after falling off the 14th floor of a residential building in suburban Malad, six days before Rajput's death at his Bandra residence on June 14. The Bombay High Court has asked its registry to assign the petition for a fresh investigation into the death of Disha Salian, former manager of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, to an appropriate bench after her father informed a bench led by Justice Revati Mohite-Dere that his plea pertained to another bench. The matter was listed before a bench of Justices Mohite-Dere and Neela K Gokhale for Wednesday. But Satish Salian informed the court that the relief he seeks pertained to a bench led by Justice Sarang V Kotwal. "Considering the relief sought, the petitioner says it pertains to the bench of Justice Kotwal. Registry to take appropriate steps," the high court noted in its order.

Disha, 28, died on June 8, 2020, after falling off the 14th floor of a residential building in suburban Malad, six days before Rajput's death at his Bandra residence on June 14. In February 2022, Satish appealed to journalists to leave his family alone, stating that politicians were maligning his daughter's name by raising questions over the circumstances surrounding her death. Satish's plea says he initially believed that the investigation was genuine but later found it to be a cover-up. He has also sought to tag his writ petition with the PIL plea filed by Rashid Khan Pathan, who claimed to be president of the Supreme Court & High Court Litigants Association of India, seeking a direction for the



CBI to investigate Shiv Sena (UBT) MLA Aaditya Thackeray in relation to the deaths of Rajput and Disha. In October last year, Thackeray filed a caveat in the high court seeking to be heard before any order is passed on Pathan's petition. Thackeray, in his intervention application, stated that the PIL was non-maintainable as the investigation in the Rajput case was already being conducted by the CBI, the Supreme Court was seized of the matter, and no order could be passed by the high court in this regard. During the hearing on Pathan's plea on February 5, Thackeray's lawyer submitted that nothing was found against his client in an investigation carried out by the local police and the Criminal Investigation Department. The bench led by Chief Justice Alok Aradhe then told the petitioner that if he had any new evidence, he could give it to the police. The court also said it would have to first ascertain the maintainability of Pathan's plea.

Lone Congress MP from Gujarat seeks to raise Deesa firecracker factory blast issue in Lok Sabha

GNS News Agency, April 10

The lone Congress MP from Gujarat, Geniben Thakor, has written to the Lok Sabha Speaker seeking permission to raise the issue of the blast at firecracker factory in Banaskantha's Deesa which killed 21 people on Tuesday, in the house. Lashing out at the BJP-ruled government in Gujarat in the letter which she posted on X, Thakor Wednesday stated, "Workers died tragically in a fire at a firecracker warehouse in Deesa, Banaskantha. This is not the first incident. Tragedies like Surat's Takshashila (22 deaths), Morbi bridge accident (135 deaths), Rajkot game zone (27 deaths) have happened in Gujarat but the BJP government has indulged in corruption... If serious steps had been taken, these accidents could have been prevented".

"I demand that the government constitute a high-level committee to investigate this incident and strict actions should be taken against all those responsible so that such incidents are not repeated in the future," she said.

On Tuesday morning, 21 workers including seven children — the youngest being three years old — were killed, and six were injured, after a blast destroyed a firecracker



warehouse on the outskirts of Deesa town. Of the six injured, three are at Deesa Civil Hospital, two at Palanpur Civil Hospital while one is at Ahmedabad Civil hospital. The blast had caused the building structure to blow over 100 feet onto surrounding fields. "If allowed, I will raise the issue in the Parliament and also meet the families of the deceased and injured and offer all the help possible," Thakor said.

Delhi Police to move court to declare 'drug kingpin' Virendra Basoiya proclaimed offender

GNS News Agency, April 10

The men told the police that a man suddenly entered the ATM, brandished a gun, and looted approximately Rs 1 lakh from both victims before fleeing the scene. On October 1, 562 kg of cocaine was seized in Mahipalpur, South Delhi. Then, on October 10, 208 kg of cocaine was recovered from a shop in Ramesh Nagar, West Delhi. The Delhi Police will begin proceedings to have Dubai-based Indian businessman and alleged drug kingpin Virendra Basoiya declared a proclaimed offender (PO) by a court. He is accused of running a cartel that smuggled 1,289 kg of cocaine into India, according to an official from the Special Cell of the Delhi Police.

At least four more accused named in the case will also have PO declaration proceedings initiated against them, with some of them in direct touch with Basoiya, the officer said. Special Judge (NDPS) Sudhir Kumar Sihohi of the Patiala House Court in Delhi had earlier issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against Basoiya following a series of cocaine seizures.

On October 1, 562 kg of cocaine was seized in Mahipalpur, South Delhi. Then, on October 10, 208 kg of cocaine was recovered from a shop in Ramesh Nagar, West Delhi. The third seizure was done on October 13, when Special Cell sleuths and the Gujarat Police recovered 518 kg of cocaine worth Rs 5,000 crore in the international market during a raid at a firm called Aavkar Drugs in Gujarat's Ankleshwar. Five people were arrested, including three of the company's listed directors — Ashwin Keshubhai Ramani, Brijesh Kothia and Vijay Keshavlal Bhesania. Aavkar Drugs, which claims to manufacture chemical products on its website, was incorporated on September 23, 2016. The other two men arrested were Mayur, an employee of a fake company named Pharma Solutions Services, and middleman Amit Masuria, who allegedly aided the meeting between representatives of the two firms. During the October 1 raid, Delhi-based henchman Tushar Goyal was arrested along with three others. The Ramesh Nagar bust



The Patiala House Court in Delhi had earlier issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against Dubai-based Virendra Basoiya.

followed this. According to the Special Cell, 1,289 kg of cocaine and 40 kg of hydroponic Thailand marijuana, worth Rs 13,000 crore, have been recovered in this case so far. The police said it was all part of a consignment that the cartel operated by Basoiya allegedly smuggled in. "The drugs came to India at multiple locations from South America via Dubai. They were to arrive at Aavkar in multiple consignments by road to be refined and processed. Then they were transported as medicine packages of Pharma Solutions Services again via road to Delhi-NCR," a police officer said.

"During the investigation, it was found that the drugs belonged to Pharma Solutions Services and came from Aavkar Drugs," the officer said. The Special Cell team led by DCP Amit Kaushik has so far made 12 arrests in the case, including Goyal. Six lookout circulars have been issued, including one Basoiya. "Aavkar was involved with the Dubai cartel and Basoiya. Their communication channels are being investigated," the officer said.

Sambhal administration acts against Shahi Jama Masjid head's family members



GNS News Agency, April 10

The local administration in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal on Tuesday acted against five members of Shahi Jama Masjid managing committee president Zafar Ali's family by booking them under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) sections related to imposing measures to prevent the breach of peace or disturbance of public tranquillity.

According to the police, Ali's son Haider Ali, brothers Tahir Ali and Qamar Hasan, and nephews Mohammed Danish and Mohammed Mujib — all practising lawyers at

the local Chandausi court — were "bound down" with a surety of Rs 1 lakh each in case of breach of peace under BNSS sections 126 (security for keeping peace in other cases) and 135 (inquiry as to truth of information). This would mean that if the men were found to be involved in any verbal or physical act that could lead to breach of peace, they would be liable to pay Rs 1 lakh to the court. Anuj Tomar, the in-charge of Sambhal Kotwali police station, confirmed the development.

"The decision has been taken in a bid to ensure peace in the town in the wake of the Eid and Navratri festivals," Vandana Mishra, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Sambhal district, said. Ali is in jail after being arrested on March 23 for his alleged role in the violence that broke out in Sambhal in November last year following a court-ordered second survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid to ascertain if a temple existed where the mosque is currently located. Four people died, and several others were injured in the violence. Meanwhile, members of the Sambhal District Bar Association have decided that none of them will enter the court premises till Ali is freed. "We will continue our agitation till the exploitation of our respected leader and advocate Zafar Ali and his family by the police and local administration continues," Mohammed Shahid, a lawyer, said.

As security for Ram Navami tightens, 1 leaves for Bengal police cancelled till April 9

GNS News Agency, April 10

As Bengal police beef up security for the upcoming Ram Navami celebrations, the West Bengal Police have cancelled all leaves for its personnel across the state until April 9. An order signed by the Additional Director General of Law and Order came into effect immediately on Wednesday. Sources said that the move was made by police keeping in mind the state's "history of sporadic violence and communal tension". Sources within the police department also indicated that intelligence inputs played a role in the decision. Circulated to all Superintendents of Police (SPs) and Commissioners of Police (CPs) in the state, the order explicitly states leaves will be granted only in cases of an extreme emergency.

Ram Navami, which celebrates the birth of Lord Rama, is a significant festival marked by processions, religious gatherings, and displays of devotion. However, in recent years, West Bengal has witnessed incidents of clashes, stone-pelting, and disturbances between communities during these processions in certain pockets of the state. These incidents have often resulted in property damage and injuries, prompting the police to implement heightened security measures during subsequent festivals. "The cancellation of leaves will mean that a significantly larger number of police personnel will be on duty during the Ram Navami period. This will allow for increased patrolling in sensitive areas,



stricter monitoring of processions, and a quicker response to any potential incidents," said a senior police official. Police sources have confirmed that elaborate security arrangements are being put in place, including the deployment of additional forces, setting up of barricades, and the use of CCTV surveillance in key locations. "Our priority is the safety and security of all citizens," said a senior police official on condition of anonymity. "Given the past incidents, we cannot afford to be complacent. This temporary measure is essential to prevent any untoward incidents." "Emphasis is being placed on maintaining communal amity and preventing any actions or rhetoric that could incite tensions," said another official.

Trying to book Air India flight, former Union transport ministry official duped of 1.22 lakh

GNS News Agency, April 10

A former Union transport ministry official from Gurugram allegedly lost Rs 1.22 in a cyber scam while looking to book an Air India flight, and the city cybercrime police registered an FIR in the matter on March 28. According to the complaint, the fraud occurred around noon on February 27. Rajender Indoria, who retired in 2011 as director general (road development) and special secretary in the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, said he tried to contact an Air India helpline number. As per the complaint, a man posing as a representative of the airline attended the call. According to the complaint, the man on the other side sounded genuine as he had details about Indoria's frequent flyer membership (Maharaja Club). He allegedly asked Indoria to share his screen and complete certain forms with credit card details.

Indoria alleged that the conversation was then redirected to a WhatsApp number, and he received a message from HDFC Bank stating that his credit card had been charged Rs 1,21,999. Indoria said he received vague and



evasive responses when he confronted the man on the phone. He promptly reported the incident to his bank, which then blocked his credit card to prevent any further transactions. The Gurugram cybercrime police registered the FIR under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Section 318(4) [cheating]. The police said an investigation is going on in the case.

Haryana human rights panel flays Gurgaon civic body for inaction against 54 'unsafe' buildings; top officials summoned

GNS News Agency, April 10

The Haryana Human Rights Commission (HHRC) strongly criticised the Gurugram Municipal Corporation (MCG) for inaction in connection with 54 buildings declared unsafe in the city. The panel has summoned the municipal commissioner and chief engineer to appear in person at the next hearing and provide a detailed explanation. The panel led by HHRC chairperson Justice Lalit Batra, along with members Kuldeep Jain and Deep Bhatia, expressed serious concerns over the municipal body's efficiency. The Commission has ordered chief engineer Manoj Yadav to submit a comprehensive report on the current status of the 54 unsafe buildings and on the pending inspections of 15 structures at the next hearing.

The issue of unsafe buildings in Gurgaon gained attention after a section of a high-rise at Chintels Paradiso Society collapsed on February 10, 2022, killing two women. The case was handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which has since filed two chargesheets, naming 11 people as accused. The panel's order read: "...authorities of Municipal Corporation, Gurugram, are least interested in taking substantive action against defaulters concerning dangerous structures numbering fifty-four (54), as identified till date. It is pertinent to mention that out of total one hundred and eighty-three (183) dangerous structures as identified by M/s Yashi Consultancy Services Pvt Ltd, fifteen (15) buildings are yet to be visited/inspected by the Executive Engineers of Municipal Corporation, Gurugram."

The order stated, "...if the Municipal Authorities take more than five to six years to initiate action against violators, particularly concerning dangerous structures, it may be construed as a compromise on the part of the Municipal Corporation, Gurugram, thereby, jeopardizing public safety. The residents of these declared dangerous structures bear the brunt of this inaction. A glaring example of such negli-



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gence occurred on February 10, 2022, when the roof of a multi-storey building, namely Chintel Paradiso, Society in Gurugram, collapsed. This incident starkly highlights the gross inaction and negligence." An HHRC official said, "According to the reports submitted to the Commission, the authorities had identified 183 dangerous buildings, out of which 152 were inspected. Initially, 80 buildings were deemed hazardous, but the latest report lists only 54 unsafe structures. Additionally, 15 buildings remain uninspected, raising concerns over MCG's lax approach to public safety." HHRC Public Relations Officer Dr Puneet Arora said the Commission has issued a stern warning to the civic body, stating that failure to act promptly will be considered a direct threat to public safety. "The next hearing is scheduled for May 20. The Commission has made it clear that any further negligence will not be tolerated," he said.

‘Continue voluntary service, we will seek legal recourse’: Mamata to West Bengal teachers who lost jobs after Supreme Court order



GNS News Agency, April 10

Amidst a charged atmosphere at Netaji Indoor Stadium, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee assured teachers facing potential job losses that their livelihoods were “secure”, urging them to continue providing “voluntary service” while the government sought legal recourse. “For as long as I am alive, I will not let anyone snatch the jobs of eligible candidates,” she pledged on Monday, as her administration prepares to challenge a recent Supreme Court verdict that upheld the invalidation of 25,753 teacher appointments over irregularities in the recruitment process by the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC). “I know how to fight challenges. This is not the court’s fault but of those who did politics with the teachers,” said Banerjee.

The Chief Minister announced a legal team, including prominent Supreme Court lawyers Kapil Sibal, Kalyan Banerjee, Prashant Bhushan, and Abhishek Manu Singhvi, to fight the teachers’ case. “Who was our lawyer? Abhishek Manu Singhvi. Who are we taking this time? Kapil Sibal, Kalyan Banerjee, Prashant Bhushan, Singhvi,” she said. While affirming that her government is “bound by the ruling of the SC,” Banerjee emphasised the need to “explore all possible legal avenues to provide justice to those who have been affected.” She announced plans to “first seek clarification from the apex court” regarding the eligibility of the teachers.

Addressing concerns about the immediate future of the working teachers and non-teaching staff, Banerjee questioned, “Those who are currently working, what will they do today?” following the Supreme Court’s directive to complete

recruitment through a new process in the next three months. “The SC said to complete recruitment through a new process, but we have to first clear who will run the school after all the teachers lose their jobs,” she said. The Chief Minister mentioned a swift response from her administration, saying, “I have had a detailed meeting with the Chief Secretary within two and a half hours after the verdict and we sent a letter to the commission (WBSSC).”

She alleged a “conspiracy to destroy the education system of West Bengal” and questioned the basis for labeling all teachers as “corrupt, tainted and incompetent.” “The Supreme Court did not clarify who is tainted and who is genuine,” she said. Banerjee also outlined her contingency plans. “I am also keeping future things in mind. What if the Supreme Court says those who are in jobs can’t continue, then what... let good sense prevail. Those who are eligible and genuine, their job security is the government’s responsibility. I will follow the SC verdict. If someone shuts a door, there are always options and gaps. Plans A, B, C, D, and E are ready,” she asserted. She reassured the teachers that their jobs were currently secure. “No one has terminated your job till date. You continue to work,” she said, suggesting a voluntary continuation of their duties while the legal process unfolds. “You all can always voluntarily go and continue. If they say no you cannot, then I can request the Education department.” Responding to objections within the Netaji Stadium from students during her speech regarding “voluntary service,” Banerjee clarified, “I am just trying to use the court’s language. We are submitting a review petition; until there is clarity, you can always continue work.”

Accusing certain entities of specifically targeting West Bengal, she drew a comparison with allegations against corruption in the NEET examination. “There were a lot of allegations against NEET but it was not cancelled, only Bengal is being targeted. You cannot deny that you all fear Bengal’s talent,” Banerjee said. “Do not snatch the bread and butter of a family in the process of targetting my government.” “In Tripura, 10,000 jobs were cancelled. The BJP said that when they would come to power, they would get it back... they did not, but in fact physically attacked those who tried to protest,” she said. Banerjee said that she would first try to secure jobs for the “genuine teachers” and then review the evidence against the accused tainted teachers. “If the evidence is (factual), we cannot help, but if we find any loopholes, we will look into it.”

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'Traitor' jibe case: Stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra moves Bombay HC against FIR

GNS News Agency, April 10

Mumbai: Stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra has approached the Bombay High Court, seeking to quash an FIR lodged against him by the city police for allegedly passing a “traitor” jibe at Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. Kamra moved the high court on April 5. His plea has claimed the complaints against him were violative of his fundamental rights of freedom of speech and expression, right to practice any profession and business and right to life and liberty guaranteed under the Constitution of India. The plea, filed through advocate Meenaz Kakalia, is likely to come up for hearing before a bench headed by Justice Sarang Kotwal on April 21. Kamra last month got interim transit anticipatory bail from the Madras High Court in the case against him. He is a permanent resident of Tamil Nadu. The comedian has failed to appear before the Mumbai police for questioning despite three summons issued to him. During a show, Kamra had taunted Shinde, without taking his name, using a modified version of a Hindi song from the film “Dil To Pagal Hai” where he called him a “gaddar”



(traitor). The comedian went on to joke about how Shinde rebelled against Uddhav Thackeray. Following a complaint by Shiv Sena MLA Murji Patel, the police here registered the FIR against Kamra under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections 353(1)(b) (statements conducing to public mischief) and 356(2) (defamation).

Indonesia cutting world’s biggest rainforest for biofuel



GNS News Agency, April 10

Jakarta: Indonesia plans to clear forests about the size of Belgium to produce sugarcane-derived bioethanol, rice and other food crops, potentially displacing Indigenous groups who rely on the land to survive. Local communities say they’re already experiencing harm from the government-backed project, which environmental watchdogs say is the largest current planned deforestation operation in the world. A vast tropical archipelago stretching across the equator, Indonesia is home to the world’s third-largest rainforest, home to many endangered species of wildlife and plants, including orangutans, elephants and giant forest flowers. Some live nowhere else.

Indonesia has been building food estates, massive plantations designed to improve the country’s food security for decades, with varying level of success. The concept was revived by former President Joko Widodo during his 2014- 2024 administration. The current president, Prabowo Subianto, has expanded such projects to include crops to produce bioethanol, a renewable fuel made from plants like sugar cane or corn, in pursuit of Indonesia’s ambition to improve its energy mix and develop more renewable sources. “I am confident that within four to five years at the latest, we will achieve food self-sufficiency,” Prabowo said in October 2024. “We must be self-sufficient in energy and we have the capacity to achieve this.”

Biofuels, such as bioethanol, play an important role in decarbonising transport by providing a low-carbon solution for sectors that heavily rely on fossil fuels such as trucking, shipping and aviation, according to the International Energy Agency. But the agency also cautions expansion of biofuel should have minimal impact on land-use, food and other environmental factors in order to be developed sustainably. That’s of particular concern in Indonesia, where more than 74 million hectares of Indonesian rainforest — an area twice the size of Germany — have been logged, burned or de-

graded for development of palm oil, paper and rubber plantations, nickel mining and other commodities since 1950, according to Global Forest Watch. Indonesia has vast potential for bioethanol production due to its extensive agricultural land but currently lacks sustainable feedstocks, like sugarcane and cassava. A previous attempt to introduce bioethanol-blended fuel in 2007 was discontinued a few years later due to a lack of feedstock supply. Since then, the government has accelerated work on its food and energy estate mega-project, which spans 4.3 million hectares (about 10.6 million acres) on the islands of Papua and Kalimantan. Experts say the combined size of the numerous project sites makes the mega-project the largest current deforestation project in the world. The largest site, called the Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate, will cover more than 3 million hectares in the far-eastern region of Papua, according to the international environmental organisation Mighty Earth. Overlapping with the Trans-Fly ecoregion, it’s home to critically endangered and endemic mammals, birds and turtles and to several Indigenous groups who rely on traditional ways of living. “Imagine every piece of vegetation in that area being completely cleared ... having all the trees and the wildlife erased from the landscape and replaced with a monoculture,” said Glenn Horowitz, CEO of Mighty Earth.

“It’s creating a zone of death in one of the most vibrant spots on Earth.” An unpublished government feasibility assessment estimates that carbon dioxide emissions from clearing land for the project will total 315 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent. An independent assessment by the Indonesia-based think tank Center of Economic and Law Studies estimated double that. Deforestation contributes to erosion, damages biodiverse areas, threatens wildlife and humans who rely on the forest and intensifies disasters from extreme weather. Hashim Djojohadikusumo, Subianto’s brother and envoy for energy and the environment, said the government will reforest 6.5 million hectares of degraded and deforested land. “Thus, the food estate programme continues while we mitigate the possible negative impacts with new programmes, one of which is reforestation,” he said. But experts warn that reforestation, while essential, cannot match the ecological benefits of old-growth ecosystems, which store vast amounts of carbon in their soils and biomass, regulate water cycles and support biodiversity. Local communities in Papua that rely on the area for hunting, fishing and other aspects of their cultural identity say their basic needs have been harmed by the projects. Environmental watch groups say the projects’ development will impact generations of Indigenous groups for generations to come. AP

Google to support 20 Indian startups in AI-focused app accelerator programme

GNS News Agency, April 10

New Delhi: Tech giant Google on Monday announced that it is all set to empower 20 Indian startups through the second edition of its ‘Google for Startups Accelerator: Apps’ programme. The initiative, supported by Google Play, is designed to help app-based startups in India make the most of artificial intelligence (AI) and scale their products effectively. The programme is being run in collaboration with the MeitY Startup Hub, whose support, Google said, has played a key role in extending the reach and impact of the initiative. In a statement, Google said India’s startup and developer ecosystem is a ‘hotbed of innovation’ and the company is proud to support its growth.

With the accelerator, the US-based tech major aims to equip emerging app startups with cutting-edge AI tools, expert guidance, and mentorship from its top engineers and researchers. The programme will run for three months and is open to Indian startups that are already using AI or are looking to integrate AI into their apps. “To be eligible, startups must have a published app on the Play Store, be incorporated in India, and be funded between Seed and Series-A stage,” said Paul Ravindranath, Programme Manager, Google for Startups Accelerator India. The second cohort will focus heavily on AI, recognising its growing importance in the future of app development. Through personalised mentorship and collaboration with Google experts, these



startups will receive support to improve their AI capabilities, enhance user experience, strengthen security, and accelerate user growth. Google highlighted that the first cohort of 20 startups saw major progress in technology, design, and engagement, thanks to hands-on mentorship and access to Google’s resources.

The upcoming cohort will also benefit from similar support, including custom reports to help them perform better on Google Play. Applications are open until May 15 and the programme will begin in July with a week-long bootcamp. During the application period, interested startups can also attend weekly virtual open forums every Thursday to learn more and ask questions, according to the company.

BMC app to ensure proper disposal of construction, demolition debris

GNS News Agency, April 10

Amid the union government unveiling the new Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2025, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is eyeing to streamline the process of tracking the Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste generated across Mumbai, with the launch of a new application which will trace the journey of the debris from the source to the approved dumpsite. Aimed at curbing unauthorised C&D dumping in the city, the application is expected to be developed this month. Earlier this week, the central government notified the Environment (Construction and Demolition) Waste Management Rules, 2025 — superseding 2016 rules — which lays down norms for all activities pertaining to construction, demolition, remodeling, renovation and repair of any structure. Slated to be enforced from April 1, 2026, the rules have also called the producers of bulk C&D waste to prepare a waste management plan (WMP) with respect to each project, assessing the quantum of waste from all streams in a construction, re-construction and demolition project and submit it to the local authority for approval. According to senior BMC officials, Mumbai is the only city in India that mandates waste management plans (WMP) at the project approval stage. As per the norms, the developer is expected to submit their WMP — comprising details of the expected debris to be generated at their construction site — with BMC’s development planning department, who issue approvals. Following this, the agencies are allocated sites for discarding the approved quantum of debris. However, according to senior officials, the civic body is facing challenges in tracing whether the approved quantity of debris generated is actually dumped on the allocated site, with many resorting to unauthorised dumping in low lying areas as well as protected spaces such as mangroves.

Seeking to address this, the BMC is developing a new application, which will track the total amount of waste generated and trace whether they are discarded at the approved dumpsite. “The developer or any agency concerned undertaking constructions are issued a QR code, after they are given permissions to their waste management plans. Once this application is launched, the producer of C&D waste can scan this QR code. On the app, they will be asked to provide details of their total target of C&D waste, the site where



the debris will be dumped as well as mention the vehicle number through which this waste will be transported,” said an official. “They will then be given a time bracket for example, of two hours, within which they will have to discard the waste on the designated site. If a delay is observed in reaching the location, they will be asked to explain the reasons. All information about quantity approvals, routes, etc., will be saved on the BMC files,” the official added. The application is in the final stages of development, and is likely to be launched within the next two weeks, the official said.

Kiran Dighavkar, deputy municipal commissioner (SWM), told The Indian Express that the civic body is also eyeing to develop a new C&D processing plant at Deonar. The proposed plant is pegged to treat 1,000 metric tonnes of waste daily, with the civic body slated to float tenders for the project soon.

At present, Mumbai generates 8,500 metric tonnes of waste everyday, in what has left the city reeling under the rising challenge of unauthorised debris dumping as well as dust from the uncovered, discarded C&D waste. To tackle the mounting heap of debris, the BMC commissioned two new C&D processing plants in Mumbai last year. Situated in Dahisar and Shilphata, these plants can collectively cater to 1,200 metric tonnes of C&D waste. Even so, the civic body is able to treat a mere 10 per cent of its daily C&D waste. “Most of the C&D waste is dumped by the builders outside the city. Our goal is to eventually treat all the C&D waste generated within the city. In accordance with the new rules on the C&D waste.

Why was the validity of Uttar Pradesh madrasa law upheld by the Supreme Court?



The story so far: The Supreme Court on Tuesday (November 5, 2024) upheld the constitutional validity of the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 (2004 Act) except for its provisions allowing the Board to award higher degrees like Kamil (under-graduate studies) and Fazil (post-graduate studies). A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud opined that granting these degrees contravened the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 (UGC Act) rendering it unconstitutional. Accordingly, the top court set aside the Allahabad High Court’s decision, which had deemed the 2004 Act to be in breach of the principles of secularism.

How do madrasas operate?The Arabic word “madarsa” denotes an educational institution. The madrasa system has been in existence since the era of the Delhi Sultanate, receiving patronage from the Khilji and Tughlaq dynasties. Over time, it evolved into a distinct education system that provided both religious and secular learning. Notable figures such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the father of the Indian Renaissance, Rajendra Prasad, India’s first President, and the renowned writer Munshi Premchand are historically believed to have gained their foundational knowledge from madrasas and their teachers, known as maulvis.

The bulk of the funding for madrasas comes from the respective State governments. In 1993, the P.V. Narasimha Rao government recognised the necessity of integrating modern education into madrasas resulting in the implementation of the 2009 Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM).According to data presented by the Union government in Parliament on February 3, 2020, India has a total of 24,010 madrasas, with around 60% — approximately 14,400 — located in Uttar Pradesh. These include 11,621 recognised and 2,907 unrecognised madrasas. The 2004 Act was enacted to regulate these madrasas with respect to curriculum, standard of education, conduct of examinations, and qualifications for teaching. It also established the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education, predominantly comprising members from the Muslim community. Under Section 9 of the Act, the Board is responsible for preparing course material, granting degrees, and conducting examinations.

What was the case?

A single judge of the Allahabad High Court on October 23, 2019, while hearing a petition filed by Mohammed Javed, expressed doubt regarding the validity of the 2004 Act. Mr. Javed was appointed as a part-time assistant teacher in 2011 for the primary section of Madarsa Nisarul Uloom Shahzadpur, Akbarpur Post Office, District Ambedkar Nagar on a fixed salary of ₹4,000 per month, subject to an 8% annual increment. He approached the High Court contending that he should be paid a salary equivalent to regular teachers and that appointments to madrasas should instead be regulated by the State government, the Madarsa Shiksha Parishad and the district minority welfare officer.While referring the matter to a larger Bench, the judge observed, “With a secular Constitution in India, can persons of a particular religion be appointed or nominated in a board for education purposes or should it be persons belonging to any religion, who are exponent in the fields for the purposes of which the board is constituted...?”.Meanwhile, lawyer Anshuman Singh Rathore filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition in the High Court challenging the validity of the 2004 Act on the ground that it violated secularism as well as Articles 14 (equality before law), 15 (which forbids discrimination) and 21-A (right to education) of the Constitution. The larger Bench accordingly framed the question of law for adjudication as — “Whether the provisions of the Madarsa Act stand the test of secularism, which forms a part of the basic structure of the Constitution of India?” The impugned verdict was jointly pronounced on all such pleas.

Why was the law struck down by the High Court?

After examining the curriculum taught in the madrasas, a Bench comprising Justices Subhash Vidyarthi and Vivek Chaudhary observed that the education imparted in these institutions is “neither quality nor universal in nature” and that “the State has no power to create a Board for religious education or to establish a Board for school education only for a particular religion and philosophy associated with it.” It

thus concluded that the 2004 Act violated secularism and that the government could not “discriminate” by imparting education based on religious affiliation.The judges further noted that while “Islamic studies” is mandatory in all madrasas, essential modern subjects such as English, mathematics, science, and social sciences are either excluded or made optional. This, they reasoned, undermines the State’s constitutional obligation under Article 21A to ensure “quality” education for all children aged six to fourteen. Highlighting that “higher education” is a field reserved under Entry 66 of the Union List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, the High Court further asserted that the State government lacks the competence to legislate on such matters. It accordingly ordered that students enrolled in madrasas be promptly accommodated in regular schools recognised by the State government.

What was NCPCR’s response?

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), the top child rights protection body in the country, told the top court that madrasas are “unsuitable or unfit” places for children to receive “proper education”. It also flagged concerns related to the curriculum, teachers’ eligibility, opaque funding, and violation of land laws to assert that such institutions fail to provide a “holistic environment” to children.In June, the child rights body issued a series of directives urging the Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories to withdraw recognition of government-aided madrasas that do not comply with the Right to Education Act, 2005. Subsequently, the Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh directed district collectors to examine madrasas that had enrolled non-Muslim students and ensure their immediate transfer to recognised schools. On August 28, the Tripura government issued a similar directive.The Jamiat Ulema-I-Hind, an organisation of Muslim clerics, consequently challenged these directives in the Supreme Court contending that such measures encroached upon the rights of religious minorities to establish and manage their educational institutions under Article 30 of the Constitution. Accordingly, the court directed the concerned authorities to refrain from implementing these directives until the matter was conclusively adjudicated upon.

What did the Supreme Court finally decide?Dismissing the High Court’s finding that the 2004 Act violated secularism, the Chief Justice underscored that any such purported infraction should be traced to an express provision of the Constitution and cannot simply be invalidated by making a blanket statement that it contravened the Basic Structure. “The reason is that concepts such as democracy, federalism, and secularism are undefined concepts. Allowing courts to strike down legislation for violation of such concepts will introduce an element of uncertainty in our constitutional adjudication,” he reasoned.The court further opined that the State must strike a delicate balance between maintaining quality education and respecting the autonomy of minority education institutions. It underscored that the 2004 Act ought to be construed to be in consonance with Article 21A “to ensure that religious minority institutions impart secular education of a requisite standard without destroying the minority character”. However, the Chief Justice cautioned that in accordance with Article 28(3) of the Constitution, a student attending a minority institution recognised by the State or receiving aid out of public funds should not be compelled to take part in religious instruction or forced to attend religious worship.The unanimous verdict further noted that while madrasas offer religious instruction, their primary objective is to impart education thereby bringing them within the fold of Entry 25 of the Concurrent List.

“The mere fact that the education sought to be regulated includes some religious teaching or instruction does not push a legislation outside the legislative competence of a State,” the judges asserted.The court, however, invalidated provisions of the 2024 Act that allowed the issuance of higher educational degrees, emphasising that such degrees are exclusively regulated by the UGC Act and thus lie beyond the legislative competence of the State legislature. Nonetheless, it clarified that this does not necessitate the annulment of the entire statute, as doing so would be akin to “throwing the baby out with the bathwater.”

Bridging gaps, building resilience

World Health Day, celebrated on April 7, serves as a global call to action for accessible and fair healthcare. The theme for 2025, ‘Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures’, emphasises the critical role of maternal and newborn health, a particularly pertinent issue for India, which has a population exceeding 1.4 billion. India has made notable progress through programmes such as Ayushman Bharat, especially the Pradhan Mantri-Jan Arogya Yojana, which offers financial protection to more than 500 million beneficiaries. Health and Wellness Centres are designed to improve primary care, yet challenges such as staff shortages, inadequate diagnostic facilities, and irregular medicine supplies continue to exist. Although 70% of the population resides in rural areas, 35-40% of healthcare infrastructure is located there. To address disparities, India needs to invest more in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and encourage medical professionals to work in underserved regions. Policy support, enhanced infrastructure, and digital innovations like telemedicine are crucial for decentralising healthcare services.

India faces a dual burden of persistent infectious diseases and rising non-communicable diseases, which now account for over 65% of all deaths. Sedentary lifestyles, poor diets, and tobacco use are driving conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. The 2024 International Diabetes Federation reported 101 million Indians with diabetes. Air pollution accounted for 1.6 million deaths in 2019, according to The Lancet, further underscoring the urgency of environmental health measures. According to the National Family Health Survey-5, 35% of children under five are stunted, and 57% of women aged 15-49 are anemic. These indicators reflect broader socioeconomic challenges — poverty, lack of education, poor sanitation, and gender inequality. Government efforts such as Poshan Abhiyaan and the Integrated Child Development Services target malnutrition but require stronger data tracking, community engagement, and multi-sectoral coordination to be truly effective. While there has been progress, public health funding is still low. In the 2025–26 Union Budget, ₹99,858.56 crore was allocated to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, accounting for approximately 1.97% of the total Union Budget. Moreover, high out-of-pocket spending continues to push 55 million Indians into poverty each year. A shift towards preventive healthcare — through screenings, school-based health programmes, and public health campaigns — is essential.

India is experiencing significant progress in the realm of digital health. Programmes such as the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission and eSanjeevani have collectively facilitated over 10 crore teleconsultations. Nonetheless, the advantages of digital healthcare are not evenly spread. A mere 37% of rural households have Internet connectivity, and numerous patients and healthcare workers lack the digital skills



necessary to effectively use telehealth services. If this digital divide is not addressed, technology could exacerbate healthcare disparities. Additionally, concerns about cybersecurity and the lack of strong data privacy laws might undermine public confidence. To fully realise the potential of digital health, India needs to invest in rural Internet infrastructure, provide training for front line workers, and implement comprehensive data protection regulations. Emerging technologies such as AI diagnostics, wearables, and remote monitoring hold transformative promise for early detection and disease management. These innovations must be adopted in a responsible and inclusive manner, ensuring that they benefit all communities and not just those in urban areas with tech-savvy populations.India’s health objectives are in line with Sustainable Development Goal 3, which emphasises good health and well being. Developed nations focus on public health infrastructure, universal insurance, and early childhood interventions — areas where India needs to make rapid progress. By capitalising on its youthful population, digital infrastructure, and pharmaceutical sector, India has the potential to emerge as a global health leader. India’s G20 presidency in 2023 served as a platform to demonstrate leadership in vaccine equity, digital public goods, and health diplomacy. Aligning domestic initiatives with global frameworks such as the International Health Regulations and the Global Health Security Agenda will bolster pandemic preparedness and international collaboration. Mental health and climate resilience are equally pressing issues. The Tele-MANAS helpline and the National Action Plan on Climate Change and Human Health are commendable initiatives.However, a 2023 NIMHANS study revealed that 14% of Indians suffer from some form of mental disorder, underscoring the need for increased investment and awareness. India must perceive health not merely as a social obligation but as a strategic investment. A cohesive, inclusive, and well-funded health system — rooted in innovation, equity, and resilience — is essential for achieving developed nation status. Through coordinated efforts across government, civil society, and private sectors, India can fulfil its vision of ‘Health for All’.

Health and sanitation as the pillars of a healthy India

On this World Health Day (April 7), as nations reflect on the foundations of human well-being, India stands tall with a transformative lesson: health and sanitation are not separate pursuits, but are two sides of a coin. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has undertaken a sanitation and water revolution that has not only changed the way we live but also how we thrive.Rural missions that made a difference

The story of modern India cannot be told without acknowledging the contribution of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Grameen and the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). These programmes are not just about toilets and tap water alone. They represent a shift in the soul of the nation. These rural missions symbolise dignity, equity, and, above all, health.When the Prime Minister launched SBM from the ramparts of the Red Fort in 2014, he ignited a movement that has touched every Indian household, making it a people’s movement — a Jan Andolan that was anchored in behavioural change and inter-generational equity. By 2019, India had declared itself Self Open Defecation Free (ODF) and taken significant steps towards achieving SDG 6.2 (it focuses on achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030) and also ending open defecation, 11 years ahead of time.

The SBM has been a powerful public health intervention. A World Health Organization (WHO) report estimated from 2014 to 2019, through the sanitation mission, over three lakh diarrhoeal deaths were averted. The Gates Foundation reported in 2017 that there were 58% higher cases of wasting among children in non ODF areas. A UNICEF study (2017) found that 93% of women felt safer after getting a toilet at home and ODF families saved ₹50,000 annually in health-care costs, ensuring higher savings. The SBM has improved environmental outcomes. Groundwater contamination in ODF villages is 12.7 times less



The story of modern India is connected to each link in the sanitation chain that results in the healthier and safer society

likely, ensuring long-term health resilience in rural communities. A (2024) Nature study estimated that 60,000 to 70,000 child deaths are prevented every year due to improved sanitation access. These outcomes are not incidental, they are the result of sustained political commitment, inter-ministerial coordination, and community ownership.

In 2019, the Jal Jeevan Mission was launched to ensure every rural household receives clean drinking water through a tap connection. This is more than infrastructure. It is an investment in human potential with far-reaching socio-economic impact. Research by Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Kremer has shown that nearly 30% infant deaths can be reduced if safe water is made available to families for drinking and 1.36 lakh child deaths (under five years) can be prevented with universal tap coverage. WHO estimates suggest that the JJM could avert four lakh diarrhoeal deaths with safe drinking water supply at home. And, 5.5 crore hours are saved every day, mostly by women, who had earlier spent time fetching water. State Bank of India research finds that the availability of water within premises led to increased participation by women in agriculture and allied activities.The Sujal and Swachh Gaon campaign, launched to integrate water, sanitation, and hygiene at the village level, has further galvanised communities. Thousands of villages have already been declared

Swachh Sujal, which is an important marker of holistic public health transformation. Improved water and sanitation systems are also leading to reduced out-of-pocket expenditure for rural households, reinforcing the preventive health-care model.Sanitation and water are the first line of defence in public health. They are the invisible shield that protects communities from disease, women from indignity, and children from lost opportunity. A healthy nation is a productive nation. A clean nation is a resilient one.Today, more than 80% of India’s rural households have tap water connections. Over 96% villages have been declared as ODF Plus, more than 5.07 lakh villages have solid waste management systems, and 5.23 lakh villages have liquid waste management systems in place.Women are not just beneficiaries, they are also water testers, sanitation entrepreneurs, and local leaders. Over 2.48 million women have been trained to test water quality, and women-led Self-Help Groups are managing sanitation assets, recycling centres, and even sanitary napkin production. This is the vision of a Viksit Bharat where no child misses school because of a lack of water, no woman walks miles with a pot on her head, and no family loses a loved one to preventable illness.The journey to health is the journey to dignity. A toilet brings privacy. Clean water brings opportunity. Waste management protects the environment. Each

link in the sanitation chain connects directly to a healthier, safer society. The lessons we have learnt highlight the importance of inter-ministerial collaboration which is non-negotiable.

Since, health is not the concern of one Ministry alone, it is the outcome of converged action across water, sanitation, nutrition, education, and rural development. We must recognise that India’s model is not insular, it is global. Our innovations, community-led models, and use of technology whether through real-time dashboards, Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (or GOBARdhan) biogas plants, or plastic waste management units are blueprints for the world, especially the Global South. Lastly, we must continue to work through a mutual understanding that every rupee invested in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) yields manifold returns in health, productivity, gender equity, and environmental sustainability.India is committed towards progressing forward on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and this World Health Day, we need to acknowledge and remember that good health begins not in hospitals, but in homes with access to clean water, safe sanitation, and a shared resolve. As we move forward, India remains committed to sharing its journey, collaborating globally, and co-creating a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient world.

Blood-based tests emerge as key tools for early Alzheimer’s detection

New Delhi: While early detection of Alzheimer’s disease is crucial for better outcomes, a report on Wednesday said that blood-based tests are emerging as valuable tools.The report by GlobalData, a data and analytics company, offers accessible alternatives to PET scans and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) analysis.

Currently, Alzheimer’s affects over 55 million people globally, and cases are projected to triple by 2050.Advances in diagnostic methods that can make diagnosis faster, less invasive, and more affordable can help in the timely intervention of the neurodegenerative disease. However, the report said questions remain about their real-world impact on patient outcomes.

Ashley Clarke, Senior Medical Analyst at GlobalData said that blood-based biomarker tests that are cost-effective and efficient in early assessment, have taken a major leap forward in diagnostics with it being used for conditions like heart attacks.For Alzheimer’s disease, reliable and accessible testing could lead to earlier detection, giving patients more time to pursue interventions and lifestyle



changes,” Clarke said.According to GlobalData’s Pipeline Products Database, more than 150 in vitro diagnostic tests for Alzheimer’s disease are currently in development. However, the USFDA has yet to grant full approval to blood-based Alzheimer’s tests.”

Fatty Liver - a silent signal from the body



Fatty liver disease is becoming one of the most common health issues in today's fast-paced world. Once considered a concern mostly for older adults or individuals who consume alcohol excessively, fatty liver is now being diagnosed in younger people including teenagers and individuals in their 20s and 30s. Often, there are no warning signs in the early stages, making it a silent condition that can go unnoticed until it becomes more serious.

What is Fatty Liver Disease?

Fatty liver occurs when too much fat builds up in the liver. Normally, a small amount of fat in the liver is normal. But when fat makes up more than 5% to 10% of the liver's weight, it starts to affect its function. There are two main types of fatty liver disease -- Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD), that is not related to alcohol and is mainly caused by poor diet, obesity, and lack of exercise and alcoholic fatty liver disease that occurs due to excessive alcohol intake over time.NAFLD is now the most common form, especially due to the rise in unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles, and increasing rates of obesity.

Who is at risk?

Fatty liver can affect anyone, but certain factors can raise the risk significantly. People who are overweight or obese are more likely to develop this condition, especially if they consume a diet high in sugar, processed foods, or unhealthy fats.A sedentary lifestyle such as sitting for long hours with less physical activity can also be a risk factor. Individuals with type 2 diabetes, prediabetes, high cholesterol, or elevated triglyceride levels are at greater risk. Additionally, those with a family history of liver disease should

be extra cautious, as genetics can also play a role in the development of fatty liver.What's concerning is that even young people with normal body weight can develop fatty liver if they follow an unhealthy lifestyle.Fatty liver usually doesn't cause any symptoms at first. As it gets worse, you might feel tired, have a heavy or full feeling on the right side of your belly, or notice weight gain that's hard to lose.

In some cases, the skin or eyes may turn yellow. Regular check-ups and simple tests like liver function tests or an ultrasound can help diagnose it early.

Can fatty liver be reversed?

Yes, in many cases fatty liver can be reversed, especially if caught early. The liver is a unique organ with the ability to heal itself—but only if we give it a chance.

Steps to a healthier liver

Taking care of your liver starts with simple lifestyle changes. Begin by improving your diet—cut down on sugar, refined carbs, and fried or processed foods. Instead, choose high-fiber options like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and go for healthy fats and lean proteins. Regular physical activity is key—try to get at least 30 minutes of exercise most days, including strength training. Maintaining a healthy weight is also important—even losing just 5% to 10% of your weight can help reduce liver fat. Avoid alcohol, as it can worsen fatty liver, even in small amounts. Lastly, managing conditions like diabetes, high cholesterol, and blood pressure with proper medical care can further protect your liver.

Why early action matters

If left unmanaged, fatty liver can lead to more serious conditions like non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), liver fibrosis, and eventually liver cirrhosis or even liver cancer. But with early detection and lifestyle changes, progression can be stopped—and even reversed.Fatty liver may be silent, but it's your body's way of warning you that something needs to change. Simple lifestyle choices like eating better, moving more, and cutting back on alcohol can go a long way in keeping your liver healthy.If you haven't had a check-up in a while or if you feel constantly tired or bloated, speak to your doctor. Taking care of your liver today means protecting your health for years to come.

Semaglutide reduces risk of cardiovascular events in patients with type 2 diabetes, finds study

Diabetes management shouldn't be focused narrowly on blood sugar levels, but must concurrently work at protecting cardiac and renal health too, states a recent study that found daily oral semaglutide (an anti-diabetic medication used for the treatment of type 2 diabetes and an anti-obesity medication used for long-term weight management) could cut the risk of heart attacks, strokes and cardiovascular death by 14%.In a phase three trial of people with diabetes, the study, called SOUL, tested Rybelsus - Novo Nordisk's diabetes drug administered in oral form - against a placebo, in trial participants already receiving standard medications.The study of this oral form of GLP-1 Receptor Agonists (GLP-1RAs) was a multicentre, international, randomised, double-blind, parallel-group, placebo-controlled, phase three cardiovascular outcomes trial, with 9,650 people enrolled. In India, there were 32 centres and 788 people enrolled.Semaglutide was initially approved in June 2021 for chronic weight management in those with obesity or overweight and at least one weight-related condition, including high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, or high cholesterol, in addition to diet and increased exercise.

The SOUL trial was initiated in 2019. The key objective of SOUL was to demonstrate that oral semaglutide lowers the risk of major adverse cardiovascular events (a composite endpoint consisting of cardiovascular death, non-fatal myocardial infarction and non-fatal stroke) compared to placebo, both added to standard of care in patients with type 2 diabetes and established Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD).A recent study from the Indian Council of Medical Research reveals that, in 2021, India had over 100 million people living with diabetes. The National Family Health Survey (2019-21) reported that nearly nearly 23% of women and 22.1% of men are overweight as per the BMI criterion. Additionally, in terms of abdominal obesity, 40% of women and 12% of men are abnormally obese in the country."The SOUL trial demonstrates statistically significant reductions in the primary composite endpoint of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE), encompassing myocardial infarction, stroke, or cardiovascular death, in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and established CVD and/or CKD. This data reinforces oral semaglutide's role as the first and only approved oral glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonist (GLP-1 RA) to achieve



a significant reduction in cardiovascular risk within this high-risk population. This achievement enhances the existing standards of care for managing both T2DM and CVD, offering patients an innovative and effective therapeutic intervention. The observed impact of oral semaglutide on cardiovascular outcomes underscores its potential to address a critical unmet need in cardiometabolic disease management," V. Mohan, chairman, Dr. Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre, said.

A.G. Unnikrishnan, CEO and chief of Endocrinology at the Chellaram Diabetes Institute, Pune added that the SOUL trial on oral semaglutide has shown that it can reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events (MACE), regardless of whether participants were already using sodium-glucose cotransporter-2 inhibitor (SGLT2i). He said that the benefits were consistent for everyone - those on SGLT2i and those without - during the trial."What is even better is that combining these two treatments was a safe approach, opening the door to a more comprehensive, all-rounded approach to managing type 2 diabetes. This breakthrough not only transforms care for people living with type 2 diabetes but also sets a new standard for scientific innovation," he said.

How teletherapy empowers patients with access and affordability

The advent of teletherapy has meant a compound metamorphosis for the paradigm of mental health. This trend has precipitated a discourse among mental health professionals and patients regarding the relative efficacy of teletherapy versus face-to-face psychotherapy. With the Indian government's Tele-MANAS scheme gaining increasing momentum and popularity, the delivery efficiency of teletherapy is being scrutinised even more than before. There is no doubt that there are a number of benefits that teletherapy brings, to enable access and reach more people than physically possible, advantages that seem particularly dear, after the pandemic. However, while acknowledging the reach, it is important to have a sense of the not-so-ameliorative effects as well.Technology-assisted therapy has made it possible for therapy to be delivered remotely aka teletherapy. This means that one does not have to drive down, or make the journey to the therapist's clinic, but can access therapy from the convenience of their home. Teletherapy can reach those individuals from underserved areas, and has been efficacious in catering to those who have mobility issues. Teletherapy also helps those with hectic schedules who may not find the time to travel to therapy sites or people with a phobia of new places, or those with social anxiety.

At the heart of the issue is this: a therapeutic relationship is an intricate, intimate one. The one receiving therapy is in a space of emotional vulnerability, to be able to reap fruits from the sessions. This means that the encounter with the therapist can go very well, or go south. It may take a few tries, before finding the therapist with whom you fit in well with a seamless working relationship. If someone in

Mumbai was to find the right therapist for themselves from Chennai, a lengthy commute or relocation is overcome with the ease teletherapy provides. The vulnerability in receiving therapy is sometimes compounded by an individual's apprehensions about being subject to shame or stigma. Although India has made strides in making mental health help more accessible and socially acceptable, there is still a long way to go in terms of getting rid of the stigma of consulting a doctor for mental health issues. Here, teletherapy allows the convenience of an added layer of anonymity, alleviating concerns about being seen accessing mental health services.There are definitely advantages. For instance, Karan, a 30-year-old doctor from Kerala, struggled with the stress of being in the frontline during the pandemic. He struggled with a diagnosis of depression, anxiety and work burn-out. He was able to make full and complete use of the Indian government's Tele-Manas online counselling scheme from the comfort of his home, he says. Another 35-year-old homemaker from Maharashtra who lost her 7-year daughter to COVID-19 was able to cope with the loss of her child with the help of this helpline, which came at the right time, providing her with a solution when she found it difficult to meet too many people.The traditional paradigm, the stalwart of mental health treatment for several decades now, has been face-to-face psychotherapy. This also calls for a conventional, stereotypical therapist couch, with the person getting help sitting or lying, speaking about what troubles them most. The benefits are many. To begin with, being face to face with your therapist enhances access and receipt of your therapist's personable, empathic energy output.

It is time to talk about harassmnet and the male victim



When we talk about sexual harassmnet, the image we generally think of is that of a woman fighting for justice in a system that is hostile towards her. Now, imagine a man walking into a police station to report that he is being harassed. He may be greeted with awkward laughter and dismissive comments such as "You're a man, can't you handle it?" This is the unacknowledged reality of many men who face abuse but whose plight is met with disbelief and ridicule. Where do they seek justice? What recourse does the law have for them?

Being the largest democracy, India is on the path toward progress and growth. But are we truly upholding the constitutional principles of justice, liberty and equality when addressing social issues? And do the laws that we have created to tackle these issues align with these ideals?

According to a recent study by the National Commission for Women, 3,000 cases of sexual assault on men were reported in India in 2022. These numbers represent real people, their real pain and a system that is failing them. Much to the dismay of Indian men, Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) does not include them as rape victims. The dominant discourse of the discussion is Section 63 of BNS which after the Navtej Singh Johar vs. Union of India (2018) still dealt with issues related to bestiality and sexual assault, irrespective of gender. The Section begins with the wordings, "A man is said to commit rape", ruling out all the possibilities of the woman committing the rape or the male being the victim of rape. The Section further focuses only on the instances where a woman is victim and no recourse has been paid to male victims of rape. With no mention of it in the new criminal laws, there is a huge gap when it comes to protecting men from sexual violence. This means that non-consensual sexual acts with men (sodomy) or animals (bestiality) are no longer considered criminal offences.

Moreover, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act 2013 does not include male or LGBTQ+ employees who may be subjected to workplace sexual harassment. There is no act or law protecting men from possible instances of domestic violence as well. How can we, as members of a civilised society, negate the possibility of similar instances happening to men?

It is not an undisclosed fact that Section 85 of the BNS has always been a subject of societal scrutiny and disregard. It refers to husband or relative of husband of woman

Sanitation and expanding rotavirus vaccination are key to combating diarrhoeal diseases in India: experts

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), diarrhoeal disease is the third-leading cause of death among children aged 1–59 months, with 4,43,832 global deaths under five and an additional 50,851 deaths in children aged 5–9 years annually. India bears a significant share of this burden, with 1.7 billion childhood cases each year, largely due to unsafe water and poor sanitation -- issues affecting 780 million people without safe drinking water and 2.5 billion lacking improved sanitation.Diarrhoea is also a leading cause of malnutrition, worsening children's immunity. In India, rotavirus and E. coli are major risk factors, leading to severe dehydration and life-threatening complications. Prevention efforts include rotavirus vaccination, ORS (oral rehydration solution) and zinc therapy, and initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which aim to improve sanitation and reduce waterborne diseases.

According to Vaikunth Ramesh, resident, Department of Paediatrics, RML Hospital, Delhi, India has among the highest incidence of diarrhoeal illnesses worldwide, with children under five experiencing an average of 2 to 2.3 episodes per year. This rate surpasses those seen in other low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where the incidence typically ranges between 1 and 1.7 episodes annually. "Over a five-year period, this means a child in India could experience up to 10 diarrheal episodes, and there is an urgent need for intervention," Dr. Ramesh said.Rotavirus accounts for approximately 10–20% of diarrhoeal illnesses in children and tends to be more severe than other viral diarrhoeas, often leading to hospital admissions.

There are notable regional variations in the prevalence of diarrhoea across India, the WHO says. southern India reports lower incidence rates of rotavirus-related diarrhoea, largely due to better implementation of sanitation and hygiene practices compared to northern regions. States such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan experience a higher diarrhoeal burden, primarily due to weaker sanitation infrastructure. While improved access to clean drinking water and increased hygiene awareness have helped reduce diarrhoeal cases in urban areas, rural regions continue to face significant challenges.Recognising symptoms , first step to prevention and treatment

Recognising early signs of dehydration is crucial, as symptoms such as lethargy and excessive thirst indicate worsening dehydration. Since the virus has a short incubation period of under 48 hours, parents should monitor symptoms and seek medical help if dehydration signs such as lethargy, irritability, and decreased urine output appear. While mild cases can be managed at home with oral rehydration solutions and adequate feeding, hospitalisation may be required for severe dehydration.

Deepa Hariharan, senior neonatologist, Chennai, emphasised the importance of hydration in managing rotavirus related diarrhoeal diseases. "Since antibiotics are ineffective against rotavirus, rapid hydration is the primary treatment to manage symptoms," she says.Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) is also an effective treatment for 90% of diarrhoea cases, yet only 50-60% of affected children in India receive ORT and zinc supplements. The use of zinc supplements has been shown to reduce the duration of diarrhoea by 25% and its severity by 30%, but awareness and consistent implementation remain a challenge, say doctors.Expanding rotavirus vaccine coverage: progress and challenges

The rotavirus vaccine was introduced in the Universal Immunisation Programme of India in 2016. Since then, says

subjecting her to cruelty. This again raises the concern about why the husband cannot be subject to cruelty by the wife or relative of the wife. The Supreme Court in Armesh Kumar vs State of Bihar (2014) observed that Section 85 of the BNS (previously Section 498A of the IPC) had turned into a potent tool for discontented wives, resulting in the arrest of innocent individuals without substantial evidence. Moreover, statistics from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) indicate that more than 70% of cases filed under Section 498A end in acquittal.A part reason why such ignorance is prevalent in Indian laws is the inequality inherent in gender roles. It is a known fact that the weight of societal expectations falls heavily on men. As a consequence of patriarchal norms, the image of masculinity portrays men as non-emotional, strong, brave and powerful. This makes them believe that if they speak out, they may be subject to judgement and mockery. Even when they gather the courage to speak out, the legal system offers them little to no support. These factors prevent them from confiding in friends, colleagues and even family.One steady finding about male sexual harassment is that it can detrimentally affect the victim emotionally and psychologically. Harassment is always associated with an increased risk of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as a lack of confidence and self-esteem. The ultimate fear of re-experiencing sexual harassment often drives the victim into seclusion from society causing social alienation. The destructive thoughts that follow harassment, trap the victims. In response, they begin to view extreme self harm as a potential way to escape from their emotional turmoil and despair.Harassment against men goes beyond just sexual violence. It includes physical abuse, emotional torment, and even domestic violence. Yet, when it comes to men's mental health in India, the conversation is often muted or ignored, leaving many to suffer in silence under the weight of stigma and societal expectations.The recent death of an engineer in Bengaluru sparked outrage, drawing much-needed attention to the plight of victims of these pervasive social issues. However, much of the discourse turned to blaming women and demanding justice for the deceased person. There was little talk about the need for law to deliver justice. We must view these incidents as wake-up calls to demand meaningful action, so that we can protect the vulnerable by creating an inclusive society.

To this end, we must primarily acknowledge the fact that men can also be victims of harassment and feel vulnerable. At that instant, what they require the most is assurance — that they are not alone, and have faith in the legal system. Extensive research must be done on this topic, as there is hardly any verifiable data available. In furtherance, the legal architecture on harassment laws must be reviewed and safeguards should be installed against discriminatory practices, so that the interests of all individuals, irrespective of gender, is balanced. No section of the society should feel helpless or ignored. Only then can we say that the constitutional promises are being duly fulfilled.Aastha Arora is a second-year law student at the Faculty of Law, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Agrima Vishni is a second-year law student at the Faculty of Law, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.



Dr. Ramesh, there has been a significant reduction in rotavirus-related hospitalisations. Studies indicate that mortality due to rotavirus diarrhoea has dropped by 40-50% in regions where vaccination coverage is high.India now provides three doses of the rotavirus vaccine at 6, 10, and 14 weeks of age. A 2024 mathematical modeling study conducted by National Centre for Disease Control confirmed a decline in antibiotic use for diarrhoeal diseases following the vaccine rollout, further underscoring its positive impact on public health.Studies, including population-based research conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in Vellore, as well as similar studies in Africa, South America, and Mexico, have established the vaccine's effectiveness.

India's national immunisation schedule includes three doses of the rotavirus vaccine at 6, 10, and 14 weeks of age. This differs from the standard two-dose recommendation by vaccine manufacturers GlaxoSmithKline and Merck. The additional dose in India is necessary due to the concurrent administration of the oral polio vaccine (OPV), as OPV and rotavirus vaccines can interfere with each other.The introduction of rotavirus vaccines has played a crucial role in reducing both the incidence and severity of diarrheal diseases, says Dr. Ramesh, adding that indigenous vaccine development efforts are also underway. "Bharat Biotech and Shanta Biotech are currently testing multivalent rotavirus vaccines targeting multiple strains, potentially enhancing vaccine effectiveness, he says.Improving sanitation and hygiene for long-term prevention

Improvements in sanitation could prevent up to 60% of diarrhoeal deaths in India, states the WHO, highlighting the importance of addressing sanitation as a critical public health priority.According to Vijayakumar T., consultant paediatrician and neonatologist at Prashanth Hospitals, Chennai, simple everyday hygiene practices can go a long way in preventing rotavirus infections, which spread through the fecal-oral route, often due to poor hygiene, contaminated food, and unsafe drinking water.

"If left untreated, symptoms like severe diarrhea, fever, vomiting, and abdominal pain can lead to life-threatening dehydration," he said.He points out that there needs to be more focus on vaccine coverage. Following the introduction of rotavirus vaccination in 2016, there has been a noticeable decline in diarrhoeal diseases, particularly those caused by rotavirus, with studies indicating a reduction in rotavirus cases, antibiotic misuse, and deaths. Additionally, he emphasises that all infants should receive the vaccine before six to eight months, as they are highly susceptible to infections during this period.Preventive measures such as exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, proper hygiene, safe drinking water, and avoiding unhygienic food, could also go a long way, he says.

Prashant Jain Interview: Indian economy is more resilient, markets falling on account of correlation between markets



As Indian markets fell sharply in line with global markets over rising concern on tariff war and slowdown in global growth, Prashant Jain, founder and CIO, 3P Investment Managers told Sandeep Singh that while there will be short term pain on account of correlation between the markets, Indian economy is more resilient and is good in the current situation.He advised investors to invest in large caps in a staggered manner and said that investors should avoid small and mid caps.

Why have the markets fallen?

Globally there is a concern around tariff war that has resulted in a panic. The US yields have fallen sharply, the dollar has weakened, and the oil prices have fallen. The equity markets around the world are witnessing a sharp decline, and since there is panic in the world, there will be some correlation that is resulting in a fall in Indian markets.

What Sebi chief Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on conflict-of-interest guidelines, F&O trading, and common KYC

GNS News Agency, April 10

tunhin pandeyPandey joined the Sebi at a time when the market has plummeted 18 per cent over the last five months and investor confidence has taken a beating. Tuhin Kanta Pandey took over as the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) on March 1. He assumed office at a time when the market is facing multiple challenges, including an ongoing stock sell-off, the withdrawal of over Rs 2 lakh crore by foreign institutional investors' since October last year, and a review of the delisting norms.In an interview with Financial Express, Pandey talked about optimising Sebi regulations, the new conflict-of-interest framework, and his thoughts on allowing foreign individuals to invest directly. Here are the key points from his interview.

1) On Sebi regulations

Sebi chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said that the financial regulator is looking forward to review its decades-old regulations. He said that Sebi aims to accelerate this process within the next three months after consulting all stakeholders. "We have got three mandates –investor protection, development of market and regulation. We have to look at all three equally. Regulation can't be an end in itself; they should be a means to an end," he said, adding that what is required is "optimum regulation because over-regulation will kill innovation".

2) On conflict-of-interest guidelines

Pandey said that the conflict-of-interest guidelines will be good for Sebi. "The conflict-of-interest issues has two parts — the level of disclosures related to your investments, property, or other things. The second level of conflict of interest are matters whether you are dealing with any of the companies in the listed space. So, we should have proper guidance as to where we are going to recuse and in what

How do you see the outlook for the Indian economy amid the global concerns?

India is relatively better positioned amid the developments around the world. The goods exports to the US are only 2 per cent of India's GDP, and in any case, the duty differential with our key competitors in goods exports such as China and Vietnam has increased, which puts us in a slightly advantageous position.As the oil prices and US yields have fallen sharply, it is positive for India.Also, with the US markets, which was the most preferred asset class over the last few years, underperforming other markets, it should lead to the realignment of capital flows, and India is a potential beneficiary. Besides, rising services business exports have lowered India's current account deficit to 1 per cent. This enhances the Indian economy's resilience in the current environment. All this put India in a much better position vis-a-vis other nations.

What should investors do?

One key concern for India was valuations. With NIFTY valuations around 17 times at FY'27 earnings, these are reasonable multiples for a realistic 10-12 per cent earnings growth. With domestic flows staying strong and lower supply from primary markets, the Indian markets should do well over a three-year horizon. There may be short term pain because of the global markets correlation.As Nifty seems fairly valued, investors should prefer large caps and invest in a staggered manner over the next few months. Investors should avoid taking exposure to small and mid-caps as the valuations continue to remain expensive.



manner," he said.

3) On whether foreign individuals will be allowed to invest directly in the Indian equity market

The Sebi chairman said that at present foreign individuals can register and come as foreign portfolio investors (FPI) or through a pooled vehicle FPI. "Yes, there are certain ideas on whether they can come as an individual also. They are being examined," he said.

4) On influx of new investors in future and options (F&O) market

According to Pandey, though the ticket size is smaller, a number of people, especially from younger generation, are trying their luck in the F&O market. They need to be made aware of the stickiness of the market and risk metrics. Sebi had already published a report on derivative trading that said 90% of these investors were losing money.

5) On common KYC

Pandey underlined the importance of a common KYC, which he said is "highly desirable". He added that Sebi is working with the RBI to achieve it.

Credit card defaults up 28% last year, touched Rs 6,742 crore

Credit card defaults surge, Credit card defaults cases, Credit card usage, Credit card NPAs, RBI data Credit card NPAs, consumer debt crisis, unsecured loans, digital payments surge, rising defaults, debt trap, Gross non-performing assets (GNPA), non performing assets (NPAs), Reserve Bank of India, Business news, Indian express, Current AffairsCredit card NPAs have shot up by over 500 per cent from Rs 1,108 crore as of December 2020.Credit card usage has gone up significantly in the last three years, driven by increased consumer spending and the growing popularity of digital payments. However, non-performing assets (NPAs), or the amount defaulted by customers, in the credit card segment have also risen by 28.42 per cent to Rs 6,742 crore during the 12-month period ended December 2024, according to the latest Reserve Bank of India data.

The RBI data shows that gross NPAs rose from Rs 5,250 crore in December 2023 to the current level, a rise of nearly Rs 1,500 crore, amid a slowdown in the economy. This works out to 2.3 per cent of the gross loan outstanding of Rs 2.92 lakh crore in the credit card segment of commercial banks in December 2024 as against 2.06 per cent of Rs 2.53 lakh crore credit card outstanding in the previous year.Credit card NPAs have shot up by over 500 per cent from Rs 1,108 crore as of December 2020, according to the reply to the RTI request filed by The Indian Express. This has happened at a time when banks managed to bring down overall gross NPAs from Rs 5 lakh crore (2.5 per cent of advances) in December 2023 to Rs 4.55 lakh crore (2.41 per cent) by December 2024. While Indian banks have succeeded in reducing NPAs, or loans defaulted by borrowers, over the past two years, a closer look reveals a significant rise in NPAs within the personal loan and credit card segments. This spike coincides with an increase in borrower indebtedness, casting a shadow over the sector's progress.Credit card outstanding is unsecured in nature and carry high interest rates. A loan account becomes an NPA when the interest or principal instalment is more than 90 days overdue. When a customer delays repayment of his credit card bill beyond the billing cycle, the bank charges a high interest rate of 42-46 per cent interest per annum on the outstanding dues and his credit score also plummets.

Card outstanding is the amount due from customers after the interest-free period offered by banks.What has lured customers to the credit card segment are incentives like rewards on higher spending, loan offers and lounge benefits. "Customers should realise that if they keep card dues



The RBI data shows that gross NPAs rose from Rs 5,250 crore in December 2023 to the current level, a rise of nearly Rs 1,500 crore, amid a slowdown in the economy.

beyond the interest-free period, they end up paying an interest rate of up to 42 per cent in some cases. It will put them in a debt trap," said a bank official.

In November 2023, the RBI had increased risk weight on the exposure of banks towards consumer credit, credit card receivables and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) by 25 per cent up to 150 per cent. The move was aimed to address build-up of any risks in these segments. "Even as inquiry volumes remain robust, the impact of increase in risk weights on certain segments of consumer credit pulled down the rate of growth in overall consumer credit, especially personal loans and credit cards," the RBI's FSR report said.Credit card use is rising rapidly in the country, if the customer spends through this route are any indication.

The value of credit card transactions tripled in the last three years to Rs 18.31 lakh crore during the year ended March 2024 from Rs 6.30 lakh crore in March 2021 with the economy emerging from the pandemic and consumer confidence increasing over the past several quarters. Credit card transactions were Rs 1.84 lakh crore in the month of January 2025, up sharply from Rs 64,737 crore in January 2021. The number of credit cards issued by banks also rose rapidly to 10.88 crore as of January 2025 from 9.95 crore in January 2024 and 6.10 crore in January 2021, RBI data shows.

Why Piyush Goyal's cautionary note on start-ups strikes many an echo



Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal's comments on the start-up ecosystems in India and China and how Indian companies focus on sectors like online deliveries and betting apps while businesses in China address electric mobility and artificial intelligence (AI) have helped turn the light on a crucial issue that has seldom been debated: how India's start-up ecosystem is the third largest in the world after the United States and China but is marked by fundamental differences.Speaking at a start-up event earlier this week, Goyal showed a slide comparing start-ups in India and China, and said that Indian startups are busy making "food delivery apps, fancy ice cream & cookies, instant grocery delivery, betting & fantasy sport apps and reels & influencer economy." On the other hand, the start-ups in China are working on "EV & battery tech, semiconductors and AI, robotics and automation, global logistics & trade and deep tech & infrastructure." "Fancy ice cream and cookies. I know at least three or four billionaires whose children make one brand or the other, very fancy ice cream and cookies, and run a very successful business," said Goyal in his address. "And I have no complaint against that. But is that the destiny of India? Is the future of India satisfied with that?"

"What are India's start-ups of today? We are focused on food delivery apps, turning unemployed youths into cheap labour so the rich can get their meals without moving out of their house," Goyal added.

Goyal's remarks strike many an echo. In private, government officials have often emphasised the importance of building Indian-owned intellectual property (IP), which is currently severely restricted in terms of making much commercial sense. Very few Indian companies hold important IP in cutting edge sectors, unlike their Chinese counterparts. Some government schemes like the design linked incentives for chips are trying to change that. The gap, though, is widening.China is considered to be the biggest frontier in electric mobility, with its companies like BYD and Li Auto, having considerable advantage over even some American and European rivals like Tesla and Volkswagen. India lags far behind the Chinese in terms of battery technology, and is largely a consumer of innovation that took place in China. In fact, many believe that India will likely be the final frontier for internal combustion engines.In AI, while American companies — including start-ups like OpenAI and Anthropic — have so far dominated, China has managed to create a global sensation with Deepseek, which showed the world that a good AI model can be created at a fraction of the cost than what the world believed earlier. Meanwhile, in India, there is yet a global standard model to be launched, with the government of India currently evaluating some proposals.

In e-commerce (including quick commerce and food delivery), India has managed to create giant companies like Flipkart, Zomato, Swiggy, Myntra, Blinkit and Zepto. These companies, some of which are also publicly listed, have capitalised on growing access to the Internet that several Indians enjoy today, with a particular focus on urban areas, where people have some leeway for discretionary spending.However, these start-ups are predominantly domestic facing, with a majority of their business coming from India. The issue with this is that a vast majority of Indians

'Training of AI in Indian context, languages will drive regional expansion of data centres'

Schneider Electric, a global leader in energy management and automation, is also a key player in the data centre sector. It has collaborated with NVIDIA on AI data centre reference designs and operates a 6.5-acre facility in Bangalore producing advanced cooling systems, most of which are exported. In a conversation with Aggam Walia, Venkatraman Swaminathan, Vice President & Country General Manager, India & SAARC, Secure Power Division at Schneider Electric, discusses the reliability of power supply for data centres, the potential of renewable energy storage, and how the rise of AI is driving the expansion of data centre infrastructure.

Data centres need a reliable power supply for uninterrupted operations. How has this evolved in India, especially with more end users demanding renewable energy?

In general, data centres require power as raw material. Land parcels in non-seismic areas become the second consideration, and the third is safety and security. Mumbai has become the hotspot with almost 50 per cent of India's data centres because of the perceived stability and long-term reliability of power. So in terms of power, all states are now looking at Mumbai's success.Chennai has a unique advantage because of its cable landing stations, which connect it to Singapore through undersea cables, enhancing connectivity and reducing latency. Chennai and Hyderabad are also attracting interest because of their power surplus. States are positioning themselves by ensuring stable power supply, which is a major factor for data centre development.Meanwhile, Delhi and Kolkata are seeing less movement due to concerns around seismic activity and power availability. That said, if you ask whether India has sufficient power for data centres, the answer is yes. Companies are also looking to reduce power costs by integrating solar energy. Companies like AWS and Microsoft must also report their carbon emissions, so they're moving towards green energy.

What role do you see battery storage playing in the near future, and what about other options, like nuclear, to ensure round-the-clock green energy supply?

Beyond stable power sources, alternative energy solutions for data centres are still in various stages of infancy. Some firms are experimenting with fuel cells — for instance, a data centre in Bengaluru has implemented a proof-of-concept installation.Everybody is talking about battery storage but there's nothing comprehensive yet, they're still with diesel generators (DGs). While there are calls to phase out DGs due to carbon footprint concerns, data centres in places like Mumbai, which have had no major power disruptions for years, mostly use them as insurance.Large business houses are moving into importing battery cell technologies to build batteries and store solar energy because

— nearly 1 billion, or 90 per cent of the population — lack the financial flexibility for discretionary spending, according to a recent study by venture capital firm Blume Ventures. This severely restricts the companies going global, where rivals already exist.In contrast, China has managed to build global-level businesses in the online services and consumer Internet space, with companies like Bytedance's TikTok and e-retailers Shein and Alibaba servicing users across the world. In manufacturing, China has cemented itself as the factory of the world, especially in tech manufacturing. India, which started late in the segment, has made some inroads in the space after successfully localising smartphone assembly in the country, even though it remains heavily dependent on Chinese-made parts.

As far as deep tech start-ups are concerned, that is one particular area where the Chinese have a significant leg up over their Indian counterparts. The deep tech sector in China comprises more than 6,000 companies, which have collectively raised close to \$100 billion in venture capital money and private equity. More than 100 of these companies have also gone public. Deep tech start-ups are companies that leverage advanced scientific discoveries or engineering innovations to solve complex problems and create disruptive technologies. They focus on high-impact fields such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, quantum computing, robotics, aerospace, clean energy, and advanced materials. Indian start-ups in the sector, meanwhile, face a funding crunch with investors unwilling to take a bet on them, considering them as too risky a gamble.

One area where India has managed to put itself on the global map is the software-as-a-service (SaaS) sector — where companies like Zoho and Chennai-founded Freshworks, as well as TCS and Infosys, have managed to create a sizable order base. However, the fundamental issue here too is a lack of innovation, with the Indians preferred over others primarily due to a labour cost arbitrage. Some of that is changing with the establishment of global capability centres (GCCs) in India, however, even there, the innovation is largely done for a particular company.Payments is another area where India has set a template, which has received global recognition, through its unified payments interface (UPI). The innovation, which was initially steered by the government and later made available to private companies, has helped create big domestic businesses in the sector through companies like PhonePe and Paytm. It's a separate issue that the UPI service remains free for users and merchants, which makes it difficult for service providers to monetise it.Incidentally, several major companies in China initially also built domestic facing online services businesses, such as Meituan, Pinduoduo (both of which are e-retailers), Didi (ride hailing), and Alipay (financial services), among others. These companies — founded between 2004 and 2015 — served as the first wave of major Chinese start-ups.Responding to Goyal were from Zepto CEO Aadit Palicha to former BharatPe chief Ashneer Grover and Shaadi.com's founder Anupam Mittal.

Palicha said Zepto has created over 1.5 lakh jobs, contributes over Rs 1,000 crore in taxes each year and has brought in over \$1 billion of FDI. "If that isn't a miracle in Indian innovation, I honestly don't know what is," Palicha wrote on X (formerly Twitter).Grover said that the only people in India who need a "reality check" are its politicians. "China also had food delivery first and then evolved to deep tech. It's great to aspire for what they've done — maybe time for politicians to aspire for 10%+ economic growth rate for 20 years flat before chiding today's job creators. Maybe time to change 'public discourse' from history to science," he added.Mittal said: "In the last few months I have met a few deep-tech cos that have absolutely blown me away. From AI & space-tech to material science, Indian entrepreneurs are ready to take on the world. But capital & the eco-system for growth & commercialisation are severely lacking. Founders can do most things but not everything."



solar input at nights and in winters is lower. Still, I haven't seen large-scale battery storage replacing DGs in India.Nuclear power takes a long time to develop, and with hydro, we don't have too many hydroelectric plants close to the cities. Hydrogen-based power generation, used overseas in some cases, could emerge as an option. For now, data centres will likely continue using a mix of DGs and mains power for at least another year and a half till battery energy storage becomes more mature.

How do you see data centre deployment expanding beyond tier-1 cities in India? Additionally, how will the balance between hyperscale and edge facilities evolve in the coming years?

The bandwidth requirements for cloud data centres has been manageable in cities like Chennai, Mumbai, Bangalore, and Hyderabad. While users may tolerate occasional buffering on their phones, AI applications require seamless performance. For instance, Singapore's autonomous vehicle projects generate terabytes of data every minute, accelerating the need for edge data centres.AI data centres will require regional and edge data centres, especially for applications in agriculture, where AI can assist farmers with soil analysis and improving crop yields. This will drive the regionalisation of data centre capacity beyond urban areas.The trend is moving towards a combination of hyperscale, regional, and edge data centres, depending on the end use application. Currently, there is not much training happening in India, it's mostly AI inference. Since we have over 20 official languages and so many dialects, I believe you have to train AI in the Indian context, therefore you will see more regional and edge data centres, which is inevitable.

Ricky Ponting at Idea Exchange: ‘Dhoni may be the only one in IPL who doesn’t seek advice from the dugout ’

GNS News Agency, April 10

The owners have been terrific from the start. We did hours and hours of preparation leading up to the auction, spent three or four days in Riyadh, and had two good days at the auction table. Everything I've asked for around the team, including training camps and management people, has happened. We brought in a new bowling coach, James Hopes, who worked with me in Delhi for a long time. I made it clear to the owners and they made it clear to me too, that this is my team, and we will run it the way I want, in conjunction with the owners' inputs. At the end of the day, it is their team, but as far as cricket goes, I wanted it to be my team. I'm responsible for the wins and losses. Everyone's buying into it and the players have been terrific. Shreyas Iyer has added a lot with his experience and leadership qualities, which was important for me. Sriram Veera: If you were a captain, how much involvement would you want a coach to have? How much do you think is being done with the football manager style we see now?

I may have made it sound like the whole team is all about me. It's certainly not. I'm the head coach and responsible for wins and losses, but once the game starts, the team is handed over to the captain. The coach can then do very little. It was pretty clear with what we did at the auction by bringing Shreyas to this franchise, it was clear to me and the owners that we wanted the best possible Indian captain. We got our man. He's been terrific around the group. And I don't think a cricket team coach has the same impact as a football team manager. I like to share my thoughts and ideas with the captain and a few senior players. We don't necessarily include everyone in all tactical decisions, but the relationship between the captain and the coach must be as strong as possible. That's why I went for Shreyas in the auction. I've worked with him for a long time in Delhi. He's one of the great players and great people I've worked with and is an IPL-winning captain. We have a terrific relationship, respecting each other's roles. On building the team | The owners have been terrific from the start. We

Indian Arrows suffers first defeat



GNS News Agency, April 10

HYDERABAD: Indian Arrows Women Juniors suffered its first loss in the Indian Women's League-2, going 0-1 against Group B hosts Roots FC at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru. Maibam Nandeshwori Devi scored the winner in the 12th minute.

This result saw Roots rise to the top spot in Group B with six points from two games. Indian Arrows Women Juniors, who had beaten Puduhuai Unicorns and Inter Kashi in their first two matches, are now in second place. The top two in the five-team group will progress to the final round. Indian Arrows Women Juniors will hope to seal qualification for the final round when they face Casa Barwani SC in their last match on April 9 and the match will be streamed live on the Indian Football YouTube Channel. Roots took the lead with a well-worked team goal in the 12th minute. Winger Rosy Thanga burst down the left flank and drilled a low cross into the six-yard box for striker Nandeshwori Devi, who finished it first time.

The local side was equally good defensively, frustrating Indian Arrows with a tight backline that didn't allow any inroads through the middle. Alexandersson's girls dominated possession for the rest of the match in pursuit of the equaliser, but they couldn't really bother goalkeeper Sonakshi Singh much.

The Roots custodian made one notable save, denying Julian Nongmaithem's volley with an outstretched palm early in the second half. As the clock ticked down, desperation grew in the Arrows camp, and the Swedish coach made attacking changes, introducing the likes of Tonamabam Taniya Devi, Rupashree Munda, and Gurnaz Kaur. Valaina came close to finding the net from 18 yards out, sending instinctive half-volley inches over the bar. Viksit Bara, who scored from the centre circle in the last match, saw a 35-yard free-kick attempt land not too far from the target.

We have the skill levels to bat or bowl at any stage, Prasidh

GNS News Agency, April 10

Hyderabad: Gujarat Giants pacer Prasidh Krishna, who played a key role in the team's victory against Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL league match here on Sunday night, says that coming on to bowl the sixth over or after power-play definitely helps when the scoreboard shows two or three wickets down. "So, that is helping me do my job better. I think he's coming off a good, good practice session," Prasidh informed the media in the post-match briefing. "We've had great sessions together. All the work that he's (player of the match Mohd Siraj) put in from January or February that he's been working on. Everything is going well," he said. "He's releasing the ball well, feeling confident," he added. "I think if you look at the wins that we've had, they came with a lot of understanding of what the wicket is behaving like and adjusting our game plans accordingly," Prasidh said. "So, if as a bowling unit we are able to do that consistently, it is really helpful going forward in the tournament. Well, the pitch was slightly slow when we got on to bowl," he said. On debutant Washington Sundar batting up the order, Prasidh said was somebody that could do the job at all places. "Like I said, we have a team where luckily we have the people that have the skill levels to bat at any number, bowl at any stage of the game. And, that worked for On the pitch, Prasidh said it was not really coming off, the fuller lengths were like when Abhishek got out as well that didn't really get on to the bat. "So, looking at that, it became very clear that we had to bowl straighter lines and we were able to do that pretty well," he said. "We have the bowling unit where any of us can bowl at any stage of the game and given the skill levels all of us have, we should be able to do all the roles pretty well."

did hours of preparation leading to the auction... Everything I've asked for around the team, including training camps and management people, has happened Sriram Veera: With inexperienced captains or even in general, is there anything wrong with cricket going the football manager way — with more frequent inputs even after the toss?

Absolutely not. It's rare that an on-field captain doesn't seek advice from the dugout. Dhoni may be the only one in IPL who doesn't do that. Even in our first game, there was a lot of advice going to Shreyas, and he was asking questions about what the game needed. A prime example is how we used our impact player in the first game with Vyshak (Vijaykumar) coming in as late as he did. There was a lot of tactical planning behind that. We had three guys ready: two spin bowlers and Vyshak. We waited for the right time to bring our impact player into play. It depended on what Gujarat Titans were doing as well. We kept an eye on their dugout, waiting to see if they'd use (Sherfane) Rutherford or Glenn Phillips as their impact player. Once they made their choice, it was clear to us which way we should go. Even with timeouts in the IPL, you have a chance to talk to your captain or senior players. Sriram Veera: Kagiso Rabada said we might as well name the sport batting instead of cricket if there is no balance between bat and ball. What are the changes you would like to see in cricket to balance it? I think a lot of it comes down to the approach of the batters. The impact player has definitely made a difference in how batsmen approach their innings. We have high-quality all-rounders in our starting 11, which was by design in the auction. The batsmen can go from the first ball to the end of the 20th over without much concern about being left short of quality batting. Ricky Ponting at Idea Exchange: 'Dhoni may be the only one in IPL who doesn't seek advice from the dugout' The change is partly in batting skill. Speaking as a batsman, it has undoubtedly become harder for bowlers. Batting skill has evolved more than bowling over the last 18 years of IPL cricket. How many guys bowl consistently good yorkers like Bumrah or like Malinga used to deliver? There

aren't many of those bowlers around, so what's stopping them from executing four to five yorkers in an over? We saw what Vyshak did the other night with a slightly different tactic with the wide stuff. Where are the bowlers who can do that consistently? The length of the pitch hasn't changed, a good yorker is still a good yorker. Yet, we're seeing that skill dying off a little bit. Yes, the game favours batsmen now because of the impact rule. However, we used the impact rule to our advantage with a bowler who had the right skills for the situation. The evolution of bowlers still needs to happen and improve.

Sandeep Dwivedi: One thing we've observed about you from your playing days to coaching is the confidence that you carry, how did that come about?

It all comes down to how you prepare. If you're well-prepared, there's no reason that you shouldn't be confident. A great example of that right now is Shreyas. You saw him walk out to bat the other day, he walked out with a certain amount of swagger about him because he's confident. He knows if he does his little things right, then he can't fail. That's the thing I always tell the players: if you prepare as well as you can and if you go out and stick to your game plan, you can't fail. Yes, you might make a mistake, but you've done everything you can to make an impact on the game. I worked as hard as anyone, through my career, on my batting and fielding, to get myself ready to go. It is more so in the T20 game; coaches and players always talk about playing with freedom. You can't play with freedom unless your preparation is right. If you're not confident and have doubts, it's impossible to play with freedom. I've had conversations with younger Indian players for these three weeks. I have told them, 'You let me know how you want to be coached and the preparation you want and I'll make sure it gets done every single day.' On different formats | I'm probably too much of a traditionalist with the international game. I want to see Test cricket prosper, and one-day cricket improve. I think there's still a place for all these competitions to survive and prosper Sandeep Dwivedi: You once advised



Rahul Dravid not to retire, and he went on to have a good series after that. How do you know when a player's time is up, especially in India right now with debates about Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma after the Australia series? Regarding Dravid, it was a series against us. We could all see he was battling and there was a lot of media talk, and it was all wearing him down. Rahul and I have always got along really well. We were fierce competitors, both No. 3 batters for our countries for a long time. For players like that, the class and quality don't leave. It sometimes gets buried under a lot of other stuff, and certain people can't find their way out of those holes. I just had a chat with him and said, 'Look, forget about all the external stuff, believe in yourself, and go back to the things that have made you a good player. If you focus on that and not worry about the little things, I am sure you can finish off your career on a strong note.' That's all I said. He went away and did that and guess what? When I was at the end of my career, I got the same message back from him. He was the first on the phone and made me aware of the things I had said to him.

Why R Ashwin's YouTube channel will not cover Chennai Super Kings games anymore



GNS News Agency, April 10

Ravichandran Ashwin's YouTube channel will not cover Chennai Super Kings matches anymore during the ongoing season of the Indian Premier League. This means that the spinner's popular YouTube handles will not do any previews of games involving CSK or review the matches afterwards. Ashwin's main YouTube handle has over 1.6 million subscribers. He also started a new channel called Ash ki Baat, which focuses on Hindi analysis.

"Given the nature of the discussions on this forum over the last week, we want to be mindful of how things can be interpreted and have chosen to step away from covering CSK games, both previews and reviews, for the rest of this season. We value the diversity of perspectives that come through on our shows and remain committed to ensuring the conversation stays true to the integrity and purpose of the platform we've established. The views expressed by our guests do not reflect Ashwin's personal opinions," ESPN Cricinfo quoted a note from the admin of Ashwin's channel as saying. The report stated that this comes because of a controversy last week when one of the guests on Ashwin's channel — Prasanna Agoram, who is a former data analyst for South Africa and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) — criticised CSK's move to pick Afghanistan spinner Noor Ahmad, despite the five-time champions having Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja in the squad.

The video was reportedly taken down after it attracted plenty of criticism on social media. Chennai Super Kings are in the middle of a wretched run in the IPL where they have lost their last three games on the trot after beating Mumbai Indians in their IPL 2025 opener. Even CSK coach Stephen Fleming was asked about the players having their YouTube channel after their loss to Delhi Capitals. Fleming seemed to be caught off guard by the suggestion that opinions on YouTube channels can make things awkward in the dressing room. "I have no idea," Fleming had shrugged. "I didn't even know he [Ashwin] had a channel, so I don't follow that stuff. That's irrelevant."

Charlotte Edwards takes over as England women's head coach; Mumbai Indians bid emotional farewell

Hyderabad: Charlotte Edwards, who coached the team to two WPL titles in three seasons, will be missed by the Mumbai Indians 'OneFamily' and her girls whom she inspired and helped develop over the course of the three years. A Mumbai Indians spokesperson said Charlotte Edwards had been a leader for whom the entire #OneFamily has enormous admiration, appreciation and respect.

"The incredible achievements that Charlotte has driven the team towards, winning two titles in three years, developing and inspiring the girls to play their best cricket and taking the MI legacy forward and bringing joy to the MI Paltan," the media release said. "We wish her all the very best and are grateful for everything she has brought to our team over the past 3 years."

Charlotte was an inspirational figure in the team bringing in her nuances of being a leader, friend and exciting energy that paved the way for the girls to perform and be the best at what they do. Mumbai Indians wish Charlotte Edwards all the very best in her new role with the England Women's team and the #OneFamily will continue to cheer for one of the greats of the game.

‘They should be ashamed’: Angry Pep Guardiola lashes out at Manchester United fans over abuse

GNS News Agency, April 10

A livid Pep Guardiola lashed out at Manchester United fans for their targetted abuse aimed at Phil Foden's mother during the Manchester Derby on Sunday. England footballer Foden struggled in the game against arch-rivals Manchester United. "It was a lack of class, but it's not Man United, it's the people," Manchester City manager Guardiola said after the game ended. "It's a lack of integrity, class and they should be ashamed. But it is happening everywhere, I would say, not just the UK, everywhere." Guardiola added: "We are so exposed, the people in the screen in the world of football — managers, owners and football players especially. Honestly I don't know, understand (what's) in the mind of the people... involving the mum of Phil." While the game at Old Trafford ended 0-0, both teams are eight spots apart in the Premier League standings. City are fifth in the standings, 21 points away from league leaders Liverpool. Manchester United meanwhile have 38 points, almost half as many as Liverpool. The game saw Foden continue a beleaguered run of form this season after becoming the player of the year last time around. The 24-year-old has not scored



for 13 games. He has scored just 10 times in 40 appearances. Manchester City's Premier League title defense has similarly gone off track over the past months. "When the team is not playing at the level that we had, it looks like everyone is not what they were. I see the passion and smile on his face every day in training and that is what I want. His impact was incredible and he will be back," Guardiola said.

India shines at World Boxing Cup in Brazil with 6 medals, Hitesh scripts history with gold

GNS News Agency, April 10

Hyderabad: The Indian contingent came up with an impressive performance in their first-ever outing in the World Boxing Cup in Brazil winning six medals, including a gold and silver. Hitesh became the first Indian boxer to clinch a gold medal in the World Boxing Cup. His opponent, Odel Kamara of England was injured and couldn't take to the ring in the 70kg finale. Abhinash Jamwal, the other Indian boxer to reach the final in the 65kg category, gave his best against local favourite Yuri Reis but could not do enough to get a favourable verdict and bagged a silver medal. Four Indian players bagged bronze medals, including Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (50kg), Manish Rathore (55kg), Sachin (60kg) and Vishal (90kg). Hitesh after becoming the first Indian boxer to clinch a gold medal in the World Boxing Cup credited the 10-day preparation camp in Brazil ahead of the tournament as something that helped him and the team a lot. "The camp helped me learn a few tactical nuances that helped me a lot in the competition. This tournament has provided us fantastic exposure at the highest level and I am happy that I



could grab the gold medal," said Hitesh. India had fielded a 10-member contingent for the World Boxing Cup, their first major international outing since the Paris Olympics, and bagging six medals, this will not only boost the confidence of the squad as they start preparing for the 2028 Olympic cycle ahead of Los Angeles Games.

Gujarat Titans’ Ishant Sharma handed 25 percent fine and one demerit point by IPL



GNS News Agency, April 10

Gujarat Titans (GT) pacer Ishant Sharma was slapped with a 25 percent fine and handed one demerit point for breaching the Indian Premier League's code of conduct during the IPL 2025 victory over the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) on Sunday. A statement from the IPL, posted on their website, said that Ishant had been found to be in breach of Article 2.2 but did not specify what he had done to breach it. Article 2.2 relates to "abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings during a match". The statement also said that "for Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding." Ishant later admitted to being guilty of the Level 1 offence and accepted match referee Javagal Srinath's sanction.

Ishant has had a frustrating IPL 2025 so far, claiming just a single wicket in three games. He has been expensive as well, conceding 107 runs across eight overs in three games. On Sunday against the Sunrisers Hyderabad, the

Gujarat Titans pacer was hit for 53 runs in four wicketless overs. He then made way for Sherfane Rutherford. Ricky Ponting interview with The Indian Express at Idea Exchange: On why Punjab Kings 'wanted Shreyas Iyer at any cost' in IPL auction | On MS Dhoni's IPL future | On Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma's future with Team India | On the Impact Player Rule While Ishant struggled in Hyderabad, his fellow pacer Mohammed Shami ended the night with his best figures in the IPL: taking four wickets for just 17 runs. Thanks to Shami's heroics with the ball, Gujarat Titans defeated the Sunrisers Hyderabad by seven wickets. This was Hyderabad's fourth defeat in five IPL 2025 games, a sequence of results that sees the SRH team plummet to bottom of IPL 2025 standings. For Gujarat, on the other hand, this was their third victory in a row after they started the season with a defeat against Punjab Kings.

Gujarat Titans bowler Ishant Sharma fined for breaching IPL Code of Conduct

HYDERABAD: Gujarat Titans fast bowler Ishant Sharma has been fined 25 per cent of his match fees and has also accumulated One Demerit Point for breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during his team's match against Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium.

Hansal Mehta: ‘Adversity creates great art. It is an opportunity, not a hindrance’

Hansal, you wrote a blog after you watched Thappad in 2020. You ended it by saying, ‘to all the women in my life... I know it is late, but better late than never, sorry. Sorry if I have let my entitlement stifle your growth. Sorry if I have let my patriarchal conditioning render me insensitive to your needs’. Why did you write that? Hansal Mehta: That is the power of good cinema. It provokes you. It makes you think, introspect and say things that maybe you would not articulate otherwise. It was a very powerful film and that’s what good films do to you. Randeep, at an Express event a few months ago, Manoj Bajpayee had said there are two kinds of actors — those who go to the character they are playing and others who let the character come to them. You obviously are the first kind, who goes to the characters. Was this a conscious choice you made at the beginning of your career? Randeep Hooda: It’s not that I choose a role and say, I’m going to method-act this role or lose weight for it. I get the role and then I realise, oh my God, I would go through that. It is an afterthought really. It’s basically that if you’ve got an accent or you’ve got a certain physicality or you’ve got a certain thought process, you just try and make that a part of your life 24x7 so that you don’t have to act when the shots are on.

Hansal, you said somewhere that craft is overrated. And that films like Aligarh and Shahid don’t come out of craft, but from love and freedom. Do you still have the same love? More importantly, do you still have the same freedom?

Hansal Mehta: We’ve had the Supreme Court telling us about how freedom of expression is so important. It’s a celebratory moment. In all the darkness, there’s always this glimmer of hope and that glimmer of hope comes from storytellers, from performers, from people who live lives beyond their own, freedom comes from that. It’s the freedom that you feel, not the freedom that you’re given. That is artificial freedom that a government gives you, that the law gives you. It’s a freedom that you give yourself to express, to feel, to say things in a certain way, to feel the way you do about other people and that freedom to me is paramount.

You spoke up on the attack on Kunal Kamra. You also said that 25 years ago you faced the mob yourself which made you publicly apologise for one sentence in your film. You said how that humiliation bruised your spirit and made you a different kind of filmmaker and that it took you a long time to reclaim your own freedom after that episode. This is something we don’t hear enough about — what happens

after the mob has gone and the rest of us have moved on?

Hansal Mehta: I was broken, one because of the film that had failed. And four weeks later when you’re dealing with financial losses, people enter your office and vandalise it, paint your face black and then they tell you to come and apologise. I said, how much more should I apologise? They had to create a bigger public spectacle so I was made to apologise in front of 10,000 people. The apology was not the issue. The issue, I later realised, was that people who violate your self-respect, your freedom, do not belong to any particular ideology, any particular party. It took me time to realise that I was not the coward. I was attacked by cowards. And the moment I realised that, I found my voice.

Shahid came in 2012, Aligarh in 2015. Would you be able to make them today?

Hansal Mehta: Shahid was made before 2014. It won a National Award in 2014, the very year that the world claims that India changed. Yes, with every new establishment, there is change. The state trying to control the narrative is not something new. Why are we behaving like it is some new franchise that has opened up? Randeep Hooda: It’s more in your face because of social media. Hansal Mehta: It’s been there since the Emergency. Pre-Emergency it must have been there. I find that adversity very positive. Adversity creates great art. It’s an opportunity and not a hindrance. The issue is that we see it as a hindrance. I keep telling people, you will find newer ways to tell your stories. You’ll find newer ways to be critical. You’ll find newer ways to awaken the people, to provoke and to ensure discourse and debate.

Randeep, you’ve been asked about why you made the biopic of Savarkar and your answer has been that what you call the unsungness of Savarkar appealed to you. Were you not apprehensive that, in a time like this, you were inviting questions about politics, judgements?

Randeep Hooda: Many people advised me to not get into this kind of a subject, which urged me to read more about him. He was so maligned. I read Vikram Sampat’s book and other books on him. I went through a whole lot of hell to make it. I wanted to release it six months earlier but it was released during the elections and it was tainted as a propaganda film. And I am thinking who sells their house and loses 32 kilos to make a propaganda film? I want to meet that patriot. But if a movie can be



made on Mahatma Gandhi, a movie can be made on Savarkar as it can be made on anybody else. I made the film because I was angry about the fact that all of our freedom struggle is brought down to two, three names and only to non-violence, which was not the case. Why are you, Hansal, making Gandhi today? And Gandhi’s story has been made so many times already. Hansal Mehta: My approach to characters is to not judge them. So Gandhi’s story is about his flaws, mistakes and learning from them. I found his journey mostly untold in all the telling that I have seen so far... I think it’s important that we understand that we are chronicling our times. Election campaigns and politicians have a tendency to change history according to their convenience but you cannot wipe out what is recorded, what is on celluloid. It is as important to tell Savarkar’s story as it is to tell Gandhi’s. There is a sense of anxiety in both the movie and the streaming sectors. Are the best storytellers not coming forward or is it that the gatekeepers are the problem? The studio executives who are looking for data-driven storytelling now and telling you where to put the climax and where to bring the star in. Hansal Mehta: I think the gatekeepers are the storytellers and we need to recognise that. The moment we recognise that, we will reclaim our space. But you see there has always been a crisis. Any business-minded person, if they decide to get into films, will realise that it is the least profitable business of all. But this is a business of passion. Randeep Hooda: We have isolated ourselves in the ivory tower, which some people might call the Juhu-Bandra syndrome. I’m doing a movie with a Telugu director...

Dia Mirza refutes Telangana CM Revanth Reddy’s claim of sharing AI-generated content on Kancha Gachibowli tree-felling: ‘Verify facts’

Amid the Kancha Gachibowli land issue, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy claimed that several celebrities, including Dia Mirza, have fallen prey to AI-generated content. In a statement, Reddy claimed that celebrities, including Dia, shared fake and AI-generated content on the Kancha Gachibowli tree-felling to support the student protest. Now, the actor has reacted to the claims and has called it “absolutely false.” Taking to her X handle, Dia wrote, “The CM of Telangana posted a tweet yesterday. He made certain claims about the situation at Kancha Gachibowli.” She added, “One of them was that I had used FAKE AI generated images/videos in support of the protest by students to protect biodiversity on the 400 acres of land the government wanted to auction. This is an absolutely false statement. I have not posted a single image or video that is AI generated.” Dia further slammed the media and the state government, saying, “The media and the Telangana government should verify their facts before making such claims.” The controversy garnered national attention when photos and videos, purportedly depicting wildlife being disrupted by the bulldozing of trees in Kancha Gachibowli, began circulating online. Several celebrities, including John Abraham, Dia Mirza and Raveena Tandon, raised their voice in support of the students who are protesting the government’s decision of building an IT park by clearing about 400 acres of forest land in Kancha Gachibowli. Among the many celebrities, Dia Mirza, who is also an advocate for SDGs, and Ambassador of Wildlife Trust of India, has been actively opposing the state government’s decision through her social media posts. On April 2, the actor shared a post on X in support of the students protesting in Telangana



and said, “Students are raising their voices for a future where nature thrives. Forests, not IT parks, offer young people a chance at a sustainable tomorrow. ‘Development’ at the cost of biodiversity is DESTRUCTION. Save Kancha Forest in Gachibowli, Hyderabad.”

Her post, however, didn’t contain any images. Apart from sharing posts on X, the actor reshared several posts that highlighted the Supreme Court’s order in the case. On April 3, she shared another post that read, “There is HOPE because the youth of our country know better and are compelling authorities to do better. India needs her forests and biodiversity, and our youth are raising awareness, their voices and inspiring action. We hear you, we see you, we stand by you.” This post too didn’t contain any images as claimed by the Telangana CM.

Mimoh Chakarborty says Bollywood folks stopped taking dad Mithun Chakraborty’s calls when he tried to help him: ‘Everything was against me’

Mithun Chakraborty’s son, Mimoh, was recently seen on the Netflix India show Khakee: The Bengal Chapter. While his stint on OTT has been getting him a lot of attention, Mimoh has recently opened up about the struggles he went through to establish himself as an actor. During a conversation with Digital Commentary, Mimoh opened up about the time when the industry not just ignored him, but also his father, Mithun Chakraborty.

Recalling his initial days, when Mimoh sought help from his father to reach out to directors, the Khakee actor recalled, “There was a time when people would not even respond to dad, it was because of me. Today, I am a part of this industry. There are two things which are very real about our industry — one is that it is very professional, and because of that, you cannot mix emotions or obligations. Two, if you are united with them, they will stick by you. Just because I got Khakee, I cannot sit here and say that everybody is nice. Back then, I wouldn’t understand this, I would feel that if you aren’t replying to me, at least respond to Dad. Everything was going against.”

“Whenever anything negative happened, there would also be a glimpse of hope. Casting directors would message me to audition for a TV show, and they would disappear, I would not find any roles, then again after a couple of months, a message offering work would come. Whenever I felt it was not working out, there would be a sign that would put me on the path,” Mimoh added.

In an earlier interview, Mimoh said the only two people who helped him through the years are Karan Johar and Salman Khan. “Salman Bhai and Karan Johar, they are the only two who have actually helped me. Salman Bhai loves



dad a lot, and whenever I message asking if I can meet him, he says, ‘aaja, come over’. I go and chill with him, he sits with me, gives me a lot of good advice. Karan Johar has gone out of his way to help me and Namashi, my brother. He has introduced me to so many people, connected me with so many people and agencies,” he had told Bollywood Helpline. Mimoh also recalled the time his father went through a worse patch than he had professionally. He also thanked Salman for being like an elder brother to him.

Empuraan box office collection day 11: Prithviraj-Mohanlal’s blockbuster is highest-grossing Malayalam film ever; earns Rs 250 cr worldwide

Empuraan box office collection day 11: Even as the controversies surrounding L2: Empuraan is refusing to die down, the film has gradually grown from strength to strength to become the highest-grossing Malayalam film ever. Although the second weekend collections are at a decent level, Empuraan has created newer avenues outside India since the bulk of the collections have come from abroad. On day 11, Empuraan made Rs 3.97 crore, which is the maximum it has earned in the 2nd weekend of release. The domestic collections are now at Rs 98.35 crore, and will ideally enter the Rs 100 crore club in the domestic market by the end of Day 12. The makers revealed that the film has crossed Rs 250+ crore gross worldwide, and it is the first Malayalam film to do so since the previous record was held by Manjummel Boys at Rs 240+ crore. However, it is highly



unlikely that the domestic numbers of Chidambaram-directed film, starring Soubin Shahir, and Sreenath Bhasi, will be breached. Manjummel Boys’ numbers currently stands at Rs 141.61 crore, and considering the festive Vishu weekend release hitting the screens in Kerala on April 10, Empuraan might not touch this mark. Sharing the information about becoming the highest-grosser, the makers wrote on social media, “Malayalam cinema breaches the 250+ crore barrier for the first time in its history! The Emperor and his General navigating never seen before territory!” And Mohanlal, who plays Stephen Nedumppally in the blockbuster franchise, which has a third part in the works, said, “Empuraan now reigns as the highest-grossing film in Malayalam cinema history. The new industry benchmark. This moment belongs not just to us but to every heartbeat that echoed in theatres, to every cheer, every tear, to you. Running successfully in theatres near you.” On April 10, there are multiple releases hitting the screens in Tamil (Good Bad Ugly), Hindi (Jaat), and Malayalam (Bazooka, Alappuzha Gymkhana and Maranamass). This will result in fewer screens for Empuraan, and its collections will take a solid hit. Nevertheless, the film has other things to worry about too, apart from impending clashes at the box-office. Empuraan, which had to go back to the edit table because sections of audience took offence to scenes involving the Gujarat riots, and violence against the oppressed. Although BJP MP and actor Suresh Gopi shared that the party didn’t ask for any cuts, and it was done on the makers’ own volition, it is clear that there was undue pressure from various quarters. Also, over the past few days, the Enforcement Directorate conducted searches in the offices of Gokulam Gopalan, who became one of the producers of Empuraan to sort out the financial issues between Lyca Productions and Aashirvad Cinemas.

John Abraham’s wife Priya Runchal has the best response to Arjun Kapoor’s cheeky question: ‘Did John carry his own pasta?’



Arjun Kapoor asks John Abraham’s wife Priya Runchal Arjun Kapoor hilariously revealed John Abraham’s love for pasta. Actor Arjun Kapoor is known for his cheeky questions and responses on other celebrities’ posts on social media. The recent comment by Arjun on a photo of actor John Abraham which his wife Priya Runchal shared on her Instagram account is now in the limelight. John and Priya stepped out for a dinner with their friends and Priya shared a candid click. While the couple’s fans started to post love and fire emojis in the comment section, Arjun Kapoor’s comment caught everyone’s attention.

The shared photo has John Abraham and his wife Priya Runchal seated at a restaurant with two of their friends. John looked dapper as always dressed in a T-shirt while his wife wore a brown dress. Priya shared the photo with the caption, “La love in Bbay??.” Arjun Kapoor asked in the comment section, “Did John carry his own pasta?” which made Priya reply, “Haha it’s under that big napkin.” This fun interaction is getting a lot of likes on Instagram. Some fans also posted their reaction. A user wrote, “John sir Biceps??,” while another wrote, “Beautiful people??.” And John really loves wearing black??. John Abraham and Arjun Kapoor are often seen together at some sports events. The duo have also shared the screen space in the 2022 film, Ek Villain Returns. On the work front, John Abraham was last seen in the film, The Diplomat.