

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

## Upset over ill health, income tax official dies by suicide in Hyd

Hyderabad: Upset over her ill health, an income tax official died by suicide allegedly by jumping from the Central Government Offices (CGO) Towers in Kavadiaguda on Saturday.Jayalakshmi (52), who was working as the Income Tax Inspector in the I-T Department located in the complex, had come to the office on a closed holiday and ended her life.As per available information, Jayalakshmi, was upset over her ill health for the past some days. Though she was undergoing treatment, there was no improvement in her health.She came to the office on the closed holiday and jumped from the eighth floor of the building. She fell on the ground and died on the spot due to grievous bleeding injuries. The security guard who was on duty at the office, rushed to rescue her, but she died by then.

## Revanth & his gang playing dangerous game on HSU: Dr Sravan Dasoju



Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): BRS leader Dr Sravan Dasoju has said Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with his cabinet colleagues, was playing a dangerous and “dirty game of vengeance and deception” targeting the University of Hyderabad (HCU) to settle political scores under the guise of a so-called committee and a 2000 acre “eco-park”. “Just yesterday, the CM shamelessly declared there was “no wildlife, no trees” on the 400 acres of Kancha Gachibowli land, a blatant lie to justify his cruel conspiracy of auctioning this biodiversity-rich area to pre-selected crony capitalists. But after fierce protests by HCU students and environmentalists and a Supreme Court stay on tree-felling, the CM has now made a shameless U-turn, announcing a so-called 2,000-acre “eco-park”. He was behaving like a true Tughlaq”, he said adding this sudden shift is not about conservation. It’s a calculated move to destroy HCU, one of India’s most prestigious institutions, just because its students dared to resist his criminal agenda. Ironically, he also holds the Education portfolio, which has become a curse for Telangana under his tenure”. The BRS leader said the CM’s dictatorial and faction-driven mindset is evident. His real plan is to uproot HCU, relocate it to “Future City” with a new ₹1,000 crore campus, and erase its legacy, all while pretending to care about the environment. But if he truly cared, why attempt to destroy the biodiversity in the first place? He must tender a public apology to HCU for his brazen actions, he said. Dr Sravan Dasoju said the 400 acres he planned to auction are reportedly mortgaged to a bank for Rs 20000 crore. How can the government develop land now that’s legally encumbered? The eco-park drama is nothing more than a smokescreen to cover up his vindictive intent. His constant flip-flops expose his lack of vision, integrity, and respect for institutions.He said the HCU is not just a university, it is a symbol of academic excellence, a brainchild of late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. It’s time for the students, environmentalists and people of Telangana to unite and protect HCU and its 400 acres of pristine biodiversity from this vengeful, factional CM. (NSS)

## Kavitha slams Rahul & Priyanka for missing in action during Wafq Bill debate

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): Questioning the conspicuous absence of LoP Rahul Gandhi and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi during the Waqf Amendment Bill – 2025 debate in Parliament, BRS MLC K. Kavitha condemned the lack of responsibility and seriousness shown by the Congress leadership.In a statement today, Kavitha stated the “People of Telangana have long known the true nature of the Gandhi siblings. They tour the country during elections with grand slogans, but when it’s time to defend the rights of millions – especially the minority community – they are nowhere to be found,” she said and criticized the Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi for failing to speak on an issue that directly affects over 30 crore people in India, especially the Muslim community. She said the silence of both Rahul and Priyanka Gandhis has not gone unnoticed by the minority community across the nation. BRS leader also said people of Telangana are aware of these theatrics of the Gandhis and they know that the duo will opt for silence over peoples rights if it does not have any electoral gain.“Leadership is not about optics. It’s about showing up when it matters most,” Kavitha remarked, emphasizing that performative politics is no substitute for real, accountable leadership. (NSS)

## Bhadradri Temple uses 100 kg pearls for making muthyala talambralu

GNS News Agency,April 5

Kothagudem: Around 200 quintals of ‘muthyala talambralu’ have been prepared for the Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy’s celestial wedding to be celebrated at Bhadrachalam on Sunday.

Of the many attractions of the Sri Rama Navami Brahmotsavams at the Sri Seetha Ramachandra Swamy Devasthanam, the ‘muthyala talambralu’, consisting of pearls, holds a special significance for devotees. The preparation of ‘talambralu began on ‘Phalguna Pournami’, the day Holi is celebrated, with a large number of devotees from Bhadrachalam and neighbouring villages in Andhra Pradesh, besides volunteers of the temple, taking part by beating turmeric.

The deep red coloured talambralu prepared adding ‘Gulal’ to rice to gives the bright red colour. The other ingredients mixed with rice are turmeric, kumkuma, scent, rose water, ghee and vegetable oil.

## PM Modi holds talks with Lankan Prez Dissanayake in Colombo; Defence pact on agenda

GNS News Agency, April 5

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday held bilateral talks with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake in Colombo, aimed at bolstering the strategic and developmental partnership between the two neighbours.The discussions are expected to be on a shared road map for mutual prosperity and regional co-operation under the "Joint Vision for Fostering Partnerships for a Shared Future," first adopted during President Dissanayake's visit to India in December last year.During the wide-ranging discussions, both sides are expected to have reviewed progress on key joint initiatives and agreed to further enhance cooperation in critical sectors, including energy connectivity, digitisation, Defence, health, and multisectoral grant assistance.Several agreements in these areas



are expected to be signed in the presence of the two leaders.In addition to his official engagements, PM Modi is also scheduled to interact with senior political figures and dignitaries of Sri Lanka during his visit.Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Modi was accorded a ceremonial welcome at Colombo's Independence Square, which the Ministry of External Affairs described as "special" -- marking the first time Sri Lanka has hosted such an event for a visiting foreign leader.This is PM Modi's fourth visit to the island nation since 2014 and his first since

## Adilabad farmers express concern over rising price of cotton seeds

Adilabad: The price of cotton seeds is continuing to go up, resulting in financial burden on cotton farmers.A packet of seeds weighing 475 grams is now priced at Rs 901 as against Rs 767 in 2021. Around two packets of seeds are required for raising the crop in an acre. Area of cultivation of the commercial crop cotton is 10 lakh acres in erstwhile Adilabad district, known as one of the largest producers of cotton in Asia. As many as 20 lakh packets are going to be purchased by the farmers.Officials said that the price of the seeds was Rs 864 per the packet in 2024, while it was Rs 810 in 2022. Due to the rise in the cost, farmers would end up paying around Rs 8 crore more than that they paid in the previous year. They expressed concern over mounting the price of the seeds affecting the prospects of profits in cultivating the crop.

## BJP leaders celebrate Babu Jagjivan Ram birth anniversary



Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS):: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of former Deputy Prime Minister of India and social reformer Babu Jagjivan Ram, Telangana BJP leaders held celebrations at the State party Office. On the occasion, floral tributes were paid to his portrait by the saffron party leaders. Earlier, floral tributes were paid by them at the statue of Babu Jagjivan Ram at LB Stadium in the city. Later, the BJP leaders participated in the birth anniversary celebrations of Babu Jagjivan Ram at Barkatpura, Hyderabad city party office.

Union Minister and BJP Telangana State President Kishan Reddy garlanded the portrait of Babu Jagjivan Ram and paid grand tributes. Speaking on the occasion, Kishan Reddy said on the occasion of Babu Jagjivan Ram's birth anniversary, they paid tributes to that great man. "Babu Jagjivan Ram is a personality, who fought for the rights of the oppressed classes throughout his life. "On the occasion of Jagjivan Ram's birth anniversary, on behalf of the Government of India, on behalf of the BJP, and on behalf of the people of Telangana, we extend our greetings on his birth anniversary," Reddy said. (NSS)

## UHTA thanks all for saving Kancha Gachibowli land from tricks of govt



Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): Dr Bhangya Bhukya, president of University of Hyderabad Teachers' Association has said for the recent issue of the Kancha Gachibowli's 400 acres of biodiverse land adjacent to the University of Hyderabad, on behalf of the University of Hyderabad Teachers Association (UHTA), we thank Vata Foundation, Human Rights Forum, Civil Society, ecologists, students, teachers and all others, who opposed the auction of the land as well as the deforestation

by the State Government. We are grateful to all our friends who have been fighting inside and outside the High Court and the Supreme Court for the biodiverse land.

"We have the following demands to the Telangana State Government. Withdraw the police force from the University of Hyderabad (UoH) campus immediately; Drop all the recent and Rohit Vemula incident cases against the UoH students; Register the whole land given to the University of Hyderabad, that is, 2300 acres , including the 400 acres of land in legal controversy, on the name of the UoH; identify and declare biodiverse heritage zones in the entire University land. The biodiverse heritage zones must remain untouched and it must remain as natural shrub forest of the Deccan region. Further, we demand that the management of these biodiverse heritage zones must lie only within the UoH, that is teachers, students and stakeholders of the UoH community and build a continuous boundary wall wherever it is discontinued for the entire UoH land, said Dr Bhangya Bhukya, president of University of Hyderabad Teachers' Association. (NSS)

## BRS leaders hold preparatory meeting ahead of party's silver jubilee celebrations



GNS News Agency,April 5

Hyderabad: BRS Supremo and former Chief Minister, K Chandrashekhara Rao had a preparatory meeting with the party leaders ahead of the party's silver jubilee celebrations at his Erravelli residence on Saturday.

The meeting was attended by key leaders from the erstwhile districts of Khammam, Mahabubnagar, and Nalgonda. The session had the participation of BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) and several prominent leaders. The meeting focused on strategizing for the upcoming celebrations and strengthening the party's presence across Telangana. The leaders emphasized the importance of unity and collective efforts to make the silver jubilee celebrations a grand success.From Mahabubnagar, attendees included former ministers C.H. Laxma Reddy, S. Niranjan Reddy, and Srinivas Goud, along with MLC Naveen Kumar Reddy, MLA Vijay, and former MLAs Anjaiah Yadav, Chittam Rammohan Reddy, Patnam Narendra Reddy, and others.

Senior leaders like Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy, Marri Janardhan Reddy, Guvvala Balaraju, and Jaipal Yadav were also present.From Khammam, former minister Puvvada Ajay, MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra, and former MLAs Kandaala Upender Reddy, Sandra Venkata Veeraiah,

## Bandi pays rich tributes to Babu Jagjivan Ram

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS):Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay today paid rich tributes on the occasion of Babu Jagjivan Ram Jayanti.Speaking on the occasion, he said Jagjivan Ram was the jewel of the lower classes. He also said the Modi government was working to achieve his aspirations. He alleged that the Congress party was an anti-Dalit party and reminded that the Congress had insulted everyone from Ambedkar to Jagjivan Ram. He said the party that insulted Ambedkar in Parliament and made him resign from the post of Union minister was the Congress party.He was angry that the Congress party gave Bharat Ratna to duplicate Gandhis and ignored BR Ambedkar, who authored country's constitution. He said Babu Jagjivan Ram had the power to rule the country after former PM Indira Gandhi, but she created anarchy by imposing Emergency without giving him the Prime Minister's post. He said it was the Modi government that is distributing rice in ration shops in Telangana. He criticized the Congress for playing a drama by claiming that they were distributing it themselves in the name of fine variety of rice. He accused the Congress leaders of playing a drama to impress artists. He was angry that farmers were being put to trouble by not purchasing their grain properly by the State government. He demanded that Modi's photo should be put in the ration shops. (NSS)

## Youth Congress should serve as protective barrier for party: TPCC chief

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee ( TPCC) President Mahesh Kumar Goud and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud has emphasised that the Youth Congress should serve as a protective barrier for the party.The Telangana Youth Congress State Executive convened on Saturday at Indira Bhavan, located on the grounds of Gandhi Bhavan, under the leadership of President Shiva Charan Reddy. The meeting was attended by TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, AICC Secretary Vishwanath, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, AICC member Sampath Kumar, BC Corporation Chairman Nuthi Srikanth Goud, and others.

During his remarks, the TPCC chief assured that dedicated members of the Congress party would receive proper acknowledgment and be given appropriate roles in the upcoming local body elections.Mahesh Kumar Goud pointed out the need for the Youth Congress to take a proactive stance on social media. He accused the BRS party of disseminating false information regarding HCU lands using AI technology. "We must convey the truth about HCU lands and actively counter the misleading claims made by opposition parties," he stated.



Minister Ponnam Prabhakar stated that the State government is launching various initiatives in Telangana that had not been established previously. He encouraged Youth Congress members to act with the dedication of soldiers in promoting these government schemes to the public.Everyone will have opportunities. Local body elections are set to take place in either June, July, or August. Party tickets will be allocated to workers within the Youth Congress category," Ponnam added. (NSS)

INDIAN CHRONICLE

WANTED

Passionate Reporters

for our Dynamic Newspaper!

Are you a skilled storyteller with a nose for news?

Do you thrive in fast-paced environments and love uncovering the truth?

If so, we want YOU!

Requirements: Strong writing & research skills

Experience in journalism or a related field

Contact

9440231967

7989694528



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Mining policy revamp

Punjab's latest amendments to the state sand and gravel mining policy mark a significant shift in its approach to mineral extraction. By allowing private landowners and panchayats to mine sand and gravel directly, the government hopes to increase supply, stabilise prices and curb illegal mining. But will these changes genuinely root out corruption, or are they merely a reshuffling of power? One of the most striking aspects of the amendment is the expansion of mining rights. Private landowners can now extract and sell sand and gravel while panchayats will gain similar privileges under district administration oversight. The government justifies this by arguing that increasing legal sources of sand will naturally undercut the black market. However, without proper checks and balances, there is danger of the new system enabling local power structures to simply shift corruption to a decentralised model. This will render regulation even more difficult.

The increase in royalty — from 73 paise to Rs 1.75 per cubic foot for sand and Rs 3.20 for gravel — is expected to boost state revenue beyond the current Rs 350 crore annually. But with mining now open to individual landowners, ensuring compliance will be challenging. Will local authorities have the capacity to monitor small-scale mining operations effectively? Or, will this become another avenue for underreporting and tax evasion?

Punjab has long struggled with illegal sand mining, often linked to politically connected mafias. The real test of this policy will lie in its enforcement. If it is not accompanied by stringent monitoring and technological tracking — such as satellite surveillance and digital permits — illegal mining could persist under new disguises. For now, the policy appears ambitious. But the fear of it being another temporary distraction from Punjab's deeper corruption problem is real.

## "SRIDHAR BABU LAUNCHES RICE SCHEME IN MANTHANI

P. S. ASHOKAN "INDIAN-CHRONICLE" "6-4-2025" "MANTHANI" "The state government has launched a rice scheme for the poor, said State IT Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu. On Friday, he distributed rice under this scheme to beneficiaries in Manthani. Speaking on the occasion, he mentioned that the Congress government is moving forward to fulfill all the promises made in the state. He added that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Minister for Consumer Affairs Uttam Kumar Reddy are working towards the goal of bringing happiness to the poor, in line with the promises made during the election. He further stated that the new Rajiv Youth Vikas Scheme, worth 10,000



crores, is aimed at promoting financial development for women. Through this scheme, they are committed to providing subsidies and empowering women. "Sridhar Babu pointed out that while the previous government failed to fulfill its promises, the Congress government is actively implementing welfare schemes, which some are criticizing out of frustration. He emphasized that the goal of the Congress government is to ensure food security for the people. During the event, rice was distributed to white ration card-holding women from Manthani, Kamanpur, and Ramagiri mandals. The event was attended by Additional Collector Venu, RDO, Tahsildar, and various department officials and leaders.

## Sri Ram Navami greetings from Yalamanchi Uday Kiran Charitable Trust.

Miyapur April 5 Trust Chairman Uday Kiran extended Sri Ram Navami greetings through Yalamanchi Uday Kiran Charitable Trust. He extended Sri Ram Navami greetings to the people of Serilingampalli constney and Miyapur division. Rama Navami is predominantly a Hindu festival that celebrates the birth anniversary of Lord Rama. The day is observed on the ninth day of the Shukla Paksha in the month of Chaitra (Hindu calendar). As per the Gregorian calendar, the day usually falls between the months of March and April. Rama Navami in 2025 falls on the 6th of April, Sunday. "Speaking on the occasion, Uday Kiran



out a procession dedicated to Lord Rama, offering prayers in temples and at homes are some of the major customs that are followed on this day.

## Ministers Ponnamm, Seethakka to attend Chintan Shivir at Dehradun

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): Telangana Ministers Ponnamm Prabhakar and Seethakka are set to participate in the Chintan Shivir program focused on social justice and empowerment. This event is slated to take place in Dehradun on April 7 and 8, with Union Minister for Social Justice Dr. Virendra Kumar presiding over it. Ministers representing Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes from various states across India will join the Chintan Shivir.

## EV91 partners with BattRE to deploy 10,000 electric vehicles



GNS News Agency, April 5

Hyderabad: EV91 Technologies, a leading aggregator of electric vehicles (EVs) and a comprehensive enabler for all EV-related needs, has entered into a strategic partnership with BattRE Electric Vehicles, a pioneer and leader in B2B two-wheeler electric mobility solutions in India and evpe, a leading provider of integrated electric vehicle financing solutions. Together, they will deploy 10,000 EVs for last-mile partners, corporate clients, and B2B fleets, providing a complete end-to-end solution for seamless deployment. The partnership seeks to redefine the future of both urban and rural transportation by deploying 10,000 electric vehicles throughout the country. So far 1,000 orders have been placed and 100 vehicles have entered pilot stages, representing a major shift towards sustainable transportation. Through initiatives such as last-mile deliveries, EV loans, rentals, long-term subscriptions, and fleet sales, this collaborative effort

is committed to accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles.

BizDateUp, a startup enabler, has facilitated a key partnership between BattRE Electric Mobility and EV91 Technologies, an alliance aimed to redefine how people travel, signaling a significant move towards a cleaner, more sustainable transportation ecosystem. EV91 Technologies, formerly known as EV91, unveiled a fleet of 107 vehicles in Bangalore and

Chennai in FY 23-24 and jumped to 800+ Vehicles in FY 24-25 collaboration with BattRE will help us to reach the goal for FY 25-26 With 10000+ Fleet. "We're super pumped to team up with BattRE Electric Vehicles! Our goal? To make EVs the go-to choice and provide fast, eco-friendly, and efficient services for both urban and rural areas. We're aiming to add 10k electric vehicles to our fleet by 2026 and help BattRE hit 10,000 sales. Let's make this happen!" Talking about the partnership, Mr. Nishchal Chaudhary, Founder & MD of BattRE, said, "Our goal is to deliver an electric scooter that's top-notch in quality and tech—not just for everyday users, but also for fleets, partnering with others in the ecosystem to drive growth and sustainability. With EV91 Technologies, we want to show how switching to electric mobility can save money and help the planet. We're confident this partnership will benefit both sides and be a game-changer in boosting EV adoption." "Our next-level electric vehicles and super reliable, all-made-in-India electric scooter are built for people who care about quality, comfort, and safety. The STOR:IE is perfect for work and can totally double as your go-to ride after hours. Teaming up with EV91 Technologies, we're about to change the game in electric mobility!"

## Babu Jagjivan Ram's life is an inspiration to the oppressed people of the society: District SP, V. Harshavardhan Raju



April 5, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator "Tirupati District SP, V. Harshavardhan Raju organized the 118th birth anniversary celebrations of Babu Jagjivan Ram at the SP camp office on Saturday. District SP Harshavardhan Raju garlanded the portrait of Babu Jagjivan Ram and paid tribute to his services." Speaking on the occasion, District SP V. Harshavardhan Raju praised Babu Jagjivan Ram as a great social reformer, humanitarian, idealist and beloved leader in India. He said that Jagjivan Ram has the honor of serving as a cabinet minister in the Government of India for 30 years. He praised Babu Jagjivan Ram, who served as the Defense Minister effectively during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, as a source of pride for India. "He said that Babu Jagjivan Ram was a freedom fighter and social reformer who came from the backward classes of Bihar. He explained that he is not only held various min-



isterial posts in the Indian Parliament for 40 years but also served as the Deputy Prime Minister of India. "He said that Babu Jagjivan Ram was born in a simple poor Dalit family and rose to the highest position step by step. He said that he participated in the Indian independence movement and worked for the independence of the country and became known as a public leader. He said that he was a member of Parliament for a long time and brought many reforms. District SP V Harshavardhan Raju said that he was affectionately called Babuji by the people. He also said that as the Agriculture Minister, he contributed a lot to the Green Revolution and the modernization of the Indian agriculture sector. "Additional SP Armed Reserve Result Srinivasa Rao, DSP Home Guards Chiranjeevi, R. I Ramana Reddy, R. I, Camp Office Ramana and other police personnel participated in this program.

## Arrangements to provide Sitaramula Kalyanam Talambralu and Annaprasadam to every devotee :TTD JEO



the Bramhottasavarnis, the JEO said. All the arrangements are being made to carry out cultural programs with a total of 30 art groups under the auspices of HDPP - (18), Dasa Sahitya Project - (4), and Annamacharya Project - (8). "He said that for the first time, Sankshipta Ramayanam is being arranged with art works, and around 12 tons of traditional



flowers and 1 lakh cut flowers would be utilized to decorate the Kalyana Vedika, temple and its surrounding areas. "Later, the JEO inspected the arrangements at the Kalyana Vedika premises with the District Revenue, Police and TTD officials. "RDO John Erwin, TTD CE Satyanarayana, SE Electrical Venkateswarlu, Annaprasadam Special Officer Sastry, Transport Department GM Sessa Reddy, Deputy EO Natesh Babu, Smt. Prashanthi, Selvam, Sivaprasad, Estate Officer Gunabhusan Reddy, DPP Secretary Sriram Raghunath and other officials participated in this program.

## Rachakonda CP inaugurates 860 surveillance cameras under LB Nagar zone

GNS News Agency, April 5

Hyderabad: As part of expanding the Community CCTV camera network across the jurisdiction, Rachakonda Police Commissioner G Sudheer Babu has inaugurated 860 surveillance cameras under the LB Nagar zone here on Saturday.

Officials said the project was completed at a cost of Rs 79.3 lakh. These cameras would further be connected to the Command and Control Centre, where a dedicated team will monitor them.

## CCTV Cameras Are Essential for Public Safety

Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudheer Babu



GNS News Agency, April 5

Hyderabad: Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sri Sudheer Babu inaugurated 860 CCTV cameras in the LB Nagar Zone under the jurisdiction of Rachakonda Commissionerate. Out of these, 380 CCTV cameras were installed across 14 colonies and 4 villages at a cost of Rs. 79,32,000/-, with a two-year Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC), as part of a community initiative. These cameras are integrated into the Command and Control Centre, where a dedicated team monitors them 24/7. So far, a total of 6,087 CCTV cameras and 71,693 'Nenu Saitham' CCTV cameras have been geo-tagged within the LB Nagar Zone. Commissioner Sudheer Babu stated that CCTV cameras play a crucial role not only in enhancing security and preventing crimes but also in supporting criminal investigations, enabling proactive surveillance, crime analysis, and overall public safety. He emphasized that they are a vital part of modern crime prevention strategies. With the help of CCTV footage, Rachakonda Police have been able to solve many sensational cases.

He also announced that, in the next fifteen days, an additional 315 community CCTV cameras worth Rs. 1.56 crore will be inaugurated using MP/MLC constituency funds. With this, a total of 1,200 new CCTV cameras will be added within the limits of LB Nagar Zone. The Commissioner urged colony and village elders to come forward and support the installation of CCTV cameras, stressing their importance for community security. He appreciated and felicitated those community leaders who supported the police in setting up these CCTV cameras. Let me know if you'd like this in a more formal report or presentation format!

## Two red sandalwood smugglers arrested..



"8 red sandalwood logs, two motorcycles seized. "April 5, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator "In addition to arresting two red sandalwood smugglers in the Proddatur range of Kadapa Forest Division, the Task Force Police seized 8 red sandalwood logs and two motorcycles from them. Task Force Chief Subbarayudu, with a special operation, RSI P. Naresh team of Kadapa Sub Control RI Chiranjeevulu, along with local Pattur FBO Linga Nayak, went to check the entry and exit points from the Telugu Ganga Canal in the area. When they reached the KC Canal in the Proddatur range of the Pattur forest beat in the Khajipet mandal of Kadapa district, two people were seen standing on motorcycles. As they approached, they saw the task force personnel and fled, abandoning their motorcycles. The task force personnel who chased them were able to catch them. On checking the surroundings, red sandalwood logs were dumped at one place. There were 8 red sandalwood logs there, along with the motorcycles, they were seized. The arrested persons were identified as belonging to Kadapa district.

## State Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar had darshan in Tirumala



"April 5, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator "On Saturday morning, State Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar visited Tirumala and had Srivari darshan along with his family. After Srivari darshan, Vedic scholars blessed the minister at the Ranganayaka Mandapam and presented him with Tirtha Prasadam. Later, he had lunch with his family members at the Vengamamba Annaprasadam Complex like ordinary devotees.






# World Class Infrastructure towards Viksit Bharat

New Pamban Bridge – India’s First Vertical Lift Sea Bridge at Rameswaram

## Dedication to the Nation of New Pamban Bridge

-  2.08 Km long bridge benefitting over 25 lakh pilgrims visiting Ramanathaswamy Temple annually
-  72.5 m lift span providing higher clearance of 17 m to allow larger boats, improving sea connectivity
-  Advanced material and anti-corrosion technology used
-  Boost to local tourism and socio-economy growth

**4-laning of Villupuram - Puducherry Section of NH-332**  
**4-laning of Poondiyanakuppam - Sattanathapuram Section of NH-32**  
**4-laning of Cholapuram - Thanjavur Section of NH-36**

-  Wider roads ensure smooth traffic flow, shorter travel time, and lower fuel costs
-  Strengthens linkages between major ports and key coastal districts

## Flagging off of

**New Train between Rameswaram and Tambaram (Chennai)**

-  Improved connectivity in Delta region of Tamil Nadu, uplifting local economies
-  Enhances accessibility to religious and tourist destinations

## Laying of Foundation Stone for

**4-laning of Walajahpet/Ranipet–  
Tamil Nadu/Andhra Pradesh Border Section of NH-40**

-  Faster road connectivity between spiritual and metropolitan hubs
-  Direct travel option for pilgrims, tourists and daily commuters

Dedication to the Nation and Foundation Stone Laying of Projects worth Rs. 8500 crore  
by  
**Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

## In the august presence of

- R. N. Ravi**  
Governor, Tamil Nadu
- M.K. Stalin**  
Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu
- Nitin Jairam Gadkari**  
Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways
- Ashwini Vaishnaw**  
Union Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology
- Dr. L. Murugan**  
Union Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs
- Thangam Thennarasu**  
Minister of Finance and Environment Climate Change, Govt. of Tamil Nadu
- R. S. Rajakannappan**  
Minister of Milk and Dairy Development Govt. of Tamil Nadu

 Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

 Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu

 12.45 PM





# NIRDPR & KISS-DU inks MoU to promote rural development

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): Partnership between NIRDPR and KISS-DU is expected to have a significant impact on rural and tribal development, poverty alleviation and social security at the village level. The two institutions are committed to leveraging each other's strengths to achieve their common goals and create a better future for tribal communities in rural areas. The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) Hyderabad and the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences Deemed to be University (KISS-DU) Bhubaneswar, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen evidence-based research and capacity building on tribal regional/area development issues. The MoU, signed on April 4, 2025, aims to promote collaboration between the two premier institutions in areas such as courses on tribal development, experiential learning in rural entrepreneurship development, NTFP value chain development,

sharing indigenous best practices, scaling-up of identified rural skills, and tribal livelihoods. Speaking on the occasion, Dr G Narendra Kumar IAS, Director General, NIRDPR, emphasized on the collaboration between two institutions in the background of research leading to job opportunities and enabling exchange of knowledge, skill and best practices. Dr Prashanta Kumar Routray, Registrar KISS-DU, expressed his desire for the two institutions to work together for tribal empowerment, learning through hybrid mode and sharing of experiences. The MoU signing ceremony was attended by prominent members from both institutions. Manoj Kumar, Registrar and Director Administration, NIRDPR and Dr Prashanta Kumar Routray, Registrar KISS-DU signed the MoU in the presence of Prof. R S Gavali, Prof. Jyothish Sathapalan, Dr Digambar A Chmankar, Dr Kesava Rao from NIRDPR and Dr Saroj Das from KISS DU and other faculty members. (NSS)

# Why delay in installing Phule statue on Assembly premises: Kavitha

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): BRS party MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha today questioned the Congress government as to why BCs were ignored by it? She questioned the delay in installing the statue of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule in the State assembly premises. On Saturday morning, she unveiled a poster of the Phule statue installation drive along with the leaders of the BC associations at her residence in the city. She called for a large turnout for the statue installation drive to be held at Indira Park on April 8. Speaking on the occasion, she reminded that Mahatma Jyotirao Phule was a great man, who fought against oppression, persecution and untouchability throughout his life. She reminded that under the auspices of Telangana Jagruti organisation, they had brought his statue to the attention of the State government on several occasions to install it on the assembly premises and respect it. However, she expressed her anger that the government was deliberately delaying the installation of Mahatma Phule's statue. She said the statue installation drive was being taken up to increase pressure on the State government in a democratic manner. "The Congress government, which is campaigning for 42 percent reservation in the assembly for the BCs in local bodies as well as in education and employment sectors, is not making sincere efforts to implement the increased reservations. We want an answer as to why the bill to increase the reservations in the Assembly and Council is not being taken to the Central Government even after it is passed," she asked. She also said Chief Minister Revanth Reddy was holding back because he fears that all parties would increase pressure on



the Centre on increasing the BC reservations. She said the Congress, which came to power with the votes of the poor, weaker sections and minorities, had completely ignored those sections. She said Phule had educated his wife Savitribai Phule and through her he had educated many women. She said they had introduced the BC Gurukuls and Overseas Scholarships for the uplift of BCs during KCR's tenure and continued his inspiration. She expressed concern that after the Congress party came to power, Gurukuls had been damaged and students were struggling for overseas scholarships, fee reimbursement and scholarships. She appealed to people from all walks of life to come out in large numbers and make the Phule statue Sadhana Diksha program at Indira Park a success. (NSS)

# Col Anil Kumar hands over charge to Col Prashant Kumar

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): Cadets of NCC Group of Hyderabad have always been at the forefront of all activities held under the aegis of NCC Directorate Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, with Col Anil being at the helm of affairs. In a formal ceremony, Colonel Anil Kumar handed over the charge of the NCC Group Hyderabad to Colonel Prashant Kumar. The handover marks the completion of Col Anil Kumar's tenure as the Group Commander of Hyderabad, a role he has held since January 1, 2023. During the tenure of Col Anil, a lot of training infrastructure like Obstacle Course, Squad Posts, Training Sheds, 800 Camp Stools, Drill Nursery were established. Under Col Anil's leadership, the NCC Group Hyderabad has flourished, with cadets consistently leading in various activities conducted by the NCC Directorate Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

His strategic direction and hands-on approach have ensured that the Group remains at the forefront of youth

empowerment and national service. The Group has achieved remarkable milestones, including participation in national-level events like All India Thal Sainik Camp, All India Vayu Sainik Camp, Republic Day Camp, adventure camps and community service projects, reflecting the commitment of the cadets to service and leadership. Col Prashant Kumar, who takes over as the new Group Commander, is set to continue this legacy of excellence. With a strong background in leadership and military service, Col Prashant is expected to steer the Group towards even greater achievements. Col Prashant brings with him a wealth of experience and leadership expertise, and it is expected that under his command, the Group will continue to build on the successes achieved so far. The handover ceremony was attended by all the officers of the Group, whom expressed their gratitude for Col Anil's leadership and their enthusiasm for the new chapter with Col Prashant at the helm. (NSS)

# Moni Babaji health centre to open today



Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): The Moni Babaji Health Centre (MBHC), an initiative of the Moni Babaji Seva Trust has taken a major and philanthropic decision of helping the society in the field of medical care in order to contribute a bit of share for the cause of humanity services. MBHC centre is the realisation of a long-cherished vision to provide accessible and affordable healthcare to the general public with dedicated benefits for the Sikh community. In this connection, Moni Babaji Health Centre developed in 1,600 sft area is strategically located near Gurudwara Sahab Ameerpet is going to inaugurated at 9 am on April 6, 2025. The Centre will be a non-profit charitable organisation and will provide services for the needy, economically disadvantaged, unprivileged and all others providing quality medical

services at highly subsidized affordable cost. Dr S Khuswant Singh, brain behind establishing the health centre at Ameerpet said the noble endeavour is inspired by 108 Sant Baba Joginder Singh Ji, an embodiment of Seva and Simran, whose unwavering commitment to selfless service continues to guide the sangat (devotees). "Our mission is to provide high-quality, yet cost-effective medical care to all, irrespective of caste, creed or religion.

In the light of escalating costs of medical care, the Health Centre is committed to offer state-of-the-art diagnostic services at economical rates. The centre is equipped with modern equipments and is offering medical services for pathology, orthopedic, cardiac, dental and others etc; at lowest cost when compared to market price. The centre is equipped with advanced dental care equipped with modern technology, cutting-edge X-ray and DR imaging facilities. The patients will be well taken care of by our experienced general physicians. There will be expert consultations with distinguished specialists, including physicians, cardiologists, pulmonologists and orthopedicians which includes Dr. Promod Kumar from Yashoda Hospital, Dr Pradyut Waghray, pulmonologists from Apollo Hospitals and Orthopedic experts led by Dr. S. Bhupin Singh Bakshi). The Center proposes to conduct regular health camps, awareness programmes and expert-led consultations in the coming days in collaboration with the Prabandhak Committee, Gurudwara Sahab Ameerpet to foster holistic community well-being. (NSS)

# CM Revanth couple to attend Sri Rama Kalyanam at Bhadrachalam today

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, accompanied by his wife, is set to participate in the divine wedding ceremony of Lord Sri Rama at the historic temple in Bhadrachalam on Sunday, coinciding with the Sri Rama Navami festivities.

The Chief Minister will offer silk clothes and talambralu to the presiding deities on the occasion of celestial wedding of Lord Rama and his consort Seetha at Mithila stadium in the presence of a huge crowd of devotees. After the completion of celestial wedding, CM Revanth Reddy will have lunch at the home of a beneficiary of the fine rice being provided to ration card holders by the Telangana government. (NSS)



P. S. ASHOKAN "IINDIAN-CHRONICLE" "6-4-2025" "MANTHANI." "At the Sri Lakshmi Narayana Swamy Temple in Manthani town, the Thiru Kalyana Mahotsavam (divine marriage festival) is being celebrated with grandeur. Initiated on March 30, the festivities commenced with a procession of the deity on the Garuda Vahana, followed by the Kalyana (marriage) ceremony. From April 7 to April 13, daily rituals including Nitya Vidhi (regular prayers) and Bali

Haranalu (sacrificial offerings) are scheduled. On April 12, in honor of Hanuman Jayanti, a Rathayatra (chariot procession) will traverse the town's main streets. The celebrations will conclude on April 13 with rituals such as Nagavelli, Saptavaranal, and Aavahika Sthapana Udvasanam, followed by Ekanta Seva (private worship). Devotees are encouraged to participate in these events to receive the blessings of the deity.

# KCR remembers Babu Jagjivan Ram

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): BRS party chief KCR today praised the services rendered to the country by Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram as a freedom fighter, Deputy Prime Minister of India, and a visionary of an equal society, who fought against social discrimination. In a statement, KCR remembered his services on the birth anniversary of Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram. He said Jagjivan Ram faced social discrimination since childhood and fought against caste discrimination. "Babu Jagjivan Ram, who actively participated in the country's freedom struggle, brought many reforms in the labour department as a cabinet minister in the post-self-rule era, and his contribution to departments like telecom-

munications, agriculture, and national defence was memorable. His services as the country's Deputy Prime Minister were exemplary," KCR said. He also said the people of the country, who have recognized Jagjivan Ram's services for a non-discriminatory society and social justice, celebrate his birth anniversary as Samata Diwas, and stand as a reflection of the services he rendered for the nation. KCR said his work was exemplary even today and added that they would all work towards the complete eradication of the evil practice of untouchability and social discrimination in the name of caste as an expression their grand tribute to Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram. (NSS)

# Babu Jagjivan Ram is a real public leader ""-Doctor Dasi Nagaraju""

Quthbullapur, Indian Chronicle, April 05 "Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram is a true people who fought for public welfare and equality, said BJP SC Morcha state spokesperson and founder of Compassionate Welfare Society, Dr. Dasi Nagaraju. On Saturday, Babu Jagjivan Ram Jayanti paid homage to the Jagjivan Ram statue in Rajiv Gandhi Nagar in Bachupalli and paid homage to the activists. Speaking on the occasion, Dasi Nagaraju said that Babu Jagjivan Ram was one of the greatest leaders of India's independence struggle, social justice and political arena and was born on April 5, 1908 in a Dalit family in Chandwa village in Bihar state. He said that the problems of the depressed classes have been hurt by him from childhood, and that his education journey has gone on in the Banaras Hindu University and Calcutta University, and has shown talent in education and leadership. Jagjivan Ram was actively involved in the Indian Independence Movement, establishing the All India Harijan Society in 1935 and fought for the rights of the depressed classes. Dr Dasi Nagaraju said that he was elected to the Bihar Legislative Assembly in 1937 and later served as Union Minister, especially during the 1971 Indo-Pak war as Defense Minister. He was the Deputy Prime Minister of India in 1979 for over 40 years in his politics, and that



Jagjivan Ram had a high commitment on democracy values, equality and social justice, but his aspirations and practices were the ideal for all of us today Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram is celebrating Jagjivan Ram Jayanti every year on April 5, while remembers his services, and how to struggle for social equality, how to walk morally and dedicate life to the people. Jagjivan Ram explained that it is a good spirit for future generations. Kiran, Anil and Vijay were present at the event.

# Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu Felicitates Newly Elected President of Arya Vaishya Sangham



"P. S. Ashokan" "Indian-Chronicle" "6th April 2025" "Manthani" "In a distinguished ceremony held yester-

day at Shiva Kiran Garden in Manthani town, Sri Ellanki Vamsi, the newly elected president of the Arya Vaishya Sangham, was formally honored for his appointment. Vamsi, who was unanimously chosen to lead the community organization, was felicitated with a traditional shawl by Sri Duddilla Sridhar Babu, the Hon'ble Minister for IT, Industries, and Legislative Affairs. The Minister extended his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the new president, emphasizing the importance of leadership in promoting unity and progress within the community. This occasion marked a significant moment for the Arya Vaishya Sangham, with leaders and well-wishers gathered to celebrate the new leadership.

# Govt expresses concern over AI creation of controversy over HCU lands

Hyderabad, April 5 (NSS): The State government has raised concerns about the Artificial Intelligence (AI) creation of controversy on social media platforms, particularly regarding the takeover of Hyderabad University lands. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy convened a review meeting at the Secretariat to discuss the ongoing court cases related to the Kanche Gachibowli lands. The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers Seethakka and Ponguleti, Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari, DGP Jitender, PCCF R.M. Dobriyal, TGIC MD Vishnuvardhan Reddy, and officials from relevant departments. Over the past 25 years, numerous projects have been established on the lands identified as Survey No. 25 in Kanche Gachibowli. These include the ISB, Gachibowli Stadium, IIIT, private structures, residential complexes, and various buildings associated with Hyderabad University. The officials informed the Chief Minister that there were no disputes or issues during the construction of these projects. At that time, issues such as wildlife conservation and environmental degradation were not contentious. The meeting discussed the reasons behind the controversy surrounding the development of 400 acres of government

land within the same survey number. Officials informed the Chief Minister that this controversy had sparked a national discussion because some individuals had widely shared videos and images on social media that, while appearing real, were actually fabricated using artificial intelligence. They noted that the rapid spread of false information on social media at a national level, in contrast to the unveiling of the truth, poses a significant challenge for the government. Police officials relayed to the Chief Minister that manipulated images and videos depicted scenarios of peacocks crying in unison, deer fleeing after being struck by bulldozers, and fabricated audio records. They emphasized that even prominent figures across various sectors had been misled by these falsehoods, contributing to the dissemination of misinformation on social media. The meeting discussed that Union Minister Kishan Reddy, former Minister Jagadish Reddy, social media influencer Dhruv Rath, and film celebrities John Abraham, Dia Mirza, and Raveena Thandani have all sent a wrong message to society by posting fake photos and videos created by AI. Officials stated that journalist Sumit Jha, who first posted the fake video on these lands.



# MUDA commissioner gets death threats for restricting middlemen, 2 booked



GNS News Agency, April 5  
Mangaluru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) commissioner Noor Zahara Khanam has lodged a police complaint against two middlemen for allegedly threatening to kill her and defaming her.Khanam filed the complaint on

March 29 at the Urwa police station. The accused, Wahab and Sabith, allegedly targeted Khanam after she restricted middlemen from interfering in single-site approvals and other official matters. The curbs were enforced after a man allegedly trespassed into the MUDA office and tampered with files on January 7.The accused allegedly created a WhatsApp group with other middlemen and posted defamatory content about Khanam between January 7 and March 27. They are accused of making threatening phone calls, which included death threats.The police said the accused used social media to disrupt office operations and conspired against Khanam. They allegedly resorted to threats involving black magic practices.The Urwa police registered a case under sections 132 (assault or using criminal force against a public servant), 351 (criminal intimidation), 356 (1) (defamation), 61 (2) (criminal conspiracy) and 352 (intentional insult to provoke breach of peace) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

# Karnataka HC quashes 2012 sale of property by UB Group, directs liquidator to auction it

GNS News Agency, April 5  
The Karnataka High Court has quashed the 2012 sale of a Bengaluru property by the UB Group, directing that it be auctioned off by the liquidator.The order was passed on March 14 by a bench of Justice Suraj Govindaraj and was recently made available.



In 2023, Brunton Developers had approached the high court with an application regarding their purchase of a property on the third floor of Canberra Block of UB City in Bengaluru from UB Group for a sum of Rs 3 crore. The company argued that it was a transaction at fair market price that was over the guidance value and thus was binding without interest to defraud the creditors of UB Group. However, the company said, the khata or legal property document remained with UB Group, which is in the process of liquidation, and sought transfer of the same.The official liquidator, however, objected to the same on the grounds that the sale was fraudulent as it was made after the institution of winding-up proceedings. It also argued against the valuation report submitted by the company in favour of its purchase price, stating that it was not contemporaneous with the time of the sale and that it was based on the guideline value and not the market value. The liquidator thus argued that it was deliberately undervalued and sold at a throwaway price.

The court agreed with the liquidator on the starting point of the sale, stating, “...the sale of the property by the Company in liquidation, having occurred post the commence-

ment of the winding up proceedings, is statutorily void in terms of Section 536 and 537 of the [Companies] Act of 1956, 334 and 335 of the [Companies] Act of 2013, and as such, the same cannot be validated by this Court”.The bonafides of the transaction were also not accepted by the judge, both about the value and the fact that the son of one of the partners in the applicant company was a managing director at UB Group.Among other observations, the judge rejected the application and declared the property sale void, ordering, “On taking possession of the said premises, the official liquidator is directed to bring the said property for auction after taking necessary permission from this Court and complete the auction process in accordance with law by obtaining such orders from this Court as and when are necessary.”

# As wheat procurement season begins in Punjab, Arvind Kejriwal urges government to create storage space

GNS News Agency, April 5  
Wary of a repeat of last year's paddy procurement fiasco, the Punjab government is not taking any chances in the current wheat procurement season that began on April 1, even as a shortage of storage space remains a pressing concern.Sources told The Indian Express that Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal recently called a meeting of state government officials on procurement and told them that he would not like a repeat of the situation. Last year, paddy procurement was delayed due to a shortage of storage space, leading to a glut in the mandis.It was after Kejriwal's meeting that Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann met Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Pralhad Joshi on March 26, seeking to expedite the movement of foodgrains from the state. “The CM sought that at least 40 rakes of foodgrains should be moved out of Punjab to recipient states every day. This way, we will be able to clear space by June 30 this year. The Union minister assured us that this would be done,” said an official.Mann told Joshi that the state is expected to procure 124 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of wheat. Around 5 lakh tonnes of wheat from the previous season is also stocked in the state due to which the government has to make arrangements for the storage of about 129 lakh tonnes of wheat. Mann said that due to the space crunch, most of the covered space available with the agencies is being diverted for the storage of rice.Mann said that as per the availability of storage space, the state would require at least 25 LMT of wheat to be moved via direct delivery special trains to cope with the shortfall in storage space. He also informed the Union minister that due to the shortage of space for rice, only 45 per cent of rice due has so far been accepted by the Food Corporation of India (FCI). He said that on March 26, the space available with FCI was for 7.50 LMTs, while a total of 71.50 LMTs of rice is yet to be delivered.Punjab can store 175 lakh tonnes of grains under covered spaces and 60 lakh tonnes in open plinths. Of this 235 lakh ton capacity, space for at least 100 lakh tonnes would be needed between April 15 to May 15.



An official said wheat was a hardy grain and can be stored in covered area plinths (CAPs). The state is now in the process of creating CAPs for 35 lakh tonnes of grains. Under CAP storage, the grains are stored under tarpaulins over raised platforms.“The Centre does not allow grains to be stored in uncovered spaces. But we have got Centre's approval for creating this space considering that we have no space. At least this time, we are preparing in advance,” said an official.Last year, when Kejriwal was in Tihar jail, Punjab faced problems of storage. Later, after the state faced problems during the paddy procurement season, Kejriwal had pulled up government officials for not taking up the issue with the Centre at the appropriate time.However, the storage scenario is not rosy – at least 145 lakh tonnes of food grain is already stored in state godowns, and around 100 lakh tonnes of freshly shelled rice is waiting to be stored.Even after Mann's request, on average, only 20 rakes with 50,000 tonnes of grains move out of Punjab every day. As wheat arrivals will peak from April 20 to 30, the state will grapple with space. The priority of the government is to get the paddy purchased in October last year milled as soon as possible and store the rice in covered godowns because rice cannot be stored in the open.About 170 lakh tonnes of paddy were purchased in October out of which only half has been milled till now. Due to the lack of space in the godowns, millers are shying away from milling. The millers are also complaining that in peak summer, the moisture of the paddy will decrease, and the rice will break during milling.

# As mercury rises in Pune, students in hostels struggle without cooling options

GNS News Agency, April 5  
As parts of Pune saw the mercury touching the 40-degree Celsius mark, students living in hostels and paying guest (PG) accommodations in the city are struggling with the lack of cooling options. Many said their accommodations neither provide nor allow air conditioners or coolers, and that fans alone are inadequate to beat the heat.Thousands of students from across Maharashtra and other states reside in Pune to pursue courses at the Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) and other varieties or to attend coaching for competitive examinations, but they are struggling as temperatures rise in the education hub.Shubhashree Popalghat and Sakshi Gunjal, two NEET aspirants staying in Shivajinagar, said their PG did not provide additional cooling facilities even though they are charged separately for electricity in addition to the monthly fee of Rs 5,000. Similarly, Abhidadas, a science student preparing for competitive exams, said, “Only table fans are allowed in my accommodation, which does not suffice in this weather. If they cannot provide a cooler, they should at least allow residents to bring their own.”

Payal, a student at the Brihan Maharashtra College of Commerce (BMCC), pays Rs 9,000 per month at her host-

tel which has no cooler or air conditioning facility. She said the only option to beat the heat is to find another place. “There are two solutions – either go to an AC restaurant or cafe in the afternoon or move out and get a flat instead,” she said.Multi-city hostel chains like Stanza and Tribe provide air-conditioned rooms, but their rates are as high as Rs 18,000 per person for a shared room, making them unaffordable for most students.Dr Shubham Rodge, a medical intern, said he visited around 15-20 hostels looking for a balance between price and availability of amenities. “There should be a middle ground between the affordable and luxury accommodations. Most hostels or PGs are either too expensive or, if affordable, lack basic amenities,” he said.Among the places he visited, Rodge claimed to have found only one PG that allowed residents to bring coolers or install an AC. “But even this PG charged an unnecessarily high price for the installation of an AC, which was separate from the additional monthly fee for electricity.”A few local hostels, however, are more reasonable. Nilesch Dongare, who owns a hostel in Model Colony, said, “We do not provide coolers but we also do not prohibit students from acquiring or renting personal ones. We charge them only for the additional electricity consumed, apart from the fixed price of Rs 8,000 per month for a double-sharing room.”

# At Pune’s first rehabilitation and employment centre for beggars, ‘it’s not just about jobs, it’s about restoring dignity’



GNS News Agency, April 5  
For the last decade, Dr Abhijit Sonawane and Dr Manisha Sonawane have worked to help the homeless in Pune by providing them with medical care and livelihood opportunities. They have rescued children from the streets, ensuring they receive an education, and have rehabilitated elderly beggars by providing them with shelter and support. They have helped more than 300 beggars, helping them start small businesses such as vegetable stalls, tea shops, footwear stores, electronics shops, and tattoo parlours.However, they said a major hurdle remained — the lack of a dedicated employment centre where beggars could receive training and earn a stable income. “For years, we struggled to find a place for this initiative. No one was willing to give us space,” said Dr Abhijit, 50. “But then, Danishbhai Shah stepped in and made this dream a reality.”

The couple said they have started a rehabilitation and employment centre for beggars at the 2,500 square feet space donated by Shah, a 55-year-old businessman and owner of Sanghar Company, in Bibwewadi. Named Aami Madhyaratriche Surya (We Are the Midnight Sun), the project aims to help those forced into begging by providing them with employment.Apart from offering the land, Shah also funded the infrastructure needed to set up the employment centre.“People often donate money at temples or religious places, but here, Danishbhai has donated something even greater,” said Dr Manisha. “He has given people the ability to stand on their own feet.”The centre was inaugurated on March 30, Gudi Padwa, in the presence of Shirish Sardeshpande, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Anti-Corruption Bureau), Mamata Shinde, Assistant Commissioner Beggar Prevention Branch, Women & Child Welfare De-

# Vigilance during midday meals, morning assemblies: Bengal schools directed to take measures against stray dogs

GNS News Agency,April 5  
stray dogsThe directive said that students should also be warned against throwing stones, pebbles, and sticks at dogs, as well as hitting, yelling at or running from a dog.In a first, the Paschim Banga Samagra Shiksha Mission (PBSSM) has issued a directive to all District Education Officers for the implementation of safety measures for preventing stray dog attacks on children in West Bengal.According to the directive, state schools have been advised to utilise the morning assemblies to educate and sensitise the children. Some of the suggestive measures are to not to go near stray dogs or groups of dogs. The directive said that students should also be warned against throwing stones, pebbles, and sticks at dogs, as well as hitting, yelling at or running from a dog.



Teachers have also been instructed to be careful during midday meals to prevent the entry of dogs into school premises and to take extra precautions during the canine breeding season when dogs tend to be more aggressive.The directive was issued following a letter from the department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education (MoE) of the Union government. The letter states that the NCPCR (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights) has made recommendations to ensure the safety and self-protection of children, emphasising the role of municipal bodies under the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023.Speaking to The Indian Express, Animesh Halder, South 24

Parganas district secretary of the Secondary Teachers and Employees Association, said that since the instructions have come from the education department, they will be implemented, but there are issues which require to be “addressed first”.

“For the first time, such an initiative has been taken. It is a good initiative, but many schools have no boundary walls; no one can keep a watch of 360 degrees, the dogs will find a spot one place or another. Also many schools do not have gatekeepers, so gates remain open and the dogs wander inside.There are no night guards in schools.... we have asked for them several times over the years but no response, there are several important documents which are just unprotected,” said Halder.

# Sole survivor suffered excessive blood loss, condition critical, say doctors



GNS News Agency, April 5  
The sole survivor of the accident on the Siswan-Kurali road in Mohali, which killed three PU students, remained critical According to doctors, Manvinder, 24, a research scholar in forensic science, who is undergoing treatment at PGIMER's trauma center, suffered severe head and facial injuries and his condition remained critical.The accident occurred at around 10:30 pm on Sunday when the victims, who were in Maruti Eriga, were en route to Kurali from Chandigarh, to help a friend whose car had broken down. Shubham Jattwal (25), Saurabh Pandey (26), and Rubina (24) were killed in the accident.While the postmortem of Shubham and Rubina was conducted on Monday, Saurabh's postmortem was completed on Tuesday. According to doctors, Saurabh suffered multiple fractures, and excessive blood loss occurred due to a severe head injury.

SHO Block Majri stated that an unidentified vehicle driver was booked on Monday.According to the preliminary information so far, the victims' high-speed car apparently hit a speed breaker, causing it to become airborne and collide with another vehicle, a tipper truck, leading to the fatal accident. The CCTV footage from near the accident site was recovered but remains unclear, making it difficult to identify the vehicle or its license plate. However, police teams are investigating the case.Notably, police found the mangled Maruti Eriga, which was driven by the victims' side at the accident site on Sunday night. The vehicle was completely wrecked, with its speedometer stuck at the reading of approximately 130 kmph. Local residents and emergency responders had to use axes and cutting machines to rescue the victims trapped inside the wreckage.

# ‘Uber for Teens’ rolls out in Hyderabad, other major cities

New Delhi: Ride-hailing major Uber on Wednesday announced the launch of a new service called ‘Uber for Teens’ in India, which, the company claimed, is designed to offer safe and reliable transportation options for teenagers aged 13 to 17 years in the country.This service has been rolled out across 37 cities in the country, including Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata, among others.

The service comes with a set of strict safety protocols, including GPS tracking, real-time ride tracking, and an in-app emergency button.“This is to ensure that both teens and their parents feel secure while using the service,” claimed the company.

A key feature of ‘Uber for Teens’ is that it allows parents to have oversight on the rides their children book.



# Countdown to U.S. reciprocal tariffs: What to expect



GNS News Agency, April 5

With hours to go for the U.S. announcement on “reciprocal tariffs” that have been touted by U.S. President Donald Trump since he came to office as a way to “tax them as they tax us” — referring to countries that impose tariffs on U.S. goods imports — the White House is set to unveil the plan at a Make America Wealthy Again event. The announcement will take place in the Rose Garden at 4 p.m. U.S. EST (1:30 a.m. IST on Thursday) and are due to go into effect immediately, according to the White House.

What is the U.S. expected to do?

While officials have been tight-lipped about the final announcement due to be made, here's what is expected, per various comments by senior Trade and Treasury officials in the last few weeks: Identification of countries to be targeted with tariffs. While Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has referred to the “Dirty 15” that have the highest trade deficits with the US, others have suggested the list will be based on the average tariffs they charge. A single figure of tariffs to be imposed on each of those countries identified — this could either be a blanket figure of 20%, according to some news agencies, or a structured number for each countries based on the differential in average tariffs with the U.S. average of tariffs. According to the USTR, U.S. currently has a “trade-weighted average import tariff rate of 20% on industrial goods”, with half of imports coming in duty-free. Possible additional tariffs to be placed on the basis of Non-Tariff Barriers, Market access issues, as well as those tariffs that Mr. Trump has been threatening over the past few weeks, i.e. on energy imports from Venezuela and Russia. Deferrals of the reciprocal tariffs for certain countries, or even waivers, are based on the actions they have taken thus far or trade negotiations that are ongoing. This is still a guessing game, given that White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt has said that Mr. Trump was imposing tariffs to address “decades of unfair trade practices that have ripped [the U.S.] off and American workers off”, and therefore unlikely to change them due to recent remedial action.

What should India prepare for?

India hopes for some sort of exceptional treatment, given Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington and talks with Mr. Trump in February, and the launch of talks for a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) since then. In a statement issued at the end of the last round of talks March 25-29 in Delhi between U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) officials and Commerce Ministry officials, the government said they had “broadly come to an understanding” on the next steps for the BTA, and hoped to finalise the first tranche or part of it by Fall 20205 (September-November). The statement said they would now start negotiations sector-by-sector virtually, and also hold talks on issues like “increasing market access, reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers and deepening supply chain integration”. Even so, statements from the White House, including Mr. Trump himself, indicate India is seen amongst the “worst offenders” on trade, and has been singled out for both high tariffs (applied tariff

# Israel PM Benjamin Netanyahu drops security chief nominee under fire from Trump ally



GNS News Agency, April 5

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said on Tuesday (April 1, 2025) that he had reversed a decision to appoint former navy commander Vice Admiral Eli Sharvit as Security Agency Chief following criticism, including from a key U.S. senator. Mr. Netanyahu had announced Mr. Sharvit's appointment on Monday (March 31, 2025), pushing back against a Supreme Court decision to freeze his government's move to dismiss incumbent director Ronen Bar. It later emerged that the former Naval Chief had publicly opposed key policies of the Netanyahu Government and U.S. President Donald Trump. “The Prime Minister thanked Vice Admiral Sharvit for his willingness to be called to duty but informed him that, after further consideration, he intends to examine other candidates,” Mr. Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

The abrupt about-turn by the Prime Minister on the key security appointment drew condemnation from the opposition. “The head of the Shin Bet is not just another appointment. It's not a job that you announce and regret after 24 hours because of a few screams,” said opposition leader Yair Lapid. “This is the holiest of holies, it's a violation of state security,” he said on social media. Former Defence Minister Benny Gantz echoed Mr. Lapid's remarks. “Mr. Netanyahu proved again this morning: for him, political pressure outweighs the good of the state and its security,” he said in a post. The Prime Minister announced Bar's dismissal on March 21, citing an “ongoing lack of trust”, but the supreme court swiftly suspended the decision until April 8. The move to dismiss him has sparked daily mass protests in Jerusalem. On Monday (March 31, 2025), hours after Mr. Sharvit's appointment was announced, reports began surfacing that he had been among tens of thousands of Israelis who took to the streets in 2023 to oppose the Netanyahu Government's attempts to reform the judiciary. Israeli media reports also recalled that Sharvit, who served in the military for 36 years, five of them as head of the navy, had supported a 2022 agreement on the maritime border with Lebanon that Mr. Netanyahu had opposed.

Beyond problematic It was also revealed that the nominee had penned an opinion piece criticising the U.S.

rate was 17.0 percent in 2023 by WTO figures) and the bilateral trade deficit (\$45.7 bn) in its favour. On March 31, Ms. Leavitt addressed the White House press corps holding up a chart which she said showed the worst “tariff offenders”, including “50% from the European Union on American dairy, 700% tariff from Japan on American rice, a 100% tariff from India on American agricultural products, and nearly a 300% tariff from Canada on American butter and American cheese”. The figures were referred to in the 2025 National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers released by the USTR on March 31. India's average Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) applied tariff rate was 17% in 2023 (latest data available), which was the highest of any major world economy, with an average applied tariff rate of 13.5% for non-agricultural goods and 39% for agricultural goods. India's World Trade Organization (WTO) bound tariff rates on agricultural products are among the highest in the world, averaging 113.1% and ranging as high as 300% India has repeatedly raised import restrictions, tariffs, surcharges and taxes on products ranging from electronics to farm produce.

India maintains various forms of non-tariff barriers: banned or prohibited items that are denied entry into India (e.g., tallow, fat, and oils of animal origin); items that require a non-automatic import license (e.g., certain livestock products, pharmaceuticals, certain chemicals, certain information technology products); and items that are importable only by government trading monopolies and are subject to cabinet approval regarding import timing and quantity (e.g., corn under a tariff-rate quota).

The United States has raised concerns about the science and risk basis for India's sanitary and phytosanitary-related trade barriers to food and agricultural imports, impeding agricultural products (including dairy products, alfalfa hay, and other feed grains) into the Indian market. In addition, the U.S. has raised similar concerns about India's policy on Genetically Modified foods. U.S. raised concerns over lack of Intellectual Property rights concerns as well as taxes on digital services including the 6% Digital Equalisation Levy and data localisation requirements, and has put India on its “Priority Watch List”. New Delhi should expect to be asked to address each of these concerns if it wants to avoid being penalized by the Trump administration. What has India done thus far: Begun talks for a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) to address most of the issue. Reduced tariffs on a number of items including US alcohol, motorcycles and other goods. According to officials privy to the negotiations, the Indian side has indicated willingness to reduce tariffs on about half of the current line of goods being imported. India may also discuss if it can forego some of the extra surcharges, the digital tax, production-linked incentives etc. India is also willing to discuss market access for agricultural goods and dairy products, thus far considered a no-go area. India is in negotiations for early FTA deals with E.U., U.K., Australia, New Zealand and others along with the U.S., and will be expected to offer similar concessions to all. Facing pressure from farmers' groups over the plans, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar acknowledged their concerns but emphasized that negotiators should be “trusted” to negotiate the “best possible deal” for India. India's response to any tariffs imposed will also be watched closely. China has already retaliated to tariffs with major counter-tariffs, as have Canada and Mexico. European Union leaders have said the E.U.'s response to any U.S. tariffs will be “unitary, proportionate and robust”. When the previous Trump administration had revoked India's ‘GSP’ status overnight, India slapped the U.S. with a number of retaliatory tariffs. However, this time around, the response to U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminium, the restrictions on energy purchases, etc. have been met with silent acceptance from New Delhi, and it remains to be seen what the reaction to the announcements overnight will be.

# Why do we make doubling error typos when typing?

president's policies on climate change, prompting staunch Trump ally Senator Lindsey Graham to criticise his appointment in a post on X. “While it is undeniably true that America has no better friend than Israel, the appointment of Eli Sharvit to be the new leader of the Shin Bet is beyond problematic,” Mr. Graham wrote on Monday (March 31, 2025). “There has never been a better supporter for the State of Israel than President Trump. The statements made by Eli Sharvit about President Trump and his policies will create unnecessary stress at a critical time. My advice to my Israeli friends is change course and do better vetting,” he said. Mr. Sharvit's criticism of the U.S. president was published by Israeli financial newspaper Calcalist on January 23 under the headline: “Not just a political mistake: Trump is pushing the earth to the abyss.” Israeli opposition leaders have warned that if the top court overturns Bar's dismissal, the country could face a constitutional crisis. Legal experts told AFP on Monday (March 31, 2025) that Mr. Netanyahu had so far not violated any law in his moves to find a replacement for Bar. But Mr. Gantz has said that no decision should be taken on the leadership of the Shin Bet until after the supreme court's decision. Mr. Bar's relationship with the Netanyahu Government soured after he blamed the executive for Hamas's October 2023 attack and following a Shin Bet probe into alleged covert payments from Qatar to a Netanyahu aide. Mr. Netanyahu testified in the investigation on Monday (March 31, 2025), denouncing it as a “political witch hunt” aimed at “preventing the dismissal” of Bar.

# Why do we make doubling error typos when typing?

A: Analyses of large corpora of typed text reveal that these doubling errors are a common class of typographical errors. They only arise in words that have adjacent double letters, or geminates, and are attributed to a special repetition marker in the brain. This marker is associated with a particular position in a word and causes immediate repetition of the letter at that position. Sometimes the marker may be triggered too early or too late, causing incorrect repetition of a nearby letter. Thus, ‘between’ appears as ‘betwwen’.

Repetition markers are assumed necessary by the suppression of actions during the production of a well-learned sequence. The temporary suppression of each action immediately after its execution prevents it from persevering or competing with subsequent action. This suppression is problematic when immediate repetition is required, which explains the need for the special repetition marker.

# China-India ties across the past and into the future



GNS News Agency, April 5

Yesterday (April 1) was the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India (1950). Over the past 75 years, China-India relations, despite weathering ups and downs, have always surged forward like the Yangtze and the Ganges. One learns from the past in order to understand the future, and follows the right path to go far. Looking back at the extraordinary journey of China-India relations, there are four inspirational factors embedded therein that are particularly worth drawing upon.

Leaders and their guidance

First, the strategic guidance of our leaders serves as the ‘anchor’ for China-India relations. Over the past 75 years, the leaders of the two countries have consistently steered the relationship at critical historical junctures. In 1950, Chairman Mao Zedong and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru made the historic decision of establishing diplomatic ties, and India became the first non-socialist country to have diplomatic relations with China. In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited China, and the two sides agreed to “look forward”, initiating the normalisation process of bilateral relations. Since 2013, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi carried out “hometown diplomacy” and two informal meetings, which have propelled the bilateral relations into a period of rapid development. Last October, the leaders of our two countries met in Kazan, and opened a new chapter for China-India relations. Second, friendly exchanges and cooperation form the ‘foundational fabric’ of China-India relations. Looking back through history, our two civilisations have flourished like twin lotuses, interconnected and mutually illuminating. The westward journey of Master Xuanzang seeking Buddhist scriptures and the eastward voyage of Bodhidharma spreading Zen teachings have become widely-circulated stories of exchanges between China and India. Our two peoples have empathised with and supported each other in our respective struggles for national independence and liberation. Rabindranath Tagore and Dr. Kotnis have become timeless emblems of the China-India friendship. Since the turn of the century, China and India have forged a strategic and cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity. During President Xi Jinping's state visit to India in 2014, the two sides decided to build a closer developmental partnership. Under these important frameworks, the two countries have established nearly 50 dialogue mechanisms at all levels and in various fields. The bilateral trade volume has jumped from less than \$3 billion in 2000 to \$138.5 billion in 2024. Cooperation in culture, education, tourism and other fields has expanded continuously. Yoga and Bollywood movies have gained popularity in China. China-India exchanges and cooperation are becoming deeper and deeper, and the people of the two countries are getting closer and closer.

Third, bridging differences through dialogue stands as the ‘one and only key’ of China-India relations. As close neighbours, our peoples may sometimes have differences. As Prime Minister Modi said, when two neighbouring countries exist, occasional disagreements are bound to happen. Even within a family, not everything is always perfect. But our focus is to ensure that these differences do not turn into disputes. As two ancient civilisations, China and India both have the tradition and characteristics of cherishing peace and goodwill, as well as the wisdom and capacity to resolve differences through dialogue. Faced with the boundary question left over from history, the two sides have established communication channels such as the Special Representative Mechanism on the China-India Boundary Question and the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on China-India Border Affairs, and strive to seek a proper solution. At the end of last year, the two sides pushed the border situation back to tranquility through intensive dialogue, marking the latest testament to China and India's commitment to resolving differences through consultation. Fourth, working for the future of the world is the “important mission” of China-India relations. President Xi Jinping once said, if China and India speak with one voice, the whole world will listen; and if we join hands, the whole world will pay attention. Historically, the two great civilisations of China and India have enriched each other, and the total economic volume of the two countries has long accounted for half of global GDP, making momentous contributions to human progress. After the establishment of diplomatic relations, China and India jointly advocated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, attended the Bandung Conference together, and promoted the independence and unity of Asian and African countries and the peaceful development of the

# EU has ‘strong plan’ in place for Trump’s tariffs: Von der Leyen

GNS News Agency, April 5

On the eve of U.S. President Donald Trump's sweeping ‘reciprocal tariffs’ on April 2, the E.U. and U.K. had starkly contrasting responses planned, with the E.U. gearing up for retaliation and the U.K. bracing for impact and deciding for now not to impose retaliatory tariffs as it hopes to reach a deal with Mr. Trump. On Tuesday (April 1, 2025), European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the bloc was considering the use of all of its policy instruments in response to Mr. Trump's move.

“Europe has not started this confrontation. We do not necessarily want to retaliate, but we have a strong plan to retaliate if necessary,” she said, arguing that the trade relationship with the U.S. when goods and services were considered, was close to being balanced and urging a solution to the brewing trade war. Mr. Trump had already announced tariffs on all countries for their exports of steel, aluminium, automobiles and auto parts to the U.S. Now, Washington is set to impose reciprocal tariffs on its trading partners on Wednesday (April 2, 2025), which Mr. Trump has termed ‘Liberation Day’ in America. Reciprocal tariffs – which are country-specific – are based on the idea that the U.S. will charge its partners tariffs equal to the tariffs it is charged by them. The details of how the tariffs will be worked out for each country are unclear. On Tuesday (April 1, 2025), Ms. Von der Leyen said that as part of its response, the EU

world. At present, as vital members of multilateral mechanisms such as BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the G-20, China and India should take the common responsibilities of safeguarding the rights and the interests of developing countries, maintaining international fairness and justice, and upholding multilateralism. At present, transformation not seen in a century is accelerating across the world, geopolitical conflicts keep escalating, and the mankind is facing unprecedented challenges. As the only two major developing countries and representatives of emerging economies with a population of over one billion, China-India relations have become one of the most crucial bilateral relations in the world. The sound and stable development of bilateral relations serves the fundamental interests of the two people, meets the common aspirations of regional countries, follows the historical trend of the Global South growing stronger, and is conducive to world peace, stability, development and prosperity.

On the ground Recently, China and India have earnestly implemented the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries. The two Foreign Ministers have met for several times on multilateral occasions. The 23rd Special Representatives' meeting on China-India Boundary Question and the Vice Minister-Foreign Secretary Dialogue have been held successively, and reached many points of consensus on China-India relations, border issues, and practical cooperation. The two sides maintain communication on issues of mutual concern, such as the resumption of direct flights, visa facilitation, pilgrimage to Mount Gang Renpoche and Lake Mapam Yun Tso (Kailash Manasarovar Yatra) in Xizang, and also resident journalists, striving to achieve results as soon as possible. Bilateral economic and trade cooperation has maintained good momentum. In the first two months of this year, the bilateral trade volume reached \$23.6 billion. People-to-people exchanges are increasing. In the first quarter of this year, the Chinese Embassy and Consulate-Generals in India have issued over 70,000 visas to Indian citizens, with a year-on-year increase of approximately 15%. These figures fully demonstrate the strong motivation for exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

Steps for Beijing and New Delhi to take It is the common will of the two peoples and the unstoppable tide of history to advance China-India friendship and cooperation. China and India will gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation. A pas de deux of the dragon and the elephant is the only right choice for both sides. We should adhere to the important consensus reached by the two leaders, and forge a right path for the two neighbouring major countries to coexist in harmony and develop hand in hand. First, we should build a healthy and stable China-India relationship. Both sides should adhere to the strategic judgment made by the two leaders that “China and India are partners rather than rivals, and development opportunities rather than threats to each other”. We should uphold the principles of mutual respect, mutual understanding, mutual trust, mutual accommodation and mutual accomplishment. We should properly handle differences through dialogue, and never allow bilateral relations to be defined by the boundary question, or let specific differences affect the overall picture of bilateral ties, so as to ensure that China-India relations always move forward along the track of sound development. Second, we should develop a mutually beneficial China-India relationship. Both China and India are at a critical stage of national development and revitalisation. It is our common goal to develop the economy and improve people's livelihoods. China is actively promoting high-quality development and pursuing higher-standard opening up. India is committed to realising the vision of “Viksit Bharat 2047”. We should strengthen the alignment of our development strategies, resume and promote exchanges and cooperation in various fields, and push forward the modernisation of the two countries. Third, we should forge an internationally cooperative China-India relationship. As important members of the Global South, China and India have the responsibility to jointly safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries, promote an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalisation, and inject stability into a world fraught with uncertainties. As the rotating president of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation this year, China is willing to work with all parties including India to jointly hold a SCO summit featuring friendship, solidarity and fruitful outcomes, and lead the SCO into a new stage of high-quality development featuring stronger solidarity, coordination, dynamism and productiveness. Mahatma Gandhi once said, “I long for the day when a free India and free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world”. Thousands of years of civilisation have endowed us with the foresight to learn from the past and chart the course for the future. The similar goals of achieving national rejuvenation and modernisation lead us to focus on development, and the aspirations of 2.8 billion people for a better life call for us to strengthen cooperation. I believe that under the strategic guidance of the leaders of the two countries and with the joint efforts of people from all walks of life, China and India will move forward steadily along the path of jointly achieving national development and rejuvenation and promoting the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

# Why do we make doubling error typos when typing?

would further diversify its trading partnerships and “double down” on the internal EU Single Market. Listing some of the bloc's trading relationships, she said that Brussels was hoping to conclude a trade deal with New Delhi by the end of this year. The cabinet of EU Commissioners had visited India at the end of February to boost the partnership and the two sides had resumed trade talks, holding discussions in Brussels in March. “I hear Americans when they say some others have taken advantage of the rules. I agree. We also suffer from it. So let us work on it,” Ms. Von der Leyen said. In the U.K., where Britons face an increasing cost of living and lower economic growth projection for 2025 than previously forecasted, there were no plans for immediate retaliation against the U.S. The apparent bonhomie between U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Mr. Trump and the fact that the two countries are negotiating a trade deal have not translated into a tariff exemption for the U.K. Mr. Starmer expressed optimism about concluding a deal with the U.S. quickly and said that such an agreement would “mitigate” the impact of tariffs, in an interview with Sky News. The Prime Minister said he was talking to the sectors the tariffs would impact and that all options were on the table. However, he repeatedly said a trade war was not in the U.K.'s interest. He sidestepped a question on whether he was being “played” by Mr. Trump. “This is clearly a very significant development,” U.K. Trade and Business Secretary Johnathan Reynolds said. In an interview with the BBC.



# Breathing easy in the National Capital Region



Given the umbilical link between winter pollution in the National Capital Region and paddy stubble burning — at least for three to four weeks, it is the difference between poor and very poor or severe air quality — Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh’s plans to reduce land under non-basmati rice cultivation by 500,000 hectares is a breath of fresh air. The Capital’s three neighbours are the biggest stubble-burners in the region (with Punjab accounting for the majority), and the proposal made in a report submitted to the Supreme Court is based on the states’ responses. To that end, they must ensure a meaningful follow-through.

Non-basmati varieties account for an overwhelming share of paddy acreage in Punjab (96% in 2024) and a significantly large share in Haryana (56%). The states’ respective commitments of acreage to be divested of non-basmati cultivation — Punjab’s 459,000 hectares, Haryana’s 81,000 hectares, and UP’s 11,000 hectares — need to be viewed against this backdrop. In Punjab’s case, with total rice acreage at 3.15 million hectares in 2024, this would mean a 14% reduction in acreage and a resulting fall in crop residue that needs to be disposed of through burning. The gains for air quality in the NCR could truly be consequential. Given paddy is a water-guzzler, the fall in acreage could also give ground-water reserves in these states much-needed relief after decades of over-exploitation, but only if farmers shift to less water-intensive crops such as maize instead of cotton and sugarcane. That said, the proposed shift must carefully weigh the implications for the government’s grain reserves, given buffer stock and public distribution requirements. At current levels of procurement, the stocks with the government usually are in excess of these, to varying degrees throughout the year. Any anticipated fall in reserves can perhaps be made up for by shifting procurement to other states where rice production is high, but environmental costs are low.

## On the possibilities offered by speculative fiction

Let’s talk about Blaft! Having launched in 2008, it is in its 17th year now. How has it changed in the context of who and what you publish?

Rashmi: We brought out the first anthology of Tamil pulp fiction because we strongly believed this book needed to exist. We hoped there would be more than a fair number of folks like us who would want to read it too. Since then, the titles we’ve been bringing out are books we really want to read ourselves — that has been the driving catalyst that makes things bloom in Blaft’s petri dish.

Rakesh: When we started out, Rashmi and I were frustrated with what felt like a suffocating sameness about most of the Indian writing available in English bookstores. It seemed like everything was about delicate sad women, with mangoes and sari borders on the covers. While those books still exist, things have opened up a lot — there’s more writing in different genres, more translations, more experiments. But I don’t think our ethos has changed much really; we still like to publish books that feel different and surprising.

As a small independent press, how has a platform like Kickstarter helped you? Since this campaign made more than three times the goal amount, did you expect such an enthusiastic response?

Rakesh: Kickstarter has been great, especially for getting our books into the hands of international readers; people from all over the world find it easy to support us there. We kept our goal as the amount that would allow us to meet minimum production costs. I did expect that we’d meet it easily — there was a lot of interest early on; besides, there were more than 40 contributors, all of whom had networks of friends and family and fans. But I didn’t expect it to exceed the target by quite so much!

Rashmi: We are really thankful to everyone who supported this campaign. We were completely blown away at the support this book project received. Indie publishing is a hard knock business, you don’t have the infrastructure or fiscal bandwidth that legacy publishing houses have to keep multiple manuscripts in development. This book could only have been conceived through a crowdfunded model. We also want to make books that have stellar production quality in terms of printing and design. We could realise those aspects as well thanks to the ACSF backers.

Why ‘anti-caste’ speculative fiction? How did you envision the collection in the planning stages?

Rakesh: For me, it was just this: if you do a caste census of Indian writers published in English, you’ll find that it’s something like 70% Brahmins and 20% other “upper-caste” writers. And in genres like science fiction, it’s more like 99%. Many of those writers do excellent work, but it’s just totally non-representative of the population, which is only 20% or 30% upper caste. That seems super unhealthy, you know? Like the imagination of most of the country is being throttled.

What possibilities does speculative fiction as a genre offer that perhaps is not the case for realism? Could you please expand on the line about how “it’s a powerful way to think critically and ask important questions about our world”?

Rashmi: I am no expert in speculative fiction. But if I was attempting to articulate what the genre means to me at this point in time, it’s that it lets you reframe the absurdity of the unfairness and imbalance of our day-to-day existence. Realism is also not an umbrella term that covers everyone’s lived experience, right? I think spec fic gives a writer trying to make sense of these absurdities the possibility to build a layered story — fantasy on horror with science fiction at the base, double sandwiched maybe, with a slice of camp.

How did you decide on the contributors and how to source contributions? Were there any specific challenges in getting submissions?



Rakesh: We had a rough target page count. RT Samuel had a network of author friends — many of whom have been active in anti-caste academic or artistic spaces — and solicited contributions from that group. I did a bunch of research hunting for writers in other languages and hooking them up with translators. Those pieces together accounted for about ¼ of the page target; after that we put out our open call with a plan to fill the rest of the pages with submissions.

As for challenges: all the submissions we got from the open call were written in English. Which was fine, but I would have loved to include more translations. In particular, the book doesn’t have anything from Hindi. I can’t believe that among 400 million Dalit/Bahujan/Adivasi Hindi speakers there’s nobody writing cool speculative fiction. They must be out there; we just haven’t found them.

What was the editorial process like? How did you divide the work and labour between the three of you? Were there specialised tasks for each one of you?

Rakesh: RT Samuel did a lot of the commissioning and had the final say on what went in and what didn’t. I did a lot of the working-with-translators. Rashmi was keen on including comics.

It is commendable that the anthology contains contributions translated from other languages as well as multimedia pieces. What was the thought process behind that decision and did it affect how you viewed “speculative fiction”?

Rakesh: We’ve always been interested in genre fiction in Indian languages—after all, we launched our company with an anthology of Tamil pulp stories. Genre boundaries are different in different languages, the tropes are different, the whole idea of what imaginative fiction can be is different.

In many ways, the manner in which these stories are written and presented also pushes the horizon of possibility along with their content. Could you please comment on this aspect?

RT Samuel: Blaft has always had a very strong visual language and has also prioritized storytelling across mediums so this project wasn’t any different. And genre-wise SF has also always had a tradition of breaking new ground in terms of art, graphic novels, film (both animated and live-action). It’s just part of the canon, so to speak.

How have contributors and readers responded to the anthology so far? And what next? Have you begun thinking about a follow-up or a similar anthology?

Rakesh: As stretch goals for the Kickstarter, we decided to bring out two collections — a book of short stories by PA Uthaman, translated from Malayalam by Midula Makkuni, and the full book Parivrajak by Gautamiputra Kamble, translated from Marathi by Sirus J Libero. No plans for a sequel yet, but hopefully soon!

## There are happier ways to get out of bed: listen to the musicians of the air

In the old days, we used to be awoken every morning by the plangent fire-engine like rattling ring of our alarm clocks, many of which must have met their end, after being thrown out of the window. Later, equally irritating, electronic beeping alarms would gradually beep louder and louder until they bayoneted the deepest recesses of your blissful early morning sleep. Now, our smartphones play ‘soothing’ tunes, which frankly get on our nerves in very short order. In all cases, we get out of bed cranky and grumpy. That doesn’t happen when you get birds to wake you up. For years and years now, I have used the services of a mellifluous red-whiskered bulbul that roosted in the bougainvillea outside my bedroom window. Punctually at dawn, every morning it would call out in dulcet tones, to be answered by its partner or a rival nearby. Its own timer was set for sunrise. It would wake you up at as late as 7-7.30 am in winter and maybe 5 am in summer, which was so sensible and suited me just fine. It didn’t have a vast repertoire, but there was some soothing and refreshing about its call, which on occasion could be pretty loud too. The bulbul was clearly signalling that it was alive and well, and this was its patch, and that lady bulbuls were welcome to join it. In Goa, I had my magpie robin friend who is still on ‘dooty’ as they would say, after I first noticed him over 10 years ago. Snuggled up in

bed, you could hear his long, sweet whistle break the silence and there was no way you could put a pillow over your head and go back to sleep; you just had to listen. He was an early riser. All dressed up in his tuxedo, he would start his concert well before dawn. He would fly from perch to perch in the area, signalling he was in possession of a territory much larger than perhaps he needed, but which, no doubt, would impress the ladies. He had a playlist, too. On my last visit, I noticed he sang different compositions every morning. Between pauses, you could hear the soft chiming calls of what I think are scops owls deep in the trees, which added to the aura. In case you dozed off or were trying to sleep off a hangover (all too possible in Goa) there was backup — especially in summer. The ringing call of the white-throated kingfisher, was loud and insistent and all about excitement — get up man! Yes, he certainly woke you up. And for the finale, the cackling laugh of a pair of black-rumped flamebacks (nee golden-backed woodpeckers) as they clamped themselves on the tall palm tree at the end of the garden. They have a crackling, rising laugh that lifts your spirits and is just what you need first thing in the morning — better than any cup of coffee! Red-whiskered bulbuls For years and years now, the author has used the services of a mellifluous red-whiskered bulbul that roosted in the bougainvillea outside his bedroom window.

# U.S. Sends Warplanes, Ships to the Middle East in Warning to Iran



GNS News Agency, April 5

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon is rapidly expanding its forces in the Middle East as the U.S. military continues airstrikes against Houthi militants in Yemen and steps up its pressure on Iran, the Pentagon said Tuesday. President Trump has threatened in recent days to bomb Iran if Tehran doesn’t make a deal to roll back its nuclear program. But two officials said that the aim of the current deployment is to bolster the U.S. campaign in Yemen and deter Iran. The deployments aren’t preparation for an imminent Iran attack, the officials said. The buildup includes F-35 combat jets, which are joining B-2 bombers and Predator drones in the region, according to U.S. officials familiar with the planning. The U.S. will soon have two carrier strike groups in the region—the USS Harry S. Truman, which has been operating in the Middle East since last fall, and USS Carl Vinson, which is usually assigned to Asia and is expected to arrive within two weeks.

Along with the carriers, the strike groups include cruise missile-carrying destroyers and other warships. The U.S. also has sent Patriot antimissile batteries to defend U.S. air bases and nearby allies, the officials said. The Trump administration launched an air campaign against the Houthis on March 15 and has continued daily strikes around the Yemeni capital of San’a and other locations, targeting the group’s leaders and military assets. On Tuesday, the Houthis said they shot down a U.S. MQ-9 Reaper drone amid ongoing U.S. strikes in Yemen. The Pentagon was aware of the claim but declined to comment. Earlier this week, the Houthis launched missiles toward Israel, which were intercepted. In addition to threatening Iran with bombing if it doesn’t negotiate a nuclear agreement, the White House has warned it will hold Tehran accountable if the Houthis fire at U.S. forces. Iran has provided arms and training to the Houthis. Talks between the U.S. and Iran on Tehran’s nuclear program have yet to be arranged.

“The United States and its partners...are prepared to

## France’s Far Right Confronts Life After Le Pen

GNS News Agency, April 5

For generations that question was unthinkable as one Le Pen, firebrand Jean-Marie, handed the reins of France’s nationalist party to another, his daughter Marine. In banning Marine Le Pen from running for the presidency in 2027, however, a French court has forced the Le Pen family party, National Rally, into a reckoning over its future. The dilemma: whether Le Pen should dig in and fight for her political future or make way for a successor. The first option means waging an all-out war with French prosecutors in appellate courts as well as the court of public opinion. That approach mirrors President Trump’s campaign against judges and prosecutors, which fired up his supporters and helped turn the tide of the U.S. presidential election in his favor. It also risks bogging down National Rally in litigation with no guarantee Le Pen will secure the right to run, all while alienating swathes of the French electorate who support France’s fiercely independent judiciary.

Picking a successor, meanwhile, is also a path fraught with peril. Le Pen has positioned her protégé, Jordan Bardella, as National Rally’s dauphin, waiting in the wings. A fresh-faced 29-year-old with a gift for viral TikTok posts, Bardella is regarded as a talented politician. Bardella spearheaded National Rally’s campaign during last summer’s snap parliamentary elections, but he has never been under the klieg lights of a contest for France’s highest office. So far, Le Pen has been mercurial about her intentions. In a TV interview on Monday she described herself as a fighter, saying she wasn’t going to be brought down by a court ruling. But she also praised Bardella as a “tremendous asset for our movement.” “I hope we won’t have to use that asset any sooner than necessary,” she added.

Le Pen is counting on an unusually swift appeals trial to overturn Monday’s ruling, which convicted her of misusing European Union funds and sentenced her to a five-year ban from running for office again, as well as a four-year prison term. Half of that term was suspended, and the remaining two years could be served with an electronic bracelet, judges said. The Paris appeals court said Tuesday it “will examine this case within a timeframe that should allow a decision to be taken in the summer of 2026.” Jordan Bardella is waiting in the wings at the National Rally party. For National Rally, turning the page on Le Pen is challenging because the party has long operated as a cult of personality centered on a Le Pen family member. Jean-Marie Le Pen, who died in January, outraged the public with antisemitic remarks, but he was also a riveting presence on the airwaves with his provocative turns of phrase. His daughter cultivated a folksy image, publicly fawning over her cats, and connecting with rural and working-class voters neglected by mainstream parties. Some polls, however, suggest that voters are ready for a changing of the guard. A survey by polling firm Odoxa conducted on Monday after the ruling found that 57% of National Rally voters consider Bardella a better candidate than Le Pen for president in 2027. The figure rose to 61% when accounting for voters of all stripes. Bardella isn’t alone as a pretender to France’s far-right throne. Le Pen’s 35-year-old niece, Marion Maréchal, has had an on-again, off-again relationship with National Rally and her aunt, adopting the Le Pen last name at one point only to jettison it later. Her ambition to one day become the face of France’s far right, however, has always been clear. After judges ruled on Monday, Maréchal wrote a post on X that included an archival photo of her embracing her aunt. Maréchal recounted how her family had endured “all the attacks, all the injustices” over the decades. “I am more than ever by Marine’s side at this time,” Maréchal wrote. Not to be outdone, Bardella posted a photo of Le Pen hugging him with a look of maternal pride on her face. Bardella and Maréchal each appeared on TV on Tuesday morning to defend Le Pen.

“The weakening of Marine Le Pen’s leadership will create more competition and rivalry,” said Olivier Rouquan, a researcher at the Paris-based Study and Research Center for Administrative and Political Sciences. Jean-Marie Le Pen

respond to any state or nonstate actor seeking to broaden or escalate conflict in the region,” Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said in a statement Tuesday. “Should Iran or its proxies threaten American personnel and interests in the region, the United States will take decisive action to defend our people.” Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Qalibaf on Friday said Iran would retaliate against any U.S. strike on Iran by attacking American interests in the Middle East. “If the Americans attack the sanctity of Iran, the entire region will blow up like a spark in an ammunition dump,” Qalibaf said in a speech in Tehran. An Iranian official said the response would be focused on U.S. bases in the Persian Gulf. “Each American soldier will be an individual target,” he said.

Some experts believe that Iran is wary of initiating a major conflict with Trump, who ordered the killing of Qassem Soleimani, the commander of the paramilitary Quds Force, in a January 2020 airstrike near the Baghdad airport. Army Gen. Michael “Erik” Kurilla, the head of the U.S. Central Command, which is responsible for military operations in the Middle East, has long advocated for a more forceful U.S. response to Houthi attacks on ships transiting the Red Sea and nearby sea lanes, which began shortly after Israel’s war in Gaza began in 2023. The Houthis, who control large swathes of Yemen, stopped their attacks earlier this year after a brief cease-fire in Gaza, but said they would resume them once the deal collapsed and Israel relaunched its military operation.

The Biden administration, which was trying to avoid a wider Middle East war as Israel and Hamas clashed, sent U.S. warships to try to protect international shipping and conducted strikes against the Houthis. But the Trump administration has been more aggressive and has expanded its list of targets to include Houthi military leaders. The new deployments underscore that the Middle East remains a major focus of concern for the Pentagon, despite its multiyear push to shift forces to the Pacific region to deter threats from China. U.S. bases in Europe and the Middle East have witnessed a flurry of activity in recent days as the U.S. and Iran traded warnings in recent days. B-2 bombers have been deployed to an air base in Diego Garcia, an island in the Indian Ocean. The Biden administration also used B-2s to strike Houthi underground weapon storage sites in Yemen in October. A steady stream of Air Force cargo planes and refueling tankers have been flying to the Middle East from Europe, Asia and the U.S., according to flight-tracking data. Write to Nancy A. Youssef at nancy.youssef@wsj.com, Michael R. Gordon at michael.gordon@wsj.com and Benoit Faucon at benoit.faucon@wsj.com



## Marine Le Pen described herself as a fighter after she was banned from running for president in France’s 2027 race.

outraged the French public with his antisemitic remarks. Support for Bardella within National Rally is strong but he isn’t without critics. Some senior party officials blamed him for the National Rally’s disappointing results during last summer’s snap legislative elections. The campaign won 125 seats in the National Assembly—by far the most in the party’s decadeslong history—but the result underperformed the polls. There were signs that Bardella and the party failed to thoroughly vet candidates as it scrambled to find people to run in far-flung districts across the country. Days before the vote, local media reports unearthed a photo of a National Rally candidate wearing an officer’s cap with a Nazi swastika. A video interview of another candidate went viral when she tried to defend National Rally against accusations of racism and antisemitism by saying she had a Jewish eye doctor and a Muslim dentist. Bardella removed some of the controversial candidates from National Rally’s ticket, describing them as “black sheep.”

The episodes stood in contrast to Le Pen’s effort to “de-demonize” the party. After the summer election, Le Pen tasked Bardella with professionalizing its ranks, but senior party officials say he has made little progress on that front. Le Pen’s strategy of cleaning up her party’s image and building its machinery was designed to persuade French voters that National Rally is ready to govern. It is an approach that aims to mirror the best practices of the political establishment even as she rails against it. Le Pen’s anti-immigration stance has centered on lax border enforcement and welfare programs that provide migrants with aid without embracing ideology such as the “great replacement” theory, which holds that global elites are bent on replacing Europe’s white population through mass migration from nonwhite regions of the world. Bardella, on the other hand, has flirted with the idea. “I don’t like the word ‘great replacement’ because I don’t think it’s clear. It’s a very intellectual slogan, but it points to a reality that is true,” Bardella said on national TV in 2021. On Tuesday, Bardella and Le Pen met with their caucus in the National Assembly, allowing cameras to film part of the proceeding as they sought to harness any public anger toward the court’s decision to mobilize supporters. The party is organizing a petition drive to “save democracy” from what Bardella described as “the tyranny of the judges.” Le Pen cast the court’s ruling as the political establishment pulling out all the stops to block her from government. “The system has taken out the nuclear weapon and if they use such a powerful arm against us it’s because we’re on the brink of winning elections,” she said. Read breaking news, latest updates from US, UK, Pakistan and other countries across the world on topics related to politics, crime, and national affairs.



# JP Morgan gives ‘overweight’ rating to four Adani bonds



US investment banker JP Morgan has given 'overweight' rating on four Adani group bonds, comforted by ability to scale and grow using internal cash flows which reduces the scope for credit stress.In a report, JP Morgan gave 'overweight' rating on three bond issues of Adani Ports & SEZ and one by Adani Electricity Mumbai Ltd (a subsidiary of Adani Energy Solutions Ltd). It has taken neutral stand on other five Adani bonds and is underweight on one bond issued by Adani Green Energy Ltd.

JP Morgan gives three kinds of ratings for bonds – 'Overweight' rating which falls into a buy rating category; Neutral rating which falls into a hold rating category; and 'Underweight' which rating falls into a sell rating category.Under the risks section, it said that Adani bonds could do well than anticipated if there is a quick resolution of the US SEC and Department of Justice indictments of founder chairman Gautam Adani and key aides on bribery charges, successful refinancing of the upcoming bonds and credit facilities; and improved operating performance.Adani

group has denied as baseless the charges brought against it by the US authorities.After initial volatility, “spreads of the group’s bonds, (since action by US authorities), seem to have settled, widening by about 100-200 basis points, with short tenor seeing more spread widening due to higher dollar prices,” JP Morgan said.Stating that it has tabulated a few near-term maturities for offshore debt at various Adani group companies, including Adani Ports, Adani Green, Adani Airport Holdings (100 per cent owned by Adani Enterprises), Ambuja Cement bidco (business and industrial development corporations) entities and Adani Energy Solutions, it said, “Overall, we take varying degrees of comfort, and believe that key to watch among the bond-issuing entities are mainly Adani Green, which has a decent-size loan (USD 1.1 billion) due in March 2025.” It said the bonds may not be backed by any security, but are backed by solid cashflows.“Our preference is for cashflows over security,” said Love Sharma of JP Morgan in the report.“Even in the case of some secured bonds, decent distribution is allowed under covenants and, hence, cash cannot be treated entirely as trapped. The ability to scale and grow using internal cash flows in the case of Adani Ports gives us strong comfort on the intrinsic equity value of such a business, which in turn reduces the scope for credit stress,” the report said.Key upside risks to its Neutral rating are “if there is a quick resolution of the SEC/DoJ charges; successful refinancing of the upcoming bonds and credit facilities; and improved operating performance,” the report said.Key downside risks to its 'overweight' and 'neutral' ratings are an adverse outcome from the SEC/DoJ indictment and jury trial; any related-party transactions within the group and promoter entities; and debt-funded M&A or capex-led growth leading to weaker credit metrics, it added.

# Domestic industry stares at months long copper shortage as quality norms kick in

With the quality control order (QCO) on refined copper effective from December 1 and Japanese suppliers—who account for 80 per cent of India’s copper imports—still awaiting certification, the downstream industry has warned the government of a looming supply crunch that could last for over three months.Due to insufficient domestic production, India depends on imports for 30-40 per cent of its refined copper needs, a critical raw material used to manufacture electrical wires and cables. In 2023-24, it imported refined copper worth Rs 16,500 crore from Japan.

Now, with the QCO issued by the Ministry of Mines, producers across the world, including those in Japan, are barred from exporting refined copper to India without a certification from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).Currently, BIS is reviewing applications from seven Japanese firms that it received in January earlier this year. “BIS will certify two Japanese companies soon. With that, there are enough certifications,” a senior official told The Indian Express.

However, downstream user associations have told the mines ministry that a 90-day shortage has already been created due to the QCO and have sought to push the implementation date by four months. Without Japanese imports, downstream users will lose access to roughly 1 lakh tonne of refined copper over three months.“Japanese suppliers stopped shipping refined copper in mid-October to avoid clearance issues, as it takes 45 days for cargo to reach India. Provided that the QCO is relaxed immediately, it will take another 45 days for the shipment to come here. In total, there will be a shortage for at least 90 days,” a senior industry executive said. A copper shortage can lead to a spike in input costs and halt production of wires, cables, and other electrical equipment.With the QCO in effect, only four domestic producers—including Adani’s Kutch Copper Ltd, Hindalco Ltd, and Vedanta Ltd—and three foreign producers—one in Austria and two in Malaysia—are BIS-certified to supply refined copper to the Indian market. In 2023-24, imports from Austria and Malaysia were only 1 per cent in value terms.The mines ministry and BIS did not respond to requests for comment. The Embassy of Japan in New Delhi also declined to comment on the matter “as it is still being coordinated”.

The mines ministry issued the QCO on August 31, 2023, originally set to take effect three months later, to restrict the import of substandard refined copper. However, after industry stakeholders highlighted that obtaining BIS certification for foreign manufacturers typically takes 8-12 months, the ministry extended the implementation by six months.Stakeholder representations for the extension came from the Embassy of Japan, the Embassy of India in Tokyo, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), the Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers' Association (IEEMA), the Winding Wires Manufacturers' Association (WWMA), and several domestic manufacturers, according to documents reviewed .In a letter to the Mines Secretary VL Kantha Rao in October, 2023, then-DPIIT Secretary RK Singh had warned that enforcing the QCO without giving certification to Japanese producers would “severely disrupt manufacturing” activities.Singh noted that imports accounted for 26.8 per cent of India’s

# Deregulation to be a big theme in upcoming Economic Survey: CEA V Anantha Nageswaran

Deregulation, or the process of letting go of regulations in some spheres, would be a big theme for the upcoming Economic Survey for 2024-25, which would be presented alongside the Budget for FY26 in February, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said on Thursday. The CEA also underlined that the growth forecast of 6.5-7 per cent for FY25 still looks “feasible”, stressing that a correction in wage structure for employees by the corporates is required to push consumption and savings growth.Stating that there has been a “creeping informalisation” of the workforce after the COVID-19 pandemic, Nageswaran said more contractual employees have been hired than regular ones, and the wage growth of such corporate employees has not kept up pace with the rate of inflation, and that has exerted a “downward pressure” on consumption. “...if you want to have consumption being the driver of growth, then it is very clear that some of the shift in the hiring practices of the corporate sector does have to be looked up as a possible source. Post Covid there has been what I call a creeping informalisation of the workforce in the Indian corporate sector. Individually for every company it may be an optimal solution or logical solution. But, collectively it does exert a downward pressure on consumption,” he said at an event organised by industry chamber ASSOCHAM.Citing wage growth data from a report by Quesada Corp and Ficci, the CEA said the “annual average wage

growth for contract employees in different sectors has not kept up with inflation”. This, he said, stands out in the context that profitability of companies has grown by 4X in the last four years in absolute terms and has hit a 15-year high as a share of GDP (Gross Domestic Product). He said if the country has to have a “secular growth in consumption”, then work has to be done to turn small and medium enterprises into medium and large enterprises; cost of capital has to become lower; and ensuring employment income growth and thus spending for growth. “Otherwise, it will become a mutually self-destructive cycle,” he said.A “viable and vibrant” small and medium enterprises sector, human capital infrastructure and deregulation will be explored in the upcoming Economic Survey, he said. There is a necessity for the private sector to find the “right balance” between capital intensive and labour intensive growth, he said.Nageswaran further said that for bridging both gender divide and job creation, policy can do more in terms of deregulation. “For example, the number of occupations that are restricted for women in different states, if you add them up, it comes to 118 restrictions. These occupations are deemed risky for women to participate, at a time when women are being fighter pilots and they are participating in defence, flying commercial airlines”“So if you want to increase female labour force participation or employment more generally speaking, the focus has to be on the plumbing of deregulation that has to happen in state .

# When parents part ways: Stories of adults navigating parental divorce



As AR Rahman, Saira Banu's children ask for privacy amid separation, hearing stories from adult children navigating divorceAs AR Rahman, Saira Banu's children ask for privacy amid separation, hearing stories from adult children navigating divorce When AR Rahman and Saira Banu announced their separation after 29 years of marriage, the spotlight turned not just on them but also on their children, Raheema, Khatija, and AR Ameen. In an Instagram post, Ameen, 21, requested privacy, depicting an often overlooked reality: the impact of parental separation on adults.Divorce may come as a shock at any age, but for adults, it's not just about coming to terms with the loss of a family structure—it often entails rethinking deeply rooted identities and redefining relationships. As 2024 closes, this reflection on stories of adults navigating parental divorce offers lessons in resilience, healing, and the complexity of human relationships. “We had hoped to reach the grand thirty, but all things, it seems, carry an unseen end. Even the throne of God might tremble at the weight of broken hearts. Yet, in this shattering, we seek meaning, though the pieces may not find their place again. To our friends, thank you for...

When Khan's parents divorced during her 12th exams, it sent her into a spiral of rebellion and self-harm. “Divorce is often the best outcome in a bad situation, but you won't come out unscathed,” she said. “I remember my 10th-grade boards when my parents first mentioned separating. My world collapsed. I couldn't concentrate and failed almost all my exams.”Despite her struggles, her parents came together to support her recovery. Yet, the aftermath left her emotionally avoidant. “Even now, I can't have conversations about my feelings. I'm 31 and still scared of being vulnerable, which hurts my relationships,” she said.Hazarika witnessed her parents' separation at 17, and it triggered a downward spiral. “My grades tanked—I failed my board exams and the CPT entrance twice. I developed severe eating disorders and spent years blaming myself for their breakup. I thought if I'd been better, they'd have stayed together,” she said.Low self-esteem made her susceptible to toxic relationships. “I clung to anyone who showed affec-

tion, even when it was unhealthy.” Her belief that relationships are inherently difficult came from her parents' failure to stay together.Therapy became Hazarika's lifeline at 25. “I began to see my parents not as just 'mom and dad' but as two flawed individuals trying to navigate life. I forgave them, though I still struggle with my father. He disappeared during tough times, and I can't forget that,” she said.Her experiences have left her with relationship anxiety, even in a stable marriage. “It's a daily battle to not let the past overshadow my present, but I've learned that healing is a choice I must actively make.”

Coping with Heartbreak, Understanding the Pain of Heartbreak, The Science of Heartbreak While the collateral damage of divorce often leaves adult children with fractured parental relationships, healing is possible (Source: Freepik)

D Kumar, 23When Kumar's parents separated at 19, he initially welcomed it as a long-overdue decision. “I thought, ‘Finally, I'll have one parent who isn't constantly stressed or angry.’ But understanding their reasons was hard—it felt like they were abandoning everything we'd built as a family,” he said.The divorce brought a shift in his family dynamics. “My mom and I were close before because I felt the need to protect her. Therapy taught me she doesn't need saving; she's her own person.”On the other hand, his bond with his father improved. “He sought therapy and became more supportive. But when he gets angry, I still feel like a scared kid walking on eggshells,” he said.For Kumar, healing has been about redefining family on his terms. “It's an ongoing process, but I'm learning to accept them—and myself—as imperfect people,” he said.How to healWhile the collateral damage of divorce often leaves adults with fractured parental relationships, healing is possible, said Ambika Chawla, clinical psychologist at Lissun—a mental health startup.She outlined strategies to cope for adults navigating parental divorce: Focus on self-care: Establish a routine that includes restful sleep, balanced nutrition, and physical activity to build resilience. Seek a support system: Lean on friends, family, or counselors to process emotions and avoid feeling isolated.Acknowledge emotions: Accept feelings like anger, grief, or frustration instead of suppressing themAvoid taking sides: Stay neutral to prevent additional strain on family dynamics.Seek professional help: Therapy can provide a safe space to navigate complex emotions and unresolved trauma.Chawla pointed out that reconciliation with divorced parents may not always be possible. “In some cases, acceptance and setting boundaries are the healthiest outcomes,” she said. But where reconciliation is possible, it requires patience, understanding, and a willingness to see them as individuals rather than infallible figures.By focusing on their own healing and emotional well-being, adult children can break the cycle of trauma, ensuring healthier dynamics for future generations.

# Neha Dhupia lashes out at trolls for criticising her morning run: ‘That video was all over’



Neha Dhupia slammed trolls for criticising her morning run. In the comments section of a paparazzi video that has gone viral, the actor was called out for her running pace and weight. Opening up, she said, “I had gone for a run the other day. That video was all over. I got trolled for my body, my way of running, but I was literally the only one who got up at 6.30 in the morning and went for a run.”The 44-year-old further told Bollywood Bubble, “I was doing something about my life. Do all the comments make a difference such that I don't get up the next morning and don't take the same route? Of course, I am going to do it. Because I know what it has done to me. I know it has done me good. I am going to make a difference to myself.”Previously, too, in one of her Instagram posts, the Bad Newz actor expressed, “The one thing I have always loved to do is run ... whether I am happy or sad or free or busy ?? ... I would always crave a run and this never meant that I was good or fast or athletic it only meant I would listen to my mind and my body and decide my strength and pace on that day and set myself free ...”.Way to deal with anxiety, trolls



Dealing with significant anxiety owing to trolls and toxic people while going through a day can get challenging for some, said Dr Santosh Bangar, senior consultant psychiatrist, Gleneagles Hospital, Parel. “Navigating anxiety can be overwhelming as each day feels like a new set of challenges that are difficult to accomplish. This emotional uncertainty not only affects mental health but also physical well-being, for example, long sleepless nights, overthinking, restlessness, and racing heartbeat,” added Dr Bangar.Dr Munia Bhattacharya, senior consultant psychologist at Marengo Asia Hospital, Gurugram, noted that people should prioritise healthy lifestyles that include frequent exercise, a balanced diet, and enough sleep rather than reacting to trolls, being carried away, or taking a step back.“Maintaining relationships with family and friends and creating robust social support networks are crucial. Participating in community events and maintaining an active physical lifestyle might help one feel less stressed and more supported. People can increase their resilience and sustain improved mental and physical health by focusing on themselves,” said Dr Bhattacharya.

# This is what happens to the body on consuming too many fruits every day

Often, eating fruits is considered an excellent way to have a balanced diet. But have you ever wondered if you have (maybe) been eating too many fruits? We ask because, much like everything else, too much fruits can also affect health in a negative way, especially the liver. “When large quantities of fructose (via fruits) reach the liver, consistently for long periods of time, the liver can use excess fructose to create fat (a process called lipogenesis) leading to nonalcoholic fatty liver disease,” Kavita Devgan, a nutritionist, said.To explore the connection between fruit consumption and liver health, we contacted other experts.

There are a large number of people who go on a fruit diet to lose weight faster. However, doing so is not at all recommended, said Dr Uday Sanglodkar, senior consultant hepatologist and clinical lead liver and transplant ICU, Gleneagles Hospitals Parel, adding that while it is believed excessive fruit consumption can be harmful to the liver as the fructose in the fruits causes fat buildup, leading to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), “there are no studies to prove this claim.”“No cases have been reported of ex-



cessive fruit consumption causing liver ailments. However, excessive fruit consumption can invite some unpleasant side effects that one should watch out for,” said Dr Sanglodkar.Unmonitored fruit consumption can cause bloating, diarrhea, or constipation as they are loaded with fiber and natural sugars, and may have a laxative effect.According to Dr Sanglodkar, the natural acids and sugars in fruit can cause dental problems such as tooth decay. “







# From services surplus to farm goods, what EU and China may target after Trump's 'Liberation Day' tariffs



There is little clarity on exactly how US President Donald Trump's April 2 tariff spectacle will play out. What is known, though, is that the promised 'Liberation Day' reciprocal tariffs will be announced at an outdoor event in the White House's Rose Garden, where Trump is likely to announce tariffs on a country-by-country basis, rather than on sectoral terms. The two big unknowns post that are: What these tariffs are going to be like and, more importantly, who's going to retaliate and by how much? If the approach taken by countries so far is anything to go by, the principle of calibrated, moderate hikes on critical goods that clinically impact American consumers could be a favoured model. This is especially so, since these reciprocal tariffs are not likely to be an end in themselves, and more of a stepping stone for a grand bargain. The European Union has, so far, hit back against Trump's earlier announced tariff hikes on steel and aluminium by taxing key US product imports, from Harley-Davidson motorcycles to bourbon. The focus so far, though, has been on goods trade. What seems to have been ignored is Washington, DC's considerable export surplus on the services side, especially to markets such as Europe. In January 2025, for instance, while America's goods trade deficit increased by \$33.5 billion to \$156.8 billion, its services sector recorded an increase in the surplus of \$0.2 billion to \$25.4 billion.

There is a possibility that the EU could go ahead with some retaliatory curbs on digital services coming in from the US, which could potentially open up a whole new front on this trade war. Bilateral trade deficits are a lot more than just factory goods and a digital onslaught, in some punitive manner, could end up impacting Meta, Alphabet and other companies that are at the heart of the American innovation story and have led the bull run in US stocks over the last 12 months. A hit on these services by Brussels could be troublesome for Washington, DC., since European regulators are already scrutinising Apple and are taking a close

look at Meta's practices, among other major American companies that are in the regulatory crosshairs across the Atlantic. That could trigger a Black Wednesday for the American stock markets, as some have predicted. Responding to tariff impositions in Trump's last term, China's retaliatory measures largely consisted of tariffs slapped across a wide range of American imports before the two sides reached a "phase one" trade deal. This time around, Beijing has been far more tempered, and has, instead, moved more strategically. So far, it has hit back swiftly on the two tranches of additional 10 per cent tariffs Trump imposed on Chinese imports to the US, while readying a toolbox of other countermeasures. China has specifically targeted American farm goods, including soybean and pork, that could impact Trump's agri support base in the American midwest. Soybean is the largest agricultural export to China from the US.

Late last year, the Chinese government also overhauled its export controls for "dual use" items and then swiftly tightened the export of gallium, germanium and antimony — key elements with tech and military applications. India looks to be in a comparatively advantageous position, though Trump has repeatedly flagged the high tariffs imposed by New Delhi. Policymakers here have offered some concessions, including on high-end motorcycles and bourbon starting from around the Union Budget in late January, but much of that has been delivered in a piece-meal fashion and is not really part of a comprehensive package. That could be a problem for New Delhi, especially from the point of a negotiating strategy.

What is positive, though, is the fact that a day before the US reciprocal tariffs kick in, India has agreed to the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Bilateral Trade Agreement with America. The ToR outlines the framework of the BTA proposed between the two countries, and sets the ball rolling on a bilateral deal. The finalisation of the ToR was still pending on Saturday when US negotiators left India after four days of talks. Both sides are now technically ready for formal negotiations where India is expected to lower tariffs on American goods in exchange for US concessions. Putting pressure on India and other trading partners, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) on Tuesday, released a report raising a range of concerns. In its report 'Foreign Trade Barriers' covering 29 major partner countries, concerns flagged for India range from Internet shutdowns and dairy feed rules to restrictions on imports of agriculture and GM foods. The biggest export from India is of pharmaceutical products, where Washington, DC is likely to have limited leeway to hike tariffs, at least from New Delhi's perspective.

## Trump's 'Liberation Day' tariffs set to take effect, all eyes on who will be hit the hardest

As the trade policies of US President Donald Trump continue to evolve, April 2 has been marked as a crucial day in the administration's economic agenda. Dubbed "Liberation Day" by Trump himself, the date is expected to usher in sweeping import tariffs designed to curb foreign reliance and bolster domestic industry. However, uncertainty shrouds the specifics of the plan, and experts warn of potentially significant economic ramifications. The White House has also confirmed that an announcement on the tariffs will be made at 4 pm Eastern Time. Trump has long championed a protectionist trade stance, arguing that foreign nations impose unfair levies on American exports while enjoying preferential access to the US market. His latest proposal seeks to introduce reciprocal tariffs — duties mirroring those imposed by trading partners — to 'ensure a level-playing field'. On Monday, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt confirmed that the president will unveil these tariffs on April 2, although the specifics remain unclear. Among the possibilities are product-specific levies or broader tariffs applied across all imports from a given nation. White House trade adviser Peter Navarro has suggested these tariffs could generate \$600 billion annually, implying an average tax rate of 20%.

Trump has signalled his intent to target major economies including the European Union, South Korea, Brazil, and India. The proposed tariffs come at a time of mounting concerns over inflation and global economic stability. While Trump argues that import duties will protect US industries, many economists caution that such measures could trigger price increases for consumers, disrupt supply chains, and invite retaliatory tariffs from affected nations. Financial markets have already experienced volatility in response to previous tariff actions, with investor sentiment dampened by the uncertainty surrounding future trade relationships. Businesses, too, have faced disruptions, delaying hiring and investment plans amid concerns over rising costs. April 2: A 25% tariff will be imposed on imports from any country that purchases oil or gas from Venezuela, a move that could impact the US itself given ongoing energy imports from the South American nation. April 3: A 25% tariff on all auto imports will come into effect, beginning with fully assembled vehicles. Tariffs on auto parts will be phased in gradually, concluding on May 3. Previously delayed tariffs: Levies on imports from Canada and Mexico, originally postponed for a month, are set to expire in early April. The US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) extension covering Mexican imports will lapse on April 2 unless further action is taken. The administration projects that auto tariffs alone will generate \$100 billion in revenue annually. However, industry analysts warn that these measures could severely disrupt global supply chains and increase vehicle prices for American consumer. China Tariffs: In February, a 10% tariff was imposed on all Chinese imports, which doubled to 20% in March. Beijing responded with retaliatory duties, including a 15% levy on US coal and liquefied natural gas, a 10% tariff on American crude oil, and up to 15% tariffs on key agricultural exports. Steel and Aluminium Tariffs: Effective since March 12, steel and aluminium imports are now subject to 25% tariffs, with exemptions removed and aluminium levies increased from 2018 levels. Canada and Mexico Tariffs: While some import taxes on auto-related goods have been delayed, others — such as a 10% tariff on Canadian energy products — remain in place. Canada has introduced countermeasures totalling billions of dollars, while Mexico has yet to impose new levies, signalling a possible effort to de-escalate tensions.

What has been the reaction to the tariff threat?

As the world awaits for the tariffs to kick in, the European Union has warned that the world's biggest trade bloc "holds a lot of cards" when it comes to dealing with such levies. "Europe has not started this confrontation. We do not necessarily want to retaliate, but if it is necessary, we have a strong plan to retaliate and we will use it," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told EU



lawmakers. "Europe holds a lot of cards, from trade to technology to the size of our market. But this strength is also built on our readiness to take firm counter measures if necessary. All instruments are on the table," von der Leyen said, at a European Parliament session in Strasbourg, France. Canada has vowed to respond with tariffs of its own. "We will not disadvantage Canadian producers and Canadian workers relative to American workers," Prime Minister Mark Carney said in Winnipeg. Carney and Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum spoke on Tuesday about Canada's plan to "fight unjustified trade actions" by the US, the prime minister's office said. "With challenging times ahead, Prime Minister Carney and President Sheinbaum emphasized the importance of safeguarding North American competitiveness while respecting the sovereignty of each nation," Carney's office said in a statement. Trump has signalled his intent to target major economies including the European Union, South Korea, Brazil, and India via the tariffs Trump has signalled his intent to target major economies including the European Union, South Korea, Brazil, and India via the tariffs.

Will it affect India?

It remains unclear whether the tariffs will affect India as New Delhi and Washington on Tuesday agreed to the Terms of Reference for the Bilateral Trade Agreement following an intervention from the Indian Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The ToR outlines the framework of the BTA and typically requires clearance from the highest political office before negotiations begin. "The PMO is keen on a swift finalisation of the deal," a senior government official told The Indian Express. Trump, following the deal, said that India was willing to cut tariffs, hinting at possible relief for India from sweeping US levies. "I heard that India is going to be dropping its tariffs substantially. A lot of countries are going to drop their tariffs," Trump said during a White House press briefing. However, the US President had also told reporters aboard Air Force One that "all countries" would face the new tariffs.

## Govt appoints NCAER Director General Poonam Gupta as RBI Deputy Governor

New Delhi: The government has approved the appointment of NCAER Director General Poonam Gupta as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a period of three years, according to sources. The post of the Deputy Governor of RBI fell vacant after MD Patra demitted office in January. The sources said the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) approved Gupta's appointment for the post of Deputy Governor in the RBI for three years from the date of joining, sources said.

Currently, Gupta is the Director General of National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), India's largest economic policy think tank.

## Ambrane unveils Stylo N10, N20 power banks with built-in type-C cable and fast charging



Hyderabad: Mobile accessories brand Ambrane has launched two power banks as part of the already successful Stylo series, the Stylo N10 (10,000mAh) and Stylo N20 (20,000mAh). Both models are designed for today's agile

user and are equipped with BoostedSpeed technology, which provides even higher charging speeds at 22.5W via USB-A and Type-C (input & output) ports for quick and efficient power delivery. Ambrane Stylo N10 and N20 will be found with a 6-month warranty on all significant e-commerce portals like Amazon, Blinkit, and retail stores. Compact, Stylish, and Apt for Travel Design

For the Stylo N10 and N20, a slim, rubberized finish and four colors were made available: Black, Purple, Saf-ron, and Green. Its compact and ergonomic design makes it a perfect travel companion for professionals, students, and people on the move. A very important feature is the built-in Type-C cable, which also has the function of a loop holder-meaning no extra wires are needed when traveling and better portability. Performance & Security Features

All models have a mutual support of 22.5W fast charging for smartphones, tablets, and other USB-A & Type-C-enabled devices. Delivers high performance with high energy density lithium polymer cell for more durability, efficiency, and safety. Approved for air travel; great choice for users on the move. Speaking on the launching of the new products, Ashok Rajpal, the MD of Ambrane, said, "The Stylo series has always been closer to our customers with over 10 lakh sales till now. With these additions, we aim to enrich his styling experience by bringing in convenience and power. Stylo N10 and N20 are for modern users who prefer fast yet reliable charging systems with no hassles of carrying extra cables." "With this latest offering to the market, Ambrane is sure to continue its efforts of strengthening its position as a brand in mobile accessories, bringing designs, performance, and innovations to bear on the products to the consumers.

## Raising money as important as managing debt; no politics over public finances, says FM Sitharaman

Raising resources for schemes by governments through borrowing might be tempting, but it has to be weighed with the realities as raising money is as important as managing debt, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Tuesday. Sitharaman also said when it comes to finances of the country, whether the finances of the central government or of the states, there should be no politics over it. Launching "NITI-NCAER States Economic Forum" Portal, Sitharaman said data for states' finances is often viewed with a certain sentiment: "Who has put it out? Is it against me? Is it for me? Facts, notwithstanding. We've had this quite often in the Parliament where data put out by the Union Government itself is questioned saying: are you being objective?" The portal will help officials to grasp everything about states' finances and help states to make more meaningful interventions, raise revenues, manage debts and learn from peer experiences, she said.

The portal by NITI Aayog and NCAER is a repository of data on social, economic and fiscal parameters, research reports, papers, and expert commentary on state finances for a period of over 30 years (1990-91 to 2022-23). Sitharaman said countries have become so debt ridden and it is going to take a generation for them to reach acceptable levels of debt. "It's one thing to say, we are good in growth. We are the fastest-growing economy and so on all over the world. If there is a struggle to become a faster growing economy, equally, there's a big struggle to contain your borrowing. Countries have become so debt ridden and it is going to take a generation for them to even come to acceptable levels, leave alone ideal levels. It's not for want of data, they know it," she said. The sense of handling public finance with a certain balance is that you need the revenues, but you also have to be careful, she said. Borrowing has to be weighed in with all the realities in front of us, she said.

"There is no good if I am being very good in terms of giving projects for or schemes for the public, very compassionate, very inclusive, but you don't have the resources for it. Equally, it's also very tempting to keep borrowing...when you think in terms of, oh, I don't have the resources, but I need to borrow. That borrowing equally will have to be weighed with all the realities in front of us," she said. States may be differently endowed but the fundamentals of finances are the same for them. "It is not just coming back to power next year or the next fourth year. But are you leaving the state better off or worse off? And that irrespective of party, all of us will have to have some responsibility when we deal with public finances. Each state is unique, but when it comes to finances, the fundamentals cannot be different. So this states' economic forum, with all the data dashboards, is going to give that opportunity for officials to at least grasp everything," she said.

## While Ratan Tata will has no-contest clause, one beneficiary seeks clarification

Anticipating a dispute among beneficiaries — mainly close associates, charitable organisations, and family members — over his estate, Ratan Tata had specified that any beneficiary who contests or challenges his will would forfeit their rights and benefits. While the no-contest clause was intended to prevent litigation among beneficiaries and ensure a peaceful settlement, according to lawyers, Tata's longtime associate Mohini Mohan Dutta has reportedly sought clarification on his share of the late Tata Group chairman's wealth. Tata, former Chairman of Tata Sons and various Tata companies, passed away on October 9, 2024. The executors of Ratan Tata's will have filed a petition with the Bombay High Court to probate the will last week.

Who has sought clarification on Ratan Tata's will? At the heart of the clarification lies Dutta's entitlement to one-third of Tata's wealth, valued at Rs 3,800 crore, including Tata Sons shares worth Rs 1,684 crore at book value. However, the Tata Sons shares are specifically willed to two foundations established by Ratan Tata, leaving Dutta's claim uncertain. Dutta has only sought clarification, and he has not challenged the provisions of the will, according to legal circles.

Former Chief Justice of India, SA Bobde, has been appointed to arbitrate among the beneficiaries by the executors of the will. Tata's will was submitted to the Bombay High Court for probate last week, marking a critical step in confirming the will's veracity. As the court navigates the complexities of Tata's estate, the outcome of Dutta's claim remains uncertain. One thing is clear, however: the fate of Ratan Tata's vast wealth will be decided in the court with far-reaching implications for the Tata group and its beneficiaries. What is the value of Ratan Tata's estate? Ratan Tata's estate, valued at approximately Rs 3,800 crore, has been allocated largely to charitable causes, with the Ratan



A state's debt-to-GSDP cannot be three times more than its GSDP. "And some other state cannot constantly do a fantastic job of it and then stand out as a good performing state. The fundamentals ultimately are the same. That's why I said, when you're talking about public finances, there cannot be politics," she said. Giving an example of the discussions held in the GST Council, Sitharaman said there are no differences between a BJP-ruled state or a Congress-ruled state as everybody wants to raise revenues. "There is no difference on that. Punjab, doesn't speak differently from Gujarat. Gujarat doesn't speak differently from Tamil Nadu. Everybody wants to raise revenue," she said. But, equally we have to be sure we don't burden the people, she said. "In the GST Council, everybody says money. But they're conscious that it cannot be by burdening on certain items which are of daily use for common people. So, through the GST Council, we are able to prove the hard look, actually, the realistic look," she said.

So, similarly, Sitharaman said she expects the NITI NCAER States' Economic Forum to have that kind of an impact. "Data tells you hard truths. Something which is difficult to gulp. States which call themselves developed are ridden with huge debts...get them on board. Let them see what is before them. Let them see how other states are managing. One might want to see how other states are managing that, but the second one would want to see how their per capita income is rapidly growing and what is it that they have to do...make sure the states understand the importance of such data," she said. Aanchal Magazine is Senior Assistant Editor with The Indian Express and reports on the macro economy and fiscal policy, with a special focus on economic science, labour trends, taxation and revenue metrics. With over 13 years of newsroom experience, she has also reported in detail on macroeconomic data such as trends and policy actions related to inflation, GDP growth and fiscal arithmetic. Interested in the history of her homeland, Kashmir, she likes to read about its culture and tradition in her spare time, along with trying to map the journeys of displacement from there.



Tata Endowment Foundation and the Ratan Tata Endowment Trust being the primary beneficiaries. These organizations will utilise the funds for philanthropic purposes.

In addition to his shares in Tata Sons, Tata's investments included various stocks, financial instruments, and properties. His will, signed on February 23, 2022, comprises four codicils — additions or supplements — with the final one stipulating that unallocated assets will be distributed to the charitable trusts.

Who are the beneficiaries of Ratan Tata's will? The key beneficiaries of the will are Ratan Tata Endowment Foundation and Ratan Tata Endowment Trust which will get the lion's share of the estate. His sisters Shireen Jejeebhoy and Deanna Jejeebhoy will receive one-third of the remaining Tata's assets, worth Rs 800 crore. Dutta, a former Tata Group employee and close associate, will receive another one-third of the remaining Tata's assets. Jimmy Naval Tata, Ratan Tata's 82-year-old brother, will inherit a share of Tata's Juhu bungalow, silver articles, and jewellery. Mehli Mistry, a close friend, has been granted Tata's Alibaug property and three guns.



# Hockey legend Vandana Katariya retires: ‘What use was my life if I couldn’t help the team?’

GNS News Agency, April 5

Even with the usual full-fledged transition ongoing in women’s hockey with younger players being ushered in preparing for LA28 qualification, the 32-year-old has had it in her the fierce determination and ability to battle for the poaching forward’s slot. The Haridwar hurricane who ran like the wind and dived at goalmouth, undeterred by poking sticks, finished with 158 goals from 320 games and an Olympic hat-trick. But on Tuesday, the thought of stepping back that had been swirling for a few months was paused. Vandana, the first Indian woman to play over 300 games, took a snap-second decision – not unlike how she routinely barged into the D.

“It’s always a tough decision, but it had to be taken at some point. I didn’t really talk to anyone about it, just acted on my emotion,” she would say on Tuesday, during marathon 5-hour long media interactions. “I’ve just been talking to the press since morning. Haven’t had time to think about future options – coaching, maybe, perhaps if I have to stay connected to the game,” she said. Her hat-trick in a must-win game against South Africa at the Tokyo Olympics where India finished memorably 4th, will remain an enduring legacy. She is dreading missing the team. “They had become a habit. Eating with them, training with them, almost growing up with them, the stress, the jokes and laughs,” she said. Vandana Katariya played over 300 matches for team India. (Hockey India) Vandana Katariya played over 300 matches for team India. (Hockey India) Vandana came from a very humble family in Haridwar, where her father was a technician at Bharat Heavy Electricals, but loved sport so much he had a wrestling pit built in his front yard. She defied taunts for wearing shorts, playing football and athletics, she drowned out casteist and sexist slurs thrown her way by ignorant men, battled anaemia and poor musculature, depression where she stress-ate sweets and finally struggles to hold onto her place, before her life turned around as Vandana was in the team that won a Junior World Cup bronze for India after 36 years.

“I think the biggest change in Indian hockey is how we learnt to professionally prepare for each game – from the time of waking up, diet, recovery, rest, technique, coordination and mentally. It doesn’t happen overnight. Our team took many years, (7-8) to find success,” she says.

Through it all, till right before Tokyo Olympics, her father would support her, someone with a talent for the zig-zag dribble. He passed away on the eve of the 2021 Games but remains a voice in her head. “He always said one thing – when you train away at the hostel, it might be in silence most times with no one watching you to check your dedication every second. Coach has many players to take care of. But God is watching always and will know if you are honestly working hard. So you can’t slacken. Also there are no easy ways to success, even if easy temptations will show up,” she recalls. “Ek rupaya kamaane ke liye bhi mehnat karo (work hard to earn even one rupee). No shortcuts.” Bronzes at Asian Games, gold at Asian Champions Trophy and Asia Cup and silver at Commonwealth Games would be notched up, though the giddy no-medal 4th place run at Tokyo will stay imprinted on Indian minds a



long time, bringing as much joy as Neeraj Chopra’s gold. It had all however plunged into a room of tears after India lost the opening few games and were sucker-punched, tottering towards elimination after the England match.

Vandana’s hat-trick proved invaluable not for how tough the opponents were, but for lifting the team from the abyss of hopelessness. “England was a terrible match, I remember we cried in the meeting thereafter. Personally I had lost my father recently, and kept thinking how futile efforts were after spending all of Covid away from family, but talking, breathing, and living hockey at the camp in Bangalore. I asked myself- what am I doing wasting all the hardwork and what use was my life if I couldn’t help the team. The hat-trick became memorable because it brought us back and will be close to my heart always,” Vandana says. Indian hockey legend Vandana Katariya announced her retirement on Tuesday. (Hockey India) Vandana announced her retirement on Tuesday. (Hockey India) Reluctant to pick any personal goal as favourite, her most vivid memories were of celebrating winning the quarterfinals against Australia with the team. While she struck up good connections with Navneet, Neha and Sushila, Vandana prized herself in adjusting even with the new bunch of players, some of whom she will continue to play with in HIL.

While India never really challenged for the top slots in women’s hockey, and its forwardline often got bullied in the last third by stronger teams, Vandana & Co did manage to sneak in spaces created to build up towards a goal. “(Timing of) when to lead and fitness was the most important for forwards, and we analysed individual defenders and made inroads. But toughest was Holland defenders, because their reach was mighty and we had to out-run them which needed a strong mind and fitness,” she recalls. While channeling her speed into coherence and making every raid into the circle count, remained a challenge through her career, nobody would fault Vandana on effort – given how frequently she dove about in search of last-gasp deflections. Vandana remains a shoes and sneaker-freak, the one thing she loved as much as hockey – from kitten heel pumps to latest Pumas. And she’s happy with the new crop of players. “They come into the team with assured knowledge of fitness, diet and recovery comparable to the world’s best players. They are ready for demands of high performance games and fast hockey. Their self confidence is great to see.” It had taken her an Olympic hat-trick to get to that same mind space.

# Real Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti faces court trial for tax evasion

GNS News Agency, April 5

Carlo Ancelotti recently became the latest addition to a long list of football celebrities that have been investigated by the Spanish tax authority. The Real Madrid manager is accused of not paying •1 million (\$1.08 million) from image rights revenue during his first spell with the Los Blancos (2013-2015). The 65-year-old is expected to appear before the court on Wednesday. Besides a prison term of four years and nine months, the prosecutor is also demanding a •3.2 million fine from the veteran manager. The prosecution argues that Ancelotti only reported his Real Madrid salary and not the income generated through image rights in both 2014 and 2015, leading to two counts of tax evasion. The Associated Press reported that one of the allegations against Ancelotti is using shell companies to hide his true earnings. Prosecutors have alleged that the veteran football manager used one shell company that lacked “any real (economic) activity” in the Virgin Islands as part of an alleged scheme.

Ancelotti was present in court himself during proceedings. When he arrived, he was asked by television journalists if he trusted in the justice system. “I do” he said before walking away. Prior to the hearing, the prosecution stated



that Spain’s tax authority had seized debt plus interest from the manager. Ancelotti’s trial is set to take place over a period of three days in a Madrid court. However, the parties could reach an agreement out of court at any point during or before the trial. Portugal’s Cristiano Ronaldo and Spain’s Diego Costa have eluded punishment in the past with out-of-court payments involving huge fines. In contrast to this, the Spanish Supreme Court had upheld the acquittal of Bayer Leverkusen boss Xabi Alonso following his unwillingness to settle and defended his innocence.

# ‘Abnormally large... 503 grams’: Experts on size of Diego Maradona’s heart after autopsy

GNS News Agency, April 5

Diego Maradona death arrest security guard Maradona’s daughter had earlier said that Luque and Coria had suggested home hospitalisation for her father, while clinic authorities had suggested keeping the World Cup winner in the hospital itself. In a trial of seven health professionals accused of the negligent homicide of Argentine footballing legend Diego Maradona, experts involved in his autopsy testified on Tuesday that the football legend had an abnormally large heart. The experts who conducted Maradona’s autopsy also testified that he was suffering from cirrhosis but stated that his body showed no traces of alcohol or drugs at the time of his death. Maradona, who orchestrated Argentina’s World Cup triumph in 1986, passed away on November 25, 2020 at the age of 60. Forensic expert Alejandro Ezequiel Vega told the court that Maradona’s heart was “enlarged” and weighed around 503 grams, when the average weight is between 250 and 300 grams. Vega explained that the examination of Maradona’s heart revealed that the legend suffered from “long-standing ischemia,” with a “lack of blood flow and oxygen.”

Maradona breathed his last while on house hospitalization in a residence in Buenos Aires, a few days after undergoing surgery for a hematoma that formed between his skull and brain. The autopsy concluded that Maradona died of acute pulmonary edema (fluid building up in lungs), caused by congestive heart failure. Neurologist Leopoldo Luque, who served as Diego Maradona’s doctor, stands in court on the first day of a trial for alleged homicide by negligence against the medical team who treated the late soccer star in San Isidro on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Tuesday, March 11, 2025. (AP Photo) Neurologist Leopoldo Luque, who served as Diego Maradona’s doctor, stands in court on the first day of a trial for alleged homicide by negligence against the medical team who treated the late soccer star in San Isidro on the outskirts of Buenos



Experts who had conducted Maradona’s autopsy testified that he was suffering from cirrhosis but stated that his body showed no traces of alcohol or drugs at the time of his death.

Aires, Argentina, Tuesday, March 11, 2025. (AP Photo)

The prosecution maintained that the seven professionals charged in the case — a neurosurgeon, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, doctors, and nurses — who were caring for Maradona, failed to provide adequate care, which may have led to his demise. Additionally, forensic expert Ezequiel Ventosi stated that the blood and urine samples taken from Maradona showed no traces of alcohol or drugs. Silvana De Piero, from the same police task force, stated that the liver analysis identified “conditions compatible with cirrhosis,” and that Maradona’s kidneys “had altered function and lacked a good blood supply to carry oxygen.” Among those on trial is Leopoldo Luque and psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov, who prescribed the medication Maradona took until the time of his death. Luque is Maradona’s personal physician during the last four years of his life.

# Aap MI aa sakte hain: How Mumbai Indians scout talent and make them into stars

GNS News Agency, April 5

An hour after sunset at Mumbai’s Wankhede stadium on Monday, a star burst into the Mumbai Indians skyline. Ashwani Kumar, 23, claimed four wickets against defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders to finish with the best figures for an Indian IPL debutant. The son of a farmer with modest means, Ashwani hails from village Jhanjheri near Mohali in Punjab. It’s a hinterland-to-starlight script made in Bollywood. Except there is a twist. Whereas thousands descend to India’s movie capital nursing superstar ambitions every day, Mumbai Indians take the opposite route. Their scouts travel far and wide, scour thousands of cricketers across obscure leagues, nondescript maidans and small towns around the country to discover their superstars.

Present and former MI captains have doffed their hats to their reputed scout-squad that includes one-time India coach John Wright and former national selectors Kiran More and TA Sekhar. Over the years, the other unseen eyes scanning every corner of the country have belonged of top international stars like Robin Singh, Zaheer Khan, RP Singh, Vinay Kumar, Paras Mhambrey and Parthiv Patel. Also part of the team is computer analyst CKM Dhananjai and many former MI players, who keep an eye for talent. At Wankhede, after the win, MI skipper Hardik Pandya didn’t forget to mention the men who first saw Ashwani. “It’s always a challenge picking one guy here and there, but our scouting team deserves the credit. They spotted Ashwani’s potential early. He had the zip, late swing, a different action. They have gone all over the place and picked up the players,” he said.

Ashwani was spotted by hawk-eyed MI scouts who had travelled to Chandigarh for the Sher-e-Punjab domestic T20 tournament. MI’s other rookie star, left-arm wrist-spinner Vignesh Puthur, who had a three-wicket debut against Chennai Super Kings this season, had caught the eyes of MI talent hunters even before the Malappuram boy was spotted by the Kerala selectors. The other relatively unknown players they have found include Jharkhand wicketkeeper Robin Minz and Allah Ghazanfar, the mystery spinner from Paktia in Afghanistan.

The MI talent-mining model matches the elaborate talent-finding methods of European football clubs with the world’s best all-format bowler Jasprit Bumrah easily the biggest find. The list is long — the Pandya brothers, Hardik and Krunal, Axar Patel and Yuzvendra Chahal. Ashwani had been on their radar for the last two seasons. He continued to impress them in his half a dozen appearances for Punjab as well as the Sher-e-Punjab T20 tournament in Chandigarh last year. His knack of nailing yorkers, the southpaw angles of deception, and the disguised variation were proof enough of his game-defining virtues to be offered an MI contract. The story of Vignesh traverses the same lane. Before the left-arm wrist-spinner’s three-wicket haul on debut, he was a name that had not even entered the discussion table of Kerala’s selectors. But MI scouts stumbled on him during last year’s Kerala Cricket League tournament in Thiruvananthapuram. There is a well-monitored process in place that goes into a player with potential making it to the MI playing XI. The scouts have a WhatsApp group where videos of players with spark are posted. Once others give a favourable assessment, the aspirant gets called to Mumbai.

Something similar happened with Vignesh. He was parachuted to Mumbai, where he passed the assessment tests of the coaching staff, before he was made to play in a



T20 Invitations Trophy. Later, he was flown to South Africa, where MI have a team, MI Cape Town, in the SA20 league. It was here that the chinaman from Kerala got a chance to interact with the world’s leading spinner, Afghanistan’s Rashid Khan. One of the most successful franchises in the league, MI might splash millions to acquire the services of famous names, but they have developed a robust talent-scouting process that ensures an edge over their competitors in discovering and sculpting high-class talents. It’s a two-column model — a team that blends established, internationally experienced ones with young and outrageously skilled players mined from obscurity. The scouts, thus, make the stars. Rohit Sharma vouched for their often unsung labours in an interview on JioCinema last year. “It is very easy for people to say that it is a superstar team, but there is a lot of hard work behind it. A lot of appreciation has to go to the scouts. Scouts work hard during the off-season while spotting talent, and so many of them have gone on to play for the country. They saw Hardik, Krunal, Bumrah and Axar and brought them here. We turned them into stars,” he explained.

While the job profile is simple — spotting talent — the reality is harder. They work through the year, constantly searching for talent, dissecting not only cricketing skills, but also temperament, attitude and work ethic, gathering information from their teammates, umpires and coaches. A list of recommendations are filed to the coaches; they continue tracking the endorsed players for a couple of seasons with the data team in tow. For example, middle-order batsman Tilak Varma was watched for three seasons before he was acquired. It is not just the designated scouts, but some of the former players too suggest names when they come across talented cricketers in the region. It was Saurabh Tiwari who endorsed statemate Robin Minz to the franchise. Not everyone rises to superstardom like Bumrah and Pandya, but the scouts do provide the ‘special ones’ the pedestal to reach the heights they had dreamt of.

# From the vault: How did MS Dhoni ensure no Team India player was late for team meetings?

GNS News Agency, April 5

Mahendra Singh Dhoni will forever be remembered as the man who helped India claim the 2011 Cricket World Cup. Not only did he apply the finishing touch to India’s triumph with a glorious six at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, he was also the captain of the Indian team. While the things Dhoni did on the pitch were conspicuous, Paddy Upton, who was working with the Indian cricket team as a mental conditioning coach under Gary Kirsten, had spoken about how Dhoni had put in rules to ensure that discipline in the side was maintained.

Speaking during a Kolkata event in 2019 while launching his book, The Barefoot Coach, Paddy Upton had revealed how India captains Anil Kumble and Dhoni ensured that no India player was ever late for a team meeting. “When I joined the team, Anil Kumble was the captain of the Test team and MS Dhoni was the captain of the ODI team. We had a very self-governing process. So we said to the team ‘is it important to be on time for the practice and team meetings?’ Everyone said yes it is.” “So we asked them if anyone



is not on time is there anything one should give up? We discussed it amongst ourselves and the players, and eventually, it was left to the captains to decide,” Upton said. That was when Kumble declared that any players arriving late would be fined Rs 10,000. But Dhoni went several steps ahead. He ruled that if any player was late, all members of the team would be fined Rs 10,000 each.

# ‘Rolls-Royce just stayed in third gear’: PBKS coach Ricky Ponting on skipper Shreyas Iyer’s half century vs LSG

Punjab Kings head coach Ricky Ponting lauded skipper Shreyas Iyer for his well-paced half century in the match against Lucknow Super Giants, saying that the former KKR captain was like a ‘Rolls-Royce in third gear’. Iyer got his 50 off the last ball of Punjab’s chase when he smashed a six to overhaul LSG’s 172-run target in 16.2 overs for the loss of two wickets. “Skipper (Iyer) did it easy again. Rolls-Royce just stayed in third gear for most of the day. Didn’t have to go any harder than that. Just steers the ship home. You haven’t got an average yet,” Ponting said during the team meeting following the big victory. Iyer is yet to be dismissed in IPL 2025, having notched up an unbeaten 97 in the opening game against Gujarat Titans. He is currently the second-highest run-getter in the season with 149 runs.

In the match, opener Prabhsimran Singh supported his skipper’s cause scored a blistering 34-ball 69 while Nehal Wadhwa chipped in with a 25-ball 43. “And Prabhsimran, I think you have learned a lot about yourself this week as well. I think you’ve proved to everyone just what a class act you are,” said Ponting on Prabhsimran.

“We talk about players making impact, right? You get an opportunity in a T20 game and it’s all about making an impact on the game and on the contest when you can. He (Wadhwa) only packed one shirt in his bag because he didn’t think he was going to be taking much part in the game. He fields the last four overs and then I tap him on the shoulder. When I saw that they’d (LSG) made their impact sub as a left-arm off spinner, I said, mate, you’re going in. And I



Punjab Kings head coach Ricky Ponting lauded skipper Shreyas Iyer for his well-paced half century in the match against Lucknow Super Giants, saying that the former KKR captain was like a ‘Rolls-Royce in third gear’. Iyer got his 50 off the last ball of Punjab’s chase when he smashed a six to overhaul LSG’s 172-run target in 16.2 overs for the loss of two wickets.

said, make the most of the opportunity. Play your way,” the former Australian player added about Wadhwa.



## Fawad Khan and Vaani Kapoor's film Abir Gulaal faces opposition from MNS: 'Won't let the film release in Maharashtra'



Actor Fawad Khan is returning to the big screen in Bollywood after 9 years with Abir Gulaal. The film's teaser was released on Tuesday, garnering a warm welcome from fans. However, Abir Gulaal seems to be facing some opposition from political leaders from the MNS and Shiv Sena. In a conversation with Dainik Bhaskar, the politicians have condemned Fawad's return to Bollywood, and said they will not let the film release in Maharashtra.

MNS Leader Ameya Khopkar said, "Hume aaj hi is film ke release ki jaankari mili, jab film ke makers ne iska elaan kiya. Lekin hum saaf taur par yeh keh rahe hain ki hum is film ko Maharashtra mein release nahi hone denge, kyunki ismein Pakistani actor ki maujoodgi hai. Hum kisi bhi haal mein aisi films ko Maharashtra mein release nahi hone denge. Hum is film se judi aur bhi jaankari juta rahe

hain aur fir is par apna pooraa bayan saamne rakhenge. (We learned about the film today itself when the makers announced it. But we would like to make it clear that we will not let the film release in Maharashtra, since it stars a Pakistani actor. We will not let this film get released under any circumstances. As of now, we are gathering more details on the film and will issue our detailed statement soon)." Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Nirupam also expressed his viewpoint and said, "When a film is released from Pakistan, Indian people do not like to watch it. It is a different thing to watch one or two films for a minute, but the films of Pakistani artists do not become very popular among the Indian audience. That is why Pakistani stars have never been able to succeed in India. I would advise Pakistanis that instead of exploring the Indian market, it is better to work in their own country. If the central government has made a policy, it should be implemented. I believe that the government should decide whether Pakistani films should be allowed to come to India or not. Whether Pakistani artists should be allowed to work in India or not should also be the government's decision." In 2016, following the ban on Pakistani artists working in India, many actors from across the border (including Fawad Khan and others) couldn't explore the Hindi film industry. However, in 2023, the Bombay High Court dismissed the petition seeking an official ban on Pakistani actors working in India.

## Kunal Kohli says producers should accept failures instead of block booking theatres, paying influencers to promote films: 'Silly'

Kunal Kohli may not be doling out hits like he did in mid-2000s, but he admits that he'd never endorse the recent phenomenon of fake booking in cinema halls. The filmmaker feels instead of coming to terms with their failures, the filmmakers are in denial. That's why they're filling up full theatres to give the impression that their film is a hit.

"No one is going to theatres, but you have signed a deal with satellite and digital that you will get this much if you earn that many crores in theatres. To salvage that, you're buying tickets in the theatres. The audience goes there and finds out there's no one. I go to the theatre for every big or good film on Friday at 10 am because I don't want to read reviews. Reviews are also bad because half of them are paid or they don't understand cinema. Anyone's a reviewer now. So when I go to the theatre, I see barely 10 people around. But when I went to watch Munjya, I was impressed that the theatre was 60% full. There was no promotion in that film. People judged the film on the basis of its poster and trailer. I have nothing to do with Munjya so why else would I say the theatre was 60% full? The audience can smell the film. So you don't need to waste money on silly promotions. You don't need to buy tickets," Kunal said.

"The film didn't work? Accept it! I accept that Thoda Pyaar Thoda Magic (2008) didn't work, Break Ke Baad (2010) didn't work. The film could've worked if made well. But it wasn't. It's okay, learn from your mistakes. I learnt that I shouldn't have become an actor. I could've made excuses that my work was very good. Did anyone offer you a role after that, Kunal Kohli? That's it, you weren't good in the film. Simple," added Kunal in a podcast on YouTube channel India Now and How. Kunal made his directorial debut with the 2002 romantic comedy Mujhse Dosti Karoge!, which was a box office flop. He followed it up with two hits in Hum Tum (2004) and Fanaa (2006). His next couple of directorials — Thoda Pyaar Thoda Magic and Teri Meri Kahaani (2012) — also failed at the box office. Break Ke Baad was produced by him, and directed by Danish Aslam. He made his acting debut opposite Jennifer Winget in his 2018 directorial Phir Se..., which was also a box office



failure. Kunal argued that it's not just the corporate booking, but also the dependence on influencers for promotions that's damaging the film industry. He said that playing 'Truth & Dare' or making dance reels with influencers only helps them generate content. Under the guise of promotions, producers are spending at least Rs 15-20 lakh on hair, make-up, and costume in every segment. "Then they think why did my film not get an opening? Because you're not behaving like a star. Being a star doesn't mean you make the producer spend a lot of money. Being a star means having a personality," said Kunal. He added that stars are the actual 'influencers.' The social media influencers' followers could very well be paid, Kunal said. "Tell all these influencers, would you ask Ajay Devgn to put up a placard (as part of a game during promotions). They don't have the aukaat to ask Ajay Devgn. Now, that's star power," added Kunal. He also advised young stars to talk about their films and roles instead of playing games during promotions. "Don't say that you were shooting and feeling cold. Why do I care? The audience who's watching you are also working hard. The light men, spotboys, and carpenters work the hardest on set," said Kunal.

## Ahead of Shah Rukh Khan shifting out of Mannat, Gauri Khan sells Mumbai flat for Rs 11.61 cr, makes a cool 37 percent profit



Gauri Khan recently sold a residential property in Dadar West, Mumbai, according to registration documents gathered by Square Yards. The interior designer and Shah Rukh Khan's wife has reportedly sold the property for Rs 11.61 crore. The sale was registered in March 2025. The property in question is located in Kohinoor Altissimo, a project developed by Kohinoor CTNL Infrastructure Company Pvt Ltd. The project offers 2.5 BHK, 3 BHK, and 3.5 BHK apartments. Gauri's flat is reportedly located on the 21st floor of a residential tower and covers nearly 2,000 square feet. According to reports, Gauri had bought the flat in August 2022 for around Rs 8.5 crore. The star wife has made a profit of around 37% in three years. According to Zapkey, the transaction was registered on March 28. Apart from other amenities, the apartment also comes with two parking spaces.

The development has come just after the Khan family decided to move out of their iconic house Mannat for

renovation purpose. The house will get an extensive renovation, which will take nearly 2 years. According to reports, the renovation will include the expansion of its annexe, adding two extra floors. It will add about 616 square meters of space to the house. For a smooth renovation, the Khan family has decided to temporarily shift to luxury duplex apartments in the Puja Casa building in Pali Hill. The apartments are owned by producer Vashu Bhagnani's family. Shah Rukh Khan leased the apartments for three years for Rs 8.67 crore. The first duplex is taken on rent from actor Jacky Bhagnani and sister Deepshikha Deshmukh for a monthly rent of Rs 11.54 lakh. The second apartment, owned by Vashu Bhagnani, is on a rent for Rs 12.61 lakh per month. According to 2024 Hurun India Rich List, Shah Rukh Khan's net worth has reached Rs 7,300 crore. Most of his earning are driven by his investments in the IPL team, Kolkata Knight Riders. He is the richest actor in Bollywood.

## Kajol thanks Ajay Devgn for always 'being older'

Mumbai: In a lighthearted and quirky birthday post, actress Kajol thanked her husband, actor Ajay Devgn, for always "being older" than her. The playful message caught the attention as Kajol humorously celebrated Ajay's special day while expressing her love and gratitude in her unique style. On Wednesday, the 'Dilwale' actress took to her Instagram handle and penned a heartfelt birthday wish for her husband. Sharing the candid photo, Kajol wrote, "All the cool people were born in August, but we don't mind wishing u a happy birthday :) thank u for always being older than me. In the image, Kajol is seen smiling as Ajay looks at her. Needless to say, the picture speaks volumes about the strong bond they share.

## Did Kim Soo Hyun use AI script? Netizens call him 'King of fake tears,' debate his clenched fists, 'narcissistic' attitude



Kim Soo Hyun's emergency press briefing on Monday backfired as enraged netizens and former fans picked apart his statement, questioning its sincerity. The biggest online trend for the day centered on whether the Queen of Tears star's emotional breakdown was genuine, with many slamming him as the "King of Fake Tears."

This marked the first time the actor addressed allegations that he dated the late Kim Sae Ron when she was a minor. Among the many theories surrounding his last-minute press briefing, netizens also accused him of using AI-generated speech. Close-up footage from the event caught attention, as some believed he was reading from a script while addressing the controversy. While his apparent lack of preparation was already being criticised, others ran checks on his speech, and what they found has only made the situation worse for him.

A viral social media post claimed to have run Kim Soo Hyun's speech through an AI detection tool, which allegedly found that 93% of his words were AI-generated. Not only was he mocked, but some netizens slammed his speech as 'long-winded,' while others demanded solid proof before jumping to conclusions. During the press conference, Kim Soo Hyun denied dating Kim Sae Ron while she was a minor. He also explained why he had kept their one-year relationship private, stating that revealing it during the peak of his drama, Queen of Tears in 2024 would have negatively affected the show and its production team's hard work. The Its Okay to Not be Okay star kept sobbing the whole time while also refuting claims of any involvement in Kim

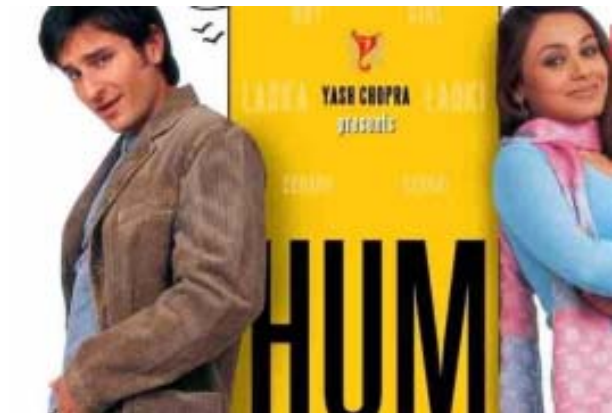
Sae Ron's 700 million KRW debt to their agency, Gold Medalist. However, despite his tearful delivery, the press conference did not include a Q&A session. His emotional display was met with skepticism, critics were quick to accuse him of acting rather than genuinely expressing remorse. Another controversial moment came when Kim Soo Hyun referred to himself as "Star Kim Soo Hyun." This self-referential remark did not sit well with many, who quickly labeled him a narcissist on social media. One netizen sarcastically wrote, "The image-conscious star called himself 'Star Kim Soo Hyun'—get over yourself already." One post read, "He keeps talking about himself. What a narcissistic person." Some netizens even speculated whether his clenched fists during the press conference were a sign of frustration or an attempt to fake emotions. A viral TikTok video showed him walking away with clenched fists after a journalist yelled a question about Kim Sae Ron asking him, "Kim Soo Hyun, can you tell me when and where you first met Kim Sae Ron? I think that will be okay. Please tell me when and where you first met." The clutching of fists by Kim soo Hyun shows that he's angry, he has always been in control of situations but he's now helpless, he's trying to save himself but it has gone way beyond himpic.twitter.com/wmHs22FMA0 Many also compared Kim Soo Hyun's chaotic press conference to Kim Sae Ron's composed approach during her 2022 DUI press conference. Despite being cancelled and dropped from several projects, netizens pointed out how Kim Sae Ron had remained calm and apologetic while addressing her controversy. One viral Threads post showed a clip of Kim Sae Ron's mature response to a reporter questioning her alleged financial difficulties. She simply stated, "I never claimed that I was in a difficult situation... It's true that I worked part-time, and it's also true that the penalty fees are very high." In contrast, Kim Soo Hyun was criticised for delivering a long monologue and avoiding any direct Q&A session. Queen of Tears's mention backfires

Kim Soo Hyun and Kim Ji Won's Queen of Tears was one of the biggest K-drama hits of 2024. This was also the first time Kim Sae Ron publicly posted her photo with Kim Soo Hyun, but Gold Medalist instantly refuted all claims of a romantic relationship between the two. The actor, during his press conference, explained that he had delayed addressing the dating allegations to avoid affecting the drama's success. Netizens accused him of using the drama's popularity to deflect from serious allegations. Many felt that rather than focusing on his career, he should have taken responsibility and cleared up the accusations more transparently. One angry fan wrote, "Why is he bringing Queen of Tears into this? Does he think his drama success will make us forget the allegations?" Meanwhile, Disney+ has delayed the release of his upcoming drama, Knock Off, following the controversy. With his reputation at stake, it remains to be seen how Kim Soo Hyun will recover from this career crisis.

## 'Yash Chopra refused to put his name on Hum Tum; film was declared a flop,' recalls Kunal Kohli: 'I had tears in my eyes'

When Bollywood is experiencing a dearth of love stories, it is only fitting to look back and recall the much-loved romantic dramas that the Hindi film industry has produced. Recently, filmmaker Kunal Kohli talked about how he made Saif Ali Khan and Rani Mukerji's hit 2004 film Hum Tum. Kohli admitted that while he and Aditya Chopra were confident in the film's potential, producer Yash Chopra refused to invest much in it. Speaking at India Now and How, Kunal said, "Yash Chopra wasn't very happy with Hum Tum's script. He said Mujhse Dosti Karoge! is Mughal-E-Azam in front of it. He called the script ordinary and said it's a travel log. He agreed to give Rs 7.5 crore and refused to give a penny more. Only Aditya and me believed in the film."

Kunal added, "Yash ji had even said that he would not put his name in the film if it won't work and would put Aditya Chopra's name instead, but after watching the final cut, he appreciated the film and said, 'I was wrong, you both were right.' I had tears in my eyes. He said, 'I will proudly put my name'." The film also featured animated sequences, which were expensive to produce, but Kunal managed to reduce the cost to Rs 50 lakh to save the budget. "I just kept basic sketches of the cartoons and removed the background, 3D, and everything." He also recalled how they filmed the Paris and USA sequences in Amsterdam to cut costs. "We bought Paris' stock shots, and Karan Johar gifted us stock shots of New York when he went there to shoot for Kal Ho Naa Ho." Kunal also shared how he had to convince Rishi Kapoor to take on a small role in the film, as the late actor initially refused to be cast in it. "Rishi ji told me, 'I don't do guest appearances in films, especially in a Yash Raj Films production, because I have always played a hero and done impor-



tant films for them." However, after Kunal narrated the scenes to him in detail, Rishi Kapoor eventually agreed to do the film. Although Hum Tum is now widely praised, Kunal recalled that nobody liked the film after watching it. He shared how trade analysts warned him that the film would not work and how the industry's reaction was lukewarm. "They told me, 'What have you done? Everything is wrong. I am shocked you made a film like this.' The whole industry went to see the paid preview of the film, and they nodded at me and went like, 'His film is a flop.'" However, despite the skepticism, Hum Tum became a box office hit upon release. Kunal recalled a phone call with Rakesh Roshan, who congratulated him on the film's success. "The film didn't drop even on Monday. Rakesh ji called me and said, 'Your film is housefull at 12 pm in Indore. On Monday, even the big films flop, but your film is housefull. Congratulations, it is a blockbuster.'"

## Ghibli trend gone wrong: Can you spot errors in these Ghibli-style pictures?

Hyderabad: The viral Studio Ghibli AI trend took an unexpected twist and turned creepy enough to amuse and unnervingly social media at the same time. What started as an all-fun activity using OpenAI's newest image generation tool allowed users to turn their photos into dreamy Ghibli-style illustrations. More awkward moments are just created when the AI misinterprets the brief. One such incident was a Ghibli-style drawing of women celebrating Chhath Puja, a major festival in Bihar. The original photo had women standing by a river holding baskets filled with fruits, incense sticks, and coconuts meant for offering to the Sun God. ChatGPT inaccurately accentuated this picture, assuming the coconut to be a human head. The bizarre image shows a woman carrying a basket which looks like it should have contained the coconut; instead, it bore the surreal appearance of a severed human head. The disturbing gaffe went viral in no time, prompting unbelievable reactions. One user commented, "Looks like a horror anime crossover," while another said, "ChatGPT just turned Chhath Puja into a Halloween special." Bizarre gaffes are not completely unheard



of with AI-generated images. Missing fingers, levitating faces, spare limbs, and mysteriously appearing extra family members have all been reported by social media users in AI-enhanced images. One such case went viral, where a woman's Ghibli transformation has her gaining a third hand to hold her ice cream. While these glitches have been a source of entertainment for many on the internet, they also fortify the argument that AI still needs to develop in understanding complex visual details.