

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

14 September, 2024 | Saturday | Volume No:12 | Issue No:185 Pages: 8+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State) ₹ 3

## Gold, silver prices see a sharp surge in Hyderabad on Friday

Hyderabad: The gold prices in Hyderabad experienced a significant surge on Friday, reaching the third-highest rate recorded this year.

The price of 24-carat gold per 10 grams rose to Rs 74,450, marking an increase of Rs 1,300 from Thursday's rate of Rs 73,150. Similarly, 22-carat gold prices saw an increase, with the rate per 10 grams reaching Rs 68,250, up by Rs 1,200 from the previous day's Rs 67,050. Over the past few weeks, gold rates have experienced a fall fluctuating around Rs 70,000 for 10 grams of 24-carat gold and approximately Rs 66,000 for 10 grams of 22-carat gold.

## MLRIT hosts first International Conference in Sustainable Technology

Hyderabad: The Department of Mechanical Engineering at MLR Institute of Technology inaugurated the 1st International Conference on Advancements in Sustainable Energy, Materials, and Manufacturing Technology (ICASMMT-2024) on Friday. The two-day event has global participation, with over 380 research papers submitted, of which more than 250 were carefully reviewed and accepted for publication in the conference proceedings. Conference Chair, Dr. K. Srinivas Rao, emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts in advancing sustainable technologies and co-chair Prof. M. Venkateswar Reddy, general chair Dr. M. Satyanarayana Gupta, and convener Dr. Balram Yelamasetti also addressed the gathering.

## CM Arvind Kejriwal released from Tihar jail, AAP Party workers celebrated at the party office

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

New Delhi: Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi's chief minister, has been released from Tihar Jail. Outside Tihar, he was greeted by a huge crowd of Aam Aadmi Party members, including former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann.

After coming out of Tihar, Kejriwal addressed his workers and said, "I want to thank millions of people for praying for me. He said that lakhs of people went to temples and mosques. He said, I was honest; I was right; that is why God supported me. Furthermore, he said, the prison bars cannot weaken Kejriwal's courage. Keep doing what the Almighty has shown me. I have been fighting against the anti-national forces who are working to weaken the country all my life and will continue to do so. Kejriwal said that my life is dedicated to the country." Aam Aadmi Party supporters have been celebrating after Arvind Kejriwal was granted bail by the Supreme Court. Following the Supreme Court's verdict, AAP officials and workers celebrated fiercely at the party office and distributed sweets. Kejriwal supporters say that the Delhi CM's coming out of jail will be visible in the assembly elections of



Haryana and Delhi. A Delhi court issued orders for Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's release after the Supreme Court granted him bail on Friday in the alleged excise policy fraud case. Special Judge Rakesh Syal issued this ruling after Kejriwal's attorneys presented a Rs 10 lakh bail bond with two sureties in court. The court also accepted the request of the defense lawyers that the release order be sent through a special employee for Kejriwal's immediate release.

## Telangana CM seeks Central funds for permanent flood control measures

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Hyderabad : Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has sought unconditional funds from the Centre to undertake permanent measures for flood control in the state. The Chief Minister also wants the Centre to formulate an action for permanent solutions. He made the demands when a Central team met him at the Secretariat on Friday after its two-day visit to flood-affected areas in the state to assess the damages.

Highlighting the damages caused by heavy rain and floods, Revanth Reddy impressed upon the team that the Centre should immediately release the funds as immediate assistance without any conditions. Referring to floods caused in Khammam town by the Munneru rivulet, the Chief Minister said construction of a retaining wall was the only permanent solution for preventing floods. Revenue Minister P. Srinivas Reddy, MP Raghuram Reddy, CM's Advisor Vem Narendar Reddy, Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari and other senior officials attended the meeting.

The six-member Central team led by National Disaster Management Authority adviser Colonel KP Singh visited Khammam, Mahabubabad and Suryapet districts on September 11 and 12 to assess the loss caused by recent rain and flash flood. The team, comprising Central government officials Mahesh Kumar, Shantinath Shivappa Kagi, SK Kushvaha, T. Nialkhanon and Sashivardhan Reddy, split into two to visit the flood-affected areas.



Through photo exhibitions, officials in the three districts explained to the Central team the extent of the flood and the details of the damage. Before a visit to the flood-affected districts, the team met with Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari and other officials in Hyderabad. The Chief Secretary briefed the team about the extensive damage caused in most parts of the state due to the unprecedented rainfall that occurred between August 31 and September 3. Special Chief Secretary Disaster Management Arvind Kumar gave a brief overview of the damages caused and measures initiated by the state government to provide immediate relief to the people who are in distress. He informed that initial estimates of the damages were pegged at Rs 5,438 crore while the actual assessment is still going on.

## Protesting doctors write to President Murmu, PM Modi seeking their intervention

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Kolkata protests Junior Doctors during a protest rally to Swastha Bhavan in Saltlake, Kolkata in connection with rape and murder of a junior doctor in RG Kar medical college and hospital.

Protesting junior doctors in West Bengal have written to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting their intervention in the RG Kar hospital impasse. Copies of the four-page letter written by the West Bengal Junior Doctors' Front were also sent to Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar and Union Health Minister JP Nadda. A post-graduate trainee was raped and murdered in state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9. Junior doctors have been on 'cease work' since then. "We humbly place the issues before your esteemed excellency, as the head of state, so that our unfortunate colleague who has been the victim of the most despicable crime shall receive justice, and so that we, the healthcare professionals under the West Bengal



Health department, may be able to discharge our duties to the public without fear and apprehension. "Your intervention in these trying times will act as a beacon of light to us all, showing us the way ahead out of the darkness that surrounds us," they wrote. One of the doctors, Aniket Mahato, told PTI that the letter was drafted earlier this month and sent on Thursday night.

## Centre announces two new Vande Bharat trains to AP and Telangana

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

In a significant boost to rail connectivity for the Telugu people, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced the introduction of two new Vande Bharat trains to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana which will be flagged off during his visit to Ahmedabad on September 16. This initiative is part of the government's broader strategy to improve transportation facilities across the region. The newly allotted trains will substantially enhance travel options for residents of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Currently, there are four Vande Bharat trains operating from Secunderabad railway station, with the latest addition being the fifth train scheduled to run between Secunderabad and Nagpur. This service is expected to streamline travel times and offer passengers a comfortable journey.

The Secunderabad-Nagpur Vande Bharat train will depart from Nagpur at 5:00 AM and arrive in Secunderabad by 12:15 PM, completing the 578 km journey in just over 7 hours. For return trips, the train will leave Secunderabad at 1:00 PM, reaching Nagpur by 8:20 PM. Scheduled stops include notable stations such as Kazipet, Ramagundam, Balahara, Chandrapur, and Stavaram.

In addition to the Secunderabad-Nagpur route, another Vande Bharat train is set to enhance connectivity from Visakhapatnam to multiple destinations in Chhattisgarh, including Raipur, Mahasamund, Khariar



Road, and Kanthbanji, before making its way to Visakhapatnam via Rayagada and Vizianagaram. This new service will facilitate seamless travel across Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha. Union Minister Ashwani Vaishnav has emphasized the central government's commitment to improving the railway infrastructure in Telangana, with an allocated budget of ₹5,336 crore for the current fiscal year. With the goal of achieving over 100% railway accessibility by 2024-2025, efforts are being made to expand rail services and enhance connectivity throughout the region. As Prime Minister Modi continues to focus on expanding India's railway network, the introduction of these Vande Bharat trains marks a progressive step toward improving travel facilities for the Telugu states.

## Mamata Banerjee announces Rs 2 lakh compensation for kin of 29 patients who died amid doctors' protest



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday announced Rs 2 Lakh compensation for each of the families of those who lost their lives due to the disruptions of health services following cease work by a section of junior doctors. The move came a day after talks between the agitating junior doctors and the state government failed after the Mamata Banerjee-led administration refused to allow a live streaming of the meeting scheduled at Nabanna, the state secretariat. While the chief min-

ister waited for over two hours at Nabanna Sabhaghar, the junior doctors waited just outside the gate demanding live streaming of the meeting which was denied by the authorities. On Friday, Banerjee took to X and wrote, "It is sad and unfortunate that we have lost 29 precious lives due to disruption in health services because of long drawn cease work by junior doctors." "In order to extend a helping hand to the bereaved families, State Government announces a token financial relief of Rs. 2 lakh to family members of each deceased person..." she added. Since the rape and murder of a junior doctor at the R G Kar Medical College Hospital on August 9, a section of junior doctors have been hitting the streets in protest and observing cease work in the OPDs.

Meanwhile, the junior doctors rubbished the claims by the state government that the patients have died due to their cease work. The protesters said senior doctors and resident doctors are working round-the-clock in the OPDs, emergencies and the wards. For the past three days, junior doctors have been agitating with their five-point demand on the streets near Swasthya Bhawan (health department headquarters) in Salt Lake.

## Harish Rao Accuses CM Revanth Reddy of Involvement in Attack on Kaushik Reddy's House



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Finance Minister Harish Rao has accused Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of being involved in the recent attack on the house of MLC Kaushik Reddy. Speaking today, Harish Rao criticized the Chief Minister's approach to law and order, questioning why it

wasn't enforced during the attack. Harish Rao alleged that those who carried out the stone-pelting at Kaushik Reddy's residence were given special treatment by the government. He further claimed that the CM's provocative language has contributed to escalating tensions. According to Harish Rao, the Chief Minister was behind yesterday's incident, intensifying the political confrontation in the state.

## Court directs cops to book case against astrologer Venu Swamy

GNS News Agency, Sept 13: Hyderabad: Following a petition from a journalist of a vernacular news channel, a local court on Friday has directed the city police to book a case against astrologer Venu Swamy and conduct a thorough investigation.

## Chandigarh blast was a terror attack: Punjab Police



conducted a spot investigation, revealing that two individuals arrived on an auto-rickshaw and one of them hurled the hand grenade in a house.

"The Hand Grenade used in this incident is a military grade equipment smuggled from across the border through drone with the help of ISI. Police have identified the other accused person as well, and raids are being conducted to nab him," said the DGP, while reiterating fulsome cooperation to the Chandigarh Police in this case.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that accused Rohan, who has been working in Jammu and Kashmir from last few years, knew Happy Passia from their shared village. Happy Passia instructed Rohan to carry out the attack, promising financial rewards. DGP Gaurav Yadav said that during questioning, accused Rohan confessed to involvement in the grenade blast, revealing he acted at the behest of Happy Passia, who provided the hand grenade and weapons through his associates. Happy Passia had also arranged finances and logistics for them, he added.

He said that further investigation to unravel the entire conspiracy is being done jointly in coordination with the Chandigarh Police and Central Agencies. Sharing more details, AIG State Special Operation Cell (SSOC) Amritsar Sukhminder Singh Mann said that after committing the crime, accused Rohan and his associate had travelled first to Amritsar and thereafter, took their separate ways. Rohan initially went to his acquaintance in Khanna but had returned to Amritsar as he planned to further travel to J&K, he said, while adding that in the meantime he was arrested. The AIG said that prima facie it appears that they were trying to target a specific person as the same terror group had attempted a similar attack at the same location last year. That attempt was successfully foiled by the Punjab Police with the arrest of two operatives identified as Bikramjit Singh alias Raja of Batala and Bawa Singh of Majitha, he added.

Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said the arrested accused person has been identified as Rohan Masih, a resident of village Passia in Amritsar. Police teams have also recovered one sophisticated 9MM Glock pistol along with ammunition from his possession, he added.

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

The Punjab Police in a joint operation with the central agencies on Friday cracked the Chandigarh grenade blast case masterminded by ISI-backed Pakistan-based terrorist Harwinder Singh alias Rinda of Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) and USA-based Harpreet Singh alias Happy Passia with the arrest of a main perpetrator. Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said the arrested accused person has been identified as Rohan Masih, a resident of village Passia in Amritsar. Police teams have also recovered one sophisticated 9MM Glock pistol along with ammunition from his possession, he added.

On Wednesday evening, two unknown persons lobbed a hand grenade in Sector 10, Chandigarh. Chandigarh Police immediately reached the scene and



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Engineer Rashid's bail

THE interim bail granted to Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, MP from Baramulla, signals an interesting moment in Jammu & Kashmir's evolving political landscape. Arrested in 2019 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act by the National Investigation Agency, Rashid has been associated with the separatist ideology and faces terror-funding allegations. His release allows him to campaign in the upcoming Assembly elections, an opportunity that could alter the region's political dynamics.

Rashid's electoral history is striking. He defeated heavyweight Omar Abdullah in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, proving he has significant local support. Now, his return to the political fray raises questions about the inclusion of former separatist leaders in the mainstream democratic process. His Awami Ittehad Party, often seen as controversial, might gain ground due to a divided electorate. While Mehbooba Mufti has labelled his party a proxy for the BJP, suggesting that his bail is strategically timed to benefit the ruling party, Ghulam Nabi Azad has welcomed the bail and Omar has cautioned voters against splintering the mandate, fearing that support for Rashid could indirectly benefit the BJP's ambitions. Notably, after coming out of Tihar Jail on Wednesday evening, Rashid declared that he would fight PM Modi's narrative of 'Naya Kashmir'. Rashid's release may either integrate former separatists into J&K's political fabric or deepen the existing divide. Rashid's return also touches on the broader question over how J&K would reconcile with its separatist past. It could either foster political stability or reignite old tensions, depending on the people's response to his re-emergence. This delicate balance between democracy and separatism underscores the complexity of J&K's political future, as figures like Rashid seek both legitimacy and influence within the existing framework.

## Mumbai's dabbawalas feature in Kerala's school curriculum for Class 9



Mumbai's legendary dabbawalas, known for their unmatched punctuality and dedication in delivering lunch boxes across the city, have achieved a new milestone of being featured in Kerala's Class 9 English syllabus. A five-page chapter, titled 'The Saga of the Tiffin Carriers,' celebrates their inspiring journey from their beginnings in 1890 to their global recognition.

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Mumbai's legendary dabbawalas, known for their unmatched punctuality and dedication in delivering lunch boxes across the city, have achieved a new milestone of being featured in Kerala's Class 9 English syllabus. A five-page chapter, titled 'The Saga of the Tiffin Carriers,' celebrates their inspiring journey from their beginnings in 1890 to their global recognition.

The chapter, authored by travel writers Hugh and Colleen Gantzer, is part of Kerala's updated 2024 curriculum introduced by the Kerala State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT). It recounts the fascinating history of Mumbai's dabbawalas, starting with Mahadeo Havaji Bachche, who delivered the first tiffin box from Dadar to Fort for a Parsi lady in 1890, almost 134 years ago. The dabbawalas grew into a highly efficient system that has garnered international acclaim for their community-driven entrepreneurship.

Over the years, the dabbawalas have become a symbol of dedication and excellence. Their unparalleled service has been the subject of numerous films, documentaries, books, and even doctoral theses. In 2019, Mumbai-based artist Abhijeet Kini created a comic book to highlight their daily grind. The dabbawalas have also been invited to deliver talks at prestigious institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and international business schools.

"It's a great honour for us to have our story included in school curriculums. We hope this inspires the younger generation to appreciate the values of hard work, dedication, and teamwork," said Ulhas Muke, president of the Mumbai Dabbawala Association. "While we are grateful for the recognition we've received globally, we would also love to see a similar acknowledgment from the Maharashtra government," Muke added. Muke credits King Charles of England for the praise they are receiving worldwide as he was the first one to recognise their efficient service in 2004. The chapter in Kerala SCERT also states, "From those humble beginnings, this self-made Indian organisation has grown into a huge network whose incredible efficiency has won the admiration of international business schools and even Prince (now King) Charles of England." The Covid-19 pandemic, however, dealt a severe blow to their trade, reducing their numbers to around 2,000 from over 5,000 in the pre-pandemic period. Deliveries, which once averaged 2,00,000 daily, now hover around 1,00,000. Despite these challenges, the dabbawalas are grateful to Kerala's education department for including them in the syllabus.

The Director of the Kerala SCERT thanked the Mumbai Dabbawalas for "enhancing the educational experience and inspiring future generations". He said, "Our goal is to expose learners to real-world examples of successful, community-based organizations like yours. We believe that these stories will spark creativity and encourage students to seek innovative solutions to everyday challenges."

## Court interpreter held for accepting Rs 25 lakh bribe from Mumbai hotelier



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

A 43-year-old interpreter of a small-causes court was arrested by the Maharashtra Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) in Mumbai on Monday for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 25 lakh from a south Mumbai-based hotelier.

The ACB sleuths said the 66-year-old complainant is fighting a legal battle over the ownership of a hotel and the interpreter, identified as Vishal Chandrakant Sawant, allegedly claimed that he could help him get a decision

in his favour in return for a bribe of Rs 25 lakh. According to the police, the complainant and his partner had filed an application in a small-causes court near the LT Marg police station in south Mumbai over a year ago. An ACB officer said, "The judgment in the case was to be pronounced on September 13."

After Sawant approached the complainant, the 66-year-old man and his partner decided to approach the ACB office in Worli and lodged a complaint on Friday. "We called them (the complainants) again to our office on Monday and on the same day, we recorded their statements, verified the complaint and registered a case against Sawant under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act," said an ACB officer.

The ACB officer said Sawant had initially called them at the court premises to take the bribe, however, later he changed the location and went to a hotel to accept the bribe. "Around 7 pm on Monday, we caught him red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 25 lakh," the officer said. He was arrested late on Monday evening. The ACB officer said a team has been appointed to check if Sawant is in possession of any disproportionate assets. "If we find anything, we will take action accordingly," a senior ACB officer said.

## IAF Wing Commander booked for rape in J&K on woman officer's complaint



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

A Wing Commander of the Indian Air Force (IAF), posted at Air Force Station, Srinagar, has been booked for rape by the Jammu and Kashmir Police following allegations of sexual assault levelled against him by a woman officer also posted at the same station. The FIR was filed at the Budgam police station on September 8 under Section 376 (2) of the IPC which was in force at the time of the alleged incident on January 1, 2024. The section deals with rape committed by a member of the armed forces deployed in an area by the Central or a State Government.

The woman officer has also alleged "continuous harassment, sexual assault, and mental torture" that she has been subjected to over the last two years, primarily by authorities at the Air Force Station, Srinagar. In her complaint, which is part of the FIR, the woman officer has alleged that she was forced to perform a sexual act on him after the New Year's Party held at the Officers' Mess, Air Force Station, Srinagar, on December 31, 2023. She has alleged that the sexual assault took place in a room at around 2 am on January 1 after the Wing Commander asked her to come to a room to receive a New Year gift.

"I went into a mental shock being new to the atmosphere in the forces. I was embarrassed and... broken to that extent... lacking courage to report. I can't describe the mental agony, being an unmarried girl... treated in

such a heinous manner... the incident and nightmares put me in the dilemma of whether to discuss or be quiet, finally I took a call and decided to fight," the woman officer said in her complaint. The officer has accused senior IAF officers of the station of not taking her complaint seriously. "It took two months for Station to assemble an Internal Committee (IC)... on April 2, 2024, Internal Committee assembled. The bias of Station authorities to aid the sexual offender was very heartbreaking for me... Medical examination was not done till the time I insisted multiple times. It was done on the last day of the investigation by the Internal Committee," her complaint stated. According to the complainant, she urged the Internal Committee to summon a witness who had been made to "run away" from the camp area before giving his statement. But the Internal Committee, her complaint stated, did not do so despite being provided "all facts and bringing out lies and contradictions" of the "tutored witnesses". According to the complainant, the committee later said it is "inconclusive that the incident happened or not" because of "lack of eyewitness". The investigation, she said, ended on May 15 and "till date no action has been taken on anyone and no intimation has been given to me". The woman officer alleged that she was forced to approach the J&K Police to lodge an FIR after finding that no action was being taken by the IAF authorities. The Public Relations Officer of the IAF in New Delhi did not respond to an email, seeking comments on the FIR and the allegations of the woman officer. Colonel Amit Kumar (retd), counsel for the woman officer, said it has to be understood how much courage is required to report such incidents. "She is a junior officer and not expected to know the existing laws and actions. The Commanding Officer has an important role while dealing with officers of such seniority. I was shocked when the victim reported to me about all such acts and harassments. There should be no compromise with the dignity of women. My advice to the IAF authorities would be that she should be detached from the present unit in order to keep impartiality alive," he said.

## Karnataka looks to enhance investment from US-based firms



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Karnataka US investment, Karnataka startup ecosystem, US-India Business Council Karnataka, During the meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the US-based companies are learnt to have expressed interest in partnering with the state for skill development initiatives to bridge the gap between workforce capabilities and industry needs. A roundtable meeting between the Karnataka government and US-India Business Council (USIBC) Global Board of Directors Mission was held on Tuesday to discuss measures to strengthen Karnataka's startup ecosystem and partnering with the state on urban development and sustainable infrastructure projects.

During the meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the US-based companies are learnt to

## Baramulla MP Engineer Rashid gets interim bail to campaign for Jammu and Kashmir polls

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

A Delhi court on Tuesday granted interim bail to Baramulla MP Engineer Rashid till October 2 to campaign for the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections. Rashid, who has been in jail since 2019 in a terror funding case, won the 2024 Lok Sabha polls as an independent candidate from the Baramulla constituency by defeating his nearest rival, National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, by over 2 lakh votes. On July 5, Rashid was allowed to step out of Tihar Jail to take the oath of office as a Lok Sabha member.

On May 30, 2017, the NIA registered a case under Indian Penal Code section 120B (criminal conspiracy) and various sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act against Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, co-founder of the Pakistani militant organisation Lashkar-e-Toiba, and other "secessionist and separatist" leaders.

As per the NIA's case, the separatist leaders had "received and collected" funds through hawala channels in "connivance with active militants of proscribed terrorist organizations Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Dukhtaran-e-Millat, Lashkar-e-Toiba" to fund "terrorist activities" in Jammu and Kashmir. These organisations were allegedly seeking the secession of Jammu and Kashmir from India and had entered into a criminal conspiracy to "wage war against the Government of India". Rashid was not named in the NIA's May 2017 case. Nor was he among the 12 accused named in the agency's first chargesheet in the case, filed on January 18, 2018. Rashid's name surfaced during the subsequent investigation and he was arrested in the case on August 9, 2019—four days after the Centre abrogated Jammu and Kashmir's special status and downgraded the state into two Union Territories. Almost the entire political leadership of Kashmir, including three former chief ministers, was arrested at the time.

## Passenger on Pune-bound flight from Delhi caught smoking midair, booked



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

A 38-YEAR-OLD passenger who was caught allegedly smoking midair in the lavatory of an IndiGo flight from Delhi to Pune was booked by Pune city police upon arrival. A First Information Report in the case was registered at Vimalant police station under Pune city jurisdiction by a security executive of IndiGo airlines posted at the Pune International Airport.

According to the FIR, the incident took place on an IndiGo Delhi to Pune flight that landed at Pune Airport sometime after 1 am on Monday. The 38-year-old male passenger has been booked under section 25 of The Aircraft Rules, 1937 and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita section 125 which pertains to 'Act endangering life or personal safety of others.' According to the FIR, the flight attendants detected smoke inside the lavatory around 12.30 am when the flight was midair. The crew subsequently recovered the parts of the smoked cigarette from the dustbin of the lavatory and also seized the lighter from the passenger.

Upon landing, the ground crew was informed and the passenger was handed over to the police. Officials said that the passenger is a resident of Okhla Vihar area of New Delhi. "We have booked the passenger and have issued him a notice to be present before us for the investigation when summoned," said an officer from the police station.

## ANI alleges copyright and trademark infringement by Netflix and producers of 'IC 814': 'don't want to be associated with ISI PR'



In fresh trouble for the Netflix-produced mini-series IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack, news agency ANI has moved the Delhi High Court with a copyright and trademark infringement suit against the series's production company and others, seeking takedown of episodes or an undertaking from the filmmakers that they would remove the infringing frames.

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

IC 814 Netflix series copyright case, Kandahar Hijack series ANI lawsuit, IC 814 footage infringement case, While not granting any interim relief in terms of injunction in favour of ANI, Justice Pushkarna directed the defendants to file their reply in two days and kept the suit for further consideration on September 13 and 16. (IMBD) In fresh trouble for the Netflix-produced mini-series IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack, news agency ANI has moved the Delhi High Court with a copyright and trademark infringement suit against the series's production company and others, seeking takedown of episodes or an undertaking from the filmmakers that they would remove the infringing frames. Alleging "extensive use" of its footage, including what is "probably the only footage" available of Mohammad Masood Azhar, considered the founder of the Pakistan-based terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed, in Karachi, taken by camera persons engaged in Pakistan by the news agency, the plaintiff impressed upon its "exclusive copyright" on such footage.

Seeking takedown of episodes 4 of the 6 where such footage has been used, ANI further submitted before the court that if such infringement is allowed, "No one will invest in news collection... Ultimately, news is also a business. How will we engage journalists if the content is wantonly used?" ANI has moved the suit against Matchbox Shots LLP, Benaras Media Works, series director Anubhav Sinha's production company, and Netflix US as well as Netflix India. "This series has been criticised for whitewashing Pakistan's role... I don't wish to be associated with such a series... I don't want to be associated with such a series seen as anti-national in the public eye, a PR job for ISI. Highly unpatriotic," Advocate Siddhant Marwah submitted on behalf of the news media company before the court of Justice Mini Pushkarna. Meanwhile, Advocate Hiren Kamod, representing the production company Matchbox Shots, said before the court that the company executed two agreements with other companies — one with Conceptual Pictures Worldwide Ltd and another with Wilderness Films India Pvt Ltd — which gave them the rights to the production company to use the footage. Kamod also submitted that ANI gave licensing rights to the footage involved to Reuters which in turn gave it to other companies and the said companies then gave the rights to Conceptual Pictures and Wilderness Films India. Kamod also argued that where the filmmakers have "spent Rs 114 crore to make it, does it make sense to not pay for the copyright/ footage." However, Advocate Marwah countered, "I've only given a licence to Reuters to use outside India. If someone fraudulently misrepresented to them, I'm not privy to it, the defendant will have (course of) action against them, and I'm not concerned... I'm prejudiced today because it's pilloried in the public as a PR job for ISI." While not granting any interim relief in terms of injunction in favour of ANI, Justice Pushkarna directed the defendants to file their reply in two days and kept the suit for further consideration on September 13 and 16.



## Delhi HC limits St Stephen's admission relief to 7 students, restricts DU from further allocations



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

While allowing seven students admitted to St Stephen's College by a court order to continue attending classes, the Delhi High Court on Tuesday directed Delhi University not to allocate more students to the college. St Stephen's College moved a division bench of the court on Monday appealing against a single-judge bench's September 6 order in favour of the seven students whose admission had been in limbo.

While the university had allocated them to St Stephen's, the college had not confirmed their admission following a dispute over the seat matrix and seat

allocation system being followed by the university. Apprehending that others who were similarly not admitted despite allocation by Delhi University would make similar demands, the college requested the bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela not to extend the relief to other students who were not granted admission as the university had allocated them to the college in excess of its sanctioned intake. Of the seven petitioner students, six have started attending classes while one is yet to pay their fees. They approached the high court last month. The college submitted before the bench, "No further allocation should take place... Anyone who has not come to court shall not be given, limit (admission) to 7 (who had moved court and were granted admission)." Delhi University, represented by senior advocate Moninder Rupal, informed the bench that it would not press for extending the relief to other similarly situated students.

However, this may not be recorded in the order, the counsel said. Addressing the university's counsel, Justice Manmohan remarked, "Just look at what you are doing... 152 seats in a course of 24 (sanctioned intake)... if you're following this in all colleges, there will be a breakdown." The university said it was ready to reconsider the seat matrix and the allocation system for the college for the next academic year.

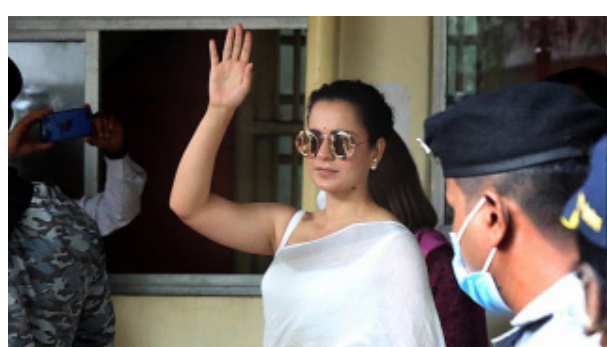
## Kangana Ranaut sells Bandra bungalow for Rs 32 crore

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Actor and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut sold her bungalow in Mumbai's Bandra area for Rs 32 crore, according to Zapkey India.

Ranaut bought the property in September 2017 for Rs 20.7 crore and it was converted into the office for Manikarnika Films, the actor's production house. It is situated in Bandra West's posh Pali Hill area. The actor also took a loan of Rs 27 crore against the property in December 2022. The total return for the property stood at 55 per cent with a Compound Annual Growth Rate of 6.4 per cent.

In 2020, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) ordered partial demolition of the bungalow for illegal construction. The demolition was halted after the Bombay High Court ruled in Ranaut's favour. Meanwhile, the actor-politician's directorial debut movie "Emergency" has been postponed and a new release date is yet to be announced. The political period drama was scheduled to hit theatres across the country on Friday but the makers are yet to get a clearance from the Central Board of



Film Certification (CBFC) and the matter is currently in court. Ranaut, who essays the role of former prime minister late Indira Gandhi, had earlier this week accused the CBFC of stalling the certification to delay the release. The film has been caught up in controversy after Sikh organisations, including the Shiromani Akali Dal, which accused it of misrepresenting the community and getting facts wrong.

## Mumbai University offers 6 new short-term courses for industry-relevant training

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Mumbai University has launched six new courses in specialised sectors through its Garware Institute of Career Education and Development. These short-term elective certificate courses, worth two credits each, are open to all. These courses are retail banking, wealth management, mutual fund distribution, Python programming, data science basics, and intermediate. Students studying at the undergraduate or postgraduate level in any field can enrol in the course of their choice for two credits. These courses are designed to provide practical knowledge by working on real industry problems and aim to prepare students for the workforce, in line with the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. Director of the institute, Dr Keyurkumar Nayak, said, "These courses were finalised after studying the current industry needs. These are some of the skills that are very relevant and required in various industries and yet are not part of the conventional curriculum. These short-term courses can bridge this gap and enhance a student's chance to land a good internship, which will now be mandatory as per NEP 2020 recommendations." With an example, Dr Nayak further explained, "As internships are now becoming integral, students pursuing conventional arts, commerce, and science courses can find it difficult. But suppose a student pursuing commerce takes up this short-term course in retail banking. In that case, he/she will have a better chance of getting an internship opportunity for specialised training and conventional commerce education." Each course will be online for 30 hours, followed by internal



and external assessments. "While internal assessment will include a quiz, scenario-based testing or working on a real-project with industry, external assessment will include a written examination," said Dr Nayak, adding that the institute had already signed an MoU with an online learning platform to offer such courses effectively. He also said that teachers for these courses will essentially be working professionals from respective industries with considerable experience so that students can get the most relevant training for the current industry needs. More details of the courses, including admissions, will be available on the Garware Institute's official website.

Mumbai University Vice Chancellor Dr Ravindra Kulkarni said, "These certificate courses have been designed with the needs and opportunities in the fields of information technology, finance and marketing, and other emerging sectors in mind. Such open elective courses offer students a skill-development opportunity. They will certainly contribute to their growth."

## AAP will fight to save houses facing eviction in Delhi's Madras Camp: Manish Sisodia

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Manish Sisodia AAP Delhi Senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia on Tuesday visited southeast Delhi's Madras Camp, where residents have been served eviction notices to make way for the construction of a new flyover, and said the party "will fight strongly against dictatorship to save people's houses". Senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia on Tuesday visited southeast Delhi's Madras Camp, where residents have been served eviction notices to make way for the construction of a new flyover, and said the party "will fight strongly against dictatorship to save people's houses". The Public Works Department (PWD) pasted eviction notices in the Old Barapullah Bridge area last week, asking the locals to



vacate their homes within five days.

The residents, however, have refused to leave unless they are given an alternative site. "Injustice against slum dwellers will not be tolerated in 'Bulldozer Raj'. Thousands of people living in slums of Madras Camp in Delhi are an integral part of Delhi. If

LG sahab and BJP try to remove or demolish their houses, we will not tolerate it at all. We will fight strongly against dictatorship to save people's houses. Whether we have to fight in court or on the ground for this," Sisodia said in a post in Hindi on X. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government has given shelter to the

needy and built houses for people, Sisodia said. Free electricity, water and better education for children. But the BJP has only destroyed people's well-established homes. The level of education has gone from bad to worse. We will fight against this from the court to the streets," he added in the same post.

## Pune BJP leader Babu Pathare set to join NCP (SP), contest from Vadgaon Sheri seat



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Babu Pathare ncp Pathare had recently met NCP(SP) chief Sharad Pawar and state party chief Jayant Patil had also visited his residence earlier. The BJP in Maharashtra is likely to lose yet another leader to the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) with Babu Pathare, a former MLA from Pune's Vadgaon Sheri Assembly seat, saying on Monday that he would contest the upcoming Assembly elections as a candidate from Sharad Pawar's party.

The Vadgaon Sheri Assembly constituency is currently represented by Sunil Tingre of the NCP led by Ajit Pawar. Tingre was elected in 2019 after he defeated sitting BJP MLA Jagdish Mulick, who had won against Pathare in 2014. Pathare, who was elected to the As-

sembly in 2009 on an NCP ticket, joined the BJP in 2019.

"I will be contesting the Assembly elections and have decided to contest as an NCP(SP) candidate," Pathare said on Monday, addressing citizens during his visit to a Ganesh pandal in Vadgaon Sheri. He added that voters had stood by him in the past and he was hoping that they would get him elected to the state Assembly again. Pathare had recently met NCP(SP) chief Sharad Pawar and state party chief Jayant Patil had also visited his residence earlier. Though the NCP(SP) is yet to make any announcement on Pathare, the party is likely to field him against Tingre. Pathare has also been skipping official BJP meetings. He was among the many local BJP leaders who did not attend a meeting called by leader Pankaja Munde last week to review the party's preparation for the Assembly elections. Munde subsequently played down the issue, saying the leaders had some other commitments and had conveyed them to the party. Local BJP leaders in Vadgaon Sheri have reportedly conveyed to the state leadership that they will not campaign if Tingre is picked as the NCP candidate for the Assembly seat, accusing Tingre of violating the alliance 'rule' of including all coalition leaders in publicity campaigns. Last week, Samarjeet Ghatge left the BJP and joined the NCP(SP). He will now contest from the Kagal Assembly seat in Kolhapur and take on state minister Hasan Mushrif of the Ajit Pawar-led NCP.

## Delhi HC relies on SC verdicts, grants bail to businessman Sameer Mahendru

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

The Delhi High Court on Monday ordered the release of alleged liquor excise policy scam accused Sameer Mahendru and Chanpreet Singh Rayat on bail. With this, only four remain incarcerated in the case now, including Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Forty stand accused in the case lodged by ED, including the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and 16 companies. As many as 17 stand accused in the case lodged by CBI.

The court of Justice Neena Bansal Krishna, while ordering for businessman Mahendru's release, recorded that taking a "prima facie view of the role as defined of the applicant in the case, it can be observed that the twin test of guilt for the offence of money laundering or likely to commit any offence are weak." The ED has claimed that Mahendru is the "kingpin" of the scam, alleging that he "used proxy/dummy persons to conceal the real owner of his businesses". Mahendru had a 35 per cent partnership stake in Indospirit LLP, which got a wholesale L-1 licence. The ED has alleged that Mahendru was directly or indirectly controlling manufacturing, wholesale and retail businesses in violation of the excise policy. Rayat had, meanwhile, allegedly handled funds for AAP's campaign in the 2022 Goa elections. Referring to the Supreme Court recently releasing AAP's Manish Sisodia as well as other accused - Kalvakuntala Kavitha and Vijay Nair - on bail in the same case, Justice Krishna reiterated the right to liberty guaranteed under Article 21.

Justice Krishna recorded, "In the present case as well, in the light of the observations of the Apex Court in Manish Sisodia and in the bail applications of the other co-accused, it is now well defined that Article 21 of the Constitution shall take precedence over the twin test and if the trial would take long, the accused shall be entitled to bail." "In all these cases, a reference has been made to the ED as well as the CBI case... there are 492 witnesses who have been named. The case involves thousands of pages of documents and over a lakh of digitised documents... there is not even a remotest possibility of the



trial being concluded in the near future. Considering that the applicant is in judicial custody since 28.09.2022... and with a little hope of speedy completion of trial, he would be deprived of his right to liberty under Article 21 and is therefore entitled to grant of bail," Justice Krishna observed.

Justice Krishna went on to rely on the SC's Sisodia bail verdict while dismissing ED's submission that the accused are indulging in tactics to delay the trial by filing multiple applications in court. "...though the applications are being filed on behalf of the accused, the conduct of the accused cannot be termed as vexatious or intended to delay. They were merely exercising their rights of fair trial by seeking the documents relied and unrelayed by the prosecution for their defense. It cannot be said that there is any delay which is attributable to the applicant; rather it is the complexity of the matter, voluminous records and the number of witnesses which are required to be considered in the trial, which would take a reasonable time," the court recorded. The court also ruled that Mahendru is not a flight risk or is not likely to tamper with evidence. With the release of Mahendru and Rayat, Kejriwal, owner of Brindco Sales Private Limited Amandeep Singh Dhali, alleged hawala operator Vinod Chauhan and Hyderabad-based businessman Arun Ramachandra Pillai are still in jail in connection to the case.

## Girl playing near Karnataka Ganesh pandal kidnapped, police and locals rescue her in an hour

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

The police arrested H Darshan, a resident of Ijloor, around 50 km from Bengaluru, after identifying the 26-year-old from CCTV footage from near the Ganesh pandal. (File Photo) The police arrested H Darshan, a resident of Ijloor, around 50 km from Bengaluru, after identifying the 26-year-old from CCTV footage from near the Ganesh pandal. A five-year-old girl was kidnapped by her neighbour while playing at a Ganesh pandal in Karnataka's Ramanagara district. She was rescued in an hour as her father, neighbours and police acted fast.

The police arrested H Darshan, a resident of Ijloor, around 50 km from Bengaluru, after identifying the 26-year-old from CCTV footage from near the Ganesh pandal. Around 9 pm on September 8, the girl was playing with her friends as her father assisted others at the pandal. When he realised his daughter was missing, he quickly raised an alarm, prompting the villagers to search for the girl. "Everyone started looking for her and spread out in different directions," said a police officer. Someone contacted the police control room and plainclothes policemen on duty at the pandal reviewed the CCTV footage. They saw the girl walking with a young man toward an under-construction building nearby. Meanwhile, the girl's father received a WhatsApp call from an unknown number. The caller told him that his daughter had been kidnapped, and demanded a ransom. "I will call you later



in the night and tell you how much money to bring and where to meet. If you tell the police, your daughter will be dead," the caller threatened him. The police asked the girl's father if he could identify from the CCTV footage the person who had taken his daughter away. He realised it was his neighbour Darshan, according to the police. The police then headed to the direction where Darshan had taken the girl, and caught him after a chase. The police and the neighbours went to the under-construction building and found the girl with her mouth taped and legs and hands tied. The police said Darshan had lost his father, had a debt of Rs 2.5 lakh and had decided to extort money from the girl's father.

## E.coli bacteria presence confirmed in Noida housing society water samples

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Noida society e coli bacteria "The bacteria causes diseases like diarrhoea, vomiting and fever. If not treated on time, it can be fatal," said Dr Sunil Kumar Sharma, Chief Medical Officer, Noida district hospital. The Gautam Buddh Nagar hospital administration has confirmed the presence of E.coli bacteria in the water samples taken from a housing society in Greater Noida where over 300 residents, including 170 children, fell sick last week.

"The bacteria causes diseases like diarrhoea, vomiting and fever. If not treated on time, it can be fatal," said Dr Sunil Kumar Sharma, Chief Medical Officer, Noida district hospital. The incident occurred at Supertech Ecovillage 2 of Greater Noida, where 339 residents complained of diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach pain and fever.



The Greater Noida Authority supplies water to the residential society where around 3,500 people live in 32 towers.



## In first post-election meeting, wildlife board clears transmission lines in Gujarat's flamingo habitat, Goa's Mollem forest



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

National Board for Wildlife projects, SC-NBWL meeting July 2024, Wildlife conservation infrastructure projects, Kedar Gore, Director, The Corbett Foundation said that the Little Rann of Kutch is an entry point into India for several migratory birds. Apart from flamingos, it is an important habitat for other threatened bird species such as Asian Houbara, vultures, cranes and storks.

In its first post-election meeting, held after a gap of five months in July end, the standing committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SC-NBWL) has cleared projects such as a transmission line in Little Rann of Kutch, a controversial transmission line project in Goa's Mollem national park as well as a clutch of infrastructure projects in tiger corridors of central India, among others. The board considered 121 projects, big and small, across 12 states. The SC-NBWL, headed by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, also pulled up the Madhya Pradesh tourism department for carrying out constructions in Son Gharial sanctuary and adjacent tiger corridors without permits. The minister recommended action against those responsible, the minutes showed.

The NBWL is primarily responsible for promotion and conservation of wildlife. It also appraises and approves development projects that fall within and outside protected areas such as sanctuaries, national parks and tiger reserves. Even after intense protests against deforestation in Bhagwan Mahaveer Sanctuary and Mollem National Park, the NBWL conditionally cleared the 400 kV transmission line on 27 hectares of forest. NBWL said that project work should not commence unless the proposal on the Karnataka side is recommended by the board. Goa's citizens have been protesting the transmission line as well as a railway line doubling and highway widening proposal passing through the sanctuary and the national park under the 'Save Mollem' banner.

The transmission line will involve felling of 7,881 trees in a forest located in the Western Ghats and home to tiger, gaur, sloth bear, an array of amphibians and reptiles. The matter was also heard by the Supreme Court and in April 2022 it had ordered that the transmission line should be aligned with an existing 110 Kv corridor line to reduce the extent of deforestation. An expert committee

which was formed to carry out a site visit recommended to NBWL that the project's right of way should be divided into a 'wire zone', for areas below the powerline and 'border zone' for areas between the powerline for plantations.

In the conditions imposed with the clearance, NBWL said that the transmission pillars should be guarded so that wild animals do not have contact with them. It also asked the project proponent to study the impact of transmission lines on biodiversity and wildlife and ensure that the sanctity of the habitat is not disturbed. Two approvals were granted for erection of transmission lines in Gujarat. One in the Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary in the Great Rann of Kutch and another in the Wild Ass sanctuary in Little Rann of Kutch over 100 hectares. The proposal in the wild ass sanctuary was for a 765 kV D/c Lakadia - Ahmedabad transmission line to evacuate power from 4.5 gigawatts Khavda renewable energy zone in Surendranagar district. The NBWL said that work on the project would have to implement mitigation measures as given by the Wildlife Institute of India. "To prevent impact on avifauna, bird diverters to be installed on earth wire to make it visible to birds from long distance to prevent any possible collision of birds," stated one of the mitigation measures to protect birds. The wild ass sanctuary is home to wild asses, jackals, bluebills, desert fox, Indian wolf, jungle cat, chinkara. However, the landscape is especially important as an important wintering, breeding site for migratory birds, especially the lesser flamingos, who build nesting mounds on the landscape during winters. Kedar Gore, Director, The Corbett Foundation said that the Little Rann of Kutch is an entry point into India for several migratory birds. Apart from flamingos, it is an important habitat for other threatened bird species such as Asian Houbara, vultures, cranes and storks. "Given the unique ecosystem that attracts rare and threatened species in this landscape, the least they should do is to lay the new power lines underground ideally. There are many examples of power lines laid under ground in India and abroad," Gore said. As per the project proposal, 39 towers will be erected for the transmission line.

The wildlife board also approved widening of the National Highway 46 between Itarsi and Betul through the tiger corridor between Satpura and Melghat tiger reserve. The project will use 101 hectares of forest land and approval was granted with the condition that the National Highways Authority of India will build animal passages consisting of underpasses and overpasses. Further, the NBWL also directed for a site inspection to be carried out by National Tiger Conservation Authority, Wildlife Institute of India and environment ministry officials to examine the animal passage plans and check if any violations were carried out by NHAI. Tiger corridors help wildlife to migrate between habitats and linear infrastructure such as highways prove to be fatal for them when they attempt to cross the roads. Animal underpasses help tigers, bears and other mammals to migrate between habitats safely.

## This Kerala village celebrates Onam with Christmas-like carols:

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Onam, Kerala's iconic harvest festival, is celebrated in different, unique ways across the state. From the fascinating 'Onapottan'—a Theyyam that visits households on Thiruvonam—in Kannur and Kasargod regions to the thrilling snake boat races in Alleppey, each region brings its own flavour to the celebration. In the small village of Valayanchirangara near Perumbavoor in Ernakulam district, a special tradition, exclusive to the village, sets Onam celebrations apart—an 'Onam carol'. The origin of Onam Carol: A celebration of togetherness

The idea of an 'Onam carol' was suggested first in 1985 by the members of the cultural community in the village. "The aim was to ensure the message of Onam reaches every household. With every passing year, the support and encouragement for conduction only grew," said K K Gopalakrishnan, a theatre artist involved in the carol since its inception. Today, 43 years later, the tradition continues, organised by a coalition of local groups—the Olympic Sports Club, V N Keshavanpilla Memorial Library, and Suvarna Theatres.

Onam The carol kicks off each evening at 6:30 PM and concludes by 10 PM, with a dinner for the participants.

The carol procession: Eight days of joy and music for eight days, starting from Atham, the Onam carol procession makes its way through different parts of the village. Led by a person dressed as Maveli (King Mahabali), a new person takes on the role each day. Accompanied by drummers and singers, the carol brings the village to life, visiting homes in eight regions, namely Karthavinpadi, Vimala South, Peruvani, Aalumchadu, Vaarikkadu, Puliyaumbull, Vigwapuram and Kunnathusherry.

The carol kicks off each evening at 6:30 PM and concludes by 10 PM, with a dinner for the participants. N G Krishnakutty, an active member of Suvarna Theatres, reads the Mahabali each day. Onam To make the festivities more inclusive, women have also begun playing the role of Mahabali since last year. N M Rajesh, former secretary of Suvarna Theatres, said, "Each day, we get up to Rs 8,000 in donations from the homes we visit. We use this money to organise a grand Uthradram-day (the day before Thiruvonam) procession, which also marks the end of Onam celebrations for us," he said.

Women stepping into the role of Mahabali To make the festivities more inclusive, women have also begun playing the role of Mahabali since last year. A dedicated day during the eight-day celebration is now reserved for women to take on the role of Mahabali. "Last year, however, two women became Mahabalis, and it was received very well," said G Ajeena, a teacher and secretary of Suvarna Theatres.

What started as a local village affair has, over the years, become bigger. "People from our neighbouring villages like Rayamangalam, Pergola, Mazhuvannur come to join us in this tradition," said P Rajan, secretary of the library. Onam Weeks before the event, Onam carol songs are shared via WhatsApp groups to help everyone prepare. The younger generation keeps the tradition alive. The younger generation in Valayanchirangara is showing as much enthusiasm in celebrating the festival, and this particular tradition, as the old. Weeks before the event, Onam carol songs are shared via WhatsApp groups



to help everyone prepare. The only time the carol was paused was in 2018, during the devastating Kerala floods. However, the spirit of the village remained unbroken. "Despite challenges, we manage to conduct the carol every year without fail, thanks to the community's cooperation," said K V Cheriyan, former president of the sports club. Every year, as the Onam carol concludes, the people of Valayanchirangara begin planning to make next year's event bigger and better.

## 'Only time Sikhs felt existential threat was when Rahul Gandhi's family was in power': Hardeep Singh Puri hits back

GNS News Agency, Sept 13 Union Minister and senior BJP leader Hardeep Singh Puri Tuesday hit back at Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, over his remarks on Sikhs during his visit to the United States.

"Out of the blue he (Rahul) says that the Sikh community in India has a certain anxiety that they cannot wear a turban or kada. I have been wearing a turban for six decades, and a kada. This government has gone out of its way to address the issues and concerns of the Sikh community... If there's been one time in our history where we have felt insecurity and an existential threat, was at the time when Rahul Gandhi's family was in the seat of power," Puri said during a press conference. The BJP leader was referring to Rahul's statement in Herndon, Washington DC, when he was addressing the Indian diaspora.

"First of all, you have to understand what the fight is about. The fight is not about politics. That is superficial," Rahul said. He then pointed to a man in the audience, and asked, "What is your name, brother with the turban?"

When the man responded, Rahul said, "The fight is about whether a Sikh is going to be allowed to wear his turban in India or a kada in India. Or he, as a Sikh, is going to be able to go to Gurdwara. That's what the fight is about. And not just for him, for all religions."

## PIL in SC seeks autonomous body to regulate content on OTT, other digital platforms



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

A PIL was filed on Tuesday in the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Centre to set up an autonomous body to "monitor and filter" content and regulate videos on over-the-top (OTT) and other platforms in India. The PIL also referred to Netflix series IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack to highlight the need for such a regulatory mechanism as the OTT platform claimed it was based on real-life incidents. "However, (what) the series have shown is a vile attempt to rewrite history, downplay the terror inflicted by the actual hijackers, and subtly glorify their actions... by reducing the tragedy of IC 814 to a farcical narrative, the series tried to promote the insidious agenda that seeks to whitewash the brutality of terrorism and vilify the Hindu community," said the plea filed by lawyer Shashank Shekhar Jha and Apurva Arhatia. It said there exists a statutory film certification body- Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)- tasked with regulating public exhibition of films under the Cinematograph Act. The cinematograph law outlines a strict certification process for commercial films shown in public venues, it said.

## MP court awards 7-year rigorous imprisonment to Tarun Jinaraj for impersonating friend while on run

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

A sessions court in Madhya Pradesh recently handed a seven-year rigorous prison sentence to Tarun Jinaraj, a Gujarat-based Kerala man accused of murdering his wife on Valentine's Day in 2003, for allegedly impersonating his friend from college to evade investigative agencies. On October 5, 2023, Jinaraj, a basketball coach turned recovery manager with a tech company, was arrested by the Gujarat Police from Delhi after he jumped interim bail. He was first arrested in November 2018 after being on the run for 15 years and sent to Sabarmati Central Jail, where he spent the next five years as an undertrial.

Following the murder of his wife, Jinaraj allegedly took on the identity of Praveen Bhatelley, his senior from college in Gwalior, who ran a judo institute for underprivileged children in Bhopal at the time. According to the prosecution, Jinaraj came to Bhatelley in March 2003 seeking a job. Between June and July 2003, Bhatelley offered him work teaching spoken English to students at his institute. The prosecution argued that during this time, Jinaraj allegedly scanned all of Praveen's documents, including mark sheets and identity cards, and prepared forged ID cards and educational certificates. The police alleged that he obtained a passport using forged documents and used it to travel to the US while working for a tech company in Bengaluru. Additionally, Jinaraj married another woman from Pune in 2008 and they moved to live in Bengaluru. Bhatelley later found out about Jinaraj's criminal past when he read a newspaper and filed a First Information Report (FIR) at Bhopal's T T Nagar police station.

Additional Public Prosecutor Vinod Dubey argued that the accused used these forged documents to de-

ceive companies like Option One Mortgage Pune, iGate Noida, Teletel Gurgaon, Vertex Customer Management Gurgaon, Dell Bangalore, and Daksh E-Services Gurgaon, "leading these companies to hire him as their employee/officer at a higher salary due to his deception". Additional Sessions Judge (Bhopal) Swayam Prakash Dubey convicted Jinaraj under sections 419 (punishment for cheating by personation), 467 (forgery of valuable security...), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating) and 471 (using as genuine a forged document) of the Indian Penal Code and fined him Rs 11,000. "Therefore, based on the above factual investigation and analysis, the prosecution has successfully proven beyond reasonable doubt that the accused... forged valuable documents such as a passport, PAN card, driving license, Aadhaar card, etc., in the name of Praveen Bhatelley to establish himself as Praveen," the court said. After he jumped interim bail in 2023, Jinaraj allegedly resided in Delhi under the identity of 'Justin Joseph'. The trial for the Sajini murder case is still ongoing in Gujarat.

The petition said such a board must be headed by a secretary-level IAS officer and shall have members from varied fields including the film industry, cinematography, media, defence forces, the legal profession and members of academia. "The issue pertains to the abuse of fundamental rights of equality (Article 14), freedom of expression (Article 19), thus infringing right to life of people at large (Article 21) and Article 47 mandating state to improve public health and prohibit the consumption of intoxicating drinks & drugs harmful to health," it said. The OTT and other digital media platforms have given a way out for filmmakers and artists to release content without being worried about getting clearance certificates for films and web series from the censor board, it said. "The Union of India and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) introduced IT Rules 2021 to self-regulate OTT platforms, however the same has been inefficient. These unregulated portals are putting everything without any moderation and common people in India arwatching the same at the comfort of their houses which could ultimately lead to various problems in the coming future," it said.



ceive companies like Option One Mortgage Pune, iGate Noida, Teletel Gurgaon, Vertex Customer Management Gurgaon, Dell Bangalore, and Daksh E-Services Gurgaon, "leading these companies to hire him as their employee/officer at a higher salary due to his deception". Additional Sessions Judge (Bhopal) Swayam Prakash Dubey convicted Jinaraj under sections 419 (punishment for cheating by personation), 467 (forgery of valuable security...), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating) and 471 (using as genuine a forged document) of the Indian Penal Code and fined him Rs 11,000. "Therefore, based on the above factual investigation and analysis, the prosecution has successfully proven beyond reasonable doubt that the accused... forged valuable documents such as a passport, PAN card, driving license, Aadhaar card, etc., in the name of Praveen Bhatelley to establish himself as Praveen," the court said. After he jumped interim bail in 2023, Jinaraj allegedly resided in Delhi under the identity of 'Justin Joseph'. The trial for the Sajini murder case is still ongoing in Gujarat.

## As Tejashwi sets off on statewide yatra, workers told to put RJD's iconic green gamcha aside

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Tejashwi Yadav Bihar green gamcha RJD Significantly, the directive comes at a time when Leader of Opposition and party scion Tejashwi Yadav is gearing up to embark on his 'Karyakarta Samvad Karyakram', a statewide tour to interact with party workers, from Tuesday. The Rashtriya Janata Dal appears to be going for an image makeover. After years of allowing its workers to wrap its trademark green gamcha (scarf) around their necks and heads, the party is trading it for a green cap and badge. In a two-page directive issued on 4 September, RJD state president Jagdanand Singh asked party workers to "avoid" using the green gamcha.

Significantly, the directive comes at a time when Leader of Opposition and party scion Tejashwi Yadav is gearing up to embark on his 'Karyakarta Samvad Karyakram', a statewide tour to interact with party workers, from Tuesday. The green gamcha has been the signature style of the RJD, which was founded in July 1997. While campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections this year, Tejashwi was seen wearing the green scarf like a muretha — the pagdi-like headgear that's wrapped around the head.

Although no reasons were cited for the party's decision in the letter, RJD sources claimed that the party was looking to reinvent its image as a progressive party and the use of the gamcha, particularly as a muretha, didn't align with those ideals. "The muretha often looked retrogressive and aggressive and was meant to symbolise the Yadav aggression. As the muretha isn't gelling with our ideas of progressive reforms and governance mod-



els, the party decided to shed it," one source said. In his 14-point directive, RJD state president Jagdanand Singh also asked party workers to not use hoardings, posters and welcome arches to greet Tejashwi and to not discuss candidates for the next year's assembly polls with him. "Instead of carrying green gamcha, try to use green cap and matching badge to such programmes," the letter said, also asking workers to "maintain discipline" while taking photographs of the Leader of Opposition or posing for selfies with him.

The first phase of the yatra is scheduled to begin from Samastipur and Ujjain parliamentary seats and will continue until September 17, covering districts such as Darbhanga, Madhubani and Muzaffarpur. Through the tour, Tejashwi plans to cover the entire state in various phases that will extend until the first quarters of 2025, with the leader holding interactions with workers right down to the block levels.

## TSDCA busts illegal cough syrup manufacturing facility in Hyd

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Hyderabad: The Telangana State Drug Control Administration (TSDCA) has busted an unlicensed facility which was illegally manufacturing Glycoril Cough Syrup and seized stocks worth Rs 65,000.

The facility, Akhil Life Sciences in Prashant Nagar, IDA, Kukatpally, was engaged in unauthorized manufacturing of the syrup without requisite drug license for the product, DG, TSDCA, V B Kamalasan Reddy in a state-

ment said. The DCA teams, which conducted raids on the drug manufacturing facility on Monday, seized 635 bottles of 100 ml each of unlicensed Glycoril Cough Syrup, which should have been manufactured only after receiving drug manufacturing license from DCA. Printed labels of the product from the possession of C Bhaskar Reddy, proprietor of Akhil Life Sciences were also seized. Drugs manufactured without drug license may fail to meet the quality standards prescribed in the Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP) and Drugs Rules.



## Ukraine identifies Russian suspect in July attack on children's hospital



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Ukraine's prosecutor general said on Tuesday (September 10, 2024) that Kyiv suspected a senior Russian air force commander of ordering a missile strike on a children's hospital in central Kyiv in July that killed two people and caused extensive damage. Prosecutor General Andriy Kostin did not name the individual but said the International Criminal Court in The Hague had already issued an arrest warrant against him. In March, the ICC issued an arrest warrant for Lieutenant General Sergei Kobylash, saying he was the commander of Russia's long-range aviation forces. The ICC said at the time he was suspected of war crimes including ordering strikes on Ukraine's energy system. Russia denies carrying out war crimes in Ukraine and says it does not target

civilians.

"We are continuing the investigation to find other people responsible for the strike on Okhmatdyt," Mr. Kostin told reporters, referring to the hospital. He stood outside the damaged clinic beside ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan, who is visiting Kyiv. According to Mr. Kostin, the commander ordered the firing of a Kh-101 air-launched cruise missile from a Russian bomber at 10.45 a.m. on July 8, the day of the strike. Mr. Khan added that it appeared from various sources that a Kh-101 missile has been identified.

"It does seem from a number of sources and the work that's been done that a missile, a Kh-101 cruise missile, has been identified," Mr. Khan said. "A number of factors have to be looked into further." The ICC has issued arrest warrants for six Russian officials, including President Vladimir Putin. Mr. Putin and Russia's children's ombudsman Maria Lvova-Belova were charged by the court last year with the unlawful deportation of children from occupied parts of Ukraine. Russia has dismissed ICC war crime arrest warrants as part of a biased Western campaign to discredit Russia. Russian officials say such warrants have little real world impact as Moscow is not a member of the court and neither are other major powers, such as the United States and China. Mr. Kostin is leading Ukraine's campaign to prosecute alleged war crimes by Russian forces and over 140,000 cases are being investigated.

## U.S. House Republicans' report blames Joe Biden for chaotic Afghan withdrawal

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

U.S. House Republicans on Sunday issued a scathing report on their investigation into the country's withdrawal from Afghanistan, blaming the disastrous end of America's longest war on President Joe Biden's administration and minimising the role of former President Donald Trump, who had signed the withdrawal deal with the Taliban. The partisan review lays out the final months of military and civilian failures, following Mr. Trump's February 2020 withdrawal deal, that allowed America's enemy fundamentalist Taliban to sweep through and conquer all of the country even before the last U.S. officials flew out on August 30, 2021. The chaotic exit left behind many American citizens, Afghan battlefield allies, women activists and others at risk from the Taliban.

But House Republicans' report breaks little new ground as the withdrawal has been exhaustively litigated through several independent reviews. Previous investigations and analyses have pointed to a systemic failure spanning the last four presidential administrations and concluded that Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump share the heaviest blame. Texas Republican Rep. Michael McCaul, who led the investigation as chairperson of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the GOP review reveals that the Biden administration "had the information and opportunity to take necessary steps to plan for the inevitable collapse of the Afghan government, so we could safely evacuate U.S. personnel, American citizens, green card holders, and our brave Afghan allies."

"At each step of the way, however, the administration picked optics over security," he said in a statement. Sharon Yang, a White House spokesperson, said the Republican report was based on "cherry-picked facts, inaccurate characterisations, and preexisting biases." "Because of the bad deal former President Trump cut with the Taliban to get out of Afghanistan by May of 2021, President Biden inherited an untenable position," either ramp up the U.S. war against a strengthened Taliban, or end it, Ms. Yang said in a statement. House Democrats in a statement said the report by their Republican colleagues ignored facts about Mr. Trump's role.

A 2023 report by a U.S. government watchdog in Afghanistan singled out Mr. Trump's February 2020 deal with the Taliban agreeing to withdraw all American forces and military contractors by the spring of the next year, and both Mr. Trump's and Mr. Biden's determination to keep pulling out U.S. forces despite the Taliban breaking key commitments in the withdrawal deal. The more than 18-month investigation by Republicans zeroed in on the months leading up to the removal of U.S. troops, saying that Mr. Biden and his administration undermined high-ranking officials and ignored warnings as the Taliban seized key cities far faster than most U.S. officials had expected or prepared for. The withdrawal ended a nearly two-decade occupation by U.S. and allied forces intended to rout out the al-Qaeda militants responsible for the September 11, 2001, attacks on the U.S. The Taliban had allowed al-Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden, to shelter



in Afghanistan. Committee staffers noted reports since the U.S. withdrawal of the group rebuilding in Afghanistan, such as a UN report of up to eight al-Qaeda training camps there.

The Taliban overthrew an Afghan government and military that the U.S. had spent nearly 20 years and trillions of dollars building. With Mr. Biden no longer running for reelection, Mr. Trump and his GOP allies have tried to elevate the withdrawal as a campaign issue against Vice President Kamala Harris, who is now Mr. Trump's Democratic opponent in the presidential race. The report by House Republican cites Ms. Harris's overall responsibility as an adviser to Mr. Biden, but does not point to specific counsel or action by Ms. Harris that contributed to the many failures. Signs ignored

Earlier reviews have said Mr. Trump also carried out his early steps of the withdrawal deal, cutting the U.S. troop presence from about 13,000 to an eventual 2,500 despite early Taliban noncompliance with some parts of the deal, and despite the Taliban escalating attacks on Afghan forces. The House report faults a longtime U.S. diplomat for Afghanistan, former Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, not Mr. Trump, for Trump administration actions in its negotiations with the Taliban. The new report says that Mr. Trump was following recommendations of American military leaders in making sharp cuts in U.S. troop numbers in Afghanistan after the signing. The report also goes into the vulnerability of U.S. embassy staff in Kabul as the Biden administration planned its exit. Republicans claim there was a "dogmatic insistence" by the Biden administration to maintain a large diplomatic footprint despite concerns about the lack of security afforded to personnel once U.S. forces left. Gen. Frank McKenzie, one of the two U.S. Generals who oversaw the evacuation, told lawmakers that the administration's insistence at keeping the embassy fully operational was the "fatal flaw that created what happened in August," according to the report. The report claims that State Department officials went as far as watering down or "even completely rewriting reports" from heads of diplomatic security and the Department of Defense that had warned of the threats to U.S. personnel. "We were still in planning" when Kabul fell, Carol Perez, the State Department's acting undersecretary for management at the time of the withdrawal, testified to the committee.

## Maldivian President Muizzu to visit India 'very soon', says spokesperson

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Heena Waleed, the chief spokesperson at the President's Office, announced Mr. Muizzu's visit on a day when two junior ministers, suspended in January for derogatory comments against Prime Minister Narendra Modi — resigned from the government. She said that while the exact date for the trip is yet to be finalised, the two sides are discussing a date, which is of convenience to the leaders of both countries, the Sun Online news portal reported. "The President is scheduled to visit India very soon. As you are aware, such trips are scheduled for a time of maximum convenience to leaders of the two countries. Discussions regarding this are in progress," she said during a press conference. Mr. Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, visited New Delhi on June 9 to attend Prime Minister Modi's swearing-in ceremony. Unlike his predecessors, who made the first port of call to New Delhi after assuming office, Mr. Muizzu travelled to Turkey first and to China for his first state visit in January. Heads of the states from India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region attended Modi's oath ceremony. Mr. Muizzu said he was delighted to receive Prime Minister Modi's invitation and "equally delighted" to have attended the event. On his return, Mr. Muizzu described his first visit to India as a "success" for the Maldives and the region following talks with India's top leadership and said that the strong ties between the two countries will lead to increased prosperity for the Maldivians. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar visited the Maldives in August — the first high-level trip from New Delhi after Muizzu assumed office in November last year. India's relation-



ship with the Maldives came under strain since Mr. Muizzu took charge as the President. Within hours of his oath, he had demanded the withdrawal of Indian military personnel manning three aviation platforms gifted by India to the Maldives. After talks between the two sides, the Indian military personnel were replaced by civilians. Things escalated after three Maldivian Deputy Ministers made controversial remarks regarding India and Prime Minister Modi on social media. Maldives Foreign Ministry distanced itself from their remarks, saying they do not represent the views of the Male government. The three junior Ministers were suspended, and two of them — Mariyam Shiuna and Malsha Shareef — resigned on Tuesday. The Maldives is one of India's key maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean region and the overall bilateral ties, including in the areas of defence and security, witnessed an upward trajectory under the previous government led by President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih.

## Vietnam storm deaths rise to 64 as a bridge collapses and flooding sweeps away a bus



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

"A bridge collapsed on Monday (September 9, 2024) and a bus was swept away by flooding owing to heavy rains following a typhoon that caused landslides, power outages and at least 64 deaths in the Southeast Asian country and disrupted businesses and factories in the export-focussed northern industrial hubs," state media reported. "Nine people died when Typhoon Yagi made landfall in Vietnam on Saturday (September 8, 2024) before weakening to a tropical depression and at least 50 others have died in the consequent floods and landslides," state media VN Express reported. The water levels of several rivers in northern Vietnam were dangerously high. A passenger bus carrying 20 people was swept into a flooded stream by a landslide in mountainous Cao Bang province on Monday morning (September 9, 2024). Rescuers were deployed but landslides blocked their path. In Phu Tho province, rescue operations were continuing after a steel bridge over the engorged Red River collapsed on Monday morning. Reports said 10 cars and trucks along with two motorbikes fell into the river. Three people were pulled out of the river and taken to the hospital, but 13 others were missing.

Pham Trung Son (50) told VN Express that he was driving on the bridge on his motorcycle when he heard a loud noise. Before he knew what was happening, he was falling into the river. "I felt like I was drowned to the bottom of the river," Son told the newspaper, adding that he managed to swim and hold on to a drifting banana tree to stay afloat before he was rescued. "Dozens of businesses in Haiphong province hadn't resumed production by Monday because of the extensive damage to their factories," reported state media Lao Dong newspaper. The report

said that the roofs of several factories were blown apart while water had seeped into industrial units, damaging finished goods and expensive equipment. Some companies said they still didn't have electricity on Monday and that it would take at least a month to be able to resume production.

Toppled electricity poles meant that Haiphong and Quang Ninh provinces were still without power on Monday. The two provinces are industrial hubs, housing many factories that export goods, including EV maker VinFast and Apple suppliers Pegatron and USI. Authorities are still assessing the damage to industrial units but initial estimates show that nearly 100 enterprises were damaged by the typhoon, resulting in losses amounting to millions of dollars, reported the newspaper. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh visited Haiphong city on Sunday (September 8, 2024) and approved a package of \$4.62 billion to help the port city recover.

Typhoon Yagi was the strongest typhoon to hit Vietnam in decades when it made landfall on Saturday with winds up to 149 kph (92 mph). It weakened on Sunday, but the country's meteorological agency warned the continuing downpours could cause floods and landslides. On Sunday, a landslide killed six people including an infant and injured nine others in Sa Pa town, a popular trekking base known for its terraced rice fields and mountains. Skies were overcast in the capital, Hanoi, with occasional rain Monday morning as workers cleared the uprooted trees, fallen billboards and toppled electricity poles. Heavy rain continued in northwestern Vietnam and forecasters said it could exceed 40 centimetres (15 inches) in places. Yagi also damaged agricultural land where rice is mostly grown. Before hitting Vietnam, Yagi caused at least 20 deaths in the Philippines last week and four deaths in southern China. Chinese authorities said infrastructure losses across the Hainan island province amounted to \$102 million with 57,000 houses collapsed or damaged, power and water outages and roads damaged or impassable due to fallen trees. Yagi made a second landfall in Guangdong, a mainland province neighbouring Hainan, on Friday night. Storms such as Typhoon Yagi are "getting stronger due to climate change, primarily because warmer ocean waters provide more energy to fuel the storms, leading to increased wind speeds and heavier rainfall," said Benjamin Horton, director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore.

## Venezuela's Opposition cornered as Gonzales flees and Maduro digs in

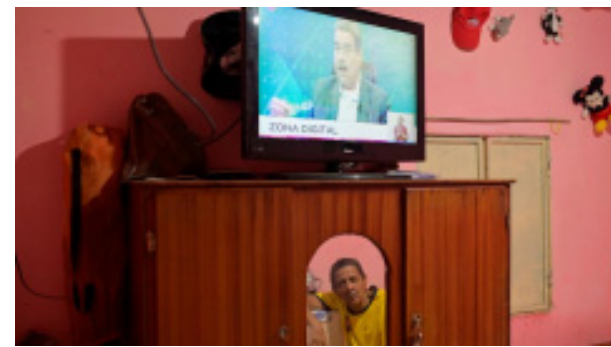
GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Venezuela's battered opposition is running out of options for challenging President Nicolas Maduro's claim to have won re-election. Opposition presidential candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia fled in exile to Spain over the weekend. The popular leader he stood in for at the polls, Maria Corina Machado, is in hiding. Other opposition figures have been arrested and Mr. Maduro is firmly in charge of the oil-rich nation - showing no sign of yielding.

Mr. Maduro's disputed win in the July 28 election is challenged not just by the opposition or historic geopolitical rivals such as the United States, but also by leftist allies of Venezuela such as Brazil and Colombia. The latter have come up empty-handed in their efforts to help find a peaceful solution to the crisis. Inside the country, chatter abounds about what the opposition calls a stolen election - but people make their criticisms in whispers: no one wants to join the more than 2,400 people who have been arrested since the vote, including children, with some even accused of "terrorism." Mr. Maduro would be sworn in for a third term on January 10, and in the next four months, anything can happen. But for now, Venezuela looks like this: Mr. Maduro and other heirs of the late iconic socialist leader Hugo Chaves are closing ranks, the opposition is trying to somehow reorganize itself and the outside world is assessing how to confront a Maduro whom international sanctions and pressure have long failed to shake. Sweeping away everything The National Electoral Council, loyal to Mr. Maduro, proclaimed him the winner of the election with 52 percent of the votes. That means another six-year term in power for the former bus driver handpicked by Chavez to succeed him. The opposition published copies of voting records from polling stations, saying the data proves the claim of a Mr. Maduro win is bogus and that Gonzalez Urrutia won by a landslide. That act of publishing the results online has triggered a probe by the government and charges that the opposition engaged in conspiracy, usurping functions and sabotage. The government has meanwhile not released detailed voting records to back up its claim of victory - it says it cannot, because the election tally system was hacked.

Mr. Maduro insists he won and at least in public rules out any kind of negotiation with the opposition. "It is clear that the government is not seeking to yield, and to the contrary it is digging in," said Antulio Rosales, a political scientist and professor at York University in Canada. "It is a strategy of domination, of sweeping away everything," said Giulio Cellini, head of the LOG political consultancy.

The goal, he said, is "to keep Maduro in place no matter what the cost is, because the cost of giving up



power is even greater." After Venezuela's last election, in 2018, Mr. Maduro also claimed victory amid widespread accusations of fraud. With the support of the military and other institutions, he managed to cling to power despite international sanctions. Mr. Maduro has led the oil-rich but cash-poor country since 2013. His tenure, amid sanctions and domestic economic mismanagement, has seen GDP drop 80% in a decade, prompting more than seven million of the country's 30 million citizens to flee. Gonzalez Urrutia, a 75-year-old, little-known former diplomat - until now - said last week that he was not considering going into exile, as he has now done.

But for many Venezuelans, his flight came as no surprise. He was under tremendous pressure, not just from a legal standpoint - he defied three summonses to appear in court - but also due to a rain of daily insults from Mr. Maduro, who called him "filthy," a coward and even a Nazi. Machado, the very popular leader of the opposition who was barred by Maduro-loyal courts from running for president, is now living in hiding. Many Venezuelans are now wondering if she too will flee into exile. Protests erupted right after the Maduro win was announced and in clashes with security forces 27 people died and nearly 200 were hurt. Experts say it is unlikely that the United States will react as firmly as Donald Trump did after Maduro's disputed win in 2018. Then, the U.S. administration said it no longer considered Mr. Maduro to be president and recognized opposition leader Juan Guaido instead.

The most recent U.S. punishment came earlier this month, when it seized one of Mr. Maduro's planes, in the Dominican Republic. The United States is now expected to impose sanctions on individual members of the Maduro government. Pablo Quintero, also of the LOG consultancy, said that over the short and medium term, the Maduro government expects to govern in isolation. "They have trained for these kinds of situations and are willing to endure them in order to stay in power," he said.

## An unsteady alliance: Donald Trump and the religious right

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Donald Trump, the Republican presidential nominee for 2024, presents a concatenation of contradictions. His transition from New York businessman to the President of the United States, from a thrice-married TV celebrity to the poster child for white evangelical Christians, came as a surprise to many.

Mr. Trump was convicted last month by a New York court on 34 felony counts in a trial involving hush-money payments to adult film star Stormy Daniels. He was found to be liable for the sexual abuse of a New York woman in 1996. In 2016, Mr. Trump was also the only GOP candidate with a history of casino ventures and two divorces, as well as allegations of sexual misconduct — one of them affirmed by a civil court verdict.

To a bystander, his actions may seem incongruous with the norms of Christianity. Indeed, of late, his reluctance to take a hardline stance on abortion and some

support for Kamala Harris among Evangelicals may be challenging his sway. A recent poll by EWTN News/RealClear Opinion Research revealed that the vice president was polling ahead with Catholics, a key denomination of Christians. While Mr. Trump is being supported by 42.7% of Catholics, Ms. Harris is seven points ahead, at 50.1% support.

However, he still maintains the lead among white evangelical Christians in America. According to a Pew Research Center poll in February 2024, two-thirds of white evangelical Christians had a favourable opinion of Mr. Trump; a Reuters/Ipsos poll in September 2023 showed that he beat out Vivek Ramaswamy and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis among this section of the public.

Several of the issues which are foremost for the Christian right — bans on abortion, curbing of LGBTQ+ rights, and protection of the traditional family structure — have found resonance in policies rolled out during the Trump years.



## RBI Governor ranked among top 3 global central bankers; Modi lauds Shaktikanta Das



bank's post stated. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Das in a post on X. "This is a recognition of his leadership at the RBI and his work towards ensuring economic growth and stability," Modi said. In the report released on August 19, Das secured the second spot among the three central bank governors rated 'A+'. The top position went to Denmark's Christian Kettel Thomsen, while Switzerland's Thomas Jordan was placed third.

According to Global Finance, grades are assigned on an "A+" to "F" scale based on success in areas such as inflation control, economic growth goals, currency stability, and interest rate management.

The annual Central Banker Report Cards recognize those leaders whose strategies have outperformed their peers through originality, creativity, and tenacity," Global Finance's statement highlighted. Joseph Giarraputo, founder and editorial director of Global Finance, noted, "Central bankers have waged a battle against inflation over the past few years, using their primary tool: higher interest rates. Now, countries around the world are seeing the results of these efforts, as inflation has dropped significantly." Since 1994, Global Finance has published the Central Banker Report Cards annually, grading central bank governors from nearly 100 countries, territories, and districts, including the European Union, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the Bank of Central African States, and the Central Bank of West African States.

## Employment growth in corporate sector declined to 1.5% in FY24: BoB report

The employment scene in the corporate sector is not too encouraging if the latest data is any indication. Based on data reported in the balance sheets of a sample of 1,196 companies, the employment growth declined to 1.5 per cent in FY24 as compared with 5.7 per cent in FY23, according to a Bank of Baroda report.

In absolute terms the accretion in headcount was under one lakh in FY24 while it was 3.33 lakhs in FY23, BoB report said. "A reason for this slowdown is that FY23 was the first year post pandemic when there was a certain degree of voluntary and involuntary displacement of staff," it said. BoB said there was a tendency for growth in employment to be higher in FY23 as activity was ramped up. The same necessity was not felt in FY24 resulting in a lower growth rate. "This sample, however would include only the large to medium companies and exclude the micro and small enterprises. Also, this was a period when companies in certain sectors have gone in for rationalization of staff based on their business levels and prospects," BoB said in the research report. For the aggregate sample of 1196 companies 700 had registered an increase in headcount, while 121 were in a status quo position and 375 companies recorded a decline. "Hence at the micro level, the picture is mixed," it said.

BoB report said IT is the largest sector with share of nearly 25 per cent in total which is followed by banking with around 22 per cent. "Therefore 47 per cent of total headcount resides with two industries. Finance, healthcare and auto are the next three sectors with share of around 14.5 per cent," it said. Insurance, business services and textiles follow with share of 10 per cent with each one accounting for a little over 3 per cent in total. Intuitively the movement in these 8 sectors will influence the headline numbers.

The 'job destroyers' category is a significant group where there was fall in headcount in FY24, the report said. "Clearly this was a case of companies resorting to downsizing which could be motivated by a variety of reasons. IT and textiles are the significant players here which have considerable share in the total headcount in the corporate sector," it said. According to the BoB report, the industries under the heading of 'job accelerators' category are the ones which have registered double digit growth in employment in FY24. "They have tended to be



more in the services sector and infra based segment like steel and construction. The big boost to housing witnessed partly due to the government push has resulted in the realty sector hiring more staff," the report said.

"Retailing and trading have been at the forefront in terms of creating jobs with the highest growth rates. Finance continues to be an accelerator as NBFCs have been spreading their reach across the country which means hiring more staff," it said. Another category is called 'job creators' where growth is between 4-10 per cent and includes telecom, plastic products, banks and FMCG, it said. "Those which are positive but less than 4 per cent have been termed as 'job stabilizers' where there is minimal growth in employment maintained by the industries. Flat growth was seen for chemicals while media witnessed 3 per cent increase," BoB said. For companies with global subsidiaries, standalone numbers have been considered as the focus is on employment in India, it said. "A limitation to using these numbers is that the quantum of outsourcing is missed as companies report only permanent staff on their rolls. Several industries use 'outsourced staff' for functions like sales where remuneration is performance based. These expenses get captured in the miscellaneous expenses in the profit and loss account," it said. FY24 was a good year for the economy with growth of 8.2 per cent being registered. "This was impressive as it came in on top of growth of 9.7 per cent and 7 per cent respectively in FY22 and FY23. From the point of view of companies, this was a period when growth in sales slowed down even as profits did well. There were savings had on the side of inputs as well as rationalization measures invoked to ensure that earnings remained buoyant," BoB said.



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) last year highlighted that rising average debt ratios in sub-Saharan Africa had sparked concerns of a looming debt crisis in the region, noting that while China is a major credit provider to sub-Saharan Africa, it imposes harsh terms on debtors.

gion is emerging as a highly attractive destination for investments and partnerships. And India remains committed to partnering with Africa in its quest for value addition in its industrial sectors through innovative solutions, he said. Meanwhile, Chinese lending to sub-Saharan Africa has drawn considerable attention and criticism for imposing relatively harsh terms on debtors and using natural resources as collateral, the IMF said, adding that other concerns include the lack of standardisation and transparency in public debt because Chinese lenders do not systematically document loans to individual overseas borrowers, leading to significant data gaps. "China has forged deep economic ties with countries in sub-Saharan Africa over the past 20 years, making it the region's largest single-country trading partner. China buys one-fifth of the region's exports—metals, minerals, and fuel—and provides most of the manufactured goods and machinery imported by African countries," the IMF said in its report last year. The IMF reported that the average debt ratio in sub-Saharan Africa has almost doubled in just a decade—from 30 per cent of GDP at the end of 2013 to almost 60 per cent of GDP by the end of 2022, and repaying this debt has also become much costlier. As of 2022, more than half of the low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa were assessed by the IMF to be at high risk of, or already in, debt distress.

## Why Sunita Williams may face risk of DNA damage due to extended stay in space



Astronauts like Sunita Williams, who spend extended periods in space, face unique health challenges due to the harsh environment beyond Earth's protective atmosphere. According to Dr Niti Raizada, Senior Director – Medical Oncology and Hemato-Oncology at Fortis Hospital, Bangalore, one of the most significant risks that hasn't been discussed yet is DNA damage caused by prolonged exposure to cosmic radiation and the effects of microgravity. Though NASA closely monitors radiation levels, said Dr Shailesh Jha, Consultant Psychiatrist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, but the extended duration of Williams' mission raises concerns about cumulative exposure and its potential effects on cognitive functions and overall brain health.

Space is filled with cosmic rays, high-energy particles from outside our solar system, and solar radiation, which can penetrate the body and damage cellular DNA. Prolonged exposure to these rays can lead to mutations, increasing the risk of cancer and other genetic disorders. Unlike on Earth, where the atmosphere and magnetic field provide a protective shield, astronauts in

space are far more exposed to these harmful particles. According to Dr Raizada, this radiation can cause breaks in DNA strands, leading to mutations during the repair process. Additionally, it can induce epigenetic changes, which affect gene expression without altering the DNA sequence directly. Sunita Williams Research is ongoing into gene editing technologies and other advanced treatments that might help repair or mitigate the effects of DNA damage. Microgravity, or the near-weightlessness experienced in space, also plays a role in compromising the body's ability to repair damaged DNA. In microgravity, cellular functions, including the DNA repair processes, are altered. This means that any DNA damage sustained in space is less likely to be effectively repaired, leaving cells more vulnerable to the long-term effects of radiation exposure. Dr Raizada also notes that the long-term consequences of DNA damage from space exposure could include "accelerated ageing, potential reproductive issues, and telomere shortening," which is linked to premature cellular ageing. Telomeres are protective caps on the ends of chromosomes, and their shortening is a marker of biological ageing.

How can these risks be mitigated? To counteract the risks of DNA damage in space, astronauts like Sunita Williams engage in rigorous exercise routines and consume diets rich in antioxidants to help combat oxidative stress. NASA and other space agencies are also exploring advanced countermeasures, including in-flight radiation shielding, protective gear, and even pharmaceutical interventions. Research is ongoing into gene editing technologies and other advanced treatments that might help repair or mitigate the effects of DNA damage. While some damage may be irreversible, emerging technologies and careful management of lifestyle factors during space missions are critical in minimising health risks.

## 99.9 % people 'failed' to count the number of triangles in this puzzle; data scientist shares ways to solve shape-based riddles

The challenge of such puzzles lies in the brain's intricate processing of visual stimuli and the cognitive mechanisms involved in solving them. Gurleen Baruah, organisational psychologist and executive coach at That Culture Thing, says, "Puzzles involving shapes and optical illusions, like counting triangles, often seem more challenging because they tap into the complex way our eyes and brain work together to interpret visual information." When we look at an image, she continues, our eyes send signals to the brain, which then tries to make sense of what we're seeing. However, our brain doesn't just passively receive this information; it actively interprets it, sometimes making quick assumptions based on patterns, depth, and past experiences.

Mathematical principles that are often used to create optical illusions in puzzles Shreya Singh, data scientist based in Bengaluru, tells indianexpress.com, "Optical illusions in puzzles often exploit our brain's reliance on certain mathematical principles to create visual confusion." Some common techniques include: Forced Perspective: Playing with relative sizes and distances to create misleading depth perception. Our brains instinctively interpret objects that are larger as being closer, and those smaller as farther away. Illusions can manipulate this by presenting objects in unexpected sizes, tricking us into perceiving impossible spatial relationships.

Ambiguous Figures: Crafting images that can be interpreted in multiple ways. This ambiguity arises from our brain's tendency to quickly seek out recognisable patterns. When a figure presents multiple possible patterns, our perception can flip between them, leading to the illusion of change or movement. Impossible Objects: Depicting shapes or structures that defy the laws of geometry. These illusions exploit our brain's built-in assumptions about how objects should exist in three-dimensional space. By presenting conflicting visual cues, they create a sense of paradox and impossibility. Gestalt Principles: Utilising our brain's natural tendency to group visual elements based on proximity, similarity, continuity, and closure. These principles can be cleverly manipulated in puzzles to either camouflage shapes or create false patterns, making it challenging to discern individual elements.

Common cognitive biases or errors do people tend to make when solving shape-based puzzles Baruah explains, "One major bias is our brain's tendency to see patterns, even when they aren't there. This trait, known as pattern recognition, helped our ancestors survive by quickly identifying potential threats or resources in their environment." Another common bias is confirmation bias, she states, where we tend to focus on information that



supports our initial interpretation while ignoring conflicting evidence. This can happen in puzzles when we latch onto the first pattern or shape. "Our brains also rely on Gestalt principles to make sense of complex visual information. These principles help us organise shapes and patterns into a coherent whole, which was useful for navigating our environment. However, in puzzles, these principles can lead us to see connections or complete shapes that aren't really there," confirms Baruah. We also tend to fall into the trap of anchoring bias, where we fixate on the first piece of information we identify and base all our subsequent decisions around it. Strategies or techniques can be used to systematically count shapes in puzzles to avoid common mistakes. When faced with a complex puzzle, Singh suggests employing a systematic approach can greatly improve your accuracy and prevent frustration:

Break it Down: Divide the puzzle into smaller, more manageable sections. This allows you to focus on one area at a time and reduces the chance of overlooking smaller shapes. Start Simple: Identify the most obvious and largest shapes first. This provides a foundation for spotting smaller shapes that might be formed within or around them. Look for Overlaps: Pay close attention to areas where shapes intersect. Overlapping regions often create new, smaller shapes that are easy to miss. Trace and Label: Use a pencil or your finger to trace the outlines of each shape as you count them. This helps you keep track and avoid double-counting. You can also label each shape with a number or letter for further clarity. Change Perspectives: If you're stuck, try rotating the puzzle or looking at it from a different angle. A fresh perspective can sometimes reveal hidden shapes or patterns. Take Breaks: If you start to feel overwhelmed, step away from the puzzle for a few minutes. Returning with fresh eyes can often lead to new insights.

## Take inspiration from Bollywood celebs like Alia Bhatt, Priyanka Chopra to twin with your mini-me

Twinning with your little one is a fun way to bond, create lasting memories, and capture some seriously cute pictures. And what better way to do it than take inspiration from your favourite Bollywood stars? Bollywood A-listers are known for their dazzling fashion sense, both on and off-screen. And they can also be a source of inspiration for creating adorable mommy-and-me looks. Forget the red carpets, Bollywood's cutest stars are stealing the show on social media with their matching looks! Let's take a peek at how some of your favourite Bollywood celebrities are rocking the mommy-and-me trend. Alia Bhatt and Raha Kapoor Back in March, Alia took the internet by storm with a picture of



her and daughter Raha, both looking like blooming flowers in matching floral outfits at the grand pre-wedding bash of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant in Jamnagar. Twinning doesn't necessarily mean being identical. Add a per-

sonal touch with a statement necklace for you or a funky headband for your little one. Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Malti Marie Chopra Jonas This stylish duo is always a delight! We can't get enough of Malti's adorable white co-ord set

with blue flowers, perfectly complementing Priyanka's pyjama set in the same floral theme. The duo also twinned with daddy Nick Jonas in white for Holi. Just like Priyanka, pick outfits that are comfortable for both you and your mini-me.



## A deep dive into Donald Trump's relationship with Roy Cohn, who taught him to 'admit nothing, deny everything'



lawyer Roy Cohn (Jeremy Strong), who gained recognition for his role as Senator Joseph McCarthy's chief counsel during the Army-McCarthy hearings. As Trump introduces himself, a response comes, "Donald, who?" highlighting the film's setting at a time when Trump was not yet well-known. When Trump asks Cohn, "How do you always win?" Cohn replies, "There are rules."

"The first rule is: attack, attack, attack. Rule two: admit nothing, deny everything. Rule three: no matter what happens, you claim victory and never admit defeat. You have to be willing to do anything to anyone to win," Cohn advises Trump. The trailer presents several scenes that evoke Trump's real-life persona and his cultivated public image. It concludes with Trump being asked in an interview, "What if you lost your fortune today?" With a smirk, he responds, "Well, then maybe I'll run for president," suggesting that the film will be explosive.

Directed by Ali Abbasi and written by Gabriel Sherman, the trailer's description reads: "A young Donald Trump (Sebastian Stan), eager to make his name as a hungry second son of a wealthy family in 1970s New York, comes under the spell of Roy Cohn (Jeremy Strong), the cutthroat attorney who would help create the Donald Trump we know today. Cohn sees in Trump the perfect protégé—someone with raw ambition, a hunger for success, and a willingness to do whatever it takes to win."

Besides Stan and Strong, *The Apprentice* features Maria Bakalova, Martin Donovan, Ben Sullivan and Charlie Carrick as Ivana Trump, Fred Trump, Russell Eldridge and Fred Trump Jr, respectively. The film had its world premiere at the 77th Cannes Film Festival on May 20, 2024, and is set to be released in the United States on October 11.

The *Apprentice* trailer: The movie, revolving around Donald Trump's early business career, is set to hit the screens soon and is expected to become a major talking point in the weeks leading up to the US presidential election. Sebastian Stan plays the role of Republican party leader and businessman Donald John Trump.

The *Apprentice* trailer: With the United States presidential election right around the corner, both the Democratic and Republican parties have intensified their campaigns for nominees Kamala Harris and Donald Trump, respectively. Less than a month before the polls, the much-anticipated biographical historical drama *The Apprentice*, revolving around Trump's early business career, is set to hit the screens and the film is expected to become a major talking point in the weeks leading up to the election.

On Tuesday, the film's makers released its official trailer, offering a glimpse into *The Apprentice* and its depiction of the "three rules" for success. The 88-second trailer starts with Trump (Sebastian Stan) going to meet

## Gulshan Devaiah says Ranveer Singh was upset with Looter underperformance; recalls working with him in Ram-Leela: 'I got tired just watching his energy'



Gulshan Devaiah recently recalled working with Ranveer during a challenging phase in the latter's career. He also admitted that he was often left exhausted just watching Ranveer's boundless energy. Actors Ranveer Singh and Gulshan Devaiah in director Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela*. (Images: Express Archives, Eros Now Movies Preview/YT)

Gulshan Devaiah is one of the rare talents in the film industry who, despite having no prior connections, has made a name for himself through his unique choice of roles and movies and consistently excellent performances. Since his debut in director Anurag Kashyap's *That Girl in Yellow Boots* (2010), Gulshan has consistently secured substantial roles in major films, always prioritising quality over quantity. One of his early successes came with his performance in director Sanjay Leela Bhansali's romantic tragedy *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* (2013), which brought him widespread recognition. His portrayal of Bhavani, a character based on Count Paris from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, earned him considerable praise, even in a film headlined by Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh. Recently, Gulshan Devaiah recalled working with Ranveer Singh during a challenging phase in the latter's career. The *Uljah* actor also admitted that he was often left exhausted just watching Ranveer's boundless energy.

"His films were not doing well at that time. Though he received a lot of appreciation for director Vikramaditya Motwane's *Looter* (2013), it didn't do well business-wise. I think that had started affecting him, whether he wanted it or not. His first film (*Band Baaja Baaraat*) had done well, but his second film *Ladies vs Ricky Bahl* ended up being average (grosser). Though he was getting that stardom, such movies (*Looter*) give you an unexpected opportunity and then you start rooting for people to like it since it's such a beautiful story made by a really good director. And people didn't like it as much as he wanted. It was a bit dull in the beginning," Gulshan recalled during a chat with *Lehren Retro*. Gulshan, however, noted that Ranveer's mood lifted once the musical sequences for *Ram-Leela* began shooting, returning him to his signature high-energy self. "He immediately came back to 'his zone'. He is exactly like you think he is. Those who have known him since childhood also say that he's been the same since then. His energy level is amazing. I used to walk away sometimes realising I can't maintain the same energy. I used to get tired looking at his energy," he added. It may be mentioned here that *Ram-Leela* marked the first time Ranveer Singh worked with his now-wife Deepika Padukone and it was during the filming of this film that their romantic relationship blossomed. On the debut episode of *Koffee with Karan* Season 8, the couple revealed they were practically "inseparable" during the film's production.

## Tanuj Virwani opens up about his relationship with Jennifer Winget, says his wife Tanya and Jennifer have never met: 'We were just friends'

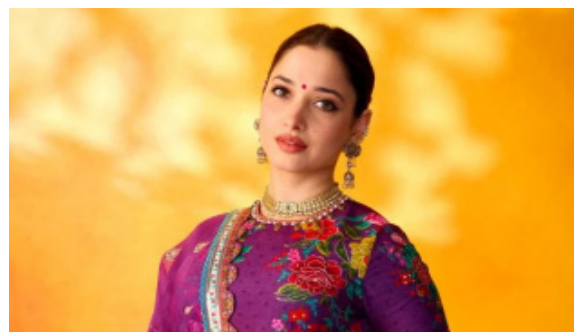
Actor Tanuj Virwani and Jennifer Winget shared screen space during the series *Code M* and at the time, it was rumoured that the two were in a relationship. Now, in a recent interview, Tanuj opened up about the rumoured relationship and said that they still share a cordial relationship. Tanuj also said that Jennifer is a "gem of a person" but added that confirming or denying his relationship with Jennifer would be a "big disservice" to his wife Tanya. In a chat with Sidharth Kannan, when Tanuj was asked if he was dating Jennifer, he said, "We were just friends. People keep speculating. Me and Jennifer still talk to each other and we still have a cordial relationship." He then said that Jennifer is "one of the best people I know. They don't make people like that very often".

When asked clearly to define his past relationship with Jennifer Winget, Tanuj Virwani said, "By confirming or denying this relationship, I feel it would be a big disservice to my wife. I will always maintain that Jennifer is a very special part of my life." Tanuj then spoke about the



positive influence of Jennifer and shared, "She got me disciplined as an actor, as a human being because we spent a lot of time together on *Code M*. She taught me that you must value what you have because you are not going to have everything all the time and if you don't respect it, it will leave you. She has been a very good, positive influence on my life."

## Tamannaah Bhatia on the fundamental difference between South and Hindi cinema: 'They go for basic human emotions'



Tamannaah Bhatia is someone who has had tremendous success in Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi cinema. Juggling between these industries, Tamannaah ensures she feels at home in all three, delivering one blockbuster after another. The *Stree 2* actor recently opened up about the one fundamental aspect of South cinema, and why emotions will always be the primary driving force behind any film. "In the South, the stories are very rooted. As in, it is well contained within their geographical area. That is why their content is translating globally," said Tamannaah, who simplifies the variety of South films in a rather succinct way.

"They go for basic human emotions. Be it a drama, or a revenge film, it revolves around relationships. They don't see the audience as specific segments of people. They are not trying to service different kinds of people. Also, the emotion level is so strong that it communicates through even if you are watching the film in its original language, and not the dubbed version. You don't need the language, you need the emotion to come through."

Drawing parallels with Hindi cinema, Tamannaah points out that she has definitely been inspired by the

work done there, but it is important to get to the roots. "When you create work that is catered to work for different audiences, and everybody's consumption, *khichdi ban jaati hai* (it becomes a hotchpotch of a film). Take, for instance, *Laapataa Ladies*. It was a village story, but managed to resonate with the urban audience, right? So, it is important to understand that what really matters is not the people and their setting, but the emotions," said the *Babli Bouncer* actor.

It is also interesting how Tamannaah has been a part of blockbuster successes, and era-defining films in the recent past. She had special numbers in films like *Stree 2* and *KGF*, an extended cameo in *Jailer*, and a starring role in the *Baahubali* franchise. "I've had the good fortune to have been part of these commercial successes. I am not complaining at all," said Tamannaah while taking time to explain that the primary need for the audience is to get entertained, even if the film deals with a rather profound theme. "What Amar Kaushik has done intelligently in *Stree 2* is that he is using a commercially viable genre like horror comedy to say something really profound. No one wants to listen to profound conversations if the communication isn't interesting." Tamannaah also took the opportunity to talk about how horror comedy is a difficult genre to crack, but she did not once but twice in 2024. "Earlier this year, my Tamil film, *Anamanai 4* made more than Rs 100 crores. It was a female-lead film with Raashi Khanna starring alongside me. The glory was all ours. Of course, films fronted by men do make a lot of money in the South, but it is only a handful of films lead by women that make so much money. More than anything, it is testament to the fact that when you make stories about what is happening in every street and village, that film will run," said Tamannaah.

## Jr NTR says Devara journey started for him before RRR, details shooting for extensive underwater sequences: 'The one shot I hated was...'

Jr NTR is set to explode on screen with his latest spectacle *Devara Part 1*, which will be his first film since SS Rajamouli's *RRR* made him a global name. The expectations are high, and the star says the team left no stone unturned to mount the movie as a "high octane" action drama.

Directed by Koratala Siva, *Devara Part 1* features Jr NTR portraying two characters, the titular father as well as his son. The film also stars Janhvi Kapoor and Saif Ali Khan, marking their Telugu debut. During the trailer launch of *Devara* here, Jr NTR spoke about the film's grand action sequences, detailing how a lot of time and effort went into ensuring it matches global standards.

"It is an action drama, which is extremely high on action. Saif sir will agree with me that there were some physically strenuous action sequences we have even been a part of. Solomn, who had worked on *RRR* as well, has extensively worked on the underwater and over-water sequences in the film. "We shot for about 38 days underwater and about 60 days over water. So 80-100 days were gone in that, to mount phenomenal action sequences which you've never seen before," he added.

Jr NTR said his journey with *Devara Part 1* began when Koratala Siva narrated him the "phenomenal idea" before the release of *RRR*. When the actor was asked if there is one particular sequence that he was most excited for, Jr NTR said it was impossible for him to choose



one but revealed that the one he hated the most was the scene where he is seen riding a shark. "I'm sure Karan sir will agree that the last 40 minutes of the film is going to rock you all. I can't wait for people to watch the vision of my director. There's also that sequence of me riding on the shark. I hated shooting for it! It took a lot of time. I was in a 200x150 tank, which was about five and a half feet. It took almost one day to get it right!" he added. *Devara* is set to be released in two parts, with the first chapter arriving on September 27. Produced jointly by Yuvasudha Arts and NTR Arts, the film boasts cinematography by Rathnavelu ISC, music by Anirudh Ravichander, production design by Sabu Cyril and editing by Sreekar Prasad.

## Venkat Prabhu explains why Vijay-starrer GOAT's Telugu, Hindi versions underperformed; speculates his favourite IPL team CSK might be the reason

Despite being marketed as "Thalapathy" Vijay's penultimate film before his foray into politics, director Venkat Prabhu's actioner *The Greatest of All Time (GOAT)* could not match the opening performance of Vijay's last outing, director Lokesh Kanagaraj's *Leo*, and saw significantly lower collections on its first day. Although the movie has already emerged as the highest-grossing Tamil film of 2024, this achievement is largely due to the industry's struggles this year, with no major blockbusters and the bigger releases failing to leave a lasting impact.

However, *GOAT*'s performance remains concerning when compared to *Leo*. One of the main reasons behind this is the lacklustre performance of the film's Telugu and Hindi versions. Director Venkat Prabhu himself has now offered his thoughts on why *GOAT* didn't resonate in these markets. During an interaction with fans on X (formerly Twitter) Spaces, Venkat Prabhu speculated that his favourite Indian Premier League (IPL) team might have been the reason the movie failed to connect with non-Tamil audiences. The climax of *GOAT* unfolds at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, also known as Chepauk Stadium, during an IPL match between the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and the Mumbai Indians (MI), with CSK shown in a favourable position.

"Because of that, Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) fans troll me. We are all CSK



fans — it's in our blood and we can't deny that. Maybe, it's because of the CSK connection that this movie didn't appeal much to Telugu and Hindi audiences. I don't think they enjoyed the moment like we did," he said in Tamil. According to reports, *GOAT* has already grossed over Rs 300 crore globally. Its India nett collection currently stands at Rs 155.6 crore, according to industry tracker *Sacnilk*. Produced by AGS Entertainment with a substantial budget of Rs 400 crore, the film also stars Sneha, Prashanth, Prabhu Deva, Ajmal Ameer and Mohan in key roles. The movie's technical crew includes cinematography by Siddhartha Nuni, editing by Venkat Raajen and music by Yuvan Shankar Raja.

## Priyanka Chopra stuns in black satin dress at New York event; chats with Jessica Chastain and Julianne Moore.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas turned heads at the Kering Foundation's Third Annual Caring for Women Dinner held in New York. The actor looked stunning in a black cocktail dress at the event, which was attended by numerous Hollywood A-listers, including Jessica Chastain, Kim Kardashian, Katy Perry, Orlando Bloom, Ashley Graham, Salma Hayek, Lindsay Lohan, Naomi Watts, and Dakota Johnson.

Several photos and videos from the event have surfaced on social media. In a photo, the *Baywatch* star is seen engaging in conversation with Jessica Chastain.

Priyanka was also photographed with Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, his girlfriend Lauren Sánchez, actors Julianne Moore and Naomi Watts. For the occasion, Priyanka wore a black satin dress paired with black satin pumps and Bulgari jewels, including dangling earrings, rings, and a bracelet. Priyanka was named Bulgari's brand ambassador in 2021. Priyanka Chopra also had an encounter with Donatella Versace, the creative head of Versace. The two were seen having a conversation. The actor was accompanied by her manager, Anjula Acharia, who can also be seen in the event's photos.



## Has Sri Lanka taken one big step forward with Test win over England or is it a false dawn?



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Pathum Nissanka, of sturdy constitution and brisk manners, marching towards his hundred and a memorable Test victory in England; Kamindu Mendis, of vibrant eyes and ice-cold veins, Sri Lanka's storm-rider; Asitha Fernando, of a feral grunt and bristling action, harassing batsmen of repute. Sri Lanka would remember the England tour of 2024 through a heap of images and with sunny affection, even if they had lost the series, even if they had self-combusted in moments that could have yielded them a brighter outcome, even if the fear of a familiar false dawn stalks every moment of glory. Stand-in coach and all-time great Sanath Jayasuriya rolled back the memories to the era-defining Test victory at the same venue, the Oval, 26 years away. "We won a lot of respect after winning that match. Earlier, we used to play one-off Tests. After this, teams began to invite us for a three-Test series," he said. The latest Test win, he asserts, was tougher to win than the 1998 one. "The conditions were difficult this time, the pitch was green and the ball was moving around, it was difficult to bat," he said.

A trigger-happy batsman in his heyday, he is more prudent with his words. He didn't over-romanticise the win or sprinkle lofty words like renaissance or phrases like coming of age. He is, without a doubt, well acquainted with the dizzy fluctuations of fortunes in Sri Lanka cricket, of wasted potential and unfulfilled promises. There are several walking embodiments of strayed gifts. At the stroke of the previous decade, Angelo Mathews was primed to conquer world cricket with his pristine stroke-making, lively seam bowling and a winsome smile that endeared him to even his bitter adversaries. He shook the world with a thunderous 160 in a famous and series-clinching win at Leeds, months before England hammered India. But a decade later after he was adjudged the Wisden player of the year, his career slumped, chiefly due to injuries, burden of captaincy, self-doubts and the general directionless nature of Sri Lankan cricket this century. He chisels out useful performances, an odd spell of incisive dibbly doblers, or a vintage assault of fours, but never conquered the peaks he was touted to scale. A Test batting average of 45.15 suggests diligence, not greatness. Similarly, Kusal Perera, a Sanath Jayasuriya clone with a short backlift and closed-in arms, could never build on his Durban knock, always in the conversations of greatest-eve Test knocks and occupying a spot in the top-five. Thirteen more Test innings of nominal yield, he became a one-knock wonder, a proverbial shooting star, his last outing in the longest version coming in 2021. There are others too, like Roshan Silva, architect of a thrilling draw in Kotla, or Dinesh Chandimal of the Galle heist against Ravi Ashwin and Co.

## Tanvi Sharma, Pranav Ram, Rounak Chouhan to headline Smt Krishna Khaitan Memorial badminton

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Former U-17 national champion and member of this year's Asian Championships-winning Indian women's team, Tanvi Sharma will be among the top contenders in the girls' U-19 category at the 31st Yonex Sunrise Smt Krishna Khaitan Memorial All India Junior Ranking Prize Money Tournament to be held here from September 12-19. The tournament, which is being organised by Express Shuttle Club Trust under the aegis of Haryana Badminton Association, is one of the junior events on the Badminton Association of India (BAI) domestic calendar and will be played at Tau Devi Lal Sports Complex in Sector 3.

"We have received 1,014 entries for the tournament. It is an important tournament on the BAI calendar and offers ranking points to U-19 players. Last year's finalist Tanvi Sharma is the leading contender in the girls' U-19 category and players like top seed Rujula Ramu of Karnataka and Medhavi Nagar of Haryana too will be top draws of the event," said tournament director Sanjiv Sachdeva, who has been the chief coach of the Indian junior team in the past and is a member of BAI's selection committee. Last month's All India Junior Ranking Tournament winner Rounak Chouhan of Chhattisgarh will be the top seed in the boys' U-19 singles category while defending champion Pranav Ram of Telangana has been seeded second. Some of the top U-19 players, like Asian U-15 champion Tanvi Patri and Asian U-17 bronze medallist Gnana Dattu, are part of the national camp for the world junior badminton championship this week. In the boys' doubles U-19 category, Vinayakram GP and Swastik Matharasan of Telangana are the top seeds as are Pragati Parida and Vishaka Toppo of Orissa in the girls' U-19 section. Mithlesh P Krishnan of Puducherry and Manya Ralhan of Punjab National Bank have been drawn as top seeds in the mixed doubles U-19 category.

The tournament has a prize money of Rs 4 lakh, sanctioned by BAI president Himanta Biswa Sarma, as the quarter-finals onwards. "Last year, we saw talents like Anmol Kharb and Tanvi Sharma emerging from the tournament. This year too, we expect some new talents to come out. The main draw for boys' and girls' singles will be of 32 each while the rest of the categories will see main draws of 16," said Sachdeva. Saina Nehwal won the girls' singles title in 2005 while PV Sindhu won the title in 2010. Last year, Haryana's Anmol won the girls' U-19 title beating Tanvi of Punjab in the final. "Players born on or after January 1, 2006, are eligible to take part in the tournament and BAI overseers will be strictly adhering to the age guidelines," added Sachdeva. A.J. Singh, Executive Director, Tynor Orthotics Pvt. Ltd., will be the chief guest at the opening ceremony. Madhu Bhatia, W/o Late Wg. Cdr. Satish Bhatia, and Ravinder Talwar, Vice President, Chandigarh Badminton Association, will be guests of honour. K.D. Singh, Chairman, Alchemist Group, will

But Perera is perhaps most symbolic of the fits and flashes nature of Sri Lankan cricket. In the last decade, Sri Lanka produced what no other Asian side could; win a Test series in England and South Africa. They nearly pulled off a heist in New Zealand too, where no Asian team has won a Test in 15 years. Yet, for a team predisposed to be competitive in all conditions, they have not cracked the consistency code. It could be that the crisis their country had been riding in the past few years had derailed them in sports too; the chaos in cricket administration could have disillusioned them; the frequent shuffling of the coaching pack might have disturbed them; the pandemic years might have broken their wave of progress and continuity; recession might have forced some of their most talented cricketers into seeking the riches of the franchise leagues. In white ball cricket, it won the Asia Cup, defeating a strong Pakistan side, yet crashed out in the second stage in the T20 World Cup that tailed it.

The paradox of Sri Lankan cricket is that just when you give up on them, they conjure something magnificent to reinstate hope and joy. Few would have believed that Perera could subjugate Dale Steyn and Kagiso Rabada, or Nissanka could blitz through Olly Stone and Chris Woakes under sullen skies. The excited faithful cling on, but they contrive to self-destroy. The cycle repeats, making the exercise of following them an equally fascinating and frustrating experience. Only time would denote whether the Oval win is a concrete sign of missing and repelling parts falling into place to solve the giant-scale sudoku or just an incidental, sporadic victory that eventually leads to another false dawn. The parts and promise, no doubt, exist. The batting order has a mix of style and steel. Nissanka bludgeons; Dimuth Karunaratne stonewalls. Kusal Mendis, Mathews, Dinesh Chandimal and Dhananjaya de Silva are capable of match-turning acts. Kamindu Mendis, the tour's discovery, injects balance and calmness. The seam-quartet of Fernando, Milan Rathnayake, Lahiru Kumara, Vishwa Fernando, apart from the injured Dilshan Madushanka and Kasun Rajitha, could make life harrowing for batsmen. On turners, they have the guileful left-arm spin of Prabhath Jayasuriya to lean on. Whether they could combine in tandem and harness the potential would colour the memory of Oval afternoon. It could be an era-defining moment; it could be another of those numerous false dawns the tear-shaped island would have woken up too. With the stalwarts phasing out, the 100-run win ushered in hope that the transition would be smooth. It didn't exactly pan out the way they hoped. Sri Lanka immediately lost a series at home against South Africa, defeated Pakistan and then lost series to New Zealand (away), India (home) and Pakistan (home). One of the greatest Test series wins raised genuine optimism about Lanka's resurgence. But it was not to be, as they waited for two more years to register their next series win against a top-nation. The phase included drawn series against New Zealand, Pakistan and West Indies, besides series defeats at the hands of England and South Africa. After a shock defeat in the opening game against Afghanistan in the opening, they fought back strongly to win the next five games and clinch the trophy. Yet, they barely managed to qualify for the T20 World Cup a few months later, losing in the qualifiers to even Namibia, and endured a forgettable campaign in the main event.



be the chief guest at the prize distribution ceremony and former international player K.K. Cheema will be the guest of honour.

## Rahul, Pant, Gill rested from Duleep Trophy; Rinku to feature in round two

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Anantapur: Majority of the players picked in the India squad for the first Test against Bangladesh, including Rishabh Pant, K L Rahul and Shubman Gill, were on Tuesday rested for the second round of Duleep Trophy beginning here on September 12. The others picked in the national squad on Sunday include Akash Deep, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Dhruv Jurel, who all have been exempted from the second round. Left-arm pacer Yash Dayal and Sarfaraz Khan, who to are part of India's 16-man squad for the opening Test, have not been released from their Duleep Trophy duties indicating they won't be part of the playing eleven against Bangladesh in the game to be played in Chennai. "The selectors have named Pratham Singh (Railways) as a replacement for Gill, Akshay Wadkar (Vidarbha CA) as a replacement for KL Rahul and SK Rasheed (Andhra CA) as a replacement for Jurel," said the BCCI in a statement. "Left-arm spinner Shams Mulani will replace Kuldeep in the squad whereas Aaqib Khan (UPCA) will replace Akashdeep in the squad." Mayank Agarwal has been named as India A captain in Gill's place. As Jaiswal and Pant's replacements, the selectors have named Suyash Prabhudessai and Rinku Singh. Nishant Sandhu comes in as a replacement for Axar in the India D squad. Pacer Tushar Deshpande has been ruled out of the game due to a niggle and his place will be taken by India A's Vidwath Kaverappa. No changes have been made to the India C squad led by Ruturaj Gaikwad.

## The Breaking star: B-girl Dutch star India who has never been to India



GNS News Agency, Sept 13

She doesn't culturally identify with anything Indian, and is happily free-spirited in her dancing influences and prodigiously talented at 18 as a sportswoman. Yet, B-Girl India who represented her native Netherlands at the Olympics, finishing fourth at Paris' breakout sport of Breaking, clung to her given name 'India' when choosing a professional moniker. And the teenaged India Sardjoe believes she carries some of the 'cool vibe' of freestyle dancers from the country she's never visited in her life.

"I'll be honest, I don't have any direct Indian influence in my Breaking moves. But my parents chose my name as 'India' when I was born and I didn't want to assume another dancing-name like other breakers. I just like 'India' enough," she says candidly, having returned from Paris where she lost a bronze after making semifinals, but was one of the emerging faces of the new sport, with a documentary on her becoming a sleeper hit on Dutch television.

Her Dutch-born mother Natascha, understands and speaks fluent "Hindustani" though, India says. Father Rishi Sardjoe too reached the Hague in Holland where he settled in the Zeeheldenkwartrij (Naval Heroes district), after arriving when young from Suriname, a former Dutch territory in the Caribbean. 23 percent of Suriname has people of Indian ethnicity, those who trace back roots to Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and were ferried as indentured labour in the 1870s, and continued speaking an Awadhi / Bhojpuri dialect called Sarnami Hindustani. B-Girl India's father and maternal grandparents relocated from Suriname to the Netherlands, and the family of 4 (she has an elder sister) straddles multiple cultures and languages, by default.

"Dad was born in Suriname and moved here, so he only understands Hindustani, mother grew up in Holland but speaks Hindustani. I guess my Indian roots go back to great grandparents who were Indian, but there's my name India," she chuckles. She's part of a multicultural crew Heavy Hitters, but easily the most recognised Breaking face in Holland. "I started hip-hop classes with my sister. Sport was always where my attention was. I got my swimming diploma in school. And also played a bit of football. But Breaking was what I was passionate about. My dad has really encouraged me since I was 10," she says.

Rishi Sardjoe moved to the Hague, and from starting out as a courier delivery gig-worker, grew his own logistics business in the new country. During the Olympics, he locked himself in the house watching India progress through early rounds, because he gets acutely nervous when she's on stage. Rishi would ferry packages and manage the office just as India's interest picked up in Breaking. "I started out in Battles at age 9. I travelled for a lot of under-13 tournaments to Belgium, and within the Netherlands. Then in 2022 I had second place at Dutch Nationals and also became European Champion and won the Red Bull BC world cypher. Since then it's just been growing, growing," she says.

Young Dutch of Surinamese descent focus plenty

## How much will India's Paris Paralympics medallists earn as per the colour of their medals?

GNS News Agency, Sept 13

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday presented cash awards of Rs 75 lakh to the gold medallists, Rs 50 lakh for the silver winners and Rs 30 lakh for the athletes who bagged bronze in the just-concluded Paralympics. Those excelling in mixed teams events, like armless archer Sheetal Devi, who won a bronze along with Rakesh Kumar, got richer by Rs 22.5 lakh. The minister presented the cheques to the medal winners during an event organised to felicitate the medallists as well as the other participants at the Paris Paralympics. Mandaviya also pledged full support and facilities for para-athletes to aim for more medals at the 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics. "The country is rising in Paralympics and para sports. From 4 medals in 2016, India have won 19 medals in Tokyo and 29 in Paris with 18th place finish," Mandaviya said.

"We will provide all the facilities to all of our para-athletes so that we can win more medals and gold medals in 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics." Addressing the Paralympians, the minister said, "You have brought laurels for the country, you have shown that you can successfully challenged the challenges



## Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday presented cash awards of Rs 75 lakh to the gold medallists, Rs 50 lakh for the silver winners and Rs 30 lakh for the athletes who bagged bronze in the just-concluded Paralympics.

of life.

"But you should not stop now. We should start preparations for the next Paralympics in Los Angeles (in 2028) and then for 2032 and win more and more medals. Our target should be to produce our best performance when India hopefully hosts the Olympics and Paralympics in 2036." India concluded their historic Paris Paralympics campaign with 29 medals, including seven gold, nine silver, and 13 bronze medals, marking the country's best performance in the competition's

history. Gold medallists like javelin throwers Sumit Antil and Navdeep Singh said they would work harder to defend their titles in LA 2028. Tuesday's felicitation saw a large number of para track and field athletes receiving cheques from the sports minister after they won an unprecedented 17 medals, including four gold. Paralympics Committee of India President Devendra Jhajharia said that India's rise as a Paralympics power was the result of a collective effort of all the concerned stakeholders, including the play-

ers and coaches. Besides Antil and Navdeep, other gold winners — high jumper Praveen Kumar, club thrower Dharambir Nain and archer Harvinder Singh — also received the cheques from the sports minister.

The government has already felicitated shooters, including gold winner Avani Lekhara, and shuttlers like top-podium finisher Nitesh Kumar after they returned home last week, and therefore they were not present at Tuesday's function.

While there was plenty of buzz around her potential medal, she was thrilled to run into Olympics Dutch running royalty. "The Dutch track superstar Femke Bol. I got a picture with her and it was good to see her in person finally. She was really sweet, though I kept thinking 'Shit, should I approach her?' But then I thought let's just do it," India says.

The Olympics stint though was a one-off, and Los Angeles dropped the sport for 2028. "Well we already knew it. But OK sure, just happy to have had the opportunity to be at the Games. Coming back from Paris, I was feeling really sad. The 4th place finish was heartbreaking. Had to switch off in my head that the road wasn't ending. There are other competitions. It's unfortunate because competition was really at the highest level at the Olympics. I really hope future Games consider having Breaking," she says.

Breaking also got mired in meme-making after Aussie B-Girl Ray Gun became meme material post her eccentric moves, giving enough fodder to outdated Olympic boomers wanting to chew on how Breaking was un-serious. "Honestly, I don't want to talk about it. I'm sure she trained as hard as anybody else. That's all I'll say. It's not my place."

Outside of the Olympics, the sport is growing bigger across neighbourhoods in all continents — from Japan to Switzerland to Peru to New Zealand, even as prize money increases for circuit battles. "The level is really high and getting even better for B-Girls. I'm just 18, but those younger are much much better than us. They are highly technical, powerful and have great footwork," she says. There's a hint of Indian geekiness in her quite apart from the free-flowing creativity of the Dutch when she speaks of her signature move. "No favourites as such but the Elbow 1.5 is something I took long to get good at. I had to practice it for a long time, break down the movement, study it, and it just looks very pretty," she says.

Though India is not on her calendar, she would love to visit it properly some day, more so for the typical folk and street dances dotting every community. "Not planned India trip yet. But it's really huge and beautiful and diverse so it will take a lot of time to cover the country," she says.