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## OU employee paints campus rocks, boulders to spread message

Hyderabad: In a unique blend of art and environmental advocacy, an employee of Osmania University's Dr. BR Ambedkar Memorial Library has been using his artistic skills to infuse a new life into the campus's rocks and boulders. With focus on environmental protection, E Venkanna has created about 140 paintings, depicting animals, birds and forms of pollution, driving a message to save the water, trees, energy and earth.

With a passion for art and environmental activism, the 45-year-old university main library employee embarked on the project by painting a parrot-shaped rock near the Post Office on the campus.

## IDA joins IMA in solidarity, dental services halted for 24 hours

Hyderabad: Indian Dental Association (IDA) on Saturday said it stands in solidarity with the Indian Medical Association's (IMA) following the brutal rape and murder of a young postgraduate student of chest medicine at RG Kar Medical College, Kolkata.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, the IDA announced withdrawal of dental services for 24 hours from August 17 to August 18 and said, "it is imperative that the entire nation recognizes the gravity of this situation and the pressing need for enhanced protection and respect for all healthcare workers."

## Vinesh Phogat cries inconsolably on return to heros welcome after Paris Olympics heartbreak

New Delhi, GNS News Agency, August 17

Celebrated wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Saturday received a grand welcome on her return to the country with hundreds of supporters gathering outside the IGI airport, showing immense solidarity with her. Stars such as Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and panchayat leaders received Vinesh, who endured a heartbreaking exit at the Paris Olympics where she was disqualified for being overweight on the day of her 50kg final. Heavily garlanded, Vinesh stood in an open Jeep and thanked all the supporters. "I thank the entire country," she said, her hands folded in humility.

There was a thick security cover as Phogat, who was found 100 grams overweight, landed in the national capital. Vinesh's caravan left for her native village Balali in Haryana and on the way she met her supporters, positioned at different spots. A group of 50 followed her jeep. They offered prayers at a temple in Delhi's Dwarka before continuing their journey towards Balali. Vinesh had stayed back in Paris after challenging her disqualification in the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) and demanding a joint silver. The application was dismissed on Wednesday. "She has come back to her country after such a long time. She is very emotional also. She will spend time with family and calm herself. What Vinesh has done for women is praiseworthy. She might not have received a medal, but she is a champion for us," said Sakshi Malik.

London Olympics bronze medal-winning shooter Gagan Narang, who was the chef de mission of the Indian contingent in Paris, called her a champion, posting a photo with Phogat at the Paris airport. Both of them were on the same flight to Delhi. "She came as a champion on day 1 into the games village and she will always



remain our champion. Sometimes one doesn't need an Olympic medal to inspire a billion dreams.. @vineshphogat you have inspired generations. Salute to your grit," Narang posted on X. "People are waiting to welcome her at our village. People are excited to meet Vinesh and encourage her," her brother Harvinder Phogat said. The feisty wrestler, in her first reaction after her disqualification, on Saturday said that under "different circumstances" she could see herself competing till 2032 because she still has a lot of wrestling left in her but is now unsure about her future as things "might never be same again". Vinesh had announced her retirement from the sport after her disqualification. In an emotional post on social media, Vinesh shared her childhood dream, the hardships she faced after losing her father and also put on record the contribution made by people in her extraordinary journey that ended in heartbreak in Paris.

## PM Modi proposes Global Development Compact to propel Global South

GNS News Agency, August 17

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday proposed a comprehensive 'Global Development Compact' on behalf of India to the countries of the Global South. "The foundation of this Compact will be based on the experiences of India's development journey and development partnerships. This Global Compact will be driven by the development priorities set by the countries of the South themselves," PM Modi said in his closing remarks at the Inaugural Leaders' Session of the Voice of Global South Summit 3.0.

"It will be human-centric, multi-dimensional and promote a multi-sectoral approach to development. It will not burden needy countries with debt in the name of development finance. This will contribute to the balanced and sustainable development of partner countries," the Prime Minister said. He further clarified that the 'development compact' will focus on trade for development, capacity building for sustainable growth, technology sharing, project-specific concessional finance and grants.

"To boost trade promotion activities, India will launch a special fund of \$2.5 million. Training in trade policy and trade negotiation will be provided for capacity building. A fund of one million dollars will be provided for this," PM Modi said. He said that India is contributing to the SDG Stimulus Leaders group for financial stress and development funding in the countries of the Global South and will



also work to provide affordable and effective generic medicines to the Global South. "We will also cooperate in the training of drug regulators. We will be happy to share our experiences and technology of natural farming in the agriculture sector," he added. He also said that global tensions and conflicts which were highlighted at the conference were a serious matter and addressing these concerns depends on just and inclusive global governance. Such institutions must give priority to the Global South while developed countries also fulfil their responsibilities and commitments. "There is also a need to take action to reduce the gap between the Global North and South and the Summit of the Future at the UN to be held next month could become an important milestone for all this," PM Modi added.

## Closely monitoring monkeypox situation, no new reported cases in India: Centre

GNS News Agency, August 17

New Delhi: The government on Saturday said they are closely monitoring the global monkeypox situation, and preparedness and cautionary measures are being put in place to prevent and control the spread of the disease. There are no new reported cases of monkeypox in India as of date, said the Health Ministry. In the meeting with senior ministry officials, chaired by Health Minister JP Nadda, it was decided that as a matter of abundant caution, certain measures are put in place. These are sensitising the health units at all the airports, seaports and ground crossings, readying the testing laboratories and gearing up health facilities for detecting, isolating and managing any case. The meeting was called in view of the World Health Organisation (WHO) declaring Monkeypox a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). In the meeting, it was noted that Monkeypox infections are usually self-limiting lasting between 2-4 weeks and patients generally recover with supportive management.

The transmission requires prolonged close contact with an infected case and is generally through the sexual route, direct contact with body/lesion fluid, or contaminated clothing/linen of an infected person. Globally, since 2022, WHO has reported 99,176 cases and 208 deaths due to monkeypox from 116 countries. Since the 2022 declaration by WHO, a total of 30 cases were detected in



India with the last case in March 2024. The Centre said that a joint monitoring group meeting, under the chairmanship of the Director General of Health Services consisting of experts from relevant fields, was held to review the situation. Although the possibility of a few imported cases being detected in the coming weeks is not entirely ruled out, it was assessed that the risk of a large outbreak with sustained transmission is presently low for India.

After reports of Mpox cases in Sweden and Pakistan surfaced, infectious disease experts urged health authorities to begin screening for the deadly infectious disease at key airports in India to help curb the spread.

## 'I haven't committed any mistake':

## Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah rules out resignation



GNS News Agency, August 17

In the wake of sanction for prosecution granted by Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot in connection with the alleged Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the CM said on Saturday that he has not committed any mistake and will not resign from his post. Siddaramaiah, while speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, said that the prosecution sanction issued against him was a conspiracy of the Central Government, the BJP and JD(S) leaders.

"The Governor had taken the decision without having any authority or jurisdiction. It is totally unconstitutional and we will fight it out legally.... Because it is an illegal sanction given by the Governor who is a puppet of the Central Government," Siddaramaiah said. The CM said that there was no case against him or anybody in connection with the MUDA scam. "The BJP has no moral right to ask for my resignation. The Governor is biased against me," he said, noting that the Governor was sitting on prosecution sanction requests against Union Minister and former CM H D Kumaraswamy, former state ministers Shashikala Jolle, Murugesh Nirani and Janardhan Reddy. "They (the BJP) are not tolerating this government. This government has implemented all guarantee schemes which is for poor people of all communities and religions. The Central Government is against social justice, poor people," he said. To a question, he said that the Congress high command was with him and the entire Cabinet was with him. Siddaramaiah has been facing flak from the Opposition in the state for an alleged land deal involving the allotment of 14 housing sites in Mysuru to his wife and the theft of Rs 89.73 crore from a state development corporation for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes.

## Centre's olive branch to striking doctors: Will form panel for safety measures



GNS News Agency, August 17

The Central Government has proposed the formation of a committee to address the safety concerns of doctors on strike. This committee will include input from all relevant stakeholders, including state governments.

Doctors and students protest against the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, in Kolkata. The Union Health Ministry on Saturday asked doctors to end their nationwide strike against the gruesome rape and murder of the trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital and assured them that a committee tasked with proposing safety measures for healthcare professionals will be formed. This committee, as per the centre, will include input from all relevant stakeholders, including state governments, who will be invited to share their insights and suggestions. This came as doctors across the nation are holding a 24-hour strike in protest against the brutal murder and rape of a trainee doctor at a state-run medical college in Kolkata. During the protest, all health services — except for essential services and emergency care — were suspended. The medical community is demanding justice

and urgent reforms, including an overhaul of resident doctors' working and living conditions and the implementation of a central law to protect healthcare professionals from workplace violence.

Doctors, paramedics and support staff take out silent protest march in south Delhi demanding justice in the Kolkata rape-murder case. Union Health Ministry officials met the representatives of the Federation of Resident Doctors Association (FORDA), the Indian Medical Association (IMA), and Resident Doctors' Associations of Governmental Medical Colleges and Hospitals in Delhi today.

## Union Minister Rammohan Naidu meets Chandrababu in Delhi, says Aviation Services will be enhanced

GNS News Agency, August 17

Union Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu announced plans to expand airport facilities in Andhra Pradesh. This announcement comes after a historic meeting between Naidu and the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and TDP chief, Chandrababu Naidu, marking Chandrababu's first engagement with Rammohan Naidu since he assumed his ministerial position. The two leaders convened with officials from the aviation department for an extensive review of the aviation sector's development in Andhra Pradesh, which lasted approximately two and a half hours. They outlined a strategic plan to complete crucial infrastructure projects related to aviation within the next two years, setting specific deadlines for each project.

## Befitting reply to BJP gov't's conspiracies: Rahul Gandhi on HC order on assistant teachers' selection in UP



GNS News Agency, August 17

UP assistant teachers recruitment "The BJP's stubbornness to snatch away reservation has pushed the future of hundreds of innocent candidates into darkness," Gandhi alleged. Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said the Allahabad High Court's decision on the recruitment of 69,000 assistant teachers is a befitting reply to the "conspiracies of the BJP government which is playing with the reservation system".

The former Congress chief's remarks came after the Allahabad High Court directed the Uttar Pradesh government to prepare a fresh selection list for the appointment of 69,000 assistant teachers in the state. "The Allahabad High Court's decision on the recruitment of 69,000 assistant teachers is a befitting reply to the conspiracies of the BJP government which is playing with the reservation system," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X.

This is not only the victory of thousands of youths like Amit Maurya who have been struggling in the streets in winter, summer and rain for the last five years but also of every warrior fighting the battle for social justice, he

said. "The BJP's stubbornness to snatch away reservation has pushed the future of hundreds of innocent candidates into darkness," Gandhi alleged. The BJP is the culprit for those who will get jobs through the new list after facing hardships for five years and also those whose names will now be removed from the selected list. "The BJP government, which is forcing those who want to study to fight, is the enemy of the youth in the true sense," Gandhi said. He also tagged one of his posts from February in which he had said, "UP's 69,000 teacher recruitment scam is proof of BJP's anti-reservation mentality. By ignoring Basic Education Rules, 1981 and Reservation Rules, 1994, the BJP government snatched the rights of Dalits and backward classes from them." "The aggrieved students met me and told me that in this recruitment, OBC category got only 3.86% reservation instead of 27% and SC category got only 16.6% reservation instead of 21%. This irregularity is related to about 19,000 posts and not making the original list brings this entire recruitment process under suspicion," he had said.

The HC set aside the selection lists issued in June 2020 and January 2022, which included 6,800 candidates. A bench comprising Justice A R Masoodi and Justice Brijraj Singh issued the order while disposing of 90 special appeals filed by Mahendra Pal and others, challenging a March 13 single-judge order.

The court upheld the single-judge's decision to cancel the January 5, 2022 selection list of 6,800 candidates belonging to the reserved category. The bench instructed the state government and other authorities concerned to complete the process of issuing the new selection list within three months. The court said that while preparing the new selection list, any adverse impact on the currently employed assistant teachers should be mitigated by allowing them to complete the ongoing academic session. This is intended to prevent disruption in the students' education, it said.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Polls in J&K

JAMMU and Kashmir's decade-long wait for the Assembly polls is over, with the Election Commission announcing a three-phase polling schedule for the state-turned-UT. President's rule, abrogation of Section 370, bifurcation of the state — J&K has seen it all. The delimitation exercise necessitated by the reorganisation has altered the electoral landscape — the Jammu region's seat count has risen sizeably from 87 to 43, while the number of Assembly constituencies in Kashmir has gone up from 46 to 47. This will have a bearing on the election outcome and pre- or post-poll alliances. The upcoming poll battle will be held against the backdrop of a series of terror attacks and encounters in the Jammu region. Terrorists have changed tack: they are targeting Hindu-dominated areas, while Muslim-majority Kashmir is no longer the epicentre of turbulence. In view of this shift, there is greater pressure on the BJP-led Central Government to ensure peaceful campaigning and polling. Elements inimical to India will try to disrupt the proceedings. The key is to create an environment conducive for the voter to come out and vote without fear. It will be a straightforward contest between the BJP and the Congress in Jammu. In contrast, the field is wide open in Kashmir, where the Abdullahs' National Conference and the Muftis' PDP will be in the fray along with Sajjad Lone's J&K People's Conference, Altaf Bukhari's J&K Apni Party and former Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad's Democratic Progressive Azad Party; independents with radical leanings can make the fight tougher. In poll-bound Haryana, where the BJP has been in power for a decade, the Congress is looking to capitalise on the anti-incumbency factor. Both are fancying their chances, having won five seats each in the state in this year's Lok Sabha elections.

## How school children from Kerala's Kozhikode are using class breaks to help their peers in Wayanad



These notes, made under the guidance of their teachers, were meant for the 138 lower primary students of two government schools at Mundakkai and Chooralmala — the two villages most affected by the landslide last month.

GNS News Agency, August 17

Lubna Raihana, a Class 4 student at the aided Jinarajadas Lower Primary School in the coastal Marad village of Kerala's Kozhikode district, has had a busy few days. Every school break this past week, she and her classmates would quickly finish their food and then hurry back into class to complete a major task at hand: meticulously and painstakingly copying down notes for the first semester in new notebooks.

These notes, made under the guidance of their teachers, were meant for the 138 lower primary students of two government schools at Mundakkai and Chooralmala — the two villages most affected by the landslide last month. Nearly closed down after communal riots tore through the serene fishing village of Marad 20 years ago, the Jinarajadas school is now scripting a chapter on compassion. Over the last week, these students were sorted into different groups to make notes in five subjects — Malayalam, English, Arabic, Maths and Environmental Science. While some students read out from their own notes, others copied it down while their teacher stood by, guiding and correcting them where needed.

Each class was tasked with making notes for their corresponding peers from the two government schools. The notes for the entire first semester, which ends by the end of August, were made ready for their peers in Wayanad since the landslide is expected to significantly disrupt their regular schooling. Notes of all five subjects, now in a single bound book, will be handed over to the schools in Wayanad Thursday.

Said school headmaster E.M.Pushparajan: "These students have lost their study materials in the tragedy. Many agencies have offered to replace the lost textbooks, bags and other items. But their lost school notes could not be supplied in that manner. Hence, at our school, we decided to help them by preparing their school notes". The idea, according to teacher E.Dijesh Kumar, is to ensure that their learning is not lost.

But for students like Lubna, this is the only help they could give their peers in Wayanad. "We're all saddened by the stories of our fellow students, who lost their dear ones and belongings in the landslide... When teachers told us about the plan, we were all in for it," she said. The 110-year-old Jinarajadas school had hit headlines after the Marad communal riots in 2003 and 2004, which left 14 people, both Hindus and Muslims dead. Soon after the riots, both communities were reluctant to send their children to school, pushing it to the brink of closure. The school eventually went on to play a key role in bringing the strife-torn village back together by organising outreach programmes and camps. In 2007, then Communist Party of India (Marxist) legislator and businessman VKC Mammed Koya took over the management of the school and upgraded its infrastructure. As the embers of the hatred cooled off over the years, attendance to the school also grew. Today, Jinarajadas LP School has a total of 450 students on its roll.

## IPS Nalin Prabhat appointed new DGP of Jammu and Kashmir, set to assume charge from Oct 1



GNS News Agency, August 17

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Thursday appointed 1992-batch IPS officer Nalin Prabhat as the Director General of Police (DGP) of Jammu and Kashmir. He is set to assume charge from October 1. Till then, he will work as the Special Director-General (DG) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police. He had reported that the Centre was considering appointing Prabhat, 56, as the new DG of the Jammu and Kashmir Police amid the rising terror attacks in the Jammu region since June 9 in which the security forces have suffered casualties.

## Congress slams PM Modi's 'communal civil code' remark, says his 'capacity for malice knows no bounds'

GNS News Agency, August 17

Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his Independence Day speech where, while mentioning the need for a Uniform Civil Code (UCC), he called the existing one "communal" and "discriminatory", the Congress said on Thursday that it was "a gross insult" to Dr B R Ambedkar. Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh wrote on X, "The non-biological PM's capacity for malice, mischief, and maligning of history knows no bounds. It was on full display today in his Red Fort speech. To say that we have had a 'communal civil code' till now is a gross insult to Dr Ambedkar, who was the greatest champion of reforms in Hindu personal laws that became a reality by the mid-1950s. These reforms had been bitterly opposed by the RSS and the Jana Sangh."

Ramesh also quoted a 21st Law Commission's Consultation Paper on Reform of Family Law, dated August 31, 2018, which said that a UCC "is neither necessary nor desirable at this stage". "While diversity of Indian culture can and should be celebrated, specific groups or weaker sections of society must not be disadvantaged in the process. Resolution of this conflict does not mean abolition of all differences. This commission has therefore dealt with laws that are discriminatory rather than providing a uniform civil code which is neither necessary nor desirable at this stage. Most countries are moving towards recognition of differences and the mere existence of difference does not imply discrimination, but is indicative of a robust democracy," he wrote in his X post, quoting the paper. The Uniform Civil Code has been a part of the BJP's Lok Sabha election manifestos since 1989.

"In our country, the Supreme Court has repeatedly discussed the Uniform Civil Code. It has given orders many times because a large section of the country believes, and there is truth in it, that the civil code with which we are living is really a kind of communal civil code, a discriminatory civil code," Modi said in his address from the Red Fort. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said in his speech at the party headquarters after the flag hoisting ceremony that the Government was "promoting divisive thinking".

## Congress objects to Nehru not named in President's address, calls it part of campaign to erase him from history



The Congress took a strong objection to Jawaharlal Nehru's name not finding mention among iconic personalities of the independence movement in President Droupadi Murmu's address, alleging it is part of the continuing campaign to erase India's first prime minister from history.

GNS News Agency, August 17

Jawaharlal Nehru is most unfortunate, to say the very least, that while there was mention of a number of iconic personalities of the independence movement in the President's address to the nation last night, the name of India's first PM who spent 10 years in British jails was not mentioned, Ramesh said in a post on X. The Congress Thursday took a strong objection to Jawaharlal Nehru's name not finding mention among iconic personalities of the independence movement in President Droupadi Murmu's address, alleging it is part of the continuing campaign to erase India's first prime minister from history.

Congress General Secretary (In-charge, Communications) Jairam Ramesh recalled that around midnight

In an order on Thursday, the Centre said, "Consequent upon joining the AGMUT cadre on inter-cadre deputation from AP cadre, Prabhat is hereby posted as Special DG, J&K police with immediate effect and till September 30. Further, upon retirement of R R Swain, IPS of 1991-batch of AGMUT-cadre on September 30, Prabhat is appointed as DGP, J&K police from October 1, and until further orders..." On Wednesday, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) sanctioned the inter-cadre deputation of Prabhat, who was the DG of the National Security Guard (NSG), from Andhra Pradesh to Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre for three years. The decision to change Prabhat's cadre came just three months after he was appointed as the NSG DG. Earlier, ACC approved his appointment as the NSG DG until August 31, 2028. Before joining the NSG, Prabhat was the additional director general and Special DG of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and headed its formation in Jammu and Kashmir. He also previously held the post of the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Kashmir and the South Kashmir sectors, among others. He did his BA (Hons) and MA from St Stephen's College. Prabhat is a three-time police gallantry medal winner and has headed the specialised anti-Naxal police force 'Greyhounds' of Andhra Pradesh, his former cadre state. Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired multiple meetings with senior officials including Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor; J-K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, along with Indian Army and CRPF officers, to come up with new strategies in the wake of an uptick in terror attacks in the Union Territory.



"Instead of remembering the contribution of freedom fighters and following the path shown by them, today's Government is promoting divisive thinking. With the intent to spread hatred, they celebrate the 'Vibhajan Vibhishika Diwas' (Partition Horrors Remembrance Day). Those who didn't take part in the freedom struggle are giving advice to the Congress and are trying to show they were part of the struggle. This is a factual truth that it was their hatred-filled politics which divided the country into two parts. This partition happened because of them," said the leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha. "For their selfish gains, the British ideology of divide and rule is being taken forward by the Sangh family, and there is no lack of evidence for the same," he added. Rashtriya Janata Dal MP Manoj Kumar Jha said that after making "Islamophobic remarks, the prime minister has now started talking of a secular civil code". "The most worrying aspect is that in his 11th year, the PM couldn't understand that he is the PM of the country, and those who didn't vote for him or are in Opposition don't have a separate PM. Whenever we have hoped that he will show a big heart, we have been disappointed. We must understand something which is decent is said in an indecent manner, then it looks odd and doesn't suit your post. Whether it is (you) saying that some want destruction. It seemed like an election speech. After talking of bhains (buffalo), mujra and mangalsutra and Islamophobic content, now you are talking of a secular civil code. Secularism is a process. You will have to go through that," Jha said.

## '140 crore Indians want Hindus, minorities to be safe in Bangladesh': PM Modi in Independence Day speech



GNS News Agency, August 17

At a time when Hindus and minorities in Bangladesh have borne the brunt of numerous attacks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking from the ramparts of the Red Fort on the 78th Independence Day Thursday, called for peace. "I hope things will soon be normal in Bangladesh. 140-crore people want that Hindus, and minorities there be safe. We want that our neighbouring countries tread the path of peace and happiness," PM Modi said. The PM added that India will always be supportive of Bangladesh's growth and development.

Bangladesh's minority Hindus have faced more than 200 attacks in 50-odd districts since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government on August 5. As policing collapsed, at least five people were reported killed in attacks on Hindu families, institutions, and temples. According to Bangladesh's 2022 census, a little more than 13.1 million Hindus reside in the country, making up for 7.96% of the country's population. Other minorities (Buddhists, Christians, etc.) together constituted less than 1%. In an attempt to reach out to the Hindu community, Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus, who is heading the interim government, also reached out on Tuesday with a visit to the Dhakeshwari Temple where he met community leaders and assured "justice" and "equal rights" for all.

"Rights are equal for everyone. We are all one people with one right. Do not make any distinctions among us. Please assist us. Exercise patience, and later judge — what we were able to do and not do. If we fail, then criticise us," Yunus said, after meeting minority leaders. He said the administration would work towards a situation where Hindus and other minorities don't have to fear for their safety. On August 8, as Yunus was sworn in, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had extended his best wishes and urged him to ensure "the safety and protection of Hindus and all other minority communities". This direct reference to the safety of Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh underlined Delhi's expectations from the new players in Dhaka. "In our democratic aspirations, we should not be seen as Muslims, Hindus or Buddhists, but as human beings. Our rights should be ensured. The root of all problems lies in the decay of institutional arrangements. That is why such issues arise. Institutional arrangements need to be fixed," Yunus said on Tuesday. "We have to establish human rights and freedom of speech. That is our prime goal," he said.

## Maoists kill 16-year-old boy for being 'police informer' in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district

GNS News Agency, August 17

A 16-year-old boy was allegedly beaten to death by Naxalites in Puarti village in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district late Tuesday evening. According to the police, Soyam Shankar was killed on suspicion of being a police informer. Significantly, over a dozen civilians have been murdered in Naxalite violence in Sukma this year. Puarti is a Naxal stronghold and home to at least two dreaded Naxal leaders — Barse Deva, chief of People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), and his predecessor Madvi Hidma, now the Maoist commander-in-chief for South Bastar. Sukma Superintendent of Police Kira Chavan said Soyam was still wearing his school uniform when he was killed at around 8-9 pm Tuesday. "His family had shifted to Palnar (in the neighbouring Dantewada) but he had gone to Puarti to meet his relatives to mourn the death of his sister-in-law," Chavan said. The scene of the alleged incident is barely 3 km away from a new police camp in Puarti. The camp was made in February after security forces pushed a PLGA unit further back into the dense Sukma forest. Soyam's body was brought to Sukma district headquarters, where a post-mortem was conducted at the district hospital. An FIR for murder has been registered at Jagargunda police station, police said. Puarti is a few kilometres from Tekulagudem, a site of several Naxalite encounters. On January 31, two elite Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) commandos and a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan were killed in a gun battle between security forces and the PLGA in Tekulagudem. In April 2021, 23 jawans were killed in an encounter with Maoists in the same forest.

## Voluntary organisations set up 20-bedded healthcare facility at mosque in Sahaheen Nagar

Hyderabad: Voluntary organisations set up 20-bedded healthcare facility at mosque in Sahaheen Nagar. The facility has modern medical equipment including, Oxygen pipeline, Para monitors, defibrillators with a competent team of doctors and nurses will be managing the center 24x7. Hyderabad: In a unique initiative, voluntary organisations collaborated to set-up a 20-bedded healthcare facility for treatment of seasonal infections at a mosque in Sahaheen Nagar. In view of the acute need for an inpatient facility to treat seasonal ailments like typhoid, dengue, chikungunya and diarrhea which are endemic to this area due to poor sanitation, hygiene and access to clean drinking water, a hospital has been set-up that also has 5 bedded emergency casualty that can even handle an acute MI/Heart attack, voluntary organisations Helping Hand Foundation (HHF) and AMPI-USA, a charity run by alumni of Osmania and Gandhi Medical College.

## Govt's plan to control vegetable prices: New urban farming clusters to boost supply



GNS News Agency, August 17

vegetable production, vegetable supply, vegetable prices, vegetable vendor, vegetables, vegetable market, Indian express news, current affairs Under the scheme, support will be provided to select implementing agencies, decentralised cold storage facilities, procurement of vending trucks/vans and for fruit and vegetable processing, a source said. The Centre plans to develop 50 vegetable clusters near cities having over 20 lakh population over the next five years with an investment of ₹2,000 crore to ramp up vegetable production and supply chains through public private partnership.

According to sources, the Agriculture Ministry is in the process of drawing up contours of the scheme, which is expected to be finalised and approved by the Union Cabinet soon. According to a source, the scheme is expected to benefit over 2 lakh farmers near big cities and aimed at providing remunerative prices to them while curbing the role of middlemen. It also aims to ensure uninterrupted supply of fresh vegetables at reasonable prices to consumers, the source said.

The scheme will engage Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and cooperative bodies to control volatility in prices and supply of tomato, onion and potato. When there is glut in the market, the crop does not fetch a good price for farmers, and during shortage, consumers feel the heat of price rise, the source said. Data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) Monday showed that the food inflation rate slipped to a 13-month low of 5.42% in July, from 9.36% in June. Food inflation has hovered between 8-9% during the last eight months as prices of vegetables, cereals and pulses have stayed consistently elevated. Among food items, the inflation rate of vegetables eased to 6.83% in July from 29.32%. In her Budget speech on July 23, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had proposed setting up vegetable clusters near big cities for ramping up production and supply chains. "Large-scale clusters for vegetable production will be developed closer to major consumption centres. We will promote Farmer Producer Organisations, cooperatives and start-ups for vegetable supply chains including for collection, storage, and marketing," Sitharaman had said. A source said the clusters, to be developed in partnership with implementation agencies from private sector, FPOs and cooperative bodies for fresh vegetables, would be set up in a radius of 50 km from cities like New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Hyderabad among others. Consumers can buy vegetables in their locality from retail shops and vending trucks/vans. Under the scheme, support will be provided to select implementing agencies, decentralised cold storage facilities, procurement of vending trucks/vans and for fruit and vegetable processing, a source said. The scheme will have a provision to support the agencies to set up at least 10 kiosks/retail outlets at 10 strategic locations in residential areas like apartment complexes, societies and colonies.

## 45% Indian-Americans went after 2010, median age below US average: Report



GNS News Agency, August 17

AROUND HALF of the over 5 million Indians residing in the United States migrated after 2010. With a median age of 36 years, the Indian-American community is, in fact, younger than that of the US average. Also, around 3,20,000 work visas — a staggering 73% of the total work visas the US allocated in 2022-23 — were issued to Indians. These findings figure in the latest report of US-based non-profit organisation Indiaspora, prepared in collaboration with the Boston Consulting Group. Titled 'Small Community, Big Contributions, Boundless Horizons: The Indian Diaspora in the United States', the report takes note of the ways in which this relatively small community — 1.5 per cent of the total US population — continues to have an impact on multiple aspects of American life, from the economic to the cultural. Quoting data from the Migration Policy Institute, the impact report says that of the Indian diaspora's 5.1 million people in the US, about 2.8 million are first-generation immigrants. Approximately 30 per cent of them migrated to the US before 2000, while around 45% made the move after 2010. The community is largely concentrated in New York State and California. According to the most recent census, their median age is 36 years — a bit younger than the median population of the US as a whole, says the report, which was released by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti in Delhi on Tuesday. The median income of the Indian-Americans — around \$136,000 — is almost double than that of the US average, according to the report.

"Indian-Americans account for only 1.5% of the US population, yet they continue to have an outsized and positive impact across different aspects of US society," said Indiaspora founder M R Rangaswami. Incidentally, former PepsiCo CEO and Chairman Indra Nooyi and former US Ambassador to India Ken Juster are members of the Steering Committee in preparing the report. While the United Arab Emirates is home to the largest segment of the Indian diaspora, the US is home to the second largest, the report says. The biggest draw for them is the educational offerings in the US.

According to the report, 78% Indian-Americans hold

bachelor's degrees or higher, which outpaces the US national average of 36%. According to Boston Consulting Group estimates, members of the community contribute 5-6% (\$300 billion) in tax revenues annually, on top of the \$370-\$460 billion in annual spending, which translates into a major economic wave in terms of sales tax, business growth, and support of employment. From Silicon Valley tech giants to global conglomerates, Indian-origin leaders are steering some of the most influential companies, the report says. Indian-origin CEOs were at the helm of 16 Fortune 500 companies in 2023 (3%), managing enterprises that generated roughly \$978 billion (5%) in revenues and employed 2.5 million people (9%) across the globe that year. As many as 72 unicorn startups out of 648 in the US are led by Indian-origin founders, with their collective value exceeding \$195 billion, employing 55,000 people (approximately 13% of the unicorn workforce). Quoting a 2020 study by the National Bureau of Economic Research and Harvard University, the report says the Indian diaspora's share of patents increased from 1.9% in 1975 to 10% in 2019.

Many diaspora members come to the US to study. According to Open Doors data for 2022-2023, around 2,70,000 students from India pursue graduate and undergraduate degrees in US universities. This accounts for 25% of the international student population in the US, says the report. There is a preference for studies in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) subjects among the Indian students, with over 70% enrolled in engineering, computer science, or life science programmes — along with 10% in business/management programmes — as of 2023. Around 60% of them are enrolled in graduate-level programmes. In healthcare, Indian-origin physicians comprise 10% of all doctors in the US, serving 30% of the patients. According to data collected by the Asian American Hotel Owners Association, Indian Americans own around 60% of all US hotels, generating \$700 billion in revenue and creating over 4 million jobs, directly and indirectly. Indian Americans also own an estimated 35%-50% of all convenience stores in the US. However, the Pew Research Center estimates that about 6% of the group lives below the poverty line — with the complexities of undocumented migration comprising a significant contributing factor. Approximately 14% Indian-Americans were undocumented in 2021, making them the third-largest undocumented migrant group in the country. The report is the first volume in a series to look at the impact of the Indian diaspora, with a focus on public service, business, culture and innovation. In addition to various statistics, the project also profiles the diaspora leaders across economic and cultural areas.

## Indian Army to procure cutting-edge tech to detect enemy drones near border areas

GNS News Agency, August 17

Army to procure advanced system to detect enemy drones. Parameters such as range of detection and other technical parameters will be submitted by the vendors when they submit their bids. The Indian Army is set to procure an advanced version of the Integrated Drone Detection and Interdiction system (MK IIA) to counter the growing threats from unmanned aerial systems, particularly along the western and northern borders. As per the Army, the proposed system should have a surveillance, detection and tracking capability, microprocessor for computing a targeting solution and a LASER weapon system for hard kill or destruction and jamming capability for soft kill or denial. A Request for Information (RFI) was published last month by the Army to seek details about the system from prospective vendors.

The fresh RFI comes within months after the Army inducted indigenous integrated drone detection and interdiction systems in the northern border along the China border in the northern sector and is reflective of the efforts to develop and procure counter drone systems in the wake of an increase in threats from enemy unmanned aerial systems. Developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Bharat Electronics, the Army Air Defence had got seven of these systems, five of which were inducted for deployment close to the northern borders. These systems too had both soft and hard kill options.



Apart from these indigenous systems, other improvised systems with different counter-UAS capabilities have been deployed by the Armed Forces. This includes prototypes of laser-based systems developed indigenously with Army Air Defence, improvised versions of ZU-23 and L/70 guns for drone detection and killing, ad-hoc handled jammers, low-level lightweight radars, among others. The Armed Forces have inducted anti-drone systems from Indian private firms and the Israeli SMASH 2000 plus systems to tackle enemy drone threats. Parameters such as range of detection and other technical parameters will be submitted by the vendors when they submit their bids. However, the RFI states that it should have a radar system that should be able to detect and track low RCS targets, and assist in designation of the hostile targets to the weapon system.

## EC reviews J-K security situation with Home Secy for holding Assembly polls



GNS News Agency, August 17

THE ELECTION Commission Wednesday held a meeting with Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla to review the security situation and the requirement of forces for holding Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. EC sources said the deployment of forces would be "over and above" that for the Lok Sabha polls held earlier this year. The commission, comprising Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioner Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, had visited the Union Territory last week to review preparations on the ground. On Wednesday, the EC met Bhalla and discussed the possible increase in

the number of security personnel for the Assembly polls compared to the Lok Sabha polls, sources said.

Given the security situation in the UT, all candidates would require security cover, leading to an increase in the requirement, sources said. The Assembly elections are also expected to be more contested, they said. The EC's review also took into account the recent spike in terror activities in Jammu, sources said. Since the last Assembly elections in J&K were held in 2014, the more-recent Lok Sabha elections would be taken as the benchmark for deciding force deployment, said an official.

While upholding the abrogation of Article 370, the Supreme Court last year had directed the Election Commission to hold Assembly elections in J&K by September 30, 2024. Ahead of the deadline, the EC has started the process of preparing the updated electoral roll, which is scheduled to be published on August 20. The ongoing Amarnath Yatra pilgrimage is scheduled to end on August 19. Speaking at a press conference in Jammu last week, the CEC said the commission was committed to holding Assembly elections in the UT at the earliest. Jammu and Kashmir hasn't had Assembly elections since 2014 and had no Assembly since it was dissolved in 2018. If held, the upcoming elections would be the first in 10 years and the first since the state was split into two Union Territories — Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh — in 2019.

## Amid growing Ukraine threat, India issues advisory to nationals in Russia: 'Temporarily relocate to safer areas'

GNS News Agency, August 17

The Embassy of India in Russia issued an advisory on Wednesday for Indian nationals living in the Bryansk, Belgorod, and Kursk regions. The advisory states that citizens, including students, residing in these regions are advised to temporarily relocate to safer areas due to recent "security incidents" following the intensification of the Russia-Ukraine war.

The advisory was issued shortly after Russia's Belgorod border region declared an emergency due to heavy shelling by Ukrainian forces, who are continuing a major cross-border incursion into the adjacent Kursk region for a second week. An emergency had already been declared in Kursk last Saturday after Ukrainian forces launched an incursion on August 6, marking a significant escalation in the conflict, with both sides reporting casualties and territorial gains. "In view of the recent security incidents in Bryansk, Belgorod and Kursk regions, Indian nationals are advised to take necessary precautions and temporarily relocate outside these regions," the Indian embassy stated. For those needing assistance or guidance, the embassy has provided a dedicated email address and telephone number. "Any Indian national or stu-



dent requiring any assistance may contact the Embassy at email: edul.moscow@mea.gov.in or telephone number +7 965 277 3414," the advisory added. Russia's Defence Ministry reported that overnight, 117 Ukrainian drones were intercepted and shot down within its territory, primarily in the Kursk, Voronezh, Belgorod, and Nizhny Novgorod regions. The ministry also stated that missiles had been downed and released footage of Sukhoi Su-34 bombers targeting Ukrainian positions in the Kursk region.

## Over 800 birth certificates issued from single ID in UP village in 2 years, probe ordered



GNS News Agency, August 17

Authorities in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras have found out that a single user ID from a village was used to issue birth certificates for 814 individuals in multiple states in less than two years, prompting them to launch a probe. Officials said Sinchawali Sani village has a population of roughly 1,100. However, over the last 19 months, a total of 814 birth certificates were issued using the village's user ID for the Civil Registration System (CRS).

"These certificates have been issued not only for residents of Uttar Pradesh but also for individuals in other states, including Jharkhand, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Karnataka," an official said. "So far, it has been found that 780 certificates were issued in Uttar Pradesh, 13 in Jharkhand, 12 in Bihar, four each in Madhya Pradesh and Haryana, and one was issued in Karnataka. The number of such cases may increase as the investigation progresses," the official said. Gram Panchayat Officer Ishwar Chand, who is responsible for Sinchawali Sani, said he received access to the CRS portal on August 5. "By then, 814 birth certificates were already issued through the ID. All of these certificates listed Sinchawali Sani as the place of birth," Chand, who reported the matter to senior officials, said. District Magistrate Ashish Kumar said a probe has been initiated. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of Hathras Dr Manjeet Singh, who has been tasked with leading the investigation, said efforts are on to determine how the ID was leaked. "The ID was recently assigned to the panchayat secretary of Sinchawali Sani. The inquiry will focus on uncovering the source of the leak and the extent of the misuse," he added.

## Lawyers protest senior advocate's remarks against Manipur High Court, stage protest

GNS News Agency, August 17

Meitei alleged that the senior advocate had acted beyond his professional ethics by speaking at the behest of a particular community and giving contemptuous remarks against the High Court. Meitei alleged that the senior advocate had acted beyond his professional ethics by speaking at the behest of a particular community and giving contemptuous remarks against the High Court. The legal fraternity in Manipur on Wednesday organised a protest under the aegis of All Manipur Bar Association (AMBA) denouncing the statement of senior advocate Colin Gonsalves who allegedly made contemptuous remarks lowering the authority of the High Court.

A large number of lawyers converged in front of Cheirap court, Imphal,



where they organised a sit-in demonstration holding placards like "Stop Instigating Kuki-Zo, Stop Instigating Violence", "Save Communal Harmony, Save Manipur" and "Stop Attack on Honourable Manipur High Court". Puyam Tomcha Meitei, president of AMBA, said, the remark of the senior advocate is uncalled for when peace is gradually returning to the

state. Meitei alleged that the senior advocate had acted beyond his professional ethics by speaking at the behest of a particular community and giving contemptuous remarks against the High Court. The AMBA president further informed that the legal fraternity would move the High Court for a criminal contempt case against Gonsalves

besides petitioning the state to register an FIR. In addition, the state legal fraternity will also apprise the Supreme Court to take steps against the senior advocate. Gonsalves, the founder of the Human Rights Law Network, allegedly made the remarks at an event held at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi, on March 8, 2024.



## Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi's house auctioned again, no bids received



March. Ahead of the auction, a small crowd of mostly journalists gathered outside the colonial-era house on leafy University Avenue, a few doors from the US embassy. Above the gate, a portrait of Suu Kyi's father, independence hero Aung San, watched over the proceedings while armed police stood guard behind sandbags. A notice pasted to the door by a local court advertised "Buildings and every heirloom under the name of Daw Khin Kyi" -- Suu Kyi's mother. An auctioneer came out of the compound and asked three times for any buyers, then announced the auction was unsuccessful when none came forward. For around 15 years, Suu Kyi was confined within the house's crumbling walls by the military after shooting to fame during huge demonstrations against the then-junta in 1988.

Cut off from her husband and children in England, Suu Kyi spent time playing the piano, reading detective novels and meditating as her status as a democracy leader grew. Hundreds gathered regularly on the pavement outside the property to hear her talk about democracy and fighting military rule through non-violence. After her release in 2010, she continued to live in the villa, where she received a string of foreign leaders, journalists and diplomats. In 2012, then-US president Barack Obama lionised her as an "icon of democracy" during a visit to the home. Suu Kyi left Yangon in 2012 and moved to the capital Naypyidaw to govern as part of an uneasy power-sharing arrangement with the military. She was detained there in the early hours of February 1, 2021 when the military seized power again, ending a 10-year experiment with democracy and plunging the Southeast Asian nation into bloody turmoil.

## Russian-American woman jailed for 12 years for donating \$50 to Ukraine charity

GNS News Agency, August 17

The woman, who pleaded guilty to the charges, was accused of sending money to fund equipment and ammunition for the Ukrainian army. Image shows US-Russian citizen Ksenia Karelina standing in a cage at the Sverdlovsk regional Court. A Russian court has sentenced Ksenia Karelina, a 33-year-old Russian-American woman, to 12 years in prison on charges of treason after she made a small donation of just over 50 US Dollars to a US-based charity that supports Ukraine. The verdict was delivered after a closed trial at the Sverdlovsk regional court, following Karelina's detention earlier this year while she was visiting her grandparents. Karelina, who pleaded guilty to the charges, was accused of sending money to fund equipment and ammunition for the Ukrainian army, according to RIA Novosti. Her lawyer, Mikhail Mushailov, has indicated plans to appeal the decision.

The sentencing comes just days after a major prisoner swap between Russia and Western countries, which saw the release of 24 individuals, including former US Marine Paul Whelan and Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich. The Russian government has recently increased penalties for treason, with President Vladimir Putin raising the maximum sentence from 20 years to life imprisonment last year amid the ongoing war. Karelina, a resident of Los Angeles who became a US citizen in 2021, was visiting Russia for the first time in several years. Her



boyfriend, Chris Van Heerden, revealed that she had been excited about the trip, which he had arranged as a birthday gift. Van Heerden emphasised that Karelina was not politically engaged and had never spoken about the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The New York-based non-profit Razom for Ukraine, the organisation to which Karelina allegedly donated, expressed its dismay at her arrest and conviction. The case has drawn significant attention, particularly due to the court's involvement in previous high-profile cases, including the conviction of Evan Gershkovich for espionage. Karelina's legal team remains hopeful for a potential inclusion in a future prisoner swap, although her lawyer acknowledges that such negotiations cannot proceed until the verdict is finalised.

## Bangladesh court begins genocide probe against Sheikh Hasina



Mohammadpur area during the quota protests on July 19. Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Zaki Al Farabi set the date after the case was placed before his court for the next course of action. The student-led protests demanding reforms in government job quotas evolved into a government-toppling movement in early August. Over 230 people died in Bangladesh in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government on August 5, taking the death toll to 560 during the three weeks of violence. Following Hasina's resignation, a caretaker government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus was formed in the country, promising to address administrative and political reforms and hold accountable those involved in the violence.

## Resignations of officials close to Sheikh Hasina legal, says Yunus

Dhaka: The head of Bangladesh's interim government, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, says the high-profile resignations of authorities close to ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina are legal after student leaders who organised protests against Hasina's government issued ultimatums for them to quit. "Legally ... all the steps were taken," Yunus, 83, told a group of journalists Sunday night. The country's chief justice, five justices and central bank governor have all resigned in the past few days, part of a dramatic transformation after weeks of protests against a quota system for government jobs turned into a mass uprising. Hasina resigned and fled to India last week. Yunus said a key priority of the interim government is to restore the independence of the judiciary. He called former chief justice Obaidul Hassan "just a hangman". Syed Rezaat Ahmed was appointed the new chief justice on Sunday after his name was proposed by student leaders of the protests. Students vow to cleanse the political system of Hasina's rule, which they have denounced as autocratic. More than 300 people, including students and police officers, were killed in the weeks of violence. Yunus took over on Thursday after student leaders reached out. He said the students told him he was the only one they could trust. He said he accepted "because these are the guys who broke the local government," describing it as a "student-led revolution". "It's not my dream, it's their dream. So I'm kind of helping them to make it come true," Yunus said. The interim government is expected to announce a new election, but it is not clear when it will be held. Yunus had been a longtime critic of Hasina and her government. An economist and banker by profession and known as the "banker to the poorest of the poor."

## Iranian woman 'shows hair in public while driving', cops shoot her



GNS News Agency, August 17

On a darkened road beside the Caspian Sea, Iranian police officers opened fire last month on a 31-year-old woman who had tried to speed away likely knowing they wanted to seize her vehicle. Police had been ordered to impound her car, activists say, because of an earlier violation of Iran's headscarf law for showing her hair in public while driving. Now unable to walk and confined to a bed at a police hospital, Arezou Badri — a mother of two — is the latest casualty of Iran's renewed crackdown over headscarves, or hijabs. Her shooting occurred nearly two years after 22-year-old Mahsa Amini died while in police custody over an alleged headscarf violation, sparking nationwide protests over women's rights and against the country's theocracy.

As the September 16 anniversary of Amini's death approaches, Iran's new reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian has promised to ease enforcement of the headscarf law. But the murky details of Badri's shooting and a recent video of a girl being manhandled in the streets of Tehran show the dangers still lurking for those willing to disobey it. "They have elevated it to the most serious crime, where the police is allowed basically to shoot to kill," said Hadi Ghaemi, executive director of the New York-based Centre for Human Rights in Iran. "That's really a war on women."

Badri's shooting occurred around 11 pm on July 22 along a coastal road in Iran's northern Mazandaran province as she drove home from a friend's house with her sister, activists say. A brief account published by Iran's state-run IRNA news agency quoted police Col. Ahmad Amini as saying patrol officers had ordered a vehicle with tinted windows to stop, but that it didn't. It made no mention of the hijab violation or impound notice. Officers appear to have first fired at Badri's car's tires, according to the group Human Rights Activists in Iran, which spoke to people with knowledge of the shooting. As Badri continued driving, officers fired into the vehicle, the group said; the gunfire pierced her lung and damaged her spine. Under Iranian law, police must fire a warning shot, then aim to wound below the waist before taking a potentially fatal shot at a suspect's head or chest. If the suspect

is driving, officers typically aim first for the tires.

Why police initially stopped Badri's car remains unclear, though activists blame it on the impound alert over the hijab violation. It's also unknown whether any police vehicle at the scene had a camera that recorded the shooting or if any officer there wore a body camera. There are no public statistics of fatal police shootings in Iran. Police firearms training and tactics vary widely, as some officers face more paramilitary duties in areas like Iran's restive Sistan and Baluchestan provinces. Iran's Interior Ministry, which oversees the country's police, did not respond to questions about the shooting from The Associated Press.

Authorities are holding Badri at a police hospital in Tehran under tight security, restricting her family's visits and stopping them from taking photographs of her, activists say. Despite that, an image of Badri was published by the BBC this week, highlighting her case. "She has no sensation from the waist down and doctors have said that it will be clear in the coming months whether she is completely paralysed," said one activist in Iran, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal. The hijab became a focal point of demonstrations after the death of Amini in 2022. She died after being arrested for not wearing her headscarf to the liking of police. A United Nations panel has found that Amini died as a result of "physical violence" used against her by the state.

Amini's death sparked months of protests and a security crackdown that killed more than 500 people and led to the detention of more than 22,000. After the mass demonstrations, police dialled down enforcement of hijab laws, but it ramped up again in April under what authorities called the Noor — or "Light" — Plan. The hijab crackdown remains widely discussed in Iran, even as police and state media rarely report on it. Many women continue to wear their hijabs loosely or leave them draped around their shoulders while walking in Tehran. Women driving without wearing hijabs are believed to have been tracked via surveillance camera technology provided by Chinese firms, matching their faces against a government-maintained photo database, Ghaemi said. If they are stopped, that can lead to physical altercations between women and the police. Surveillance footage published last week by the Iranian reformist news website Ensaf showed a 14-year-old girl manhandled by the morality police in Tehran. Her mother described her daughter's head as being rammed into an electrical box, a female officer pulling her hair and another putting their foot on her neck. Police described the officers' behaviour as unprofessional, but also accused the girl of using bad language. "I saw my daughter with a wounded face, swollen lips, a bruised neck, torn clothes and she couldn't even speak," her mother, Maryam Abbasi, told the website. "Her eyes were so swollen from crying that they wouldn't open."

## Airports in Germany suspend flight ops after climate activists block runways

GNS News Agency, August 17

The Last Generation campaign group said in a statement that activists had stopped or reduced traffic at the Berlin, Cologne-Bonn, Nuremberg and Stuttgart airports. The group also published pictures of activists with their hands glued to the tarmac. Two German airports have temporarily suspended flights on Thursday morning after climate activists breached the airfields as part of a larger protest targeting four airports nationwide.

The Last Generation campaign group said in a statement that activists had stopped or reduced traffic at the Berlin, Cologne-Bonn, Nuremberg and Stuttgart airports and published pictures of activists with their hands glued to the tarmac. The Nuremberg airport said on its website that flights were suspended until further notice since 0342 GMT and warned that passengers would face delays, while the Cologne-Bonn airport said on social media platform X that flights are currently suspended while police are dealing with "unauthorised persons." Police were on site at the Berlin airport and were able to remove the two protesters, who had entered the airfield by cutting through a fence, and flight operations were unaffected, said a police spokesperson.



A Stuttgart airport spokesperson was not immediately available for comment. The group has listed several countries across Europe and North America where they said similar disruptions are planned as part of a protest campaign calling for the German government to pursue a global agreement to exit oil, gas and coal by 2030. German politicians have demanded better protection for the country's airports after climate activists were able to breach fences and disrupt air traffic, including at the country's busiest airport, Frankfurt, for two days in a row last month.

## UN team to visit Bangladesh next week to probe killings of protesters during students' agitation

GNS News Agency, August 17

Dhaka, A team of UN experts will visit Bangladesh next week to investigate the killings of the protesters ahead of and in the aftermath of Sheikh Hasina's resignation as the prime minister last week, it was announced on Thursday. This will be the first time the UN is sending a fact-finding mission to Bangladesh since its independence in 1971 to investigate widespread human rights abuses in the country, according to a UN official, said a post on X by the Chief Adviser of the Government of Bangladesh. Muhammad Yunus took oath as the Chief Adviser of the interim government on August 8, days after Sheikh Hasina's government collapsed and she fled to India on August 5 amid violent protests over quota reforms for government jobs.

"The United Nations is sending a UN fact-finding team next week to probe atrocities committed during the Student Revolution in July and early this month. UN human rights chief Volker Turk announced the move when he called Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus late Wednesday," the Chief Adviser of Government of Bangladesh said in a post on X, the handle for which is run by Yunus' office. Bangladesh descended into chaos last week after Hasina's departure while the Army stepped in to fill the power vacuum on August 5. Before that, the anti-government protests had killed more than 500 people since mid-July. Meanwhile, Turk assured his support and said an inclusive, human rights-centred approach will ensure the transition succeeds. Volker Turk in a post late on Wednesday night said, "Promising phone call with @ChiefAdviserGoB Muhammad Yunus. I assured him of @UNHumanRights Office's solidarity with the people of #Bangladesh & our support to the interim govt at this pivotal time. An inclusive, human rights-centred approach will ensure this transition succeeds." Earlier on Wednesday, after his phone call with Turk, Yunus had posted: "The UN human rights chief, @volker\_turk has made a phone call to Bangladesh Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on Wednesday."



"A team of UN experts would soon visit the country to investigate [the killings]," Volker Turk told Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus today during a phone conversation. Yunus said in a connecting post on X: The UN rights chief said a UN-led investigation will be launched very soon to probe the killing of the protesters during the Student Revolution. Human rights will be the cornerstone of his administration and the protection of every citizen is the top most priority of the government, Yunus, who has sought UN cooperation to uphold human rights, said. "The Chief Adviser thanked him and his long-time friend Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, for supporting the Bangladesh students' revolution and championing their rights during unprecedented and devastating killings of student protesters," Yunus said in the series of posts. Meanwhile, a complaint was filed on Wednesday with the investigation agency of Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal against Hasina and eight others, accusing them of committing genocide and crimes against humanity during the mass movement of the students against her government. This article was generated from an automated news agency feed without modifications to text.

## Mining tax dues: Ruling to have large financial impact on mining cos; 'pass-on of costs may be inflationary'



According to a senior official in the Ministry of Mines, the ruling will have a major financial implication on mining companies, especially those mining coal and iron ore. These include both private companies and public sector undertakings (PSUs) that come under the mines ministry, the official said, adding that future investments in the mining sector could also be impacted by the ruling to tax retrospectively.

The ruling will lead to more costs being imposed on a primary sector like mining, which will make it "unviable", stakeholders from the industry said at the sidelines of a mines ministry event on Wednesday. Most metal stocks reflected this sentiment and closed in the red after the SC's ruling. India's largest iron ore miner NMDC Ltd fell 6.02 per cent to Rs 210.94. Coal India, the country's largest coal producer, dropped 3.26 per cent to Rs 504.70. JSW Steel dropped 1.93 per cent to Rs 890.30, Tata Steel 1.82 per cent to Rs 146.17, and Vedanta 0.50 per cent to Rs 420.20. Earlier, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta had told the SC that if the verdict is applied retrospectively, the tax demand on PSUs would be between Rs 70,000 to 80,000 crore. For the entire sector, the cumulative impact could be well around Rs 2 lakh crore, according to industry estimates.

"The burden would eventually go to the common man. Whether directly or indirectly, he will be the person who will bear the burden because no industry can absorb this. For example we made a rough estimate only for the public sector undertakings. This is rough and ready, it is still the process of calculation is going on, but the approximate demand, which the only PSU's are expecting would be somewhere in the vicinity of 70,000 to 80,000 crore," Mehta had said on July 31.

The nine-judge SC bench on Wednesday said the levy of interest and penalty on demands made for the period before July 25, 2024 shall stand waived and the

time for payment of tax "shall be staggered in instalments over a period of twelve years commencing from 1 April 2026". The July 25 judgment overruled the 1989 decision of a seven-judge bench in India Cement Ltd vs State of Tamil Nadu, which said royalty is tax and state legislatures lack competence to levy taxes on mineral rights because the subject matter is covered by an act of the Parliament in exercise of powers under the Union List of the Constitution. The verdict has paved the way for states to collect greater revenue from mining operations.

Now, with states empowered to tax royalty on mining production, experts said costs of primary goods, especially iron ore, may go up. "Typically, you need 1.6 to 1.8 tons of iron ore for a ton of steel. If you consider the total cost of steel production and work backwards, royalty is roughly 5 to 8 per cent of the selling price. It's not a small cost at all," said Rakesh Surana, a partner with Deloitte India. "What if the costs go up? If the costs go up, margin is eaten into. If the margin is eaten into, you can either pass it on or if not, it's obviously not good for the company. It impacts expansion plans, the ability to repay debt, etc. Even if you can pass it on, it creates an inflationary impact... there is a risk of that happening if this isn't well calibrated," Surana added. After the July 25 judgment, each state can now decide the quantum of cess on mining operations, as opposed to a relatively more uniform taxation regime prior to the judgement. Surana said this may create a new dynamic of competition among states in terms of attracting mining-related investments. Moving forward, the industry is also bracing for the revival of previously stayed GST demand cases on mining operations, as the court has now clarified that royalty payments are a contractual consideration rather than a tax. "After April 2016, there is a liability under reverse charge mechanism with respect to services provided by the government. Therefore, royalty is something which will be considered as a mining rights service provided by the government to the mining community. Now, all the petitions which are currently pending in high courts and the demands which have been stayed in most of the cases will get revived," said Gopal Mundhra, partner at Economic Laws Practice (ELP). Mundhra noted that the centre has the authority to provide relief on pending GST demands after the insertion of Section 11A in CGST Act at the 53rd GST Council Meeting last month. The amendment gives the central government the powers to forgive non-collection or under-collection of GST in situations where businesses followed a common practice that led to the shortfall in tax collection.

## Cognizant's new campus opened in Hyd



Hyderabad: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy inaugurated the new campus of IT major Cognizant at Kokapet in Hyderabad on Wednesday. With an office space of 10 lakh sq.ft, the new campus will provide employment to around 15,000 people, making Hyderabad its largest base in the world.

Established in Chennai in 1994, Cognizant began operations in Hyderabad in 2002 and now has five campuses in the IT corridor. The IT firm is currently the second-largest IT employer in Telangana. While workforce in Chennai currently stands at around 55,000 to 56,000 employees, Hyderabad is all set to surpass it with 57,000 employees. The new campus will focus on advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), machine

learning (ML), digital engineering, and cloud solutions.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister announced that the State government would constitute an investors task force to attract investments to Telangana. He claimed that his recent trip to the US and South Korea, attracted investments worth Rs 31,500 crore which would create around 30,750 jobs. He said with Hyderabad in its tow, Telangana would compete with the world rather than its neighbouring States of Karnataka or Andhra Pradesh in attracting investments. He also claimed that while former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi laid the foundation for the IT sector in Hyderabad, former Chief Ministers N Chandrababu Naidu and YS Rajasekhara Reddy fueled its growth.

## Lenders in talks with govt for "amicable resolution" after Karnataka halts transactions with SBI, PNB

Karnataka government SBI PNB SBI and PNB in separate statements issued on Thursday said they are committed for amicable resolution of the matter and are in discussion with the Karnataka government. (File) Days after Karnataka government ordered all its departments and public sector units to close all their accounts at State Bank of India (SBI) and Punjab National Bank (PNB), both the lenders on Thursday said they are in talks with the state government for a 'amicable resolution' of the issue.

On August 12, the Karnataka's finance department issued an order asking all state government departments, public sector units, boards, corporations, local bodies, universities and other institutions to close accounts at SBI and PNB. The state government has set a September 20 deadline for all departments to comply with the direction, according to a circular issued by P C Jaffer, secretary in the department, on Monday. SBI and PNB in separate statements issued on Thursday said they are committed for amicable resolution of the matter and are in discussion with the Karnataka government. However, both the lenders did not provide any specific comment as the matter is currently sub judice.

The Karnataka government's decision followed two fraudulent transactions reported at these banks. The first is related to PNB's Rajajinagar branch, Bangalore, where



the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board had started a fixed deposit of Rs 25 crore on September 14, 2011. However, after the term of the deposit ended, PNB allegedly released only Rs 13 crore, citing fraud by bank officials. The other case was related to a fixed deposit at the erstwhile State Bank of Mysore, which merged with the SBI in 2017. The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board had a fixed deposit of Rs 10 crore at the bank's Avenue Road branch, Bangalore. According to the state government, the amount was adjusted to the loans taken by a private company using forged documents. Attempts to recover the amount are said to have suffered the same fate as that of the fixed deposit in PNB.

## Is garlic a vegetable or a spice? This is what the Madhya Pradesh HC says; We asked a dietician to weigh in



The humble garlic clove found itself at the heart of a legal tussle in India. What began as a seemingly simple question – is garlic a vegetable or a spice? – escalated into a full-blown legal battle that reached the Madhya Pradesh High Court. The dispute arose when the state's market board declared garlic a vegetable in 2015, only to be reversed by the agriculture department, which reclassified it as a spice. This bureaucratic ping-pong had significant implications for farmers and traders, affecting where garlic could be sold and taxed.

After years of legal wrangling, the high court finally ruled in favour of garlic's vegetable status, citing its perishable nature. Kanikka Malhotra, a consultant dietician and diabetes educator, explained that botanically, garlic is classified as a vegetable. It belongs to the Allium genus, which includes other vegetables like onions, leeks,

and shallots. The edible part of garlic is the bulb, which grows underground and consists of several cloves wrapped in a thin, papery skin. This bulb structure makes garlic a vegetable, similar to other root and bulb vegetables, she said.

Vegetables are generally defined as the edible parts of plants, such as roots, stems, leaves, flowers, or fruits.

Garlic, being a bulb, fits this definition perfectly. It is cultivated and harvested like other vegetables and provides nutritional value, including vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Despite its botanical classification, garlic is often used as a spice in cooking due to its strong flavour and aroma. Spices are typically derived from seeds, fruits, bark, or other plant parts and are used primarily to season and flavour food rather than for their nutritional content. Garlic is used in small quantities to add depth and complexity to dishes, much like a spice would be. The potent flavor of garlic comes from compounds like allicin, which are released when garlic is chopped or crushed. Malhotra explained. These compounds give garlic its characteristic pungent smell and taste, which can dominate or enhance the flavor of a dish. Malhotra said that while garlic is botanically a vegetable, its culinary use aligns more with that of a spice. This dual role makes garlic a versatile ingredient, capable of providing both flavour and nutritional benefits. Its classification as a vegetable does not diminish its powerful role as a flavouring agent, making it a staple in kitchens worldwide.

## Butter chicken to sambar, macher jhol to vada pav, dishes with deep-rooted significance in India's Independence movement



India's journey to Independence is not only a tale of political struggle but also a story etched in the flavours and aromas of its diverse cuisine. Food, an integral part of India's cultural fabric, mirrors the nation's historical journey, regional diversity, and the spirit of unity that defines its identity. As we celebrate the 78th Independence Day, let's explore the deep connection between food and national identity through insights from Chef Yashraj Dharadar, culinary chef at Academy of Pastry and Culinary Arts (APCA) Mumbai branch, and food historian Manisha Singh, who shed light on how various dishes across India reflect the nation's evolution.

"Each region has its unique culinary traditions that represent local customs, beliefs and practices," Chef Dharadar tells indianexpress.com. Indian cuisine, with its mosaic of flavours and ingredients and dishes like biryani and chole bhature, not only transcend regional boundaries but also symbolises "unity in diversity". Singh says, "Food (in India) transcends mere sustenance, embodying regional pride, social bonds, and cherished beliefs." Culinary traditions act as a unifying force, strengthening cultural ties and national identity across diverse linguistic and cultural boundaries. North India: Chhole bhature and butter chicken as symbols of resilience and growth in the context of India's independence, North Indian cuisine reflected the region's resilience and post-independence growth. Chef Dharadar says chhole bhature is a dish that gained immense popularity after Independence. Originating in Punjab, this hearty combination of spicy chickpea curry and fried bread symbolises the region's vibrant spirit. Dharadar notes, "After Independence, as people migrated to the newly-formed country, chhole bhature became a favourite street food." It embodied cultural change and the expression of newfound freedom and solidarity.

Singh adds butter chicken to the list, saying it became synonymous with North Indian cuisine in the 50s. "In the 50s, at Delhi's Moti Mahal restaurant, a culinary accident turned leftover tandoori chicken into this iconic dish, simmered in a creamy tomato gravy enriched with butter," she explains. Its creamy, buttery tomato gravy became a metaphor for India's journey of transformation and growth, mirroring the country's rise on the global culinary stage. Independence day Vada Pav epitomises Mumbai's melting-pot nature, where people from different walks of life converge in a densely populated area (Source: Freepik) South India: Idli and sambar as catalysts for unity

Chef Dharadar explained the role of food in fostering unity during the independence movement, using Idli as a poignant example. These simple steamed rice cakes were vital during the freedom struggle, offering a convenient and nutritious meal for community gatherings and rallies. Freedom fighters and activists often gathered in homes and community centers where idlis were served, he says. The variety of chutneys and sambar made idli a versatile and interesting choice. Idli became a symbol of collective effort, embodying the common purpose necessary for achieving independence. Singh echoes this sentiment with the history of sambar, a lentil-based stew that has become a cornerstone of South Indian cuisine. Originally introduced to Thanjavur by the Marathas, sambar evolved into a dish that transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Eastern India: How macher jhol became a testament to resilience Eastern India's contribution to the culi-

nary narrative of Independence is best captured by macher jhol, says Dharadar. This simple fish curry, rooted in Bengali traditions, embodies the resilience of a region that faced many challenges — from floods to political unrest. She says, "The dish's simplicity, relying on fresh fish, mustard oil, turmeric, and a few essential spices, reflects the ability to create flavourful and nourishing meals even in the face of adversity. Machher Jhol is more than just a dish; it is a symbol of survival, adaptation, and the unwavering spirit of the people of Eastern India." Machher jhol underwent a "transformation in its preparation techniques," post Independence, according to Dharadar. The incorporation of various fish species and spices reflects both economic upliftment and changing tastes. The dish transitioned from a humble, everyday meal to a celebrated staple in both home kitchens and fine-dining restaurants, but while maintaining its traditional roots. Western India: Vada pav and puran poli become symbols of fusion and festivity The culinary evolution of Western India in the post-Independence era is vividly captured through vada pav and puran poli. Chef Dharadar describes vada pav as a symbol of cultural fusion, epitomising Mumbai's melting-pot nature. "Originally a quick lunch for textile mill workers, it has a spicy potato fritter (vada) served in buttered bread rolls (pav). This dish reflects the convergence of diverse communities in Mumbai," he explains. The combination of Portuguese-influenced bread rolls with local spices embodies the spirit of a newly-united nation embracing its multifaceted identity. Similarly, puran poli, a sweet flatbread from Maharashtra, is a symbol of abundance and prosperity, Singh says. With references dating back centuries, it involves the slow cooking of lentils and jaggery to create a rich, fragrant filling. The flatbread, made from whole wheat flour, is rolled thin, stuffed with the sweet filling, and cooked on a griddle until golden brown. Singh notes, "Its preparation during festive occasions reflects the warmth and generosity of the region, uniting families and communities in celebration."

## Expansion plans of foreign investors in Telangana shrouded in uncertainty

Hyderabad: After multinational companies like Corning International Corporation and Kaynes Semicon pulled out of Telangana and the Amara Raja Group having second thoughts on its expansion plans since the Congress government came to power in the State, doubts are now being raised about the future of other industry giants like Foxconn in Telangana. Foxconn had previously announced plans for investment of Rs 4,000 crore in Hyderabad and to create around one lakh jobs. The ground-breaking ceremony for its manufacturing unit in about 200 acres at Kongara Kalan in Rangareddy district was performed in May last year. The facility was expected to commence operations by the end of August this year. A Foxconn delegation had also met Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy after the Congress government was formed in December last year, but there has been no further update. There were reports that the firm had plans to invest an additional \$400 million USD, but there has been no news on the same so far.



