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Telangana... 10 Years Festive Celebration

People's Telangana, stepping into the 11th year
heralding a new era of progress.

Telangana Formation Day Celebrations

on **2nd June, 2024.**

*Jaya Jayahe Telangana...
Janani Jaya Kethanam...*



Issued by Special Commissioner, I&PR Dept. Government of Telangana

Programmes

Celebrations reach a new high:

Tankbund will be the Grand Venue for Laser show, Fireworks, Carnival and Cultural programmes from 5pm onwards.

ALL ARE INVITED...

Hon'ble Chief Minister

Sri A. Revanth Reddy Garu

will pay tribute at Gun Park Martyrs Stupa at 9:30am

will unfurl the National Flag and receive the Guard of Honour at 10:00am in Parade Grounds.

Congratulations and welcome to the people of Telangana on the eve of Telangana Formation Day

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Healthcare relief

THE Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has taken a much-needed step to smoothen the health insurance landscape by mandating a three-hour limit for settling cashless health claims. This significant directive is aimed at enhancing the efficiency and customer-centricity of health insurance services in India. By stipulating that insurers should decide on cashless authorisation within an hour and settle claims within three hours of discharge, the regulatory authority is setting a new benchmark for responsiveness and reliability in the sector. Health insurance claims pose major challenges to customers. Lengthy processing often results in financial strain as patients and their families must raise funds immediately to pay hospital bills. Delays in cashless claims can lead to additional charges, prolonged hospital stays and potential disruptions in treatment. The rigmarole exacerbates the patients' stress. Further, erratic service and a lack of transparency contribute to deep distrust in the system, deterring many from purchasing health insurance policies altogether. The new directive also includes a provision for a no-claim bonus and mandates a wider range of products to be offered by insurers, catering to the needs of all kinds of patients. These reforms are aimed at boosting customer confidence and, subsequently, increasing insurance penetration in a country where health insurance coverage remains relatively low, with a significant section of the population reliant on government schemes. The lack of awareness about health insurance is another stumbling block. By streamlining the claims process and suggesting a discount on the premium amount for claim-free years, the IRDAI has taken on these challenges head-on. It must now ensure that the health insurance companies align their operations with the new guidelines by the July 31 deadline.

At two branches of hospital that caught fire, no sign of staff, doors shut

GNS News Agency, June 1

A couple hold their six-day-old baby girl and wait on the stairs for someone to open the glass door of the neonatal facility. This was the Baby Care New Born Hospital, but in Faridabad's Sector 10. It is part of a chain of three neonatal hospitals, run by Dr Naveen Khichi. On Sunday, Khichi was arrested after six newborns were killed in a fire at his Vivek Vihar facility. The couple — Aakash and Jyoti — brought their daughter, who is yet to be named, to meet Dr Khichi. She had been admitted to the Faridabad branch for four days. "We left on Saturday after our daughter was discharged by Dr Naveen. He asked us to return today (Monday) at 3 pm for a review," said Aakash, 21, a farmer from Panhera Kalan village in Faridabad. "There is no one here today," he added. Aakash said they didn't know about the facility until a doctor at Ghai hospital in Faridabad's Sector 9 asked them to go there. "My daughter was born on May 22... doctors at Ghai hospital told us she developed an infection and was unable to breathe. They referred us to this hospital where she was admitted to the ICU for four days. She was discharged on Saturday at 4.30 pm," he said.

Aakash and Jyoti asked neighbours about when the facility would open. No one knew. "We paid Rs 25,000 to this hospital as fees for four days," Aakash said. "Ye sasta tha or ghar ke pass tha isliye aa gaye (This was affordable and close to our home)," he said. The Faridabad chapter was in a building which also housed a private office of an architect on the ground floor and a gym in the basement. In the garage, several oxygen cylinders were lying behind a parked car. An ambulance with the name Baby Care New Born Hospital painted in red was also parked on the road. Festive offer t the Baby Care Hospital, speaks with the media, at Vivek Vihar, in East Delhi, Monday, May 27, 2024. A massive fire broke out at the hospital on Saturday night leaving seven newborns dead and five others injured. A massive fire broke out at the Baby Care hospital on Saturday night leaving seven newborns dead and five others injured. "A lot of newborn children carried by their parents are their patients. This place remains very crowded during the morning and evening," said Kanhaiya Kumar, who worked in the adjoining office. Unlike Aakash and Jyoti, Kumar was aware of the fire at the Vivek Vihar branch and the arrest. He said he was shocked to learn about the deaths.

On the other side of Delhi, Khichi has another branch of his Baby Care New Born hospital at Paschim Vihar. It was shut today. Located in a two-storey building on the main road in Pocket 2, there was a bakery and gift shop next to the hospital. At the entrance, there were half a dozen oxygen cylinders. At 11 am, a nurse and another staff member loaded them on a mini truck and left. They didn't agree to talk. Residents though were ready to talk. "We are very happy it is closed," said Santosh Khorwal, 50, who lives two blocks away. "The hospital started in 2018 and ever since then, they put oxygen cylinders in our lane, blocking our way. It was a huge risk for all of us," she said. Santosh and a few other neighbours were discussing the Vivek Vihar tragedy, harred remains of medical equipments and other items at Baby Care New Born Hospital where a fire broke out on Saturday night at Vivek Vihar area. (Express Photo) Charred remains of medical equipments and other items at Baby Care New Born Hospital where a fire broke out on Saturday night at Vivek Vihar area. Kanak, a 22-year-old who supplies drinking water bottles in the area and runs a cyber cafe opposite the hospital building, claimed residents had filed two complaints against the hospital after a "gas leak" four years ago. "After our complaints, (staff) started to store oxygen cylinders inside his premises." Recalling the leak, Kanak said, "There was a loud noise triggered by the leak. We had filed a complaint and spoke to the local MLA," said Kanak. He added that Dr Khichi regularly visited this hospital. "I would see him interacting with attendants outside," he said. "The patients were mostly from Madipur and the jhuggi nearby." Kanak said staff abruptly vacated the building on Monday morning. Rinku, a pharma company delivery agent, had come to deliver a probiotic supplement consignment to the hospital. He was also surprised to see it shut. Out of the four branches, the one in Gurgaon does not operate any longer. It shut down two years ago.

After woman who filed Pocco case against B S Yediyurappa dies, advocate says she was relentless in pursuit of justice for daughter



GNS News Agency, June 1

Days after a 54-year-old woman who filed a sexual harassment complaint against former Karnataka chief minister B S Yediyurappa died in Bengaluru on Sunday following an ailment, her lawyer said that she fought relentlessly and single-handedly for justice for her minor daughter in two separate cases. The woman, who battled lung cancer nearly eight years ago and partially overcame the disease, had been running around for support for a case involving an alleged sexual assault on her nine-year-old daughter by a close relative of her husband in 2015. She had met several police and state officials in her effort to ensure that the perpetrator in the case, which is still under trial, is brought to justice.

The woman met Yediyurappa on February 2 this year to rally support for her daughter but filed a complaint against him on March 14 under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocco) Act alleging that he had touched her daughter inappropriately. Yediyurappa has denied the allegations. "She did not buckle under intense pressure from the very powerful people against whom she filed a case. There was a lot of pressure on her but she stood firm," said an advocate who was helping the single mother and daughter pursue the Pocco case. Although she was accused of being cantankerous and filing complaints against as many as 53 state officials, her lawyer said that all complaints she filed were in pursuit of justice for the case she filed in 2015. "They were not isolated cases. She felt that officials had not taken her seriously," the advocate said.

Why has Pune suddenly become colder? Will monsoon be affected by Cyclone Remal?



GNS News Agency, June 1

Cloudy skies and a sudden drop in the maximum temperature have brought much-needed relief for Pune residents. Instead of the usual 38-41 degrees Celsius recorded daily, Pune's maximum temperature over the last 48 hours has hovered around 30-31 degrees Celsius. The bigger question is how long this relief will last, as the days before the arrival of the monsoon are normally marked by higher-than-normal temperatures. Anupam Kashyapi, the former head of weather forecasting at the India Meteorological Department (IMD), said that the drop in temperature was mostly due to the influx of moisture from the Arabian Sea. This

From 'kaale naag' to 'bikau', CM Sukhu sharpens attacks on six Congress rebels and BJP: 'Dhanbal haregaa, Janbal jitegaa'

GNS News Agency, June 1

Hardly a day went by, since the election campaigns for the Lok Sabha and the state by-election began in Himachal Pradesh when Chief Minister Sukhinder Singh Sukhu did not use words like "bikau" (saleable), "who sold their zameer" (integrity), and "kaala-dhan" (black money) in his speeches while maintaining his government is stable. All these while his pet slogan has been: "Dhanbal haregaa, Janbal jitegaa" (money power will be defeated, people's power will win). Sukhu even dubbed the six rebels as "kaale naag (black cobras)" and made remarks "Bhutto ko Kutto (beat Bhutto)", prompting the Opposition BJP in the state to move to the Election Commission against him.

The elections are taking place close on the heels of the February 27 rebellion by the six Congress legislators who defeated their own party candidate and senior lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi by cross-voting in favour of BJP candidate Harsh Mahajan in the Rajya Sabha election in much dismay to CM Sukhu. The Congress lost despite having a full majority in the House of 68 — 40 Congress, 25 BJP, and three Independents (supporting BJP from the outside). Already left embarrassed, Sukhu was faced with the demand for his resignation on moral grounds and a floor test by Opposition leaders led by former CM Jairam Thakur. At this juncture, the Sukhu government issued a party whip for the Budget Session in the Assembly, but the six rebels, who were under the protection of paramilitary forces, stayed away only to be disqualified by Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania, necessitating the by-election on the six Assembly seats represented by them. The by-election on six seats will simultaneously take place with the parliamentary elections on all four seats in the 7th and last phase on June 1.

"Sukhu is right, his government is stable as the current numbers — 34 Congress, 25 BJP, 3 independents (who joined BJP after submitting resignations, which are yet to be accepted) — favour him. But as June 1 ap-

In August 2017, during trial, the woman testified in court about the attack on her child by a relative from her now estranged husband's side. In March 2018, she was cross-examined by the defence counsel. "She felt that the trial was not going well and that the evidence may have been compromised. So she began visiting police and government officials seeking support for a special investigation in the case," said a human rights advocate who was in touch with the woman and her daughter since the March 2024 Pocco case. On March 20, the woman and her daughter went to court and provided a statement before a magistrate about the incident where her daughter was allegedly harassed by Yediyurappa. After recording the statement, the woman had complained to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) that there were some discrepancies in the process. A day ahead of the recording of the statement, Yediyurappa, who has refuted the allegations and said that he had helped the mother and daughter in the past, had obtained an ex-parte court order prohibiting defamatory media reporting on the case. The CID, which is investigating the case, has obtained Yediyurappa's voice samples for comparison with voices on a video recording done by the woman on the day of the alleged incident. Yediyurappa appeared before CID investigators on April 12 to provide the voice samples, sources said.

"Around one or one-and-a-half months ago, they came to my house seeking help. After listening to her, I called city Police Commissioner B Dayananda over the phone seeking to address her problem. Later, they spoke against me and I then suspected there was some health problem with her," Yediyurappa had said in a reaction to the FIR in March this year. Groups like the Janavadi Mahila Sangathan supported the single mother in her legal fight. She reportedly told advocates and others who rallied behind her that she would consider writing to higher judicial officers seeking justice for her daughter. She was due to consult a senior human rights advocate on Monday evening and a meeting had been scheduled but she passed away on Sunday, said a senior journalist who had been communicating with the woman to help her seek justice. The teenage daughter of the woman is now being looked after by relatives on her mother's side, said an advocate who has been in touch with the family.

was a result of the Cyclone Remal, which caused several deaths and massive destruction in West Bengal. The cyclone made landfall on Monday and had little impact on Maharashtra, but the noticeable decrease in temperature can be attributed to it, he said.

Kashyapi, however, said the relief from the heat might not last long due to the establishment of a westerly wind pattern caused by Cyclone Remal, leading to moisture depletion in Maharashtra and southern Gujarat. He also said that a sharp rise in daytime temperatures is likely over west-central India, with Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and southern Madhya Pradesh expected to experience an increase in temperature. The big question on everyone's mind is how Cyclone Remal will affect the arrival of the southwest monsoon. The IMD had predicted that the monsoon would arrive over Kerala on May 31. Typically, the monsoon reaches Maharashtra within the first week of June. Kashyapi said that due to the decrease in moisture over the Bay of Bengal, the onset of monsoon over Northeastern states such as Assam, Meghalaya, and Mizoram might be delayed by a day or two. "This branch of the monsoon may proceed on time, but further progress may like to be hampered," he said. Moisture depletion over the Arabian Sea branch of the monsoon has not been significant, which would result in normal onset of the monsoon over Kerala and other parts of the country, he added.

proaches, his attacks on the rebel MLAs contesting by-election on BJP tickets have sharpened. Look at his campaign speeches for the parliamentary elections and the by-election, you will notice his speeches for the bypolls are more aggressive. For Sukhu and his government, the bypolls are more important than the parliamentary elections, which is evident from Sukhu's campaign style. Besides, four out of the six rebels are from the Hamirpur parliamentary constituency, under which the constituencies of Sukhu (Nadaun) and Deputy CM Mukesh Agnihotri (Haroli) fall, mounting pressure on both top leaders," said Dr Joginder Singh Solanki, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Himachal Pradesh University in Shimla. The bypolls in the state have become an affair of greater significance even among central leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, and others. On May 24, addressing an election rally in Nahan in Sirmour district, Modi hinted at political instability, referring to the bypolls on the six seats, and said the state government could fall anytime.

In response, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Nahan on Sunday accused the BJP of trying to topple the democratically elected state government. Sukhu is not missing any chance to attack the six rebels — Rajinder Rana, Sudhir Sharma, Devinder Kumar Bhutto, Chaitanya Sharma, Inder Dutt Lakhnupal and Ravi Thakur — alleging they accepted "crores of rupees for selling their integrity". Countering Sukhu, the rebels accused him of ignoring them during the government and promoting his friends while distributing portfolios. The rebels also accuse Sukhu of not allowing development works and not resolving the grievances of the people in their constituencies. A few of them, including Sudhir Sharma and Rajinder Rana, have filed defamation suits against Sukhu in the Himachal Pradesh High Court. In two of these petitions, notices were issued to Sukhu.

IRS officer arrested after body of partner found at his Noida apartment



GNS News Agency, June 1

The Noida police on Sunday arrested an Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer on charges of murder after the body of his woman friend was found at his rented accommodation in Sector 100. The accused has been identified as Saurabh Meena, 35, a resident of Rajasthan and currently living in Lotus Boulevard Society, where the woman's body was found. The police received information on Saturday around 4 pm that a woman, also 35, died by suicide at a high rise. They said when the police reached the spot, the door was broken by Meena and guards at the society.

"The accused Saurabh has been arrested and sent to judicial custody. The family members [of the woman] have alleged he was involved in the incident so an FIR under Section 302 (murder) has been registered... Further action will be taken according to the post-mortem report," said Manish Kumar Mishra, Additional DCP, Noida. They said Meena and the woman met through a dating app around three years ago. The preliminary investigation has revealed their relationship was not good in the past few months and that the incident took place following an argument. "The woman was working as a deputy HR manager at a government institution. The accused is posted as a deputy commissioner of the IRS on deputation in Delhi," said an official. According to the autopsy report, the woman died due to ante-mortem injuries. Officials said they would recreate the scene of the crime and further action would be taken based on forensic and autopsy reports.

AAP plea seeking accomodation for party office: Delhi HC reserves order

GNS News Agency, June 1

The Delhi High Court Monday reserved orders on a plea moved by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) seeking allotment of accommodation for its party office in the national capital. In March, the Supreme Court had asked the AAP to vacate its office in Rouse Avenue by June 15 as the land in question had been allotted for the expansion of judicial infrastructure.

The HC was hearing two petitions filed by AAP last year, seeking allotment of land for constructing its office or a housing unit on a licence basis in the national capital in light of its status as a recognised national party. A single-judge bench of Justice Subramonium Prasad while reserving the verdict on the issue of temporary accommodation for office space said, "I will try to pronounce it during the vacations. Most probably on the (June) 5th morning." Appearing for AAP, senior advocate Rahul Mehra submitted, "Kindly pass an ad interim order... By June 15, I will have to vacate. One election is over, next election is six months down the line. Can a national party and a state party be treated like this if I have a legal entitlement?"

Mehra said till the time the party is allotted permanent land for constructing its office, it should be allowed to function out of plot 23-24 DDU Marg, which is presently occupied by a minister of the AAP government. "There is a responsibility under the Constitution to ensure that there is a fair level playing field... What prejudice is going to be caused to them (Centre), on a property which is with my minister which is given to me till they allow the land to me? I'm not saying that I have a permanent entitlement to it. I'm asking for only 2-4 months (temporary accommodation) till they allot me appropriate land. My minister will stay without government accommodation," Mehra added. The counsel appearing for the Centre said AAP was offered land in 2014 for its offices but they had refused to accept it. He further said the allotment has to come from the general pool and there is no exclusive list for political parties. He submitted that the party had asked for land on DDU Marg pursuant to which a joint inspection had been conducted in that area and "no land was found available" on DDU Marg. "As far as 23-24 DDU Marg is concerned, we have written to them to give it back to us," the Centre's counsel said.

2 engineering students killed, 1 injured after truck hits bike on Pune-Ahmednagar road

GNS News Agency, June 1

Officials from the Vimantal police station identified the deceased as Adil Shaikh and Fahad Shaikh, both of G H Raisoni Engineering College in Pune. (Representational) Officials from the Vimantal police station identified the deceased as Adil Shaikh and Fahad Shaikh, both of G H Raisoni Engineering College in Pune.

Two 20-year-old engineering students were killed, and their friend was injured after the bike they were riding was hit by a speeding truck from behind in the Kharadi area on the Pune-Ahmednagar road on Monday night.

Officials from the Vimantal police station identified the deceased as Adil Shaikh and Fahad Shaikh, both of G H Raisoni Engineering College in Pune. Their friend Afan Shaikh, 20, a student at an engineering college in Latur, was injured in the accident. "The initial probe suggests that the three students were on their way to Pune Railway station, while two of them were going to Latur. The truck hit the bike behind, knocking all three down. Two were fatally injured.

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Food safety team discards expired food articles at China Bistro in Jubilee Hills

Hyderabad: Continuing with their string of inspections at restaurants and food-related establishments, the task force team of the Food Safety Department conducted another check at China Bistro in Jubilee Hills on Friday. Along with discarding expired food articles like potato flakes, scamorza cheese, rice flour, white vinegar, and pasta, other semi-prepared food articles stored in the refrigerator without labels and beyond use by dates were also discarded.

Moreover, mayonnaise sweet sauce, premium dry fruits nutmeg, dry dates, makhana, cloves, and pancake syrup were seized as they were found without proper FSSAI labeling.

Jubilee Hills police nab local dealer, seize 43 LSD blots

Hyderabad: A local drug peddler who was allegedly selling LSD blots was nabbed by the Jubilee Hills police on Saturday. The police seized 43 LSD blots, a car and a mobile phone from them.

The alleged drug dealer V Lakshminath alias Lucky (28), a resident of Bhongir, discontinued his B. Tech course and through social media contacted some persons who were selling drugs. "Lakshminath through his contacts in Mumbai was procuring the drugs through courier and selling it in the city to his customers," said the police.

Voting concludes for 18th Lok Sabha polls; more than 58% turnout in seventh and final phase



GNS News Agency, June 1

A voter turnout of 58.34% was recorded till 5 p.m. on Saturday in the seventh and final phase of the Lok Sabha polls with incidents of violence between TMC and BJP supporters reported in Sandeshkhali region of West Bengal, and complaints of EVM glitches and rigging at some booths lodged. Polling was held in seven States and the Union Territory of Chandigarh for 57 constituencies, including Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh from where Prime Minister Narendra Modi is seeking a third consecutive term in the Lok Sabha. Voting is being held amid a severe heatwave in all 13 seats of Punjab and four of Himachal Pradesh, 13 constituencies in Uttar Pradesh, nine in West Bengal, eight in Bihar, six in Odisha and three in Jharkhand, besides Chandigarh. Polling for the remaining 42 Assembly Constituencies in Odisha and bypolls to six Assembly seats in Himachal Pradesh are also taking place simultaneously.

Saturday's voting will mark the end of the marathon polling process that began on April 19. The Assemblies of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim also went to polls. The BJP-led NDA is seeking a rare consecutive third term in office. The Opposition INDIA bloc is trying to upset the NDA apiece by putting up a joint fight in some States. The counting of votes will be taken up on June 4. In Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, the counting for the Assembly polls will be held on June 2. Till 5 p.m., the estimated polling percentage was 58.34, according to the EC's voter-turnout app.

Bandi Sanjay writes to Revanth Reddy, Seek CBI Inquiry on Phone Tapping case



GNS News Agency, June 1

In a recent development, BJP MP Bandi Sanjay has written a letter to Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, urging him to seek a CBI inquiry into the alleged phone tapping scandal. Sanjay highlighted that the previous government had banned the CBI in the state, which had hindered the investigation of such sensitive matters. Sanjay accused former chief minister Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao and his son, Minister K. T. Rama Rao, of being involved in the phone tapping scandal. He expressed suspicion that they were not notified of the tapping, indicating a potential breach of privacy and misuse of power. The BJP MP emphasized the need for a thorough investigation into the matter and called for the cancellation of the ban on CBI in Telangana.

Centre urges preventive measures as four states report Avian Influenza

GNS News Agency, June 1

New Delhi: The Centre has asked all states and Union Territories to undertake several preventive measures in the wake of four states reporting cases of the H5N1 virus. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) issued a joint advisory on H5N1 for all states on May 20. All states have been advised to orient all healthcare workers and private practitioners on case definitions, signs, and symptoms of Avian influenza or bird flu. It has also asked states to be vigilant for any unusual deaths amongst the domestic birds/poultry, and if observed, to share the information immediately with the Department of Animal Husbandry so that public health action can be initiated as per the national action plan for Avian influenza.

PM Modi embarks on final day of meditation in Kanyakumari

GNS News Agency, June 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarked on his third and final day of meditation on Saturday, after performing the 'Surya Arghya' during sunrise at the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, officials said. Mr. Modi carried out 'Surya Arghya,' a ritual associated with spiritual practice involving salutations to the sun. The PM poured a little water from a traditional,



beaker-like small vessel into the sea as an offering (Arghya) and prayed using

his prayer beads (Japa mala), they said. Mr. Modi was clad in saffron and

also paid floral tributes to a statue of Swami Vivekananda, they added. He walked around the mandapam with his 'japa mala' in his hands. Kanyakumari is famous for its sunrise and sunset and the memorial is located on a tiny islet near the shoreline. At the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, the PM embarked on meditation on the evening of May 30 and he is scheduled to complete it on the evening of Saturday.

Court reserves for June 5 order on Kejriwal's interim bail plea



GNS News Agency, June 1

A court in New Delhi on June 1 reserved for June 5 its order on an application moved by Chief Minister and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal seeking interim bail in a money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. The case being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) relates to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's now-scrapped excise policy for 2021-22. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja reserved the order, observing that the application was for grant of interim bail on medical grounds and not for the extension of the interim bail granted by the Supreme Court. The top court had on May 10 granted 21-day interim bail to the Chief Minister to enable him to campaign during the Lok Sabha polls. It had directed him to surrender on June 2, a day after the last phase of the seven-phase poll gets over. Mr. Kejriwal campaigned in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi and Maharashtra after being released from the Tihar jail. After the judge reserved the order, Mr. Kejriwal's counsel urged the court to pass the order on Saturday itself, considering that he has to surrender on June 2. The judge, however,

declined the request, saying the arguments and the documents submitted by the advocates of the accused as well as the prosecution was voluminous.

During the proceedings, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the ED, told the court that Mr. Kejriwal made misleading claims at a press conference on May 31 that he would surrender on June 2 on his own. At a press conference in New Delhi on May 31, Mr. Kejriwal said he will be surrendering on June 2. "I will leave my house around 3 pm (on Sunday) to surrender. It is possible that this time they will torture me more, but I will not bow down," he said. Mr. Kejriwal had also alleged, "They tried to break me. They stopped my medicines while I was in jail. My weight reduced by six kg after being arrested. My weight was 70 kg when I was arrested. I have not gained weight after coming out of jail." Doctors have advised several tests and "they feel this could be a sign of some underlying medical condition", he had claimed.

The ED's counsel said in court, "Kejriwal campaigned throughout his interim bail period and, now, he suddenly claims he is ill. Kejriwal suppressed facts and made false statements, including about his health." Kejriwal's counsel told the court that he was ill and needed treatment. The ED said the interim bail is not maintainable as the trial court cannot modify the order of the Supreme Court mandating Kejriwal to surrender on June 2. "The Supreme Court order says he will surrender. That order has not been modified till date. He has to surrender. He is not on interim bail because of this court's order. He is on interim bail because SC order. He is asking for extension of the Supreme Court order, which is not permissible," the probe agency's counsel said. The liberty granted to him is that he will apply for regular bail, and there is no liberty for extension of interim bail, Mehta said.

"A person who is saying that his condition is serious, look at his conduct.

Never said black magic ritual was performed inside Kerala temple: K'taka DyCM



GNS News Agency, June 1

Bengaluru: After facing flak, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday clarified that he had only said that black magic rituals took place near a Kerala temple and not inside it. Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, he said, "My statement has been misconstrued. I never said that the black magic ritual 'Shatru Bairavi Yagna' against me and the Chief Minister was performed in the Raja Rajeshwara temple in Kerala. I had mentioned the rituals took place in a private land near the temple." He was replying to the statement by a Kerala Minister that animal sacrifice does not take place in Kerala temples.

"I have great respect for God's own country, its temples and the people. My statement has been misunderstood. I did not mean to hurt the sentiments of anyone. I had recently visited the Raja Rajeshwara temple and I am a devotee of the temple. I only referred to the temple to indicate the location of the black magic rituals," he said. "I would not like to talk about who is behind the black magic rituals, I only shared the details that I received. The Kerala minister has said that an inquiry would be ordered

into the incident and I welcome that decision," he said. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar stated on Thursday that political opponents were performing black magic through 'Aghoris' and 'tantriks' at a temple in Kerala against him and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. He had said that he had credible information that a yagna (special worship) was conducted by 'Aghoris' in an isolated place near the Raja Rajeshwara temple in Kerala.

Preparations in full swing for counting of votes for Lok Sabha polls in Telangana

GNS News Agency, June 1

Hyderabad: As the countdown begins for announcement of the Lok Sabha poll results, preparations are in full swing for the counting of votes across 17 parliamentary constituencies in Telangana on June 4. The entire counting process is expected to be completed by 3 pm.

The polling was held in Telangana as part of fourth phase of Lok Sabha elections on May 13, along with the by-election to Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly constituency.

Elaborating on the arrangements at a press conference here on Saturday, Telangana Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Vikas said Section 144 has been imposed, and CCTV cameras have been set up at 34 counting centres across the State for round-the-clock surveillance. Unauthorised persons are prohibited within 100 meters of the vote-counting hall.

Revanth Reddy and Bhatti Vikramarka invites governor for Telangana formation day



GNS News Agency, June 1

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka visited Raj Bhavan to meet the Governor and extend an invitation to him. They presented him with a bouquet of flowers as a gesture of courtesy and requested his presence at the Telangana state formation day celebrations. The State Formation Day celebrations are scheduled to be held at Secunderabad Parade Grounds and the government of Telangana has made elaborate arrangements for the upcoming Telangana Formation Day Event, which is set to be celebrated on a grand scale. In light of the event, the police have announced traffic restrictions in major areas of Hyderabad to ensure smooth celebrations. These restrictions are expected to be in place from Saturday morning to 12 midnight on Sunday.

YS Jagan Returns from London, Receives Warm Welcome at Gannavaram



GNS News Agency, June 1

Chief Minister Jagan, who recently completed his tour of London, arrived back at Gannavaram airport in the early hours on Saturday. He was greeted by a throng of Ministers, MPs and MLAs who were eager to welcome him back home. After landing at Gannavaram, CM Jagan proceeded to Tadepalli by road where he is expected to hold a meeting with key party leaders at 11 o'clock. During the meeting, the Chief Minister will provide direction and guidance to the party leaders in preparation for the upcoming counting. The return of CM Jagan has sparked excitement and anticipation among party members as they prepare for the next phase of their political journey. Stay tuned for more updates on this developing story.

Oil Companies slash commercial LPG cylinder prices by Rs 69.50

GNS News Agency, June 1

New Delhi: In a move aimed at offering relief to businesses and commercial enterprises, oil marketing companies have announced a reduction in the prices of commercial LPG gas cylinders. Effective today, the rate of 19 kg commercial LPG cylinders has been slashed by Rs 69.50 in Delhi, with the retail sales price now standing at Rs 1676. This latest reduction comes on the heels of a previous price adjustment on May 1, 2024, when the rate of 19 kg commercial LPG cylinders was lowered by Rs 19. The consecutive decreases in price signal a positive trend for businesses grappling with operating costs amid economic challenges.

With the beginning of a new month, the prices of LPG cylinders change. The government is running various schemes to promote the use of LPG cylinders for cooking in homes, like Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, which provides subsidies to eligible families. A month ago, on May 1, oil marketing companies slashed the prices of commercial LPG gas cylinders by

The retail sales price of a 19 kg commercial LPG cylinder was then Rs 1745.50 in Delhi, sources said. The Opposition, led by the Congress, has often taken potshots at the BJP-led ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre for failing to rein in fuel prices and its ripple effect on the prices of essential food items and other commodities. While the precise reasons behind the price decrease remain undisclosed, various factors, such as changes in international oil prices, shifts in taxation policies, and supply-demand dynamics, likely contribute to such adjustments. Revisions for both commercial and domestic LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) cylinders typically occur on the first day of each month.

Explain why 19 IPS officers are on ex-cadre posts 'in excess' of quota

GNS News Agency, June 1

The central government has asked the Haryana government to explain the reasons for posting 19 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers on ex-cadre posts "in excess than the quota for the same", terming it "over-utilisation of the ex-cadre posts" while "keeping cadre posts as sanctioned by the Centre vacant". The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has been terming such a practice by states as a "violation of cadre norms" as it "disturbs the structure of authorised strength in various heads". While cadre posts are civil services posts approved and notified by the Centre for states every five years, ex-cadre posts are temporary posts of the same rank as cadre posts created by the state governments. In a recent communication to the Haryana government, the MHA observed that the Haryana government is functioning with 38 IPS officers on ex-cadre posts while the sanctioned strength for these posts is only 19. Thus, the ministry pointed out, the state government is "over utilising 19 posts than its quota" of ex-cadre posts while keeping 24 cadre posts vacant, and sought reasons for the same.

The Centre has also asked the state to furnish details regarding postings of all cadre officers on the ex-cadre/temporary posts while seeking scientific and effective planning of cadre structure with a five-year perspective. Meanwhile, referring to the latest official figures, a senior IPS officer has informed the MHA that currently, 64 IPS officers are working on ex-cadre posts in the state, as against the sanctioned strength of 19 officers — i.e. 45 IPS officers are working in "excess" than the quota. The number of cadre posts for Haryana is 79.

Currently, the state has six director general of police (DGP)-rank officers (two on cadre and four on ex-cadre posts); 19 additional director general of police (ADGP)-



rank officers (six on cadre, 13 on ex-cadre posts); 27 inspector general of police (IGP)-rank officers (16 on cadre, 11 on ex-cadre posts); and 22 deputy inspector general of police (DIG)-rank officers (15 on cadre, seven on ex-cadre posts). On their part, Haryana government officials have been insisting that the state can create particular posts for a specific period and no rule was violated in the promotions of IPS officers in the state. In January 2023, the MHA had expressed displeasure over having ex-cadre posts of IPS officers in excess of the authorised strength in some states. The MHA had also pointed out the practice of appointing IPS officers against the ex-cadre posts while keeping the cadre posts vacant. The MHA had stated: "Some state governments are utilising posts against SDR (ex-cadre) quota keeping SDP (cadre) posts in abeyance/vacant, which is a violation of cadre norms as it disturbs the structure of authorised strength in various heads." Referring to the rules, the ministry had said that at no point in time should the number of IPS officers in ex-cadre posts exceed the number of cadre posts at the DGP level without prior approval of the central government.

'Non-performing assets': Gehlot takes aim at 'backstabbers' who continue to remain in Congress

GNS News Agency, June 1

Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday termed those leaving the party as traitors and opportunists, saying that some backstabbers continue to be in the party. "Call them opportunists, non-performing assets, nikamma, nakara (useless, worthless), or gaddar (traitors), or the ones who stab in the back — all these words are brothers and sisters. And these (words) are used for such people. Jo gaddari karta hai who gaddar hai hi hai dekho (one who commits treachery is a traitor indeed). What else would you call them?" Gehlot said while talking to reporters in Jaipur Monday. Notably, Gehlot had used the words "nakara, nikamma" for former deputy CM Sachin Pilot during the latter's rebellion in mid-2020. Attacking leaders in Rajasthan who left the party in the past few months, he said that they were with the party for five years when it was in power in the state but left it in its hour of need. "This was the time to work. That is how history is made," he said. He cited how Congress was almost wiped out in the north in 1977 "yet we stayed strong" and subsequently there was a huge wave for Indira Gandhi in the next election in 1980.

Ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, Mahendra Jeet Singh Malviya, Lalchand Kataria, Rajendra Singh Yadav, among others, had left the Congress and joined the BJP. Gehlot said that many leaders who left had been in the party for 40-42 years and were given plum positions, from union minister to AICC general secretary, PCC president and even chief minister. Without taking any names, he said that there are still some others who betrayed the party yet continue to be in it and now they should try and be assets to the party. "Those who betray and stab in the back, even they stay in the party. But this is opportunism. I would like to tell such people that tomorrow is yours — the coming generation. They should act in a way where they continue to be an asset for Congress 15 — 20 years



down the line, and not become a liability," he said, adding that it is Congress's party character that whoever helps during a crisis doesn't need to ask for anything from the party. Asked about Rajasthan Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Avinash Gehlot's statement that the reservation given to 14 Muslim castes in the OBC category in the state will be reviewed, the former CM said the reservation to backward Muslim castes was given based on OBC Commission's recommendations. "Whatever the government's representatives say, nothing is going to happen because reservation was given under the recommendation of the OBC Commission over 25 years ago. It was when Jats, Bishnois got reservation... The OBC communities including Kayamkhani, Sindhi Muslim, which were backward, got reservation. All the Muslims didn't get reservation," he said. Avinash had said that reservation to 14 Muslim communities under OBC between 1997 and 2013 will be reviewed. On Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent comments, including where he employed the word "mujra", the former CM said that the PM's post has a dignity and the PM is of the entire nation. "No one — not even Narendra Modi — has the right to degrade the dignity of the (PM) office," he said.

How did the fire start? Who was responsible? Questions for 15 staff members of Vivek Vihar hospital



GNS News Agency, June 1

Did any of the staff members at the Vivek Vihar hospital see how the fire, which killed six newborns Saturday night, started? Was the fire a result of carelessness on the part of someone in using electrical equipment? These will be two key questions, among several others, that the Delhi Police will pose to around 15 staff members of New Born Baby Care Hospital. They will also be questioned on their shift timings, educational qualifications, knowledge of safety handling equipment, and if they had received any training to carry out rescue work in case of a mishap, said officials. Dr Naveen Khichi, the owner of the facility, and Dr Akash, who was on duty Saturday night, were arrested Sunday evening. Officials questioned three-four staff members Monday and will call the rest over the week, said police. Said a senior police officer, "Fifteen staffers worked at the clinic and we summoned all of them for questioning, including the nurses... we will take their statements, including of nurses present at the site at the time of the fire to ascertain if they saw how the fire started or if the fire broke out due to carelessness in using an electrical equipment."

Said DCP (Shahdara) Surendra Choudhary, "A

three-day custody remand of the accused persons has been obtained to verify their degrees as also the documents regarding the registration of the hospital." Said another officer privy to the probe, "It has come to light that the owner, Dr Naveen Khichi, had first opened the Punjabi Bagh branch of his hospital in 2011, following which, over the years, he went on to open other branches... we are also getting the other operational branch checked to see whether it had proper registration and fire safety certificates... an audit of the other hospital (run by Dr Khichi) will be carried out." The officer said teams were sent to the other hospitals on Monday to carry out inspection of its entry and exit points. "While a fire inspection report from the fire department is currently pending, prima facie, the cause of fire seems to be an electrical short circuit in one of the wires inside the hospital. The fire then spread to the cylinders, which eventually blew up," said the officer. FSL teams found "burnt debris from van", "burnt debris near the wall", and burnt wire pieces. The FIR stated that FSL experts told police it was "difficult to pick up the exhibits" as the building was "warm from the fire". According to the FIR, the ground floor and nearby buildings were also found in a burnt condition.

Of 1,225 Delhi hospitals, less than 200 have valid fire safety certificates

As per data compiled by the DFS, only 196 hospitals had approached them for FSCs for their premises. There are currently 1,183 private hospitals, including nursing centres in the city, apart from 12 MCD hospitals, and 30 Delhi government hospitals.

A fire safety certificate essentially certifies that a building has been deemed to comply with fire prevention and safety requirements as per Rule 33 of the Delhi Fire Services Rule.

Hotter nights and muggy days: Why Delhi has been feeling warmer over the years

GNS News Agency, June 1

An analysis by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) — which used temperature and humidity data from the IMD — shows there has been an increase in humidity levels over the past 10 summers, how land surface temperatures are cooling down to a smaller extent at night, and how built-up area has increased. On Monday, the city recorded heatwave conditions with a maximum temperature of 45.1 degrees Celsius. The highest maximum temperature recorded during the day was 48.8 degrees in Northwest Delhi's Mungeshpur. Heatwave conditions are set to persist till Thursday, going by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast.

According to the CSE analysis, Delhi's ambient air temperature "shows little change" over the past 10 summers compared to the 2001-2010 decade. However, the "nature of heat is changing" with a significant increase in relative humidity over the past 10 summers. The analysis considered the months from March to August as summer months, divided into pre-monsoon (March to May) and monsoon (June to August). The last 10 summers (2014-23) in Delhi have been 8% more humid on average compared to the average relative humidity from 2001-2010. While the average relative humidity for the summers from 2001 to 2010 was 52.5%, in the summer of 2023, this was as high as 60.9%. Similarly, in 2020, it was 61.4%, while it was 57.3% in 2021, and 53.5% in 2022, going by the analysis.

The analysis explains that the combination of high heat and humidity can compromise sweating — the body's main cooling mechanism. "The evaporation of sweat from the skin cools our bodies, but higher humidity levels limit this natural cooling. As a result, people can suffer heat stress and illness, and the consequences can even be fatal..." it added. The analysis also considered the 'heat



index,' a measure of how hot it feels when humidity and temperature are both factored in. "It is considered that a heat index of 41 degrees Celsius is dangerous to human health," the analysis noted, adding that in the summer of 2023, Delhi recorded 14 days when the daily average heat index crossed the 41-degree mark. The analysis also said Delhi is "not cooling down at night" — during the summers of 2001-10, the land surface temperature would drop by 12.3 degrees on average from the daytime peak to the nighttime low. Over the past decade, 2014-23, this nighttime cooling has fallen to an average of 11.2 degrees Celsius, and has been even lower in recent years — 9.8 degrees in 2023. "Hot nights are as dangerous as midday peak temperatures — people get little chance to recover from daytime heat if temperatures remain high overnight," it explained, adding that the city's 'core,' with the higher built-up area and population, is 2.9 degrees Celsius hotter than its peripheries. The analysis used satellite imagery to determine that the city's built-up area has increased from 467.8 sq km in 2003 to 568.9 sq km in 2022.

'Pleaded with them to give us our baby': At mortuary of Delhi hospital, an endless wait for two fathers

GNS News Agency, June 1

delhi fire, delhi hospital fire, vivek hospital fire, delhi hospital fire victim, vivek hospital mortuary, indian express news New Delhi: Vinod Kumar, father of one of the newborn babies who were admitted at the Baby Care New Born Hospital after birth, cries after a fire broke out at the hospital on Saturday night, in New Delhi, Sunday, May 26, 2024. A massive fire broke out at the hospital at Vivek Vihar, leaving seven newborns dead, officials said They wait for the bodies. There are fathers, aunts, and grandparents. The mothers haven't been told. When the tiny bodies — wrapped in white cloth — of the two newborn babies are finally handed over to the families after 40 hours, it didn't bring any closure.

Raj Kumar, a gardener in Ghaziabad, had been waiting outside the mortuary of Guru Teg bahadur hospital since Sunday morning. He is accompanied by his sister Vineeta and his wife Uma's adoptive mother. Uma hasn't been told. Raj Kumar and Uma's new born baby — 17-days-old Ruhi was killed by the flames that engulfed New Born Baby Care Hospital in Vivek Vihar. "I have been pleading with the hospital authorities to give us the body of our baby girl. But they kept on telling us to wait for half an hour more. It is already two full days now," Uma's adoptive mother said. The agitated family raises its voice and a police officer present at the morgue comes to check. He explains that a doctor had made a mistake in their MLS (medico-legal case) documentation, which has caused the delay. "...they wrote the baby's name in the column where they had to write the mother's name," he said. By the time hospital administration and the police found out the mistake, scores of additional documents had already been filed. "We realised that a mistake had been made on Sunday morning. When we rushed back to the doctor at the hospital the hospital administration told us that the doctor had left for home after his night shift ended and would return only in the evening. When we came back in the evening, the doctor informed us that he doesn't have the authority to correct the mistake in this document and asked us to file an affidavit to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), requesting him to issue a note rectifying the mistake," the police official said. But Raj Kumar and his family aren't interested in the details of this elaborate bureaucratic procedure. "We know it is our child. The hospital people know it was our child. The



police know it is our child. What is fuss about?" said Vineeta. At around 4 pm, they are finally told that the corrections have been made and they can take the girl's body home. It takes an hour more. Vinod Sharma too sits nearby in the waiting area. His boy — born a day before the fire extinguished his life — was a precious baby. His wife Jyoti had lost two babies earlier — one of the babies had died at birth and the other lost to a miscarriage.

Sharma's eyes are bloodshot. He too has been waiting since Sunday morning. "I didn't want to believe that he was gone," Vinod said. Like Uma, Vinod's wife Jyoti hasn't been told about the tragedy. He said that Jyoti is still nursing the stitches from her cesarean surgery in a hospital in Meerut. Sharma had initially refused to identify his son's body, holding on to the hope that one of the five rescued babies was his. When they went to look at the five babies for identification, for one surreal moment Sharma believed one of them was his. "We told the doctors but they said one family had already claimed the baby... none of us could recognise the kids, they were just a few days old. How could we differentiate between them?" said Manish, his brother. A small fight broke out between the two families, both equally convinced the baby was theirs, before the police stepped in. What finally convinced Sharma was the placement of two IV lines — on his newborn's nose and navel — that he had last seen on his son when the boy was alive. As the sun began to set, the hospital released their children's bodies. The two fathers soon emerge holding their children in their arms, wrapped in white cloth. They are so small that they barely take any space or effort to be carried.

Why implementation of Act regulating hospitals & clinics is hanging fire

GNS News Agency, June 1

Whether prices of consumables — medicines, gloves, gauze etc — in private hospitals should be capped is the question on which a law looking at registration and regulation of hospitals and clinics in Delhi is hanging fire. Hospitals and nursing homes in the city are regulated by the Delhi Nursing Homes Registration Act, 1953. Last year, however, the Union Health Ministry wrote to the Delhi government asking it to implement the Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010, stating that the present law only applies to hospitals and nursing homes in allopathic medicine. It added that clinics, polyclinics, laboratories, imaging centres, and AYUSH clinical establishments were not covered under it and a large number of such establishments remain unregulated. The Delhi High Court had also ordered the government to adopt the Act in 2022. On April 4, the Delhi Health Minister and the department secretary agreed to implement it as an interim measure. Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said the government has already finalised the Delhi Health Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Bill, which has to be sent to the Centre for approval.

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it and a large number of such establishments remain unregulated. The Delhi High Court had also ordered the government to adopt the Act in 2022. On April 4, the Delhi Health Minister and the department secretary agreed to implement it as an interim measure. Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said the government has already finalised the Delhi Health Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Bill, which has to be sent to the Centre for approval. "Our Health Bill, ready since 2023, has the provision of capping prices of hospital treatment; the Centre's does not. We want reasonable capping of medicines prices, procedures, surgeries and other expenses of private hospitals. We will implement the Centre's Act, but only in the interim," he said. He said he had received the file on Friday; on Monday, the file has been sent from his office. As per the April HC order, Bharadwaj and the health secretary "jointly agreed" to forward the Bill to the Centre for approval. Sources, however, said movement has been slow. "Despite receiving the letter from the Centre almost a year ago, many health establishments are running without any regulations."

Israeli attack on Rafah tent camp kills 45, prompts international outcry



GNS News Agency, June 1

CAIRO/JERUSALEM, An Israeli airstrike triggered a fire that killed 45 people in a tent camp in the Gazan city of Rafah, officials said on Monday, prompting an outcry from global leaders who urged the implementation of a World Court order to halt Israel's assault. Palestinian families rushed to hospitals to prepare their dead for burial after a strike late on Sunday night set tents and rickety metal shelters ablaze.

Israel's military, which is trying to eliminate Hamas in Gaza, said it was investigating reports that a strike it carried out against commanders of the Islamist militant group in Rafah had caused the fire. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the strike had not been intended to cause civilian casualties. "In Rafah, we already evacuated about 1 million non-combatant residents and despite our utmost effort not to harm non-combatants, something unfortunately went tragically wrong," he said in a speech in parliament that was interrupted by shouting from opposition lawmakers. Survivors said families were preparing to sleep when the strike hit the Tel Al-Sultan neighbourhood where thousands were sheltering after Israeli forces began a ground offensive in the east of Rafah over two weeks ago. "We were praying... and we were getting our children's beds ready to sleep. There was nothing unusual, then we heard a very loud noise, and fire erupted around us," said Umm Mohamed Al-Attar, a Palestinian mother in a red headscarf. "All the children started screaming... The sound was terrifying; we felt like the metal was about to collapse on us, and shrapnel fell into the rooms."

Video footage obtained by Reuters showed a fire raging in the darkness and people screaming in panic. A group of young men tried to haul away sheets of corrugated iron and a hose from a single fire truck began to douse the flames. More than half of the dead were women, children, and elderly people, health officials in Hamas-run Gaza said, adding that the death toll was likely to rise from people with severe burns. Medics later said an Israeli airstrike on Monday on a house in Rafah had killed seven Palestinians, with several others wounded.

Israel's military said Sunday's strike, based on "precise intelligence", had eliminated Hamas' chief of staff for the second and larger Palestinian territory, the West Bank, plus another official behind deadly attacks on Israelis.

That followed the interception of eight rockets fired towards Israel from the Rafah area in Gaza's southern tip. Israel has kept up its offensive despite a ruling by the top U.N. court on Friday ordering it to stop, saying the court's ruling grants it some scope for military action there. The court also reiterated calls for the immediate and unconditional release of hostages held in Gaza by Hamas. The U.S. urged Israel to take more care to protect civilians, but stopped short of calling for a halt to the Rafah incursion. "Israel has a right to go after Hamas, and we understand this strike killed two senior Hamas terrorists

who are responsible for attacks against Israeli civilians," a National Security Council spokesperson said. "But as we've been clear, Israel must take every precaution possible to protect civilians." French President Emmanuel Macron said he was "outraged" over Israel's latest attacks. "These operations must stop. There are no safe areas in Rafah for Palestinian civilians," he said on X. Several thousand demonstrators later gathered in Paris to protest against the offensive in Gaza.

Item 1 of 5 Palestinians search for food among burnt debris in the aftermath of an Israeli strike on an area designated for displaced people, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and the EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said the International Court of Justice ruling must be respected. "International humanitarian law applies for all, also for Israel's conduct of the war," Baerbock said. Canada's government said it was "horrified" by the deadly airstrike in Rafah, and called for an immediate ceasefire. "Canada does not support an Israeli military operation in Rafah," Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said in a post on X. "This level of human suffering must come to an end." Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates also condemned the Israeli attack and Qatar said the Rafah strike could hinder efforts to mediate a ceasefire and hostage exchange. More than 36,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive, Gaza's health ministry says. Israel launched the operation after Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israeli communities on Oct. 7, killing around 1,200 people and seizing more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies. By daylight, the camp in Rafah was a smoking wreckage of tents, twisted metal and charred belongings. Women wept and men held prayers beside bodies in shrouds.

Sitting beside bodies of his relatives, Abed Mohammed Al-Attar said Israel lied when it told residents they would be safe in Rafah's western areas. His brother, sister-in-law and several other relatives were killed in the blaze. "The army is a liar. There is no security in Gaza. There is no security, not for a child, an elderly man, or a woman. Here he (my brother) is with his wife, they were martyred," he said. The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs based in the West Bank condemned "the heinous massacre." Egypt also condemned Israel's "deliberate bombing of the tents of displaced people", state media reported, describing it as a blatant violation of international law. The Israeli military said it was investigating reports of an exchange of fire between Israeli and Egyptian soldiers close to the Rafah border crossing with Gaza. Egypt's military spokesperson said that shooting near the Rafah crossing led to the killing of one person and authorities were investigating. Israeli tanks stepped up the intensity of bombardments of eastern and central areas of Rafah on Monday, killing at least eight, local health officials said. Two medical workers were killed by a missile fired from a drone as they left the Kuwaiti hospital in Rafah, medics said. In Al-Nuseirat camp in central Gaza Strip, an Israeli attack killed three Palestinian police officers, Gaza's Hamas-run interior ministry said. Israel says it wants to root out Hamas fighters holed up in Rafah and rescue hostages it says are being held in the area.

Coming soon: Get the latest news and expert analysis about the state of the global economy with Reuters Ecom World. Sign up here. Additional Dan Williams and James Mackenzie in Jerusalem; Jana Choukeir and Claudia Tanios and Mohammed Salem; Gabrielle Tétrault-Farber in Geneva; Tassilo Hummel, Jarrett Renshaw and Adam Makary; Writing by Ros Russell, Sharon Singleton and Deepa Babington; Editing by Andrew Cawthorne, Timothy Heritage, William Maclean and Jonathan Oatis. A senior correspondent with nearly 25 years' experience covering the Palestinian-Israeli conflict including several wars and the signing of the first historic peace accord between the two sides.

Papua New Guinea requests aid after landslide buries 2,000



Melbourne: The Papua New Guinea government said a landslide on Friday buried more than 2,000 people and has formally asked for international help. The government figure is around three times more than a United Nations' estimate of 670. In a letter seen by The Associated Press to the United Nations resident coordinator dated Sunday, the acting director of the South Pacific island nation's National Disaster Center said the landslide "buried more than 2000 people alive" and caused "major destruction". Estimates of the casualties have varied widely since the disaster occurred, and it was not immediately clear how officials arrived the number of people affected. Australia prepared on Monday to send aircraft and other equipment to help at the site of a deadly landslide in Papua New Guinea as

overnight rains in the South Pacific nation's mountainous interior raised fears that the tons of rubble that buried hundreds of villagers could become dangerously unstable. Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles said his officials have been talking with their Papua New Guinea counterparts since Friday, when a mountainside collapsed on Yambali village in Enga province, which the United Nations estimates killed 670 people. The remains of only six people had been recovered so far. "The exact nature of the support that we do provide will play out over the coming days," Marles told Australian Broadcasting Corp. "We've got obviously airlift capacity to get people there. There may be other equipment that we can bring to bear in terms of the search and rescue and all of that we are talking through with PNG right now," Marles added. Papua New Guinea

is Australia's nearest neighbour and the countries are developing closer defence ties as part of an Australian effort to counter China's growing influence in the region. Australia is also the most generous provider of foreign aid to its former colony, which became independent in 1975. Heavy rain fell for two hours overnight in the provincial capital of Wabag, 60 kilometers (35 miles) from the devastated village. A weather report was not immediately available from Yambali, where communications are limited. But emergency responders were concerned about the impact of rain on the already unstable mass of debris lying 6 to 8 metres (20 to 26 feet) deep over an area the size of three to four football fields. An excavator donated by a local builder Sunday became the first piece of heavy earth-moving machinery

brought in to help villagers who have been digging with shovels and farming tools to find bodies. Working around the still-shifting debris is treacherous. Serhan Aktoprak, the chief of the International Organisation for Migration's mission in Papua New Guinea, said water was seeping between the debris and the earth below, increasing the risk of a further landslide. He did not expect to learn the weather conditions at Yambali until Monday afternoon. "What really worries me personally very much is the weather, weather, weather," Aktoprak said. "Because the land is still sliding. Rocks are falling," he added. Papua New Guinea's defense minister, Billy Joseph, and the government's National Disaster Center director, Laso Mana, flew on Sunday in an Australian military helicopter from the capital of Port Moresby to Yambali, 600 kilometers (370 miles) to the northwest, to gain a firsthand perspective of what is needed. Mana's office posted a photo of him at Yambali handing a local official a check for 500,000 kina (USD 130,000) to buy emergency supplies for the 4,000 displaced survivors. The purpose of the visit was to decide whether Papua New Guinea's government needed to officially request more international support.

Papua New Guinea orders thousands to evacuate from path of 'active' landslide



SYDNEY, GNS News Agency, June 1 Thousands of residents were ordered to evacuate from the path of a still-active landslide in Papua New Guinea by the government on Tuesday, after parts of a mountain collapsed, burying an initial estimate of more than 2,000 people. Relief teams in the Pacific nation have been trickling into the difficult-to-access northern Enga region since Friday though officials said the odds of finding survivors were slim. Residents said they have been using shovels and bare hands to search for survivors.

"The landslide area is very unstable. When we're up there, we're regularly hearing big explosions where the mountain is, there is still rocks and debris coming down," Enga province disaster committee chairperson Sandis said. "The landslide is still active, as people are digging through the rocks, more is still coming down." A state of emergency has been declared across the disaster zone and a neighbouring area, with a combined population of be-

tween 4,500 to 8,000, although not all have been ordered to evacuate yet, Tsaka said. Military personnel have set up checkpoints and are helping move residents to evacuation centres, he said. Heavy equipment and aid has been slow to arrive because of the remote location, treacherous terrain and tribal unrest in the area forcing the military to escort the convoys of relief teams.

More than 2,000 people were buried in the landslide which occurred early Friday, according to the government. That is sharply higher than the initial estimates by the U.N., which has put the possible deaths at more than 670. Former head of the local government Jiman Yandam estimated the dead at 162. Only five bodies have been recovered so far. The variance in the total number of possible deaths reflects the difficulty in getting an accurate population estimate. The mountainous nation's last credible census was in 2000 and a 2022 voter roll doesn't include those under 18. Tsaka declined to specify the total death toll saying he was not sure how many residents were in the area when the landslide occurred. "From preliminary estimates, we expect it to be a significant number, in the hundreds and it could go beyond but at this point we'd like to be careful with the number," he said. Coming soon: Get the latest news and expert analysis about the state of the global economy with Reuters Ecom World. Sign up here. Reporting by Renju Jose, Lewis Jackson and Jill Gralow in Sydney; Editing by Michael Perry. Lewis writes about companies, politics and energy as part of the Breaking News Team in Sydney. He covered months of strikes at some of Australia's largest gas export facilities and the breakup of financial services firm PwC. Before Reuters he wrote about stocks at Morningstar.

UK's Sunak proposes tax cuts for pensioners in new election pledge



GNS News Agency, June 1 - British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday proposed tax cuts for millions of pensioners in his latest campaign pledge, highlighting the importance of older voters in the upcoming July election. Sunak's Conservative Party said it would introduce a new age-related allowance and deliver a tax cut of around 100 pounds (\$128) for each of 8 million pensioners in 2025, rising to almost 300 pounds a year by the end of the next parliament.

"This bold action demonstrates we are on the side of pensioners. The alternative is Labour dragging every one in receipt of the full state pension into income tax for

the first time in history," Sunak, who last week called a general election for July 4, said in the statement. The number of pensioners in Britain rose by 140,000 to 12.6 million in the year to February 2023. Close to 50 million Britons will be eligible to vote in the election, which opinion polls predict is likely to end 14 years of Conservative rule in the country. The Conservative Party said the proposal comes alongside its commitment to the so-called triple lock, which guarantees increases to publicly funded pensions by the level of earnings, inflation or 2.5%, whichever is highest. Labour has also committed to retain the policy, which was introduced by a Conservative government in 2011 to prevent pensioners from falling into poverty. However, costs associated with it have come under increased scrutiny in recent years after British inflation soared, pushing up the government bill for state pensions by an additional 11 billion pounds last year. The new proposal, which the party termed "triple lock plus," will cost 2.4 billion pounds a year by 2029/30 and be funded through the government's previously announced plan to raise an extra 6 billion pounds a year by clamping down on tax avoidance and evasion, the party said. "This is just another desperate move from a chaotic Tory party torching any remaining facade of its claims to economic credibility," Labour shadow paymaster general Jonathan Ashworth said in a statement on the plans. The paymaster general falls under the Treasury and acts as a banker for most government departments.

Biden tells Israel to protect civilians after Rafah strike



WASHINGTON, GNS News Agency, June 1 - The Biden administration told Israel to take every precaution to protect civilians after a military strike in Rafah killed dozens of Palestinians, as it faced calls from some fellow Democrats to halt military shipments to Israel. "Israel has a right to go after Hamas, and we understand this strike killed two senior Hamas terrorists who are responsible for attacks against Israeli civilians," a National Security Council spokesperson said. "But as we've been clear, Israel must take every precaution possible to protect civilians. Biden has faced increasing pressure from within his own party to scale back support for Israel, even before the airstrike on Sunday night that set tents and rickety metal shelters ablaze in a Rafah camp, killing 45 people.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a prominent Democratic lawmaker in the House of Representatives, on Monday called the strike "an indefensible atrocity", adding in a social media post that "it is long past time for the President to live up to his word and suspend military aid." "Horrible and gut wrenching images coming out of Rafah last night," Representative Ayanna Pressley said in a social media post. "How much longer will the U.S. stand by while the Israeli military slaughters and mutilates Palestinian babies?" Representative Rashida Tlaib, the only Palestinian-American serving in Congress, called Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a "genocidal maniac." Netanyahu on Monday said was not intended to cause civilian casualties but went "tragically wrong."

The NSC spokesperson said the U.S. government was "actively engaging" with the Israeli military and others on the ground to assess what happened. Almost half of Democratic voters disapprove of Biden's handling of the Israel-Hamas war, according to a recent poll from Reuters/Ipsos. Weeks of campus protests about the war

have added to the pressure, and wider demands for a permanent ceasefire have put Biden's reelection campaign on the defensive. Coming soon: Get the latest news and expert analysis about the state of the global economy with Reuters Ecom World. Sign up here.

Iran's near-bomb-grade uranium stock grows, talks stall, IAEA reports say

VIENNA, GNS News Agency, June 1 - Iran is enriching uranium to close to weapons-grade at a steady pace while discussions aimed at improving its cooperation with the U.N. nuclear watchdog are stalled, two confidential reports by the watchdog showed on Monday. The International Atomic Energy Agency faces a range of difficulties in Iran, including the fact it only implemented a small fraction of the steps IAEA chief Rafael Grossi thought it committed to in a "Joint Statement" on cooperation last year.

"There has been no progress in the past year towards implementing the Joint Statement of 4 March 2023," one of the two reports to member states, both of which were seen, said. Grossi travelled to Iran this month for talks with Iranian officials aimed at improving cooperation and IAEA monitoring in Iran. Follow-up talks have stalled, however, after the death of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash last week. "The Director General reiterates to the new government of Iran his call for, and disposition to continue with, the high-level dialogue and ensuing technical exchanges commenced ... on 6-7 May 2024," the report added. It is 18 months since the IAEA's 35-nation Board of Governors last passed a resolution against Iran, ordering it to cooperate urgently with a years-long IAEA investigation into uranium particles found at three undeclared sites. While the number of sites has since been reduced to two, Iran has still not explained how the traces got there. "The Director General regrets that the outstanding safeguards issues have not been resolved," the report said, referring to those traces. France and Britain are pushing for a new resolution at next week's Board meeting, which the United States has so far not supported, diplomats say. Iran usually bristles at such resolutions, taking nuclear-related steps in response.

GDP growth in March quarter likely to slow on sluggish services, factory output; mild uptick likely after elections on inflationary surge



India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is likely to have grown 6.2-7.3 per cent in the January-March quarter of the financial year 2023-24, slower than the 8 per cent-plus growth in the first three quarters, various estimates by economists showed. A slowdown in manufacturing and services is likely to have pulled down growth in the last quarter even as GDP growth for the full year FY24 is seen doing better at around 7.8 per cent, which is higher than the second advance estimate of 7.6 per cent. The data for Q4 GDP and provisional estimate for FY24 GDP is scheduled to be released by the National Statistical Office on May 31. The second advance estimate for the GDP, which was released on February 29, had estimated FY24 GDP growth at 7.6 per cent. GDP had grown by 8.4 per cent in October-December, by 8.1 per cent in July-September and 8.2 per cent in April-June.

Agricultural Gross Value Added (GVA) is expected to contract for the second straight quarter in Q4 FY24 at around (-)0.5 per cent compared with (-)0.8 per cent in Q3 amid weak trends in the rabi output (barring wheat) and concerns related to yields, ICRA said. GVA reflects national income from the output side and GDP is arrived at by adding product taxes and subtracting subsidies to the GVA. ICRA has projected the GDP growth to moderate to a four-quarter low 6.7 per cent in Q4 FY24 from 8.4 per cent in Q3. "Lower volume growth coupled with diminishing gains from commodity prices dampening the profitability of some of the industrial sectors is expected to dampen India's GVA growth in Q4 FY2024," Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, ICRA said.

HDFC Treasury Research expects Q4 GDP to be 6.5 per cent amid moderation in manufacturing and services growth. For the full year FY24, it expects GDP to grow by 7.8 per cent higher than the second advance estimate of 7.6 per cent, it said. "Manufacturing sector is expected to be the key growth driver within the industrial sector...agriculture sector is expected to showcase a marginal contraction in Q4FY24. Services sector has shown stable and sustained growth as indicated by various high frequency indicators. On the demand side the growth in consumption demand would be lower than the GDP growth due to a drag in the consumer/non-durable goods," Paras Jasrai, Senior Analyst, India Ratings said.

The Lok Sabha elections also seem to have impacted growth. DBS Group Research in a note pointed out that growth, on average, slows a quarter before the elections but rises subsequently, by an average of around 60-100 basis points, and inflation tends to pick up post

elections. DBS expects real GDP growth at 7 per cent in Q4, taking the full year FY24 growth closer towards 8 per cent. Manufacturing sector growth is likely to be subdued with decline in net profit growth of non-financial listed companies, after rising for four consecutive quarters, IDFC FIRST Bank said. However, rural consumption likely improved in Q4FY24, after remaining subdued for the majority of FY24, with FMCG sales growth (volume) having shown an improvement in rural areas in Q4 FY24, it said.

On the capex front, while the government's capital expenditure grew by 31.6 per cent year-on-year to Rs 1.3 lakh crore in January-February 2024, it may have eased in March 2024 on a Y-o-Y basis amidst the Model Code of Conduct. "Capex cycle remains supported by Central government capital expenditure (36.5 per cent in FY24 till date v/s 24.4 per cent in FY23 till date) and state government capital expenditure (21.5 per cent in FY24 v/s 17.1 per cent in FY23). Construction sector, which has been supported by government capital expenditure, is showing some signs of moderation with a slowdown in steel consumption (10.7 per cent YoY in Q4 v/s 14.5 per cent in Q3). That said, cement production growth, which had slowed in Q3, picked-up in Q4 (8.5 per cent in Q4 v/s 5.1 per cent in Q3)," Gaura Sen Gupta, Chief Economist, IDFC FIRST Bank said. Private final consumption expenditure is estimated to have slowed to 3 per cent in FY24. "A slower growth in consumption will require upcoming policies to be demand-focused rather than only supply-driven, leaving the door open to directed support towards the urban poor and unorganised sector players," DBS said.

Some economists are of the view that Q4 GDP will throw a surprise on the upside as had happened during Q3 GDP estimates. However, GVA growth would be on the lower side. India's GDP growth had surged to a six-quarter high of 8.4 per cent in October-December as against many economists expecting growth to slow down to about 6.5 per cent from the previous quarters, prompting many to point towards GVA growth data for a more realistic picture. "We are likely to see the repeat of Q3 FY24's big upside surprise in GDP growth and high wedge between GDP and GVA growth in Q4 as well. While the implied GDP and GVA growth for Q4 FY24 (if one goes by NSO estimates for FY24) is 5.9 per cent and 5.4 per cent, respectively, the implied net indirect taxes growth is estimated at around 9-10 per cent. However, the fiscal data for the Centre and states so far reveals that subsidies/net indirect taxes are again tracking much lower than the previous year which could artificially push the Q4 FY24 GDP print to near 6.9-7.0 per cent even as GVA growth may still stay shy of 6 per cent," Madhavi Arora, Lead Economist, Emkay Global Financial Services said. Deutsche Bank, which is estimating the highest growth rate for Q4 at 7.3 per cent, said most high-frequency indicators are pointing towards a higher growth rate. "We are forecasting Jan-March '24 real GDP to have grown 7.3 per cent YoY during the quarter, which is higher than what we had previously anticipated. DB's India Macroeconomic Momentum Indicator (IMMI), which is a composite index of 5 high-frequency growth indicators - industrial production, exports, non-oil-non-gold imports, bank credit and consumer goods - tracks quarterly GDP growth quite well in advance and is indicating 7.0%+ growth during Jan-March '24...we are forecasting real GVA growth at 6.5%yoY for Jan-March '24, 90 bps lower than our GDP estimate," said Kaushik Das, chief economist, India & South Asia, Deutsche Bank.

Wage revision impact caps LIC Q4 net profit at Rs 13,762 crore



Country's largest insurer Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), on Monday reported a marginal 2.5 per cent increase in its standalone profit after tax at Rs 13,762 crore in the quarter ended March 2024 as against Rs 13,427 crore in the year-ago period. The board of LIC recommended a final dividend of Rs 6 per share for FY 2023-24. Earlier, during the year an interim dividend of Rs 4 was declared. The flat profit in the quarter due to the impact of wage revision. For the year ended March 31, 2024, profit after tax was Rs 40,676 crore as compared to Rs 36,397 crore for FY2023. LIC said it changed its accounting policy in September 2022 regarding transfer of amount pertaining to the accretion on the available solvency margin from non-participating policyholders account to shareholders account. Accordingly, it transferred a total amount of Rs 29,518.75 crore (net of tax) in FY 2023-24 compared to Rs 27,240.75 crore in the FY2022-23, which included an amount of Rs 4,542.31 crore pertaining to the quarter ended March 31, 2022. "We have more than doubled our share of non-par business within our individual business. Now we intend to focus our strategic interventions to maximize our market share across categories. At the same time, our sharp focus on various parameters which create superior value for all stakeholders shall continue, as demonstrated," LIC Chairperson Siddhartha Mohanty said. In terms of market share measured by first year premium income (FYPI), as per IRDAI, LIC continues to be the market leader by market share in the Indian life insurance business with overall market share of 58.87 per cent. For the year ended March 2024, LIC had a market share of 38.44 per cent in individual business and 72.3 per cent in the group business. During the year, LIC's total investment in equities stood at Rs 1,30,000 crore and in corporate bonds at Rs 78,000 crore. Its total premium income for FY2024 was Rs 4,75,070 crore as compared to Rs 4,74,005 crore in FY2023. Total individual business premium increased to Rs 3,03,768 crore from Rs 2,92,763 crore FY2023. The group business total premium income stood at Rs 1,71,302 crore as compared to Rs 1,81,242 crore. LIC sold a total of 2,03,92,973 in the individual segment during the year. The Value of New Business (VNB) for

FY2024 was Rs 9,583 crore as compared to Rs 9,156 crore in FY2023, registering a growth of 4.66 per cent. The solvency ratio, a measure of capital adequacy, as on March 31, 2024, increased to 1.98 as against 1.87 on March 31, 2023. Mohanty said there are key initiatives related to distribution channel and digital transformation underway. "We are confident that our employees, agents and our channel partners are fully committed to achieving these objectives. We look forward to this current year as the one in which our topline growth trajectory will be back in focus," he said.

'Amulyam' to revive Indian art and craft through exquisite wedding gifts

Hyderabad: From beginnings in a small room at an apartment, the husband and wife duo, Sushanth and Trishala Agarwal after four years opened a store, Amulyam on Monday. This store, dedicated to wedding gifts and tableware, aims to promote Indian arts and crafts, offering a range of luxury utility items that are entirely made in India. "We curate handcrafted wedding gifts that are special in their way, curated by women, widows, and women cooperatives. They are green products, plastic-free, and environmentally friendly," said Sushanth. Their collection highlights traditional art forms such as Pichwai, Jodhpur, and Udaipur, of Cutlery and Crochery. It also features the famous Karimnagar silver filigree artefacts, these intricate silver pieces are crafted by skilled artisans who are renowned for their delicate and time-consuming work. "The making of silver filigree articles involves cutting, twisting, and plating fine silver threads, a process requiring immense patience and skill," explained Sushanth. The store sources these items directly from Karimnagar artisans, ensuring they earn dignity and recognition for their craft. The couple's vision goes beyond mere commerce, it is a mission to revive forgotten Indian crafts and support the artisans behind them. "Our tableware tells stories of ancient India and showcases dying art forms," said Trishala while speaking about the importance of thoughtful, handcrafted wedding gifts that are both traditional and modern, "we curate special, personalized gifts that are practical, aesthetically pleasing, and environmentally friendly," she adds. The store located at Banjara Hills was launched by Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, Mayor of Hyderabad, and socialite and philanthropist Pinky Reddy. Amulyam will offer a personalised experience, blending cultural heritage with contemporary elegance, making each piece a memorable addition to any occasion.

Understanding the 8-shaped walk and its 'infinite benefits'



Walking is one of the best exercises for health. It is most effective when done with a free mind, without distractions, ensuring that the walker remains focused. But is there a set pattern you should walk in to reap maximum benefits? Apparently, yes. According to an Instagram reel by 'yogawithshakti', the 8-shaped walk or infinity walk has "infinite benefits". But what is it?

"In today's fast-paced world, many people treat morning walks as social activities, often chatting with friends in person or over the phone, which can detract from the potential health benefits," said Dr Aashish Chaudhry, managing director, senior consultant, and head, department of orthopaedics and joint replacement, Aakash Healthcare. "Among various walking exercises, the 8-shaped walking exercise stands out. This method is praised for its numerous health benefits. Practicing this exercise for 15-30 minutes daily can yield results," said Dr Chaudhry. But before we dive into its benefits, here's a guide from Dr Chaudhry on how to practice it. "Perform this exercise in the morning, evening, or on an empty stomach. Choose an open space or a room where you can walk," said Dr Chaudhry. "Start walking along an 8-

shaped imaginary path, moving from north to south and back, alternating between clockwise and anticlockwise directions. Walk for 15 minutes in each direction." After completing the 8-shaped walk, you can perform simple breathing exercises, shared Dr Chaudhry. Dr Chaudhry said that practicing the 8-shaped walking exercise regularly can bring about a sense of rejuvenation, making a person feel youthful and healthier. "Walking barefoot stimulates reflex points on the palms and soles, which correspond to various internal organs. The 8-shaped path causes the body, particularly the hips and abdomen, to twist, activating internal organs. The deep breathing involved ensures a high oxygen intake, energising the body and improving lung function," said Dr Chaudhry. According to Dr Chaudhry, regular practice can alleviate headaches, obesity, knee pain and rheumatoid arthritis.

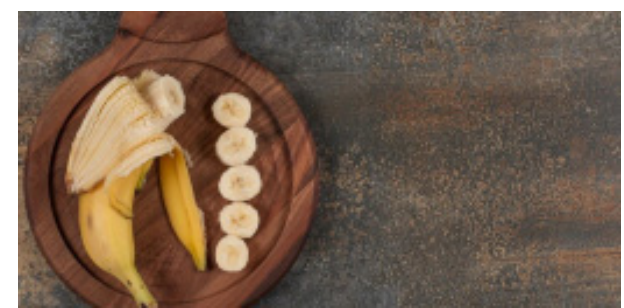
"Gentle 8-shaped walking helps reduce blood pressure and relieves various types of pain, including foot cracks and knee pain. Even those who are elderly or paralysed can benefit from this exercise, either independently or with assistance. This exercise can help manage conditions such as shoulder, neck, back, and lumbar pain, cervical and lumbar spondylitis, sciatica, disc prolapse, depression, epilepsy, migraines, sleeplessness, and heart diseases," said Dr Chaudhry. However, Bala Krishna Reddy Dabbedi, fitness expert, co-founder and director at FITTR, said that 8-shaped walk "does not have any additional benefits when compared to a straight walk". "Walking is a good activity for any person which has its benefits like letting you have a small amount of muscle in your legs, helps you develop good muscular endurance in leg muscles and also helps you burn some calories and these benefits are same for person who walks in a straight line or in 8-shape method," said Reddy Dabbedi.

Hydrating and moisturising, this fruit is the 'best choice for shiny hair'

Home remedies — which require fewer ingredients but promise long-lasting benefits — have a huge fan base. So, any such solution shared on social media tends to go viral; and so happened when the in-remedies shared on Instagram that banana is the perfect food for healthy and shiny hair. The post mentioned that bananas contain silica, a mineral element that helps the body to synthesise collagen and makes the hair thicker and stronger. So, we decided to explore whether bananas nourish the hair. Find out what we learnt.

Experts agree that banana, known for their hydrating and moisturising properties, makes it the best choice for shiny hair. "They are rich in vitamins like A, C, and B and minerals like potassium, magnesium, and antioxidants which not only strengthen your hair but also promote a healthy scalp," said Dr Rinky Kapoor, consultant dermatologist, cosmetic dermatologist and dermatologist, The Esthetic Clinics. Potassium helps improve blood circulation and deliver essential nutrients to the hair follicles, added dietitian Simrat Bhui. "This promotes healthy hair growth and might even help prevent hair loss," said Bhui.

Not only in the diet, people often apply bananas — mostly as a hair mask. "These hair masks can be modified and adjusted according to individual preferences and available ingredients," said Dr Kapoor. Here are some effective DIY banana hair masks with simple ingredients to promote your hair growth: Banana and avocado hair mask. Avocado is packed with biotin, vitamins, and healthy fats that can soften the strands, making them smooth and silky. "This hair mask can be made by mashing ripe banana and avocado in the same quantity and applying it on the scalp and your split ends for the best results. Let it



rest for 20 to 30 minutes and rinse it off with warm water. Individuals are advised to apply it once or twice a month for luscious hair," shared Dr Kapoor.

Coconut oil is considered one of the best choices for healthy hair. When combined with banana, which is known for improving the overall texture of your hair, it works wonders. "Mix one ripe banana with 2 tablespoons of coconut oil and apply it to your hair. Let it sit for almost 30 to 40 minutes. This can make your hair hydrated and less frizzy," said Dr Kapoor. Although banana is a rewarding ingredient with various benefits for hair and gives a natural shine and even moisturises the hair, people should use it moderately without going overboard. "People are advised to properly wash their hair after applying a hair mask, as a leftover banana hair mask can cause irritation and worsen your dandruff. Over usage of these hair masks can make your ends brittle resulting in split ends and hair damage. Consult experts or doctors in case of any allergies or concerns to avoid any future side effects and hair damage," urged Dr Kapoor.

Why repeatedly heating vegetable oils is putting your health at risk, according to ICMR guidelines

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Indians released earlier this month, "The practice of 'reusing' vegetable oils for cooking, (which have been repeatedly heated during food preparations) is very common, both at homes and in commercial establishments. Repeated heating of vegetable oils/fat, results in oxidation of PUFA, leading to the generation of compounds which are harmful/toxic and may increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases and cancer."

Ipsita Chakraborty, senior nutritionist at Hungry Kola explains, "If you repeatedly heat vegetable oils, it leads to the formation of harmful compounds such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), aldehydes, and acrylamide. These compounds are formed through a series of chemical reactions, including oxidation, hydrolysis, and polymerisation, that occur when oils are subjected to high temperatures multiple times." Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, she warns, are known carcinogens that can damage DNA and contribute to cancer development. Aldehydes, particularly acrolein, can also be toxic and irritating to the respiratory system. Additionally, acrylamide, which forms in starchy foods cooked at high temperatures, has been classified as a probable human carcinogen. These compounds pose significant health risks, emphasising the importance of safe cooking practices. Particular types of vegetable oils that are more prone to producing harmful substances

Chakraborty says, "Oils with high levels of polyunsaturated fats, such as soybean, sunflower, and corn oils, are more prone to degradation and the formation of harmful substances when heated repeatedly. This susceptibility is due to the chemical structure of polyunsaturated fats, which contain multiple double bonds that are more reactive and prone to oxidation."

On the other hand, oils with higher levels of monounsaturated fats, like olive oil and canola oil, and those with higher saturated fat content, such as coconut oil and palm oil, are more stable at high temperatures. Factors contributing to the susceptibility of oils include their fatty acid composition, the presence of antioxidants, and the temperature and duration of heating. Safe practices individuals can adopt to minimise the risks associated with reheating vegetable oils

To minimise the risks associated with the repeated



heating of vegetable oils, individuals should adopt several safe practices. "Firstly, I would advise to avoid reusing oil multiple times, especially if it has been heated to high temperatures. One must use fresh oil for each cooking session as it can significantly reduce the formation of harmful compounds," Chakraborty adds. Secondly, people should choose oils with higher smoke points and greater stability, she elaborates, such as olive oil, avocado oil, or coconut oil, can help mitigate risks. Additionally, incorporating cooking methods that require less oil, such as steaming, baking, or grilling, can reduce the need for high-temperature frying.

Monitoring the temperature during cooking and avoiding overheating the oil can also prevent degradation and the formation of toxic compounds. Alternative cooking methods or oils that experts recommend to mitigate potential health risks. According to Chakraborty, using air fryers or ovens for baking instead of deep-frying can achieve a similar texture with significantly less oil. "Steaming and boiling are also excellent methods that preserve nutrients without requiring oil."

"When frying is necessary, using oils with high stability at high temperatures, such as avocado oil or ghee, can reduce the formation of harmful compounds. Cold-pressed oils are preferable as they retain more antioxidants that can counteract some of the harmful effects of heating. Furthermore, integrating more raw or minimally processed foods into the diet can reduce the reliance on vegetable oils altogether

Mom-to-be Deepika Padukone appears radiant in new Cartier campaign.



commercial appeared on Reddit, numerous fans flocked to the comment section to commend the actor for effortlessly showcasing the pieces. One user noted that an Indian remake of the 2015 American comedy-drama *The Intern*, with Deepika reprising the lead character originally played by Anne Hathaway, would be a good idea as she looks so powerful in suits. "DP & diamond jewellery," one Redditor wrote, while another mentioned, "She looks gorgeous. Mother mothering."

The brand's global ambassador since mid-last year, Padukone recently spoke to Harper's Bazaar India about the new collection. "DP > diamond jewellery," one Redditor wrote, while another one mentioned, "She looks gorgeous. Mother mothering." The brand's global ambassador since October, 2022, Padukone recently spoke to Harper's Bazaar India about the new collection. "The collection presents a theatre of apparitions, where precious animals are parading. It is almost as if the different animal characters in the collection are the actors of the collection, playing with graphics and optical illusions in an imaginary world," she said. "It reveals a variety of animals from Cartier's previous collections, but I didn't discover (them) before. One of the pendants can be transformed into a turtle brooch. It is very playful; the pieces have some incredible craftsmanship and exceptional stones," she mentioned. "My favourite piece is the Koaga necklace, inspired by the zebra. The zebra really comes to life by the stylised lines of the design and the black and white are contrasted by an impressive pear-shaped rubellite," Padukone added.

The commercial has gone viral on social media, with many praising Deepika Padukone's stunning appearance and the way she exudes charm wearing the ornaments. Bollywood icon Deepika Padukone has been French luxury-goods conglomerate Cartier's global ambassador since 2022. Legendary French luxury-goods conglomerate Cartier has unveiled its new Nature Sauvage High Jewellery collection and, as part of its promotions, released a new advertisement featuring Bollywood icon Deepika Padukone. In the commercial, she appears radiant and elegant in five different outfits of varied shades, each adorned with Cartier jewellery inspired by various animals.

Despite being only 15 seconds long, the commercial has gone viral on social media, with many praising the Fighter actor's stunning appearance and the way she exudes charm wearing the ornaments. Soon after the

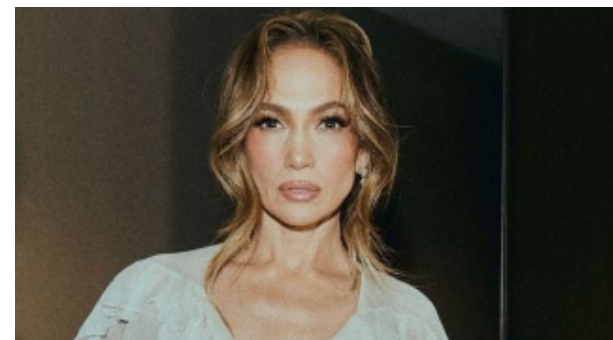
Priyanka Chopra reaches Australia to shoot for *The Bluff* with daughter Malti Marie: 'Best travel partner ever'

Priyanka Chopra reaches Australia to shoot for *The Bluff* with daughter Malti Marie. Priyanka Chopra reaches Australia to shoot for *The Bluff* with daughter Malti Marie. Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas is set to begin filming for her upcoming Hollywood project *The Bluff* in Australia. The *Bluff*, which hails from Russo Brothers' banner AGBO Studios and Amazon MGM Studios, will see Priyanka play the role of a former female pirate. According to an Instagram reel shared by the 41-year-old actor on Monday, she was accompanied by her daughter Malti Marie Jonas (two) on the journey. "Touchdown... *The Bluff*. With the best travel partner ever," Priyanka, who is based out of Los Angeles, captioned the post. Set in the 19th century Caribbean, *The Bluff* follows a former female pirate, essayed by Chopra Jonas, who must protect her family when the mysterious sins of her past catch up to her. The movie will be directed by Frank E Flowers, who



has co-written it with Joe Ballarini. Chopra Jonas also serves as a producer on the film alongside AGBO's Anthony and Joe Russo — executive producers of her Prime Video show *Citadel*. *The Bluff* will stream on Prime Video.

Jennifer Lopez calls AI 'really scary': 'We had them stealing our faces'



Actor and singer Jennifer Lopez plays Atlas Shepherd, a data analyst who must turn to AI to help save the Earth from an evil robot in the science fiction action film *Atlas*. She shared that the movie "does a good job of showing how AI could go incredibly wrong," reported Variety. "I think this movie does a good job of showing how AI could go incredibly wrong, and this is how it could go really right," said Lopez at the film's Los Angeles pre-

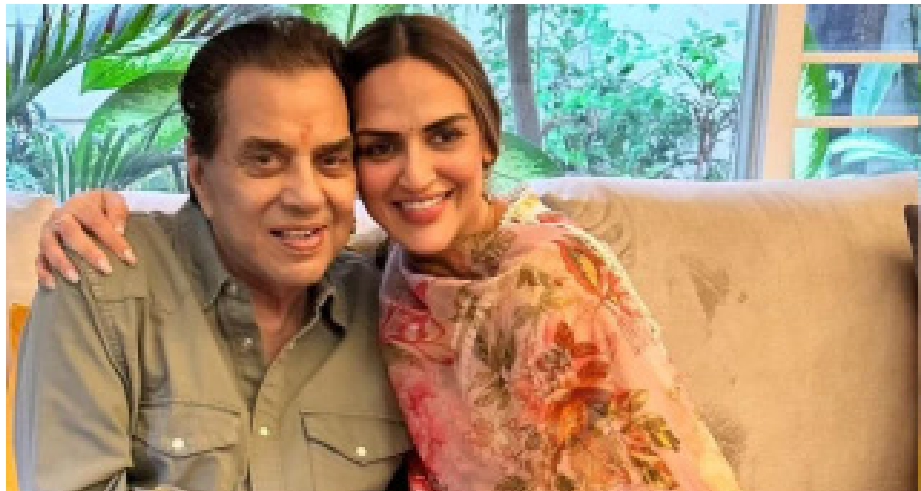
miere. She has experienced the exploitative side of AI, with ads "selling skincare that I know nothing about" using manipulated photos of her face covered in "wrinkles." "It's really scary," she said, adding, "Right away we had them stealing our faces. So, yes, [AI] is really scary." Lopez further explained, "I think you should be respectful of AI... We have to be open to all possibilities. These movies that are talking about AI — especially this one — do a really good job of showing both sides."

Sterling K. Brown, who portrays a military officer battling with Atlas, was impressed by Lopez's work ethic. "Moguls be moguling," he said. "She was talking earlier today how she has brought down her level of commitments. I would have marveled to see her at full tilt, because it looked like it was full tilt when we were together. There was always something happening." In one scene, Brown and Lopez's characters are left badly beaten and bruised by the villains. "We had nice little side conversations between takes," Brown said. "I asked her about being a Fly Girl [on *In Living Color*]. She had a few good Rosie Perez stories." *Atlas* is available on Netflix, reported Variety.

Esha Deol remembers wearing salwar-kurta on Koffee with Karan because dad Dharmendra 'could be watching'; Karan Johar was surprised

Esha Deol, who made her acting comeback with Ajay Devgn's streaming series *Rudra: The Edge of Darkness* (2022), is eager to do more diverse roles as she enters a new phase in her career. Esha recently got divorced from her husband of 11 years, Bharat Takhtani. In a recent interview, she recalled that what she said years ago about failure and self-reflection doesn't "resonate" with who she is today. When reminded about her appearance on the popular celebrity chat show *Koffee with Karan* almost two decades ago, she said that she can't remember ever saying that she was self-reflective about failure.

Reacting to this, Esha said in an interview with *India Today*, "I said this back then? I don't know why I spoke and gave so much philosophy then. I am getting myself in trouble with what I said then. I don't think it resonates to what I



am today." However, Esha remembered what she wore for the show. She shared how she ditched glamorous outfits and donned a salwar-kameez because she was aware that her father, Dharmendra, would be watching the episode when it airs, and for that, she wanted to be "well dressed." She reminisced, "I have to go back and watch

that interview because I don't really remember what I said. I remember it being a fun, spontaneous interview and the main thing I remember is also that I wore a salwar-kurta and Karan (Johar) was like (shows amused expression) and I was like, 'Maybe dad watches this, I better be well dressed'. So I made Rocky (celebrity fashion designer Rocky S) make a salwar-kurta for me."

In an earlier interview with *indianexpress.com*, Esha had shared how Dharmendra was against her becoming an actor even though his sons Bobby and Sunny Deol were already stars. She had explained how her father was "possessive and orthodox" when it came to her, and that according to him, "Girls should be kept away from the world in a protected way".

'Richa Chadha was crying, upset': Heeramandi co-star Jayati Bhatia recalls infamous 99 take incident, says her shoot was cancelled because of it



Actor Jayati Bhatia, who played the character Phatto in *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar*, recalled the infamous incident in which her co-star Richa Chadha was reduced to tears on set because director Sanjay Leela Bhansali was dissatisfied by her performance. In an interview, Jayati said that her shoot was cancelled on the following day because of the drama that had gone down on set between Richa and Bhansali. In previous interviews, Richa said that she was made to do 99 retakes for a shot, which ultimately wasn't used in the final cut.

Chatting with *Bollywood Now*, Jayati was asked about her interactions with Richa, who played the tragic character Lajjo on the show. She said, "I met Richa only a couple of times on set, for the 'Sakal Ban' song and then for her death scene. I had been told that she would only be there in two episodes, but I didn't have an idea of her character. We spoke about Lajjo in scenes, but we

didn't know the extent of her fragility."

Jayati continued, "I had heard of the famous 99 takes, and the only reason I'd heard about the incident was that my shoot was cancelled the next day. I asked why, and I was told, 'Something major happened yesterday. Sir took 101 takes with Richa, he wouldn't stop. Woh ro rahi thi, badi pareshan thi, yeh thi, woh thi (She was very upset, she was crying)'. I said, '99 takes? Why? How?' All of this I heard." Jayati said that she got a taste of Richa's performance for the first time at the premiere, where the first two episodes of the eight-episode series were shown. She said that after the screening, she couldn't get up from her seat because she was so moved by Richa's performance. "She's only there for two episodes, but when she dies, you feel a deep sense of loss," she said.

In a recent interview with *India Today*, Bhansali addressed reports of his poor behaviour on set, and looked back on his experience with Richa, especially while shooting the song "Masoom Dil Hai Mera." He said, "That was a special moment. But unka baith nahi raha tha (Her performance wasn't landing). She was trying, but I wasn't getting what I wanted," he said. "After a point, I got a little upset. I said, 'You've rehearsed it, but it's still not falling in place, you're not getting the state of mind'. I got a little angry, and she became upset as well... If you are taking too many takes, and I scold you, then you will feel the humiliation that the character was meant to show. When I was watching it, I thought, 'She's actually crying'. She held on to every beat. Till the last moment, she didn't let go of that anger and frustration."

Karan Johar says 'proud to be Indian', advocates following our traditions while being progressive: 'West is emulating our clothes and rituals'

Emphasising his love for his country, director-producer Karan Johar recently said that he is a staunch believer in the nation's traditions. Karan Johar is currently gearing up for the release of his Dharma Productions' third endeavour this year — *Mr & Mrs Mahi*. Having frequently slipped in moments and dialogues that exude nationalistic sentiments in most of his movies, a blind assumption that Karan Johar is a proud Indian would not have proven wrong for sure. Nevertheless, the director-producer himself has now come forward, emphasising his love for his country. "I'm so proud to be an Indian and to have been born in this vast and culturally rich land, on which we can tell a million stories and still wouldn't have told enough," he said during a chat with *GlobalSpa Magazine*.

"I'm also a huge believer in our traditions. We are all evolving and accepting modern society and being progressive, woke and going with the times, yes. But there are some aspects of our upbringing that are deeply embedded in the tradition of our rich country, be it respecting our parents, elders and forefathers or teaching our children the right manners or being hospitable which is in our DNA. I love that some of these aspects are truly and traditionally Indian. They are authentically us, and I'm proud that we take them wherever we go. We even travel with our emotions on our sleeves," he noted. "I also like that we are sometimes overtly and hyper-emotional and sometimes a tad melodramatic. But we don't keep it within ourselves," he said, citing the example of the practice of conducting rituals over a period of two weeks fol-



lowing someone's death. "And the opposite of death is life, marriage, and relationships. When we have marriages, where else in the world do you see events like ours? Our saangeet is now travelling across the world, after being a traditionally North Indian phenomenon once. Not only other states, but many from the West have also started embracing it. Western countries are also emulating our clothes and rituals. I feel like the colour of our weddings is brighter than any other culture's," he added. Following his last directorial venture, the Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt-starrer *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani*, Johar is currently gearing up for the release of his Dharma Productions' third endeavour this year — *Mr & Mrs Mahi*. Johar's other production ventures this year — *Yodha* and *Ae Watan Mere Watan* — had, however, failed at the box office.

Manoj Bajpayee says vegetable sellers 'scold' him when he bargains with them, wife Shabana gets embarrassed: 'Achcha nahi lag raha sir'

Imagine actor Manoj Bajpayee stepping out from his house, heading to the market and then bargaining with the local sabzi wala. That's precisely what happens when he goes grocery shopping, the acclaimed actor admits sheepishly, embarrassing his wife Shabana, who pretends to not know him at all in such times.

The actor, who is currently promoting his latest film *Bhaiyya Ji*, spoke about his bargaining habits when he goes shopping. When asked if he bargains when he buys vegetables, Bajpayee told *Mashable India*, "Ab daant dete hai sabzi waale mujhe, 'Ye achcha nahi lag raha sir.' Then I tell them that I am merely practicing! My wife would behave as if she doesn't know me. She doesn't like to bargain." The actor then mentioned how the Bajpayee family is slowly moving towards a more sustainable living and has moved towards "non-plastic" products. "We have a lot of cloth bags which we take to buy groceries. In other sustainable practices, my wife is very fond of thrifting! When we go to America, whether one buys or not, but she has to go to the thrift store! She visits thrift stores of every city. It is my job to find as many thrift stores for Shabana.

"When we feel we are done with certain clothes, we



pack them in cartons and send it to different cities where we send it to our friends or relatives, who then distribute it to those in need. There is no point in throwing the clothes away of course," he added. On the work front, the actor has had a packed year so far, which began with the Netflix series *Killer Soup*, followed by *Silence 2: The Night Owl Bar Shootout* and now his latest feature *Bhaiyya Ji*, which is playing in cinemas. His other releases for the year include *Despatch* and *The Fable*. Manoj Bajpayee will also be shooting for the third season his Raj-DK series *The Family Man*.

Vidya Balan dances with husband Siddharth Roy Kapur, brothers-in-law Aditya and Kunaal on Jumma Chumma.

What happens when a family of actors and producers hit the dance floor? Best to ask the Roy Kapur brothers. A new video has surfaced on the internet, where Aditya Roy Kapur, Siddharth Roy Kapur, Kunaal Roy and Vidya Balan are seen dancing together. While the occasion is speculated to be a family wedding, all four of them are seen on the dance floor dancing to the chartbuster "Jumma Chumma De De". The video, shared on Reddit, begins with the Anand Bakshi penned lines, "Arey tu boli thi. pichle jumme ko." where Vidya and her producer hus-

band Siddharth are seen grooving. The couple is soon joined by Aditya, who matches them in the banter as the song continues. Just before the hook line of the Laxmikant-Pyarelal banger drops, Aditya is seen pulling in his elder brother, Kunaal, to the dance floor. Then, the three brothers and Vidya Balan are seen doing the iconic Amitabh Bachchan hook step of the song. The video comes at a time when there is speculation that Aditya Roy Kapur has broken up with actor Ananya Panday.

I couldn't even brush my teeth for two months: Rishabh Pant



gency, June 1

Rishabh Pant, Rohit Sharma, Shuvam Dube, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja First batch of Team India has arrived in the US for the T20 World Cup. Team India wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant has opened up about the "unbearable pain" and "insecurities" that crept inside him after his life-threatening injury.

Pant, who is making a comeback in the Indian team almost after a gap for one and a half year had miracu-

lously cheated death but the injuries required a major knee surgery and an extensive rehabilitation. "Self-belief and self-confidence are very important while recovering from an injury because there are people saying all sorts of things around you, and you, as an individual, have to think about what's good for you," Pant said on "Dhawan Kareng", a talk show hosted by India cricketer Shikhar Dhawan. Rishabh Pant jumped to third in the IPL 2024 Orange Cap race on Wednesday. (BCCI) Rishabh Pant jumped to third in the IPL 2024 Orange Cap race on Wednesday. (BCCI) "The accident was a life-changing experience for me. When I got up after it, I wasn't even sure if I would be alive, but God was very kind to save me. I couldn't even brush my teeth for two months, and for six to seven months, I suffered with unbearable pain. I couldn't go to the airport because I was nervous about facing people in a wheelchair." The 26-year-old has returned to the action in the IPL, where he led Delhi Capitals. Pant gave glimpses of his devastating best, scoring 446 runs at the strike rate of 155.40. "Now that I'm making a comeback in cricket, more than feeling pressure, I'm excited. I feel this is kind of a second life, so I'm excited but also nervous," he added.

'I would have picked Shubman Gill over Yashasvi Jaiswal': Eoin Morgan on India's T20 World Cup squad

GNS News Agency, June 1

Former England captain Eoin Morgan calls India the "favourites" to win the T20 World Cup and feels the selectors should have picked his former Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) teammate Shubman Gill ahead of Yashasvi Jaiswal in the squad. "The strongest side even with injuries throughout the tournament is India. Their strength and depth is absolutely incredible," Morgan said on Sky Sports. "And it's almost probably, we're talking about who the players that were missed out in their squad of 15 because of the quality that they possess. They are favourites for me, the quality they have on paper, if they produce it I think they can beat anybody quite well in the tournament," he added.

"The only decision I would have had differently and if I was selecting the squad, I would have picked Shubman Gill over Yashasvi Jaiswal. I have played alongside him, I know how he thinks. I know how he works. I feel he's a future leader within that side and I think in big moments, in World Cups the more leaders the better. Even if he's sitting on the sideline, you still need inspiration from here and there, a sense of positivity." But former England captain Michael Atherton pointed out that India head into almost every tournament as favourites but they haven't won an ICC title in over a decade and ironically that the only time India won the T20 World Cup was before the IPL came into being. "It's also an irony, because everyone talks about the IPL and how it has improved India's



T20 cricket. The irony is that the only time they have won is pre IPL," Atherton said. Nasser Hussain and Atherton quipped Morgan about India's style of playing in the T20 and how in the last edition of the T20 World Cup they were hammered by 10 wickets by eventual winners England in the semifinals in Adelaide.

"I think they can (win), because they have to go to a stage now where Adelaide would hurt, recently losing the (ODI) World Cup at home to Australia in front of 1,25,000 Indian fans. The spinner will come into the game, the level of batsmanship will come into the game if the wickets slow down like we think. But also that excellence in power hitting is the point of difference for me. Shivam Dube has to play, I think he'll set this World Cup alight."

Norway Chess notes: Hungry Magnus Carlsen, Pragg wins with one second on clock and more

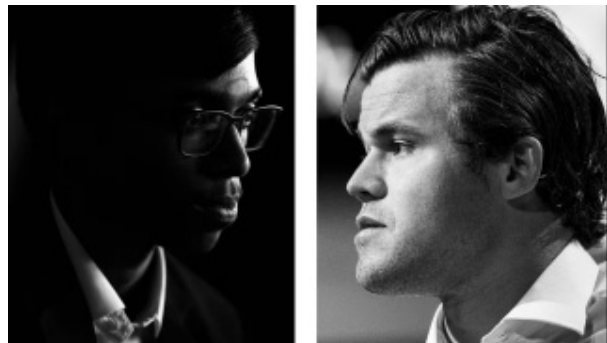
It was a battle between the old world champion and the new world champion for the first time in the classical time controls since the throne was relinquished. On Monday, the first day of the Norway Chess tournament, Magnus Carlsen, the current world no 1, was taking on Ding Liren, the man who now sits on the throne that the Norwegian occupied for a decade. It was expected to be an intriguing clash, with Carlsen having told The Indian Express before the tournament began that he was hoping to find out where his level was in classical time controls. Ding, meanwhile, has also been dogged by indifferent form since he took over the crown last year. He told The Indian Express that his goal was just not to finish in last place in Norway.

The Ding vs Carlsen game started off on a dramatic note with the Norwegian almost bolting off the board after two moves into the players' back room. He returned nearly 12 minutes later. That absence was enough to set off tongues wagging with local media speculating what was happening behind the scenes.

Finally, World no 3 Hikaru Nakamura walked into the confession booth — a novelty set up by the Norway Chess organisers where players can speak their mind without being prodded — and offered some clarity on what was happening behind the scenes in the exclusive back room that's kept only for the players. "It's pretty funny to see Magnus in a situation where there are no increments, he's in the back room eating. I think he spent like 13 minutes just eating noodles, salad and whatever it was... I think it was a big pepperoni pizza... Obviously, you guys cannot see any of this. But behind it was pretty funny to see from the inside Magnus chugging his water, eating his salad and eating pizza," Nakamura said. Soon, the official handle of Norway Chess posted a clip of Carlsen's trainer Peter Heine Nielsen — who has helped Viswanathan Anand as well as Carlsen plot almost all of their World Chess Championship triumphs (barring the 2013 edition when Anand faced Carlsen) — walking into the playing hall carrying a massive box of what looked like pizza before the event had started. Later, while talking to a panel in the TV 2 studio afterwards, Carlsen explained that long absence in the middle of the game: "I ate, I was hungry."

The duo managed to eke out a draw pretty fast — in 14 moves — in the classical format which meant that as per the rules of the tournament, the game headed into the Armageddon. At Norway Chess, if a match is drawn, the Armageddon rules come into effect. Here, the player with white has 10 minutes on the clock, while the player with black has seven minutes. But the catch is that the player with white has to secure victory, or the player with black gets the bonus half a point. Pragg wins with one second on the clock

All six games of the day were drawn, which means all 12 players had to play their way out of Armageddon on Monday. The Armageddon format, where the player with white has 10 minutes in the first 40 moves while the opponent has seven minutes for 40 moves (with an increment for both players of just one second per move



from the 41st move).

Himanshu Gulati, an Indian-origin member of Parliament with the Progress Party, poses with Pragganandhaa and Vaishali ahead of the first day of the Norway Chess event.

This format pushes nerves on the brink, as happened in the game between Pragganandhaa and Alireza Firouzja. Both players played on till they were deep in time trouble. Eventually, Pragg won the game with just one second on the clock because his opponent lost on time, a wild finish akin to a photo finish in track events in athletics. "I didn't really see the clock at all," admitted Pragganandhaa later on. "And actually, I didn't realize that we didn't make move 40. I thought we were already getting the one-second increment," the 18-year-old confessed later. At Norway Chess, some chess parents have also made the journey to the Scandinavian country to offer emotional support to their kids. This includes the omnipresent Nagalakshmi, who is here providing both Pragg and Vaishali and Carlsen's father Henrik.

World champion Ding Liren, who had walked out of the playing hall after the game against Magnus Carlsen, is led back into the playing hall by his mother. World champion Ding Liren, who had walked out of the playing hall after the game against Magnus Carlsen, is led back into the playing hall by his mother. Express Photo by Amit Kamath) Also in Stavanger, where the Norway Chess event is being played, is Ding Liren's mother who is a visible source of emotional support for the world champion. She was spotted bringing him beverages and even rushing to bring him back to the playing hall during a break. A day before they were to wage war over the chessboard, the six women who are competing in the Norway Chess tournament's first ever event for women were thoroughly tested in a mock classroom for Norway Chess' television partner in the host country.

Sverre Krogh Sundbø, a popular host from Norway's TV 2 Sport, threw tricky questions at the six women, who were seated like they were in a classroom. First question: How do you spell Ian Nepomniachtch's name? This one brought a massive chuckle from all the players, only a couple of whom got the correct answer.

Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni: Fake India coach applicants use famous names



GNS News Agency, June 1

Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni are some of the names used by fake applicants for the job of head coach of the Indian men's cricket team.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has received more than 3,000 applicants for the post but understands that most of them are from fake names including former cricketers and politicians. As the deadline for applying for the post ended on Monday (May 27), it is understood that the BCCI received multiple applications in the names of Tendulkar, Dhoni, Harbhajan Singh, Virender Sehwag, among other ex-cricketers. The long list also features the names of politicians like Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah. On May 13, the BCCI had invited applications for the job on Google forms and witnessed a large number of fake applicants for the post on a daily basis. What is not

clear at this stage is whether the BCCI has received any applications from genuine candidates who are interested in the responsibility. This is not the first time that the Indian board has had to deal with fake applicants which cost them a lot of time to scrutinise them. In 2022 when the BCCI had invited applications for the post of head coach, they had received around 5,000 applications from imposters using celebrity names. While the BCCI back then had asked the interested candidates to mail their applications, this time it used Google forms.

"Last year too, the BCCI received such a response where imposters applied and the story is similar this time. The reason the BCCI had to invite applications on Google forms is it's easy to scrutinise the names of applicants in one sheet," a BCCI official said. In its advertisement, the board has outlined the qualities it was looking for in the head coach of the team to be in charge till the 2027 50-over World Cup in South Africa. Some of the most notable requirements for the new head coach listed by the BCCI were: the candidate "must be willing to meet work expectations and pressures associated with handling marquee athletes"; and they should help in "developing a world-class Indian cricket team which delivers sustained success in all conditions and formats, inspiring current and future generations of cricketers and stakeholders with their approach to the game." The next head coach will begin his tenure soon after the T20 World Cup in the USA and Caribbean next month. The incumbent Rahul Dravid, whose tenure began in December 2021, has decided against seeking an extension.

Pragganandhaa, Vaishali and Humpy making heads turn in land of Magnus Carlsen during Norway Chess

GNS News Agency, June 1

CHESS LEGEND Garry Kasparov called it the Wimbledon of the 64 black and white squares. But Norway Chess, an invitational tournament that began in Stavanger on Monday, is resplendent this year with the sport's most dazzling northern lights — home legend and five-time world champion Magnus Carlsen and the organisers' must-have on the wishlist, the chess stars from India. The presence of the world's most famous chess siblings — teenager R Pragganandhaa and his sister R Vaishali — has a hard to miss buzz around them in Magnus-land. Travelling with their mother, they are chased by autograph hunters and selfie seekers. Among them is an important fan who has travelled miles to meet them.

Himanshu Gulati, an Indian-origin MP with the Progress Party, had his reasons to make a dash here from Oslo. "A few years ago, I would have come to this event just to get a selfie with Magnus Carlsen. But today, I mostly came here from Oslo to meet with Pragganandhaa. He's the talk of the world right now," Gulati told The Indian Express. Himanshu Gulati, an Indian-origin member of Parliament with the Progress Party, poses with Pragganandhaa and Vaishali ahead of the first day of the Norway Chess event.

"India should be really proud of the talents they have produced. In the world of chess, India is definitely a dominant force at the moment. You can see that India is really making its mark in Norway Chess with so many Indians. These young Indians are the future of chess," he said. The Indians will be tested since the carefully curated field includes both reigning world champions Ding Liren and Ju Wenjun, World No 2 and No 3 Fabiano Caruana and Hikaru Nakamura and world championship challenger Lei Tingjie. India's veteran star Humpy Koneru is also part of the elite six-player field at the event's first women's edition. "This year we have



The presence of the world's most famous chess siblings — teenager R Pragganandhaa and his sister R Vaishali — has a hard to miss buzz around them in Magnus-land. Travelling with their mother, they are chased by autograph hunters and selfie seekers. Among them is an important fan who has travelled miles to meet them.

Pragganandhaa competing. Last year it was Gukesh. Pentala Harikrishna was here some years ago. So we have had four different players from India (including Vishy Anand)," said Kjell Madland, founder and director of Norway Chess, an event that remains smitten by Indian chess whizzes. "India is a huge country for chess. A lot of Indian players are very talented. We used to have Anand playing here for many years. It's a massive honour for us to have him play here. Indian players are so nice. And they're always professional. They're so young, but so good," said Madland. The crowd favourite though remains Norway's greatest chess player Carlsen, and fans are making a pilgrimage to catch him in action. "If I get to talk to Magnus Carlsen, I just want to ask him, 'how are you so good?'," said 11-year-old Isabella Fontana, one of the many children who turned up at the SR-Bank's main building, hosting the tournament.

The Fontanas have lived in Stavanger for a year since moving here from the US for work. Despite their roots, Isabella and her younger brother Isaiah, 9, are massive Carlsen fans rather than rooting for Americans Nakamura or Caruana. And when they heard that Carlsen would be in action, they just had to be at the playing hall, even if it meant getting to the venue almost two hours before the first round. "It's crazy how anybody can be that good at chess, finding new strategies and beating people," said Isabella. The Fontana fam-

ily who arrived at the playing hall nearly two hours before the first round of Norway Chess started. Both Isabella and her younger brother nine-year-old Isaiah are massive Carlsen fans. The Fontana family who arrived at the playing hall nearly two hours before the first round of Norway Chess started. Both Isabella and her younger brother nine-year-old Isaiah are massive Carlsen fans. (Express Photo by Amit Kamath)

Her brother Isaiah is an early convert to Magnus-mania: "Magnus is just really good. I watched plenty of videos of his matches. So I know he has a really good strategy." While France's Alireza Firouzja is another star attraction, it is the Indian prodigies whose participation the organisers were equally keen to ensure. "It's very important for us to have players from India every year. But it's not easy to pick the player we invite because so many of them are so good. Maybe we'll have to pick more than one (from next year)," said Madland. Unlike open events, where anyone can enter, or those where qualification routes decide who gets to play, invitational tournaments see organisers decide who to invite based on parameters like how good a player is and their personality.

While the decision on which Indian they get to invite among the elite six-player field might have the organisers fretting, what Madland takes particular pride in is the fact that they foresaw the rise of Gukesh, who sensationally became the youngest World Cham-

pionship challenger at Candidates last month. "When we invited Gukesh to play in the main event last year, he was about World No 30 in the ratings list. But by the time the event ended, he rose to World No 9," said Madland. The 2023 Norway Chess event was also where Gukesh started working full time with his current trainer Grzegorz Gajewski, a partnership that has now led to the 17-year-old becoming the C a n d i d a t e s champ. Carlsen, who opted out of the classical format World Championship, has almost kick-started a chess storm in football and ice hockey-mad Norway. "It feels really good to play in Stavanger again. There are a lot of chess fans in Norway, most of them don't get the chance to see me very often. So it feels very special whenever I play here," Carlsen told the event organisers a day before the event started. Pragganandhaa is known to play adventurous chess and gained eyeballs at the Candidates for his wild risky style, even as he finished fifth. His mother has proudly accompanied him and sister Vaishali to the Norway Chess, and will remain a totem presence as the siblings go about their chess. Another fascinating attraction of the event is the presence of 61-year-old Swedish GM Pia Cramling, even as Indian chess followers stay riveted to watch if Pragganandhaa can pull the rug from under opponents' feet and remind Norway of their own prodigy who has gone on to become a legend.