

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

2 August, 2024 | Friday | Volume No:12 | Issue No:148 | Pages: 8+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)

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## Hyderabad police rescue 524 children under Operation Muskaan –X

Hyderabad: As many as 524 children, including 43 girls, were rescued from child labour by the Hyderabad Police under 'Operation Muskaan – X' during the month of July. As part of implementing this program, Hyderabad City Police coordinated with the Labour department, Revenue Department, District Child Protection Unit and NGOs and took up joint inspections across the city. Of the rescued children, 317 children belong to Telangana and 207 children were from other States. Hyderabad police said that based on the working place, labour officers and NGOs lodged written complaints at the police stations concerned, which led to registering of 20 criminal cases against employers. Further, where criminal cases were not booked, the labour department imposed fines totaling to Rs 11.2 lakh.

## Swapnil Kusale's bronze medal in Paris Olympics 2024 'fitting gift for Central Railway': Pune divisional railway manager



GNS News Agency, August 1

Swapnil Kusale Olympics 2024 Pune Kusale hails from the Kambalwadi village of Kolhapur district. Before coming to Pune, he used to train for shooting at the Krida Prabodhini, a state government-owned sports academy. He has been training in rifle shooting since 2009. Swapnil Kusale joined the Pune Division of Indian Railways as a ticket checker in 2015. Ever since, he hasn't been able to give significant time to his duty as he has been busy training. However, on Thursday, he gave an invaluable gift to the Central Railway — an Olympic medal. Kusale, 29, won a bronze medal in the men's 50-metre rifle 3-position event at the Paris 2024 Olympics.

"We are absolutely thrilled," said Indu Rani Dubey, Divisional Railway Manager, Pune Division, where Kusale is an employee. "It's a proud moment for the country, the state and the Indian Railways. We are celebrating his historic win along with the rest of the country," she said. She said that the Pune Division will welcome Kusale in a grand way when he returns from Paris. "Since he joined, he has focussed on his game. He's a very focussed person and he has given a fitting gift to the Central Railway which allowed him to pursue his passion," said Dubey. Kusale hails from the Kambalwadi village of Kolhapur district. Before coming to Pune, he used to train for shooting at the Krida Prabodhini, a state government-owned sports academy. He has been training in rifle shooting since 2009.

His father is a retired school teacher while his mother has been a sarpanch of the village, his cousin Ujjwal Patil said. Patil himself is a qualified national shooter. "I watched the entire game and what caught my attention was how he was focusing on his breathing, it was really intense. I'm extremely happy for his win and can't wait to hear more from him in person once he's back from post-match engagements," said Patil.

## West Bengal sending delegation to flood, landslide-hit Wayanad

GNS News Agency, August 1

Kolkata: Trinamool Congress supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, on Thursday announced that West Bengal will be sending a two-member delegation to the flood and landslide-affected Wayanad in Kerala.

According to a statement issued by CM Mamata Banerjee on Thursday, Rajya Sabha MPs Saket Gokhale and Sushmita Dev will visit Wayanad. "We are greatly perturbed by the news of the Wayanad landslides in Kerala. It is really a grave disaster. On humanitarian grounds, we are sending a team of two of our MPs — Saket Gokhale and Sushmita Dev — to visit the affected areas," she said in the statement. The Rajya Sabha MPs will stay at Wayanad for two days and will extend full assistance and cooperation for the well-being of the suffering families. "I extend my condolences to the families of the victims, support and solidarity to all who are affected," her statement added. The Chief Minister's announcement comes on a day when Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha (LoP) Rahul Gandhi and Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi reached Wayanad's Chooralmala, one of the worst-hit regions by the flood and landslides.

## Three, including child, die in flooded Jaipur basement

GNS News Agency, August 1

Jaipur: Three people, including a child, died after the basement of their house was flooded due to heavy rain in the Vishwakarma Industrial area of Jaipur. The deceased were identified as Kamal (23), Pooja (19) and Poorvi (6), said local corporator Sumit Mishra. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem, ASI Narendra Kumar said on Thursday. "After a rescue operation of about five hours, all three bodies have been taken out," he added. Illegal construction is the main reason for this incident, sources said. Meanwhile, schools have declared a holiday on Thursday. District Collector Prakash Rajpurahit has visited Jaipur Airport, Malviya Nagar and Vishwakarma Industrial Area and instructed the Municipal Corporation to pump out water from the affected areas. Meteorological Director RS Sharma said that Jaipur received 155.6 mm rain, Alwar 118 mm, and Churu 124 mm. A mansion collapsed due to overnight rain in Churu.

## I consider women MLAs my sisters: Telangana CM amid opposition uproar

GNS News Agency, August 1

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Thursday said that he considers women MLAs his sisters, a day after his remarks about two BRS MLAs triggered chaos in the Assembly. Speaking in the Assembly, he lashed out at the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), saying the party is "using" sisters to play politics and stall the proceedings of the House. He was reacting to the protest by BRS MLAs who earlier staged a walk-out and held a sit-in outside his chambers in Assembly premises, demanding his apology over allegedly insulting remarks made against BRS women MLAs P. Sabitha Indra Reddy and V. Sunita Lakshma Reddy.



Denying that he made any insulting remarks, the Chief Minister said he considers them his sisters. He clarified that he only said a sister left Congress after inviting him to the party and joined BRS for a ministerial berth. "For the other sister, I campaigned and two cases registered against me are still pending in the court," he said. He appealed to Sabitha Indra

Reddy and Sunita Lakshma Reddy to not fall into the trap of BRS targeting BRS working president K. T Rama Rao, he remarked, "I will not roam around doing politics if my sister is in jail." The opposition leader went to New Delhi and entered a secret deal despite his own sister being in Tihar Jail, he said. He alleged that after Wednesday's proceedings in the House, BRS support-

ers posted memes on social media insulting Tribal Minister Seethakka. He alleged that BRS leader and former chief minister KCR is not coming to the Assembly as he does not want to sit in front of the Speaker who is a Dalit. CM Revanth Reddy said it was Congress that gave political life to KCR, and Harish Rao also became a minister because of the Congress party. "The opposition creates a ruckus in the House when they are given mikes. They stage protests before the podium when they are denied opportunity," he said. BRS leaders focused only on political gains and neglected people's issues in the House, he claimed. The BRS leaders obstructed the House from debating the farm loan waiver scheme by using women MLAs as puppets.

## Telangana Assembly witnesses chaos, BRS MLAs removed from Assembly premises



GNS News Agency, August 1

Hyderabad: The Assembly witnessed chaos and noisy scenes on Thursday with Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) members demanding Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to tender an unconditional apology for his remarks against women MLAs in the House. Since the commencement of the proceedings, the BRS members sporting black badges, raised slogans against the Chief Minister and did not occupy their seats. They remained standing in protest for nearly three hours before leaving the house around 12.45 pm. Later, as the male MLAs were protesting in front of the Chief Minister's chambers in the Assembly, they were removed from the spot by marshals and shifted from the Assembly premises. Earlier, as the BRS members continued their sloganeering, Legislative Affairs Minister D. Sridhar Babu introduced the Young India Skills University bill in the House. As the Minister was briefing about the bill, a dozen marshals arrived into the House. Appealing to Speaker G. Prasad Kumar to give the microphone to their members, the BRS MLAs approached the well. With the Speaker not relenting, they squatted at the podium and raised "Nahi Chalega nahi

chalega, tana shahi nahi chalega," and "Chief Minister down down" slogans.

Meanwhile, BJP floor leader A. Maheswar Reddy welcomed the bill presented by the government and AIMIM member Jaffer Hussain demanded the government to rename the bill as Telangana Skills University. He also wanted the bill to be sent to a select committee for their opinions and include their suggestions. Congress MLA Yennem Srinivas Reddy spoke and BJP MLA Palvai Harish demanded that only the Governor should be made the Chancellor of the University and not the Chief Minister. He also wanted an eminent industrialist to be the Chairperson of the Board. As the BRS continued their protest at the podium, AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi intervened and asked the Speaker to keep the House in order. "They have been protesting for two hours. It is their right. The Government should have courage to face them or suspend them. If not adjourn the House, call for a meeting with BRS members and resolve their issue," Owaisi said.

Interrupting, the Legislative Affairs Minister said "We do not want to suspend them and want them to participate in the debate. There are rules of the House and it is not a platform to raise slogans and protest," he said. In reply, the AIMIM members approached the podium and demanded the Speaker to offer the mike to BRS members. CPI MLA K. Sambasiva Rao also sympathized with BRS women MLAs and wanted the Speaker to adjourn the House and hold a meeting with BRS members. BJP floor leader A. Maheswar Reddy intervened and found fault with the BRS members for disruption. "Yesterday also due to your (BRS) behavior, we lost the opportunity to speak on the Appropriation Bill," he said. Responding to his remarks, the BRS said the unholy nexus between Congress and BJP was exposed. They raised "Kya Hua bhai kya Hua, Bade Bhai aur Chota Bhai milgaya..."

## Himachal Pradesh rain fury: 5 killed, 50 missing - The Tribune

Chandigarh, GNS News Agency, August 1

Five persons were killed and about 50 missing following several incidents of cloudburst in Himachal Pradesh where rains washed away many houses, bridges and roads, officials said on Thursday. The state emergency operation centre said the cloudbursts took place in the Nirmand, Sainj and Malana areas in Kullu, Padhar in Mandi and Rampur in Shimla districts. The local meteorological office has issued a "red alert" of heavy to extremely heavy rains along with thunderstorms and lightning at isolated places in three districts of Kangra, Kullu and Mandi on Thursday. A cloudburst near Shrikhand Mahadev on Wednesday night triggered flash floods in Sarpara, Ganvi and Kurban nallahs, and as a result, the water in Samej Khud (nallah) in the Rampur subdivision of the Shimla district rose leaving two people dead and about 30 missing, said Shimla SP Sanjeev Kumar Gandhi.

Four persons have been rescued from the spot. The rescue operation is challenging as roads have been washed away, Shimla DC Anupam Kashyap said. The Shimla DC and SP, who were on the spot, said that teams of the Army, NDRF, ITBP, SDRF, police and home guards have started rescue operations and the help of drones is being taken to locate the missing persons. Another cloudburst in the Rajban village near Terang in the Padhar subdivision of the Mandi district on Wednesday night left three persons dead and seven missing. Two houses were washed away while another was damaged, officials said.



Bodies of Chandhi Devi (75), Chaitri Devi (90) and Baijru Ram (80) have been recovered and an injured person (25-year-old Ram Singh) has been rescued in serious condition, the officials added.

A cloudburst also occurred in the Kullu district, leaving seven persons missing.

"Seven persons are missing and about eight to nine houses have been washed away in the Bhagipur area of Nirmand block in Kullu district and CISF and special Home Guard (quick response team) have been deputed for search operation to locate the missing persons," said Kullu DC Torul S. Raveesh.

## Actor Rajasekhara cites his displeasure over GHMC's negligence

Hyderabad: Actor Rajasekhara has expressed his displeasure over the negligence of the GHMC regarding a drainage leak near Ashwini Heights, Road No. 70, Jubilee Hills.

Taking to his Twitter handle, Rajasekhara posted that despite repeated complaints, the GHMC authorities have not taken any initiative to address the issue. He has tagged GHMC Chairperson, the GHMC official account, and City Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, requesting them to look into the matter and take necessary action.

## World Athletics grants 'Basic' level recognition to Hyderabad Marathon



GNS News Agency, August 1

Hyderabad: World Athletics, formerly called as International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), has formally labelled the 13th edition of Hyderabad Marathon as World Athletics 'Basic' level, according to a press release here on Thursday.

World Athletics is the international governing body for the sport of athletics covering track and field events. The body is involved in standardization of rules and regulations for the sports, certification of athletic facilities, recognition and management of world records etc. Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy congratulated Hyderabad Runners Society (HRS) for getting Hyderabad city on the World Athletics calendar through Hyderabad Marathon by getting World Athletics Label. He assured to support the event enabling it to meet all the necessary criteria of World Athletics. Race Director of the current edition of the marathon, Rajesh Vetcha said in the years to come, Hyderabad would produce some of the finest athletes in the country in both amateur and elite categories. As the second marathon in India to receive this label, this affiliation puts Hyderabad on the world map of the international sporting calendar, boosting our city's standing globally. Only 220 marathons have a label from World Athletics. HRS president Abhijit said the society was looking forward to host runners from all over the world who will participate in the marathon. The Hyderabad Marathon is organized in association with NMDC and powered by IDFC First Bank.

## Rahul Gandhi meets Wayanad landslide victims: How I felt when my father died



GNS News Agency, August 1

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi said it was painful to see people who have lost family members and homes in the massive landslides that hit Wayanad and termed it a national disaster. He was visiting the landslide-hit Chooralmala area of Wayanad along with his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Thursday. Rahul Gandhi, along with party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, visited the landslide site in Kerala's Wayanad.

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, along with party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, visited the landslide site at Chooralmala in Kerala's Wayanad. The Congress leaders took stock of the situation in the area and met the affected people. Speaking to the media after meeting people in Wayanad, Rahul Gandhi said, "It is a terrible tragedy for Wayanad, for Kerala and the nation. We have come here to see the situation. It is painful to see how many people have lost family members and their homes. We will try to help and make sure that the survivors get what is their due. A lot of them want to be relocated. There is a lot that needs to be done here. I would like to thank all those including doctors, nurses, administration and volunteers." "Today, I feel how I felt when my father died. Here people have not just lost a father but an entire family. We all owe these people respect and affection. The whole nation's attention is towards Wayanad," he added.

As many as 256 people have died so far after three landslides struck Wayanad on Tuesday, following heavy rain. Mundakkai, Chooralmala, Attamala, and Noolpuzha villages in the Kerala district were the worst affected due to the landslides.

Over 200 people are also injured in the landslides. The Army has rescued around 1,000 people and 220 people are still missing, as rescue operations entered the third day on Thursday. A Command and Control Centre has been set up in Kozhikode by the Army for coordinating Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts, PTI reported. Kerala Health Minister Veena George said, "At least 1,500 Army personnel have been deployed for the rescue operation. We have deployed forensic surgeons."

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Wayanad calamity

A massive rescue operation is in progress in Kerala's Wayanad district, which has been ravaged by a series of landslides triggered by heavy rain. The death toll has crossed 150, even as the immediate priority is to evacuate and rehabilitate as many people as possible. Though it is being conveniently described as a natural calamity, the impact of factors such as climate change, an eco-sensitive terrain and the loss of forest cover cannot be discounted.

As per the landslide atlas released by the Indian Space Research Organisation's National Remote Sensing Centre last year, 10 out of the 30 most landslide-prone districts in India are in Kerala, with Wayanad ranked 13th. According to a 2021 study, all landslide hotspots in Kerala are in the Western Ghats region, concentrated in Idukki, Ernakulam, Kottayam, Wayanad, Kozhikode and Malappuram districts. Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and former Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi has asked the Central Government to prepare an action plan to address the growing frequency of natural disasters in the ecologically fragile region of the Western Ghats. No less important is the need to assess the preparedness of various states and work out ways to make them better equipped to handle such catastrophes. The loss of lives and property can be minimised through an efficient early warning system, which doesn't seem to have happened in Kerala's case.

India's approach to disaster management has improved from reactive to proactive as well as pre-emptive in recent years, but there are still some gaps to be plugged. A major stumbling block is the unwillingness of state governments, industries and local communities to pay heed to experts' warnings about the ramifications of infrastructure development and promotion of tourism in ecologically sensitive zones.

## Karnataka to provide free CET, NEET coaching for 25,000 students from this year



GNS News Agency, August 1

Karnataka CET NEET coaching, free coaching Karnataka, CET NEET preparation, Deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar is working on a big project focusing on developing model schools in each panchayat on the lines of PPP (public private partnership) model. From this academic year, Karnataka will provide free coaching to 25,000 pre-university science students from government colleges who are aspiring to crack National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) and Common Entrance Test (CET). State School Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa, who made the announcement on Wednesday, said the government will provide free coaching for other competitive exams as well and has allocated Rs 12.5 crore for it.

He said the initiative will benefit students from rural backgrounds who are often devoid of such opportunities unlike the candidates from the urban setup. Tenders will be invited soon to rope in a coaching institute to train the students, he told reporters. Bangarappa said, "Out of the 80,000 PUC science students we will be shortlisting 25,000 students who will be selected through an entrance exam. They will be given coaching by qualified trainers from a coaching institute for CET, NEET and other competitive exams. The coaching will be provided to both first and second PUC students". The Education Minister also pointed to the fact that around 6,400 government schools in Karnataka have a strength of less than 10 students. He said that Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar is working on a big project focusing on developing model schools in each panchayat on the lines of PPP (public private partnership) model. "This way we can attract many schools with less than 10 students to the model schools where they will be imparted quality education," Bangarappa said. He expressed concern over parents' unwillingness to send their children to government schools and children being engaged in field work and other menial jobs at a very young age. "I understand that there are issues pertaining to infrastructure and teachers' availability in government schools. The department is making constant efforts to address the issues. I appeal to the parents to send their children to schools and not engage them in work at an early stage," he said. Reducing the weight of school bags Bangarappa also said that his department is working on reducing the weight of school bags by introducing single notebooks for multiple subjects or note sheets instead of notebooks. Face-recognition attendance In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the minister said that the education department will soon begin trials for marking students' attendance through a face-recognition system. The system will be linked to SATS (Students Achievement Tracking System), which monitors the performance of students.

## Police get 3,000 calls of traffic logjam

GNS News Agency, August 1

According to senior officers, adequate traffic inspectors and circle officers were deployed to address each issue depending on the severity of the incident. According to senior officers, adequate traffic inspectors and circle officers were deployed to address each issue depending on the severity of the incident.

The Delhi Police on Wednesday received nearly 3,000 calls of traffic logjam caused by heavy rain-triggered waterlogging in the national capital, according to data.

## After Delhi coaching centre deaths, MCD plans survey of all basements, warns officials of strict action



GNS News Agency, August 1

Days after three UPSC aspirants drowned in the flooded basement of a coaching centre in Old Rajender Nagar, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Thursday announced measures including a survey of all buildings with basements and desilting of storm-water drains. As the flooding of the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle, which was caused by a choked sewer line and storm-water drainage system, has highlighted critical infrastructure issues in Delhi and triggered outrage and protests, the corporation said in a circular, "It is the primary responsibility of MCD to provide a safe and liveable city to the public."

In the circular, the corporation has outlined several measures, including a survey of all buildings with basements, immediate action against those misusing base-

ments, removal of encroachments over drains and foot-paths, full desilting of storm-water drains, deployment of portable pumps and operators to remove water from vulnerable waterlogging points.

The corporation also said that a separate entry and exit gate would be mandated for basements and that to facilitate the detection of violators, building plans would now be made public. Surveys would also be conducted to identify open wires and cables and discoms would be roped in for necessary work. Private waste management contractors would be instructed to ensure the quick removal of garbage, particularly during the rainy season.

"In some of the zones, there are old barrels catering to combined drainage, i.e., sewer and storm water. These barrels should be surveyed to avoid any untoward incident on account of settlement," the civic body said, adding that urinals in poor condition would be upgraded. The corporation has also warned that strict disciplinary action will be taken against officials who fail to adhere to the directives. "The above directions be scrupulously adhered to and strict disciplinary action will be taken against the delinquent officials," the circular stated. Ashwini Kumar, Commissioner, MCD, met a delegation of students on July 28 and Delhi Education Minister Atishi and Mayor Shelly Oberoi met students on Monday to address their concerns in the aftermath of the July 27 tragedy. The Delhi High Court has pulled up the corporation over the lapses that led to the three deaths at Rau's IAS Study Circle.

## Delhi court rejects trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar's anticipatory bail plea

GNS News Agency, August 1

Puja Khedkar IAS Pune UPSC Khedkar, 32, who joined Pune Collectorate as part of her probationary training in June 2024, is facing allegations of misusing the Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Persons With Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD) quotas to clear the UPSC Civil Services Examination. A Delhi court on Thursday dismissed the anticipatory bail plea of trainee Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Puja Khedkar who has been accused of fraudulently clearing the Civil Services Examination held by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). The court action comes a day after UPSC, which conducts the premier exam, cancelled Puja Khedkar's candidature in CSE 2022 and also barred her from appearing for any future exams held by it.

The court said on Thursday the Delhi Police should investigate if anyone from UPSC helped Khedkar. The court also directed UPSC to find details about other candidates who availed of benefits of OBC quota without belonging to the non-creamy layer and of those candidates who fraudulently availed of quota for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities. The Delhi Police, which has lodged the case against Khedkar on a complaint filed by UPSC, and the Commission argued on Wednesday that



her custodial interrogation was needed as the matter had to be investigated seriously as the trainee IAS officer had "breached the integrity of the system." UPSC has accused Puja Khedkar of "fraudulently availing attempts beyond the permissible limit under the Examination Rules by faking her identity by way of changing her name, her father's & mother's name, her photograph/ signature, her email ID, mobile number and address." On her part, Khedkar alleged before Additional Sessions Judge Devender Kumar Jangala that the case was lodged against her because she filed a sexual harassment complaint against the Pune collector.

## 'Neha Hiremath murder case to be heard by fast track court only if required,' says K'taka Home Minister Parameshwara



GNS News Agency, August 1

Congress councillor daughter murdered, Hubballi college student murder On April 18, Neha, 21, was stabbed to death allegedly by her former classmate, Fayaz Khodunaik on the campus of KLE Technological University in Hubballi Dharwad, where she was a first-year MCA student. Days after the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) filed a 483-page chargesheet in the murder of MCA student Neha Hiremath, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Wednesday said the case will be heard in a fast-track court if required.

Speaking to media persons in Hubballi, Parameshwara, however, claimed there was no need to

take such a decision just yet. He further said, "It is not the state government that decides whether a case needs to be assigned to a fast-track court or not. The police are there to decide that. The judicial setup has the power to decide if it wants to hold a speedy trial in such cases."

Reacting to the home minister's statement, Neha Hiremath's father Niranjani Hiremath, Corporator, Hubballi Dharwad Municipal Corporation (HDMC), expressed his disappointment. "The chief minister, home minister, and several cabinet ministers had promised that a fast-track court would hear the case but the home minister is breaking his promise now. It seems some force is influencing this decision," he alleged.

On April 18, Neha Hiremath, 23, was allegedly stabbed to death by Fayaz Khondunaik, her former classmate, outside KLE Technological University. She was a first-year MCA student. The case, initially registered at Vidyanagar police station, took a political turn after the BJP alleged it was a case of 'Love Jihad'. Later, the case was handed over to the CID. Neha Hiremath's father Niranjani Hiremath, a Congress corporator, had also alleged that it was a case of 'Love Jihad', but the CID has ruled out such an angle. The murder on the campus provided ammunition to the Opposition BJP to corner the ruling Congress in Karnataka ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, raising allegations of deterioration in the law and order situation, 'Love Jihad', and minority appeasement.

## Bengaluru 'dog meat' row: Police register FIR against former BJP MP Pratap Simha



GNS News Agency, August 1

The Bengaluru police on Thursday registered a case against former BJP MP Pratap Simha and others for allegedly obstructing police duty while protesting in front of a local police station. The protest was a fallout of an allegation over 'dog meat' allegedly being sold in Bengaluru as sheep meat. Simha, BJP MLA Harish Poonja, and several others had protested in front of the Basaveshwara Nagar police station on Wednesday alleging that self-proclaimed Hindutva activist Kerehalli was tor-

tured in police custody.

Kerehalli, an accused in a murder case, was arrested after he created a ruckus at Bengaluru city railway station on July 26 saying that he had intercepted cartons containing dog meat that was to be sold as sheep meat in the city. The consignment belonged to Abdul Razaak, a trader who sourced the meat from Rajasthan. Following the allegations, the Karnataka health department had collected the 84 parcels and the meat was sent to the ICAR-National Meat Research Institute in Hyderabad. Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao on Wednesday said that the test results had concluded it was sheep meat and urged people to refrain from spreading rumours. Following recent media reports alleging the transportation of mutton and other animal meat from Rajasthan to Bengaluru via train, we committed to thoroughly investigating this matter through scientific verification. To ensure accuracy, we sent a total of 84 parcels to the... pic.twitter.com/NzWsaQzJS0 Though Kerehalli was released on bail on Wednesday, he claimed that he was stripped naked and tortured by the police. Levelling allegations against Chandan Kumar, Assistant Commissioner Of Police, Vijayanagar, Simha said, "

## IMD issues orange alert for 5 districts in Punjab and 2 in Haryana



GNS News Agency, August 1

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Thursday issued an orange alert for heavy to very heavy rain for five districts in Punjab and two districts in Haryana in anticipation of the severe weather. In Punjab, the alert is in effect for Moga, Ferozpur, Ferozepur Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib, Bathinda, and parts of Tarn Taran districts. In Haryana, the orange alert applies to Sirsa and Fatehabad. Alongside the orange alert, IMD issued a yellow alert for the remaining areas of Punjab, excluding parts of Patiala and Rupnagar districts. IMD also forecast very heavy rain at isolated locations in Punjab and Haryana on August 2, with heavy rain expected in both states at isolated places on August 3. IMD forecast for Punjab and Haryana

In Punjab, thunderstorms with lightning and moderate rain are likely over areas including Mansa, Tapa, Talwandi Sabo, Abohar, Malout, Bathinda, Gidderbaha, Fazilka, Rampura Phul, Jaitu, Muktsar, Jalalabad, Bagha Purana, Ferozpur, Moga, Firozpur, Zira, Shahkot, Patti, Sultanpur Lodhi, Tarn Taran, and Nihal Singhwala. Light rain is expected in Sardulgarh, Budhlada, Lehra, Mansa, Sunam, Sangrur, Barnala, Dhuri, Malerkotla, Moonak, Patran, Samana, Nabha, Amloh, Khanna, Payal, Khamanon, Ludhiana East, Chamkaur Sahib, Samrala, Ludhiana West, Phillaur, Nakodar, Phagwara, Jalandhar I, Kapurthala, Jalandhar II, Balachaur, Nawanshahr, Anandpur Sahib, Garhshankar, Nangal, Hoshiarpur, Baba Bakala, Amritsar II, Amritsar I, Batala, Ajnala, Dera Baba Nanak, Bhulath, Dasua, Mukerian, Gurdaspur, and Pathankot. In Haryana, thunderstorms with lightning and moderate rain are expected over Ellenabad, Rania, Sirsa, and Dabwali. Light rain is likely in Badhna, Loharu, Bhiwani, Tosham, Siwani, Bawani Khera, Hansi, Hisar, Adampur, Narnaund, Nathusari Chopta, Ellenabad, Fatehabad, Narwana, Sirsa, Tohana, and Ratia.

## How phone number tattooed on Mumbai woman's body helped police identify her



GNS News Agency, August 1

Laxmibai Gadiwadar earned a living by cleaning drains in Mumbai. As she was illiterate, she found it difficult to remember her contractor's phone number to check if she had been assigned any work for the day. So she got his mobile number tattooed on her hand - it was this tattoo that helped the Kurla railway police identify her body in 2015. On December 13, 2015, the police received a call about a partly decomposed body of an unidentified woman being found near an unused railway track at Kurla railway station. There were no obvious clues to her identity and she would have turned up as yet another 'unidentified body' in the morgue. But on closer inspection, the police said they found a phone number tattooed on the woman's right forearm.

When the Kurla railway police called this number, it was the woman's employer who answered. Through him, the police said they learnt that the body was that of Gadiwadar, who hailed from Kurla West. She had been reported missing at the Vinoba Bhave Nagar police station in Kurla on December 13, 2015.

Further investigation revealed that Gadiwadar cleaned drains all over Mumbai's central and eastern suburbs. As she found it difficult to recall her contractor's phone number daily, she came up with a solution - in 2013, she got his mobile number tattooed on her hand. According to the police, she could then ask strangers to dial the number on her hand or go to a public booth and ask the operator to dial the number. Though Gadiwadar's identity was traced, the police failed to get any clues on what caused her death. According to the police, her family said that on December 12, she brought home Rs 300 and left home the next day at 9 am. They also had no idea what she was doing at Kurla railway station.

## Elderly woman killed in brutal dog attack; Stray dogs eat parts of body in Sircilla

GNS News Agency, August 1

Rajanna Sircilla: An elderly woman Pitla Rajalakshmi (75) died in a brutal attack by stray dogs in Sevalal thanda of Mustabad mandal later on Wednesday night. The dogs were found to have eaten parts of her body.

According to villagers, Rajalakshmi was living alone in her home, which reportedly had no doors. As she was sleeping, the dogs entered the house and attacked her. Her head and abdomen were found to have been eaten by the dogs, when her sons reached home in the morning on Thursday.

## Is the water you are drinking in these rainy days safe?



GNS News Agency, August 1

The rainy season brings with it a heightened risk of waterborne, vector-borne, and respiratory diseases due to increased water stagnation, humidity, and changes in living conditions. To prevent and control these diseases, Dr Harshal Pandve, Secretary, Indian Association of Preventive and Social Medicine (IAPSM), Maharashtra has recommended a multi-faceted approach that begins with safe drinking water. The expert who is Professor and Head of Department of Community Medicine, PGI and YCM hospital, Pimpri-Pune has listed several do's and don'ts along with steps that citizens should take to ensure safe drinking water. Water Safety: Ensure safe drinking water by boiling or use water purifiers, disinfectant, as contaminated water is a primary source of infections like cholera, typhoid. Boil water for at least one minute to kill bacteria, viruses and parasites. At higher altitudes boil water for at least three minutes. Use water purifiers as a certified one can remove contaminant and heavy metals. Adding chlorine tablets to water following instructions on the packaging can effectively disinfect water. Store boiled or purified water in clean covered containers with narrow openings

so as to prevent contamination," urges Dr Pandve.

He also cautioned that in case the water safety alert was severe then it was preferable to use bottled water from a reliable source for cooking and drinking. "Please check updates from the civic body about water safety and ensure that hands are thoroughly washed with soap and clean water before handling food," he added. The expert also advised to immediately report changes in water colour, taste or smell to the local body. Avoid cooking food with unfiltered or untreated water especially during a water safety alert, Dr Pandve said. He also urged citizens to refrain from swimming in lakes, rivers or any water bodies if there is a contamination alert. Reliable water filters should be installed at home and children should be educated on the importance of safe drinking water and hygiene practices. Vector Control: The rainy season is a peak time for mosquito breeding, leading to the spread of diseases like dengue, malaria, and chikungunya. It is essential to eliminate stagnant water sources, use mosquito nets, and apply repellents. Community involvement in keeping neighborhoods clean and free of standing water is vital. Hygiene Practices: Personal hygiene cannot be overemphasized. Regular handwashing with soap, especially before eating and after using the toilet can prevent the spread of gastrointestinal diseases. Proper food hygiene is also critical to avoid foodborne illnesses. Avoiding outside, especially street food, is very important for prevention. Eat healthy homemade freshly prepared food. Public Awareness and Education: Public health campaigns should focus on educating communities about the symptoms, transmission, and preventive measures of common monsoon diseases. This awareness is key to early detection and prompt treatment. Seeking timely and appropriate medical advice reduces the chances of any further complications.

## As Siddaramaiah faces legal challenges over MUDA land allotment, Cabinet likely to rally around him



GNS News Agency, August 1

With Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah facing the prospect of a case being filed against him over an alleged scam in the allotment of 14 housing sites in Mysuru to his wife in exchange for land taken over by the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA), the Congress cabinet is expected to rally support for him

A cabinet meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday morning where the measures to counter the MUDA scam charges are expected to be drawn up. Siddaramaiah held a breakfast meeting with his close supporters in the cabinet on Thursday, following his arrival from Delhi after meeting the All India Congress Committee (AICC) leadership. Rapid developments are taking place in the Congress government in Karnataka on account of Governor Thawarchand Gehlot seeking more information on the MUDA scam after anti-corruption activist T J Abraham approached him for sanction to file a complaint seeking an investigation against Siddaramaiah in the MUDA land deal.

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said Thursday that the government had received a notice from the governor's office for more information on the MUDA allegations. He said the MUDA issue will be discussed in the cabinet meeting scheduled at noon. Another Congress minister Priyank Kharge indicated that the government will face the challenges legally. The Congress central leadership is expected to depute its two key general secretaries – K C Venugopal and Randeep Surjewala – to Bengaluru on the weekend to supervise the developing crisis in the Karnataka Congress government.

On Wednesday, Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar returned from a visit to meet the AICC leadership in Delhi. "The high command has informed us that even though we have done no wrong, efforts are being made to make it seem like some wrongdoing has occurred. They have instructed us to speak out for the government," Siddaramaiah said. "We have discussed the way we should react during the BJP protests and will do accordingly. BJP's conspiracy to destabilise the state government will not succeed. They will not achieve success in this," Siddaramaiah added. Siddaramaiah said the Congress leadership had been convinced that there was no government role in a Rs 89.73 crore fund scam in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Limited and that the BJP was using the fraud to label the Congress as being anti-tribes. He also said the MUDA allotment of 14 housing sites to his wife was legal. Land deals have been the bugbears of chief ministers in Karnataka for over four decades. Conflicts of interest involved in land acquisition, either personally or by family members, have dogged Karnataka chief ministers when they have been in power – from Ramakrishna Hegde in the 1980s to Siddaramaiah at present. The insinuation of corruption in land deals has rarely led to the exit of a chief minister, other than B S Yediyurappa in 2011. Yediyurappa was forced to quit after the then Karnataka governor Hans Raj Bhadravaj granted sanction to an advocate Sirajin Bhasha to file a corruption complaint against the BJP chief minister over

a land deal involving Yediyurappa's sons where the office of the CM was allegedly misused for the private profit of his family. In the current instance, Karnataka's second-time Congress chief minister Siddaramaiah is under siege from the Opposition BJP and JDS on two fronts – one on account of a land deal involving his family and the second due to the apparent theft of Rs 89.73 crore from a state development corporation chartered to the welfare of Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka.

Both controversies have direct linkages to the chief minister, with the land deal involving his wife, and the ST corporation fund fraud beginning with the transfer of funds from the state treasury, which falls under the purview of the finance department and the CM. In the land deal, Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi has been offered 14 prime housing sites spread over 38,284 sq feet in Mysuru city, valued at over Rs 30 crore, in exchange for a 3.16 acre property located outside Mysuru that was allegedly taken over wrongly by civic authorities. Over the last few weeks, Siddaramaiah has been firefighting allegations of wrongdoing on multiple fronts.

"My land allotment case is not a scandal. Our land was illegally taken away by MUDA. We have not sought land under the 50:50 scheme. You must understand the difference between land acquired legally and illegally taken over by MUDA. They have illegally taken over the land and given alternate sites as compensation," Siddaramaiah has said in his defence of the land deal. "The finance department has no role in this scam. All fund releases from the treasury will not come to my notice. It is the authorities who carry out the release of funds. It does not come to my notice and I do not sign on it," the CM said, distancing himself from the ST fund fraud. Past land controversies of Karnataka CMs

Karnataka's chief ministers and top political leaders have a history of encountering allegations of corruption and nepotism about land deals in top cities like Bengaluru and Mysuru. In 2011, B S Yediyurappa was forced to quit as chief minister after a Lokayukta report, among other things, alleged that he and his sons sold one acre of government land near Bengaluru to JSW Steel for Rs 20 crore. One of Yediyurappa's sons was accused of illegally acquiring the land by misusing the CM's office. The case was prosecuted by the CBI and Yediyurappa and his sons were acquitted of wrongdoing. An allegation of illegal acquisition of nearly 40 acres of government land in the Bidadi area on the outskirts of Bengaluru still haunts former Karnataka chief minister and current Union minister H D Kumaraswamy despite frequent assertions that the land on which a farmhouse has been built was partly gifted by an aunt before he entered politics.

Kumaraswamy's father, former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, who is also a former Karnataka CM, is often accused by the Congress and BJP of distributing as many as 32 housing sites for friends and family in Mysore in 1984 when he was a minister in the Ramakrishna Hegde government. This accusation resurfaced during the current controversy surrounding Siddaramaiah. Past Congress chief ministers Dharam Singh and S M Krishna were also accused of doling out housing sites in Bengaluru for friends and family. In the 1980s, Hegde, who carried the image of Mr Clean, was embroiled in the Revajeetu scandal where his family was accused of acquiring a prime property in Bengaluru through a private real estate firm called Revajeetu Builders. Hegde was also linked to the Madhuvana scam where 67 acres in Mysuru were acquired by a private firm by bending the law and were later sold to a private liquor firm which was widely believed to be a key financier of politicians at the time, and an NRI scam for allotment of 110 acres in Bengaluru where a firm linked to the CM's family was roped in for land development.

## 'Police summons mustn't be half-baked, should have relevant details of alleged crime'

GNS News Agency, August 1

The Karnataka High Court has observed that summons issued by the police should include all relevant details of the alleged crime, while also providing interim guidelines to apply in the case of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). These observations were made by a bench consisting of Justice M Nagaprasanna in an order on July 19. In this case, a senior journalist had been issued a notice to appear by the police via WhatsApp, which purported to be under Section 41(1) (a) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), but not referring to a specific crime or filing of the First Information Report (FIR).

His counsel had argued that this section could not be invoked for notice in the absence of a registered crime. Later, a second notice was issued with a crime number attached. The counsel for the state argued that in the first notice, this had been inadvertently left out. The bench observed, "The information to the citizen cannot be half baked; it must be in full. The notice must contain the crime number and the purpose for which he is being summoned. While it can be transmitted electronically, no fault can be found with that, but it should mention the crime number. The duty of the Station House Officer would not stop at mentioning crime number, but he should also attach to the communication, a copy of the FIR, so registered against the noticee, as power is available to summon the accused or any person in connection with a crime."

Looking into how such matters would be applied under the new BNSS, the court said, "It, thus, becomes mandatory for a notice to be issued under Section 35 of



the BNSS to mention the crime number, the offence alleged in the crime so registered and necessarily append to it a copy of the FIR so registered, as any person who receives the notice must be aware for what he is being summoned to the Police Station."

The bench further added that the state would have to come up with guidelines in case of police officers summoning any person. Till such guidelines were assembled, the bench stated that communications would have to include crime number and alleged offence, a copy of the FIR, along with a "search friendly" system for uploading FIRs. The court added that in the absence of crime number, offence, and FIR copy, the person to whom the notice was sent would not have to appear, and no coercive action could be taken against them. The court accepted the second notice sent to the journalist, to be executed in line with the observations made by the court.

## '...power has gone into his head?': SC questions Kejriwal aide Bibhav Kumar's conduct in Swati Maliwal 'assault' case

GNS News Agency, August 1

The Supreme Court on Thursday came down heavily on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar, who has been accused of physically assaulting AAP Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal at the former's official residence, asking "what he thinks" of himself and whether "power has gone into his head". Issuing notice on his bail plea, a bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan said the fact that Maliwal had called the emergency number "immediately after the incident...belies" Kumar's "story that she subsequently concocted the allegations". "What he thinks...the power has gone into his head?... We are shocked... She is in a particular physical condition at that time. She is crying that I am in such and such physical condition... We don't want to read in the open court... she tells him that please stop because of this physical condition and this man continues," said Justice Kant, asking if Kumar did not "feel ashamed of doing it to a young woman?" Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi said these were the allegations in the First Information Report (FIR) which was registered three days later and that they were a matter of trial. "This is a matter of trial... FIR is a version of a person who makes it three days later with a friendly police under a friendly Lieutenant Governor. My complaint on the same day is not registered," said Singhvi. But the court was not impressed. "These are all your internal political affairs. We are only examining the law and the criminal allegations," added Justice Kant. Justice Datta asked Singhvi if Kumar was secretary to the chief minister or ex-secretary to the chief minister on May 13, 2024, the date of the alleged incident. Singhvi said that he was the political secretary, mostly handling appointments and rendering some political advice. Justice Kant said, "You are not a political secretary, you are a government official, probably...". Singhvi submitted that Kumar has a case going on in the Central Administrative Tribunal and is currently out of service. He, however, reiterated that Kumar was political secretary to Kejriwal. Justice Datta pointed out from documents that he was an ex-private secretary to the chief minister and asked, "If you are an



ex-private secretary, then what authority you have per se in the chief minister's residence?" As Singhvi sought to defend Kumar, Justice Kant said, "You are saying as if some goon has gone inside the house, and you want to protect...". Singhvi cited the Medico Legal Case (MLC) report and said it states there were "only two injuries, one to the right cheek and one to the thigh" and that they were "simple and non-dangerous" which is "totally contrary to her allegation". The "FIR is lodged on May 16, and the story, which is put up with FIR, according to me is very strange... that I (Maliwal) was so traumatised that I took three days...". He added, "She went the first day to the police station. She did not lodge an FIR in the police station, came back and after three days" lodged the FIR. Justice Surya Kant pointed out that "she also called 112". He added, "The point is if she called up immediately after the incident, the emergency call, it showed what?... That belies your story that she subsequently concocted the allegations." Singhvi said that Maliwal "came to this house". "Nobody went to her house. She waited in the waiting room," he added. Justice Kant asked if he was trying to say that the chief minister's official residence was a private residence. "...is it a private residence?... The chief minister's official bungalow is a private residence?" Singhvi said he had been denied bail on the ground that he could tamper with evidence and wondered how he could do that but Justice Kant countered, "If this kind of person can't influence witnesses,

GNS News Agency, August 1

New Delhi: Malware attacks in India increased by 11 percent and ransomware cyber attacks rose by 22 percent in 2024, according to a report by SonicWall said. Malware attacks grew to 13,44,566 in 2024 from 12,13,528 in 2023, as noted in the 2024 SonicWall Mid-Year Cyber Threat Report. Attacks on the Internet of Things (IoT) jumped by 59 percent, reaching 16,80,787 in 2024 from 10,57,320 in 2023. The report also highlighted a 22 percent increase in ransomware attacks and a significant 409 percent rise in crypto attacks. "Organizations to-

day confront a dynamic threat landscape where threat actors continually innovate to outpace enterprise defenses," SonicWall Vice President, APJ Sales Debasish Mukherjee said. At least 12.6 per cent of an organization's annual revenues were at risk to cyber threats as businesses endured on average 1,104 hours of critical attacks during a span of 880 working hours, the report said. Cyber security measures protected businesses from a potential of 46 days of downtime. The report stated that a total of 78,923 never-before-seen malware variants were identified in the first five months of 2024. "

## Delhi saw more than half of its monthly rainfall on Wednesday; yellow alert for today



GNS News Agency, August 1

The downpour brought the minimum temperature on Thursday to 24.3 degree Celsius, three notches below normal and the lowest recorded in two months. The second lowest was 24.6 degree Celsius on June 6. The downpour brought the minimum temperature on Thursday to 24.3 degree Celsius, three notches below normal and the lowest recorded in two months. The second lowest was 24.6 degree Celsius on June 6. A day after the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a red alert in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) following the heavy rain during which at least five people died amid reports of waterlogging, and traffic snarls on Wednesday evening, the weather bureau declared a yellow warning (be aware) on Thursday.

The downpour brought the minimum temperature on Thursday to 24.3 degree Celsius, three notches below normal and the lowest recorded in two months. The second lowest was 24.6 degree Celsius on June 6. While

203.7 mm of monthly rainfall was recorded in Delhi until Wednesday, the Capital received more than half of this amount at 107.6 mm in Safdarjung station, which is representative of the city, in 24 hours from 8.30 am on Wednesday. IMD's 24-hour cumulative rainfall data till 8.30 am Thursday shows Safdarjung logged 107.6 mm, Lodhi Road 106 mm, Ridge 113 mm, Ayanagar 71.4 mm, Palam 68.3 mm, Pusa AWS 86 mm, Mayur Vihar AWS 147.5 mm, Delhi University AWS 104.5 mm, Pitampura AWS 45.5 mm, and Najafgarh AWS 113 mm. Most of the rainfall took place after a dry day from 5.30 pm to 11.30 pm but light to moderate spells of rainfall also lasted till 2.30 am on Thursday. Earlier, an orange alert (be prepared) was issued for Thursday but it was changed to a yellow (be aware) warning until Friday, after which there is no warning according to IMD's seven-day forecast.

The water level in the Yamuna remains below the warning level. At 8 am on Thursday, the Old Railway Bridge recorded the water level as 202.24 metre, as per data from the Central Water Commission's flood forecasting station. The warning mark is at 204.5 metre, while the danger level is at 205.33 metre. Last year, the water level reached 208.66 metre, which is the highest level ever recorded since 1978, and resulted in the worst-ever floods in 45 years. A generally cloudy sky with light to moderate rain and thundershowers is predicted on Thursday by IMD. Over the week, the maximum temperature and minimum temperature are predicted to fall below normal at 34 degrees Celsius and 26 degrees Celsius respectively. Meanwhile, the Delhi Police received 127 calls about waterlogging, 2,945 for traffic jams, and 50 about tree falling as well as 27 calls for building collapse from Wednesday till 7 am on Thursday.

## In Wayanad's Chooralmala, 2 men desperately search for family: 'Hope to find at least their bodies'

GNS News Agency, August 1

"My blood lies beneath those boulders," says 68-year-old Sivanandan, pointing at large rocks on what is now a flattened ground at Wayanad's Chooralmala village. Some distance away, an earthmover and some rescue workers are trying to clear away the boulders and layers of mud. For the last two days, Sivanandan and his brother Sivan have been desperately looking for six relatives — their mother, two younger brothers, and their families, all living at the village that has now been flattened by the landslide that struck here earlier this week. Chooralmala is one of the two-worst affected villages — the other being the epicentre Mundakkai.

While both Sivanandan and Sivan know the chances of finding their family alive are slim, they want to get back their bodies. "They are my blood. Only one body, that of the younger brother's son, could be retrieved," Sivanandan says now. After waiting at Wayanad's Meppadi government hospital for two days, the brothers went to the location on Thursday to search, taking with them wood cutters and friends who could help clear away layers of the rubble. But so far, their searches have not yielded much. Chooralmala has turned into a land of rubble and boulders, with mud going many layers deep, and getting to them would be a task.

"I checked all the bodies (that had come in) at the hospital for the last two days. My family members are still



missing. I want to search their houses that are covered under debris. I hope to find at least their bodies," he says. At his pleading, an earth mover has now been dispatched to clear the path to where his families' houses stood. According to government officials, although rescuers conducted a manual survey of the houses that had been destroyed, machines could not be deployed because of the presence of large boulders. "Today, we are making ways to take the machines. We have a rough sketch of the houses in the area before the landslide. But, with most houses washed away and their floors buried under massive deposits of debris, the search for bodies is very difficult," one official said. Meanwhile, the Indian Army is erecting a 190-foot long Bailey bridge from Chooralmala to Mundakkai to look for bodies.

## 'We want to go home': Manipur's displaced people hold rally, face police action

GNS News Agency, August 1

The rally, initially intended to head towards the chief minister's bungalow at Babupara in Imphal, prompted a significant deployment of state police personnel in the area to prevent the march. At least 10 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and five students staying in Akampat relief camp in Manipur were following police action who allegedly fired tear gas shells, rubber bullets, and lathi-charged hundreds protesting in Imphal valley, people aware of the matter said.

A protest was held on Thursday by people displaced by the ethnic violence in the state, demanding their resettlement. The IDPs are staying in the relief camps after they were displaced after the incident on May 3 last year. The rally was abruptly halted by state forces soon after the protestors exited the camp's gate in Imphal East, said the people. The rally, initially intended to head towards the chief minister's bungalow at Babupara in Imphal, prompted a significant deployment of state police personnel in the area to prevent the march. As the protestors began their procession, they were met with loudspeaker warnings from the state forces, followed by a barrage of tear gas shells aimed at dispersing the crowd. According to the people, Manipur Police fired several rounds of tear gas shells, mock bombs, and live rounds in the air to control the agitators who tried to overpower the police while the protestors retaliated by pelting stones, in which at least 10 IDPs fainted due to suffocation and were evacuated to a nearby hospital for first aid. Meanwhile, five students of S Chaoba Memorial English School, residing near the Akampat relief camp, also fainted due to suffocation from the tear gas shells, said the people mentioned above. The school is located around 200 meters from the relief camp along Singjamei Kongba Road, Imphal East district. The students were also evacuated to a nearby hospital for first aid. One scribe of a local cable TV channel, who was trying to cover the incident, was allegedly assaulted by a Manipur Police sub-inspector. After the scribe identified himself as media, the police personnel tried to snatch his phone, a video of which was captured by the scribe. Another group of IDPs, under a banner reading "Mass rally on rehabilitation of IDPs," chanted slogans such as "send us back to our home," "We do not want free food from government," and "implement NRC immediately," heading towards CM's residence. The protest was organised by the Committee on Protection of Meitei Victims, Moreh.

The protestors demonstrated a rally heading towards the CM's residence by banging utensils, but were blocked by the police at Singjamei Chingamathak, about four kilometers from the CM's residence. The protestors continued their protest by blocking the Indo-Myanmar Highway-2 (Imphal-Moreh) road. One of the protestors, Thangjam Budha Meitei of Moreh, residing in a relief camp, said the IDPs have been suffering for the last over 15 months. IDPs are demonstrating the protest and demanding that the Manipur government make necessary



arrangements so they can return to their homes. Later, the protestors dispersed from Singjamei Chingamathak, Imphal West, after staging around two hours of sit-in protest by blocking the highway to their relief camps.

The incident was raised in the state assembly by opposition MLA K Ranjit Singh. Thokchom Satyabrata Singh, the leader of the House, said the Manipur government is also taking necessary measures to restore peace in the northeastern state. He mentioned that there is a suspicion that some groups are trying to instigate the IDPs by politicising the issue for their own benefit. At present, the government cannot send the IDPs back to their homes as it does not want to take any risks. Satyabrata Singh said, adding that peace talks are still continuing in Silchar and that the outcome might be known within a few hours. The Hindustan Times YouTube channel now has 7 million subscribers. We thank our viewers for their support. Follow the channel for exclusive video news on politics, sports, entertainment & more. Click here.

## Woman loses Rs.75000 to cyber fraudsters in Jangaon

GNS News Agency, August 1

Jangaon: A woman from Jangaon reportedly lost Rs.75,000 to a cyber fraud. According to reports, the woman, a trained nurse, received a call from a stranger on July 27 saying that she was selected for the post of staff nurse in the District Medical and Health Department and a fake interview letter was also sent to her.

However, the person said to get the job, she had to send Rs 75,000 to him. The woman, who was desperate for a job, immediately sent Rs. 75,000 to the account number of the person.

However, when she went for the interview on Wednesday, she realised that she was cheated as there was no interview or recruitment in the health department. She immediately lodged a complaint with the Jangaon town police.

## 'Militant and terrorist': Bangladesh bans Jamaat-e-Islami party after violent protests



GNS News Agency, August 1

Bangladesh on Thursday banned the Jamaat-e-Islami party, its student wing, and other related groups. The government labelled the party as a "militant and terrorist" organisation. This move is part of a nationwide crackdown after weeks of violent protests that resulted in more than 200 deaths and thousands of injuries. Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her political allies accused Jamaat-e-Islami, its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir, and other related groups of provoking violence during recent student protests about the government job quota system. In an official notice, seen by The Associated Press, Bangladesh's Ministry of Home Affairs announced on Thursday that the ban was enacted under an anti-terrorism law. Since July 15, at least 211 people have died, and over 10,000 have been arrested across the country.

Jamaat-e-Islami has been banned from participating in national elections since 2014 after the Election Commission cancelled its registration, AP reported. In 2013, the High Court banned the party from elections, stating that its constitution conflicted with the national constitution by opposing secularism. However, it was still allowed to carry out political activities like holding meetings, rallies, and making statements. Ten years later, in 2023, the Supreme Court confirmed the High Court's de-

cision, ending the long legal battle and preventing the party from taking part in elections or using its symbols. Yet, the Supreme Court did not completely ban the party.

Jamaat-e-Islami was established in 1941 during British colonial rule by a controversial Islamic scholar. During the 1971 war of independence from Pakistan, the party opposed the creation of Bangladesh as an independent nation. Since 2013, many top leaders of the party have been executed or imprisoned after being found guilty of crimes against humanity, such as killings, abductions, and rapes in 1971. During the nine-month war against Pakistan in 1971, the party had created militia groups to assist the Pakistani military. Bangladesh gained independence on December 16, 1971, with the support of India. According to Bangladesh, 3 million people died, 200,000 women were raped, and almost 1 million people fled to India during the war.

The party was banned after Bangladesh gained independence in 1971 due to its involvement in the mass killings under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh's founding leader and Hasina's father. The ban was lifted in 1976, a year after Rahman and most of his family were killed in a military coup. Only Hasina and her younger sister Sheikh Rehana survived because they were in Germany at the time. On Thursday, the party did not respond right away, but on Tuesday night, the party's chief, Shafiqur Rahman, said in a statement that any decision like this should be condemned after Law Minister Anisul Huq from Hasina's Awami League party mentioned that a decision was coming soon. "We strongly condemn and protest the illegal, unauthorized, and unconstitutional decision ... to ban Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami. The 14-party alliance led by the Awami League is a political platform. One political party or alliance cannot make decisions about another political party. The laws and constitution of Bangladesh do not grant such authority. If a trend of banning one party by another party or alliance begins, it will lead to chaos and the collapse of state order," he said.

## Rain mayhem in hills: Himachal, Uttarakhand severely hit | 10 points

GNS News Agency, August 1

With heavy rains battering parts of northern India, at least 14 people were killed and hundreds are stranded in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. Personnel from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), police and paramilitary forces have been deployed to rescue people, as many are feared missing in the hill states. A total of 32 people have reportedly died in rain-related incidents across seven northern states over the past 24 hours. This includes 12 in Uttarakhand, two in Himachal Pradesh, five in Delhi, two in Greater Noida of Uttar Pradesh, three in Haryana's Gurugram, three in Rajasthan's Jaipur and five in Bihar. Here's how rain has wreaked havoc in the hills and plains. Cloudbursts in Shimla, Mandi, and Kullu districts of Himachal Pradesh on Thursday morning caused severe damage, with four people confirmed dead and more than 50 others reported missing. Teams of the National Disaster Response Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, police and home guards started rescue operations have started rescue operations in Shimla. Drones are used to locate the missing people and chief minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu held a meeting to take stock of the situation in the state. Union home minister Amit Shah has assured Himachal chief minister of providing central assistance and all possible help. On the other hand, BJP national president JP Nadda has asked all BJP cadres to work toward the rescue and relief of people hit by the cloudburst in his home state. In Uttarakhand, heavy overnight rains caused 12 deaths, including three from the same family and six injuries. The rains led to house collapses, widespread flooding and rising water levels in



several rivers Uttarakhand chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama announced on Facebook that pilgrims stranded on the trek route to Kedarnath are being transported to the emergency helipad. An advisory has been issued advising pilgrims to postpone their journey to Kedarnath until the road is restored. The cloudburst in Uttarakhand caused a landslide in the Bhim Bali stream along the Kedarnath walkway, damaging a 30-metre stretch. This area has been temporarily closed for safety reasons. Roads in Haridwar were submerged. Flooding also impacted colonies and markets in Bhupatwala, Haridwar, Naya Haridwar, Kankhal and Jwalapur. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a red alert for parts of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand on Thursday, warning of very heavy rainfall and possible flooding. Following the alert from the IMD, fresh registrations for the Chardham yatra have been put on hold for the time being.

## Why was water leaking in the new Parliament building? Lok Sabha Secretariat explains



GNS News Agency, August 1

The Lok Sabha Secretariat on Thursday issued a clarification over videos of a water leak inside the new Parliament building, saying the adhesive material used to fix the glass domes over the lobby had been slightly displaced and it was later fixed.

"There are media reports that heavy rains in Delhi on Wednesday caused water leakage into the Lobby of the newly inaugurated Parliament Building, raising concerns about the weather resilience of the structure. It has also been reported that waterlogging was noticed around the premises, particularly near the New Parliament's Makar Dwar, with several videos of the waterlogging going viral on social media platforms," it said in a statement. It said the green domes were installed to ensure natural light in the Parliament building. "In this regard, it is worth mentioning that keeping in view the concept of Green Parliament, glass domes have been provided in several parts of the Building, including in the Lobby, so that abundant natural light could be utilized in day-to-day work of the Parliament. During the heavy rain on Wednesday, the adhesive material used to fix the glass domes over the Lobby of the Building was slightly displaced, causing minor leakage of water in the Lobby," it said. The secretariat said the problem was timely detected and fixed. "The problem was, however, detected timely and corrective measures were taken immediately. Thereafter, no further leakage of water has been noticed. Similarly, accumulated water opposite Makar Dwar also got drained out quickly," it added.

The Opposition questioned the durability of the new Parliament building after Congress MP Manickam Tagore posted a video on X that showed water leaking from the

roof of the lobby of the new Parliament building. "Paper leakage outside, water leakage inside. The recent water leakage in the Parliament lobby used by the President highlights urgent weather resilience issues in the new building, just a year after completion," he wrote on X. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav also took a swipe at the government, saying the old building was better than the new.

## Said nothing unparliamentary, says Revanth

GNS News Agency, August 1

Hyderabad: Sticking to his guns, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said there was nothing unparliamentary about his remarks on BRS women MLAs in the House on Wednesday. "I did not use a single word indecently. After Sabitha Indra Reddy raised personal issues, I had to respond," Revanth Reddy said in an informal chat with media persons in the Assembly.

In fact, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said the BRS leader Sabitha Indra Reddy was a synonym for cheat and fraud, he said. "When I campaigned for Sunitha Laxma Reddy during 2018 elections, two cases were filed against me. They are still pending in Kaudipalli and Narsapur," he said, adding that Sunitha Reddy joined the BRS and became State Women Commission Chairperson but the cases against him were not withdrawn. In the past, Sabitha Indra Reddy invited me to join Congress but she joined the BRS, which was in power then. She had even assured to take up responsibility in the elections. "But by the time I filed my nomination, a campaign was launched against me," he said. If Sabitha Indra Reddy was humiliated and injustice was meted out to her, why did not BRS chief K Chandrashekhara Rao and former Minister T Harish Rao come to her rescue and support her, the Chief Minister asked. Compared to the last 10 years, the Assembly was being conducted democratically.

## Bangladesh bans Jamaat-e-Islami, its student wing under anti-terrorism law



GNS News Agency, August 1

Bangladesh on Thursday banned the Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir under anti-terrorism law following nationwide unrest, citing the threat posed by the fundamentalist party to public security. A notification issued by the Public Security Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs on Thursday confirmed the ban on the Islamist party, a key ally of former prime minister Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

The ban on Jamaat, Chhatra Shibir and other associated groups came through an executive order under Section 18(1) of the Anti-Terrorism Act. "They (Jamaat-Shibir and BNP) just used the students as their shield," Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on Thursday when Italian Ambassador Antonio Alessandro called on her at her official residence Ganabhaban here. The Bangladesh government on Tuesday decided to ban the Jamaat-e-

Islami following the deadly nationwide students' protests over quotas in government jobs, accusing it of exploiting the movement that left at least 150 people dead. The development comes after a meeting of the ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance passed a resolution earlier this week that Jamaat must be banned from politics. The recent decision to ban Jamaat comes over 50 years after its initial prohibition in 1972 for "misusing religion for political purposes".

Top leaders of the ruling Awami League, who have been in power for the past 15 years, have supported the ban on the Jamaat because of its role in the Liberation War. The Jamaat remained active despite losing its registration and being barred from elections due to court rulings. The party was allegedly involved in the recent violence surrounding the protests of the quota reform movement, which the government has cited as a reason for the ban, the report added.

Violence gripped Bangladesh for almost the entire of July when the protests that had started in universities and colleges earlier this month, quickly turned into a widespread agitation against Prime Minister Hasina and her government's policies. The government called in the Army to quell protests against job quotas after the unrest left at least 150 dead and several thousand people, including policemen, wounded and major government installations damaged. Law Minister Anisul Huq said on Tuesday the ban is being imposed because of the recent violence associated with the quota reform movement and will be enacted through an executive order, the report added.

## The Guest who brought gift of death: Who's Hamas's Deif killed by Israel

GNS News Agency, August 1

As Israel confirms the killing of Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif after days of suspense, it brings closure to a decades-long chase. Deif, the elusive commander behind the October 7, 2023, attack on Israel, was killed by the Israelis on their eighth attempt. He was known as The Guest for shifting his location frequently. Screenshot from a video posted on Hamas's website in October 2005 in which a man identified as Mohammed Deif called for the intensification of armed conflict with Israel.

Trying to avenge a deadly bus suicide attack in Tel Aviv, Israelis launched a hunt for a specific target. The target, one of Israel's most-wanted men, was in the crosshairs. Israeli helicopter gunships launched missiles at a car in Gaza City in 2009. The incident in broad daylight in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood killed six. However, it turned out to be a missed opportunity for the Israelis.

For Deif, whose nom de guerre means "the Guest", is inspired from the practice of Palestinian fighters staying overnight with different sympathisers to evade Israeli intelligence. Deif rarely stayed at a place for more than a day. Israeli forces have been on the hunt for Deif for decades. They have got him now. After days of suspense, Israel confirmed on Thursday that Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif, who is believed to have masterminded the October 7, 2023, attack on Israel, was killed in an airstrike last month in Gaza. A massive strike on July 13, in which Israel claimed to target Hamas' shadowy military commander in Gaza, resulted in the deaths of at least 90 people. What might have felt like a 'same old story' as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu then said "there still isn't absolute certainty" that Mohammed Deif was among the dead.

"We can now confirm: Mohammed Deif was eliminated," the Israel Defence Forces announced on X, days after Ismail Haniyeh, who led Hamas's political operations, was killed in Tehran. Mohammed Deif, the elusive commander of Hamas' military wing, the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades, who had been a thorn in Israel's side for decades, has been eliminated in the eighth attempt.

Born in the Khan Yunis refugee camp, Deif is credited with developing Hamas' rocket arsenal and the tunnel system, the 700-kilometre elaborate Gaza Metro.

The Israeli desperation to get undoubtedly stems from the fact that Mohammed Deif is believed to be the mastermind behind the brutal October 7 massacre in Southern Israel, which it called its '9/11 moment'. As Hamas launched a barrage of rockets, Deif, in an audio tape broadcast, named it the "Al-Aqsa Flood", hinting at a payoff for Israeli raids on Islam's third-holiest site (Al-Aqsa Mosque) in Jerusalem in 2021.

The 58-year-old Deif began planning the operation in May 2021, said the Reuters report. He was also believed to have trained the militants, especially the elite Nukhba forces, who attacked on October 7, according to a report in The Guardian. The surprise attack that left 1,200 Israelis dead and over 250 taken hostages by Hamas, is the bloodiest attack in Israel's 75-year history. In response, amongst the three Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's

## Hamas military chief who masterminded October 7 attack dead, confirms Israel

GNS News Agency, August 1

After days of suspense, Israel confirmed on Thursday that Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif, who is believed to have masterminded the October 7, 2023, attack on Israel, was killed in an airstrike last month in Gaza. The development comes a day after Hamas's top leader Ismail Haniyeh was killed in Iran's capital Tehran, with the outfit claiming Israel's involvement in the early morning attack. "We can now confirm: Mohammed Deif was eliminated," the Israel Defence Forces announced on X as a massive crowd gathered in Tehran for the funeral procession of Ismail Haniyeh, who led Hamas's political operations. On July 13, IDF fighter jets struck a compound in southern Gaza's Khan Yunis area housing Mohammed Deif and Rafaa Salameh, the commander of Hamas's Khan Yunis brigade.

However, there was no confirmation if Deif, who had dodged seven Israeli assassination attempts, was killed. Following the strike, the Gaza Health Ministry said the attack on the "humanitarian zone" for displaced families killed 90 Palestinians.

### WHO WAS MOHAMMAD DEIF?

Israel has held Deif as the mastermind of the October 7, 2023, massacre in which 1,200 people were killed



government vowed to kill, was Deif, along with Hamas' leader in Gaza Yahya Sinwar and Marwan, Issa his deputy, according to Reuters.

DITCHED DEATH SEVEN TIMES, WHAT DO WE KNOW OF DEIF?

Deif, who had allegedly lost his brother, nephew, niece, wife, 3-year-old daughter, and 7-month-old son in the Israeli hunt for him, is said to have survived seven assassination attempts before he was killed in the airstrike on July 13. An Israeli air strike roughly 21 years ago, reportedly left him in a wheelchair, when the mastermind lost an arm and a leg, reported the Financial Times. In May 2021, the Israeli military made two attempts in one week to kill Deif, but both went in vain. Despite the close calls, Deif had managed to maintain a low profile, rarely making public appearances. Until last year, only three photos of Deif were seen: one from his 20s, a masked photo, an image of his shadow used during the 7 October broadcast, and one found by Israel in millions of computer files it seized, according to The Guardian. Deif, who rose through the ranks in Hamas, was arrested by Israel in 1989, and spent 16 months in detention. In the following decade, he made sure Israel and Palestine didn't talk peace. Deif, who studied chemistry at the Islamic University of Gaza, was trained by "Engineer" Yahya Abd-al-Latif Ayyash, the chief bombmaker of Hamas in the 1990s. In the meantime, he helped establish the Ezzedeen Al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, and later came to head it. Deif also established the 'Shadow Unit' within the al-Qassam Brigades, an elite unit meant to guard and hide enemy captives. The July 13 strike, which targeted Deif in Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, had raised questions about his fate. While Israel had refrained from officially declaring that Deif was dead, Hamas officials had claimed that he was alive and "fine" after the attack. However, while there were uncertainties about his life, the IDF's confirmation certainly brought closure to the decades-old chase and hunt of 'the guest'. The confirmation of Deif's death comes a day after the killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. The Israelis have an upper hand for now.



in southern Israel and around 250 people were taken as hostages into the Gaza Strip. The attack triggered the Gaza war, now in its 10th month. One of Hamas's most dominant figures and seen as the second-in-command to the outfit's chief Yahya Sinwar, Deif has topped Israel's most wanted list for decades. In the past, Deif has taken responsibility for the deaths of dozens of Israelis in suicide bombings. The secretive Hamas commander, who rarely appeared in public, joined the outfit in 1987. Deif, who has a degree in science from the Islamic University in Gaza, was arrested by Israel in 1989 and spent 16 months in prison.

## Saved my life: Trump hugs woman for chart he turned to look at before shooting



GNS News Agency, August 1

Former US President Donald Trump publicly thanked a woman staffer who put up an immigration chart on the big screen during the July 13 rally he turned to glance at moments before an assassination attempt. Donald Trump publicly thanked the woman who created a chart he was referencing when he was shot in an assassination attempt, saying she saved his life.

Former US President Donald Trump publicly thanked the woman staffer responsible for putting up an immigration chart on screen, which he turned to glance at, minutes before would-be assassin Thomas Matthew Crooks opened fire at him. Speaking at a campaign rally in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the 78-year-old invited the woman on stage and hugged her before pecking her on the cheek. "She saved my life," Trump shouted to a cheering audience after calling her a "computer genius". The woman smiled widely after being called on stage, and could only manage to say a "Hi" into the microphone,

which drew a smile from Donald Trump.

The rally was the Republican presidential nominee's first rally since the July 13 assassination attempt in Butler, Pennsylvania. "I love that chart. I'm going to sleep with that chart for the rest of my life," he said as the famous illegal immigration chart was displayed to his right. The former President noted that the chart documenting the levels of illegal immigration in the US over the years is used at "less than 20%" of his campaign rallies and that it is "always" on his left. Mentioning the bullet, which narrowly missed his face and grazed his ear instead, Donald Trump said, "It would have been a perfect hit." The 78-year-old also said that typically the immigration chart is pulled up at the end of his speeches as opposed to what happened during his July 13 rally. The woman staffer was "flabbergasted" when Trump had called for the chart early at the Butler rally. At his Republican National Convention (RNC) speech last month, Donald Trump said that he "would not be here today" without the chart. Titled 'Illegal Immigration into the US', and prepared by US Senator Ron Johnson on a plane ride, the chart was displayed on a large screen behind him during his speech at the rally in Butler on July 13. When Trump had moved his head to the right to look at the numbers on the chart to explain, Thomas Matthew Crooks's bullet grazed his right ear. Thomas Matthew Crooks, 20, fired eight shots at Donald Trump at the rally. In the attempt to assassinate him, two people were shot twice and a 50-year-old volunteer firefighter was killed. A Secret Service sniper quickly shot and killed Crooks.

## Canadian-Sikh minister sought 100 soldiers to perform with Diljit Dosanjh

GNS News Agency, August 1

Canadian Emergency Preparedness Minister Harjit Sajjan requested 100 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) soldiers to act as backdrops for a concert by Indian-Punjabi singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh in Vancouver. The request was denied by CAF commanders due to a tight timeline and personnel availability. Canadian Emergency Preparedness Minister Harjit Sajjan had requested for 100 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) soldiers as backdrops for a concert by Indian-Punjabi singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh in Vancouver, media outlets in Canada reported. The request, which was ultimately denied, was for soldiers to participate in Dosanjh's sold-out performance at BC Place, a stadium in Vancouver, British Columbia, on April 27.

The concert was part of Dosanjh's Dil-Luminati tour, which kicked off with a sold-out stadium show at BC Place to a crowd of 54,000 people, making it the largest Punjabi music concert outside of India. Diljit's tour started on April 28 and ended on July 13 at the Rogers Centre in Toronto. Sajjan, an Indo-Canadian minister, received a letter on April 15 from Dosanjh's manager, Sonali Singh, requesting Canadian soldiers to participate in Dosanjh's sold-out performance at BC Place on April 27. Sajjan forwarded the letter to Defence Minister Bill Blair with his endorsement. The request was then rejected by Canadian Armed Forces commanders due to the "tight timeline and personnel availability", reported CBC News. Sajjan's press secretary, Joanna Kanga, explained that the minister saw the concert as an opportunity for the CAF to engage with a diverse community of young Canadians, similar to their outreach and recruiting events at professional sporting events. "Diljit Dosanjh is the biggest Punjabi artist in the world and was on the verge of making history as the first Punjabi artist to sell out a concert at one of the largest stadiums in Vancouver," Kanga was quoted as saying by The Globe and Mail.

"Minister Sajjan agreed the concert would be a good opportunity for the Canadian Armed Forces to engage with and expand connections to a diverse community of young Canadians, along the lines of the CAF outreach and recruiting events at professional sporting events,"



she added. The Department of National Defence emphasised that participation in such events must not impact domestic or international operations and that operational readiness must be sustained at all times. "Additionally, it is crucial that participation in such events does not impact domestic and international operations, and our operational readiness must be sustained at all times" Lieutenant-Commander Linda Coleman, reported The Globe and Mail.

HARJIT SAJJAN ATTENDED DILJIT DOSANJH CONCERT Harjit Sajjan attended the concert with his family, purchasing his own tickets and covering all expenses personally, according to CBC News. The event was a significant cultural achievement, with Dosanjh being a vocal critic of India's ruling government and having "his support in 2020 to Punjab and Haryana farmers who held mass protests after the Modi government brought in reforms to open the highly regulated farming sector to private players", reported The Globe and Mail. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also recognised Dosanjh's appeal among the Indo-Canadian community, meeting him before his July 15 concert in Toronto and posting pictures on social media. Justin Trudeau made a surprise visit to an event of Diljit Dosanjh, an Indian-Punjabi singer-actor, at the Rogers Centre in Toronto, where he praised Dosanjh for his achievements. However, after the concert, Trudeau's post on X about the encounter sparked controversy when he referred to Dosanjh as "a guy from Punjab".

## Vivek Ramaswamy slams Kamala Harris for selective use of Indian roots



GNS News Agency, August 1

US Vice President Kamala Harris's ethnic identity has become a central issue in the US presidential campaign, with Donald Trump making racial remarks and entrepreneur-politician Vivek Ramaswamy criticising her for allegedly using her Indian roots selectively.

for using her Indian roots selectively.

"Many Indian-Americans in the US are indeed somewhat offended by the way Kamala has suddenly cast aside the Indian-American side of her identity," Ramaswamy said in an interview with Fox News. Harris, a Democrat, who launched her presidential campaign last month after US President Joe Biden bowed out from the White House bid, has long identified herself as both Black and Asian. She is the first Black and Asian-American person to serve as the Vice President. Harris, the presumptive Democratic presi-

dential nominee, is an Indian-American politician whose mother is Indian and father is Jamaican. A small village in Thulasenthrapuram in Tamil Nadu is known as the ancestral home of US Vice-President Kamala Harris's maternal grandparents. KAMALA HARRIS WEARS A DIFFERENT IDENTITY NOW: RAMASWAMY Vivek Ramaswamy, in an interview with Fox News, said, "My parents were immigrants to this country, legal immigrants from southern India, the very same part of India that her mother also immigrated from." Ramaswamy also recalled that Kamala Harris,

emphasised her Indian-American heritage when she first ran for office in California as a Senator but now seems to "wear a different identity" on the national stage for political convenience. He further said that Harris' focus on identity politics invites criticism. "I don't think we should be relying on these ethnic identities at all. We're American. And the problem is when you're Kamala Harris and you actually do lean into your identity politics, then you open the door to that type of criticism," he said. He also added that Harris's candidacy lacks a clear vision for the US. "But if you ask me, that shouldn't be how this election is decided one way or another. It should be decided on our own identity as Americans and what our vision is for the future of the country. And the number one thing missing in Kamala Harris's candidacy is that she lacks that vision for the country. That's what we've got to focus on," Ramaswamy said. The debate intensified after former President Donald Trump accused Harris of shifting her racial identity for political gain, claiming she "turned black" a few years ago despite her long-standing Indian heritage.

## ‘Clarity on ITC eligibility on sales promotion expenses pivotal’



Introduced to simplify India's tax regime, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) promised a seamless flow of Input Tax Credit (ITC) to enhance efficiency and reduce the tax burden on businesses. However, India Inc. has been vocal about various challenges, seeking clarity and consistency in the GST provisions, particularly related to ITC. The recent GST Council meeting unveiled substantial proposals from Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman but industry stakeholders are anticipating additional measures. While any new GST amendment necessitates deliberation within the GST Council, the minister could highlight key priorities in her forthcoming Budget speech.

In this context, the industry has heightened expectations from the Union Budget to provide clarity on uncertainties surrounding ITC. Businesses are calling for comprehensive reforms to simplify ITC claims, alleviate compliance burdens, and improve transparency within the GST framework, essential for promoting a conducive business environment and bolstering economic growth. This article delves into the expectations of Indian businesses and addresses concerns regarding the eligibility of ITC, particularly focusing on the denial of ITC on sales promotion expenses. Importance of sales promotion in business: Sales promotion activities are vital for businesses aiming to attract customers, boost sales and enhance brand visibility. These activities can range from offering discounts (quantity discounts, cash discounts etc.), gifts and free samples to conducting loyalty programmes and providing promotional merchandise. The deployment of promotional schemes is vital in today's fiercely competitive landscape.

In industry practice, promotional schemes fall into two main categories: target-based schemes and those schemes where promotional items are given for free as a marketing tactic. While promotional activities are crucial for business growth and market presence, GST provisions impose specific restrictions on the eligibility of ITC

for goods given by way of gifts or free samples for promotional purposes. Due to ambiguity surrounding the meaning of 'gift', authorities have been consistently denying such ITC. Notably, as per a Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) press release dated July 10, 2017, 'gift' has not been defined in the GST law. In common parlance, 'gift' is made without consideration, is voluntary in nature, and is made occasionally. The department's perspective: The Board, in its wisdom, issued Circular No. 92/11/2019-GST dated March 7, 2019, dealing with ITC on sales promotion expenses. In this circular, it has been clarified that ITC shall not be available for goods and services used for gifts or free samples distributed without consideration. If the distribution of gifts or free samples qualifies as a "supply" under Schedule I of the Act, the supplier can avail ITC.

The issue surrounding the GST implications of promotional schemes, both from an outward and inward perspective, has been a long-standing source of debate and confusion, with various conflicting rulings and interpretations. For instance, the Tamil Nadu Appellate Authority for Advance Ruling (AAAR) ruled in the matter of GRB Dairy Foods Pvt Ltd. that goods distributed as part of a promotional scheme would not qualify as a supply and as a result, the ITC would not be eligible. This viewpoint was also upheld by the Karnataka AAAR in the case of Page Industries. ITC eligibility for promotional goods: Understanding the rationale: To contend that companies distribute goods to their dealers and customers purely on a voluntary basis, devoid of any business objective, happens to be unreasonable. The notion that such distributions lack a strategic business purpose is unfounded. It is crucial to recognise the embedded nature of these promotions within the overall supply value. While they may appear as 'gifts' from a marketing perspective, they are far from gratuitous in a commercial sense. The industry sets its sales targets and incorporates these offers into the value of supply on which taxes are duly paid, aligning with the principle that 'nothing is free' and the entire arrangement operates on a quid-pro-quo basis. However, revenue authorities often dispute this, seeking to tax these supplies or insist on reversing ITC. Addressing the concerns: Addressing the concerns of India Inc. regarding ITC eligibility on sales promotion expenses is crucial for fostering a business-friendly environment under the GST regime. Achieving clarity and consistency in GST provisions, particularly those related to ITC on promotional expenses, remains pivotal. As businesses await the upcoming Union Budget, their hopes are pinned on comprehensive reforms that streamline ITC claims, reduce compliance burdens, and enhance transparency.

## IndiGo announces direct flights to Abu Dhabi from Mangaluru, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli

These new routes will further enhance IndiGo's international connectivity, with non-stop flights connecting the capital city of United Arab Emirates to major cities in Southern India. IndiGo These new routes will further enhance IndiGo's international connectivity, with non-stop flights connecting the capital city of United Arab Emirates to major cities in Southern India.

IndiGo has announced the launch of direct flights from Mangaluru, Coimbatore, and Tiruchirappalli to Abu Dhabi. The flights from the Abu Dhabi to Mangaluru route will operate daily, from August 9, and the Tiruchirappalli to Abu Dhabi will operate four times a week, starting from August 11. Starting from August 10, the direct flights from Coimbatore will operate thrice weekly.

Recently, the airline had also announced new direct flight between Bengaluru and Abu Dhabi, which will operate six times a week starting August 1, 2024. These new routes will further enhance IndiGo's international connectivity, with non-stop flights connecting the capital city of United Arab Emirates to major cities in south India, a press release from the airlines stated. Mr Vinay Malhotra, Head of Global Sales at IndiGo, expressed enthusiasm about the new routes. "With the addition of these flights,



IndiGo now operates 89 non-stop flights a week to Abu Dhabi from 13 cities in India. These flights will provide smooth and convenient options for business as well as leisure travel to the UAE and further add to the gateways for travelers to explore the wonderful island city and beyond. IndiGo The flights on the Abu Dhabi to Mangaluru route will operate daily, from August 9, and the Tiruchirappalli to Abu Dhabi will operate four times a week, starting from August 11. Customers who wish to plan their travel can book tickets via IndiGo's official website or through their mobile app.

## Light-weight cars and small batteries: Suzuki's tech plan for the next decade



Suzuki Suzuki will be developing electric vehicles that minimise energy consumption by combining components that embody 'Sho-Sho-KeiTan-Bi such as a small and efficient electric unit, and a small and light battery' the company said. Suzuki has said that it will focus on light-weight materials and small battery packs in its electric vehicles and cut down rare earth metals from the production. Outlining its technology principles for the next decade, the company also said that until non-fossil energy becomes fully widespread, hybrid cars will remain to be the best solution. "Suzuki will be developing electric vehicles that minimise energy consumption by combining components that embody 'Sho-Sho-KeiTan-Bi such as a small and efficient electric unit, and a small and light battery," the company, which owns around 58 per cent stake in the country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India, said.

It said that smaller cars require fewer and lighter materials. "If the car is lighter, the required power source can be smaller. For EVs, this means fewer and lighter batteries, smaller motors, and reduced use of rare earths and rare metals. "We will continue to develop light-weight platforms, small, light-weight, and highly efficient E-axis, small battery packs that ensure a suitable driving range, and electric technologies that are durable, safe, and short charging times. Until non-fossil energy becomes fully widespread, HEV is the best solution," Suzuki said.

Suzuki said that in India, the average weight of all its cars is a little more than 940 kilograms, compared to the

industry average of 1,133 kilograms. "Suzuki makes 200 to 300 kilograms lighter vehicles than the average weight of all manufacturers," it said. "If the vehicle weighs 200 kilograms less, it requires fewer materials, about 20 per cent less energy for production, and 6 per cent less energy for driving. "We will further evolve the light-weight and safety body "HEARTECT," and also work to minimise energy consumption through weight reduction technology," Suzuki said. Beyond its cars, the company will also focus on energy reduction across its production process and will shift towards a "circular economy." The conventional economic system is called a linear economy, in which the flow of raw material extraction, product manufacturing, utilisation, and disposal is unidirectional. This has caused mass consumption of energy, resource depletion and environmental destruction. In the future, Suzuki will achieve minimal energy consumption with a circular economy which is to save the total use of resources by designing products that can be easily disassembled with recycling and reuse in mind," it said.

## Sanofi to invest Euro 400 mn in its Hyderabad GCC by 2030

GNS News Agency, August 1

Hyderabad: Sanofi Healthcare India Pvt Ltd on Wednesday announced the expansion of its Global Capacity Centre (GCC) here with plans to invest Euro 400 million over the next six years, out of which Euro 100 million will be pumped in by next year. Madeliene Roach, Executive Vice President, Business Operations, Sanofi said in a press conference that over the next two years, this GCC will expand to host up to approximately 2,600 employees, making it the largest of Sanofi's four global hubs. Established in 2019, the Hyderabad hub has grown exponentially from being a medical hub to now providing several best-in-class services for Sanofi's global functions and affiliates across the world, she said.

## IMF raises India GDP forecast by 20 bps to 7% for FY25



IMF India economy growth Overall, global growth is projected to be in line with the April 2024 World Economic Outlook (WEO) forecast, at 3.2 per cent in 2024 and 3.3 per cent in 2025. Improved consumption prospects, particularly in rural areas, are expected to support the country's growth trajectory in the ongoing financial year 2024-25, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Tuesday while revising India's growth forecast upward by 20 basis points to 7 per cent.

For the next financial year, the IMF retained the projection at a slower growth rate of 6.5 per cent, as stated in its latest edition of the World Economic Outlook. "The forecast for growth in emerging markets and developing economies has been revised upward; this increase is powered by stronger activity in Asia, particularly China and India. The forecast for growth in India has also been revised upward to 7 per cent this year, reflecting carryover from upward revisions to growth in 2023 and improved prospects for private consumption, particularly in rural areas," the IMF noted. India's economy is now forecast to expand by 7 per cent, up from the 6.8 per cent the IMF projected in April. Overall, global growth is projected to

align with the April 2024 World Economic Outlook forecast, at 3.2 per cent in 2024 and 3.3 per cent in 2025. Asia's emerging market economies remain the main engine for the global economy, with growth in India and China being revised upward and accounting for almost half of global growth, Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, Economic Counsellor and Director of Research at the IMF, said in a blog. He pointed out that prospects for the next five years remain weak, largely due to waning momentum in emerging Asia. "By 2029, growth in China is projected to moderate to 3.3 per cent, well below its current pace," he added.

Growth in major advanced economies is becoming more aligned as output gaps close. "The United States shows increasing signs of cooling, especially in the labour market, after a strong 2023. The euro area, meanwhile, is poised to pick up after a nearly flat performance last year," he stated. Varied momentum in activity at the turn of the year has somewhat narrowed the output divergence across economies as cyclical factors wane and activity becomes better aligned with its potential. Services price inflation is hindering progress on disinflation, complicating monetary policy normalisation, the IMF said. Upside risks to inflation have increased, raising the prospect of higher-for-longer interest rates amid escalating trade tensions and increased policy uncertainty. To manage these risks and preserve growth, the policy mix should be sequenced carefully to achieve price stability and replenish diminished buffers, the report advised. "As in April, we project global inflation will slow to 5.9 per cent this year from 6.7 per cent last year, broadly on track for a soft landing. However, in some advanced economies, especially the United States, progress on disinflation has slowed, and risks are to the upside," Gourinchas said.

## Swiggy study says anytime binge-eating is on the rise. Is it healthy?



With changing lifestyles and the ease of getting food throughout the day, 'anytime binge-eating' is on the rise. Health experts, however, want you to know the risks and ways to give this trend a healthier twist. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner with some mid-meal snacks – that's what a day's food schedule looked like for most of us until a few years ago. Not anymore.

Thank the ease of ordering food online and the growing restaurant density around us. Team it with long working hours that leave us with no or barely any time to be in the kitchen. Add to that our lost control over instant gratification. Simply coming across a viral Reel featuring a cheese-loaded burger can lure many into ordering one right away, no matter what time of the day it is. This is especially true for urban millennials and Gen Z, who prefer convenience and have the money to afford it. Online food platforms have become our virtual kitchens, and dining out isn't just reserved for special occasions. Staying up till the wee hours - to binge-watch shows and movies or for regular parties and game nights - is also fuelling the late-night eating scene. Binging and watching get too literal! The trend has also been noted in a recent study, 'How India Eats,' conducted by food delivery platform Swiggy in collaboration with Bain & Co. It highlighted a rise in 'anytime bingeing,' emphasising increased prominence for mid-meal occasions such as brunch, evening, and late-night. The study also reported a 23 per cent growth in late-night orders for burgers, pizza, and biryani on Swiggy in 2023 compared to 2022. Talking about the same, Rohit Kapoor, CEO, Food Marketplace, Swiggy, said that the concept of breakfast-lunch-dinner is getting blurred with people stepping out to eat and ordering food online during mid-meal hours.

This is reflected in Swiggy's order frequency as well. The company has six major peak orders during the day, which include the traditional breakfast, lunch, and dinner along with brunch, evening snacks, and late-night meals. And let's not forget the popularity of rat snacking as a food trend, which involves having snacks between meals, and experimenting with unconventional food pairings while at it. Health experts, however, want you to be cautious of the growing trend of eating anytime. Eating late at night, for instance, disturbs this natural rhythm and can lead to severe health complications. "When a person eats at 2 am, it disturbs their sleep-wake cycle and biological clock. The digestion, metabolism, and energy utilisation processes get disrupted. During the day, our body is more primed to process food and nutrients efficiently, but at night, energy is conserved, and restoration work occurs," explains dietitian Deepali Sharma, clinical nutritionist at the CK Birla Hospital, Delhi.

Experts say it is fine to have more meals than just breakfast, lunch, and dinner, like mid-afternoon or evening snacks, but the point to remember is to eat light and only eat when hungry. No mindless munching, please! Even indulging in a late-night meal is fine, only if it is occasional and not a regular occurrence. "Late-night work or parties till midnight or 2 am demand late-night eating, especially something junk like a pizza or a burger accompanied by soft drinks or even booze. If this happens once a month it is alright. But such a lifestyle happening persistently will hamper one's health in multiple ways and hasten the process of ageing," adds Pooja Shah Bhav, a consultant clinical dietician and certified diabetes educator based in Mumbai. While compromising on

proper sleep increases the risk of obesity, diabetes, and heart diseases, consuming heavy meals high in carbs, sugar, and fats adds to the woes. "Our metabolic rate is very low in the night. Such meals are not metabolised and utilised completely, and a major portion converts into fat. It also causes too much oxidative stress and inflammation in our body, multiplying the damage caused by lack of sleep," Bhav adds. To this, Delhi-based nutritionist Lovneet Batra adds that meal timings govern our digestion, and eating at erratic timings makes our digestion weak. And weak digestion leads to compromised nutrition absorption, which can further lead to nutrition deficiencies, skin and hair woes, weakened muscles, impact on bone health, and low energy levels. As for brunches, which are becoming popular and also encouraging cafes and restaurants to curate special brunch menus, are also problematic if you entirely skip breakfast. "As a dietician, I usually discourage skipping breakfast because breakfast is the main meal of the day. The wholesome carbohydrate and protein-rich breakfast within two hours of waking up is best," says Bhav.

"If one has to have a brunch instead of breakfast, it is best to start a day with a fruit or a handful of nuts early in the morning and then complete the brunch by 11 am in the day as we have the highest metabolic rate in the morning hours," she adds. Dr Mahesh Kumar Gupta, senior consultant, gastroenterology, Marengo Asia Hospital, Gurgaon, says that meal timings should essentially be fixed and not change much each day. Furthermore, it is also what you are eating that has a significant impact. He strictly advises against overeating and frequently devouring foods that are processed, contain excessive fat, and are loaded with refined sugar. What's the right time to eat?

Health experts strongly emphasise having a fixed schedule for your meals and following the traditional sequence of breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Ideally, you should have your first meal (breakfast) within two hours of waking up. Lunch should be consumed four hours after the first meal, and dinner should be done 2-3 hours before hitting the bed. Late-night meals can lead to obesity and other health issues. Ideally, the last meal of the day should be consumed 2-3 hours before sleeping. Sleep routine: Ideally, you should have your first meal (breakfast) within two hours of waking up. Lunch should be consumed four hours after the first meal, and dinner should be done 2-3 hours before hitting the bed. Those who cannot eat as per the sunrise/sunset principles (basically, the body's natural clock) because of late-night work shifts, can follow the above three factors for their meal schedules. Additionally, the distribution of calorie intake throughout the meals is also significant to stay healthy. "50 percent of your day's calorie intake should be from breakfast. It is supposed to be the heaviest meal. Your lunch and dinner should contribute 20 and 10 percent of the day's total calories," says Dr Gupta. "The rest 20 percent can be divided into 2-3 snacks," he adds. How to make your 'anytime meals' healthier: So, those between-the-meals snacking sessions are absolutely fine, till you are keeping them light. But that's not what it looks like for many people. According to Swiggy, particular food items that were usually ordered during breakfast, lunch, or dinner like chhole bhature, pizzas, or ice creams, are now ordered throughout the day. Pizzas, for instance, are popular as evening snacks and late-night orders on

## Amitabh Bachchan shares rare photo from his school days, recalls his scouting experience : 'I find it difficult to recognise me'



Amitabh Bachchan got nostalgic on Thursday as he shared a rare photo from his childhood. On the occasion of World Scout Scarf Day on 1 August, the actor revealed he was part of the Scout Troop in his school—Boys' High School, Allahabad. Big B shared a photo from his school magazine. In the photo, he along with his batchmates can be seen posing in the Scout uniform. The text on the

magazine read, "The Winner Of Inter Troop Challenge Shield—Allahabad District (1954)." In the photo, Amitabh can be seen standing in the third row on right. Sharing the photo, the Sholay star wrote, "Those good ol' days of Boys Scouts... the special scarfs... the badge... the special salute... Baden Powell its Founder... and how many of those learnings still being practised."

The actor's fans were quite excited to see the old picture, others from the same school expressed joy and pride in passing out from the same institution as Mr Bachchan. In his blog, Amitabh Bachchan shared more details about his Scout days. Sharing more photos, he wrote, "Oh Gosh those were the days at BHS, Allahabad... and the scouting experiences with the troop and the visitor of the head of the Scouts from Australia and how he remembered the number of autographs he signed." He called the experience "quite remarkable". Claiming that he remembers most of his fellow Scouts, the actor wrote, "Strange is it not how you remember those early days and have problems remembering the recent meets."

## Vivek Agnihotri mocks new Parliament building, Institute of Town Planners after Delhi rains: 'Indian towns are monuments of ugliness'

Vivek Agnihotri recently mocked the waterlogging at the Institute of Town Planners India in Delhi following recent heavy rains in the national capital. On Thursday, the filmmaker took to his X handle to quote tweet a visual shared by ANI. Laughing at the irony, The Kashmir Files director said, "Indian towns are monuments of ugliness."

Sharing a visual of water being pumped out of the Institute of Town Planners building in the national capital, the filmmaker wrote, "Hahahaha. Nothing can be more ironical than this. Indian towns are monuments of ugliness, inconvenience, discomfort inefficiency, disaster-prone and a risk to life. We have fully failed in town planning." Many agreed with the filmmaker, while others backed the town planners and blamed people involved in illegal encroachment and construction. The filmmaker also took a dig at the new parliament building. In another post, the filmmaker shared a visual of a leak in the new parliament building and wrote, "Can't believe this is the new parliament. The parliament doesn't belong to any government. It belongs to 'we the people'. It was made ugly, but now this? Unacceptable. Can't believe this is the new parliament. The parliament doesn't belong to any government. It belongs to 'we the people'. It was made ugly, but now this? Unacceptable. He added, "We have been a country with heavy monsoons for ages. How



long will it take our architects to build leakage-proof buildings? There isn't any modern public building or house which doesn't leak. Since independence, we haven't constructed a single building that is eco-friendly, durable, convenient, and aesthetically pleasing." The filmmaker said we have failed our ancestors. Delhi received heavy rainfall on 31 July and in the wee hours of August 1. It resulted in waterlogging in several localities of Delhi-NCR. The IMD has issued warnings of intermittent showers through August 5. On the work front, Vivek Agnihotri is currently working on the film The Delhi Files as well as Parva - An Epic Tale of Dharma, which is said to be based on the Hindu epic Mahabharata.

## Priyanka Chopra returns home to daughter Malti Marie helping nani Madhu Chopra make rotis: 'After a hard day at work...'



Priyanka shared a series of photos and videos on Instagram, starting with a selfie showing how she wears padding before performing daredevil stunts for the film. She wrote, "Partial padding for stunts. Takes forever to get into costume. Sorry, ADs ??." The next photo shows Malti holding a wooden rolling pin as she adorably tries to make a roti. The Barfi actor also shared a sweet video of her karaoke night with Malti as they sing a track from Moana.

Priyanka Chopra has been busy shooting her upcoming film The Bluff in Australia for months, but the actor isn't feeling homesick as she is accompanied by her mom Madhu Chopra and daughter, Malti Marie Chopra. Recently, Priyanka shared glimpses of her life in Australia, which involves coming home to a busy kitchen where her mom makes delicious desi meals, with Malti helping her make chapatis.

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Priyanka also shared a video of her mother making ladyfinger sabzi and her manager, Anjula Acharya, pre-

paring the dough for chapatis. Thanking them for their presence in Australia, she wrote, "Coming back home after a really hard day at work to a home-cooked meal by my mom, and on this instance, my girl Anjula and my team, was such a blessing and exactly what I needed to recuperate and go and do it again tomorrow. ??? @khushboobajpai06 @tylerwincott15 @oysterlily. Main chefs in the kitchen: @anjula\_acharya @drmadhuachopra." In another clip, Priyanka is seen sleeping on set. The post ended with Priyanka flaunting her curly hair from her vanity van. Priyanka Chopra began shooting for The Bluff in June. Earlier, her husband Nick Jonas accompanied her on set, but after his return to the USA to fulfill his work commitments, Priyanka's mom Madhu Chopra flew in to be with her. Priyanka also took a brief break from shooting in July to attend Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's wedding in Mumbai. On the professional front, Priyanka is currently awaiting the release of Heads of State, which also stars John Cena and Idris Elba in the lead roles. She is also producing the documentary Born Hungry, which tells the true story of Sash Simpson, a young Indian individual who runs away from home, is adopted by a Canadian family, and eventually becomes the chef-owner of a trendy restaurant in Toronto.

## Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant walk hand-in-hand as they attend Olympic games in Paris.



After their extravagant wedding, Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant headed to Paris with the Ambani family to support the Indian athletes at the ongoing Olympics. Recently, photos of the couple taking a walk and spending quality time together in the French capital have been making rounds on social media.

In the videos, Radhika and Anant are seen walking on the streets of Paris hand-in-hand. While Radhika was dressed in a chic white and blue outfit, Anant wore a comfortable-looking shirt with a floral print. The newlywed couple were seen enjoying the European summer

amid heavy security, surrounded by many bodyguards. Take a look: In another video, Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant were seen bidding goodbye to Nita Ambani and Mukesh Ambani as they were leaving Paris. Nita, a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), was present in the French capital for the ongoing games. Earlier, the Ambani family was photographed attending a competition at the Olympics. Apart from Nita and Mukesh, Isha Ambani, her husband Anand Pirmal, and Anant and Radhika were also seen attending the game. In a recent interview with ANI, Anant and Radhika congratulated the Indian athletes and wished them luck. Anant said, "I am sure that with god's grace, the Indian team will perform very well and we will win many medals. I am sure the Indian team will make every Indian like me proud." Expressing her excitement, Radhika Merchant said, "We are very excited because we watched the first India match and we won, which made it even more exciting... Our odds are really good and a lot of young people are getting inspired..."

Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant had been engaged since 2022. The couple tied the knot on July 12 after a series of pre-wedding festivities. They hosted two receptions post their grand wedding.

## Citadel Honey Bunny teaser: Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Varun Dhawan introduce Raj and DK's version of international spy universe.

Citadel: Honey Bunny, starring Samantha Ruth Prabhu and Varun Dhawan, debuted its first teaser and announced a release date in Mumbai on Thursday. Directed by Raj and DK, the show follows Samantha and Varun's spy characters on a high-stakes, globe-trotting adventure. In the one-and-a-half minute teaser, we see Varun and Samantha's characters disguising themselves as they take on different missions. The teaser has a revamped version of 'Raas Baaki Baas Baaki' playing in the background, as the two take on their enemies. The teaser also features Kay Kay Menon, Saqib Saleem, Sikandar Kher, among others.



Citadel: Honey Bunny is a spin-off of the original Citadel series, which stars Priyanka Chopra and Richard Madden. Amazon Prime Video had previously announced that the spin-offs of the original series will be set in India, Spain, Italy and Mexico with Priyanka's show being the anchor point of all these shows. The Indian spin-off is the first one to be released. However, after the release of Citadel, the series got a lot of negative reviews. The show was promoted all over the world by its lead stars but failed to generate much interest from the audience. Despite

this, the show was renewed for a second season. Russo Brothers, known for Avengers films, were involved in the making of the show. It was previously announced that Joe Russo would come back to direct the second season of Citadel but in light of recent announcements, with him and Anthony Russo going back to MCU for future Avengers films, it seems like Citadel might be taken over by someone else.

## Dimple Kapadia says she was naive when she married Rajesh Khanna, thought he would sing 'Mere Sapno Ki Rani' to her: 'I was shattered'

Dimple Kapadia was just a teenager when she fell in love with superstar Rajesh Khanna. They soon got married and she left the movies for a few years. In an earlier interview, Dimple once shared that she was quite naive when she fell in love with Rajesh. In fact, she described herself as so "filmy" that even thought Rajesh would sing "Mere Sapno Ki Raani" for her in the mountains.

Talking at FICCI FLO Jaipur Chapter a few years ago, Dimple said, "Because I am such a filmy kid, you know I actually thought Rajesh Khanna ji would sing 'Mere Sapno Ki Rani Kab Aayegi Tu'. He will take me to the mountains and sing." As Dimple laughed while sharing the anecdote, she said that she was quite "young" when she met him and was strongly influenced by the movies. "I swear I am not lying, because I was so young. And there was such an impact of the movies. Toh jab mountains pe pohanche aur gaana bhi nahi hua, hawa bhi nahi chali toh meri toh haalat kharab ho gayi (So when we reached on the mountains but there was no song and no gust of wind, I was in a bad state) because my dream was shattered. Because I seriously believed it. I mean how dumb can you get? But well that was me," she said.

Dimple was asked about her best role in life during the same conversation and she said, "The best role of my life has been Mrs Rajesh Khanna. That's been my best role." Dimple and Rajesh stayed together for almost 8 years before getting separated but they never got divorced. They shared two daughters - Twinkle and Rinke



Khanna. Dimple spoke about her love story with Rajesh in the same chat and said that she met him soon after she signed Bobby. She was approached for Bobby when she was only 13 and there was a 15 year age gap between her and Rajesh Khanna. She recalled that after she signed Raj Kapoor's film, she, along with other film celebrities, was called for a function to Ahmedabad. Rajesh was also on the same flight and they happened to be sitting next to each other. "So he sat next to me, and I was looking at him. Very cleverly I told him 'vahan toh boht crowd hoga, bheed hogi, aap mera haath pakdoge na?' He said 'haan bilkul'. I said 'hamesha ke liye?' (I told him there will be so much crowd there, will you hold my hand? He said yes, of course. I asked forever?) I was very filmy and yeah, the rest is history. It happened."

## Sreeleela didn't quit Varun Dhawan's upcoming comedy flick, she was never a part of it: Ramesh Taurani



In a statement, the film producer revealed that the makers haven't yet finalised any actress opposite Varun in the film. He said, "We have not yet approached anyone for the role. We are still in the process of finalising the cast. The first schedule has just been completed, and we will make an official announcement once we have locked someone for that role. Until then, we request audiences not to believe any rumors."

After Main Tera Hero, Judwaa 2, and Coolie No. 1, Varun Dhawan is reuniting with his father, David Dhawan, for a new comedy film produced by Ramesh Taurani. Recently, rumours surfaced on social media about Telugu actor Sreeleela quitting the movie. However, Taurani has clarified that Sreeleela was never part of the film in the first place.

In a statement, the film producer revealed that the makers haven't yet finalised any actress opposite Varun in the film. He said, "We have not yet approached anyone for the role. We are still in the process of finalising the cast. The first schedule has just been completed, and we will make an official announcement once we have locked someone for that role. Until then, we request audiences not to believe any rumors." Sreeleela is a well-known face in Telugu cinema and has starred in films like Dhamaka, Skanda, Bhagavanth Kesari, Aadikeshava and Guntur Kaaram. As for Varun Dhawan, he has Jawan director Atlee's Baby John in the pipeline. The film is a Hindi-language remake of Atlee's Tamil film Theri (2013). Varun will also feature in Raj and DK's Citadel: Honey Bunny, an India-set spin-off of the American spy show Citadel, which starred Priyanka Chopra in the lead role. He will once again share the screen with Janhvi Kapoor after Bawaal in Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari, produced by Karan Johar.

## Time to move on from T20 World Cup triumph and focus on what lies ahead: Rohit Sharma



GNS News Agency, August 1

Ahead of the 3-match ODI series against Sri Lanka, skipper Rohit Sharma said that it was time to move on from the euphoria of winning the T20 World Cup and look forward to the new challenges that Team India will face next, including the Champions Trophy set to take place next year. "I had a good time off from cricket. It was a great feeling to come back home after winning the World Cup...what we experienced in Delhi and Mumbai. But yeah, now we have to move on, cricket moves on," Rohit said on the eve of the first ODI between India and Sri Lanka on Thursday.

"Whatever we have done in the past, that was good for that particular period of time, but time keeps moving forward and we also need to keep moving forward. That's what happened after the 2023 World Cup. There was a lot of disappointment, but we had to move on and look forward to this World Cup. Now, that the T20 World Cup is

over, we have to think about what lies ahead of us as a team. Yeah, there is plenty to look forward to, a big tournament coming up," he added. Talking about new head coach Gautam Gambhir, Rohit said, "I know Gambhir for a very long time and we have played a little bit of cricket together. He has a very clear mind and knows what he wants from the team." "Basically, our chats have centred around what the team needs, what are our shortcomings, where have we done well etc. It was a discussion on how to take the team forward. But we don't want to plan too far ahead. We are here for three games, and the idea is to take something back from these three games, and learn how we want to play and what we want to achieve in ODI cricket," he said.

Speaking about taking a call on who will be India's wicketkeeper batter for the ODIs, the captain said that it was a tough decision between KL Rahul and Rishabh Pant, maintaining that both the players are "match-winners" in their own way. Pant made a return to India colours during the T20 World Cup in the Americas, while Rahul will be eyeing his first one-day game since this January during the opening match against Sri Lanka on Friday.

"It's a tough call (wicketkeeper-batter between Rahul and Pant) to make. Both are quality players, and you know the abilities of both the players. They are match-winners in their own way. They have won a lot of games for us in the past," the 37-year-old said. "It is not easy to pick a team or a player when you have quality like that. It is always nice to have problems like that while picking up the teams, so you know that there is quality in the squad. I look forward to these kind of problems till I am the captain," he said.

## Nikhat Zareen's Olympic campaign ends with shocking loss to China's Yu

GNS News Agency, August 1

Paris: In one of the biggest upsets of the Olympic Games boxing competition, two-time world champion Nikhat Zareen (50kg) bowed out after a 0-5 loss to Asian Games gold medalist Wu Yu, completely outmaneuvered by the Chinese in a stunningly lopsided bout here on Thursday. Nikhat was unseeded for the Games as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which is holding the boxing competition, doesn't recognise the International Boxing Association (IBA), which conducts the world championship. One of India's strongest medal contenders, she had been tasked to navigate a nightmarish draw. "Sorry guys," an emotional Nikhat said after the loss. "It was a learning experience for me. I had not played her before. She was faster. I will analyse this bout once I am home. I was unseeded and this wasn't my first match, she was playing her first, it also impacts. It was an intense bout," she added. "I had worked hard, prepared myself physically and mentally for this Olympics. I will come back strong." Meeting each other for the first time, Nikhat was put under pressure by the top-seeded reigning flyweight (52kg) world champion in the opening round itself. Yu was quick off the blocks and though Nikhat tried to counter-attack, she wasn't able to connect. The reason being, Yu's brilliant footwork, which allowed her to consistently switch her stance to avoid the blows.

Trailing 1-4, Nikhat found a bit more success in the second round as she landed a few straight punches but Yu managed to connect some telling hooks on the Indian's face. Nikhat ended the round with a few body shots. Not much changed in the third round as Nikhat desperately tried to connect but continued to fail due to Yu's nimble movements. "She was not attacking much and my punches were going in the air. There was no point keep doing that and lose energy. I had to wait. I wanted to do better in Round 1 and 2," the 28-year-old said. Nikhat had moved



down from her preferred 52kg weight division as it didn't feature in the Paris Olympics after her first world championship gold medal in 2022. "I had not eaten in the last two days for weight cut. I had not recovered and played first bout. If I had won the effort I would have been appreciated but it will now look like excuse. I gave my best," said Nikhat, who had defeated Germany's Maxi Karina Kloetzer in her opening round on Sunday. Despite this loss, Nikhat remains one of the most consistent Indian boxers, having won back-to-back gold medals at the world championships and the 2022 Commonwealth Games besides a bronze in the Asian Games last year and silver at the prestigious Strandja Memorial tournament in February. Nikhat thus becomes the fourth boxer out of the six-member Indian contingent to get knocked out of the Paris Games. Former world number one Amit Panghal (51kg), Commonwealth Games bronze medalist Jaimine Lamboria (57kg) and Asian Games bronze winner Preeti Pawar (54kg) have all crashed out from the competition. Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) and worlds bronze winner Nishant Dev (71kg) are one win away from confirming medals.

## Dhoni on playing IPL 2025: 'Ball not in our court, will decide in best interest of CSK'

GNS News Agency, August 1

Dhoni said a decision on his playing future with CSK will depend on the BCCI's rules for the upcoming IPL 2025 auction. (CSK) Dhoni said a decision on his playing future with CSK will depend on the BCCI's rules for the upcoming IPL 2025 auction. (CSK) Will MS Dhoni have another go in Yellow for the Chennai Super Kings next IPL season? The legendary India wicket-keeper has left that decision down to the BCCI and the "best interest" of CSK.

The 43-year-old Dhoni, whose IPL 2024 season had ended with a group-stage exit earlier this year, said a return to the field with CSK would depend on the rules set by the BCCI and the IPL governing council for the upcoming IPL 2025 auction. "There is a lot of time for it. We have to see what decision they take on player retention etc. Right now, the ball is not in our court." So, once the rules and regulations get formalised, I will take a call, but needs to be in the best interest of the team," Dhoni said as he answered a fan's question during a promotional event in Hyderabad. A day before the start of the IPL 2024 season in Chennai, Dhoni announced that he had stepped down as CSK's captain having led the side to five titles and passed the baton to Ruturaj Gaikwad. On Wednesday, the BCCI had held a meeting with all the 10 IPL franchise owners in Mumbai to formalize the procedures and standards for the upcoming IPL auction. Teams have been divided in their opinions regarding the number of player retentions and the need for another mega auction within a short span. The Indian Express understands that a majority of the teams who are part of the tournament since its inception are keen on continuity and have made a strong pitch to have the big auctions in a 4 or 5 year cycle. With the mood among the franchises very clear, the ball is now in the BCCI court to decide.

Citing the last two big player auctions which were held in a four year cycle (2018 and 2022), it is learnt that some of the top franchises have informed the BCCI that they are not keen on losing their key talents at this stage, especially after investing in them over the last three years. Dhoni's decision would therefore ultimately whittle down to the structure set by the BCCI. Bumrah favourite bowler' Meanwhile, Dhoni also highlighted India speedster Jasprit Bumrah as his current favourite bowlers. How-



Speaking at a promotional event in Hyderabad, Dhoni said his Chennai Super Kings playing future will depend on the BCCI's rules and procedures for the upcoming IPL 2025 Auction.

ever, the two-time World Cup winning captain refrained from choosing a batter between Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli. "It's easy to pick my favourite bowler because Bumrah is there. It's difficult to pick a batsman because we have many good batsmen. But that doesn't mean bowlers aren't good," said Dhoni. "It's difficult to pick one among batters as whomever I see batting, he looks the best. But when I see someone else he also looks great. But as long as Team India is winning, I don't want to pick a batter (as my favourite). I hope they will keep scoring runs for the team," Dhoni added. Bumrah made his international debut for India in Australia under Dhoni's leadership. The pace spearhead was also adjudged the Player of the Tournament during India's T20 World Cup win in the Caribbean in June.

## Paris Olympics hockey: Why the defeat to Belgium ushers in hope and optimism for India



GNS News Agency, August 1

If any positives can be taken from a loss, India can leave with their heads held high despite a 1-2 reversal against defending men's hockey champions Belgium at the Paris Olympics on Thursday. On another sweltering day, Abhishek put India ahead with a rare open-play goal in the second quarter, but the Europeans hit back with two goals in the third period. Despite their best efforts, Harmapreet Singh & Co couldn't fashion a turnaround.

The Indian skipper had scored two vital goals in the penultimate minutes in the games against New Zealand and Argentina, and he had a chance to do likewise against Belgium as well, but his thunderous drag-flick was deflected away from the target by Florent van Aubel on the goal line. India asked for a video referral in the hope for a penalty stroke, but the replay provided no joy. There were no points to show for India's efforts on Thursday, but it was arguably their best performance so far in the tournament. They pressed high up the pitch, showed a lot of intensity and gave the Belgians, coming off a 6-2 thrashing of Australia, a tough time. The defence held strong and goalkeeper PR Sreejesh thwarted Alexander Hendrickx's drag-flicks repeatedly, 10 of Belgium's 11 penalty corners going in vain. But the European stalwarts know more than one way to skin a cat. A tough loss for us today! We started strong in the first quarter, maintaining a solid defense and creating early chances. Moving into the second quarter, our team continued to dominate possession and create numerous opportunities. Abhishek shone brightly. At the start of the second half, they raised the tempo straightaway. The ball was passed from the centre of the field to the left wing, and after some great work from van Aubel, Thibaut Stockbroekx was at the right place to just turn the ball past Sreejesh and into an unprotected goal. The equaliser lifted the holders and they had much the better of proceedings from thereon. It could be gauged from the fact that India earned just two penalty corners in the game, their primary avenue for goals in recent times. The one penalty corner that the Belgians

did find joy from, didn't bring a goal from the initial shot, Sreejesh again keeping Hendrickx at bay, but in the ensuing melee, it was veteran John-John Dohmen who just pushed the ball over the line for the eventual winner.

Despite the defeat, India head coach Craig Fulton sounded upbeat. "It was a good performance. We just need to maintain confidence ahead of our next game and then the quarterfinals," the South African told Jio Cinema. "Even when we had a man down due to a yellow card (shown to Raj Kumar Pal), which I didn't think was warranted, we kept going and created a chance in the 59th minute, which was deflected away from the goal line. I would have been happier with a draw." Aussie challenge That next game, with a turnaround time of little over 24 hours, is against Australia, who bounced back after their drubbing at the hands of Belgium to hand one of their own. New Zealand being at the wrong end of a 0-5 thrashing with Blake Govers getting a hat-trick. It has been a long time since India got the better of the Aussies in a World Cup or Olympics, but the present batch from Down Under doesn't quite inspire awe as did the world-beaters under match tactician Ric Charlesworth.

That may give Harmanpreet cause for optimism despite the disappointment against Belgium. "We played well and there was good coordination between midfield and the forward line, but we couldn't hold on after taking the lead. The defence, may be, could have done better, and we could have been more clinical in attack as well," he told the broadcasters after the game. The body language of the Indian players seemed upbeat despite the defeat, as they knew it was a much better performance than the one they dished out against Ireland two days ago, when ironically they had come away with full points. Abhishek's goal was arguably the highlight of the Indian performance. He benefitted from some sloppy play by Arthur de Sloover a little outside the Belgian circle and despite several Belgian shirts swooping on him, took a low shot on the turn and beat a startled Vincent Vanasch lot on his near post. But Belgium showed that they can grind out a hard-fought win after a comprehensive performance against a perennial favourite team. They would be pleased with a 2-1 result against a team that finished on the podium three years ago, and has its sights set on another medal in the French capital. Both teams were already through to the quarterfinals before Thursday's game. It was a matter of getting themselves in top gear going into the business end of the competition. The other group features heavyweights like The Netherlands, Germany, Spain and Great Britain, and results there have not always gone on expected lines. So, it's more about the performance in the group matches than ensuring a favourable quarterfinal match-up.

## Ticket collector from Pune, Swapnil Kusale wins India's third shooting bronze at Paris Olympics

GNS News Agency, August 1

At the tender age of 14, Swapnil Kusale was selected to be part of a Maharashtra government sports scheme, where he chose shooting as his preferred sport. On Thursday, the 28-year-old from Kolhapur, won a bronze medal in the men's 50m 3P final at the Chateauroux Shooting Centre in Paris Olympics. His father, 57-year-old Suresh still remembers the day when his elder son Swapnil shifted to a residential school at the age of ten.

"Right from the age of ten years, Swapnil has stayed in government residential schools and later training in Pune as well working as TTE with The Indian Railways in Pune. He rarely gets time to visit us at the village but whenever he comes, he makes sure to bring something for all of us. To see him coming home with an Olympic medal this time will be indeed a special moment for all of us and we would make him stay longer at the village this time. The village kids and elders should also see his Olympic medal," said Kusale Senior while speaking with The Indian Express from the village. With the village famous for organic farming as well an alcohol free village, most of the kids at the village have been sent to residential schools nearby, Kusale too was sent to the Bhogawati School In Parite, Kolhapur before he was selected for the Maharashtra's Kreedha Prabodhini scheme at the age of 14. It meant that the youngster was initiated in shooting at first under the government scheme.

"Our village is famous for a drug-free ban apart from practising organic farming. A young Swapnil would never miss his morning run and was very fit from a young age. When he joined the residential school and later the Kreedha Prabodhini scheme, he wanted to make a name in sports. When the coaches decided to put him in shooting, he would draw us the targets and show how it's done whenever he visited home," says mother Anita who is now the sarpanch of the village.

Four years after he started shooting, Swapnil won the title in the 50m rifle prone event in Asian Championships in 2015 before he won the national title in the same discipline edging out London Olympics bronze medalist Gagan Narang and Chain Singh in the final. His interest in the 50m 3P event started in the fag end of his junior days.

In 2015, the Maharashtra shooter joined Indian Railways as a Ticket Collector, something which helped him also get his first own rifle. "Swapnil and other shooters would shoot with a common rifle initially before he was allotted a rifle by the Maharashtra Government. When he joined the Indian Railways in 2015, he saved his first six month's salary to get his first rifle costing more than Rs 3 lakhs. Later in 2017, when he finished with a bronze in the Commonwealth Championships, I asked him, how much did Gagan Narang's gun cost. He told me it cost Rs 9 lakhs. Along with some of my savings and his salary, we got him a new rifle costing more than eight lakhs. He also understood that while rifles can cost a lot, it's up to him to shoot well," says Kusale Senior. Three junior world cup appearances and a bronze in prone event in Asian Championships till 2018 would mean that Kusale would be in the Indian teams but it was not till the ISSF World Cup at Cairo in 2022, that the Indian shooter would come into limelight. Although he missed the medal due to the final shot of 8.2, he bagged the Paris quota for India with a fourth place finish. His coach Deepali Deshpande said he would spend his time in 50m 3p events though it wasn't his category.

"When Swapnil came to us in junior camp in 2013,



he was chosen due to 10m air rifle but he would often spend his time in 50m 3p events and range. He found the .22 rifle recoil in 50m 3p events as fascinating. His prone position was strong as his body posture and fitness helped him in a balanced posture, a rarity in young athletes. In one of his early nationals, we had him enrolled in the junior 50m 3p event. He shot scores around 1167-1168 and would have gone to the senior final had we listed him in the senior event. But then he surprised us with that score in his first 3p nationals," remembers coach Deepali Deshpande. Father Suresh is also quick to share, "In his early days, each of the ammunition shot cost more than Rs 120-130 and he would be sometimes worried about the cost of training. But whatever number of shots she shot, he would tell me that he aims to learn quickly," remembers the father. Absolutely thrilled for Swapnil's epic bronze medal win in shooting at the Paris Olympics! ?? Your hard work, grit, and passion have truly paid off. Competing at the highest level and coming away with a medal in shooting is a testament to your dedication and talent. YLast year, Kusale was in the lead in the 50m 3P final in Hangzhou Asian Games before a 7.6 in standing series saw him finish fourth. But the Indian paired up with Akhil Sheoran and Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar to win the gold Apart from the pressures of shooting at the highest level, Kusale has to adjust to the new format.

With the 50m 3p event now seeing shooters shoot 20 shots each in kneeling, prone and standing series as compared to 40 shots each in the three positions earlier, Kusale had to adjust to the new format. "In his early senior days, he would quickly shoot close to 140-150 shots and end his round. And it worked to his advantage. He is a rhythmic shooter and once he is in good rhythm, it sets him up in the finals too. Under the new format, the time for recovery is less as it's just two series per position. So we focused on him getting his rhythm quickly so that he makes a good start. The way he recovered in the qualification after three nine's to shoot three consecutive ten's to make it to the final made him in a good rhythm," says Deshpande. While the lactose intolerance means that Swapnil can't have milk products, mother Anita knows what her son will ask for when he returns home with the medal. "The first thing he likes to have is bhakri and methi sabzi. Can he have it three times a day and that's what he would ask us on his return to celebrate the medal," says the mother.