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A people's pontiff

Pope Francis, who passed away on Easter Monday at the age of 88, was not just the first Latin American pontiff, he was, in many ways, the most unconventional pope of modern times. A spiritual leader with the heart of a reformer, Jorge Mario Bergoglio embodied humility, compassion and a quiet but persistent defiance of the Vatican's ossified traditions. From the moment he stepped onto the balcony of St Peter's Basilica in 2013, rejecting papal opulence and choosing the name "Francis" after the saint of the poor, his message was unmistakable: this would be a papacy focussed on mercy over judgment, inclusion over exclusion and the marginalised over the powerful.

He will be remembered as the pope who washed the feet of prisoners, lived in a guesthouse instead of the Apostolic Palace, and embraced LGBTQ+ Catholics, migrants and climate action with moral clarity. His messages on environmental stewardship and economic inequality reframed Catholic doctrine for the 21st century. For many, he reimagined the Church not as an institution of power, but as a field hospital — meeting people where they suffer. Pope Francis notably addressed the liturgical dispute in India's Syro-Malabar Church, appointing Archbishop Cyril Vasil as his delegate to mediate.

Critics saw him as too progressive, and his initial response to clerical abuse drew scrutiny. Yet, reform under Francis was real, if incomplete. Still, he reoriented the Church's moral compass towards compassion. His visit to conflict zones and his willingness to speak uncomfortable truths gave him moral authority beyond the Catholic fold. In a divided world — and often a divided Church — he stood as a figure of unity and hope. Pope Francis reminded us that true power lies in humility. His call for a Church of the poor, for the poor" will resonate for generations.

FGG urges CEC to probe into BRS fiat asking its corporators to abstain from MLC voting

Hyderabad, April 22 M. Padmanabha Reddy, president, Forum for Good Governance (FGG) wrote a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner, Election Commission of India, New Delhi about Hyderabad local body elections and B.R.S. party refraining party corporators from participating in elections and the offence attracts section 123 of the R.P. Act and section 169 of B.N.S. He requested the CEC to conduct an inquiry. He stated that the local body elections of Hyderabad to be held on April 23, but the main Opposition BRS party is refraining its corporators from participating and voting in elections. He stated that the Election Commission of India is taking numerous steps to improve the polling percentage. The civil society organizations in Telangana are organizing as "Election Watch" and taking up campaign for all citizens to exercise their voting right. The Supreme Court will improve the polling percentage and to allow negative voting ordered to include NOTA. The entire exercise of the Election Commission of India, Supreme Court and Civil Societies is to see that all voters should exercise their Right to Vote. Citizens of Hyderabad have elected their Corporators, M.L.A.s and M.P.s by exercising their adult franchises. When it comes to electing an M.L.C. by Corporators of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, BRS party is directing its Corporators not to participate in elections. As per newspaper reports, the BRS party has warned the Corporators of serious action if any Corporator participates and votes in elections. This act of B.R.S. party violates sec. 123 of R.P. Act. Again, as per sec. 169 of B.N.S. 2023 a person has a electoral right to vote at an election. Directing the party Corporators not to go for voting violates the Right to Vote. Forum for Good Governance urges the Election Commission of India to take suitable action in this matter

Telangana Rising delegation receives warm welcome at Hiroshima

Hiroshima, April 22 The Telangana Rising delegation, headed by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, received a warm welcome in Hiroshima city, Japan, on Tuesday. Takashi Nakamoto, the Speaker of the Hiroshima Prefectural Assembly, greeted the Chief Minister and his team with great respect and honored Revanth Reddy upon their arrival. Following this, the official Telangana Rising delegation visited the Prefectural Legislative Assembly Hall, where both parties engaged in extensive discussions focused on cooperation, collaboration, and the promotion of shared values related to peace, sustainability, and prosperity. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, IT Minister D. Sridhar Babu, and officials including Jayesh Ranjan, V. Sheshadri, Ajith Reddy, Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, and others were then given a ceremonial trip inside the Assembly. As a special mark of honour, Speaker Nakamoto took Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Minister Sridhar Babu to his chair. Earlier, speaking to the gathering of legislators, Revanth Reddy said, "It is an honour to come to Hiroshima. Your city means Hope. You are a symbol of what is possible when people decide to do something, together. Like Hiroshima, Telangana too is all about struggle, hope, and achievement through hard work, vision and responsibility." "We both share several values. Never give up is one. Hiroshima stands for peace, sustainability and prosperity. Telangana too shares those values with you. Therefore, today, I am not here to talk about investments, but partnership. A partnership to help create a better, greener, and more inclusive world," Minister Sridhar Babu said. "Today, more than 50 Japanese companies are doing wonders in my state. We are ready to welcome many more. We have great opportunities in clean energy, electric mobility, precision manufacturing, and green hydrogen," the Minister said. "I invite officials of Hiroshima Government and business leaders to visit Telangana to see first-hand what we are doing. Telangana can be your gateway to India — and our platform for global growth."

The National Sanskrit University, in collaboration with C-DAC inaugurated a two-day national conference



"April 22, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator" The National Sanskrit University, in collaboration with C-DAC inaugurated a two-day national conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Quantum Computing, and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) at the Ramanujan Mukherjee Auditorium campus. Key

speakers included Prof. Kamakoti, Director of IIT Madras, delivered a key note address titled "SANSKRIT FOR AI & AI FOR SANSKRIT". He highlighted the integration of AI and ML with Sanskrit studies, emphasizing the potential of AI technologies to advance Sanskrit scholarship and achieve new goals. Dr. S.D. Sudarshan, Executive Director of C-DAC Bangalore, discussed the application of AI in Sanskrit grammar, new word creation, and transmitting traditional scientific knowledge to modern generations through technology. "University Registrar K.V. Narayana Rao noted the historical use of advanced technology in Indian military science, drawing parallels between ancient weapons like the Brahmastra and modern nuclear arms, underscoring the deep roots of such technologies in Indian tradition." Vice-Chancellor Prof. G.S.R. Krishnamurthy stressed the broad application of C-DAC's technology in Sanskrit studies and encouraged interdisciplinary research aligned with NEP 2020, promoting innovations and patents. He also introduced a newly established Modern School at the university to foster technical research and innovation. "Prof. K. Ganapathi Bhat, Chair and Coordinator of the event, elaborated on using AI in Vedanta and other classical sciences to transmit knowledge to contemporary audiences. Prof. R.J. Ramasri, Head of Computer Science, shared ongoing research on leveraging AI to modernize Sanskrit through computerization." Academic Dean Prof. Rajanikant Shukla discussed effective ways to use technology in Sanskrit language studies. The event also featured presentations from IIT Tirupati faculty on computer vision applications for Indian cultural heritage. "The conference was attended by university faculty, students, and experts, with Prof. B. Chandrasekhar, Head presiding over the Computer Science department's coordination. The event marked a significant step in blending ancient Indian knowledge systems with cutting-edge AI, ML, and quantum computing technologies to preserve and advance Sanskrit and Indian heritage in the modern era

Signify launches a new range of Ecolink fans, combining energy efficiency with revolutionary designs and premium aesthetics



Hyderabad: In line with the customer demands for the summer season, Signify, the world leader in lighting, has unveiled an innovative range of Ecolink fans, offering high speed performance, superior air delivery, and energy efficient technology. Designed to cater to evolving consumer needs, this new lineup introduces 4 new models with BLDC Technology: AeroElevate, AeroQuad, AeroGeometry & AeroJewel and 2 new Smart models: AeroGeometry Smart and AeroJewel Smart which are powered by Wiz; Signify's IoT platform.

The innovative product line combines advanced technology with superior performance, offering consumers a breath of fresh air in any space. With a MRP range of INR 5850/- to INR 8700/-, the product line includes 4 new innovative models - AeroElevate, AeroQuad, AeroGeometry, AeroJewel, all designed to provide superior air delivery, efficient performance, and significant energy savings.

Commenting on the power packed launch Sumit Joshi,

MD & CEO, Signify, Greater India, said, "At Signify, we are dedicated to redefining innovation and design to enhance everyday living. We are thrilled to introduce our powerful new range of Ecolink fans, designed to meet the evolving needs of consumers. Through extensive research, we have developed a lineup that seamlessly integrates cutting-edge technology with energy efficiency. With models like AeroElevate, AeroQuad, AeroGeometry, and AeroJewel, we have incorporated unique features such as designer LED speed indicators, BLDC technology, RF remote technology and a ceiling adjustable mounting mechanism that maintains the design aesthetic post installation. We are confident that this revolutionary range will set a new benchmark in the premium fans category."

C Arun Kumar, Head of Consumer Business, Signify Greater India, said, "Our new range has been meticulously designed to maximize energy efficiency, helping consumers reduce power consumption leading to lower electricity bills.

This range transforms the way ceiling fans are perceived, offering revolutionary designs and powerful performance that elevates any space. Whether it's the hollow hub design of AeroElevate, the futuristic square hub design of AeroQuad, the geometric precision of AeroGeometry, or the luxurious finish of AeroJewel, each model is crafted to align with evolving consumer preferences. With this launch, we reinforce our commitment to delivering innovative designs, quality, performance, and stylish home comfort solutions."

India's Street-Smart Car: MG Comet BLACKSTORM unveiled in Hyd



Hyderabad:JSW MG Motor India unveiled the BLACKSTORM Edition of India's Street-Smart Car- MG Comet in Hyderabad. With enhanced style and appeal, the Comet BLACKSTORM is the top variant which comes at Battery-as-a-Service Price (BaaS Price) ? 7.80 Lakh + ? 2.5/km. Customers seeking a stylish and tech savvy city commuter can now visit MG dealership in Hyderabad and book the new MG Comet BLACKSTORM, by paying a sum of ? 11,000/-.

The MG Comet BLACKSTORM exudes sophistication and style through its 'Starry Black' exteriors, that enhances the overall appeal of the car. The Comet EV nameplate is carved in dark chrome and 'Internet Inside' emblem is finished in black, commanding attention from on-lookers. The black theme is carried over in the interiors with the word 'BLACKSTORM' embroidered in red on the leatherette seats, promising a premium experience.

For the music aficionados, the company has now equipped the Comet BLACKSTORM with 4 speakers to make traffic congestions a little soothing. Under the hood,

this new edition is equipped with a 17.4 kWh battery that supports fast-charging and delivers a certified range of 230 kilometre*. Customers can further personalise their Comet BLACKSTORM with an exclusive accessory pack, including a unique badge, wheel cover, and optional styling elements like hood branding and skid plates.

Commenting on this, Abhay Dubey, Dealer Principal, MG Hyderabad said, "The MG Comet EV is a promising product for an industrial city like Hyderabad. The evolving preferences of modern Indian buyers include a vehicle which reflects their stylish personality and the MG Comet BLACKSTORM will help them stand out. This newer edition of Comet enhances daily commutes with its stylish black exterior, sophisticated design while maintaining MG's commitment to advanced technology and superior ownership experience." The MG Comet EV combines the functionality that an urban commuter needs with their desired style, all within a safe and smart package. The Comet EV's sales impressively grew by 29% in CY'24 over CY'23, signalling its strong acceptance among car-buyers. Its innovative design and practicality have resonated with consumers nationwide, making it a preferred choice for city dwellers seeking a stylish, eco-friendly mobility solution.

BRS leader BSN Kiran Yadav distributed printing machines to government school

"Miyapur Division April 22 In the context of teachers and students facing difficulties in obtaining Xerox and printing at Shamshiguda Government School under the division, Miyapur Division BRS leader BSN Kiran Yadav distributed printing machines to meet their basic needs. Speaking on the occasion, he said that he would provide any assistance related to education to the students.

The management of the government school and the students expressed their joy for providing two printing machines immediately after asking. Student leaders, State General Secretary Yashwanth, Sherlingampalli constituency Raju Amalavalasa and others participated in the program.

Notice issued to Krishank by Madhapur PS is political vendetta: BRS

Hyderabad, April 22 Madhapur Police have issued a notice to BRS social media convener Krishank Manne in connection with a case registered a year ago, on March 31, 2024. The notice, dated April 1, 2025, was issued under Section 35(3) of the BNS for alleged offences under IPC Sections 504, 505(2), and 505(1)(b). The case pertains to a complaint by Senior Vice President Telangana Congress Committee Kumar Rao, that Krishank Manne posted a tweet.

Reacting to the notice, Krishank said, "I didn't even post anything in this case. This is nothing but an attempt to intimidate me. The earlier case was from Gachibowli and now this one is from Madhapur. Both notices were prepared so carelessly that they even mention me as 'Soda media convener' instead of 'Social media convener'. Are these notices being drafted from the CM's office?"

Krishank added, "Last year I already gave one phone in Madhapur. Now Madhapur Police are asking for my phone again while on other end Gachibowli Police also have been asking my phone. What should I do, Give battery at Madhapur and Display screen at another Police Station? What is this nonsense? This is clearly political vendetta." He further stated, "Unlike this government, which is wasting time filing false cases, I am a busy person working on people's issues such as Group 1 Mains Exam discrepancies as well as Rs.5000 crore MoU and 60 Acres allotment to a Fraudulent company URSA clusters, we have been questioning these. These notices are only meant to distract and harass me

Emami Unveils 'Pure Glow' A revolutionary skincare solution Ropes in Raashii Khanna as Brand Ambassador



Hyderabad:Emami Limited, the flagship personal care and healthcare company of the Emami Group, announces its entry into the ?4,000 Cr plus brightening cream category with the launch of Emami Pure Glow - a revolutionary skincare solution designed to address key consumer concerns and redefine the glow segment.

Why Pure Glow is Superior?

Revolutionary Moisturizing Base Formula – No white cast, fast absorption, and long-lasting hydration2X visible brightness, 50%+ moisturization, and dark spots fading in one weekPowered by Japanese Sakura Flower & NiacinamideSun Protection & Long-Term EffectivenessA unique blend of pink for glow and gold for premium appealTo amplify the brand's appeal and connect with consumers nationwide, Emami has roped in Raashii Khanna as the face of Pure Glow. With a strong presence across regional and Hindi film industry, Raashii brings charm, confidence, and relatability to the brand, making her the perfect choice for a new-age skincare revolution.Backed by cutting-edge technology, Emami Pure Glow is crafted to tackle the biggest challenges faced by women with existing brightening creams - white cast, lack of moisturization and minimal effectiveness or visible results over time. Emami, renowned for its groundbreaking innovations in the personal care segment, has combined the power of science and nature, infused with the potent of Japanese Sakura Flower and clinically proven Niacinamide in this next generation brightening cream. The unique formula delivers 2X visible brightness in just 3 weeks, provides 50% more moisturization, and helps reduce dark spots in as little as one week.Speaking on the launch, Mr Mohan Goenka, Vice Chairman and Whole-Time Director, Emami Limited, said, "For years, Emami has disrupted personal care categories with innovative and high-performance products. With Pure Glow, we are entering the ?4,000 Cr brightening cream market with a superior, science-backed formula that truly delivers. We have studied consumer concerns extensively, and our unique 6-Way Brightening Action, deep penetration technology, and natural ingredients ensure an effective, long-lasting glow. We believe Pure Glow will be a category game-changer."



Indira IVF Hospital Limited Expands Presence in Hyderabad with Gachibowli Centre



Hyderabad: Indira IVF Hospital Limited ("Indira IVF") today inaugurates a new fertility centre in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, enhancing access to advanced reproductive care in the region. Located at 2nd Floor, Fortune Cyber, Gachibowli Village, Gachibowli-Miyapur Road, Serilingampally Mandal, Gachibowli, Telangana. The centre aims to provide specialized fertility treatments to individuals and couples seeking support on their journey to parenthood. With this expansion, Indira IVF continues its mission of making fertility care more accessible and inclu-

sive by combining technology-driven services with compassionate medical guidance.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Mr. Tariq Ansari, Chairman of Telangana State Minority Commission, and Dr. Shanta Kumari, President of FOGSI Telangana, as the Chief Guest. Also present were, Dr. Trupthi Ganapathi, Gynecologist, IVF Specialist & Indira IVF's Centre Head, Hyderabad, and South Zonal Business Director, as Guests of Honour, and Dr. Udaya Kiran Bandaru, Gynaecologist and IVF specialist, Indira IVF's Center head, Gachibowli.

Speaking on the inauguration, Mr. Tariq Ansari, Chairman of Telangana State Minority Commission, stated, "While medical advancements have made infertility treatable, social stigma and lack of awareness continue to prevent timely intervention. It is vital that we work towards normalising conversations around reproductive health, and this centre can play an instrumental role in that effort." Dr. Shanta Kumari, President, FOGSI Telangana, added, "Affordability remains one of the key concerns in fertility treatment. It is encouraging to see organisations like Indira IVF expanding into areas where they can offer both expertise and cost-effective solutions, helping many couples achieve their dreams of parenthood." Mr. Nitiz Murdia, Managing Director, Indira IVF, said, "As India's healthcare landscape evolves, the demand for patient-centric fertility care is growing rapidly. At Indira IVF, we are focused on creating environments where clinical excellence is matched by transparency, empathy and trust. The centre in Gachibowli is a reflection of this approach, tailored to meet the unique needs of the community it serves."

Continental Hospitals Study Reveals Alarming Rise in Colon and Rectal Cancer Risk Among Indians



Hyderabad: A groundbreaking study by Continental Hospitals has highlighted a concerning trend in the rising incidence of colon and rectal cancer (CRC) among the Indian population, particularly affecting individuals aged 50 and under. As the third most common cancer globally, CRC accounts for about 10% of all cancer cases and is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide. The alarming trends indicate that states such as Mizoram, Jammu and Kashmir, and Kerala, along with cities like Kollam, Thiruvananthapuram, and Bengaluru, exhibit high rates of colorectal cancer incidence and mortality. Notably, some registries report an increase in cases ranging from 20% to 124% per year. In 2022, colorectal cancer accounted for 881,984 cases worldwide and tragically claimed 38,367 lives in India alone.

Dr. Guru N. Reddy, the primary author of the study and Founder and Chairman of Continental Hospitals, stated,

"Despite established guidelines advocating for colorectal cancer screening in developed countries for over 25 years, India has not yet instituted a formal recommendation or advocacy for such screenings. This is a critical gap that needs addressing."

Continental Hospitals has implemented proactive measures over the past three years, conducting screening colonoscopies on thousands of patients. The findings reveal that approximately 28.03% of men and 21.15% of women had pre-cancerous lesions (polyps), representing a significant portion of patients at risk of developing colorectal cancer if these lesions remain undetected and untreated. The American College of Gastroenterology endorses colonoscopy and Fecal Immunochemical Tests (FIT) as vital screening tools. "We urge individuals aged 45 and above to undergo screening colonoscopies to enhance early detection and intervention," Dr. Reddy emphasized.

KASTURBA ADARSHA SCHOOL ACHIEVES REMARKABLE SUCCESS IN INTERMEDIATE RESULTS



P. S. A. SHOKAN "INDIAN CHRONICLE" MANTHANI "23-4-2025" Kasturba Adarsha School in Mutharam Mandal has achieved outstanding academic results in the Intermediate First and Second Year examinations for the academic year 2024-25, as announced by the Intermediate Board. "The school has shown exemplary performance across various streams, especially in MPWH, where both First and Second Year students secured a 100% pass rate. In the CEC stream, the First Year saw a pass percentage of 53%, while the Second Year witnessed an impressive 98% success rate. "Taduri Kavaya stood as the top scorer in the CEC Second Year with 912 marks, securing the first rank in the college. In the MPWH stream, Ali Amulya emerged as the overall college topper with a remarkable score of 962 marks in the Second Year. "Out of 80 students who appeared for the First Year examinations, 55 students passed, resulting in a 68.7% pass rate.

In the Second Year, 87 students appeared, of which



76 students passed, achieving an 87.3% pass percentage. "Stream-wise Toppers: "MPC Stream: "First Year (Out of 470 Marks): "R. Spandana - 460, A. Jessika Charlin - 460, K. Sindhuja - 459, A. Akshaya - 454, K. Jashwitha - 452 "Second Year (Out of 1000 Marks): "G. Ashwitha - 964, R. Shravanthi - 948, D. Keerthana - 919, D. Siri - 900 "BiPC Stream: "First Year (Out of 440 Marks): "M. Niharika - 432, A. Akshitha - 424, P. Anjali - 415 "Second Year (Out of 1000 Marks): "B. Sushmitha - 938, P. Anjali - 894 "CEC Stream: "First Year (Out of 500 Marks): "J. Akshaya - 439, V. Geethika - 363 "Second Year (Out of 1000 Marks): "A. Jahnavi - 938, T. Navya - 878, Sree Valli - 863 "Among the CEC students, A. Jahnavi stood as the Second Year topper with 938 marks, earning special recognition from the school. "On this occasion, Kasturba Adarsha School Special Officer Ms. Swapna and Principal Mr. Kesari Santosh Kumar congratulated the teaching faculty and staff for their dedicated efforts that led to this commendable achievement.

20 Students from KP's 21st Century IAS Academy shine in UPSC Civil Services Examination 2024.



KP's 21st Century IAS Academy, Hyderabad is proud to announce that 20 of its students have successfully cleared the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2024, securing top positions and reaffirming the academy's com-

mitment to academic excellence and nation-building.

Among the distinguished achievers are:

- Aman Tiwari - All India Rank 74
- Pulkit Bansal - All India Rank 155
- Ashish Raghuvanshi - All India Rank 202
- Rishika - All India Rank 217
- Hemanth Sankar - All India Rank 223
- Sai Rohan - All India Rank 892

Speaking on the occasion Mr P Krishna Pradeep, Chairman of 21st century IAS Academy, said: "We are incredibly proud of our students who have cracked one of the toughest examinations in the country. Their achievement is a source of pride not just for the academy but for the entire nation. We remain committed to mentoring the next generation of civil servants with passion and purpose." Mr Krishna Pradeep said that their campuses in Hyderabad and Delhi, has become a preferred destination for civil services aspirants across India. The academy continues to deliver consistent results through its comprehensive curriculum, intensive test series, interview training, and personalized guidance. Director Dr Bhavani Shankar and the team of 21st century IAS Academy congratulated the rankers.

NEW ROR ACT & BHU BHARATI TO RESOLVE LAND ISSUES.

"P. S. A. SHOKAN "INDIAN CHRONICLE" MANTHANI "23-4-2025. "Relief for pending Sada Bainama applications" Steps underway to appoint Village Administration Officers in every village" Plan to assign "Bhoodhaar" numbers to land just like Aadhaar for individuals" Says District Collector Koya Sri Harsha "Ramgiri, Mutharam: District Collector Koya Sri Harsha stated that land-related issues can be effectively resolved through the newly introduced ROR (Record of Rights) Act in conjunction with the Bhu Bharati system. On Tuesday, he participated in an awareness program on the Bhu Bharati Act held at the Singareni Community Hall in Centenary Colony of Ramagiri Mandal, along with Additional Collector D. Venu. "Collector Sri Harsha explained various aspects of the Bhu Bharati Act to farmers and the general public through a PowerPoint presentation. "Speaking on the occasion, the Collector shared that the Bhu Bharati Act (Record of Rights in Land) 2025 was introduced by the government with the primary goal of addressing land disputes and has already been implemented on a pilot basis in four mandals across the state. "He said that individuals can now appeal against land-related orders issued by officials under the provisions of this new Act. Appeals against Revenue Division Officer (RDO) decisions can be made to the Collector, and decisions of the Collector can be further appealed to the Land Tribunal. Unlike in the Dharani system, where objections could only be taken to civil courts, the new appeal mechanism allows for a more accessible grievance redressal system. "If still dissatisfied after the appeal process, applicants can approach a civil court. The government will also provide free legal advice to applicants wherever required. "The Collector highlighted that revenue records will be prepared for every village and displayed annually. To strengthen the revenue system, the government is taking steps to appoint Village Administration Officers (VAOs) in every village. "He also informed that, like



Aadhaar for individuals, every land parcel will soon be assigned a unique Bhoodhaar number, which will help prevent illegal land encroachments. The current land records in Dharani will be continued under the new Bhu Bharati Act. "He encouraged eligible applicants with errors in their land rights records to apply within a year of the implementation of the new Act in the district. These applications will be reviewed by the RDO and the District Collector. If applicants have any objections, they can appeal to the Collector or the Land Tribunal. "The government has also made provisions to regularize pending Sada Bainama applications under the Bhu Bharati Act. Applications not violating POT, LTR, or Ceiling Acts will be regularized upon payment of applicable stamp duty, registration fee, and a penalty of ₹100. Certificates will be issued, and the land details will be recorded in the Rights Register, followed by the issuance of a Pattadar Passbook. "He added that awareness pamphlets about the Bhu Bharati Act are being distributed and urged the public to go through them. Officials are always ready to clarify doubts, he assured. "The event saw the participation of Revenue Division Officer Suresh, Ramagiri Tahsildar Suman, local farmers, community members, and other relevant officials.

First four minutes are crucial in case of fire: Asst Dist Fire Officers

"April 22, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema coordinator "We should try to prevent a fire as soon as it occurs, and any delay can lead to a major disaster, said District Fire Service Officers Kiran Kumar Reddy and Adinarayana Reddy (TTD). A fire drill was conducted on fire prevention at the Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Vahanam Mandapam on Tuesday under the supervision of temple AVSO Satish Kumar. As part of this program, temple staff, flood personnel and priests were shown how to act in case of fire accidents and how to use fire extinguishers to prevent fire accidents. Speaking on the occasion, officials said that the first four minutes are very crucial in case of fire accidents. They said that they demonstrated what actions should be taken in case of fire accidents in the flood season or outside the temple and how to use fire extinguishers. They were asked to provide information immediately in case of fire accidents. Temple priests, fire department



staff, temple staff, vigilance staff and others participated in this program.

All should work hard to achieve Indra Reddy's dreams BRS party MLA Sabitha

Hyderabad, April 22 Former Minister and Maheshwaram MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy today said that everyone should work hard to achieve former Minister Indra Reddy's dreams and follow in his footsteps. On the occasion of Indra Reddy's death anniversary, former Minister and Maheshwaram MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy, along with her son Karthik Reddy, Kaushik Reddy, Kalyan Reddy, Chevella MLA Yadayya and Rangareddy District DCMS Chairman Pattolla Krishna Reddy, paid floral tributes at his statue at the Chevella Municipality Center.

Speaking on the occasion, she said that although Indra Reddy was away from everyone for 25 years but he was still in the hearts of the people. She said that Indra Reddy constantly lived among the people and worked for the development of the poor. She said that the Indra Reddy family would remain in the hearts of the people of Chevella area forever. She explained that she was moving forward in the practice of Asya by following in the footsteps of Indranna.

Chevella MLA Yadayya, senior leaders Karthik Reddy, Rangareddy District DCMS Chairman Krishna Reddy, former MPP Bal Raj, former ZPTC Krishna Reddy, former Vice MPP Prasad, Mandal President Prabhakar, Chevella Constituency Youth President Vanga Sridhar Reddy, former Sarpanchs Narahari Reddy, Prabhakar, Shiva Reddy, Hanmanth Reddy, Jahangir, Mallareddy, MPTC Satyanarayana Chari, former Vice Chairmen of Chevella Market Committee Giridhar Reddy, Narsimulu, former Directors Telugu Venkatesh, Mahesh, Sainath, Gudi Malkar Directors Mangali Yadagiri, leaders Gudennolla Manikyam,



Mahender Reddy, Arthasekhar Reddy, Krishnaiah, Madhava Goud, Srinivas, Gudipalli Sekhar Reddy, Raghavendra Reddy, Yellaiah, Ramprasad, Venkatesh, Gani, and others participated in the program. (NSS)

Internship Training

Hyderabad, April 22 (NSS): BSNL training centre RTTE, Hyderabad, will start offline Internship Training for Engineering students, on April 28. The two-week and four-week training will enable engineering students to gain hands-on-skilling, certification and career-ready expertise.

Interested candidates can register on <https://bsnltd/RTTCHY/c/BSNL.04.2025>, says a notification.

KPHB Police Crack Murder Case – Three Arrested.



“Kukatpally April 22 The accused A-1, Boini Kavitha, who is the wife of the deceased Boini Sailu, hatched a plan to eliminate her husband. She sought the help of her brother-in-law A-2 Sadhula Mallesh and her sister A-3 Sadhula Jyothi. A-1 informed them that she was vexed with her husband’s orthodox behavior, due to which she had separated from him. However, whenever she visited the village to see her children, she was insulted by her husband and his family members. Recently, the deceased decided to perform his daughter’s marriage with his sister’s son. When A-1 questioned him about this, he responded aggressively and warned her not to interfere in family matters again. Holding a grudge, A-1 conspired with A-2 and A-3 to eliminate him.”“As per the plan, she brought the deceased to Hyderabad under the pretext of working and earning money for their daughter’s marriage. After reaching Hyderabad, A-

1 took him to A-2’s house and offered him alcohol. Once he was in deep sleep, A-1 and A-2 fixed an electric wire to the switchboard, connected it to binding wire, and placed it on the deceased’s body. When the switch was turned on, he received an electric shock and woke up. At that moment, A-1 pressed her hands against his neck and testicles with full force, while A-3 stood on his legs to restrain him. As a result, the deceased succumbed to the assault and died. Later, they tried to shift the body using an auto, placing it inside a blue-colored cover that resembled a large bag. They attempted to bury it near the Jogipet area. However, the auto driver grew suspicious of A-1 and A-2’s actions and returned with the body to the original location where he had picked them up. Subsequently, A-2 and A-3 moved the body to an isolated area and buried it.”“DETAILS OF THE ACCUSED:“A-1: Boini Kavitha, W/o Boini Sailu, Age: 29 years, Occupation: Laborer.

A-2: Sadhula Mallesh, S/o Late Sailu, Age: 40 years, Occupation: Laborer. A-3: Sadhula Jyothi, W/o Mallesh, Age: 27 years, Occupation: Watchwoman at Mitra Mills.”“SEIZED ITEMS:“Vivo mobile phone from A-1, used during and after the offence to contact the auto driver. iQOO mobile phone from A-3, used before and after the offence.”“The case was successfully detected by the KPHB Police under the guidance and supervision of K. Srinivasa Rao, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Kukatpally Division, and S. Rajashekar Reddy, Inspector of Police, KPHB. Their dedicated team put in tremendous effort in apprehending the accused. The staff members who played a key role in solving the case are being suitably rewarded for their commendable work.

BIS Hyderabad raids sanitary napkin factory, 30k non-ISI marked sanitary pads seized

Hyderabad, April 22 : The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Hyderabad Branch Office, carried out a Search and Seizure operation on Monday at a factory outlet in Kushaiguda, Medchal-Malkajigiri District, for violation of the BIS Act, 2016. During the raid, officials seized around 30,000 sanitary napkins and 7,000 napkin label covers, all of which were found to be stored and offered for sale without the mandatory BIS Certification and ISI Mark. These products fall under IS 5405:2019 (Sanitary Napkins – Specification), which has been mandated by the Government of India through a Quality Control Order (QCO) to ensure women’s health, hygiene, and safety are not compromised. The absence of standard compliance not only violates the law, but also raises serious concerns regarding women’s health and safety.

The operation was conducted under the directions of P.V. Srikanth, Director and Head, BIS Hyderabad, and was led by Joint Directors Sattu Savitha, and Rakesh Tanneeru.

This action highlights a clear violation of Section 17 of the BIS Act, 2016, which prohibits the sale, storage, or distribution of goods under QCOs without the requisite BIS certification. As per the Act, such violations are punishable with imprisonment up to two years or a fine not less than

Rs 2 lakh for the first offence, and Rs 5 lakh or more for repeat offences. The offence is cognizable in nature, and BIS will initiate legal proceedings against the violators.

In order to prevent manufacturers or retailers from distributing fake goods and mislead the wider populace, Bureau of Indian Standards is initiating search and seizure operations based on information of misuse. Consumers before purchasing a product, should confirm the status of the license through BIS Care App; if it is found to be Suspended/Deferred/Expired/Cancelled, then you may register a complaint. Any information on the misuse of the BIS Standard Marks (ISI MARK, BIS Registration Mark, BIS Hallmark) on any products may be provided to the Bureau through email or letter or BIS CARE app (downloadable from Google Play Store and App Store).

BIS urges all manufacturers, importers, and e-commerce platforms to ensure compliance with the provisions of the BIS Act, 2016. Consumers are also encouraged to verify the authenticity of BIS-certified products through the BIS Care App or by visiting www.bis.gov.in. Information regarding misuse or spurious use of BIS Standard Marks may be reported confidentially to BIS through the app or by contacting the Hyderabad Branch Office. (NSS)

GOVERNMENT GIRLS’ JUNIOR COLLEGE EXCELS IN INTERMEDIATE RESULTS – CLINCHES DISTRICT’S TOP HONOR WITH 465 MARKS

“ “ P . S . A S H O K A N “ I N D I A N CHRONICLE“MANTHANI“23-4-2025.”“Manthani:“In a resounding testament to academic excellence, the Government Girls’ Junior College, Manthani, has emerged as a beacon of scholastic distinction in the recently announced Intermediate examination results. Demonstrating exceptional performance, the institution secured the highest rank among government colleges in the district.”“In the first-year MPC (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry) stream, student Gundodju Sreeja attained a remarkable 465 out of 470, thereby earning the coveted district top position. Following closely were Harika Sri with 453 marks, and Pendyala Sreenidhi, Siri Chandana, and Akshaya Mahalakshmi, each garnering an impressive 449 out of 470. In the BiPC (Biology, Physics, Chemistry) stream, Sudheshna distinguished herself with 394 out of 440 marks.”“Second-year students also demonstrated commendable academic prowess. Kodala Aparna achieved 903 out of 1000 in the CEC (Commerce, Economics, Civics) stream, while Sreeja earned 886/1000 in the MPC stream, and Harini secured 837/1000 in the BiPC stream.”“The college principal, Syed Saleem, felicitated the meritorious students with floral bouquets and extended his heartfelt congratulations. He lauded their stellar achievements, emphasizing that such accomplishments—comparable to those of reputed corporate institu-



tions—exemplify the potential of government educational establishments. He further urged students to capitalize on the opportunities and resources available within public education.”“Distinguishing faculty members Bollavaram Sridhar Rao, Ravula Thirumal, Hanumandla Nagesh, and Gaddam Mounika, along with esteemed staff Kukkala Rajanna, Anasuya, and several proud parents, graced the occasion, collectively celebrating the triumphs of these young scholars.

CONGRESS PARTY PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN INDIA’S FREEDOM STRUGGLE – MANTHANI SINGLE WINDOW CHAIRMAN KOTHA SRINIVAS.”

“ P . S . A S H O K A N “ I N D I A N CHRONICLE“MANTHANI“23-4-2025.”“Manthani:“The Congress Party was instrumental in securing India’s independence, asserted Manthani Single Window Chairman Kotha Srinivas. He made these remarks during the concluding ceremony of the “Jai Babu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan” program, organized by the Mandal Congress Party in the villages of Nagepalli and Adavi Somanpalli under Manthani Mandal.”“Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized that it was the Congress Party that fought relentlessly for India’s freedom even before independence was achieved. He paid homage to former Prime Ministers Rajiv Gandhi and Indira Gandhi, who, he noted, sacrificed their lives for the nation. He also stated that Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are carrying forward their legacy and ideals.”“He criticized the steep hike in domestic gas cylinder prices, which have increased from ₹500 to ₹1200. He declared Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi as protectors of the nation, akin to “Sree Rama Raksha”.”“Furthermore, he expressed admiration for Minister of IT, Industries, and Legislative Affairs Duddilla Sridhar Babu, saying that the Congress leaders are following in his footsteps and working to realize his vision. He asserted that the development of the Manthani constituency



has been made possible only under the leadership of Sridhar Babu, and predicted a transformative change in the region’s landscape in the coming days.”“The event witnessed the participation of Single Window Director Ravikanti Satish Kumar, former Manthani Municipal Chairperson Pendli Rama, leaders Kududula Venkanna, Peravena Lingayya, Vodnala Srinivas, Sadula Srikanth, Erukala Praveen, Bapu, Mahender, Bejjanki Mallayya, Akkapaka Sadayya, former sarpanches, MPTCs, and several senior Congress members.

SV University Celebrates World Earth Day with Environmental Awareness Activities



“April 22, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator”“Sri Venkateswara University, in association with the Department of Youth Services, Government of Andhra Pradesh, organized World Earth Day celebrations on April 22, 2025, in a grand manner. The event was conducted by the Directorate of Student Welfare and Cultural Affairs on the university campus.”“Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof. C.H. Appa Rao emphasized that Earth is like our home, and it provides us with water, air, and food. He expressed concern over the increasing pollution of these natural resources and urged the younger generation to take the lead in environmental protection efforts.”“Registrar Prof. M. Bhupathi Naidu remarked that excessive use of chemical fertilizers by farmers has led to the depletion of essential nutrients like potassium in the soil, resulting in adverse health impacts. He advocated for the adoption of organic farming techniques to ensure both sustainable agriculture and soil health.”“Mr. K. Mohan Kumar, CEO of SETWIN



and Chief Guest of the event, stated that the Earth carries the burden of all life forms. He stressed the urgency of collective awareness and action to safeguard the planet. Highlighting the alarming rise in global temperatures, he urged all to unite under the theme “Let us protect our Earth ourselves.”“Prof. Muralidhar, Director of Student Welfare and Cultural Affairs, recalled that Earth Day has been observed every year on April 22 since 1970. He noted that with proper awareness and commitment over the past 54 years, today’s environmental challenges could have been mitigated.”“Dr. Vivek, Cultural Coordinator, pointed out that in addition to political conflicts among major global powers, environmental pollution is also escalating. He called upon the youth to be aware of issues like plastic usage and work towards reducing environmental damage.”“The program was attended by Prof. O.V.S. Reddy, Principal of the Pharmacy College, along with research scholars, students, and university staff members.

JSP Hyundai Launches Green Initiative with CNG Aura Fleet for Corporate Sector

Hyderabad, April 22 : In a significant step towards a cleaner and greener future, JSP Hyundai, has joined hands with Surya Travels and Logistics Pvt Ltd to promote CNG-powered transportation. This initiative aims to reduce carbon footprints and encourage the corporate sector to adopt more sustainable vehicle options. The partnership also marks JSP Hyundai first-ever delivery of Hyundai Aura CNG vehicles to corporate and logistics companies in the region. On Tuesday, a fleet of 35 Hyundai Aura CNG vehicles was delivered at the JSP Hyundai showroom in Jubilee Hills. Kripa Shankar Mishra Zonal Business Head South - Hyundai Motor India Ltd, Younghoon Yun, Zonal co-ordinator South, - Hyundai Motor India Ltd, G. Ram kumar Regional sales Head of Hyundai Motor India Ltd, Mr. Prudhvi Reddy Managing Director of JSP Hyundai handed over keys to Srinivas Murthy MD – Surya Travel. Ram, Regional Manager of Hyundai Motor India Ltd, emphasized the growing importance of sustainable mobility. He highlighted that CNG vehicles offer significant benefits in terms of fuel effi-

ciency, reduced emissions, and cost savings and it’s about creating a cleaner, more sustainable environment for future generations,” said Mr. Ram.

Prudhvi Reddy, Managing Director of JSP Hyundai said, “We believe that sustainable transport is the way forward. By providing corporate sectors with CNG-powered vehicles, we aim to contribute to a greener environment while offering logistics companies a more affordable and efficient solution. This is just the beginning, and we plan to collaborate with more travel and logistics companies in South India. Our goal is to deliver around 200 Hyundai Aura CNG vehicles in the near future,” said Mr. Reddy. Srinivas Murthy MD , Surya Travel said that “It’s truly exciting to witness the growing shift towards sustainable mobility, especially in the corporate sector. The use of CNG vehicles like the Hyundai Aura is a powerful step towards reducing our carbon footprint. CNG is a cleaner, more cost-efficient alternative to traditional fuels, helping reduce harmful emissions and contribute to a healthier environment.

Call for greater synergy between innovation and industry

Hyderabad, April 22 : In a spirited call for greater synergy between innovation and industry for a sustainable StartUp ecosystem, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh said the time has come for Indian science to break silos and integrate with stakeholders including industry, investors, and the public.

Speaking at the Startup Conclave jointly organized by CSIR-IITC, CSIR-CCMB, and CSIR-NGRI in Hyderabad, Dr Jitendra Singh highlighted that India’s moment in science and innovation has arrived. Addressing a gathering of scientists, entrepreneurs, students, and policymakers, Dr Jitendra Singh lauded the rare joint initiative by the three Hyderabad-based CSIR labs, noting that “such an integrated scene of science and governance under one roof” reflects Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of collaborative and inclusive innovation. The Minister made a strong pitch for dismantling the outdated image of government labs as “ghost-haunted places where frogs are dissected,” narrating how villagers once misunderstood the work of CSIR labs due to lack of public outreach. “Science should not be confined behind gates. If your domain is agriculture, invite the farmers in. Let them see what you’re doing,” he asserted. Dr Jitendra Singh underlined the need for early and deep industry involvement in research and innovation, pointing to the success of CSIR’s Aroma Mission, where over 3,000 youth, many of them non-graduates, became successful agri-entrepreneurs with minimum annual earnings of ₹60 lakh. “That’s the real transformation—a blend of technology, livelihood, and dignity,” he said. Referring to India’s rapidly growing biotechnology sector, Dr. Jitendra Singh recalled that in 2014, there were only 50 biotech startups. Today, the number exceeds 10,000. “It’s not just numbers. We’ve moved from \$10 billion to nearly \$170 billion in biotech valuation. This is not just growth, it’s a revolution,” he said, citing the government’s dedicated policies like Bio-E3 and

the National Quantum Mission.

Dr. Jitendra Singh expressed concern over internal compartmentalization within CSIR and even within his own Ministry. He revealed that he now holds monthly joint meetings of all science departments including Atomic Energy, Space, and Biotechnology, to ensure overlapping initiatives are integrated rather than duplicated. “How can we compete globally if we don’t even know what our neighbouring lab is doing?” he questioned. The Minister also announced plans to open up the nuclear sector, noting that a new realism has replaced the secrecy that once shrouded scientific endeavours. “When Google can peek into our lives, what’s the point of denying access to potential collaborators in the name of confidentiality?” he asked.

The Minister made a compelling case for realistic, demand-driven innovation. “Let the industry do the mapping. Let them invest from day one. If they put in ₹20, they’ll make sure your startup doesn’t fail,” he said, encouraging researchers to see industry not just as a customer but as a co-investor. In a candid remark, Dr. Jitendra Singh acknowledged that while the government has significantly increased support—CSIR and DSIR budgets have risen over 230% since 2014—true sustainability lies in self-sufficiency and public-private collaboration. “You can start a startup, but sustaining it is the challenge. Social and economic security must match the aspiration,” he said. Dr Jitendra Singh emphasized that Hyderabad, with its unique blend of scientific legacy and tech-savvy spirit, is best positioned to lead India’s science-led development agenda. “This is not just about Hyderabad or about CSIR. This is about India stepping out of the shadows and leading the global innovation narrative,” he said.

The event, held at a time when India’s Global Innovation Index has jumped from 81 to 39 in less than a decade, marked a decisive moment in the Centre’s mission to democratize science, empower youth, and position India as a global innovation powerhouse.

BIS Hyderabad raids sanitary napkin factory, 30k non-ISI marked sanitary pads seized

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This action highlights a clear violation of Section 17 of the BIS Act, 2016, which prohibits the sale, storage, or distribution of goods under QCOs without the requisite BIS certification. As per the Act, such violations are punishable with imprisonment up to two years or a fine not less than

Rs 2 lakh for the first offence, and Rs 5 lakh or more for repeat offences. The offence is cognizable in nature, and BIS will initiate legal proceedings against the violators. In order to prevent manufacturers or retailers from distributing fake goods and mislead the wider populace, Bureau of Indian Standards is initiating search and seizure operations based on information of misuse. Consumers before purchasing a product, should confirm the status of the license through BIS Care App; if it is found to be Suspended/Deferred/Expired/Cancelled, then you may register a complaint. Any information on the misuse of the BIS Standard Marks (ISI MARK, BIS Registration Mark, BIS Hallmark) on any products may be provided to the Bureau through email or letter or BIS CARE app (downloadable from Google Play Store and App Store). BIS urges all manufacturers, importers, and e-commerce platforms to ensure compliance with the provisions of the BIS Act, 2016. Consumers are also encouraged to verify the authenticity of BIS-certified products through the BIS Care App or by visiting www.bis.gov.in. Information regarding misuse or spurious use of BIS Standard Marks may be reported confidentially to BIS through the app or by contacting the Hyderabad Branch Office.

‘This wall is four years old:’ Amid protests, AAP MLA gives inauguration event a miss



GNS News Agency, April 22

High drama prevailed at Government Senior Secondary School at Kotra Kaura village in Bathinda district Thursday after residents and farm union members protested the inauguration of a “four-year-old boundary wall” under the Punjab government’s ongoing Sikhya Kranti drive. As protesters opposed the inauguration scheduled at 10.30 am on Thursday, Maur AAP MLA Sukhveer Maiser Khana did not turn up for the event. The protesters also scribbled a note on the wall, “Eh kandh chaar saal puraani hai (This wall is four years old)”, next to the new plaque installed on the wall, crediting Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains for the work. Teachers, however, had to wait for hours and they got free around

6.30 pm after the event was eventually cancelled. The teachers had made all arrangements such as a tent, sound system, plaque, etc., but the MLA did not turn up “fearing opposition from villagers and farm unions”. Bhartiya Kisan Union (Sidhupur) state general secretary Kaka Singh Kotra said the entire village knew that the boundary wall, with a shiny new plaque, was four years old. “Not a single brick was laid. We never saw the boundary wall being renovated. But they installed a new plaque, saying it was newly constructed. Both old and new panchayat members, farm union members and local villagers gathered to protest the inauguration, but the MLA did not turn up. Teachers had made all the arrangements, and a lot of money was spent on the tent, sound system, etc., but the programme was cancelled. The teachers were made to wait till 6.30 in the evening, but the MLA did not turn up, knowing he would have to face questions. Local NGOs and NRIs spent money on government schools and got several works done, but plaques with the CM’s and the education minister’s names were being installed. What kind of Sikhya Kranti is this? Why would anyone do social work in future to help schools if fake plaques have to be installed crediting politicians,” he asked. Bathinda District Education Officer (DEO) Maninder Kaur said, “The programme at Kotra Kaura was cancelled due to the protest.” Asked about the allegations that a four-year-old boundary wall was to be inaugurated there, she said, “Every inauguration under Sikhya Kranti is being done as per the directions of the Education Department.”

Delhi Police arrest 5 cyber fraudsters from Rajasthan and Gujarat for duping people of Rs 50 lakh

GNS News Agency, April 22

The Delhi Police said Thursday they arrested five cyber fraudsters from different locations in Rajasthan and Gujarat last week for allegedly defrauding people in various ways over the last two years. The police said the arrests took place during a two-day special operation targeting rising cybercrime hotspots, specifically in Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Ahmedabad. The arrested men have been identified as Zakir, 32; Karan Swami, 20; and Javed, 20, from Jaipur; Tejas, 26, from Ahmedabad, and Mohammad Sohail, 26, from Jodhpur.

According to the police, the accused were involved in three methods of cyber fraud. They reportedly posed as bank customer care representatives to trick victims into revealing sensitive information under the guise of enhancing credit card facilities. The arrested men also allegedly impersonated relatives to send fake SMS messages regarding money transfers, and lured individuals into fraudulent online job schemes that promised earnings for likes, shares, or investments. The police said three separate cyber



fraud cases were cracked as a result of the operation. Authorities also found that transactions worth approximately Rs 50 lakh occurred through the alleged bank accounts connected to these frauds. Each accused has been linked to specific cases registered over the past two years, and their roles in the cyber frauds are now under detailed investigation, the police said. They added that a mobile phone and an active SIM card were also recovered from the accused.

Delay in Himcare claims, PGI awaits about Rs 143 cr from Himachal govt

GNS News Agency, April 22

The Governing Body of the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) has raised concerns over the delay in payments under the Himcare Health Scheme of the Himachal Pradesh government. PGIMER has submitted 1,478 claims amounting to about Rs 143 crore to the state government, which remain pending. As per an MoU signed between PGIMER and the Himachal government, claims submitted by the hospital are to be settled within a month. However, officials pointed out that this timeline has not been adhered to, causing financial strain on the institute.

The Governing Body has directed the PGIMER’s administration to take up the matter with the state authorities and ensure time-bound clearance of the dues, as delays could impact the institute’s financial stability and may hinder the delivery of other essential health services. PGIMER provides services to patients from across the region, with a large number coming from Himachal Pradesh. In a major relief to these patients, PGIMER launched a cashless treatment facility under the Himcare scheme on March 8 last year, enabling patients to receive treatment without having to wait for reimbursement of bills.

Now, patients can begin treatment by submitting a photocopy of their Himcare card along with their hospital



slip. Earlier, patients had to obtain cost estimates and wait for months while files were approved in Shimla, followed by the submission of bills for reimbursement. The new system has eliminated this waiting period, offering timely medical care. Under the Himcare scheme, the Himachal Pradesh government provides cashless treatment up to Rs 5 lakh per annum per family. It is estimated that 4,000 to 5,000 patients from the state benefit annually through PGIMER. PGIMER said in a statement that following the directive from the Governing Body, the institute has addressed this matter with the appropriate authorities of Himachal Pradesh. The pending dues are being settled based on the periodic grant releases from the Himachal government, and it’s a routine and ongoing process.

Deputy mayor protests against hike in property tax, resigns from panel

GNS News Agency, April 22

In a political move, Deputy Mayor Taruna Mehta has resigned from the Municipal Corporation’s House Tax Committee in protest against the recent three-fold increase in property tax in Chandigarh. Her resignation highlights growing dissent within the civic body over the steep tax hike, which has triggered widespread public outrage. In her resignation statement, Mehta questioned the legitimacy of further meetings of the House Tax Committee, stating that there is “no justification left” after the property tax rates were hiked without prior discussion within the committee.

She criticised the procedural bypass, alleging that the matter was never brought before the committee and was instead directly presented in the House meeting by the mayor, without proper planning or consultation. Blaming the mayor, BJP councillors and senior administrative officials, Mehta accused them of deliberate collusion to facilitate the approval of the new tax structure. “This was done in a planned manner to legally pave the way for the administration to impose taxes at will,” she said. The deputy mayor also lashed out at the BJP, accusing it of hypocrisy. “Now that public anger is surging across the city, BJP councillors are shedding crocodile tears and pretending to oppose the move by offering to resign,” she said. According to Mehta, these gestures are meaningless in the light of their earlier support for the tax hike.

She claimed that the mayor and BJP councillors appear helpless and powerless in front of the administration, exposing what she termed a serious disconnect between the local body and the officials of the Chandigarh Administration, allegedly emboldened under the central BJP government. Taking a dig at the Administration, Mehta pointed out that it too is listed among property tax defaulters, owing crores in unpaid dues. She added that if the ad-



The deputy mayor said there is ‘no justification left’ after rates were increased without prior discussion within the committee.

ministration paid its own taxes, it would provide substantial relief to the financially stressed Municipal Corporation. Concluding her statement, Mehta reiterated that the Chandigarh Congress would continue to oppose the “anti-people” tax hike, vowing to raise the issue on public platforms and support citizens affected by the decision. The BJP councillors and the Mayor Harpreet Kaur Babla had in a meeting held recently at the BJP headquarters also considered collective resignation as a mark of protest against the administration’s unilateral decisions. Babla too had said earlier that “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, which they are not allocating us. All the expenses are on us, nothing is going right in the city, roads are not in good condition, there is shortage of water,” said Babla.

Now, woman mountaineer seeks govt job, financial aid after Haryana offered Rs 4 crore to Vinesh Phogat



GNS News Agency, April 22

Reena Bhatti, 36-year-old mountaineer and daughter of a tractor mechanic at Balak village in Haryana’s Hisar district, who scaled two mountain peaks, including the highest peak Mount Everest in the shortest period of less than 21 hours, Thursday urged Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini to recognise her achievements and provide her with a job. Bhatti’s request to the CM came days after the Haryana government offered a cash reward of Rs 4 crore to wrestler Vinesh Phogat. On May 21-22, 2024, Bhatti first climbed the highest peak in the world, Mount Everest, at an astounding height of 8848.86 metres, and then scaled the fourth-highest mountain, Mount Lhotse (8,516 metres). According to Pioneer Adventure, a Nepal-based mountaineering and expedition agency, “Bhatti is the fastest Indian woman to climb two 8,000-meter mountains in 20 hours and 45 minutes.” Bhatti tasted success after repeated failures. In March 2024, she could not scale Mount Everest, the seventh-highest Dhaulagiri Mountain, due to heavy snowfall despite four attempts in 55 days. In May 2023, Bhatti returned without scaling Everest despite being just 50 metres away from the world’s highest peak. But she made another attempt to climb Mount Everest and Mount Lhotse in May 2024 and succeeded. Bhatti says she has scaled more than 20 peaks, including the world’s highest, in just five years. Coming from a humble background, Reena works for a private company after completing her Master of Com-

puter Applications (MCA) in 2017. Bhatti took to X, raising her demand for a Group A government job and financial assistance. She also shared the letter addressed to Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini. Reena-Bhatti-Mountaineer Bhatti first climbed the highest peak in the world, Mount Everest, at an astounding height of 8848.86 metres Bhatti said, “After scaling more than 20 peaks, including setting the record as the fastest Indian woman to climb Everest, I’ve made my state proud of my achievements. Just as you have been making progressive decisions for the welfare of daughters across the state, I hope you will also recognise and support my contributions and accomplishments.” Bhatti added, “Several other mountaineers have already been supported by the government through job opportunities, boosting their morale. I, too, seek the government to recognise my struggles. Climbing the world’s highest peak is an extremely risky task where one’s life could be at stake. Unlike other sports, it carries a higher level of danger. Therefore, the government should view the achievements in this field with the same perspective as they do for other sports and provide the appropriate recognition.”

When contacted, Haryana Principal Secretary (Sports) Navdeep Singh Virk said, “Haryana has the best policies covering all aspects of achievements in various sports. These policies have been modified and improved over time.” The officer said, “If a sports person claims to have made an achievement, he or she must make an application in the given format, which will be processed, and a job or award will be given as per the rules.” The mountaineer raised the demand after the Haryana government on March 25 offered three choices to wrestler Vinesh Phogat, an MLA from Julana, under its sports policy — a cash prize of Rs 4 crore, a ‘Group A’ job, or the allotment of a plot under the Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP). A family member of Phogat told The Indian Express, “The sports policy of Haryana has a provision of all three facilities — Rs 4 crore in cash, a plot and a government job. According to the sports policy, we have applied for both a cash prize of Rs 4 crore and the plot. We have not claimed for a government job as the same was not possible in case of a sitting legislator.”

Bengaluru dog breeder claims to have bought a Rs 50 crore rare canine, ED searches his house

GNS News Agency, April 22

After a Bengaluru-based dog breeder claimed he bought a rare canine for Rs 50 crore, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) paid a visit to his residence. S Satish, a former dog breeder, recently claimed on social media that he had bought a rare wolf-dog worth Rs 50 crore, which was bred in the United States. Satish boasted about owning a breed called Cadabomb Okami — a hybrid of a wolf and a Caucasian Shepherd — drawing attention from both national and international media outlets. As the photos and videos of Satish posing with the animal were widely circulated online, adding to the buzz, ED visited his house. However, when ED officials searched his home, they found no evidence of the rare breed. Upon questioning, Satish reportedly admitted that the dog was not his and that he had only posed for pictures to gain social media attention. Given the large amount, ED launched a preliminary inquiry to check for potential violations under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). However, the agency concluded that Satish did not have the money to purchase such an expensive pet. While no case under FEMA has been initiated, the episode has highlighted the extent to which social media stunts can spiral into official scrutiny.



How fake documents were used to make unauthorised appointments and pocket salaries

GNS News Agency, April 22

The alleged Shalarth scam, which has hit dozens of educational institutions in Vidarbha, centres around the creation of fake teacher and staff profiles within the Shalarth portal, a Maharashtra government system meant to ensure transparency in salary disbursement. These fraudulent entries facilitated the illegal withdrawal of salaries for individuals who never existed on official school rosters. Ankita Deshkar explains how the alleged Shalarth scam unfolded, and the current status of the ongoing investigations.

What is the Shalarth system?

Shalarth is a centralised online platform launched by the Maharashtra Government in November 2012 for managing the payroll and service records of employees in government and government-aided schools across the state. The system was introduced to streamline salary disbursement for teachers and non-teaching staff working in primary, secondary, and higher secondary institutions. Currently, the Shalarth system plays a critical role in salary processing and record-keeping. Each school must first register on the portal, after which a unique Shalarth ID is generated for every staff member appointed by the institution. Detailed employee information — such as name, date of birth, designation, school name, date of joining, educational qualifications, promotion history, training, and appointment details — is entered into the system. This data becomes the basis for important processes such as salary increments, transfers, promotions, and retirement benefits.

How did the Shalarth ‘scam’ unfold?

Teacher recruitment in Maharashtra was put on hold in 2012. To bring in more transparency, the government later introduced an aptitude and intelligence test for DED and BEd degree holders. Those who cleared it could apply for jobs online through a system called the ‘Pavitra Portal’. Since then, the teacher recruitment process — from application to selection and final appointment — has been shifted online. In 2024, over 11,000 teachers were officially hired through this system. However, behind the scenes, unauthorised appointments continued using fake documents and backdated approvals, bypassing the official digital route. In 2019, a key change took place where the authority to issue Shalarth IDs — a digital identifier essential for salary processing — was transferred from the Maharashtra Education Ministry to deputy directors of education at the divisional level. Several deputy directors allegedly used fake documents to appoint ineligible teachers and principals in grant-aided schools, and then created Shalarth IDs to make them appear legitimate. These IDs were sent down the line for salary approval, often without any checks, which could have happened because of an alleged collusion between officials and school management. In Nagpur alone, IDs were reportedly created for 580 fake or unqualified staff. Some of them were falsely shown as having already completed three years as Shikshan Sevaks — a probationary period with a



modest stipend — so that their earlier dues could also be pocketed. A portion of that money was allegedly siphoned off each month by school heads and education officials. Suspended pay superintendent Nilesh Waghmare is allegedly accused of creating IDs for people who never even existed on the staff list. In some cases, officials reportedly backdated appointments to make it look like these fake teachers had been working for years — just to claim their arrears too.

How did the Shalarth scam come to light?

In early 2024, complaints arose about fraudulent Shalarth orders being issued using the forged signature of Someshwar Naitam, a deceased education officer. A list of 244 staff — 211 assistant teachers, 2 headmasters, 18 junior clerks, and 13 peons — was submitted for review, as mentioned in the First Information Report (FIR). It revealed that while 31 files were legitimate, the remaining entries showed signs of being added without proper authorisation. After the allegations, a seven-member committee was formed, initially led by Ulhas Narad, deputy director of education, to look into the case. Post the initial investigations within the department, a complaint was registered on March 12, 2025, by Ravindra Patil with the Nagpur Cyber Cell on the instructions of Narad, stating that the Shalarth IDs were being misused. Soon after an FIR was filed, Narad came under the scanner. He was arrested in a separate case related to the fraudulent creation of a Shalarth ID for a Bhandara teacher. Several complaints have been filed from other regions, including Bhandara and Gondia, which allege that school organisations have appointed ineligible individuals as teachers. How many people have been arrested so far?

The police have arrested six people from Nagpur. This includes Ulhas Narad, deputy director and Parag Pudke, a principal of a school in Bhandara, Nilesh Meshram, a superintendent, Sanjay Dudhalkar, education sub-inspector, Suraj Naik, a senior clerk, and school teacher Mahendra Mhaikar. What’s next? Multiple complaints regarding the recruitment of ineligible teachers have surfaced from various districts across Maharashtra, including Jalgaon, Nashik, and Solapur.

‘This wall is four years old:’ Amid protests, AAP MLA gives inauguration event a miss



GNS News Agency, April 22

High drama prevailed at Government Senior Secondary School at Kotra Kaura village in Bathinda district Thursday after residents and farm union members protested the inauguration of a “four-year-old boundary wall” under the Punjab government’s ongoing Sikhya Kranti drive.As protesters opposed the inauguration scheduled at 10.30 am on Thursday, Maur AAP MLA Sukhveer Maiser Khana did not turn up for the event.

The protesters also scribbled a note on the wall, “Eh kandh chaar saal puraani hai (This wall is four years old)”, next to the new plaque installed on the wall, crediting Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains for the work.Teachers, however, had to wait for hours and they got free around 6.30 pm after the event

was eventually cancelled. The teachers had made all arrangements such as a tent, sound system, plaque, etc., but the MLA did not turn up “fearing opposition from villagers and farm unions”.Bhartiya Kisan Union (Sidhupur) state general secretary Kaka Singh Kotra said the entire village knew that the boundary wall, with a shiny new plaque, was four years old. “Not a single brick was laid. We never saw the boundary wall being renovated. But they installed a new plaque, saying it was newly constructed. Both old and new panchayat members, farm union members and local villagers gathered to protest the inauguration, but the MLA did not turn up. Teachers had made all the arrangements, and a lot of money was spent on the tent, sound system, etc., but the programme was cancelled. The teachers were made to wait till 6.30 in the evening, but the MLA did not turn up, knowing he would have to face questions. Local NGOs and NRIs spent money on government schools and got several works done, but plaques with the CM’s and the education minister’s names were being installed. What kind of Sikhya Kranti is this? Why would anyone do social work in future to help schools if fake plaques have to be installed crediting politicians,” he asked.

Bathinda District Education Officer (DEO) Maninder Kaur said, “The programme at Kotra Kaura was cancelled due to the protest.”Asked about the allegations that a four-year-old boundary wall was to be inaugurated there, she said, “Every inauguration under Sikhya Kranti is being done as per the directions of the Education Department.”

Heavy fine for wasting water in Mohali: Any consumer caught violating the rules three times will have their water connection disconnected and face a 5,000 fine

GNS News Agency, April 22

In a significant move to curb water wastage, the Water Supply and Sanitation Department has announced that starting Friday, fines will be issued to violators in Mohali. The department has issued a notice urging residents to conserve water, particularly during the summer months when demand peaks. This measure aims to ensure an uninterrupted water supply throughout the season.According to the notice, any consumer caught violating the rules three times will have their water connection disconnected and face a ₹5,000 fine. To restore the connection, the consumer must submit an affidavit, though the final decision on reconnection lies solely with the department’s Executive Engineer.In Mohali, the Water Supply and Sanitation Department manages most of the water supply, while GMADA handles a portion, with each authority serving different sectors. Notably, water consumption rises significantly during the summer, and wastage leads to inconvenience for the general public.Michael Singh, Executive Engineer (EXEN) of Division 2, stated, “This enforcement begins in the city today. A fine of 1,000 will be imposed for the first violation, 2,000 for the second, and on the third offense, the consumer’s water



connection will be disconnected with an additional ₹5,000 fine.”Officials noted that using supply water to wash cars significantly reduces water pressure, making it challenging for residents on upper floors, particularly the third floor, to receive sufficient water. “People act out of convenience, but their car washing causes major issues for others,” officials added. As a result, the department is conducting strict inspections to prevent such misuse.

Leopard spotted in Asola Bhati sanctuary; Delhi’s natural world is alive and protected, says Sirsa



GNS News Agency, April 22

The Delhi Forest and Wildlife Department on Thursday reported a fresh sighting of a leopard at Asola Bhati Wildlife Sanctuary, the city’s lone wildlife sanctuary near Tughlakabad. The leopard, officials said, was spotted drinking water from a water hole in the afternoon.Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa took to X, saying, “A leopard in Delhi? Yes... and it’s not lost, it’s home. From wild cats to spotted deer, Delhi’s natural world is alive and protected.”

He added, “Under PM @narendramodi Ji’s vision and CM @gupta_rekha Ji’s leadership, we’re proving that a modern city can still make space for the wild. And we are not just witnessing this biodiversity... we are actively safeguarding it and taking care of it.”Speaking to The Indian Express, Sirsa said, “This is a sign of a healthy ecosystem... Making water available for animals is the top priority

of the department to preserve the leopard population... Recently, several new water holes were dug to make sure enough water is available for animals.”Spread across 32 sq km, Asola Bhati has seen its leopard count go up to 12 since last September, indicating that the animals were also breeding inside the park.A senior forest official said, “There are several challenges in conserving and ensuring the well-being of leopards. Since it is an urban area, man-animal conflicts are common... There are several unauthorised colonies in the surrounding areas of the park... local residents often enter and remove camera traps...”

The official added that the number of camera traps, used to keep an eye on the animals, has increased with 45 new motion-detecting devices added — taking the number from 15 to 60.This is not the first time that a leopard has been sighted at the sanctuary. According to a 2022 report by the Bombay Natural History Society, eight leopards were caught on camera in a year.Officials said the leopard population in Delhi, as well as the frequency of such sightings, has increased, with a leopard sighted at least once every month. Last month, a leopard was sighted at the Asola Bhati sanctuary, officials added.Maintaining that efforts are on to ensure the sanctuary only uses electric vehicles, Sirsa said, “There should be no foreign material in the park. We want to make it completely environment-friendly. Golf carts are allowed, but soon, we will switch to electric tractors for maintenance and other work.”Asola Bhati is home to 25 species of mammals, including leopards, Striped Hyena, Golden Jackal and Fruit Bat. It is also home to 115 bird species.



The Majlis Park and Jagatpur village segment will include three new stations – Burari, Jharoda Majra and Jagatpur village.

In January, the first stretch under the phase – from Janakpuri West to Krishna Park Extension – was opened for passengers.In a statement, the DMRC said that 70% of

JNU students’ union polls: Student bodies name candidates, AISA & SFI part ways



GNS News Agency, April 22

In this year’s Jawaharlal Nehru University Students’ Union (JNUSU) elections, the united Left is parting ways with the All India Students’ Association (AISA) and the Students’ Federation of India (SFI) contesting separately.AISA has, instead, formed an alliance with the Democratic Students’ Front (DSF) — effectively ending the broader Left unity that has defined the polls.JNUSU President Dhananjay, who belongs to AISA, told The Indian Express, “We asked SFI to join us in a joint contest, but they insisted on fielding their own candidate for the President’s post. Unfortunately, they lacked clarity on who their candidate would be and we had stronger contenders with greater campus presence. So we decided to contest this year with DSF.”According to him, AISA will field candidates for the posts of President and Joint Secretary, while DSF will nominate candidates for Vice-President and General Secretary.The AISA-DSF alliance Thursday named Nitish for President, Manisha for Vice-President, Munteha for General Secretary, and Naresh for Joint Secretary.

The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) also released its panel of candidates on Thursday. It has fielded Shikha Swaraj for President, Nittu Gautam for Vice-President, Kunal Rai for General Secretary, and Vaibhav Meena for Joint Secretary. The student group has announced candidates for 42 councillor posts across 16 schools and special centres and said it is prioritising female representation.In its statement, ABVP said it will campaign on issues such as campus infrastructure, women’s safety, affordable education, and ensuring a “responsive” student union.The National Students’ Union of India (NSUI) also announced its

picks — research scholar Pradeep Dhaka for President; Mohammad Kaif (an alliance with Fraternity Movement) for Vice-President; Arun Pratap for General Secretary; and Saloni Bhardwaj for Joint Secretary.

NSUI said the alliance “reflects our commitment to unity among democratic and secular student forces”. “We are confident of a strong mandate,” said Ravi Hanuman Pandey, chairman of NSUI’s media department.Last year, the Left panel had swept all four central panel positions, with Dhananjay (AISA) elected President, Avijit Ghosh as Vice-President, and Mohammed Sajid as Joint Secretary. The post of General Secretary went to Priyanshi Arya of the Birsra Ambedkar Phule Students’ Association (BAPSA), who was backed by the Left.Although SFI has traditionally held influence in the students’ union, AISA emerged as the dominant Left force once elections resumed in 2012. In 2008, the Supreme Court had banned the elections after JNUSU refused to adopt the election guidelines formulated by the Lyngdoh Committee.

The two groups have frequently allied in recent years, though AISA has consistently fielded candidates for the President’s post since 2015. In 2019, SFI reclaimed the JNUSU presidency for the first time in 13 years when Aishe Ghosh won the post with 2,313 votes.Voting for this year’s JNUSU elections will take place in two phases — between 9 am and 1 pm, and from 2.30 pm to 5.30 pm — on April 25. Counting will begin at 9 pm the same day, with results expected by April 28.Ruckus on campus

On Thursday evening, the SFI alleged that members of the ABVP disrupted the withdrawal process for nominations by forcibly entering the Election Committee (EC) premises and engaging in violence.“A dozen ABVP members... started breaking windows, misbehaved with students, and created a commotion,” SFI claimed, adding that several candidates were unable to withdraw their nominations before the 4.30 pm deadline.The ABVP, however, denied these allegations and said it was the Left that resorted to “mob tactics and intimidation”.In a statement, it said, “Unable to form an alliance or agree on candidates, the Left-led student union at JNU chose violence over dialogue, chaos over consensus... Their internal ego clashes and ideological disunity stalled the democratic process, and when confronted with the consequences of their own failures, they resorted to mob tactics and intimidation.”

Crackdown on old vehicles, smog guns atop high-rises: How Delhi govt plans to curb air pollution

GNS News Agency, April 22

Crackdown on old vehicles, smog guns, delhi aqi, Delhi air pollution, Delhi air quality, air pollution, air pollution level, Delhi severe air quality, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsMinister Sirsa visited the Ghazipur landfill for an inspection. An aggressive drive against ‘end of life vehicles (ELVs)’ entering Delhi from neighbouring cities, mist sprayers on electric street poles, mandatory installation of smog guns on the roofs of high-rises: These measures are part of the Delhi BJP government’s air pollution plan, which it will roll out in the coming days.

“Our key aim is to reduce air pollution,” said Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa. Taking a dig at the AAP government that was in power earlier, he added, “Unlike the previous government, which waited till air quality levels deteriorated, we have decided to act immediately.”On initiatives planned by the environment department, he said, “There are around 3,000-4,000 high-rise buildings. We are planning to make it mandatory for all such buildings — government, private, corporate housing societies and malls — to install smog guns on their terrace or rooftops.”He said an order will be issued and an announcement will be made. “Building owners will also need time, so we will give them six months to install these smog guns. We will be ready ahead of the next pollution season,” said the minister.

He also said the government is planning to hire 250 more truck-mounted smog guns to spray water across the city to control dust pollution.A key initiative is to bar entry of overage vehicles — banned in Delhi — from other states. To this end, the environment department plans to install Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras and LED screens at Delhi’s borders and toll gates.The camera will detect the number plate, and it will be displayed on the



screens. “Messages will then be sent and challans will be issued,” said Sirsa

“We are also looking at collecting data on all ELVs in neighbouring cities and sending messages to the owners that these vehicles are not allowed in Delhi. There are also plans to send messages to BS III and BS II vehicles before the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is implemented so they don’t enter the city,” said Sirsa.Further, the Environment Minister said the government is planning to install mist sprayers on electric poles across the city to control vehicular emissions and dust pollution.“Currently, it is installed in a small section on Lodhi Road. We will now install them on the Outer Ring Road — from the Azadpur stretch via Rajouri, Dhaura Kuan and Mahipalpur — till the Gurgaon border. Gradually, it will be implemented across the city,” said the minister.The minister also visited the Ghazipur landfill for an inspection and said the BJP government is exploring ways to hire additional agencies to expedite the waste processing work. “Garbage mountains will become extinct like dinosaurs in the next five years,” said Sirsa.

HC order on DPS Dwarka result of strong political will, was lacking in AAP govt: Education Minister

GNS News Agency, April 22

DPS Dwarka, Ashish Sood, delhi education system, Delhi Public School Dwarka, dps fee hike dispute, delhi school fee hike dispute, school fee hike dispute, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsIn response, AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that no auditor has been appointed by the BJP government yet. “... if he says that BJP government has conducted 600 audits in the last 10 days, he is lying,” he said.

Education Minister Ashish Sood Thursday said “for the first time in the history of Delhi’s education system”, the report of a committee set up by the BJP government to inspect private schools has led the Delhi High Court to pull up Delhi Public School Dwarka for treating students with “indignity” over a fee hike dispute.

the HC had chastised the school for confining students to a library and not allowing them to attend classes or interact with their peers. Justice Sachin Datta



had said the school, which was treating students like “chattel”, was using the institution as a “money-making machine”.Taking on AAP, Sood told mediapersons, “For the very first time in the history of the Delhi education system, our government... by using the district magistrate’s judicial powers, set up a committee... The HC has given its order based on the committee report led by our DM... He has been directed to carry out regular inspections to ensure no further injustice is done. It wasn’t rocket science, but a strong political

will... which was lacking in the previous government.”The Indian Express had reported on Wednesday that following complaints of unregulated fee hike, showcause notices have been issued to 11 schools for violations under the Delhi School Education Act and Rules, 1973.“This is not the first time the fee hike issue has been raised in Delhi, it comes up every year. The AAP keeps creating noise around it. I will later present evidence to show how dealings were made with (private) schools. You should not question me, but

AAP... only 75 schools were audited per year, whereas every school needed to be audited...” Sood told the media.“The previous government couldn’t take action for five years. But we have acted on reports from 600 schools in a short time... We are doing what they (AAP) failed to do,” he said, adding that the government will “investigate all irregularities and take action against the 11 private schools”.In response, AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that no auditor has been appointed by the BJP government yet. “

With his promises of peace unmet in Gaza and Ukraine, Trump may find Iran just as tough



WASHINGTON, -GNS News Agency, April 22 With his campaign promises unfulfilled to quickly bring peace to Gaza and Ukraine, U.S. President Donald Trump has turned to another high-profile challenge that could be just as elusive: curbing Iran's escalating nuclear program.His administration plans a second round of talks with Iran on Saturday in Rome that few thought possible after years of hostility dating back to the Republican president's first term, when he scrapped a 2015 nuclear deal and imposed a "maximum pressure" campaign of crippling sanctions.The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here.

While no one is ruling out the potential for progress after a meeting in Oman last weekend that both sides described as positive, negotiators are lowering any expectations of a swift breakthrough in the decades-long dispute.Debate on elements of a potential framework nuclear deal is at a very early stage among Trump's aides, said a source briefed on a White House meeting with the president on Tuesday. The two sides could reach an interim deal ahead of a more detailed agreement, said two sources familiar with White House thinking.Adding to regional tensions surrounding the diplomatic effort is Trump's repeated threat to bomb Iran's nuclear sites if a deal cannot be reached.That would mean that Trump, who pledged in his January 20 inaugural speech to be a "peacemaker," could drive the U.S. into a new conflict in the Middle East.Trump said on Thursday he was not in a rush to strike Iran, insisting that negotiations were his first option."If there's a second option, I think it would be very bad for Iran," Trump said during a White House meeting with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. "I think Iran is wanting to talk. I hope they're wanting to talk. It's going to be very good for them if they do."Leading the U.S. negotiating team is Steve Witkoff, a Trump friend and real estate investor with no prior diplomatic experience who some analysts have nicknamed the administration's "envoy for everything." He has been tasked with getting a deal with Iran in addition to ending the wars in Gaza and Ukraine, both of which have raged on.

Across the table will be Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, a shrewd negotiator who some Western diplomats worry will take advantage of Witkoff's lack of expertise."Having to balance Gaza and Ukraine and Iran would be a challenge from a bandwidth perspective for any-

Hamas says it is ready to release all remaining hostages for an end to Gaza war

GNS News Agency, April 22

CAIRO, Hamas wants a comprehensive deal to end the war in Gaza and swap all Israeli hostages for Palestinians jailed in Israel, a senior official from the Palestinian militant group said, rejecting Israel's offer of an interim truce.In a televised speech, Khalil Al-Hayya, the group's Gaza chief who leads its negotiating team, said the group would no longer agree to interim deals, adopting a position that Israel is unlikely to accept and potentially further delaying an end to the devastating attacks that restarted in recent weeks.The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here.Instead, Hayya said Hamas was ready to immediately engage in "comprehensive package negotiations" to release all remaining hostages in its custody in return for an end to the Gaza war, the release of Palestinians jailed by Israel, and the reconstruction of Gaza."Netanyahu and his government use partial agreements as a cover for their political agenda, which is based on continuing the war of extermination and starvation, even if the price is sacrificing all his prisoners (hostages)," said Hayya, referring to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu."We will not be part of passing this policy."

Egyptian mediators have been working to revive the January ceasefire agreement that halted fighting in Gaza before it broke down last month, but there has been little sign of progress with both Israel and Hamas blaming each other."Hamas's comments demonstrate they are not interested in peace but perpetual violence. The terms made by the Trump Administration have not changed: release the hostages or face hell," said National Security Council spokesperson James Hewitt.

The latest round of talks on Monday in Cairo to restore the ceasefire and free Israeli hostages ended with no apparent breakthrough, Palestinian and Egyptian sources said.Israel had proposed a 45-day truce in Gaza to allow hostage releases and potentially begin indirect talks to end the war. Hamas has already rejected one of its conditions - that it lay down its arms. In his speech, Hayya accused Israel of offering a counterproposal with "impossible conditions."Item 1 of 5 A child looks on at the site of an Israeli strike on a tent camp sheltering displaced people, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Hamas released 38 hostages under a ceasefire that began on January 19. In March, Israel's military resumed its ground and aerial offensive on Gaza, abandoning the ceasefire after Hamas rejected proposals to extend the truce without ending the war.Israeli officials say that the offensive will continue until the remaining 59 hostages are freed and Gaza is demilitarized. Hamas insists it will free hostages only as part of a deal to end the war and has rejected demands to lay down its arms.On Tuesday, the armed wing of Hamas armed said the group had lost contact with militants holding Israeli-American hostage Edan Alexander after the Israeli army attacked their hideout. Alexander is a New Jersey native and a 21-year-old soldier in the Israeli army.

The armed wing later released a video warning hostages' families that their "children will return in black coffins with their bodies torn apart from shrapnel from your army."Israeli military strikes killed at least 32 Palestinians, including women and children, across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, local health authorities said.One of those strikes killed six people and wounded several others at a UN-run school in Jabalia in northern Gaza Strip. The Israeli military said the strike targeted a Hamas command center. The war

one," said Jonathan Panikoff, former deputy U.S. national intelligence officer on the Middle East, of Witkoff's assignment."But that's especially (the case) with Iran, given the amount of technical details, history, regional geopolitical considerations, and broader complexities," added Panikoff, now with the Atlantic Council think-tank in Washington.Witkoff has one distinctive negotiating asset: his direct line to Trump, which should signal to the Iranians they are getting the president's views from someone he trusts.Whether that will help the administration's effort to secure a deal remains to be seen.Witkoff's own comments in recent days have injected further uncertainty over Trump's endgame with Iran.Ahead of last Saturday's talks, he told the Wall Street Journal last week that the red line would be "weaponization" of Iran's nuclear program, seeming to back away from Trump's demand for full dismantlement.He then told Fox News on Monday night that Iran could be allowed to enrich uranium at a low level but only with strict verification, before appearing to backtrack on Tuesday, saying in a post on X that Iran must "eliminate" its enrichment program.

In response, Araghchi said on Wednesday that "the principle of enrichment is not negotiable."Harsh sanctions on Iran appear to have helped draw the OPEC member-nation to the negotiating table.But Tehran, which has long denied Western and Israeli accusations that it seeks a nuclear weapon, has approached the talks warily, suspicious of Trump and doubting the likelihood of an agreement.Since Trump withdrew from the international nuclear accord with Iran in his first term, Iran has far surpassed the 2015 deal's limits on uranium enrichment, producing stocks at a high level of fissile purity, close to that required for nuclear warheads.Trump's surprise announcement on April 7 of a resumption of talks with Iran spotlighted Witkoff's central role in the administration's foreign policy.

Witkoff's record so far has been mixed. He has had no success securing a deal between Russia and Ukraine, countries at war since Moscow's 2022 invasion of its neighbor.Shortly before Trump took office, he helped secure a long-sought ceasefire in Gaza between Israel and Hamas militants, a deal that has since unraveled. Possible U.S. or Israeli military action is keeping the Middle East on edge.Israel, which has severely weakened Iran's regional influence since the Palestinian group Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, has long left little doubt that it could strike Iran's nuclear sites to thwart what it considers an existential threat.Caught off-guard by Trump's decision to negotiate with Iran, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has urged a denuclearization deal like the one that Libya signed in 2003 - a deal Tehran is considered highly unlikely to accept.Gulf states, nervous about another Middle East war, hope the negotiations continue but are concerned about being left out of the process, Gulf sources said.Some analysts suggest that despite the steep obstacles to an Iran deal, a two-party agreement between the U.S. and Iran still might be less of a long shot for Trump than forging lasting peace between the warring sides in Gaza and Ukraine."As a party to a nuclear agreement, the U.S. can assert some measure of control," said Laura Blumenfeld, a Middle East analyst at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies in Washington. "



was triggered by Hamas' October 7, 2023, attack on southern Israel, in which 1,200 people were killed and 251 taken hostage to Gaza, according to Israeli tallies.

Since then, more than 51,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Israeli offensive, according to local health authorities.Reporting and writing by Nidal al-Mughrabi. Additional reporting by Muhammad Al Gebaly and Ahmed Tolba, Gram Slattery in Washington; editing by Don Durfee and Deepa BabingtonOur Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles., opens new tabA senior correspondent with nearly 25 years' experience covering the Palestinian-Israeli conflict including several wars and the signing of the first historic peace accord between the two sides.

Kothagudem Police lay 1.9 km BT road onTelangana-Chhattisgarh borders connecting remote villages

Kothagudem: In an effort to enhance road connectivity in Left wing extremism (LWE) affected areas, the district police laid a 1.9 km BT road connecting a remote village Pusuguppa in Cherla mandal in the district and Rampuram in Chhattisgarh.Superintendent of Police B Rohith Raju along with Bhadrachalam ASP Vikrant Kumar Singh inspected the road on Thursday by riding on motorbikes. Speaking to the media, he informed that the road was laid with the funds worth Rs 3 crore sanctioned by the State government.The personnel of CRPF, CoBRA and Kothagudem district special party police helped in laying the road without any untoward incidents and in guarding the men and material. Works were executed round the clock for the speedy completion of the road, he said.

Kothagudem Police have also been establishing mobile hospitals in Chennapuram and Pusuguppa with an estimated cost of Rs 2 crore and they would soon be made operational. In addition to that mini rice mills and indoor stadiums in for adivasis in Cherla and Dummugudem mandals, the SP informedThe district police have been focusing more on the surrender of Maoists. Under Operation Cheyutha nearly 220 underground Maoist cadres from Sukma, Bijapur districts in Chhattisgarh as well as Telangana surrendered to Kothagudem Police so far in the year 2025.

Trump signals tit-for-tat China tariffs may be near end; TikTok deal on hold



GNS News Agency, April 22

U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday (April 18, 2025) signalled a potential end to the tit-for-tat tariff hikes between the U.S. and China that shocked markets, and that a deal over the fate of social media platform TikTok may have to wait."I don't want them to go higher because at a certain point you make it where people don't buy," Mr. Trump told reporters about tariffs at the White House."So, I may not want to go higher or I may not want to even go up to that level. I may want to go to less because you know you want people to buy and, at a certain point, people aren't gonna buy."Mr. Trump's comments further pointed to a di-

Luigi Mangione faces federal charges, death penalty in UnitedHealth executive's killing

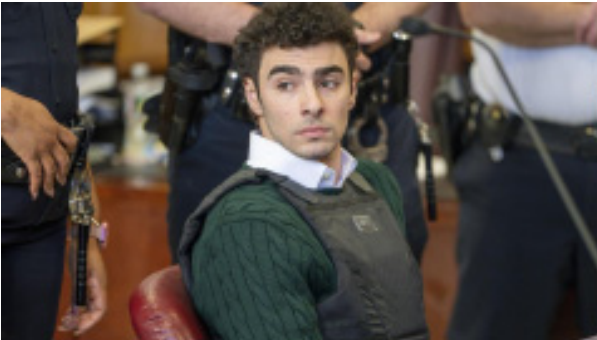
GNS News Agency, April 22

A federal grand jury has indicted Luigi Mangione, who is accused of murdering a UnitedHealth Group executive in New York last year, allowing prosecutors to seek the death penalty in his case, according to court filings on Thursday.Mangione, 26, is already facing state murder and weapons charges in New York, which does not have the death penalty. The federal indictment does not include new charges but raises the stakes for Mangione, who has pleaded not guilty to the state charges.Mangione's lawyers did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The U.S. Attorney's office in Manhattan declined to comment.

The indictment means that a grand jury found probable cause to charge Mangione with murder, stalking and firearms offenses. A hearing in the federal case is scheduled for Friday in Manhattan federal court.Mangione has asked a judge to prevent federal prosecutors from seeking the death penalty. His lawyers in a filing last week said U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi's April 1 announcement that prosecutors would seek the death penalty was "unapologetically political" and breached government protocols for death penalty decisions.If that bid fails and Mangione is convicted in the federal case, the jury would determine in a separate phase of the trial whether to recommend the death penalty. Any such recommendation

minished appetite for sharply higher across-the-board tariffs on dozens of countries after markets reacted violently to their introduction on April 2.

The Republican president slapped 10% tariffs on most goods entering the country but delayed the implementation of higher levies, pending negotiations.Still, he hiked rates on Chinese imports, now totaling 145%, after Beijing retaliated with its own counter-measures. Last week, China said "will not respond" to a "numbers game with tariffs," its own signal that across-the-board rates would not rise further.Mr. Trump said China had been in touch since the imposition of tariffs and expressed optimism that they could reach a deal.While the two sides are in touch, sources told Reuters that free-flowing, high-level exchanges of the sort that would lead to a deal have largely been absent.Speaking with reporters, Mr. Trump repeatedly declined to specify the nature of talks between the countries or whether they directly included Chinese President Xi Jinping.Mr. Trump has repeatedly extended a legal deadline for China-based ByteDance to divest the U.S. assets of the short video app used by 170 million Americans. On Thursday, he said a spin-off deal would likely wait until the trade issue is settled."We have a deal for TikTok, but it'll be subject to China so we'll just delay the deal 'til this thing works out one way or the other," Mr. Trump said.



must be unanimous, and the judge would be required to impose it.Brian Thompson, the deceased CEO of UnitedHealth's insurance division, was shot dead on December 4 outside a hotel in Midtown Manhattan, where the company was gathering for an investor conference.

The brazen killing of Thompson and ensuing five-day manhunt captivated Americans.While public officials condemned the killing, some Americans have cheered Mangione, saying he drew attention to steep U.S. healthcare costs and the power of health insurers to refuse payment for some treatments. Mangione is currently being held in federal lockup in Brooklyn.

Indian jails plagued by overcrowding, lack of medical, mental health professionals: report

GNS News Agency, April 22

With a national average occupancy rate of more than 131%, Indian jails face extreme overcrowding and are battling multiple health challenges, according to the recently released India Justice Report 2025. The report highlights the fact that India's prison inmate population is projected to reach 6.8 lakh by 2030, even though prison capacity is only likely to grow to 5.15 lakh.The capacity shortage is not restricted to space alone, but extends to health staff. There are only 25 psychologists for the entire nation's prisoners, at a time when the recorded number of prisoners with mental illnesses has jumped from 4,470 in 2012 to 9,084 in 2022. Yet, the response remains largely absent, the report says.Prisons also record a 43% vacancy among medical officers. The report, titled 'The State of Public Health in India's Prisons: India Justice Report 2025— Findings on Gaps in Staffing & Medical Care', explains that the model prison manual (2016) benchmarks the prisoner-doctor ratio at 300 prisoners to 1 doctor. "India's national average far exceeds that, standing at 775 prisoners per doctor," says the report.

It also highlights the non-availability of health data on prisoners entering jail with a disability, and those who acquire a disability within the prison.Overcrowding could also be a root cause of the spread of several communicable diseases, the report says. In the decade between 2012 and 2022, there have been worrisome upward shifts in prison populations in several areas."The total number of people incarcerated has gone up from 3.8 lakh to 5.7 lakh; national occupancy rates have spiked from 112% to 131%. Overall, the 27% increase in prison housing capacity between 2012 and 2022 (from 3.4 lakh to 4.3 lakh) has not kept pace with need. Levels of overcrowding have also escalated. For instance, in 2012, Maharashtra averaged a 99% occupancy



rate but in 2022, this had increased to 161%," the report says.Insufficient mental health staffAs of 2022, no State or Union Territory met the benchmark of one psychologist or psychiatrist per 500 inmates. At that time, there were only 69 sanctioned posts for psychologists and psychiatrists across India's 1,330 prisons and 5.7 lakh inmates, but not even half these positions were filled."The data records the presence of only 25 or one for every 22,929 prisoners. Twenty-five States/ Union Territories make no provision for a psychologist or psychiatrist within their cohort of correctional staff," said Valay Singh, the lead author of the India Justice Report.The India Justice Report (IJR) 2025 is a collaborative effort with multiple agencies in the field and is a quantitative index which uses government data to track improvements and persisting deficits in each State's structural and financial capacity to deliver justice. It is based on quantitative measurements of budgets, human resources, infrastructure, workload, and diversity across police, judiciary, prisons, legal aid, and Human Rights Commissions for all 36 States and UTs.

Trump administration orders Gaza-linked social media vetting for visa applicants

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The Trump administration on Thursday (April 17, 2025) ordered a social media vetting for all U.S. visa applicants who have been to the Gaza Strip on or after January 1, 2007, an internal State Department cable seen by Reuters showed, in the latest push to tighten screening of foreign travelers.The order to conduct a social media vetting for all immigrant and non-immigrant visas should include non-governmental organization workers as well as individuals who have been in the Palestinian enclave for any length of time in an official or diplomatic capacity, the cable said."If the review of social media results uncovers potential derogatory information relating to security issues, then a SAO must be submitted," the cable said, referring to a security advisory opinion, which is an interagency investigation to determine if a visa applicant poses a national security risk to the United States.The move comes as President Donald Trump's administration has revoked hundreds of visas across the country, including the status of some lawful permanent residents under a 1952 law allowing the deportation of any immigrant whose presence in the country the secretary of state deems harmful to U.S. foreign policy.The cable dated April 17 was signed by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who said in late March that he may have revoked more than 300 visas already.A State Department

spokesperson declined to comment on internal communications when asked about the cable, but said every prospective traveler to the U.S. undergoes extensive inter-agency security vetting."The Trump Administration is focused on protecting our nation and our citizens by upholding the highest standards of national security and public safety through our visa process," the spokesperson said, adding that all visa applicants are continuously vetted."Security vetting runs from the time of each application, through adjudication of the visa, and afterwards during the validity period of every issued visa, to ensure the individual remains eligible to travel to the United States," the spokesperson added.Mr. Trump officials have said student visa holders are subject to deportation over their support for Palestinians and criticism of Israel's conduct in the war in Gaza, calling their actions a threat to U.S. foreign policy interests.Mr. Trump's critics have called the effort an attack on free speech rights under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.The U.S. Constitution guarantees freedom of speech for everyone in the U.S., regardless of immigration status. But there have been high-profile instances of the administration revoking visas of students who advocated against Israel's war in GazaAmong the most widely publicized of such arrests was one captured on video last month of masked agents taking a Tufts University student from Turkey, Rumeysa Ozturk, into custody.

As BJP, AIADMK reunite, what it means for the Tamil Nadu Assembly polls next year



The BJP had just announced that it had managed to bring the AIADMK back to the NDA fold, almost two years since their alliance broke down, in time for the Assembly elections next year. The photo, however, underlined that AIADMK chief EPS, as Palaniswami is popularly known, had ensured that Annamalai, the outgoing Tamil Nadu BJP president, would not be around to queer the pitch for him. The discord between the two stemmed not from Annamalai's criticism of the Dravidian party's icons Jayalalithaa and C N Annadurai, the first Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, but from the fact that both are from the same region (western Tamil Nadu) and the same caste (Gounders). This makes them rivals and claimants for the same political base.

Shah, the Union Home Minister, made it clear that EPS would lead the NDA in Tamil Nadu, signalling that the AIADMK chief would be the alliance's chief ministerial candidate. In all likelihood, Annamalai will now move to national politics. Despite the cop-turned-politician's hard work to build the BJP in the state, the party did not perform as well as expected, with its vote share jumping from 3.7% in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls to only 11.24% last year. The case for the two parties to come together is compelling. Their alliance got 40% of the vote share in the 2021 Assembly elections, with the DMK-Congress-Left alliance polling over 45% of the votes. When the AIADMK broke away from the NDA and contested last year's Lok Sabha elections on its own, it got 20.46% of the votes while the BJP-led group got 18%, together polling 41%. With the DMK-led alliance increasing its vote share to 47% in 2024, the difference between the two alliances has been around 5-6% in recent elections. If the NDA manages to make up some of this difference, the contest could become close.

After Jayalalithaa died in 2016, a weakened and fragmented AIADMK performed poorly in both the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The M K Stalin-led DMK, in comparison, outperformed its Dravidian rival. It won the 2021 Assembly elections and fared handsomely in the 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Though the DMK has a core following, the BJP and the AIADMK will look to tap into an anti-incumbency sentiment. All eyes are also on actor Vijay, popularly referred to as "Thalapathy (commander)" by his legions of fans. He has caught the imagination of many, particularly the youth who are tired of the existing parties and want a change. During a recent trip to Tamil Nadu, I

found many speculating whether Vijay's party Tamizha Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) would join hands with the AIADMK and the BJP. Though seemingly unlikely — Vijay has not only attacked the DMK but also the BJP — if it happens, the combination will be a formidable one. Vijay has not yet opened his cards and is busy completing his films. If he decides to fight on his own, he is bound to divide the anti-incumbency votes, thereby helping the DMK. AIADMK leaders, however, feel that being a Christian, Vijay may take away some minority votes from the DMK, and that may help the NDA. EPS, RSS, and a paradox

Till last year, the BJP was thinking about building the party first, with Annamalai leading the attack on the two Dravidian majors. By deciding to piggyback the AIADMK, the party's strategy has undergone a significant shift. The BJP hopes that its grassroots outfits will help strengthen its base in a state that has resisted its advances so far. For EPS, this is his last chance to go for the kill, given the weakening and fragmentation of the AIADMK since Jayalalithaa's death. When people look at an alternative nowadays, they like the leadership question to be settled and for the leader to be strong — in this case, someone who will stand up for the state's interests in Delhi. With Stalin expected to pursue his agenda of upholding "Tamil pride" — he has done so in recent weeks — the BJP brass will be called to tone down its position on contentious issues that deepen the North-South fault lines, something that can be electorally counter-productive.

Stalin has opposed issues related to the New Education Policy, resisting the "imposition of Hindi", and called for the postponement of the delimitation exercise by 25 years. The southern states fear the "D" factor will strengthen the political clout of the Hindi heartland states even more. Stalin has even gone to the extent of urging people to "make more babies", with BJP ally and Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu also singing the same tune. Where does this leave EPS, who will be constantly under pressure on questions of Tamil identity? If he can persuade Delhi to revisit some of these issues, he may gain in stature. A Common Minimum Programme for the alliance is being talked about, and there is precedence from the Atal Behari Vajpayee days. Under the former Prime Minister, the newly formed NDA placed the BJP's controversial core issues — Ram Mandir, Article 370, and Uniform Civil Code — on the back burner. The return of the AIADMK-BJP alliance also shows that the RSS is back at the high table. Amit Shah called on RSS ideologue and Tughlak editor S Gurumurthy, with their discussions reported to have gone on for a couple of hours. The Sangh and the BJP may have calculated that Tamil Nadu is close to a "post-Dravidian" era, and the ground-level sentiment on something like opposition to Hindi is not as intense as in the 1960s, when widespread violence occurred. Then there is the inexplicable paradox of political Hindutva failing to take off so far in Tamil Nadu, though the people of the state are deeply religious (every village has a temple that hundreds flock to). The alliance appears to be the BJP's calculated gamble to break new ground in the South, where it has faced resistance. Whether it will succeed or not will be as clear as day within a year.

Expert Explains: US-Iran nuclear talks — what has happened so far, why, and the road ahead

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and United States Special Envoy Steve Witkoff held indirect talks in Muscat on Saturday. Their objective is to reach a deal that ends US economic sanctions on Iran, in return for Tehran giving up its stockpile of enriched uranium and attempts towards nuclear weaponisation. "The talks were conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect... Both sides decided to continue the process in a matter of days," Araghchi posted on X. US President Donald Trump first confirmed such talks during a press conference with Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu on April 8. He has repeatedly expressed his desire for a deal, and threatened Iran with bombing, "the likes of which they have never seen before... if they don't make a deal".

The Iranians have long agreed to negotiate, but "indirectly", as an article in The Washington Post by Araghchi emphasised on April 9. Trump and Witkoff have repeatedly characterised any talk as "direct". The two sides entered negotiations with several such fundamental differences, but they are at the table — a scenario few expected, least of all just three months after Trump took office and amid a large-scale US campaign against the Iran-backed Houthis. Why? The change has been more in Iran than in the United States.

What has changed for Iran?

Iran is at a watershed moment. The average Iranian is 32 years old, and the newer generations have not witnessed the three formative events that bind political leaders from older generations — the 1979 revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, and the only succession of a Supreme Leader (Ali Khamenei succeeded Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989). In the last two decades, the Iranian regime has successfully weathered and neutralised threats from mass protests (usually led by the youth) through a mix of limited concessions and coercion. It has built a 'resistance economy' in response to Trump's 'maximum pressure' policy since 2018. In August 2024, President Masoud Pezeshkian said Iran needed at least \$100B in foreign investment to achieve a growth rate sufficient to slow double-digit inflation and high unemployment rates. Iranian leaders, including Araghchi, are advocating doing business with the United States and deals like the one with Boeing in 2015 for 80 commercial aircraft (when the earlier nuclear deal took effect). Recently, Pezeshkian even said Khamenei was not opposed to US entities investing in the Iranian economy as long as they were genuine investors.

The economic need for sanctions relief has helped Iranian reformists press for a nuclear deal, while conservative politicians (who hold a majority in the Iranian Parliament) voice caution but do not upend negotiation efforts. In its neighborhood, the severe weakening of Iran's 'Axis of Resistance' (even if temporary) has coincided with a strong Arab interest in improving cross-Gulf ties. Capitals such as Riyadh, which vociferously opposed the 2015 nuclear deal (along with Israel), are now in favour of a negotiated settlement and greater economic integration. Even Iran's extra-regional allies such as Russia, who largely stopped pushing Iran to give up nuclear enrichment after Tehran's support to Moscow over Ukraine — have freshly reiterated the preference for a deal.

How has the Iran-Trump equation evolved?

Tehran has a 22-year history of such negotiations; with the E3 (France, Germany, UK) since 2003, and with the United States since 2013. These often occurred alongside American military threats to improve Washington's bargain-

ing position. Following Trump's unilateral withdrawal from the Obama-era deal in 2018, Iran learnt two main lessons — that Tehran had to improve its bargaining position through greater uranium enrichment (which it eventually did, to 60%), and that the Washington could not be trusted as a negotiating partner (Khamenei declared a 'no war, no talks' policy in 2018). Iranian acrimony towards Trump increased after the US' assassination of Iran's most celebrated General — Qassem Soleimani — in January 2020.

But Tehran's need for sanctions relief, which had brought it to the 2015 deal, progressively increased. It needed to reconcile this need with an effort to pre-empt another 2018-like possibility. Hence, despite indirect negotiations in Vienna in 2021 and 2022 with the Biden administration, Iran remained non-committal to the older deal (without formally abrogating it). In retrospect, this approach has been vindicated within Tehran as it allows fresh negotiations with Trump for a deal he can claim credit for. Abbas Araghchi's recent article even blamed the Biden administration for the Vienna talks' failure and asserted that "there is a chance for the United States to finally have a president of peace", pandering to Trump's personality.

What lies ahead?

At their very core, Washington's and Tehran's immediate objectives are aligned — Iranian nuclear disarmament, and economic engagement. Iran has consistently maintained that nuclear weapons are theologically prohibited (with Khamenei having issued a fatwa against them), and that nuclear enrichment is only a response to American aggression. The question is if the Trump administration will push for more concessions, as it did in 2017, demanding the limiting/eliminating of Iran's ballistic missile capabilities and a cessation of Iranian support to proxy groups.

Trump has a maximalist approach to deal-making — to first impose almost unacceptable terms substantiated by a strong bargaining position, and eventually settle for as many concessions as possible. Witkoff has confirmed that there is room for compromise. Hence, Washington's position might not be entrenched. Its ally Israel, however, has been lobbying for an end to all Iranian nuclear activity (which Tehran categorically rejects), and a military approach to achieve this.

Even as Trump has declared that Israel will lead anti-Iran military action if negotiations fail, the US retains room to dilute its additional demands vis-à-vis Iranian strategic capabilities. Iran too has the ability to scale down its relationship with the Yemeni Houthis (whose history reveals more autonomy than other Iran-backed groups). A blueprint for a deal has been available since 2015 and Khamenei has reportedly given Araghchi 'full authority' for negotiations. Should the Arab states boost the Iranian position during Trump's upcoming visit to the region, Netanyahu's ability to undercut US-Iran negotiations would be further dented.

Also, while US Vice President JD Vance has asserted that a war with Iran is not in America's interest, Tehran's leaders have reciprocated this reasoning for Iran (unless militarily provoked). It is also uncertain if a deal is possible within Trump's (initial) two-month timeline. US-Iran talks in 2013 had begun in March, but a blueprint was fully ready only by November, and in force only by 2015.

Ultimately, however, this seeming détente between Tehran and Washington will depend on their ability to silo negotiations from other regional developments, including Israel's war in Gaza, Syria, and Lebanon.

Space tech offers a replicable template, iDEX in defence & BIRAC in biotech working well: PSA Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood



According to the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, Ajay Kumar Sood, while there is now an increasing sensitivity to putting deep tech startups on an accelerated path, India needs to think beyond manufacturing. Prof. Sood, who is also the Chairperson of the Prime Minister's Science, Technology & Innovation Advisory Council and is a National Science Chair Professor at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore, told Anil Sasi in an interview that Indian startups are working well in sectors such as quantum technology and that his office is working on how to include deep tech startups in allocations from the fund-of-funds announced earlier. One of your key mandates is technology foresight. When we look at sectors such as deep tech startups, the one big concern is that the number of deep tech startups that are coming out in India is low and that they are not really in the cutting-edge technology segments. Do you see that changing?

So, the good news is that there is an increasing sensitivity to take the deep tech startups on an accelerated path. Our office has helped prepare a deep tech policy (the National Deep Tech Startup Policy), which was up for public consultation and so on... What we would like to do from that is make an action plan, not us, but DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade) and other places, make an action plan to see how it can help. For example, this fund-of-funds that has been announced in this year's Budget, the question is, can we allocate some of it for deep tech startups? That is a suggestion we have. And also we have this Rs 1 lakh crore corpus fund, which was announced in last year's Budget... which is like a loan, a zero per cent loan. Again, the question is how do we include deep tech startups? Because deep tech startups, as you know, need long-term patient funding that (might be) difficult with the venture capital funds and others, because they may not wait for so long (for projects to pick up)... So our goal will be to create instruments. Some of them could be policy decisions. Some of them can be like the fund-of-funds and so on, so that our deep tech startups get stabilised here and they remain with their IP (intellectual property) here... Because it's not only starting up, it also should be sustainable here... So, for example, in quantum itself, there are now about 35 companies alone, and they are deep tech, obviously. A few of them are big. But many of them are small startups. So, under the National Quantum Mission, there is a provision to fund startups, and is being done. Now, eight startups have been funded under the quantum mission for these deep tech startups. Similarly, this will happen in the AI mission. In the AI mission, which is now being done by MeitY, one vertical is full on startups. So, my own sense is now that there is very high sensitivity to enhancing deep tech startups, but we have to see that all conditions are favourable (for fostering this).

There is this conversation around this proposed centre for deep tech translation. How do you see this evolving?

So we may not have a centre, per se, because that is just an articulation of the high priority we will give (for this initiative). It can be a centre, it can be a distributed effort, it can be a virtual centre. But what we are saying is there has to be a concerted effort, a body that should focus on deep tech startups in a consolidated manner by looking at all aspects of it. So, it may not be an institute, or any such thing. But it could be a mix of many things, it could possibly be virtual. The intention is to step up the focus on these deep tech startups.

One area where India has done exceedingly well is the national space programme, not just proving that we can do cutting-edge stuff, but that it can be done by the public sector, and at a fraction of the cost benchmarks. And now we are getting in private players who are doing well too. Can we replicate the success of the space sector to other areas, such as deep tech, or nuclear, or EVs?

For example, in defence, there is the iDEX programme (Innovations for Defence Excellence, an initiative of the Ministry of Defence to support innovation and technology development in the defence and aerospace sectors). Actually, iDEX is a huge success. People probably don't know much about it. iDEX is for the deep tech startups in this space, because they are working on cutting-edge technologies that are required by the strategic sector. It's not a random thing, it is what is needed (in the sector). Can you come up with a solution (for this problem)? That's the challenge,

“Every child is born with extraordinary abilities”

My belief in the incredible potential of every child truly began when I became a mother. Watching my son grow in those first two years was nothing short of magical. I saw him go from lying down to sitting, crawling, walking, talking, and laughing. It was so clear to me in those moments that every child is born with extraordinary abilities — what I like to think of as their own superpowers. That experience deeply shaped my understanding of children as naturally curious, capable, and full of potential. Later, when I started my school, I saw this truth reflected in so many other children. And through my travels to different countries, I have been struck by how universal this is — no matter where a child is born, this innate potential exists within them. For me, it all began with the awe and wonder of motherhood.

What are your fondest memories from your school days?

My fondest memories of my school days were not really about the learning itself, but the friendships that I built over the years. I went to a small, all-girls school, and the connections we formed were truly special. It was those simple moments — eating lunch together, playing games, and chatting — that stayed with me the most. This was before the era of television, so our entertainment was just spending time with each other. Looking back, those small, everyday interactions made those years unforgettable.

and iDEX (is) enormously successful. And, in recent years, the funding for this has been increased.. So, iDEX is a very good example. Similarly, there is BIRAC (Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, a Department of Biotechnology initiative) to promote startups in the biotechnology sector. The biotech ecosystem has grown in startups because of BIRAC. They have invested probably a few hundred crores over the years, and it has resulted in many times more biotechnology companies coming up. And they are also deep tech projects.

So two examples are there already, iDEX in defence and BIRAC in biotechnology, they are very similar to what we're doing in space. See, in space, there is an advantage, because the players exactly know what to do. Similarly, in defence too, one knows exactly what is required. But in other areas, we have to also create the demand for future products. So, this is where we will need the support. Another thing which should happen, is that we have been very good in design, because we have a lot of designers. Over 2,000 or so, or more. But what we need is that we should have designing capabilities on our specifications, not on someone else's specifications, which means some intellectual thinking has already (been done) somewhere else. So that's what will make our country a leading product nation. What do you need in a product nation?

Think about it. It's not manufacturing... Manufacturing, of course, is required, down the line, but it (manufacturing) is not the only thing, because then you will get into the middle-income trap. Because the profits will go somewhere else, and much of the profits are before and after manufacturing. So, what we need is, can we really have a product that is not based on somebody else's design, but our design. So, I think, that is what the culture we need to bring in. Our youngsters are very, very good, actually. I mean, the design companies that are there in Bengaluru, all our engineers there, are very good, but they are designing for somebody else and to their specifications. Question is, why can't we have our GCC (global capability centres). And there are some companies that are coming up now, in manufacturing, such as Bharat Forge, the Tatas are doing (some work), Tech Mahindra is there... More has to happen. So, my passion is how to foster that.

In the nuclear sector, with the US Department of Energy specific authorisation (10CFR810) that enables an American company Holtec Int. the possibility of transfer of technology to at least three companies to start off with, how crucial is this development in your view?

See, nuclear energy is inevitable, because if you look at the energy mix, which is required for net zero carbon by 2070, nuclear energy is integral to this energy transition period. You can't get away from that. Given that, whatever is required: whether it is SMR or whether it is 500 megawatt conventional reactors or any other reactor type, all has to be used now. SMRs have a distinct advantage, that if you need a very focused energy supply, like for data centres, and there could be many more examples, an SMR offers a possible application, even if it is not economical. So, I would like to say that we need to keep all options open and it's not a question of 'or'; rather it should be, 'and', when it comes to multiple technologies.

On EV mobility, your department has kept the technology option open, just like you mentioned for the energy sector. But within sections of the government, the conclusion seems to be that battery electric cars are the only option. Shouldn't we pursue a multiple technologies pathway to achieve electrification of mobility?

I completely agree, multiple technologies (is the way forward). Take the fuel cell, green hydrogen, and the fuel cell is a very good option, along with EVs. I'm not saying EV should be (ruled) out, but with EVs, I don't think that lithium chemistry (for batteries) is the end of the world... Other electro chemistries have to be tried, and are being tried... Solid-state batteries are the ultimate, in my view, because they'll be the safest, and energy density will be the highest, but there you still have some R&D issues, so it's still not commercial yet... But that's where we should work. Fully solid-state batteries, where the electrolyte is also solid. But sodium ion batteries are already an option. Our R&D roadmap (e-mobility R&D Roadmap for India' released last year) actually tells you which technologies you have to (pursue) now, so that you are not import dependent after five years. And based on that, the good news is that in the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (established through the ANRF Act of 2023 that was notified in February 2024 and is chaired by the Prime Minister), the first mission we have launched is on electric vehicles and the R&D needed. (This is) where we need to be competitive. It's not a replacement R&D, there's a difference. Something we are importing, you want to replace that. That is one option. But you have to also know what you will need after five years, three years, because R&D takes that long... So EVs are absolutely essential, but when I say EV, it should be more generic (in technology terms). Fuel cell is one option, and hybrids, and so on... So, options are there. And in my view, a country of our size and our breadth, we need all

How would you describe the philosophy behind Riverside School's design-led approach?

The core philosophy of Riverside's design-led approach lies in a simple yet profound shift: moving from designing for the student to designing with the student. This change in perspective unlocks the power of co-creation and collaboration, which are essential for discovering meaningful solutions. What we now call the Riverside design-led approach focuses on involving all key stakeholders — whether it is the students, parents, or teachers — in the decision-making process and the design of solutions. By doing so, we create a sense of ownership and agency that truly empowers our children. It is about recognizing that when students are active participants, rather than passive recipients, their capacity to contribute and innovate flourishes. You studied at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad. When you interact with teachers who feel intimidated by the vocabulary associated with “design thinking”, how do you break down the concept in a friendly and accessible way? To introduce design thinking or the design process to someone new — whether a teacher or a student — it is helpful to think of it as a recipe. A simple recipe, when followed step by step, leads to a wonderful outcome. And the more faithfully you follow each part of the recipe, the more meaningful or “delicious” the result becomes.

The mandatory thesis submission in medical postgraduate education is a futile exercise



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Modern medicine, as we practice it today, began with trial and error, and has evolved over time. Central to this process is the quality of research, which drives evidence generation. It is evidence—not just logic and gut feeling—that we rely on. Naturally, learning the art of research, to generate and understand emerging evidence, is paramount during the many years of medical education and clinical practice. The importance of research to doctors in training A sound knowledge of the intricacies of medical research is as important as knowing the functioning of the human body and the diseases that affect it. Gone are the days where medicine was practised based on anecdotes and personal experiences. With the ushering in of evidence-based medicine, the cornerstone of medical practice, is good quality and reliable medical research. To put it simply, a simple antibiotic that is given to you for an infection is prescribed because it was found to be beneficial in clinical trials. Why a doctor chooses a particular test to diagnose a condition or orders a blood test for a patient is determined by the outcome of research. Therefore, a proper understanding of research is undoubtedly an essential tool in a doctor's toolkit. This knowledge is also crucial to identify poorly-done research and avoid its futile or potentially harmful recommendations from turning into practice. However, one of the greatest shortcomings of the Indian medical education system is the lack of structured teaching in medical research. As surprising as it may sound, not all doctors possess this skill set of not only conducting research, but also understanding and interpreting research.

Most undergraduate students are not taught research. The requirement of a good foundation in statistics also makes learning research challenging and often less interesting, as the dislike for numbers is often what pushes people to pursue medicine. Knowledge of the human body—its physiology, the what, when and how of diseases, and the principles of diagnosis and treatment—is far more intriguing to students. For most medical students, their first exposure to research occurs during Community Medicine postings in their third year. As scientific critical thinking but rote learning is the requirement to clear all exams, undergraduate research is considered an 'extracurricular activity' and not actively encouraged in most institutions. This leads to nearly all medical students graduating to become doctors without knowing even the basics of research. Postgraduate training continues to leave this gap unaddressed. The mandatory thesis submission during postgraduate training in fact, worsens the situation. Mandatory thesis - a flawed model Postgraduate training, also known as residency, in India, is typically a three-year programme, with some exceptions. One striking difference from undergraduate training—aside from the fact that residents are now practicing doctors—is the thesis requirement. Like most professional courses, residency mandates the completion of a thesis. In an ideal scenario, a resident is supposed to select a topic of interest, get it approved by their mentor, draft a research protocol, obtain ethics approval, and conduct a proper research project. That is the intended process. However, in most institutions, this is not what happens.

Students choose a postgraduate course more often based on the influence of their seniors or on their NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) rank, without an understanding of the nuances of the subject, due to a lack

of substantial real-world exposure to the speciality. The first few months of residency therefore, are gruelling, as one seeks to stay afloat amidst unrealistic working hours and overwhelming work while at the same time trying to gain the specialist specific necessary skills and knowledge. During this phase, most universities require the resident to also plan the thesis. Without any formal training in conducting research, minimal to no departmental support, and no dedicated time allotted for research, planning an ethically and scientifically relevant study becomes a formidable task.

A thesis topic is often forced on residents by their guides, impacting their interest not only in research but also in the subject. Without a sound knowledge of research methodologies and lack of a proper understanding of the speciality subject, a study protocol is drafted in haste, and often lacks the scientific rigor to be beneficial to anyone. The mandatory nature of the thesis makes it something that just needs to be finished somehow, rather than an exercise of enquiry to advance medical science. Barring the field of Community Medicine, where research is a core subject, once the research protocol is approved, students often receive minimal support on how to conduct the study. Students in departments with heavy patient loads often find it impossible to work on their thesis due to unrealistic working hours that also demand dedicated patient care. The study is therefore often sidelined until submission is around the corner, two years later. At this point, conducting a meaningful study is no longer feasible. Consequently, many residents resort to fabricating data or paying third parties to write their theses. This practice not only undermines the value of research but, with the current requirement for a mandatory publication, also leads to the widespread publication of fraudulent research. This lack of support and structured training fosters disinterest, leading to a cycle in which one resident submits a fake thesis and later advises junior students to do the same.

To address this, many universities have introduced mandatory research methodology workshops and biomedical statistics courses. While this is a move towards educating residents, it must be emphasised that a one-week workshop is not synonymous with training in research. A one-week workshop in research is equivalent to a week-long workshop in neurosurgery for every doctor who has never been taught how to hold a scalpel. The real focus should be on teaching doctors on how to read and understand research by providing hands-on research training without the pressure of mandatory submission. Residents should be encouraged to participate in ongoing studies conducted by faculty members—without the burden of a compulsory thesis. Not every practising doctor needs to know how to conduct research but every doctor needs to be able to understand and interpret research. For those interested in research, there should be provision for dedicated time for learning and conducting research. A combination of MD-PhD programs could facilitate this. Notably, the United States and Canada have integrated MD-PhD programs to facilitate clinical and research training. South Korea's MD-PhD program, initiated in 2005, emphasises the need for economic support and stable employment for physician-scientists. Australia has implemented innovative approaches, such as the Clinician-Scientist Track (CST), which allows students to pursue a research Masters concurrently with their medical degree, with the option to transition to an MD-PhD. Evidently research needs to be inculcated as a culture through proper training and not as a mandatory exercise without any guidance. We simply do not need too many ill-informed, untrained cooks, meticulously spoiling the quality of the broth. Bad evidence is worse than no evidence. Training in research is a specialty in itself, and pressuring residents to conduct and publish a full-blown study in the form of a thesis is akin to enabling each passenger on a flight to steer the aircraft for a short duration. It is time to shift our perspective and recognise that not every training doctor requires homework or imposed deadlines to develop valuable skills. The sooner we acknowledge this, the better our medical education system will be.

When bipolar disorder turned out to be a burnout: Why mental health advisors on social media can't be your therapist



A 28-year-old MNC professional walked into the clinic of psychologist Dr Rituparna Ghosh at Apollo, Navi Mumbai, convinced she had bipolar disorder. She had been watching videos on social media on signs and symptoms and found that some of them, like mood swings and impulsive spending, matched hers. "She was utterly distressed and scared. But once we began to unpack her experience, it was clear that she could not regulate her emotions very well because of prolonged burnout and emotional neglect. Hers was not a mood disorder," she says. These days Dr Ghosh is busy dispelling myths around mental health before diagnosing patients as they are increasingly being taken in by advisories put out by online content creators who have no professional expertise.

Young people, who trust and follow influencers because they seem like relatable sounding boards, are, therefore, falling prey to misinformation and anxiety. This becomes problematic because it oversimplifies the complexity of psychological conditions. "Even a teenage boy believed he had Autism Spectrum Disorder because a video had listed 'discomfort in social situations' and 'hyperfixation' (prolonged focus on specific object or activity) as traits. After a few sessions, we understood his discomfort was rooted in severe bullying and low self-esteem, not neuro-divergence," says Dr Ghosh. In fact, a new analysis published in the journal PLOS One has found that most of the popular content about ADHD or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder—a mental health disorder characterised by inattention, hyperactivity and impulsiveness—on social media platforms like Tik Tok and Instagram is inaccurate. Insights provided by content creators do not mirror those of mental health professionals. "Self-diagnosis based on social media advisories is emerging to be a bigger problem than the mental health condition itself. We must draw a clear line between awareness and diagnosis, and help young people differentiate between mental health content that educates versus content that sensationalises," says Dr Ghosh. Diagnosis isn't about relating to a meme—it's a process rooted in comprehensive clinical assessment, behavioural history and individual traits.

Random scrolling on a suspected mental health condition may get anybody hooked simply because of the volume of content that floats up onscreen. "I had a young man with ADHD, who saw his condition through the lens of social media trends and not clinical science. The algorithms aren't neutral. So once someone starts watching ADHD-related content, they're flooded with it, often in ways that

reinforce a self-diagnosis," says Dr Ghosh. ADHD is often genetic, associated with differences in brain structure and function. But in the young man's case, it was about childhood trauma, poor diet and sleep cycles. By incorrectly diagnosing himself, he had overlooked his real triggers. "Another issue is the normalisation of pathology. When everything becomes a potential symptom, the line between mental health and mental illness gets blurred. That's emotionally exhausting for young people who are still figuring out their identities. It also fosters a culture of hyper-vigilance—constantly analysing oneself through a diagnostic lens rather than with self-compassion," says Dr Ghosh. Also, people with mental health concerns refrain from seeking professional help due to societal stigma and love the comfort of anonymity online.

WHAT ARE COMMON SOCIAL MEDIA MYTHS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

"I can binge-watch an entire series in one night, I don't think I have ADHD," a patient told Dr Ghosh. But here's the thing: ADHD isn't about not being able to focus—it's about when and how your brain lets you focus. It's often task-specific, not ability-specific. "In fact, many of my patients with ADHD are extremely intelligent and creative. What's missing is not capability, but regulation—of attention, time and emotion. But in India, where performance is king and distraction is equated with failure, ADHD often hides in plain sight. Especially among women and girls, it's brushed off as 'being too moody' or 'just careless.' We're misreading the signs," she says.

Anxiety is the most under-diagnosed, often dismissed as overthinking. But chronic anxiety isn't just that. "It's your body sounding the alarm over and over, even when nothing's visibly wrong. The worst part? Most people don't even realise how much they've normalised suffering. It's only when I ask, 'When was the last time you felt truly at ease in your body?', that the tears come. We're living with anxiety and calling it personality disorder," explains Dr Ghosh.

Some patients, who are multi-taskers, also see therapy sessions as a waste of money since they do not have a visible crisis to deal with. "But therapy isn't just for breakdowns. It's for breakthroughs. It's for unpacking a childhood that never got space. For grieving the version of yourself you had to abandon to survive. For understanding why you keep choosing the same kind of pain in different relationships. In India, we applaud people who 'manage everything'—work, family, obligations—but no one asks at what cost. If you're functioning but numb, managing but joyless, surviving but burnt out... therapy might be exactly where you need to be," says Dr Ghosh. Many wonder if they should dig up their past and address it without knowing that panicking before a deadline, the emotional shutdown in conflict, the inability to ask for help has origins in earlier wounds. "Not every difficult experience becomes a disorder. But it does shape us. Therapy offers that pause, that space to ask, 'What did that experience do to me? And what part of me never quite recovered? That's not a weakness. That's wisdom,'" says Dr Ghosh. She has also seen caregivers, new mothers and high-functioning professionals say they would fix things on their own. "No, you shouldn't. And you don't have to," she says.

GAPS IN MENTAL HEALTH

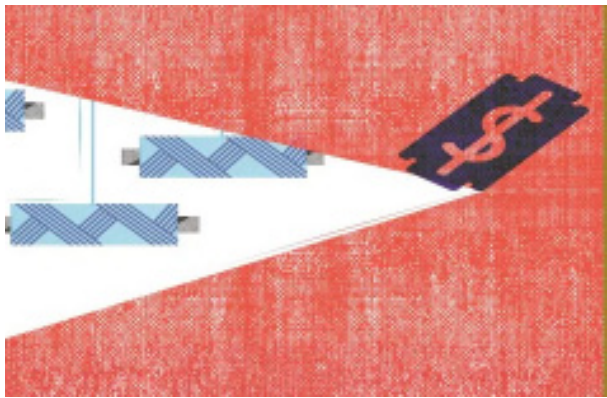
There's another lens from which social media virality needs to be studied—an unmet need for care services. When traditional mental health support systems seem too expensive, unavailable or intimidating, they turn to the most accessible source: social media. "What we need is a healthcare system that needs to be more accessible, inclusive and better integrated with digital spaces," says Dr Ghosh.

India needs its cards right to navigate a world governed by Trump's tariffs

US President Donald Trump has surprised the world, once again, with his sudden announcement of a 90-day pause on reciprocal tariffs on countries that did not retaliate against his April 2 order. Many in the media and economic fraternity read it as a "climbdown". To us, however, it is increasingly clear that the reciprocal tariff order was a strategic tactic to bring the US's trading partners to the negotiating table. The purpose was simple: Slashing the US trade deficit, which was \$1.2 trillion in 2024.

Reciprocal tariffs, beyond the minimum base level of 10 per cent, were designed specifically to give a tariff shock to the US's trading partners. In that sense, Trump has already succeeded. The US president does not shy away from saying that these countries are now queuing up to make trade deals with America. He claims that the trade deals will be "fair" to them as well as the US. In the process, it appears that the multilateral trading system is being thrown out of the window. The game plan seems to be targeted towards China, and perhaps for the right reasons—though there are reports of a softening of stance. In 2024, China exported goods worth \$440 billion to the US while its imports from the US were \$144 billion, creating a trade deficit of \$296 billion in the US's trade account. This amounts to roughly 24 per cent of the US trade deficit of \$1.2 trillion. China is often accused of currency manipulation, keeping the yuan undervalued against the US dollar, besides having non-tariff barriers. An undervalued currency is nothing but a hidden way of giving export subsidies. In that sense, the Chinese economy is not fully market-based. The WTO failed to fix this, and no wonder the WTO itself is becoming increasingly irrelevant. However, the US's target list may go beyond China. The next in the list could be the EU, Mexico and Vietnam—countries that inflict large trade deficits on the US. The EU, for example, exported goods worth \$609 billion to the US, while its imports were only \$372 billion, creating a deficit of \$237 billion (roughly 20 per cent of the US trade deficit). Similarly, Mexico's exports of \$516 billion against its imports of \$334 billion created a deficit of \$182 billion (15 per cent) for the US. Even Vietnam, which has a lot of Chinese investments, exported goods worth \$136 billion and imported a meagre \$13 billion, creating a deficit of \$123 billion in the US's trade account (about 10 per cent of the country's trade deficit). Japan, Canada, and even India also fall in this category—but India ranks 10th among the countries that have created a trade deficit (\$45 billion) in the US current account.

There is no doubt that with Trump's new tariff plans, China is likely to be the worst hit. Interestingly, if the current tariff level (125 per cent) on China stays, its exports of \$440 billion to the US will drop to a trickle very soon. Given that the Chinese economy already has a huge surplus capacity, it will be scouting for alternative markets to dump its goods. Else, its economy would head towards recession.



No wonder China is talking of an "Elephant and Dragon" tango, and making friendly moves towards ASEAN countries. India's trade with China is already hugely imbalanced with imports of \$109 billion and exports of only \$15 billion, creating a trade deficit of \$94 billion. The import-to-export ratio between India and China (88:12) is even worse than that between the US and China (75:25). India has to be extremely vigilant against being inundated by Chinese cheap imports. They may look very attractive today, but could wipe out many Indian domestic industries. If India has to learn any lesson on these lines, it needs to look at Indonesia, which is suffering because of the influx of Chinese imports, with several of its domestic textile firms having shut down. Thousands of Indonesians have lost jobs as a result. The fear of losing the US market due to Trump's tariffs will make China look for new avenues. Its next target could be the ASEAN countries, the EU, India, other South Asian countries, and even several African countries. Our only advice is to be vigilant. Getting back to the US, our research indicates that India has an opportunity to occupy the space that China will vacate in America, especially in labour-intensive sectors like textiles and apparel (T&A), machinery, toys and games, footwear and leather. But to tap this potential, India will have to do a lot of homework to scale up its production and adhere to high-quality standards, with a sole focus on US markets. Let us take the case of textiles and apparel. The US is the world's second-largest market, after the EU, for apparel, importing over \$81.5 billion in 2023. China has been the biggest exporter to the US market. But now with elevated tariff structures, Chinese exports will come down drastically. If India plays its cards right, it could give a big push to its target of \$100 billion in T&A exports by 2030. To capitalise on this opportunity, India must address structural inefficiencies in its textile value chain. First, it needs to integrate the "fashion" component into the apparel industry. Second, it requires a shift towards manmade fibre-based (MMF) apparel, which dominates globally.

With GenomeIndia, population-scale genomics comes of age in India

In one way or another, all living people on the earth can trace their ancestry to Africa and therefore carry some portion of African ancestral DNA—some to a significant degree, others less so. If we all originated from the same African ancestors, why do we look so different? Imagine two grains of paddy, one red and one blue. You plant them in two isolated locations, and each grows into a healthy rice plant, producing bags of red and blue rice, respectively. The next time, you sow a field with thousands of these red and blue grains. You no longer get just red and blue rice. You will begin to see a different coloured rice grain in addition to red and blue, and a spectrum of colors through successive generations.

This is because rice reproduces sexually: through genetic recombination during reproduction, offspring inherit not only the traits of their parent grains but also new, unique traits. Over time, spontaneous DNA changes—known as mutations—also introduce new characteristics, some beneficial and others detrimental. Both recombination and mutation result in genetic diversity. Given an average human generation length of 25-30 years, around 8,000 to 10,000 generations have passed since modern humans emerged in Africa roughly 200,000-300,000 years ago. Evolution eliminates harmful genetic changes while allowing beneficial ones to persist, especially when people from different genetic backgrounds copulate. However, if a population remains isolated and intermarriage occurs only within the group over generations, harmful mutations may persist because they lack the opportunity to be diluted or eliminated.

To understand how humans originated and migrated across the globe, researchers examine both the DNA of present-day individuals and ancient DNA from archaeological remains. Comparing the two helps track how our genomes have changed over time. But beyond tracing population history, studying present-day human DNA has profound implications for understanding human diseases, especially for developing diagnostics and treatments. India, in particular, offers a unique opportunity for such research due to its numerous endogamous populations: groups that have practiced marriage within their own communities for centuries. Several tribal groups have also remained genetically isolated for extended periods. Studying these populations can yield insights into both disease-causing and protective genetic traits. For example, if a tribal group thrives at high altitudes, their DNA may contain beneficial markers that could help assess high-altitude readiness. Similarly, identifying mutations that predispose a specific population to a disease can lead to targeted drug development. Hence, sequencing the DNA of individuals from diverse, unrelated,

and isolated populations is critical, and India is uniquely positioned for this research. Considerable effort! Recognising this, the Government of India launched the GenomeIndia National Consortium in 2017 to sequence the DNA of nearly 10,000 unrelated individuals. Some findings were reported this week in a peer-reviewed journal. Researchers selected individuals from 83 population groups—including 30 isolated tribal groups—and collected blood samples from 75 to 160 individuals per group. They extracted DNA and sequenced it using next-generation technologies. The data underwent quality control, was aggregated across institutions, and used to identify genetic variants: parts of the DNA that differ from the reference genome. The study identified over 180 million genetic variants, many of which are not found in existing global databases and which are largely based on individuals of Caucasian descent. This isn't the first study of genetic diversity in India. Its detailed results are also still pending: a summary of the experimental design and results were published as a 'Comment' in Nature Genetics on April 8; a full scientific paper detailing the research results is still awaited. This said, the GenomeIndia consortium represents the largest and most comprehensive genomics effort in the country. It marks an important milestone, enabling disease research within populations where both harmful and protective mutations may be more prevalent than elsewhere. Then again, this is also only the beginning. The true value will emerge when other researchers use the consortium's data to identify disease-causing variants, develop diagnostic tools, test drugs, and build AI models to better understand human biology. For this to happen, the results must be validated by other researchers and the data shared openly in line with international genomic data-sharing standards, while ensuring the privacy of individuals and populations. Encouragingly, the Department of Biotechnology has invited proposals to fund research based on the data generated by the consortium. However, while it's essential to protect individual and population identities, and their geographic details, the decision to withhold FASTQ files (the raw sequencing data) is a step backward. Science advances through open data sharing. Indian researchers, including those in the GenomeIndia project, have greatly benefited from open-access datasets from large international initiatives and individual laboratories, especially in the U.S. and Europe. The U.K. Biobank, for instance, has set a benchmark for open data-sharing by providing access to health and whole-genome data from half a million individuals. The GenomeIndia Consortium should follow this example. Making the raw data publicly available will empower scientists globally and accelerate the next wave of discoveries.

Trade wars resulting from erosion of trust in international systems: IMF



Trade tensions are, to a large extent, the result of an erosion of trust in the international system and between countries as global integration—while lifting vast numbers out of poverty—has not benefited everyone equally, with many communities “hollowed out” by jobs moving overseas, said Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The impact of trade wars has begun to show up already in Indian sectors, which are facing steep duties on inputs such as steel and aluminium, as well as weak and below-expectation reported by IT earnings due to declining discretionary spending in the US. Several top software firms have even expressed uncertainty about wage hikes in FY26 amid tariff-related disruptions.

Moreover, Indian goods exports in FY25 barely grew as shipments of labour intensive sectors such as gems and jewellery and marine exports remained under stress registering a degrowth. Trade wars have also triggered concerns about dumping of Chinese goods with US tariffs on China reaching as high as 245 per cent. “Trade distortions—tariff and non-tariff barriers—have fed negative perceptions of a multilateral system seen to have failed to deliver a level playing field. While the first two decades of this century saw significant convergence towards a low and stable US effective tariff rate, progress has stalled in the past decade. Taking into account all the recent tariff increases, pauses, escalations, and exemptions, it is clear that the US effective tariff rate has jumped to levels not seen in generations,” she said in a statement. “Other countries have responded. And then there are the spillovers—as the giants face off, smaller countries are caught in the crosscurrents. China, the EU, and the United States—despite having relatively low import-to-GDP ratios—are the world’s three largest im-

porters. Size matters—their actions impact the rest of the world,” Georgieva said.

Georgieva said the IMF has been advising China on policies to boost chronically low private consumption. These include scaling back industrial policies and widespread state involvement in industry, as well as strengthening social safety nets to reduce the need for precautionary savings. “Such actions, if decisive enough, would lift confidence and domestic demand, help repair damaged trade relations, and set the stage for the next phase of China’s growth story. Among other things, that story needs to include a stronger embrace of the natural progression from manufacturing to services as economies mature,” she said. In the US, Georgieva said the key macroeconomic policy challenge is to put federal government debt on a declining path—requiring significant reductions to the budget deficit. This, she noted, would necessitate elements of spending reform. Reducing federal debt would both strengthen economic resilience and help lower the current account deficit.

Speaking on the EU, she said assertive fiscal expansion by Germany to support defence and infrastructure spending will lift domestic demand. EU-wide efforts to improve competitiveness—through deepening the single market—would also help. “Europe needs a banking union, a capital markets union, and fewer restrictions on internal trade in services,” she said. “Ultimately, trade is like water: when countries put up obstacles in the form of tariff and non-tariff barriers, the flow diverts. Some sectors in some countries may be flooded by cheap imports; others may see shortages. Trade continues, but disruptions incur costs,” Georgieva said. That is an increasing worry for New Delhi. Georgieva further said that countries must redouble efforts to put “their own houses in order” as, in a world of heightened uncertainty and frequent shocks, there is no time to delay reforms aimed at enhancing economic and financial stability and improving growth potential. “Economies are confronting these new challenges from a weaker starting point, with public debt levels far higher than just a few years ago. Most countries must take resolute fiscal action to rebuild policy space, setting out gradual adjustment paths that respect fiscal frameworks. Some countries, however, may face shocks necessitating renewed fiscal support; if such support is required, it should be targeted and temporary,” she said.

Tariffs weigh on Indian IT firms’ earnings; Jerome Powell flags US spending dip

Top Indian IT software exporters to the US are reporting weaker-than-expected earnings and have expressed uncertainty over wage increases, as tariffs begin to weigh even on the services sector amid concerns about declining discretionary spending in the US. This comes as Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell also said that recent changes in US trade policy are likely to cause “at least a temporary” rise in inflation and “delays in investment decisions”.

India’s second-largest IT company, Infosys, on Thursday reported an 11.7 per cent decline in consolidated net profit for the March quarter, citing weak macroeconomic conditions triggered by the US-led global tariff war. TCS, which posted a 1.6 per cent drop in consolidated net profit last week, said it was witnessing delays in decision-making and project initiations related to discretionary investments, attributing the trend to tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump. IT major Wipro also stated that it would decide on wage hikes for FY26 “closer to the date”, as CEO Srinivas Pallia warned that uncertainties had “dramatically increased”, with tariffs on China potentially impacting the company’s European clients in the future. Although Wipro reported a 6.4 per cent sequential rise in net profit, its shares fell over 4 per cent on Thursday after brokerages downgraded the firm over weaker-than-expected performance.

Market concerns over IT earnings have intensified after Powell on Thursday expressed concern over the impact of trade policy on US economic growth. Following his warning that tariffs could cause “at least a temporary rise in inflation” and noting that discretionary spending in the US is “already declining”, Trump posted on social media that “Powell’s termination cannot come fast enough”. Notably, the World Trade Organization (WTO) on Wednesday warned that US tariffs could impact global trade growth. It revised down its forecast for global commercial services trade growth to 4 per cent in 2025 and 4.1 per cent in 2026—significantly below baseline projections of 5.1 per cent and 4.8 per cent, respectively.

Powell’s warning: Implications for Indian services Raising concerns about a potential dip in demand from the US, Powell on Wednesday said that surveys of households and businesses indicate a “sharp decline in sentiment and elevated uncertainty” about the economic outlook, largely stemming from trade policy concerns. “External forecasts for the full year are coming down and mostly point to continued slowing—though still positive—growth. We are closely monitoring incoming data as households and businesses continue to digest these developments,” Powell said in his speech.

In a conversation with former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan at the Economic Club of Chicago, Powell said: “...the [Trump] administration is implementing significant policy changes—particularly in trade. The effects of that are likely to move us away from our goals. Unemployment is likely to rise as the economy slows, and inflation is likely to increase as tariffs work their way through, with some of those costs passed on to the public.” Responding to Rajan’s question on how the Fed plans to address long-term uncertainty, Powell said: “These are very fundamental policy changes. There’s no real experience—Smoot-Hawley tariffs were not this large, and they happened 95 years ago. There isn’t a modern example to guide us, and businesses and households are reporting extremely high uncertainty in surveys.”

“There’s a lot of research—including from the Fed—showing that [tariffs] lead businesses and households to delay decisions. Tariffs are likely to weigh on investment in general. If the United States becomes a jurisdiction where structural risks are persistently higher, it would make us less attractive for investment,” Powell said. WTO warns of broader tariff impact India was the world’s eighth-largest exporter of commercial services in 2024, with exports worth \$374 billion, accounting for a 4.3 per cent share of global services exports. India also posted annual growth of 11 per cent in services exports last year and for companies like TCS and Wipro, which rely heavily on global revenues, the WTO’s downgraded forecast is a cause for concern.

The WTO said the ongoing trade war is expected to slow global services growth, as tariff-induced declines in

goods trade reduce demand for related services such as transport and logistics. Broader uncertainty is also expected to suppress discretionary spending on travel and reduce demand for investment-related services, the apex trade body said. “Though not directly subject to tariffs, services trade is also expected to be adversely affected. Tariff-induced declines in goods trade weaken demand for associated services such as transport and logistics, while broader uncertainty dampens discretionary spending on travel and slows investment-related services,” the WTO said. “Travel could be the first sector to be affected by economic uncertainty. Consumers may forgo trips and cancel room reservations abroad if accommodation or flight prices rise, as this is discretionary spending,” WTO said.



India is a key resource talent hub for AI professionals: Jayant Chaudhary

New Delhi: India is a key resource talent hub for AI professionals, which is a clear indicator of the efforts of the government and the industry to nurture an environment for adoption of AI, Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (Independent Charge), Jayant Chaudhary, has said.

Speaking at Africa’s largest tech and startup show, ‘GITEX Africa 2025’, the minister said that India’s Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) has driven transformative changes across areas, especially through developments of digital identity (Aadhaar), digital payments (UPI), e-commerce (ONDC), and healthcare. “And we are increasingly integrating advanced technologies – AI, cybersecurity, fintech, and digital infrastructure – into our skilling ecosystem. Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH), a digital public infrastructure for the skilling ecosystem has onboarded more than one crore users in over one and a half years. These are areas, rich with potential, for collaboration with our African partners and we can collectively grow our economies through sustained partnerships,” the minister told the gathering at the event in Morocco’s capital, Marrakesh.

The three-day event provided platform for policy leaders, changemakers and visionaries to collectively discuss and deliberate on the opportunities to collaborate and further the imperative of inclusive and equitable growth of the global economy. “India, where the pace of digitalisation is higher relative to some other developing economies, with established open-source Digital Public Infrastructure systems, has the potential to catalyse speed of digitalisation in other developing countries seeking to develop such systems through collaboration and knowledge sharing,” Chaudhary added.

On the sidelines of the summit, the minister held productive bilateral meetings. In his discussions, Chaudhary touched upon broadly on exploring synergies in AI, research and capacity; discussed insights on how DPI can be a catalyst for inclusion, innovation and equitable growth; and shared India’s experience in building scalable, inclusive technology for public good, according to the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

Gensol’s share price continues to plummet after SEBI action; BluSmart suspends operations



Crisis-ridden EPC company Gensol Engineering’s share price continued to plummet on Thursday, ending the day’s trade 4.97 per cent lower at Rs 117.50 apiece. The company’s shares have been placed under Enhanced Surveillance Mechanism (ESM) Stage 1 by stock exchanges. This entails strict enforcement of a 5 per cent price band with trade-for-trade settlement. This means that all trades must be settled on the same day. At the time of writing, Gensol’s market cap stood at Rs 446.3 crore, as its share price touched a 52-week low. According to market regulator SEBI, brothers Anmol and Puneet Singh Jaggi, promoters of Gensol Engineering and EV cab service BluSmart, diverted Rs 262 crore—loaned by government-owned lending agencies to procure 1,700 electric cars—towards personal indulgences and related-party entities.

Gensol Engineering’s share price was down 5 per cent on Thursday to Rs 116.54 apiece on the NSE. In the past five days, the company’s stock lost 16.55 per cent value. According to exchange data, Gensol’s share price declined 50.76 per cent in the past month, 85.98 per cent in the past six months, and 87.09 per cent in the past year. Gensol is a company in the renewables sector which was founded in 2007. It was listed on the stock exchanges in 2019. It started as an operator in the engineering, procurement, and construction space with a focus on solar energy projects. Along with the Gensol stock price crash, BluSmart also suspended operations on Thursday amid the brewing crisis, with users failing to book cabs on BluSmart app. The Delhi airport also issued an advisory, cautioning flyers that BluSmart has temporarily suspended operations, and asking them to avail other cab and transportation services to and from the airport. Operational in Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, the EV cab service was particularly popular for airport drop-offs and pick-ups. SEBI has barred the Jaggi brothers from the securities market over alleged financial mismanagement and misuse of funds. According to the regulator, the brothers diverted substantial loan amounts through complex transactions for personal use, including the acquisition of luxury real estate, and continuously misled investors.

SEBI has barred the two from the securities market for financial mismanagement and misuse of funds. The investigation into the brothers’ vast network of transactions routed through related-party entities and round-tripping began following a complaint of stock manipulation and fund diversion in June 2024. Following the regulator’s action, the company announced the resignation of an independent director—Arun Menon—and its promoters. In an email addressed to Anmol Singh Jaggi, Menon stated that he had offered to resign earlier but was asked to stay on until the IPO of Matrix Gas and Renewables, another unit of the

Gensol group. Menon said he had offered to resign since he felt he was adding “limited value to the company” after multiple requests for a face-to-face meeting with the CFO were not heeded. These meetings were sought for clarity on Gensol’s debt position, Menon said, adding that he had also offered to assist the company with deleveraging through a debt restructuring plan. “There was growing concern on the leveraging of GEL (Gensol Engineering) balance sheet to fund the capex of other business’s; and the sustainability of servicing such high debt costs by GEL,” Menon said in the email, attached in the exchange filing. He also cited the terms of his current employment, where the parent company is a private equity firm, stating that it does not allow him to hold an independent director’s role, as a reason for his decision to quit the board immediately. Gensol clarified that there is “no other undisclosed price-sensitive information apart from that flagged by SEBI known to the Company that could explain the recent movement in the Company’s share price.” The company denied media reports that it was in discussions for an undisclosed “merger, acquisition, asset sale or any other significant transaction.” In what is reportedly one of the biggest reported frauds at a startup in India, SEBI’s findings show that Rs 262 crore out of a loan secured from government agencies for purchasing 1,700 EVs, the brothers purchased a luxury apartment in The Camelias, a high-end residential society operated by the DLF Group in Gurugram, Haryana. A sum of Rs 40 crore was routed to Gensol Group’s related party entity Wellray Solar Solutions via GoAuto, according to the SEBI order.

A sum of Rs 39 crore was transferred to the Jaggi brothers through another series of complex transactions. Anmol Jaggi directed Rs 50 lakh from the Rs 26 crore received via Wellray into former BharatPe founder Ashneer Grover’s latest venture Third Unicorn. Anmol Jaggi also reportedly spent money on luxuries such as a golf set from TaylorMade, apart from remitting money to his wife and mother. Amid these and other discrepancies found by SEBI, the markets regulator ordered the Jaggi brothers to refrain from participating in the securities market. Anmol and Puneet Jaggi are no longer participating in the management of Gensol in compliance with SEBI’s interim order, the company said in an exchange filing. Investor Vijay Kedia took to social media platform X to state that “there are many Gensols still hiding in the cupboard.” In his social media post, Kedia pointed out 10 red flags that scream before a scam. Kedia cautioned against the overuse of flashy buzzwords such as “AI-powered” and “next-gen” while also pointing out that they often tend to diversify into “unrelated businesses just to ride trending narratives.” He cautioned against promoters exhibiting a lifestyle that does not align with their company’s performance. Another red flag raised by Kedia was that of excessive related-party transactions carried out by listed companies.

What’s the likely plan for BluSmart?

Gensol Engineering’s board is considering plans to fold up BluSmart and revert to being a fleet operator for US-based cab aggregator Uber in India, the Economic Times had reported, citing people familiar with the matter. Gensol’s shareholders have reportedly approved the transition plan which is expected to start with 700-800 cabs. At its peak, BluSmart clocked 25,000-30,000 rides per day. This figure declined to half in recent weeks, according to the report.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on India’s growth path amid volatility: We will navigate global disruptions with policy agility, long-term vision

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday said that while trade recalibration poses challenges and creates uncertainties, India will navigate these global disruptions with policy agility and a long-term vision. Speaking at the 150th year anniversary celebrations of the BSE, Sitharaman emphasised that the most effective path in building economic resilience is through fostering domestic efficiencies and competitiveness. “The intensification of tariff wars and the rise of protectionist policies have the potential to disrupt global supply chains, increase production costs and create uncertainty in investment decisions across borders as well. India is confident that it will navigate these global disruptions with policy agility and long-term vision,” Sitharaman said.

On April 2, US President Donald Trump announced reciprocal tariffs on major economies, including India. The tax announcement had a ripple effect on financial markets across the globe, including Indian markets. However, after Trump gave a 90-day relief, domestic markets recovered all the losses incurred immediately after the tariff announcement. Sitharaman said that despite the recent global uncertainties, India’s financial markets have shown remarkable resilience. Testament to this is that in the second half of March 2025, foreign portfolio investors made substantial investments in India’s financial sector, channeling over Rs 17,500 crore into financial stocks, she said. At the same time, DILs, the domestic institutional investors, in the last financial year, recorded total inflows of Rs 6.1 lakh crore, far outpacing the Rs 1.3 lakh crore net outflows from FDIIs. This transition of DILs from a supporter to a dominant force underlines the growing maturity and depth of India’s capital market,” she said. Sitharaman said that the world currently is full of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and



ambiguity (VUCA) which is shifting every day.

“One thing stands firm — the strength of the Indian economic fundamentals and the macroeconomic prudence with which the economy is being managed,” she said. India’s focus remains firmly on building a robust domestic foundation and the foundation is laid and strengthened through infrastructure development, inclusive growth and deeper regional cooperation. “These are not just buffers to external shocks, but accelerators for our long-term growth aspirations,” she said. Driven by a strong regulatory architecture and by enabling reforms such as dematerialisation, trading plus one (T+1) trading settlement cycle, direct market access and mutual fund penetration, the country has built one of the most robust market infrastructures in the world, the minister stated. In FY2025, market capitalisation of Indian stock markets crossed \$5 trillion market for the first time, making it the fifth largest capital market globally. In the past five years, domestic indices have delivered 131 per cent dollar-adjusted return, which is the highest among global peers.

Fitch cuts India growth estimates by 10 bps to 6.4% amid escalations in global trade war

Fitch Ratings cut India’s GDP growth estimate by 10 basis points to 6.4% for the current fiscal, but retained the projections for the next financial year, on concerns over a ‘severe’ escalation in global trade war. “It is hard to predict U.S. trade policy with any confidence. Massive policy uncertainty is hurting business investment prospects, equity price falls are reducing household wealth, and U.S. exporters will be hit by retaliation,” Fitch said in its special update to quarterly Global Economic Outlook (GEO).

Fitch also cut the world growth projections in 2025 by 0.4 percentage points and China and U.S. growth by 0.5 percentage points from its March GEO. “Fitch Ratings’ forecasts for world growth have been sharply lowered in response to the recent severe escalation in the global trade war. World growth is projected to fall below 2% this year; excluding the pandemic, this would be the weakest global growth rate since 2009,” it said. With regard to India, Fitch cut GDP growth estimates for both the 2024-25 fiscal and

the current 2025-26 fiscal by 10 basis points to 6.2% and 6.4%, respectively. For the 2026-27 fiscal year, growth has been retained at 6.3%. The GDP growth rate of the United States is expected to remain positive at 1.2% for 2025. China’s growth is expected to fall below 4% both this year and next, while growth in the eurozone will remain stuck well below 1%, as per Fitch projections. It said the U.S. ‘Liberation Day’ tariff hikes were far worse than expected. While subsequently paused and replaced with a near-universal 10% rate for 90 days, the shock prompted several rounds of retaliatory moves between China and the U.S., taking bilateral tariff rates over 100%. The U.S. average effective tariff rate (ETR) has risen to 23%, the highest since 1909 and well above the 18% Fitch assumed in March. Fitch now assumes the U.S. ETR on China will remain above 100% for some time before falling back to 60% in 2026. “For now, we stick with our March assumption of a 15% U.S. ETR on other trade partners,” Fitch added.

Who said what after Manchester United’s incredible comeback against Lyon in Europa League: ‘If you looked madness up in dictionary..’



GNS News Agency, April 22

On a night of high drama at Old Trafford, Manchester United put their domestic problems to one side by sealing a spectacular comeback to beat Lyon 5-4 and advance to the semifinals of the Europa League. United first blew a two-goal lead and then saw Lyon take a 4-2 lead in extra time. Ruben Amorim’s side then staged a sensational late comeback against Lyon’s 10 men to produce one of their most memorable victories in their famous stadium, scoring three goals in seven minutes, with Harry Maguire sealing the win. “We still have time to make something special of this season, so we have to think like that and be positive. If you

see the goals from Kobbie and Harry Maguire, the sound of the stadium was the best sound I ever (heard). You want to keep that. People want to keep a lot of things, shirts, I just want to keep that sound, it’s the best sound in the world.”

“Honestly, I don’t understand what’s happened. It was crazy! The fans are always here to support us, so I want to say thank you to the fans. Of course, our target is to win the trophy. I am sure we can do it. We will give everything to do it and this game shows everything until the last minute.” “If you looked madness up in the dictionary you would probably describe it as that game. A crazy game and unbelievable to be on the right side of the result, and yet we’ve created great memories for a lot of our fans. We’ve made them happy and given them lots to talk about, good and bad.” “It’s hard to understand what happened. We have done magnificent things; we led 4-2 with one fewer player on the pitch. But we celebrated a lot at 4-2 when the match was not over. We thought we had won when we should have continued to think about our game management. We lacked experience at that moment.” “I’ve never seen anything like that as a spectator. It was an amazing thing. We saw so many fans leaving when it was 4-2 and you thought that was over. I said on commentary it would take more than a miracle to get back into it and now I’m actually a believer because that was outrageous.”

‘I had the intention’: Lionel Messi opens up on Barcelona ‘return’ wish

GNS News Agency, April 22

Lionel Messi, despite his current playground being the MLS and Inter Miami, will forever be remembered as an FC Barcelona icon and legend. The Argentine parted ways with the Spanish club back in 2021, in a rather emotional affair for the player, his fans and the club. Messi the went on to play for Paris Saint-Germain in France for two seasons, winning multiple Ligue 1 titles and other domestic accolades.

After a two-year stint with the French giants, the Argentine made the surprising decision to join MLS side and David Beckham owned club Inter Miami. Wearing his iconic No 10, the forward has been an elemental part of their success in recent seasons. Despite Messi’s current situation at Miami and his passion on display week in, week out, the veteran revealed that he thought about returning to Spain in 2023, after his contract with the Parisiens ran out. “I had the intention of returning to Barcelona and being able to go back to a place I always wanted to be, but it wasn’t possible again”, Lionel Messi said in an interview with Simplemente Fútbol. Although Messi refrained from going into the details,



a prominent reason could have been Barcelona’s difficult financial situation, which was also a major reason for his departure in the first place. Adding to the same, Messi said, “After that, it (deciding on a new club) became a family decision. The fact that we won the World Cup also had a big impact. I was clear that I didn’t want to be at another team in Europe, I didn’t want to go to any of them”. Messi then went on to sign for Miami in July 2023, and has till date, won the Leagues Cup and the Supporters’ Shield.

Reverse-swing has made a comeback, but it needs supreme skill to execute pinpoint yorkers



GNS News Agency, April 22

Shimron Hetmyer did not require a clairvoyant’s intuition to forecast the path of Mitchell Starc’s first ball at him. It would, inevitably, be a yorker tailing into his shoes. The Guyanese batsman coiled to get under the ball so that the missile did not dismember his stumps. Like a wild hairpin bend, it crawled towards his toes, skewing violently from the off-stump line towards the direction of the leg-stick. Hetmyer groped hastily and hopelessly, as the ball grazed off the inside edge to the fence. Last-over exchanges are when the audience gasps at the incredulity of a stroke, rather than recreate the swerving path of a toe-crusher and wonder whether it was for real or an optical illusion. But Starc’s spell of devastating reverse-swing sorcery would embellish the IPL folklore. Twelve balls of fire and heat — eight of those in the blockhole — he produced a symphony of reverse swing, yorkers and death-over bowling. More precisely, on how to combine these facets to produce a captivating and match-defining performance.

Not only Starc, pace-ally Mohit Sharma made the ball reverse into right-handed batsmen in the Powerplay. As did Kolkata Knight Riders’ Anrich Nortje before the dew set in at Mullanpur against Punjab Kings on Tuesday, and Sunrisers Hyderabad’s Eshan Malinga, against Punjab Kings last week. Mohit attributed the sudden resurrection of reverse-swing and the tool it devastatingly aids, the yorker, to re-legalisation of the use of saliva on the ball, banned during the pandemic.

“[It helps] 100 percent. In 70 percent of the games, the ball is tailing in and it’s only because saliva is heavy, and our sweat is not so heavy,” he said. The effects of saliva on leather is well documented. When one side of the ball is polished with saliva, and as the other gets progressively rougher, it gets heavier, leading to weight imbalance. The ball, consequently, starts swinging to the heavier, shinier side, as opposed to the rougher part with conventional swing. “If the ball is heavier on one side, it will tail in,” Mohit explained. “I don’t use it (saliva). I think it’s a myth. Some people swear by it. I don’t know what the difference is with sweat and saliva. I don’t reckon it makes a difference. It can make a difference on the red ball. I don’t reckon it makes a difference on the white ball,” he detailed. It could be a classic case of what works for one doesn’t for the other. And vice versa. But essentially, even with the saliva advantage, not every one could coax reverse-swing, and fewer still possess the unflinching energy and precision to nail the yorker repeatedly. It’s both unrepeatable and unsustainable for a longer period, requiring incredible shoulder strength, a durable back and powerful knees. It requires scientific precision — as an inch fuller it becomes a full toss, and an inch shorter it turns to be a hit-me length ball — and almost narcissistic self-belief.

Norwich City coaches bring global expertise to U-17 Football Championship in Goa

Hyderabad: In a first in Indian football development, coaches of the English-based football team Norwich City FC brought their international expertise to the Dream Sports Championship Football 2025As part of the ‘Dream Again’ initiative by Dream Sports Foundation, the week-long U-17 football tournament also featured four specialised workshops covering various aspects of football development. The well-rounded program featured sessions on leadership in coaching, physical and medical training and coach & support staff development led by Norwich City’s Head Coaches and Physiotherapists.

Why was Ryan Rickelton given not out despite being caught?



GNS News Agency, April 22

In the 7th over of Mumbai chase, a bizarre development took place. Ryan Rickelton had slapped a short ball from the legspinner Zeeshan Ansari to covers where Pat Cummins caught it. Rickelton had walked out of boundary and Suryakumar had reached the middle when the first signs of something odd appeared when the fourth umpire rushed to stop Rickelton just before the stairs that lead to the dressing room. It was the law 27.3.1 that intervened. The position of SRH’s wicketkeeper Heinrich Klassen’s gloves was what the third umpire was focusing on. That law states that “The wicket-keeper shall remain wholly behind the wicket at the

striker’s end from the moment the ball comes into play until a ball delivered by the bowler- touches the bat or person of the striker, or passes the wicket at the striker’s end, or the striker attempts a run.” Law 27.3.2 adds: “In the event of the wicket-keeper contravening this Law, the striker’s end umpire shall call and signal No ball as soon as applicable after the delivery of the ball.

And Klassen’s gloves hands had encroached that laxman rekha just before Rickelton made contact with the ball. Once the television replays confirmed it, the decision was reversed and Rickelton was called back. He fell next over but slammed couple of fours before that. Earlier, SRH found late momentum with the bat to fight their way through and post 162 for 5 against Mumbai Indians on a tricky pitch in their Indian Premier League match. With the surface at the Wankhede Stadium providing grip and turn for the spinners and slower deliveries giving dividends to the pace bowlers, Sunrisers Hyderabad batters struggled to adapt to the wicket for most part of the innings. But a big finish — 57 runs coming off the last five overs — gave SRH some much-needed impetus towards the end. MI bowlers were spot-on in formulating their plans and near-perfect in their execution with Jasprit Bumrah delivering a measly 4-0-21-1, Trent Boult nailing his yorkers again to return 4-0-29-1 and Will Jacks producing an impressive 3-0-14-2.

Mumbai read the conditions exceptionally well: Vettori

GNS News Agency, April 22

Hyderabad: Sunrisers Hyderabad head coach Daniel Vettori acknowledged that Mumbai read the conditions exceptionally well, and after probably the first few overs they really relied on that slow ball. “And, I think the slow ball is obviously effective, because of their execution, and there are some supreme exponents of it in Jasprit Bumrah and Trent Boult and even Hardik Pandya. So, I think the way that they bowled, particularly through those middle stages, really stifled us,” Vettori said in the post-match briefing after Mumbai won the IPL game in Mumbai on Thursday night.

“I think we finished pretty well, but just that middle stage, the way that they bowled, didn’t allow us to score. I thought we tried to counter it pretty well,” he said. “But I also think you look at the way that Boult bowled to that small boundary, he defended it with superb yorkers, so I think they’re really clever in their planning, and we just weren’t able to get away the bad balls that they did bowl, which were few and far between,” Vettori said.

“Well I think, I mean, Jacks’ spell was fantastic, particularly he came up against our three left-handers who were all very good players of spin, but he was able to extract something out of the wicket, and all those batsmen said it was hard to get down to him, and when he did drop short it



sort of sat in the wicket and made it difficult to hit. So, I think he found a good length,” Vettori explained. “In general, it was a difficult batting surface, and 180 maybe would have been a par score and something that could have challenged Mumbai, but I think the way that they navigated the middle period, particularly their six-hitting prowess, took the game away from us,” he said. “I feel like no one really has control over their surface. So there’s a little bit of luck involved in terms of coming up against wickets that don’t suit us. But I think there has to be more to it from our side that we have to adapt,” Vettori said.

Jacks pleased with his show against Sunrisers



GNS News Agency, April 22

Hyderabad: “I’m not expecting to take more wickets than some of the quality bowlers we have, but I’m pretty happy with it. I was getting straight down the ground, so I was always prepared to use the wide line. It doesn’t matter if I bowl the odd wide, I’m happy to try and restrict them in that way and just bowl good lengths,” says Will Jacks, player of the match for Mumbai Indians against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Mumbai on Thursday night..

“I knew there was going to be a bit of spin assistance, so as long as I wasn’t floating the ball up there and bowling aggressively and bowling hard spin using the wicket, that’s what I was trying to do. Looking to get them out. Obviously,

I’ll spin it to two left-handers, I’m always looking to take wickets and be aggressive and they’re always going to come after me as well, being the sixth bowler,” Jacks said. “I think you have to play smart, take the right options which benefit us, obviously batting second. I think when we bowled, we adapted quite quickly, which is what good teams do, so we’re pleased with how we did that today and we bowled accordingly. The only thing we probably could have done in the death there is probably used the wicket a little bit more in those last three overs, but overall we put in a good bowling performance and batting as well,” he explained. “We’ve obviously got such a star-studded line-up and they’re such amazing people to learn from and train with, so I was really happy to be playing for MI,” Jacks said. “

I would have loved to have contributed more in the first six games, the first five games I’ve played. The message has always been the same from the team,” he said. “I think if you bowl tentatively to people like that, it’s only going to end one way. That was the message, and I thought originally I was going to bowl to the power player,” Jacks said. “When they’re (SRH) on a good wicket, they’re very tricky to bowl to. We saw how good they were last week obviously. For me, it’s very easy to focus on the batters when you’re a bowler,” he said. “I made a good impact on the game today and hopefully when we play here against Chennai next, I’ll be able to do the same,” Jacks said.

Young Indian footballers shine in ISL 2024–25

Hyderabad: The Indian Super League (ISL) has consistently served as a launch pad for India’s most promising football talent — from Sandesh Jhingana, Jeje Lalpekhlua to Sahal Abdul Samad, the platform has given rise to household names who’ve gone on to inspire millions. The 2024–25 season was no different, with young stars lighting up the league and charting the future course of Indian football. While Mohun Bagan Super Giant created history by completing the League Double this season — lifting both the ISL Shield and the ISL Cup — it was FC Goa’s Brison Fernandes who stood out individually, bagging the Emerging Player of the Season award. From frontlines to backlines, here are some of the most impressive breakout performers this season:

At just 23, Brison scored seven goals and made two assists, becoming the first Indian to score back-to-back braces in ISL history. His exploits earned him a national team call-up, validating coach Manolo Marquez’s faith in him. He finished the season as the second-highest Indian scorer, only behind Sunil Chhetri. An Reliance Foundation Young Champs (RFYC) graduate, Nathan stood tall in a challenging season for Mumbai City FC. He contributed with three goals and an assist and his composure was unmatched for his age. The 23-year-old Ramhlunchunga, the Hyderabad FC No. 10, was an ever lively presence in their frontline, making five goal contributions (2G, 3A), in addition to his tenacious defensive outputs.

Kerala Blasters FC’s Korou Singh entered ISL 2024-25 after playing just 13 minutes last season. This year though, the dynamic 18-year-old made his opportunities count by recording two goals and four assists (joint second-most by an Indian after Jithin MS – 5) in 17



appearances. As NorthEast United FC made an inspiring run to the knockouts, one player quietly pulling the strings from the back was Buanthanglun Samte. Averaging 23 passes per game, he helped them make inroads offensively and was equally enterprising on the defensive front, winning 26 tackles, 68 duels, alongside 52 clearances and 58 recoveries too. Lalrinliana Hnamte, 21, earned his first call-up for the Blue Tigers in October after a season where he revamped his defensive outputs to become a mainstay in the Chennaiyin FC squad. Hnamte is the player with the second-most successful tackles (53), whereas he also chipped in with 26 interceptions, 30 clearances, and 105 victorious duels. In only his second ISL campaign, 20-year-old defender Tekcham Abhishek Singh impressed with returns that saw him become the player with the third-most interceptions (47). He formed impeccable partnership with Nikhil Prabhu, who has made the most interceptions in the league this Dippendu Biswas, 21.

Logout movie review: Babil Khan’s solo act asks relevant questions, but is lost in improbability



GNS News Agency, April 22

Logout is one more addition in the recent spate of shows and films unpacking the dangers of online excess: it certainly looks like that subject is here to stay, because the addiction-adrenaline-endorphin-glut doesn't show any signs of slowing down. Pratyush Dua, aka Pratman (Babil Khan) is an 'influencer' with a follower count inching close to the magic figure of ten million. His closest rival is a pretty girl whose chief constituency is 'single desperate ladke', whose one 'emo reel' threatens to beat Pratman, not just in terms of numbers, which is bad enough, but juicy deals, which is worse. In the middle of this race, Pratman's cell phone vanishes. Shock and consternation ensue. How can one live even one second without their most favourite appendage? Losing a limb may be a better option. A girl's disembodied voice comes through the speakers of his laptop excitedly: she is his biggest fan, and she knows where his phone is! Relief is short-lived. That was just a ruse to get him to relax his guard, and what follows in the rest of the film is a

cautionary tale which picks on all our collective anxieties and dread that our constant state of hyper-connection has unleashed upon the world. What would we do if our dark secrets, which no one has access to except for our phones, are about to be made public? This film asks the questions other films have posed: we're still reeling under the impact of the corrosive connection between carefully constructed socially-mediated images and self esteem in 'Adolescence'.

When Pratman says, in so many words, 'deal bhi jayegi aur relevance bhi', we hear the desperation of the numbers of people who've made their internet selves their alter egos, and have lost sight of the distinction between the two. Those who spend their waking moments 'live counting' the uptick in their 'followers', hog-tied to the buffoonery expected of them every time they are on screen: are those real lives anymore? The film's theme is timely even though we've seen it being explored in recent films like CTRL, and Babil Khan deftly shifts gears to keep our attention. It could well be called a solo act as he is practically the only one we see; the other characters, including his excitable manager (Gandharv Dewan) and the obsessive fan SK (Nimisha Nair, doing some believable voice work) are off screen almost all the way through the film, barring a few scenes. The only other one who is visible is Rasika Dugal in a cameo, as Pratman's sister, exasperated by his constant need for engagement-and-validation.

When the person behind the 'I'm your number one fan' (shades of Stephen King's 'Misery'?) is revealed, though, most of the tension is lost in improbability. The ideas here are relevant, and some of the hypocrisies the film points to (Pratman endorses a veggie brand, but, gasp, loves his chicken IRL) are on-point. The film makes smart use of its self-aware lead—with his first-hand experience of being at the receiving end of trolls—while expanding on its premise, but forgets that 'content creators' banging on about 'creation of content' risk sounding like pedants.

‘Theatres would be burned down if Bombay were released today; India is less tolerant’, says Mani Ratnam classic’s cinematographer Rajiv Menon

Cinematographer Rajiv Menon, who shot Mani Ratnam's Bombay, said that the film would struggle to find a release in theatres today. He said that India has become 'less tolerant' in the three decades since Bombay's release and subsequent emergence as a cult classic. In an interview, he also reflected on some of the supposed visual metaphors in the film, which was set against the backdrop of the 1993 Mumbai blasts and the riots they fuelled.

In an appearance on the O2 India YouTube channel, Rajiv said, "A film like Bombay cannot be made today. The situation in India is so volatile, people take up positions that are so strong, and religion has become such a big issue. I don't think you can make a film like Bombay, release it in the theatre, and not expect the theatre to be burned down. In these 25-30 years, India has become less tolerant."

Asked if Manisha Koirala's character shedding her burqa during the "Tu Hi Re" song was a metaphor for her leaving behind her faith, Rajiv clarified, "We didn't have props on that set, we just had the fort wall. The location was shown to me by one of my father's friends, who was a commodore in the Navy. Long after my father died, I insisted on having the anchor as a prop, and her outfit got stuck in it and got caught. It was just this idea that we had about not getting stuck with the same costume. There was this beautiful blue dress, and it would've been boring to have just one dress. We didn't have a dance master or anything." Director Mani Ratnam shed some light on his decision to use the most haunting melody that AR Rahman had composed for the scenes involving violence. He said, "For all the violent scenes, we had the score. It's agony. It is not the drums, it is not the violins that are being underlined, but it is the pain



behind the violence." Rajiv added, "The city was burning. Anybody else would've picked (a thrilling score), but what he picked was the emotion of the mother searching for her child. It was essentially a lullaby." In a past interview, also with O2 India, Rajiv had recalled Rahman being influenced by faith. The composer was born a Hindu, but converted to Islam some years into his career. Rajiv said, "There was a period they didn't know Hindi, so I would be the translator. I have seen this period of transition and gravitation towards religion, and belief. I have seen Rahman deal with immense pressure from within the family, especially with the marriages of his sisters. It was music that helped him brave the storm."

Babil Khan continues battling fake humility allegations, jokes about Akshay Kumar’s ‘sexist’ sanitary pad PSA in funny video.

Late actor Irrfan Khan's son, Babil Khan, was trolled for feminist comments that were perceived as performative online. In a video, Babil had declared that one doesn't 'get' girls, before proceeding to make the same comment himself. He also received backlash after profusely apologising to a woman for blocking her at a red carpet. Although Babil has reacted to this trolling previously, he participated in a satirical new video aligned to the release of his new film, Logout. The video, designed as a faux podcast hosted by writer Biswapati Sarkar and shared on the ZEE5 YouTube channel, saw Babil poke fun at his reputation.

The video begins with Babil sitting on the floor, because he doesn't want to be put on the same pedestal as Biswapati, whom he describes as his 'senior'. After accidentally bumping into a woman on set, he apologises profusely again, and says that she should be the one being interviewed instead of him. When Biswapati says that he's the guest and not her, Babil replies, "You think girls can't do podcasts? Girls can do anything; they can become pilots, they can become astronauts, they can become criminals."

When Babil finally agrees to sit down, he bids farewell to the woman by promising to write a letter to her. He is introduced by Biswapati as the son of Irrfan, who delivered many magnificent hits, 'but also Babil'. He says that he doesn't watch Indian movies because of how sexist they are, but reveals that he walks out after watching Akshay Kumar's PSA about sanitary pads. "How can someone buy cigarettes with money intended for sanitary pads? I get very offended and leave immediately," he says. Babil also pokes fun at his 'get girls' comment, and says that one cannot 'get' followers. "It's a partnership," he adds, before slipping and using the word 'get' incorrectly. He did the same thing in his original interview, before checking himself. Babil says that his favourite recent film was Mrs., also for its feminist themes. In an earlier social media post, Babil had addressed the trolling he faced in the aftermath of the two incidents. He wrote, "All I did was introduce myself, 'Hi, I'm Babil' and the way you looked at me changed. I know that look, I know that you think that I'm fake, he's pretentious, tryna act humble



when he's sure that I know of his name' or something else like, If I'm too sorry when I apologise."

Vincy Alosious upset over leak of her complaint about renowned actor’s ‘drug use’ on set; reveals another female actor left the film because of him: ‘My only demand is...’

Following the shocking revelations of the Justice Hema Committee report, which detailed the extreme discrimination and exploitation faced by women in the film industry, Malayalam cinema has once again found itself embroiled in controversy after State Award-winning actor Vincy Alosious accused a renowned male actor of arriving at work allegedly under the influence of drugs and behaving inappropriately towards her. Although Vincy refrained from publicly naming the actor or the film on whose set the incident occurred, she reportedly filed a complaint with the Kerala Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC), the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA) and the Kerala Film Producers Association (KFPA) eventually. However, details of her complaint soon surfaced in public, much to the shock of the complainant. Now, Vincy has stepped forward, expressing disappoint-

ment over the leak and explaining why she decided not to disclose particulars about the incident.

Maintaining that she had specifically requested in her complaint to ensure that the names of the accused actor or the film in question not be revealed to the public, Vincy stated that she took the decision to safeguard the project, which, she felt, should not bear the brunt of his alleged wrongdoings. "The film in question had an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC). When the incident happened on set, an ICC member contacted me and asked if I wanted to file a complaint. At that time, the film's shoot was nearing completion, so I chose not to lodge a complaint then. I anticipated potential complications for the film. That's why I made a personal decision to stay silent. However, I later decided not to work in films involving people who use drugs," she said,

Suhana Khan, who champions sustainable fashion, sports Rs 1.4 crore luxury watch at Kesari 2 premiere.



Suhana Khan, who made his debut with Zoya Akhtar's 2023 film The Archies, was recently spotted wearing a luxury watch worth Rs 1.4 crore at the premiere of Akshay Kumar-starrer Kesari 2. The film also stars Ananya Panday, who is friends with Suhana. This isn't the first time that Suhana was seen wearing this watch. She previously wore it at the premiere of Nadaaniyan, and there too she paired it with a black

dress. The watch, Reverso Tribute Nonantieme 'Enamel', doesn't list its price on its official website but other luxury online marketplaces list the price close to Rs 1.4 crore. Previously, Suhana spoke about sustainability in fashion as she spoke about Alia Bhatt wearing her wedding saree at the National Film Awards. "Recently, Alia Bhatt wore her wedding saree again to receive her national award. As somebody with a platform who has an influence, I thought that was incredible with a much-needed message. She did that and she took a stand towards sustainability while advocating for that. If Alia Bhatt can re-wear her wedding saree then we can also repeat an outfit for a party, we don't need to buy a new outfit," Shah Rukh Khan, who is the father of Suhana, has a huge collection of luxury watches. In 2024, he was photographed wearing a Audemars Piguet watch worth Rs 4.2 crore. He also owns a Patek Philippe, among many others, that costs over Rs 1.1 crore. He was also spotted wearing a Richard Mille Tourbillon worth Rs 6 crore. Suhana is yet to announce her next film after Archies. It has been rumoured that she will be starring alongside her father in Siddharth Anand's next film King, which also stars Abhishek Bachchan. King will be SRK's next big project after the humungous success of Jawan and Pathaan. Previously, Sujoy Ghosh was helming the film with Siddharth acting as the producer. At a recent event in Dubai, Shah Rukh spoke a bit about the film and said, "I'm not just shooting it here; I'm shooting it in Mumbai now when I go back in a couple of months. My director, who is Siddharth Anand, is very strict. He made Pathaan. So he is very strict. He said, 'Don't tell people about the film, what you are doing in it.' So I can't tell you, but I can assure you it will entertain you; you will have fun."

Manoj Kumar offered to re-edit Raj Kapoor’s 4-hour-long Mera Naam Joker: ‘Dad respected Raj saab, wanted to change the shape of the film’

Manoj Kumar, who was popularly known as Bharat Kumar given his long list of patriotic films, shared a close friendship with Raj Kapoor. In a recent interview, Manoj's son Kunal Goswami, recalled Raj's film Mera Naam Joker, which brought him at the verge of bankruptcy, and shared that Manoj had actually offered Raj that he would edit the second half of the film. Mera Naam Joker's runtime was of over 4 hours and the film was released with two intervals. Manoj played a small role in the film as well.

In a chat with Vicky Lalwani on his YouTube channel, Kunal said that the film was just as close to Manoj's heart as it was to Raj, and since it failed, it became a special film for everyone who was involved. Kunal was asked if Manoj directed a portion of the film as well and he said that while Raj directed the film from start to finish, there was a conversation between the two stars about the edit.

"There was some dialogue between Raj saab and Dad. Dad had told him that you allow me to edit the second half of the film so we can change the shape of the film. But I don't know whether that happened or didn't happen. Dad told me that this discussion happened, about editing, not direction," he said. He wondered out loud, "Why would he (Manoj) direct? Raj saab was a great director. Dad respected him, he was in awe of him all the time." In an earlier interview with Mumbai Mirror, Manoj revealed that he wrote a few lines for his character in Mera Naam Joker. "The first story in this three-story film was reworked by me, but I didn't



do it for fame, money. I paid for my travel expenses and hotel stay and refused to take credit as writer. Mera Naam Joker was my tribute to karmayogi Raj Kapoor. In Urdu 'awara' means 'khushboo' and even today, the 'fragrance' of Raj Kapoor fills our senses," he said. Mera Naam Joker was an expensive film that tanked at the box office and after this, RK Studios was on the verge of bankruptcy. Raj played the lead role in the film where he chronicled the life of an entertainer, who prioritises entertaining others over his own well-being. The film also starred Rishi Kapoor, Simi Garewal, Dharmendra, Raj Kapoor among others.

Ishaan Khatter, Bhumi Pednekar-starrer 'The Royals' to premiere on May 9

Mumbai: Actors Ishaan Khatter, Bhumi Pednekar, and Zeenat Aman's upcoming series The Royals will premiere on May 9 on the streaming giant Netflix. Directed by Priyanka Ghose and Nupur Asthana, written by Neha Veena Sharma, and produced under the banner of Pritish Nandy Communications, The Royals also stars Sakshi Tanwar, Nora Fatehi, Dino Morea, Milind Soman, Chunky Panday, Vihaan Samat, Kavya Trehan, Sumukhi Suresh, Udit Arora, Lisa Mishra, and Luke Kenny.

It will have Bhumi playing an ambitious and feisty CEO of Work Potato, Sophia Shekhar, and Aviraaj Singh, a dashing party prince played by Ishaan. Creators Rangita Pritish Nandy and Ishita Pritish Nandy shared, "With The Royals, we've mounted a romance that whips together the old-world charm of palaces and Indian royalty with glass-walled boardrooms and modern reality, where love is anything but easy." "The creators shared that the series is about two people from completely different worlds, each fighting their own battles, constantly at odds, yet irresistibly drawn to each other in ways they never expected.

"As they clash, challenge, storm, and rage against each other to prove their worth, they must also discover



whether their love can survive the chaos that's them. Expect drama, humor, and a whole lot of fire!" said Tanya Bami, Series Head, Netflix India. She added, "Rom-coms have a timeless charm; they make us laugh, believe in love, and embrace the beautiful chaos that comes with it. With The Royals, we've created a modern love story that has an equally modern-day conflict. While Bridgerton and Emily in Paris showed the world how compelling romantic sagas can be, The Royals brings that sizzle and swoon to a world that's unapologetically Indian."

Mathrubhumi reported. "Everyone else associated with that film behaved respectfully. When I filed the complaint, the director gave the actor a warning. Another female actor who worked with me in the film was more troubled by his behaviour than I was. She was so distressed that she left the set. I had confronted him verbally at the time, but new actors, especially women, may not always have the courage to speak up in such situations," Vincy added. She also attested to not knowing how the details of her complaint leaked to the media. "I have no intention of naming the individual or exposing him publicly. My only demand is to be able to work on film sets with dignity. Every workplace has a designated smoking area. But on film sets, there is no such system. Smoking in front of everyone is not appropriate. Such things can be done during breaks." "Thanking all those who supported her, she also expressed gratitude to various film bodies.