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Mild tension prevails as farmers swarm outlets for cotton seeds in Adilabad

Adilabad: Police used mild force to disperse farmers who jostled with each other while being in the queue to buy cotton seed here on Tuesday. Farmers from several parts of the district flocked the seed selling shops from 7 am, following shortage of the seeds belonging to a brand, Rashi-2. They formed serpentine queues to buy the seeds. Policemen were deployed to control the crowds at the time of purchasing the seeds. They inspected various brands of the seeds. Farmers regretted that they were allowed to buy only two packets containing 400 grams each. They expressed anger against the ration of the seeds.

BRS gears up for three-day celebrations to commemorate 10 years of Telangana State formation

GNS News Agency, May 28

Hyderabad: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) is gearing up for three-day grand celebration to commemorate the 10th Telangana state Formation Day. The party leaders approached the GHMC officials seeking permission for the proposed rally and celebrations at the Amara Jyothi memorial on June 1. The celebrations will kick off on June 1 at 5 PM with a candlelight rally from the Telangana Martyrs' Memorial in Gun Park to the Amara Jyothi memorial at Tank Bund. This event is being organised to pay homage to the martyrs who laid down their lives for the cause of Telangana. BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao along with numerous Telangana activists and citizens, will participate in the event. On June 2, the State Formation Day celebrations will be held at Telangana Bhavan, the party's headquarters.

BRS president Chandrashekhara Rao will hoist the national flag at 9.30 am and later the party flag, on the occasion. Later, he will address the party cadre, reflecting on the journey of Telangana agitation and the role of the BRS in realising the dream of a separate State. Grand celebrations will be organised in all district headquarters by the party district presidents on June 3. The activities will include hoisting of the party flag, followed by various service activities such as distribution of fruits and food to the needy. In a statement, BRS working president KT Rama Rao urged the party cadre to ensure the success



of these celebrations. Emphasizing the significance of this milestone, he highlighted the role of the BRS and its president K Chandrashekhara Rao in achieving statehood for Telangana through relentless struggle and sacrifices, including Chandrashekhara Rao's indefinite hunger strike. He called on every Telangana citizen to actively participate in these decennial celebrations.

University of Hyderabad ranked among the top 12 percent universities in the world

Hyderabad: The University of Hyderabad (UoH) has been ranked among the top 12% universities in the world for international students. It is among the best ranked university from India in the World Best Value University Rankings 2024 for International Students. The University Database Lead at Study Abroad Aide is the world's most comprehensive database of universities, encompassing over 8,000 institutions – including 3,349 institutions in Asia. After evaluating 3,349 higher educational institutions in 20 Asian countries, Study Abroad Aide has placed the University of Hyderabad in the top 12% of universities in Asia. (<https://studyabroadaide.com/institutions/university-of-hyderabad/>)

'Na khaunga, na khaane dunga': PM warns action against corrupt leaders will accelerate after June 4

GNS News Agency, May 28

New Delhi: From Barasat in West Bengal to Dumka in Jharkhand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday vowed to launch a thorough investigation against corrupt leaders once the results of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections are out on June 4. This, he promised, was a "Modi ki guarantee" and an "X-ray so powerful" that it will deter future generations from indulging in corruption. "Ten years ago, I pledged to eradicate corruption, and I've upheld that promise. Now, I assure the nation that 'na khaunga, na khaane dunga'! The mountains of notes that have been recovered from TMC leaders will be accounted for, every single penny of it. Legal measures are being implemented to ensure justice," said Prime Minister Modi during the election rally in Barasat.

In Dumka, as he slammed Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Congress of "looting Jharkhand from all sides", the Prime Minister said that the resource-rich state is now infamous for its mountains of currency notes. "After June 4, action against corrupt leaders will accelerate, and this is the Modi ki guarantee," he said while reiterating his commitment to combating corruption in the country.

On Monday, while speaking exclusively to IANS, Prime Minister Modi elaborated on how his government has been working tirelessly to weed out rampant corruption from the system. "Today, when the big fish are being caught, questions are being raised by vested interests. It's difficult to understand what is the motive of the Khan Market Gang and why it is framing such narratives to save the criminals from facing the law," he said. He had also made it clear that the independent agencies take action based on facts which are gathered after a lot of



hard work. "It is the Independent investigative agency which apprehends the accused and the judiciary which decides on their conviction or trial. The Prime Minister has no role in this," said Prime Minister Modi. While addressing multiple election meetings in different parts of the country over the past many weeks, the Prime Minister has emphasised that the next five years will prove to be extremely important in the country's fight against corruption. Last August, while speaking from the ramparts of the Red Fort on the occasion of 77th Independence Day, Prime Minister Modi had mentioned that corruption, nepotism and appeasement are the three major challenges that have suppressed the aspirations of people in the country. "Freedom from corruption, fight against corruption in every area and in every sector is the need of the hour. And countrymen, my dear family members, this is Modi's commitment; it is my personal commitment that I will continue to fight against corruption," said the Prime Minister on August 15, 2023.

HM Amit Shah takes 'Chawal wali sarkar Vs jhole wali sarkar' jibe to target Naveen Patnaik govt

GNS News Agency, May 28

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday launched a scathing attack on the Naveen Patnaik government and said that the incumbent Odisha Chief Minister was set to become former CM on the day of counting i.e. June 4. "Come June 4, and Naveen Babu will no longer remain the CM, but will become the 'Ex-CM'," Amit Shah, who is on a whirlwind campaign tour to Odisha, said at a rally.

Amit Shah addressed three back-to-back rallies in the state (Bhadrak, Jajpur and Jagatsinghpur) and lambasted Naveen Patnaik administration for projecting Centre's free ration scheme as its own. Boasting about Modi Government's welfare policies in poll rallies, he said that it provided free ration to over 80 crores poor of the country, constructed around 12 crore toilets, and provided 4 crore pucca houses to the poor while the Patnaik government was always seen dragging its feet. "Narendra Modi's government is Chawal Wali Sarkar because it is providing free ration to the poor while Naveen Babu's government is 'Jhole Wali Sarkar' as it merely adds jhola (bag) to the ration," said Amit Shah.

He further quipped, "Naveen Babu, you should have increased the amount of rice. Jholas (bags) can't satiate the hunger of poor but added ration could have served the purpose." Amit Shah, leading the BJP campaign in the last leg of polls, took a series of jibes at Naveen Patnaik and blamed him for the backwardness and poverty and also the exodus of youth from the state. He also questioned the Chief Minister as to why he was bent on making a non-Odia person, his "successor".



"Today, Naveen Babu is trying to impose a Tamil Chief Minister on Odisha. We have tolerated you Naveen Babu for a long, but we will not tolerate a Tamil Babu in your name," said Amit Shah in an apparent reference to Naveen Patnaik's close aide and BJD leader VK Pandian, widely seen as his political heir. He further said that this time, Odisha will have a local young person who will take the reigns of state. "Odisha deserves a Chief Minister who is Odia, who is young, and who is a devotee of Bhagwan Jagannath. The BJP will win, and after 25 years, Odisha will finally be getting an Odia Chief Minister," he reiterated at multiple rallies in the state today. Further, citing Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar's suggestion to avoid animosity with Pakistan because of the latter's arsenal having atom bombs, he mockingly him, saying, "Let Naveen Babu and Rahul Baba know that PoK was, is and will always be a part of India and we will take it back."

India-based AI foundational models key to fight climate change: DST Secretary



Developing foundational models in Artificial Intelligence (AI) tailored to Indian condition are necessary to fight climate change in the country

GNS News Agency, May 28

New Delhi: Developing foundational models in Artificial Intelligence (AI) tailored to Indian condition are necessary to fight climate change in the country, said Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST), under the Ministry of Science and Technology. He was speaking at the two-day climate change conclave organised by the Department of Science and Technology at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.

The conclave, held on May 27 and 28, brought together experts from all over India and discussed climate modelling in the Indian context, quality control of data and improving climate predictions, as well as strengthening interactions with people for better climate adaptation solutions. "There is a need to focus more on developing foundational models in AI in the Indian context," said Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), while addressing the conclave. He also released the draft executive summary of 'District Level Climate Risk Assessment for India' and added that indigenous climate models based on data will provide a better understanding for addressing climate change. "Collective efforts towards a holistic approach involving researchers from multiple disciplines and a range of stakeholders can help address the ongoing challenges of climate change and its effect on agriculture, water, and the environment," added Prof. Abhay, the former Director at IIT Kanpur. The experts also discussed the process of developing and mentoring climate change science and adaptation R&D programmes all over the country. Stressing that climate solutions were about securing the future for generations to come, they urged communities to come together and not just analyse the problems but work collaboratively towards solutions. "About 40 per cent of the world's population was already vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change," said Dr Anita Gupta, Head of Climate, Energy, and Sustainable Technology (CEST), DST, while emphasising the urgency for solutions to the climate change problem.

KTR warns Revanth Reddy against changing Telangana official emblem with political motives

GNS News Agency, May 28

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao questioned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's stance on removing the 'Kakatiya Thoranam' and 'Charminar' from the State's official emblem. He pointed out that these symbols, which represent Telangana's rich cultural heritage, are also mentioned in the proposed State anthem, "Jaya Jaya He Telangana."

Stating that the Chief Minister's stance is contradictory and foolish, he questioned the former's hatred towards the Kakatiya Thoranam and Charminar. "These are not just architectural landmarks but symbols of Telangana's 1,000-year-old cultural legacy," he reminded. Responding to the Chief Minister's decision to remove Kakatiya Thoranam from the official emblem, Rama Rao noted that the proposed State anthem celebrates the Kakatiya Thoranam and Charminar as key elements of the State's heritage. "The Charminar is not just a building but an icon of Hyderabad which grew into a global city. The Kakatiya Thoranam is more than a structure, it is a standing testament to our fertile region," he asserted.

The BRS working president argued that removing these symbols from the official emblem would be akin to erasing Telangana's history and hurting the sentiments of its four crore residents. He questioned whether the Congress government would remove the royal symbols in Karnataka's official emblem as well. "India's national emblem features three lions from Ashoka's Stupa and the national flag includes the Dharmachakra. Will you remove these symbols as well?" he asked. Rama Rao wondered if the ponds built during the Kakatiya period would also be destroyed or if the Assembly building, once

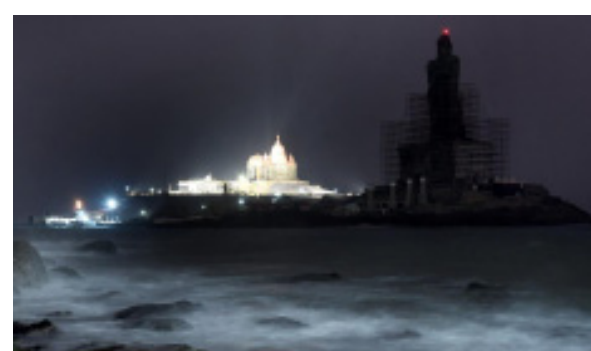


a symbol of monarchy, would be dismantled. He demanded to know whether the Congress which is changing the official emblem, would also change the borders of Telangana State which was achieved with decades of struggle. "For the past ten years, the official emblem has been accepted by the entire Telangana community and has won the hearts of the people. Altering it for political reasons is unacceptable," he asserted. He emphasised the importance of preserving these symbols and warned that attempts to change them would be met with resistance. "We will question your narrow-mindedness and unite Telangana society to build a people's movement against this," he warned.

PM to meditate at Tamil Nadu's Vivekananda Rock Memorial to mark culmination of Lok Sabha campaign

GNS News Agency, May 28

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be visiting the Vivekananda Rock Memorial in Kanyakumari, to meditate between May 30 to June 1, to mark the culmination of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Sources in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said that Prime Minister Modi will arrive at the rock memorial and will be meditating through the day and night at the place, which was also the place where Swami Vivekananda is said to have meditated and was visited by the vision of "Bharat Mata". There are other reasons behind Prime Minister Modi's choice, said sources, including a message of unity and affection for Tamil Nadu, where this time he has invested much of his political capital. Kanyakumari is said to be the southernmost tip of the Indian mainland, where the three oceans — Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean meet, as well as having a place in Hindu mythology as the place where Goddess Parvati meditated on one foot for attaining Lord Shiva. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Kanyakumari is reminiscent of his visit to Kedarnath at the end of campaign for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls (where too he meditating in a now famous hut), and of his visit to Pratapgarh, associated with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in at the end of the 2014 Lok Sabha polls. The silent period for the seventh



Prime Minister Modi will arrive at the Vivekananda rock memorial and will be meditating through the day and night at the place

and last phase of polling for Lok Sabha polls begins on May 30 with polling scheduled for June 1 for 57 seats across seven States and one Union territory (Chandigarh).

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Cannes acclaim

INDIA's presence at the 77th Cannes Film Festival marked a significant milestone for its independent filmmakers. This year, India celebrated multiple firsts, showcasing its film industry's immense talent and potential on a global platform. The festival's recognition of Indian films and artistes is cause for national pride, highlighting their artistic excellence and the evolving landscape of cinema.

Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine as Light* securing the prestigious Grand Prix, the festival's second-highest honour, is a landmark achievement. This film's nomination in the main category — the first for India in 30 years — represents a noteworthy breakthrough for our cinema. Kapadia's film offers a nuanced perspective that challenges conventional narratives. Anasuya Sengupta becoming the first Indian actor to receive the Best Actress award in the *Un Certain Regard* segment for her role in *The Shameless* exemplifies the growing appreciation of Indian talent beyond Bollywood. Chidananda S Naik's *Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know*, which won the *La Cinéfondation* top prize for best short film, underscores the creative prowess of emerging filmmakers. The accolades extended to the technical side, with cinematographer Santosh Sivan receiving the *Pierre Angénieux ExcelLens in Cinematography* award — the first Asian to receive this honour.

While commercial successes like *RRR* and *Pushpa: The Rise* have garnered global attention, the wins at Cannes are a testament to the diversity and depth of Indian cinema. Notably, the success of these films was made possible through innovative financing strategies, including crowd-funding, international co-production and support from the government in the form of incentives.

Royal Shakespeare Company's 'Matilda The Musical' comes to Mumbai, here's how to book the tickets



With the summer vacation on, it's a perfect time to watch the bitter-sweet story of a five-and-a-half years old super-nerd unfold on a Mumbai stage. Inspired by the much-loved children's book by Roald Dahl 'Matilda', the multi-award winning production from the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), titled 'Matilda The Musical', is being staged at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) The Grand Theatre till June 2.

The story of Matilda, written by Roald Dahl in 1998, is a celebrated children's fantasy that tells the darkly humorous story of its titular protagonist who is extremely well-read and bright for her age. Though she has emotionally aloof parents at home and a tyrannical principal at school, she navigates these adversities using her telekinetic ability and wit. The novel, after being adapted for the stage by the Royal Shakespeare Company, has travelled across the world, winning awards and accolades.

What catches the audience attention when one first steps into the theatre is the spectacular set — designed to look like a library. Soon, they discover that the library and books are Matilda's refuge from her parents, who neither care for her nor understand her. The musical features a cast of strong performers who are impressive all-rounders. They sing, dance, somersault and show their other acrobatic skills. Especially impressive is a song sequence where Matilda's schoolmates show their excellent movement skills as they perform on swings. Even though 'Matilda The Musical' is visually-rich, what makes this production engrossing is the way Matilda's unique story is told. One feels the loneliness of the five-year-old who does not receive her parent's love but is adored by the librarian, teacher and her classmates.

The RSC began work on developing the musical in 2003. (Photo by Hanan Assor) The RSC began work on developing the musical in 2003. (Photo by Hanan Assor) Dahl has given Matilda telekinetic abilities. The musical, which has improvised the original text to make it

Laila Khan murder case: Mumbai court sentences stepfather Parvez Tak for murder of actor and five of her family



GNS News Agency, May 28

A sessions court in Mumbai on Friday sentenced Parvez Tak to death in the murder of his stepdaughter and actor Laila Khan, her mother, and four of her siblings in 2011. Earlier this month, Additional Sessions Judge Sachin Pawar convicted Tak of murder and destruction of evidence in the case. Last week, the police sought the death penalty for Tak, calling the case "rarest of the rare". Another accused named in the case is still on the run. In 2011, Khan, who had appeared in a few films, including

one opposite actor Rajesh Khanna in 2008, went missing, along with her mother Shelina Patel and four of her siblings. A complaint was filed at the Oshiwara police station by Laila's father, Nadir Patel, who informed the police that his entire family had been missing. Apart from Laila, her mother Shelina, elder sister Azmina, twin siblings Zara and Imran and cousin Reshma, had gone missing.

A year later, the Mumbai police claimed to have recovered their bodies from a farmhouse and arrested Khan's stepfather, Tak, for the murder, and he has been behind bars since. The prosecution was led by Special Public Prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam till the court reserved the case for judgment last month. Nikam recently withdrew from all cases as he is contesting in the Lok Sabha elections for the BJP from the North Central constituency. The police had claimed that Tak, the third husband of Laila Khan's mother Shelina, first killed Shelina after an argument over a bungalow in Igatpuri, and then killed Khan, her siblings Amina, Zara, and Imran, and cousin Reshma as they had witnessed the crime. They also said it was Tak who led the police to the remains of the deceased, which he had buried in a pit at the farmhouse.

Bengaluru Airport City to get business park, concert arena and India's biggest hotel, says BIAL

GNS News Agency, May 28

In a major investment boost in the business, hospitality and entertainment sectors, the Bengaluru Airport City Limited (BACL) is all set to develop a two million square feet business park and a 775-room hotel near the Kempegowda International Airport, Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) said on Friday. The project will be developed on the principles of sustainability, inclusivity and resilience to make the Bengaluru Airport City an eco-friendly urban centre, said officials. The BACL, incorporated on January 21, 2020, is a wholly owned subsidiary of the BIAL (operator of the Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru).

The BIAL in a statement said, "The biophilic-inspired business Park by BACL promises smart workspaces within a vibrant public realm. The park seeks to seamlessly blend work and play, to cater to the diverse needs of businesses and employees and offers a dynamic environment for growth and collaboration." A biophilic design is a kind of architecture that incorporates natural elements into buildings and landscapes in order to create a more productive and healthy environment for people. The project lies in the Urban Forest, a lush oasis in the centre of development. This green space will serve as a focal point, blending indoor and outdoor spaces throughout the area. The upcoming Metro station in Airport City will provide seamless connectivity to the business park from the northern side, ensuring convenient accessibility.

The Combo Hotel is poised to become one of the largest hospitality establishments in India. Comprising a total of 775 keys, the hotel will be a collaboration between Vivanta (450 rooms) and Ginger (325 rooms). The



hotel is expected to be completed by the end of 2026 to cater to both business travellers and tourists. Another addition to the Airport City's allure is the upcoming Concert Arena — a first-of-its-kind arena in the country in an airport ecosystem. The concert arena will have a capacity to host 10,000 attendees. Scheduled to open its doors within the next couple of years, this state-of-the-art venue will set the stage for events and concerts and prove to be a hub for entertainment and cultural gatherings. Rao Munukutla, the CEO of the BACL said,

"This investment by the BACL will propel our vision of transforming the Airport City into a bustling hub for businesses, knowledge-intensive zones, research and development centres and Global Capability Centres. With world-class infrastructure and a focus on sustainability, our goal is to create a thriving environment that nurtures growth, brings in job opportunities and makes a positive socio-economic impact on the region."

Pune Porsche crash: Police commissioner admits 'negligence, says MLA's police station visit didn't influence probe



GNS News Agency, May 28

Pune Porsche car crash Amitesh Kumar also spoke about the controversy surrounding the early morning visit to the Yerwada Police Station by Vadgaon Sheri MLA Sunil Tingare and the allegation that he had made attempts to influence the probe in the minor's favour as he is close to his realtor father. Pune Police Commissioner Amitesh Kumar said on Friday the internal inquiry being conducted by the department has prima facie found there was 'some negligence' on the part of the officer who initially probed the Pune Porsche crash case and lodged a First Information Report (FIR).

When asked about the status of the internal inquiry

being conducted by the Pune City Police, Kumar told reporters, "There was some negligence by the officer concerned and appropriate action against that officer will be taken at the soonest".

Kumar said the FIR was lodged against the minor boy around 8 am on Sunday at Yerwada Police Station after which he was taken to Sassoon General Hospital for a medical examination. "Here his blood samples were taken around 11 am. There is a lapse in the time of collection of blood samples. However, our case under Section 304 (culpable homicide) is not dependent on the blood report. We have a watertight case that he (minor) was in full senses while committing the offence," said Kumar. He also spoke about the controversy surrounding the early morning visit to the Yerwada Police Station by Vadgaon Sheri MLA Sunil Tingare and the allegation that he had made attempts to influence the probe in the minor's favour as he is close to his realtor father. "It's a matter of fact that he had visited the police station, there's no two opinions about it. However, I have been repeatedly saying that the police action was as per rules and because of that (MLA's visit) there was no change in the direction of the investigation," said Kumar. Two young IT engineers were killed after a speeding Porsche Taycan allegedly driven by a 17-year-old boy in an inebriated state hit their motorcycle at Pune's Kalyani Nagar junction around 2.30 am on May 19.

T-shaped flyover at Mith Chowky likely to be ready by 2024-end



GNS News Agency, May 28

Mith Chowky, the four-arm junction infamous for its traffic snarls in Malad (West), will soon get a T-shaped flyover, exclusively for light-weight vehicles, in Mumbai's western suburbs by the end of 2024, according to Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) sources.

Why Mith Chowky?

The Mith Chowky is one of the most important traffic junctions on Mumbai suburbs that records a heavy flow of traffic from Madh Island, Kandivali, Borivali, Andheri and Versova coming from its four sides. Due to heavy vehicular density, the junction has become a choke-point where motorists spend as much as 20 minutes by standing at the congestion.

How will the flyover bring in respite?

The T-shaped flyover will cater to vehicles travelling towards the eastern and southern side of the junction, which will take off the load from the existing main road below and will also reduce waiting time as well.

Features of the bridge:

The bridge will be 800 metres long and will have three arms with its western arm originating from the Girdhar Park bridge above the Malad Creek and will pass above the traffic junction making its landing at St Joseph's School, where the eastern arm will merge with the main carriageway of the road. Towards the southern side, the arm will make its landing on SV Road, from where motorists can travel towards Andheri-South Mumbai.

Other features:

Civic officials said that the bridge will cater to one-way traffic only since it has a limited width. The bridge will pass beneath the Metro 2A lines and will originate between Malad and Dahanakurwadi stations. Cost: Though earlier, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has estimated the project cost at Rs 53 crore it has been escalated to Rs 65 crore. The construction work is ongoing and BMC is aiming for a year-end deadline.

Administration speaks:

"This bridge will cater to light weight vehicles only and will be a solution to the congestion woes in the area. Also, since we have Metro lines passing over, there is a restriction on height, therefore, heavy vehicles will not be allowed on the bridge and only the road below will cater to heavy vehicles and buses," said an official from the Bridges Department.

Angry at 2022 security breach, when PM Modi left Punjab with parting shot for Manpreet Badal

GNS News Agency, May 28

It was during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Punjab during the 2022 Assembly elections that he had left the then finance minister Manpreet Badal speechless. Leaving the state after the infamous security breach incident, Modi had told Badal to convey to then chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi that he was returning alive. Over two years later, Modi was seen sharing pleasantries with Badal in Patiala on Thursday. Modi spent a few minutes with him, more than anyone else, shook hands and held a conversation. Badal was seen listening to Modi intently. BJP's Faridkot candidate Hans Raj Hans later joined in.

Their exchange of pleasantries was reminiscent of Modi's parting shot in January 2022. The PM's cavalcade was left stranded on a flyover for half an hour as a group of farmers protested the Centre's contentious farm laws, forcing Modi to go back without addressing a rally in Ferozepur. Channi had assigned Badal to receive PM Modi at Bathinda airport. When the PM met Badal at the Bathinda airport during his return, he told him that he should go and thank Channi that he had reached the airport alive.

Badal, who was with Congress then, later switched sides and joined the BJP. With Punjab set to vote on June 1, Badal, who suffered a cardiac issue a few days ago, has been missing from the BJP campaign. On Wednesday, however, he posted a video on social media seeking votes for BJP saying he was recuperating and not able to campaign. PM Modi could steer the country into a phase of development and honour, he said. The discussion between Modi and Badal in 2022 was revealed in a Cabinet meeting by Badal himself.

The meeting was chaired by Channi. Badal said that PM Modi was visibly livid when he returned to Bathinda airport. Later, the Cabinet had discussed how the state could face a backlash for what happened during the day. Badal had told the Cabinet that when he had gone to receive the PM, he asked the finance minister where the CM was. Badal informed PM Modi that Channi's principal secretary had tested positive for COVID-19 and as he was his primary contact, he had decided to stay back.

Badal, sources had stated at that time, also told the Cabinet that after he received him, PM Modi spent half an hour with Governor Banwarilal Purohit at the airport. Later, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs had sought an explanation from the government on the breach in PM's security. The Cabinet had also discussed fears that President's rule could be imposed in the state. At that time, the then director general of police Siddharth Chattopadhyaya had also reached the meeting and explained to the ministers that he had been working on pacifying the protesters.

Chandigarh resident gets waste collection bill of Rs 73,000: 'Even a restaurant doesn't get such a hefty amount'

GNS News Agency, May 28

A Chandigarh resident has received a bill of Rs 73,000 for garbage collection from the civic body for a three-floor building he rented out to small traders in the city. Sanjeev Grover, the owner of the building in Sector 26, said he came to know about the bill of Rs 72,900 without any arrears when he received the property tax intimation from authorities for the fiscal 2024-2025.

Before this, Grover said he would get a bill for Rs 200 per floor and pay Rs 600 every month for the building, which measures 16x66 square yards. "I was shocked to see such an exorbitant amount raised against my three-floor building. Even a restaurant may not have been issued such a hefty garbage collection amount. On the first floor, there is a vendor's account office, the second floor has a fruit company's office, and on the ground floor, there is a rice trader. They don't generate a huge volume of waste," said Grover while speaking Grover said the civic body sent a bill for a similar amount last year but

was held back after they raised a hue and cry. "The previous system of garbage collectors collecting waste and taking Rs 200 per month was put in place. But this year again, they have issued such an inflated amount," he said. Chandigarh Mayor Kuldeep Kumar told The Indian Express he would "certainly get it checked". "Residents shouldn't be burdened unnecessarily like this.

This amount for waste collection fees is huge. But I will ask the staff to immediately check this." In 2019, the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation took over the waste collection from the independent collectors in a phased manner and deployed 399 garbage collection vehicles to collect dry and wet waste. At that time, the civic body said independent collectors were not ensuring full coverage of households and shops and Chandigarh was lagging in the ranking.

The move faced protests as the waste collectors feared losing their jobs. Last year, new revised rates of waste collection fees were brought in by the civic body.



The Chandigarh Municipal Corporation took over the waste collection from the independent collectors in 2019.

'Bangalore 1974': Rock star Konarak Reddy on his musical journey, tracing the elements of the city during 1974

GNS News Agency, May 28

Konarak Reddy says he is trying to create a journey of how Bangalore was in 1974, how he experienced that period as a teenager, and how one can find the elements of 1974 even today. Konarak Reddy says he is trying to create a journey of how Bangalore was in 1974, how he experienced that period as a teenager, and how one can find the elements of 1974 even today. In the lead up to his next concert at the Bangalore International Centre, veteran Bengaluru musician Konarak Reddy spoke to The Indian Express this week, explaining his music and plans for the concert. The newest concert, 'Bangalore 1974' comes after two concerts at the International Centre and Whitefield, titled 'The Guitar Book of Revelations'.



Reddy has long been a constant in the Bengaluru music scene and beyond, having been one of the early movers in the days of Cubbon Park Music Strip. Having accumulated a host of musical qualifications at home and abroad on numerous instruments, 2024 marks the 50th year of his musical career. Looking back down the years, Konarak Reddy says 1974 was a magical year for him. "We used to sit at South Parade, all of us friends and play the guitar. I was sitting one day at the far end of the ground, hoping that someone would give me a guitar to play. A guy walked right up to me, gave me the guitar and I started playing. That night, I was in sync with the cosmic rhythm... I felt comfortable with myself, my music, everything...."

Reddy says he is trying to create a journey of how Bangalore was in 1974, how he experienced that period as a teenager, and how one can find the elements of 1974 even today. He added, "I went through cancer last year, so my wife Kirtana told me to do a concert to get my mind off the chemo and radiation. My whole mind shifted to creating music and putting visuals to it, and didn't think about the treatment. When I started thinking about the 70s, how music was.... I went back, started taking inspiration from my past and started doing the music." He said that instead of trying to be technically perfect with the music, he was enjoying the relationship he had with music. With his recent concerts, Reddy is a one-man show on stage, and has been experimenting with background visuals, some of which are edited with Artificial

Intelligence. His plans do not end with this concert. Reddy says, "We've got a small generator and PA system that can play for around 200 people... so we can travel to different beautiful spots in Karnataka or South India and play for a small select group in intimate spaces." Reddy also feels that this sort of music is still timeless – and the generation of today still finds it relatable.

"Rock music is the music of revolt, of wanting to change something... that music reflects young people who want to change something. Young people still love rock – Kirtana's theatre students, some of whom are around 13-14, were excited. One boy came up to the stage and was really excited. So I feel there is something that youngsters are getting from this," he explains. Reddy's music isn't easily put in a box either – from studying classical guitar in Chennai, the piano in Bangalore, to the nadaswaram and the sarod under Pandit Rajeev Taranath, and even the mridangam with T S Mani, he has a broad range of influences to draw from. He adds, "Indian music is melody based with intricate rhythm structure while Western music uses harmony and how you go through the notes, so they don't really meet.... but what I can do with the silence between the notes – I can put my rhythm, what I truly feel with my Indianness." The concert will be held at the Bangalore International Centre on May 29 from 7 pm to 8.30 pm. Entry to the event will be free of cost, on a first-come first-served basis by registering at BIC's website.

'2 years ago, regional parties wanted to form alliance with Parkash Singh Badal as convener': Prem Singh Chandumajra

GNS News Agency, May 28

With Punjab set to vote on June 1, Prem Singh Chandumajra, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) candidate from the Anandpur Sahib Lok Sabha seat, says regional parties will emerge stronger in this election and change the course of the country's politics. A former MP from Anandpur Sahib, Chandumajra spoke to Jagdeep Singh Deep about his vision for the constituency, SAD's relevance in national politics and the present political situation in the state. He also revealed that regional parties wanted to form a 'Mahagathbandhan' under Parkash Singh Badal's leadership. Chandumajra: I feel that regional parties, irrespective of their alliances with national parties, will emerge stronger in this election. You can see a new leadership coming up in all the states. You can see it in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. In West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee is a force to reckon with. I think it is a good sign for our country. When regional parties get stronger, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SA) always plays a crucial role in national politics. In the past, we have had very strong leaders like Chaudhary Charan Singh, Karpooi Thakur, Parkash Singh Badal, Biju Patnaik, N T Rama Rao, Mulayam Singh Yadav etc. They all came from regional parties but also influenced national politics. The same thing is going to happen again.



Q: Were any efforts made to form an alliance of regional parties to counter the national parties?

Chandumajra: Yes, around two years ago, we decided to align with all the regional parties and form a 'Mahagathbandhan'. I met Mamata Banerjee, Uddhav Thackeray and Naveen Patnaik for the same. They all agreed on Parkash Singh Badal's name and wanted him to become the convener. But then he fell ill... and the alliance could not take shape.

Q: Do you think the SAD and BJP should contest as allies?

Chandumajra: Our party tried to form an alliance but the BJP leadership was adamant on certain issues. We asked them to fulfil the promises made to the farmers but they did not give a satisfactory reply. Disagreement on farmers' concerns was one of the reasons that our alliance could not materialise. But now we are in the middle of the elections and we are getting a good response from people. They are recognising that our party put their interests first.

Q: Whom do you think you are in a direct fight with at Anandpur Sahib?

Chandumajra: I feel I am in a direct fight with Congress [Vijay Inder Singla is the candidate] at one or two places and with the BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party] in the Garhshankar area. But overall, I feel that my contest is with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) [Malvinder Singh Kang is the AAP candidate]. But the AAP has failed miserably in the state.

Q: What is your vision for Anandpur Sahib?

Chandumajra: I want to make Anandpur Sahib a tourist hub. The demography of my constituency is such that it is the perfect place to be developed as a tourist place. It has a mountain range, forests, water bodies and religious places which make it a desirable tourist destination. I brought some tourism-oriented projects when I was the MP. I wanted to make a lake near Virasat-e-Khalsa, a revolving restaurant and a six-lane road in the area but my successor Manish Tiwari did not do anything in this direction, resulting in all these projects getting stalled. If I win, I will take up these projects again and make them a reality.

Q: What was your biggest achievement as an MP?

Chandumajra: I was an MP from 2014 to 2019 and during my tenure, one of my biggest works was to highlight Nankana Sahib [a city in Pakistan's Punjab prov-

ince that is home to the Nankana Sahib Gurdwara, built over the site where Guru Nanak was believed to be born]. The Indian government at that time swapped some land with Bangladesh. It prompted me to raise the issue of Kartarpur Sahib. I raised the issue saying that we could swap some villages with Pakistan to take back Nankana Sahib. It was the initiation of the bigger idea. It became a reality when Kartarpur Sahib corridor was built. Some people took credit for it, saying they met someone and the corridor was opened, but I was the first one to flag it.

Q: Any major project you would like to bring to Anandpur Sahib?

Chandumajra: I feel that channelisation of water is my dream project. A lot of water flowing down the hills of Himachal Pradesh is wasted. I want to bring a project to channelise the water by using big pipes, along the lines of European technology. Another project is to create a cargo terminal at the international airport.

Q: Drinking water is a big issue in Mohali and Kharar, which are parts of your constituency. Any plan to solve this?

Chandumajra: Of course, we got a project of supplying treated canal water passed for Kharar. A grant of Rs 300 crore was released for it and it is lying with the Kharar Municipal Council but the local MLA is not allowing the work to be done. It is AAP's negative politics.

Rise in IT jobs across Hyderabad's tech hubs despite national decline in job postings

GNS News Agency, May 28

Hyderabad: Despite a national decline in IT job postings, specific tech hubs like Hyderabad are witnessing substantial growth. Hyderabad is solidifying its status as a major Information Technology (IT) hub, according to data from Indeed, the global hiring platform, which reveals a notable increase in IT job opportunities.

The data, pooled from job postings and job clicks on Indeed's platform between April 2023 to April 2024 shows a 41.5 per cent surge in IT job postings in Hyderabad, outpacing Bengaluru, which saw a 24 per cent rise. This growth underscores Hyderabad's increasing allure for IT professionals seeking new opportunities.

Moreover, job seeker interest has surged significantly, with Hyderabad experiencing a 161 per cent increase in job clicks, compared to an 80 per cent rise in Bengaluru, indicating a robust interest among job seekers in Hyderabad's burgeoning tech sector.

Contrary to this growth, the national landscape for IT jobs has seen a slight downturn. Across the country, IT job postings have declined by 3.6 per cent, reflecting cautious hiring practices by tech companies due to the uncertain global economic climate.

Bengaluru police apprehend 16-year-old for murder of BBA student passed off as suicide

GNS News Agency, May 28

A 16-year-old boy has been apprehended by the Bengaluru police in connection with the murder of a 20-year-old BBA student, who was found dead at her house last week, which was attempted to be passed off as a case of suicide. According to police sources, the minor, who is the son of a bar owner, allegedly murdered the woman in a dispute over Rs 2,000. A senior Bengaluru South police officer said the suspect, who knew the victim, allegedly stole the money from her purse to pay for the repair of a friend's spectacles which he had damaged. When the woman came to know about the theft, she confronted the minor and there was a fight. The officer said the suspect pushed the woman during the fight and she fell unconscious. Thinking the woman was dead, the minor and a friend slashed her wrist and throat in an attempt to pass it off as a suicide, said the police.



The police initially filed a case of unnatural death but registered it as a murder case on May 18 after finding that an attempt was made by the suspect to wash the blood from the victim in the bathroom and the water tanks on the roof were emptied as a result. The police have also found CCTV footage of the minor entering the house as key evidence in the case, sources said. "Sorry, Amma" The fourth-semester Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) student was found by her family with her wrist and throat slashed in her house at Brindavan Layout in Padmanabhanagar on May 15. Three notes, which the police later found were not in her handwriting, saying "Sorry, Amma" were also recovered.

Before the victim's mother returned home, her brother arrived and found the door locked from inside. After their

Bengal CID arrests butcher from Mumbai, says he 'smothered, skinned' Bangladesh MP

GNS News Agency, May 28

The West Bengal Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Friday arrested a Bangladeshi national, who was working as a butcher in Mumbai, in connection with the 'murder' of Bangladesh MP Md Anwasrul Azim Anwar. The MP who was last seen in Kolkata has been missing since May 13. The CID identified the accused as Jihad Hawladar, 24, a resident of Barakpur in Bangladesh's Khulna district, and said that he confessed to smothering and killing the MP along with four other Bangladeshi nationals. The accused removed the MP's skin to hide his identity, the CID said. Hawladar was brought to Kolkata two months ago at the behest of Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman, a US citizen of Bangladeshi origin, the alleged mastermind of the MP's 'murder', the CID alleged. Sources said that Hawladar was staying illegally in Mumbai.



Hawladar will be presented before a court in Barasat and taken into police custody to verify his statement. The MP's body is yet to be found. The Dhaka police have arrested three people who allegedly told the police that the MP had been murdered. Anwar's body has not been

found yet. The Awami League MP came to Kolkata for treatment on May 12. He first went to Mondolpara Lane in Baranagar to meet his friend Gopal Biswas, a gold trader. On May 13, he left Biswas's residence and went to the New Town flat he had taken on rent. He went missing from there. After he went missing, his family members in Bangladesh filed a missing complaint. Biswas filed a missing complaint in Kolkata on May 18.

5, including 3 children, killed as vehicle ferrying pilgrims loses control in Punjab's Ludhiana

GNS News Agency, May 28

At least five people, including three children, were killed and several others injured after a vehicle carrying a group of pilgrims met with an accident in Punjab's Ludhiana district on Friday morning. Khanna Police said the accident took place near the Sirhind Canal in Behlolpur village after the driver lost control of the Mahindra pick-up van. "The vehicle did not fall into the canal but rolled over and got stuck in the trees. However, three children slipped into the canal and died due to drowning. Two other women were declared dead on arrival at the hospital," said Tarlochan Singh, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Samrala.



The victims have been identified as Karamjit Kaur, 55, and Mahinder Kaur, 65. DSP Singh said divers have recovered the bodies of two children who drowned in the canal — Gaganjeet Kaur, 12, and another girl who is yet to be identified. The body of the third child, Sukhpreet Singh, 7, is yet to be recovered and divers were on the job, he said. The injured were rushed to Chamkaur Sahib Civil Hospital in the nearby Ropar district.

As many as 18 people, including the driver, were travelling in the vehicle, said the police. The police said the pilgrims, who hailed from Nizampur and Danogwal

villages of the Payal segment in Ludhiana, were returning after paying obeisance at Dera Vadhbhag Singh in Una of Himachal Pradesh.

DSP Singh said it was suspected the driver probably nodded off for a few seconds due to which he lost control of the vehicle.

"But it will be clear only after his statement was recorded. He is also undergoing treatment," said the officer, adding that an FIR was being registered at Machhiwara police station of Khanna police district.

Character of warfare changing, battlespace more complex, contested and lethal: Army Chief

GNS News Agency, May 28

Passing Out Parade (POP) of the 146th course — of the National Defence Academy (NDA) is being held at the Khadakwasla based institute on Friday morning. Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pande is the Reviewing Officer for the event. "The character of warfare is undergoing a profound change," General Pande said in his speech. "Disruptive technologies, advancements in space, cyber and information domains. Progression in the capabilities of conventional means of war are making the battle space more complex, contested and lethal. In order to operate in the battlefield of tomorrow, you need to enhance your technical competency thresholds. So keep your quest for embracing technology and striving for professional excellence going," he said. The POP marks the culmination of rigorous three-year training at the NDA.



General Pande, the Reviewing Officer of the parade, is himself an alumnus of the 61st course of the academy — inspected the parade line up of the passing out cadets, address them and also pin the medals on the award winning cadets. Annually, India's premier triservices military academy sees the graduation of batches of two cadets. Known as the cradle of military leadership, the NDA

is located at Khadakwasla in Pune overlooking the foothills of the Western Ghats in Maharashtra. After passing out from the NDA, the cadets head out for one more year of pre-commissioning training at the academies of their respective Armed forces — Indian Naval Academy in Ezhimala located in Kannur district of Kerala, Indian Military Academy in Dehradun for Army and the Air Force Academy in Dundigal, located in Telangana. In June 2022, the NDA admitted its first batch of women cadets, which is part of the 148th course and is slated to pass out from the academy in May 2025.

Spivak, Du Bois, subaltern and speech: What the fracas at JNU is all about



GNS News Agency, May 28

In her 1988 postcolonial studies essay, literary critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak famously asked, "Can the subaltern speak?" Thirty-six years later, a Dalit student responded, "If the subaltern cannot speak, he shall abuse" and threw in an epithet for good measure. The controversy broke out at a lecture on 'W. E. B. Du Bois and his vision of democracy' at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), where Spivak had been called as a guest speaker. During the Q/A session, a student ventured to pose his question to Spivak, but was unable to as she interrupted him thrice to correct his pronunciation of 'Du Bois'. Later, the student, Anshul Kumar, who calls himself the founding professor and chairperson of the Centre for Brahmin Studies on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter), claimed his space on the platform to wryly remark that the 'subaltern' can speak, but can he finish his question?

The exchange has since kicked off a debate on Brahminical hegemony on education and language, class politics, and the pedantry of academia, among other things. W.E.B. Du Bois, the pronunciation of whose name is at the centre of the fracas, was an African-American sociologist, historian, author, and activist who co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and led the civil rights movement in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. Spivak's repeated corrections stemmed from the fact that Du Bois was extremely particular about the pronunciation of his name. Aldon Morris, writing for the UC Press Blog, says: "Responding to a speaking invitation by the Chicago Sunday Evening Club in 1939, Du Bois made it clear that: 'My name is pronounced in the clear English fashion: Du, with u as in Sue; Bois, as in oi in voice. The accent is on the second syllable.'" When Kumar kept on mispronouncing the name of the American sociologist despite her correcting him, Spivak reportedly observed that deliberate mispronunciation of a name is behaviour associated with the upper caste, and somebody pursuing 'Brahmin Studies' ought to know better. At which point, Kumar quipped that Spivak was herself a "Brahmin," a caste identity from which Spivak was quick to distance herself.

Some, including Spivak herself, have called the 28-year-old scholar rude, not just for his interaction with the

professor, but also for the swear words (some of them with misogynistic import) that he has used for Spivak on X since the lecture. Supreme Court senior advocate Karuna Nundy, citing a tweet of Kumar's with expletives used for the Columbia professor, wrote on X that "Spivak was rude in response to rudeness." Others have pointed out that Spivak repeatedly correcting Kumar's pronunciation in public and not allowing him to complete his question was a "snobbish" act of linguistic domination, especially given the enduring elitist fascination with English in India, where proficiency in the language is often used as a marker of social status and privilege. Historically, gatekeeping knowledge and language has been a tool to assert caste and class superiority. To those policing his language, Kumar says on X that the bigger issue was that "Spivak can rudely punch me down by rudely asking who are you".

Asked for her take on the matter, Professor Manju Jaidka, director of humanities, SRM University, Delhi-NCR, Sonapat, who has previously interacted with Spivak at a symposium, says: "Madame Spivak carries an air of superiority and has the dubious reputation of exhibiting rudeness across various platforms. In fact, the fame she has acquired in academia should humble her. At the same time, those of us – lesser mortals, in her view – who encounter her high-handedness need to preserve our dignity and refrain from stooping to petty name-calling. The gift of language that sets us apart from other creatures should be wielded with restraint and dignity." To those fastidious about pronunciation, Kumar cites on X Du Bois' Criteria of Negro Art (1926): "They insisted he simply follow the accents and idioms of standard English, thereby killing not only his personal but his racial spirit and distinction." He also uses snippets of Guyanese-born poet John Agard's poem, Listen Mr. Oxford Don to drive home his point. The poet mixes Caribbean dialect and formal British English to rebel against the colonial imposition of language: "I ent have no gun I ent have no knife but mugging de Queen's English is the story of my life I don't need no axe to split/ up yu syntax I don't need no hammer to mash/ up yu grammar" Simply put, the term subaltern refers to a person or thing of inferior rank or status. In postcolonial theory, the term refers to people in the lower social classes or displaced and marginalised groups. Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci used the term subaltern to discuss the hegemony of the ruling classes over subordinate classes, since then the word has been widely used in postcolonial studies, most notably by Spivak and historian Ranajit Guha. The term has been subsumed by Marxist, feminist, and Dalit studies, among other disciplines. It was Spivak herself, who in her essay, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' contended that when intellectuals are trying to give voice to the oppressed, this act remains implicated in the oppressor's discourse – it produces subalternity and the subaltern as a passive object who is spoken for. Famous as Spivak's essay is for its seminal ideas, it is also equally notorious for being abstruse.

Of political ploys and spiritual alliances: Why candidates are posing with dera heads?



GNS News Agency, May 28

Last Wednesday, AAP candidate from Hoshiarpur Lok Sabha seat Raj Kumar Chabbewal met head of Radha Soami dera in Beas Baba Gurinder Singh Dhillon with his family. On Friday, SAD candidate from Jalandhar Lok Sabha seat Mohinder Singh Kaypee mirrored the same gesture and said that he has been following the Baba for years now and is engaged in public welfare works, following the path shown by the dera head.

While Chabbewal released his photos with the Baba and said that he has been a follower of the dera since long and has taken the 'Naam Daan' (which is given by the spiritual guru, for daily practice to invoke the inner voice), Kaypee said that he considers himself very fortunate that he got the opportunity to meet Babaji. In Doaba, which is the heart of Punjab and has two Lok Sabha seats of Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur (both reserved), every dera, big or small, has become a stage for political posturing with candidates seeking blessings and hoping for votes by the visits. The two politicians are not lone examples as several other candidates are making beelines to the dera in Jalandhar and releasing the photos on social media. Other party leaders are also visiting 'Dera

Sach Khand Ballan', which is the epicentre of Ravidassia community, and releasing their photos while meeting the dera head. So why are candidates of political parties now flaunting their dera visits, which earlier used to be behind close doors?

Explaining the change in trend, a senior leader of a prominent political party in Punjab said that the motives behind these calculated encounters is just about seeking blessings but also to project closeness to influential dera heads. "By aligning themselves with spiritual figures, politicians hope to tap onto the vast network of devout followers who view their leaders' photos as closeness with the candidates and even some consider it as quite serious at the time of voting," said a senior Congress leader, requesting anonymity. "Do voters truly buy into these theatrics?" many think. "Surely, they see through the veil of staged photo ops and vote based on substance and not just superficial gestures," the leader added. Some other leaders, however, feel that that while visiting deras might sway devout followers, the overt display of political opportunism could alienate discerning voters. "People are not blind to these tactics. They see through the façade and demand genuine commitment to their welfare and not mere photo opportunities," another political leader said. However, some other party leaders are not convinced. "In a place where candidates clamour for attention, such tactics become necessary," they countered, adding, "In the absence of substantive policy differences, the illusion of proximity to dera heads might just be the edge needed to tip the scales in one's favour." In this game of strategy and spectacle, the lines blur between faith and politics and this leaves the common people clueless. When asked, a Jalandhar resident said that it becomes very difficult for a person to choose the leader and vote. "Sometimes a person may be fond of a particular dera but not of the candidate. What does he or she do then, go by faith or by the state of affairs?"

Another New Zealander and first Sikh from country Malkiat Singh summits Mt Everest

GNS News Agency, May 28

A student of Punjab Public School at Nabha, young Malkiat Singh remembers getting an award from Sir Edmund Hillary, a legendary mountaineer who along with Tensing Norgay was the first to climb the world's highest mountain Mt Everest in 1953. Hillary, who was New Zealand's high commissioner to India from 1985 to 1988, visited the school in 1987 for annual awards when Singh had met him. Last Sunday morning, Singh, now 53, who had immigrated to New Zealand in 1998, summited the 8,848.86 m high Mt Everest, becoming the latest New Zealander to achieve the feat. He was overjoyed. "I remember meeting Sir Edmund Hillary and listening to his mountaineering tales. At that time, I knew nothing about mountaineering but we were fascinated by his and Tensing Norgay's triumph. Later when I shifted to Auckland in 1998, I again met Edmund Hillary at his residence. As I made it to the summit of Mt Everest this Sunday, I remembered the conversation and it feels special to be the latest New Zealand citizen and first Sikh from the country to do so," an overjoyed Singh told The Indian Express on the phone from Kathmandu.

Born in Baur village in Fatehgarh Sahib District, Singh studied in Nabha before joining Punjab Agricultural University as a BSc (Hons) agriculture student. Singh was adjudged as the best athlete for three consecutive years at the university before he pursued an MBA from the same university in 1995. A two-year professional stint saw him working for CIBA-GEIGY and ONGC before he immigrated to Auckland, New Zealand in 1998. A computer science programme for him was followed by him working as an accounts administrator in Auckland. While Singh had done some trekking in the scenic country, it was not till 2022 that he decided to plan for the summit of Mt Everest. With his elder son Mansimrat Singh, who recently joined the New Zealand Army as a commissioned officer, guiding him in the preparation for the expedition, Singh followed a strict schedule.

"I was an active sportsman in my university days in India. I was fond of trekking here in New Zealand but it was only in 2022 that I planned the Mt Everest expedition. I would follow the seven-month-long training schedule made by my elder son which involved completing 1,200 stairs every day at the local beach apart from doing hypoxic high altitude training in local gyms with less oxygen apart from going to work. November last, I climbed the 6,119 m high Mt Lobuche in Nepal," Singh said. Singh arrived in Nepal on April 12 and the Everest



base camp on April 20. The next few days would see him climbing Mt Lobuche once again as part of his acclimatisation before he started for the Mt Everest summit attempt from 6,065 m high camp 1. Singh had reached the 6,500 m high camp 2 on May 12 before waiting for five days at the camp due to bad weather. It was on May 18 that Singh started the summit push from 7,470 m high Camp 3 and reached 7,920 m high Camp 4 at 4 pm before attempting the final summit push for the summit at 8 pm the same night. It was at 8.37 am on May 19 that Singh hoisted the holy Nishan Sahib flag apart from the New Zealand national flag on the summit. The whole expedition cost Singh close to 1,50,000 New Zealand dollars and he sold one of his two houses for this feat. "My wife Parminder Kaur and both sons wanted to see me achieve the feat. By God's grace, I owned two houses in Auckland and sold one to get the money for the expedition. Five days at Camp 2 required a lot of patience and I would recite Gurbani to keep my mind and body calm," said Singh. The last one week saw two Mongolian climbers dying in their summit attempt of Mt Everest apart from a British climber and his sherpa going missing due to bad weather on Tuesday. Singh counts himself lucky. "One has to get lucky and I found myself lucky. We had to wait for five days first at Camp 2 and then it was a clear day on May 19. On our return, there was a snow blizzard and we could see many climbers abandoning their climbs. I hope my climb will inspire youth to dream about such feats and not to fall over bad things," Singh added.

BJP hits out at Congress govt in Karnataka, terms capital city 'Udta Bengaluru'

GNS News Agency, May 28

A total of 103 people had participated in the party, which was organised under the pretext of a birthday party. The participants included 73 men and 30 women. A total of 103 people had participated in the party, which was organised under the pretext of a birthday party. The participants included 73 men and 30 women.

Hitting out at the Siddaramaiah-led Congress government in Karnataka for the alleged "deteriorating law and order situation" in the state, the BJP termed the Silicon City as "Udta Bengaluru" and alleged the city is becoming the "adda" for narcotic substances and rave parties. The development comes after the Bengaluru Police busted a rave party at a farmhouse here recently which was allegedly attended by 86 people, including a Telugu film actress. Taking to 'X', the BJP has alleged that since the Congress government came to power in Karnataka, "immoral gatherings" were happening everywhere in Bengaluru.

"Law and order has deteriorated, government chaos has been exposed. After the Congress government came to power, immoral gatherings are happening everywhere in Bengaluru. Silicon City is now full of drugs, cannabis drug rave parties," BJP Karnataka said in a post in Kannada. The BJP also used a poster featuring Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar with the hashtags #BadBengaluru and #CongressFailsKarnataka to hit out at the state government.

In the poster shared by BJP on 'X', it termed the capital city as "Udta Bengaluru" and alleged "Silicon City is becoming an 'adda' (hub) for narcotic substances and rave parties are rampant." The BJP used "Udta Bengaluru"



in reference to the 2016 Bollywood movie "Udta Punjab", which highlighted drug abuse by youth in Punjab. According to police sources, the blood samples collected from those who attended the rave party at a farmhouse here recently revealed that 86 people, including a Telugu film actress, tested positive for narcotics. A total of 103 people had participated in the party, which was organised under the pretext of a birthday party. The participants included 73 men and 30 women. Police seized MDMA (Ecstasy) pills, MDMA crystals, hydro cannabis, cocaine, high-end cars, DJ equipment, including sound and lighting worth Rs 1.5 crore during the raid at the farmhouse near Electronics City in the wee hours of May 19. After the raid, police collected the blood samples of the participants in a private hospital, which revealed that 59 men and 27 women tested positive for narcotics. "Most of the people who attended the party were consuming drugs. The Central Crime Branch will issue notices to those who tested positive," a police source had said.

BJP should've told me, was not aware of other names on panel of contenders': Kishan Kapoor

The party preferred to give the ticket to Rajeev Bhardwaj, without taking Kapoor, 72, into confidence, a concern flagged by the five-time Dharamshala. Kishan Kapoor, the party's OBC face Kapoor, who belongs to the Gaddi (shepherd) community which has a significant presence in Kangra tells Saurabh Parashar at his residence in Khanyara, Dharamshala, the issues that the BJP needs to take up and how to bring about more transparency in party affairs. Excerpts:

Even after such a good performance in the last Lok Sabha election, the BJP overlooked you and gave the ticket to Rajeev Bhardwaj. Did that hurt you?

There is no question of getting hurt. Bhardwaj is the most deserving candidate among those whose names were shortlisted for the ticket from Kangra. When Bhardwaj filed his nomination papers, I even accompanied him to the office of the Returning Officer in Dharamshala and congratulated him. But what upset me was the manner in which the party picked the candidate. I was not taken into confidence. Considering my seniority and long-standing association, the party should have at least informed me about its decision. I was not even aware of the other names on the panel of contenders sent to the high command in Delhi.

Politics is heating up in Himachal. Where do you see the BJP's campaign going?

I can only comment on the campaign in Kangra parliamentary constituency. Leaders, including our party candidate, are just talking about new projects such as tourism, industry, and rail connectivity to be brought into the constituency, which includes Chamba district, which was once a most backward area. If you see the track record of my tenure and my predecessors, many big projects, including a four-lane highway from Chamba to Pathankot worth hundreds of crores, have already been sanctioned. Health facilities were promised and improved. I think our party should also highlight these works during the campaign and tell the people that these projects will be completed soon.

Why are you not actively participating in the election campaign? Have your relations with the BJP changed?

I was diagnosed with multiple health issues related to my lungs in the past. I underwent intensive surgery at AIIMS, Delhi. After that, I went to Haridwar for Ayurveda treatment. These days I am mostly confined to my house, but whenever my party calls me, I attend functions. For instance, party leaders called me for the filing of nomination of our candidate, and I attended.

Six Chandigarh-run electric vehicle charging stations come up in city; '40 by June-end'

GNS News Agency, May 28

The Chandigarh administration finally made six electric vehicle charging stations functional in the city a year and a half after launching the electric vehicle policy, having the provision of charging stations. For people intending to charge their vehicles at these stations, Rs 8 per unit will be charged for slow or moderate charging, Rs 10 per unit will be charged for fast charging and Rs 11 for battery swapping. These six charging stations are located at Sector 7, 43-B, 44-C, 44-D, Manimajra and Lake Sports Club. These six charging stations are among the proposed 53 stations that were to be made entirely functional by March-end. A formal announcement for the same was made, but to date, only six have been made functional, though the deadline was missed. A senior official of the Chandigarh Renewable Energy and Science and Technology Promotion Society (CREST) said by June-end, other 34 charging stations would also be made operational — thus the city will have 40 charging stations ready. The city has, however, about 20 charging stations. The Chandigarh administration had in September 2022 announced the electric vehicle policy, but failed to work on the infrastructure it was supposed to provide to the people with electric vehicles. The administration even started restricting the registration of fuel-based vehicles after achieving the "set targets" in the said year. This was despite the UT not setting up any infrastructure to facilitate the EV owners. On the day of the announce-



ment of the electric vehicle policy, the UT had promised to set up 100 public charging stations but nothing was done. After protests by automobile traders and residents, the UT Administrator in November last year had to stall the target-based registrations of electric vehicles. In the absence of infra facility, people owning electric vehicles either had been charging their vehicles at private charging stations or home. Citizens said they were being compelled to buy a particular vehicle, even as the supply was limited and the high cost pinched. The EV charging stations are being set up at Rock Garden parking, Lake Club parking, Multi Level parking in Sector 17, opposite Parade Ground in Sector 22, near Passport Office in Sector 34, at several locations in Sector 17, Japanese Garden, parking area of Car Bazar, etc.

India tops charts in sending immigrants to UK in 2023, most for jobs, degrees



GNS News Agency, May 28

In 2023, Indians formed the largest number of immigrants entering the UK, according to the government's Office for National Statistics. Around 250,000 Indians went to the UK last year, mostly for work and education. This comes even as the UK saw a net 10% dip in annual immigration. Indians have topped the charts as the largest group of people to migrate to the UK in 2023. The UK saw 250,000 Indians move to the country last year, mostly for jobs and education. This comes even as net immigration to the UK dropped by 10% in 2023 as against 2022.

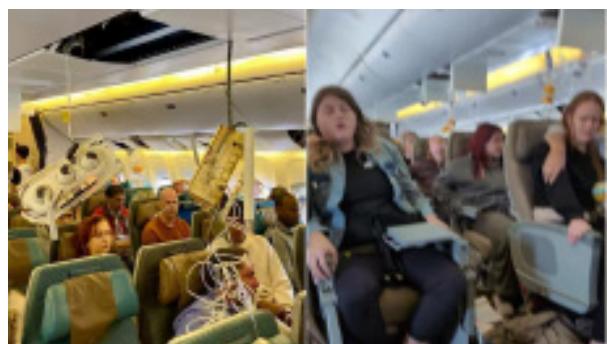
Of the 250,000 Indians who migrated to the UK last year, 127,000 went for work, 115,000 for studies and 9,000 for other reasons. Nigerians, with 141,000 immigrants, came next to Indians, as per the figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The Chinese came at

number three and Pakistanis in fourth spot in sending immigrants to the UK. Net migration to the UK dropped by 10% in 2023 to 685,000 after hitting a high in 2022 of 764,000, the ONS data shows. As for work visas, 337,240 work visas were granted in 2023 and 146,477 were for health and care visas. About 114,409 graduate visas were granted there, allowing students to work after they graduate. 50,503 of these were Indians number Indians were also the highest number to receive study visas, according to Home Office Immigration Statistics in the UK. But it is still too early to say if this was the start of a new downward trend. Around 85% of the people who migrated to the UK were from outside the European Union. Chinese, Pakistani and Zimbabwean people make the remaining up of the top five. An analysis indicated people from Nigeria, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan workers also brought dependants on them. Around 50% of the dependants were around 17. The end of the Covid-19 pandemic increased the numbers of non-EU immigrants. People also migrated to the UK for humanitarian reasons in 2023. Migrants from Ukraine and Hong Kong were 50,000 in number in 2023. As for Indians, recent data also shows how the number of study visas issued to Indians has dropped. Around 21,800 fewer Indian students went to the UK this year, according to a media report. The British Universities' International Liaison Association looked at the data from 75 universities and found that 90% of them had seen a fall in applications from international students. There was a 27% fall in total applications by international students for postgraduate courses in 2023 compared to 2022.

Fliers on turbulent Singapore Airlines plane sustained spinal, brain injuries

GNS News Agency, May 28

Of the 40 people on the Singapore Airlines flight still under treatment, 22 patients have spinal cord injuries and six have brain and skull injuries, he said. Visuals from inside the aircraft show dented overhead bins, blankets and miscellaneous items strewn across the floor. Twenty people who were aboard a Singapore Airlines flight that hit severe turbulence and diverted to Bangkok for an emergency landing on Tuesday remain in intensive care, a hospital official said on Thursday. "The number of patients in ICU remains the same," Adinun Kittiratanapaibool, Director of Bangkok's Samitivej Srinakarin Hospital told reporters, referring to the medical facility's intensive care unit. "The meaning of those in ICU are those that need close attention," he said, and added that currently there were no life-threatening cases. Of the 40 people on the flight still under treatment, 22 patients have spinal cord injuries and six have brain and skull injuries, he said. The oldest patient at the hospital is 83 years old and the youngest a two-year-old child who suffered a concussion, he added. Adinun had said 41 people were still under treatment, but later said one person had been discharged.



Ten British, nine Australian, seven Malaysian and four Philippine citizens were among the 41 people, according to a presentation made by Adinun. He did not provide any breakdown of passengers and crew under treatment. One passenger died of a suspected heart attack and dozens were injured after Singapore Airlines flight SQ321 encountered what the airline described as sudden, extreme turbulence while flying over Myanmar.

US political consultant fined \$6 million for AI-generated Joe Biden phone calls

GNS News Agency, May 28

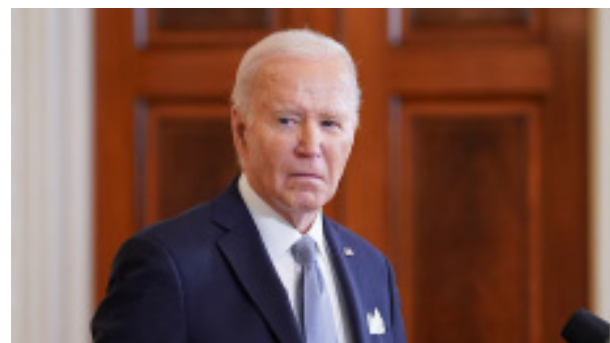
A political consultant who sent artificial intelligence-generated robocalls mimicking President Joe Biden's voice to voters ahead of New Hampshire's presidential primary faces a \$6 million fine and more than two dozen criminal charges. The Federal Communications Commission said the fine it proposed Thursday for Steven Kramer is its first involving generative AI technology. The company accused of transmitting the calls, Lingo Telecom, faces a \$2 million fine, though in both cases the parties could settle or further negotiate, the FCC said.

Kramer has admitted orchestrating a message that was sent to thousands of voters two days before the first-in-the-nation primary on Jan. 23. The message played an AI-generated voice similar to the Democratic president's that used his phrase "What a bunch of malarkey" and falsely suggested that voting in the primary would preclude voters from casting ballots in November.

Kramer is facing 13 felony charges alleging he violated a New Hampshire law against attempting to deter someone from voting using misleading information. He also faces 13 misdemeanor charges accusing him of falsely representing himself as a candidate by his own conduct or that of another person. The charges were filed in four counties and will be prosecuted by the state attorney general's office. Attorney General John Formella said New Hampshire was committed to ensuring that its elections "remain free from unlawful interference."

"I am pleased to see that our federal partners are similarly committed to protecting consumers and voters from harmful robocalls and voter suppression," said Formella, who was appointed by Republican Gov. Chris Sununu. Lingo Telecom said it strongly disagrees with the FCC's action, which it called an attempt to impose new rules retroactively. "Lingo Telecom takes its regulatory obligations extremely seriously and has fully cooperated with federal and state agencies to assist with identifying the parties responsible for originating the New Hampshire robocall campaign," the company said. "Lingo Telecom was not involved whatsoever in the production of these calls and the actions it took complied with all applicable federal regulations and industry standards."

The New Hampshire calls falsely showed up to recipients as coming from the personal cellphone number of Kathy Sullivan, a former state Democratic Party chair who helped run the Biden write-in campaign. She said in an email Thursday that she hopes Kramer is learning "there is a steep price for trying to rig an election." "The swift, decisive action by the New Hampshire Department of Justice and the FCC hopefully will deter other bad and/or stupid actors who don't respect democracy," she said. Kramer, who owns a firm that specializes in get-out-the-vote projects, did not respond to an email seeking comment Thursday. He told The Associated Press in February that he wasn't trying to influence the outcome of the election but rather wanted to send a wake-up call about the potential dangers of artificial intelligence when he paid a New Orleans magician \$150 to create the recording. "Maybe I'm a villain today, but I think in the end we get a better country and better democracy because of what I've done, deliberately," Kramer said in February.



A political consultant is facing a \$6 million fine and over two dozen charges for using AI-generated robocalls mimicking President Biden's voice ahead of the New Hampshire primary.

Voter suppression carries a prison sentence of 3 1/2 to 7 years in prison. Impersonating a candidate is punishable by up to a year in jail. In an interview days after he was publicly identified as the source of the calls, Kramer said he disagreed that his robocall suppressed voter turnout, noting that Biden won the Democratic primary by a wide margin as a write-in candidate. While he did some ballot access work for another former Democratic presidential hopeful, Rep. Dean Phillips of Minnesota, Kramer said he acted alone.

"I wrestled in college. I'm ready for the fight," said Kramer, who is scheduled to appear in court on June 5. "If they want to throw me in jail, good luck." Since the New Hampshire robocalls, the FCC has taken steps to combat the growing use of artificial intelligence tools in political communications. In February, it confirmed that AI voice-cloning tools in robocalls are banned under existing law, and on Wednesday, it introduced a proposal to require political advertisers to disclose when they use content generated by artificial intelligence in broadcast television and radio ads.

If adopted, the new rules would add a layer of transparency that many lawmakers and AI experts have been calling for as rapidly advancing generative AI tools churn out lifelike images, videos and audio clips that threaten to mislead voters in the upcoming U.S. election. FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel said Thursday that regulators are committed to helping states go after perpetrators. In a statement, she called the New Hampshire robocalls "unnerving." "Because when a caller sounds like a politician you know, a celebrity you like, or a family member who is familiar, any one of us could be tricked into believing something that is not true with calls using AI technology," she said in a statement. "It is exactly how the bad actors behind these junk calls with manipulated voices want you to react."

Why a Canadian province doesn't want more Indian students



GNS News Agency, May 28

Prince Edward Island (PEI), Canada's smallest province, announced a 25% reduction in immigration permits, leading to widespread protests from hundreds of Indian students who are now facing deportation. They say the sudden changes by the Canadian province to the immigration policy have left them with an uncertain future. But why has the Canadian province changed its rules to curb the inflow of international students? Though Prince Edward Island has acted, the problem that is now being associated with international students and lack of infrastructure development is an issue across Canada. Immigration to Canada, known for its accommodative immigration and citizenship policies, hit a record high in recent years.

Statistics Canada labour force data show the country's working-age population grew by 411,400 people in the first four months of 2024, a 47% increase over the same period in 2023 and nearly quadruple the average for those four months from 2007 to 2022, reported Yahoo News Canada. One of the sources of these working-age people is the high volume of international students landing in Canada.

Among the international students, those from India constituted the largest national cohort, comprising 37% of the 579,075 permits issued until November 2023. This figure, however, marked a decrease from the 41% in 2022. The number of Indians moving to Canada has gone up a lot since 2013. Between 2013 and 2023, the number rose from 32,828 to 139,715, a 326% increase. This increase was fuelled by more Indian students going to Canadian universities. The number of international students at Canadian universities went up from 62,223 in 2000 to 400,521 in 2021, a 544% increase. International students have been really important for Canadian universities. Since 2000, 45% of the growth in enrolment at Canadian universities is because of international students. The rise in immigration has put strain on healthcare and housing infrastructure of Prince Edward Island (PEI).

The Premier of PEI revealed a plan to cut the number of international migrants for permanent residency through the Provincial Nominee Programme (PNP). The new policy prioritises essential workers in healthcare, childcare, and construction, while deprioritising those in the food, retail, sales, and service sectors, which the international students mostly engage in. This change reduces annual permits from about 2,100 to 1,600, a 25% cut, significantly impacting low-skill service jobs. "PEI offered 1,070 PNP slots in 2018, which doubled to 2,050 slots in 2023 — so this new 25% reduction to 1,600 in 2024 is still 75% higher than it was in 2018. But it's going in the right direction, and that is the most we can realistically hope for," stated the Karlstuck report. Jeff Young, director of the PEI Office of Immigration, met with protesters on Friday to hear their concerns.

Iran releases first investigation report on Ebrahim Raisi's helicopter crash

Tehran: The General Staff of Iran's Armed Forces has released the first report on the causes of a recent helicopter crash that resulted in the deaths of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his entourage. Following the crash, a senior investigation committee composed of experts, specialists, and technicians arrived at the scene on Monday morning, the semi-official Tasnim news agency quoted the report by the General Staff of Iran's Armed Forces as saying on Friday. According to the report, the helicopter had remained on its predetermined course all along the way and had not deviated from the flight route. Nearly one minute and a half before the incident, the pilot of the crashed helicopter had contacted the other two helicopters of the President's convoy, the report said. No trace of bullets or similar items have been detected on the wreckage of the crashed helicopter, it added as quoted by Xinhua news agency report.

After crashing into the mountain, the helicopter had caught fire, it said. "Complications of the region, fog, and low temperature" had caused the search and rescue operations to continue until nightfall and then throughout the night, the report said, adding, "At 5 a.m. local time on Monday, with the assistance of drones, the exact location of the incident was identified." No suspicious issue had been detected in the conversations between the watch-

"We know it's a difficult situation for a lot of people," Young said. "But as the premier announced on February 22, the new immigration measures aim to manage our population growth," reported CBC News. Young explained that the changes focus on offering a faster track to permanent residency for people with healthcare, childcare, and construction experience. However, service sector employees can still get permits. "This year, about 215 to 220 permits have been allocated to the sales and service sector," he said, noting this is a significant decrease from the 700 to 800 permits granted in past years, reported CBC News. A reduction of approximately 25% in permits, primarily affecting low-skill food service positions. Hundreds of food service workers in PEI will not have their documents renewed, forcing them to either depart voluntarily or face deportation. The reduction has caused frustration and tension among Indian immigrants who arrived in PEI on temporary work permits. They argue they should be allowed to stay permanently and have participated in protests demanding to be "grandfathered" into the existing PNP system. These protests initially included a threat of a hunger strike, but as of May 22, no hunger strikes have been reported, the report stated.

Firstly, grandfathering current workers into the PNP system. Secondly, fair PNP draws without a point system, which currently excludes many in sales, service, food sectors, and truckers. Lastly, extension of work permits to compensate for lost opportunities due to the government's changes and economic issues. According to a report on Karlstuck, Prince Edward Island (PEI) has seen a significant influx of international immigrants since 2006. "Before 2006, international immigration to PEI was virtually nonexistent, but it has recently increased dramatically," said the report. Population and household growth continued to outpace the growth in rental vacancies in 2023, keeping rental vacancy rates at historic lows. The rental vacancy rate on the Island increased marginally between 2022 and 2023, from 0.8% to 1.0%. Charlottetown saw a decline in its vacancy rate, from 0.9% to 0.6%, the fourth consecutive yearly decline. In Summerside there has been some meaningful improvement in the vacancy rate, going from 1.0% to 2.7%. Average rents on the Island have increased from \$1,020 to \$1,079. Nationally, the rental vacancy rate was 1.5%, down for the second year in a row and down from the 1.9% vacancy rate in 2022. The Island tied Nova Scotia for the lowest vacancy rate amongst provinces, according to Prince Edward Island economic paper 2024. According to the latest data from Statistics Canada, Prince Edward Island ranks last among all the provinces when it comes to the share of the population with access to a regular healthcare provider. In 2022, 76% of Islanders had a regular healthcare provider, down nine points from three years ago. The national average was 86%, reported CBC News. Krista Cassell, president of the Medical Society of PEI, said these numbers highlight the need for more family doctors in the province. "The median wait time, from coming into the ER to being admitted to another hospital unit, is 35.6 hours on PEI. The national average is just 14.7 hours," reported CTV News.

In 2023, Prince Edward Island had the longest wait times in Canada. It took an average of 41.7 weeks to see a specialist after a general practitioner appointment. Adding a median wait of 23 weeks for treatment after seeing a specialist, the total median wait time from general practitioner referral to treatment was over 64 weeks, according to Statista. The new immigrants add to the wait-time and residents struggle for healthcare support. This strain on the small province's infrastructure is what made the provincial government of Prince Edward Island tighten the tap on the flow of Indian students.



tower and the flight crew, it added.

More details would be provided after further investigations, it said. Raisi and his entourage were en route to East Azerbaijan province when the helicopter carrying them crashed in a mountainous area on Sunday. Also on board the helicopter were Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and Mohammad Ali Ale-Hashem, the representative of Iran's Supreme Leader to East Azerbaijan. Raisi was laid to rest on Thursday in the holy shrine of Imam Reza in his hometown, the northeastern city of Mashhad.

Haj operations: 30-bed hospital in Makkah for Indian women pilgrims without Mahram

Jeddah: The Indian Haj officials in Saudi Arabia fully indulged in Haj operations as pilgrims from India are gaining momentum in Two Holy cities of Islam. Every day 4000 thousand pilgrims arrive in Saudi Arabia.

Also, the same number of pilgrims moving from Madinah to Makkah, according to Indian Consul General Md. Shahid Alam. He told the media on Wednesday that so far 52,000 pilgrims reached Saudi Arabia, among them 30,000 camped in Madinah and the rest were moved to Makkah. Shahid Alam stated that a total of 1,75,025 pilgrims are coming for Haj and among them 1,40,020 pilgrims facilitated by the Indian Central Haj Committee.

This year, 5,000 women without Mahram will be performing Haj and exclusive women staff being deployed to look after them during their stay in Saudi Arabia, said Indian consul general. He highlighted that an exclusive women hospital with 30 bed capacity is being set up for the women pilgrims.

The top Indian diplomat noted that this year most Indian pilgrims lodged at Markazi area in Madinah and



also in Mina from zone one to four allocated for Indian pilgrims. In significant development, a group pilgrims will be transported through Harmain Metro Train, high speed rail, from their Jeddah Airport to Makkah. Disclosing medical facilities for pilgrims, he said that the Indian Haj Mission has set up 30 and 40 bed each hospital in Mina and 20 bed hospital in Madinah.

Why Paytm shares tumbled nearly 5%



Paytm Q4 earnings preview: Dolat Capital expects 29 per cent dip QoQ due to PPBL business transition. Adjusted Ebitda is seen at Rs 50 crore, helped by UPI incentive. Several brokerages have expressed concerns over Paytm's Q4 results. Shares of One97 Communications Limited, the parent company of digital payments firm, Paytm fell nearly 5% in early trade. While Paytm shares had soared despite reporting a net loss of nearly Rs 550 crore on Wednesday, fresh reports indicate that the digital payments firm is gearing up for another round of layoffs. In a letter to shareholders, Paytm CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma, hinted that the company's employee costs have increased due to investments in technology, merchant sales and financial services. However, Sharma indicated that the company will be focused on reducing employee costs, leading to savings of Rs 400-500 crore.

"For the coming year, while we continue to invest in the merchant sales team, as well as risk and compliance functions, we expect reductions in other employee costs. We expect annualised people cost savings of Rs 400 - Rs 500 crore," Sharma said. Some reports have indicated that the digital payments firm will lay off around 20% of its workforce, following the Q4 net loss that was a result of financial disruptions. It may be noted that the Reserve Bank of India had asked the digital payments firm's associate, Paytm Payments Bank Limited, to wind-up some key operations, citing non-compliance. Brokerages concerned after Paytm Q4

Following the digital payment firm's Q4 results, several brokerage firms have also shared tepid views on Paytm's stock.

Foreign brokerage firm Macquarie has maintained an 'underperform' rating on Paytm, setting a target price of Rs 275. This implies a potential decline of 25% in the

stock, as the brokerage anticipates challenging quarters ahead. Macquarie projects the March 2024 quarter to be tough for Paytm, with the June 2024 quarter expected to be even more difficult.

The full impact of RBI regulations is expected to be felt in Q1FY25, according to Macquarie. The brokerage firm highlighted the need for robust support from the lending ecosystem, which remains a key factor to monitor for Paytm. "Adjusted Ebitda came in better than our estimates. We estimate overall disbursements to decline 8 per cent YoY in FY25 as the company follows a distribution-led model and stays away from low-ticket postpaid loans. Merchant and personal loan segments are already seeing a recovery; however, take rates will moderate as the company forgoes collection incentives," Macquarie said. Motilal Oswal has revised its earnings estimates, projecting Paytm to achieve Ebitda breakeven by FY26.

"We value Paytm based on 15 times FY28 Ebitda and discount the same to FY26E at a discount rate of 15 per cent. We thus value the stock at Rs 400, which implies 2.3 times FY26E P/Sales," Motilal added, maintaining a 'neutral' rating. Bernstein noted an improvement in Paytm's total GMV in April, which reached 81% of January's GMV, marking a recovery from the low seen in March 2024. "The merchant loans have seen a revival in April after seeing a complete shutdown in February and the volumes are back at 86 per cent of Jan value which is a positive," it said. However, the brokerage also pointed out severe impacts on Paytm's payment business due to a combination of a 20% drop in payment GMV and a reduction in payment processing margin expectations to 5-6 bps. "Also, Paytm has 'pivoted' to doing more of distribution only loans which has helped limit the decline in financial services revenue," it added. JM Financial highlighted a sharp decline in financial services revenue due to a reduction in the value of loans disbursed, as Paytm completely halted its post-paid business in March 2024 due to asset quality issues in the low-ticket segment. "We remain watchful of the closure of small ticket postpaid business and pivot towards high ticket lending thereof. Although Paytm has found alternatives for PPBL, we believe onboarding of new customers and revival of high margin products in payments business is contingent on regulatory approvals, seamless migration of accounts, and smooth integration," JM Financial stated, issuing a 'sell' rating and setting a target price of Rs 300.

NP Singh to step down from Sony Pictures Networks India after 25 years

NP Singh, the Managing Director and CEO of Sony Pictures Networks India (SPNI), announced on May 24 that he will be stepping down after 25 years with the company. Singh has decided to leave his role to focus on social change and move from operational roles to advisory positions.

"Today, I have a significant update to share. After nearly 44 years in my career, including a rewarding 25-year tenure at SPNI, I have decided to move on from my role as MD and CEO. Having reached many significant milestones with our team, I am now ready to focus on social change and shift from operational roles to advisory ones," said Singh in a press release. He will continue to lead SPNI until the company finds a suitable successor. The company has already started a structured succession planning process to ensure a smooth transition. Singh highlighted his commitment to SPNI's ongoing success and highlighted the many achievements the team has accomplished together. "However, my commitment to SPNI and its success remains strong. During my time here, we have established industry benchmarks, expanded our reach, and achieved many noteworthy accomplishments. I am dedicated to ensuring our legacy of success continues and grows under the new leadership," he said.

Singh also addressed potential speculations during



this transition period, urging everyone to rely on official updates from the company. He promised that SPNI would provide timely and transparent information through their established channels. Singh's journey at Sony India began in 1999 when he joined as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Over the years, he rose through the ranks, becoming the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and eventually the CEO in 2019. An alumnus of the Delhi School of Economics, Singh holds a Master's degree from the institute and a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from the University of Delhi. Before his time at Sony, he held several leadership positions in finance and operations at companies like Modi Xerox, Spice Telecom, ModiCorp, and Hindustan Copper Limited.

Indigo's business class services to takeoff by year-end



Low-cost carrier IndiGo on Thursday announced its plans enter the business class segment and provide business class services on its flights by the end of the year. The airline will launch a new tailor-made business product on select routes as per an exchange filing on May 23. Details of the business class offerings will be announced by August this year.

"Over the past 18 years, India's and IndiGo's growth story have been closely interlinked. We believe as India gears up to become the third largest economy in the world, it's our privilege to provide the New India even more options to choose from as they travel business. We are excited with this new phase and tailor-made product in IndiGo's evolution and strategy and aim to further give wings to the nation, by connecting people and aspirations," said Pieter Elbers, CEO of IndiGo. InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, the parent company of IndiGo, announced a 106% year-on-year increase in net profit to Rs 1,894.80 crore for Q4 FY24, up from Rs 919.20 crore in the same period last year.

The airline expects a 10-12% increase in June quarter capacity measured in available seat per kilometre (ASK) compared to the first quarter of fiscal year 2024.

Revenue from operations for the fourth quarter rose by 25.9% year-on-year to Rs 17,825.30 crore, excluding foreign exchange losses, resulting in a profit of Rs 2,060 crore compared to Rs 666.40 crore in the previous year, as reported in an exchange filing by IndiGo. During the quarter, passenger ticket revenues amounted to Rs 15,600 crore, marking a 25.5% increase. Ancillary rev-

enues reached Rs 1,719.40 crore, up by 18.9% year-on-year. InterGlobe Aviation noted a 14.4% year-on-year rise in capacity to 34.8 billion, with passengers growing by 14% to 26.7 million. IndiGo maintained a healthy total cash balance of Rs 34,737 crore, consisting of Rs 20,823 crore in free cash and Rs 13,914 crore in restricted cash. The capitalised operating lease liability was recorded at Rs 43,488 crore, with total debt, including the capitalised operating lease liability, amounting to Rs 51,280 crore.

RBI warns retail investors against cryptocurrency risks

New Delhi: RBI yet again urged retail investors to be more cautious while investing in cryptocurrencies, and noted that the crypto ecosystem lacks accountability and stability and is marked by regulatory ambiguity. RBI, in its monthly bulletin released Tuesday, asserted that their findings suggest that the interest in cryptocurrencies is driven by speculative motive rather than a means of payment for real economic transactions.

The RBI findings are in accordance with a survey by UK FCA that majority of investors (38 per cent) investing in cryptoassets taking it as a 'gamble to make or lose money'. "Some cryptos may be backed by underlying; however, if the underlying itself is another unstable digital asset with no transparency and central bank back up, the crypto system is prone to crisis without safeguards," the RBI bulletin noted. The bulletin quoted the RBI governor Shaktikanta Das, wherein he had once said "the term cryptocurrency, private cryptocurrency is a fashionable way of describing what is otherwise 100 per cent speculative activity." The recent collapse of FTX and Binance exposed the limitations of the country specific rules/bans and grave risks they entail. "As DeFi (Decentralised Finance) continues to evolve and mature, and its interaction with the traditional financial system grows, its utility against risks demands further analysis," RBI said.

London dentist goes viral after saying you shouldn't brush your teeth after vomiting; find out if it's true



A London dentist, Dr Shaadi Manouchehri, has gone viral on TikTok with a surprising message about brushing your teeth. Her video, seen by over 12 million users according to USA Today, highlights three situations where brushing might actually be harmful, raising questions about the right way to maintain oral hygiene. However, Dr Manouchehri's advice to skip brushing after vomiting has caused the most confusion. Viewers expressed concerns, with one user commenting, "I would rather lose all of my teeth than not brush after vomiting!" Another wrote, "Apparently idk (I don't know) when to brush."

According to Dr Manouchehri, the outermost layer on your teeth can be "worn away" by the stomach's acidic contents if you choose to brush right after vomiting, USA Today reports.

Dr. Niyati Arora BDS, MDS (prosthodontist) at Crown Hub Dental Clinic, Pitampura, confirms that this is true. "Vomit consists of undigested food along with the acids that are produced by our stomach which helps to digest the food. This makes it acidic in nature. Once we vomit, the ambience in our mouth and throat becomes acidic. This acidic environment weakens our enamel — which is the outer mineralised structure of the tooth. If we brush at this time, one thing that can happen is that the enamel can abrade away easily as its already in a weakened

state and we end up rubbing the acid of our mouth on all our teeth, exposing even more surfaces of teeth to acid and worsening the situation." Dr Nisha Thakkar, cosmetic dentist at Dr Karishma Aesthetics adds, "Enamel is the calcium covering of the tooth surface; it can wear off with acid. So, after vomiting, you should ideally wait for the acidic pH to get neutral, which generally takes 30 to 45 minutes."

Saliva's role in helping neutralise mouth acidityNot many people know this but saliva has numerous functions in the body. Saliva is antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal covering on the teeth surface, Dr Thakkar says. It helps in digestion and mineralisation; saliva also contains buffer systems responsible for maintaining acid-base balance. She continues, "The most important role is played by the bicarbonate buffer. The buffers maintain the pH of saliva between 5.7 and 6.2. There is no specific process to increase salivation in the mouth but drinking water, moisturising the lips, and breathing through the nose, are some ways to maintain salivation."

Concurring, Dr Arora elucidates that bicarbonates (H2CO3) are central to maintaining acid-base disturbances happening in our oral cavity. The saliva that is saturated with all these ions constantly form a layer around our teeth and help the teeth to replenish the minerals that are lost during the demineralisation process. brushing After vomiting, you should ideally wait for the acidic pH to get neutral. Importance of timing when it comes to brushing teeth after consuming acidic substances or vomiting According to Dr Arora, the worst time to brush the teeth would be right after consumption of acidic things. "It's always better to wait for around 30 minutes before we brush our teeth." To avoid decay, Dr Thakkar agrees with Dr Arora on waiting for 30-45 mins before brushing your teeth. "Within this time the pH of the mouth shall be neutralised and it is safe to brush." In the meantime, she recommends we can do certain things to neutralise the ill effects of acid. "These would include swishing the mouth with normal drinking water, consuming dairy products and more of green vegetables that can help keep the saliva balanced and acids under control."

Turns out, you must not snack between 4-6 pm; find out why

We know, because even our favourite time to snack on that hot samosa or crispy wafers is tea time — usually between 4-6 pm. But, turns out, we are doing a gross injustice to our health by doing so. According to longevity biohacker Prashant Desai, those two hours are our biggest enemy, as he explains: "You start your day well as you have rested enough, had breakfast, and gone to work. The first seven or eight hours of your day are highly motivated and productive. But by 4 pm, that discipline fades, and you start snacking. This habit carries into dinner and late-night snacking. To stay healthy, avoid eating between 4 pm and 6 pm," Desai said on Instagram. He suggested having a glass of water, chaach (buttermilk), or nimbu pani (lime water) at 3.30 pm. "If you're still hungry, eat some nuts with black coffee or black tea or drink a protein shake," said Desai, stating that these tips will help you maintain discipline between 4 pm to 6 pm and stay on track.

Should you pay heed to this advice?

Dr Vinoda Kumari, deputy chief medical officer, Jindal Naturecure Institute said that there are many reasons why snacking between 4-6 pm might be troublesome. "First of all, dinnertime is almost here, which might encourage overindulgence and upset your appetite for a healthy meal later. Second, the snacks eaten at this time of day are frequently heavy in fats, sweets, and calories, all of which can lead to energy slumps and weight gain. Furthermore, eating a late-afternoon snack may obstruct your body's natural hunger signals, making it more difficult to identify true hunger signals in the future," said Dr



Kumari. As such, she recommended choosing "light, nutrient-dense foods that provide continuous energy and satiety". "Think of choices such as whole-grain crackers with roasted chana, makhana or foxnuts, fresh fruits, and almonds," Dr Kumari told indianexpress.com, adding that these options provide a good ratio of protein, healthy fats, and carbohydrates to keep you feeling full and content until dinner.

What else to keep in mind?

It's critical to watch meal sizes and refrain from mindless eating when snacking. "Consider how hungry you are and select snacks that will help you reach your dietary objectives. Stay hydrated as well, as sometimes hunger can be mistaken for dehydration. You can keep up a healthy eating pattern all day long by choosing mindful snacks and paying attention to your body's signals," said Dr Kumari.

9 simple exercises that can help improve your ankle mobility

Ankle mobility is a crucial yet often overlooked aspect of overall movement and flexibility. Whether you're an athlete aiming to enhance performance or someone seeking relief from everyday discomfort, restricted ankle mobility can hinder your ability to move efficiently and perform more challenging exercises. According to Dr Pallavi Singh, founder of Stride Podiatry, "Stiff ankles can be a real drag, limiting your mobility and flexibility. Two main culprits are often to blame: tight calf muscles and lingering after-effects of old injuries."

Imagine your calf muscles as strong ropes pulling on your ankle joint. When these muscles get tight, it's like they're yanking on your heel, says Dr Singh, making it difficult to bend your foot upwards (dorsiflexion). This tightness can sneak up on you from inactivity, overdoing exercise, or even wearing shoes that don't provide enough support. "Sprains, strains, and fractures around the ankle joint can leave behind scar tissue. This scar tissue can act like a tiny internal bully, restricting movement and causing stiffness, especially if the injury didn't heal completely," she informs. However, the good news is that you can improve ankle mobility, alleviate discomfort, and enhance your range of motion with targeted stretches and exercises. Dr Dharitri Rajbangshi, senior physiotherapist and corporate wellness head at Physiotattva recommends these nine effective ankle mobility stretches to help you regain flexibility and strength in your ankles:

Ankle circles

By performing controlled circles in both clockwise and counterclockwise directions, ankle circles help lubricate the ankle joint and improve its overall range of motion.

Heel raises

Strengthening the muscles around the ankle joint through heel raises enhances stability and support, contributing to improved mobility and reduced risk of injury. Toe flexion and extension This exercise not only stretches the muscles and tendons in the front of the ankle but also promotes better proprioception and balance, essential for maintaining mobility and preventing falls.



Resistance band ankle dorsiflexion

Using a resistance band adds resistance to the dorsiflexion movement, intensifying the stretch and targeting the muscles responsible for pulling the foot towards the body. ankle mobility The good news is that with targeted stretches and exercises, you can improve ankle mobility, alleviate discomfort, and enhance your range of motion. (Source: Freepik) Foam rolling

Using a foam roller to massage the calves and lower legs can help release tension and improve flexibility, preparing the muscles for deeper stretches. Ankle plantar flexion stretch with prop Sitting on the floor with legs extended, loop a towel or resistance band around the ball of one foot and gently pull it towards you, feeling a stretch in the calf and Achilles tendon. Calf stretch

Stand facing a wall, place one foot against the wall with the knee bent. Lean forward, keeping the heel on the ground, to stretch the ankle dorsiflexors. Dynamic ankle mobility drill Perform ankle circles, ankle alphabet (drawing the alphabet with your toes), or ankle figure eights to dynamically warm up and mobilise the ankle joint. Ankle joint mobilisations

With the guidance of a physical therapist or qualified professional, perform joint mobilisation techniques to improve ankle joint mechanics and unlock restricted movement.

Richa Chadha reveals she 'opted out' of scenes in Panga when she noticed her role in Kangana Ranaut-starrer wasn't as 'meaty' as she'd been led to believe



Actor Richa Chadha, who was recently seen in the Netflix series Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar, spoke about working on the film Panga, and revealed that she tried to back out of the project when she noticed that it was 'going south'. Richa has previously spoken about collaborating with actor Kangana Ranaut, whose political leanings are often seen in stark contrast to Richa's own liberal views. Directed by Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari, Panga was released in January 2020, and didn't make much of an impact at the box office.

In an interview with Galatta Plus, Richa was asked about doing a supporting role in Panga, despite having once said that in the film industry's eyes, this could be seen as a demotion. She said, "I kind of opted out of a lot of scenes in that one, I'll tell you... Especially towards the end. I was excited about it because I thought the film would be about female athletes, and how the choices are even more tough for them, in between having a child and..."

She continued, "Somewhere along the line, it went south, for me. So, I was like, 'Give me a guest appearance.'" Asked if her character was more of a parallel lead when she signed on, Richa said, "I would say it had more meat, definitely... It's not about the supporting part, the small part, the special appearance. None of that really matters to me, because I feel like I hold my own no matter where I am." In the past, Richa has said that she agreed to do the film after hearing a 'vague narration'. She told Indian Express, "I have never had a problem working with anyone. I get along with everyone unless they are douches and then I just hate them." Richa said that as an outsider in the film industry, the most difficult thing for her to crack has been 'the ecosystem'. She said, "I was so naive. It took me a while to realise during the promotions of Gangs of Wasseypur that if I was going for an interview, I could legitimately ask for makeup and hair, or a stylist... Navigating the ecosystem, getting the right advice, figuring out what PR is."

Mom-to-be Deepika Padukone shares new photos as Bollywood backs her amid trolling, fans call her 'ray of sunshine'.

Deepika Padukone started her Friday morning bringing in sunshine as she posted a set of cheerful pictures donning a sunny yellow dress and flashing a million-dollar smile. Deepika took to Instagram story to share her pictures. Soon-to-be mom Deepika had her fans delighted with her pregnancy glow. See her pictures here: Deepika is bright-eyed in this picture where she's smiling away. Deepika and her husband, actor Ranveer Singh, took to Instagram earlier this year to announce their pregnancy. The couple expressed joy as they prepare to welcome their baby in September.

Deepika Padukone in yellow dress-2 Deepika Padukone is a ray of sunshine in her new pictures. While Deepika has been away from the public eye, she was last spotted by paps when she stepped out to cast her vote in Mumbai on Monday, May 20. She was seen donning a white shirt and denims, twinning with Ranveer Deepika Padukone in yellow dress-3 Deepika Padukone is pregnant, expecting her child in September. Deepika's fans poured in their love as she radiated in her pregnancy glow and debuted her baby bump.

Deepika and Ranveer dated for six years before tying the knot on November 14, 2018, at Lake Como in Italy. She had earlier said that she and Ranveer love children and were 'looking forward to the day when we will start our own family'. The actor faced some distasteful trolling recently as she was seen with her husband as they stepped out to vote during the Lok Sabha elections. While Deepika herself didn't comment, Bollywood celebs



such as Alia Bhatt, Pooja Bhatt and Shruti Seth liked a post asking haters to behave.

On the work front Deepika was last seen in Jawan with Shah Rukh Khan and is now all set to star in Rohit Shetty's Singham Again as Lady Singham. Recently, in an interview with Deadline, she opened up about her work and not doing another Hollywood film after XXX: Return of Xander Cage (2017). She said, "I don't think we've drastically changed anything in India about the way that we work or the kinds of stories that we tell. I think we've always had interesting stories to tell but I do think that what has changed is that the world has opened up to the idea of the East and to India in particular and I think that's the change—realizing there is a world outside of America."

Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor visit their under construction house in Bandra, fans joke 'Taj Mahal would have been ready by now'



Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor have been making their dream house for many years now. On Friday, the two stars were seen visiting the under construction bungalow in Bandra's Pali Hill area. Ranbir, who is currently working on his next film with Ramayan, was seen in a clean-

shaven look with Alia dressed cute pink shorts. Fans in the comments section couldn't help but wonder how many years it had been since they started making the house. "From last 10 years they are making this house??," wrote one fan and another mentioned,

"Ab tak to taj mahal bhi bnkr tayar ho jata bhai (Taj Mahal would have gotten ready by now.)" Located in Bandra's Pali Hill, the house has been in the Kapoor family since 1980. Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor bought the property back then after they tied the knot and named it Krishna

Raj, after Rishi's mother. Ranbir grew up in this house but in 2016, Rishi and Neetu moved out and started taking permissions for renovation work on the property.

Before Rishi's cancer diagnosis in 2018, he would sometimes visit the property to check on the renovation. Since his passing, Ranbir, Alia and Neetu have been keeping a close eye on the construction work. Alia and Ranbir presently reside in an apartment in Bandra. Ranbir has been living in this apartment for a few years now and Alia moved into this apartment after the two of them started dating each other. They got married in the same apartment in April 2022, and welcomed their daughter Raha. It has been suggested that Krishna Raj will be a multi-floored house with one floor specifically for Neetu Kapoor.

Bhaiyya Ji movie review: Weak film does Manoj Bajpayee no credit

Exactly to the date a year ago, director Apurv Singh Karki and actor Manoj Bajpayee came together in a film called Sirf Ke Bandaa Kaafi Hai. That was Bajpayee playing a lawyer helping a victim of self-styled godman's Asaram Babu's sex assault. This time, Karki and Bajpayee have gone literal — there is sirf ek bandaa in Bhaiyya Ji, and kaafi or not, that is all there is.

In a rare marvel of filmmaking, Karki, director and co-writer, has made a film that you can drop into at any time — and not bother whether it is the start, middle or end. For, after a reasonably nice start when Bhaiyya Ji (Manoj Bajpayee), in the midst of his wedding festivities somewhere in Bihar, is worrying winsomely over younger brother Vedant (Akash Makhija) who is coming over by train from Delhi, and then growing increasingly frantic as Vedant goes missing, the film's record is stuck.

Revenge has to be had, particularly when the killer of Vedant is the no-good and blood-thirsty son, Abhimanyu (Jatin Goswami) of a remarkably sense-free ganglord, Chandrabhan Singh (played by Suvinder Vicky, who impressed so in Kohrra). But how and how many times? We are not really sure whether Bhaiyya Ji, who apparently gave up violence for some wedded bliss with Mithali (Zoya Hussain) or some other reason in the past that is mumbled through at super-double speed, has actually gone down the pacifist path.

But thanks to some very crude and cruel prodding by Vedant's mother, and his stepmother (Chhaya Kadam), Bhaiyya Ji is left with little choice but to proceed to Chandrabhan's palatial mansion somewhere in Delhi and demand "justice". Before that happens, a medallion encasing a lion's face amidst sun's rays is brought out of a box with much fanfare, and makes its way around Bihar, causing people to literally piss in their pants. Such is the lore of this ganglord who wreaks justice with a shovel, with much allegorical dust flying about — all the better to



establish his subaltern origins, maybe, compared to Chandrabhan's palace and his velvet waistcoats.

Supporters down their shutters and join in at the sight of the medallion hence aloft as a signal, and Bhaiyya Ji lands in Delhi with at least his entire village in tow. There is a glimmer of hope that Karki is suggesting a Bihari sub-network that runs through cities such as Delhi that people like us see and not see — and that this could be Bhaiyya Ji's biggest strength. Nope. We have clashes, more clashes, yet more clashes, and then some more. There is a Shiva procession as backdrop for one of them, and unending chatter about "bhakti aatma" of Vedant because the ritualistic crowd hasn't eaten the offering after his death. One can't of course leave a "bhakti aatma" wandering around, no matter how many times Bhaiyya Ji himself rises from the dead.

Then Mithali, a nicely well-rounded Hussain, giving us another hope that Karki is embracing body types more natural to an older woman, drops in to lend a hand and her sniper-shooter skills. Her parents at one time appear to warn her about hanging around with a man of violence like Bhaiyya Ji, "After all that education"?

Aishwarya Rai celebrates mother Brinda's birthday with Aaradhya, fans ask her about arm injury: 'Hope she is fine after surgery'



Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, who was recently in Cannes with her daughter Aaradhya Bachchan, took to social media to share pictures from her mother Brinda Rai's birthday celebrations. In the shots shared on Instagram, Aishwarya and Aaradhya are seen celebrating Brinda's birthday. Both of them twinned in black and were all smiles for the special day. The trio is seen posing for pictures with Aishwarya's father Krishnaraj's photo. In the pictures, Aishwarya was seen wearing the cast after her arm injury as she posed with Brinda, Aaradhya and other family members. Reportedly after returning from Cannes earlier this week and casting her vote in Mumbai, Aishwarya underwent a surgery on her injured arm.

Reacting to her pictures, Aishwarya's fans continued to express concern over her injured arm while others inquired where was Abhishek Bachchan. One fan, talk-

ing about Aishwarya, commented, "She's damn pretty even at 50?????" another fan wrote, "God Bless you and your mom ?? may she live 100 yrs ?? @aishwaryarabachchan_arb," yet another fan wrote, "Hope Aishwarya is fine after surgery.?????. Also please make a big return to MOVIES."

On the work front Aishwarya attended the 77th Cannes Film Festival as he promoted an international cosmetic brand there. She is a Cannes regular and has been attending the film festival since she made her Cannes debut in 2002 for the premiere of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Devdas with Shah Rukh Khan. For the last few years, from 2013, Aaradhya has also been accompanying her mother at Cannes, this year she was seen helping her as she tended to her injured arm. Talking about films, she was last seen in Mani Ratnam's Ponniyin Selvan 1 and 2.

Malaika Arora reacts to Chaiya Chaiya co-star Shah Rukh Khan suffering a heatstroke, gives tips on how to beat the heat

Shah Rukh Khan was recently admitted to a hospital in Ahmedabad after he reportedly suffered from heatstroke and dehydration in the city while cheering for his IPL team Kolkata Knight Riders in a match against Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Narendra Modi Stadium. Now SRK's Dil Se co-star Malaika Arora has reacted to his hospitalisation. When Malaika was asked about the recent hospitalisation of Shah Rukh Khan due to dehydration, the actress told Instant Bollywood, "That's why I am saying you have to protect your environment. That's the only way the environment will love you back. But of course, you can't really do much." She added, "Stay hydrated, drink loads of water, wear cool, comfortable cotton clothes, use sunscreen, try carrying an umbrella. These are my tips!"

While SRK was still in the hospital on Wednesday, his Darr co-star and business partner Juhi Chawla had given his health update. She told News18, "Shah Rukh was not feeling too well last night, but he is being attended to and was feeling much better this evening. God willing, he will soon be up and in the stands on the weekend, cheering the team, as we play the finals."

A day after SRK was hospitalised, his manager Pooja Dadlani released a statement on social media giving an update on his health. She wrote, "To all of Mr Khan's fans and well wishers — he is doing well. Thank you for your



love, prayers and concern ??." While the actor is now doing well, he was kept under observation for about a day before he was given a discharge on Thursday evening. The star was seen returning to Mumbai along with his wife Gauri Khan. The couple was spotted exiting the private airport at Kalina on Thursday night. Their daughter Suhana Khan, son AbRam and Amitabh Bachchan's grandson Agastya Nanda accompanied them. On the work front SRK was last seen in Atlee's Jawaan. He also did a cameo in Salman Khan's Tiger 3. While he has not officially announced his next film, he is expected to feature in The King with Suhana. The film, directed by Sujoy Ghosh, is currently in pre-production and is targeting a 2025 big screen release.

Ambati Rayudu to RCB fans: 'Force your management to bring players who'll put team interests 1st'



players who will put the team's interests first. A great new chapter can start from the mega auction," Rayudu wrote.

This is not the first the 38-year-old has been critical of the franchise. "If you talk about RCB, it shows that only passion and celebration don't win you trophies. You don't get the IPL trophy just by reaching the playoffs." Rayudu would say RCB's loss to RR. To qualify for the playoffs RCB had to beat Chennai Super Kings by 18 runs in their final league game which they could do. "Don't think you will win the trophy just by beating CSK." In the first half of the season, RCB could only win one of their eight games. "Look at them who bats in the pressure situations for them? Young Indian batters and Dinesh Karthik," Rayudu would critique RCB when speaking on Star Sports. "Your big-name players who are international players who are supposed to take pressure where are they? Are all in the dressing room.

This has been happening for over 16 years for this team." Rayudu would analyze. The 38-year-old would even go on to say, "This has been their story. When there is pressure we cannot find any big-name players all young players are coming down the order. Your big-name players go to the top of the order and eat the cream. A team like this will never win. This is the reason why they have not won IPL thus far."

On Wednesday Royal Challengers Bengaluru with four defeat wicket loss to Rajasthan Royals in the Eliminator have gone out of the tournament. The franchise since the inception of IPL in 2008 has been trophyless. Six-time IPL winner Ambati Rayudu took a dig at RCB teams and management on his X account ("My heart truly goes out to all the RCB supporters who have passionately supported the team over the years. If only the management and the leaders had the team's interests ahead of individual milestones.. RCB would have won multiple titles. Just remember how many fantastic players have been let go. Force your management to bring

Virat Kohli thanks Dinesh Karthik after DK ends IPL career: 'When I was really struggling for confidence, he sat me down and helped'



lengers Bengaluru and Chennai Super Kings, at M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru. "So, I just like his honesty and courage to go and speak to anyone about things that he feels deeply about. And that I think is the most special thing for me when it comes to Karthik and that's one thing I have always cherished about him. That's why we get along really really well," Kohli added.

Kohli recalled his first impressions of Karthik when the duo first played together for India in the 2009 Champions Trophy on South African soil. "The first time I met DK, I remember we were playing in South Africa if I am not wrong in the Champions Trophy 2009. It was the first time I shared the change-room with Dinesh and I found him to be very amusing. I would say hyper-active, confused person, most of the times he was moving all over the place, never stopping. That was my first impression of Dinesh," Kohli said. "Outstanding talent, brilliant batter to watch and my first impression and present day impression are not far apart. Just that he has become wiser and calmed down a lot."

RCB's Virat Kohli and Dinesh Karthik after the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 T20 cricket match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Rajasthan Royals, at the Narendra Modi Stadium, in Ahmedabad, Wednesday, May 22, 2024. Rajasthan Royals won the match by 4 wickets. (PTI Photo)Virat Kohli and Dinesh Karthik after RCB's IPL 2024 season ended against Rajasthan Royals at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

Virat Kohli has praised his Royal Challengers Bengaluru teammate Dinesh Karthik for helping him out in tough times in the 2022 season of the Indian Premier League. Kartik's retirement was officially confirmed by the RCB in a post on Friday afternoon. RCB posted two clips on Friday. In the first one RCB staff and players, besides Kartik's wife Dipika Pallikal Karthik, are offering up anecdotes from his career. In the second clip, where fans are praising Kartik, the franchise officially confirmed that Kartik's IPL stint was over.

"Off the field, I have had some really nice and interesting conversations with Karthik. He is a wise man, has great knowledge about a lot of things, not just cricket. I have thoroughly enjoyed my conversations with him. Even in that phase in 2022 when I did not have a great IPL season, I was really struggling for confidence, Karthik sat me down a couple of times and gave me a very honest explanation of how he is seeing things and maybe I am not able to see them myself," Kohli recalled. Back in that season, Kohli had three ducks to his name and scored only 341 runs from 16 matches with two half-centuries and a strike-rate of 115.98.

Dinesh Karthik Royal Challengers Bengaluru batter Dinesh Karthik plays a shot during the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 cricket match between Royal Chal-

Jyothi Yarraji equals 100m hurdles national record but misses direct Olympic qualification by a whisker



GNS News Agency, May 28

There is no end to Jyothi Yarraji's quest for excellence. Even though the 24-year-old is the only Indian to clock a sub-13s timing in 100m hurdles, she still feels there's massive scope for improvement. At the Monet Grand Prix in Finland on Monday, she showed her class yet again, clocking 12.78s to equal her own national record, despite almost tripping on the final hurdle. The Andhra missed the direct Olympic qualification mark by just 0.1 seconds and was not satisfied with her finish, even though she is likely to make the Paris cut by either meeting the direct qualification criteria in races in the near future or through world rankings quota.

"It was a really disappointing race for me," says Jyothi. It's not what athletes usually say after clocking a national record timing, but that's probably what sets her apart. Jyothi, who has run sub-13s races almost two dozen times since last year, is on a training and competition stint in Europe under coach James Hillier. She landed in Tenerife, an island just off the Spanish coast, where she had a three-week training session to work especially on

her starts. Earlier this season, Jyothi decided to make a major change to her starting routine, moving away from a habit of 10 years. She would earlier approach the first hurdle in eight strides but realised that she was getting too close to it. "I spoke to my coach and we decided to approach the first hurdle in seven strides instead of eight," she explained. Although it may sound simple in theory, even a minute change in technique at this level requires tremendous effort. Jyothi Yarraji's coach Coach Hillier is pleased with her ward's progress and feels she could have easily clocked 12.60s had she not hit the last hurdle. (Reliance Foundation media) The stride reduction also meant that Jyothi would now have to take off from the blocks on her right leg instead of the left (her weaker left leg would be in front at the blocks). "It is like asking a person who has used their right hand to eat all their lives to suddenly switch to the left. It is a habit and doesn't go easily. It is extremely difficult but the tweak is already helping me on hurdles three and four," says the Hangzhou Asian Games silver medalist.

Coach Hillier is pleased with her ward's progress and feels she could have easily clocked 12.60s had she not hit the last hurdle. But Jyothi and her team are relieved that she came off without injury. "It shows how strong she is. She hit the final hurdle hard and almost stopped but somehow stayed on her feet. We are happy that she didn't get injured," says Hillier. It is only a matter of time before the national record is disturbed again, feel Jyothi and Hillier as they continue their European training stint. Jyothi may have adapted well to training in Europe but there is one area that she finds very difficult to adjust to. "It's so difficult," she says with agony in her voice while talking about food. "I really miss home food and it is so tough for me. We manage to cook something but this is also a learning experience. This is the most difficult part for me," says Jyothi, a self-proclaimed biryani lover.

Bangladesh's horror form continues as they lose T20I series to USA with a game to spare

GNS News Agency, May 28

Bangladesh vs USA Bangladesh's rotten form continued on Thursday when they lost the second T20I against United States of America by 6 runs, thereby losing the 3-match series with one match to spare. This was USA's first series win against a full member nation. (X/ICC) Bangladesh's rotten form continued on Thursday when they lost the second T20I against United States of America by 6 runs, thereby losing the 3-match series with one match to spare. This was USA's first series win against a full member nation.

After USA were sent to bat first, Monank Patel (42), Aaron Jones (35) and Steven Taylor (31) all contributed to help the team reach 144/6 after 20 overs. Chasing the target, Tanzid Hasan (19), captain Najmul Hossain Shanto (36), Towhid Hridoy (25) and Shakib Al Hasan (30) were the only Bangladeshi batters who could reach double figures with 6 players in the team getting dismissed in single digit. Ali Khan was the pick of the USA bowlers, taking 3 for 25 while Saurabh Netravalkar and Shadley van Schalkwyk took 2 wickets apiece as Bangladesh were wiped out for just 138 runs in 19.3 overs at the Prairie View Cricket Complex in Houston, Texas. This is the latest hammer blow to the World Number 9 team as they had lost the previous match to the 19th ranked USA by five wickets on Tuesday. It must be noted that USA had remarkably also brought down Ireland in 2021, which was their first victory in T20Is over a ICC Full Member nation.



Batting first, Bangladesh only managed to post 153 for 6, thanks to Towhid Hridoy scoring 58 and Mahmudullah adding 31 runs in a 67-run partnership. Bangladesh's starting troubles saw them slump to 68 for 4 at pn stage of the match before Hridoy and Mahmudullah rescued them. USA's bowlers were ably led by Steven Taylor, who claimed two wickets for nine runs. Former India Under-19 cricketer Harmeeet Singh, who now plays for Team USA, also chipped in with four economical overs, where he kept the Bangladesh batters on a leash by leaking just 27 runs. Harmeeet then played a knock of 33 unbeaten off just 13 balls as USA chased down the target of 154 with five wickets in hand, getting there with three balls to spare. The third and final T20 will be held on May 25 with Bangladesh hoping to salvage some sort of pride.

Koneru Humpy talks of challenges of motherhood and why she's too cool for social media

GNS News Agency, May 28

The last couple of years have seen the march of jet-setting Indian chess teenagers who flit from one tournament to another, almost apparating from one country to next in the blink of an eye. They usually are accompanied by their parents, who act as chaperones and managers, helping them iron every wrinkle that comes their way. Humpy doesn't have that luxury. Since her daughter is just six years old, she usually has to make the tough decision to leave her back in India when she competes in events. "Until 2017, I was completely focussed on chess. I played whatever I could. But once my daughter was born, I restricted myself. I only played in events that were very important. I'm very choosy in the events that I play in now. I also make sure that I don't play events back to back, so that I can come back home, spend some time with my daughter and then fly back for another event. I'm very happy (with the balance I've struck). Last year, I played in 9-10 tournaments. Since the pandemic, there have also been plenty of rapid and blitz events coming up, so those also are plenty of fun to play in," says the 5th ranked woman chess player in the world who will be seen in the prestigious Norway Chess event starting later this month.

"She can draw for hours without disturbing me," smiles Humpy about a world not confined to black and white. "Balancing personal and professional lives is not at all easy. Usually when I compete in round robin tournaments, they last 14 to 15 days. There are shorter events that last just a week or 10 days. But the recent Candidates was a 25-day trip to Canada for me. After 10-15 days, my daughter was already waiting for me to get back. It was not easy emotionally to stay away from her. She missed me a lot. But taking her with me to Canada was also not possible because she's just six years old. I needed to concentrate. These were tough times as a mother," says Humpy.

While Humpy is now selective about the events she plays in due to her family, back in the day when she had become the country's first woman to become a grandmaster, her reasons for playing in select events was completely different. "The difference I see now (compared to when she started out) is that Indian players who perform well or show potential get corporate support almost immediately. That way this generation is quite lucky. When

I became the youngest grandmaster in 2002 (India's seventh overall), I was struggling for sponsorships. For some years I held a job with Bank of Baroda but even after I became a grandmaster, I had no sponsors at all! For three or four years after that, my family struggled a lot with financial conditions. We used to be very selective with tournaments due to budget. Finally, when I got an offer to work with ONGC, things got better. Now the situation is entirely different. Now when you win a tournament, because of social media like Twitter, Insta, you get plenty of focus. Back in our days when we won a tournament, no one would notice it. Humpy While Humpy is now selective about the events she plays in due to her family, back in the day when she had become the country's first woman to become a grandmaster, her reasons for playing in select events was completely different. (Michal Walusza via FIDE)

One of the biggest changes that the sport is seeing is the prize pool for women's events getting bigger. The Norway Chess event will feature a Norway Chess Women's Tournament that will run parallelly with the open event with the same format and, more importantly, an equivalent prize fund. Besides Humpy, also in action will be World Champion Ju Wenjun, last year's challenger Lei Tingjie, former world rapid and blitz champion Anna Muzychuk, and India's R Vaishali. "Back when I was starting out, we didn't have so many opportunities. The tournaments were limited. Even the Grand Prix started in 2009. I've been playing in the FIDE World Cup since 2004. The events with decent prize funds started very late, maybe in the last four or five years. But it's a good sign for women's chess," she says.

With teenage stars popping up at a frequent pace in the sport, many established grandmasters are starting to feel that the opportunities that they get are starting to dry up — in terms of invitations for world-class, closed events. In such a situation, having an active social media presence certainly helps with recall value. "Now-a-days having a social media presence is also equally important. It's required now. Unless you showcase your achievement nobody will be able to notice you," Humpy says before breaking into a chuckle as she adds: "But I'm not a social media person. I always believe in my strength (chess). For me, these days it's more important that I balance my family and profession."

Jay Shah clarifies after Langer, Ponting comments: 'Neither I nor BCCI have approached any ex-Australian cricketer with coaching offer'

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KL Rahul to coach Justin Langer on Indian team politics Justin Langer head coach and KL Rahul (c) of Lucknow Super Giants during match 4 of the Indian Premier League season 17 (IPL 2024) between Rajasthan Royals and Lucknow Super Giants held at the Saiwaj Mansingh Stadium, A day after Justin Langer revealed that he had turned down the chance to coach the Indian men's cricket team after being approached by people in the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), BCCI secretary Jay Shah clarified that no one from BCCI had approached "any former Australian cricketer with coaching offer". Not just Langer, who is currently working with the Lucknow Super Giants, Australian cricket legend Ricky Ponting, who is at the helm of the Delhi Capitals team, also revealed he had held talks about a role with the Indian cricket team, but had refused. "Neither I nor the BCCI have approached any former Australian cricketer with a coaching offer. The reports circulating in certain media sections are completely incorrect," BCCI



secretary Jay Shah said in a statement. "Finding the right coach for our national team is a meticulous and thorough process. We are focused on identifying individuals who possess a deep understanding of the Indian cricket structure and have risen through the ranks. It's crucial that our coach has an in-depth knowledge of our domestic cricket framework to truly elevate Team India to the next level." Shah went on to add: "When we talk about international cricket, no role is more prestigious than that of the Head Coach of the Indian Cricket Team. Team India commands the largest fan base globally,

enjoying support that is truly unrivalled. Our rich history, passion for the game make this one of the most lucrative jobs in the world. The role demands a high level of professionalism as one gets to nurture some of the best cricketers in the world and an assembly line of talented cricketers to follow. Catering to the aspirations of a billion fans is a huge honour and the BCCI will pick the right candidate, capable of propelling Indian cricket forward." Langer had told BBC's Stumped podcast that a chat with LSG skipper KL Rahul had led to him declining India offer. "I was talking to KL Rahul

[the captain at Lucknow Super Giants, where Langer is the head coach] and he said, 'You know, if you think there's pressure and politics in an IPL team, multiply that by a thousand, [that's] coaching India. That was a good bit of advice, I guess.'" Langer shared. Meanwhile, Ponting had told ICC that he had turned down the India offer because it did not "fit into his lifestyle right now". "A national head coach is a 10 or 11-month of the year job, and as much as I'd like to do it, it just doesn't fit into my lifestyle right now and the things that I really enjoy doing," Ponting had said.