

INDIAN CHRONICLE

11 July, 2024 | Thursday | Volume No:12 | Issue No:129 Pages: 8+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)

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15 officers given new postings in Hyd

Hyderabad: The State government on Wednesday transferred 15 IPS officers and gave them new postings. The officers with their new postings are Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat – Additional DGP (L&O) Telangana, Swati Lakra – Additional DG Organizations and Home Guards, Vijay Kumar – Additional DG, Personnel and will also hold the additional charge of Additional DG Sports and Welfare. Similarly, Sanjay Kumar Jain – Additional DG TGSP Battalions, M Stephen Raveendra – Additional DG, GreyHounds, G Sudheer Babu – Commissioner of Police Rachakonda, Dr Tarun Joshi – Director Anti-Corruption Bureau, S Chandrasekhar Reddy – Inspector General Multi Zone – I, K Ramesh Naidu – Inspector General – Railways and Road Safety, V Satyanarayana – Inspector General – Multi Zone – II, Rakshita K Murthy – DCP CAR Headquarters Hyderabad, D Uday Kumar Reddy – Superintendent of Police, Medak, R Giridhar – Superintendent of Police Wanaparthy, B Bala Swamy – DCP (East) Hyderabad and G Chandra Mohan – DCP (South West) Hyderabad.

Mr Telangana Mohd Sohail dies in road accident near Siddipet

Siddipet: In a tragic incident, well-known bodybuilding champion from Siddipet and Mr Telangana winner Mohd Sohail (23), a resident of Siddipet, died in a road accident. Sohail, who was driving the bike, lost control and hit an oncoming auto-rickshaw carrying scrap near Mirudoddi. Both Sohail and Khadir sustained serious injuries in the mishap. They were shifted to a private hospital in Hyderabad. He died while undergoing treatment on Wednesday. Sohail had won many district-level, State-level and South India-level bodybuilding championships in his short career. He had also won the Mr Telangana championship.

CM Revanth seeks quick resolution for land acquisition delays for national highways



GNS News Agency, July 10

Hyderabad: With farmers refusing to give up their lands for various national highway projects citing low compensation compared to market value, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday directed District Collectors to negotiate directly with farmers and convince them in this regard. He asked them to adopt a humanitarian approach by offering maximum possible compensation as per the laws.

During a video conference with district collectors from the Secretariat here, the Chief Minister said union Minister Nitin Gadkari had given in-principle approval to the unified numbering of the northern and southern sections of Regional Ring Road (RRR). A tripartite agreement between the State and Central governments along with National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) would be signed to formalise this.

The meeting also discussed the alignment and administrative issues concerning the RRR. In the northern part of the RRR, Yadadri Bhongir Collector Zandage Hanumant Kondiba reported court stays due to alignment errors. Revanth Reddy instructed the filing of a counter by next Friday to lift the stay. With regard to land acquisition for Nagpur-Vijayawada corridor in Khammam district, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, who participated in the meeting through video conference, said all efforts to convince the local farmers were underway. He informed that the NHAI officials suggested converting the Khammam-Ashwaraopet route into a State highway, considering the Tallada-Devarapalli Greenfield Highway works. However, the Chief Minister differed with the NHAI officials and wanted to continue with the route as a national highway.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, who also participated through video conference, proposed the construction of service roads and underpasses at major villages along the Nagpur-Vijayawada corridor to facilitate local farming activities. NHAI project member Anil Chaudhary assured to consider these suggestions, including the development of gravel roads for movement of agricultural vehicles. Regarding forest department land transfers for roads like the Armoor-Jagtial-Mancheril and Vijayawada-Nagpur corridors, Revanth Reddy asked District Collectors to acquire forest lands and allocate government lands as an alternative to overcome obstacles. He called for coordination between the Revenue and Forest departments in this regard. The Chief Minister also instructed NHAI officials to commence the Hyderabad-Manneguda road project at the earliest and also expedite expansion of the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway, as land acquisition for its six lanes has been completed. NHAI officials assured that work would start within two months.

Arvind Kejriwal directly involved in AAP getting Rs 100 crore kickback, claims ED

GNS News Agency, July 10

The Enforcement Directorate chargesheet in the Delhi liquor policy case mentions that Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal was directly involved in his party receiving Rs 100 crore kickback in lieu of the policy.

As per the ED, Arvind Kejriwal conspired with the members of the 'South Group' and others such as Vijay Nair to receive kickbacks to the tune of Rs 100 crore for "providing undue benefits to private entities by way of formulating and putting in use a tailor-made liquor policy". Nair, according to the ED, was acting on behalf of the top leaders of the AAP, including Kejriwal. "In this manner, Arvind Kejriwal is directly, knowingly and actually involved in the generation, acquisition and possession of the proceeds of crime of Rs 100 crore," reads the ED chargesheet. The ED further claimed that out of this Rs 100 crore, approximately Rs 45 crore was used by the AAP for its campaign for Goa election in collusion with Kejriwal. "Arvind Kejriwal has concealed this proceeds of crime by way of using cash transfers/Hawala transfers from the point of generation till the use," the chargesheet reads.

"Hence, the accused Arvind Kejriwal, is actually and knowingly involved in the different proceeds and activities connected with the offence of money laundering, i.e. generation, acquisition, possession, concealment, transfer, use and claiming it to be untainted as defined u/s 3 of PMLA, 2002," it added.

In Austria, PM Modi reaffirms that 'this is not time for war'

GNS News Agency, July 10

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 10 said he held a "fruitful discussion" with Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer during which they discussed in detail the ongoing disputes in the world, including the Ukraine conflict and situation in West Asia, reaffirming that "this is not the time for war". Mr. Modi, who arrived here from Moscow after meeting Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday night on a two-day visit — the first by an Indian prime minister in over 40 years, also said India and Austria identified new possibilities to further strengthen mutual cooperation and prepared a blueprint for cooperation for the coming decade. "Today, Chancellor Nehammer and I had a very fruitful discussion. We have identified new possibilities to further strengthen our mutual cooperation. We have decided to give a strategic direction to our relationship. A blueprint



cooperation has been prepared for the coming decade," Mr. Modi said in a joint media appearance with Chancellor Nehammer after their talks. "Chancellor Nehammer and I have spoken at length about ongoing conflicts around the world, be it the conflict in Ukraine or the situation in West Asia. I have said before that this is not the time for war," the Prime Minister said. Asserting that solutions to problems can't be found on the battlefield, Mr. Modi said India and Austria emphasise dialogue and diplomacy, and for that, they are ready to give any support required. Mr. Modi said both India and Austria strongly condemn

terrorism and agree that it is not acceptable in any form. "This cannot be justified in any way," he said.

"Moreover, the conflict in the Middle East was a major topic," he added. He said India's participation as a founding member of a BRICS organisation in the Swiss peace summit in June over Russia-Ukraine was an important signal. "And today, we've been talking about an even stronger commitment and the possibilities of reviving the peace process." "Prime Minister Modi and myself discussed the unique position of India in the so-called Global South. India is an important, influential and credit-worthy country. India is the biggest democracy in the world. And therefore, India's role, especially for Austria, is more than important when it comes to the peace process and future peace summits," he said. Mr. Modi said he was happy that he got the opportunity to visit Austria at the very beginning of his third term.

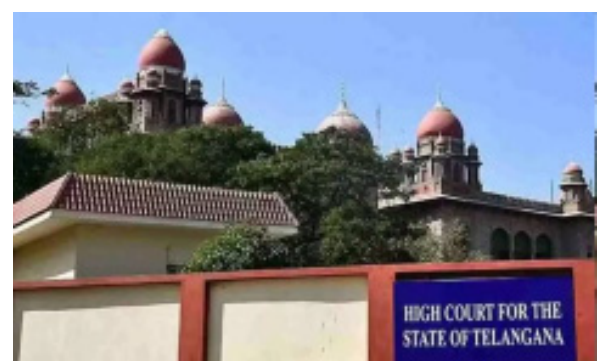
Dr. Jitender appointed as new DGP of Telangana



GNS News Agency, July 10

Hyderabad: The State government on Wednesday appointed Dr. Jitender, a 1992 batch IPS officer, as the Director General of Police, (Coordination) while he will also hold the post of Director General of Police (FAC) Head of Police Force – HoPF. The present DGP Ravi Gupta is transferred and posted as Special Chief Secretary to Government, Home Department.

Telangana High Court advises restraint in phone tapping case



GNS News Agency, July 10

In a recent hearing at the Telangana High Court regarding the phone tapping case, the court has advised all parties to exercise restraint in the matter. In a recent hearing at the Telangana High Court regarding the phone tapping case, the court has advised all parties to exercise restraint in the matter. The court has emphasized on not delving into personal lives and refraining from disclosing names, phone numbers, and photos of judges and their family members. Stating that the centre will file a counter on the 23rd of this month, the High Court has adjourned the next hearing to the 23rd of this month after hearing arguments on both sides. It is evident that the High Court is taking a cautious approach to this sensitive case and is urging all parties involved to handle the matter with care.

BRS condemns police high-handedness against journalists in Telangana



GNS News Agency, July 10

Hyderabad: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) on Wednesday condemned the police high-handedness against journalists who were covering the student protests at Osmania University. The party demanded the immediate release of a vernacular television channel journalist and cameraman who were detained by the police from Osmania University. BRS working president KT Rama Rao expressed outrage over the incident, stating that freedom of the press is essential in a democracy. He said the illegal detention of journalists and the police treatment of them by grabbing their collar, is highly deplorable. Rama Rao also reminded the mistreatment of a pregnant woman journalist at the Yellamma temple in Balkampet a couple of days ago, questioning the protection for journalists under the current administration. Senior BRS leader T Harish Rao echoed these sentiments, condemning the police's behaviour. He questioned what was wrong with the journalists covering the news at Osmania University as part of their duty. "Arresting journalists and forcibly taking them to the police station is a violation of the right and freedom of the media."

Muslim women have right to seek maintenance from spouse, rules SC



GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled that a Muslim woman can seek maintenance from her husband under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), which is applicable to all married women

Shiv Sena sacks key accused Mihir Shah's father Rajesh Shah as party's deputy leader

GNS News Agency, July 10

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who heads the Shiv Sena, on July 10 sacked Rajesh Shah, whose son Mihir Shah was allegedly involved in the BMW hit-and-run, as the party's deputy leader. A one-line notice by Shiv Sena secretary Sanjay More said Rajesh Shah has been relieved from the post of the party's deputy leader. Mr. Shah, however, continues to be a member of the Shiv Sena.

"A BMW car driven by Mihir Shah allegedly rammed into a two-wheeler in the Worli area of south-central Mumbai on July 7, resulting in the death of Kaveri Nakhwa (45), who was riding pillion, while her husband Pradeep survived with injuries," police have said. According to them, Kaveri Nakhwa was dragged for around 1.5 km by the speeding car before Mihir pulled it over, swapped the seat with his driver, and fled in another vehicle. The driver allegedly ran over her while reversing the BMW. Mihir Shah was arrested on July 9. BMC razes illegal alterations in bar visited by main accused hours before accident. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is demolishing unauthorised alterations made at the city-based bar that was visited by the main accused in the BMW hit-and-run case hours before he allegedly took the wheel of the car involved in the crash that killed a woman," officials said. The establishment — Vice-Global Tapas Bar — against which the action was being taken, is located in Juhu suburb. "The BMW car driven by main accused Mihir Shah allegedly rammed into a two-wheeler from behind in Worli area of south-central Mumbai on Sunday morning, resulting in the death of Kaveri Nakhwa (45), who was riding pillion, while her husband Pradeep survived with injuries," police have said. A civic official said the BMC's K-West ward office team reached the Vice-Global Tapas Bar this morning and started demolishing some of the additional alterations made inside the establishment.

The civic body had conducted an inspection of the



bar on Tuesday to check if any unauthorised additions and alterations were made there. "Detailed measurements were taken at the bar during the inspection, the official said. The bar was given a notice before the demolition process began," he said. Earlier, the State Excise Department sealed the bar. It was visited by Mihir Shah and his friends on Saturday night, hours before he allegedly took the wheel of the car involved in the crash."

Maoist party condemns Hussein's arrest

GNS News Agency, July 10

Karimnagar: The CPI (Maoist) party on Wednesday condemned the arrest of Mohammed Hussein, founder member of Singareni Karmika Samakhya (Sikasa), a frontal organization of the extremist party. Maoist State Committee official spokesperson Jagann, in a statement released to the media, termed Hussein's arrest illegal and said Hussein was leading a normal life after being released from jail 10 years ago.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Portrayal of disabled

THE Supreme Court has made a bold and welcome intervention by issuing guidelines to govern how people with disabilities are portrayed in films and other visual media. The landmark verdict underscores that language that disparages persons with special needs marginalises them further. It supplements the barriers in their social participation. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has called for authentic as well as respectful representation, and not stereotyping that bettles their experiences. There have been jokes made on the disabled for comic relief, and this understanding is obsolete, he notes. The lack of familiarity has been attributed to the inadequate representation of the disabled in the dominant discourse. The CJ's message is crystal clear — distinguish between 'disability humour', which helps in understanding the disabled, and 'disability humour' that denigrates them. The apex court has aptly concluded that creative liberty cannot include the freedom to lampoon, stereotype, misrepresent or disparage those already marginalised. There is no denying that terms such as 'cripple' and 'spastic' have acquired devalued meanings in societal perceptions. Filmmakers now have a responsibility to move away from disrespectful tropes and caricatures. The creative lens must shift focus to sensitive, inclusive and realistic representation. The new guidelines align with the anti-discrimination and dignity-affirming objectives of the Constitution as well as the Rights for Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. The legislation seeks to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Reclaiming their rightful space continues to be a struggle for them. Unequal hiring and promotion, lack of access to training, occupational segregation, negligible attention to their requirements at restrooms and public offices — this is their reality.

Ajit Pawar says corruption allegations were to defame him, Sule reminds they were levelled by BJP and its leaders



GNS News Agency, July 10

Ajit Pawar said, "I want to tell that I have never changed any political party from the day I began my career in politics. From the first day, public has been my priority and I have worked only in their interests." Gearing up for the assembly elections, NCP chief and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Friday said his rivals levelled allegations of corruption in the past to defame him but none of them have been proved right. However, NCP (SP) working president Supriya Sule reminded him that the charges were made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and his team, so Ajit Pawar should tell this to his alliance partners in Mahayuti and MVA. In a video, Ajit Pawar, who is also the finance minister, highlighted the popular decisions taken by the state government for the benefit of women and farmers. "My rivals have criticised the budget tabled by me in the assembly but they are merely doing politics

while I focus on the development of the state and work in the interest of public. Those doing more work face opposition, so is with me. In the recent past, there were false allegations of corruption made against me. Not a single allegation has been proved and neither would they be proved right," he said. Pawar said, "I want to tell that I have never changed any political party from the day I began my career in politics. From the first day, public has been my priority and I have worked only in their interests." The NCP chief said his party would contest the forthcoming assembly elections only on development issue. "Opposition might mislead you but don't fall for it. I have been working in the interest of public since long and in 2014 had declared Krishi Sanjivni Yojana that reduced electricity bills for farmers. I initiated many industrial projects, urban development projects and did makeover of cities. There is long list of development work that I have carried out," he said adding he would need support of the people for the development of state.

NCP Working President Supriya Sule, during her visit to Baramati constituency said, "Allegations of corruption against Ajit Pawar were levelled by BJP. It is under BJP's rule that raids by ED and Income Tax were conducted on the residences of my sisters. So it is the BJP who should reply whether their allegations were true or false." The allegations were levelled by none other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis along with his team, she said. Sule further said that the Mahayuti budget for state was merely to woo voters ahead of assembly elections.

West Bengal most preferred destination for UG courses, says Bratya Basu



GNS News Agency, July 10

West Bengal Education Minister Bratya Basu said Wednesday that the state has become one of the most preferred destinations for higher education as over 87,000 undergraduate applications have been received by the higher education department's admission portal, which was launched on June 19.

In an X post, Basu said a total of 87,010 applications have been received from various states including Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Bihar and Maharashtra. The students have submitted applications in colleges affiliated to the state universities. "Up from Jammu & Kashmir right down to Kerala, students are preferring Bengal as their destination for Higher Education. We welcome them with wide open arms," said the education minister.

According to a senior official at the state higher education department, about 5 lakh applications have been received through the portal till Wednesday. The state government's recently launched 'centralised admission portal' is a part of various state government colleges and universities. The portal has been developed for admission to 7,230 undergraduate courses in government and government-aided general degree colleges and universities including 16 universities, 461 colleges and a few other higher education institutions across West Bengal. Through this portal, a candidate will be able to search for courses, colleges, and universities across the state and access all relevant details such as course-wise eligibility criteria, vacancies, formula for merit-index calculation, and elective subjects offered by any college or higher education institution.

Karnataka government extends property tax discount deadline to July 31



GNS News Agency, July 10

The government order mandates that the discount be available in municipalities, municipal corporations, and town panchayats throughout the state. Property tax. The government order mandates that the discount be available in municipalities, municipal corporations, and town panchayats throughout the state.

The Directorate of Municipal Administration recently announced the extension of the 5 per cent discount on property tax payments for the fiscal year 2024-25. Originally offered only in April, this discount will now be available until July 31, 2024, across all urban local bodies (ULBs) in Karnataka. The extension followed a thorough review of a proposal by the Directorate of Municipal Administration. The proposal highlighted the need for improved tax payment compliance and suggested that an extended discount period would incentivise more property owners to pay their taxes promptly. The government order mandates that the discount be available in municipalities, municipal corporations, and town panchayats throughout the state. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike in March had also announced the extension of the 5 per cent rebate on property tax until July 31, 2024.

Ready to return site if compensation is paid for land lost, says Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah

GNS News Agency, July 10

The MUDA scam was different from the row over the compensatory site given to his wife, Siddaramaiah said. The MUDA scam was different from the row over the compensatory site given to his wife, Siddaramaiah said. (File Photo) The row over Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam took a turn Thursday as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah offered to return the site given as compensation to him by MUDA.

Estimating the value of 3 acre 16 guntas land owned by his wife Parvati at Rs 62 crore, he said that MUDA was free to cancel the allocation of the alternate site provided the compensation was paid. "MUDA illegally acquired our land. They later admitted to their mistake and offered us sites under the 50:50 scheme," he said. Under the 50:50 scheme, land losers receive 50 per cent of the sites developed and the civic body retains the remaining half. The MUDA scam came out earlier this week following complaints that several people received larger sites than they were entitled to, and some received alternate sites at localities such as Vijayanagar, J P Nagar, and RT Nagar — where the guidance value of land was higher than in places the layouts were made — resulting in losses to the tune of hundreds of crores for MUDA.

The MUDA scam was different from the row over the compensatory site given to his wife, Siddaramaiah said. "MUDA should have compensated with the same extent of land they acquired. Can I let it go just because I am the CM?" he said. The alternate site measuring 38,284 square feet — 0.88 acre — was sanctioned after his wife petitioned MUDA in 2021, when the BJP was in power, the CM added. The government also deputed the legal advisor to



CM, A S Ponnanna, to mount a defence against the allegations made against the CM. "The compensation received by his wife is being depicted as a big scam," he said. Although Parvati received less than the land she lost, she did not contest the compensation, he added. Ponnanna pegged the value of the compensatory site offered at around Rs 15-16 crore. The BJP, meanwhile, has pressed for a CBI probe over alleged irregularities at MUDA. However, Siddaramaiah has shrugged off the demands. During the recent BJP state-level executive committee meeting, BJP Parliamentary Board member B S Yediyurappa said the party would expose all the scams of the Congress government. Apart from the row over the MUDA scam, the Congress is also under attack over the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation scam, which saw the resignation of B Nagendra as minister from the Siddaramaiah Cabinet.

Karnataka High Court cancels posting of Dr Basappa as Mysore University registrar



GNS News Agency, July 10

Mysore University Karnataka High Court Dr Mahadevan had challenged a March 15 government notification that appointed Dr Basappa to the post. His counsel argued that as per Karnataka State Universities Act, only a senior faculty could be appointed to that post. The Karnataka High Court has cancelled the appointment of a new Registrar (Evaluation), Dr Basappa, at the University of Mysore. The order dated June 18 was passed by a bench consisting of Justice B M Shyam Prasad, in response to a petition by Dr K M Mahadevan, who had previously held the post.

Dr Mahadevan had challenged a March 15 government notification that appointed Dr Basappa to the post. His counsel argued that as per Karnataka State Universities Act, only a senior faculty could be appointed to that post, whereas Basappa was an assistant professor serving only from October 2022, while there were 58 other professors in the same university. Basappa's counsel argued that he was actually an associate professor, and that he should be considered as senior faculty since he was the chairman of the Department of Organic Chemistry.

It was also argued that as per the doctrine of pleasure the government was at liberty to remove an incumbent. The counsel for Dr Mahadevan countered that Basappa was only appointed to the chairman post since there was a vacancy of a professor in the department, and a provision for appointment on rotation. Regarding the applicability of doctrine of pleasure the court stated, "In view of the opinion rendered by the Vice Chancellor (that Basappa would not be senior faculty), the circumstances in which the file is closed and reopened to await the decision in another file, and ultimately leading to replacement of the petitioner with the appointment of the third respondent just on the eve of the Election Code of

Conduct regime, this court must opine that neither public interest nor administrative interest is established, and if the impugned notification fails, on this score there must be judicial intervention or otherwise the Universities' institutional autonomy could be in jeopardy." The bench added, "The Government should have considered all aspects before displacing the petitioner with the third respondent's (Basappa) appointment...the third respondent could not have been eligible to be appointment as the Registrar [evaluation] only because he is appointed as the Chairman of the Department of Organic Chemistry."

To tackle forest fire: In 15 yrs, Himachal earned Rs 109 cr by selling chir pine resin

GNS News Agency, July 10

The Himachal Pradesh State Forest Development Corporation (HPSFDC) has been minting money by selling the extracted resin from chir pine trees over the past 15 years. So far the HPSFDC has earned Rs 109.65 crore, including the highest revenue of Rs 10.89 crore in 2010, followed by Rs 10.83 crore in 2014. However, over the past few years, the revenue has been decreasing. Since 2015, the revenue generated through selling resin has been recorded between Rs 9.42 crore and Rs 6.62 crore. The chir pine trees are occasionally blamed for forest fires in the hill state during summers. While the bark of the tree doesn't catch fire easily as it has a very high ignition temperature, the needles and resin-filled cones of the chir pines do. Forest fires mostly occur during the pre-monsoon summer season when there is a lot of moisture in the area due to snowmelt water.

Of the total 37,948 sq km of forest area in the state, 2,800 sq km is under pine cover. In the past three months, 2,362 forest fire incidents were reported in the state — almost three times higher than the last year which saw 631 fire incidents. This year, the maximum forest fires of 533 were reported from Dharamshala in Kangra district alone, followed by 186 such incidents in Shimla. To tackle the problem, the Himachal Forest Department hands over resin blaze (a cut mark through which resin is collected from chir pine trees) to the HPSFDC, which was formed in 1974. In return, the forest department charges a royalty for each resin blaze. While the current royalty rate for a single blaze is Rs 45, last year, the department collected 14,72,021 such blazes. "Resin extracted from the pine

tree is widely used for making adhesives, coatings or other construction material. There are two resin and turpentine factories in the state — Nahan in Sirmour district and Bilaspur district. The installed capacity of the two factories is 1.11 lakh quintals per annum. Quintals of collected resin transported to these factories, it was refined and further sold in the market. HPSFDC is a company controlled by the state government. For the extracted resin from pine trees on the forest land, HPSFDC has also paid a royalty of Rs 166.81 crore to the state forest department between 2015 and 2024. Indeed, pine trees catch fire swiftly," Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCR), Himachal Pradesh, Rajiv Kumar, said. Sources said, "Before HPSFDC in 1974, the resin was extracted by private contractors who would exploit forests unnecessarily."

However, concerns have been raised over the declining revenue over the years. The last earned revenue in a double-digit was Rs 10.83 crore in 2014. From 2014 to 2023, the revenue decreased to a single digit. In 2023, Rs 6.62 crore was earned through 14.72 lakh blazes. A senior forest officer said, "There are many reasons behind this. The foremost reason is the increasing number of forest fire incidents. Hundreds of pine trees burnt in one fire mishap. Meanwhile, diversion of forest land for developmental activities, including the construction of roads, highways, government buildings, etc., is also a reason. The process of afforestation takes a long time." Three species of pine trees — Pinus roxburghii, Pinus wallichiana and Pinus gerardiana — are abundant in the state.

SBI announces initiatives to mitigate risks in agriculture loan portfolio



aged on SBI's digital platform from applicant registration on the MNRE/REC portal to loan disbursement.

Acknowledging the significant contributions and global presence of the Indian diaspora in shaping the nation's growth story, SBI opened a second Global NRI Centre (GNC) in Patiala, Punjab. To enhance its service to NRI clients, its Chairman Dinesh Khara inaugurated the second Global NRI Centre (GNC) in Patiala on Bank Day.

Saffron won't make your baby fair, so why is it advised during pregnancy?



sickness is one of the major problems during the first trimester. Having saffron in a moderate amount will ease the feeling and give you relief from nausea," said Kalpatharu. As the baby grows in the womb, the mother's body muscles stretch and adjust the space.

Mothers may face anemia during pregnancy. According to Kalpatharu, moms are advised to have iron-rich food and supplements during pregnancy. "Having some amount of saffron daily will ensure you maintain the iron and hemoglobin levels and stay healthy in this beautiful journey," said Kalpatharu.

Unlike what pregnant women are made to believe, drinking saffron milk regularly won't make the baby fair. But it is still recommended during pregnancy. Why?

Answering the same, Dr Surabhi Siddhartha, consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist, Motherhood Hospital, Kharghar said that saffron doesn't possess any magical properties to improve the baby's skin tone.

Saffron contains anti-depressant agents that control mood swings and anxiety, mentioned Kalpatharu. "It ensures that the mom — and as an extension, the baby — remain happy," said Kalpatharu.

According to Kalpatharu, saffron also tends to manage blood pressure issues during pregnancy. "Morning

How much to have?

Dr Surabhi mentioned that pregnant women should be cautious about the quantity of saffron to be used daily. "Follow the instructions given by the expert who will guide you regarding the safe quantity of it to be had daily.

In Koo's demise, a stark reminder: a global social network needs more than just tech



Before it could really fly, the yellow bird was dead. Government officials gave it initial flight, and while it did gain some early traction in 2021, Koo — India's answer to X (formerly Twitter) — has shut down, highlighting the existential challenges a company has to overcome in building a successful social networking platform.

It takes a lot of capital to build a social media platform in a world which is already dominated by such offerings by deep-pocketed big tech platforms from the US.

explored partnerships with multiple larger internet companies, conglomerates and media houses but these talks didn't yield the outcome we wanted. Most of them didn't want to deal with user generated content and the wild nature of a social media company," the co-founders said in their post.

For Koo, it thought that its focus on local language content could be that differentiator. "We saw a big gap between the languages the world speaks and the fact that most social products, especially X/Twitter in India are English dominant.

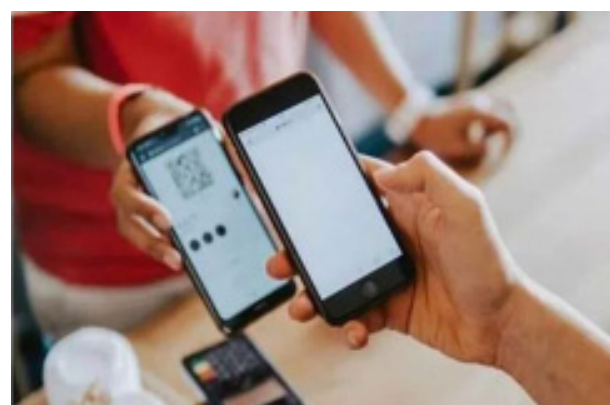
But, that was not sustainable. Social media is a game of scale. They're not just competing with other apps, but also with essential bodily needs like sleep. They will only work if users actively choose to log in, and engage with — and outrage over — content that is served to them.

Those who closely follow tech regulations in India would vouch for the intricate web of lobbying that goes behind the scenes to ensure that companies and governments agree to trade-offs that they are both okay with.

"We were just months away from beating Twitter in India in 2022 and could have doubled down on that short term goal with capital behind us," they said.

A conservative mosh pit is also ostensibly argued that making a social media platform is not much of a tech challenge anymore, as it might have been a decade ago.

Now, users will be able to make UPI payments to UAE merchants



New Delhi: The Indian Government has been pushing UPI globally for faster digital payments. Now, UPI will be available in the Middle East country UAE as well. NPCI International Payments Limited has partnered with Network International, a large digital commerce company in the Middle East and Africa for this.

According to the NPCI release, "The number of Indian travelers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is estimated to reach 98 lakh in 2024. Around 53 lakh Indians are likely to reach UAE alone."

tions on the UPI platform in June was 13.9 billion. It has seen an increase of 49 per cent on an annual basis. During this period, the average number of transactions through UPI was 463 million per day and the average transaction value was Rs 66,903 crore per day.

Can you drink your fruit and vegetables? How does juice compare to the whole food?



Less than 5 per cent of Australians eat the recommended serves of fresh produce each day (with 44 per cent eating enough fruit but only 6 per cent eating the recommended vegetables). Adults should aim to eat at least five serves of vegetables (or roughly 375 grams) and two serves of fruit (about 300 grams) each day.

It might help overcome barriers. Common reasons for not eating enough fruits and vegetables are preferences, habits, perishability, cost, availability, time and poor cooking skills. Drinking your fruits and vegetables in juices or smoothies can help overcome some of these barriers.

So, drinking my fruits and veggies counts as a serve, right? How juice is positioned in healthy eating recommendations is a bit confusing. The Australian Dietary Guidelines include 100 per cent fruit juice with fruit but vegetable juice isn't mentioned.

retain the nutrients and bioactive compounds of fruit and vegetables and even add more because parts of the fruit we don't normally eat, like the skin, can be included. Juice is acidic and does contain sugars, but it is possible proper oral hygiene, including rinsing, cleaning and using straws can mitigate these risks.

So, it is healthy then? A recent umbrella review of meta-analyses (a type of research that combines data from multiple studies of multiple outcomes into one paper looked at the relationship between 100 per cent juice and a range of health outcomes.)

The common belief juice damages teeth might not stack up. Studies that show juice damages teeth often lump 100 per cent juice in with sweetened drinks. Or they use model systems like fake mouths that don't match how people drinks juice in real life.

So, what should I do? Comparing whole fruit (a food) to juice (a drink) can be problematic. They serve different culinary purposes, so aren't really interchangeable.

Javed Akhtar recalls AR Rahman's strange yet unique practice: 'Whenever we entered the music room, he would light a candle...'



Javed Akhtar and AR Rahman's collaboration has given the Indian music industry some of its finest songs. Akhtar, who has worked with Rahman in projects like Lagaan, Swades and Dil Se..., recently recalled two statements by the Oscar winning composer which he remembers till date.

Calling Rahman an unusual man, Akhtar told O2india, "Rahman is a very unusual man. He is not a usual person. Let me share something unique yet strange. Once we entered the music room. This was when we began working together. There used to be a candle in the room. After entering the room, he used to light the candle. I used to wonder what is the need of the candle when the room is lit? However, I never asked him anything. One day, I think he noticed my curiosity and told me the reason behind his habit of lighting a candle. He said, 'Everything is mechanical here. Everything is a machine. There should be something that's not a machine. Something real. This candle is not a machine. Its light is not a machine. It is not a bulb. It makes us realise that there are other things in life which is beyond machines.'

Recalling another incident, the veteran lyricist shared, "Though he is younger to me, he said something very wise to me which I will never forget. We were working for a producer, who made useless suggestions for a song. After he left, I felt irritated and commented, 'How can he talk such nonsense? That too with so much confidence?' Rahman replied, 'No worries. We must listen to them. We should not compromise with our work, but at the same time when we listen to different opinions and try to satisfy them without losing our standard, we will do different kind of work. If we do only what we like, then there will be a similarity in the work. Our work will become monotonous.' What a wise thing to say? These two statements of Rahman, I will never forget." Just recently, on the 23rd anniversary of Lagaan, Javed Akhtar had taken to his X handle to share a special note. His post read, "Today it is 23rd year of Lagaan release. I can never forget my music sessions with the director Ashutosh saheb who is also a dear friend and the musical genius AR Rahman whose each composition made me stand on my creative toes to reach the level of the tunes. I would like to thank both of them."

Lakshmi Manchu on playing heroine to younger actors at a time when actresses complain about ageism in industry: 'Girls stick to one hero...'

Lakshmi Manchu, who is the daughter of veteran actor Mohan Babu, has had an interesting journey in the movies. Lakshmi, who secretly joined Hollywood to make her dream of becoming an actor come true, is today one of the fewest actresses in Indian cinema who plays the lead role opposite younger actors, unlike majority of the films where a 50-year-old hero romances someone in their 20s. Lakshmi was cast opposite Aadi Pinisetty, an actor 5 years younger to her, in the 2013 film Gundello Godari, which was a hit at the box office. In the 2015 movie Dongaata, she was cast opposite Adivi Sesh, an actor who is 7 years younger to her.

However, this is a very rare practice in Indian cinema. Sharing her view on the same, Lakshmi Manchu told indianexpress.com, "It's a patriarchal society. The boys are the one spending more to get out there. You are playing to the fantasy I think. We as women, if we like one hero, for the rest of our life, we are with that one hero (as a fan). But, our boys are not like that. Whoever is the hottest heroine, is their new favourite. So I think it is about our (women) mentality of always being one hero's fan... why weren't you other hero's fan? Even this is really difficult for women to think if you really think about it. That's just my take on it."

"The problem of ageism has been there in the film industry since the beginning. Several actresses over the years have expressed their displeasure in being a victim of ageism. Actors like Shefali Shah have played the role



of a mother to Akshay Kumar at the age of 28 in the film Waqt: The Race Against Time. Akshay was 32 at that time. Meanwhile, young stars like Manushi Chhillar said age is not an issue for them when they are cast against superstars like Akshay Kumar. In an interview with Times Now, Manushi said, "Akshay Kumar is a superstar, and I want to work with him. For me, it doesn't matter what his age is. I had fun working with him." Apart from the age gap between the lead actors, there have also been cases where actresses are not given age-appropriate roles. In 2019, there was a massive outrage when Taapsee Pannu and Bhumi Pednekar were roped in to play older roles. Neena Gupta had reacted to the casting and said, "I was just thinking about this hamari umar ke role toh kamsekam humse kara lo."

Disha Patani calls Kalki 2898 AD director Nag Ashwin 'creative genius,' thanks Prabhas for being the 'sweetest co-star ever'



Though Disha Patani plays a brief role in Nag Ashwin's Kalki 2898 AD, she thoroughly enjoyed shooting the film with Prabhas. The actor, who portrays the character Roxie, took to her Instagram stories to praise the filmmaker as a "creative genius" and thanked Prabhas for being "the sweetest co-star."

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Disha shared a photo of Prabhas and Nag from inside a flight. She wrote, "Thank you @nag_ashwin for creating this crazy sci-fi world in the most beautiful way, integrating Indian history and science, you're truly a creative genius sharing conversations with you about anime was my highlight of being on your set. Thank you bhairava @actorprabhas for being the sweetest co-star ever and taking care of everyone. Shout out to the women in charge @priyankadutt @swapnaduttchhalasani for bringing it to life, you guys are inspirational @djordjevla you're a magician." She added, "Honoured to be a part of such a legendary cast, hats off to the whole team who worked sleepless nights to create this spectacle. And lastly, thanks to my team D who worked so hard to bring Roxie to life I'm grateful to be a part of this beautiful journey. let's go #kalki2898ad" Disha shot for Kalki 2898 AD in Italy. The Yodha actor had shared some behind-the-scenes photos from the shoot and was seen posing for a selfie with Prabhas. She also shared visuals of the beautiful shooting location. Directed by Nag Ashwin, Kalki 2898 AD stars Prabhas, Amitabh Bachchan, and Deepika Padukone in the lead roles. The film has surpassed Rs 700 crore globally.

Munjya director Aditya Sarpotdar on why Alia Bhatt, Shraddha Kapoor were first considered for the supernatural thriller

Munjya has raked in over Rs 100 crore at the domestic box office without much promotions. The movie doesn't even boast an impressive star cast, but can surely boast of strong word of mouth. We sat down with the film's director, Aditya Sarpotdar, to discuss the horror comedy's success and more. In the end credit scene of Munjya, we see a crossover between Munjya and Bhediya. Is there a possibility of seeing Munjya in Stree 2? Aditya says that there is a possibility. Talking about the cross-connection between different characters in the Maddock horror-comedy universe, Aditya said, "There is a plan on how Munjya will come into this whole universe, just like how Bhediya after the first film will come into the universe. There are these larger plans in mind. But the larger point was that we connect Bhediya to Munjya and that's why you see Varun Dhawan in a scene and not Rajkumar Rao or Shraddha Kapoor. The idea was to have a stronger connection because I am sure that the Bhediya sequel is being planned where there will be a larger connection between Bhediya and Munjya. We will then have a few more characters come into this universe where there will be these cross-connections and integrations in other films."

There was also chatter that either Alia Bhatt or Shraddha Kapoor would star in Munjya, but that didn't happen. Opening up about the changes being made in the original draft of Munjya's script, Aditya shared, "Yogesh Chandekar, the writer of the film, had seen this film as a female protagonist film where the conflict was that she was in love with her best friend who was a teenager. It was that angle that was being brought in the narrative." "When I came onboard and read the script, I said that I did not identify with the social referencing in the film as I don't understand it and it wouldn't be right for me to comment on it either. I saw the film about these two guys who are in a position in life, in the same space where they were in love with an older girl. The hero respected and looked at her in a very sensitive manner. He believed in consent, rather than this guy who was obsessed and crazy about this girl he was in love with and went to the extent of getting her killed," he added.

During the conversation, Aditya revealed why he didn't want Munjya to be "female-centric". He said, "I wanted these two parallels together. I thought people would understand it better if there are two guys in the same direction. Dinesh (Vijan) understood this. Yogesh also agreed with this approach. I was adamant about not casting an older man because love at first sight and the referencing with an older man gets awful and it is somehow very cliched now. We keep seeing these old men falling in love with younger girls. I wanted a 19-year-old



who feels he's fallen for an elderly girl. He is at a stage in life where he doesn't necessarily understand what life is and that's his journey. That's how Abhay came on board. He fits the part. He looks that age and is believable."

Aditya Sarpotdar then opened up on why Abhay Verma was cast in Munjya, even after considering actors like Rajkumar Rao and Ayushmann Khurrana. He said, "We auditioned a lot. We were looking for new, younger talent. We didn't want to cast someone older. It would be very easy to approach Rajkumar Rao or Ayushmann (Khurrana), but we stuck to wanting to cast a 19 or 20-year-old boy. We reached out to all the casting agents and auditioned multiple boys, including The Archies group of boys, the young stars and aspiring actors who are from the web space. You see a lot of them in this age group doing content on OTT. What the producer was also clear about is that we wanted to put this guy as the poster boy on a film, so we didn't want somebody who has been there, don't that. So we went for a completely fresh talent." Munjya is based on a Maharashtra folklore. When asked if the makers ever thought that it would be a limiting idea as people beyond Maharashtra are not very familiar with the story, Aditya says, so was Kantara, as it was specifically rooted in one state. Aditya says Kantara's success gave them the courage to tell a rooted story. He said, "Since it was a story from Maharashtra, and not only a story, but a folklore story of Maharashtra, it gave me more confidence that this film will be loved by a bigger audience. This confidence came from a couple of things that were happening around us in the last 2-3 years. The way Kantara became euphoric, the way people loved that movie in spite of it being totally local and rural in its own sensibility and how that whole cultural referencing in the movie went crazy in the country. So I knew that if it (the story) is rooted, if it's a story of the land and the culture it comes from and if it is exciting and interesting then people will watch it."

Arbaaz Khan asks Shabana Azmi if she encouraged Javed Akhtar to sever ties with his dad Salim Khan: 'He was much happier after...'

Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar changed the face of the Indian film industry with their hit-making streak in the 1970s, rising up the ranks of Bollywood to command as much respect and remuneration as some major movie stars. But their partnership came to an abrupt end, and while both of them have spoken about why they split, neither has given concrete reasons. Javed Akhtar's wife, actor Shabana Azmi, said that she still doesn't know why they broke up, as she was asked about the rumours that she might have played a role in the split.

Shabana appeared as a guest on Arbaaz Khan's chat show, The Invincibles Series, where she addressed the subject. Arbaaz, the son of Salim Khan, said, "Salim-Javed were at the peak of their careers, and around the same time, you entered Javed saab's life. And shortly afterwards, at the peak of their careers, they split. A lot of people tried to find answers as to why they would've split. Some went so far as to suggest that because Javed saab was a writer and poet, Shabana encouraged him to pursue a solo career. You might have heard these rumours too; I heard them as a child. How did you react to that?"

She said, "Arbaaz, will you believe it, that till today I don't know why Salim-Javed have split. Since I thought it was a personal decision, I shouldn't get involved in it. But I think what was happening is that he was going through some change. He had started writing poetry, he was moving into another kind of world. I don't know what happened and why they ever split, but I do know that he was a much happier person having taken this huge risk. There is no merit or 'dismerit' meri taraf se." In the past, both Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar have addressed their decision to separate. Javed said in a chat with BBC News Hindi, "Shuru mein jab hum nakaam log the, struggle kar rahe the, toh bilkul ek the. Koi humare aur dost nahi the, hum hi baith ke subah se shaam tak kaam karte the."



Shaam ko bhi saath the, raat ko khana bhi saath hota tha. 24 mein se 15-16 hours toh saath hi hote the. (In our earlier unsuccessful days, we were struggling, we were one. We did not have any other friends, we would work together from morning to evening. We would even have dinner together. Out of 24, we would spend 15-16 hours together.)"

In an earlier chat with ETC, Salim Khan had recalled, "Every box has an expiry date—this also had one. We were near Javed's house one evening when Javed told me he wanted to split, that he'd been thinking about it for some time now. I got up, shook hands with him and started walking towards my car. He also started to walk with me, but I held him, turned him towards his house and said, 'I can look after myself.' I came back home and didn't tell anyone about it. The next evening, calls started coming in asking about the split. I asked Javed whether he told anyone, he said only a few friends knew. It was only after a few days that I announced the split."

Anna Ben asked Nag Ashwin about her character's return in Kalki 2898 AD's sequel. This is how he responded

Among the actors featuring in cameo roles in Nag Ashwin's dystopian epic Kalki 2898 AD is Malayalam actor Anna Ben, who plays the character Kyra. Though it's hinted that Kyra dies at the end of the film, various fan theories suggest otherwise. In a recent interaction, Anna addressed the speculations about her being part of Kalki's sequel.

When asked if she would be part of the sequel, Anna told News 18, "I've also been wondering the same. During the shoot, I became friends with the ADs. They were rooting for my character and were also hoping that my character comes back at some point. I asked Nagi sir about it but he didn't say anything because he's a man of few words. He just smiled and told, 'I don't know. Maybe. Let's see.' So, I guess we'll have to wait and watch. I'll be very happy if she comes back." Nag Ashwin's dystopian epic Kalki 2898 AD doesn't just feature the country's biggest actors — Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, Amitabh

Bachchan, Kamal Haasan — in lead roles, it also features artists from different film industry to make it a true blue pan-Indian film. These include filmmakers Ram Gopal Varma and SS Rajamouli, along with actors Dulquer Salmaan, Vijay Deverakonda, Mrunal Thakur and Disha Patani.

During the interaction, Anna also spoke about Kalki's pan-India approach, she said, "It's an amazing thing that we could have an Indian film that could represent us at a global film. It's an Indian film in every sense of the word. Right from the casting to the technicians involved, every industry is involved in the making of this film. Every actor has done a fantastic job and we can all be proud of that." She also called the cameo of her fellow Malayalam actor Dulquer Salmaan as her favourite. "Dulquer's a national star and not just a Malayalam star now. His involvement in the project has shifted many things because he has a huge fan base here," she said.

