

Fire breaks out at emergency wing of NIMS in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: A fire broke out in the emergency wing of the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) in Punjagutta on Saturday.As per available information, a short circuit is suspected to have led to the flames breaking out in the ward which is located on the fifth floor of the hospital building.People on the hospital premises informed the management who called the fire control room.The fire department officials along with the fire engine were reached the spot and the fire and smoke was brought under control.

Telangana set for another record paddy production: Uttam



Hyderabad, April 19 The Telangana government has launched a large-scale paddy procurement operation for the Rabi 2024–25 season, setting a target of 70.13 lakh metric tonnes (LMTs). This follows an estimated production of 127.50 LMTs over 57 lakh acres, placing Telangana at the top among the country's paddy-producing states.

In Vanakalam, Telangana produced 153.5 LMTs of paddy over 66.7 lakh acres. Therefore, in the year 2024–25, the overall paddy production - including Vanakalam and Yasangi - will touch 281 LMTs, the highest-ever production recorded in any Indian state. Addressing all District Collectors via video conference from Civil Supplies Bhavan on Saturday, Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies N Uttam Kumar Reddy said, "We are in a situation of plenty. After a smooth and nearly flawless Vanakalam procurement, we must now execute Yasangi procurement with equal or greater efficiency."Highlighting the urgency of the procurement drive, Uttam Kumar Reddy cautioned officials to remain alert due to unseasonal rains reported in several districts. He said such weather fluctuations could damage harvested or standing paddy if not procured swiftly.This is why we must act efficiently and quickly - any delay could mean losses for our farmers," he told Collectors, urging intensified ground-level monitoring and infrastructure preparedness at PPCs.As of April 18, around 8.51 LMTs of paddy had arrived at procurement centres, of which 5.77 LMTs had already been procured - 3.79 LMTs of fine variety (Sanna) and 1.98 LMTs of coarse (Doddu). A total of 63,887 farmers had benefited, and payments - including bonuses - were being processed. Around 2.74 LMTs of paddy remained to be lifted from PPCs. To achieve the procurement target, 7,337 Paddy Procurement Centres (PPCs) have been activated out of the proposed 8,329, reaching 88 percent operational status. These centres are being managed by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), Indira Kranthi Patham (IKP) groups, and other agencies. Districts such as Nizamabad, Kamareddy, Nalgonda, and Siddipet have reported full PPC operationalisation. The Minister said that key equipment - including grain callipers, electronic weighing scales, tarpaulins, paddy cleaners, moisture meters, and husk removers - had been distributed. The state requires 17.5 crore gunny bags (9.45 crore new and 8.05 crore old), of which 9.23 crore are currently available. Collectors were asked to report infrastructure gaps early and resolve them swiftly.

KTR highlights BRS' achievements, vision for Telangana

Hyderabad: Emphasising the commitment of the BRS to the people of Telangana and its resilience as a political entity, BRS working president KT Rama Rao said on Saturday that the party continued to hold a unique place in India's political history.Addressing party leaders and elected representatives at Telangana Bhavan, he reflected on the long innings of the BRS, both as an organisation that spearheaded the movement for statehood of Telangana and later for the development of the State for nearly a decade before embarking on the present journey as a responsible opposition.Stating that the BRS' objective was not political power alone, he said the party could don a major role to steer the State in the right direction. He noted that only two regional parties, NTR's Telugu Desam Party and KCR's BRS, had managed to sustain themselves for 25 years, which shows their enduring relevance and public support.

He praised party president K Chandrashekhar Rao's transformation from a determined agitator to an effective administrator. His role was acknowledged by leaders like former President Pranab Mukherjee and former Union Minister Arun Jaitley. Hailing the BRS chief 's leadership during the Telangana movement, he recalled the challenges he faced, including opposition from powerful political forces and skepticism from the public.He highlighted the sacrifices made by leaders like Konda Lakshman Bapuji and the struggles endured by the party to establish itself as a voice for the people. He also spoke about the historical context of the Telangana movement, mentioning the sacrifices of 370 students in 1971 and the betrayal by Telangana Praja Samithi leaders who merged with Congress, which left the people disillusioned.Despite these setbacks, Chandrashekhar Rao's leadership and the grassroots efforts by the BRS reignited the movement, leading to the formation of Telangana in 2014.Rama Rao outlined the party's future plans, stressing the importance of the upcoming April 27 rally as a platform to showcase the party's strength and unity. He expressed confidence in the ability of the BRS to continue serving the people of Telangana and reiterated the party's vision for a prosperous and inclusive State.

Some political forces creating hurdles to Musi rejuvenation project: CM

Tokyo, April 19 Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has alleged that some political forces are creating hurdles to the Musi Rejuvenation project in Hyderabad.Addressing a programme organised by Japan Telugu Federation at Tokyo in Japan on Saturday, the Chief Minister said that Delhi was witnessing unchecked air pollution and the institutions are forced to declare holidays.Don't we need to learn a lesson from the uncontrolled air pollution in Delhi where the public life came to a standstill. Taking a serious note of it, we have proposed to restore and re-



juvenate the Musi river in Hyderabad," Revanth Reddy said.

He stated that Musi project, Metro Rail expansion, Regional Ring Road (RRR) and Radial roads are

being considered the most important to the progress of Telangana.The State government's intention is to invite huge investments, promote industrial development and create more employment opportunities. We have achieved quite a lot of progress in the IT and pharma sectors in Telangana. In addition to this, the plans have been envisaged to establish a Dry Port in the State," Revanth Reddy said.The Chief Minister urged the members of the Japan Telugu Federation to contribute to the progress of Telangana, emphasising that with collective effort, the state can compete on a global level.

"Feel free to share your ideas with the State government. We welcome your suggestions for the development of Telangana," Revanth Reddy stated.

Selective targeting compromises principles of justice: Smita Sabharwal on AI image of Kancha Gachibowli issue

Hyderabad: Senior IAS officer and State Tourism Secretary Smita Sabharwal on Saturday appeared before the Gachibowli police and recorded her statement in connection with the notice served to her related to the Kancha Gachibowli disputed land case.Later, responding on her official 'X' account, Sabharwal said she had fully cooperated with the Gachibowli police."As a law abiding citizen, I have given my detailed statement today to the Gachibowli police authorities under BNSS Act," she wrote.The senior bureaucrat further said the post was re-shared by as many as 2,000 individuals on the social networking site and sought clarification on whether same action was initiated for all."If not, this raises concern about selective targeting, that in turn compromises the #principles of #natural justice and equality before the Law," he said.Smita Sabharwal had shared a Ghibli-style image posted on March 31 from her 'X' handle regarding the



Kancha Gachibowli lands. In that post, a large number of bulldozers were deployed in front of Mushroom Rock, while peacocks and deer were standing in front of the bulldozers.The Gachibowli police, who are investigating said it was a fake photo. To this extent, they had served notices to Smita Sabharwal seeking her statement.

Telangana, AP States hold joint Haj review

Hyderabad, April 19 A joint coordination meeting between officials of the Haj Committees of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh States was held at the Conference Hall of Dr B.R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat here on Saturday.The meeting reviewed the elaborate arrangements being made for the Haj-2025 pilgrimage.The meeting, conducted at the request of Andhra Pradesh government, was presided over by Advisor to Telangana Government Mohammed Ali Shabbir, and was attended by Andhra Pradesh Minister for Law, Justice and Minorities Welfare N. Md. Farooq, who led the visiting delegation from AP. In his opening remarks, Shabbir Ali said Telangana would host all pilgrims departing through the Hyderabad Embarkation Point, including those from Andhra Pradesh, with utmost care and dignity.

He informed that Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy had given clear instructions to ensure that every pilgrim is treated with respect and no complaints should be received regarding services or facilities. "The Telangana Haj Committee is fully prepared to make Haj-2025 a smooth and spiritually fulfilling experience for all pilgrims," he said. Minister Md Farooq thanked the Telangana government for



its hospitality and assured full cooperation from the Andhra Pradesh administration. He said that around 1,200 pilgrims from Andhra Pradesh will embark on Haj from Hyderabad this year, and the government would coordinate closely with the Telangana Haj Committee to ensure that all requirements of the AP pilgrims are fully addressed.We are grateful for the support being extended to our pilgrims and look forward to working together in the spirit of unity and service," he said. As per the briefing, a total of

Healthy India key towards realising Viksit Bharat goal: HM Shah

New Delhi: The concept of a Viksit Bharat (developed India) cannot be realised by being unwell and that is why it is very important that every citizen remains healthy, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday.HM Shah further stated that all countrymen should take good diet, adequate water, adequate sleep and regular exercise, "the rest Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government will take the responsibility of taking care of your health".Speaking at a programme organised by the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) on the occasion of World Liver Day, HM Shah said that everyone should take a pledge to keep their 'liver' healthy with awareness, diligence and complete information.Sharing his experience of a healthy lifestyle, the Home Minister said that there has been a huge change in his life since May 2020. HM Shah said that young people can achieve a lot in their lives with water, diet, exercise and sleep as per the requirements of the body.The Union Home Minister said that the Ministry of AYUSH is working to develop

a system so that we do not fall ill."Today, even big allopathic hospitals are opening AYUSH wings. The mental and physical health of a person was included in the idea of "World Yoga Day," he noted.PM Modi-led government is bearing the entire cost of treatment, up to Rs 5 lakh, for crores of people of the country. The government is also bearing all expenses up to Rs 5 lakh for the treatment of citizens above 70 years of age.PM Modi-led government has spent Rs 65,000 crore to build the health infrastructure in the country and has made arrangements to make every Primary Health Center (PHC) and Community Health Center (CHC) a complete unit.For generic medicines, a network of more than 15,000 Jan Aushadhi Centres has been opened in the country and through these centres, medicines are available up to 80 per cent cheaper.Under 'Mission Indradhanush', arrangements have been made for free vaccination of children from birth to the age of 15 years and 1 crore 32 lakh mothers were also vaccinated.Under the e-Sanjeevani app,.

Differences among Gadwal Congress leaders flare up again

Jogulamba Gadwal: Differences among Congress leaders in the district flared up again and this time, it was at the Bhu Bharathi awareness programmes organized here on Saturday.After the Assembly elections, Gadwal MLA Krishnamohan Reddy shifted loyalties from BRS to Congress. Ever since, his supporters have been at loggerheads with supporters of Saritha Tirupataiah, who contested from the Congress in the elections.During the Bhu Bharathi portal awareness programme, supporters of both the leaders got engaged in heated arguments over protocol. Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Nagarkurnool MP Mallu Ravi, Gadwal MLA Krishnamohan Reddy and others were present on the stage.

BRS to boycott Hyderabad Local Body MLC elections



GNS News Agency, April 19

Hyderabad: BRS working president, K T Rama Rao on Saturday announced the party's decision to boycott the upcoming Hyderabad Local Body MLC elections, He stated that a whip would be issued to party councillors and warned that strict action would be initiated against those who venture to defy it.Addressing a preparatory meeting of party leaders and elected representatives at Telangana Bhavan, ahead of the BRS silver Jubilee celebrations, he also hinted at imminent by-elections in the State, urging members to gear up for the challenges ahead.Looking beyond immediate electoral battles, Rama Rao outlined plans for the party's future, including the launch of a digital membership drive post the April 27 rally and the organization of training sessions for constituency-level workers. He also revealed that the party would hold its presidential election in October, signaling a commitment to internal democracy and organizational strength.Unveiling a comprehensive roadmap for the party's upcoming political engagements, he emphasized the party's unwavering commitment to Telangana's development and its readiness to face any electoral challenge. Rama Rao expressed confidence in the party's strength, asserting that the BRS flag would continue to fly high, likening its dominance to a storm sweeping across the State.He predicted that BRS chief K. Chandrashekhar Rao would once again lead the State, reinforcing the party's position as a formidable force in Telangana politics. Highlighting the potential impact of delimitation, Rama Rao noted that Greater Hyderabad could see an increase in assembly and parliamentary seats, further solidifying the party's influence in the region.He underscored the BRS party's strong presence in Hyderabad, surpassing that of national parties like Congress and BJP. Rama Rao called on party members to intensify their efforts in preparation for the April 27 rally, urging them to hoist the party flag in every locality.He criticised Congress and BJP, labelling them as Delhi-centric parties indifferent to Telangana's welfare, and accused them of harbouring resentment towards the state's progress.

SWACHH ANDHRA – SWACHH TIRUMALA CARRIED OUT

Tirumala, April 19 As part of the Swachh Andhra–Swachh Tirumala initiative, the TTD Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary has appealed to the devotees to refrain from throwing garbage from their vehicles onto the roads in the holy pilgrimage town of Tirumala. The initiative was launched on Saturday morning at the "Kunkala Point" (last step) on the First Ghat Road along Alipiri Footpath, where he administered the Swachh Andhra pledge to the staff and commenced the clean-up drive.Speaking on the occasion, the Additional EO said that although plastic is officially banned in Tirumala, some pilgrims continue to dispose of plastic covers, food packets, and water bottles on the roadside from the vehicles they have been travelling to.This has led to a significant accumulation of garbage over the years. As a part of the Swachh Tirumala campaign, the First Ghat Road is now being chosen for a thorough cleanup, he maintained. He informed that around 400 TTD staff, along with police personnel and Srivari Sevaks and some students who have voluntarily come forward and actively participated in the drive. In addition to clearing the existing waste, dust bins have been installed along the road to prevent future littering.

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A prison crisis

India's prisons are in crisis. They resemble overcrowded warehouses for the forgotten. The India Justice Report 2025 shows the scale of the problem. As of 2022, 5.73 lakh inmates were lodged in facilities built for 4.36 lakh. That's a 131 per cent occupancy rate. By 2030, the prison population could reach 6.8 lakh — far beyond the projected capacity of 5.15 lakh. The crisis goes deeper than space. It's a human rights emergency. There are just 25 psychologists for the entire prison population. Mental illness among inmates has more than doubled since 2012. Most of those suffering are undertrials — people not yet convicted. They wait years for justice because of court delays. The medical crisis is equally grim. There is a 43 per cent vacancy in medical officer posts across prisons. Delhi has only one doctor per 206 inmates. Without proper care, prisoners suffer in silence — both mentally and physically.

This neglect is not new. The Supreme Court has often called for long-term prison planning. But state action remains slow and indifferent. Staff shortages are severe. Correctional vacancies reach 60 per cent in some regions. Delhi's jails, for example, have operated at over 250 per cent capacity. Marginalised communities — Dalits, tribals and Muslims — are overrepresented behind bars. This reflects deep-rooted inequities in the justice system.

Addressing this crisis needs political will. Fast-track courts and alternative dispute resolution can reduce undertrial numbers. Infrastructure investment must match rising inmate numbers. More doctors, psychologists and staff are urgently needed. Legal aid access must improve for the poor. Prisons should not be sites of prolonged punishment. They must become centres of reform. Treating inmates with dignity and care reflects the strength of our democracy. It is not a favour — it is a constitutional duty.

FULL-FLEDGED COMMITTEE FORMED FOR MANTHANI DIVISION PRESS CLUB—



Motukuri Srinivas emphasizes responsible and unbiased journalism. P. S. ASHOKAN, INDIAN CHRONICLE, MANTHANI, April 19: Journalists must uphold the values of neutrality and focus on reporting public issues with integrity and responsibility, said Motukuri Srinivas, President of the Manthani Division Press Club. Addressing the members during the Division Press Club's general body meeting held on Saturday, he emphasized the importance of balanced journalism and announced the formation of a full-fledged committee. During the meeting, several key resolutions were passed, including the initiation of social service activities under the club's banner. Srinivas expressed satisfaction that the Division Press Club is gaining recognition for its impartial role in society and called upon all journalists to uphold ethical standards in their work. A new committee was unanimously appointed with the following members: Organizing Secretary: Tati Vasu Goud; Division President (Spiritual, Cultural & Service Committee): Mahavadi Satish Kumar; Vice President: Ramadugu Sai Srinivas; Mandal Convenors: Manthani: Siliveru Mahender; Ramagiri: Ponnampalli Srinivas Goud; Mutharam: Akkalla Narayana; Kamanpur: Gade Balayya; Management Committee President: Chirala Ravinder; Members: Manthani Lakshman, Nampally Srinivas, Madeshi Shrayan Kumar; Disciplinary Committee: President: P. S. Ashokan; Members: Dagama Sadavali, Arigela Narayana, Kashipeta Srikanth; Publicity Secretary: Toorpati Ramu; Anti-Attack Committee: President: Kacherla Shankar; Member: Egolapu Santosh Goud; Advisor: Nagelli Rajababu. The meeting was attended by Press Club Vice Presidents Jabbar Khan and Gadeepelli Ajay Kumar, General Secretary Kodari Mallesh Yadav, Joint Secretary Madar Boyina Kishan, along with several other active members.

Telangana is only State providing fine rice to poor: Tummalala

Khammam, April 19 : Telangana is the only State in India providing fine rice to the poor, said Minister for Agriculture Tummalala Nageswara Rao. As part of the State government's ambitious fine rice distribution programme, the Minister, along with Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt and district in-charge Collector Dr. P. Sreeja had lunch at the home of beneficiary, Gudibandla Raja Rao, in Budidampadu village of Raghunathapalem mandal in Khammam district on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Tummalala Nageswara Rao said that during the previous BRS government, coarse rice was often left unused or sold in the black market. Beneficiaries, unable to consume the poor-quality coarse rice, were driven to sell it for Rs. 10 per kg and use their earnings from labour to buy fine rice instead. He emphasized that now, all white ration cardholders are contentedly enjoying the fine rice provided by the Congress government.

The State government is acquiring fine variety of paddy from farmers at a support price of Rs 500 per quintal. With the bonus offered by the State government, the cultivation of this premium variety of paddy in Telangana has increased from 20 percent to 80 percent, he said.

The Minister instructed officials to ensure that the distribution of fine rice strictly benefits only those who qualify. He encouraged the underprivileged to make good use of the fine rice initiative introduced by the Congress government.

RUN FOR JESUS ORGANIZED IN MANTHANI PROCLAIMING THE LOVE OF CHRIST THROUGH HIS“ RESURRECTION.“



P. S. ASHOKAN, INDIAN CHRONICLE, MANTHANI, April 19-4-2025. In a powerful expression of faith and unity, the "Run for Jesus" event was held in Manthani, organized by the Manthani Christian Pastors Fellowship (MCPF). The program aimed to proclaim the sacrificial love, death, and glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the public. The event was graced and led by MCPF Honorary President Aithu Elisha, President Aithu David, Vice President Daiva Krupakar, Secretary Ashok, Treasurer Jayaraj, and Committee Members Naveen, Sudarshan, Joseph, Raj Kumar, and John Wesley. Their dedication and leadership were instrumental in making the event a success. A large number of believers, along with pastors from Manthani, Ramagiri, Mutharam, and Kamanpur, participated with great enthusiasm, bearing witness to the love of Christ and spreading His message of hope and salvation. The event stood as a shining testimony to Christian unity and faith in action.

Review meeting on Reorganisation of CRO held



April 19, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator. The Executive Officer of TTD J Syamala Rao along with Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary and other officials reviewed on the reorganization of Central reception office to reduce congestion and to improve aesthetics as well to provide better waiting facilities to the pilgrims. The meeting took place at Annamaiah Bhavan in Tirumala on Saturday. The Central Reception Office (CRO) in Tirumala serves as the primary hub for pilgrims seeking accommodation, darshan tickets, and other essential services. Over the years, the CRO has experienced significant congestion, especially during peak pilgrimage seasons. Pilgrims often face challenges such as long queues, limited waiting areas leading to delays and discomfort. The existing infrastructure, designed decades ago, struggles to accommodate the growing number of devotees visiting the sacred temple town. In response to these challenges, Dr. G. Karteek, Architect & Urban Designer from the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), Vijayawada, presented a comprehensive reorganization proposal for the CRO through



a PPP. The presentation showcased an in-depth study and visionary proposal aimed at streamlining pilgrim movement, optimizing space utilization, and improving overall infrastructure in the CRO and PAC-1 area. The reorganization proposal integrates traditional spiritual aesthetics with modern urban planning strategies, aligning with the divine significance of the Seven Hills of Tirumala and the ecological setting of the temple town.

The TTD EO discussed in length on the redesigning of the facilities in CRO with dedicated queue line systems and holding areas, spatial zoning and retrofitting of existing buildings, a vision aligned with TTD's long-term Masterplan and many more. The ultimate aim is to avoid the existing congestion and also reorganization of the several decades old building, reshaping it as per the needs of the present day and also keeping in view its utility for the next few decades, the EO asserted. TTD CE Satyanarayana, TTD Town Planning and Urban Designing Expert Ramudu, Tirumala Estates Officer Venkateswarulu, DyEO Harindranath and others were also present.

FIELD ASSISTANTS SUBMIT REPRESENTATION SEEKING PAY REVISION AND JOB REGULARIZATION



P. S. ASHOKAN, INDIAN CHRONICLE, MANTHANI, APRIL 19-4-2025. Manthani, April 19: In response to a state-wide call given by the Field Assistants' Union, field assistants from Manthani Mandal submitted formal representations to the Revenue Divisional Officer, Tahsildar, and MPDO, demanding immediate resolution of long-standing issues. The delegation was led by District General Secretary of the Union, Velpula Devender. Speaking on the occasion, Devender expressed concern over the plight of field assistants who have been working under the MGNREGS (National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) for the past two decades with

minimal wages and without job security. He said successive governments have ignored their contributions, and despite being frontline workers in rural development, their struggles have gone unnoticed. He pointed out that the present Congress government, in its election manifesto, promised to implement a pay scale, enhance salaries, and provide regular employment status to field assistants. He urged the government to honor these assurances at the earliest. Among the key demands submitted in the petition were: Immediate release of three months' pending salaries (from January); Conversion of field assistants into Full-Time Employees (FTEs); Implementation of a minimum monthly salary of ₹25,000; Provision of ₹10 lakh ex-gratia to families of deceased field assistants who died while on duty; Reinstatement of terminated field assistants. The protest and submission of demands were supported by Budida Ganesh, District Secretary of the Agricultural Workers Union. Several union leaders and members participated in the event, including Jetty Arjun and Tundla Rajamallu (President and General Secretary of the Manthani Mandal Field Assistants' Union), and field assistants Ramesh, Mogili, Praveen, Devender Reddy, Ramadevi, Pochayya, Venkatesh, among others.

DEMAND FOR TRAVEL ALLOWANCE BY MGNREGS WORKERS“DAILY WAGERS WALK 4 KILOMETERS FOR UNFAIR PAY“

P. S. ASHOKAN, INDIAN CHRONICLE, MANTHANI, April 19-4-2025. In Maidupalli village of Manthani Mandal, workers under the MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) are walking nearly 4 kilometers to reach a remote forest worksite. Budida Ganesh, District Secretary of the Agricultural Labour Union, visited the location and interacted with the laborers. Speaking at the site, Ganesh expressed serious concerns:

“These workers are walking long distances under the scorching sun, yet no travel allowance is being provided. The wages they receive do not reflect the hard work and the effort put in.” He also criticized the government, stating that laborers are forced to buy their own tools like shovels and hoes, increasing their financial burden. “What is the government doing? Why is there no proper support?” he questioned. Ganesh further highlighted the risk of accidents during their daily commute and the lack of basic facilities at the worksite. He urged the government to take immediate steps: PROVIDE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE TO WORKERS; RELEASE TWO MONTHS' PENDING WAGES IMMEDIATELY; PAY FOUR MONTHS' SALARIES TO FIELD ASSISTANTS; ENSURE BASIC AMENITIES AT WORK LOCATIONS. Workers including Thundla



Kanakaiah, Tammashetty Mallayya, Isampalli Srinivas, Panthangi Lakshmi, Pettam Pushpa, and others took part in the visit and raised their voices for justice.

All languages have emerged from Sanskrit: District SP V. Harshavardhan Raju



“April 18, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator. Tirupati National Sanskrit University is organizing a two-day Sanskrit Bharati Purva Purvakalika meeting on 19th and 20th of this month. District SP V. Harshavardhan Raju participated as the chief guest of this program. As part of this program, the program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp. On this occasion, District SP V. Harshavardhan Raju said... He was very happy that prominent people from all parts of the country were coming. “He said that your efforts to bring back the past glory of Sanskrit will not be forgotten. “He said that Sanskrit is the divine language, Sanskrit is the universal language, the source of all languages, and the uniqueness of the language was conveyed. “He said that he is happy to organize 1.3 million Sanskrit language camps. He said that science, mathematics, and every subject have come from Sanskrit. “He praised that since 1981, he has been working hard for 44 years with the determination to bring Sanskrit language as a universal language. He expressed his happiness and said that he feels lucky to be able to speak to the great people present at this program. He said that it is a good result that two lakh teachers have prepared this school so far. “He also congratulated that introducing Sanskrit to 80 lakh people is not an ordinary matter. “He said that he also feels that learning Sanskrit is good. He expressed his happiness and said that he hopes that the blessings of Sri Srinivasan will be with all of you.

GRAND "JAI SHRI RAM" WRITING INITIATIVE TO BEGIN ON AKSHAYA TRITIYA.



P. S. ASHOKAN, INDIAN CHRONICLE, MANTHANI, April 19-4-2025. A massive spiritual initiative to write the name "Jai Shri Ram" 11 crore, 11 lakh, 11 thousand, 111 times will be launched on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, announced the organizers. The sacred campaign, symbolizing devotion through pen and voice, will be undertaken as part of the Jai Shri Ram Maha Yagam, and devotees from all walks of life are being invited to take part in this monumental effort. As part of this initiative, a new spiritual and cultural platform titled "Mantrapuri Hindutva Shreshtha Vardhani" has been established to coordinate and execute the program effectively. Speaking about the preparations, the organizers said a special "Jai Shri Ram Samooaham" group is being formed with the active involvement of 116 devoted couples, who will lead and coordinate the writing campaign. Devotee Maruti urged one crore devotees to join the preparatory meeting scheduled for Monday at 4 PM and be part of this divine mission. Prominent individuals who attended the planning meeting include Kotha Srinivas, Medagoni Rajamouli Goud, Gattu Naganna, Tati Buchalaiah Goud, Bejjanki Digambar, and Naramalla Krishna, among others.

Gold may hit Rs 1 lakh amid Trump tariffs, recession fears: Experts

New Delhi: The gold prices in India could soon touch Rs 1 lakh per 10 grams, as global uncertainties continue to push investors towards safe-haven assets, experts said on Saturday.

The sharp rise in gold prices is being driven by fears of a slowdown in the US economy, fuelled by President Donald Trump's renewed tariff policies. According to estimates by global brokerage Goldman Sachs, gold prices could reach \$3,700 per ounce in the near term, and possibly touch \$4,500 per ounce if trade tensions escalate further. If this happens, domestic gold prices on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) could climb to Rs 1 lakh or even Rs 1.25 lakh per 10 grams, market experts said.

Gold has already delivered strong returns to investors. In the last five years, gold prices have jumped more than 110 per cent -- from Rs 44,906 per 10 grams on April 17, 2020, to Rs 95,239 per 10 grams on April 17.

Devotees visiting the Sri Padmavati Ammavari temple should dispose of their garbage in the designated area: CI Sunil Kumar“



“April 19,Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator““Tiruchanur CI Sunil Kumar said that the main objective of Swarna Andhra Swachh Andhra is to create awareness among the people about cleanliness in every village. “The Swarna Andhra - Swachh Andhra program, which has been taken up by the state government as a prestigious event, is being organized on the third Saturday of every month. In this regard, the staff of the Tiruchanur Police Station and the Panchayat staff organized the Swarna Andhra Swachh Andhra program. As part of this program, the officials took the Swarna Andhra Swachh Andhra pledge. After that, local leaders, Tiruchanur TDP Village Committee President Kishore Reddy, Tiruchanur TDP Secretary Sai Royal and Tiruchanur CI Sunil Kumar personally cleaned



the garbage around the police station. Speaking on this occasion, CI Sunil Kumar said that the Swarnandhra Swachh Andhra program has been taken up in Tiruchanur as per the instructions of District SP Harshavardhan Raju and Chandragiri DSP Prasad. “Devotees who came to see Sri Padmavati Ammavari in Tiruchanur asked them not to throw garbage anywhere but to throw it in the place allotted for it. They appealed to all the people to keep the surroundings around them clean and called on the people to make Tiruchanur a clean city.

Tiruchanur SAILs Sainath Chowdhury, Jagannath Reddy, Aruna. Gram Panchayat staff. Secretariat staff. Village association members and people participated in this program.

Extensive Multispecialty Medical and Ophthalmological Camp Held at Puttapaka by Sri Paada Trust in Association with Patel Eye Care and Sunrise Hospital“



“ P . S . A S H O K A N “ I N D I A N CHRONICLE“MANTHANI.“19-4-2025.““On Saturday, 19th April 2025, Sri Paada Trust, in collaboration with Sri Vaidya Foundation, orchestrated an extensive free multispecialty medical and ophthalmological camp in Puttapaka village. The initiative aimed to extend quality healthcare services to underserved rural communities and witnessed an impressive turnout from the local populace.““Comprehensive eye examinations were conducted using advanced diagnostic tools, including torchlight evaluation and a state-of-the-art autorefractometer. With the support of Patel Eye Care, Manthani, founded by Mr. Buddhathi Satish Kumar, several ocular conditions were identified, including cataracts, pterygium, retinal and corneal disorders, squint, glaucoma, amblyopia, myopia, hypermetropia, and presbyopia.““Additionally, in partnership with Sunrise Hospital, the camp offered vital screenings for cardiovascular and metabolic health, such as ECG, blood pressure monitoring, diabetes detection, and blood analysis. Patients diagnosed with conditions received appropriate medications at no cost.““BC Cell Mandal President Mr. Ali Srinivas,



speaking at the event, extended heartfelt gratitude to the medical teams for delivering corporate-standard medical services to the rural heartland. He praised the selfless efforts of Patel Eye Care and Sunrise Hospital for their commitment to public health.““The camp saw active participation from several medical professionals and coordinators, including Dr. Sai Kiran, Dr. Suresh, and Dr. Kiran (Cardiology) from Sunrise Hospital, along with Camp Manager Mr. Kothur Rajender, Coordinator Mr. Satish, Marketing Assistant Manager Mr. Balu, and Assistant Executive Mr. Tirupati.““

The event was also supported by prominent local leaders and Congress members: PACS Chairman Mr. Kotha Srinivas, Village Congress President Mr. Chatlapalli Santosh, Vice President Mr. Edla Shravan, and key leaders including Mr. Sawai Ganesh, Mr. Kalvala Rajesham, Mr. I.R.V. Raju, Mr. Iluto Venkatesh, Mr. Marishetti Kumar, and Mr. Sheelam Prabhakar.““This noble initiative stands as a testament to the power of collaborative community healthcare and the enduring impact of service-driven leadership.

Create wealth with garbage... : Bojjala Sudheer Reddy



April 19, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator““Srikalahasti MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy has urged the people not to throw garbage in vain. As part of the Swachh Andhra program, he participated in a program held at Bhaskar Peta High School in Srikalahasti town on Saturday. He organized the program along with the students. Speaking on the occasion, he said that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has started a scheme to create wealth from garbage, and therefore, he asked that no one should throw garbage in vain. He asked the students to find out the problems. He advised the concerned officials to solve them. He also participated in the Kumbhabhishekam program of the Vinayak temple held in Venkatapuram village of Srikalahasti mandal. Party leaders Vijayakumar Naidu, Kanta Ramesh, Chenchaiha Naidu, local RDO Bhanu Prakash Reddy and municipal officials participated in the program...

Mahila Congress stages protest over recent hike in LPG price

Hanumakonda, April 19 Hanumakonda Mahila Congress staged a massive protest against the recent hike in LPG price by the Union government.

The protest was organised led by District Mahila Congress President B Sarala Yadav and General Secretary in-charge N Rajitha at the Ashoka Junction in Hanumakonda.Sunitha Rao, the President of the Telangana Mahila Congress, participated in the protest, which featured the burning of an effigy representing Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Sunitha Rao denounced the Union government's recent hike in LPG price and said that the

ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government was not thinking about the common people.She said the Narendra Modi-led government caters only to the rich and not the poor, demanding that the Centre roll back the increased price immediately



International Conference on Rare Earths from 21st•200 national and foreign delegates to attend three-day conference

“April 19, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator““An international conference will be held in Tirupati from the 21st of this month. The program will continue for three days on the topic of Science, Technology and Applications of Rare Earth. The program will be jointly organized by the Department of Physics of SV University and the Department of Biotechnology of Padmavati University. The details of the conference were revealed by VC Professor CH Apparao and Registrar Professor Madala Bhupathi Naidu at a press conference held at SVU on Saturday. He said that the Rare Earth Association of India from Mumbai is supporting the conference. He said that about 200 national and foreign delegates will participate in the three-day parallel conferences and submit research papers. He said that it is a great thing to organize an international conference on such a topic of great importance. Wishing the conference a successful one, the conference organizers, Professor B.



Devaprasad Raju, congratulated Professor N. John and Sushma.“The convener of the international conference said that the conference will begin on Monday, the 21st at 9:30 am. The venue for this inaugural session will be the Indira Priyadarshini Auditorium of Padmavati Mahila University. The chief guests at the inaugural conference were Padmavati Mahila University VC Pro-

fessor Vennam Uma, SVU VC Professor CH Apparao, Vikrama Simhapuri University VC Professor Allam Srinivasa Rao, Nellore, Nakhon Pathom Raj Bhat University VC Professor Jakrapong Kaikho from Thailand, Indonesia's Professor Mitra D Jamal, SVU Padmavati University Registrars Professor Bhupathi Naidu, Professor N Rajani,

Rare Earth Association of India Secretary Dr MLP Reddy, Vice President Dr CK Jayashankar, President Dr Deependra Singh. “Varsity Science College Principal Professor Padmavati, Professor RP Vijayalakshmi, Dr MLP Reddy, Professor CK Jayashankar and others participated in the program.“[5:53 pm, 19/4/2025] +91 96667 99952:

Mahavadi Satish Kumar and Ramadugu Sai Srinivas Take Charge as Spiritual & Cultural Heads of Manthani Division Press Club.““

P . S . A S H O K A N “ I N D I A N CHRONICLE“MANTHANI“19-4-2025.““Manthani: Under the leadership of the Manthani Division Press Club, a new committee has been formed for the Spiritual and Cultural Department. Mahavadi Satish Kumar has been appointed as the President and Ramadugu Sai Srinivas as the Vice President of this department.““Speaking on the occasion, both expressed their happiness and gratitude for being entrusted with these responsibilities in a town known for its spiritual significance. They assured that they would carry out their duties with dedication and sincerity.““They also thanked the Division Press Club President Motukuri Srinivas, Vice President Jabbar Khan, General Secretary Kodari Mallesh Yadav, Treasurer Gadipelli Ajay Kumar, and Assistant Secretary M. Kishan for their support and trust.



Seven Entrepreneurs in India Selected for Premier Social Innovation Accelerator, Set for April 24-25 in Hyderabad

Hyderabad:The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) will host the prestigious ISHOW India 2025 on April 24–25 at T-Hub, Hyderabad. This groundbreaking event will bring together seven hardware-driven social ventures from across India, each showcasing innovative solutions aimed at solving critical challenges in agriculture, energy, healthcare, and transportation.

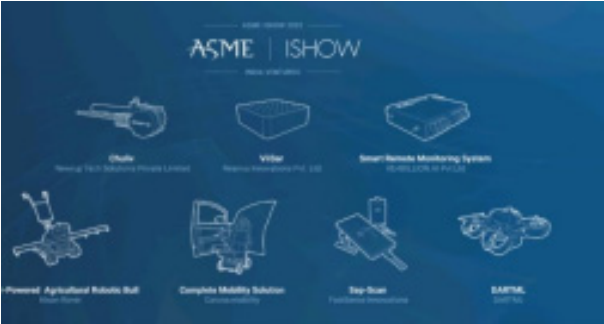
The ISHOW India ventures' innovations provide affordable, sustainable hardware technology solutions to agricultural, energy, healthcare, and transportation challenges. They are:

- Caruna Mobility (Puducherry, India)
- DARTML (Kerala, India)
- FastSense Innovations (Pune, Maharashtra, India)
- Kisan Rover (Jhalawar, Rajasthan, India)
- Neenva Innovations Pvt. Ltd. (Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India)
- Newrup Tech Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India)
- RE4BILLION.AI Pvt. Ltd. (Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India)

Over the two-day event, these startups will participate in an intensive accelerator program, benefiting from invaluable feedback and mentorship from top design and engineering experts. They will compete for a coveted place among the ISHOW 2025 cohort and a share of \$30,000 in grant funding, designed to help accelerate the development and market launch of their impactful innovations.

The event will culminate in a dynamic product showcase on April 25, followed by a high-profile awards ceremony. At the ceremony, three ventures will be selected to join the ISHOW 2025 cohort, gaining access to technical support, design services, and ASME's expansive global network to help bring their groundbreaking solutions to market.

Sri Jayesh Ranjan, IAS, Special Chief Secretary, Department of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications (ITE&C), and Department of Industries & Commerce, Government of Telangana, expressed his pride in hosting this global event: “Telangana, known as the startup state of India, is at the forefront of creating and executing policies that promote innovation for the benefit of the people. Telangana has three specific and unique policies aimed at promoting innovation, social innovation and grassroots innovation. The visions of the Telangana state and the ASME ISHOW align perfectly,” said Sri Jayesh Ranjan. “The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)’s mission is to advance innovation for the benefit of humanity, and the ASME ISHOW is a global accelerator of hardware-led social innovation. ISHOW supports entrepreneurs and ventures that have a positive social and environmental impact. The ASME Foundation India’s work is grounded in grassroots innovation. The ASME Foundation India works to promote and create awareness about core engineering fields as well as to implement engineering innovations to



improve the quality of life in rural India.” Tom Costabile, Executive Director and CEO of ASME, highlighted the significance of the event: “Through the vision and creativity of these talented entrepreneurs and the guidance of expert mentors, ASME ISHOW is transforming groundbreaking ideas into market-ready products that improve lives. This program is a key component of ASME’s support for the future of energy and aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

Free mortuary ambulance services are commendable: Former Vice President Venkaiah Naidu“

“April 19,Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator““Former Vice President and founder of Swarna Bharat Trust, Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu, was politely met by Edify Schools Director Praneeth Foundation Founder Praneeth Penumadu, felicitated him with a shawl, presented him with a bouquet and inquired about his well-being.““In this context, he inquired about the activities of Edify Schools. He especially appreciated the service programs being carried out by Praneeth Foundation. He also described the free mortuary ambulance services being provided to the poor as commendable. He encouraged



aged Praneeth Foundation to undertake more service programs in the future. When Praneeth Penumadu invited him to participate as the chief guest at the Edify Schools Annual Day event to be held in January 2026, Venkaiah Naidu responded and promised to attend.

City man loses huge money to scammer

Hyderabad, April 19 : A 35-years-old male private employee from Hyderabad, two weeks ago, received a link via SMS from an unknown number, as well as an email from alu.kunkum@gmail.com regarding a platform called “Bull Markets” to reset a password after joining. Later, the victim received multiple missed calls from someone claiming to be a senior economist (scammer), the victim returned a call. The individual, who answered introduced a trading platform claiming to help people develop trading skills and promised high returns, citing “Quantum AI” as a profit-generating system.

The victim was persuaded to deposit \$230 USD (?20,106.65) using his SBI credit card to the merchant MAM*BULLMARKETS Nairobi KE. A small profit of \$30 USD was shown to build trust. The scammers then convinced the victim to invest more. A second deposit of \$999 USD (?90,835.63) was made. The victim was shown how to make a withdrawal and successfully withdrew \$50 USD, purportedly from his profits.

Encouraged by this, the victim made further deposits: \$540 USD (49,663), \$540 USD (?49,663) and \$500 USD (45,904). After two days of trading, the victim attempted to withdraw \$1,900 USD. The “Senior Economist” called and

claimed that withdrawing at that moment would prevent the victim from participating in future trades and maintaining the necessary margin level. The withdrawal request was cancelled around 6:52 PM IST. Following this, the scammer opened multiple trades, drastically lowering the victim's margin level.

The victim received an email warning that the open trades were at immediate risk of closing due to the low margin. From this point on, the scammer refused withdrawal requests and pressured the victim to maintain margin levels by investing more. The victim then deposited \$320 USD (?27,407) via SBI UPI. The merchant name was displayed as Yawar Meat Shop, which raised suspicion about the legitimacy of the platform. Later that day, a different individual claiming to be a Senior Manager called and threatened that if the victim didn't deposit more money, the entire investment and profits would be lost. Fearing further loss, the victim made a final deposit of \$2,584 USD (?2, 28,671). Despite having a remaining balance in the trading account, the victim was not allowed to withdraw amount Rs 9, 72,276/-. The scammers sent documents and asked the victim to sign them, which the victim refused. The victim subsequently raised a complaint through the Cyber Crime Portal for assistance.

TOMCOM signs MoUs with Japanese agencies to facilitate job opportunities for Telangana youth

Tokyo, April 19 In a significant development to enhance global employment opportunities for the youth of Telangana, Telangana Overseas Manpower Company Ltd. (TOMCOM), a state-run organisation under the department of Labour, Employment, Training & Factories, Government of Telangana, signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with two leading companies — M/s. TERN (TGUK Technologies Pvt. Ltd.) and M/s Raj Group. The MoU was done in the presence of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy during his ongoing official visit to Japan. This collaboration is aimed at facilitating the recruitment of skilled professionals from Telangana to meet the growing workforce demands in Japan across several high-demand sectors.

TERN Group with its regional office in Tokyo's Shinagawa district, specialises in international recruitment for the Software, Engineering, and Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) sectors within Japan. Raj Group in partnership with Tsukui Corporation Ltd, Japan's leading nursing care employer has been working with TOMCOM for training and recruitment of caregivers and with the new MoU, will expand collaboration to non-health sectors. The two Japanese employers have jointly indicated a requirement of around 500 job openings in the next 1-2yrs in the following sectors, including Healthcare (200 positions), Engineering (Automotive, Mechanical, Computer Science/Information Technology –100 positions), Hospitality (100 positions), Construction (including Civil Engineering, Building Works, Infrastructure Development, Equipment Handling and Maintenance–



100 positions). This initiative is part of TOMCOM's broader mission to diversify international employment avenues for the youth of Telangana.

It is closely aligned with the Government of Telangana's priorities to promote global workforce mobility and empower young professionals with rewarding international career opportunities. These agreements are expected to pave the way for long-term collaboration, offering a strong platform for skilled workers and professionals from Telangana to participate and contribute to Japan's evolving labor market. This development further enhances Telangana's reputation as a dependable and high-quality source of global talent.

Congress workers clash at Bhu Bharathi meeting

Jogulamba Gadwal, April 19 In Jogulamba Gadwal district, differences between Congress members have flared up once again. The supporters of former MLAs and former ZP chairpersons protested in front of the State Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy.

The district administration organized an awareness seminar on the new ROR Act Bhubharati at Dharur mandal center on Saturday. Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy was present as the chief guest at the program, but the party activists protested after Gadwal MLA Krishna Mohan Reddy was invited to the stage and former MLA Sampath Kumar and former ZP chairperson Saritha were not invited. Nagarkurnool MP Mallu Ravi tried to pacify the activists but they did not listen.

B Tech. (Civil Engineering) and PhD in Allied Health Sciences introduced in MANUU

Hyderabad, April 19 Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) is inviting applications for online admission in regular mode courses offered at its Main Campus at Hyderabad, Satellite Campuses, Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Polytechnics across the country for the academic year 2025-2026. Total 120 programmes are being offered upto Ph.D. level under eight schools of studies and 19 different departments throughout the country in 11 different states. For the academic year 2025-26 - 31 Ph.D; 33 PG; 19 UG, 08 Professional Diploma, and various Diploma and Certificate courses are being offered. Presently, around 5170 students are enrolled in various regular courses whereas 2,840 students have taken admissions in the last academic year. MANUU has around 370 regular faculty members. The teacher and student ratio is 1:14. From this year onwards MANUU is introducing a PhD programme in Allied Health Sciences (MLT), Advance Diploma in Pashto and four Diploma programmes in Calligraphy, Telugu, Turkish and Urdu. The Bachelor of Technology (Civil Engineering) is also being introduced through Self Financing Mode.

Hydra demolishes illegal structures in GHMC limits

Hyderabad, April 19 The Hydra has demolished illegal structures in the State capital and GHMC limits today. Demolition drive was held in Injapur under Vanasthalipuram area limits. Scoops Ice Cream Company has occupied the main road leading to several colonies. In Survey Nos 213, 214, 215, 216 of Turkayanjal Municipality, a wall was erected across the road by blocking traffic to several colonies. As traffic was severely disrupted, people from the respective colonies approached the Hydraa. The Hydra officials conducted a survey and collected details based on the complaints of the colony residents. The Hydra carried out demolitions after finding that the road leading to Srirangapura Colony, Sundarayya Colony, Apple Colony, Lakshmi Nagar Colony, Indiramma Colony and about 7-8 colonies were encroached upon. On the other hand, Hydra demolitions are also continuing in Hafizpet under Miyapur limits.

The demolitions were carried out near the Kondapur

RTA office. The land dispute continues over 39 acres of land in Hafizpet's Survey No 79. A new office has been constructed under the name Vasantha House and huge sheds have been set up. After Hydra received a complaint about the land dispute, the office was demolished amidst heavy police security. The fencing around the site and the huge sheds were removed with JCBs. The Hydra gave a shock to TDP Mylavaram MLA Vasantha Krishna Prasad. While demolishing illegal structures in Hafizpet, it demolished the illegal structures on 17 acres of land belonging to the MLA. It seems that the MLA's office was also included in the demolition drive. It seems that the Hydra has prevented land encroachments worth a total of Rs 2,000 crore. Meanwhile, MLA Vasantha Krishna Prasad responded to the demolitions. He said he purchased this land in 2005. He said Rangareddy Collector had given a no objection certificate by stating that there were no objections to this land.

CPI should lead movement against Waqf amendment Act, say intellectuals



Hyderabad, April 19 Several political and public leaders and intellectuals have called for all citizens of the country, regardless of religion and caste, to unite and oppose the amendment of the Waqf Board Act. They appealed to start another struggle on the lines of the nationwide farmers' movement and make a contribution to the protection of democracy. A round table meeting was organized under the auspices of the CPI Hyderabad District Committee on the topic “Who is the Waqf Amendment Act for?” The roundtable meeting, chaired by CPI Hyderabad District Committee Assistant Secretary Kamatham Yadagiri, was attended by CPI National Executive Member Chada Venkata Reddy, State Secretary Members V.S. Bose, E.T. Narasimha, Eminent Social Scientist Moturi Krishna Prasad, MBT Official Spokesperson Amjadullah Khan, Insaf State President Munir Patel, Journalist and Writer Sky Baba, Indian Nationalist Movement, National General Secretary Mohammed Abdul Ali Zubair, Hyderabad District President Syed Naveed, All India Muslim Personal Law Board Warangal District President Maulana Fasiuddin Qasmi, Muslim Unity and Development Movement Warangal District President Mohammad Abdul Subhan, All India Sufi Ulema Council, President Maulana Khairuddin Su, Jamiat-e-Ahle Hadith, Telangana Representative Dr. Asif Umri, Jamaat-e-Ulema-e-Hind spokesperson Mehboob Madani and several intellectuals participated.

Speaking on the occasion, Krishna Prasad criticized the Central government for spending public money to

achieve the amendment of the Waqf Board Act. He also criticised the opportunists, Andhra Pradesh CM Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for supporting the bill only after compromising and fulfilling their demands. He said this amendment of the law was meant for Adani and Ambani and added that the time had come to move to free the country from Gujarati businessmen. Chada Venkata Reddy said CPI National General Secretary D. Raja had filed a petition in the Supreme Court against the Waqf Board Amendment Act brought by the Centre. He also said on the one hand, they would challenge the Central government's stance through legal battles and on the other, through public movements. He revealed that a policy decision against the Waqf Board Amendment Act was likely to be taken in the CPI National Council meeting to be held in Kerala.

ET Narasimha made it clear that the CPI would thwart any conspiracies hatched by the BJP government in power at the Center to divide religions and castes and separate people and added that it would not hesitate to sacrifice its life if necessary. He criticized that while the BJP government at the Centre was being run by the BJP, Adani and Ambani. He said there were no papers related to many mosques, Idgahs and temples that have been there for hundreds of years and challenged the Central government to take possession of them if it has the courage. V.S. Bose said the amendment to the Waqf Act should not be considered as injustice only to Muslims. He said Prime Minister Modi's political career would end with this amendment to the law. Amjadullah Khan said Chandrababu Naidu, who took power as the CM of the joint AP in 1994, had initiated the end of the Waqf land revolution. He criticized everyone, starting from YS Rajasekhara Reddy, who came to power after that, to KCR, who took charge as the CM after the formation of a separate Telangana State, as those who looted the Waqf Board lands. He said if they had opened the gates, Prime Minister Modi would not have brought the Waqf Amendment Act to loot the Waqf Board lands. CPI city executive members N. Srikanth, Shamshuddin, MD Salim, Salim Khan, Kampalli Srinivas, Gya Naresh, Mahmood and others participated in the program

SCR GM inspects ongoing redevelopment works of Secunderabad Railway Station

Hyderabad, April 19 SCR General Manager Arun Kumar Jain conducted a detailed inspection on ongoing redevelopment works of Secunderabad Railway Station on Saturday. He was accompanied by Bartesh Kumar Jain, Divisional Railway Manager, Secunderabad Division and other senior Railway officials throughout the inspection. He conducted a detailed review of the on-going redevelopment works at the station.

He took stock on the progress of upgradation works on both the sides of the Railway station (i.e., platform no. 1 & no.10 side) and advised the officials to further expedite the works so as to complete the project at earliest. The General Manager also reviewed the passenger amenities at the station and instructed the officials to take extra pre-

cautions to avoid the traffic congestion in view of temporary closure of some platforms to facilitate platforms extension works. He also inspected the on-going works of upcoming station booking, parking and circulating areas and so on.

The General Manager made a detailed review of the redevelopment works of Secunderabad Railway Station, the comprehensive measures undertaken by the Secunderabad Division officials to ensure the smooth movement of passengers while maintaining the highest standards of safety and security. He instructed the officials that in view of redevelopment work involving significant infrastructural modifications requires effective crowd management, security enhancements and passenger assistance initiatives.

KTR asks party workers to make party meet grand success

Hyderabad, April 19 BRS party working president KTR has called for hoisting the party flag in the colonies and bastis of Hyderabad and move like a band for the party formation day meeting to be held on the 27th of this month. He said the BRS party's formation meeting to be held in Elkathurthi of Warangal district on April 27 was a home festival for the Telangana people. KTR participated in the preparatory meeting of the BRS party Silver Jubilee Conference held at Telangana Bhavan with leaders and activists of Greater Hyderabad. Speaking on the occasion, KTR said the upcoming MLC elections would be boycotted. He announced that whips would be issued to the councillors and action would be taken against those who defy them. He said the people's disgust towards the Congress party would increase due to CM Revanth Reddy's crazy actions.

KTR expressed confidence that whenever elections are held in the State, the people would make the BRS party win. He praised the achievements of the BRS party as extraordinary and impossible. He said BRS created history by winning 99 corporator seats out of 150 in the 2017 GHMC elections. He said a clean sweep was made in Hyderabad in the 2018 assembly elections. He also said the pink flag flew inside ORR in the 2023 assembly elections as well. He said the deceit of the Congress party and BJP would not work in front of the people of Hyderabad. KTR said CM



Revanth Reddy created anarchy in the State in the name of Hydra. He said the CM did not demolish his brother's house or touch the houses of the rich. He criticized that Hydra showed its glory by visiting the houses of the poor during court holidays. He said Hydra did not change its performance even after the High Court gave it a hard time. He also said the real estate in Hyderabad had collapsed due to the blow of the Hydra and Revanth's incompetence. He expressed his grief that one lakh people had lost their jobs. He said Congress had beaten the stomachs of the poor by saying that they would be given a raise or a dime

MLA Raja Singh slams KTR on MLC election boycott

Hyderabad, April 19 : Goshamahal MLA Raja Singh responded to the sensational statement made by BRS party working president KTR that his party was boycotting the Hyderabad local body MLC elections. Speaking on the issue on Saturday, he made hot comments that the BRS party's plan had been exposed by the comments of KTR. He said the BRS was staying away from voting in the Hyderabad local body MLC elections to make AIMIM party win. He alleged that the Congress and BRS parties conspired to hand over Hyderabad to the Majlis. He made sensational allegations that a fraudulent agreement was reached

between these three parties. He expressed confidence that the BRS party would be destroyed in the State capital. He warned the Congress and BRS party corporators that if the Majlis party wins, their political future would be ruined. Raja Singh suggested that not participating in voting was a violation of democracy and that they should vote according to their conscience. KTR said he was not fielding his party candidate because he did not have the required number of the candidates to contest. He warned that action would be taken against anyone who violated the order not to go to the council to cast their votes.

525 students from TGSWREIS qualified for JEE Advanced

Hyderabad, April 19 A total of 525 students from the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGSWREIS) have qualified for JEE Advanced 2025. Dr. V.S. Alagu Varsini, Secretary of TGSWREIS, said this milestone marks the highest number of qualifiers in the institution's history and is being hailed as a golden chapter for the Gurukula system.

The students, many of whom hail from underprivileged backgrounds, have demonstrated that with the right support, determination and opportunity. They proved that poverty is no barrier to academic excellence. Their perfor-

mance in the JEE Mains 2025, conducted in two phases in January and April, has positioned them on par with their peers from elite private coaching institutions. Alagu Varsini noted that the achievement is a result of bold and strategic reforms initiated under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. She stated that special coaching programmes were introduced to ensure Gurukula students receive JEE training on par with top-tier private coaching centres. This year, for the first time in the institution's history, a significant number of students achieved over 90 and 80 percentile scores in the national-level engineering entrance test

Delhi govt develops ‘giant inverter’ in Kilokri to meet Capital’s power needs



GNS News Agency, April 19

The Delhi Government is developing a battery bank at the BSES power grid system in Kilokri. Under this new technology, electricity is drawn from the grid and stored in batteries, according to officials.Power Minister Ashish Sood on Wednesday visited the Kilokri site where the battery bank is being developed. “We are going to dedicate this battery

bank to the public very soon. This is a new technology where power is stored in batteries for future use, especially during a crisis. It can be called a giant inverter that will be used when there is a power shortage,” he said.The minister stated that this is the first step taken under the leadership of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta to modernise Delhi’s power sector.

“Although we are a new government, we have a firm resolve to modernise the power infrastructure. The key aim is to keep transmission and distribution together and provide reliable electricity to the public with safety. More developments are going to take place in the coming days,” said Sood.Taking on the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Sood said that in the last ten years, the previous government did nothing to develop the power sector, except for their “berozgar netas (jobless leaders)” spreading false rumours that subsidies were going to stop. “But the BJP government has silenced their voices and agenda. The scheme was approved by the Cabinet yesterday, and the ongoing power subsidies will continue in Delhi,” he added.

Clashes erupt in Nashik during demolition of unauthorised structure around dargah; 15 arrested

GNS News Agency, April 19

Police personnel put barricades after tension erupted in the area late Tuesday night following attempts by the Municipal Corporation to demolish an allegedly illegal dargah, in Nashik, Maharashtra. (PTI Photo)Police personnel put barricades after tension erupted in the area late Tuesday night following attempts by the Municipal Corporation to demolish an allegedly illegal dargah, in Nashik, Maharashtra. Clashes broke out between the police and a crowd in Maharashtra’s Nashik Tuesday night after civic authorities moved in to demolish an illegal structure built around a decades-old dargah in the city’s Kathe Galli area.The demolition was carried out by the Nashik Municipal Corporation around structures that had been built around the Satpeer Dargah. As a large number of Corporation staff and the police surrounded the place, clashes broke out after protesters angry over the demolition got into an argument with the government staff.

“The trustees of the Dargah and local citizens had agreed to remove the construction. Accordingly, all of them had gathered on Tuesday at 11 pm. At the same time, a crowd arrived from the direction of Usmania Chowk, and chaos broke out. The trustees and eminent citizens tried to reason with the mob. Senior police officers also attempted to calm the situation, but the crowd did not listen to anyone and began pelting stones,” said Kiran Kumar Chavan, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Nashik.Chavan said the police deployed tear gas shells, and carried out a mild baton charge to disperse the agitators. “In the stone-



pelting, 31 police personnel sustained minor injuries. So far, 15 individuals have been arrested in connection with the violence, and 57 two-wheelers allegedly used by the mob have been seized,” DCP Chavan told the media.A bulldozer being used to demolish an allegedly illegal structure of a dargah, in Nashik district, Maharashtra. Demolition activities commenced at around 5.30 am Wednesday with the help of two JCB machines. Nearly 90 per cent of the unauthorised structure has since been razed, with debris being swiftly cleared by municipal vehicles.A heavy police force continues to be deployed in the Kathe Galli area, with authorities rerouting traffic towards Bhaba Nagar to maintain order.The Nashik Municipal Corporation had previously issued a 15-day notice to vacate the structure that had come up around the dargah.

Ladki Bahin scheme to continue, no question of scrapping it: Ajit Pawar



GNS News Agency, April 19

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has said the government’s flagship Ladki Bahin scheme to provide financial assistance to women will continue and that there is no question of scrapping it.Under the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, which is believed to have played a key role in the victory of the ruling Mahayuti (comprising the BJP, Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar’s NCP) in the state polls last year, women are provided Rs 1,500 every month.

Talking to reporters on Tuesday night, Pawar, who is also the state’s finance minister, said: “The budgetary allocation for the implementation of the scheme has been made

and there is no question of scrapping it.” Earlier, state Women and Child Development Minister Aditi Tatkare on Tuesday said no change has been made in the amount of assistance paid under the scheme, but some 7.74 lakh women already getting Rs 1,000 under another scheme are being paid the difference of Rs 500.She was responding to media reports claiming the aid under the Ladki Bahin scheme was reduced for 7.74,148 women who were re-ceiving benefits of other schemes.

Rs 1,500 per month are paid under the Ladki Bahin Yojana to women who are not taking advantage of any other government scheme. To those who are receiving a benefit of less than Rs 1,500 under other schemes, the difference is paid under the Ladki Bahin Yojana, Tatkare said.In line with this policy, the difference of Rs 500 is being paid to 7,74,148 women who are receiving Rs 1,000 per month under the Nam0 Shetkari Samman Yojana, the NCP leader said in a post on X.“No eligible woman has been excluded from the Ladki Bahin scheme, and no change has been made in the said process after July 3, 2024,” Tatkare said, adding she has clarified about the same during the budget session of the state legislature.The opposition was constantly spreading misinformation about the scheme and its leaders either have a poor understanding of administrative matters or their morale has been hit by the success of the scheme, she claimed.

3,000 Haryana private schools will face action if 25% seats are not reserved for economically weaker students: Minister Mahipal Dhanda

GNS News Agency, April 19

Nearly 3,000 private schools in Haryana will soon face action if they fail to comply with the government directive of reserving 25 per cent of Class 1 seats for students from economically weaker sections (EWS), said Education Minister Mahipal Dhanda in Chandigarh Dhanda, during a review meeting with the senior officers of the education department, said that under the Right to Education (RTE) Act it is mandatory for all recognised private schools in Haryana to abide by the reservation rule.

The minister has directed education department officials to ensure the enforcement of the rule, adding that non-compliance could lead to the cancellation of the school’s recognition.He said that 70 per cent of the 10,000 private schools have so far allocated seats through the Ujjwal Portal.Dhanda also stated that under Rule 158(6) of the Haryana School Education Rules, 2003, no recognised school in the state is allowed to compel students or their parents to purchase textbooks, stationery, or uniforms from a particular shop, nor are the schools permitted to change their uniforms within five years.He said that the government has so far received 40 complaints related to different issues through the Education Department portal apart from 57 complaints through email. “All complaints are currently under investigation, and strict action will be taken against any schools found in violation,” he said.The minister shared



that while 2,07,685 students were enrolled in Class 5 in government schools as of April 30, 2024; 2,04,163 students have already been admitted by April 15 this year.Going by the trend, Dhanda expressed confidence that by April 30, the number of admissions will surpass last year’s figure, reflecting the growing trust in government schools and the noticeable improvement in the quality of education.The minister further said that under the RTE Act, the funds for uniforms for government school students from Classes 1 to 8 will be transferred directly to their bank accounts by the last week of April. Free textbooks will be distributed to all such students by April 21.

Bengal’s Bhangar slowly returns to normal after Waqf protest violence; arrests rise to 16



GNS News Agency, April 19

The Soonepur Bazar area. According to police sources, the trouble began when ISF supporters, en route to a, anti-Waqf Act rally in Kolkata that lacked official permission, were stopped by police on Bhangar’s Basanti Highway. The Soonepur Bazar area on Tuesday. According to police sources, the trouble began when ISF supporters, en route to a rally in Kolkata that lacked official permission, were stopped by police on Bhangar’s Basanti Highway. (Normalcy has gradually returned to Bhangar in the South 24 Paraganas district of West Bengal, after a violent protest on Monday led to the arrest of 16 individuals.

The unrest, reportedly involving supporters of the Indian Secular Front (ISF), erupted during a planned rally against a recent amendment to the Waqf Act. Until yesterday, nine persons had been arrested.Of the 16 now arrested

by the Kolkata Police, 12 originate from Uttar Kashipore, three from Hatishala, and one from the Chandneswar police station area. Authorities claim to have identified more individuals through CCTV and video footage.According to police sources, the trouble began when ISF supporters, en route to a rally in Kolkata that lacked official permission, were stopped by police on Bhangar’s Basanti Highway. Allegedly, protesters attempted to breach police barricades near Bhojerhat, resulting in clashes and a subsequent lathi-charge by the police.Later, news of the highway incident reached Shonepur Bazar, where residents were gathered to discuss the Waqf bill. Eyewitnesses alleged that a confrontation between police and protestors escalated, leading to stone pelting, damage to property, and the torching of five motorbikes outside the Shonepur Hat Jame Masjid.Residents and community leaders, including Mohammad Alauddin, the Muezzin of the Masjid, have condemned the violence while also expressing their opposition to the Waqf Act amendment.Shopkeepers in Bhangar have begun to reopen their establishments under a significant police presence. Md Khalique Ansari, former vice-president of the West Bengal State Minority Cell, has appealed for peace while supporting the right to democratic protest. Authorities are continuing their investigation into the unrest.“It is their government and they have passed the bill. At no cost should people indulge in arson, violence and damaging properties. It is your right to protest, you can. The government at the Centre is there today, it might not be there tomorrow. We all have been appealing to people to maintain peace,” said Ansari.

In Yudh Nasheyen Virudh numbers, a big story: 407 woman smugglers arrested

GNS News Agency, April 19

According to data about cases registered under the NDPS Act till April 7, the maximum number of women was arrested in Hoshiarpur district (43).The number of arrests in other districts and commissionerates of police (CP) are Sangrur (33), Jalandhar Rural (28), Ludhiana CP (27), Patiala (24), Barnala (21), Kapurthala (21), Faridkot (17), Gurdaspur (16), Muktsar (16), Moga (15), Amritsar CP (14), Ludhiana Rural (14), SBS Nagar (14), Mansa (12), Amritsar Rural (9), Bathinda (9), Ferozepur (8), Khanna police district (8), Fazilka (7), Fatehgarh Sahib (6), Jalandhar CP (6), Tarn Taran (6), Malerkotla (5), Pathankot (4), Batala police district (3), Ropar (3) and Mohali (2). Notably, women drug smugglers have been arrested in each of the 23 districts of Punjab, it says.This list also includes 16 women from other states have been arrested in Punjab — Haryana (3), West Bengal (3), Delhi (2), Jharkhand (2), Uttar Pradesh (2), Chandigarh (1), Himachal Pradesh (1), Madhya Pradesh (1) and Rajasthan (1).The recent arrest of woman police constable Amandeep Kaur in Bathinda for alleged drug smuggling has brought into sharp focus the role of women in Punjab in the drug trade, prompting the Punjab Police to swing into action with women smugglers.

Speaking with The Indian Express, Sandeep Kumar Malik, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Hoshiarpur, where the maximum number of women drug smugglers were arrested, said, “Certain areas in the district are known for smuggling. It’s like a family business. In many instances, we found women with multiple FIRs registered against them for drug smuggling.”“With male members of several families behind bars in previous smuggling cases, it is often left to their women to continue the trade. It is observed that the men lodged in jail give commands to their women for selling drugs. Hence, there is a complete ecosystem of drug merchandising within the family,” the SSP added.Constable Amandeep Kaur’s arrest allegedly with 17 grams of narcotics made headlines due to her fame as an Instagram celebrity, but the Punjab Police claimed to have caught several notorious women smugglers in the border district of



Amritsar during the ongoing drive.On March 26, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav divulged that the Amritsar Commissionerate Police dismantled a cross-border drug cartel with the arrest of one Mandeep Kaur (27) of Ibban Kalan village in Amritsar and three others with 5.2 kg of heroin.“The preliminary investigation revealed that Mandeep was in a relationship with a person who introduced her to Pakistan-based smugglers. Mandeep’s ancestral house is in the border village of Khaira in Tarn Taran, approximately two kilometres from the Indo-Pak border fence,” Yadav said.The DGP further said Mandeep would occasionally don a police uniform to carry out her activities.On March 18, Amritsar police arrested two women with 10 pistols and 2 kg of heroin at Bharopal village under the Gharinda police station of the Amritsar rural police district. Kuljit Kaur and Rajbir Kaur were arrested under the NDPS and Arms Acts, the DGP said.

Senior police officials said not only women from modest backgrounds were found involved in the drug trade, but they arrested former Congress MLA Satkar Kaur, who is now in the BJP, and her driver for allegedly trying to sell 100 grams of heroin in Mohali’s Kharar area in October 2024.Satkar was at the wheels of a luxury car and had come to deliver heroin after a Rs 2.5 lakh deal, police said.Kaur was the MLA from the Ferozepur rural constituency from 2017 to 2022 and joined the BJP in 2022 after the Congress denied her a ticket to contest the Assembly elections.

From dreams to uniform: How Pune women Rutuja Warhade and Nandini Waikar charted their path to NDA

GNS News Agency, April 19

In a country where service to the nation is often regarded as the highest duty, two young women from Pune — Rutuja Warhade and Nandini Waikar — have taken their dreams all the way to the National Defence Academy (NDA). Their recent selection into one of the world’s most prestigious military training institutions is not just a testament to personal determination but also a reflection of family support and quiet resilience.The selection of Warhade and Waikar to NDA comes at a time when the first batch of girl cadets who was admitted to the military training institute in June 2022 is set to pass out from the academy in May this year. The academy has said that the training has been conducted in a gender-neutral and gender-sensitive manner.

Rutuja Warhade, who secured an All India Rank 3 and was the first-ranked female candidate, knew as early as Class 9 that she wanted to join the armed forces. “My father had once dreamed of joining the forces but couldn’t pursue it due to lack of facilities. I wanted to fulfil that dream,” she said. When Warhade first witnessed the first Passing Out Parade of NDA, it left a lasting impact and deepened her resolve.Preparing for the toughest hurdle in the process — the Services Selection Board (SSB) — interview became her sole focus. With help from retired officers, teachers, and batchmates, Warhade pushed through. She credits her mother for laying a strong academic foundation that helped her clear the written examination with ease. Warhade admitted that managing time between academics, fitness, and personality development was not easy. “Discipline was the only constant. I had to say no to distractions and stay focused every single day,” she said.

Warhade is now preparing for the rigorous four-year training ahead — three years of NDA and one more at the service academy. “The course will be physically and mentally demanding. I’ve already started preparing for it,” she said. Her parents are proud and emotional. “She got the fruits of her hard work. There were times she felt low, but we stood by her. She never gave up,” her father said.Her mother added, “It was my dream to see my children do something extraordinary. Rutuja always wanted to do something out of the box. She found inspiration in her father and maternal grandfather, who had also attempted the SSB. As parents, especially of daughters, it’s important that we sup-



port their choices and believe in them.”

Nandini Waikar, who secured an All India Rank 27, was the third-highest-ranked female candidate. She also grew up with a dream to join the forces. “Three years ago, I decided to join NDA. Since then, I’ve been preparing. My family and friends were my biggest support,” she said. The SSB interview, she said, was the most demanding part of the process. What gave her an edge was the leadership development she underwent during various academy events. “We would practice speaking on different topics, which improved my communication and confidence,” Waikar said.

Her father, overwhelmed with emotion, said, “It was the most beautiful moment of my life. I had taken her to many parades, and I saw the spark in her eyes. She’s a born fighter.” Her mother, equally proud, said, “She worked so hard, often sacrificing sleep. I used to tell her stories of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, whose vision and courage inspired our family. She wanted to contribute to the nation just like him.”As they step into a training environment that was once a male-dominated one, both cadets are clear that they expect no special treatment. “The training is equally tough for all, and the outcome will be equal too,” Waikar said. Their message to aspirants is simple: “Believe in yourself. Don’t let societal expectations define your dreams. The path is hard, but the reward is worth every step.”

Kejriwal’s ‘eyes and ears’ Nawal Agrawal resigns as Punjab chief governance officer



GNS News Agency, April 19

Once known in the government circles as AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal’s “eyes and ears on the ground” in Punjab, Nawal Agrawal has resigned as chief governance officer, a post to which he was appointed in

September 2023.Sources said that the IIT Kharagpur alumnus has cited personal reasons for quitting.

A few hours later,the state government, in a minor reshuffle, removed Girish Dayalan, a 2011-batch IAS officer, from the post director of Governance Reforms Department.

Dayalan has been asked to report to the Chief Secretary.He is now among six IAS officers in Punjab who have not been given posting by the government.Agrawal, who had been working on several governance projects, was not available for comments.No government official was willing to say anything on record about the development except that Kejriwal was paying keen attention on governance reforms in the state as he was trying to make Punjab a model state as far as governance was concerned.A.B.Tech and M.Tech degree holder from IIT-Kharagpur in chemical engineering, and a post-graduate diploma holder from Ashoka University, Agrawal had earlier worked with the Haryana government.

Engineer-turned-drug peddler held in Bengaluru with ‘hydro ganja’ worth Rs 4 crore, Rs 36 lakh cash

GNS News Agency, April 19

The accused, Jijo Prasad, 25, a resident of Bommanahalli, was nabbed by the Anti-Narcotics Wing while he was waiting to deliver the parcel in a vacant plot near Veer Sandra, close to Electronic City.The accused, Jijo Prasad, 25, a resident of Bommanahalli, was nabbed by the Anti-Narcotics Wing while he was waiting to deliver the parcel in a vacant plot near Veer Sandra, close to Electronic City. The Central Crime Branch (CCB) of Bengaluru police arrested a civil engineer-turned-drug peddler for allegedly supplying “hydro ganja” to IT professionals in the city, officers said Tuesday. The police also seized from him 3.5 kg of the high-grade contraband, valued at Rs 4 crore, along with Rs 36 lakh in cash.Hydro ganja or hydroponically grown weed is a highly potent variant of ganja and is much more expensive.



He used WhatsApp to coordinate with clients and operated discreetly to avoid detection. To mask the smell and avoid suspicion, he packed the drugs in airtight plastic covers and arranged meetings in secluded spots of his choice, the police added.A CCB officer revealed that Prasad had built a wide customer base among techies, leveraging his professional background and low profile to stay under the radar. His arrest followed a tip-off from a police informant.The bust comes amid a larger crackdown on the smuggling and distribution of hydro ganja in Bengaluru. Authorities believe that most of the supply is sourced through the dark web and foreign sellers, with the delivery routed through postal services. However, Prasad’s case has exposed a new channel of interstate smuggling via Kerala.

MC crackdown on misuse of water: 180 notices, 8 challans issued on first day



GNS News Agency, April 19

The Chandigarh Municipal Corporation (MC) first introduced a 3 per cent property tax on the annual rateable value (ARV) of commercial, industrial, and institutional lands and buildings in 2004.Committee members Harjeet Singh, Manoj Sonkar and Lakhbir Singh, along with senior MC officials, participated in the session. In a bid to prevent the misuse of potable water, the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation (MC) launched its annual water conservation drive on Monday morning, issuing 180 notices and eight challans to violators for wasting drinking water.

According to officials, the campaign is part of an intensified effort to promote judicious water usage, particularly during the summer months.Officials said the drive conducted between 5.30 am and 8.30 am following the the order of MC Commissioner Amit Kumar was aimed at discouraging practices like washing vehicles, courtyards, or watering lawns using hoses/pipes. On the first day, several residents were found flouting the guidelines, they said.Under

the campaign, which will continue until June 30, anyone found watering lawns or washing vehicles using hoses/pipes is liable to be fined Rs 5,788.Additionally, households with leaking tanks, taps, water meters, or coolers were served notices with a two-day deadline to carry out repairs, failing which violators will face penalties.Most of the violations on Monday involved residents washing cars and courtyards using potable water. As part of the enforcement, MC teams documented the breaches with photographs and videos for evidence.The MC Commissioner urged citizens to save drinking water and avoid its misuse. He also encouraged residents to opt for treated tertiary (TT) water for gardening and other non-potable uses.Shamlat land to be reserved for community development: MCThe Slum Development Committee of the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation has decided to earmark Shamlat (common) land in city villages exclusively for community development purposes such as parks, playgrounds, community centres, and essential infrastructure.

The directive was issued during the committee’s first meeting, chaired by Senior Deputy Mayor Kuljeet Singh Sandhu.It was also decided that the departments concerned must prepare cost estimates up to Rs 15 lakh for urgent development projects in under-served areas, which will be reviewed in the next meeting for prompt implementation.Additionally, the committee sought a detailed report on all rented shops in villages now under the MCC jurisdiction, including rental terms and current occupancy, to ensure better revenue and space utilisation.Committee members Harjeet Singh, Manoj Sonkar and Lakhbir Singh, along with senior MC officials, participated in the session.Sandhu emphasised that the committee aims to bridge development gaps in neglected areas and ensure basic civic facilities reach every resident.

8,286 drink-driving challans issued since 2023, nearly 550 licences to be suspended

traffic challans, drunk drive cases, indian expressThe rising number of drunk-driving cases, coupled with a low suspension rate and growing case backlogs, is raising concerns about the effectiveness of current traffic laws in ensuring road safety. The Chandigarh Traffic Police has issued a total to 8,286 challans for drink driving since 2023, as the city witnesses an increase in the number of drunk driving violations and only a small fraction of offenders is facing the deterrent action of driving licence (DL) suspension.According to data of the Chandigarh Traffic Police, in 2023, as many as 3,160 drink driving challans were issued, in 2024 – 3,561 and till March 31 in 2025 -1,565.Of the 8286 challans, nearly 5,000 cases were disposed of, while in nearly 550 cases, DL suspension was recom-



mended, it says.Under the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, driving under the influence of alcohol can lead to hefty fines, imprisonment, and/or suspension of the driver’s license.“Police should work more strictly, and the execution of law should be a deterrent against the tipsy drivers in the city. Even the people who have been found driving drunk find a way out

and manage easily to avoid their licences getting cancelled,” said Harman Singh Sidhu, chairman of Arrive Safe Society.“The rising number of drunk-driving cases, coupled with a low suspension rate and growing case backlogs, is raising concerns about the effectiveness of current traffic laws in ensuring road safety,” Sidhu added.A senior police officer said, “Additional

checkpoints across the city are being set up, which has led to a noticeable increase in the number of challans issued for drunk driving.”However, going by recent incidents in the city whereby drunken drivers were involved, a high-speed Mercedes crashed and mounted the central roundabout at Matka Chowk, Sector 17, Chandigarh, narrowly averting a major tragedy.

Amid Panjab University protests, female students raise alarm over campus safety



GNS News Agency, April 19

As protesting students called off their hunger strike at Panjab University late Tuesday evening, female students from multiple departments spoke out against what they described as a “persistent atmosphere of neglect, fear and institutional exclusion”.“There’s no sense of safety after dark,” said Deepti Sehrawat, a student of the Department of Anthropology. “We walk back from the Sector 14 library at night with no lighting, no patrols, and no one around to turn to if something happens. We’re told we’re overreacting, but it’s our daily reality.”Students allege that at least four gates on the South Campus remain open or are only lightly guarded. “There’s no police in the beatbox opposite the Sector 25 gate,” said a second-year student from the Department of Psychology. “Anyone can walk in — locals, schoolboys, and even strangers who ask us our names and departments as we walk to our hostels. Once, a group of men in a jeep stopped and tried to get details out of me. There was no security nearby.”The Sector 25 gate next to a residential area has long been flagged as a vulnerable point. “It’s not even chest-high and completely unmanned. We’ve seen men hopping over it, even on the day of the incident where a student, Aditya Thakur, got knifed,” said a student from the Department of Hotel Management. “There’s no CCTV and no barrier.”

Streetlights on key campus routes reportedly remained non-functional for months. “The path between the hostels

and the library was pitch black until last week,” Deepti added. “Only after protests began did lights start working again.”Komal Preet, former Department Representative (DR) of Laws and currently an LLM student at UILS, said many women remain silent out of fear of judgment or neglect. “Most of us don’t report anything. Not because we’re unaffected, but because we’ve been conditioned to stay quiet. There’s no female-led safety committee, no self-defence clubs, no peer spaces where women feel heard.”Hostel security protocols, too, have come under scrutiny. “The attendance register is just a formality,” said Deepti. “Even if someone doesn’t sign in by 10 pm, the hostel staff don’t call. You can walk in and out of the hostel as well as the university whenever you want, no one asks anything.”Late-night security checks are reportedly nonexistent. “We haven’t seen a patrol outside our hostel in weeks,” said a second-year student from the Department of English. “There’s no one posted near dark stretches. If something goes wrong halfway between the hostel and the library, there’s nobody to turn to. Guards work overtime and are underpaid; how much can they handle alone? We need retired army professionals and more skilled guards,” she added.While grievance cells technically exist, students say they feel inaccessible. “There aren’t enough female staff. After the recent violence, we’re even more afraid to approach authorities,” Komal added. “We feel invisible, not just in terms of safety, but in the protest itself.”Deepti, currently, the only woman activist leading the protest, echoed the sentiment. “I’ve been raising these issues alone. Women’s voices aren’t just ignored but they’re not even included.”University authorities did not respond to requests for comment.The protesters were demanding visible reforms, starting with improved lighting, round-the-clock patrolling, and the immediate resignations of both the DSW and the Chief Security Officer (CSO). In response, a new Joint Action Committee (JAC), comprising Kuldeep, Abhishek Garg, and Prakhar Singh Paliwal, has been proposed to oversee the functioning of the DSW office.“The students have vowed to continue their protest until their demands for increased security and accountability are addressed,” Archit Garg, Vice President of the Panjab University Campus Students’ Council (PUCSC), said earlier.

BJP councillors warn of mass resignation over hike in property tax & collector rates

GNS News Agency, April 19

In a dramatic turn of events, BJP councillors and Mayor Harpreet Kaur Babla appear to be heading towards a confrontation with the Chandigarh Administration over the recent hikes in the property tax and collector rates.A crucial meeting was held on Tuesday at the BJP’s Chandigarh headquarters, Kamlam. State party president Jitender Pal Malhotra chaired the meeting, which was attended by the mayor and all elected and nominated councillors of the BJP.According to sources, the BJP councillors are actively considering a collective resignation as a mark of protest against the administration’s unilateral decisions, which they claim are being made without considering public sentiment or the elected House’s opinions. The councillors argue that such moves are placing an undue financial burden on residents, while their own inputs are being disregarded in key policy matters.

This brewing rebellion is seen as a response to mounting criticism from the opposition and the public, especially after the administration moved ahead with implementing a property tax hike despite the proposal being rejected in the House meeting. The councillors reportedly expressed that if the administration fails to take corrective steps soon, they are prepared to resign in mass.Sources revealed that this issue was earlier discussed with BJP National General Secretary (Organization) B.L Santosh and Chandigarh BJP in-charge Atul Garg. The senior leaders are believed to have assured that the matter would be raised with Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Councillors had also pressed for the reversal of these unpopular decisions to avoid public backlash ahead of the upcoming Municipal Corporation elections in December 2026.Meanwhile, amid intensifying political pressure, Mayor Harpreet Kaur Babla recently met with the UT Chief Secretary to request a rollback of the property tax notification. Despite submitting a formal representation, her plea received no response from the administration.Mayor Babla has publicly voiced her frustration, calling the administration’s conduct discriminatory. She noted that the Municipal Corporation delivers 80 per cent of the city’s civic services, yet does not receive revenue sharing from the Registering and Licensing Authority (RLA).

Mayor Babla questioned how the administration could notify a property tax hike despite the House rejecting the proposal.“The increase in property tax has to be rolled back. Without consulting the councillors, the property tax has been increased, which will not be tolerated. We have been asking the administration for funds, but they are not allocating us. All the expenses are on us, nothing is going right in the City, roads are not in good condition, and there is a short-



age of water”, noted Babla.“How will we ask the city people for tax when we are unable to provide them with Civic amenities? So, if the property tax is not rolled back, all BJP councillors and the mayor will resign,” added Babla.Meanwhile, earlier, during the BJP meeting, several councillors echoed similar sentiments, with some raising the issue of mass resignation.As buzz grows over BJP councillors, including Mayor Babla, threatening to resign in protest against recent hikes in property tax and collector rates, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders slammed the move as a political stunt to mislead voters ahead of elections.AAP Chandigarh State Treasurer J.D. Ghai dismissed the resignation talk as “crocodile tears,” asserting, “The BJP has failed to deliver any meaningful development in the city over the past decade. Now, they are trying to shift focus from their failures by creating drama.”

Echoing Ghai’s sentiments, AAP Women’s Wing President and councillor Prem Lata also called it a “fixed drama” orchestrated to fool the public. “This resignation drama, staged in the presence of the Chandigarh BJP president, is nothing but a distraction. The property tax hike was approved by the BJP-led central government. If they truly cared for public welfare, they would resign overall central government decisions harming Chandigarh,” she said.“The mayor herself claimed to have met Home Minister Amit Shah, who promised grants for the Municipal Corporation. If the BJP truly stands with the people of Chandigarh, its councillors and Mayor should resign over these unfulfilled promises, not just over one issue for political mileage,” Prem Lata added.AAP leaders said the people of Chandigarh are no longer unaware — they recognize the difference between real governance and “political stunts.”

Woman shot dead near Shahdara park, man last seen with her picked up for questioning

GNS News Agency, April 19

A young woman was found shot dead near a park at GTB Enclave in Shahdara late Monday. Sources in the police said they have picked up a suspect for questioning — allegedly the woman’s boyfriend — who could be seen walking with her in CCTV camera footage from the area.The police said the woman was a witness to a murder that had taken place in Nand Nagari last November.“A man was murdered when he allegedly stepped in to stop two men from harassing the woman and rebuked them,” said an officer. The two men were later arrested.The police said they are looking into all possible angles, including motives borne out of revenge or relationship issues.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) Neha Yadav said they received a PCR call on Monday night regarding a woman lying dead on the road. “The local police found a woman lying dead on a service road near Sunder Nagari,” Yadav said, adding that there were two bullet injuries on the body. Sources said she had been shot on her cheek and chest.The body of the woman, who has been identified, was brought to Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital for postmortem examination.The woman’s relatives told The Indian Express that she was living with her elder sister for over a month after their mother’s death.

When contacted, the elder sister said, “We were wor-

ried about her... and wanted to get her married. We even asked her if she liked someone but she never gave us a straight answer.”“We had planned to send her to Jaipur to live with our pregnant sister... she was supposed to leave on the 17th, after our mother’s chhalisi,” the sister added. Chhalisi is a funeral rite observed after 40 days of a person’s death.The elder sister was informed of the woman’s disappearance at midnight, while she was working at a private hospital. “My daughter called me to say that (she) wasn’t home... My uncle later told me that she had been talking to someone over the phone before she left home,” she said.Claiming that the woman often went out in the evening to meet her friends, the family reasoned that they were not immediately worried when told that she was not at home.Late night, the police showed up at the house, asking the family to provide the woman’s photograph and a description of the clothes she was wearing. “The police did not confirm anything to us until morning,” the woman’s maternal aunt said.By 7 am on Tuesday, the victim’s neighbours raised an alarm. “(The woman’s) photograph was being circulated on WhatsApp groups in the area. Everyone was saying that she was the murder victim,” said the sister.Panicked, the family rushed to nearby hospitals and police stations before getting to know who had been killed. In front of the mortuary on Tuesday, the family awaited the postmortem examination to take place.

Why are ASHA workers protesting in Kerala? | Explained



The story so far: For over two months now, a section of Kerala's 26,125-strong community of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) have been on a day-night agitation on the streets demanding better remuneration and retirement benefits. While the agitation gained much attention and was also raised in Parliament, the issues raised by the ASHAs remain unresolved.

Why are they protesting?

ASHAs in Kerala are given a monthly honorarium of ₹7,000 and a fixed incentive of ₹3,000. Depending on the area where they work (for example, the tribal belt), they also get additional incentives. The payment of the entire honorarium and incentives are dependent on them fulfilling certain work-related criteria. The honorarium is paid by the State while the incentives are paid by the Centre and State at a 60-40 ratio. The State government claims that Kerala pays one of the highest honorarium to ASHAs, whereas the incentives given to ASHAs by the Union government for various services has remained the same from the inception of the scheme. Kerala Health Minister Veena George's statement that almost all ASHAs in the State are drawing anywhere from ₹10,000- ₹13,000 a month was refuted by the ASHAs who pointed out that they received much less in reality because of the criteria linked to honorariums.

What are the long term demands?

In Kerala, which has one of the highest minimum wage structures, and where daily wages for various jobs range anywhere from ₹700-₹1,200, ASHAs earn less than 250 daily. Though their immediate demands were the release

of pending amounts due to them, they also demanded that the criteria linked to the honorarium be removed. Their main demand is to hike the honorarium to ₹21,000 a month so that they receive at least minimum wage (₹700 daily). They also sought a lump sum of ₹5 lakh on retirement. The ASHA scheme, when conceived in 2005, envisaged ASHAs as health volunteers rather than as a regular workforce. Hence they receive no fixed salary, no pension or other social security benefits. ASHAs point out that they would forever remain on the fringes unless they were made into a regular workforce.

What is the State saying?

The State Government has all along maintained that ASHAs come under the Union government and that it was entirely up to the Centre to change the fate of ASHAs by making fundamental changes in the scheme such as revising the incentive pattern and changing their employment status from non-paid "health volunteers" to a regular workforce. The State has also called out the Centre for refusing to give the cash grant it owed to the State National Health Mission (NHM) for the year 2023-24 — ₹636 crore — which has precipitated the current crisis and totally derailed the functioning of the NHM. Though the Government issued orders de-linking the conditions which were attached to the honorarium payment, it has refused to relent to the ASHAs' demand for a hike in honorarium or retirement benefits, citing the State's precarious finances. Moreover, the State government is peeved that the Kerala ASHA Health Workers' Association (KAHWA) which is leading the agitation is doing so in front of the Secretariat and not in front of the Raj Bhavan. It has tried to discredit the agitation, accusing KAHWA of leading an "anti-government" movement.

What is the current position?

The Union Health Minister has declared in the Rajya Sabha that the incentives for ASHAs would be revised, yet no timeframe has been fixed for the same. During the last round of negotiations, the State Government put forth a suggestion that a committee be set up to study the issues of ASHAs, including the honorarium hike. KAHWA suggested that in the interim, ASHAs be given a hike of at least ₹3,000 — an increase of ₹100 per day — which was rejected by the State.

Wealthy Indians under-reporting their income to avoid taxes: study

A paper studying national accounts — and sampling asset disclosures by Lok Sabha MPs — found rich Indians are likely under-reporting their income, raising the possibility that income inequality in India is starker than previous studies may have indicated. The paper by Delhi School of Economics director Ram Singh finds that "the wealthier a household is, the smaller the income it reports relative to its wealth". It is not uncommon for affluent individuals' wealth, such as fixed assets and long-term capital investments, to relatively outgrow their income. But data from the national accounts, income tax statistics from the Central Board of Direct Taxes, and election candidate filings show that "a 1% increase in family wealth is associated with a more than 0.6% decrease in the reported income-wealth ratio," the paper says. Dodging the tax: Decreasing trend in income-wealth ratio persists for all versions of income reported to tax authorities, states the paper. This includes the income reported as taxable and the total income declared in rich households, the relative share of reported income against wealth shrinks even further. For a family listed in the 2021 Forbes richest Indians list, the study estimates that income is a mere 1/12th of wealth.

"The decreasing trend in the income-wealth ratio persists for all versions of income reported to tax authorities, namely the income reported as taxable and the total income declared, including capital income." The paper was published in the May 2025 edition of the International Association of Research in Income and Wealth's Review of Income and Wealth. Going to the richest households, the relative share of reported income against wealth shrinks even further. For a family listed in the 2021 Forbes richest Indians list, the study estimates that income is a mere 1/12th of wealth. This, Mr. Singh says, is likely indicative of income concealment, likely to avoid taxes. The result has been a regressive taxation structure, where the effective income tax rates actually reduce the richer an individual gets. The data throws up anomalies: namely, while an increase in ownership of equity shares results in a comparable boost in income as well as wealth, an increase in ownership of agricultural land and commercial property decreases the ratio. This should not be happening, Mr. Singh points out, as "rental yields" are nearly always better than equity dividends. "Absent tax evasion, these results would seem counter-



intuitive," the paper says, pointing out what appears to be, specifically, under-reporting of farm rent income, and abuse of farmland ownership by declaring farm income to escape taxation.

Lok Sabha MP affidavits were studied because they may represent a socially representative dataset. Here, too, Mr. Singh found signs of similar abuse. One curious exception was candidates with a serious chance of winning, whose disclosures showed fewer signs of under-reporting: "That the reported ratios increase with vote share also implies that media and official scrutiny have a more pronounced effect on the reporting of income relative to wealth," he wrote. The findings could exacerbate the already dire assessments of Indian income inequality. A paper published by the World Inequality Lab last year assessed the share of wealth held by India's top 1% earners as 40.1% and the share of income at 22.6%. These findings likely underestimate the extent of the inequality, Mr. Singh writes. Unlike that paper, which pushed for a 2% wealth tax on the ultra-rich, Mr. Singh did not make a judgement call on the structure of Indian taxation. "Macroeconomic analysis is beyond the scope of this paper," he wrote.

A proclamation of democracy in legislative process

The recent judgment by the Supreme Court of India, in The State of Tamil Nadu vs Governor of Tamil Nadu, was a historic one. But it has also led to another development — the passing of laws without the assent of the Governor or President, which is an unprecedented event in the history of the republic. The Court invoked Article 142 of the Constitution to do "complete justice" in the case and fixed a time limit for the gubernatorial and presidential responses to the Bills passed by the State legislature. It interpreted Articles 200 and 201 of the Constitution dealing with the powers and functions of the Governors and the President and laid down principles governing these provisions. It emphatically said that the Governor cannot torpedo the laws made by the legislature that reflects the people's will. The judgment that runs into 414 pages has embarrassed the Centre. The Governor of Kerala is on record for his criticism of the judgment. He has expressed his view that the Court has overstepped into the domain of Parliament and exceeded its authority by subjecting even the President of India to judicial review. The issue of interpretation

The Constitution is not a static document when it requires interpretation. The Court does not read the text of the Constitution in a mechanical way; rather, it interprets it organically in each situation. A centralist Constitution such as India's often calls for a federalist elucidation, to balance the interest of the States, which essentially means the people of India. Again, very many deficits in the constitutional provisions might require imaginative and purposive construction to fulfil their objective. Scholar Robert Post has rejected the plain meaning theory of interpretation as not a theory at all, for it does not actually involve a process of interpretation.

Constitutional interpretation, unlike statutory interpretation, is bound to be panoramic, futuristic and extensive. The Court's long journey from the narrow understanding of Article 21 in A.K. Gopalan (1950), which validated the preventive detention, to the broader prepositions on privacy based on the very same article in K.S. Puttaswamy (2017) shows the significant transformation in the process. The present judgment, which was rendered by Justice J.B. Pardiwala and Justice R. Mahadevan, demonstrates constitutional modernity and realism. Article 200 of the Constitution is about the Governor's duties (not powers) with respect to the Bills passed by the State legislature. Primarily, when a Bill is placed before her, the Governor has three ways ahead: to give assent; to withhold it; or to make a reference to the President. Returning the Bill that is withheld, for reconsideration is the next option. Once a Bill is returned is reiterated by the House with or without amendment, the Governor cannot withhold assent any further. The Article also provides for reserving the Bill for presidential clearance in certain cases. Situations of repugnancy, and patent unconstitutionality on account of breach of express constitutional provisions could be reasons for such a course. Article 201 is on the obligations of the President on reservation of the Bill for her consideration. She can either give assent or withhold it. Also, she can direct the Governor to return the Bill to the President with a message when it is not a money Bill. Reconsideration of such a returned Bill should happen within six months. On reiteration, the Bill should be again 'reconsidered' by the President. This scheme indicated in the constitutional text is not comprehensive. The Court, while deciding the illustrative instance of the Tamil Nadu Governor dragging the Bills, had occasion to scan the intent and the content of the constitutional provisions.

Karnataka Gig Workers Bill: What stayed and what changed



The Karnataka Cabinet, on April 11, cleared the much-awaited Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2024, which is now expected to be introduced as an Ordinance. If passed, this would make Karnataka the second State in the country to introduce legislation for the welfare of platform-based gig workers after Rajasthan.

Why legislation?

Reports suggest that there are around 2 lakh platform-based gig workers in Bengaluru working with companies such as Swiggy, Zomato, Uber, Ola, Urban Company, Porter, Amazon, Flipkart and so on. An evolving and nascent sector, the gig economy is expected to create 23.5 million jobs in India by 2030 as per a 2022 NITI Aayog report. Platform-based gig workers, who are not full-time employees and are often referred to as 'partners' by the aggregators, enjoy a certain degree of work flexibility unlike jobs in the formal sector. However, given the employment is outside the traditional employer-employee relationship, workers do not have the safety of labour protection laws. Multiple instances of worker neglect and exploitation have been reported over the years necessitating the need for legislation to ensure the protection and welfare of the workers. Although the Central government, in 2020, passed the Code on Social Security (CoSS) which defined gig workers for the first time in India, it is yet to be implemented. In 2023, the Congress government which was then in power in Rajasthan enacted the Rajasthan Platform-Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Act, 2023 just before the state elections. The subsequent BJP government in the State left the law unimplemented.

What's the timeline?

It was in June 2024 that the Siddaramaiah-led government first published the draft of the Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill. According to officials, the Bill was drafted after several meetings with various stakeholders. While it was expected to be tabled in the monsoon session, industry bodies such as NASSCOM and IAMA representing various tech companies registered strong opposition against several clauses of the draft Bill and demanded more time to submit their feedback. Following this, the draft Bill was put on the back burner, much to the dismay of gig worker unions, who have since been pushing for its passage at the earliest. In the first week of April, the top brass of the Karnataka government met with Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, with whom the Bill was discussed. Legislation for gig workers was one of the promises of Congress before the general elections as well as the state elections in Karnataka. Following the meeting, Karnataka Labour Minister Santosh Lad confirmed that the Bill had been finalized and would soon be passed. On April 11, the Karnataka Cabinet cleared the Bill.

What are the key clauses?

The Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers Bill defines a gig worker as a person who performs work or participates in a work arrangement that results in a given rate of payment, based on the terms and conditions laid out in such contract and includes all piece-rate work, and whose work is sourced through a platform, in the services specified in the Schedule - I. The Bill that emphasizes the rights of gig workers aims to create a welfare fund for the workers, places obligations on aggregators, and proposes a welfare fee of 1%-5% of the payout to the worker during each transaction. All sum received will go to the welfare fund for the workers. A gig workers' welfare board will be established to ensure registration of workers by the platforms, welfare fee collection, and implementation of social security schemes. Aggregators are required to furnish their database of all gig workers to the board. The proposed Payment and Welfare Fee Verification System (PWVFS) will track every payment made to the workers and the welfare fee deducted by the aggregators.

How does the Bill help?

The platforms are required to provide a work environment that is safe and without risk to the health of the worker and ensure that the worker has adequate periods of rest and access to sanitary and rest facilities. Addressing arbitrary termination, which has been one of the major concerns of workers, the Bill notes that no worker can be terminated without a valid written reason and prior notice of 14 days, except in instances where they have caused bodily harm. The Bill also mandates platforms to enter into transparent and fair contracts with the workers and stresses on the need for transparency with respect to the automated monitoring and decision-making system. It proposes a two-tiered grievance redressal mechanism wherein the worker is required to approach the internal dispute resolution committee first. If the committee fails to provide an 'Action Taken Report' in 14 days or the worker is unsatisfied, the grievance will be forwarded to the board.

What were the objections?

Following the publishing of the draft Bill in 2024, industry bodies, the Department of Electronics, IT-BT and Science & Technology, and Commerce & Industries department had raised several objections. The key concerns included how the bill defined 'gig worker', welfare fee per transaction, duplicate obligation for aggregators once CoSS 2020 is implemented, clarity on how the welfare fund would be utilised, grievance redressal mechanism under the Industrial Disputes Act and criminal liability on platforms for non-compliance, among others. While CoSS 2020 defined a gig worker as a person who performs work or participates in a work arrangement and earns from such activities outside of traditional employer-employee relationships, the Karnataka bill did not explicitly mention that the gig work

was outside traditional work relationships. Hence, it was demanded that the bill align its definition of gig worker with that of CoSS instead of creating a parallel system which equates gig workers to full time employees.

What were the reasons for objections?

A note from the IT-BT department argued that the welfare fee on a per-transaction basis was not suitable for all business models. It contended that the fee must be 1-2% of a platform's state-specific turnover or 5% of gig workers' payout, whichever is lower. To avoid duplicate obligations for platforms to contribute to both state and central funds, it also demanded a sunset clause or transition mechanism that addressed this issue once CoSS was implemented. The previous version of the Bill proposed a grievance redressal mechanism under the Industrial Disputes Act. This was strongly opposed citing that the Act was applicable only to workmen covered under conventional labour laws. Clarity on welfare fund utilisation was sought, and objections were raised to the central transaction information and management system (CTIMS), citing the compliance burden on platform companies. The draft Bill's demand for platforms to disclose their algorithmic decision-making process was also opposed, contending that the anonymised nature of it was their competitive edge. There were also objections regarding the 14-day notice period for workers before termination. Commerce and industries department argued that wide ranging powers to the state government allowing it to interfere with the algorithms, contracts and day to day management of platforms was against the spirit of ease of doing business.

What were the changes made?

Following the objections, a few amendments were made to the draft Bill. The grievance redressal mechanism was removed from the ambit of the Industrial Disputes Act, and criminalisation for non-compliance was ruled out. While the Bill retained the 14-day notice period, a provision was added that it was not required in situations where bodily harm was caused. The Bill gave more clarity regarding the welfare fee compared to the initial draft which was ambiguous regarding the deductions. In its response to the objections made, the labour department noted that rules would be framed separately for platforms, taking into consideration sector-specific business models and without disturbing financial sustainability, cross-subsidisation and job creation in the industry. It also pointed out that a sunset clause was introduced to the Bill and platforms need not contribute to CoSS if they are already contributing under the state bill. Regarding the objection to CTIMS, the department argued that aggregators are already tracking and storing data at an individual level. CTIMS was changed to Welfare Fee Verification System (WFVS), which only requires integration with the API and no additional compliance, it said. The Bill adhered to its definition of 'gig worker' noting that it assumed employer-employee relationship only to the extent of providing basic minimum social security benefits and clarified that traditional labour laws do not apply to the sector. "Although there is flexibility of work for workers, platforms enter into contracts, define their payout, allocate and control work and in some cases provide benefits and insurance. So, the employer-employee relationship exists to an extent. The bill addresses this unique nature of evolving relationships in the labour market by using a definition of Gig worker without establishing any explicit partnership status," noted the response from Labour Department.

Air hostess on ventilator in Gurugram hospital sexually assaulted by staff: Police

An air hostess was allegedly sexually harassed while she was on a ventilator and in a semi-conscious state during treatment at a private hospital in Gurugram. The alleged incident took place on April 6, but the complaint was lodged at Sadar Police Station on April 14, a day after she was discharged from hospital, said the Gurugram Police.

The 46-year-old woman had come to Gurugram for a training on behalf of her company and was staying at a five-star hotel. During this time, her condition deteriorated due to drowning in the swimming pool after which she was admitted to a private hospital for treatment. On April 5, her husband admitted her to another private hospital in the city. She was on ventilator when a hospital staff allegedly sexually harassed her. She was in a semi-conscious state at the time of alleged harassment and could not resist. Two nurses were also around, but they did not intervene, according to the complaint.

After being discharged from hospital on April 13, she confided in her husband about the harassment and he, in turn, made a call to the Police Control Room. She later filed a formal complaint at the police station in this connection in the presence of her legal advisor. The Gurugram Police said the victim's statement was recorded before the Magistrate and the matter was under investigation. The footage of the closed-circuit television cameras inside hospital was being scrutinised and the accused would be soon arrested, said the police.

Doctoral distress: What’s broken in India’s PhD system and how to fix it



The PhD is often the lifetime work of a researcher. Many drop out -- some estimates put drop-out figures at as high as 40%. And some hang on even if they lost interest mid-course purely for the sake of getting the degree. With the unfamiliarity of the PhD coursework and rigorous review meetings, the PhD program remains an ordeal for many. It is common for students to become disinterested and leave the program midway or change their supervisor. All of this takes mental health for a toss, and students lose valuable years of their lives. Many students experience delays in getting their fellowships for months on end. Hence, it is not surprising that they lose interest, as most of them are in the age group of 25-30 and may have family responsibilities. However, this is just one of the many problems that create hardships for PhD students.

While different institutes have different selection processes, most conduct an entrance exam or select students for a PhD in the sciences based on a GATE score, then conduct interviews, after which a specific number of students are offered PhD positions within the institute. A new PhD student is typically required to complete coursework at the beginning of a program, the duration of which varies among different institutes but usually ranges from one to two years. Some institutes also administer a comprehensive exam at the end of the coursework to assess students' subject knowledge and research capability. Students commence their PhD work only after completing the necessary assessments. Coursework aims to create a foundation, preparing students for their research work. However, it is often considered a mere 'requirement' towards a doctoral degree, where students study to obtain grades. Unlike bachelor's or master's courses, PhD coursework requires thorough reading and preparation, delivering seminars on different topics, and also includes courses on communication skills. Seminar courses help students learn the literature review process, while courses on communication skills are tailored to train students in writing papers, reports, and presenting their work.

Anish* defended his thesis in December 2023 from a prestigious Indian institute in chemistry and is now working as a postdoctoral fellow in the U.S. Anish found the coursework helpful, as most courses are 'bridging courses' that help close knowledge gaps. He added that a course in instrumentation helped students understand the principles and workings of laboratory equipment. Such courses are immensely useful to students who come after a master's with little exposure to experimental techniques, especially in handling laboratory equipment independently. The PhD program in most places is structured – a research proposal seminar at the end of the 1st year, annual progress seminars at the end of every subsequent year, and a synopsis seminar after four or five years, where students present their doctoral research and later publish it in the form of a thesis, with research publications in peer-reviewed journals. Students finally defend their thesis before external examiners, and thesis committee members and are awarded a PhD upon successful completion.

Why do PhD students lose interest?

Senior researchers are concerned that PhD programs in India have deviated far from being a 'doctorate in philosophy' -- where the scholar has mastered the art of thinking critically. "Previously, students were expected to have a wider view of their general area. It has evolved to becoming specialists and sometimes technical specialists with an extremely narrow view", says Prof. Sandhya Koushika, cellular neurobiologist and principal investigator at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai.

Students may join a laboratory right after their master's, where rote learning is still common. In fact, most students join a PhD program just because it is the 'next obvious step' after a master's program, but may not know what doing research is like on a day-to-day basis or the true trajectory of a PhD program. While most master's students are expected to have worked on a research project before joining, the experience of working in a research laboratory is entirely different. A PhD program is a mixture of being both—a student as they are learning, and an employee as they get a stipend. However, unclear expectations or gaps in communication can make students feel vulnerable. "The supervisor needs you to do something at that one particular time, and it absolutely has to be done. Sometimes this understanding doesn't work in the favor of a student, and we feel like we could be taken for granted," says Prasanna Simha, a PhD student at the University of Transdisciplinary Health Sciences and Technology (TDU), Bengaluru. A few years ago, Prasanna worked as a junior research fellow (JRF) in a prestigious institute in Bengaluru. The supervisor expressed interest in enrolling him for a PhD and assigned a few projects. While working on one of the projects, he was abruptly asked to leave the program, as he didn't know specific skills that students usually learn on the go.

Without a fellowship and a secure position, he was left in the lurch. "I felt at that point that the professor wanted me to be prepared to know a lot of things already even before I got to know about them for the first time," says Prasanna. Fortunately, he could join another laboratory at TDU for a PhD program, where he had worked earlier. Prof. Koushika explains how she leads discussions with students. "The question that I often ask young people is, are you interested in science? Why do you want to do a PhD? Sometimes, you can see from the answers that they have a very romantic view (of doing science). And their romantic view comes from listening to Nobel laureates or other famous scientists." Importantly, research advances with debate and criticism, and not all students are comfortable with this process. Constructive criticism by experts and peers is an integral part of doing science. Progress in the lab may not always move forward as planned. Experiments fail; at times, an entire idea may fail, leading to uncertainty. "The levels of uncertainty for a lot of students don't align with a romantic view of science that they hold," says Prof. Koushika.

Students sometimes feel stuck and unmotivated as techniques do not work consistently or projects don't give the expected results. It requires months of revisiting their hypotheses, re-designing experiments, and often starting afresh. But that's how science works in practice, and it should not dampen a student's spirits long-term. "Sometimes, you might still not know the answer, and that should be okay. That should not stand in the way of awarding a PhD degree, because that is also science", says

Prasanna. Despite the uncertainty, supervisors, thesis committee members, and peers should work to build a strong support system for a student. How a student navigates their PhD depends on the kind of feedback and support they get from their mentors and peers that should help build their resilience.

"The unstructuredness of a PhD is like a marathon. You need to figure out what gels with you and keeps you going. But what keeps you going comes down to the people who hand you water and refreshments", says Anish. He adds that the annual progress review meetings can be helpful, provided committee members give honest and constructive feedback.

The ordeal is over. Now what?

The next career step after a PhD is often to get post-doctoral experience in laboratories within or outside India, and eventually, apply for a faculty position. Today, careers in communication, industry, education, etc., are open to or may require those with a PhD degree. Many students who aspire for non-academic careers sometimes disregard their PhD training, using it merely as a stepping stone to get the degree. Discussions on post-PhD careers outside academia happen rarely. When they do, "the discussions come at the end, like the third year or the fourth year, of the PhD program", says Dr. Vishal Govind Rao, Associate Professor, Dept. of Chemistry at IIT Kanpur. Even if students find interest in non-academic jobs, they have to be carefully oriented. "A PhD is not just about publishing; it is a training for one's lifetime," he adds. Independent thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills learned during PhD training are immensely helpful, even in non-academic careers. The success of a PhD student is typically viewed in terms of the number of papers published and the journals in which they are published, with insufficient weight given to scholarly thinking. Typically, one or two publications in peer-reviewed journals are necessary for getting a PhD degree from most institutes. Publications are more than a checkbox where the number and quality of publications determine career trajectories. However, the pressure to publish can lead to ethical violations such as data fabrication and plagiarism to complete the mandatory graduation requirements. Scholarly publications are the yardsticks by which academic success is measured. Dr. Govind Rao says, "Publication is the currency in academia. It gets you the funding, the collaborations." He is concerned that in many laboratories, PhD students are only trained to generate data, while supervisors design the projects and experiments, write the research articles, and respond to reviewers' comments in the peer-review process. This leaves no room for students to become independent thinkers and scholars. It's not just the publication but thinking about the philosophical aspect of research that is equally important, says Dr. Govind Rao. Writing a research paper, submitting manuscripts, and addressing comments from peer review are skills that students learn on the job. Several institutes offer courses in communication. Despite this basic training, navigating the publication process can be challenging, especially for the first time. Yet, it is essential that students learn to write a research paper on their own, says Dr. Govind Rao. A supervisor's career mainly depends on the number and quality of publications from their laboratory. It becomes the 'norm' for some supervisors to write the research papers themselves, taking away a training opportunity for a student. "Much of what the students do becomes integrally tied, especially in India, to the career of the principal investigator (supervisor) who leads the group", says Prof. Koushika.

Prof. Koushika suggests that a student's productivity should not be tied to the supervisor's career. Decoupling the two could ease the pressure on students to a large extent. She suggests a system with two tracks— one focused on doing PhD in the traditional way, geared towards an academic career, and the other focused only on employment outside academic research. The latter could be a straight track, without comprehensive exams and coursework, and students could focus on developing transferable skills, perhaps even bypassing publishing papers to get a degree. Alternatively, we need a 'non-student' cadre of scientific manpower who can work especially on projects with long incubation times. Prof. Koushika recognizes that the 'two-track system' may not solve the problem but strongly expresses the need to address it. "We need many more ideas because otherwise young people end up being very upset and cynical about their PhD journey, when it should be a journey of discovery and joy."

Underwater heavyweight mantis shrimp also packs a natural energy shield

The mantis shrimp is a colourful, 10-cm-long resident of the ocean whose appearance belies its reputation as one of the most fearsome predators on the planet. These unassuming crustaceans use a hammer-shaped appendage called the dactyl club to strike their prey at a blistering 23 m/s (about 50-times faster than the blink of an eye), smashing into the poor creature's body like a bullet from a gun fired point blank. The strike releases enough energy to send small shockwaves through the surrounding water. But the thing about guns is that every bullet fired has a recoil. It's Newton's third law of motion. If a firearm is not securely braced against the body to absorb it, the sudden backward motion can lead to severe injuries. Yet despite striking prey hard enough to produce shockwaves, the mantis shrimp remains unharmed. How is this possible? A team of researchers from the US and France found the answer in a specialised microstructure in the mantis shrimp's club. They found that this structure was capable of phononic shielding — a unique ability that allows it to blunt the flow of acoustic waves and thus weaken the recoil the mantis shrimp has.

The team fired laser pulses at the microstructure in a rapid sequence that illuminated its response at less than one-billionth of a second at a time. They followed this up with numerical simulations. People have looked at the material structure under a microscope but haven't explored the dynamic mechanical behaviour, especially how it responds to wave propagation," Maroun Abi Ghanem, the study's coauthor and a researcher at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France, said. "We looked into this behaviour by sending waves through the structure and analysed how they interacted with the material." Triggering implosions The dactyl club of a mantis shrimp stores its energy in spring-like elastic structures held together by latch-like tendons. When the latch is released, the club is released. As it moves to deliver its punch, it displaces the surrounding water and forms small low-pressure zones. Inside these zones, the water's density drops so much that it turns into vapour, leaving behind a bubble.

When these bubbles collapse due to the pressure of the surrounding water, they release a considerable amount

Urban consumers are worried about their income levels



This March, while a significant share of urban consumers remained optimistic about job opportunities, many continued to be pessimistic about income levels. This suggests that although jobs are available in urban areas, income growth has stagnated. Notably, pessimism around income levels is even more pronounced in rural areas. Moreover, a majority of urban consumers said that commodity prices have risen compared to a year ago and, as a result, their spending has increased. Coupled with stagnant incomes, this has led to a greater share of urban consumers feeling pessimistic about the overall economic situation of the country despite improved sentiment regarding employment.

Urban perceptions are drawn from a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) survey conducted between March 1 and 10, 2025, covering respondents from 19 major cities. Rural perceptions are based on the first edition of a separate RBI survey, which gathered responses from households in rural and semi-urban areas across the country in the same period. Chart 1 shows the share of urban respondents who said that their employment opportunities have increased compared to a year ago. In March, 35.5% of respondents had said that their employment scenario had improved compared to a year ago, maintaining almost the same level recorded in the last one year. Chart 2 shows the share of urban respondents who said that their income levels have

increased compared to a year ago. Only 23.8% claimed that their income levels have increased compared to a year ago — close to 12% points less than those who said that the job outlook has improved. The steady recovery in perceptions about income levels, since the pandemic-related peak pessimism, saw a reversal in March 2024. From that month, optimism about income levels started to dip again. This negative trend persisted into March 2025 as well, with fewer than one in four urban respondents reporting any improvement in their income levels. Charts 1 and 2, when read together, suggest that while a decent number of jobs are available in urban areas, income levels remain largely stagnant, as noted earlier. Chart 3 presents the share of urban and rural respondents who reported a decline in their income compared to a year ago. Across all surveyed months, a consistently higher proportion of rural respondents expressed pessimism about their income levels compared to their urban counterparts. In March this year, 29.9% of rural respondents said that their income levels have declined compared to a year ago, higher than the 23.3% who said the same in urban areas. Chart 4 illustrates the share of urban respondents who said that commodity prices have increased over the past year. As of March, over 90% continued to report that prices were higher than a year ago.

This perception appears to have influenced spending behaviour. Chart 5 shows the share of urban respondents who said that their spending has increased compared to the previous year. In March, over 80% reported higher spending levels compared to a year ago. Chart 5 | Share of urban respondents who said that their spending has increased compared to the previous year Charts 4 and 5 indicate that rising prices have led to higher spending. However, as Chart 2 shows, income levels are stagnant. This suggests that many urban residents may be struggling to make ends meet despite retaining their jobs. This has had an effect on the overall economic perception of urban residents. Only 34.7% of them said in March that the overall economic situation has improved this year, compared to last year. This is the lowest such share of respondents in over a year (Chart 6).

Doctor, will I ever run again? On life after a heart attack

Aditya (name changed), the 47-year-old father of two, has always been active. A university-level badminton player in his younger days, he remained a regular runner and fitness enthusiast. A 5,000-metre run at the start of each weekend helped him maintain his physical and mental fitness despite a busy schedule. There was no past medical history. He looked healthy and fit. During a work meeting one day, Aditya experienced a searing pain in his chest. He also felt uneasy. The pain continued even after he took two antacids. He began to perspire after a while, and experienced a heavy feeling in both shoulders. Sitting next to him, a co-worker saw something was amiss and called an emergency helpline. Aditya was taken to a hospital with an emergency and cardiac team. His ECG showed that he was having a heart attack. After being hurried to the cath lab, an angiography was performed on him. A blood clot had blocked one of his main heart arteries. In between performing an angioplasty, the doctors informed the family. To remove the blockage, a stent was inserted. After a straightforward procedure, he was moved to the intensive care unit (ICU), then to the ward, and after three days, when he was discharged he was stable. When spoken to after the procedure, his only question was, Doctor, will I be able to run again? Will I be able to play sports like before? Younger people who experience heart attacks usually worry about this. Despite their apparent activity, many of them have hidden risk factors. Today, heart attacks are increasingly common among young people. The main causes include stress, long work hours, sleep deprivation, junk food, smoking, inactivity, and obesity. Additionally, some individuals experience elevated homocysteine or lipoprotein (a), along with other silent risk factors like excessive levels of bad cholesterol. Aditya's cardiac function decreased from 60% to 40% after the heart attack. He began taking blood thinners, cholesterol-lowering pills, and medications to help his heart pump more efficiently. It was recommended that he follow a strict diet and consume more salads, fruits, veg-



etables, and lean meats like chicken or steamed fish. Ghee, vanaspati, fried food, and too much oil were to be avoided.

After a week, he started taking 4,000–5,000 steps per day. He was able to walk 4–5 kilometers every day for a month. His strength slowly returned, and he resumed work. His LDL cholesterol had decreased to 50 mg/dL and cardiac function had improved to 50% at the three-month monitoring. He had more vitality. He began alternating between walking and quick runs. After seven months, he managed to complete a 10-kilometre office marathon. Never ignore warning indications such as shoulder pain, perspiration, or chest discomfort. Lives can be saved by immediate intervention and treatment. After a heart attack, it is possible to resume your regular life with proper support, care, medications, and lifestyle modifications. Heart attacks are no longer just a problem for the elderly. A lot of young, active people are also at risk because of aspects related to their lifestyle. Regular health check-ups, regular exercise, a nutritious diet, and timely treatment can save lives; therefore, it is important to never ignore early symptoms. This case shows that even in young people, recovery from a heart attack is possible with timely treatment, quality medical care, and healthy lifestyle changes.



ing is that our findings suggest the club's structure not only resists these intense forces but may also be fine-tuned to control how shock waves propagate through it," Espinosa said. "This dual role of structural robustness and wave manipulation is an incredible example of nature optimising materials at multiple levels."

For a long time, scientists believed that materials that could guide the flow of energy in particular ways could only be created in the lab, not in the wild. Such materials are called metamaterials: they have specially tailored geometries to achieve these effects. The new finding about the mantis shrimp stands to change this belief. Nature always had metamaterials. The study's findings can also be applied to develop synthetic sound-filtering materials for use in protective gear, such as earmuffs for soldiers. They could also inspire new approaches to reducing blast-related injuries in the army and sports, the researchers said in a statement. "We are working on biomimetic structures inspired by the architecture of the mantis shrimp with a focus on wave trapping," Abi Ghanem said. "We are interested in understanding how the structures trap waves, explore what we can do with this trapped energy, and if it is possible to convert the trapped energy into another form." Sanjukta Mondal is a chemist-turned-science-writer with experience in writing popular science articles and scripts for STEM YouTube channels.

India's US-bound exports in March up 35% as exporters frontloaded shipments to beat reciprocal duties



Official data showed that India's exports to the US in March stood at \$10.14 billion, up 35.06 per cent from \$7.51 billion in March 2024. Official data showed that India's exports to the US in March stood at \$10.14 billion, up 35.06 per cent from \$7.51 billion in March 2024. Indian exporters rushed to beat the reciprocal tariffs expected to come into effect on April 2, pushing goods worth over \$10 billion to the US last month alone — a sharp jump of 35 per cent compared to March last year, according to data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry.

Even as the reciprocal tariffs were subsequently paused for 90 days, exporters globally scrambled last month to accelerate shipments before the duties kicked in. Tech giant Apple, for instance, flew several last-minute consign-

ments of iPhones to the US before the tariffs were due to take effect. Official data showed that India's exports to the US in March stood at \$10.14 billion, up 35.06 per cent from \$7.51 billion in March 2024. For the full financial year (April 2024 to March 2025), exports to the US totalled \$86.51 billion — an increase of 11.59 per cent compared to \$77.52 billion during the same period in the previous year. Meanwhile, goods imports from the US also rose to \$3.70 billion in March 2025, 9.63 per cent higher than in March 2024. Over the same financial year, imports rose 7.44 per cent to \$45.53 billion, compared to \$42.13 billion in 2023–24.

The data further showed that India's total goods and services exports in 2024–25 reached a record \$820.93 billion, up 5.50 per cent from \$778.13 billion in the previous financial year. Services exports rose by 12.45 per cent to \$383.51 billion, while goods exports saw marginal growth of 0.08 per cent, reaching \$437.42 billion. Just hours before the April 2 deadline, US President Donald Trump announced a 90-day pause, stating that 75 countries had approached the US seeking to sign trade agreements. However, Trump simultaneously raised tariffs on China to 145 per cent. India and the US are currently negotiating a bilateral trade agreement aimed at more than doubling trade — from the current \$191 billion to \$500 billion by 2030. The first phase of the deal is expected to be concluded by autumn (September–October) this year.

SEBI bans Gensol Engg, promoters from securities market in fund diversion case

GNS News Agency, April 19

The order came after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) received a complaint in June 2024 relating to the manipulation of share price and diversion of funds from GEL and thereafter started examining the matter. The order came after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) received a complaint in June 2024 relating to the manipulation of share price and diversion of funds from GEL and thereafter started examining the matter. Capital markets regulator SEBI on Tuesday barred Gensol Engineering and promoters — Anmol Singh Jaggi and Puneet Singh Jaggi — from the securities markets till further orders in a fund diversion and governance lapses case. The regulator has also debarred Anmol and Puneet Singh Jaggi from holding the position of a director or key managerial personnel in Gensol until further orders. Further, the markets watchdog directed Gensol Engineering Ltd (GEL) to put on hold the stock split announced by it. The order came after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) received a complaint in June 2024 relating to the manipulation of share price and diversion of funds from GEL and thereafter started examining the matter. In a 29-page interim order, SEBI said, "The prima facie findings have shown mis-utilisation and diversion of funds of the company (GEL) in a fraudulent manner by its promoter directors, Anmol Singh Jaggi and Puneet Singh Jaggi, who are also the direct beneficiaries of the diverted funds". "The company has attempted to mislead SEBI, the CRAs (credit rating agencies), the lenders and the investors by submitting forged conduct letters purportedly issued by its lenders," the regulator said.

The noticees 1, 2 and 3 (GEL, Anmol and Puneet Singh Jaggi) are alleged to have violated the provisions of PFUTP



(Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices) rules, it added. SEBI noted that the promoters were running a listed public company as if it were a proprietary firm. GEL's funds were routed to related parties and used for unconnected expenses as if the company's funds were promoters' piggy banks. The result of these transactions would mean that the diversions at some time need to be written off from Gensol's books, ultimately resulting in losses to the investors of the company. "...prima facie evidence of a blatant violation of rules of corporate governance is writ large over the workings of the company."

The diversion of funds of the company (GEL) by promoter entities reflects a culture of weak internal control, where even ring-fenced borrowings from institutional creditors were rerouted at the total discretion of the promoters," SEBI's whole-time member Ashwani Bhatia said in the order. The internal controls at Gensol appear to be loose and through the quick layering of transactions, funds have seamlessly flowed to multiple related entities/individuals, Bhatia said.

US has big advantages on services, but projects deficits on goods trade; talks will be based on 'true picture', says govt

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said Tuesday that the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) talks with the US are focused on the exchange of "right facts" and the "true picture" of trade between the two countries. This comes as US President Donald Trump has consistently sought to pressurise trade partners, accusing them of "ripping the US off" on goods trade, but overlooking the advantages that America enjoys in the services sector. "When we engage with the US team, all the facts are on the table, and the negotiations are based on the right facts and the data we exchange with them. That is completely rooted in the true picture which exists between the two countries. So, the BTA progresses on those lines," Barthwal said. Multiple experts in India have also pointed out that the 26 per cent reciprocal tariffs announced by the US on India were based solely on goods trade, while ignoring services trade — an area where the US and other Western countries hold considerable advantages over developing nations.

According to data compiled by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, which falls under the country's Department of Commerce, services exports from the US to India have consistently grown over the last three years. In 2022, such exports stood at \$26.53 billion, rising to \$33.99 billion in 2023, and \$40.26 billion in 2024. Notably, the US recorded a marginal trade deficit with India in terms of services imports from New Delhi during the same period — with imports recorded at \$33.03 billion in 2022, \$36.4 billion in 2023 and \$40.74 billion in 2024.

India is considered the largest market by user base for several major US tech companies — such as Meta's Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, and Alphabet's Google Search and YouTube — owing to its large population and some of the world's lowest internet data rates. As such, beyond direct monetary value, Indian users provide hundreds of millions of eyeballs for American tech products, while also generating vast amounts of data to fine-tune their services. Incidentally, countering concerns over the selective use of goods trade deficit, China, in a white paper released last week, said that services and local sales of domestic enterprises' branches in the other country (i.e., local sales generated through two-way investment) should also be taken into account when discussing trade.

"When the three components — trade in goods, trade in services, and local sales of domestic enterprises' branches in the other country — are considered together, it becomes clear that the economic and trade benefits accrued by China and the US are roughly balanced," the Chinese white paper stated. In India, revenues from major American companies' operations here have been on a steady rise, particularly in online advertising, which has seen substantial growth due to increasing digital adoption in the country. For instance, Meta India's revenue from operations in FY24 grew by 9.3 per cent to Rs 3,034.8 crore, up from Rs 2,775.7 crore in FY23, while its net profit rose by 43 per



cent to nearly Rs 505 crore. Meta India also makes royalty payments to Meta USA for the commercialisation of intellectual property, along with infrastructure charges. Similarly, Google India saw its revenues increase by 26 per cent to Rs 5,921.1 crore in FY24, from Rs 4,700 crore in FY23. Microsoft India's FY24 revenue grew by more than 18 per cent year-on-year to nearly Rs 23,000 crore. The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that the US frequently misrepresents trade figures. "For example, Trump claimed that the US trade deficit with India is \$100 billion, whereas India's official data places it at under \$45 billion. Similarly, the White House fact sheet inaccurately stated that India imposes a 100 per cent tariff on Harley-Davidson motorcycles, when the actual tariff was reduced from 50 per cent to 30 per cent on 1 February 2025," the GTRI report stated.

Wipro Q4 PAT up 26 per cent to Rs 3,569.6 cr

New Delhi: India's fourth-largest IT company Wipro on Wednesday reported a 25.9 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 3,569.6 crore during the March quarter. It had reported a profit (attributable to equity holders of the company) of Rs 2,834.6 crore in the year-ago period. Revenues for the fourth quarter (Q4) of FY25 came in at Rs 22,504.2 crore, a marginal increase of 1.33 per cent from Rs 22,208.3 crore in Q4 FY24. Sequentially, profit and revenue rose 6.43 per cent and 0.83 per cent, respectively. For full FY25, profits saw an uptick of 18.9 per cent to Rs 13,135.4 crore, according to a regulatory filing. Revenues for the full fiscal year tanked 0.74 per cent to reach Rs 89,088.4 crore. For Q1 FY26, the Bengaluru-headquartered firm sees revenue from its IT services business to be in the range of USD 2,505 million to USD 2,557 million, a drop of 1.5–3.5 per cent in constant currency terms on a sequential basis. "As clients remain cautious in the face of macroeconomic uncertainty, we're focused on partnering closely with them while staying committed to consistent and profitable growth," Wipro CEO and MD Srinil Pallia said.

Govt fears trade war may trigger import surge of US farm, Chinese factory goods



AMID ESCALATING global trade tensions, the Commerce and Industry Ministry is assessing the risks of significant trade diversion from other countries to India and is particularly concerned about the likely surge in imports of US farm produce and factory goods from China, Vietnam and Indonesia into the country, a government official said. "A recent assessment highlighted the risk of merchandise dumping into India due to reciprocal tariffs amid global trade tensions. Rising US costs may prompt exporters from countries like China, Vietnam, and Indonesia — all facing US trade deficits — to divert goods to India, potentially triggering import surges. Additionally, Chinese retaliatory tariffs on US goods could further increase the inflow of US agricultural products into India," the official said. Unlike other countries, China retaliated against US tariffs, which in turn has raised the risk of trade diversions globally. While the US has imposed a cumulative of 145 per cent tariffs on Chinese products apart from electronic items, Chinese tariffs on US items have also surged to a record 125 per cent. Notably, soybean and corn are the top US agri exports to China.

To support stakeholders amid shifting global trade conditions, including tariff hikes, import surges, and export-related disruptions, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) under the Commerce Ministry launched the Global Tariff and Trade Helpdesk on April 11, 2025, the Commerce and Industry Ministry said. The Indian Express had reported earlier this month that a high-level meeting had taken place at the Commerce and Industry Ministry to assess possible import surge as a result of trade diversions in the backdrop of the reciprocal tariffs. "With a number of tariff announcements and subsequent pauses, things are in flux. But we are looking at import surges and have identified some countries for more intense monitoring. We have also picked commodities for closer watch because we are already aware of certain trends, and we are focusing on

those commodities," Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said. "Depending upon how the world is moving in terms of tariffs, counter-tariffs, exemptions and other developments, we are monitoring those imports. We are also in touch with our stakeholders. Our commodity divisions within the Ministry of Commerce are in contact with export promotion councils and various ministries. Based on the feedback, inputs, and data we analyse, remedial measures will, of course, be taken," Barthwal said.

Meanwhile, the Commerce Ministry said the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), the anti-dumping watchdog, has issued final findings on 13 trade remedy investigations on imports in March alone, particularly from China and other countries such as Japan, Taiwan, and the European Union. Items include Vitamin-A Palmitate, Insoluble Sulphur, and Aluminium Foil up to 80 microns, among others. Economists and trade experts have also raised concerns over a surge in exports from China. A research note by HDFC Bank on Friday stated that apart from the direct impact of US tariffs on Indian exports, India faces a "high risk" of oversupply from China, which could hurt domestic manufacturing. "With the tariff increase on Chinese goods now effectively exceeding 60 per cent, it is more likely that a greater share of China's supply could flow into other markets. This makes domestic manufacturing in countries like India vulnerable to cheaper Chinese oversupply," noted Sakshi Gupta, Principal Economist at HDFC Bank. According to Crisil Ratings, India faces a high risk of indirect impacts from US tariffs, particularly in electronics, machinery, and textiles, as Chinese exporters may divert their shipments to India as part of a geographical diversification strategy. "The top Chinese exports to the US, including electronics, machinery, and textiles, are particularly vulnerable to dumping, and their influx into the Indian market could impact domestic industries. However, the Indian government may impose anti-dumping duties to safeguard Indian exporters and mitigate any potential damage," Crisil Ratings stated. International think tank the Lowy Institute, in a recent research paper, estimated that about 80 per cent of countries traded more with China than with the US in 2023. However, the US remains a key driver of global demand, particularly as it has increased imports from countries such as Vietnam and Mexico, shifting away from China following the first round of Trump-era tariff hikes. "This increase in imports from China is a combination of US tariffs prompting China to diversify into other markets and a redirection of its exports (parts and components) via other countries that ultimately serve the US market," the think tank said.

IndusInd Bank external audit reveals Rs 1,979 crore derivative discrepancies

IndusInd BankAs per RBI directives on investments issued in September 2023, banks are prohibited from conducting internal trades/ hedging and, accordingly, IndusInd Bank too ceased internal trades from April 1, 2024. IndusInd Bank on Tuesday said the report prepared by the external agency — PwC — showed Rs 1,979 crore of 'negative impact' to the net worth of the bank due to the derivative discrepancies. "Based on the report, the bank said that it has assessed an adverse impact of 2.27 per cent to its net worth as of 2024," it said in an exchange filing.

The bank also disclosed the ongoing review by an external agency which was independently reviewing the internal findings. "The report from the external agency identified discrepancies relating to derivative deals," it said. "The bank will appropriately reflect the resultant impact in the financial statements for FY 2024-25 and will continue to take suitable steps to augment the internal controls relating to the derivative accounting operations of the bank," it said. On March 10, 2025, the bank had disclosed that it noted certain discrepancies in accounts balances of its derivative portfolio. The internal review by the bank had estimated an adverse impact of approximately 2.35 per cent of the bank's net worth as of December 2024. As per RBI directives on investments issued in September 2023, banks are prohibited from conducting internal trades/ hedging and, accordingly, IndusInd Bank too ceased internal trades from April 1, 2024. However, during an internal review, the bank identified certain discrepancies where accounting of losses on



forex derivatives/ swap transactions executed prior to April 2024 (over the past 5-7 years) to hedge forex deposits/ debt were not recognised through NII (net interest income), while the corresponding treasury gains were recognised in the P&L. Derivatives are used by treasury department to convert forex deposits/ borrowings into the rupee. According to banking sources, it is probable that the bank was aware of the scale of the issue long before they claimed to have discovered it, and that the disclosure was prompted by the RBI. The bank's handling of internal trades and accrued interest differential has raised questions, as it appears that these transactions were not fully unwound on a daily basis. As a result, the loss accumulated over time instead of being adjusted gradually. This is a likely breach of accounting norms.

Nvidia says it will make AI supercomputers in the US amid looming tariffs, national security probe

Chip major Nvidia said it would produce artificial intelligence (AI) supercomputers entirely in the United States, a day after President Donald Trump said he would soon impose tariffs on semiconductors imported from elsewhere. It makes Nvidia the latest tech company to back Trump's tariff-induced push for local manufacturing. "Together with leading manufacturing partners, the company has commissioned more than a million square feet of manufacturing space to build and test Nvidia Blackwell chips in Arizona and AI supercomputers in Texas," the company said in a press statement. Its Blackwell chips have started production at the Phoenix plant of Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), Nvidia said, adding that it is building supercomputer manufacturing plants in Texas, with Foxconn in Houston and with Wistron in Dallas. Mass production at both plants is expected to ramp up in the next 12-15 months. "The AI chip and supercomputer supply chain is complex and demands the most advanced manufacturing, packaging, assembly and test technologies. Nvidia is partnering with Amkor and SPIL for packaging and testing operations in Arizona," the company said.

Within the next four years, NVIDIA plans to produce up to half a trillion dollars of AI infrastructure in the United States through partnerships with TSMC, Foxconn, Wistron, Amkor and SPIL. "Manufacturing Nvidia AI chips and supercomputers for American AI factories is expected to create hundreds of thousands of jobs and drive trillions of dollars in economic security over the coming decades," it added. "The engines of the world's AI infrastructure are being built in the United States for the first time," said Jensen Huang, founder and CEO of Nvidia. "Adding American manufacturing helps us better meet the incredible and growing demand for AI chips and supercomputers, strengthens our supply chain and boosts our resiliency."

Last week, the US administration exempted smartphones, computers and memory chips, among others, from the tariff regime, fueling speculation that the US might temper its overall strategy. However, hours later, Trump said that tariffs on semiconductors would be announced soon and that the exemptions may not be perma-



nent, signalling that any relief might be temporary. The US has also initiated a national security investigation into the imports of semiconductors and semiconductor manufacturing equipment. As per an unpublished version of the investigation, the probe would cover, among other things, semiconductor substrates and bare wafers, legacy chips, leading-edge chips, microelectronics, and SME components.

Google suspends 2.9 millionn advertisers' accounts in India

New Delhi: Internet giant Google suspended 2.9 million advertisers' accounts in India and removed 247.4 million ads in 2024 for abusing its advertisement policy, the company said in a report. Globally, Google suspended over 39.2 million advertiser accounts, removed 5.1 billion ads and restricted over 9.1 billion ads, the company said in its annual ads safety report. "In India, 247.4 million ads were removed and 2.9 million advertiser accounts were suspended," the report said. The company said it launched over 50 enhancements to its LLMs (large language models) in 2024, which sped up complex investigations, helping identify bad actors and fraud signals like illegitimate payment information during account set-up.

Thinking ahead to the England tour — the future can wait



Some five decades ago, after India had been swamped 0-3 in a Test series in England, skipper Ajit Wadekar, then 34, quickly announced his retirement. India had to find a captain with experience and the ability to motivate a team down in the dumps. They settled on Wadekar's predecessor, the charismatic Nawab of Pataudi Jr. who had not played in over four years. When the selectors initially offered him the job for the first two Tests in the home series against the West Indies, Pataudi told them it had to be all five or nothing. West Indian cricketer Clive Lloyd and India's Nawab of Pataudi during the India and West Indies Test series in 1974.

The selectors relented, and Pataudi led in one of the most exciting series, India levelling the scores after losing the first two Tests before losing the decider in Mumbai. Having put Indian cricket on an even keel, Pataudi handed over charge to Bishan Bedi who led in the tours that followed, to New Zealand and the West Indies. When a team has lost a series or two badly, is it better to go in for a younger captain and team with the long-term view, or to plump for experience and an ad hoc approach, with just one series in mind? That's a question the selectors will have to answer soon. India play a five-Test series in England from June, having lost a home series to New Zealand 0-3 and lost 1-3 in Australia, both under Rohit Sharma. India won two ICC white ball tournaments under Rohit, but the captain averages 10.93 in his last eight Tests, with just one 50, and his place in the eleven must be in doubt.

Rohit Sharma turns 38 this month. He has been one of the most unselfish of Indian captains, a white ball great who never asks a player to do what he would not do him-

self. The two younger players who might lead are Jasprit Bumrah, 31, and Shubhman Gill, 25; Bumrah has led in a Test in England too. There are others in the mix: K L Rahul, who has led in three Tests, and Rishabh Pant, who has been vice captain. Rishabh Pant and Shubman Gill in action during the second day of the third Test between India and New Zealand at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai

Indian cricket, like Indian politics, often invokes TINA, "there is no alternative". There is always an alternative, of course. In many ways, the England tour is a starting point. It is the first in the new cycle of the World Test Championship. It catches an Indian team in transition, with Rohit and Virat Kohli, 36, close to the end of their careers, and three, Rishabh Pant, Gill and Yashasvi Jaiswal set to carry the batting on their shoulders in the next generation. The odd man in the middle is K L Rahul. This is a good spread, although one or two more mid-career batters might allow the captain to breathe easier. This is particularly important for a series in England. Experience and form have to come together, and when they do, you have the ideal candidate. Karun Nair's recent heroics in the IPL follows his monstrous run of scores in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, and more relevantly, his 863 runs in the Ranji season, the most by a Test player.

Karun Nair plays a shot on the fourth day of the fifth and final Test between India and England at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on December 19, 2016. Nair is 33, which is not the end of the world, even if his Test match triple century might have come eight years ago. He has played first class cricket in England for Northamptonshire for whom he has scored a double century and averaged over 50 each season. The manner in which he handled Bumrah in the IPL suggests he is ready for a comeback with his combination of skill, style and fettle.

Making Bumrah captain — and he is a fine strategist who understands his players well — over a long tour might be a bit of a risk although he is the best qualified after Rohit. He is India's trump card and will need to be handled delicately, perhaps even rested for a match, if he is to be fully effective. Once the choice is made between ad hocism and preparing for the future, the selection falls into place. Virat Kohli, who has been there and done that might play the role Pataudi did, steadying the ship before handing it over to a younger man. The future can wait a little in that case.

KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane after IPL 2025 loss to Punjab Kings: 'We played bad cricket as a batting unit'



GNS News Agency, April 19

Punjab Kings defended the lowest total in IPL history — 111 — against Kolkata Knight Riders in their 16-run win at Maharaja Yadavindra Singh PCA International Stadium at Mullanpur on Tuesday night, thus handing KKR their fourth loss this season. With the Ajinkya Rahane-led team lost eight wickets for 33 runs in their chase, the captain was critical of the batting unit of the team and took the blame as a captain. "It's not like Punjab bowled very well. I think we played bad cricket as a batting unit. I take this responsibility as a captain that we couldn't chase this down. But individually, I'm sure, all the players, especially the batters, will think about their own game and improve in the upcoming matches," Rahane said while addressing the media post the match.

It was the Kings' fourth win in 17 home matches in the last two years. The home side had made a total of 111 runs in 20 overs. Kolkata Knight Riders were once placed at 62

for 2 in 7.3 overs during their run chase but then Rahane fell LBW to a Yuzvendra Chahal delivery and the Knight Riders erred by not taking the review with TV replays showing the impact of the ball outside off stump. Rahane's dismissal started the slide for Knight Riders as the team lost their next seven wickets for 33 runs. The Kolkata captain talked about not taking the review and the thought behind the decision. "As a batter, I thought that I could save the review for later. It shouldn't happen that I take a review and lose it, then we are only left with one review. The communication between the two batsmen (him and non-striker Angkrish Raghuvanshi) wasn't that clear. If someone clearly tells you that the impact can be out or it can miss, you take a review as a batter. But generally, the batsmen in front of you, you think about what they say. The communication wasn't that clear: Maybe it could be the umpire's call, maybe it could be hitting. That's why I didn't take a review. But again, no complaints. Apart from that, we also were pretty bad as a batting unit. And that was the reason we lost today," said Rahane.

The captain also talked about the need for the batting unit to have game awareness in the match. With the pitch offering help to spinners, Rahane was of the view that the batsmen needed to grind it out. "It was not a flat wicket. There was something for the bowlers. We had to grind it out. T20, I believe, is not only about hitting sixes. Though we are seeing at this moment that most of the players are going for big shots, they want to look good while batting, it's not about that. It's all about reading the situation well. Having that game awareness as a batter, as an individual and then taking the game forward -that's what I thought we lacked today," said Rahane.

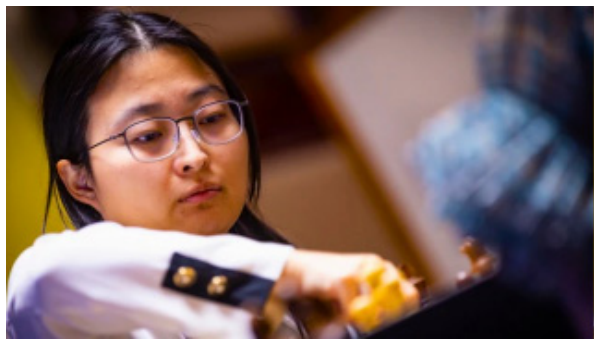
Ju Wenjun brushes aside Tan Zhongyi's challenge to retain FIDE Women's World Championship crown

Ju Wenjun remains the women's chess champion of the world after defeating compatriot Tan Zhongyi in just nine games of the FIDE Women's World Championship to retain the crown. In the contest, Tan had initially raced into the lead by winning a game, Game 2, but then Ju went on a four-game winning streak immediately afterwards to enter the ninth game of the Women's World Championship 2025 needing just a draw.

The 2025 FIDE Women's World Chess Championship match between Ju and Tan was supposed to follow a 12-game format with the first player to score 6.5 points will be declared the winner. Ju Wenjun and Tan Zhongyi during the Women's World Chess Championship Game 8, (Anna Shtourman/FIDE) Ju Wenjun and Tan Zhongyi during the Women's World Chess Championship Game 8. (Anna Shtourman/FIDE)

Who is Ju Wenjun?

Ju Wenjun had defied the same opponent, Tan Zhongyi, in May 2018 to claim her first world championship crown. That was her seventh attempt at the Women's World Championship. Since then, she has defended her crown four times. In March 2017, Ju Wenjun became only the fifth woman to cross the 2600 rating threshold, reaching a peak rating of 2604 in March 2017. After that, in 2018, Ju played in the 64-player knockout tournament as the top seed, where she secured victory in every round before the final without needing tiebreaks. She then defeated Kateryna Lagno in a



tiebreak. In 2020, she defeated GM Aleksandra Goryachkina to retain the crown after plenty of drama. She beat Goryachkina in the third game of a rapid tiebreak after the event had ended 6-6 in classical games. Three years later, she defeated compatriot Lei Tingjie to stay the women's world champion. Ju Wenjun, currently ranked No 2 in the world in the women's rankings list, is a native of Shanghai. She started playing chess at seven, and in 2004, aged 13, she won a silver medal in the Asian Women's Chess Championship and qualified for her first Women's World Championship in 2006. What was remarkable about Ju Wenjun's career path is that inspired by Chinese legend Xie Jun, she eschewed junior competitions in favor of playing against adults from a young age.

India to tussle with Canada, Nigeria and two more countries to host Commonwealth Games 2030

GNS News Agency, April 19

Who wants to host the Commonwealth Games? After years of no nation raising their hand to answer that question, at least seven nations, including India, have thrown their hat into the ring to host the CWG, claims Commonwealth Sport. The governing body for the CWG has revealed that it had received official expressions of interest (EOIs) from seven nations and territories keen to explore hosting future editions of the CWG. While India's interest in hosting the Commonwealth Games has been made public in the previous months, Commonwealth Sport confirmed that it had received EOIs from Canada and Nigeria, besides two more unnamed countries, to host the centenary Commonwealth Games in 2030. The report also added that New Zealand are one of two nations that want to host the 2034 edition.

The future of the Commonwealth Games has looked uncertain over the past few years. Recently, Australia's Victoria had pulled out of hosting the Commonwealth Games next year because the Australian state was not willing to fork out as much as AUS \$7 billion (US\$4.8bn) on "a 12-day sporting event". The initial estimate for hosting the Games was AUS \$2.6 billion. South Africa's D??urban was stripped of the hosting rights for the 2022 CWG because of financial issues and was replaced by Birmingham, which



was actually scheduled to host the Games in 2026. Eventually, Glasgow stepped in to host the Commonwealth Games in 2026, but after making many alterations to the games programme. The statement from Commonwealth Sport said: "Hosting costs will be significantly reduced from historical Commonwealth Games costs to diversify the hosting pipeline and enable more, new countries and territories to host. This will be achieved through continued delivery optimisation and encouraging the use of existing venues for sport and accommodation, unless additional infrastructure is part of existing national development plans that will happen irrespective of a Games."

Ricky Ponting's verdict on PBKS's win: 'Best win I've ever had as IPL coach... don't need many of these at my age'

GNS News Agency, April 19

Ricky Ponting branded Punjab Kings' 16-run win against the defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders — where PBKS successfully managed to defend 111 runs, the lowest total that has been defended in IPL history — as "just about the best win that I've ever had" as a coach in the tournament. Ponting's presence in IPL dugouts as coach stretches back to 2014. "The heart rate still up a bit for me — it's probably up over 200. I don't need many of those games like that at my age of over 50 now," Ponting told the host broadcaster with a smile soon after the game ended in Punjab's favour. "It just goes to show how funny a game it is. Only three days ago we couldn't defend 246 [245] and here we are, defending 112 [111] with 16 runs up our sleeves. We actually said to the guys at the halfway mark that really small chases like this are sometimes the hardest. The wicket wasn't easy. You can see right through the game it was holding up." The architect of Punjab's victory was Yuzvendra Chahal, who ended with figures of 28/4. His victims included Rinku Singh, skipper Ajinkya Rahane, Ramandeep Singh and KKR's top scorer on the night, Angkrish Raghuvanshi.



Rinku Singh of Kolkata Knight Riders walks back after being stumped out on a delivery from Punjab Kings' Yuzvendra Chahal in an IPL 2025 game. (Photo: Sportpics for IPL) Rinku Singh of Kolkata Knight Riders walks back after being stumped out on a delivery from Punjab Kings' Yuzvendra Chahal in an IPL 2025 game. (Photo: Sportpics for IPL) Ponting revealed that Chahal had to undergo a fitness test before the game. He said: "What about [Yuzvendra] Chahal tonight!

Dharmender, Sunny and a Bollywood-style twist – Meet Bobby aka Digvesh Rathi, IPL's breakout spinner

Dharmender, an assistant at a building-material shop, named his first two sons — what else, Sunny and Bobby. Later, he had a third one. Pleased, he called him Happy. Earlier this month, in his modest house, in one of the many buildings standing cheek by jowl in a bylane of Saboli in Northeast Delhi, Dharmender's life turned into a feel-good sports movie. 'Bobby', who the world knows as Digvesh Rathi, has been this IPL season's breakout spinner. Picked by Lucknow SuperGiants for Rs 30 lakh, the 25-year-old mystery spinner got the Player of the Match award for his figures of 1/21 in a high-scoring game against Mumbai Indians, in just his fourth game of his debut IPL season. That night, when Bobby was being interviewed, Dharmender shed tears, older brother Sunny had a lump in his throat and mother Manju was in the puja room.

The family has been with Digvesh through his many struggles and made sacrifices too. Brother Sunny, a former left-arm spinner, was equally good at cricket. But Dharmender couldn't afford two cricketers in the family, so Sunny dropped out. Sunny now works as a police constable at the Mandoli Prison Complex. It's Sunday, Sunny's weekly off and he is happy to talk about his brother's skills and struggles. "He's here because of his sheer hard work. Digvesh had no godfather, we had no money or influence. We were advised to move out of Delhi. Par bhag kyun jaye (but why would we run away)?," Sunny tells Dharmender says he always believed his son would make it. "Even when he suffered setbacks, he was passionate about the game," he says while giving a quick tour of the small trophy cabinet in the living room. Digvesh's mother Manju says she is happy to leave everything to God. "I didn't watch when he played his first game. ... When he calls, I only tell Digvesh not to get carried away by success. And I check if he has slept and eaten well," she says. Sunny narrates the story of how Digvesh, the batsman with a Virender Sehwag-like cover drive when he was 13, took to bowling. Those days, he says, the brothers trained on their own at the Poorvi Delhi Khel Parisar in East Delhi's Tahirpur, where batting slots were limited and in demand. Digvesh Rathi's brother Sunny (left), mother Manju and father Dharmender at their Saboli house. "When it was Digvesh's turn to bat, most of the good bowlers were disinterested in bowling because he wasn't a known name. When he played good strokes against them, their ego was hurt too. Players brought their own cricket balls, so they didn't want to waste it on him. I would bowl to him for hours but facing only one bowler limits a batsman," Sunny says.

Inspired by West Indies spinner Sunil Narine's feats with the cricket ball, Digvesh turned to bowling, aiming at a single stump for hours even as Sunny stood behind the nets and gave instructions. This would be his routine between 1 pm and 3 pm before the other trainees arrived for practice and then from 6 pm to 7 pm, after they left at sunset. "Tappe pe marta, ghanton tak (He would hit one spot for hours)," recalls Sunny. Digvesh's workrate has Lucknow



SuperGiants head coach Justin Langer impressed. The former Australia opener had praised Digvesh, saying, "If he could bowl for 16 hours a day, he would bowl for 16 hours a day. He probably bowls in the corridor of the hotel, he bowls at breakfast, he bowls in the shower, he bowls everywhere. He just loves bowling, and he is being rewarded for years and years of practice." Sets of used cricket balls belonging to Digvesh Rathi, IPL 2025's breakout star who plays for LSG Sets of used cricket balls belonging to Digvesh Rathi, IPL 2025's breakout star who plays for LSG

LSG's trust in Digvesh is paying off. So far this IPL, he is joint-fourth among wicket-takers. His run-up, accuracy and subtle variation are the reasons he is being compared to the West Indian T20 great Narine. In a game against KKR, Digvesh even got Narine's wicket. After the game, he got an audience with his idol. Till two years ago, Digvesh didn't have a regular coach. That's when Vijay Dahiya, the former India and Delhi wicketkeeper, spotted him during a club game. "He would get calls from different clubs in Delhi and play for whichever team had a spot open. At one point, I had enrolled him at a reputed academy in Peeragarhi for Rs 2,500 a month but they made him sit on the bench for two years. But once Dahiya saw him at a local match, Digvesh got support. Dahiya called him to train at his Mori Gate academy," says Sunny. His brother's fortunes improved after he bagged 14 wickets in the Delhi Premier League for South Delhi Superstarz. Dharmender's heart swells with pride when talking about his IPL-capped son. A new refrigerator, still wrapped in its cardboard packaging, is the only recent addition to the Rathi household. The family is also keeping its fingers crossed for Happy, the youngest of the three brothers who is preparing for his police exams. Sunny was, however, worried when Digvesh was fined during the IPL for the send-off he gives to batsmen — using his palm as a notebook, he scribbles a signature every time he gets a wicket. "I did ask Digvesh about it. He told me it motivates him. I said, 'okay, if that helps you play better, fine, but don't disrespect any player'. He's not doing it to attract attention. He was not even on social media till recently... wouldn't even update his WhatsApp status. He would say, 'what is the point of status update, when you don't have status'?"

BCCI invites applications for women's team physio and S&C coach

GNS News Agency, April 19 Hyderabad: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) invites applications for two key positions with Team India (Senior Women): Head Physiotherapist and Strength & Conditioning Coach.

Both roles will be based at the state-of-the-art BCCI Centre of Excellence (COE) in Bengaluru and involve travelling with Team India (Senior Women) for matches and tournaments.

These positions are integral to the Sports Science & Medicine (SSM) team, providing high-performance support services to enhance player performance and implement effective injury management and prevention protocols. The successful candidates will work in a multidisciplinary environment, contributing to the overall development of women's cricket in India. Postgraduate qualification specialising in Sports or Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy/Sports & Exercise Medicine/Sports Rehabilitation- Minimum of 10 years of experience in physiotherapy services- Experience work-



ing with elite athletes/teams, preferably high-performance squads Extensive experience in musculoskeletal/sports injury diagnosis and management

Ibrahim Ali Khan calls social media ‘hateful world’; defends Nadaaniyan as a ‘good’ film: ‘They tried to twist it a lot’



Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh's son, Ibrahim Ali Khan, recently made his debut with Karan Johar's Nadaaniyan. While expectations were high from the film, it was widely panned by critics, with Ibrahim becoming the target of trolling online. In a recent interaction, the 24-year-old actor acknowledged that while people expected

a lot from Nadaaniyan, the team's intention was always to create an easy-breezy rom-com.

Sharing his take on Nadaaniyan, Ibrahim told Filmfare, "People go into the film with very high expectations of what it should be. It was not to be some grand film. It was meant to be a sweet, breezy rom-com that you should enjoy on a Friday night, chilling in bed." Ibrahim Ali Khan didn't shy away from addressing the negativity he faced online, calling social media a 'hateful world' for the amount of trolling both he and the film have seen in the past few months. However, he remained confident in his self-belief, adding, "They tried to twist it a lot. Sure, as a lead actor, I have to bring in loads more than what I did. I know I can bring it and I am confident that I will bring it in my future projects. But I'm happy with what it was. I worked with hardworking people and we made a sweet film." Despite facing sharp criticism, Ibrahim stood by his work, sharing that he personally found the film to be 'good'. "I get the criticism but I enjoyed working on it. It was meant to be sweet and breezy. I would say it's good," he said. Nadaaniyan also starred Khushi Kapoor alongside Mahima Chaudhry, Dia Mirza, Suniel Shetty, and Jugal Hansraj. The film was released on Netflix.

Triple-H talks about convincing John Cena to turn ‘heel’: ‘What if we pull the lever, that no one else could?’

The biggest story of WrestleMania 41 is going to be John Cena vs Cody Rhodes for the WWE Championship. The veteran who held the company on his shoulders for more than a decade, going against not just the new champion but his replacement. Many have discussed the 'why' behind Cena betraying Rhodes; why would a superstar who has stayed true to his values all his career throw it all away in his last ride? WWE's Chief Content Officer Paul Michael Levesque, better known as Triple H, shed some light on the decision in an interview and how the discussion progressed behind the scenes.

On an episode of the High Performance podcast, Triple H talked about the state of affairs when Cena came back to the WWE. "As we came into John's final year, it was discussed that he wants to retire, and even though he will always be a part of the company, his in-ring career as a performer will be over. So John and I spoke, and he is the quintessential professional when it comes to this stuff. He told me that while he has his own thoughts, he was ready to do whatever is required of him." "John told me that if during the remaining 10-12 months we want him to lose every match, win every match or be the champ again, he is ready for anything. That is a one-off quality to find in a wrestler, especially at that level because you are protective of whatever you have built," added Triple H. This comes with little surprise, as John has proved to be a highly malleable wrestler during the final leg of his career and has pushed a lot of new talent by participating in narratives which did not end with him at the top.

"We could have played it safe, but I went up to John and asked him whether we should pull the lever that no one else could. What if we turned him heel? When we explained to him the logic behind him becoming the bad guy, he was surprised and called it a bold move, but he was up for it."

John Cena takes a turn. What happened?

Basically, no one had any idea that Cena was going to



turn heel because no one really thought it was a possibility. In all honesty, Cena was having a great final run as a babyface before deciding to go to the other side. He was the last man eliminated from the Royal Rumble after Jey Uso soldiered on and won the opportunity to challenge any champion he desired for WrestleMania. Cena won the Elimination Chamber, securing a similar opportunity, and Rhodes even came out to congratulate him on his win. Just when everyone thought Cena vs Rhodes was going to be a match between two performers who respect and love each other, where the former was going to win and complete his story, the 16-time world champion surprised everyone by kicking Rhodes and standing alongside The Rock. This added a layer to the story which no one thought was needed, but in reality it saved the match and gave it quantifiable conflict. Both men will face each other in the main event of WrestleMania 41, as Cena will attempt to break one of the longest-standing records in professional wrestling history. WrestleMania will take place on April 19 and 20 at the Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas and will be streaming live on Netflix for the first time ever.

Soha Ali Khan says family's ancestral home, Peeli Kothi, is haunted; ghost slapped her grand aunt: ‘My family packed bags overnight, moved to Pataudi Palace’



Soha Ali Khan, who recently starred in the Prime Video horror film Chhorri 2, recalled a real-life spooky story in which her family in Pataudi had to vacate their house overnight. In a recent interview Soha Ali Khan while discussing horror stories shared how her family believed that they had a first-hand experience with the supernatural back in the day. Soha's royal family lived in a different palace, called Peeli Kothi, before they shifted to the famous Pataudi Palace. According to the actress, her great aunt believed she was slapped by a supernatural being after which the entire family decided to pack their bags and vacate the house.

When asked if she has ever worked on a set that is said to be haunted, Soha quickly replied, "I don't know about sets, but there's our house in Pataudi." She explained, "So there is a palace next to Pataudi Palace, which is called Peeli Kothi. Our family used to live there until one night they decided to pack their bags and vacate it and that's how they shifted to Pataudi Palace. The reason cited for the sudden shift is a supernatural being. I don't know how true is that because obviously, I wasn't present then. But, apparently, my great aunt was slapped by a ghost and they could see the mark on her face. This scared them and they decided to leave," said Soha Ali Khan to Mirchi Plus.

Soha said that despite the palace is located next to the iconic Pataudi Palace, also known as Ibrahim Kothi, making it a prime location, the Peeli Kothi remains uninhabited till date. "There must be a reason why people are not occupying that place," said Soha. Soha plays the role of Daasi Maa in the newly released film Chhorri 2. The film, directed by Vishal Furia, is a sequel to the 2021 film Chhorri. Both the films star Nushratt Bharuccha in the lead role. Pataudi Palace was built in 1934, before which generations of the family lived in the Peeli Kothi. The Nawab of Bhopal declined a marriage proposal from the Pataudi family, citing the palace's small size and saying it was unsuitable for his daughter. Spurred by this rejection, Pataudi's Nawab Iftikhar Ali Khan commissioned the construction of what we now know as the Pataudi Palace. It was designed by British architect Robert Tor Russell — who also designed Connaught Place — with help from Austrian architect Karl Molt von Heinz.

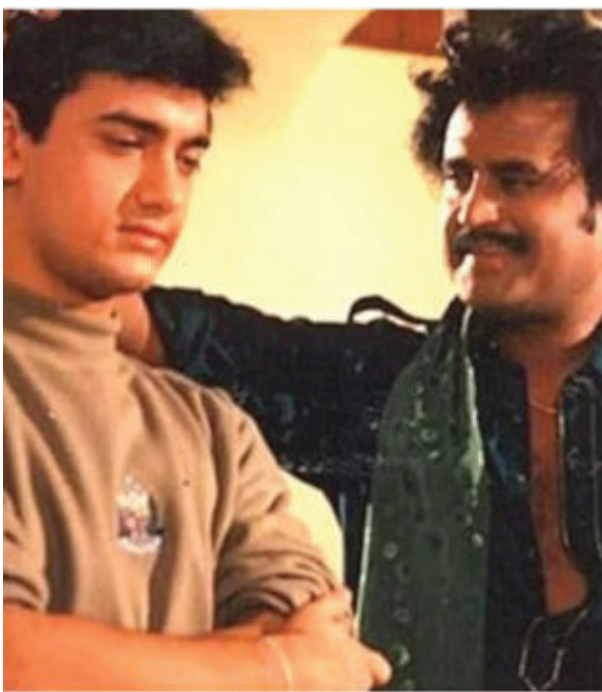
Nushratt on her journey into 'motherhood'

Mumbai: Actress Nushratt Bharuccha has called her journey into motherhood in 'Chhorri 2' a profoundly emotional experience.

The actress, who reprised her role as Sakshi in the horror thriller, shared how stepping into the role of a mother in this thrilling sequel took her on an intense emotional rollercoaster. Reflecting on her journey with 'Chhorri', Nushratt revealed that stepping into the shoes of a mother for this sequel took her on a powerful and intense emotional journey. As she navigated the complexities of her character's maternal instincts.

The actress shared, "When we were shooting 'Chhorri 1,' I was worried I wouldn't be able to convince the audience that I was an eight months pregnant woman. But playing a mother went so much deeper than just the look. Emotionally, it was one of the toughest roles I've taken on because I didn't know where the line was, how much was too much, or how little was too little. Thankfully, Vishal Sir really guided me through that and helped me find the balance."

Aamir Khan to make cameo appearance in Rajinikanth and Lokesh Kanagaraj's Coolie, confirms Upendra: ‘We have combination scenes too’



Putting all rumours to rest, Kannada star Upendra, who plays a key role in Coolie alongside Rajinikanth and Nagarjuna, has revealed that Aamir Khan indeed plays a role in the Lokesh Kanagaraj directorial. Besides Upendra and Nagarjuna, the Rajinikanth-starrer Coolie reportedly also features a cameo appearance by Aamir Khan. In this day and age, to keep details regarding a movie under wraps is almost impossible, with eagle-eyed paparazzi and fans always on the prowl to catch exclusive glimpses. This becomes even more difficult if the plan is to have a surprise cameo appearance by a mammoth star. Although speculations were rife that a massive celebrity would make a

guest appearance in director Lokesh Kanagaraj's already star-studded Coolie — with some even predicting that it's Bollywood icon Aamir Khan — the movie's team had not made any official announcements in this regard till now. However, Kannada actor Upendra Rao has now put all rumours to rest. Upendra, who plays a key role in Coolie alongside Rajinikanth and Nagarjuna, has now revealed that Aamir Khan indeed plays a role in the much-anticipated action thriller. Upendra then went one step further and also shared that he has a combination scene with the Bollywood superstar.

"I did not ask him anything when Lokesh (Kanagaraj) garu told me the story. For me, it's enough to get an opportunity to stand next to him (Rajinikanth) for a few minutes. Because if I'm Ekalavya, he's my Dronacharya. I follow him that much. If it's entertainment that he gives everyone, I get enlightenment from him. Rajini sir is like that, and I'm blessed to have worked with him," he shared while speaking to the media following the teaser launch for his upcoming movie 45. When asked if he shot with Nagarjuna and Aamir Khan too, Upendra said immediately, "Yeah, yeah, we have combination scenes too." Rajinikanth and Aamir previously worked together in the Hindi film Aatank Hi Aatank (1995). Besides the four stars, Coolie also features Malayalam actor Soubin Shahir and Tamil actors Sathyaraj and Shruti Haasan in key roles. Tentatively titled Thalaivar 171, Coolie is Lokesh Kanagaraj's seventh directorial venture but serves as a standalone film, not related to his Lokesh Cinematic Universe (LCU). Bankrolled by Kalanithi Maran's Sun Pictures, Coolie's music is composed by Anirudh Ravichander, while its cinematography and editing are handled by Girish Gangadharan and Philomin Raj, respectively. Upendra, who was last seen in his own directorial Ul, currently has both Coolie and 45 gearing up for release. Helmed by Arjun Janya, 45 also features Shiva Rajkumar, Raj B Shetty, Chethan Kumar and Jagapathi Babu in key roles. The movie will hit the screens on August 15, a day after the worldwide release of Coolie.

Kishore Kumar left ailing wife Madhubala amid worsening health; would visit her once in 2 months, disconnect phone: ‘Being abandoned killed her’



Despite her passing years ago, Madhubala continues to be one of the most enigmatic stars of Hindi cinema. Beyond her iconic performances during what is often referred to as Bollywood's 'golden era,' her personal life remains a subject of intrigue. It was also the sorrow in her personal life that earned her the moniker of the 'tragedy queen.' In a recent interaction, Madhubala's sister Madhur Bhushan talked about her life and her love affairs with Dilip Kumar and Kishore Kumar. Young in the film industry, Madhubala fell in love with Dilip Kumar. However, their romance didn't last long as the couple parted ways after an ego spat. After ending her relationship with Dilip, Madhubala got involved with Kishore Kumar, with whom she had worked in films like Dhake Ki Malmal (1956), Chalti Ka Naam Gadi (1958), and Half Ticket (1962). However, their marriage too wasn't a happy one.

Madhubala and Kishore Kumar married despite the Mughal-E-Azam star being diagnosed with a heart condition — a hole in her heart (ventricular septal defect). Their marriage suffered after Madhubala's condition worsened and she became bedridden. Talking about the same, Madhur told Filmfare, "As she (Madhubala) wasn't keeping well, Abba said don't get married now, see what the doctor has to say. But they got married in 1960." After Madhubala's condition worsened, Kishore Kumar flew her to London to consult a doctor, where they declared that she wouldn't survive. "Kishore Bhaiyya flew her to London about 10 days later. The doctors said, her heart is finished. And that she wouldn't live beyond two years," recalled Madhur.

Kishore Kumar, who was at the peak of his career at that time, left a suffering Madhubala at her home with her father and sisters. The actor argued that since his career demanded him to travel, he couldn't take care of the ailing actor. "Kishore Bhaiyya left her at our home. He said that she was sick and needed care while he had to travel, work,

sing and hence wouldn't be able to give her time. He said, I tried my best, I took her to London. But the doctors have said she won't survive. What's my fault?" Madhur added. Though Madhur didn't blame Kishore for leaving Madhubala alone during a tough time, she agreed that the actor-filmmaker didn't provide her with emotional strength. "We're not saying that he was wrong. Aapa was told by the doctors you cannot have sex, you cannot have children... But yet a woman needs emotional support no matter what." Madhur explained that Madhubala insisted on living with Kishore, and he even bought her a flat at Mumbai's Carter Road, but she was mostly left alone in the house. She said, "She'd be alone most of the time. The sea breeze made her sicker." Kishore reduced his visits to Madhubala and would also not be available to take her calls, and that made her jealous. "Often Kishore Bhaiyya's phone was disconnected. He'd visit her once in two to three months. He'd say, 'If I come, you'll cry and it will not be good for your heart. You'll go into depression. You should rest.' She was young, jealousy was natural. Perhaps, a feeling of being abandoned killed her," said Madhur. Madhur admitted that despite seeing heartbreak and facing a fatal illness, her sister had a 'tremendous willpower' that helped her survive for nine years when she was only given two years to live. She passed away in 1969, at the age of 36.

Khushi Kapoor makes her relationship with Vedang Raina Insta official with a cute pendant, follows sister Janhvi Kapoor's example



Khushi Kapoor, who was rumoured to be dating her The Archies co-star Vedang Raina, has finally made her relationship Instagram official. The actress followed her sister Janhvi Kapoor's footsteps to announce her relationship by wearing a pendant that had the initials V and K. On Wednesday, the Loveyappa actress took to her Instagram handle to share a series of pictures of herself. In the photos, the actress could be seen wearing a checked collared dress. A few images also had her close up shots, the highlight of which was a beautiful pendant. It had the initials V and K, with a heart in between.

This is the first time, Khushi has hinted at her relationship with the Jigra star. Previously, the couple was snapped together at various

occasions including Khushi's birthday, and Anant Ambani's wedding celebrations in Jamnagar, photos and videos of which were massively shared online. In Khushi's birthday video, Vedang was seen cutely holding her hair while she blew the candles on her birthday cake. At the time of Anant Ambani's pre-wed-

ding festivities in Jamnagar, Khushi was seen walking hand-in-hand with Vedang Raina, while her sister Janhvi Kapoor was accompanied by her boyfriend Shikhar Pahariya. Last year, when Khushi and Vedang were rumoured to be dating each other, they had collaborated for an ad for the dating app, Bumble. This

had fueled the rumours of their relationship, however, the couple never commented on the same. Before Khushi, Janhvi had made her relationship with Shikhar Pahariya official in a similar style where she wore a "Shiku" pendant to an event. Khushi Kapoor and Vedang Raina marked their acting debut with the Netflix film,