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Airbus Beluga, the 'Whale of the Sky,' lands at Hyderabad's airport

Hyderabad: Airbus Beluga, one of the world's largest cargo aircraft, landed at Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in the early hours of Friday.

Known as the 'Whale of the Sky' the Airbus A300-608ST, with the callsign 'BCO4003,' touched down at 12:23 am on August 30, after departing from Muscat International Airport at 7:27 pm (local time) the previous day. The aircraft resumed its journey to Thailand at 3 pm on Friday. The aircraft began its journey on August 27, taking off from Toulouse, France, before landing in Marseille, France.

My comments taken out of context, says Revanth after Supreme Court rap



GNS News Agency, August 30

Hyderabad: A day after the Supreme Court rapped Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for his comments on the bail granted to BRS MLC K Kavitha, the Chief Minister expressed his regret for making such comments. However, he also claimed that the remarks attributed to him in 'such reports' were taken out of context and reiterated that he was a firm believer of the judicial process. During a chat with media persons after laying the foundation for installation of Telangana Thalli statue in the Secretariat, the Chief Minister had commented on the bail granted by the Supreme Court to Kavitha, raising doubts about how she secured bail within five months when former Delhi Chief Minister Manish Sisodia got it after 15 months. He also said Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was yet to get relief. The Supreme Court took his remarks very seriously. "What sort of statement is this by a responsible Chief Minister?" the apex court had asked on Thursday. Following this, on Friday, the Chief Minister posted on X stating that he had the highest regard and full faith in the Indian Judiciary. "I understand that certain press reports on August 29, 2024 containing comments attributed to me have given the impression that I am questioning the judicial wisdom of the Hon'ble Court." I reiterate that I am a firm believer of the judicial process. I unconditionally express my regret for the statements reflected in the press reports. The remarks attributed to me in such reports have been taken out of context. I have unconditional respect & highest regard for the Judiciary & its independence. As a firm believer in the Constitution of India and its ethos, I have and continue to hold the Judiciary in its highest esteem," Revanth Reddy said.

Rajgopal Reddy's comments on Uttam as CM trigger turmoil in Congress



GNS News Agency, August 30

Nalgonda: Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy's comments that Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy would become the next Chief Minister has triggered turmoil in the State unit of the Congress. The Irrigation Minister had conducted a review meeting on irrigation projects in the erstwhile district here on Friday. Speaking on the occasion, the Munugode MLA said the Irrigation Minister had all the qualities to become the next Chief Minister. "Very soon, we will all be calling him as Chief Minister. In future, you will become the Chief Minister. I have moles on my tongue and whatever I profess turns true. I am not saying this for fun," Rajgopal Reddy said. However, his comments triggered a turmoil in the Congress. Rajgopal Reddy has been eyeing a Cabinet berth and had even claimed that the high command would allot him the Home Ministry portfolio, which was currently being held by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. It may be recalled that Revanth Reddy, during the Lok Sabha election campaign at Bhongir in April early this year, had said that Roads and Building Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy had all the qualities to become the Chief Minister.

BC welfare residential colleges announce new admission dates

Hyderabad: The Mahatma Jyothiba Phule Telangana Backward Classes Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society on Friday extended the deadline to submit online applications for admissions to BSc (Hons) Agriculture till September 15. The BC Welfare residential degree colleges for women at Wanaparthy and Karimnagar are offering the programme for the academic year 2024-25.

Govt taking various measures at policy level to help fintech sector: PM Modi

GNS News Agency, August 30

Mumbai: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the government is taking various measures at the policy level to promote the fintech sector, which attracted over USD 31 billion investments in the last 10 years, and the abolition of the Angel Tax is also a step towards the growth of the segment. Addressing the Global Fintech Fest 2024 here, the Prime Minister also asked the regulators to take more measures to stop cyber frauds and further increase digital literacy among people. "Fintech has played a significant role in democratising financial services," he said, and expressed confidence that it will help in improving the quality of life for Indians.

Modi emphasised that adoption of fintech by Indians is "unmatched in speed and scale" and no such



example can be found anywhere else in the world. He said the transformation brought about by the fintech sector in India is not just limited to technology, but its social impact is far-reaching. He also stressed that fintech has dented the parallel economy and is bridging the gap between villages and cities on the financial services front. The Prime Minister also said that in the last 10 years, the fintech space has attracted investments of more than USD 31 billion and fintech

startups have grown by 500 per cent. He said it is festive season in India, there is also festivity in the economy and markets, in an apparent reference to the robust GDP growth and capital market scaling new highs. Modi also informed the gathering that loans worth over Rs 27 lakh crore have been disbursed under the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana, world's largest microfinance scheme. Speaking at the event, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said, digi-

tal technologies have been instrumental in expanding financial inclusion, improving efficiency and enabling real time services across the country. "Today, India stands as a global leader in digital payments, a feat achieved by combining proactive policy making with innovation and technological advancements. Collaboration between policy makers, regulators and innovators is the defining element of India's Fintech journey," Das said. The Reserve Bank's regulatory frameworks have facilitated new and innovative businesses to grow in an orderly manner, he said. "These regulatory initiatives reflect our commitment to support innovation with prudence. Our collaborative approach is visible in the fact that we have held a large number of interactions over the last one year with the Fintech sector players," he said.

PM Modi lays foundation stone of Vadhvan Port project in Maharashtra's Palghar



GNS News Agency, August 30

The Vadhvan Port of which PM Modi laid the foundation stone on Friday (August 30, 2024), is set to boost India's trade in many aspects because of its strategic location and capacity. Situated in Palghar, Maharashtra, Vadhvan Port will be India's largest deep-water port with an investment of 76,220 crore. Owing to its coasts, Maharashtra has centuries-old connection to international trade, Mr. Modi said. "Today is a historic day in India's journey towards progress," he said. The 'New India' knows its strength and has left behind the shackles of slavery, he added. The Vadhvan Port is expected to be a world-class maritime gateway that will boost the country's trade and economic growth by catering to large container vessels, offering deeper drafts, and accommodating ultra-

large cargo ships. The port, located near Dahanu town in Palghar district, will provide direct connectivity to international shipping routes, reducing transit times and costs.

Equipped with state-of-the-art technology and infrastructure, the port will feature deep berths, efficient cargo handling facilities, and modern port management systems. The port is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, stimulate local businesses, and contribute to the overall economic development of the region. The project incorporates sustainable development practices, with a focus on minimizing environmental impact and adhering to stringent ecological standards. Once operational, the port will enhance India's maritime connectivity and further strengthen its position as a global trade hub. Mr. Modi also launched the ₹360 crore National Roll Out of Vessel Communication and Support system, under which one lakh transponders will be installed in a phased manner on mechanised and motorised fishing vessels in 13 coastal states and Union Territories. The vessel communication and support system is an indigenous technology developed by ISRO, which will help in establishing two-way communication while fishermen are at sea and also help in rescue operations as well as ensure their safety. Mr. Modi also laid the foundation stone for important fishery infrastructure projects including development, upgradation and modernization of fishing harbours, fish landing centres and construction of fish markets.

Preethi Pal wins India's first bronze medal from para-athletics at 2024 Paralympics in women's T35 100m event



GNS News Agency, August 30 India's Preethi Pal won a bronze medal in the women's T35 100m event with a personal best time of 14.21 seconds at the Paralympics on Friday. The 23-year-old Preethi's bronze is India's first medal from para-athletics in the Paris Paralympics. China's Zhou Xia (13.58) and Guo Qianqian (13.74) won the gold and silver respectively. T35 classification is meant for athletes who have coordination impairments such as hypertonía, ataxia and athetosis, as well as cerebral palsy. Preethi was born to a farmer's family. She faced significant physical challenges, when she was born, her lower body was plastered 6 Days after birth. With weak legs and an irregular leg posture, making her prone to various diseases. She underwent various traditional treatments to strengthen her legs. At the age of five, she started wearing calipers and wore them for eight years. Despite many doubting her survival, Preethi proved to be a fighter, overcoming life-threatening conditions and emerged victorious, demonstrating with incredible strength and resilience. At 17, Preethi's perspective

began to shift when she watched the Paralympic Games on social media. She was inspired and realized that she too could pursue her dreams. Although she didn't win a medal at the Asian Para Games, Preethi remained motivated and aimed for the Paralympic Games. She moved to Delhi to train under Coach Gajender Singh. Together, they focused on refining her running techniques, leading to significant improvements in her performance. Preethi's dedication and hard work culminated in her selection for the World Para Athletics Championship, where she excelled, winning bronze medals in both the 100m and 200m events in 2024.

KTR draws Kharge's attention to the Bulldozer Raj unfolding in Telangana

GNS News Agency, August 30

Hyderabad: Drawing the attention of the AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge to the Congress government in Telangana going on a demolition spree, BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Friday wanted the Congress leadership to ensure that its rule in Telangana would not unfold yet another Bulldozer Raj in the country. Posting a video of 75 houses of the poor demolished in Mahbubnagar, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's own district at 3 am recently, making several destitute families shelterless without any prior notices, he said 25 of the houses raged were those of physically challenged.

570 mobile phones worth Rs 1.50 cr recovered by Cyberabad Police

Hyderabad: Cyberabad Police recovered 570 mobile phones worth Rs 1.50 crore, which were either stolen or lost, in the last 25 days. The phones were handed over safely to their owners on Friday. Under the supervision of DCP Crimes K. Narasimha, various wings in collaborative efforts recovered the phones using the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) portal. The recovered phones, were handed over to their owners here at the Cyberabad Police Commissionerate. During the event, Narasimha stated that in the past eight months, Cyberabad Police have recovered a total of 2,696 stolen mobile phones. Of these, 1,200 phones were recovered in the last three months, with 570 retrieved in just the past 25 days.

Avani Lekhara wins India's first gold at 2024 Paralympics in 10m air rifle



GNS News Agency, August 30

The incredible Avani Lekhara became the first Indian woman to win two Paralympic gold medal with her victory in the women's 10m air rifle (SH1) event on Friday (August 30, 2024) as compatriot Mona Agarwal claimed a bronze. Avani's gold medal is India's first at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris.

Winner of the Tokyo Paralympics gold three years ago, Avani, 22, shot a superb 249.7 to erase her own record of 249.6 set in Japanese capital, while Mona, who took up shooting sport in 2022, notched up 228.7 for the bronze. Avani, who is wheel-chair bound after a car mishap left her paralysed below the waist when she was 11-years-old, had become the first woman shooter from the country to win medals in shooting at the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021. SH1 category in shooting involves athletes who have movement affected in their arms, lower trunk, legs or have no limbs. In the qualification, defending champion Avani shot 625.8 to be placed second behind Iryna Shchetnik, who broke the Paralympic qualification record with a score of 627.5. Mona, the two-time World Cup gold medallist competing in her maiden Paralympics, shot 623.1 in the qualification and entered the final in fifth place.

KCR plans mass contact programme to expose Congress



GNS News Agency, August 30

Hyderabad: Leader of Opposition and Bharat Rashtira Samithi president K Chandrashekhara Rao is all set to move into agitation mode once again, with plans being drawn up for the former Chief Minister to soon tour the State and interact directly with the people once again. The move, which will have the primary objective of exposing the double standards of the Congress party and the failures of the Congress government, will begin after a meeting with party leaders and cadre around September 10.

It is likely to hinge on the growing resentment among the people against the State government on multiple counts, right from the botched up implementation of the crop loan waiver, the neglect of the agriculture sector and other issues that have a direct bearing on the lives of the common man in Telangana. The delay in launching the Rythu Bharosa farm input assistance and farmers struggling to get irrigation water too will figure among issues the BRS president will highlight during his mass contact programme, which is likely to see him travel across the State by bus, much on the lines of his election campaign prior to the Lok Sabha elections. Chandrashekhara Rao, according to party sources, has already held interactions with party leaders on launching a movement or agitation on the farm loan waiver issue, which is seeing farmers protesting on the streets in almost every district. Though he has already collected information on what is happening on the ground level, the next effort is to meet the affected farmers and the general public, to get direct feedback from them and to assure them of his support and to instill confidence in them that the party would put pressure on the State government to ensure that every eligible farmer got the loan waiver. Party sources said there could be public meetings that Chandrashekhara Rao would address during the proposed tour, though the plans are still being finalized by him. The move will also include his efforts to rejuvenate the party and to build confidence among the cadre that though the party was on the back foot, it could never be written off. BRS leaders have already been doing the ground work by interacting with farmers and gathering data in multiple ways on how many were left out on the waiver list. The move also is expected to inject some vigour into the party ahead of the local body polls.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

'Donkey route'

FOUR Samana-based youths have made a ferocious appeal to every Punjabi: Never take the illegal route to the West. It's a bitter case of once bitten, twice shy. They are lucky to have survived the notorious and perilous 'donkey route' — they were robbed, deprived of food for days and made to trek barefoot. An unscrupulous travel agent who had assured them of a work visa to the US is to blame for their ordeal. Their families sold land and mortgaged jewellery to raise around Rs 35 lakh each. But they were stranded in Spain for weeks and had to pay Rs 25 lakh to another agent to finally make it to the US.

It's a familiar story that keeps playing itself out again and again despite all the news reports about desperate migrants pushing their luck too far. There are two key questions: Is such a passage to America worth risking one's life and savings? And what are India and other countries doing to bust the thriving racket? This international ring cannot be wiped out without a well-coordinated transcontinental operation. The ring of human smugglers has operators everywhere — from Asia to Europe and Central America — and each of them extracts his or her pound of flesh on the way.

The routine arrests after every such incident are just not enough to tackle the menace. Wily agents will be low for a while and then reappear to ply their nefarious trade.

Those who try to go abroad illegally are also at fault. A vigorous public awareness campaign is a must to warn aspiring migrants about the perils of bypassing official channels. Movies like Aaja Mexico Chaliye and Dunki have done their bit; the onus is on various stakeholders to fight this battle together.

Gandhi Sagar not yet ready for cheetahs; Kuno continues to face prey, predator challenges

Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park, the first home to translocated cheetahs in India, continues to struggle with a high leopard population and a low prey base, while the twin challenges have delayed preparations at the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, selected as the second site for cheetah introduction. Summary records from meetings of the Centre's Cheetah Project Steering Committee reveal that prey augmentation and leopard management are among the major challenges facing the grand initiative since the reintroduction of cheetahs in India in September 2022. The low prey density is also one of the reasons why cheetahs spent an extended period in enclosures in Kuno after being brought back from the wild in August last year, following the death of three cheetahs due to septicemia. As an interim solution, authorities have been introducing prey into both Kuno and Gandhi Sagar. The high leopard population in both areas also prompted the initiation of a leopard translocation drive. Cheetahs have coexisted with leopards and lions in Africa, but some officials in India consider the high leopard population in Kuno and Gandhi Sagar a problem as it would "reduce the prey biomass for cheetahs". Madhya Pradesh has the maximum number of leopards in the country at 3,907 (up from 3,421 in 2018), according to the government's "Status of Leopards in India" report launched earlier this year. In a steering committee meeting on June 18, Sanjay Raikhere, DFO Mandsaur, reported that there were 24 leopards in the 64 sq km enclosure being prepared for the new batch of cheetahs in Gandhi Sagar. According to sources, 15 leopards have been relocated from there so far. Sources have told PTI that Gandhi Sagar is "not 100 per cent ready" for cheetahs, largely owing to the leopard and prey base challenges. "We are working on making the fencing leopard-proof. We also need to improve the prey population both inside and outside the enclosure," a source said. Gandhi Sagar is spread across 368 sq km and has an additional 2,500 sq km area surrounding it. According to the "Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in Gandhi Sagar", five to eight cheetahs will be released into a 64 sq-km predator-proof fenced area in the first phase with a focus on breeding. The long-term goal is to establish a metapopulation of 60-70 cheetahs in the Kuno-Gandhisagar landscape. According to experts, the presence of dominant predators like leopards and lions influences cheetah's home range and space use. Cheetahs, known for their exceptional speed and agility, are adapted to hunt primarily in open habitats. In contrast, leopards are highly adaptable to a wide range of habitats and have a more versatile diet. As a result, cheetahs tend to avoid direct confrontation with leopards by choosing habitats and times when leopards are less active. According to Project Cheetah's annual report for 2022-23, in Kuno, leopards were observed being chased away during encounters with cheetah coalitions. The action plan for introducing cheetahs in Gandhi Sagar mentions a "significant population" of leopards, estimated at around 70, in the western range of the wildlife sanctuary. "All leopards within the fenced area will be captured and relocated before the cheetahs are brought here," the plan reads. It further notes that "cheetahs and leopards can coexist if there is an adequate prey base and other resources available in other parts of the sanctuary." Records obtained by PTI through an RTI application reveal that committee members have repeatedly expressed serious concerns about prey availability and leopard-related challenges in nearly every meeting held so far. They have consistently emphasized the importance of "in-situ prey buildup", saying "active prey augmentation through translocation cannot continue indefinitely." According to the summary record of the meeting dated June 18, Rs 3.75 crore has been spent on grass revival in an area of around 5,000 hectares in Kuno, as part of habitat improvement efforts to sustain a healthy prey base. In the same meeting, Qamar Qureshi, a scientist at the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), expressed concern over the low chinkara population in Gandhi Sagar (outside the enclosure) and emphasized the need to manage the high leopard density there. Steering Committee Chairman Rajesh Gopal stressed the need for an ecological, niche-based long-term solution to address the relative abundance of leopards. In a meeting held on March 12, S P Yadav, the former head of Project Cheetah and advisor to the steering committee, said the high density of leopards at Kuno,

BJP's 12-hour Bengal bandh evokes mixed response, workers block road and railway tracks



GNS News Agency, August 30

In Kolkata, roads looked less busy with fewer buses, auto-rickshaws, and taxis on roads than on normal weekdays. (Express Photo by Partha Paul) In Kolkata, roads looked less busy with fewer buses, auto-rickshaws, and taxis on roads than on normal weekdays. Workers of the BJP hit the streets on Wednesday, blocking roads and railway tracks across West Bengal to implement the 12-hour general strike called by the party to protest against the police action on agitators during the protest march to Nabanna over the rape and murder of a young trainee doctor at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. Meanwhile, the ruling Trinamool Congress is scheduled to hold a mega meeting on the foundation day of its student wing, Trinamool Chhatra Parishad, during the day. The BJP workers took to the streets in Kolkata since dawn, and launched rail blockades at various stations in the state to ensure the bandh was successful. Train services were disrupted between Bangaon-Sealdah which was later reinstated. Bandh supporters also blocked the Bandel-Howrah local train at Hooghly Station in the morning as they sat on the railway tracks. However, the police removed the BJP workers from the spot

Bombay HC slams SEBI, BSE, NSE for 'reckless' freezing of father and son's demat accounts; Imposes Rs. 80 lakh compensation cost on authorities



GNS News Agency, August 30

A division bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Firdosh P Pooniwalla on August 26 passed a judgement in two pleas by Dr. Pradeep Mehta, a gynaecologist and a senior citizen and his son Neil Mehta, a Non-Resident Indian (NRI). (File Photo) A division bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Firdosh P Pooniwalla on August 26 passed a judgement in two pleas by Dr. Pradeep Mehta, a gynaecologist and a senior citizen and his son Neil Mehta, a Non-Resident Indian (NRI). The Bombay High Court on Monday, while slamming SEBI, BSE and NSE for 'high-handed' and 'reckless' action to freeze demat account of the two petitioners, father and a son, asked the authorities to jointly pay Rs. 30 lakh and 50 lakh costs (total Rs. 80 lakhs) to petitioners within two weeks. The court declared their decisions as 'illegal' and 'invalid'. A division bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Firdosh P Pooniwalla on August 26 passed a judgement in two pleas by Dr. Pradeep Mehta, a gynaecologist and a senior citizen and his son Neil Mehta, a Non-Resident Indian (NRI).

The petitioners had challenged the freezing of their demat accounts by National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) under the regulations/orders of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) through letters of March and April, 2017 and August, 2018. The father, through advocate Yeshwant Shenoy argued that the action was taken merely because he happened to be one of the promoters of a company called Shrenuj & Com-

Basavaraj Bommai seeks court injunction against media after advocate claims he has private video of ex-Karnataka CM

GNS News Agency, August 30

Karnataka BJP MP Basavaraj Bommai has filed two suits in a Bengaluru court against an advocate, the media, and social media outlets, seeking an injunction against the transmission and publishing of any false and defamatory material against him. Bommai has named advocate Jagadeesh K N as the primary respondent in the two suits that were filed in the wake of the advocate claiming on social media that he had private videos of Bommai from his tenure as chief minister of Karnataka. The BJP MP from Haveri has sought an ex parte injunction order against media houses from publishing or transmitting defamatory material and a civil court in Bengaluru is expected to pass orders on the interim pleas on Wednesday. In one of the suits, Bommai has named Jagadeesh and 52 media platforms. In the second suit, he has named Jagadeesh, X Corp, Facebook, and Instagram. Bommai is represented by former Karnataka advocate general Prabhuling Navadgi. The Assembly constituency of Shiggaon in Haveri district which was earlier represented by Bommai is due for a bypoll soon on account of Bommai, who won the seat in 2023, being elected to the Lok Sabha in May this year. Bommai has rejected speculation that his son could be fielded as the BJP candidate for the Shiggaon bypoll. Bommai is among the dozens of elected representatives from Karnataka who have sought ex parte gag orders on the media against reporting on controversies related to them. Over the last few years, local courts in Bengaluru have issued ex parte gag orders against the media in several cases brought by bureaucrats, police officers, politicians, lawyers, and businessmen embroiled in controversies. In most of the cases, the ex parte temporary injunctions against the publication and broadcast of

after a while.

In Kolkata, roads looked less busy with fewer buses, auto-rickshaws, and taxis on roads than on normal weekdays. Private vehicles were also significantly less, though markets and shops remained open. Schools and colleges were open, but attendance in most private offices was less, with employees working from home. Many schools opted for online classes instead. Meanwhile, tension erupted in the Ghoshpara area of Bhatpara in the North 24 Parganas district over an alleged incident of firing, and reports suggested one person was injured. He was admitted to Barrackpore State General Hospital. Former Barrackpore MP and BJP leader Arjun Singh reached the spot, and accused the TMC of lobbing bombs. On Wednesday morning, BJP supporters took out a procession from Sukanta Mor to Vivekananda Mor in Kaliaganj city in the North Dinajpur district. They blocked the road at Vivekananda intersection for some time, after which the police came and dispersed the crowd. Except for a few scattered places, the situation in Kaliaganj city was normal, and no untoward incident occurred anywhere amid tight police security.

In Hooghly district's Konnagar, workers of the Trinamool and BJP clashed in the presence of the police. The BJP workers, who gathered at the Konnagar Film Square to support the bandh, allegedly threatened local traders to close their shops. As Trinamool workers reached the area to launch a counter-strike, a scuffle broke out between the two sides. Even though the police came to handle the situation, trouble continued between Trinamool and BJP for some time. Meanwhile, Trinamool head and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will attend the Trinamool Chhatra Parishad event at Mayo Road along with Abhishek Banerjee, the party's All India General Secretary.

pany Limited at one point, floated by his father-in-law in 1989. Mehta argued that such action of NSDL at the behest of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) was wholly illegal under the relevant statutory provisions. On March 2, 2017, the BSE issued a letter to the company for non-submission of Financial Results under SEBI Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements- LODR) regulations. Mehta argued that he had no direct or indirect control of the company's affairs and was classified as 'Promoter' merely based on his relationship with the Chief promoter, about which he was unaware of until June, 2017. He stated that no notice or hearing was given to him before freezing his shares.

"We would not expect any person to suffer in such a manner and that too in a high-handed and arbitrary manner as in the present case. We are of the clear opinion that BSE/NSE as also SEBI has clearly failed to discharge their duties and to act in accordance with law so as to deprive the petitioner of his shares in the demat account held by him which certainly, in our opinion, is an infringement of petitioner's right guaranteed under Articles 14, 21 and 300A of the Constitution," the bench noted while deciding on the father's petition and imposed a joint cost of Rs. 30 lakh on authorities.

The bench observed that the petitioner's son was in no manner concerned with the firm and the action could not be taken against him merely because his father was a second holder of his demat account. "In our opinion, the present case is more gross and is a classic example of high-handed action and a reckless action to freeze the demat account of the petitioner," the bench noted. It added that even the principle of natural justice of fair opportunity to hear the petitioner was not followed by the authorities and same was against the mandate of the law. The court added that the son suffered at the hands of respondent authorities for many years and lost valuable trading opportunities, and to deal with his property (as movable) as entitled to him under the Constitution. "It is not only painful but extremely shocking that such actions can nonetheless be defended by the respondents considering the gross facts," the bench noted and imposed Rs. 50 lakh joint cost in the son's plea and said the petitioners shall be free to deal with their shares in said demat accounts.



material has been issued by the civil courts by citing a November 26, 1986 order of the Karnataka High Court. In the 1986 case, the Karnataka High Court, while approving a temporary injunction granted by a court to a police officer, B N Garudachar, over the reporting of allegations made against him by a legislator A K Subbaiah, ruled that freedom of speech entails a corresponding duty. According to the judgment, the right to freedom of speech and expression is controlled by a corresponding duty not to infringe on the rights of others. "It is no doubt true that one has got a right to expose corrupt practices found in society. But there are methods and ways by which one can expose them. But if in the guise of exposing corrupt practices, a person makes statements which are per se defamatory, he cannot be excused on the ground that he might take up the plea of justification or truth later on," the 1986 high court order states. In many of the instances where the gag orders on the media have been obtained by public personalities, the higher courts have ruled that the gag order only bars false information from being propagated and that reporting based on facts is not barred.

Clear waste within 2 days, Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi's order to MCD after visiting wards in West Zone



GNS News Agency, August 30

During the inspection, the mayor also found a 2-3 km stretch of road near one of the collection centres in Vikaspuri ward covered with garbage to the extent that the road had to be closed. mcd During the inspection, the mayor also found a 2-3 km stretch of road near one of the collection centres in Vikaspuri ward covered with garbage to the extent that the road had to be closed. Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi inspected waste collection centres in West Zone's Tilak Nagar and Vikaspuri wards on Tuesday, and found garbage piled up and spread onto the main roads. She directed private waste management agencies and Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) officials to clear the waste within two days and repair all collection centres.

Oberoi said she would revisit the areas for inspection after two days. During the inspection, the mayor also found a 2-3 km stretch of road near one of the collection centres in Vikaspuri ward covered with garbage to the extent that the road had to be closed. The mayor also instructed the zonal deputy commissioner to beautify the area once the garbage was cleared. The MCD said in a press statement that the waste pile-up had led to widespread filth and foul odours in the area, and citizens constantly complained. It said a similar situation was found in the Tilak Nagar ward as well. "Garbage was found on the road outside a waste collection centre, with stray animals roaming around. Heaps of garbage had accumulated despite a government school and dispensary near the place. Outside a newly constructed mohalla clinic, garbage was scattered on the main road, becoming a dumping point. It was even causing traffic issues," the MCD said, adding that additional trucks and sanitation workers would be deployed to strengthen the sanitation system and remove the garbage.

Bengaluru consumer court orders MakeMyTrip and Air France to refund booking cost for flight cancelled during lockdown



GNS News Agency, August 30

A consumer court in Bengaluru recently ordered Make My Trip (MTM) and Air France to pay Rs 1.01 lakh to a man for failing to provide a voucher or refund for flight tickets he was forced to cancel due to the nationwide lockdown imposed by the government during the pandemic. On August 20, the Additional District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission-III, Bangalore Urban, ordered the online travel platform and the airlines to refund Shushanth Singh, a resident of the city's Republic of Whitefield. In his order, Shivarama K, President, ordered Make My Trip and Air France to pay Singh Rs 81,985 with 9 per cent interest from March 23, 2020, until the realisation as a refund for the cancelled flight. The court also directed them to pay him Rs 10,000 as compensation for the mental agony and harassment and Rs 10,000 as litigation costs.

According to the complaint, Singh was supposed to travel from Bengaluru to Paris on March 23, 2020, on an Air France flight as a tourist with his family. He had paid Rs 81,985 after he received a discount of Rs 5,000 for the ticket booked through Make My Trip. As there was a lockdown in India and France, Air France gave Singh an option to either take a voucher valid for a year with a free date change option or a full refund for the tickets. Singh opted to take the voucher and Air France promised to provide it soon. However, when Singh did not get any voucher, he raised a complaint with Air France and the airline said Make My Trip had not raised a request with it to provide the same. Singh then raised the complaint with Make My Trip, and he received an email stating he was entitled to get back Rs 3,198. Singh then filed a case before the Commission against Make My Trip and Air France. In its order, the court said Make My Trip facilitated Singh's booking and acted as an intermediary between the complainant and Air France. The court said it was the responsibility of Make My Trip to manage the booking and any subsequent requests, such as processing a refund or voucher. Make My Trip failed to act on the complainant's instructions to secure a voucher from Air France and did not provide adequate customer service, including failing to respond to emails and calls, added the court. "Air France provided an option to passengers to either receive a full refund or voucher valid for a year, with a free date change option. Its role became relevant when the complainant directly contacted the airline and was informed MTM had not initiated the refund or voucher," said the order. "It is evident that the complainant suffered both financial loss and mental agony due to the deficient service provided by MTM. The complainant opted for a voucher, which was not processed due to the negligence of MTM, resulting in a breach of duty and failure to fulfil contractual obligations," it added.

Retd Command Hospital staffer booked again for cheating defence job aspirants



GNS News Agency, August 30

Hagawane has alleged that between November 2021 and 2023, Kadale took a total of Rs 49 lakh from over 40 job aspirants — men and women — promising them jobs at the Command Hospital. (File Photo)Hagawane has alleged that between November 2021 and 2023, Kadale took a total of Rs 49 lakh from over 40 job aspirants — men and women — promising them jobs at the Command Hospital. Pune city police have registered one more offence against a retired civilian defence employee of Command Hospital in Pune, earlier arrested by them, on charges of defrauding over 40 people of Rs 49 lakh by promising them jobs at the hospital. The 53-year-old was earlier arrested in March in a joint operation by the Military Intelligence and the

Pune City police. The accused has been identified as Vinayak Kadale, a resident of Kondhwa, who worked at the Command Hospital as a civilian defence employee in the administrative section and took voluntary retirement in 2019. Kadale was arrested in March in a joint operation of the Military Intelligence unit of Southern Command and a team from the Kondhwa police station.

Probe had revealed that Kadale had taken money from at least 58 aspirants from Pune, Solapur, Kolhapur, Satara and Sangli promising them jobs for positions like stenographer, gardener, clerk in the Indian Army and some establishments of the armed forces. On Monday, a fresh case was registered against Kadale, based on a complaint filed by Rajendra Hagwane (53), a retired teacher from Dhanawadi in Pune, whose daughter is among those duped by him. Hagwane has alleged that between November 2021 and 2023, Kadale took a total of Rs 49 lakh from over 40 job aspirants — men and women — promising them jobs at the Command Hospital. In December 2022, he even sent these aspirants fake admit cards for the recruitment exam. When these aspirants went to the Command Hospital, they found no exam was scheduled and Kadale had taken voluntary retirement. These aspirants kept pursuing the issue with Kadale but he soon stopped responding to them. After the registration of the offence in March, these aspirants approached the police and a case was registered.

Haryana's demand for 3 DGP, 8 ADGP posts: MHA says 'against the norm'



GNS News Agency, August 30

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has termed the demand of Haryana government for increasing the cadre posts of DGP and ADGP "against the norm" while asking the state to re-examine a related proposal. The MHA in its communication sent to the state chief secretary on August 20 this year has pointed out that the state's proposal to increase the DGP-level posts from current two to three is against the norm. The MHA observed that "as compared to other states of similar cadre strength, no state has more than two cadre posts at DGP level".

In its proposal sent to the MHA in February this year, the state government had also proposed an increase of ADGP rank IPS officers from current six posts to eight. However, the MHA observed that the proposal for the DGP and ADGP level is "beyond the normative percentage prescribed for these levels". Apart from seeking an increase in the posts of DGP and ADGP, the state also sought an increase in the posts of IGP — from 16 to 18 —, DIG — from current 15 to 17 —, and SP — from 40 to 44. This would have taken the strength of IPS cadre for senior duty posts (SDPs) from current 79 to 90. However, the MHA has found the demand to be on the higher side. "The state government has proposed an overall increase of 11 SDP (senior duty posts) from existing 79 to 90 resulting in 13.92% increase in SDPs which is high in terms of extant guidelines of allowing increase up to 5 per cent only," says MHA in its latest communication to the state. If the Centre agrees to the state's proposal, even partially, then it may open more avenues for promotions for those officers who have been in the queue for long.

An officer says: "If the strength of cadre increases, then it further leads to an increase in the number of ex-cadre posts as the ex-cadre posts are created in proportion to the cadre posts. Ex-cadre posts are temporary posts of the same rank as cadre posts and created by the state government which open doors for promotion of more IPS officers." Currently, the state has six posts of DGP-rank officers — two cadre posts and four ex-cadre posts.

DGP Shatrueet Kapur and DG (prisons) Mohammad Akil are posted against the cadre posts. Sources say four IPS officers are looking after the ex-cadre posts in the DGP rank. They are: Alok Kumar Roy (DG, human rights and litigation), Desh Raj Singh (Comdt. General, home guards and civil defence), Sanjeev Jain (DGP, Haryana Human Rights Commission) and Shatrueet Kapur, chairman, Haryana Police Housing Corporation (additional charge). The state has six cadre posts in ADGP rank, apart from 13 ex-cadre posts for the same rank. Meanwhile, the MHA has also sought clarity on the cadre posts of senior IPS officers that have been kept vacant or lying vacant. After examining posting details of Haryana cadre officers, the MHA found that as many as 33 cadre posts have been kept vacant, while in the state government's proposal only five cadre posts were mentioned as lying "vacant". "This discrepancy needs to be rectified," said the MHA.

The MHA wrote to the state government: "Despite keeping 33 cadre posts vacant at various levels, an increase of 11 SDPs (senior duty posts) has been proposed by the state government... of the said 33 vacant posts, 10 have been proposed for decadrement which will reduce some of the vacant posts." The MHA has also taken a strong exception to the posting of three non-cadre officers on cadre posts for a period exceeding three months "without the approval of the central government". While referring to the IPS (cadre) Rules, 1954, the MHA has asked the state government to furnish its comments on the "rule violations". The MHA has advised the state government to consider sponsoring more officers on central deputation while pointing out that "against the authorised central deputation reserve of 31, only 10 officers are on central deputation". The last review of the Haryana IPS cadre was notified by the central government on February 2, 2017. As per rule 4 (2) of IPS (cadre) Rules 1954, as amended in 1995, review of the strength and composition of IPS cadres is required to be held ordinarily at an interval of five years. Hence, the review of strength and composition of Haryana cadre of IPS was due in 2022. As several months have already passed after the due date for the same, the IPS officers are eagerly waiting for the latest round of their cadre strength review. On its part, the MHA, from February 2022 to September 2022, wrote seven letters to the Haryana government seeking a proposal aimed at reviewing the IPS officers' cadre strength and composition. The state government in August 2023 had also sent a proposal to the central government hoping for an increase in the number of sanctioned posts for IPS officers. The state proposed an increase in the cadre strength from current 144 to 167, which includes cadre posts, ex-cadre posts and officers on training. However, two weeks later, the MHA had asked the state to send a revised proposal "fully completed in all respects in the prescribed proforma".

Australia caps international student intake for 2025



GNS News Agency, August 30

The Australian government has announced plans to introduce a National Planning Level (NPL) to cap the number of new international students at 2.7 lakh for the calendar year 2025, pending parliamentary approval. This measure, detailed by Education Minister Jason Clare, will divide the intake between higher education and vocational education and training (VET) sectors.

Under this cap, publicly funded universities will admit around 1.45 lakh new international students in 2025, maintaining levels seen in 2023. The VET sector will enrol approximately 95,000 new students, with institutions heavily reliant on international students receiving a lower allocation to encourage diversification. Other universities and non-university providers will see their intake capped at 30,000. This cap marks the lowest intake in the past five years, with a significant decrease from the 5.61 lakh international students who began courses in 2023. The cap is expected to impact the number of Indian applicants, pushing many towards public universities due to the restrictions on VET courses. Immigration consultant Gaurav Chaudhary noted that this shift might reduce the number of Indian students heading to Australia. He also

mentioned that the Australian government will soon introduce quotas for public universities, a move that will further regulate the intake. In addition to the student intake cap, the Australian government has more than doubled the visa processing fees from AUD 710 to AUD 1600 as of July 1, marking the steepest rise in the past five years.

HYDRAA serves notices to Malla Reddy institutions

GNS News Agency, August 30

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) has served notices to MLRIT and Institute of Aeronautical Engineering Colleges in Dundigal, owned by BRS MLA Marri Rajasekhara Reddy, for allegedly constructing them within the buffer zone of the Chinnal Damera Cheruvu. The HYDRAA has asked the college management to submit an explanation within 15 days. It has



asked the college management to make alternative arrangements to run the colleges, or else action would be initiated against it. The officials have already inspected the college premises. The municipal authorities have demolished some of the buildings constructed at the buffer zone of the Chinnal Damera Cheruvu in the past. Rajasekhara Reddy is the son-in-law of former minister and BRS MLA Ch Malla Reddy, who runs a group of institutions, including Malla Reddy University and medical college.

2 days on, Amritsar cops yet to find lead into firing on commission agent



GNS News Agency, August 30

Amritsar police Singh had been provided two police gunners since April when he received a ransom call in the name of gangster Rinda for Rs 5 crore, police said. Amritsar police said that they were searching for a lead leading to two motorcycle-borne assailants who shot at a commission agent, assigned two police gunners for his protection, Saturday evening. Surjit Singh was seriously injured after being shot in the thigh. He is undergo-

ing treatment at a private hospital. Singh, who also works as a document writer at the local court in Ramdas, said, "About 8 pm on Saturday, when I was closing my office, the attackers fired two shots — one bullet hit me on my thigh while the other struck on a pillar near the gate." Singh had been provided two police gunners since April when he received a ransom call in the name of gangster Rinda for Rs 5 crore, police said. Singh said, "On April 17, I received a call from an ISD number. The caller demanded a Rs 5 crore ransom in the name of Rinda while threatening to kill me if I failed to pay the money." A case in this connection was registered at the Ramdas police station on April 20, police said. "After the attack, I again received a call from an ISD number. The caller said I might not be so lucky the next time," Singh said, adding that a police gunner was accompanying him when he was shot at. Following the incident, Singh demanded police protection for his family. "My son, a lawyer, and other family members have also been receiving regular death threats. Their life is in danger," Singh said. Ramdas police station SHO Avtar Singh said, "We have registered an FIR and have been searching for the assailants. A police gunner was with the victim when he was attacked."

Sangrur SDM appoints teachers as duty magistrates to maintain 'peace and order', withdraws order later

GNS News Agency, August 30

Seven teachers, including two principals were Tuesday appointed as "duty magistrates" to maintain "peace and order" in Sangrur — a non-teaching job, which was later in the day reassigned to employees of other departments. Sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) Sangrur Tuesday issued an order (copy with The Indian Express), stating that seven government employees were being appointed as "duty magistrates" to maintain "peace and order" in Sangrur. "Sangrur shehar vich aam taur tey dharme/pardarshan hundey rehenda han atey manyog mukh mantri/VVIPs da vi auna jaana rehenda hai. Ess layi shehar Sangrur vich aman tey kanun di sthiti banayi rakkhan layi duty magistrate tainaat keete jaanda han (Several protests/agitations keep happening in Sangrur district and honorable CM/VVIPs keep visiting often. To maintain peace and law situation in the district, duty magistrates are being appointed)," reads the order.

One of the teachers in the list said that in more than 15 years of service, it was the first that he has assigned such a duty. "It is a non-teaching work where teachers are expected to negotiate with protesters and ensure law and order is maintained. We are also expected to leave school work and be around deputy commissioner's office or CM's residence where protests usually happen and collect memorandums from the protesters." Another teacher said that during previous governments, employees from other departments were given this duty, not teachers. "I don't remember doing such duty during SAD-BJP or Congress government," he said. Sangrur deputy commissioner Jitendra Jorwal, however, said: "We have withdrawn names of teachers. First we will put other em-



ployees on duty and later if required, services of teachers might be used. "Earlier, however, Jorwal had justified the move saying Punjab government has empowered district administration to appoint employees as duty magistrates. "Not just teachers but employees from other departments are given this duty on roster-wise if regular magistrate is unavailable. Only if any untoward situation happens or any protest escalates into a law and order situation, the employee has to go there and ensure peace." He said claimed there was "nothing wrong" with teachers doing this job. "They have to leave the school only if something happens," he said. Bikram Dev, state president, Democratic Teachers Front (DTF), however, said that usually teachers are never assigned such duties. "The AAP government claims that teachers will only teach but no written notification in this regard has been issued which leads to such orders at district-level. Previous governments used to put teachers on duty only during elections not for routine administrative works."

Army conducts inquiry against Maj Gen on allegation of 'pocketing fake currency'

GNS News Agency, August 30

The Army has ordered a Court of Inquiry to investigate allegations of 'pocketing fake currency notes' amounting to Rs 72,000 against a Major General heading the Army Postal Service (APS). The inquiry, which is underway in New Delhi, has been ordered to investigate the allegations against Maj Gen M K Khan, who is an Indian Postal Service (IPoS) officer holding a temporary commission in the Army. He is currently serving as Additional Director General Postal Services in the Army Headquarters (HQs).

Lt Gen Adosh Kumar, Director General (DG) Artillery, is the presiding officer of the inquiry with Maj Gen K G Kumar Devayya, Additional DG Dental Services, and Maj Gen Shivendra Kumar, Additional DG EME (B), as members of the Court of Inquiry. The allegation pertaining to pocketing fake currency notes amounting to Rs 72,000 dates back to December 19-20, 2016, when a technical inspection was carried out at 1 Central Base Post Office in Delhi Cantonment. Maj Gen Khan was serving as Brigadier looking after postal services in HQs Western Command in Chandimandir at the time. The inquiry follows a written complaint received by the Army authorities listing out certain allegations against the General.

Attempts were made to reach Maj Gen Khan for his comments on the developments but he did not respond to phone calls or text messages. For the record, several officers of the Army Postal Corps had been tried by court martial on allegations of illegalities carried out by them following the demonetisation in 2016. Among those who faced disciplinary action for their acts of omission and



commission were a Brigadier, Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, Captain and Warrant Officer. The allegations against them pertained to illegal exchange of demonetised currency notes worth Rs 6 lakh with legal currency at the 1 Central Base Post Office in New Delhi. They were also accused of preparing 5,944 forged forms with fake IDs for the exchange carried out on November 9, 2016, the day the old Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes were declared invalid by the central government. Varying punishments were awarded to several of the accused officers ranging from loss of service to rigorous imprisonment. Civilian officers of the Indian Postal Service of varying grades serve in the Indian Army holding temporary commission of an officer. These officers relinquish the commission when they revert to their original postal service. However, many postal officers serve multiple tenures in the Army as they come and go, thereby serving in both the civilian postal service as well as the Army Postal Service.

Councillors claim in unison MC has become 'adda' of corruption, says civic body has failed to remove encroachments

GNS News Agency, August 30

In the General House meeting, Chandigarh councillors cutting across the party lines on Tuesday lashed out in unison at the municipal corporation, claiming that the civic body has become an "adda" of corruption. The meeting was held at the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation assembly hall and was co-chaired by Deputy Commissioner Vinay Pratap Singh, who is holding the additional charge of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation (MC) Commissioner. Rising above the party lines, all councillors of the Chandigarh civic body lashed out at officers of the enforcement wing, stating that the MC has become an "adda of corruption" and that the officers concerned have failed to remove encroachments in the city. "I will on record say that the municipal corporation has become 'municipal corruption adda' in the enforcement department. The worst part is that the illegal vendors are all over the place and the genuine ones who have paid the fees are suffering a lot," BJP councillor Saurabh Joshi stated. "I wouldn't even hesitate to mention that the complete enforcement wing is involved in corrupt practices and letting illegal vendors mushroom." AAP councillor Damanpreet Singh told the House that illegal money is being collected from the vendors to allow them to sit in

Sector 22. "Sector 22 has the worst situation. Illegal vendors are all over the place. The enforcement staff doesn't even stay there till 7 pm, they leave by 6 pm. Aren't they supposed to be there till 7 pm? One cannot even cross the road such is the scenario in my sector," the AAP councillor claimed. BJP's Rajender Kumar while vetting the claims raised by other councillors said that vendors in his ward even challenge him that no one can remove them since they pay money to the MC officers. "Do you know a scrap dealer challenged me and said no one can remove him from this place because he pays Rs 15,000 to the officials of the civic body," Rajender Kumar told the House. Stressing that the civic body has a "zero tolerance" policy towards encroachments, the deputy commissioner, after listening to the councillors' claims, directed officials of the enforcement wing to take necessary action. "We have zero tolerance against the encroachments and all illegal vendors will be removed within fifteen days," he added. Councillors even took up the issue of the timings of the enforcement wing. AAP councillor Prem Lata asked as to why the timings of the enforcement staff may not be revised. "Instead of 11 am to 7 pm timings of the enforcement staff, why can't their timings be from 12 noon to 8 pm."

Shivaji statue collapse: PWD letter on Aug 20 warned Navy of its precarious condition



GNS News Agency, August 30

Shivaji statue collapse Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said the statue was built and overseen by the Navy and added that its collapse is not an issue on which one should play politics. The Maharashtra Public Works Department, in a letter written on August 20, had warned the Indian Navy of the precarious condition of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue at Rajkot Fort in Sindhudurg's Malvan, which collapsed Monday amid heavy rain and strong winds. The letter, written by the Assistant Engineer of the PWD's Malvan office, and directed to the Area Coastal Security Officer, detailed concerns about the statue's condition and requested the Navy to notify the architect for urgent remedial action.

"Rajkot Fort in Malvan taluka was constructed on December 4, 2023 on the occasion of Navy Day. Accordingly, a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was erected at the fort. In June, it was repaired by Jaideep Apte, the sculptor of the statue. But now the nut and bolts used to join the statue are corroded by the rain and the salty sea breeze. Therefore, the statue is looking deformed," the letter had said. "Also, Rajkot fort is visited by tourists throughout the year. Therefore, tourists, local villagers, public representatives etc. have expressed their displeasure about this. Therefore, it is requested to inform the architect concerned from your level immediately about

taking permanent measures," he said. Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said the statue was built and overseen by the Navy and added that its collapse is not an issue on which one should play politics.

"Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is highly revered and worshipped by people in Maharashtra and across India. The collapse of the statue was unfortunate incident. It has saddened everybody. Therefore, this is not an issue on which one should play politics," he said. "The state government did not construct the statue. It was done by the Navy. It is likely that those responsible for the construction and installation of the statue overlooked critical factors like high windspeed and quality of iron/steel. The statue along the seashore was exposed to high speed wind along the vast expanse of sea," he added. Fadnavis also stated that the government is determined with "greater resolve to build a bigger statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at the same site". Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the statue in December 2023. The collapse occurred after heavy rain struck the area, prompting Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to attribute the incident to the severe weather conditions. The state police filed a case against sculptor Jaideep Apte and structural consultant Chetan Patil. The statue was commissioned by the Indian Navy and created by Artistry, owned by Apte. The project was conceptualised by the Indian Navy with funding from the Maharashtra government. On Monday, PWD Minister Ravindra Chavan stated that his department had previously warned the Indian Navy about the potential for rusting and had requested prompt action. The Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi questioned why Apte, a 24-year-old with limited experience in large-scale statues, was chosen. She also called for accountability, suggesting that CM Shinde, the deputy chief ministers, and the PWD Minister should be included in the FIR. In response, Shinde Sena functionary Rahul Kanak defended the appointment, pointing out that individuals close to Aaditya Thackeray have also benefited from government schemes. Kanak listed seven projects allegedly awarded to Thackeray's associates, terming the criticism "politically motivated".

'Bhindranwale and no one else from Sikh community ever demanded Khalistan': SGPC sends legal notice to Kangana Ranaut over 'Emergency'



GNS News Agency, August 30

The Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) on Tuesday sent a legal notice to the makers of actress-turned-politician Kangana Ranaut's upcoming movie Emergency for allegedly misrepresenting the character and history of Sikhs. It said radical Sikh preacher Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, and no one else from the Sikh community, ever demanded Khalistan. The film is based on former prime minister Indira Gandhi's life, focusing on her declaration of a state of Emergency in India in 1975. Ranaut, who is the director and co-producer, plays Gandhi in this biographical film. The trailer was released on August 14, and the film is expected to hit the screens on September 6. The notice, sent by the SGPC's legal adviser advocate Amanbir Singh Siali, asked the movie makers to remove scenes depicting anti-Sikh sentiments from the movie. It also sought the withdrawal of the trailer from public and social media platforms and a written apology to the Sikh community.

Quoting a dialogue from the trailer, 'Tohadi party nu

vote chahide ne ate sanu chahida hai Khalistan (Your party need votes and what we want is Khalistan)', the SGPC said, "These are visuals in which some characters in Sikh attire are shown firing at people with assault rifles." The notice said there is no evidence or record proving that Bhindranwale ever uttered such words to anyone, nor are there any documented conversations in the entire history of the Sikh religion. Sikh bodies have been opposing the movie, saying that it aims to create an anti-Sikh narrative based on the assassination of Gandhi by her bodyguards in 1984. She was shot dead following the Indian military's Operation Blue Star to remove Bhindranwale and other Sikh militants from the Golden Temple in Amritsar. It triggered an anti-Sikh riot in which thousands of Sikhs were killed. The SGPC notice said the film would prove to be a material instrument to hurt Sikh sentiments and provide a wrong lesson about Sikhism. It said the film shows "dark days" in the history of Sikhism, not only in Punjab but throughout the world.

"The portion mentioned above in the trailer of 'Emergency' is highly objectionable as it portrays the character of Sikhs in the wrong way as separatists, which is false, frivolous and truthless. Sant Jarnail Singh Ji and no one from the Sikh Community ever demanded Khalistan. It is deliberately intentionally character assassination of Sikhs of the whole world for creating an anti-Sikh narrative," the notice said. SGPC secretary Partap Singh said the notice was sent as per the direction of SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhali. He said after the release of the trailer of the film, many anti-Sikh scenes had come to light, deeply hurting the sentiments of the Sikh community. "An attempt has been made to show Sikhs as terrorists and separatists, which is unacceptable and far from the truth," he said in a statement.

Karnataka Police want influential gangster Wilson Garden Naga to be moved out of Bengaluru jail

GNS News Agency, August 30

The Karnataka Police on August 20 moved a special court for shifting notorious gangster J Nagaraj alias Wilson Garden Naga to another prison, days before pictures of the 36-year-old relaxing in the Bengaluru Central prison with Kannada actor Darshan Thogudeepa, accused in a murder case, surfaced on social media. It was the second time the state police had sought to move Naga - believed to be a key underworld operative in Bengaluru with high connections - since his arrest in a murder in 2023.

The Special Public Prosecutor on behalf of the police moved a special court for KCOCA (Karnataka Control of Organized Crime Act, 2000) cases with an application "under section 29 of the Prisoners Act" for the transfer of Naga and others to an alternate prison on account of 24 members of his gang being housed in Parappana Agrahara Central Prison in Bengaluru. Undated video and photo of jailed Kannada film actor Darshan Thogudeepa smoking a cigarette with gangster J Nagaraj alias Wilson Garden Naga and making a call inside the Parappana Agrahara Central Prison in Bengaluru have gone viral. A source in the police department said the application was filed in a local court on the basis of a letter by a senior Bengaluru police official seeking the separation of Naga from his gang as they were likely to conspire to derail the prosecution of the murder case of a rival that occurred on August 4, 2023, just outside the Bengaluru Central prison. The viral photo shows Thogudeepa, Naga, and others sitting on a lawn of the prison and smoking a cigarette while holding a cup in his hand, a testimony to the gangster's clout within the prison system in Bengaluru. Naga and 26 members of his gang, including a key lieutenant V Mohan alias Double Meter, are accused in the August 4, 2023 murder of a rival N Mahesh alias Siddapura Mahesh, 33, in what is seen as an attempt to establish Naga as a key underworld player in Bengaluru.

In the high profile gangland murder Mahesh was hacked to death in public view, barely 15 minutes after he was released from the Central prison on the night of August 4. The police believe that nearly 50 people could have been involved in the attack - with men posted at multiple junctions between the prison - located at the fringe of the south east police zone of Bengaluru - and enroute the victim's travel line into the city - to carry out the attack. Two weeks after the murder, on August 18, 2023 Wilson Garden Naga, a gangster who came into the spotlight ahead of the Karnataka Assembly elections



in 2023 - after he was spotted visiting the home of a then BJP minister, surrendered before a court along with his close associate Double Meter Mohan. Prior to his surrender, the police had " nabbed" 10 members of the Naga gang on August 11 - a week after the murder of Mahesh, according to police sources. The murder of Siddapura Mahesh was a consequence of a rivalry in south Bengaluru between Mahesh and Wilson Garden Naga that arose following the December 8, 2020 murder at a farm house in a village at Hiresave, near Hassan, of a long time Bengaluru gangster Lingaraju alias Shantinagar Linga, 45, who initiated Mahesh into the gangland, police sources indicated. According to a police source, Mahesh who was murdered by the Naga gang had taken upon himself the mantle of avenging the death of his mentor Shantinagar Linga and went around bragging that he would kill Naga one day leading to a counter attack by Naga. "All those who have been arrested for the Mahesh murder from the Naga gang were also accused in the Linga murder case in 2020," the police said. Since the arrests of Naga and his gang members in August 2023, the entire gang has been housed in the Bengaluru Central prison raising fears in the Bengaluru police of the gang running the prison through their sheer numbers and also continuing illegal activities outside. "A letter has been written by a senior police official to the court seeking the transfer of the gangster to another prison in Karnataka to prevent the prison from becoming an organized crime hub," a Bengaluru police official said. While an attempt was made earlier by the police to transfer Naga to the Ballari prison the move was countered by the gangster and he remained in Bengaluru, a source said. Images have also surfaced of a birthday celebration in the prison for a gangster where Naga is also a participant. Nine prison officials have been suspended in the light of the viral photographs and videos.

Omar Abdullah to fight J-K assembly polls from Ganderbal seat



GNS News Agency, August 30

National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah will contest the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections from the Ganderbal segment, the party said on Tuesday, in what marks a U-turn for the former chief minister who had vowed to not fight for a seat in the legislature of a union territory. The party released a list of 32 candidates which included Omar Abdullah for the Ganderbal assembly seat, a constituency that he represented from 2009 to 2014 when he was the chief minister of the NC-Congress coalition government. Omar Abdullah had dropped hints on Monday that he is likely to reconsider his decision of not contesting the polls. Speaking to media after the NC and Congress announced their seat-sharing arrangement on Monday, Omar Abdullah said he does not want to send out a "wrong signal" by asking his party colleagues

to contest and the people to cast their votes for an assembly "that I may be suggesting that I look down upon". "I am conscious of one thing which I had not thought over fully, which is my mistake. If I was not ready to contest an election for an assembly, how can I get the people ready to vote for that assembly? "How can I hope that my colleagues will seek votes for an assembly which I am not ready to accept or may be suggesting that I look down upon? It has put a pressure on me and I do not want to give a wrong signal to the people," he said.

Over 50 lakh vehicles used country's longest sea bridge Atal Setu

Mumbai: More than 50 lakh vehicles have used the Atal Setu, the country's longest sea bridge connecting Mumbai with its satellite city Navi Mumbai, since it was opened for traffic over seven months ago, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has said. In a release, the MMRDA said 50,04,350 vehicles, including Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST), Navi Mumbai Municipal Transport (NMMT) and Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation's (MSRTC) Shivneri buses, have travelled between January 13 and August 26 on the sea bridge.

Udupi police arrest BJP worker for helping accused who raped Instagram friend

GNS News Agency, August 30

Days after a 21-year-old woman was drugged and raped in Karnataka's Udupi by a man she met on Instagram, the district police on Tuesday arrested a 23-year-old man, who is reportedly associated with the BJP, for helping the accused. The arrested man has been identified as Abhay, a resident of Karkala in the Udupi district. According to the police, Abhay helped prime accused Altaf evade capture after the crime and also supplied drugs to him. A police officer from Karkala Town Police Station said Abhay, who has also been charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, was being produced before the court for further custody.

A local police officer said Abhay was active in the local unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and right-wing organisations in the region. Photos and videos of Abhay participating in BJP events as a worker went viral on social media following his arrest. Last Friday, the Udupi police arrested Altaf, a resident of Karkala, for allegedly raping the woman he met on Instagram. According to the police, Altaf and the woman, an employee of a private



firm, met on Instagram three months ago. They said Altaf allegedly took her to a place on Friday on the pretext of showing a piece of land to her and raped her. Along with Altaf, the police also arrested Xavier Richard Cardoza in connection with the case. After the arrests last week, BJP leaders and right-wing outfits alleged a "love jihad" conspiracy behind the crime. BJP general secretary and Karkala MLA V Sunil Kumar said it was a "concerning situation as Hindu girls are being targeted".

Delhi CM Kejriwal assured each Goa assembly election candidate will get Rs 90 lakh: CBI to court

GNS News Agency, August 30

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Tuesday told a Delhi court that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal assured that Rs 90 lakh would be given to each of the 40 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) candidates during the 2022 Goa Assembly elections. This amount was to be given allegedly from "bribe money" received from the "South Group" (business persons from South India) in exchange for granting favors to them while drafting the now-scrapped excise policy. "Kejriwal was in touch with the South Group... the entire money was diverted to AAP for Goa elections. Rs 90 lakh was to be given to each candidate," said Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) D P Singh representing the CBI.

The CBI and the Enforcement Directorate had earlier claimed that "bribes" amounting to Rs 45 crore received from the "South Group" were funnelled into the AAP's 2022 Assembly poll campaign in Goa. "Durgesh Pathak (AAP MLA) was in charge of the AAP's Goa election campaign... the money (for the elections) was transferred on the directions of Pathak," SPP Singh added. Kejriwal had told the candidates that they should not be worried about the funds required for the election campaign, the prosecutor said. Meanwhile, Kejriwal, who appeared for the hearing via video conferencing from jail, sought the court's permission to have lunch. "My sugar (level) is going down. May I please have lunch?" he said.



The court gave him permission while extending his judicial custody till September 3.

After this, SPP Singh defined the role of P Sarath Chandra Reddy (member of the South Group and approver in the case). "He gave Rs 14 crore to K Kavitha (BRS leader) for a "sham" land deal. This Rs 14 crore was given to the AAP... Reddy was a 'bribe-giver', Singh said. Kejriwal was arrested by the ED on March 21 in the money laundering case linked to the excise policy. On June 26, the Chief Minister was formally arrested by the CBI in the corruption case linked to the "scam". He was granted interim bail by the Supreme Court in the money laundering case on July 12, but remains in judicial custody in the corruption case.

Chilli powder stuffed into rectum of suspected thief by mob in Bihar's Araria, 1 arrested after viral video

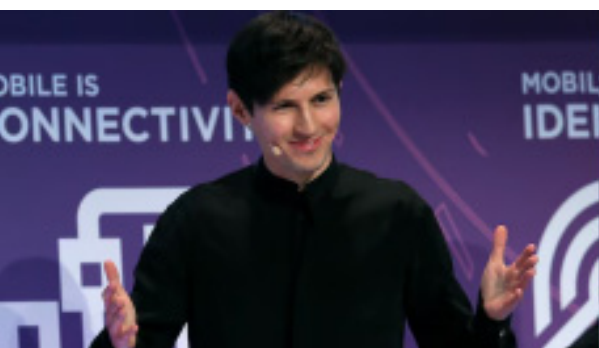
A press statement from the Araria superintendent of police's office said the incident happened in the Islamnagar under Araria police station area. A press statement from the Araria superintendent of police's office said the incident happened in the Islamnagar under Araria police station area.

A man caught on suspicion of bike theft in Bihar's Araria was subjected to brutal torture by a mob which allegedly pulled down his pants and poured chilli powder into his rectum. After a video of the incident surfaced on social media, the Araria Police arrested one man involved in meting out the mob justice on August 25. He has been identified as Mohammed Shifaat, a resident of Islamnagar under the Araria town police station. Shifaat's bike parked outside Sadar Hospital was allegedly stolen on Sunday. According to police, Shifaat later caught a resident of Simraha with the stolen bike. Shifaat and his associates allegedly publicly punished the suspected thief after tying his hands. The viral video showed the victim bending forward while a man sprinkling a chilli powder-

like substance into his rectum. The video also showed another man using a pencil to forcibly stuff the chilli powder into the man's anus.

A press statement from the Araria superintendent of police's office said the incident happened in the Islamnagar under Araria police station area. "Some people were committing the inhuman act of tying a young man with a rope and inserting a substance like chilli in his private parts on the charges of theft..." The police said a First Information Report (FIR) was registered at the Araria police station against Shifaat and other accused, who were being identified. Major Opposition party Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) targeted the Nitish Kumar-led Janata Dal (United)-BJP government over the incident. Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Prasad Yadav posted in Hindi on X "Taliban rule in Bihar! BJP/NDA is happily in power in Bihar, hence the casteist media is silent. We and our party talk about the rights and share of Dalits, backward and minorities, hence the casteists always see our rule as jungle raj."

Russia-France ties hit new low after Telegram CEO's arrest: Moscow



GNS News Agency, August 30

Telegram CEO Pavel Durov was arrested near Paris over the weekend as part of an investigation into crimes related to images of child sex abuse, drug trafficking and others.

Relations between Moscow and Paris have reached a nadir following the arrest of Russian-born Telegram boss Pavel Durov, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Tuesday, after the tech billionaire's detention was extended until Wednesday. Durov, who has French as well as Russian nationality, was arrested near Paris over the weekend as part of an investigation into crimes related to images of child sex abuse, drug trafficking and fraudulent transactions on the platform, French prosecutors said on Monday. It remains unclear if he knew about the threat of arrest in France. Durov's French lawyer did not immediately reply to a request for comment. Durov's arrest has plunged Moscow-Paris ties to their lowest level, Lavrov said on Tuesday, capping months of deteriorating relations between the two nations. French authorities accused Russia of trying to destabilise it ahead of the Paris Olympics in response to its more hawkish stance on the Ukraine war - claims Russia has denied.

Durov's detention was extended by 48 hours late on Monday, a spokesperson for the Paris prosecutor's office said on Tuesday. After that, prosecutors will either need to charge or release him. Should he face charges, his

flight risk status is a factor judges have to include in their assessment of possible pretrial detention, according to French law. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on a conference call on Tuesday that Russia was ready to provide Durov with all necessary assistance given his Russian citizenship, but that his French citizenship complicated the situation. Durov also holds a UAE passport. "The charges are very serious indeed," said Peskov. "They require a no less serious basis of evidence. Otherwise, they will be a direct attempt to limit freedom of communication." Durov's arrest has sparked a debate about the limits of free speech online, with X-owner Elon Musk saying the right to expression in Europe was under attack. It also underlines a movement by governments around the world to take a tougher line on policing illegal activity that flourishes on some platforms. Brazil's supreme court briefly suspended Telegram nationwide in 2022 over its failure to comply with judicial orders. With close to 1 billion users, Telegram is particularly influential in Russia, Ukraine and the republics of the former Soviet Union. It presents itself as a haven for free speech, but is also widely used by far-right, anti-vax and conspiracist movements, as well as political dissidents. The platform has become crucial to battlefield communications in the war in Ukraine and is used by governments and soldiers on both sides of the war to share war-related news and propaganda. Without providing evidence, Vyacheslav Volodin, the chairman of Russia's State Duma, the lower house of parliament, earlier said the United States, through France, was attempting to exert control over Telegram.

"Telegram is one of the few and at the same time the largest Internet platforms over which the United States has no influence," Volodin said in a post. "On the eve of the US presidential election, it is important for (President Joe) Biden to take Telegram under control." The White House has yet to comment on Durov's arrest. French President Emmanuel Macron, who is known to be an avid user of the app, has said that the arrest was "in no way a political decision". Russia has previously tried, and failed, to block Telegram and fined the company several times for failing to delete what it deemed illegal content.

Does Kamala Harris laugh too much?

GNS News Agency, August 30

Kamala Harris is being criticised for her laughter. She is being called "crazy", "weird" and "laughing Kamala" by Donald Trump. Does her laugh make her 'unpresidential'? Have other US Presidents with boisterous laughter also come under similar scrutiny? If not, is the Kamala Harris case about women and laughter? Laughter has its own politics. Several American Presidents were known for their bubbling laughter. Abraham Lincoln had a distinctive laugh. Theodore Roosevelt made a bellowing sound. Andrew Jackson's biographer wrote his laughter could be heard across rooms. Ronald Reagan laughed too, when he wanted to. But Donald Trump feels Kamala Harris's laughter is "weird" and too much. At the root of it, he is questioning her fitness to be President. And it hasn't remained a laughing matter.

There are several questions. Does the way one laughs makes one unfit for high office? Is there a wider gender bias in how laughing out loud in public places is perceived? When we laugh, the world laughs with us, it is said. Laughter is contagious. It conveys joy. It also takes courage to laugh with abandon, as there's always the risk of being judged. Laughter, the Kamala way, can only happen to a person who expresses freely without fear, deception or repression. Harris and her campaign consisted of coconut tree memes and the music was filled with laughter. Her running mate, Tim Walz, knows that Harris and his campaign are bringing joy to the nation. But she is being scrutinised at every step. Her pant-suits to her race to her laughter, all are fair game. The question - Does Kamala Harris laugh too much for a President? Kamala Harris, the Vice President and Democratic candidate, is facing Donald Trump, a former president and Republican bulldozer. Trump's niece and critic Mary Trump spoke about her uncle's view on laughter. For uncle Trump, "laughing is to make yourself vulnerable, it's to let down your guard in some way, it's to lose a little bit of control," Mary Trump told Slate. "And that can't happen [for Trump]. That is not allowed to happen," she added. It is no surprise he is a critic of Kamala Harris's laughter. This is a campaign between Trump, who has a smirk about others, and Harris, who laughs like no one is watching. But Harris is aware people are watching, and she knows what she is doing.

Harris was careful not to put it on the political stage before it was time. During the early days of her vice-presidency, she knew of the conservative coverage she might face. She even asked her advisors if she should laugh in public at all or even show any sense of humour, says a New York Times report. They advised her that laughing, a part of her authentic self, would help her connect with American people. Despite a thumbs up from the advisors, Kamala Harris treaded cautiously on her laughter. Her entire campaign saw her laughing but the laughter was spaced out. Added with issues like abortion rights and foreign policy, the laughter became a part of a carefully honed personality.

KAMALA HARRIS, LAUGHTER AND WOMEN Donald Trump, ready to beat her on the battlefield of opinions and electoral politics, was still quick to notice it. "I call her Laughing Kamala. You ever watched her laugh? She's crazy. You know, you can tell a lot by a laugh. No, she's crazy. She's nuts." "Crazy", "nuts" and "Laughing Kamala." This is an attack on whether she is fit to be the President of the US. The far-right in the US has also asked similar questions.

"The woman continually laughs this ridiculous laugh," far-right commentator Teena McQueen said on Sky News Australia in 2023. "I don't know what drugs she's on, or what makes her so happy all the time, but she's an absolute disgrace, and she hasn't done women any favours." There is a reason for this political disgust with Harris's laugh. Actress and comedy show judge, famous for her own boisterous laughter, Archana Puran Singh spoke to IndiaToday.in about women and the issue with their loud laughs across the world. "Isn't it highly sexist to only frown upon a woman with a loud laugh? There are men with booming laughs and that has never been cause for concern. So, if people are worried about a woman laughing loudly, it's really their own problem. Let them shut their ears," Archana Puran Singh said when asked why women with loud laughter are frowned upon.

When women laugh on screen and in public spaces, they assert their right to an "emotional response" so far not assigned to them. This is a space to express anger,

resistance, solidarity and joy, says Kathleen Rowe Karlyn in her book 'The Unruly Woman: Gender and the Genres of Laughter'. This issue with Harris's laughter should also be seen in light of laughter as a transgressive act. In some of the most authoritarian regimes, such as Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, women are prohibited from laughing.

"Meanwhile, the woman is laughing because she's having a jolly good time, which is wonderful; those people who are frowning at her should learn to enjoy life like she evidently is, and have a good laugh themselves instead of bothering about her and her loud laugh," Archana Puran Singh to IndiaToday.in on Kamala Harris's laughter. In the biggest speech of her life, at her presidential nomination acceptance at the Democratic National Convention (DNC), Harris entered laughing.

If there was a laughmeter to measure Harris's laughter frequency, it would have shown that there was no dip in its readings. She's laughing her heart out, even as critics are crying hoarse. Democrats have made her laughter all about joy and fun. "The thing we like about hard work is we have fun doing hard work," she said in her Michigan campaign. "Because we know what we stand for. When you know what you stand for, you know what you fight for." Her running mate Tim Walz is also aware of the beauty of joy. "The one thing I will not forgive them for is they try to steal the joy from this country," said Walz. "You know what? Our next president brings joy. She emanates joy." This larger-than-life joy of the Harris-Walz campaign is reaching the American people. Trump and his allies are scared. Tony Fabrizio, a former Trump pollster, told reporters gathered in Florida that the joy of the Harris campaign of "a kind of out-of-body experience where we have suspended reality for a couple of weeks."

"Renuka Chowdhury, who was then a Rajya Sabha MP, was first admonished by Venkaiah Naidu and then lampooned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the House in 2018. Modi had used a Ramayana serial reference to ask Naidu not to stop Chowdhury," author-journalist Nidhi Sharma tells India Today.in. Sharma is the author of 'She, the Leader: Women in Indian Politics'. Women politicians face far more scrutiny for how they conduct themselves than men do.

"It is a reflection of the larger gender biases that are prevalent in society. Like it was alright for Naidu to have publicly asked Chowdhury to lose weight. Though women MPs protested, these remain acceptable as part of the larger discourse," Sharma added. This scrutiny is widespread even inside Parliament in India.

"While researching for my book 'She, The Leader', women politicians across party lines say they face this at their workplace inside Parliament, which is the highest decision-making body in India," said Nidhi Sharma.

"I think there is a long list of what could be considered 'unpresidential', but for the first time, a loud laugh is being added to that list, just because a woman is standing for President of the United States. A laugh is just a person's expression of joy and delight. And what is an 'unpresidential' laugh I wonder," said Archana Puran Singh when asked if Kamala Harris's laughter made her "unpresidential" like critics suggest. Joy is infectious and so is laughter. It aims and reaches straight to the heart. US media outlets, too, are having fun, and some laughs. To Trump's attack, "Have you seen her laugh?", there are headlines like "Have you seen Trump laugh?" The judgement of her laughter could be done away with. The spotlight should come on policy, which isn't a laughing matter. "We would be better off considering those qualifications in her that would impact her ability to make such decisions as 'presidential' or 'unpresidential' rather than putting her 'loud laugh' under the spotlight," Archana Puran Singh told IndiaToday.in. The question if Kamala Harris laughs too much is settled. The question could be -- will she have the last laugh?

Indian worker dies on Italian farm from heat, workload



GNS News Agency, August 30

A 54-year-old Indian migrant worker from Punjab died due to extreme heat and a heavy workload while working on a flower farm in central Italy. Singh is the second Indian worker to die on an Italian farm in three months. Migrant workers from India often face slave-like conditions in Italy. A 54-year-old Indian migrant worker, who worked on a flower farm, has died from a combination of extreme summer heat and a heavy workload in a field near the city of Latina in central Italy. Dalvir Singh, from Punjab, India, sent regular remittances to his family and had intended to return home within the next few years as he found it increasingly difficult to work in the fields every day as he grew older. His son and his son-in-law are now trying to take his body back to India.

This is the second death of an Indian worker on an Italian farm in three months. In June, a bleeding Satnam Singh, also from Punjab, was left to die by his employers after an accident while at work. The "brutal" treatment of migrants working on Italian farms is often controlled by gangmasters who take a portion of their wages, with many workers living in ghettos or abandoned buildings, reported The Guardian. Activists in Italy have highlighted that these bosses and gangmasters exploit workers by forcing them to work in extreme heat, with many enduring shifts lasting 10-14 hours a day, creating slave-like con-

ditions for migrant workers in Italy. Colleagues of Dalvir Singh told The Guardian that he had never been sick and was a "kind man who always worked hard".

An autopsy report is expected next month, as local prosecutors continue to investigate the circumstances of Singh's death, including whether his employer took proper measures to protect workers from the heat.

INDIAN MIGRANTS FORCED TO LIVE IN POOR CONDITION In July, Italian police rescued more than two dozen Indian migrants from a farm in central Italy, saying they had been "reduced to slavery" due to debts, having their passports taken away, and being forced to live in poor conditions. The month before, Satnam Singh, a farm worker who also worked on a farm in Latina, died after his employer allegedly abandoned him on a road following an accident where his arm was severed. Instead of helping Satnam Singh, his employers "dumped" him like a "bag of rubbish" near his home. Tens of thousands of migrants have been working in fields across Italy, picking tomatoes and other crops, while the country has been hit by continuous heatwaves since mid-June.

INDIANS MADE TO WORK LIKE SLAVES IN ITALY AMID EXTREME HEAT The Italian Meteorological Society reported that average summer temperatures in Italy between June and August have risen by 1.5°C over the past 30 years, from 1994 to 2023. This extreme heat has created dangerous conditions for low-paid workers who are working outside to harvest fruit and vegetables. It's unclear how many workers have been hurt or killed due to the extreme heat in Italy this summer. However, Italy is believed to have had the highest number of heat-related deaths in Europe last year, with more than 12,000 fatalities, according to The Guardian. The Italian health and safety authority has stated that work-related accidents caused by heat are often not recognised as such. Instead, they are usually reported as fainting, falls, or similar incidents. Despite Italy's profitable food industry, these workers face low wages, long hours, and limited job protection. Many of these workers live in poor conditions, such as overcrowded ghettos or abandoned buildings.

Protests across Canada as 70,000 international students face deportation

GNS News Agency, August 30

Canada is witnessing nationwide protests as over 70,000 international student graduates face deportation due to recent changes in federal immigration policies. Indians have been the biggest cohort among international students in Canada. Students are demanding an extension of work permits and a clear path to permanent residency. More than 70,000 international student graduates in Canada face the risk of being deported due to recent changes in federal immigration policies. The students, who came to Canada with hopes of building a new life, are now protesting across the North American country against the Justin Trudeau government's decision to limit study permits and reduce permanent residency nominations.

Demonstrations are taking place from coast-to-coast, with international students setting up encampments and organising rallies in various provinces, including Prince Edward Island (PEI), Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia. In PEI, hundreds of students have been protesting outside the legislative assembly for over three months, challenging the changes in immigration rules. Representatives from the Naujawan Support Network, a student advocacy group, have warned that many graduates could face deportation when their work permits expire at the end of the year. The situation has become particularly dire due to new provincial policies that have introduced a 25% reduction in permanent residency nominations, leaving many students unexpectedly vulnerable. "I spent six years taking risks to come to Canada. I studied, worked, paid taxes, and earned enough Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) points, but the government has taken advantage of us," Mehakdeep Singh, a former international student facing deportation, told City News Toronto. Singh, who invested his family's life savings in tuition, is now confronting a daunting deadline with no guarantee of permanent residency.

WHY CANADA CUT STUDY VISAS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS The inflow of international students, who made up 37% of study visa holders in 2023, put significant pressure on Canada's housing, healthcare, and other services. In response, the Canadian government has imposed a cap on international student permit applications to manage the growth over the next two years.

This cap is expected to result in around 360,000



approved study permits in 2024, a 35% reduction from the previous year, according to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, foreign nationals can no longer apply for a post-graduation work permit (PGWP) at the border from June 21. This decision targets "flagpoling", where temporary residents exit and re-enter Canada to expedite work or study permit applications. The PGWP is crucial for international students seeking employment and permanent residency, with a notable surge in issuances in 2023 as compared to 2018. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Monday also announced that his government will reduce the number of temporary foreign workers doing low-wage jobs.

INDIAN STUDENTS FEEL UNFAIRLY TARGETED BY CANADIAN GOVERNMENT In Brampton, frustration among international students has led to further protests, where hundreds have rallied against the narrative that blames them for local housing and job crises.

Advocacy groups, such as the International Sikh Student Organisation, argue that these issues stem from broader policy failures rather than the influx of international students. The ongoing protests shows the growing desperation among international students, who feel they are being unfairly targeted by the government. Having heavily invested in their education and the Canadian economy, these students are now being told to complete their studies and return home, all while grappling with substantial debt. They are calling on the government to extend post-graduate work permits, establish clear and consistent pathways to permanent residency, and address the systemic issues contributing to their exploitation.

'Balochistan attacks aimed at stopping China cooperation': Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif

GNS News Agency, August 30

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif alleged on Tuesday that the terror attacks in Balochistan are aimed at stopping development projects that form part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Sharif's statement comes a day after multiple attacks across the Pakistani province of Balochistan claimed 73 lives. In a televised address to his cabinet, Sharif said. "The terrorists want to stop CPEC and development projects." He added that the militants also wanted to drive a wedge between Islamabad and Beijing.

The assaults that began on Sunday, killing more than 70, were the most widespread in years by ethnic militants seeking to win secession of the resource-rich province, home to major China-led projects such as a port and a gold and copper mine. In the past, Pakistan has not been able to develop the infrastructure needed to tap into the mineral-rich Balochistan, and hence sought China's help through the CPEC deal. In Beijing, China condemned the attacks and vowed to maintain its support for Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts. "China is ready to further strengthen counter-terrorism security co-operation with the Pakistani side in order to jointly maintain regional peace and security," Lin Jian, a foreign ministry spokesperson, told a regular news briefing.

Previously, Beijing has flagged concerns regarding the security risks faced by Chinese citizens working in Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan. In March, six Chinese engineers working on a dam project were killed in the northwest. Separatist armed groups have also targeted Balochistan's deepwater Gwadar port, which is run



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by China. Militants attacked vehicles on major roads and highways in Balochistan on Sunday and Monday, leading to the deaths of 38 civilians and over a dozen security personnel. 21 terrorists were killed in the counter operations run by the Pakistani military. The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), took responsibility for this week's simultaneous attacks on police stations, railway lines and highways in the province, the largest but least developed of Pakistan's four. Hundreds of its fighters, including seven suicide bombers, participated in the attacks, it said in a statement.

Bikaji says 'not for sale' amid investor interest in Indian snacks market



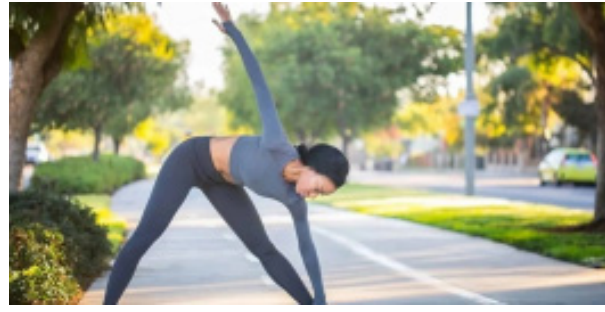
"Bikaji is not for sale. Whatever price someone offers, there are certain things that are not for sale," Chief Operating Officer Manoj Verma said earlier this month, without disclosing whether the company has received buyout offers. (Representational Photo) "Bikaji is not for sale. Whatever price someone offers, there are certain things that are not for sale," Chief Operating Officer Manoj Verma said earlier this month, without disclosing whether the company has received buyout offers. Indian snacks maker Bikaji Foods is "not for sale" and is instead on the prowl itself, aiming to cash in on the growing appetite for savoury brands in the world's most populous country, a top executive told Reuters.

The Indian savoury snacks sector has ballooned in recent years as consumers splurge on packaged foods. "Bikaji is not for sale. Whatever price someone offers, there are certain things that are not for sale," Chief

Operating Officer Manoj Verma said earlier this month, without disclosing whether the company has received buyout offers. His comments came after India's Tata Group and a consortium including Blackstone and Singapore's GIC held acquisition talks with market leader Haldiram's. Shares in Bikaji, which is majority-owned by founder Shiv Ratan Agarwal and his family, have gained around 67% to value the company at \$2.55 billion since Reuters reported on investor interest in Haldiram's last September. Haldiram's itself was in talks to acquire a majority stake in peer Prataap Snacks in January. "Suddenly, this has become a hot space," Verma said, adding that he expects the entry of heavyweight investors to make the market more competitive and fuel further growth. Reuters reported in May that talks between Tata and Haldiram's had ended, while it is not immediately clear if other deal talks are still ongoing.

Bikaji, which recently bought stakes in Bhujialaji and Ariba Foods, aims to make more acquisitions only if they could help expand distribution or boost its presence in the frozen-food market, he said, adding that it has a budget of 1 billion rupees to 1.5 billion rupees (around \$12 million-\$18 million) for the right target. The snacks maker, which brokerage Anand Rathi said is the third biggest Indian snacks brand behind Haldiram's and Balaji, is more focused on expanding its market share by 50 basis points every year from 9% currently. Verma expects Bikaji's revenue to rise 16%-17% in the current fiscal year from 23.29 billion rupees in the year ended March 31. (\$1 = 83.9330 Indian rupees)

We decode 5 morning habits that promise to help you lose belly fat



If you are a night owl, this article may make you want to become a morning person. Walking up with the sun is not only believed to have a positive impact on the day but may also aid your weight loss journey. How, you ask? Well, that's exactly what we also wanted to know after coming across fitness coach Josiah's post on Instagram stating 5-morning habits that, he claimed, will help you lose belly fat fast. Drink a glass of water and salt. Eat a high-protein breakfast. Have protein-rich foods like eggs, Greek yoghurt, or a protein shake (increases satiety, reduces cravings, and supports muscle maintenance). Engage in morning exercise. Do a 20-30 minute workout, including cardio and strength training (kickstarts metabolism, burns calories, and promotes fat loss).

Avoid sugary foods and drinks. Skip sugary cereals, pastries, and sweetened beverages (prevents insulin spikes and reduces overall calorie intake, aiding in fat loss). Plan your meals and snacks. Prepare healthy meals

and snacks for the day (helps you stay on track with your nutrition, reduces the temptation to overeat, and ensures balanced meals). Commenting on these habits, Dr Santosh Pandey, naturopath and acupuncturist, Rejua Energy Centre, Mumbai said while these can be a starting point, especially for those who struggle with getting up in the morning, it is necessary to make lifestyle changes to reduce belly fat. "Belly fat is dangerous even in lean people as it adversely affects the organs," he told indianexpress.com. Burning belly fat needs collective efforts and certain lifestyle modifications, urged Dr Manjusha Agarwal, senior consultant, internal medicine, Gleneagles Hospitals Parel Mumbai. "The key to losing weight and burning fat lies in an intense workout regime. Limited mobility can affect your metabolism causing abrupt weight gain no matter how clean your diet is," said Dr Agarwal. Dr Pandey suggested the following: "Exercise; it trims fat, including visceral fat. Cut back on carbs, especially refined carbs. Eat more soluble fibre as it promotes weight loss by helping you feel full for a longer time and decreasing the number of calories your body absorbs from food. Stop consuming foods that contain trans fat. Don't eat a lot of sugary foods. Follow a balanced diet with increased protein consumption. Never sit for a longer period of time and always keep moving. Have smaller and more frequent meals. Sleep deprivation also decreases your metabolism, which can make it difficult to lose that extra fat. So, adequate sleep is needed. DISCLAIMER: This article is based on information from the public domain and/or the experts we spoke to. Always consult your health practitioner before starting any routine.

Apple eyes bigger slice of India's streaming market with Airtel deal

Premium users of Airtel's broadband and postpaid services can access Apple TV+ and Apple Music later this year as part of their plans. Premium users of Airtel's broadband and postpaid services can access Apple TV+ and Apple Music later this year as part of their plans. Apple is tying up with India's Airtel to offer the telecom firm's premium customers its music and video streaming services for free, potentially giving the US firm access to thousands of consumers in a price-sensitive market.

The move comes as competition tightens in India's \$28-billion entertainment market and an \$8.5-billion merger of the Indian media assets of Reliance and Walt Disney faces close scrutiny from regulators. "Apple TV+ will come bundled with premium Airtel WiFi and Postpaid plans," Airtel said in a statement on Tuesday, though the companies did not disclose a deal value for the partnership or information on costs. With mostly English-language content, Apple TV+ is a small player in the Indian market, where its rivals include Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ Hotstar and billionaire Mukesh Ambani's JioCinema. Apple is following competitors in bundling streaming services with telecom plans to grow its audi-



ence more quickly. Premium users of Airtel's broadband and postpaid services can access Apple TV+ and Apple Music later this year as part of their plans. Airtel will shut its music app Wynk in this process, two sources with direct knowledge of the matter said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Airtel has about 281 million subscribers for its India telecom offerings, while its top rival, Ambani's Reliance Jio, has about 489 million.

Aamir Khan admits he missed the emotional memo as a father: Common regrets of working parents who overpass their kids' lives

Balancing a demanding career with the responsibilities of parenthood is a challenge many parents face. For some, the pursuit of professional success can lead to missed opportunities and moments with their children that can never be reclaimed. In the latest episode of Chapter 2 podcast where Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan sat down for a conversation with Rhea Chakraborty, the former opened up about not giving enough time and attention to his three children. He revealed, "Ira was struggling with depression at the time, she is much better now. But then she needed me. Junaid is starting his career. He has lived his life without me. And now, perhaps he is taking the last big step in his life, towards his career. If I am not with him at this time, then what's the point? Azad is 9 years old now. In another 3 years, he will be a teenager. His childhood won't come back."

He continued, "Not that I don't have strong feelings for my kids, I feel a lot for my family. But the fact that I already had my close ones around me, I had to win over the audience. I have laughed and cried with them (fans) through my films and stories. I have given hope to people. But when Ira and Junaid were five or six years old, I didn't know anything about their feelings then, what were their problems, what did they need then or what were their challenges. I had no idea about these things."

Khan cried and said that he knew everything about his team and directors, and he felt very bad, describing that time as "very difficult" for him. He expressed regret that Ira and Junaid's childhood wouldn't return, and he could have spent a lot more time with his mother in the last 30 years, which he didn't, lamenting that the time would never return. Realising that time spent away from family is lost forever can bring about deep feelings of guilt and regret. However, understanding how to reconnect with your children and make up for lost time can help mend these important bonds and create a new path forward. Psychologist Anjali Gursahaney tells indianexpress.com, "Many parents regret not being present for key milestones in their children's lives, such as their first words, first steps, school performances, birthdays, or other special occasions. These missed moments can leave parents feeling like they've lost irreplaceable opportunities to bond with their children and create lasting memories. When children don't receive the attention and care they need from their parents, she mentions, they can start to feel neglected and unimportant. This lack of emotional connection can impact their sense of



security and attachment, leading to a widening gap between them and their parents. Gursahaney adds, "Over time, this distance can result in communication barriers and a strained relationship. Parents often experience deep feelings of guilt, sadness, and shame for not being as emotionally present as they wanted to be, which further complicates their relationship with their kids. Effective strategies for parents who want to rebuild and strengthen their relationships with their children. Don't be dishonest: Children frequently know when a parent has not been there, so it is important to tell the truth about it. Instead of offering excuses, accept that you were not present and show genuine remorse for your absence. This will help your child understand that their feelings are valid, and that you are committed to fixing things. Share quality time: Spend time with kids in their daily activities or do something that they like doing. It could be playing children's favorite games, reading stories or walking around with them outside the house.

The focus should be on being fully engaged as well as interested in what they care about. Reasons for open communication: Give an environment where your son/daughter can share his/her thoughts and emotions without feeling judged upon. Active listening and empathy are crucial aspects towards building trust because they make your boy feel heard and understood. Keep consistency: Make sure you consistently participate within those everyday important moments in life. In the long run, this can assist in rebuilding trust and strengthening the bond even through small gestures or a brief conversation every day.

This is what happens to the body when you eat a raw egg daily

Many people like to have eggs for breakfast, which is enjoyed in many ways according to personal choices and preferences. In India, eggs are enjoyed as curry, omelette, fried rice, sunny side ups, scotch eggs, wraps, toast, soft-boiled, sandwiches, bhurji, and also in pancakes, muffins, and other desserts. But some people prefer to eat raw eggs. "Health enthusiasts or even gym goers eat raw eggs to meet their daily protein intake while focusing on building their bodies," said Jinal Patel, dietitian, Zynova Shalby Hospital. But are raw eggs healthy? Before finding out the answer to that, let's understand more about the nutritional profile of eggs.

Why should you have eggs?

Eggs contain essential nutrients like vitamin A, vitamin B2, vitamin B5, vitamin B12, vitamin B9, protein, prosperity, antioxidants, and selenium. "It also contains healthy fats like omega-3 fatty acids, DHA, and EPA. Egg yolk has the most fat content present in the egg. This is why certain people avoid eating yolk and focus on eating egg whites for maximum protein," said Patel. It is important to note that fats are essential and needed by the body for various functions such as promoting cell growth, supporting the brain and nerve system, promoting hormonal production, and also aiding the absorption of fat-soluble nutrients. "The unsaturated fat content in eggs is good for your heart health. Some believe that eggs help in lowering bad cholesterol levels and raise good cholesterol levels. However, eating a raw egg is a no-no. It can cause further health problems," said Patel. According to Patel, it is a common myth that raw eggs are good for health. "People are advised to avoid eating raw eggs due to salmonella risk (gastrointestinal illness). Some tend to eat raw eggs on an empty stomach, without consulting an expert. It can cause digestive problems like stomach

pain, cramps, diarrhea, constipation, bloating, gas and even food poisoning in some," said Patel. Agreeing, Dr Vikas Jindal, Consultant, dept of gastroenterology, CK Birla Hospital, Delhi said that eating raw eggs increases the risk of foodborne infection, especially from Salmonella bacteria, which can cause "very serious gastrointestinal upset". Additionally, avidin, a protein found in raw egg whites, can bind to biotin (vitamin B7) and, if ingested in excessive numbers, may eventually result in biotin insufficiency. "Biotin is an essential nutrient found in cooked eggs. It cannot be absorbed by your body when raw as it contains avidin. When eggs are cooked, the avidin is removed which helps your body absorb biotin," said Patel.

Raw eggs have a strong odour and might gross out a few, Patel warned. "One can find the taste and texture of raw eggs odd and unpleasant causing vomiting or puckyish feeling. Raw eggs are harder to digest compared to cooked eggs and may cause inflammation, swelling, breathing difficulties, and hives," mentioned Patel. She added that eating 1 raw egg every day can put significant stress on your immune system as it has to effectively combat bacteria like salmonella. "People with allergies should avoid eating eggs in any form. Specific allergy tests can help you identify whether you are allergic to eggs or not," said Patel. It's essential to use pasteurised eggs, which have been heat-treated to eliminate dangerous bacteria, in order to eliminate such risks. Despite the potential benefits, many health experts recommend cooking eggs to ensure safety while still providing nutritional advantages. Always consult with a healthcare professional before making significant changes to your diet. DISCLAIMER: This article is based on information from the public domain and/or the experts we spoke to. Always consult your health practitioner before starting any routine.

After Shipping Ministry assures wage revision, port workers defer strike



Port workers strike, Shipping Ministry wage revision assurance, Port workers-ministry negotiations, port workers wage revision demand, memorandum of understanding, MoU signed, MoU drafting committee, workers' federations, Indian express news India exported goods worth \$437 billion, with imports estimated at \$677 billion in FY24. Port workers on Tuesday deferred their strike, which was set to begin on August 28, after reaching an agreement with the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways following a two-day-long negotiation over a wage revision that has been pending for the last two years.

As per a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed on Tuesday, a settlement will be prepared within a period of ten days by a drafting committee consisting of various stakeholders, including a representative from all workers' federations involved in the negotiations. The MoU said that the workers would receive a fitment benefit of 8.5 per cent on the aggregate amount of basic pay as of 31 December 2021, plus 30 per cent of Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA) as of 1 January 2022. The periodicity of the settlement shall be five years, from 1 January

2022 to 31 December 2026, MoU stated.

"The suggestion of management that the periodicity of the next wage revision from 1 January 2027 should coincide with the periodicity of officers' pay revision, with a view to avoid future anomalies, has been duly considered. The federations agreed that both management and federations will consider this at the time of the next wage revision, effective from 1 January 2027, to bring parity in the periodicity of settlement for officers and employees," the MoU stated. Notably, the shipping ministry had formed a bipartite wage negotiation committee in March 2021, and the workers submitted their demands six months later, ahead of the expiration of the previous agreement in December 2021. Although the wage negotiation committee met seven times, it failed to meet the port workers' demands. The workers' unions are affiliated with five federations: All India Port and Dock Workers' Federation, All India Port and Dock Workers Federation (Workers), Water Transport Workers Federation of India, Indian National Port and Dock Workers Federation, and Port, Dock and Waterfront Workers Federation of India. The annual cargo handling capacity of major Indian ports such as Chennai, Cochin, and Mumbai is about 1.62 billion metric tonnes, according to official figures. India exported goods worth \$437 billion, with imports estimated at \$677 billion in FY24. While the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways led the negotiations, exporters had reached out to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry seeking help in resolving the issue. Exporters were concerned about the potential loss of Christmas orders from the West, which typically begins around this time. Additionally, they were worried about disruptions amid already strained maritime routes due to the Red Sea crisis.

Electronic components subsidy policy: Centre, industry disagree over job creation

electronics industry, Electronic components subsidy policy, industry disagreement, job creation, employment generation schemes, manufacturing incentive policy, MeitY, IT Ministry, Indian express, economy news An employee works at the television assembly production line of a factory belonging to Hanel electronic company in Hanoi March 1, 2011. There is a standoff between the electronics industry and the Centre over employment numbers in a new electronic components manufacturing incentive policy currently being drafted — with the industry pushing back on the government's job creation demands, saying that the numbers don't reflect the level of mechanisation available. The Indian Express has learnt. Faced with the employment issue, the government is keen on linking jobs creation to subsidies that companies could avail under the electronic components manufacturing incentive policy, which the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) is working on. As part of deliberations on the policy last week, the industry said that the government was estimating job creation under the scheme to be higher than by at least 50-60 per cent. This tussle has delayed the formulation of the policy. "Take printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) for instance. The government is asking that we employ 3-4 people per PCBA unit pro-

duced locally. But, we are telling that the process is highly mechanised, and only needs 1-2 people per unit. There are many other components on which there has been a lot of back and forth as far as employment is concerned," an industry executive said. Incentivising electronic components manufacturing is the next key frontier for India, after it successfully managed to localise assembly of finished electronics products such as smartphones. However, as smartphone companies like Apple and Samsung ramped up their assembly processes, it has resulted in a surge in import of component imports given that India has very little footprint in the domain, which is largely dominated by China. The incentive policy for electronic components could have a government subsidy component to the tune of Rs 40,000 crore, with the expected investments in the space to the tune of Rs 82,000 crore. The government is exploring various incentive models, including subsidising either operational or capital expenditure or a combination of the two, depending on the type of component. In an internal assessment, the government has also identified a "huge" demand-supply gap in the electronic components sector — to the tune of \$100 billion for domestic consumption alone, and \$140 billion if India wants to export some components.

Only Murders In The Building Season 4 review: Steve Martin, Martin Short, Selena Gomez show offers only intermittent pleasures



It's no secret that I mark time restlessly between the gaps taken by the cast and crew of 'Only Murders In The Building' — a show in which two spry senior citizens are joined by a slouchy millennial to solve murders which occur in their building with alarming frequency — to regroup for a new season. While I didn't fall madly in love with the series when it began, the novelty of the premise kept me hooked. The second one was thoroughly enjoyable, and by the time the third season rolled around, I was hopelessly smitten.

And here they are for a fourth-go-round, our real crime aficionados-cum-part-time-podcasters-cum-full-time-sleuths still-relying-past-actor-glory Charles Haden-Savage Steve Martin), still-hoping-for-a-Broadway-hit Oliver Putnam (Martin Short) and still-in-search-for-self Mabel Mora (Selena Gomez), which promises to be bigger (Hollywood! More stars than you can count! Razzle-dazzle!) and better. Having watched seven episodes of the ten shared with the press (episodes one and two are out today on Disney+ Hotstar), I can safely say that the third season's smoothness and smartness and sharpness, a tough combo to pull off, feels very much like a pinnacle. The new season (co-creators Steve Martin and John Hoffman share writing credits; the two executive-produce along with Martin Short, Selena Gomez, Dan Fogelman and Jeff Rosenthal) opens with the gang landing in LA to partake in the manic chatter around a movie

being made on their exploits. It's a lovely gambit, these three acting all overjoyed-overwhelmed-intimidated in their plush Hollywood surrounding, fronted by appropriately-maniac producer (Molly Shannon), and followed by the real-life actors — Eugene Levy, Zach Galifianakis, and Eva Longoria — who will play them. But movies, and of course dizzying stardom and pots of money, can wait. Back in Arconia, their beloved building in an equally plush part of NYC, is the job we care about: for them to pick up the trail of a body. Could it be the missing Sazz Pataki (Jane Lynch), Charles' long-time double and old pal? As always, and perhaps even more than before, there is a veritable feast of suspects, and the trio busies itself in doing what they do best, bumbling about, discovering dark truths lurking in corners of their building, exchanging one-liners, and staving off the cop-who-shows-up-when-things-get-murky (Da'Vine Joy Randolph), who always wants them to spill the tea on things they have no clue about.

But despite the cross-continental to-ing and fro-ing, and the march of the many starry exhibits, I've found my interest flagging. You don't need to be a crack investigator to know that the novelty factor of this unlikely trio was going to wear off. That was always on the cards, given how long they have been schlepping about in search of killers, while looking out for each other, with touching care and concern. Much of the charm of the show lay in how their interactions felt consistently fresh and funny. But here they aren't in great company. Their stand-ins come off decidedly, and surprisingly, dull. The fleet-footedness of the show — not making enough of the beautifully-apt idea of naming each episode after movie classics, among other things — seems to have got stalled, leaving us seeking intermittent pleasures. Which is still largely vested, thanks be, in the original threesome who seem perfectly capable of being in their own movie. Three climactic episodes remain, and there is one terrific sequence somewhere down the line which I can't reveal. Can they help prop up what came before? I live in hope.

'Akshay Kumar asked if I have a problem with him when I refused his films', says Kangana Ranaut: 'I said, you also have a daughter'

Kangana Ranaut, who is promoting her upcoming film Emergency, recently shared that she has rejected films with Salman Khan, Ranbir Kapoor in the past and even said no to Sanjay Leela Bhansali when he offered her a dance number in his film. Now, in a new interview, Kangana said that even Akshay Kumar offered her a few films but she refused to work in all of his films. In a chat with NBT Entertainment, Kangana said that when Akshay called her for Singh Is Bliing, she refused to be a part of it and when he asked her for the reason, she said, "I said please understand you also have a daughter. We want integrity for women." Kangana implied that she refused to star with Akshay because he wasn't offering her any roles that felt respectable.

She recalled, "Akshay Kumar called me for Singh Is Bliing. Then he called me again for a couple of films. Then he asked 'do you have a problem with me Kangana?' I said 'sir, I really don't have a problem with you'. He asked 'then why? I am giving you such good roles'. I said 'please understand, you also have a daughter. We want integrity for women'." Kangana, in an earlier chat with Siddharth Kannan, said that she refused to star with Salman Khan in Bajrangi Bhaijaan. The role was later played by Kareena Kapoor. She shared that when he offered her Sultan a few years later, she rejected that too.



"Salman offered me a role in Bajrangi Bhaijaan, I was like 'Yeh kya role diya hai?' (what is this role?). He then approached me for Sultan. I didn't take that up. He was like 'What more do I offer to you now?'" she said. She added that despite refusing many films, Salman has been kind towards her. She added, "Salman is so kind. He keeps talking to me. He is even excited to watch Emergency. We have a common friend, he sent him and was like 'you go see what film she has made'. He called me and said, 'It's a nice film'. I was like, 'So you have the news, but you haven't watched it yourself.' This is the kind of bonding we share."

Sharvari Wagh opens on Vedaa's underwhelming box office performance: 'Whether things work or not is beyond me'



Sharvari Wagh, who recently delivered the biggest hit of her career with Muniya and earned critical acclaim for Maharaj, has once again proved her acting mettle with her powerful performance in John Abraham's Vedaa. While Sharvari's performance has been widely praised, the film has faced stiff competition from Stree 2, which released on the same day and went on to do blockbuster business. Vedaa, meanwhile, has struggled to make a significant impact at the box office. In a recent interaction, Sharvari opened up about Vedaa's performance and how its box office results are 'beyond her control'.

Talking to India Today, Sharvari said, "Honestly, there are two different ways of looking at this. For me, I think in Vedaa, my heart was in the role and the performance of it. I really feel that the film had its heart in the right place. Now business decisions, whether things work or not is beyond me because this is only my third film in theatres. So, that is something I am still learning, and I am still a student of understanding how this translates and what is the right thing in terms of business."

In Vedaa, Sharvari plays the role of a lower-caste girl who fights against caste oppression in rural Rajasthan. Speaking about the challenges of the role, she said, "I think this role was very difficult, and challenging and very out of my comfort zone. So, when I get audience love for it, I'm satisfied because I took the little leap of faith in my performance. It could have gone a hundred other ways. For it to have gone in the right way for me is a big win. I haven't done drama, which is also very difficult,

and this was a big success for me." Vedaa has collected Rs 19.59 crore within 12 days of its release. Directed by Nikkhil Advani, the film also stars John Abraham in the lead role.

'Mathu Vadalara 2' to hit theatres on September 13

Hyderabad: Fans of the 2019 Telugu sleeper hit 'Mathu Vadalara' are in for a treat as the highly anticipated sequel is set to release on September 13. Directed by debut filmmaker Ritesh Rana, the crime-comedy took audiences by surprise with its unique plot and unexpected twists. Titled 'Mathu Vadalara 2,' the sequel promises to deliver the same thrilling experience, with a continuation of the story that left viewers on the edge of their seats.

Sree Simha and Satya will reprise their roles as Babu and Yesu, the hapless delivery agents who find themselves embroiled in bizarre and dangerous situations. Faria Abdullah will join the cast as the female lead. Kala Bhairava, who composed the score for the first film, returns to elevate the sequel's narrative with his music.



Produced by Mythri Movie Makers and Clap Entertainment, 'Mathu Vadalara 2' is expected to live up to the high expectations set by its predecessor. The original film was lauded for its clever script and fresh take on the thriller genre, making it a standout project in Telugu cinema. With Ritesh Rana at the helm once again, fans are eager to see if the sequel can surpass the brilliance of the first installment.

BJP Minister and actor Suresh Gopi lashes out, pushes reporters when asked about sexual misconduct allegations against Mukesh



At a time when prominent figures and associations in the Malayalam film industry are grappling with tough questions from the media and the public about the findings of the Justice Hema Committee and the numerous sexual misconduct allegations that have come up against several male insiders since the panel report's release, actor Suresh Gopi has sparked controversy by refusing to comment on the issue and responding rudely to related queries.

On Tuesday, Gopi, who also serves as the Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas as well as the Ministry of Tourism, was leaving the Ramanilayam government guest house in his Lok Sabha constituency of Thrissur when he was asked by the media to comment on the state BJP leadership's criticism of his stance on the allegations against his colleague Mukesh. Irked by the question, Gopi pushed the reporters aside, stating that he had the right to choose his own path and that he would not comment on the issue. Earlier that day, Gopi had criticised the media, accusing it of misleading public perception about the film industry. Claiming that the recent allegations of harassment against actors and directors were like "food" for the press, the BJP minister said they were welcome to profit from it, according to news agency PTI. He also urged reporters not to destroy a huge industry like cinema, implying that the media was blow-

ing the issue of sexual harassment allegations out of proportion. Gopi also stated that as long as the court hasn't ruled, Mukesh is not guilty.

Mukesh Madhavan is a senior Malayalam actor who has been representing the Kollam Assembly constituency in Kerala since 2016. He won both the 2016 and 2021 elections with tickets from the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the largest party in the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) alliance. "This is all food for you, is what I understand. You can use it to make money. (There is) no problem with that. But these issues are before the court and it has the intelligence and logic to arrive at a decision regarding them. You (the media) are not only making people fight each other for your own gains, you are also misleading public perception. The complaints are in the form of allegations at the moment. What are you telling people? Are you the court? You are not," Gopi was quoted as saying by PTI. "Did the court say anything about Mukesh? When I come out of the office, you have to ask about my office activities. When I come out of the house, you should ask something about that. When I come out from AMMA office, ask about it," Gopi added, Mathrubhumi reported. Soon after the actor-politician made these remarks, the BJP state leadership quickly clarified that Gopi's views did not reflect the party's official stance. Party state president K Surendran stated that while Gopi, as a film actor, is entitled to his personal opinions, the BJP's position is defined by the party leadership. Surendran reiterated the party's demand for the CPI(M) legislator's resignation, making it clear that Gopi's comments did not align with the party's stance. Reports indicate that the state leadership's statement aggravated Gopi, leading him to act rudely towards reporters, even pushing them away when approached for a response later today. Suresh Gopi and Mukesh have worked together in several films, including Sundara Purushan, Nair Saab, Thoovalsparsham, Kouthuka Varthakal, Oru CBI Diary Kurippu, Kancheepurathe Kalyanam and Minda Poochaku Kalyanam.

Ram Charan and Upasana celebrate Janmashtami with daughter Klin in a sweet, simple ceremony.

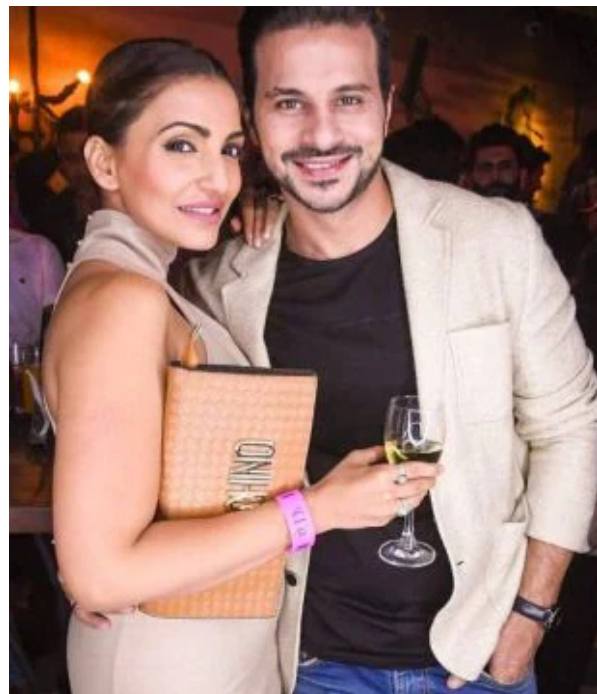
Fans recently enjoyed a glimpse of actor Ram Charan and wife Upasana Kamineni's sweet and simple Janmashtami celebration with their daughter Klin Kaara Konidela. Upasana shared heartwarming photos on Instagram, showcasing the adorable Klin in the family's beautifully decorated pooja room.

In one photo, Upasana and Klin are seen praying in front of the Krishna idol. Upasana, dressed in a powder blue kurta set, and Klin, looking cute in a blue frock, are shown participating in the ritual. Upasana captioned the image, "Amma & Kaara, simple sweet puja time #happyjanmashtami." Another photo features Ram Charan and their pet dog Rhyme joining the celebration, with Klin performing a ritual alongside her grandmother, Ram Charan's mother Surekha. Though the couple has yet to reveal Klin Kaara's face, they frequently share memorable moments of their family life. Recently, Upasana posted about Klin's first trip to Paris with her grandparents, Chiranjeevi and Surekha, writing, "Klin



Kaara's first trip with her grandparents!!! Memorable ??." On their 12th wedding anniversary in June, Upasana also shared a touching photo of Klin Kaara with her and Ram holding her hands. She captioned it, "Here's to 12 years of togetherness! Thank you all for your love and wishes. Each one of you has played a special part in making our lives truly wonderful. So much gratitude."

Ishqbaaz actress Navina Bole announces separation with husband Jeet Karnani, says they will co-parent daughter



Navina, who married financial consultant Jeet Karnani in 2017, told the newspaper that she and her husband "drifted apart gradually." Navina and Jeet welcomed their first daughter Kimaayra in 2019. In the interview, Navina called the separation amicable and revealed that it happened three months ago. She also added that the legal proceedings on the matter will begin soon, however, they have decided to co-parent their daughter.

Actress Navina Bole, popularly known for her roles in Ishqbaaz and Miley Jab Hum Tum, recently announced her separation from her husband Jeet Karnani. Confirming the news on social media, Navina shared a photo from an interview she gave to Bombay Times confirming the news. Navina wrote on Instagram, "Yes this has happened. Yes, it's true. Life goes on and everything happens for the best."

Navina, who married financial consultant Jeet Karnani in 2017, told the newspaper that she and her husband "drifted apart gradually." Navina and Jeet welcomed their first daughter Kimaayra in 2019. In the interview, Navina called the separation amicable and revealed that it happened three months ago. She also added that the legal proceedings on the matter will begin soon, however, they have decided to co-parent their daughter. Further talking to ETimes, Navina shared that

her husband Jeet will spend two days with their daughter. She added, "We believe it is better to part ways and live a happy life than be unhappy together." Sharing how they had a good marriage initially, they grew distant overtime, stating that communication and spending quality time is very important. She even revealed that they tried to sort things out for their daughter's sake but it didn't work. Reacting to this news fans said, "Love, light, and luck to you." Another fan wrote, "Always keep doing good things in life."

A third user wrote, "I hope you guys stay happy in whatever decisions you two make." Navina Bole has been known for her negative roles in Ishqbaaz and Miley Jab Hum Tum, other than this she has been a part of Sajjan Re Jhoot Mat Bolo, Na Bole Tum Na Main Ne Kuch Kaha, Jeannie Aur Juju, etc. Recently, Navina has also featured in a few web series.

Javelin to shooting, India targets medal surge as Paralympic Games start



GNS News Agency, August 30

At Rio 2016, India's para Olympians returned home with four medals, two more than the able-bodied athletes. The tally jumped to 19 medals at the next Summer Games at Tokyo in 2021. As the 2024 Paralympic Games gets underway with the opening ceremony in Paris on Wednesday, India will be looking to continue this upward trajectory. Hopes are high as the largest-ever para-contingent of 84 athletes will be seen at venues where India got five medals earlier this month. Double Paralympic medalist Devendra Jhajharia, who is now president of the Paralympic Committee of India, has a number in mind when he speculates on India's medal count.

"Our 84-member team has come here with great enthusiasm. As the president of the Paralympic Committee, I want to tell you that we are going to create history in this tournament," Jhajharia said in a video message after the contingent reached the Games village. "We will win more medals than we ever have in the history of the Paralympics. When we repeatedly say that we will win more than 25 medals and that we will be in the medal tally of the top 20 countries, it is because our preparation is excellent, whether it be athletics, badminton or archery," he said. After their feats in Tokyo, there are already a few headlines to watch out for from India. Before shooter Manu Bhaker in Paris, there was shooter Lekhara, who was paralysed from the waist below after an accident at the age of 12 years and shoots from a wheelchair, became the first Indian female athlete to bag a gold medal at the Paralympics when she won the 10m air rifle SH1. She followed that up with a bronze later. Back to compete in France now, she will be shouldering the responsibilities of the shooting contingent. In athletics, India, historically, has done well. Jhajharia's two javelin gold medals,

both before Neeraj Chopra's historic Olympic gold in Tokyo, came 12 years apart. But Sumit Antil may not have to wait that long.

Growing up in Khewra village of Haryana's Sonapat district, Antil dreamt of being a wrestler one day. He had the physique for it too, tall and well-built with strong shoulders. However, after an accident in January 2015, his left leg was amputated. A couple of years later, he was introduced to para athletics, and he thought javelin throw would be his best bet.

From throwing the spear to 35m when he started off, Antil has now broken — rather smashed — the world record in men's javelin (F64) multiple times. Antil, who throws with a prosthetic leg, shot to the limelight in Tokyo and has since added two World Championship golds and one at Asian Games too. He won the last one with a stunning throw of 73.29m, the farthest any para athlete has thrown the javelin across all classifications. While Lekhara and Antil will be looking to defend their titles, there is Sheetal Devi, a rising star who has already made headlines before her Paralympics debut. Born with Phocomelia, a rare congenital disorder that causes underdeveloped limbs, she hadn't come across a bow-and-arrow until she was 15 years old. "Initially, I could not even lift the bow properly. But, after practising for a couple of months, it became easier," Devi told The Indian Express when she won three medals at the Asian Games last year. She has since become a well-known face in the Indian sporting community, for her ability to release the arrow with the help of her right leg, right shoulder and jaw. Also in focus will be para badminton. For the first time since London 2012, Indian shuttlers didn't finish on the podium at the Paris Olympics earlier this month, but the para contingent is expected to fare better. Badminton made its Paralympics debut in Tokyo, where India won four medals, including two gold. While one of the gold medalists, Pramod Bhagat, was suspended for 18 months due to a whereabouts violation, the contingent is still brimming with talent. "This time, we will try to increase our share to eight-ten medals, including six gold medals. Our players are in good form and I believe they will do well," para badminton chief coach Gaurav Khanna told Badminton World Federation. "We need to set targets for the results and I believe we can achieve this." Over the next fortnight, there will be no dearth of inspiration as these athletes, and dozens more, showcase their skills in Paris, as India seeks to continue the upward medal trend of the last few Paralympic Games.

How Jay Shah became the most powerful man in global cricket

GNS News Agency, August 30

Confirming what had been on the cards for a while, Jay Shah was elected unopposed as the next chair of the International Cricket Council. The Indian, the son of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, will assume his new role on December 1. The 35-year-old will replace Greg Barclay and would be the youngest ICC Chair. Here's a look at his rise and rise in cricket administration.

2009: Entry into administration Shah's formal entry into cricket administration came in 2009 when he started working with the Central Board of Cricket, Ahmedabad (CBCA). He went on to work at the state level — first as an executive with the Gujarat Cricket Association (GCA). In 2011, he was included in the marketing committee of the BCCI. By the time he was 25, he had risen to the post of GCA secretary in 2013 and represented the association during the BCCI's Annual General Body meeting. In 2015, Shah is said to have played a key role behind the scenes in the ouster of former BCCI president N Srinivasan. He had backed Anurag Thakur, who pipped Srinivasan's candidate Sanjay Patel by one vote for the secretary's post. World's largest stadium

Shah's first head-turning move was at the Gujarat Cricket Association. After taking over as the joint secretary in 2013, when his father was the state unit president, Shah was at the forefront of the ambitious revamp of the then Motera Stadium. From the announcement, it was labelled as the world's biggest stadium. And in 2020, the 1,32,000-seater was the venue for the Namaste Trump event, where former US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a rally. In 2021, the venue hosted its first Test and was renamed the Narendra Modi Stadium. 2019: Rise as BCCI gen-secln 2019, came the big promotion as 31-year-old Shah became BCCI secretary, taking up arguably the most powerful role in all cricket, not just in India. While Sourav Ganguly's appointment as BCCI president made the headlines back then, Shah's ascension was quiet but significant. A new regime was taking over BCCI after a tumultuous period that saw plenty of back and forth between the Supreme Court and the Committee of Administrators. In 2022, Shah was re-elected unopposed while Ganguly made way for Roger Binny.

2020-2021: IPL during Covid times The tournament had its challenges but Shah oversaw that the lucrative IPL wouldn't halt during the pandemic when most global sport came to a standstill. The 2020 edition was played entirely in a bio-secure bubble in the United Arab Emirates. In 2021, the tournament began in India but had to be suspended during the deadly wave of Covid-19 cases. It resumed later in the year, once again in the UAE.

After not hosting the Ranji Trophy in 2020 and a curtailed version in 2021 because of the pandemic which affected domestic players' income significantly, Shah announced a new payment structure in September 2021. As per the dynamic module, a cricketer who has played more than 40 matches in his career will get a match fee of Rs 60,000 per day. Earlier this year, Shah also announced a new plan that will increase a player's match fee significantly based on the number of Tests played during a season. In addition to a Test match fee of Rs 15 lakh, if someone played 75 percent of the matches in a season, they would earn an additional Rs 45 lakh per Test match.

2021: Leading Asian Cricket Council Shah was appointed President of the Asian Cricket Council, in a prelude to his rise to the top of the global game. He was the youngest President of the ACC too. Later in 2022, Shah became Chairman of the Finance & Commercial Affairs (F&C) Committee at the ICC. 2022: IPL media rights Shah's tenure in the BCCI also saw a record-breaking deal for IPL media rights worth Rs 48,390 crore for a five-year period. The combined valuation from the bids received back then made the IPL the second-most valued sporting



league in terms of per-match value, behind the USA's National Football League.

2022-23: WPL and equal match fees After years of delays and inertia from administrators to hold a proper league for female cricketers instead of an exhibition tournament, the Women's Premier League became a reality in late 2022 and early 2023. And immediately, the league started breaking records for women's cricket, starting from team ownership bids and media rights valuation, to even player wages through the inaugural auction. Also late in 2022, BCCI said women cricketers would be paid the same match fee as their male counterparts, in an attempt to bridge the income gap that exists in cricket. This, however, didn't change the existing central contracts structure. The WPL has now completed two successful seasons. 2024: India's T20 World Cup win Much before there was any clarity on India's squad for the T20 World Cup, Shah — in a statement that signified the power he wielded in the board — had declared in February that Rohit Sharma would be the captain for the tournament in the United States and the West Indies. India went on to win the World Cup, not long after the disappointment of losing the final of the ODI mega event in November 2023. The T20 World Cup win marked the end of India's 11-year wait for an ICC title.

Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker felicitated in hometown

Jhajjar: Manu Bhaker's 2024 Paris Olympics campaign has seen her being honoured and celebrated across the country. The 22-year-old reached her hometown of Jhajjar on Sunday and was felicitated by the District Commissioner for her achievements. Upon reaching the event Manu was showered with gifts and garlands. She was thankful for the amount of support she has received from her hometown and took the time to acknowledge that. "You always need support from a lot of people, it can't be just attributed to any one individual. I started in my village and I got a lot of support from my school, family and then my district helped me out a lot. I was facing a license issue but they sorted it out quickly and from there I started improving as a shooter," said Manu to reporters. Manu Bhaker created history at the 2024 Paris Olympics by becoming the first Indian to win two medals in a single Olympic campaign post independence. She also is the first Indian woman to win a medal in single's shooting at the event. Despite the record breaking performance, Manu still is not satisfied with her performance and will be aiming for gold next time out. "The aim is to always go for gold but these bronze medals have given me teachings for the future and my aim will always be to go for gold," she added. Manu also went on to confirm that she is currently on a three month long break. She is facing a slight injury issue and will only be returning to competition after tending to it. "I have taken a three month long break, I was facing a slight injury issue so I will have to address that."

Swiatek aaves three set points to defeat Rakhimova in first round



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New York: 1221694of Poland survived a scare at the US Open on Tuesday, overcoming a gritty challenge from lucky loser Kamilla Rakhimova in the first round of women's singles at the Arthur Ashe Stadium here. Swiatek, the 2022 US Open winner, saved three set points in the second-set tiebreak before advancing 6-4, 7-6(6) in 1 hour and 52 minutes at the Flushing Meadows.

India aim for gold rush with largest-ever contingent at Paralympics

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Paris: Battered by life but not beaten by its many challenges, an 84-strong contingent of Indian para-athletes, the largest ever in the country's history and a heady mix of youth and experience, would be eyeing an unparalleled gold rush when the Paralympic Games begin here on Wednesday. India won a record 19 medals, including five gold, in the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021 for a 24th-place finish in the overall rankings. Three years on, the country's target is more than 25 medals with a double-digit haul in gold. What has fuelled this ambition is the size of the contingent and the exceptional performances in the past one year.

India won a record 111 medals, including 29 gold, at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games last year. This was followed by unprecedented success at the World Para Athletics Championships in May where the country snared 17 medals, including half a dozen gold for a sixth-place finish in the overall standings. Several medal winners in Hangzhou are in this Paralympics team, including top stars like world record-holding javelin thrower Sumit Antil (F64) and rifle shooter Avani Lekhara (10m Air Rifle Standing SH1). Both of them would be defending their gold medals won in Tokyo. The Games, as much a celebration of sporting skills as human endurance, club athletes with similar functional abilities in terms of movement, coordination and balance into various classifications. The "degree and nature of their eligible impairments" decide these groups.

For India, the para-athletics team has been a major medal giver in the past and this time too, it is expected to be the biggest contributor with as many as 38 names in fray. Other top medal contenders include the likes of para-archer Sheetal Devi, who shoots with her legs as she was born without arms, landmine blast survivors Hokato Sema (shot putter) and Narayana Konganapalle (rower) and several other accident amputees. India is competing in 12 sports this time, as against nine by a 54-member team in Tokyo. Shooter Manish Narwal and shuttler Krishna Nagar are also among those who would be looking

Rakhimova held some initiative in their first encounter, which initially threatened to be a one-sided rout after Swiatek raced out to a 4-0 lead for the loss of just three points. But Rakhimova, who took Aryna Sabalenka to three sets in Washington four weeks ago, pushed the Pole hard for the rest of the match. Swiatek, who has won five majors so far, was unable to close out the World No.104 serving at 5-4 in the second set and ultimately needed to squeak past in a tiebreak that went down to the wire. This was her 80th win in Grand Slam matches so far. Swiatek, who has won the French Open in 2020, 2022, 2023 and 2024, is bidding to add a second US Open crown to her 2022 title. Her 21st victory in 22 career Grand Slam first-round matches sets up a four-time, second-round clash with either Daria Saville or qualifier Ena Shibahara, the former doubles No.4 who has turned her focus to singles this year. In other first-round matches on Tuesday, Caroline Dolehide of the United States stunned 11th-seed compatriot Danielle Collins 1-6, 7-5, 6-4 while 31st-seeded Katie Boulter of the United Kingdom too needed three sets to overcome Aliaksandra Sasnovich 7-5, 6-2, 6-1 and 25th seed Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova defeated Taylah Preston of Australia 6-2, 6-0 in just over one hour.



to defend their gold medals won in Tokyo. Antil, whose left leg was amputated owing to an accident when he was 17, had also won gold in the para world championships in May and he is hoping to cross the 75m mark in Paris at the same venue where his able-bodied counterpart Neeraj Chopra won an Olympic silver earlier this month. Lekhara was the best performer in Tokyo with one gold and a bronze and one of the two athletes to win two medals, the other being Singraj Adhana (silver and bronze). Adhana, however, could not make the current team. Lekhara was the first Indian woman to win a Paralympic gold medal. She is now primed to join the club of three medal winners in the Paralympics. Current Paralympics Committee of India (PCI) President Devendra Jhajharia, a javelin thrower, is the most decorated Indian Paralympian with two gold (2004 Athens and 2016 Rio) and a silver (2021 Tokyo). Joginder Singh Bedi won three medals in the 1984 Paralympics (silver in shot put, a bronze each in javelin and discus throw). Deepthi Jeevanji (women's 400m T20; intellectual disability), Rio Olympics gold-medallist Mariyappan Thangavelu (men's high jump — T63), whose right leg was disabled after being run over by a bus, and Yogesh Kathuniya (men's Discus Throw — F56), born with a neurological disorder that damaged his nervous system, would be also aiming to add to their existing Paralympic medal tally.

Why Jay Shah's tenure as ICC chief is critical for cricket's global leap

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As expected, Jay Shah has been elected as the new chair of International Cricket Council (ICC), with his term set to begin from December 1. As the deadline ended on Tuesday for the directors to file their nominations, Shah was the lone nominee to replace Greg Barclay. Shah, at 35, will become the youngest to hold office, and will have to step down as the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), as his new role at the ICC is independent. Shah's elevation comes at a significant moment for the sport, which will make its Olympics debut in Los Angeles Olympics 2028. He will hold a term of three years as ICC Chair with an option to continue for three more years. With six years ahead of him, Shah gets an opportunity to position cricket as a truly global sport on the back of a heavy fan following and increasing consumption value. "I am humbled by the nomination as the Chair of the International Cricket Council," Shah said. "I am committed to working closely with the ICC team and our member nations to further globalise cricket. With cricket poised to make its historic debut at the Olympics in 2028, we stand at the precipice of a transformative era. This juncture is not merely a milestone, it's a clarion call for all of us involved in this magnificent sport. It is my privilege to lead the ICC during such an exciting period in our shared journey," said Shah.

Jay Shah Bridgetown: India's captain Rohit Sharma with BCCI Secretary Jay Shah after India defeated South Africa in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final cricket match, at Kensington Oval, in Bridgetown, Barbados, Sunday, June 30, 2024. Him assuming charges came after Barclay chose not to seek a third term. It is in sync with his steady and influential raise in cricket administration. Having joined the Gujarat Cricket Association in 2009 as an executive board member, he became its joint-secretary in 2013. In 2019, he was elected as the BCCI secretary, a position he continues till date. He is also the president of the Asian Cricket Council.

Shah, who will be the fifth Indian — Jagmohan Dalmiya, Sharad Pawar, N Srinivasan, Shashank Manohar — to hold the highest office, also has plenty of challenges ahead of him as cricket is struggling to hit the right balance between the three formats. Shah said more focus will be given to preserve the health of Test cricket. "While the T20 is a naturally exciting format, it is equally important that Test cricket remains a priority for everyone as it forms the bedrock of our game. We must see to it that cricketers are driven to the longer format and our efforts will be channelised towards this goal," he said.

Though there are fears that Shah's election would further strengthen BCCI's muscle at the ICC, he has al-



ready taken initial steps to win over the fraternity with a plan to introduce a dedicated fund to support Test cricket. The initiative from Cricket Australia, and has the support of the BCCI and ECB, will see Test cricketers get \$10,000 from the common pool. It is expected to be Shah's first big decision. Although setting up a dedicated fund for Test match would be commendable, Shah will also have to address the challenges of keeping the players happy. Recently, the World Cricketers Association formed a separate committee to look into the scheduling aspect with players believing that the bilateral ODIs and T20s don't offer any context. The Indian Express understands that once the dedicated Test match fund is available, there is a strong chance that the existing Future Tours Programme will be re-looked as member boards won't need to rely heavily on bilateral ODIs and T20s. Given the commercial challenges that lie ahead, Shah's experience as the BCCI secretary when it comes to increasing the board coffers would come in handy. As BCCI secretary in the pandemic years, Shah managed to host two successful IPLs away from home and oversaw the board bag a lucrative broadcast deal in an e-auction. He was also at the forefront of starting the Women's Premier League in 2023, which has brought more funds into the women's game. The ICC now finds itself in crosswinds, especially after the last T20 World Cup co-hosted in the US and Caribbean running into several issues. Apart from overshooting the budget, the poor quality of pitches took the shine away from the tournament. It has already resulted in one of ICC's premier broadcasters, Star, putting in a request to renegotiate the broadcast deal that runs till 2027. "I eagerly anticipate a tenure rich with collaborative efforts, striving to dismantle the barriers that have hindered cricket's progress. Every challenge we face is an opportunity in disguise, and together, we will transform adversity into triumph. Let's embark on this incredible journey, hand in hand, united by our passion for cricket and our belief in its extraordinary potential."