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Brace for extreme heat wave in Hyderabad and Telangana State

Hyderabad: Peak heat wave conditions are expected to prevail in most parts of Telangana State for the next 48 hours, as maximum temperatures in some parts are likely to cross 44 degree Celsius, while at other places they will range between 41 and 44 degree Celsius. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)-Hyderabad on Wednesday afternoon indicated that heat wave conditions will continue to prevail till this Saturday. An orange heat wave alert has been issued to all the districts of Telangana State till Saturday by the IMD-Hyderabad. A special alert has been issued by IMD-Hyderabad for Adilabad, KomaramBheem Asifabad, Mancherla, Nirmal, Nizamabad and Jagtial districts, where temperatures are expected to rise more than 44 degree Celsius.

Vance calls PM Modi, says US ready to provide 'all assistance' in joint fight against terrorism



GNS News Agency, April 23

New Delhi: US Vice-President, currently visiting India, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday afternoon to strongly condemn the Pahalgam terror attack and convey that the United States is ready to provide "all assistance" in the joint fight against terrorism. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Vance, who is visiting Agra on Wednesday, strongly condemned the dastardly terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir during his phone call with PM Modi. "He conveyed his deepest condolences on the loss of lives and reiterated that the United States stands with the people of India in this difficult hour. He expressed that the United States is ready to provide all assistance in the joint fight against terrorism. PM thanked Vice President Vance and President Trump for their messages of support and solidarity," the MEA stated. On Tuesday, Vance had taken to social media expressing his shock over the cowardly terror attack.

"Usha and I extend our condolences to the victims of the devastating terrorist attack in Pahalgam, India. Over the past few days, we have been overcome with the beauty of this country and its people. Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they mourn this horrific attack," he had posted on X. The US Vice President and his family had called on Prime Minister Modi in New Delhi Monday evening ahead of the Principals' and delegation-level bilateral meeting between the two leaders.

This is Vance's first visit to India and he and the accompanying US delegation visited Jaipur on Tuesday before arriving in Agra on Wednesday. Wrapping up his two-nation visit to Italy and India, he is scheduled to return to Washington on April 24. Earlier in the day, US President Donald Trump called Prime Minister Narendra Modi to extend US support and condolences over the terrorist strike that killed dozens of tourists. Prime Minister Narendra Modi told US President Donald Trump that he was determined to punish those responsible for the Pahalgam terrorist outrage foreshadowing retaliatory actions that have become the hallmark of his response to terrorism. "President Donald Trump called PM Narendra Modi and conveyed his deepest condolences at the loss of innocent lives in the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir. President Trump strongly condemned the terror attack and expressed full support to India to bring to justice the perpetrators of this heinous attack. India and the United States stand together in the fight against terror," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal posted on X. PM Modi told the American President that India is determined to bring the perpetrators and backers of this cowardly and heinous terrorist attack to justice.

Security forces release pictures, sketches of terrorists who carried out Pahalgam attack

GNS News Agency, April 23

Srinagar: Security forces on Wednesday released a photograph and sketches of terrorists suspected to be responsible for the Pahalgam attack in which 26 civilians were killed and several others were injured on Tuesday. Three terrorists suspected to have carried out the dastardly attack have been identified as Asif Fujji, Suleman Shah and Abu Talha. The attackers, believed to be members of The Resistance Front (TRF), an offshoot of the banned terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), opened fire on tourists at Baisaran meadow in Pahalgam area, 6 kms away from Pahalgam town. Security forces said at least five to six terrorists, wearing camouflage outfits and kurta pyjamas, came to Baisaran meadow from the dense pine forest surrounding the Baisaran meadow and opened fire with AK-47 rifles.



the terrorists wore body cams and helmet-mounted cameras to record the entire sequence of events. The attackers came with full preparation and had stocked up dry fruits and medicines. Sources said the terrorists also did a reconnaissance of Pahalgam with the help of some locals. Eyewitnesses said that while two terrorists spoke in Pashto (indicating Pakistani origin), two of them were locals (Adil and Asif). The local terrorists are from Bijhera and Tral. The precision and planning of the attack also points to the involvement of trained handlers and not local amateurs. According to Intelligence sources, digital footprints of the attackers were traced to safe houses in Muzaffarabad and Karachi, strengthening cross-border terror link evidence.

Congress to overhaul party structure in Telangana: TPCC chief



Hyderabad, GNS News Agency, April 23, Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) President and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud has announced that the party's organisation in Telangana will undergo a complete overhaul, with new compositions being established for all working groups from the village to the district levels. A meeting for Telangana State observers took place at Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday, attended by AICC Telangana in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, TPCC chief Mahesh Kumar Goud, and other party leaders. During a press briefing following the meeting, Mahesh Kumar Goud stated that Meenakshi Natarajan had provided guidance aimed at enhancing the party's development.

He mentioned that the assignment has been divided into three phases for the observers, and party leaders have been instructed to organise district-level meetings between April 25 and 30. It has been recommended that block and mandal presidents be included in the district meetings. Additionally, MPs, MLAs, MLCs, candidates who contested,

AICC and PCC office bearers, as well as senior leaders at the district level should also be invited. At the Task-2 stage, meetings should take place at the Assembly and block levels, followed by mandal meetings at Task-3, he stated. Mahesh Kumar Goud expressed that the Jai Bheem, Jai Babu, and Jai Samvidhan programs are achieving significant success in Telangana, with coordinators fulfilling their assigned responsibilities effectively.

Chandrababu condemns terror attack at Pahalgam, says nothing can be achieved by violence

GNS News Agency, April 23

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has condemned terrorism as a permanent stain on society, following the recent terrorist attack in Pahalgam. In a post on social media platform 'X', he highlighted that history demonstrates that no objectives can be achieved through violence and terror.

Offering his support to Prime Minister Modi and the Central government, CM Naidu called for strict action against those responsible for the heinous act. He extended his condolences to the families of Chandramouli and Madhusudhan, two Telugu individuals who tragically lost their lives in the attack. In his message, the Chief Minister expressed his deepest sympathies and prayed for strength for the bereaved families during this difficult time.

Hyderabad police heighten vigil post Pahalgam terror attack

Hyderabad: Following the Pahalgam terror attack, the Hyderabad Police has heightened its vigil at public places in the city. Intelligence officials said though there has been no specific input for the city, whenever such terror attacks occur in any part of the country, the local police, as a precaution, is put on alert. Apart from this, special police teams including the Task Force and Special Operations Team have increased their searches in all suspected crowded locations including various hotels and lodges and railway and bus stations. Local police also conducted vehicle checks and frisking at different places. The police were taking no chances given the general alert issued by central security agencies.

HM Shah, J&K CM Omar, LG Sinha pay tributes to people killed by terrorists



GNS News Agency, April 23

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha arrived at Srinagar Police Control Room on Wednesday to pay tributes to the tourists killed in the Pahalgam terror attack in which 16 people were killed. The bodies of the tourists killed in Tuesday's terror attack were brought to the Police Control Room in Srinagar on Wednesday morning. After paying tributes to the slain tourists, the Home Minister is scheduled to visit GMC Anantnag to meet those injured in the attack. He is also likely

to conduct an aerial survey of the attack site in Baisaran, Pahalgam, where 16 lives were tragically lost.

The bodies of tourists killed by terrorists in Pahalgam were brought to Srinagar on Wednesday as authorities are making arrangements for their return to their native places. The Civil Aviation Ministry has arranged four additional flights from Srinagar today, two each to Mumbai and Delhi. The Civil Aviation Ministry is also ensuring that the airfare does not skyrocket because of the rush as the Srinagar-Jammu Highway remained closed for the fourth day on Wednesday. A team of the NIA reached Srinagar on Wednesday. The team is going to Pahalgam to collect evidence on the terrorists who carried out the cowardly attack on unarmed civilians. A massive search operation was started in Pahalgam immediately after the terror attack to hunt down the terrorists. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that the terror attack has redoubled the resolve of the nation to eradicate terrorists completely from Indian soil. A total protest shutdown called by traders, industrialists, political, social and religious organisations paralysed normal life across the Valley today. Public transport, commercial establishments and educational institutions remained closed as very few vehicular movement was witnessed on roads and highways.

CM Revanth lauds seven candidates of 'Abhayahastam' for their selection in UPSC Civils

Hyderabad, April 23 Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has extended congratulations to seven candidates, who received financial assistance under the Rajiv Gandhi Civils Abhayahastam scheme, for clearing the civil services examination successfully. Taking to X on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said it is a matter of great pride that seven beneficiaries of the scheme were selected for the prestigious Civil Services in the very first year of its launch by the Telangana State. He also congratulated to all the successful candidates from Telangana and other parts of the country. "I wish all the candidates the very best and hope to see them play a pivotal role in the service of the nation and in nation-building," Revanth Reddy said. The candidates who received financial assistance under the scheme and cleared the examination are Ettaboyina Sai Shivani, Hari Prasad Potharaju, Preethi Raparathi, Nagaraja Naik Banothu,



Suryateja Thogaru, Anjaneyulu Gokamalla and Ramtenki Sudhaker

People eager to see, listen to KCR at Elkathurthy public meeting: KTR



GNS News Agency, April 23

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao said the party's upcoming silver jubilee public meeting in Elkathurthy near Warangal on April 27 would be the largest in the party's history. The people of Telangana are eager to see and hear from party chief K Chandrashekhara Rao, who raised Telangana to Himalayan heights. Chandrashekhara Rao will expose the failures of the Congress regime and the BJP's injustice to Telangana during the event, he said. Speaking after inspecting the arrangements at the venue on Wednesday, Rama Rao recalled that erstwhile

Warangal district had hosted many crucial BRS meetings in the past, and Elkathurthy would once again stand witness to a historic gathering. "We are making massive arrangements with care, keeping in mind the intense summer. We are ensuring no inconvenience to any attendee," he assured. He said Telangana Bhavan, the BRS headquarters, had now become a "Janata Garage" for people facing hardships under the Congress regime. "No matter what challenges people face, they continue to look towards the BRS and Telangana Bhavan for help," he remarked. Accordingly, the BRS activists and people from every nook and cranny of the State are preparing to gather in large numbers for the public meeting. The BRS working president said farmers had already started off in bullock carts from Suryapet to show their support. Similarly, he urged people to take any possible vehicle and attend the massive BRS meeting. The preparations include four designated parking zones, capacity for 40,000 vehicles in around 1,000 acres, 10 lakh water bottles, 10 lakh buttermilk packets, 2,000 volunteers, 100 medical teams, and 20 ambulances, among others. "We are even arranging 200 backup generators, as there's no reliability on electricity supply under the Congress regime," he said. Rama Rao stated that the meeting was a peaceful celebration of the party's 25-year journey, not a protest.

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi condemns Pahalgam terror attack

Hyderabad, April 23 All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi has strongly condemned the recent terrorist attack at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, where assailants reportedly targeted civilians after identifying their religion.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday, Owaisi said, "Terrorists killed innocent people after asking their religion in Pahalgam. We strongly condemn this incident. We hope that the government will teach a lesson to these terrorists. We are standing in solidarity with the affected families and pray for the swift recovery of the injured."

Owaisi further described the attack as a serious security lapse, stating, "This is also an intelligence failure, and the Narendra Modi government should re-evaluate its deterrence policy." He asserted that the Pahalgam attack was more reprehensible than the previous terror incidents in Uri and Pulwama, as the assailants, reportedly infiltrated from across the border, deliberately targeted unarmed civilians and tourists.

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Brazen impudence

Emboldened by Vice-President Jagdeep Thakur's tirade against the judiciary, two BJP MPs have brazenly targeted this vital pillar of the State whose role is to uphold the Constitution and ensure justice. Referring to the Supreme Court's order setting a deadline for granting assent to Bills, former UP Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma declared that "no one can challenge the President, as the President is supreme." Nishikant Dubey, who represents Jharkhand's Godda constituency in the Lok Sabha, disturbingly upped the ante — he said Parliament and state Assemblies should be shut if the Supreme Court took it upon itself to make laws. He didn't even spare Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, holding him responsible for "civil wars" in the country. Stopping to a new low in no time, Dubey accused former Chief Election Commissioner SY Quraishi of being a "Muslim commissioner".

Both BJP leaders have shown that they are more loyal than the king. And their 'loyalty' seems to have been rewarded. The saffron party has merely given them a rap on the knuckles, while distancing itself from their "personal comments". The BJP has also affirmed its respect for the judiciary as an inseparable part of democracy. But this assertion will remain unconvincing unless exemplary action is taken against the erring duo.

The BJP top brass has not exactly covered itself in glory when it let rabble-rousing MP Pragya Singh Thakur run riot. Pragya caused a furore in 2019 when she called Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse a 'deshbhakt'. All that the party did was to issue a showcause notice and remove her from a parliamentary panel. She apologised in the Lok Sabha twice, and the matter settled in due course, just as the BJP-led government had expected.

If flexi signs and hoardings are installed improperly, legal action will be taken.



Vikrant Kumar Singh, IPS

"April 23, Indian Chronicle, Bhadrachalam" "Anyone erecting arbitrary hoardings anywhere within the Bhadrachalam subdivision without permission will be subject to legal action. In recent times, some people have been putting Plexiglas on the side of the roads and between the dividers at will. Road accidents are likely to occur due to such actions. Flexis and hoardings can break in storms, causing accidents. Therefore, as per the permission of the Gram Panchayat authorities, it is informed that plexiglass and hoardings should be set up in the places allotted by them. Strict legal action will be taken against those who willfully set up flexis and hoardings against the rules and cause road accidents and other accidents. Strict action will be taken against those who put up banners for any birthday or other event without permission, causing accidents. Besides, action will also be taken against those who print those Plexiglas and hoardings.

On Thursday, there will be an assembly meeting in Disha. " District Collector Jitesh V. Patil "



"23 April, Indian Chronicle, Bhadrachalam" "The Disha Committee meeting will be held at the IDOC office on Thursday, the 24th, at 3 pm, District Collector Jitesh V. Patil said in a statement. The meeting, which will be chaired by Khammam MP Ramasahayam Raghurami Reddy, will be attended by Co-Chairman Mahabubabad MP Porika Balaram Nayak, MPs from the district, Legislative Council, MLAs, Disha Committee members, officers of all departments, etc. The Collector said. In this meeting, officers of all departments were instructed to attend the meeting with reports on the work being done in their departments.

MEIL receives purchase order for Rs.12,800 crore nuclear power project



Hyderabad, April 23 In a proud and defining moment, Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Ltd. (MEIL) has formally received the Purchase Order for a Rs.12,800 crore EPC contract from the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) to construct two 700 MWe nuclear reactors—Kaiga Units 5 & 6—in Karnataka. This is the biggest-ever order placed by NPCIL and marks MEIL's first major step into the nuclear energy sector—a field that will help shape India's energy future. The order was formally handed

over at NPCIL's Mumbai headquarters to Ch. P. Subbaiah, Director, MEIL (Projects), and his team. It was not just a professional achievement, but a moment filled with pride, recognition and a deep sense of responsibility.

For the first time, NPCIL used the Quality-cum-Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) method for awarding this project—striking a careful balance between quality and cost. Competing with industry giants like BHEL and L&T, MEIL was chosen for its strong technical approach and competitive pricing. This project goes beyond engineering. It's about contributing to a stronger, self-reliant India. For MEIL, it's a meaningful leap into a sector that plays a key role in powering the nation's growth story. The leadership of MEIL shared their heartfelt confidence in the team's ability to deliver the project on time—while maintaining the highest standards of safety, quality, and care.

With a solid track record of delivering large-scale projects across India and abroad, MEIL is stepping into this new responsibility with a strong sense of purpose and dedication. This step into nuclear energy adds a new chapter to MEIL's journey and strengthens its growing role in shaping India's infrastructure and energy future.

Popular cars with Built-in Air Purifiers for Daily Commuting



Hyderabad: Air pollution continues to be a significant public health challenge in India, impacting both rural and urban communities. A recent report by Climate Trends highlights widespread elevated levels of fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), one of the most harmful types of air pollution, across the country. This data highlights that air pollution is not limited to urban areas but is, instead, a nationwide concern. An average Indian spent 59 minutes to travel 20 kms one way to work last year in key metro cities, compared with 51 minutes to cover 17 kms before the pandemic, said the report, '2023 On Wheels: How India Moved In Sync', by office commute platform MoveInSync. In response to this growing challenge, automotive manufacturers have started integrating sophisticated air purification technologies into their latest models. Here are list of popular models with integrated air purifiers.

MG Hector – The MG Hector stands out with its striking design and cutting-edge features, led by an advanced in-built PM 2.5 Air Purifier and Ionizer system for a consistently fresh cabin environment. The SUV boasts a 35.56 cm (14-inch) HD Portrait infotainment screen, complemented by innovative features like a Digital Bluetooth key

with sharing function, wireless charging, and ventilated front seats. Safety and intelligence merge with Traffic Jam Assist among 11 ADAS features, while the i-SMART technology offers over 75 connected car features. Adding to its premium appeal, the Hector delivers exceptional value as the best-priced SUV with a panoramic sunroof in India.

Hyundai Venue – The Hyundai Venue, a compact SUV renowned for its feature-rich variants, offers three fuel-efficient engines and five gearbox options. It has the signature Hyundai quality, attractive design, and space to comfortably seat four occupants. It is equipped with HEPA filter technology; this urban SUV effectively cleanses the cabin air of harmful particles. The new Hyundai VENUE is designed to keep you connected to both your car, and the world around you. Between the Alexa and the 60+ feature-loaded BlueLink, you've got everything you need to make your drives exciting. Kia Sonet – The new Kia Sonet along with a bold design comes equipped with pure air purifiers with virus and bacteria protection that sharpens the sense of comfort. It has a digital cluster of 10.25 inches (26.03 cm) along with a 360 degree camera with blind view monitor in cluster. Additionally, the new sonet is built with 15 safety features including ADAS Level 1 with 10 autonomous features.

Nissan Magnite – The Nissan Magnite offers an elegant Design with two engine options: a 1.0-liter naturally aspirated petrol engine with 72 horsepower, which feels slow, and a more powerful and smooth 1.0-liter turbocharged petrol engine with 100 horsepower. Nissan offers the Magnite sub-compact SUV with an automatic PM 2.5 air purifier as a part of the optional Tech Pack which is reserved for the top-end XV Premium. Moreover, the new Nissan Magnite is packed with 55+ Active and Passive Safety Features (40+ Standard) to ensure the highest standards of safety for you and your loved ones.

PRAGATHI SCHOOL COMMEMORATES ITS GLORIOUS 30-YEAR JOURNEY WITH GRANDEUR AND DISTINCTION.



" P . S . A S H O K A N " I N D I A N C H R O N I C L E " M A N T H A N I " 24-4-2025. " "In a splendid confluence of tradition, excellence, and forward-thinking vision, Pragathi School celebrated its 30th Annual Day on Tuesday with remarkable fervor and elegance within its vibrant campus premises. The occasion not only marked three decades of academic and institutional distinction but also stood as a testimony to the school's unwavering commitment to holistic education. " "The celebrations were inaugurated by the esteemed Chief Guest, Mrs. Madhavi, District Educational Officer of Peddapalli, whose presence added grace and gravitas to the proceedings. In her keynote address, she urged parents to play a proactive and discerning role in their children's intellectual and moral development. She underscored the necessity of parental vigilance in the digital age, advising against indiscriminate use of mobile phones by children and advocating for a collaborative approach between educators and guardians to cultivate responsible, high-achieving individuals. " "The event commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, symbolizing the dispelling of ignorance through the illumination of knowledge. DEO Madhavi felicitated meritorious students who had excelled in various academic disciplines, including Abacus training, IIT foundation courses, and the SSC board examinations, acknowledging their dedication and scholastic prowess. " "In a comprehensive retrospective, School Correspondent Mr. Keshava Reddy presented an eloquent account of Pragathi's three-decade journey. He elaborated on the institution's pioneering academic initiatives and announced the integration of an Artificial Intelligence-assisted CBSE curriculum beginning in the upcoming academic year—a visionary stride toward future-ready education. The audience was captivated by a documentary presentation showcasing the evolution of Pragathi Educational Institutions since 1995, which evoked admiration and nostalgia in equal measure. " "Adding to the day's significance, formal graduation ceremonies were held for UKG and Grade V students, who were adorned with certificates and accolades in recognition of their developmental milestones. These moments were met with heartfelt applause

and pride from the assembled parents and dignitaries. " "The cultural segment of the celebration was a true feast for the senses. Students enthralled the audience with meticulously choreographed performances, showcasing classical and contemporary art forms. Of particular note was the spiritually evocative dance drama, Hanuman Nitya Roopakam, which drew wide acclaim for its artistic depth and devotional vigor. The festivities culminated in a breathtaking display of fireworks, symbolizing the school's celebratory spirit and luminous future. " "Presided over by Mr. Keshava Reddy, the grand celebration witnessed the participation of several distinguished guests including TRASMA State Leader Mr. Mallojula Vijayanand, TBGKS Leader Mr. Miriyala Rajireddy, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Ms. Nagaraja Kumari, Headmaster Mr. Ramu, Mr. Narayana Sharma, Mr. Eeshwara Prasad, and Mr. Pasam Odela Yadav. An enthusiastic gathering of teachers, parents, alumni, and well-wishers lent their spirited presence to this historic occasion, rendering the event a memorable chapter in the annals of Pragathi School.

NAREDCO Telangana's vision is to encourage growth of real estate sector

Hyderabad, April 23 NAREDCO Telangana, a 30-year-old association formed to represent and co-ordinate the efforts of real estate developers. It serves the State of Telangana interacting with the Government on behalf of the industry to co-ordinate with policy making authorities in evolving and implementing real estate friendly policies and service delivery systems in order to stimulate development. NAREDCO Telangana's vision is to encourage growth of real estate sector through contributions for framing conducive policies and encourage new technologies, promotion of primary demand and so on. The NAREDCO Telangana supports the Telangana Government's Bhu Bharati and the BuildNow Application. It expects the government to ensure effective implementation and continuous stakeholder engagement to unlock the full potential of both the Bhu Bharati Portal and BuildNow Application. NAREDCO Telangana is grateful to the government for enacting the Bhu Bharati portal and BuildNow applications with both playing a key role in planned urban growth, and increased investor confidence, especially in emerging and semi-urban corridors of Telangana. Bhu Bharati is a newly launched digital land records portal designed to bring greater clarity, transparency, and trust to land transactions. It serves as a restructured and more efficient version of the former Dharani portal, addressing past challenges by simplifying processes, correcting legacy errors, and improving public confidence in land ownership records.

Top 5 Family Cars with Spacious Boots for a Road-Trip for your upcoming Holidays



Hyderabad: The holiday season is upon us, and this is a perfect time to create a shared and memorable family experience. The right car can be your perfect companion for a comfortable and stress-free road trip. Whether you are planning a beach getaway, mountain retreat, or countryside exploration, the right set of wheels can ensure your family travels in comfort, style, and importantly, without compromising on luggage space. One of the biggest hurdles of a family road trip is ensuring all the luggage fits neatly into the car's boot! From suitcases and duffle bags, a cramped boot can quickly turn the excitement of a getaway into a game of luggage arrangement. Having a vehicle with ample boot space is not just a convenience, it's a pragmatic requirement that allows your family to travel stress-free and fully enjoy the adventure ahead. Here is a curated list of vehicles of different segments that offer ample boot space for an ideal road-trip.

1. MG Hector: The MG Hector stands out with its striking design and cutting-edge features, led by an advanced in-built PM 2.5 Air Purifier and Ionizer system for a consistently fresh cabin environment. The SUV boasts a 35.56 cm (14-inch) HD Portrait infotainment screen, complemented by innovative features like a Digital Bluetooth key with sharing function, wireless charging, and ventilated front seats. Safety and intelligence merge with Traffic Jam Assist among 11 ADAS features, while the i-SMART technology offers over 75 connected car features. Adding to its premium appeal, the Hector is available at the starting price of 13.99 Lakhs and delivers exceptional value as the best-priced SUV with a panoramic sunroof in India.

2. MG Windsor: India's first intelligent CUV, the MG Windsor, offers a perfect blend of innovation, style, and comfort. It offers a boot space of 604 Litres and has ample space for the luggage. With its 2700 mm wheelbase which is longer than many (ICE) vehicles with superior dimensions, it maximizes space, providing an unmatched cabin experience. The Windsor offers an infinity-view glass roof, aerodynamic design, and spacious, opulent interiors, ensuring luxurious business-class comfort. Reassuring safety, smart connectivity, and driving comfort are enhanced by its hi-tech features. Built on the 'Pure EV Platform', the MG Windsor starts at INR 13,49,800 (Ex-Showroom). Under the unique Battery as a Service (BaaS) program, it is available at INR 9.99 Lakhs + ₹3.5/Km for battery*. Offering a range of 332* km ARAI certified with a 38-kWh battery and four driving modes, the Windsor's zero-emission powertrain helps significantly reduce air pollution, promoting a greener future.

3. Honda City Sedan: The Honda City redefines sedan excellence with its sleek design and remarkable 506-liter boot space. Engineered with Honda's renowned reliability, this sedan offers a perfect blend of performance and comfort. Its powerful yet fuel-efficient engine ensures economical long-distance travel, while advanced safety features provide peace of mind for family journeys. The sophisticated interiors boast premium leather seats and a 8-inch touchscreen infotainment system. With excellent noise insulation, precise handling, and a reputation for durability, the Honda City transforms everyday commutes and holiday travels into refined experiences.

4. Renault Kiger Compact SUV :Renault's Kiger emerges as a game-changer in the compact SUV segment, offering an impressive 405-liter boot space that defies its compact dimensions. Designed for urban explorers and adventure enthusiasts, the Kiger combines stylish aesthetics with practical functionality. Its lightweight design ensures excellent fuel efficiency, making it an economical choice for family trips. The Kiger's robust build, ground clearance, and compact footprint make it equally comfortable navigating city streets and exploring countryside roads.

Sutradhari film team receives blessings of Srivaru, Ammavaru.



"April 23, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator" "The Sutradhari film team expressed happiness that it is very happy to receive blessings of Srivari, Ammavari. In the backdrop of the release of the Kannada film Sutradhari on May 9th, the film's producer Navarasan, hero Chandan Shetty and heroine Apoorva Kaliyuga have received the blessings of Srivari, the living deity of the present time, as well as Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari. On this occasion, the film unit spoke to the media and said that our film will attract the youth as well as the family audience. They said that they have received the blessings of Srivari as well as Sri Padmavati Ammavari for the success of this film. They asked all the audience to support the film and make it a success..."

Praneeth Foundation's services are commendable: Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy



“April 23, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema coordinator” The services of Praneeth Foundation are commendable, said State Transport and Youth Sports Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy. On Wednesday, as per the request of SHAP Chairman Ravi Naidu, Praneeth Foundation donated an RO water cooler worth Rs 1 lakh 75 thousand to the Srinivasa Sports Complex of the local S.V. Arts College in Tirupati. This RO water cooler was jointly inaugurated by State Transport and Youth Sports Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy and District Collector Dr. Venkateswar SHAP Chairman Ravi Naidu. As per the request of Edify Schools Director and Praneeth Foundation Founder Praneeth Penumadu, the chief guests who attended the program observed the performance of the RO water cooler and tasted the mineral water. Speaking on the occasion, Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy praised the



Praneeth Foundation for distributing RO water coolers immediately after the request, keeping in mind the summer season. He said that this RO water cooler will be very useful for the athletes. He specially congratulated the Praneeth Foundation for doing more service programs in the coming time. The initiative taken by the SHAP Chairman Ravi Naidu for distributing the RO water coolers is commendable. Similarly, District Collector Dr. Venkateswar encouraged the Praneeth Foundation to contact them for any help they need. Yadava Corporation Chairman Narasimha Yadav, TTD Board Member Panabaka Lakshmi, Sri Padmavati Mahila University Vice Chancellor Prof. Uma, former MMA Sugunamma, Deputy Mayors Mudra Narayana and Munikrishna, TDP key leaders JB Srinivas, Dhampuri Bhaskar, DSDO Syed Saheb, public representatives, students and others participated in this program.

BHOO BHARATI ACT TO RESOLVE LAND ISSUES, SAYS COLLECTOR KOYA SRI HARSHA



POT Act, Lands Transfer Regulation (LTR), or Ceiling Acts will be regularized by collecting stamp duty, registration charges, and a nominal Rs. 100 penalty, after which a certificate and pattadar passbook will be issued. “To strengthen land administration, the government is taking steps to appoint Village Administration Officers (VAOs) in every village. Additionally, revenue records will be updated and displayed publicly every year to ensure transparency. “A major reform is the introduction of a Bhoodhaar number—a unique identification number for each land parcel, similar to Aadhaar for individuals. This is expected to curb encroachments and protect ownership rights. “The Collector also mentioned that agricultural land registration and mutation will now be completed on the same day. In cases of sale, gift, inheritance, or partition, Tahsildars will register the transaction and update ownership records simultaneously.

If mutation is not completed within the stipulated time, it will be done automatically. “Applicants can now apply for mutation through the Bhooh Bharati portal by paying a fee of Rs. 2,500 per acre and submitting required documents such as inheritance deeds or gift agreements along with a survey map. If Tahsildars do not resolve the application within 30 days, the mutation will be processed automatically. A passbook will be issued at Rs. 300 to eligible landowners. “He added that free legal assistance will be made available to applicants and encouraged the public to contact revenue officials for any clarifications. Awareness pamphlets were also distributed during the event. “Officials Present: RDO Suresh, Manthani Tahsildar Kumaraswamy, public representatives, farmers, and various departmental officials took part in the program.

“Nagaram, Manthani Mandal: District Collector Koya Sri Harsha assured that the newly introduced Bhooh Bharati Act will provide permanent solutions to long-standing land-related issues across Telangana. He was speaking at an awareness program held at the Nagaram Rythu Vedika on Wednesday. “The Collector highlighted several key initiatives under the Act, aimed at increasing transparency, accountability, and ease of land ownership for farmers and citizens. He stated that a structured appeal mechanism has been introduced under the Act. Now, appeals can be filed with the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), followed by the District Collector, and ultimately, the Land Tribunal, unlike earlier when disputes could only be addressed in civil courts. “He also informed that the government has provided a window for regularization of pending Sada Bainama applications. Applications that do not violate laws such as the

Empowering Young Innovators: T-Works and BetterWits Host Hands-On STEM Workshop at ZPHS Girls' School, Manthani.



“ P . S . A S H O K A N “ I N D I A N CHRONICLE “MANTHANI” 24-4-2025. “In a significant initiative to nurture innovation and technical skills among rural students, T-Works, India’s largest prototyping center supported by the Telangana Government, and BetterWits, a creative education startup, jointly organized a STEM-based technical training camp at ZPHS Girls’ High School, Manthani on April 23, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. “The camp witnessed the enthusiastic participation of nearly 100 girl students, who got hands-on experience with construction and agricultural machinery models such as cranes, JCBs, harvesters, drillers, and cultivators. Using STEM kits provided by BetterWits, students assembled these machines themselves and explored how they function—bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical

understanding. “The session was facilitated by Rakesh and Uday from T-Works and Anil and his team from BetterWits, with active support from the school’s headmaster and staff. The energy and excitement among the students made the session lively and highly productive. “BetterWits focuses on creating engaging STEM learning modules and kits that develop creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving skills in children through hands-on activities. “T-Works, operating from a 78,000 sq. ft. facility with 200+ industry-grade tools, is Telangana’s flagship initiative to foster hardware innovation by supporting students, startups, and makers in turning their ideas into reality. “This collaborative workshop not only enhanced the students’ technical awareness and innovation mindset but also ignited their interest in STEM careers, setting a strong foundation for future learning and exploration.

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Student Meet in Vaagdevi College - Grand celebration (Motivation -2025) “ “ “ - Meet State Level MBA Students



“Warangal City, April 23 (Indian Chronicle): “The State Level MBA Student Meet celebration (Motivation -2025) was held on Wednesday under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at the Bollikunta Vaagdevi Educational Institute in the city. The inspiration is being conducted to develop hidden skills in the students. Kakatiya University Dean CDC Professor P Varalakshmi, who was the chief guest of the event, was inaugurated by Jyoti. Afterwards, they suggested that students should study with discipline and perseverance and become good businessmen. Shri Vignesh (Assistant Vice President, F&A Site Lead, Warangal Jenpact), who participated in the event, commented on the importance of artificial intelligence. Professor SSVN Sharma said that by participating in such programs, students would be able to develop a wide variety of skills and use the community. Dr. Vani Devi, Director of Vagdevi Educational Institutions, Professor, P Indrasena Reddy, Director of MBA College, HOD Dr Y Bhaskara Rao

and Dr P Sivashankar. “SBI Bank Warangal Deputy General Manager Gamshyam Solanki, who was the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the motivation celebration, said that the banking sector was addressing the MBA education specificity and greeted the students. Kakatiya University Controller of Examinations Professor Rajender Katla said that the students should go ahead with the management in the field of innovation and making new innovations. The event was chaired by Dr Y Bhaskara Rao, while Vagdevi Colleges Principals Dr K Prakash, Dr Mustak Ahmed and Vice Principal T Thirupathi Rao greeted the students. Marketing, Finance, HR, Dish Quiz and Young Manager presented prizes to the winners of various competitions. Dr M Sravanti was the convener of this inspiration 2025. Dr. M Murali, Dr. G. Saroja, Dr. M Sarita, Dr. CH Bhargavi, Dr. P Deepthi, Dr. Ke Radhika, Dr. K Venu, G Mukteshwar, Dr. A large number of students from Deepa Sri, Rajitha and various colleges participated.

State Building and Construction Workers Union State Fourth Meeting

“Serilingampalli April 23 Telangana Building and Construction Workers Union (AITUC) Telangana Rashtra Samithi, State Building and Construction Workers Union State Fourth Meetings were held on the 21st and 22nd of this month in Shamshabad, Rangareddy district. On the first day of the state meetings, a huge rally was organized with thousands of workers. Later, the meeting of representatives continued for two days at Elite Hotel. “250 representatives from 33 districts of the state participated in this meeting. The problems of the construction workers were discussed and future struggle programs were formulated. “These meetings passed several resolutions and a new state committee was elected. CPI National Secretary K Narayana participated as the chief guest at the public meeting on the first day, while on the second day, MLC Nellikanti Satyam, AITUC State President MD Yusuf, General Secretary S Balaraju, Deputy Secretary Mote Narasimha, senior



leaders Ujjini Ratnakar Rao, and Invitation Committee President Panuganti Parvatil participated. The new committee includes Honorary President Mote Narasimha, President Maragoni Praveen Kumar, Working President Gannarapoo Ramesh, Vice Presidents Akula Srinivas, Gade Lakshminarayana, Noone Venkateswarlu, G Paramesh, G Raju, General Secretary Palla Devender Reddy, Assistant Secretaries, Kamatham Yadagiri, S Mallesh, Pittala Sammayya, Velpula Mallikarjun Kadari Ramulu, K Venkatesh N Sivashankar, Treasurer

Kanyagari Narasimha Reddy, 75 people were unanimously elected as members of the council.

Two minivans, cowshed reduced to ashes in Telangana's Adilabad

Adilabad: Two minivans and a cowshed were burnt, while another minivan got partially damaged when a fire broke out at Kapparla village in Thamsi mandal on Wednesday. The property damage was assessed to be worth over Rs 10 lakh.

Adilabad in-charge fire officer and leading fireman T Sunganna said two vans and a cowshed were reduced to ashes, while another van was partially damaged when the fire broke out around 2 pm allegedly due to carelessness.

The property belonged to Gandra Krishna Kumar, Abhilash and Praveen Kumar. A fire engine from Adilabad was summoned and the flames were doused.

Tiruchanur High School student shows talent



“April 23, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema coordinator” The announcement of SSC 2025 exam results is inevitable. In this order, K. Suryapratap, a student from Tiruchanur High School, secured the first position in the Tirupati Rural Mandal high schools with 566 marks.

The student, who showed excellent talent, was specially congratulated by the Principal of Tiruchanur High School Murali, Honorary Advisor of AP Teachers Federation, 257S Venkata Muni. Meanwhile, many officials congratulated the Tiruchanur ZPHS school for achieving better results this time than last time. Reminding two places are achieved by Cherlopally high school student Pawan Kumar thummala gunta high school student Swathi

Two-day National Conference concluded at National Sanskrit University



IIT Tirupati, who eloquently summed up the importance of IKS in today's knowledge landscape and stressed the need for continuous exploration and integration of indigenous knowledge in mainstream education and research. Later, the chairman of the conference, Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof. G.S.R. Krishnamurthy, said that this two-day conference was organized here to provide Sanskrit knowledge to the modern generation through AI technology by using technology extensively in Sanskrit sciences through C-DAC organization, so that Sanskrit students can learn good knowledge in technology and move forward.

“The program was attended by the program chairperson, Prof. K. Ganapathi Bhat, Head of the Advaita Vedanta Department, Prof. R.J. Ramashri, Convener of the program, and Dr. Janaki and explained the relevant issues.” Dr. Mary Sujatha, Lecturer, Department of Computer Science, acted as the moderator of the program. “The faculty members of the Computer Science Department, Prof. B. Chandrasekharam, Prof. Sridhar, Dr. G. Nagalakshmi, Mrs. G. Prasanna, K. Sankeerthi and faculty members and students from various departments of the university participated in this program and made the program a success.

“April 23, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator” The two-day National Conference on Artificial Intelligence, Mission Learning, Quantum Computing and Indian Knowledge System jointly organized by National Sanskrit University Tirupati and C-DAC was held at the Ramaranjan Mukherjee Auditorium. “The event was graced by the keynote address by Prof. Krishna Prapooma from

MLA Arekapudi Gandhi, Corporator Hamid Patel laid the foundation stone for the construction of a new school building



“Serilingampalli April 23, GHMC Zonal Commissioner Upendar, PAC Chairman, MLA Arekapudi Gandhi, Kondapur Division Corporator Hamid Patel, along with local leaders, laid the foundation stone for the construction of a new school building at an estimated cost of Rs 2 crore through CSR funds in the premises of the Government Primary & High School in Gachibowli under Kondapur Divi-

sion. MLA Gandhi, Corporator Hamid Patel, Zonal Commissioner Upendar Reddy, Corporator Uppalapati Srikanth, senior leaders Erragundla Srinivas Yadav, Neerudi Ganesh Mudiraj, Srinivasa Chowdhury, Mangalarapu Tirupati Patel, Narasimha Sagar, Basavaraju, Lakshmi Bai, Budugu Tirupati Reddy, Tirupati Yadav, Swami Sagar, Venkati, Shanmukh, officials, school staff and others participated in this foundation stone laying ceremony.

Civil Aviation Minister takes swift action to support tourists & victims hit by Kashmir terror attack

Hyderabad, April 23 : In the wake of the tragic terror attack in Kashmir, Union Minister for Civil Aviation Ram Mohan Naidu has moved swiftly to ensure the safety and well-being of affected tourists and victims.

The Minister personally spoke to the Home Minister and is monitoring the situation round the clock, working in close coordination with relevant authorities. As part of immediate relief measures, four special flights from Srinagar — two to Delhi and two to Mumbai—have been arranged, with additional flights kept on standby to cater to further evacuation needs. Ram Mohan Naidu also held an urgent meeting with all airline operators and issued a strong advisory against surge pricing. Airlines have been directed to maintain regular fare levels, ensuring that no passenger is burdened during this sensitive time. Additionally, Ram Mohan Naidu has directed all airlines to extend full cooperation for the transportation of deceased individuals to their



respective home States, working in sync with State governments and local authorities.

Workshop on "Awareness & importance of Accreditation of Labs in educational institutions" held

Hyderabad, April 23 Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Technology (Autonomous) in collaboration with National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) has organized a workshop on the “Awareness and importance of the Accreditation of Laboratories in educational institutions” on April 23, 2025 in the Institute premises. Professor G. Chandra Mohan Reddy, Principal, MGIT welcomed the audience for the workshop and thanked the authorities of NABL for taking the initiative to educate on the significance of accreditation.

K. Siri Babu, Assistant Director, NABL brought it to the notice of all the audience the advantages of getting the

laboratories in the Educational Institutions certified by NABL. He assured that this certification will subsequently enhance the competence of the laboratories. He also mentioned that this certification will benefit the student fraternity as they will get to know the standards to be maintained in testing methods and subsequently become a quality analyst or researcher.

The workshop has witnessed huge participation of undergraduate students, participants from outside laboratories, and teaching staff of the Institute. The audience have expressed their satisfaction as their queries have been resolved through the interactions with the resource person.

ISKCON Kukatpally branch to hold Geeta summer camp for children from April 27

Hyderabad, April 23 The ISKCON Kukatpally branch today said it was organising a Geeta Summer Camp for children at DRS International School from April 27 to May 6.

Speaking media persons on Wednesday, ISKCON Kukatpally branch president Maha Shrunaga Das and representatives Sarala Shah, Seema Jain, Shubhvilasthan, Rajender and Mahesh Agarwal said the camp would teach children human values and Vedic rituals. They also said it would include respect, environmental protection, healthy lifestyle, family values, development of life skills, swimming, drawing, cultural programs, training in cultural hymns, yoga, traditional dances, singing and other programs, as well as teaching the Bhagavad Gita to children. They noted that food and transportation facilities would be provided to the children and added that those interested can contact them



on their website www.iskconkukatpally.in and register their names.

Modi, Amit Shah will not leave terrorists: MLA Raja Singh



Hyderabad, April 23 Goshamahal BJP MLA Rajasingh has responded on the terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam area. He made sensational comments by targeting the terrorists through a statement. On the occasion, Raja Singh paid tributes to those, who died in the

terrorist attack. He wished a speedy recovery to those injured in the attack. He expressed his deep sympathy for their families. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah would not spare the terrorists. He said everything was peaceful after the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution in Kashmir and added that the Centre was working hard to develop Kashmir.

He was furious that the terrorists from Pakistan were coming and conspiring in peaceful Kashmir. Raja Singh said Modi and Amit Shah would not sleep until the terrorists were caught. Meanwhile, 28 people have been killed so far in the terrorist attack on tourists in Pahalgam on Tuesday. Some are undergoing treatment in the hospitals and the death toll is likely to rise. The Central government is conducting a search operation for the terrorists under the name of Operation Tikka. As part of this, the Central government has already released sketches of the terrorists.

Pink party workers should take KCR's message to every village: KTR

Hyderabad, April 23 BRS party working president KTR today said their party headquarters Telangana Bhavan had become like a Janata Garage and added that the only thing that stands by the victims was their party's pink flag. KTR inspected the arrangements for the BRS party Silver Jubilee Celebration on the 27th of this month in Elkathurthi of Warangal district. On the occasion, he paid tribute to the Indians, who died in the Pahalgam terror attack at the meeting premises for two minutes.

Later, he said the TRS was an organization that was formed as a movement organization for the formation of Telangana state and added that it grew with the slogan of teaching, mobilizing, and fighting to achieve Telangana through a democratic method. He said the BRS party was the party that brought Telangana to the level of the mountain Himalayas. He said the BRS was the party that is carrying out the responsibility given by the people wonderfully. He also said the BRS was the party that has gained recognition throughout the country. He noted that the courage of the hearts of the people of Telangana was the pink flag. He said people from any section of the State were coming to Telangana Bhavan no matter what difficulties they face. He commented that the BRS was a party working for the people like Janata Garage. He said all the people of the State were cheering for the pink flag.

KTR said that it was a matter of pride that Warangal is the venue for the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the party. He said that parking facilities had been arranged on a thousand acres of land for those coming to the silver jubilee Celebrations without any problem. He said that there would be no problem even if 30-40 thousand vehicles come. He revealed that 10 lakh water bottles, buttermilk packets, more than a thousand medical teams and 20 ambulances



had been arranged for the public meeting. He thanked the leadership of the joint Warangal district for making such good arrangements. Stating that they don't have faith in electricity in the electricity, he said that they had arranged 200 generators had been specially arranged for the celebrations. He said all the leaders of the joint Warangal district were looking into the arrangements for the celebrations. He expressed confidence that the Elkathurthi public meeting would be a huge public meeting in the history of the BRS party. He said the people were eager to see KCR and listen to his speech at the meeting. He also said farmers from Suryapet were coming in large numbers.

He said 2,000 volunteers were working for the meeting. He called for hoisting the pink flags in 12,796 gram panchayats on the 27th of this month. He asked the party activists to reach the Chalo Warangal meeting venue with enthusiasm. He called upon the party workers to expose the anarchic rule of the Congress Party in the Warangal meeting. KTR criticized that the BJP had been doing injustice to Telangana for 11 years. He suggested that the pink soldiers should take KCR's message to every village.

Peace should be established in Jammu & Kashmir: CPM secretary John Wesley

Hyderabad, April 23 CPM State Secretary John Wesley today said terrorists opened indiscriminate fire and brutally killed 28 innocent citizens and tourists of one religion in the tourist area of Jammu and Kashmir. He said among the dead was Manish Ranjan, who worked in the Intelligence Bureau in Hyderabad. This has shaken not only the citizens of the country, but also the countries of the world.

In a statement, he said the CPI(M) was expressing its deepest condolences to those, who lost their lives in this inhuman incident and its deepest sympathy to the families of the victims. He said the party was urging the Central Government to provide better medical treatment to the 20 injured people and to provide all possible support to the families, who have lost their loved ones. He made it clear that the Central Government should not be complacent in its actions and investigate this incident in the name of religion from all angles and bring the perpetrators to justice and punish them severely. He said the CPI(M) was demanding that peace be restored in Jammu and Kashmir and added that the Central government should ensure that such ter-

rorist incidents do not recur and that tight security be provided to save the lives of the people there.

BRS party is heartbeat of people : MLC Kavitha

Peddapalli, April 23 MLC Kavitha and BRS party leaders observed two minutes of silence at the Peddapalli BRS party office and paid tribute to those who died in the Pahalgam terror attack today. Addressing a Press Meet, she said that the then central government came down with the idea of giving Telangana after the Singareni workers warned that they would come on the roads to achieve a separate Telangana state. “About 160 to 170 parties came and went in the united Andhra Pradesh. But, BRS party has been the heartbeat of the people of Telangana for 25 years. BRS has the bond with the people of Telangana. Although plenary sessions are held every year.

60 trees on panchayat land in Sangrur 'cut illegally'; complaint sent to police to register FIR: official



GNS News Agency, April 23

Residents and activists in Sangrur district's Balad Kalan village alleged on Friday that more than 60 trees of Eucalyptus, Dek and Brota on the panchayat land were felled and sold illegally. They accused panchayat officials, the forest department and the administration of "ignorance". However, an official said that after an inquiry into the matter, a complaint was sent to the police to register an FIR. Jasinder Sekhon, an activist based in Sangrur, said, "We got to know that more than 60 trees were felled without any departmental approval in February. Despite villagers' repeated complaints to officials concerned, no action was taken." "In mid-March, a few villagers wrote to the

forest department's Sangrur office about the felling of trees. On March 24, the department replied that the area falls under the panchayat department's jurisdiction," Sekhon said. "Not only those who were involved in the illegal felling of trees, but strict action should also be taken against complicit officials," Sekhon said.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner Sandeep Goyal told The Indian Express, "The Block Development and Panchayat Officer (BDPO) of Bhawanigarh block has conducted an inquiry and identified culprits. He is sending a report based on which an FIR will be lodged for illegally felling and disposing of the panchayat's trees." Bhawanigarh BDPO Lenin Garg said, "We have identified the culprits. The land in question is a panchayat land and is being managed by a few families of a Scheduled Caste (SC) community. They have admitted to having felled and sold trees. Their family members have recorded statements, saying they had planted those trees and later felled and sold it. They claimed that they were not aware of the rules that trees could not be felled or sold without permission from the panchayat or other authorities. However, we have sent a complaint to the police for registering an FIR." Garg said, "Only 15-20 trees were planted in two bighas, and they were not even fully grown." However, Sekhon said there were more than 60. "In the first week of April, around 17 full-grown trees were felled in and around the Sangrur Civil Hospital area," Sekhon alleged.

Two schools, one dilapidated building: Why Sikhya Kranti has failed to reach over 600 kids

GNS News Agency, April 23

Children from Govt Primary School, Shahi Mohalla, crammed in a veranda at Kundanpuri school building's verandah. Children from Govt Primary School, Shahi Mohalla, crammed in a veranda at Kundanpuri school building's verandah. In the verandah of Government Primary School, Kundanpuri, in the heart of Ludhiana city, morning prayers are being recited at 12 noon by over 200 students from primary classes. No, they aren't the students of this school but the ones from Government Primary School, Post Office Road (Shahi Mohalla) whose own building has been declared unsafe. The students from Shahi Mohalla school study at Kundanpuri school in evening shift as they have no other space to sit. The condition of Kundanpuri primary school's own children is no better. Over 400 children are crammed in just four congested rooms in the morning shift.



the school's new building will come up or where. "As of now we are teaching in Kundanpuri school building in evening shift. The building is so congested that children are being cramped in the verandah," she said.

Kuldeep Kumar, head teacher of Kundanpuri primary school, said that in the morning shift, over 400 children of their own school are crammed in just four rooms. "Our school cannot receive any grants for new infrastructure or constructing new classrooms as this land is owned by a community centre who had donated it for the school. Right now there's no government land available to construct new school building. We have no option but to make hundreds of children sit either in open verandah or four congested rooms," he said.

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Nayab Saini announces Rs 20 lakh medical insurance for players



GNS News Agency, April 23

Reiterating his government's commitment to promote sports, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said on Friday that his government had made a resolution to provide medical insurance coverage of Rs 20 lakh to every player in the state. Speaking with the media after inaugurating the third All India Shiv Kumar Smriti Basketball Competition in Kilo village in Rohtak district, the chief minister said, "Our government has taken a resolution to provide medical

insurance cover of Rs 20 lakh for every player in the state. Haryana Utkrishi Khiladi Seva Niyam 2021 has been implemented to promote sports and ensure secure employment opportunities for athletes. Under this policy, 550 new posts have been created in the Sports Department, and 224 sportspersons have already been appointed to government jobs. The policy also includes a reservation for athletes in direct recruitment for Class-I to Class-III posts," Saini said. The chief minister also announced a grant of Rs 21 lakh for development work at Shiv Kumar Smriti Stadium and the construction of a Mahila Chaupal in the village.

Saini said a total of 1,489 sports nurseries were nurturing young talents in the state. "The state government is committed to identifying and nurturing sports talents from an early age. A total of 1,489 sports nurseries are currently being operated across the state, providing training to 37,225 budding athletes. To support young athletes financially, those aged between 8 and 14 years enrolled in these nurseries receive a monthly stipend of Rs 1,500, while those between 15 and 19 years receive Rs 2,000 per month. Since 2014, scholarships amounting to Rs 53.45 crore have been granted to over 29,000 students," the chief minister added.

Now RWAs slam increase in property tax: 'A burden on the city residents'

GNS News Agency, April 23

With the political parties in disagreement over the rise in property tax by the Chandigarh Administration, the city's major residents' welfare organisations, including FOSWAC (Federation of Sectors Welfare Association Chandigarh) and CRAWFED (Chandigarh Resident Associations Welfare Federation), have also criticised the decision against the rise of property tax in the city. CRAWFED is planning to hold a meeting against the decision of the Chandigarh Administration, with more than 100 RWAs of the city, to discuss the issue and raise a protest.

CRAWFED chairman Hitesh Puri said, "The massive increase in tax rates has caused chaos among the people of Chandigarh. The corporation's treasury is empty, and no funds are being received from the Central government. The corporation is resorting to punishing the public for its failures by drastically increasing the rates of various services without proposing any improvement in it." "So far, the water tariff has been increased by 5 per cent, commercial property tax by four times, residential property tax by three times, parking fees have been increased, and electricity bills have been hiked. This has caused great resentment among both the common people and the business community. Since a majority of the population in Chandigarh comprises salaried individuals who live within their limited resources, the corporation's exorbitant tax increases have caused significant anger among them," added Puri.

The business community in Chandigarh, which is already facing numerous challenges, is distressed by the four-fold increase in property tax and other taxes. They are saying that they will either have to close their businesses or shift to Mohali or Panchkula, said Puri. Also, FOSWAC chairman Baljinder Singh Bittu said, "This tax increase is a bur-

den on the city residents. If the government does not have money, they will not start levying extra tax on people to increase their income." On Thursday, Deputy Mayor Taruna Mehta had 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. The BJP councillors and Mayor Harpreet Kaur Babla had in a meeting held recently at 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 a shortage of water," said Babla. Chandigarh Pradesh Congress Committee president H S Lucky said BJP councillors should immediately resign from their positions in protest. Lucky dared the BJP councillors to publicly announce the time, location, and the name of the official to whom their resignations would be submitted. He assured that the Congress party's Senior Deputy Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and all Congress councillors would reach the designated spot before the BJP councillors to demonstrate their genuine commitment to the cause and solidarity with the people of Chandigarh. Criticising the Chandigarh Administration's decision to impose yet another financial burden, Lucky accused the BJP of working in collusion with the administration to exploit the citizens. "At a time when people are already struggling with inflation and unemployment.

Sikhya Kranti double dose in poll-bound Ludhiana: 2 classrooms inaugurated twice; first by AAP MLA, now by AAP bypoll candidate



GNS News Agency, April 23

A government primary school in Sarabha Nagar locality of Ludhiana has received a double dose of AAP-led Punjab government's Sikhya Kranti, thanks to the upcoming Ludhiana West bypoll. According to residents, two new classrooms constructed in the primary school with assistance from an NGO were inaugurated twice in less than a year — first by then AAP MLA Gurpreet Gogi on June 28, 2024, and now by AAP Ludhiana West bypoll candidate Sanjeev Arora on April 11, 2025. A visit to the school revealed that the signs of the old inauguration still remain. While the old plaque has been removed, the NGO Round Table India Foundation's name is still readable under the fresh coat of paint on the outer facade of the two classrooms. To conceal the visible marks, a flex carrying CM Bhagwant Mann's photograph and "Sikhya Kranti" logo has been installed. On the right side of the block too, the NGO's name has been whitewashed.

In June 2024, then AAP MLA Gogi had inaugurated the two classrooms along with Round Table India's area chairman Sumit Garg, and a plaque was installed in the block's corridor carrying the names of both. "The NGO has supported the completion of both classrooms after the government grant was stalled midway and children had to sit in open verandah and corridors in scorching heat," said a teacher. Cut to April 2025. The new plaque credits CM Bhagwant Mann, education minister Harjot Bains and MP Arora for "two new modernised classrooms".

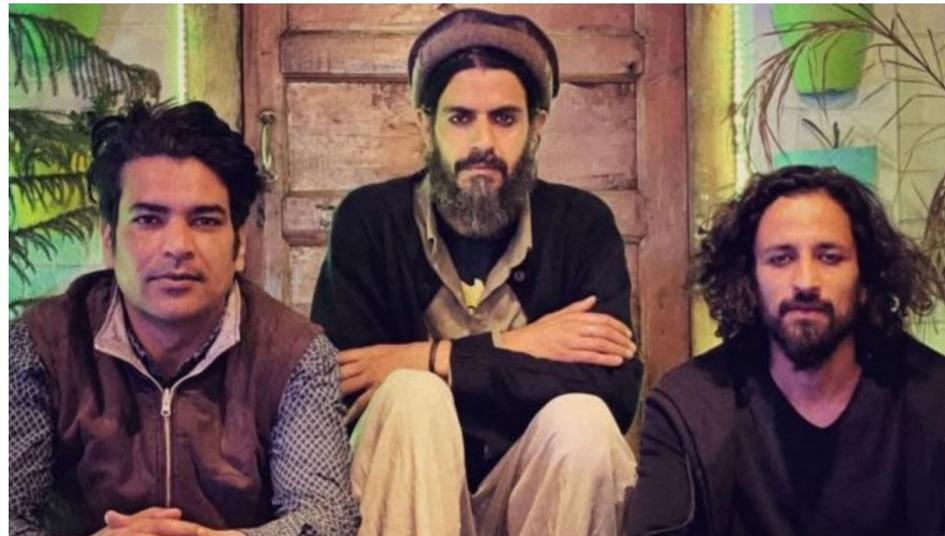
A teacher requesting anonymity said: "We had received the first instalment of government grant for two new classrooms last year (Rs 8 lakh approx) and work was started. But the grants stopped midway and the next instalment did not arrive for months. There was no space to sit. Children had to study in open verandah and corridors in scorching heat and monsoon rains were on the way. That's when the NGO stepped in and got the work completed." Meenu Padam, the school's head teacher said: "The construction of classrooms was completed I joined the school in September last year. The second instalment of Rs 7 lakh approx came after I joined and we got other works done such as installing projectors, BALA (building and learning aid) paintings, ramp etc. Even now, the NGO

keeps helping our children and they have distributed stationery, sports kits, T-shirts etc."

Harbhagat Singh, 47, a local resident and school's alumnus, said: "We are a witness to the fact that the classrooms were completed with NGO's assistance and then MLA Gogi had come for inauguration. Now the same classrooms were re-inaugurated by MP Arora. The MP has not contributed anything, why is his name on the plaque?" MP Arora during inauguration on April 11. The whitewashed facade and the classroom MP Arora during inauguration on April 11. The whitewashed facade and the classroom Harbhagat had also filed a complaint in 2023 to the Punjab State Commission for Protection of Child Rights stating how 809 children in this school were crammed in just seven rooms. Kirpal Singh, another resident, said, "Even if they had to install the new plaque and get the classrooms re-inaugurated, why was the NGO's name whitewashed? They should have acknowledged their contribution instead of doing this for political gains." Ludhiana district education officer (elementary) Ravinder Pal Kaur said that she wasn't aware of the matter as she joined much later. "The smart classrooms are equipped with all facilities for which government grant was released. I have no idea about the earlier inauguration," she said.

Rajbir Singh Arora, area chairman of Round Table India, said that the NGO has nothing to do with politics. "We will keep working for the school like we did earlier," he said. Another new plaque was installed in the school but it was not inaugurated by the MP since the education department ordered to discontinue toilet inaugurations. The school is still grappling with major space issues, with just 9 rooms for 538 children. There's no space to construct more rooms as a part of the school's land is also allegedly encroached, teachers said. "We have 104 pre-primary children and there's only one room. Over a hundred children crammed in one room and sometimes it gets difficult to even breathe properly in summers," said another teacher. Seven teachers from the school have been put on poll duty for the bypoll. "Seven of our teachers have been deputed as booth level officers (BLOs) and as the bypoll nears, they won't be coming to the school. How can we manage studies and new admissions without them," asked the head teacher.

Formed in the stillness of the 2020 lockdown, Gaekhir Republik is all set to perform in Chandigarh



It's a quiet morning at Hotel Aroma in Chandigarh, but in one corner, the air hums with energy. Sitting across the table are Sarfaraz, Suhail, and Mohsin—the trio behind Gaekhir Republik, a Kashmiri folk-rock band whose name, once understood, resonates with a kind of poetic tension: "Gaekhir" means friction in Kashmiri, and "Republik" stands for a republic of sound. Formed in the stillness of the 2020 lockdown, Gaekhir Republik is a band born out of uncertainty but driven by the need to express, to grieve, and to hope. "Friction," says Mohsin, "symbolizes the emotional, political, and social tension every Kashmiri feels. Through music, we create bonds that transcend that friction."

The band's origin story is rooted in friendship and serendipity. Suhail recalls rushing back home just before the nationwide lockdown in March 2020. Jam sessions with Sarfaraz became a way to cope with the stress of isolation. An early Instagram upload gave them confidence. Remembering Mohsin's guitar skills, Suhail roped him in, and something clicked. "We complemented each other really well," Mohsin says. "The music allowed us to express things buried deep inside us." Initially, they created parody songs just for themselves. But friends urged them to share their work publicly, despite the trio being in their 30s and lacking formal training. Their decision to upload songs to Instagram and YouTube would become a turning point. By Autumn 2020, Gaekhir Republik was officially born. Their debut album, Mandnyan Shaam—which translates to the darkness of the afternoon—is a layered and haunting reflection of

contradictions. "It's about finding hope in the darkest corners," Suhail explains. "We touch upon loss, longing, the tyranny of money, death, enforced disappearances in Kashmir, and even pandemics—not just biological, but moral and emotional." The album art, designed by their friend Khytul Abyad, is evocative. A glowing butterfly hovers before a mother and child, symbolising fragile hope amid engulfing darkness. Their songwriting process, much like their beginnings, is organic. "It starts with jamming," Suhail says. "We don't sit down to write a song. We play, we release emotions, and the stories just flow." Musically, their influences range from global legends to deeply rooted Kashmiri traditions. Mohsin began with Bryan Adams and Michael Jackson, learned the rabab, and was drawn to Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin during college in Bangalore. Sarfaraz is influenced by classical music and the timeless voice of Mehdi Hassan, while Suhail finds inspiration in psychedelic rock and blues, including The Doors. Though most of their songs are in Kashmiri, the band believes in music's ability to transcend language. "We love Avial from Kerala and Tinariwen from Mali," Suhail says. "We don't understand their lyrics, but we feel them. That's the power of music." For those who do want to understand the lyrics, translations are available on YouTube subtitles and the music site Bandcamp. As for messages to their fans, the band is clear: "We're not saints with messages," Suhail laughs. "Music is a release, a ventilation of the heart. We just hope people listen with sincerity, not for trends." Gaekhir Republik is in Chandigarh to perform at Punjab Kala Bhawan, Sector 16.

‘Remembering the Legends’: PEC pays emotional tribute to Satish Dhawan, Kalpana Chawla, and Jaspal Bhatti



GNS News Agency, April 23

Laughter, legacy, and inspiration took center stage at Punjab Engineering College (Deemed to be University) as the PEC Old Students Association (PECOSA) hosted its annual cultural evening titled “Remembering The Legends.” The event served as a moving tribute to three of PEC’s most iconic alumni—Padma Vibhushan Dr. Satish Dhawan, NASA astronaut Kalpana Chawla, and beloved satirist Padma Bhushan Jaspal Bhatti.

The evening began with the unveiling of their busts on campus—each a testament to PEC’s far-reaching influence in science, space, and satire. “These legends walked our halls. Their spark should reignite the spirit in today’s students,” said Mr. Manish Gupta, President of PECOSA, whose team took the lead in organizing the event. Crafted over five months by local artisans at Dhuriz Studios, the busts were funded through contributions from alumni across batches, with the total project cost nearing ₹8 lakh. “There was some lacuna on the administration’s part, so PECOSA took complete charge—from decoration to catering,” Gupta added. “But it ended up being a true team effort.” Chief Guest Prema Puri, Secretary Education, Chandigarh Administration, called the evening “an inspiring reminder of PEC’s role in shaping national and global leaders.” Reflecting on the

three honorees, she added, “Dr. Dhawan embodied scientific integrity. Jaspal Bhatti wielded humor like a sword. And Kalpana—she broke barriers for Indian women.”

Special messages added an emotional dimension to the event. A video tribute from European Space Agency astronaut Jean-François Clervoy—Kalpana Chawla’s mentor—was followed by heartfelt words from Jyotsana Dhawan, daughter of Dr. Dhawan and a leading developmental biologist. A short documentary chronicling the trio’s lives, laced with personal anecdotes, offered an intimate look at the human side of genius. “The alumni being honored are towering personalities who’ve taken PEC’s name to unmatched heights,” said Prof. (Dr.) Rajesh Kumar Bhatia, Director, PEC. “We stand small before their greatness.”

Savita Bhatti, wife of the late comedian, recalled Jaspal Bhatti’s mission to unify India through laughter. “He wanted the country to laugh as one,” she said. “His satire wasn’t just entertainment—it was truth in disguise.” Padma Shri awardee Dr. Satish Kumar, PEC aerospace alumnus and former DRDO chief, shared fond memories of his college years. “Satish Dhawan was the epitome of humility. Kalpana had a fascination with the stars long before she reached NASA. And Jaspal—he could crack up an entire auditorium even back then,” he said. Urging the youth to embrace emerging fields, he added, “Don’t be stuck in old ideas. AI, life sciences, robotics—this is where India’s intellectual property must grow.” The celebration wasn’t all speeches. A satirical skit based on the honorees’ lives, a soulful qawwali, and an energetic Bhangra performance lit up the evening, drawing applause from the 150+ alumni and students in attendance. PECOSA General Secretary Er. H.S. Oberoi led the awards segment, felicitating distinguished alumni and presenting over 23 scholarships for academic excellence. In his concluding remarks, he affirmed PECOSA’s commitment to preserving the institution’s legacy and strengthening alumni mentorship.

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Dentist arrested from West Bengal for her role in baby-selling racket, toddler rescued

GNS News Agency, April 23

Personnel from the Wadala Truck Terminal police station travelled to Hooghly district in West Bengal, where they found the suspect along with the two-year-old boy and another three-year-old girl. A 43-year-old dentist from West Bengal has been arrested for her alleged involvement in a baby-selling racket. Police said a complaint was registered after a two-year-old boy went missing in July 2024. Following the complaint, four persons—including the toddler’s father—were arrested. Earlier this week, police rescued the boy and made a fresh arrest in the case.

According to police officials, the dentist has been identified as Reshma Santosh Kumar Banerjee. Her role came to light during the interrogation of the previously arrested accused: Anil Purvaya, Asma Shaikh, Sharif Shaikh, and Asha Pawar, who were arrested from Mumbai and Hyderabad. Purvaya is the father of the missing child. An officer said, “The father, in collusion with others, had sold the two-year-old for Rs 1.6 lakh. After their arrest, the accused claimed they had handed over the baby to a woman identified as Banerjee at Bhubaneswar Railway Station in Odisha.” A team was subsequently dispatched, and based on the information provided by the accused, police began looking for the suspect. They later learned that Banerjee was working at Hi-Tech Dental Hospital in Bhubaneswar.

When the team reached the hospital, the authorities informed them that she had left the job to join another hospital in the same city. “We went to the second dental hospital, but she had quit that job too,” an officer added. “We then collected all available information from them and managed to obtain her residential address in West Bengal.” Personnel from the Wadala Truck Terminal police station travelled to Hooghly district in West Bengal, where they found the suspect along with the two-year-old boy and another three-year-



old girl. The girl was handed over to an NGO in the area, while Banerjee was arrested and produced before a court. She was brought to Mumbai on a transit remand, and the rescued two-year-old boy has been admitted to a hospital in Mumbai.

Groom jumps in front of train before wedding in UP

Amethi: A 30-year-old groom allegedly committed suicide by jumping in front of a train near a railway station here while his wedding procession was on the way to Azamgarh, police said Saturday. The incident happened on the Lucknow-Varanasi railway section late Friday evening in Amethi district.

According to the police, the wedding procession of Ravi (30), a resident of Salon in Rae Bareilly district was going to Azamgarh on Friday evening.

Two years after makeover for G20 Summit, Bhairon Marg drain is in a shambles



GNS News Agency, April 23

In the run-up to the G20 Summit in September 2023, Delhi rolled out the red carpet for visiting dignitaries — roads were relaid, new fountains in all shapes and sizes were built, and street art adorned the walls. As part of the transformation of the city, a portion of Pragati Maidan’s Bhairon Drain near the Summit venue — Bharat Mandapam — received a quiet makeover. Under the supervision of the Delhi L-G and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), a 240-metre section of the drain was given a ‘canal-like’ appearance. Beautified at a total cost of Rs 2.46 crore, the work was done in three phases. When The Indian Express visited the site on April 8, it bore a scant resemblance to its spruced-up version. Decorative rocks, once meticulously laid in a mosaic pattern along the sides, are now barely visible under wild overgrowth. Tall, unkempt plants have sprung from the gaps between the stones, concealing much of the design. The transformation had involved extensive efforts. The transformation had involved extensive efforts.

Floating atop the now-stagnant water is a familiar sight

— plastic packaging, used tarpaulin sheets, bottles, old rugs, and moss. The water, tinged a murky green, carries a foul odour, a reminder that the Bhairon drain is back to its old self. Piles of silt — dried and crusted from the last desilting exercise — remain heaped along the drain’s boundaries. Despite multiple attempts to seek a response on the last date when desilting and cleanliness initiatives were carried out in the canal, no response was received from the Director of Press and Information, MCD, Sumit Kumar. “The MCD cleans drains in its two-yearly desilting cycles. The drain had been cleared in the post-monsoon desilting cycle... no special desilting arrangement can be made for the beautified area of the drain,” an MCD official said. The transformation had involved extensive efforts. The stretch of the drain was cleared using machinery, which was followed by manual cleaning by sanitation staff to ensure the drain water appears clean for the high-level diplomatic meeting. Overgrowth was cleared, decorative rocks were laid, potted plants were positioned for aesthetic appeal, fish were seen swimming and a selfie point was installed.

To be sure, the deterioration had started much earlier — 20 days after the Summit, during a spot visit, The Indian Express found that the plants that once lined the canal were either missing or had withered from neglect. Silt had started to build up once again, causing a barrier in the water flow. The Bhairon Marg drain — which begins on this road and flows toward Gautam Buddha Nagar in UP before merging with the Yamuna River — has long been a troublesome spot, especially during rough monsoon spells. Infamous for its traffic snarls, the lack of regular desilting of the drain has, in many instances, led to heavy waterlogging on this corridor.

Mastan gang member, mother of 2-year-old: Who is ‘Lady Don’ arrested in murder case of Delhi teen

GNS News Agency, April 23

An Instagram reel shows a young woman waving a gun before it transitions to her loading the weapon. In another post, she has her hands on a set of bullets. In yet another post, she is seen carrying a country-made pistol. These videos and pictures were posted by ‘Lady Don’ aka Zikra, the key suspect in the murder of a 17-year-old boy in Northeast Delhi, said police, who have arrested her in the case. Her Instagram handle, Sher_ki_Sheri, was later deactivated. Mother of a two-year-old, and living separately from her husband, police said 22-year-old Zikra is part of the Mastan gang. This gang, a police officer said, is led by Shoib Mastan, who is currently lodged in jail in a robbery case. “Zikra was arrested and released 10 days ago in a case of brandishing an illegal firearm on social media. She used to make videos on her Instagram profile, which she named ‘sher ki sherni,’” the officer said. This moment, too, was caught on camera and posted online. It shows Zikra, clad in a white salwar, looking back gleefully at the camera while a female police officer escorts her to the po-



lice station. Zikra’s gang, a police officer said, was at odds with the community to which the victim belonged.

Police are also probing her association with Zoya Khan, jailed gangster Hashim Baba’s wife. Zoya was arrested in February for her alleged role in the murders of a businessman and a gym owner.

Rain brings relief to Delhi after two days of sweltering heat

GNS News Agency, April 23

Bringing respite from the sweltering heat, rain lashed several parts of Delhi on Friday evening, even as the maximum temperature soared past the 40-degree mark for the second day in a row. Friday’s maximum temperature was 41 degrees Celsius and minimum was 25.6 degrees Celsius — both four degrees above normal. By evening, however, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) sounded an orange alert and warned of moderate thunderstorms with strong surface winds, accompanied by light rain.

Around 8 pm, a fresh cloud cluster was reported to have entered Delhi, causing light rainfall. Several parts in Delhi, Northwest Uttar Pradesh, South Punjab, and Haryana reported “intense lightning”, the IMD told reporters. As per the IMD, some stations in Delhi, such as Pitampura, Pusa, and Sports Complex, Mayur Vihar, saw a drop in temperature by 10 degrees from 37 degrees to 27 degrees between 6.30 pm to 9.30 pm on Friday due to the weather conditions. The relief is expected to continue over the weekend, with the Met Office forecasting rain and windy days. The maximum temperature is expected to settle at 38 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature is likely to be at 26 degrees Celsius.

A heatwave day is registered when the day’s high for at least two weather stations touches or crosses 40 degrees Celsius with a departure of 4.5 to 6.4 degrees Cel-



sius from normal temperature for at least two days in a row. So far, three heatwave days have been logged this month in the city between April 7 and April 9. Meanwhile, the IMD has sounded a yellow alert for Saturday for thunderstorm or lightning activity; very light rainfall is also expected. Strong surface winds with speeds reaching up to 60 kmph have been forecast. Sunday is also expected to be windy. Next week, between April 21 and April 24, the IMD has forecast “mainly clear sky”. No heatwave and “no warm night” conditions are expected in the Capital till April 24, as per Friday’s bulletin. In a statement, the Met Office also said, “heat wave to severe heat wave conditions over Rajasthan are likely to abate” from Sunday onwards.

Soon, enjoy Old Delhi’s street food at a night market near Salimgarh Fort. Here are the details

GNS News Agency, April 23

Delhiites can look forward to an evening of culinary exploration under the stars — just steps away from one of the city’s oldest forts. To revive Old Delhi’s street food culture and streamline vending practices, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) is set to launch a night food market adjacent to the historic Salimgarh Fort. The market, which will operate between 6 pm and 10 pm, aims to offer a curated gastronomic experience rooted in the streets of Chandni Chowk, while maintaining hygiene standards and controlling unauthorised encroachments.

The civic body had earlier invited applications from vendors operating in Chandni Chowk and the surrounding areas. A total of 93 entries were received by the deadline of April 11, officials said, eliminating the need for an extension, which had earlier been considered in case of poor turnout. The applications featured a rich variety of Delhi’s favorite street foods, including biryani, noodles, pav bhaji, chole bhature, kachori, paranthas from the famed Paranthi Wali Gali, fruit chaat, ice cream, lassi, and more.

The location, an underutilised shortcut near the Old Iron Bridge connecting Ring Road to the Fort, has been chosen after much deliberation. After discussions with the Delhi Traffic Police, necessary clearances have been obtained to manage traffic and public movement, an MCD official said. The concept was first proposed during planning for the G20 Summit. The initial vision had involved the construction of permanent kiosks and a complete revamp of the area’s infrastructure. However, due to the monument’s protected status and other logistical challenges, the plan

was shelved. Now, the corporation has decided to take a phased approach — 50 licensed vendors will initially be picked to operate from the stretch, they must carry their own tables and chairs, and vacate the premises with all their carts after 10 pm every day.

“Vendors need to have a certificate of vending, should maintain hygiene standards, and should be ready to upgrade their carts according to the requirements set by the corporation,” an MCD official said. Each applicant is required to hold a valid vending certificate and pay a municipal and sanitation fee. A five-member screening committee has been constituted to scrutinise the entries. In food categories with multiple applicants, vendors with the highest hygiene standards will be shortlisted.

For the remaining contenders, final selections will be made through a draw of lots. The design and specifications of the carts will be decided based on public and vendor feedback during the pilot phase of the project, and the stretch will be beautified to appeal to tourists, said officials.

The deadline for the completion of the screening process has been set for May 11. Officials said this market will be strictly limited to food items — both vegetarian and non-vegetarian — and the sale of any other goods will not be permitted. On when the market will open, an MCD official said, “Applications are being scrutinised... and some lighting and toilet arrangements are being made. After these are in place, we will be able to start it [the market]. Regarding the fee, it will be decided after approval from the competent authority.”

Iran, U.S. to hold talks in Rome in bid to reach nuclear deal



GNS News Agency, April 23

Iran and the United States will hold a new round of nuclear talks in Rome on Saturday (April 19, 2025) to resolve their decades-long standoff over Tehran's atomic aims, under the shadow of U.S. President Donald Trump's threat to unleash military action if diplomacy fails. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and Trump's Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff will negotiate indirectly through mediators from Oman, a week after a first round in Muscat that both sides described as constructive.

Tehran has sought to tamp down expectations of a quick deal, after some Iranian officials speculated that sanctions could be lifted soon. Iran's utmost authority, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said this week he was "neither overly optimistic nor pessimistic". For his part, Mr. Trump told reporters on Friday, "I'm for stopping Iran, very simply, from having a nuclear weapon. They can't have a nuclear weapon. I want Iran to be great and prosperous

and terrific."

Mr. Trump, who ditched a 2015 nuclear pact between Iran and six powers during his first term in 2018 and reimposed crippling sanctions on Tehran, has revived his "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran since returning to the White House in January. Washington wants Iran to halt production of highly enriched uranium, which it believes is aimed at building an atomic bomb. Tehran, which has always said its nuclear programme is peaceful, says it is willing to negotiate some curbs in return for the lifting of sanctions, but wants watertight guarantees that Washington will not renege again as Trump did in 2018. Since 2019, Iran has breached and far surpassed the 2015 deal's limits on its uranium enrichment, producing stocks far above what the West says is necessary for a civilian energy programme.

A senior Iranian official, who described Iran's negotiating position on condition of anonymity, listed Iran's red lines as never agreeing to dismantle its uranium enriching centrifuges, halt enrichment altogether or reduce its enriched uranium stockpile below levels agreed in the 2015 deal. Iran also rejects negotiating about defence capabilities such as missiles. While both Tehran and Washington have said they are set on pursuing diplomacy, there is still a wide gap between them on the dispute that has rumbled on for more than two decades. Witkoff and Araqchi interacted briefly at the end of the first round last week, but officials from the two countries have not held direct negotiations since 2015, and Iran said the Rome talks would also be held indirectly through the Omani mediators. Russia, a party to Iran's 2015 nuclear agreement, has offered "to assist, mediate, and play any role" that will be beneficial to Iran and the United States.

U.S. Senator returns from El Salvador trip, says Abrego Garcia case is about far more than one man

GNS News Agency, April 23

Jennifer Vasquez Sura, wife of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, Cesar Abrego Garcia, and Cecilia Garcia de Abrego react as U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) holds a press conference after returning from a visit to El Salvador, where he advocated for the release of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a Salvadoran man deported from the U.S. without due process by the Trump administration, as an alleged MS-13 gang member and sent to the Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT), a maximum security prison in El Salvador, at Dulles International Airport in Sterling, Virginia, U.S., on April 18, 2025. Jennifer Vasquez Sura, wife of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, Cesar Abrego Garcia, and Cecilia Garcia de Abrego react as U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) holds a press conference after returning from a visit to El Salvador, where he advocated for the release of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a Salvadoran man deported from the U.S. without due process by the Trump administration, as an alleged MS-13 gang member and sent to the Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT), a maximum security prison in El Salvador, at Dulles International Airport in Sterling, Virginia, U.S., |

The dispute over the wrongful deportation and imprisonment of Kilmar Abrego Garcia "is not only about one man" but about Donald Trump's disregard of the American judicial system as well, Sen. Chris Van Hollen said Friday as he returned from a three-day trip to El Salvador to press for the detained man's release. Speaking to reporters just after landing back in the United States, Mr. Van Hollen offered few answers about what will come next in Abrego Garcia's case. But the Maryland Democrat said that he and others will keep speaking out after the Trump administration defied court orders to facilitate his return to the United States and insisted that he would stay in El Salvador — even as officials acknowledged an "error" in deporting him.

"It's about protecting the constitutional rights of everybody who resides in the United States," Mr. Van Hollen said at Washington Dulles International Airport at a news conference with Abrego Garcia's supporters behind him. "It's very clear that the president, Trump administration, are blatantly, flagrantly disagreeing with, defying the order from the Supreme Court." Standing next to him, Mr. Abrego Garcia's wife, Jennifer, wiped away tears as the Senator shared her husband's comments about missing his family. Much uncertainty remains about the future of Abrego Garcia, a Salvadoran citizen who was living in Maryland, after Mr. Van Hollen was presented with a carefully staged opportunity to meet with him in El Salvador on Thursday. The Maryland Senator said that Mr. Abrego Garcia reported he'd been moved from a notorious Salvadoran mega-prison, CECOT, to a detention center with better conditions. Mr. Abrego Garcia's status after Van Hollen left was not known, and there was no indication that Mr. Van Hollen's trip pushed him any closer to release. The case has become a focal point in the national immigration debate. Democrats insist that President Donald Trump is overstepping his executive authority and disrespecting the courts; Republicans are criticizing Democrats for defending a man Trump and White House officials claim is an MS-13 gang member, despite the fact that he has not been charged with any gang-related crimes. Mr. Van Hollen said that Mr. Abrego Garcia told him that he'd shared a cell with 25 prisoners and was afraid of many fellow inmates at CECOT before he was moved to another center in Santa Ana, El Salvador. He said that Mr. Abrego Garcia reported being treated well — but noted that they were surrounded by government minders at the time.

The fight over Mr. Abrego Garcia is the latest partisan flashpoint as Democrats struggle to break through and push back during the opening few months of Trump's second administration. More Democratic lawmakers have said they will fly to El Salvador to push for Abrego Garcia's release, but the partisan pressure has yielded no results. President Donald Trump and El Salvador's president, Nayib Bukele, have only dug in on keeping him out of the United States. That stance remained even after the U.S. Supreme Court called on the administration to facilitate his return.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt has said that Mr. Abrego Garcia will "never live in the United States of America again." Bukele posted images of Mr. Van Hollen's meeting with Mr. Abrego Garcia on Thursday and said that the prisoner "gets the honor of staying in El Salvador's custody." Mr. Van Hollen said a Salvadoran government official placed other beverages on the table with salt or sugar on the rim to make it appear they were drinking margaritas. Mr. Van Hollen said neither he nor Mr. Abrego Garcia drank from the glasses, which in the photo Bukele posted were garnished with cherries. After days of denying that he knew much about Mr. Abrego Garcia, Mr. Trump on Friday said he knew Mr. Abrego Garcia's prison record was "unbelievably bad" and called him an "illegal alien" and a "foreign terrorist."

The President also responded Friday with a social media post saying Van Hollen "looked like a fool yesterday standing in El Salvador begging for attention." Several House Republicans have visited the notorious gang prison in sup-



port of the Trump administration's efforts. Rep. Riley Moore, a West Virginia Republican, posted Tuesday evening that he'd visited the prison where Abrego Garcia is being held. "I leave now even more determined to support President Trump's efforts to secure our homeland," Moore wrote on social media. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials acknowledged in a court filing earlier this month that Abrego Garcia's deportation was an "administrative error." The government's acknowledgment generated immediate uproar from immigration advocates, but White House officials have stuck with the allegation that he's a gang member. The fight has also played out in contentious court filings, with repeated refusals from the government to tell a judge what it plans to do, if anything, to repatriate him. The three-judge panel from the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously refused Thursday to suspend the judge's decision to order sworn testimony by Trump administration officials and said the judiciary will be hurt by the "constant intimations of its illegitimacy" while the executive branch "will lose much from a public perception of its lawlessness." Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III, nominated by President Ronald Reagan, a Republican, wrote that he and his two colleagues "cling to the hope that it is not naïve to believe our good brethren in the Executive Branch perceive the rule of law as vital to the American ethos." Since March, El Salvador has accepted from the United States more than 200 Venezuelan immigrants whom Trump administration officials have accused of gang activity and violent crimes. Bukele's government has placed them inside the country's maximum-security gang prison, just outside San Salvador.

White House blames Covid 'lab leak' origins on China, slams Biden and Fauci

GNS News Agency, April 23

Washington: US President Donald Trump's White House launched a Covid-19 website on Friday in which it blamed the origins of the coronavirus on a lab leak in China's Wuhan. He also criticised former President Joe Biden, former top US health official Anthony Fauci and the World Health Organisation of suppressing the coronavirus origins. The White House website now has an entire page dedicated to the Covid-19 lab-leak theory. This comes weeks after the CIA issued a report saying that the lab-leak was likely. The agency had previously said that it did not have enough information to determine the origin of Covid-19. The new webpage is on the site that served as a resource for Covid-19 vaccination efforts. It now has a banner reading: "LAB LEAK: The True Origins of Covid-19." President Donald Trump is also featured in the banner. The "lab-leak" page also accuses former Chief Medical Advisor Dr. Fauci and Biden of covering up the origins of coronavirus. It says that the previous administration "engaged in a multi-year campaign of delay, confusion and non-responsiveness" to conceal the truth. "This website shows the true origins of Covid-19 and how Democrats and the media discredited alternative health treatments and the lab-leak theory," the White House said in a statement. "The Proximal Origin of SARS-CoV-2 publication, which was used repeatedly by public health officials and the media to discredit the lab-leak theory, was promoted by Dr. Fauci to push the preferred narrative that Covid-19 originated naturally," the site said. It further lists five key points, suggesting that Covid-19's origins were not natural.

1. The virus possesses a biological characteristic that is not found in nature.

2. According to the data, all cases of Covid-19 stem from a single introduction into humans, which is contrary to previous pandemics, where there were multiple spillover events.

3. Wuhan is home to China's foremost SARS research lab, which has a history of conducting gain-of-function research (gene altering and organism supercharging) without adequate biosafety.

Deadly U.S. airstrike on Yemeni oil port escalates Trump's campaign against the Houthis



GNS News Agency, April 23

A U.S. airstrike on an important oil port held by Yemen's Houthi rebels killed more than 70 people and wounded many others, the Iranian-backed rebel group said Friday, marking a major escalation in the military campaign President Donald Trump launched against the faction last month. The overnight strike on the Ras Isa port sent massive fireballs billowing skyward and turned tanker trucks into burning wrecks. It was the first American attack on a Houthi-controlled oil facility since the U.S. began its new bombing campaign. It also came just before the resumption of negotiations in Rome between the U.S. and Iran over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program, which Washington has linked to its Yemen campaign. The U.S. is targeting the Houthis because of the group's attacks on shipping in the Red Sea, a crucial global trade route, and on Israel. The Houthis are the last militant group in Iran's self-described "Axis of Resistance" that is capable of regularly attacking Israel. The port serves as a major hub for incoming fuel shipments that power areas of Yemen held by the Houthis, and analysts say the airstrike could seriously affect daily life there. The Houthis, who said the attack killed at least 74 people and wounded 171 others, aired graphic footage of the aftermath on their al-Masirah satellite news channel, showing corpses strewn about the port and smashed tanker trucks. They denounced the strike as a "completely unjustified aggression." "It targets a vital civilian facility that has served the Yemeni people for decades," the group said in a statement. U.S. Central Command declined to answer any questions about possible civilian casualties but referred to a statement in which it said "this strike was not intended to harm the people of Yemen." "U.S. forces took action to eliminate this source of fuel for the Iran-backed Houthi terrorists and deprive them of illegal revenue that has funded Houthi efforts to terrorize the entire region for over 10 years," it said in its statement.

A U.S. official said the attack sent a message to those supplying fuel to the Houthis despite sanctions. The official spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity to provide details not yet made public. Hours after the U.S. strike, the Houthis launched a missile toward Israel that was intercepted, the Israeli military said. Sirens sounded in Tel Aviv and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the Houthis said they shot down another American MQ-9 Predator drone, which the U.S. official acknowledged. The Ras Isa port is a collection of oil tanks and equipment that sits in Yemen's Hodeida governorate along the Red Sea. It is just off Kamaran Island, which has been targeted by intense U.S. airstrikes in recent days. Before the Houthis took control of Yemen's capital, Sanaa, in 2014 and sent the government into exile, oil from the country's energy-rich Marib governorate moved through Ras Isa for export. But since the Houthis don't control that region, the port now serves as an import hub for gasoline, diesel and liquefied petroleum gas that help power those parts of Yemen the Houthis control. The new U.S. operation against the Houthis under Trump appears more extensive than attacks on the group were under President Joe Biden, an AP review found. The new campaign started after the rebels threatened to begin

targeting "Israeli" ships again over Israel blocking aid from entering the Gaza Strip. From November 2023 until this January, the Houthis targeted more than 100 merchant vessels with missiles and drones, sinking two of them and killing four sailors. That has greatly reduced the flow of trade through the Red Sea corridor, which typically sees \$1 trillion of goods move through it. The Houthis also launched attacks targeting American warships without success. Assessing the toll of the month-old U.S. airstrike campaign has been difficult because the military hasn't released information about the attacks, including what was targeted and how many people were killed. The Houthis, meanwhile, strictly control access to attacked areas and don't publish complete information on the strikes, many of which likely have targeted military and security sites. The Ras Isa port airstrike is the deadliest known attack yet in the month-old campaign. The actual cost in lives is hard to assess, said Luca Nevola, the senior analyst for Yemen and the Gulf at the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, a think tank.

"Since they are targeting civilian areas, there's a lot more victims. But it's also difficult to assess how many because the Houthis are releasing these umbrella statements that cover all the victims ... or tend to stress only the civilian victims," Nevola said. Further complicating the situation is the U.S. strikes hitting military targets, said Mohammed al-Basha, a Yemen expert at the Basha Report risk advisory firm. He pointed to an American attack that Trump highlighted online with black-and-white strike footage, which might have killed about 70 fighters. "Although the Houthis claimed it was a tribal gathering, they neither released any footage nor named a single casualty, strongly suggesting the victims were not civilians but affiliated fighters," al-Basha said. "However, the overnight strike on the Ras Isa Fuel Port marks the first mass-casualty incident the Houthis have openly acknowledged and publicized."

The AP analyzed satellite images of the port provided by Planet Labs PBC that showed destroyed oil tanks and vehicles, and what appeared to be oil leaking into the Red Sea. Wim Zwijnenburg, an analyst with Dutch peace organization PAX, said it appeared at least three fuel storage tanks had been destroyed and that oil had leaked from mooring pipelines. A U.S. State Department spokesperson, Tammy Bruce, accused a Chinese commercial satellite image provider, Chang Guang Satellite Technology Co. Ltd., of "directly supporting Iran-backed Houthi terrorist attacks on U.S. interests." During a briefing with reporters, Bruce did not elaborate in detail. But she acknowledged a report by The Financial Times that quoted anonymous American officials saying the company linked to the People's Liberation Army has provided images allowing the rebels to target U.S. warships and commercial vessels traveling through the Red Sea corridor. Bruce said "Beijing's support" of the satellite company ... "contradicts their claims of being peace supporters." Responding to a question about the allegation, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said Friday: "I am not familiar with the situation you mentioned." However, he insisted China is seen as urging countries "to make more efforts conducive to regional peace and stability." "Since the escalations in the Red Sea situation, China has been playing a positive role in de-escalating the situation," Lin said. "Who is promoting talks for peace and deescalating the tensions, and who is imposing sanctions and pressure?" The company didn't respond to request for comment. The U.S. Treasury sanctioned it in 2023 for allegedly providing satellite images to the Russian mercenary force the Wagner Group as it fought in Ukraine. It remains unclear whether Chang Guang is linked to the Chinese government. The U.S. government in the past has used images taken by American commercial satellite companies to share with allies, like Ukraine, to avoid releasing its own top-secret pictures.

Trump to reclassify many U.S. Federal workers, making them easier to fire



GNS News Agency, April 23

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday (April 18, 2025) his administration is set to change the employment classifications of tens of thousands of federal workers, a move governance experts say will make it easier to carry out more mass layoffs. Mr. Trump said on social media that moving forward, career government employees that work on policy matters will be classified as "schedule policy/career." This change would ensure the federal government will finally be "run like a business," Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Trump's announcement, putting into action an executive order he signed on his first day in office on January 20, will likely strip vast numbers of the 2.3 million-strong federal workforce of their job protections by effectively mak-

ing them employees at will. By deeming anyone involved in "policy" as part of this new category, the pool of people that could potentially be fired expands enormously, because nearly everyone in government touches policy in one way or another, said Don Moynihan, a professor at the Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan. Mr. Trump ordered the reclassification of many government workers at the end of his first term, known as Schedule F, which Biden rescinded on his first day in office in 2021. Estimates then were that Schedule F could make at least 50,000 federal workers vulnerable to being fired. The new order is broad enough that hundreds of thousands of people could be reclassified, Moynihan said, before firings begin. Over 260,000 federal workers have already been fired, taken buyouts, retired early or have been earmarked for termination since Trump took office, according to a tally by Reuters. The reclassification comes as Trump and tech billionaire Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency continue their drive to cut the size and cost of the federal workforce. They claim it is bloated and full of waste and fraud. Everett Kelley, president of the American Federation of Government Employees, the biggest federal workers' union with 800,000 members, decried the move by Trump. "President Trump's action to politicize the work of tens of thousands of career federal employees will erode the government's merit-based hiring system and undermine the professional civil service that Americans rely on," Mr. Kelley said.

45 Palestinians killed in Israeli airstrikes across Gaza: Civil defence

Gaza: Israeli airstrikes across the Gaza Strip killed at least 45 Palestinians and injured dozens of others, according to the Civil Defence in Gaza. Mahmud Basal, spokesperson for the Civil Defence, said on Friday that in the southern city of Khan Younis, 10 people were killed in an Israeli airstrike targeting a residential home belonging to the Baraka family, while six others, including two children and a woman, died after an airstrike on a barbershop. "Multiple other strikes in Khan Younis reportedly killed eight more people, while two others were killed in southern Rafah city," he added. In the north, at least 13 people were killed and several others wounded when a strike hit the Maqdad family's home in the Tal al-Zaatar area, Basal said, noting six were killed in airstrikes on two displacement tents in Gaza City, Xinhua news agency reported. In a press statement, the Civil Defence warned that its emergency operations may grind to a halt in the coming days due to fuel shortages, which it attributed to the ongoing Israeli restrictions on aid and fuel

entry. In a separate attack in the same region, an Israeli airstrike hit a tent sheltering displaced civilians in the al-Tuwam area, killing two Palestinians and injuring six others. Another young man was also killed in an Israeli strike targeting a group of civilians in Jabalia. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said in a statement on Friday that, with the direction of intelligence, IDF troops are continuing their operational activity against militant organisations in Gaza, dismantling their infrastructure sites, and killing militants. "The Israeli Air Force struck nearly 40 terror targets throughout Gaza, including terrorists, military structures, and weapons storage facilities," it said. Further attacks were reported across Gaza, particularly in the eastern regions of Gaza City, including heavy shelling and airstrikes in the Shujaiya and Zeitoun neighbourhoods, with residential buildings being destroyed. On Thursday alone, the Israeli army killed at least 45 Palestinians during intensified air, drone, and artillery strikes across the Gaza Strip.

Ambedkar's extraordinary leadership



advocate for the cause of women, Ambedkar asked a gathering of about 3,000 Dalit women in 1927 to dress without heeding caste-specific restrictions, learn self-help and gain self-respect. During the All-India Depressed Classes Women's Conference in 1942, he exhorted women to give education to their children, not to marry without becoming financially stable and to stand up to their husbands as a friend and equal. A pioneer who recommended birth-control and rest during post-natal period. Ambedkar was a barrister in Bombay in the 1920s and became the Principal of the Government Law College. As Independent India's first Law Minister in Jawaharlal Nehru's Cabinet, he had brought forth the Hindu Code Bill in 1948, with provisions for women to initiate divorce, right to inherit property, manage finances and so on.

Having known how education helps to open doors, it is no wonder that Ambedkar tried to work for the cause of improving the chances for getting education for all. The establishment of Siddhartha College of Arts in Bombay and Milind College in Aurangabad under the Peoples Educational Society in 1946 and providing for essential facilities to make it possible for scholars to use these institutions are examples. The aim was, in Dr. Ambedkar's own words, not merely to give education "but to give education in such a manner as to promote intellectual, moral and social democracy". A fundamental feature of Dr. Ambedkar's work is the way it was carried out: careful deep study about the essential nature of a particular issue, leading to the formulation of ideas and identification of the solutions, which are then pursued using multiple avenues. The case of the hierarchical caste system, which Ambedkar identified as the primary cause for the social, political and economic stratification found in the Indian society can be taken as an example. Ambedkar's 1916 essay on the genesis, mechanism and development of castes in India, presented at an anthropology seminar in the U.S., is still considered as a seminal study. In Annihilation of Caste (1936), Dr. Ambedkar discusses in depth what the caste system embodies and puts forth possible ways to bring about its annihilation. He wrote about the Partition of India in the 1940 book Thoughts on Pakistan. When the State reorganisation move was going on in the country, Thoughts on Linguistic States was published in 1955. Though Ambedkar had announced leaving the Hindu fold in 1935, the fact that he actually took the plunge and embraced Buddhism only 21 years later in 1956, is a clear marker of the way he worked. Careful study of various religions, engaging with discussions, participating in world Buddhist conferences and even writing a 600-page compendium on the Buddha and his Dhamma. The twin aspect of theory and practice reveal that for Ambedkar, nothing was sacred that it could not be examined. Only after a critical analysis could anything be accepted. The mind-boggling 17-volume writings and speeches of Ambedkar give ample proof about this.

Across time and space There is relevance across time and space for the concepts and values that Ambedkar articulated — social democracy as an essential pre-requisite for a political democracy, fraternity as social endosmosis and the very core of democracy, the need to hold fast to constitutional methods, the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity as the cornerstones of a just world. One can also see applicability of the themes and methods in other disciplines, to address problems old and new. Thinking things through as a philosopher, formulating ideas as a pragmatist and then striving to bring them to fruition as a social activist. Not rigid, but open to change. After dwelling on ways to annihilate caste and suggesting his own remedies, Dr. Ambedkar says, "You must make your efforts to uproot caste, if not in my way, then in your way." The Millennium Declaration of the United Nations lists the challenges faced by the world today and shows how unequal and unjust the world continues to be. Some of the issues such as poverty and inequality are carrying on from time immemorial, while others, such as the digital divide, environmental hazards and climate change, are comparatively new. The battle for social justice is not just about one country, but about all the countries. We see the significance and relevance of Ambedkar's thoughts and concepts across the world and across time. His notion about equality as the only possible governing principle among unequal entities is a directive that can show the world the way in which to advance. The one word that describes the path that Dr. Ambedkar's life took triumphing over his circumstances, the themes he engaged with, the kind of engagement he undertook and the contributions made, is "extraordinary". A journey of focus, hard work, perseverance, uncompromising determination and sheer courage. The message of his life and work is sure to stand as a source of inspiration and beacon of hope and redemption, for generations to come. When Dr. Ambedkar says "reason and morality are the two most powerful weapons in the armoury of a reformer", it is applicable to reformers anywhere, anytime. At the 75th year of the Indian Constitution and the 134th birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, how shall we mark him? Not just as activist for the downtrodden, scholar-extraordinaire or constitution-builder, but as a leader for all of us, all the world and for all times.

loans against their stated purpose thus being unable to correctly assess the associated risk and place proportionate risk weights. Imperative to note here that loans against gold jewellery have increased more than 87% on a year-over-year basis at the end of February. Furthermore, the Finance Ministry informed Parliament earlier this year that gross non-performing assets pertaining to gold loans in Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), and upper- and middle-layer non-banking financial companies have increased by 18.14% between March and June last year.

The proposed norms introduce specific yardsticks for valuing the gold and accordingly disbursing the loan. Firstly, the yellow metal sought to be placed as collateral would have to be valued against the price of 22-carat gold. The reference price could be the average of the preceding 30 days or the closing price of the preceding day as quoted by the Indian Bullion and Jewellers Association Ltd., or the spot price of gold in SEBI-regulated commodity exchanges. The RBI also proposes that hallmarked gold be accorded preferential treatment with the margin and interest rates set accordingly. Other than this, the RBI proposes that aggregate weight of silver and gold ornaments and jewellery must not exceed 1 kilogram per borrower. As for coins, the aggregate weight cannot exceed 50 grams for gold coins for a single borrower and 500 grams in case of silver coins. The regulator specifies that coins sold by entities other than banks not be considered for valuation. Finally, the regulator proposes to mandate that lenders do not extend loans where the individual's ownership of the metal is doubtful. When original receipts may not be available, the borrower would have to provide suitable document/declaration illustrating their propriety.

What a post-Assad Syria means for China



Over the past two years, China's foreign policy has been consistent in the manner of largely supporting the Arab positions over Gaza, which included hosting Hamas in Beijing, amongst other Palestinian entities, to try and mediate. Its position in Arab hearts and minds has grown and recent surveys have put the United States below its eastern competition in popularity. However, the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria has opened a core security crisis for the Chinese by way of a stronger political position for Uyghur militants in the 'new' Damascus under President Ahmed al-Sharaa.

Getting a safe spaceAs in multiple reports, Uyghur militants belonging to the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) — also known as the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) — have scored prominent positions in the revised Syrian army. Ahmed al-Sharaa took over in a largely unchallenged juggernaut when his group, the Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), arrived in the Syrian capital without any major battles. The HTS has been at the centre of the anti-Assad movement since the initial stages of the Arab Spring led by Al Sharaa (better known then as Abu Mohammed al Jolani, and his cohort of fighters from across the world). This was a time when Syria was a hotspot of global jihadist movements and the so-called Islamic State (IS) controlled large swathes of territory across the Levant region.

Al Sharaa, who has had stints with the IS and al Qaeda, developed his own support base over time. The HTS also offered safe space for those who were seeking shelter or ideological patronage. Here, Uyghurs militias found the opportunity to construct their own sanctuary while offering tactical backing to the HTS. During the period beginning 2011, Uyghur militias were intricately woven into IS ecosystems. Propaganda videos and publications featuring Uyghur fighters were actively promoted — these ranged from well produced videos of Uyghur fighters taking on Assad's military to ideological propaganda translated into the Uyghur language in audio and text formats. More recently, in 2017, the IS released a targeted video showing Uyghur fighters in training and threatening 'rivers of blood' against the Chinese state. In the immediate past, China has seldom featured in IS propaganda as the Washington-Beijing contestation has taken centre stage. Fast forward to 2025, and Syria's mili-

tary and polity are being rebuilt. The first is arguably a more delicate endeavour than the second, with bringing a wide variety of warring factions to rally behind one leader being easier said than done. In Syria's 'new' military, those who fought alongside Al Sharaa have been given precedence irrespective of their nationality. The journey, from jihadists to generals for many, has been taking place swiftly since January. One of the biggest representations overall is by the Uyghurs — nearing 2,000 in number by some estimates. At least one of the known 50 high-ranking commander-level appointments is an Uyghur — Abdulaziz Dawood Khodaberd (known as Zahid), who has been recognised as a former commander of ETIM in Syria.

Impact of big power competitionFor Beijing, this elevation opens an automatic fault line with Damascus, with which it has enjoyed friendly relations in the past. One of the core reasons why China rallied behind America's 'war on terror' narrative was to use American hegemony to deliver on its own counter-terror interests. In 2002, the U.S. had classified ETIM as a terror organisation, only to remove it in 2020 based on the argument that no credible evidence of ETIM's existence was available for over a decade and that China was using it as a bogey to clamp down on Uyghurs in its restive Xinjiang province. The advent of big power competition between the U.S. and China has in fact only given militant groups more manoeuvring space globally. Previously, Beijing has made handling of ETIM a top priority in its relations with the new Taliban-led government in Afghanistan. However, most militant groups now in charge of parastates, tend to always first prioritise their support for those who fought with them in the trenches. Soon after the Taliban took charge of Kabul in August 2021, it was reported that the group had relocated Uyghur militants away from Afghanistan's narrow 76-km long border with China in the Badakhshan province. Unlike the Taliban, the new regime in Syria has taken a different approach — elevating the Uyghurs to official ranks. The western game plan

The Chinese government has raised this issue in the United Nations as western and regional powers alike rush to engage with Al Sharaa. The western engagements in play are to solidify two fronts. First, to place basic security in the embattled state and stem any mass migration. Second, to make sure Russia, Iran, and, by association, China remain in the peripheries and maintain minimal influence. These larger geopolitical aims have allowed now former designated terrorists to metamorphose into statesmen overnight. The challenge for Chinese diplomacy continues here. One of the main regional powers that is still kinetically and overtly active in Syria is Israel. But both China and Israel have been at odds over China's stance on Gaza and the issue of Palestine. Even on the Arab side, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, amongst others, who have previously given Beijing a pass over Xinjiang, have accepted al Sharaa, thus limiting Beijing's options and forcing a strategic re-think moving forward.

The necessity for, and the challenges that lie in caring for India's elderly population

With the country's population continuing to age, there has been an exponential rise in the demand for geriatric care services. This demographic shift has been pushing healthcare systems to come up with ways to care for the rising ageing population. While the availability of geriatric care is steadily improving, health is not the only concern: elderly citizens face numerous social and economic challenges too. The evolution of geriatric careThere was a time when not many knew about geriatric care, says V. S. Natarajan, a Chennai-based senior geriatrician. Dr. Natarajan had started an outpatient unit at the Government General Hospital in the late 1970s, and in 1996, he started an MD in Geriatrics at the Madras Medical College with two seats. "This speciality that caters to the elderly has grown over the years, and the services have improved. Now, with longevity increased, there is a greater need for special care for the elderly," he adds.

However, over the decades, the disease pattern in the elderly has also changed notes Dr. Natarajan, who also established the Dr. V.S. Natarajan Geriatric Foundation. "When I started the outpatient unit, I used to see patients with infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, cholera, typhoid and dysentery. Now, 40 years later, we are seeing a lot of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) owing to lifestyle changes including food habits and lack of exercise. As a result, people are developing multiple diseases during the ageing process. Cataracts, mild memory loss and arthritis are associated with ageing. Now though, with people living longer, they are experiencing degenerative diseases: longstanding diseases that require life-long medications." This, in turn, causes financial burdens for the elderly as well as a social burden for caregivers, Dr. Natarajan says, adding: "Financial constraints, multiple diseases and dependency are the main challenges for an elderly person today."

Priyanka Rana Patgiri, Consultant-Geriatrics, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, adds on: "It is estimated that the elderly population (persons aged above 60) will cross 300 million by 2050 in India. This increased longevity is due to the availability of good healthcare services and accessibility to lifesaving drugs. The lifespan is increasing, not the health span, as chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension are also on the rise." That a high but unmet need for services existed became evident with the opening of Chennai's National Centre of Ageing, a standalone geriatric health facility. Inaugurated in February 2024, the patient inflow to this centre steadily grew with 1,000 outpatients a day on most weekdays and 800 to 900 during the weekends. The 200-bed facility has been drawing elderly patients from across Tamil Nadu including southern districts. S. Deepa, director (full additional charge), National Centre of Ageing (NCA), attributes this to increased awareness among the people. "I think that people have recognised the field of geriatric medicine. Many are approaching us without even being referred," she says. NCA has 14 geriatricians, 27 geriatric medicine postgraduates and various specialists to take care of older people. One of the major issues when it comes to the health of the elderly is that many of them have multiple ailments. These include hypertension, diabetes and osteoarthritis. They require multiple doctor visits. This is where the NCA helps, as all services are provided under a single roof. "At NCA, patients are first seen by a geriatrician. They are assessed and then referred to the respective specialist," Dr. Deepa says. Dr. Priyanka further explains: "While chronic diseases are among the common problems faced by the elderly, polypharmacy is another concern. By the age of 75, many elderly persons start taking at least eight to nine medications and have to consult different doctors such as neurologists and cardiologists. Over-the-counter medications are also commonly used by

them. Falls, age-related issues such as urinary incontinence and memory loss are the other key issues." She also touches upon the mental health of the elderly. "We know that older persons may suffer from dementia and Alzheimer's but there are other mental health issues as well. These include depression due to loneliness; something that we are seeing after COVID-19. We often fail to see symptoms of mental illness in the elderly," she adds. Approaching issues concerning the elderly through the lens of health alone, could be insufficient. Dr. Priyanka observed that with the rising trend of nuclear families, the older population is impacted in more than one way. "They are left in isolation physically, emotionally and financially. Though the demand for geriatric medicine is rising, many are unable to come to hospitals due to various factors including immobility or lack of support at home, with many being accompanied to hospitals by their elderly spouses. We are seeing this on a regular basis," she notes. Edwin Babu, director, HelpAge India Tamil Nadu, said isolation is one of the major issues faced by the elderly now. With a lot of migration happening and children moving abroad or to other cities, more elderly persons are living alone, he said. "A lot of abandonment is also happening as families are unwilling to take care of, and spend on medical care for the elderly. Insurance for the elderly is also expensive. Earlier, following calls received at our helpline, we used to rescue homeless and destitute elderly. Now, our helpline is getting calls about elderly persons deserted, families disowning them on roads or at railway stations or by admitting them in hospitals. This is on the rise," he said. Is India equipped to deal with the rise in its elderly population? | In Focus podcast Caregiver shortage Supporting the elderly by way of caregivers is another major challenge. To address the growing demand for elderly care services in their homes, the Tamil Nadu government has started a certificate course for home-based elderly care support assistants in government medical college hospitals. What should be the path ahead? Understanding and addressing the many needs of the elderly is key. As governments and institutions step up care for the elderly, existing gaps should be identified and addressed. One such recommendation to the Tamil Nadu government is to start geriatric medicine departments in every medical college hospital, according to Mr. Edwin. "Old-age homes are limited. In our policy, we have recommended that the State government take up a financial commitment for this purpose," he adds. On its part, NCA, which offers specialist consultations such as cardiology and orthopaedics, is performing elective surgeries, and is equipping itself to take up orthopaedic surgeries shortly. This is not all. Realising the importance of certain services for the elderly, the hospital, as a part of a State government pilot initiative, took up eye screening and is providing free spectacles. It also recently administered pneumococcal vaccines to 600 older patients. "Adult vaccination is not popular, and it is also costly too. Hence, we vaccinated elderly persons," Dr. Deepa notes. With hospital-based care in place and drug distribution at the doorsteps available through the Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam (medical care at the doorstep) scheme, she raises the need for community-level assessment to look at other age-related health issues in the elderly. "Not all the elderly will be able to visit hospitals. Hypertension and diabetes are a priority, and we should also assess and address other age-related issues such as hearing impairment, vision loss, mobility and memory. We have to screen senior citizens at the community level," she adds. Dr. Deepa says that family support is crucial for the elderly. Intergenerational bonding should be promoted. Children, starting at the school level, should be sensitised to the needs of the elderly. There is also a limitation of the workforce, Dr. Priyanka says, adding: "We need more doctors trained in geriatric medicine."

How is RBI proposing to streamline rules of lending against gold?

The story so far: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on April 9 put out draft guidelines for consultation on how lending against gold jewellery and ornaments as collateral should be conducted. The norms strive to harmonise the overall regulatory framework which may differ for entities with varied risk-taking capabilities and address concerns relating to their present conduct. The apex banking regulator is soliciting comments on the proposed regulations until May 12.

Regulations felt necessary The central objective of the proposed norms is to enable a standardised framework which would help address issues emanating from lack of proper due diligence in the realm and improper assessment of the value of gold. The apex banking regulator in September last year had expressed its disquiet about how loans were being disbursed through business models that had regulated entities partnering fintech platforms and/or other financial service providers. Concerns existed about the value of the metal being assessed in the absence of the borrower and outsourcing of essential procedures as credit appraisal, valuation and KYC of customers to the partner entity, among other things.

Gold loans essentially provide money to interested borrowers for their immediate or long-term requirements by pledging the yellow metal which would have otherwise stayed idle. Its essential value makes it an ideal collateral which is auctioned off in case the loan is not repaid. However, the regulator observed instances wherein the average realisation from auctioning the gold was lower than the initially estimated value of the precious metal when the loan was disbursed. This was because of an incorrect assessment of net purity and/or weight. The regulator also had concerns about entities not having verified the end use of the

Amid China's rare earth metals blockade, Indian electronics companies to figure out 'alternatives,' says Vaishnav



park of VVDN Technologies at Manesar in Gurugram. While the availability of rare earth metals is not limited to China, it is in the efficient processing of these critical elements where Beijing has a substantial lead, which was once enjoyed by the US and Japan. In recent years, Japan has been able to restart some of its minerals' processing industry owing to government policies, but the US is still very dependent on Chinese exports of these metals, even for use cases in its defence sector.

In response to the US administration's reciprocal tariff heat, China suspended exports of seven heavy rare earth metals including samarium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, lutetium, scandium, and yttrium, as well as rare earth magnets earlier this week. A few months ago, it had banned exports to the US of gallium, germanium, antimony, and other key high-tech materials with potential military applications.

Vaishnav also expressed optimism about a "positive outcome" from the upcoming visit of US Vice President JD Vance next week. India and the US are negotiating a bilateral trade agreement, and Vance's India visit — where he is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi — is being seen as crucial. "There will be a very positive outcome, is what I can say with a good level of confidence, because we have approached this thing in a very pragmatic way, and very agile way, and we have continuously engaged," Vaishnav said. "Over a period of time, India has emerged as a very trusted country, because the way Prime Minister Narendra Modi conducted foreign policy, that trust has been generated about our country today, and that is going to be a big and important factor for all of us." Vaishnav said that the electronics sector in India was set to undergo an "exponential" growth in the coming years, partly assisted by government subsidy schemes, such as the recently notified Rs 23,000 crore incentive scheme for electronics components manufacturing. India's supply chains for electronics had grown over the last decade to achieve production value of over Rs 11 lakh crore, while exports of electronics goods had crossed Rs 3.25 lakh crore value during this time, he said.

FPIs offload significant IT, financial services and capital goods stocks till April 15

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs), who remained net sellers in the domestic equity markets during the first fortnight of fiscal 2025-26, offloaded the highest amount of shares of information technology (IT) companies, followed by financial services stocks and capital goods in the same period. Overseas investors net sold Rs 33,927 crore of local shares between April 1 and 15. In the first fortnight of the current fiscal, FPIs net sold Rs 13,828 crore worth of IT shares and Rs 4,501 crore worth of financial services stocks. This sell-off was driven by uncertainties stemming from reciprocal tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump on April 2, and the following escalation in trade wars. Analysts, however, believe that the FPI trend is likely to reverse in favour of emerging markets, especially India, in the near term, amid trade tensions between the US and China.

"The bulk of the (FPI) selling was between April 1 and 7 and was primarily due to the concerns about reciprocal tariffs from the US, and thus the Indian currency declined sharply to 86.75 level, which is back to 85.40 in the last two days," said Shrikant Chouhan, Head Equity Research, Kotak Securities. Heavy selling by FPIs resulted in the Sensex and Nifty plunging close to 4 per cent between April 1 and 7. However, both the indices have now recovered their losses.

Besides, IT and financial services stocks, FPIs pulled out money from capital goods (Rs 3,019 crore) metals & mining stocks (Rs 2,829 crore), oil gas & consumable fuels (Rs 2,759 crore), and automobile and auto components (Rs 2,562 crore) between April 1 and 15. "Although services were not targeted (through reciprocal tariffs), Indian IT companies were spooked by the prospect of slowdown in the US and therefore cut in IT budgets. The fear of slowdown in India triggered concerns of capital spending hitting the financial sector which already had multiple headwinds. Overall the selloff was in line with global sentiments, hence FPIs reduced risk," said Vineet Sachdeva, Entrepreneur Partner-Quantitative Equity Investing, Alpha



Alternatives. Recently, the US imposed a 245 per cent tariff on various Chinese imports. The trade war between the US and China escalated after the US President slapped a 145 per cent tariff on import of Chinese goods. In retaliation, China had announced to levy a 125 per cent tariff on imports from America.

According to VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, the fortnightly FPI investment data in the current global uncertainties may not give a clear picture. In the last two days, there has been a reversal in FPI flows into India, with overseas investors purchasing Rs 10,824.29 crore worth of domestic stocks. "Following Trump's tariff announcement, there is a very high probability of the US dipping into a recession, or in the best case scenario, the growth rate is projected at less than 1 per cent in 2025. Also, the prediction of GDP growth for China is around 3.5 per cent only for 2025," Vijayakumar said. "In this context, the earnings growth from these two countries will also be impacted. So that is the reason why FPI flows have suddenly reversed. There is a clear and distinct pivot in favour of emerging markets, particularly India," he said. In the last few days, the dollar index has slipped below 100. With the dollar depreciating, analysts see money flowing out of the US and into emerging markets, particularly India.

DGCA orders probe into Air India Express pilot's death after cardiac arrest at Delhi airport

Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered an investigation into the circumstances around the sudden death of an Air India Express pilot due to a cardiac arrest after operating a Srinagar-Delhi flight on April 9. The regulator has also asked the probe panel to examine existing guidelines and circulars related to dealing with such eventualities and suggest changes.

Air India Express first officer Armaan, who was in his 30s, suffered a fatal cardiac arrest at the Delhi airport shortly after operating a flight from Srinagar on April 9. According to sources, he had vomited and collapsed shortly after the plane landed in Delhi. He was first attended to by the Delhi airport medical centre staff, after which he was rushed to a hospital, but did not survive. The DGCA has formed a two-member investigation panel on the incident and has asked for the probe report to be submitted within six months, per an order issued by the Director General of Civil Aviation Faiz Ahmed Kidwai.

The terms of reference of the investigation include whether the crew reported about the pilot's sickness to the Delhi Air Traffic Control (ATC) while the aircraft was still in air, and whether the ATC initiated action appropriately, and whether the other crew members took the necessary action. The probe panel will look into the time taken in transporting the pilot to the airport medical centre and then to the hospital, and will also check the level of preparedness of the airport medical centre in handling such emergencies. This comes amid conflicting accounts on whether the pilot received timely medical attention. While some in the pilot fraternity claimed that no medical team arrived for over half an hour after the ATC was informed of Armaan's sudden onset of illness, Delhi International Airport Ltd said that the airport's medical team responded "within 10 minutes" of the emergency. The probe's terms of reference also include checking the medical history of the pilot, ascertaining



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whether due precaution was taken during his rostering by the airline, and if any specific pre-flight medical checks are required for pilots who have flying restrictions due to medical reasons. There have been a few such incidents in recent years, and pilot unions have been seeking better fatigue management measures and pilot-friendly flight duty time limitation norms and better rest period mandates. To be sure, it is too early to say if this latest incident is related to fatigue in any measure. Sukalp Sharma is a Senior Assistant Editor with The Indian Express and writes on a host of subjects and sectors, notably energy and aviation. He has over 13 years of experience in journalism with a body of work spanning areas like politics, development, equity markets, corporates, trade, and economic policy. He considers himself an above-average photographer, which goes well with his love for travel.

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. The impact of trade wars has begun to show up already in Indian sectors, which are facing steep drops 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.

Why you should start your day with 3 Surya Namaskars

It can be challenging to take time out of our busy schedules to work out. We get it—honestly, we do! But exercising doesn't mean spending hours at the gym. It's, in fact, a dedicated commitment to improving health and well-being, one step at a time. That's exactly what celebrity nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar reiterated, stressing that even when we have no time to work out, taking a small step is better than doing nothing. "This video serves as a quick reminder that you don't need a lot of time to fit in exercise. Today, I was at a hotel without any equipment, and I had to rush to an event. But I also know that my body doesn't feel right if I skip my workout. So, I decided to do three quick Surya Namaskars to get my body moving and feel energised," she shared in an Instagram reel.

According to her, surya namaskar is "a complete exercise" as it allows you to stretch, helps you stay stable, strengthens your legs, and also builds stamina. Sharath Arora, chief yoga guru at Himalayan Iyengar Yoga Center, Dharamshala, said that Surya Namaskar is a dynamic series of 12 postures that provide a full-body workout while nurturing mental clarity. "Surya Namaskar engages multiple muscle groups, improves flexibility, strengthens joints, and supports spinal health, while burning about 139 calories in 10-12 rounds (Journal of Yoga and Physical Therapy) — comparable to running or swimming," he told indianexpress.com. Its forward bends and back stretches aid digestion by massaging abdominal organs, and the postures boost cardiovascular health and circulation, he added, further mentioning that the synchronised breathing calms the nervous system, reduces cortisol levels, and enhances mindfulness.

So, what happens if you do 3 Surya Namaskars a day?

Anadi Sharma, yoga trainer and alternate healing expert, said that doing just three Surya Namaskars a day may seem small, but systemically, it rewires far more than your hamstrings. "You're not just stretching—you're sending a clear signal to your nervous system: 'I'm awake, I'm in control, and I finish what I start,'" she said. It's a complete feedback loop—movement, breath, and closure—in under five



minutes. That alone trains your brain to operate from calm execution rather than scattered reaction, she added.

Physiological impact

Sharma said it shifts your body from stagnation to activation, moves lymphatic fluid, lubricates joints, wakes up fascia, stimulates digestion, and regulates your vagus nerve. In simple terms, it gets everything flowing again. "It also works on the psyche. The repetition of 3 consistent rounds daily installs pattern integrity—your body starts to expect rhythm and closure, and your mind follows suit. It becomes easier to digest life, not just food," she added. To start, begin with 2-3 rounds daily, focusing on correct alignment and synchronised breathing. Gradually increase to 10-12 rounds over a few weeks. Sharma said that Surya Namaskar is one of the few movements that bows the head and elevates the spine. "You feel less stuck in the head, more grounded in action. It also creates a behavioral domino effect. After those three rounds, you're more likely to eat clean, respond instead of react, and feel slightly more present. Why? Because you did something hard, rhythmic, and self-generated—without applause. And that self-generated rhythm compounds," she explained.

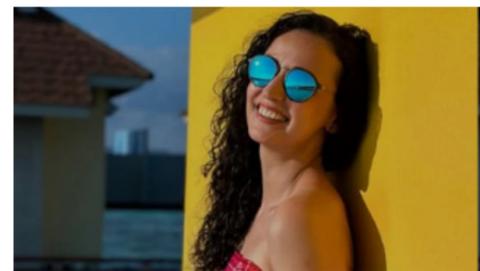
'Met this person who told me I look so young': Sanaya Irani calls out ageism and gender bias, urges focus on women's skills over stereotypes

Sanaya Irani recently opened up about the biases women face in their professional journeys, particularly in industries where appearances play a significant role. Sharing her experience in an interview with Hauterfly, she said, "People will be like, 'I can't cast you in a younger role', I'm like, 'Why?' You look at me and you say that I look like a 25-year-old, but you don't want to cast me as a 25-year-old (sic)."

Highlighting the contradiction, she added, "You are saying that, oh my god, you just don't age, but then you will hear it in a meeting: 'Nahi yaar, she can't play a young person.' Somebody will give that feedback to me. And I think I met this person who told me that I look so young, it's bizarre. But our 60-year-old heroes can look 40, and all of that can happen with even a little white and gray (hair), but we (women) can't look it. (sic)."

Her remarks shine a light on the challenges women often encounter in different professions, where age and perception can unfairly limit opportunities, even when their abilities align perfectly with the role or task at hand.

Creating more equitable opportunities for women regardless of age or perceived appearance Gurlen Baruah, organisational psychologist at That Culture Thing, says, "Workplaces can create more equitable opportunities for women by focusing on skills, experience, and potential rather than gender, age, or perceived appearance. This means ensuring a level playing field for all candidates and employees by adopting practices like blind recruitment processes, where identifying details are removed from resumes to avoid



unconscious bias, and using simulations or work samples to assess real capabilities rather than relying solely on interviews." She adds that it's also crucial to promote equal roles and opportunities, ensuring that hiring and promotion decisions are based on objective criteria and measurable outcomes. Additionally, fostering inclusive cultures through bias training, mentoring programs, and clear policies can help dismantle systemic barriers, creating an environment where everyone, regardless of gender, age, or appearance, has the chance to thrive. Strategies women can employ to ensure their skills and experience take center stage "There's no doubt that systemic bias exists and women often have to work harder to prove themselves—which is a legitimate issue. Age-based biases can make this even more challenging," notes Baruah. However, while organisations must address these biases,

Rohit Sharma already excited about leading in England – if Bumrah, Shami and Siraj can sing together, why not?



GNS News Agency, April 23

Speculation about his future can continue till the cows come home but in Rohit Sharma's world, he remains India's captain for the post-IPL five-Test series in England. On a podcast with former Australia captain Michael Clarke this week, he wasn't the Mumbai Indians (MI) impact player brooding over his IPL form, but a self-assured captain looking ahead to a long challenging tour in whites. He was being Rohit, totally cut off from the noise made by his doubters. Some may call that space a 'bubble'. In the first part of the chat, Clarke mentions the series in Australia that India lost. Rohit opens up. Surprisingly, he shares details about his 'argument' with the head coach and chief selector over his decision to sit out the Sydney Test. Unlike the uproar over The Indian Express report about Gambhir cracking the whip at Melbourne at the start of this year and the subsequent preachy 'what happens in the dressing room stays in the dressing room' stance of the team management, this time there is no saintly posturing about breach of the team's trust. That's a story for another day, back to the Clarke podcast.

As expected, early in the conversation the two captains talk about the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Clarke ob-

serves how India, or rather Jasprit Bumrah, had missed his old pace partner Mohammed Shami in Australia. Rohit agrees and hopes the two, and even others, survive the IPL's frenetic pace to be fresh for England. "It is not about bowling just four overs but the travel is challenging. Hope these guys finish the IPL very well, without concern. Others also. Hope we are a fully fit team for England, we will have a great series," he says. The 30-minute casual cricket talk ends with a deeply obliged Clarke profusely thanking Rohit for giving him time. By the way, this was on a day when MI had a game. Just as the niceties are exchanged, the Aussie inside Clarke comes out. "So good luck in England, hope you beat the Poms," he chirps. Rohit smiles and gives a knowing nod. Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami haven't played a Test together in three years. (BCCI) Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami haven't played a Test together in three years. (BCCI)

It's easy to understand Rohit's eagerness to lead in England. Which Indian captain would not be excited to be in charge of a pace attack that has Bumrah, Shami and Mohammed Siraj in England? Ask MS Dhoni, he once took the field with a semi-retired RP Singh, whose first ball reached him after bouncing twice. It's been a while since India had Bumrah, Shami and Siraj fit and bowling together. The last time Bumrah and Shami bowled together in a Test was in 2022. Only one of the three were part of India's triumphant ICC Champions Trophy campaign just before the IPL. Fighting injuries, they were at the great Indian cricket garage at Bengaluru – the Centre of Excellence. Mended, oiled and greased – they look serviced, purring at the top of their run-up. A few days after the Clarke podcast, Rohit was part of the game that had Bumrah and Shami. MI were playing Sunrisers Hyderabad at Wankhede. The Indian captain would have loved what he saw.

It wasn't a track where the ball flew – a rare low-scoring match where spinners too were in the game. To judge the pacers' Test preparedness from the four overs bowled in a T20 game would be preposterous. Proven pros, like

Bumrah and Shami though, can be trusted to drop hints. There is a certain rhythm about their bowling which shouts at you, conveying that the wheels and chakras within them are moving. "Ball achcha nikal raha hai" – say the pacers in the country's north on those perfect days. Bumrah and Siraj have had those days in the IPL. The same can't be said of Shami. But those at Wankhede say that the day isn't too far. He was purring. First, how Bumrah tamed the IPL's batting buccaneers. Such was the hype around the game at the venue with short boundaries that Dale Steyn predicted a 300 score. Bumrah against SRH should be put on a video and played on loop at most academies. It also explains why MI batting coach Kieron Pollard calls him Mufasa, Disney's wise Lion King. For a pacer with limitless variety, he took the field with just two variations – the yorker and the slower one. Those were his chosen weapons for the day. For if bowlers like Bumrah are able to bowl the way they want, wickets become an eventuality. His plan was to restrict openers Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma with slower balls, and he managed to do so. With those supersonic yorkers up his sleeve, the change of pace play works wonderfully. The bowler to let out the loudest roar post the injury break has been Siraj. (Reuters) The bowler to let out the loudest roar post the injury break has been Siraj. (Reuters) In that reassuring spell, Bumrah showed that his latest injury scare hadn't impacted his speed. He got Heinrich Klaasen with that 'rocket full toss' of his. Since he leans over the crease in his final delivery stride and delays his release point, Bumrah, in a way, shortens the pitch length for himself. His backspin makes it difficult for batsmen to read the trajectory right. Pace and poise, both are intact. The new ball is in safe hands this England tour. After the break, it was Shami's chance to take the stage. With Rohit opening, he would have had a close look at the bowler who he and Clarke hoped would be Bumrah's partner soon. Shami's run-up was smooth, the loading too was fine, and the perfect seam position was still cutting the air like an electric saw.

'No common sense': Virender Sehwag slams RCB's poor batting show in Bengaluru defeat to PBKS

GNS News Agency, April 23

Royal Challengers Bengaluru's woes at home extended to a third match in succession as they suffered a five-wicket defeat to Punjab Kings at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on Friday. Sent in to bat first after a two-hour delay to rain, the RCB batters imploded during a 14-over game, making only 95/9 in the allotted period.

None of the top-order batters got going, with openers Phil Salt and Virat Kohli falling to rash pull strokes within the first three overs. While captain Rajat Patidar brief knock and Tim David's late surge helped RCB put on a fight, middle-order bats Liam Livingstone, Jitesh Sharma and Krunal Pandya threw away their wickets. Former India opener Virender Sehwag slammed RCB for another abject batting display at home. "RCB batted poorly. All of them played reckless shots to get out. Not a single batter was out to a good ball. At least one batter should've used common sense. If they had wickets in hand, they could have reached 110 or 120 in 14 overs, which would have given them a chance to fight," Sehwag told on Cricbuzz.

While he lauded Punjab for continuing their bowling exploits from the previous game against Kolkata Knight Riders, Sehwag lambasted the RCB batters for gifting their wickets. "There is difference between getting wickets and earning wickets," he said.

While the bowlers put in a spirited effort to delay Punjab's win, Sehwag said RCB skipper Patidar will need to find a way to stem the poor batting performances at home. "Patidar has to think and come up with a solution. They have not been winning at home. Their bowlers are doing well but why are their batters faltering regularly? It's not alright if your batters continuously fail at home. Who is going to rectify that?" Sehwag asked.

RCB suffer hat-trick of defeats at home as Punjab Kings come out on top in low-scoring game

GNS News Agency, April 23

On IPL's 18th anniversary, RCB suffered another harrowing low in a five-wicket defeat against Punjab Kings that drew back memories to that eventful start in 2008 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium

Seventeen years have passed since that momentous night in Bengaluru on IPL's first cry when a 19-year-old Virat Kohli's baby steps on the scene were rocked early by a pacy short delivery. Rushed through in his attempted flat-pull across the turf, the uncapped Delhi boy's debut lasted five deliveries for one run – an attempt to impress with a counter-punching stroke under mounting pressure coming undone. When the IPL behemoth ushered in its 18th birthday on a rainy Friday evening at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, the league's highest-ever run-scorer and his side had a specific problem to contend with – the unfriendly home ground itself.

Starting the rain-marred contest against Punjab Kings third on the standings with four wins, RCB suffered a third successive home defeat, with Kohli drawing an unwanted parallel to that fateful opening in 2008. A fatal pull resulted in the 36-year-old falling on 1 again as he attempted to disrupt Arshdeep Singh's lengths. That was despite losing his opening partner Phil Salt to a similar rash stroke off a shorter length in the opening over to the left-arm seamer. A curtailed four-over Powerplay in a 14-over game did not help the impetuous nerve. Neither did a sticky Chinnaswamy pitch that seems all the more sluggish whenever the home side has walked out to bat this season.

For all their batting machismo, Shreyas Iyer's men have turned a pivotal corner with the ball a few nights ago, dumping KKR to a stunning 16-run defeat in a 112-run chase. If Kohli and Salt can take the Powerplay leeway for their miscued slogs, the tame swipes by Liam Livingstone and Jitesh Sharma either side of the square only exacerbated their plight. As Arshdeep returned to his wicket-taking ways up top, it was Marco Jansen's 'Test-match' lengths – capped by a rip-snorting bumper to snap Krunal Pandya – and former RCB regular Yuzvendra Chahal's spin web that offered harsh recalls to the home fans. Perhaps, it was the need for an out-and-out assault in the shortened burst that forced RCB to cull Devdutt Padikkal out and promote skipper Rajat Patidar back to number three. Breezing through a start with a nonchalant pull off Arshdeep and a characteristically stunning pick-up pull off Xavier Bartlett, Patidar flickered before self-combusting. Despite soaring to the 1,000-run mark in his IPL career as one of the fastest Indian batters with a 150-plus strike rate, Patidar's patchy association with Bengaluru continued with his average dropping below 22 in 10 outings at the ground. However, it took a ripping leg-break from Yuzvendra Chahal's artillery to land the spin-bashing Patidar's favoured inside-out shot at wide long-off. For once, Tim David couldn't complain about the lack of deliveries to showcase his wares. Entering in the seventh over shortly before Patidar's dismissal, the range of the towering Aussie's muscle, scythes, pulls and hefty slogs offered RCB fans a semblance of hope. Even when his mates struggled to time the slogs on a tacky pitch, the extra second on the ball only played into David's hands. Losing out on the entire 12th over when Punjab spinner Harpreet Brar picked up back-to-back wickets to leave RCB nine down, he adeptly unleashed his status as one of the most feared ball-strikers by hogging all of the last 12 deliveries, smearing 31 runs. A hat-trick of sixes off Brar deserved a share of fortune with a no-ball that helped David cross his maiden IPL half-century off 26 balls. The chase was no cakewalk despite Priyansh Arya and Prabhsimran Singh reeling in early boundaries as Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar would serve the ripostrs from rib-ticking lengths on the shorter side. After the duo removed the openers within the Powerplay, Hazlewood's third over cracked the game open, jolting Shreyas Iyer and Josh Inglis with a smattering of controlled short-pitched bowling for catches behind the wicket.

While Hazlewood's 3/14 in three overs would have sent shivers down the PBKS camp, southpaw Nehal Wadhara found the release with two smites against leggie Suyash Sharma in successive overs to quell the possibilities of another low-total defence. Redemption for RCB may come as early as Sunday in Mullanpur when the two teams meet again.

Brief Scores: Royal Challengers Bengaluru 95/9 in 14 overs (Tim David 50 not out; Marco Jansen 2/10) lost to Punjab Kings 98/5 in 12.1 overs (Nehal Wadhara 33 not out; Josh Hazlewood 3/14) by five wickets

Race walker who 'lost gold after celebrating early': Not true, Chinese walker was just beside me why would I disturb my rhythm?

GNS News Agency, April 23

Videos of race walker Nitin Gupta, in which he is seen seemingly celebrating early in the home straight, became viral content after he was beaten to the gold medal by 0.01 seconds. China's Zhu Ninghao pipped him at the Asian Under-18 Athletics Championships in Qatif, Saudi Arabia. 'Childish', 'stupidity' a 'lesson' and 'turtle and rabbit story' were some of the stinging comments on social media after the race video showed him raising his hands to hip height briefly with about 40 metres remaining in the race. Nitin, a 17-year-old Army Boys Sports Company cadet, noticed he had become troll-worthy at the end of the day. Taking on the detractors is not on his mind but he is keen to give his side of the story about the 'premature celebrations' in the 5000-metre final.

"I had just blanked out. It was my first international competition, the sun was baking hot, there was a strong gust of wind pushing us backwards during the race, I was thirsty and the Chinese athlete was pushing me to the limit. I don't remember the final 100 metres. Mother promise. Everyone is saying I celebrated too early, but that is not really true because I knew there was a Chinese walker just beside me. So why would I celebrate and disturb my rhythm? Towards the end I don't know what happened," Nitin told The Indian Express.

17-year-old Nitin Gupta from Uttar Pradesh was on the verge of clinching gold in the boys' U18 5000m racewalk at the Asian U18 Athletics Championships—but a premature celebration in the final 50m cost him dearly. He was edged out by just 0.01s by China's He regrets letting the opportunity go — of winning the gold and hearing the Indian national anthem play at the Prince Nayef Sports City. He also wanted to change the perception of Indian walkers getting disqualified at international events. "There is a general belief that India's walkers try and run at overseas competitions and our reputation is not great. I wanted to prove that Indian walkers can win gold. I regret that I couldn't prove critics wrong. But whatever happened was my mistake," Nitin said.

The teenager is a known name in race-walking circles. Last month at the National Youth Athletics Championships in Patna, he lowered the Under-18 national record to 19:24.48, a quicker timing compared to his 20:21.51 in Qatif on Friday. He hopes that in a few days, people will remember him more for the silver medal. "People are not focusing on what I did well. But I am not complaining. In a few days, hopefully, they will forget about why I was trolled. Every other day something new goes viral on social media and Instagram. Yesterday, there was a race video featuring me. What I can promise is that I will work harder, improve my technique further and win gold the next time I represent India. I am thankful that my coach understood me," Nitin added.

Basant Bahadur Rana, the 50km race walker and a 2012 London Olympian who is Nitin's coach, wants to go



easy on his ward. "I would put it down to inexperience. When I spoke to him after the race he was crying and told me he didn't know what he was doing towards the end of the race. He's learnt his lesson. During races in India, he has a big lead but international competition is of a higher standard. He missed the gold medal but is one of the most talented race walkers in the country," Rana said. Nitin, from Unnao, didn't dream of being an athlete but had ambitions of joining the army. He took up running to clear the 1.6-kilometre physical fitness test. One of his friends, who knew of race walkers in the army, suggested he make a switch. A local coach Amir Khan agreed to train Nitin. A year later, in November 2023, Nitin appeared for trials of the Boys Sports Company of the Madras Regimental Centre and was selected as a cadet.

Being part of the army set-up changed Nitin's fortunes — professional training, diet, accommodation, and sports science were taken care of. The son of a welder, Nitin, felt he could aim big. "My father Dinesh works as a welder and so does my older brother Atul. Work took them to Ludhiana. My mother Sanju used to stay with me in a rented house in Unnao but once I was selected to the Boys Company she too moved to Ludhiana. She doesn't know how to operate a phone so letting her stay alone was not an option," Nitin said.

Being from an underprivileged family, Nitin had to take up odd jobs, the first of which was working in a scrap factory when he was in Class 7. "Working at the scrap factory was backbreaking. After that I worked as a labourer, helping in the tiling of roofs and such jobs. Finally, I got a good break when I got the job of cleaning at a temple in Unnao." Nitin used to work at the temple from 8 am to 12 noon, before that at 4 am he would cycle six kilometres to a training ground. In the evening, he would train again. Nitin never told his parents he worked in a scrap factory or as a daily wage. "I didn't want my parents to feel bad and relatives will also get to know. Before I started working at the temple I only told them I was making money doing odd jobs. I never took money from them because I knew there was hardly any money. I didn't burden my parents but I hope they are proud of me despite people trolling me because of the race video."

'No common sense': Virender Sehwag slams RCB's poor batting show in Bengaluru defeat to PBKS

GNS News Agency, April 23

Royal Challengers Bengaluru's woes at home extended to a third match in succession as they suffered a five-wicket defeat to Punjab Kings at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on Friday. Sent in to bat first after a two-hour delay to rain, the RCB batters imploded during a 14-over game, making only 95/9 in the allotted period.

None of the top-order batters got going, with openers Phil Salt and Virat Kohli falling to rash pull strokes within the first three overs. While captain Rajat Patidar brief knock and Tim David's late surge helped RCB put on a fight, middle-order bats Liam Livingstone, Jitesh Sharma and Krunal Pandya threw away their wickets. Former India opener Virender Sehwag slammed RCB for another abject batting display at home. "RCB batted poorly. All of them played reckless shots to get out. Not a single batter was out to a good ball. At least one batter should've used common sense. If they had wickets in hand, they could have reached 110 or 120 in 14 overs, which would have given them a chance to fight," Sehwag told on Cricbuzz. While he



lauded Punjab for continuing their bowling exploits from the previous game against Kolkata Knight Riders, Sehwag lambasted the RCB batters for gifting their wickets. "There is difference between getting wickets and earning wickets," he said. While the bowlers put in a spirited effort to delay Punjab's win, Sehwag said RCB skipper Patidar will need to find a way to stem the poor batting performances at home. "Patidar has to think and come up with a solution."

Cristiano Ronaldo and Al-Nassr's title hopes suffer major setback with 2-1 loss in Saudi Pro League



GNS News Agency, April 23

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and a resolute Al-Qadisiyah side stood tall against Cristiano Ronaldo and Al-Nassr as the two sides met in the Saudi Pro League on Friday. Despite the hosts Al-Qadisiyah being winless in their last four matches (2 wins, 2 draws), a surprising result against title contenders Al-Nassr has left Cristiano Ronaldo's side debilitated in terms of getting their hands on the Saudi Pro League title.

Surprisingly, Al-Nassr is yet to claim a League title ever since Cristiano Ronaldo's arrival in 2023. Adding to the fact that the Faris Najd last ended the League season on top back in the 2018/19 campaign, the Portuguese superstar is yet to inspire his team to success. In a rather lacklustre display away from home, Al-Nassr, led by Ronaldo, Sadio Mane and Jhon Duran in attack, only managed to force two goalkeeper saves out of their opponents. Ronaldo in particular, failed to make a single shot on target in the game.

Former Arsenal and Barcelona man Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang played a role in both the goals scored by the hosts. His driven shot towards Bento in the 35th minute was saved and fell invitingly for teammate Turki Al-Amrmar, who made no mistake to convert from point blank range. Sadio Mane then pulled his back into the game late in the 84th minute. As the game headed to a 1-1 draw, up stepped Aubameyang to break Al-Nassr hearts. The striker's weighted header into the Al-Nassr goal in the 87th minute sealed their fate, sending Al-Nassr back home with nothing to show for their efforts. As things stand in the Saudi Pro League, Al-Nassr are four points below rivals Al-Hilal and eight points below League leaders Al-Ittihad. With just six games left to go, it is difficult to see how Al-Nassr will overcome an eight point deficit to claim the League crown. Ronaldo, despite a poor showing, remains top scorer in the competition with 23 goals to his name.

Bowlers' confidence increased, says Harpreet Brar

GNS News Agency, April 23

HYDERABAD: Punjab Kings left-arm spinner Harpreet Brar who took two wickets in his first over against Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Friday night, said that the wicket was a big help for the seamers and even for the spinners.

In the post-match briefing after Punjab won the match, Brar said the spinners did a good job and that it wasn't easy to bat. "The total was good enough but the way Nihal (Wadhara) batted, he went to the end and won the match for us," Brar said.

"He has been playing in the IPL for the last 2-3 years. He does well in the domestic as well. He played really well in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T-20 national championship knock-outs very recently," he said.

"I was ready to bowl because it was my first game of the season. I just had in mind that I have to do well for the team. Well, I didn't know that I would bowl in the last over. But I got the chance and bowled a no-ball which was first in my IPL career," Brar said.

"The boundaries that Nihal took reduced the pressure and made it easier," he said. "The confidence of the bowlers has increased after tonight's win and it will help us in the tournament," Brar said.

Anurag Kashyap lashes on 'kingpins of sanskar' after his daughter gets death, rape threats: 'Apology for one line taken out of context, spare the women'



min ho tay kar lo. Baaki meri taraf se maafi." (What is said can't be taken back, and I won't take it back either, but you can abuse me. My family hasn't said anything. If you want an apology from me, this is it. Brahmins, spare the women. Such values are in scriptures too, not only in manuwaad. Decide which Brahmin you are. The rest is my apology.) The post comes days after Anurag launched a scathing criticism of the CBFC for halting the release of Ananth Mahadevan's Phule, a biopic on Jyotiba and Savitribai Phule. Originally slated to release on April 11, the film was withheld after certain Brahmin groups raised objections over its trailer, demanding the removal of caste references like 'Mahar', 'Mang', 'Peshvai', and 'Manu's system of caste.'

Kashyap, calling the move regressive, had posted: "Now these Brahmin groups either feel ashamed, are dying of shame, or perhaps they're living in some alternate Brahmin-only India that we're unable to see. Someone please explain: who's the real fool here?" He added: "If casteism didn't exist in this country, why would Jyotiba and Savitribai Phule have needed to fight against it?" His comments stirred massive debate, but the situation escalated after he replied to a social media user saying he would "urinate on the Brahmins." The backlash was immediate. Union Minister Satish Chandra Dubey condemned him, calling him a "vile scumbag" and demanded an apology. Alongside Phule, Anurag had cited other films that have faced similar hurdles. Films like Punjab 95, Tees, and Dhadak 2 as examples of projects allegedly being blocked for portraying uncomfortable truths. "I don't know how many other films are blocked that expose the agenda of this casteist, regionalist, racist government... so ashamed to see their own face in the mirror," he wrote.

Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap took to social media to assert that he stands by his comments on caste and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), and insisted that he won't take the back but the director criticised the trolls for sending rape and death threats to his daughter and other family members. He added that one of the statements made by him was taken out of context and he apologised for that. "This is my apology, not for my post, but for that one line taken out of context and the brewing hatred," he wrote. "No action or speech is worth your daughter, family, friends and colleagues getting rape and death threats from the kingpins of sanskar." He added in Hindi: "So kahi hui baat wapis nahin li ja sakti aur na loonga lekin mujhe jo gaali dena hai do. Mere parivaar ne na kuchh kaha hai na kahta hai. Isliye agar mujhse maafi hi chahiye to ye meri apology hai. Brahmin log, auraton ko baksh do, itna sanskar to shastron mein bhi hai, sirf manuwaad mein nahin hai. Aap kaun se Brah-

'Perfectionist' Aamir Khan landed at co-actor's house at midnight for a scene that didn't involve him: 'He was in his shorts, smoking'

Bollywood is filled with stories about Mr Perfectionist, Aamir Khan, and the intent he showcases in all the projects he is involved with, be it in any capacity. The Lagaan actor has definitely earned that nickname, and to prove that, his co-actor Mushtaq Khan shared a story of how Aamir refused to let things be on the set and went the extra mile to make sure everything worked in perfect harmony. In a conversation with FilmyManta Media, Mushtaq talked about his experience of working with Aamir on the sets of Hum Hain Rahi Pyar Ke. He said, "He is a brilliant actor; they call him the perfectionist. When we did Hum Hai Rahi Pyaar Ke, all he wanted was a good take. He helped so many people on the set, like Juhi and me, telling everyone what they can do. When we used to pack up, he used to ask everyone to wait for 2 extra minutes so that we could discuss the next day's shoot."

The actor's run-ins with Aamir's relentless attitude did not stop there, as both worked together on the 1995 Mansoor Khan film, Akele Hum Akele Tum. "I played the role of Aamir's lawyer in the film. There was a line, and Aamir did not agree with it. He said, 'It was not convincing enough,' and I asked him, 'What to do?' So for around half an hour, the shooting was stopped, and everyone worked on it, and called people for ideas. Finally, the scene was shot as the director Mansoor Khan wanted to get done with that day's shoot." The actor revealed that, like everyone else, he proceeded to go back home, but he received a rather interesting phone call from Aamir later in the night. "I reached my home around 8, and Aamir called me and asked, 'What time do I sleep?' I told him that I got to bed around 10, and Aamir said that he finally got the idea for the scene and he wanted me to read it that very night. I asked Aamir to send the script to me, and while waiting, I dozed off. Around 12:15 am in the night,



there was a knock, and the driver told me that Aamir was standing downstairs to discuss the scene." The actor then went downstairs to find Aamir "waiting in his shorts, smoking." When he invited Aamir to his home, the actor revealed that Aamir was considerate enough to understand that it was late and his wife and children must be asleep, and refused. "By this time, several windows around the block had been opened, and people were trying to catch a glimpse of him as he was already a household name after Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak," added the actor. In recent times, Mr Perfectionist is leaning towards his role as a producer, with his last performance on the screen being Laal Singh Chaddha back in 2022. He will next be seen in Sitaare Zameen Par.

Archana Puran Singh's family is 'not what it appears to be', son says 'things are not okay': 'What nonsense'



Archana Puran Singh, who has successfully turned into a YouTuber, along with her husband Parmeet Sethi and their sons Ayushmaan and Aaryamann, recently shared a vlog where the family went for a fun day out. They visited Mumbai's Museum of Paradox and Ayushmaan tried to explain that in this place, nothing is as it seems. Archana quickly added that same was the case with their family and as soon as she said it, Ayushmaan looked into the camera and said, "Things are not okay guys." The vlog started with the family in their car as they spoke about the Museum of Paradox. Ayushmaan shared, "It's not a normal museum, it has a lot of optical illusions. Cheezin jaisi dikhti hain vaisi hai nahi (Things are not as they seem)." Archana added, "Humari family ki tarah. Jaisi dikhti hai vaisi hai nahi. (Like our family, it's not as it seems)." The mother and son continued this banter in just as he added, "Sab kuch theek nahi hai guys (Everything is not okay guys)." Aaryamann added to the joke and said, "Send help" and when it looked like the sons were not going to let go of the joke, Archana put a stop to it by saying "What nonsense!"

The family has amassed a huge fan following in the last few months. They started sharing their family vlogs in December and in just a few months, they have gotten a

following of almost 653K subscribers. The vlogs are generally centered around the family doing a fun activity, or inviting a celebrity guest over to their house. In the last few weeks, they have started focusing on trying out different food outlets in Mumbai, and this has struck a chord with their audience. Archana started her career as an actor in the 1980s and has appeared in some popular films like Jalwa, Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, Mohabbatein. She was recently seen in Ibrahim Ali Khan and Khushi Kapoor-starrer Nadaaniyan, and she also uploaded a vlog from the premiere of the film. Parmeet is best known for his role in Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol starrer Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge. He was last seen in the web series The Magic Of Shiri.

Kalki Koechlin learned 'patience' from her daughter Sappho

New Delhi: National Award-winning actress Kalki Koechlin revealed the biggest lesson she learned from her five-year-old daughter, Sappho, is patience. Talking about that one lesson she has learned from her child that she wishes she knew earlier in life, Kalki told IANS, "Patience. Everything in its own time." The 41-year-old actress spoke about the importance of understanding a child's developmental stages, especially how their brain affects impulse control. "You realize the difference in your child's capabilities between ages three, five, and seven, and it goes by so fast. But when you're in that moment, when they're three and struggling with something, you have to remember they haven't fully developed their prefrontal cortex."

"That's the part of the brain that controls impulses. So, if I'm angry with you, I could slap you, but I don't because I have a developed prefrontal cortex. Kids don't have that yet, so they might slap you. We often don't realize that there's a biological reason for these impulses. It's not because they hate you, and it's not personal; it's just that they don't know how to manage their impulses."

Kajal Aggarwal wishes her 'CEO of snack negotiations' Neil on third b'day



Mumbai: Kajal Aggarwal's son Neil turned three on Saturday, and the actress had the sweetest birthday wish for the "EO of snack negotiations and master of bedtime delays." Kajal took to Instagram, where she shared three playful pictures featuring her son Neil, husband Gautam Kitchlu, and herself. For the caption, she wrote, "Happy 3rd birthday to the CEO of snack negotiations, master of bedtime delays, and the only person who thinks broccoli is yucky but mud is gourmet! Calling Neil, her 'tiny tornado,' she added, "You are the apple of our eye, our tiny tornado, the giggle in our soul, the energy in our coffee! You light up our world in the most hilarious, heart-melting way (and you're the reason there's crayon on the ceiling). She added, "Love you more than Bluey, construction vehicles, waffles, Peppa, and 17 rounds of 'Why?' in a row! To the moon (and snacks) and back! @neil_kitchlu @kitchlug Thank you @mommyshotsbyamrita, @amritasamant_and @shikhadhandia for the most precious family shots!"

Kajal married Gautam in October 2020. They got mar-

ried in a small, private ceremony in her hometown of Mumbai in an intimate setting. She made her pregnancy official with an Instagram post, which was also confirmed by her husband shortly. She gave birth to Neil on April 19, 2022. On the acting front, Kajal was recently seen in Salman Khan's "Sikandar," an action drama directed by A. R. Murugadoss. The film also stars Rashmika Mandanna, Sathyaraj, Sharan Joshi, Prateik Babbar, Kishore, Jatin Sarna, and Sanjay Kapoor. In the film, Raja Sanjay "Sikandar" Rajkot is hunted by a politician seeking revenge for a family tragedy. She will next be seen in "Kannappa," a Telugu-language fantasy film directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh. It is based on the legend of Kannappa in Hinduism, a devotee of the god Shiva. The film stars Vishnu Manchu, Mohan Babu, R. Sarathkumar, Arpit Ranka, Kaushal Manda, Rahul Madhav, Devaraj, Mukesh Rishi, Brahmanandam, Raghu Babu, Preity Mukundhan, and Madhoo. The film also includes special cameo appearances by Mohanlal, Prabhas, and Akshay Kumar.

Trisha on reuniting with VTV co-star Silambarasan TR in Kamal Haasan's Thug Life: 'You will be seeing some magic'

There are only a handful of Tamil lead actors who find themselves being constant collaborators with ace filmmaker Mani Ratnam. One of them is actor Trisha, who has headlined his films like Aaytha Ezhuthu and the Ponniyin Selvan film series. She is also part of his upcoming film, Thug Life, which also marks the filmmaker's first film with Kamal Haasan since their 1987 collaboration, Nayakan. Interestingly, this film also marks the reunion of Trisha and Silambarasan TR after the cult classic, Vinnaihaandi Varuvaaya (2010). Select members of the cast and crew of Thug Life were in attendance at an event in Chennai, which marked the launch of the first single from the film. Talking about coming together with Silambarasan for a feature film for the first time since the Gautham Vasudev Menon directorial, Trisha said, "Many have been asking about when Simbu and I would be working together since VTV. We are finally here, and you will be seeing some magic in this film."

Thug Life marks their third film together after Alai and Vinnaihaandi Varuvaaya, and Trisha spoke about how their friendship has only evolved over the years. "We have been friends for a very long time. And there is a huge difference in our characters in Thug Life when compared to our previous films," said Trisha, also letting in a little inside information that she isn't part of the gangster portions of the film, which also stars Joju George, Abhirami, Nasser, Aishwarya Lekshmi, and Ashok Selvan.

"I am not there in the gangster portions, but I've heard it has come out really well," said Trisha, who also opened up about working with Mani Ratnam and Kamal Haasan,



with whom she has shared screen space in Manmadhan Ambu and Thoongavanam. "I was quite young when I did my first films with them, but they make sure they go out of their way to break the bubble," said Trisha, who went on to add that because both of them insist on thorough rehearsals, things are much smoother on the sets. "I share a nice comfort with both Mani sir and Kamal sir. They don't maintain a sense of hierarchy on the sets, and are the same way with everyone. This is probably why they are legends. Also, it is impressive how Kamal sir still treats every film as his first film," said Trisha, who assured that this is the just the first round of promotions, and the audience will be seeing more of them as the release date comes closer. Backed by Raaj Kamal Films International, Madras Talkies, and Red Giant Movies, Thug Life is written by Kamal Haasan and Mani Ratnam. Shot by Ravi K Chandran, the film has music by AR Rahman, and is set to hit the screens on June 5.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas glows even after 24-hour flight

Mumbai: Global head-turner Priyanka Chopra Jonas looked flawless even after being in a flight for over 24 hours. Priyanka took to Instagram, where she shared a close-up selfie of herself. Her skin looks smooth and glowing, even under close inspection and lighting. Her make-up is minimal, with a natural look, subtle eyeshadow, defined brows, and a soft pink glossy lip. She completed her look with a hat.

For the caption, she wrote: "Skin is skinning even after being on a plane for 24 hours, thank you, @fabricioormonde" Priyanka had also shared a picture, which showed a flight map displaying a route over India, from Hyderabad. The green dotted line represents the flight path. Earlier on April 18, Priyanka shared that she was glad her friend Namrata Shirodkar had a great time at her husband Nick Jonas' show "The Last Five Years." Namrata watched "The Last Five Years" in New York and thanked the American pop star for a "spectacular show" and Priyanka for a "fabulous evening." With her children Sitara and Gautham by her side, Namrata posted a picture on her Instagram stories section. The image had the wife of superstar Mahesh Babu and her children posing alongside Nick Jonas. For the caption, she wrote, "Thank you Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra for a fabulous evening and a spectacular show!! The Last Five Years." Priyanka re-shared Namrata's post on her Instagram stories and commented, "So glad you all had a great time." The Last Five Years, which is Jason Robert Brown's two-person musi-



cal, marks its first Broadway production. It has Nick alongside Tony Award winner Adrienne Warren. It centers on two New Yorkers—Jamie (Jonas), an up-and-coming author.