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Telangana among top 3 States with 99.15 pass percentage

Hyderabad: In the CBSE Senior School Certificate Examination (Class XII) 2024 results announced on Monday, Telangana with a pass percentage of 99.15 won a place of pride in the top three states in the country. The state-wise data of the results has Lakshadweep in the top with 100 pass percentage followed by Kerala with 99.91 per cent. However, the case of Lakshadweep is interesting as it had only 13 candidates appeared for the examinations and all of them passed. For the Class XII examinations, a total of 8,337 students, i.e., 4,433 boys and 3,904 girls, appeared of whom 8,266 students were declared as pass.

Telangana records 62.16 per cent voter turnout



GNS News Agency, May 13

Hyderabad: Telangana recorded an approximate voter turnout of 61.16 per cent till 5 pm on Monday for 17 Lok Sabha seats in the state, according to an Election Commission app. Polling which began at 7 am ended 6 pm, barring a few places where it concluded early. Bhongir Lok Sabha seat witnessed the highest poll percentage of 72.34 per cent, while the lowest voter turnout of 39.17 per cent was seen in Hyderabad parliamentary constituency.

State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Vikas Raj said an enquiry is going on into some complaints that have been received.

The Collector of Hyderabad district said on 'X' that a case is registered in Malakpet Police Station against BJP candidate Madhavi Latha, under different sections of the IPC and the Representation of the People Act. This follows an allegation that she checked the identity of burqa-clad women voters by asking them to show their faces. Meanwhile, polling was also held at the Secunderabad Cantonment assembly constituency. The bypoll witnessed 39.92 per cent voting till 3 pm. The bypoll was necessitated due to the death of sitting BRS MLA G Lasya Nanditha in a road accident a few months ago.

Ex-VP Venkaiah Naidu, Tripura Governor Indrasena Reddy cast votes in Hyd



GNS News Agency, May 13

Hyderabad: Former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu and Tripura Governor N. Indrasena Reddy, were among prominent leaders who cast their votes here on Monday for Lok Sabha elections in Telangana. Naidu and his wife Ushamma were among the first voters at a polling station at Obul Reddy School in upscale Jubilee Hills in Secunderabad parliamentary constituency.

The former Vice President later posted on social media that they fulfilled their duty as responsible citizens by exercising their franchise. He appealed to all citizens to vote and urged others to participate actively in the world's largest electoral process. Tripura Governor Indrasena Reddy also cast his vote in Malakpet, a part of the Hyderabad Lok Sabha constituency. Former Chief Justice of India N. V. Ramana also exercised his franchise in Hyderabad. Telangana Chief Electoral Officer Vikas Raj, Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari, Director General of Police Ravi Gupta also cast their votes. Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K. T. Rama Rao cast his vote at Nandi Nagar in Hyderabad. His wife and son too polled their votes with him. The BRS leader appealed to the people to exercise the valuable right given by the Constitution of India to elect the government of their choice. Union minister and Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy, who is seeking re-election from Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency, cast his vote at a polling station in Barkatpura.

High voter turnout in Bhadradi Kothagudem district

GNS News Agency, May 13

On the polling day, District Collector Priyanka Ala announced that a high voter turnout of 62.32 percent was recorded in Bhadradi Kothagudem district. She also revealed that Mehbubabad Parliament saw 60.68% turnout, Bhadrachalam 60.58%, and Khammam Parliament 61.86%. Collector Ala mentioned that voters were enthusiastically coming to the polling centers to cast their votes. She assured that all necessary facilities were in place to ensure a smooth voting process for the residents of the district.

Polling concludes peacefully, Palamuru clocks 70 percent polling on an average

New Delhi, GNS News Agency, May 13

A voter turnout of more than 62 per cent was recorded till 5 pm on Monday in the fourth phase of the Lok Sabha polls in 96 constituencies spread over 10 states and Union Territories amid incidents of violence in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. According to the Election Commission, a voting percentage of 62.31 was recorded till 5 pm. The voting will continue till 6 pm. Jammu and Kashmir witnessed the lowest voting percentage till 5 pm with 35.75 per cent of voters exercising their franchise, while West Bengal recorded the highest with 75.66 per cent. Among other states, Andhra Pradesh recorded 68.04 per cent polling, Bihar 54.14 per cent, Jharkhand 63.14 per cent, Madhya Pradesh 68.01 per cent, Maharashtra 52.49 per cent, Odisha 62.96 per cent, Telangana 61.16 per cent and Uttar Pradesh 56.35 per cent.

BJP candidate in Telangana's Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat K Madhavi Latha was booked by election authorities after a video



clip surfaced online in which she was purportedly seen asking burqa-clad women voters to show their faces to compare with the photo identity cards. In Andhra Pradesh, the TDP and YSRCP traded charges and accused each other of resorting to violence, especially in Palnadu, Kadapa and Annamaya districts.

YSRCP also wrote to the EC, alleging poll code violations by rival TDP in several assembly segments, including Vemuru, Darsi, Iccapuram, Kuppam, Macherla, Markapuram, Palakonda and Pedakurapadu. Polling for 175 Assembly seats and 25 Lok Sabha constituencies in the coastal state is

FIR filed against BJP's Madhavi Latha for conducting facial verification on Muslim women

Hyderabad: Reacting to the videos that show BJP Hyderabad MP candidate Madhavi Latha conducting facial examination of muslim women, District Election Officer Ronald Rose issued orders to register an FIR against her.

The candidate visited a polling station in old city and asked at least two women to lift their burqa to tally their faces with those in their identification cards.

Andhra records over 60 % voter turnout till 5 pm



GNS News Agency, May 13

Andhra Pradesh, which is voting for its 175-seat Assembly elections and 25 seats in the Lok Sabha, on Monday, saw a turnout of 68.04 per cent recorded till 5 pm. The southern state is currently under the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) government, which betting on its welfare scheme to retain power. In 2019, the YSRCP won 151 of the 175 Assembly seats in Andhra, with a vote share of 49.95 per cent reducing the TDP to 23 seats and 39.17 per cent votes. The JSP won one seat and got 5.53 per cent votes. The Congress got a mere 1.17 per cent of the votes and did not win any seats.

Earlier in the day, a video that went viral on Monday during the simultaneous Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly polling in Andhra Pradesh, Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) MLA A Sivakumar allegedly attacked a voter. The incident took place at a polling booth in the southern state's Guntur district as Sivakumar tried to cut ahead in line, reported ANI. The Andhra Pradesh unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) promptly hit out at the incident on social media. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), the party shared a clip of the video and wrote "Is this the Vaikapa candidate who got his hands on the voter in Tenali, Guntur district, do you have respect for democracy?" Prominent among the early voters in the state are popular Telugu actors Chiranjeevi, Allu Arjun, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu, reported PTI. The polling is scheduled from 7 am to 6 pm in the state, barring a few places where it will conclude one or two hours earlier. Meanwhile, in neighbouring Telangana, sitting MP and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi is up against the BJP's Madhavi Latha in the battle for Hyderabad.

My family works for Rae Bareli, PM Modi for Adani, Ambani: Rahul

GNS News Agency, May 13

Rae Bareli: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said Monday his family has always worked for the people of the Rae Bareli parliamentary constituency, unlike Prime Minister Narendra Modi who works in the "interest of Adani and Ambani". Addressing his first election meeting in the constituency after his nomination, Gandhi said he was contesting the Lok Sabha election from the seat because his family has deep links with the people here. Hitting out at the Modi government, he claimed that loans amounting to Rs 16 lakh crore, which is equal to 24 years of money allotted under the MGNREGA, have been waived for 22-25 top industrialists.

Rahul Gandhi said his grandmother Indira Gandhi, his father Rajiv Gandhi and his mother Sonia Gandhi have worked to improve the lives of people in Rae Bareli. Considered a Gandhi family bastion, the Rae Bareli seat had been represented by senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi since 2004. The constituency was earlier represented by former prime minister Indira Gandhi. In his address, Rahul Gandhi also accused the media of not showing the problems faced by farmers and unemployed youngsters and instead giving prominence to wedding functions in top industrialists' families. He said if the INDIA bloc comes to power, a list of poor families would be compiled and Rs 1 lakh annually — or Rs 8,500 per month — transferred in the bank account of one woman in each



such family. Gandhi also said an INDIA bloc government would waive the loans of small farmers and legalised common minimum support price would be provided to them.

He reiterated that the Agniveer scheme of short-duration recruitment in the defence forces would be done away and youngsters would be provided permanent jobs in the armed forces with pension provisions. Gandhi said youngsters would get one year of apprenticeship in public sector organisations and later, based on their merit, permanent government jobs. Rae Bareli will go to polls in the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha election on May 20. The BJP has fielded Uttar Pradesh minister Dinesh Pratap Singh from the seat.

SC dismisses plea challenging Kejriwal's continuation as Delhi CM



GNS News Agency, May 13

The Supreme Court on May 13 refused to entertain a petition seeking the removal of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal from office following his arrest and removal in the excise policy case. A Bench of Justices Sanjiv

Khanna and Dipankar Datta refused the petition filed by Delhi resident Kant Bhati, who contended that Mr. Kejriwal was unable to perform his official functions.

The same Bench had granted Mr. Kejriwal interim bail for campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections on May 10. Mr. Bhati submitted that Mr. Kejriwal, as the head of Council of Ministers, was unable to aid and advice the Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Delhi "in relation to matters with respect to which the Legislative Assembly has the power to make laws" under Article 239AA of the Constitution.

He said the Chief Ministers of States have to also act as a liaison between the Governors and the Council of Ministers under Article 167. The May 10 order of interim bail had barred Mr. Kejriwal from visiting the Chief Minister's office or the Delhi Secretariat. He would not sign any official files. However, the court had allowed him to sign files if it was necessary to do so for obtaining clearance or approval of the LG. The court dismissed the plea saying that Mr. Bhati did not have a legal right to raise the dispute. "On propriety you may certainly have something to say but no legal right. Let the LG take action if he wants to...we are not inclined," Justice Khanna told the petitioner's counsel.

Medak BRS MP Candidate Encourages Voter Turnout During Polling Booth Visits

GNS News Agency, May 13

Medak BRS MP candidate Venkatram Reddy recently visited polling booths in Narsapur town, Daultabad, and Kaudupalli to observe the voting process. He took the opportunity to speak with the media and share his thoughts on the ongoing election.

Reddy praised the election arrangements, stating that everyone was following the election code properly. He emphasized the importance of voting, referring to it as a weapon and a tool for solving public problems. Reddy urged the public to participate in the electoral process, as voting is essential for holding public representatives accountable and bringing about positive change. Reminding voters that they have until six o'clock in the evening to cast their ballots, Reddy made a passionate appeal to his fellow citizens to exercise their right to vote. He expressed hope that increased voter turnout would lead to a more democratic and representative government. Overall, Reddy's message during his visit to the polling booths was clear: voting is a powerful tool that must be utilized to shape the future of the Medak constituency.

35 injured as hoarding collapses in Mumbai amid rain and gusty wind; 100 feared trapped

Mumbai, May 13, At least 35 people were injured on Monday when a huge iron hoarding collapsed on a petrol pump in Ghatkopar area of Mumbai amid rain and gusty wind, while 100 others are feared trapped, officials said.

The incident occurred at around 4.30 pm near Chheda Nagar Gymkhana, an official said. Personnel of the fire brigade and police rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation, he said. "At least 35 persons were injured in the incident while 100 people are feared trapped under the hoarding," the official said, adding ambulances were also rushed to the spot.

An NDRF (National Disaster Response Force) team has joined the rescue operation, said Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner Bhushan Gagrani.

Cranes and (gas) cutters have also reached the spot for rescue operation, he said.

"The injured persons were rushed to civic-run Rajawadi Hospital," the official said.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Palestine's UN rights

THE UN General Assembly (UNGA) convened in New York on Friday for an emergency special session on the Gaza crisis and, by a large majority, passed a resolution upgrading Palestine's rights as an Observer State, without offering it full membership. The overwhelming global support for Palestine was accompanied by a request to the UN Security Council (UNSC) to favourably consider its request for full statehood. With this resolution, Palestine will enjoy more rights at the UN, though it will not get the right to vote or stand for elections to UN organs.

With effect from September 10, when the UNGA begins its next session, the Palestinian state will no longer be on the fringes. It will be seated with other member states in alphabetical order and can co-sponsor proposals and amendments. Palestinian representatives can also be elected as officers in the plenary and Main Committees of the UNGA. This move is of immense symbolic value, but it does not alleviate the prolonged suffering of the Palestinian people. Of pressing importance are a ceasefire in Gaza, a huge boost in humanitarian aid and the safe return of Israeli hostages.

The grant of full membership to Palestine should take place along with a ceasefire. The 25 nations that abstained and the nine, led by the US, that said 'no' failed to undermine the support extended by 143 nations. The world, especially the Global South, cannot afford the blowback that is emerging from the recurring bouts of conflict in the region. Last month, the only opposition to a UNSC resolution on statehood for Palestine came from the US. With its university campuses in turmoil, America should see which way the wind is blowing domestically as well.

HC asks Punjab DGP for details of banned songs glorifying violence



Punjab Govt in November 2022 ordered a complete ban on public display of weapons and songs glorifying violence.

GNS News Agency, May 13

Punjab and Haryana High Court Punjab DGP songs violence. The Bench of Justice Harkesh Manuja has sought a detailed affidavit from Punjab government, on various issues, after it noticed that in the earlier two affidavits the information provided has only been provided in "bits and pieces". (File/ Express photo by Jaipal Singh) The Punjab and Haryana High Court has asked the Director General of Police of Punjab to file an affidavit mentioning the details of songs promoting glorification of weapons and violence that have been either banned or recommended for ban. The matter is now listed for hearing on May 13. The HC on May 7 also sought details on "the procedure adopted to achieve the same specifically taking into consideration the Article 19 of the Constitution of India and also that there are various mode for broadcasting a song like TV/internet/public functions/live shows".

The Punjab Government in November 2022 ordered a complete ban on public display of weapons in songs glorifying violence. Punjab is popular for its songs celebrating the gun culture and concerns have been raised over its adverse impact on society. The court asked the number of live or public shows that received complaints for this reason from the public or from the police. The Bench of Justice Harkesh Manuja has sought a detailed affidavit from Punjab government, on various issues, after it noticed that in the earlier two affidavits the information provided has only been provided in "bits and pieces". Previously, the Punjab government had told the High Court that 34,768 Arms Licences were issued in Punjab from 2019 to 2023, and a maximum of 4,928 Arms Licences were issued only in Gurdaspur district, the Punjab Government has told the High Court.

The court has sought the affidavit from Punjab while hearing the anticipatory bail plea of an accused, Gurbhuj Singh alias Bheja, in a case of attempt to murder and Arms Act. The HC had earlier noted that "despite a ban by Punjab Government, the use of firearms in marriages and in public functions is widespread", and thus had asked the DGP to file his own affidavit in the matter. Justice Manuja further has sought information in affidavit from Punjab DGP on "whom do you refer to as 'anti-social elements' and what is the criteria for defining anti-social elements. The judge asked whose subjective satisfaction was required and sought the basis for determining anti-social elements.

"How many gun houses were found to be fake and without licence and what action have been taken against them?" the High Court asked the DGP. The court also sought details on the FIRs registered for the use and display of firearms in public, religious places, marriage parties and other gatherings, including on social media. It asked for the number of cases in which recommendations were sent for cancelling licences to the district magistrate on this account. "Why the procedure being followed for approval of licence for guns is different in different districts? For example, Police Commissionerate, Ludhiana, is following the Sanjh Portal but other districts are not following the same. What are the state guidelines for the same? Why one common portal is not being used in the entire State?" With respect to fake arms licence rackets, the HC asked the government about the steps being taken at the state level to curb the issue. "How many such rackets have been identified which are operating in the State of Punjab and what action has been taken against them including registration of FIRs," it asked.

As PM Modi woos Sharad Pawar, he says, 'will never ditch Nehru-Gandhi ideology'



GNS News Agency, May 13

Sharad Pawar Modi Prime Minister Modi is repeatedly taking a stand against one particular community. We will never join hands with those who adopt such a stand," Sharad Pawar told reporters in Pune on Friday. Minutes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked him to join hands with the BJP-led Mahayuti in Maharashtra, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) national president Sharad Pawar rejected the offer, saying that he would never ditch the Nehru-Gandhi ideology and join hands with people who adopt an anti-Muslim stand.

"We admire the Nehru-Gandhi ideology. We will not go anywhere and will not leave the ideology. Prime Minister [Narendra] Modi has made some comments about the Muslim community in his speeches. I have heard about it. If we have to take this country forward, we will have to

take communities together. We cannot sideline a community and think of moving ahead. Prime Minister Modi is repeatedly taking a stand against one particular community. We will never join hands with those who adopt such a stand," Pawar told reporters in Pune on Friday.

Alleging that PM Modi does not believe in democracy, Pawar said, "Today, our parliamentary and democratic system is in danger. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren have been arrested and put in jail. The Centre is involved in this... One thing is clear, the Prime Minister does not believe in our democratic system. People also know about his intentions and therefore there is no question of going with them (BJP)." Pawar's remarks were made in response to PM Modi's speech at an election rally in Maharashtra's Nandurbar district where he urged the veteran leader to join hands with the ruling Mahayuti coalition instead of talking of merging with the Congress. "For 40-50 years, one tall leader from Maharashtra is in politics. These days, he is making wild statements. After the Baramati election, he is worried. After discussing with a lot of people, he has made a statement. He has said that if smaller parties have to survive in politics, they will have to merge with Congress. It means 'fake' NCP and 'fake' Shiv Sena have made up their minds to merge with the Congress. But I want to tell him that after June 4, instead of going with Congress, they should join hands with Ajit Pawar-led NCP and Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena. All their dreams will be realised," PM Modi said.

Death due to manual scavenging: Delhi HC issues notice to deceased sanitation worker's wife in plea against enhanced compensation

GNS News Agency, May 13

The Delhi High Court on Friday issued a notice to the wife of a deceased sanitation worker in an appeal by the Delhi Government challenging an order directing it to award Rs 30 lakh as enhanced compensation to the woman. The government had challenged a November 23, 2023, order of the single judge bench of the High Court which had allowed the plea of a deceased sanitation worker's wife seeking enhancement of compensation from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 30 lakh in terms of the Supreme Court's directions on compensation to the dependents of the victims who lose their lives while manual scavenging. A division bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora issued notice to the deceased worker's wife, while asking the government to pay the enhanced amount to her. "The appellants, without prejudice to their rights and contentions, are directed to pay the enhanced amount to the respondent within six weeks," the bench said. "You pay the amount. We'll see," the bench orally said to the standing counsel for the Delhi government Santosh Kumar Tripathi.

The woman had first approached the single judge bench of the High Court claiming that she was the widow of a sewer cleaner who was performing the work of manual scavenging. She had relied on the Supreme Court's decision in Balram Singh v Union of India and Ors, wherein the apex court had passed directions to be implemented by the Centre and all state governments. Apart from the enhancement of compensation, the woman had also sought full rehabilitation, including employment to her, education for her children, and skill training, in terms of the apex court's decision. The single judge bench in its November order after considering the facts and circumstances of the case had said that the apex court's decision will apply "mutatis mutandis" to the facts of the woman's case and directed that it be implemented within two months from the date of the order. "The writ petition is disposed of with a direction to the State Government to implement the said judgment in the present case also," the single judge bench had said. Challenging this deci-



sion, the government in its appeal has claimed that the single judge bench has sought to apply a judgment of the apex court that would not apply to the facts of the present case as compensation of Rs 10 Lakh already stood paid in 2017. The appeal filed by advocate Udit Malik states that the observations of the Supreme Court in the Balram Singh case would not be applicable in the present case as the "intention of paying enhanced compensation amount is only applicable to a case where no compensation has been paid till date." "The revised compensation amount from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 30 lakh is increased taking into consideration the prevailing inflation," the appeal submits. The matter is next listed in October. In its decision on the aspect of compensation, the Supreme Court had said,

"The court hereby directs the Union and the States to ensure that the compensation for sewer deaths is increased (given that the previous amount fixed, ie, Rs. 10 lakh) was made applicable from 1993. The current equivalent of that amount is Rs. 30 lakh". "This shall be the amount to be paid, by the concerned agency, i.e., the Union, the Union Territory or the State as the case may be. In other words, compensation for sewer deaths shall be Rs. 30 lakh. In the event that the dependents of any victim have not been paid such an amount, the above amount shall be payable to them. Furthermore, this shall be the amount to be hereafter paid, as compensation," the Supreme Court said.

Far away from Gujarat's lion territory of Gir forest, lioness carcass found buried in limestone mine in Jamnagar



GNS News Agency, May 13

An Asiatic lion that had been roaming in Jamnagar district far away from established lion territory was found dead in an abandoned limestone mine on Friday, with forest officers saying that prima facie the big cat was electrocuted. Forest officers started scanning wasteland in Hansthal village of Kalavad taluka in central Jamnagar early on Friday morning and found a carcass of a lioness buried in an abandoned limestone mine. "We had got an alert that something untoward had happened and our staff started scanning the area in Hansthal village. During the scanning drive, our staff noted a foul smell emanating from an abandoned limestone mine. Eventually, we discovered that the stench was emanating from the carcass of a lioness which was buried in the quarry," K Ramesh, Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), Junagadh territorial forest circle,

Ramesh said the lioness was believed to be five to nine years old and had been ranging areas of Kalavad taluka, some 40 km from Barda Wildlife Sanctuary. "The lioness which was roaming in this area was a solitary animal in Kalavad. After getting due permission from the chief wildlife warden of Gujarat, we had radio-collared the lioness," the CCF said. Hansthal is some 100 km from Girnar Wildlife Sanctuary, the known established territory of Asiatic lions, an endangered species of big cats. The Gujarat forest department has also set up an Asiatic lion gene pool centre in Barda Wildlife Sanctuary as part

of efforts to conserve the species. In this centre set up inside the sanctuary, lions are kept in large enclosures. In January this year, a lion and a lioness were spotted in Sadodar village in Jamjodhpur taluka adjoining Kalavad. A lion had also visited Barda Wildlife Sanctuary last year. A sub-adult lion had ventured into Kalavad taluka in 2013 but it was caged and transported back to Gir forest. Forest officers said that Hansthal village has lots of wasteland which can be a suitable habitat for lions.

Bengaluru airport's Terminal 2 witnesses water leakage after heavy rainfall, flights diverted to Chennai

GNS News Agency, May 13

After heavy showers lashed Bengaluru on Thursday, rainwater leaked through the roof of the newly built Terminal 2 of the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA). The baggage claim area of T2 was particularly affected. However, airport officials said the maintenance staff cleared the rainwater to avoid inconvenience to passengers. Bangalore International Airport Limited in a statement said, "A very heavy downpour of rain within a short span of time on the evening of May 9, 2023, resulted in water leakage in certain areas of the terminals at Bengaluru airport. Our teams promptly responded to the situation to mitigate the impact and restore normal operations. We regret the inconvenience caused to our passengers."

Several Bengaluru-bound flights were also diverted to Chennai due to heavy rain. According to BIAL officials, 13 domestic flights, three international passenger flights, and one international cargo flight were diverted. According to the India Meteorological Department, Bengaluru recorded 72.4 mm of rainfall till 8:30 am on May 10.

51-year-old woman arrested in Bengaluru for murder of transgender live-in partner

GNS News Agency, May 13

A 51-year-old woman who was in a live-in relationship with a transgender person in Bengaluru has been arrested for the latter's murder which was discovered on May 3. Manju Naik, 42, who used to live with Prema, 51, in the Murugeshpalya area of east Bengaluru, was found dead on May 3 at their home.

Naik's brother Parasa Naik filed a police complaint saying that he suspected his sibling was murdered. Parasa further alleged that Prema strangled his sibling with a towel, switched off her mobile phone and disappeared. After a post-mortem conducted at the Sir C V Raman General Hospital revealed that Naik died due to suffocation, the police registered a case of murder on May 7. The Bengaluru East police reported Prema's arrest. "On receiving information from the informant about the woman who was living with the deceased, the accused was arrested on 08.05.2024 in Hassan district. She was taken into custody at her mother's house in Ayyarahalli village of Channarayana taluk," the Bengaluru police said in a statement. Police said that the accused's husband had died and she had been living together with the victim in a house at Murugeshpalya for a while. On the night of April 26, Prema allegedly fought with Naik. When Naik came to attack her with a knife, she strangled Naik with a towel, the police alleged.

Kodagu girl hacked to death by fiancé shortly after clearing Class X exam

GNS News Agency, May 13

A 16-year-old girl in Karnataka's Kodagu district, who recently cleared her Class 10 exam, was allegedly hacked to death by a man she was engaged to on Thursday. The incident took place shortly after the girl learned about her results. The girl, Meena U S, 16, was attacked by her fiancé Onkarappa alias Papu, 32, at around 5.30 pm on Thursday. The accused, who went missing after the murder, was engaged to the girl but had been dissuaded from marrying her by local officials on account of Meena being a minor. "She was engaged to the accused but after the intervention of child welfare and police officials, the families were convinced against carrying out a marriage until the girl turned 18. The accused had earlier agreed but came on the evening of May 9 and attacked the girl after fighting with her father Subramani and mother Janaki," a police official said. The accused reportedly attacked the young girl with a sword and decapitated her before fleeing. The families of both the victim and the accused are natives of Kodagu.

"He dragged Meena approximately 150 metres away from the house and cut her head and body with a sword," the police said in a statement. A written complaint about the murder was filed by Meena's elder brother Dilip U S at the Somwarpet police station. Following the incident, the police have launched a hunt for the suspect Onkarappa and have provided security at the home of the victim's father Subramani U G and the hospital where her mother Janaki is undergoing treatment. The decision of the girl and her family not to immediately take forward the marriage plan of the teenager is suspected to have angered the accused who after initially agreeing to wait for the girl to turn 18 returned to the house of the girl and fought with her and her parents over the issue, the police said.

Amritpal Singh has filled Lok Sabha nomination forms, Punjab government tells HC; plea disposed of



GNS News Agency, May 13

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Friday disposed of the petition filed by Waris Punjab De (WPD) chief Amritpal Singh, seeking temporary release for seven days to file his nomination to contest the Lok Sabha elections, as infructuous after the Punjab government informed the court that the state has facilitated the process. Singh had filed and signed two sets of nomination forms and other paperwork on May 9, the state submitted. Singh, who is currently lodged at Dibrugarh jail in Assam under the National Security Act, had moved the high court on Thursday seeking temporary release for seven days to file his nomination to contest the Lok Sabha elections from Khadoor Sahib constituency that goes to polls on June 1. As the matter came up for hearing before the bench of Justice Vinod S Bhardwaj, Punjab Deputy Advocate General Arjun Sheoran told the high court that based on telephonic instructions received from the Dibrugarh Central Jail superintendent, "Two sets of nomination forms and other paperwork were filled in and signed by the detainee on May 9, 2024." "The Superintendent Central Jail Dibrugarh will administer oath to the detainee as per the provisions of law including Handbook for Candidate, 2023 and issue Certificate for Receipt of Oath and send original form of Oath to Returning Officer, 03- Khadoor Sahab, (Punjab). The oath will be administered as and when a request is made by the detainee after his nomination form is submitted before the RO [returning officer]," the high court was told. Hearing the submission of Punjab and other respondents, the high court disposed of the plea.

'Was left with only 2 options, go to jail or switch sides,' says Shiv Sena Mumbai North candidate Ravindra Waikar



GNS News Agency, May 13

ravindra waikar Shiv Sena-Shinde faction candidate for Mumbai North West constituency, Ravindra Waikar, interacts with party-workers and general public as part of his election campaign ahead of general elections 2024, at Jogeshwari in Mumbai on 07 May 2024. (Express photo by Sankhadeep Banerjee) Shiv Sena Mumbai North candidate Ravindra Waikar, who left the Shiv Sena (UBT) and joined the Eknath Shinde-led outfit, recently claimed he had hardly any choice but to switch sides after he was

implicated in a false case. After being falsely implicated, I was left with only two options, either to go to jail or switch parties... It was with a heavy heart that I switched sides... when my wife's name was also included (in this case), I had no choice left..." Waikar told a Marathi publication. "After being in Balasaheb's Shiv Sena for 50 years, I had to leave Uddhav Thackeray's side, at that time it felt like I was becoming a stranger to a family member. But destiny created that situation and everyone saw how it can bring about change," he further said. Speaking about the case against him, Waikar said, "Lawyers told me that my case was a political one. But no one was giving me any guarantee. Obviously, I had no choice." Waikar was under the scanner of Central investigative agencies with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in October 2023 registering a money laundering case against him in connection with the construction of a luxury hotel, claiming it to be a violation of the agreement between him and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). Waikar got a major reprieve in February after the BMC informed the Supreme Court that it was withdrawing its earlier order to revoke permission for Waikar's hotel.

A large community grieving with us gave us strength to cope with our personal grief: Hamid Dabholkar

GNS News Agency, May 13

Narendra Dabholkar death family Pune Hamid Dabholkar said, "This was not just our personal loss but it was a great loss to many activists, common citizens who had felt that they had lost someone close to them." (Express Archive) Dr Narendra Dabholkar's son Dr Hamid, a trained psychiatrist, who spoke to Indian Express about his family coping with the grief of having lost his father, said that because a large community of activists, common citizens grieved with them, it gave the family strength to cope with their bereavement. Dr Narendra Dabholkar, who was shot dead on August 20 in 2013, is survived by his wife Dr Shaila, son Dr Hamid and daughter Mukta and their families. Dr Hamid said after the murder coping with individual grief became possible with the support of 'social grieving,' grieving through creative expression and continuing the journey of Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti (MANS) founded by Dr Narendra Dabholkar, after his murder. The verdict on the case was announced today.

"Deep down we always knew that there was risk involved in the work my father had undertaken. But an attack of this level and that too Maharashtra, came as a big shock at various levels. From the beginning, we had no doubt in mind that this was an attack on the thought, philosophy, organisation and work my father lived for. We were also living by these tenets, not just because we were his family but because we were convinced of them. From the beginning we knew that we had to fight against that force with all the strength we could garner. And because of this, I would say that we did not get the space to fully process the personal loss in the period immediately after the incident," said Dr Hamid.

He further said, "This was not just our personal loss but it was a great loss to many activists, common citizens who had felt that they had lost someone close to them. Dr Narendra Dabholkar's thought and work had made a difference for them. So in that sense, our individual grieving had the support of social grieving. Because a large community grieved with us, it gave us strength to cope with our personal grief. It gave us a feeling that we were not alone. At the same time, myself being a trained mental



health professional did help me personally and also my family and those close to us. "We all could also process our grief through creative efforts like the theatre production of Ringan Natak by playwright Atul Pethe. I remember Atul saying at the time that 'if they kill a man, we will write a play, we will pen a poem.' I felt that this kind of grieving through creative expression takes an individual and the society forward," he added.

On the journey of the MANS and other organisations founded by Dr Dabholkar, after his murder, Dr Hamid quoted his father, who used to say, "Andhashraddha nirmoolanala krodha pekha karunechi and upahasa peksha apulkichi garaj asate. — Superstition eradication needs an approach rooted in compassion rather than anger and in empathy rather than ridicule." Considered as one of his most iconic quotes, colleagues of Dr Narendra Dabholkar believe that it underlines his philosophy behind the three-decade-long movement he led. Dr Hamid further said, "Taking forward with determination the work he was doing, was the only answer to what had happened. After the incident, Maharashtra passed the anti-superstition act, more than 1200 individuals exploiting people through superstition have been arrested and prosecuted, many serious acts like human sacrifices were prevented. With MANS' initiative a law against caste panchayats was passed. The murder did not deter a single MANS activist from continuing their work."

Uddhav hits back at PM Modi's 'nakli santan' jibe: 'Will not tolerate insult'

GNS News Agency, May 13

Uddhav Thackeray saying that he comes from a family steeped in values, Uddhav said, "Your [PM Modi's] parents might not have instilled values in you but I come from a cultured family. You are repeatedly raising the issue of Parivarvad but I am proud of my family." Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday objected to Prime Minister Narendra Modi calling him a 'nakli santan' (fake child) during a rally in Telangana and said that he would not "tolerate the insult to his parents". "The Prime Minister has said that I am Balasaheb's [Bal Thackeray's] 'nakli santan'. This is an insult to my parents who are like Gods to me. You fight with me but if you insult my parents, I will not tolerate it. Whoever you are, I will not leave you, I will show you your place," Uddhav said at an election rally in Shirampur for the party's Lok Sabha candidate Bhausaheb Wakchaure on Thursday evening. Saying that he comes from a family steeped in values, Uddhav said, "Your [PM Modi's] parents might not have instilled values in you but I come from a cultured family. You are repeatedly raising the issue of Parivarvad but I am proud of my family." Saying that PM Modi made his mother stand in a queue after demonetisation, Uddhav said, "You made your old mother who was in her 90s stand in a queue during demonetisation for your selfish gain. I am not a hard-hearted person like you. In our Hindutva, we regard parents as God." Questioning why PM Modi referred to him at a rally in Telangana, Uddhav said, "Modiji is probably imagining Uddhav Thackeray everywhere... I am fighting against him in Maharashtra... I don't know what is wrong with him." Recalling the time when the BJP and the Shiv Sena were allies, Uddhav said, "Today, you are calling me a fake person. But in 2014 when you decided to meet [then] President Pranab Mukherjee, you had taken my signature to declare that you will be our prime ministerial candidate. Didn't you feel ashamed while taking my signature then?" Referring to the Centre's move to remove the special status accorded to Jammu and Kashmir, Uddhav said that after the Modi government stayed Article 370 (B), people from outside can buy land in Jammu and Kashmir. "But who purchased the land in the state? Adani. Why? Because the lithium required in batteries of electric vehicles is available in large quantities in Jammu and Kashmir. And that is the reason why the Modi government stayed Article 370 (B). Adanis are buying land and the money is going



to Gujarat. The Shiv Sena was also fooled into giving support to the Modi government for staying Article 370 (B)," he said.

Govt teacher develops satellite antenna giving boost to digital education

GNS News Agency, May 13

Yellandu (Kothagudem): A government teacher has made a multi-satellite signal receiver antenna giving a boost to digital education in government schools by making a large number educational television channels available to the students. Shaikh Rajalipasha of Subhash Nagar of Yellandu mandal in Kothagudem district is the teacher who made the antenna. He fitted it at Upper Primary School at Pedda thanda in Singareni mandal of Khammam district, where he works as headmaster. Speaking to Telangana Today, Rajalipasha informed that in Telangana, digital education is being provided through four T-Sat TV channels in government schools through GSAT-8 satellite. TSat Vidya, TSat Nipuna, TSat-1 and Mana TV are the only channels available and no other TV channel is available. To address the problem, he made a multi-satellite signal receiving antenna to make 250 education TV channels and 200 entertainment, sports, science, news channels available on DD free dish launched by the Central government in 2019 on GSAT-15 satellite available to the schools.

Narendra Dabholkar murder case: Two get life imprisonment, three others acquitted



GNS News Agency, May 13

After more than 10 years and eight months since the murder of Dr Narendra Dabholkar, a Special UAPA Court in Pune pronounced its verdict on Friday in the trial against five person linked to Sanatan Sanstha. The court acquitted ENT surgeon Dr Virendrasinh Tawade, Mumbai-based lawyer Sanjeev Punalekar and his aide Vikram Bhawe for the lack of evidence. The court convicted the two alleged assailants Sachin Andure and Sharad Kalaskar and convicted them to life imprisonment. Speaking to reporters outside the Shivajinagar court complex, Dabholkar's son Dr Hamid said, "On one level we are satisfied that the two assailants have been convicted and sentenced to life. But the questions about the masterminds and overarching conspiracy behind the murder remain unanswered." Rationalist, anti-superstition crusader and founder of Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan

Samiti (MANS), Dr Dabholkar, who was 67 at the time, was shot dead by two bike-borne assailants on the VR Shinde bridge in Pune on the morning of August 20 in 2013. The murder which sent shockwaves across the country was initially probed by Pune City Police and was later investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) from June 2014. The accused who were tried for murder include ENT surgeon Dr Tawade who was chargesheeted in September 2016, the two alleged assailants Andure and Kalaskar who were chargesheeted in February 2019, Mumbai-based lawyer Punalekar and his aide Bhawe who were chargesheeted in November 2019. All the accused are allegedly linked to radical outfit Sanatan Sanstha. In 2018, the CBI had moved to invoke the anti-terror legislation Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) in the case.

During a hearing of the case April 18, Additional Sessions Judge PP Jadhav who is presiding over the Special Court for the cases under the UAPA cases, had set the day of the judgement for Friday. Special Public Prosecutor for the case was Adv Prakash Suryavanshi while the accused were represented by Defence lawyers Prakash Salsingkar, Virendra Ichalkaranjikar and Suvarna Avhad Vast. 20 prosecution witnesses and two defence witnesses have deposed before the court during the trial. The Special Court had on September 15, 2021 framed the charges against five accused, marking the beginning of the trial. All the five accused had pleaded not guilty to charges against them. While Tawade, Andure and Kalaskar are currently in prison, Bhawe and Punalekar have been out on bail.

Karnataka HC refuses to quash tax evasion case against bookies operating at Bangalore Turf Club

GNS News Agency, May 13

The Karnataka High Court recently refused to quash a case involving alleged tax evasion by bookies operating at the Bangalore Turf Club, saying that "the material collected by the investigation officer during the course of investigation prima facie make out a cognizable offence". A bench of Justice S Vishwajith Shetty passed the order on April 30 in response to a petition filed by the bookies. In January this year, a case was registered under the Karnataka Police Act, the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Karnataka Race Betting Act following a raid, which was done based on information that the bookies at the club were accepting bets without proper registration of the bets, resulting in evasion of payable taxes. A sum of Rs 3,45,74,040 was also seized during the raid.

The counsel for the bookies argued that they were licensed bookies and that the section dealing with cheating under the IPC did not fit the complaint and had only been invoked as other provisions were non-cognizable. It was also argued that even if the allegations were true, it was the competent Goods Services and Tax (GST) officers who had to take action. Advocate General Shashikiran Shetty argued that the bookies had collected 25 per cent GST without issuing receipts and had not maintained any records for tax deducted at source (TDS). He also pointed out a large discrepancy between the reported bet amount and what the average amount should have been over a certain period, considering the amount that was seized.



The bench observed, "If the court is satisfied that allegations made and materials collected prima facie make out an offence, the court should normally not interfere with the investigation into the offence. In such situations, the investigating officer has not invoked the proper penal provisions... After investigation, based on the material collected, it is always open for the investigating agency to file a final report invoking the applicable penal provisions." The court concluded, "The allegations found in the first information [report] and the material collected by the investigation officer during the course of investigation prima facie make out a cognizable offence. The allegations against the accused is of very serious nature and the accused, amongst other allegations, allegedly have misappropriated crores of money collected by them towards payment of GST and TDS."

Branch was open past midnight day before polling: PDCC Bank issued showcause over poll code 'violation'

GNS News Agency, May 13

District Collector and returning officer Suhas Diwase has issued a showcause notice to the Pune District Central Cooperative (PDCC) Bank over alleged violation of the model code of conduct. Diwase said action would be taken once the investigations are over. NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar had tweeted a video about the Velhe branch of the PDCC Bank being allegedly used to distribute cash and in operation past midnight a day before the May 7 voting for Baramati. The Election Commission of India (ECI) had taken cognizance of the complaint. Diwase said showcause notice was issued as to why action should not be taken against the bank for alleged violation of the model code.

The showcause notice has asked the bank to submit cash transactions records as well as CCTVs records of the premises. Rural SP has also joined the investigation and examining the CCTV records as well as other related records on the day of the incident. Sources said the incident had happened due to the use of the premises of the bank by one of its directors. Unlike other bank branches, the Velhe branch does not have a separate entrance to the director's cabin, which had resulted



in the bank being open late after midnight a day before polling, the sources added. Digambar Durgade, the chairman of the bank, did not answer calls or reply to messages. In case of a conviction the bank would face action from the RBI, which would include a reprimand and financial fine.

The PDCC is one of the better run DCC banks in the state with Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar being a director of the bank. Pawar had resigned from his post last October.

NGO moves SC, seeks release of voter turnout data for LS polls in 'absolute numbers' within 48 hrs of polling

GNS News Agency, May 13

An NGO has moved the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Election Commission to upload polling station-wise voter turnout data in "absolute figures" on its website within 48 hours of conclusion of polling for each phase of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) has filed an interim application in its 2019 PIL seeking directions to the poll panel that "scanned legible copies of Form 17C Part-I (Account of Votes Recorded)" of all polling stations be uploaded immediately after the polls. "Direct the Election Commission to provide tabulated polling station-wise data in absolute figures of the number of votes polled as recorded in Form 17C Part-I after each phase of polling in the on-going 2024 Lok Sabha elections and also a tabulation of constituency-wise figures of voter turnout in absolute numbers in the on-going 2024 Lok Sabha elections," the NGO said. It said that the plea was filed to ensure that the democratic process is not subverted by electoral irregularities. "The voter turn-out data for the first two phases of the ongoing 2024 Lok Sabha elections published by ECI on April 30 has been published after 11

days after the first phase of polling held on April 19 and 4 days after second phase of polling held on April 26." The data as published by the ECI in its press release dated April 30, 2024 shows a sharp increase (by about 5-6%) as compared to the initial percentages announced by ECI as of 7 pm on the day of polling," the plea said. The petition said the "inordinate" delay in the release of final voter turnout data, coupled with the unusually high revision of over 5 per cent in the poll panel's press note of April 30, 2024 has raised concerns and public suspicion regarding the correctness of the said data. The non-release of absolute number of votes polled, coupled with the "unreasonable delay" in release of votes polled data, has led to apprehensions in the mind of the electorate about the sharp increase between initial data and data released on April 30, it said. "These apprehensions must be addressed and put to rest. That in order to uphold the voter's confidence it is necessary that the ECI be directed to disclose on its website scanned legible copies of Form 17C Part-I (Account of Votes Recorded) of all polling stations which contains the authenticated figures for votes polled, within 48 hours of the close of polling," it said.

Health department urges vigilance after viral hepatitis death in Kerala's Malappuram



1,032 confirmed cases since January this year. There were five suspected deaths and five confirmed deaths. One death was reported in March and four in April," the officer noted in a statement issued by the District Public Relations Department.

The statement highlighted that the highest number of cases was reported in Pothukal, Kuzhimanna, Omanur, Pookotoor, Morayur, Peruvallur panchayats, and Malappuram municipality. Regarding the man's death in Chaliyar, the health department revealed that a nine-year-old girl in his household was diagnosed with viral hepatitis on March 19. Following this diagnosis, medical officers and health workers promptly visited the house and implemented preventive measures. Subsequently, on April 22, the man himself was diagnosed with viral hepatitis at Chaliyar Family Health Centre and admitted to Nilambur District Hospital on April 26. Later, he was transferred to a private hospital in Manchery for specialist treatment, and then to a private hospital in Kozhikode as his liver function deteriorated.

Unfortunately, he developed an infection during a liver transplant and succumbed to the illness on Friday, the statement said. Viral hepatitis, caused by microorganisms belonging to the group of viruses, manifests with symptoms such as fever, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, yellowing of the eyes, and yellow urine. In severe cases, liver function can be significantly affected, potentially leading to death, the health department said.

GNS News Agency, May 13

Hepatitis Kerala Regarding the man's death in Chaliyar, the health department revealed that a nine-year-old girl in his household was diagnosed with viral hepatitis on March 19. A 41-year-old man died in Kerala's Malappuram district on Friday due to viral hepatitis, marking the sixth such confirmed case in the district in the last three months. This incident has prompted the health department to urge people to be vigilant against the disease. District Medical Officer R Renuka said that the man, hailing from Chaliyar panchayat, passed away from viral hepatitis on Friday morning while under treatment at a private hospital in Kozhikode. "Malappuram district has reported 3,184 suspected cases of viral hepatitis and

Niti Aayog report finds 'huge gap' in cancer screening at Ayushman centres



GNS News Agency, May 13

Ayushman centres, NITI Aayog, ayushman bharat, cervical cancer, Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs), Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme, cancer screening at Ayushman centres, cancer screening, Indian express news, current affairs This report was prepared by Niti Aayog's Health and Family Welfare vertical in June last year. It has not been made public yet.

BESIDES the Rs 5-lakh insurance cover, the flagship Ayushman Bharat Scheme envisaged the upgrade of primary health centres to Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs). These would, among a range of services, offer annual screening for those 30 years or older for Non Communicable Diseases: hypertension, diabetes, and three of the most common cancers in India — oral, breast and cervical. Six years since the launch, the Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme has been availed of by more than 5.47 crore users across the country — making it the world's largest medical insurance scheme. But when it comes to cancer screening at the HWCs, there is a "huge gap," according to a report from 13 states prepared by NITI Aayog, the government's premier policy think tank. This report was prepared by Niti Aayog's Health and Family Welfare vertical in June last year. It has not been made public yet. It is learnt that its findings have been shared with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It is learnt that three-member teams of NITI Aayog visited a total of 93 HWCs across 37 districts in 12 states and one Union Territory over a period of four months (from mid-December 2022 to early April 2023) to track the progress and functioning of the HWCs. The states include Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh. Niti Aayog has decided to conduct a fresh "evaluation" of the HWCs — in March this year, it issued a Request for Proposal (RFP), inviting proposals from na-

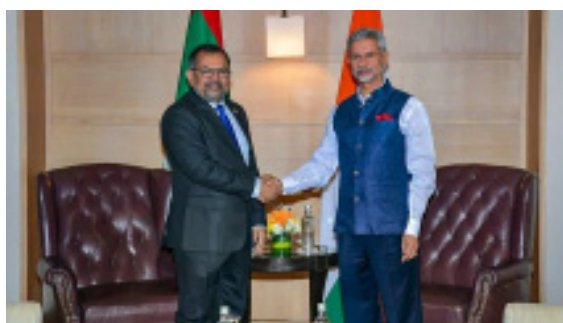
tional and international firms for this. When contacted, an official declined to comment but said that the gap is attributable to "low levels of awareness," and "lack of capacities."

As per official protocol, there are three distinct methods of screening for the three cancers: oral visual examination for oral cancer; visual inspection with acetic acid for cervical cancer (under this, the cervix is examined after the application of 3-5% acetic acid); and clinical breast examination (CBE) for breast cancer for the people in the age-group 30-65 years. Under the Ayushman upgrade, Auxiliary Nurse and Midwife (ANMs) at the HWCs were meant to be trained in these three screening methods. Also planned was the training of Medical Officers and Staff nurses. "These require intensive training and careful monitoring to sharpen the screening skills. This hasn't happened to the extent that was expected," said an official. "Screening for breast cancer is being administered by educating beneficiaries to undertake self-examination. Provision for screening of cervical cancer is yet to be operationalized. Screening for oral cancer is performed on a case by case basis, depending on tobacco consumption habits or any other visible symptoms. Presently, suboptimal cancer screening activities are a huge gap," the report noted. The report also flagged that although NCD screening was underway at most facilities, yearly screening was still largely absent. "All of the facilities visited have been functional over a year, however less than 10% facilities had completed a single round of NCD screening in the population," the report said. The NITI Aayog teams also found that the HWC staff had limited or no knowledge of the fact that the screening for hypertension and diabetes needed to be done on an annual basis. On infrastructure in the HWC, the news was better. The report said that it was in accordance with standards as envisaged in the operational guidelines. All basic devices such as stethoscope, BP apparatus (digital), weighing scale (adult and infant), clinical thermometer (oral and digital) were available and functional, it said. Medicines and diagnostic tests were available free-of-cost in all the visited facilities, it added. The gaps in cancer screening are significant in view of the government's focus on prevention and detection of cancer at an early stage. In its manifesto, the ruling BJP has announced to "expand the existing health services focussed on the prevention and reduction of Anaemia, Breast Cancer, Cervical Cancer and Osteoporosis, ensuring a healthy life for women." The party has also announced that it will launch a "focused initiative to eliminate" cervical cancer.

Day after Maldives-India meet, 'New Delhi completely withdraws soldiers from island'

GNS News Agency, May 13

A day after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met his Maldivian counterpart Moosa Zameer, India completed the withdrawal of all its soldiers from Maldives, just ahead of the May 10 deadline set by President Mohamed Muizzu. The last batch of Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives have been repatriated, confirmed Heena Waleed, news agency quoted the President's Office Chief Spokesperson as saying to Sun.mv news portal. Repatriation of about 89 Indian military personnel stationed in the Maldives — to operate and maintain two helicopters and Dornier aircraft that India had gifted earlier — was a key pledge of Muizzu during his presidential campaign in 2023. Waleed shared that the details about the number of soldiers stationed would be disclosed later. Earlier, its government had announced that 51 of these soldiers were repatriated to India on Monday. Randhir Jaiswal, the spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, at a media briefing in New Delhi on Thursday, confirmed that the first and second batches of the Indian personnel had returned and were replaced by "competent Indian technical personnel". Riding to power last November on an 'India Out' poll plank, one of Muizzu's first acts was to demand the withdrawal of around 80 Indian military personnel by May 10 — they had been stationed there to operate two helicopters and a Dornier



aircraft.

On Thursday, in a veiled reference to the pro-China tilt of the Maldives government, Jaishankar had told Zameer that the development of India-Maldives ties was based on "mutual interests" and "reciprocal sensitivity" given that they are "close and proximate neighbours". India had recently approved the highest-ever export quotas for essential commodities — eggs, potatoes, onions, sugar, rice, wheat flour and pulses, river sand and stone aggregates — to the Maldives for 2024-25 under a unique bilateral mechanism. The approved quantities are the highest since this arrangement came into effect in 1981.

Hindu population share dipped 7.82%, while that of Christians, Muslims, Sikhs rose: PM-EAC

GNS News Agency, May 13

Hindu population, christian community, Muslim community, Sikh community, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, PM-EAC, Indian express news, current affairs Of 35 OECD countries studied, 25 were from Europe, and the share of majority religious denominations has decreased by 29 per cent in these countries. The share of Hindu population in India has dipped 7.82 per cent while that of Muslims, Christians and Sikhs has seen a rise in the 65-year period between 1950 and 2015, a new analysis by Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (PM-EAC) has shown, suggesting a 'conducive environment' for increasing diversity.

The PM-EAC report titled 'Share of Religious Minorities: A cross country analysis' studied data on religious composition of populations for 167 countries. The dipping majority population and rising minority population in India was in line with global trends, also seen in Europe, but stood out in relation to India's neighbours. The analysis relied on the Religious Characteristics of States Dataset 2017 to track religious composition across countries. The study focussed only on countries that had a majority religion accounting for more than 50 per cent share of the total population in 1950.

While the population of Hindus declined 7.82 per cent, the share of Muslim population rose from 9.84 per cent to 14.09 per cent. The share of Christian population rose from 2.24 per cent to 2.36 per cent, the share of Sikh population increased from 1.24 per cent to 1.85 per cent and the share of the Buddhist population rose from 0.05 per cent to 0.81 per cent. The Jain and Parsi community population witnessed a dip. The share of Jains declined from 0.45 per cent to 0.36 per cent and the share of the Parsi population declined 85 per cent from 0.03 per cent to 0.0004 per cent. The report put in a caveat that the analysis was agnostic to the causes behind demographic changes. However, it concluded that "the rise in share of minorities suggested the net result of policy actions, political decisions and societal processes provided a conducive environment for increasing diversity in society". The study also went on to term as 'noise' news reports on atrocities against minorities in India and stated in contrast — "minorities were not just protected but also thrived in India", particularly remarkable in the context of shrinking minority populations in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka.

Shamika Ravi, member of the PM-EAC and one of the report's authors, said the Indian experience is similar to most of world's high-income and liberal democracies, such as OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries which have seen a major decline in the share of majority religion. "The change in proportion of minorities as a share of the total population serves as a reliable proxy for the status of minorities in a country, which is fostered via policies including defining minorities, which itself is a rate practice globally," she said when The Indian Express reached out to her. Of 35 OECD countries studied, 25 were from Europe, and the share of majority religious denominations has decreased by 29 per cent in these countries. Population Foundation of India, a non-profit that works on addressing population issues through research and advocacy, cautioned that the PM-EAC report should not be interpreted incorrectly to incite fear or discrimination against any community. Poonam Muttreja, the non-profit executive director, said the media should not portray the data selectively to only highlight increase in Muslim population, misrepresenting broader demographic trends. It said the total fertility rate (TFR) among all religious groups was declining and the highest decrease in TFR from 2005-06 to 2019-21 was observed among Muslims, a 1 percentage point drop in their TFR. Hindus saw a 0.7 percentage point drop. An award-winning journalist with 14 years of experience, Nikhil Ghanekar is an Assistant Editor with the National Bureau [Government] of The Indian Express in New Delhi.



He primarily covers environmental policy matters which involve tracking key decisions and inner workings of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. He also covers the functioning of the National Green Tribunal and writes on the impact of environmental policies on wildlife conservation, forestry issues and climate change. Nikhil joined The Indian Express in 2024. Originally from Mumbai, he has worked in publications such as Tehelka, Hindustan Times, DNA Newspaper, News18 and Indiaspend. In the past 14 years, he has written on a range of subjects such as sports, current affairs, civic issues, city centric environment news, central government policies and politics.

Flight carrying 250 people, many from India, grounded in Jamaica

GNS News Agency, May 13

Jamaica, flight grounded in Jamaica, Kingston, Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal, Indian express news, current affairs Last December, a Nicaragua-bound plane carrying Indians, was grounded in France and later sent back to India over suspicion of human trafficking. A chartered flight from Dubai with several Indian passengers, including around 75 from Gujarat, was sent back from Jamaican capital Kingston, as local authorities were not satisfied with passengers' documents.

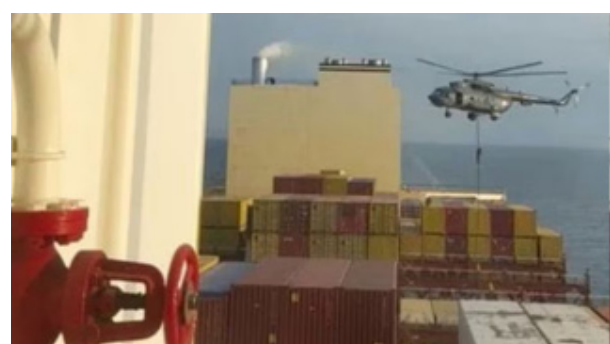
The official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal, said the flight left Kingston on May 7 for Dubai. "We understand that a Germany-registered chartered flight with Indians on board landed in Kingston from Dubai on May 2 for tourism. They had prior hotel bookings," Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing. "The authorities were not satisfied with them being tourists. The flight and passengers were ordered to return to place of origin, Dubai. The passengers left Kingston on May 7," he said. A report in Jamaica Observer said the flight had 253 foreigners and they were refused entry by immigration officials in view of security concerns. Jamaica's Ministry of National Security stated that local authorities routinely screen passenger flights for security threats, and possible breaches of law and/or regulations, the media outlet reported. An officer of Gujarat Crime Investigation Department (CID) said the flight, now under investigation of central agencies, "had on board around 75 Gujaratis on a tourist visa"... several from Punjab are also suspected to be on board". It is suspected these tourists were planning to illegally immigrate to the US through the Mexico border. Last December, a Nicaragua-bound plane carrying Indians, was grounded in France and later sent back to India over suspicion of human trafficking. The Gujarat CID had booked 14 agents on the charge of human trafficking for trying to send over 60 people from the state to the US illegally.

After almost a month, 5 of 17 Indians on board ship captured by Iran released

GNS News Agency, May 13

Almost a month after Iranian commandos seized an Israeli-affiliated container ship carrying 17 Indian crew members, 5 of them have been released and departed from Iran. The Indian Embassy in Tehran, via a social media post late on Friday, said: "5 of the Indian sailors on MSC Aries have been released and departed from Iran today evening. We appreciate the Iranian authorities for their close coordination with the Embassy and Indian Consulate in Bandar Abbas." The ship's capture came amid tensions between Israel and Iran, which escalated following an Israeli airstrike on April 1 on the Iranian embassy in Damascus, killing 16 people, including senior officers of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. 5 of the Indian sailors on MSC Aries have been released and departed from Iran today evening. We appreciate the Iranian authorities for their close coordination with the Embassy and Indian Consulate in Bandar Abbas.

The ship is associated with London-based Zodiac Maritime. Zodiac Maritime is part of Israeli billionaire Eyal Ofer's Zodiac Group. Geneva-based MSC later acknowledged the seizure and said a total of 25 crew members were aboard the vessel. Earlier, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had dialled his Iranian counterpart H Amir Abdollahian and demanded the release of all the 17 Indian crew members. "Discussed the current situation in



the region. Stressed the importance of avoiding escalation, exercising restraint, and returning to diplomacy. Agreed to remain in touch," Jaishankar had tweeted. In April, one of the Indian sailors on board was allowed to speak to his brother after the Indian Embassy had intervened. Michael, the brother of one of the sailors, had told The Indian Express, "He spoke for about 30 minutes yesterday (Monday) evening, reportedly after Indian officials visited the Iranian officers guarding the ship. They seem to have made a request to allow the crew to use phones and laptops for an hour every day. They were in custody and not allowed to use any communication equipment."

Foreign Secy Kwatra meets Sheikh Hasina, discusses bilateral ties in key areas



GNS News Agency, May 13

On his two-day trip to Dhaka, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra met Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other top leaders and reviewed New Delhi's bilateral ties in areas such as security, water, trade and investment, power and energy, defence, connectivity and sub-regional cooperation.

In the first official visit of a high-level official to Bangladesh after the formation of the new government in January 2024, Kwatra also met Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud and his counterpart Masud Bin Momen. The Ministry of External Affairs said, in a statement, that Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra went for an

official visit to Bangladesh on May 8 and 9. This was the first official visit to Bangladesh after the formation of the new government in January 2024. "Bangladesh is India's leading development partner and its largest trade partner in the region. The Foreign Secretary's visit is expected to further strengthen bilateral ties and impart momentum to co-operation in diverse areas. He reviewed the wide-ranging bilateral relationship including political and security, water, trade and investment, power and energy, defence, connectivity and sub-regional cooperation," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement. A statement from Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry said the two foreign secretaries' discussions "focused on bilateral issues, regional cooperation and avenues for future collaboration." "Kwatra and Momen expressed optimism about prospects for furthering bilateral cooperation to address shared challenges and capitalise on emerging opportunities," it said. According to the Bangladesh foreign office, the two top officials also discussed, among other issues, cooperation in the areas of green energy, digital economy and space technology. "Foreign Secretary Masud particularly emphasised on power sector co-operation, connectivity, enhancing Bangladesh's export to India, cooperation in regional and international platforms and support for Rohingya repatriation," the statement said.

Massive protest erupts in POK over unjust Pakistan taxes, arrest of activists



GNS News Agency, May 13

Protests have erupted in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir over unjust taxes imposed by the Pakistan administration and arrests of activists. Additional forces were deployed by the Pakistan government to crush the protest planned for May 11, but people took to the streets in anger after the arrest of 70 activists. People in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir vented out their anger against the Pakistan government on the streets on Friday. Section 144 was imposed and tear gas shells were lobbed to crush the protests. Massive protests broke out in Dadyal tehsil of Mirpur district, Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) on Friday (May 10) over unjust taxes and the arrest of dozens of activists. A protest was planned for Saturday (May 11) over the Pakistan-imposed taxes and rising prices, but the deployment of additional forces and arrests of 70 activists angered people, and they took to the streets on Friday itself. The protesters reportedly pelted stones at the security personnel and clashed with them.

The Pakistani administration had tried to crush the protests planned for May 11 by deploying additional troops from the Pakistan Rangers and Frontier Corps and with the arrest of the activists. Seventy activists have been detained by police to prevent a 'long march' announced

by the Jammu and Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee, reported The Dawn. The police also fired teargas shells to disperse the protesting crowd, some of which also landed in a nearby school and injured several girls, according to the DAWN report. The Jammu and Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee had planned a general strike and transport strike on Friday to press the Pakistani government to comply with an agreement reached between the two in February this year. The government in Islamabad failed to fulfil the promises of the agreement, resulting in the protests. Currently, personnel from the Front Corps, Rangers, and Quick Response Force (QRF) of Punjab Province are on the streets of the area, reported news agency ANI.

In the wee hours of Thursday, police in Muzaffarabad (administrative centre of POK) carried out raids on the home of a trader leader Shaukat Nawaz Mir, along with the homes of several others of the action committee. The police detained eight committee members, including two student leaders, reported DAWN. Political activist Amjad Ayub Mirza, speaking to ANI, condemned the incident, emphasising that violence against peaceful protesters in POK is intolerable. "After the police shelled in Dadyal Mirpur, there has been a widespread reaction with people retaliating by physically confronting police, Srinagar-based journalist Sajid Yousuf Shah posted on X. Similar protests over high electricity charges started in the Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) earlier in August 2023, and spread like a wildfire across the Islamic Republic. While some cities and towns saw the protests taking a violent turn, a call for civil disobedience went viral on social media. Pakistanis have been reeling under back-breaking inflation, worsened by the stringent conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund while approving a \$3-billion financial assistance package. The increase in electricity charges added to the problems, and people in Pakistan have been forced to take to the streets.

Canadian spy agency accuses India of espionage, interference in Canada in 2023



GNS News Agency, May 13

Canada's spy agency, CSIS, accused India, China, Russia and Iran of meddling and espionage in Canada and in other Western countries in 2023. Its report also mentions cyberattacks by pro-India "actors" after deterioration in Canada-India ties last year. Canada's spy agency said India was continued its "interference and espionage" in the North American country in 2023. Canada's spy agency said India was involved in "hostile foreign interference and espionage activities" in the North American country. This was revealed by the Canadian spy agency, Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), in a public report for 2023 that was issued this week.

The report counts India, China, Russia and Iran among "major perpetrators of foreign interference and espionage" in both Canada and other Western countries. The Canadian spy agency's report says that in 2023, these countries and their intelligence services "continued to engage in a variety of hostile foreign interference and espionage activities to advance their objectives and interests". The CSIS Act defines "foreign-influenced activities" as those "detrimental to the interests of Canada and clandestine or deceptive, or involve a threat to any person". These actions, known as foreign interference, usually serve another country's interests at Canada's expense.

The Canadian spy agency's report also talks about cyber activities against Canada by pro-India actors after a dip in Canada-India ties. It, however, clarifies that the

Indian government had no role in them. "Following the deterioration in the bilateral relations between Canada and India, low-sophistication cyber activities against Canada by India-aligned non-state cyber actors were observed. There is no indication that the Government of India was responsible for these cyber incidents," says the CSIS report. In September 2023, Prime Minister (PM) Justin Trudeau announced to the House of Commons that Canada's security agencies were pursuing credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the Government of India and the killing of a Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, in Surrey, British Columbia, in early June. The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations on September 18 of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020.

Before the PM's statement in September, Director Vigneault and National Security Intelligence Advisor Jody Thomas went to India to talk about the issue with Indian officials. Director Vigneault said that Canada and its friends want the Government of India to be responsible for its possible role in the murder of a Canadian citizen on Canadian land, in response to the serious accusations. "There are credible reasons to believe that agents of the government of India were involved in the killing of a Canadian on Canadian soil," said Trudeau, referring to Nijjar as a 'Canadian', who was included in the list of designated terrorists by India. In November, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) revealed a legal document accusing a person named Nikhil Gupta of planning a murder-for-hire plot with a government official from India. The target of the alleged plot was a person who holds citizenship from both the US and Canada and lives in New York. The Canadian spy agency's report also talks about the alleged interference by India during the 2019 and 2021 elections. "In January 2024, the Public Enquiry on Foreign Interference requested that the Government of Canada's collection and production of documents include information and documents relating to alleged interference by India during the 2019 and 2021 elections," said the report.

US plans faster rejections for some asylum seekers. But is it a big deal?

GNS News Agency, May 13

The US Department of Homeland Security has announced a new asylum policy that plans quicker rejections for some asylum seekers caught on the Mexico-US border. The move by the Biden administration comes amid immigration becoming a key election issue. How significant is the US immigration policy change? The US Department of Homeland Security under President Joe Biden announced a new asylum policy, targeting quicker rejections for asylum seekers caught illegally crossing the US-Mexico border if they have a criminal background or are a risk to national security. Biden, known for his compassionate approach towards illegal immigrants, has tightened his stance amid rising voter concerns about immigration. This is a limited move by the Biden administration to cut down on the illegal immigrants crossing the US border, reported Reuters. Immigration has emerged as a central issue in the 2024 presidential campaign, which is widely expected to be a Biden-Trump rematch, and each man is seeking to use the border problems to his own political advantage. Biden has not worked to deter illegal immigrants. Donald Trump, who is against illegal crossings, has said that Biden came to the US-Mexico border just to see the largest number of migrants crossing.

In 2023, the Biden administration is said to have facilitated overnight flights for the entry of 320,000 migrants, in a bid to reduce the number of crossings at the border. Billionaire businessman Elon Musk shared a Daily Mail report on the transfer of thousands of migrants and termed it "importing voters and creating a national security threat". He warned that the groundwork was being done "far worse than the 9/11 attacks". Musk was referring to the September 2001 terror attack by al-Qaida, in which nearly 3,000 people were killed. However, under the proposed regulation, asylum officers would have the authority to deny claims from migrants with serious criminal convictions, ties to terrorism, or posing other public safety risks. This process, according to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), could happen within days in-



stead of the lengthy years it currently takes. The measure is expected to affect a limited number of asylum seekers, potentially applying to thousands annually, a fraction of the one million caught crossing illegally from October 2023 to March 2024, according to Reuters. "We don't think that the rule will apply to large numbers of people, but it will apply to the people that we are most concerned about," said a DHS official.

President Joe Biden, known for his more compassionate approach to border security compared to his predecessor Donald Trump, has recently tightened his stance amid rising voter concerns about immigration. While Trump, Biden's Republican challenger in the upcoming presidential election to be held in November, has criticised the administration for reversing some strict border policies, Biden has not yet taken executive action to block asylum seekers at the border, although the option has been under consideration. The proposed regulation to expedite denials of asylum seekers considered criminal or security threats will be released for public comment on Monday, with plans for finalisation this year, stated a DHS official. Additionally, US asylum officers will now assess during initial screenings whether asylum seekers could have sought safety in other parts of their home country instead of journeying to the US.

UN General Assembly to back Palestine statehood. Does it mean anything?

GNS News Agency, May 13

The world has been watching the war between Israel and the Palestinian terror group Hamas for seven months now. Around 34,000 Palestinians have lost their lives in the war that seems to have no end. Israel is capturing Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. People are evacuating buildings and even hospitals there. Amid this, thousands of kilometres away, there's something going Palestine's way. On Friday (May 10), the United Nations might help the people in Palestine by accepting Palestine's membership as the 194th UN member nation. Is this just a symbolic move or is it in any way going to help alleviate the sufferings of the people in the Palestinian territories of Gaza and the West Bank?

Israel's offensive in Hamas-controlled Gaza began after the terrorist group infiltrated into the Jewish country on October 7 last year and massacred a thousand people and took hundreds hostage. Israel started pounding Gaza and later started a ground offensive in the Palestinian territory. It is seven months, and the war refuses to end. Amid this ongoing war, the global community has refused to remain a silent bystander, and it is protesting actively to support the people of Palestine. From campus protests to UN intervention, all efforts are being made to support the people of Palestine. On May 10, the United Nations might help the people in Palestine by accepting Palestine's membership as the 194th UN member nation. The UN General Assembly is not shying away from helping Palestinians as it plans to recognise Palestinian statehood and send the application to the UN Security Council to "reconsider the matter favourably", according to Reuters. Palestinians have been seeking full UN membership for decades now and this would lead to making Palestinian statehood claims valid.

"We sincerely hope after 12 years since we changed our status to an observer state, that the Security Council will elevate itself to implementing the global consensus



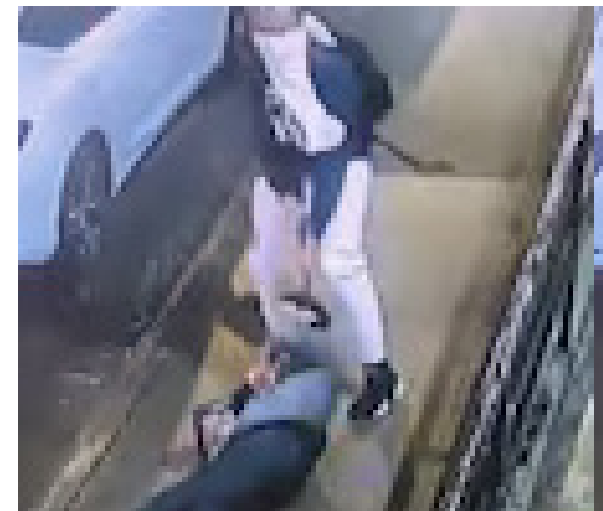
on the two-state solution by admitting the state of Palestine for full membership," said the Palestinian envoy to the UN, Riyad Mansour, reported The Washington Post. But full statehood at the UN might not come as easily as it sounds. The US has already vetoed Palestine's claim in the 15-member UN Security Council (UNSC), reported The New York Times. The ultimate veto power remains with the US and the other four permanent members of the UNSC: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom. "It remains the US view that the path toward statehood for the Palestinian people is through direct negotiations", said the US mission to the UN. The US even cuts funds for UN organisation that grant full membership to "internationally recognised attributes." The vote by the General Assembly might not be able to give Palestine an actual membership, but it will show global support for the Palestinian people. But, the deciding factor will be the approval of the Security Council first and then the General Assembly. Even if the UNSC vetoes the move for full statehood for Palestine, the vote by the United Nations General Assembly will bring some benefits to the Palestinians. From September 2024, Palestinian representatives will get a seat with other UN members in the Assembly Hall, but Palestine will still not be allowed to vote.

Chilling video shows US woman choked with belt, dragged behind car and raped

GNS News Agency, May 13

The attack, which was caught on surveillance cameras, showed the suspect approach the woman from behind before throwing a belt around her neck, pulling her to the ground with it. He then dragged her behind two cars and sexually assaulted her. The suspect threw his belt around the woman's neck to choke her before dragging her behind a car. A man attacked a woman in New York City, using a belt to lasso her neck and drag her between two cars before sexually assaulting her. The incident was caught on surveillance cameras.

The man, whose identity remains unknown, attacked the woman in the city's Bronx borough around 3 am on May 1, police said. The 45-year-old woman was walking along a sidewalk when the assailant approached her from behind. Surveillance footage depicts the attacker, his face obscured by a white cloth, stealthily trailing the woman. Suddenly, he ensnared her neck with a belt, forcibly pulling her to the ground. The victim, seen struggling to free herself from the belt, was dragged down the sidewalk by the assailant. As the woman appeared to black out, the attacker dragged her between two cars where he raped her while she was unconscious. The man then fled the scene and is still being sought by police. The survivor was taken to NYC Health & Hospitals/Lincoln for treatment and is in stable condition. According to reports, the



suspect had just had a brief conversation with the woman before he attacked her. The NYPD described the man as having a medium complexion, standing 5 feet 9 inches tall, wearing a black sweatshirt with white lettering that reads "GAP," white sweatpants and black-red-white sneakers.

Maldives says India has withdrawn all its troops ahead of May 10 deadline

GNS News Agency, May 13

India has withdrawn all its troops from the Maldives ahead of the May 10 deadline set by President Mohamed Muizzu, a Maldivian presidential office spokesperson said. Muizzu, widely seen as a pro-China leader, had set May 10 as the deadline for the withdrawal of the Indian soldiers from his country. Repatriation of some 90 Indian military personnel stationed in the island nation was a key pledge of Muizzu during his presidential campaign last year. Heena Waleed, the President's Office chief spokesperson told Sun.mv news portal that the last batch of Indian soldiers stationed in the country had left. However, she did not give the exact number of how many Indian soldiers had been repatriated. She, however, said that details about the number of soldiers stationed would be disclosed later.

The Indian troops had been stationed in the Maldives to operate and maintain two helicopters and Dornier aircraft India gifted to the island nation earlier. India and the Maldives had agreed to withdraw the remaining Indian troops before May 10. The Maldives government earlier said there were 89 Indian soldiers stationed in the island nation, citing official documents. India began withdrawing its personnel with the first batch of 25 soldiers on March 12, at the request of the Mohamed Muizzu government. Earlier, the Maldives government announced that 51 of these soldiers were repatriated to



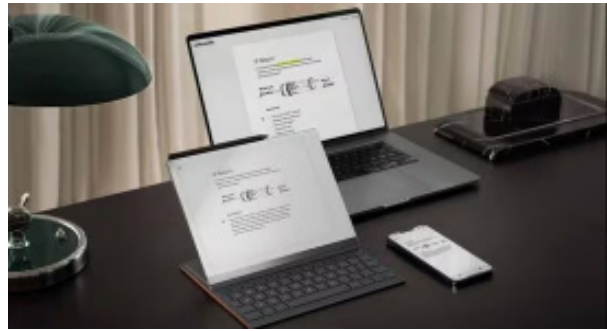
India on Monday. The announcement of the withdrawal of all Indian troops from the Maldives came against the backdrop of Maldivian Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer's visit to India. He met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday and had "extensive discussions" on bilateral relations and regional security issues. Relations between the two countries were strained after Muizzu insisted on the withdrawal of Indian military personnel operating three military platforms in the island nation. At a media briefing in Delhi on Thursday, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the first and the second batches of Indian troops have returned to India and "now a deputation of competent Indian technical personnel has taken place" to operate the three Indian aviation platforms.

Anti-acidity medications linked to a high risk of migraine, says expert

New Delhi: Taking acid reflux medications may raise the risk of migraines in individuals already suffering from the debilitating headache, according to a top neurologist. Dr Sudhir Kumar from Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, said this, citing a recent study published in the journal Neurology Clinical Practice. Led by researchers from the University of Maryland in the US, the study showed that acid-reducing drugs, including proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) such as omeprazole and esomeprazole, his-

tamine H2-receptor antagonists (H2RAs), H2 blockers such as cimetidine and famotidine, and antacid supplements, are linked to a higher risk of migraines and other severe headaches than people who do not take these medications. "In people who are suffering from migraines or other severe headaches, and are taking PPIs or H2RAs for treating gastrointestinal symptoms, it may be worthwhile stopping these medicines to see if their headaches reduce," the doctor wrote in a post on X.

ReMarkable 2 is a paper saving writing tab we think we need, but do we really?



that goes in the ReMarkable 2's favour is the clean, and quick software that awaits you and your thoughts. Press the power key and the home screen is loaded with your files as you left them, in mere seconds. Apart from documents already created, it's quite easy to get started with new notebooks too. Handy in a meeting, or if a thought springs to mind almost unexpectedly.

But this is also where the focused (or limited, depends on your perspective) approach becomes quite apparent. First off, you can set up Google Drive and Microsoft OneDrive cloud storage with the ReMarkable 2, and that means quickly accessing files stored there in a desktop-esque file manager interface. However, the ReMarkable 2 only really supports the PDF or EPUB file formats. It should be fine if you intend to solely use the ReMarkable 2 as your document device (create, edit and share files, documents etc.). Or if you're mostly working with PDF or EPUBs. If there is use of typical document formats such as .doc, .docx or .pages in your workflow, you must use the Read on Remarkable extension for a web browser on your computing device, or the ReMarkable app on your phone, tablet, PC or Mac, to send files to the ReMarkable 2 tablet in the correct, converted format. Sending files and documents to the ReMarkable 2 is as simple as it gets. However, it was often the case that documents created on the writing tab (such as this very review) when sent as a PDF and converted to a Microsoft Word document, ends up with formatting that takes significant effort to put back in place.

While it is understandable that ReMarkable cannot use proprietary file formats, it causes some formatting and compatibility (often the case with the person receiving it; PDFs can cause agony, if you wish to edit further) friction when sending documents to and from the ReMarkable 2 tablet. At the cloud storage aspect is sorted, not just with ReMarkable's own cloud space but also Google Drive and Microsoft OneDrive. Handwritten notes get converted to typed text with accuracy, with even some fairly bad handwriting. I am not exactly sure it'll be able to decode a doctor's prescription though! The stylus elicits the soft of feeling a typical pen does when writing on paper – it's the friction that is key. It can handle different pressures, and on-screen in every note you're working on, are a plethora of options for pen style, thickness and colour (limited options here -- black, grey, white, blue and red). Unlike typical stylus accessories that tend to be top heavy (because of the battery in the upper half of the chamber, as you hold it), these stylus pens are weighted equally.

Inside the ReMarkable 2 is a 3,000mAh battery, and I noticed that about two hours of typing documents drains just 1% of the battery. That's pointing to hours and hours of writing and jotting notes, before this needs charging again. For all the focus and almost successfully addressing a very specific need of distraction free writing, the ReMarkable 2 tablet does require you to part with a lot of money. That's upwards of ₹43,999 if you choose the tablet and stylus option. The Type Folio itself costs around ₹19,499. The tech underliers, such as the display, have proved to be successful attempts at a digital replacement of a notebook. But this price tag will likely make a lot of potential buyers second guess. This is when you must begin to wonder how bad your distraction problem really is. Can you get through working on a document or put your notes or presentation slides in place quickly enough without switching apps to browse social media, catch up on news or simply get the latest football scores? The answer, and your willpower, will define whether a ReMarkable 2 tablet is a must have, niche yet focused piece of tech. It doesn't replace your laptop, phone or tablet, in entirety (or even close to it). Just a specific purpose, the weightage of which is subjective for each user. You have to make a case for it. In your workflow. In your routine. In your life.

Is micromanagement a red flag in workplaces?



Looping in the boss on pertinent emails, consultations, and discussions is important in most organisations. But what happens when you are expected to update the boss about every single task? For instance, this is what a customer onboarding professional has been experiencing in her current job: "It is mandatory to update the boss for time management for every task assigned. For example, why did a task that could be done in 10 minutes take 11? Looping in a manager in all emails while communicating with colleagues and clients is another way it is practiced in my workplace. It hampers my work considering it gives the impression that my boss doesn't trust my capabilities," the Delhi-based woman expressed. Divya Jha, senior director of human resources, Johnson Controls India, described micromanagement as a pervasive management style that can be simply characterised by excessive control and close supervision of the subordinates' work.

Micromanagement manifests in various forms, but is typically rooted in a manager's lack of trust toward team members, noted Mili Panicker, director- HR and people operations at WebEngage, Mumbai. "It inadvertently turns into a vicious cycle, leading to excessive control and a lack of trust in employees, ultimately harming individual well-being and overall team productivity," said Panicker. However, Shalini Dasgupta, assistant manager of business development for a Bengaluru-based start-up, expressed that as a common practice in scaling start-ups, micromanagement occurs as you are always in a prolonged habit of wearing multiple hats. "It is the micro-level detailing in every department, usually stemming from the constant fear of balancing out perfection or because of deeper personal insecurities. It is a little detrimental in the long run although it might lead to great results in the short term," said Dasgupta.

Why does it happen?

Micromanagement is perhaps warranted only in some situations, such as when an employee is new, when the team is dealing with a crisis, or if an employee's performance needs significant improvement. "It is important to understand that there could be specific reasons why a manager engages in it. For instance, first-time managers may micromanage their employees to avoid any possible failures or mistakes. Some managers may lack the skill to coach or help someone do their job well. Certain managers may also adopt the same managerial style as their superiors," said Piyali Maity, clinical director, counselling operations, 1to1help, Hyderabad, Telangana.

How does micromanagement affect employees?

While managers may micromanage with good intentions to maintain control and ensure work quality, it negatively impacts morale, productivity, and mental health, underlined Ruchi Shah, chief human resources officer (CHRO), WeAce, Mumbai. "Managers may micromanage due to a lack of trust in the team, insecurity, fear of failure, anxiety, poor delegation skills, or lack of experience," shared Shah. workplace Micromanagement is perhaps warranted only in some situations, such as when an employee is new, when the team is dealing with a crisis (Source: Unsplash)

In today's evolving workplace expectations, this has increasingly been deemed counterproductive. A 2023 study by Monster found that 73 per cent of professionals consider micromanagement the leading sign of a toxic workplace or a red flag, underscoring the negative impact of micromanagement on employee well-being and organisational innovation. "Employees feel overwhelmed, stressed, and unable to use their skills under excessive

oversight," said Shah. "So, our HR portal has this system of punch in and punch out like all offices but say for example if you forget to punch in and seek attendance putting a time before your actual time, they look at the CCTV to verify your time and refuse to grant your attendance otherwise," said a Gurugram-based advertising professional.

In response, a human capital analyst at Deloitte, Bengaluru asserted that micromanagement can occur in HR just like any other department or field. "This excessive focus or extreme monitoring of employees or tasks can be a characteristic of a department, company, or just an individual superior's style of working," said the HR professional. According to this professional, one cannot generalise a field or department and provide an absolute opinion on whether HRs as a group practice micromanagement. "The fact is, HR is a people-centric role. The primary focus of HR professionals is managing and developing the organisation's workforce. These tasks include recruitment, training, performance management, employee relations, and ensuring compliance with rules and regulations. It also plays a very crucial role in fostering a positive work culture, promoting employee engagement, and facilitating communication between management and staff," said the professional. Another point of view is regarding the shift to remote or hybrid working in a post-Covid environment. "It is very evident that if a company has an HR tracking mechanism, it only calls out those employees who in fact may abuse the work-from-home scenario," said the professional. In Jha's view, the detrimental effects of micromanagement manifest on two levels: mental health and well-being, and the spirit of innovation and task efficiency. "The feeling of mistrust can lead to a feeling of being undervalued and lack of autonomy, which can have a cascading effect on their confidence and anxiety levels. The fear of admonition, and having every mistake highlighted can instill a deep-seated fear, hindering their learning curve, and growth within their roles," explained Jha. The constant scrutiny can lead micromanaged employees to experience burn-out, anxiety and low self-esteem. According to Maity, this management style can lead to a loss of autonomy in the employee; they may feel like they have lost their sense of control over work. "An employee's physical and emotional health can be impacted; they may feel stressed, anxious, and even experience burnout. All these factors eventually lead to a decline in employee productivity and performance, even causing some employees to quit," said Maity.

What can help?

Employers need to recognise that employees want autonomy, learning, support and connectedness to thrive at work. It is equally important for employers to sensitise managers, particularly first-time managers, with tools and training to manage their teams effectively without being overbearing and hurting team productivity and happiness, urged Maity. To tackle micromanagement, open communication is key, emphasised Apurva Singh Verma, head of products and service excellence, Elephant In The Room (EITHR). "Encouraging dialogues between managers and employees can promote mutual understanding and trust. Setting clear expectations and boundaries can also mitigate micromanagement tendencies," said Mumbai-based Singh Verma.

Panicker from WebEngage, which offers a hybrid work model that allows employees to work from home for three days a week and from the office for two days, said providing employees with a flexible workplace emphasises the importance of trust among team members. "Continuous feedback between the team member and manager helps them to get to know each other better so managers can provide more personalised feedback to their direct reports, thus increasing the efficacy of their feedback," said Panicker. Additionally, training supervisors on empowering leadership styles can prove to be beneficial. Seeking external help, such as consulting with psychologists can also offer valuable insights and strategies for overcoming micromanagement. "Addressing this concern at the workplace requires a concerted effort that would encourage a culture of trust and open doors of communication, promoting the mental health of employees," added Singh Verma.

Telecom department directs telcos to block 28,200 mobile phones used in cybercrimes

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed telecom operators to block more than 28,000 mobile handsets across the country due to their involvement in cybercrime. The department has also asked telcos to carry out re-verification of 20 lakh mobile connections linked to these handsets.

"DoT, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and state police have joined hands for curbing the misuse of telecom resources in cyber-crime and financial frauds. This collaborative effort aims to dismantle networks of fraudsters and protect citizens from digital threats," the Ministry of Finance said in a statement.

"Analysis carried out by MHA and state police revealed that 28,200 mobile handsets were misused in cybercrimes. The DoT further analysed and found that a staggering 20 lakh numbers were used with these mobile handsets. Subsequently, DoT issued directions to telecom service providers for pan India blocking of 28,200 mobile handsets and to carry out immediate re-verification of 20 lakh mobile connections linked to these mobile handsets and disconnect failing re-verification," the statement added. In March, the Union Minister for Communications Ashwini Vaishnaw had released the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) for coordination among various stakeholders – including the government, financial entities like banks and online platforms – to curb the misuse of telecom resources in cybercrime and financial frauds. The platform also contains information regarding



the cases detected as misuse of telecom resources. It can only be accessed by authorised stakeholders and not by the public.

In August last year, the department had mandated that dealers selling SIM cards register themselves with telecom operators in a bid to crack down on dealers engaged in issuing fraudulent SIM cards. The government has also discontinued the provision of issuing bulk connections, replacing it with a provision for businesses to obtain connections for their employees and other purposes after a thorough know-your-customer (KYC) process. In case of any illegal activity, the dealership will be terminated and blacklisted for three years. The process of verification should be done within a year, the ministry had earlier said.

Ola Electric commences deliveries of its mass-market S1 X scooters

Bengaluru: Ola Electric on Friday announced the commencement of deliveries of the all-new S1 X range in multiple cities across the country. Launched in three battery configurations – 2kWh, 3kWh, and 4kWh, the S1 X caters to users with different range requirements and marks the company's entry into the mass-market segment with prices starting from Rs. 69,999 (ex-showroom).

The affordable price points, coupled with an 8-year/80,000 km extended battery warranty at no extra cost, make the S1 X scooters one of the most attractive EV propositions available in the market currently.

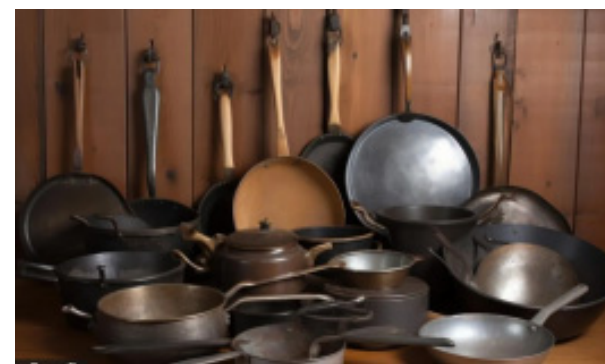
Speaking on the occasion, Anshul Khandelwal, Chief Marketing Officer, Ola Electric Technologies, said, "With S1 X, we eliminate high upfront costs as one of the key barriers affecting the adoption of EVs. Our entry into the mass-market portfolio helps us widen our target customer base, enabling an increasing number of current and potential 2W users to join India's rapidly evolving EV landscape." Ola Electric has recently announced new prices for its S1 X portfolio. Available in three battery configurations (2 kWh, 3 kWh, and 4 kWh), the scooter is priced at Rs. 69,999 (introductory price), Rs. 84,999, and Rs. 99,999, respectively. Additionally, the company also revised the prices of S1 Pro, S1 Air, and S1 X+ to Rs. 1,29,999, Rs. 1,04,999, and Rs. 84,999, respectively.

What the ICMR guidelines say about appropriate cooking methods

Alongside several guidelines for better health, including an urgency to avoid the consumption of protein supplements, ICMR also recognises the profound impact of food preparation methods on nutritional content and health outcomes. One of the guidelines emphasises the importance of adopting appropriate pre-cooking and cooking techniques. Through an intricate examination of various cooking methods and their effects on food, as well as practical advice on the safe usage of diverse cookware, these guidelines serve as a roadmap for those seeking to optimise their dietary habits while safeguarding their health. Shubha Ramesh L chief dietician at DHEE Hospitals as well as Veena V, dietician, Aster Women and Children Hospital, Whitefield, Bangalore, elaborated on this guideline that people can follow to retain the nutrients in their foods and ensure safety while cooking.

How do pre-cooking methods contribute to healthier food preparation and consumption?

Shubha says, "The ICMR highlights pre-cooking methods like soaking, blanching, and marinating to enhance the nutritional quality and safety of foods. Soaking grains and legumes, for instance, reduces phytic acid, which inhibits the absorption of minerals. Blanching vegetables before cooking helps in reducing microbial load and removing pesticide residues, preserving colour, texture, and nutrients." These methods also contribute to reducing cooking time and energy consumption, making food preparation more efficient while retaining essential nutrients that might be lost during prolonged cooking. Pre-cooking with methods like steaming or light boiling can minimise nutrient loss from water-soluble vitamins like vitamin C in vegetables, according to Veena. "Compared to direct frying or stewing, these methods help retain valuable nutrients in your food. Also, choosing food from the outlined food group ensures the necessary micro and macro nutrients, needed for the body." ICMR, diet, guideline, food These guidelines serve as a roadmap for those seeking to optimise their dietary habits while safeguarding their health. Distinct effects of various cooking methods mentioned in the guideline



Shubha explains the effects of each of the cooking methods mentioned in the guideline, on your food:

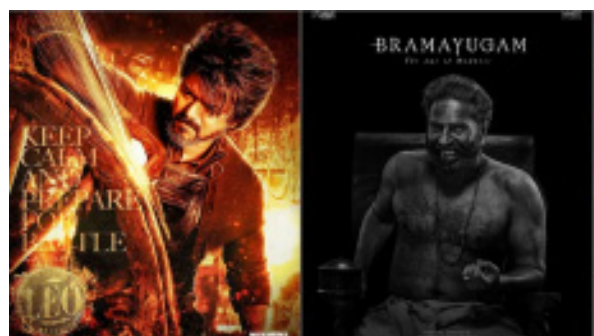
"Boiling and steaming: These help preserve water-soluble vitamins and minerals when compared to methods like frying. Steaming is particularly effective in retaining the integrity of nutrients and preventing the loss of water-soluble vitamins." Pressure cooking: Cooking in a pressure cooker helps in retaining the nutrients of food by cooking them quickly under steam pressure, reducing the time and thus preserving vitamins and minerals.

"Frying and shallow frying: Frying or shallow frying increases the fat content of food, which can affect cardiovascular health if consumed excessively. However, it can improve the taste and palatability of food

"Microwave cooking: This method preserves nutrients effectively due to short cooking times." Roasting, barbecue, and grilling: These cooking methods introduce harmful compounds like polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and advanced glycation end products (AGEs) if not done properly.

Key considerations when using different types of cookware mentioned in the DGIs in terms of cookware safety, Shubha suggest the following key considerations when using different types of cookware:

'Jailer' to 'Bramayugam', 5 South film we wish to see remade in Bollywood



GNS News Agency, May 13

With South cinema expanding its wings globally, there are many films we wish to see being remade in Hindi. In today's Wednesday Wishlist, let's have a look at movies whose remakes with Bollywood star cast will captivate the audience. In the past, Bollywood has seen many South Indian film remakes create a storm at the box office. Starting from compelling stories, innovative filmmaking, and memorable characters, South cinema has been a treasure trove. Over the years, several films from the southern region have captured the imagination of audiences across India and beyond, leaving a lasting impact on the film industry. With Bollywood often looking to remake successful regional films, here's a curated list of South Indian movies that we feel are ripe for Bollywood adaptations with popular starcast.

JAILER

The Tamil drama stars Rajinikanth in the lead as a stern yet compassionate jailer who sets out to stop a gang when they try to flee their leader. The massy drama if remade in Bollywood could potentially be a gritty and intense crime drama with elements of suspense and thriller. However, what could be interesting will be watching Sanjay Dutt stepping into the shoes of Rajinikanth while his son could be played by Siddhant Chaturvedi.

The story can revolve around the life of a tough and principled jailer who finds himself embroiled in a complex web of corruption, power struggles, and moral dilemmas within the prison system.

BRAMAYUGAM

Under the direction of Rahul Sadasivan, the Malayalam thriller reaches new heights as it gradually shifts its focus to contemplate the concept of unchecked authority and its tendency to corrupt, even those with good intentions. The horror drama with elements of local fantasy features Mammooty as the only surviving member of a crumbling, dilapidated house. If the film were to be

remade in Bollywood, one can only imagine Jaideep Ahlawat who can bring his own interpretation to the role. His ability to embody complex emotions and portray intricate characters would add layers to the narrative. Given his filmography, Jaideep could infuse the character with the depth and nuance it requires.

PUSHPA

The film with Allu Arjun in the lead is not just popular in the South. With the sequel in the works, fans are quite curious to witness the spectacle on the big screen. The success of the film lies not only in its riveting narrative but also in the stellar performance of Allu Arjun, who breathes life into the character of Pushpa Raj with his nuanced portrayal. If 'Pushpa' was to be remade in Bollywood, one cannot help but speculate about the potential star cast that could do justice to the iconic roles. While replicating Allu Arjun's charisma may seem like a daunting task, Bollywood boasts a plethora of talented actors who could rise to the occasion. Ranveer Singh is one such actor who can bring his own flair to the character. On the other hand, Rashmika Mandanna's character would suit none other than Kiara Advani, who can bring a unique charm to the role.

LEO

'Leo' directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj is said to be the Lokesh Cinematic Universe starring Thalapaty Vijay, Trisha Krishnan and Arjun Sarja in key roles. The film is about Parthiban (Vijay), a mild-mannered cafe owner in Kashmir, who fends off a gang of murderous thugs and gains attention from a drug cartel claiming he was once a part of them. Now, what will happen if the film finds its place in Bollywood? Adding his own depth and dimension to the narrative, Akshay Kumar would suit the best for the lead role as Vijay with Kareena Kapoor as Trisha and Javed Jafferi as Arjun Sarja. The dynamic trio is sure to take the storyline to new heights and, given their fanbase, the casting is a sure-shot blockbuster mantra.

KANTARA

The film by Rishab Shetty is a story set in the fictional village of Dakshina Kannada which explores the ideological conflict between humans and nature. A battle of ego swirls along the tradition and culture of the land. As discussions about the Bollywood remake of 'Kantara' continue, it will be interesting to know about the casting of the film. Ajay Devgn who has played the lead earlier in various South cinema remakes like 'Drishyam' and 'Singham', would be an ideal choice as the protagonist in 'Kantara'. The actor has the potential to captivate audiences and resonate with viewers across generations, breathing new life into this legend.

Yash Chopra was adamant about casting Manoj Bajpayee in Veer Zaara because he wasn't sure if he'd get another chance: 'I don't make films for actors like you.'

Actor Manoj Bajpayee, who will next be seen in the film Bhaiyya Ji, has opened up about the time when he had to sign films simply because he was running out of money. Manoj recalled the year 2002, when most of his movies tanked at the box-office. Ironically, the actor received National Awards for few of the films which failed. One such movie was Pinjar and Manoj said that apart from receiving the National Award for it, he also got the chance of working with Yash Chopra because of that film. In an interview with Siddharth Kannan, Manoj said, "I got a National award for Pinjar. But it did not work at the box-office. But you know what Pinjar gave me? It gave me Veer Zaara. Yash ji saw the film and he was mesmerised and he was adamant on getting me to do that role in Veer Zaara."

The actor continued, "Nahi toh Yash ji ke saath hum jaise actors ki koi jagah he nahi thi. Yash ji kehte bhi the ki 'beta, yeh ab hojaega kyunki pata nahi kab kaam karengere tere saath main tere jaise actors ke liye film nahi banata (Yash ji used to say, 'Son, this will happen now because I don't know when I'll work with you. I don't make



films for actors like you)." Manoj featured in the Yash Chopra directorial in a cameo. Manoj Bajpayee also reflected on the tough times and said, "It was a bad time. The down that I have seen, I hope nobody gets to see. When you have to do a film just because 'ab paisa khatam ho raha hai, ghar kaise chalega.' Outside people didn't know, there is nothing there in that big home."

Star movie review: Kavin shines in this pursuit of sappiness

Veteran Malayalam actor Lal plays a lovably unrealistic father in Star, who inspires his son to chase this equally unrealistic dream of becoming an actor. He bails out his son Kalai (Kavin) from difficult situations at his engineering college by faking a heart attack or claiming that his wife is critical. After every ruse, when the father and son walk out of the fix, the latter calls out the 'overacting' of the senior. In return, the dad keeps using veteran actor Sivaji Ganesan's acting as an excuse for his exaggeration. "You don't get it," he sighs. However, in case you 'get' this excess, Star will be a moving tale of following your passion. Elan would then come across as the Tamil filmmaker version of Paulo Coelho. Motivational lines such as "The universe always falls in love with a stubborn heart," will give you goosebumps everytime they appear. But if you are not in tune with the borderline melodramatic nature of the film, things would seem stretched and old school.

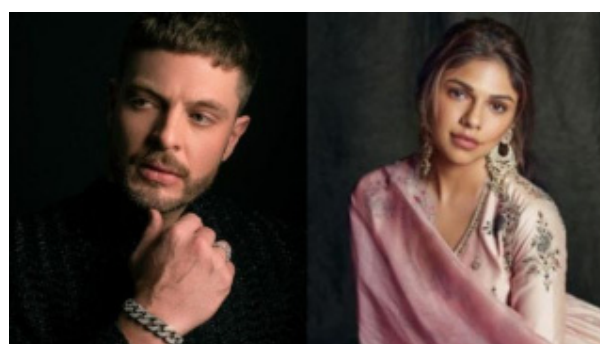
In the first part of the movie, we are transported to Gautam Menon's universe. Preity Mukhundan as Meera Malaikodi is a stand-in for Jessy from Vinnai Thaandi Varuvaaya. Meera even has a similar brother who keeps messing with our hero. Kalai, on the other hand, in another incongruous and exaggerated sequence, is shown to be the chocolate boy of the college. Even the lecturers are after him! Yet, Meera falls in love only after Kalai pulls off a dance number dressed up as a woman as the misogynistic principal bans girls from dancing. Even though the college's principal is fuming seeing Kalai's suggestive moves, he gets to finish his dance and speak about women's empowerment. Thus, Meera finally realises how Kalai is a beautiful person. While the romance is reminiscent of Gautam's Vinnai Thaandi Varuvaaya, the drama and the screenplay—or the lack of it—reminds one of director's Vaaranam Aayiram. When Meera leaves Kalai's life, he meets Surabhi (a horribly miscast Aaditi Pohankar) like Priya (Ramya) of Vaaranam Aayiram. There is even



a laughable scene at the wedding of Meera, where she thanks Surabhi ostensibly for taking care of the hero. In return, Surabhi thanks Meera! The film is all about the protagonist and thankfully Kavin is an able actor who makes things interesting.

Star only wallows in the suffering of its lead character, who misses success by a whisker. The central idea of the film is about maintaining an unflinching optimism in the face of a catastrophe. However, we fail to see his nobility given Kalai is only driven by ambition, and is aiming for fame and stardom. He often comes across as a selfish, and at times unworthy of empathy. He is named Kalai (Art), but he aspires to become a star on par with the reigning superstars of Tamil cinema, who are not often associated with the term. The only scene that explores the idea of art is when Kalai's father talks about it being a tool to propagate great ideas. Even that's limiting. Till the end, his drive to become a star is only depicted as a childhood fixation and left unexplored. Maybe in life dreams are irrational, but a film like Star, which has nothing going on other than the journey of its hero, has the onus of fleshing him out. Elan is more interested in making us have those goosebumps. He often manipulates us to tear up; using Yuvan Shankar Raja's old track at a particular moment is one such attempt.

Heeramandi actor Jason Shah on polarised reviews of Sanjay Leela Bhansali show: 'We are used to being applauded but...'



Since its debut, Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar has received extremely polarised reactions — while many have loved its maximalist and larger-than-life canvas, it has also received criticism for aestheticising the pain of women and certain errors in the way that era has been portrayed.

Actor Jason Shah, who portrayed the villainous British cop Alistair Cartwright, has addressed the criticism directed towards certain actors. Sharmin Segal, for instance, has faced backlash for her portrayal of Alamzeb, by certain section of audience. According to Jason, it's valuable to heed differing opinions about your work. In an

interview with DNA, Jason said, "I think it's a good thing to listen when someone has a different opinion about your work. We should listen to those more rather than just the flattery or the praise because there we can find places that we can explore something that we didn't try. Maybe that person does have an angle that we have not seen due to our lack of perspective."

Jason said that he is receptive to all the feedback coming his way. However, he said that he pays more attention to 'constructive criticism' rather than people who say 'you have done a great job'. He said, "You need to be aware of someone who has a different angle. I want to ask them why they think like that." The actor continued, "We are used to being applauded and told 'bhai kya shot diya (what a shot you have given)'. But I want to listen to the guy who tells me 'thoda aise kar leta toh aur mazaa aata (had you done it differently, it would have been better)'. When you listen to that opinion, you improve and something great can come up." Since Heeramandi came out on Netflix, Sharmin has received a lot of criticism. She also turned off comments on her Instagram because of the online trolling. Heeramandi stars Manisha Koirala, Sonakshi Sinha and Aditi Rao Hydari among others in pivotal roles.

Varun Dhawan shoots with Gurdip Punjj for Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari.



Actor Gurdip Punjj, known for her roles in several popular television shows, recently shared a series of photos, offering fans a sneak peek into her latest collaboration with Varun Dhawan on the upcoming film Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari.

The Sanjivani-fame actress, on Thursday, took to her Instagram account to share a couple of pictures with the actor. Apart from Varun, Gurdip's husband, Arjun Punjj, and her son and daughter also accompanied them inside what looked like a jewelry store. Gurdip and her family took photos with Varun and the director of Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari, Shashank Khaitan. The actor also wrote a caption where she shared her thoughts about working on the movie. She wrote, "It was a pleasure working with you both, @varundvn @shashankkhaitan you both not only superstars but superhumans... good luck for the film #sunnysanskarikitulsikumari #dharmaproductions #lovedshootingthem."

Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari is written and directed by Shashank Khaitan. The film features an ensemble cast, including Varun Dhawan and Janhvi Kapoor in leading roles, alongside Sanya Malhotra, Rohit Saraf, Maniesh Paul, and Akshay Oberoi. Produced by Hiroo Yash Johar, Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta, and Shashank Khaitan, the movie is slated to hit theaters on April 18, 2025.

Varun will also be seen in the upcoming action thriller Baby John. Baby John is directed by A Kaleeswaran. Atlee is presenting the film in association with Jio Studios and Cine1 Studios. He will also be seen in the Indian adaptation of the Hollywood series 'Citadel' opposite actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu. It is an Indian adaptation of the Russo Brothers' series of the same name. Priyanka Chopra and Richard Madden headlined the international version. The release date of the Indian version of Citadel is awaited. Raj and DK have created the Indian version.

Krishnamma movie review: Satyadev starrer is partly entertaining

The story of Krishnamma happens entirely in Vijayawada, which is on the banks of the Krishna river, hence the title. Bhadra (Satyadev), Shiva (Krishnateja) and Koti (Meesala Lakshman) are orphans and inseparable friends from childhood. Their only desire is to have a family of their own. Bhadra and Koti lead a life of petty crimes. Shiva runs a printing press and urges his friends to lead a normal life.

When Shiva falls in love with Meena (Athira Raj) and they decide to marry, it gives the trio a chance at a family finally. They look to mend their ways and lead a normal life. A sudden health emergency forces them to look for funds and they invariably turn to crime again for some quick bucks. Their smuggling operation fails and they are caught by the police. The friends decide to confess to the crime. But the police book them for a rape and murder case instead of smuggling. Who is the victim of the heinous crime and what happens to the friends forms the rest of the story.

The story takes time to pick up. It gains momentum only after the major twist happens. The second half moves



at a quick pace with enough emotionally charged scenes. Satyadev worked hard to bring authenticity to the happenings on screen. Athira Raj impresses in her debut performance. Archana had a brief role. Meesala Lakshman and Raghu Kunche also deliver the goods. Debutant writer-director VV Gopalakrishna takes an old story and works hard to bring in rustic authenticity. He succeeds only partly.

Selena Gomez, Benny Blanco post loved-up picture after Justin & Hailey announce pregnancy

Los Angeles: Following Justin Bieber's announcement about expecting his first child with wife Hailey, actress-singer Selena Gomez, who parted ways with the 'Baby' hitmaker in 2018, shared romantic pictures with her partner Benny Blanco. Taking to Instagram stories, Selena shared two new pictures with Blanco.

The first snap, in black and white, showed their intertwined hands resting under a blanket. Additionally, Selena posted a group picture featuring Blanco alongside her 'Only Murders in the Building' co-stars Martin Freeman and Steve Martin. She left both images captionless, reports aceshowbiz.com. Selena updated her social media account with photos of her relationship with Blanco shortly after the pregnancy announcement from her ex-boyfriend Justin and his wife Hailey. Earlier on the same day, the Canadian pop star and the model took to their respective Instagram accounts to announce their impending parenthood. The couple revealed the news by sharing black-and-white footage of them renewing their wedding vows. In the heartfelt clip, Hailey showcased her baby bump while adorned in a white lace dress and veil.

BCCI look for new coach: Rahul Dravid can re-apply, says Jay Shah



GNS News Agency, May 13

World Cup final. Those whose IPL teams don't qualify for the play-offs will be leaving on May 24. "The team will be travelling in two batches, the first batch will travel on the 24th of this month while the rest after IPL gets over," Shah added.

The Indian board is going to discuss the 'Impact Player' rule with all stakeholders during its meeting which will happen once the T20 World Cup gets over in the West Indies. The rule has drawn heavy debate during this season of IPL especially since it reduced the all-rounders' role to a minimum. Players like Shivam Dube headed to the World Cup, didn't get a chance to bowl for Chennai Super Kings (CSK), as he was used as an Impact player by his IPL franchise. The rule as per Shah, was used as a 'test' during this season of IPL and it wasn't a permanent rule. The BCCI is ready to take a call for next season after consulting all stakeholders going ahead. "Impact player was used as a test (in this IPL), it was done so that two Indian players could get a chance. It's not permanent, we will have a discussion with the Indian team captain, players, franchises, coaches and then take a call on it. The meeting can happen once the World Cup is over," Shah explained.

The Indian board is also going to discuss the matter of retention of players whenever they meet IPL owners next. Meanwhile, Indian team coach Dravid, Head of NCA-VVS Laxman, chairman of selection committee Ajit Agarkar and the Indian board's general manager of cricket operations, Abey Kuruvilla have recommended few changes in domestic cricket which the board is scheduled to implement. The board is definitely considering a relook at the timing of Ranji Trophy games played in winters that saw many games ending without any results due to fog. "We have received suggestions for domestic cricket and we will be implementing them. Like the western in parts of North Zone needs to be considered," Shah added.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah announced that the Indian board will be inviting applications for its men's team head coach soon. Current Indian team coach Rahul Dravid's tenure as head coach ends post the T20 World Cup and the BCCI will begin to hunt for a new coach in coming days. Shah stated that current coach Dravid can re-apply if he wants to.

"Rahul Dravid's tenure is till the World Cup, we will be inviting applications soon for the post of head coach and if Dravid wants to re-apply, he can do it. We have decided the criteria. Thereafter we will invite applications for support staff in consultation with the Cricket Advisory Committee. The coach's tenure will be of three years," Shah said during an interaction in Mumbai on Thursday. The Indian team will be travelling for the T20 World Cup to West Indies and USA next month in two batches, Shah informed. ICC mens CWC 2023, world cup FINAL, India Vs Australia Final, Ind vs Aus WC Final, WC 2023 Final, Narendra Modi stadium, Virat Kohli, Travis Head, Pat Cummins, Rohit Sharma, Mohammed Shami, Adam Zampa, Narendra Modi, WC 2023 winner, WC 2023 top performers, Indian Express News Team India head coach Rahul Dravid with captain Rohit Sharma after ODI

Disquiet in LSG over not-so-happy chat in public between owner Sanjiv Goenka and captain KL Rahul after crushing defeat

GNS News Agency, May 13

THERE IS disquiet in the Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) camp after visuals of team owner Sanjiv Goenka in what appeared to be a not-so-happy animated discussion with captain KL Rahul did the rounds of social media following the team's 10-wicket thrashing by Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the IPL match. Speculation was rife about Rahul's long-term future with the Lucknow franchise that is now placed sixth in the 10-team points table and has two more league matches to play this season. After the game, as cameras on the ground zoomed in on Goenka and Rahul, commentator and former South Africa captain Graeme Smith suggested that the "emotions are all over". "You always feel that these conversations should happen behind closed doors. There are so many cameras around, they miss nothing. Rahul is not gonna go and do press-conferences and probably potentially explain what is being discussed here," Smith said. The Indian Express understands that much of the talk between the owner and the captain centred around LSG's approach with the bat. On the high scoring Hyderabad ground, LSG managed only 165/4 in 20 overs. In response, SRH openers Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma overhauled the target in just 9.4 overs. While Head and Abhishek went at a strike rate of 296.66 and 267.85 respectively, Rahul went at 87.87.

IPL 2024: KL Rahul on SRH chase vs LSG KL Rahul (c) of Lucknow Super Giants during match 57 of the Indian Premier League season 17 (IPL 2024) between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Lucknow Super Giants held at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Hyderabad on



the 8th May 2024. (Sportspics) A couple of members from the LSG travelling party said the owners questioned the team's style of play and pointed out that the intent was missing. To make it worse, the heavy defeat shrunk LSG's net run-rate and this meant that their fate in the tournament would now depend on the results of the other games. A day after the controversy, despite the heavy atmosphere in the team, it was business as usual. In formal team meetings, it is learnt that Rahul went about his routine as usual. But behind closed doors, there were conversations about Rahul's association with LSG going forward. After acquiring the franchise by paying a record sum of Rs 7,090 crore in 2021, LSG picked Rahul in a pre-auction deal for Rs 17 crore. The team, under Rahul, had finished third in 2022 and 2023. Goenka, during his time as owner of the Rising Pune Supergiants (now defunct), had removed MS Dhoni as captain and replaced him with Steve Smith after the team finished seventh in 2016.

The Non-glamour of an Olympic champion: Neeraj Chopra's movement map for 2-3 months was between hostel, dining hall and training area

GNS News Agency, May 13

It's not just fans and followers of athletics in India. The anticipation for Neeraj Chopra to cross the 90m mark is entering international territory. In the pre-event press conference on Thursday, before the Diamond League meet in Doha, fellow Olympic and World Champion Miltiadis Tentoglou made a passing remark when asked if he has a dream number that he'd like to register in long jump one day: "Before I answer that, first of all, I will be very happy if Neeraj throws 90m tomorrow, truly happy," Neeraj smiled. The Olympic champion from India has never denied that 90m is a magical number in men's javelin throw that he hopes to cross one day. In 2022, he came within 6cm of it. Imagine. Six centimeters. That discussion is once again front and center as he gets ready for the title defence in Paris by opening his season with the Doha Diamond League. In an ideal world, 90m shouldn't matter as long as he keeps winning competitions with the best throw on the day. But it has now been built up to such mythical proportions that it's easy to imagine that he would want to get it out of the way quickly.

"People have been asking me this question since 2018 when I threw 88.06 at the Asian Games," Neeraj said on Thursday in Doha. "A lot of things happened after that, my elbow injury, the surgery and now I have been stuck between 88 and 90m." But I really want to break the barrier this year. Even last year, I had said that Doha is famous for 90m. But, we were not lucky due to too much headwind. Maybe tomorrow we'll have a good day. Obviously, it is the Olympics year and India is a big country and everyone expects good always. My focus is to just stay healthy and concentrate on my technique. And yes, if I stay healthy everything will be good."

Neeraj has often insisted that consistency is one of

his strong points. "Maybe it is my greatest weapon. I will throw over 90, but consistency is more important for me," he reiterated. Nothing sums up that consistency more than this stat: The 87.58m he threw in Tokyo for the historic gold doesn't even feature in his top 10 throws anymore. Only twice in 2023 (shortly after his World Championships gold) and once in 2022 (in horrid conditions) he dipped below that. Since Tokyo alone, Neeraj has crossed 88m 10 times and three of those have been 89m+. It is that consistency he will be looking for in Doha as he returns to action after more than 7 months since his hard-fought gold medal at the Hangzhou Asian Games. At the press conference Neeraj joked that while his popularity has certainly risen since Tokyo, he is not at the same level as the cricketers like Virat Kohli and MS Dhoni. Someone like Kohli is in action nearly round the year and has to take breaks to manage his workload but that is not the case with track and field events. Neeraj has had a lengthy off-season and competes around 7-8 events in a year at best.

During winter sessions in Potchefstroom, South Africa Neeraj restarted working with Spencer Mackay, Head of Strength & Conditioning at Inspire Institute of Sport, in a bid to be in top shape. Then he shifted base to Turkey as he stepped up to throwing sessions. Through it all, he has to stick to carefully planned processes, all while being away from the spotlight. "I have to tell this, sometimes people might think it is a fun life where I am spending all this time outside India but it is actually not. It's mostly a boring life. You train in the morning, eat, and then rest. Then have your evening training session, have dinner, and then go to sleep. This is our daily routine. For example, we were in South Africa for 2-3 months. At one point we had not left the centre for four weeks.

Virat Kohli strikes at nearly 200, misses century in quest for big shot as RCB stay alive in playoff race



GNS News Agency, May 13

Synopsis: Virat Kohli made full use of two lives to play a match-defining knock and, along with Rajat Patidar, take RCB to a 241/7, before Punjab Kings fell well short and get knocked out. Nobody means to drop catches but when a team drops those offered by Virat Kohli, not once but twice, it often fears the worst. Risk-free accumulation is the bedrock of Kohli's batting, even in T20 cricket, and if he gets lives, it makes him even more determined to dig in.

Punjab Kings had already played into Kohli's hands, in some ways, by omitting their pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada and their miserly left-arm finger spinner Harpreet Brar, the style of bowling that has often kept Kohli in check in T20s. That skipper Sam Curran chose to field first meant Punjab Kings were devoid of express pace at the start and economy in the middle. The foundation for the 60-run defeat that knocked them out of play-off contention was laid with the choices made before a ball was bowled. Despite that, IPL debutant Vidwath Kaverappa should have got the prize wicket, if only Ashutosh Sharma – running back from cover – and Rilee Rossouw – diving at short cover – had held on to admittedly tough chances. Those were not the only catches dropped by the sloppy Punjab Kings, Harshal Patel dropping a dolly at deep backward square to reprieve Rajat Patidar, which kickstarted the onslaught by Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

Other than the dropped catches, Kohli lived a charmed life at the start of his innings, with many of his errant shots landing in vacant territory or in front of fielders. But one knew that it was a passing phase and if he stayed in the middle for any length of time, the fielding side would have to play. The lack of express pace in the bowling attack meant he could step down the track and hit over the top with freedom, one such shot going all the way even though one hand came off the bat. RCB were 119/3 at the halfway mark, when a short interruption for rain and hail made it easier for batting, with the slightly two-paced nature of the wicket rectified. Hitting against spin has been mentioned as one of the recent issues in Kohli's batting but on Thursday, he slog-swept Rahul

Chahar and Liam Livingstone into the stands with impunity. At the innings break, Kohli mentioned that he made it a point to maintain a high strike rate, which was very nearly 200 for the whole innings. Even a possible century didn't deter him from going for the big hits in the death overs, perishing in the pursuit of quick runs. But his 92 off 47 balls had taken RCB well on the way to their fourth successive win in the competition. Kohli's evening got even better when he ran out the dangerous Shashank Singh with a direct hit from the outfield. Patidar has taken it on himself to give the team momentum batting first even as Kohli settles in for the long haul. At Dharamsala, he could have been out without scoring, but the let-off only emboldened him to take the attack to the bowlers. Patidar stood still at the crease, saw the ball early and hit it to all parts of the ground. Harshal Patel got him going with a full ball on leg-stump, which was dispatched through mid-wicket. He then showed both his touch and power in the same over, with a delicate late-cut and a drive past mid-off. Kaverappa was hit for six over long-on, but it was the arrival of Chahar that got Patidar in the mood. The first deliveries were long hops that went way beyond long-on and square leg.

The fifth ball of the over was full and offered a bit of width and was smashed beyond long-off. When Arshdeep Singh and Curran dug it short, they weren't quick enough to trouble Curran and were deposited over the legside boundary. The second one brought a 21-ball half-century. There's a lot of talk about RCB being a top-heavy team, and Patidar's contribution in the middle order is a key factor as they remain in the running for a playoff spot. The last time Punjab Kings made the playoffs was 10 years ago, and if they were a football club in a league having promotion and relegation, they would be fighting to avoid the drop almost every season. The matches they win are one-off achievements — be it the highest successful T20 chase or two domestic players pulling off a memorable heist.

with their season on the line, they dropped two of their best bowlers in Rabada and Brar, and dropped at least three catches inside the Powerplay, which left them a mountain to climb in the second innings. Livingstone, brought in for the South African speedster, made a duck off two balls. Even with the bat, apart from a brief flurry from Jonny Bairstow and Rilee Rossouw and some big shots from Shashank Singh, the rest of the batting was a damp squib, never threatening the score they were supposed to chase. It's as if the team, and the franchise, expected to be knocked out of contention. If it happens every alternate season, it can be put down to inconsistency. But when it is a regular occurrence, the team and the decision-makers have to ask some hard questions and take a good look at themselves. Brief scores: Royal Challengers Bengaluru 241/7 (Kohli 92, Patidar 55, Green 46; Harshal Patel 3/38, Vidwath Kaverappa 2/36) beat Punjab Kings 181 all out in 17 overs (Rossouw 61, Shashank Singh 37; Siraj 4/43) by 60 runs

Manika Batra's remarkable run at Saudi Smash built on trust with coach, improved tactics and belief

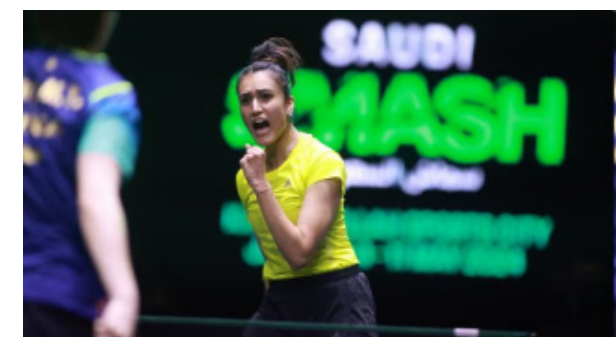
GNS News Agency, May 13

After never having won a single match at three Table Tennis' Smash events (like Tennis' Grand Slams), Manika Batra strung together three top-notch wins in a row at the Saudi Smash this week. Though she went down 4-1 to Hina Hayata on Thursday, the 28-year-old Indian did well to reach the quarters alongside 4 Chinese and 3 Japanese, the top tier of paddlers. Her deep foray into Last 8 at Jeddah also saw her crack her career-best world's Top 23. Though two months out from the Paris Olympics, the heartening aspect for coach Aman Balgu is how the tall, fierce Indian, who was No. 31 earlier, now has the world's Top 20 firmly in her sights.

Batra's last 10 major defeats had come against 6 Chinese and 3 Japanese, and it was time to tell the Commonwealth Games champion that the minor gold medal from 2018, wasn't enough. Balgu who's been coaching her for 20 months now, and was 7 years her senior on past Indian teams, concedes they were never on the same page and contrasts in their thinking were wildly pronounced. Manika was an overwhelmingly instinctive player, and she pulled off a bunch of mid-wins on sheer gut feels. Balgu, a stickler for strategy, preferred getting into opponents' minds and playing with plans, and reckoned Batra had gotten rigid in her game by 2022 when he was coaching her domestic rival Reeth Tennison. Balgu also knew she was in Chinese crosshairs after the Asia Cup win at Doha, simply seeing how her reactions, starts and serves were getting neatly x-rayed by their top players. As the India star and the meticulous, no-nonsense, self-assured coach got working, plenty of arguments occurred. Except, he would pull videos of her losses against the Chinese, and politely throw a poser, "Tell me, can you beat these Chinese just on instinct?" She said No. I told her she needed strategy. We'll find you something," he recalls. Batra, fiercely talented and a firebrand, needed to be told that what worked against Top 40 wasn't enough for the Top 15. "She first needed to have playing options to get into a position where the instinct could kick in and matter," he says.

The 10-day camp ahead of Saudi was intensive and exhausting. "It was really hard and intense. She went really 3 times her capacity. We trained on the table for 5-6 hours a day. Normally it's 4 hours. We also did fitness for one and a half hours and then spent an hour in recovery. But intensity wasn't just physical, but in terms of ideas. Her brain was pushed to limits. We did this without a break," Balgu explains.

Besides Batra beginning to trust her forehand, her approach when attacking and going aggressive has significantly changed. "In Saudi.. her service positions have changed totally but nobody is noticing that. Generally her ratio of service is 80% from the backhand or centre. This tournament the ratio is gone to 50-50. She's serving 50% from the forehand side. We had practised this more. Normally she goes to the tournament and tries it out. This time it wasn't a trial. It was purely intentional and natural," the coach adds. Having been thrashed by Nina Mittelham thrice in the past, cooked each time by playing to her strong backhand corners, Batra increased her attacks to the German's forehand this time. Purely pointed and intentional. In the famous win against Wang Manyu, Batra twice placed the twiddle instead of lambasting it like she



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usually does. "In training despite yelling, 100 times to not go hard on this, she would smack it. But in the match, she just blocked," Balgu says gleefully. Balgu says he's slowly steered her towards thinking independently. "I wanted her to be prepared for all situations. I don't know if I'll be able to travel with her to Olympics," he explains though her German sparring partner Kirill Barabanov, guided her ably, till her court endurance gave out in quarters after being mentally drained in the clinical three-game Mittelham win.

When Batra first started coaching under Balgu, her confidence was in tatters. "She was going through a lot of personal issues and her ranking was in freefall. She didn't trust anyone, and that meant her reactions on the table were slow because she was constantly doubting herself. TT is a fast game, like Bombay ki life, quick decisions. You can't think at the pace of a Tier 3 city dweller. But her trust had to be brought back. I convinced her I'm on her side, by being honest. There was no hiding or manipulation. I told her where her game stood and how she can be much more than her past best. The day she said she wasn't here to stay average or mediocre, we knew we were going all-out," he recalls. Balgu is aware a bulk of work remains, after Hina Hayata's corner ball from backhand proved too quick and too wide for a scrambling Batra. "It's just quarters, she's not won a Smash or anything. Physical ability, strategy need to get sharper. On court endurance isn't great yet. But now she's more aggressive on her forehand and backhand, her approach is proactive, she can step back and turn when needed. Two years back she wasn't winning against the Top 20, now we are talking Chinese and Japanese," he says.