# 60-year-old woman killed in sleep as dilapidated house collapses

Medak: An elderly woman died when a house collapsed in Tekmal on Saturday late at night. The deceased was identified as Shankaramma (60). Shankaramma and her husband Dattaiah had slept in separate rooms on Saturday. The room Shankaramma had slept in collapsed at midnight. She died in her sleep. Dattaiah escaped unhurt.Since the house was in a dilapidated condition, it crumbled down as the region received continuous rains. The body was shifted to the area hospital in Jogipet for postmortem. A case was registered.

Sept 8

Tamizhaga

Tamil Nadu

Election Commission of In-

dia (ECI). The actor an-

nounced that his party was

now battle-ready and

### IMD issues heavy rain alert across Telangana, moderate showers likely in Hyd

Hyderabad: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an orange alert for several districts in Telangana from September 8 to 10, warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places. Districts such as Mahabubabad and Khammam are likely to experience intense downpours, while Adilabad, Kumuram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, Mulugu, Bhadradri Kothagudem, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Siddipet, Sangareddy, Medak and Kamareddy are under yellow alert. Hyderabad is expected to see moderate, scattered rains, particularly in the evenings, with no widespread or heavy rainfall forecast. Thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds (30-40 km/h) are predicted in all districts.

### HYDRAA resumes demolition exercise, razes unauthorised structures on Hyd outskirts

# Tamil actor Vijay's party TVK gets EC recognition, to contest Assembly polls



GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Hyderabad: After a pause due to heavy rain that lashed for the last couple of days, the HYDRAA teams on Sunday resumed action against unauthorised structures in the city and outskirts.

Demolition exercises by the teams were reported from at least three different locations on Sunday morning. The HYDRAA teams, assisted by officials of Revenue, Irrigation and GHMC started razing down structures located in FTL and buffer zone of three water tanks located at different places.At Dundigal, the authorities started demolition of structures constructed in FTL of Mallampet cheruvu. In Madhapur, the authorities started razing down structures at Sunam Cheruvu. Similar exercise is underway at Ameenpur lake in Sangareddy district. The authorities are supported by the local police who arranged the bandobast for the exercise. The authorities had identified hundreds of unauthorized structures that have come up in FTL and buffer zone of lakes in citv and suburbs

### 'NC-Congress alliance will ensure statehood for J&K': Farooq Abdullah, day after Shah's remarks

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Hitting back at Union Home Minister Amit Shah over his state that "only the Government of India and (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi can restore statehood" to Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference (NC) chief Farooq



would contest the 2026 Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu.It may be recalled own and for that political power was required.He that Vijay had announced had extensively quoted his party in February 2024 from poet Thiruvalluvar's and then said that TVK Thirukkural and said, 'Enni would not contest the 2024 Thuniga Karmam' (Acting Lok Sabha polls and that after due consideration). the party's aim was to con-The actor-turned-politician test the 2026 Assembly had then said that the proelections from the state of

Vijay had then said that his fan club Vijay Makkal lyakkam has been working for the welfare of the people for many years but that it cannot bring fullfledged social, economic January. and political reforms on its

cess to formally register the party had been initiated. The popular actor noted that the party leader, functionaries, and the rules of the party were chosen and approved at a TVK meeting in Chennai in

In August, Vijay re-

leased his party flag which has red on top and bottom with yellow in the middle. A flower resembling Vaagai flower garlands symbolise their victory.

According to TVK party functionaries, a group of senior leaders of the party led by its general secretary, N. Anand alias 'Bussy' Anand who is a

surrounded by 28 stars at the centre with two trumpeting tuskers facing each other on either side is depicted in the flag. It may be noted that the ancient Tamil kings used to wear Vagai to

> drew a blank in the local body polls.

any to the party's registra-Tamizhaga Vazhvurimai Katchi of Velmurugan had raised objection to the abbreviation of the TVK but now Vijay has announced that all hurdles have been cleared and that the party has received formal ECI recognition.In the last local

former MLA in Puducherry

had approached the Elec-

tion Commission of India.

published legal notices

and had invited stakehold-

ers to express objections if

tion.

The party had in May

body polls of 2021, members of the actor's fan club All India Thalapathy Vijay Makkal lyakkam (AITVMI) won 115 seats of the 169 seats they contested. Interestingly Tamil superstar Kamal Haasan's party Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) and actor-director Seeman's, Naam Thamizhar Katchi (NTK)

questions about Rahul

Gandhi's US visit from vari-

ous quarters, and this video

message was apparently to

inform them about the Con-

gress leader's short but

highly anticipated trip to the

US.Notably, Rahul Gandhi,

after the 2024 Lok Sabha

results, has been creating



Khammam flood-affected

victims obstruct Kishan Reddy,

complain of no help from govt

GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Khammam: Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy and Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, who visited flood affected areas in Khammam city on Sunday morning, had a bitter experience as several women at Dhamsalapuram obstructed them complaining about lack of support from the government.

Srinivas Reddy convinced them the government would extend all possible support to the public. Later they distributed essential commodities to the flood-affected families.District administration was on alert in view of moderate to heavy rain alert for the district. District Collector Muzammil Khan said that all arrangements for the residents of Danavaigudem, Ramanapet, Prakash Nagar, Moti Nagar and Venkateswar Nagar were made for their stay at relief centres. He asked the public to call toll free number 1077 for help in case of emergency

Relief centres were set up at Women's Degree College, Swarna Bharathi Function Hall, Ramanapet School and Damsalapuram School. A large number of residents have been shifted to the relief centres. Deputy Chief Bhatti Vikramarka and Collector Muzammil Khan visited the relief centre as well as the flood prone area on Saturday night. Munneru stream which received huge inflows on Saturday reached 15.50 feet at 5 am on Sunday however the water level receded later and it reached 14.25 feet at 11

### Bihar sees massive bureaucratic reshuffle, 41 IAS officers transferred

Sept 8 Congress Texas: leader Rahul Gandhi be-

GNS News Agency,

gan his three-day visit to the US, arriving in Dallas, Texas, on Sunday, where he was warmly welcomed by members of the Indian diaspora and the Indian Congress Overseas (IOC). Taking to his social media, the Congress leader shared the pictures of his welcome and wrote, "I am truly delighted by the warm welcome l've received in Dallas, Texas, USA, from the Indian Diaspora and members of the Indian Overseas Congress.""I eagerly look forward to engaging in meaningful discussions and insightful conversations that will further strengthen the bond between our two nations durthis visit," he ing added.This is Rahul Gandhi's first trip to America since the 2024 Lok

Abdullah reiterated that the alliance between his party and the Congress will fulfil the statehood promise if voted to power."National Conference and Congress will ensure that we get our statehood back," the veteran leader told reporters on Sunday.On Saturday, targeting Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over his promise to restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, Shah had said: "Rahul Baba takes the pledge that he will give back statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. I want to ask Rahul Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah how will you give it back?

Responding to the comments by Shah, the former J&K CM said: "Jis Bharat wo bna na chahte hai, hum us Bharat ke khilaf hai... (We oppose the idea of India that the BJP propagates). India belongs to everyone... Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and others... The ones who are raising questions on Muslims should know that Muslims have also contributed and sacrificed their lives for Independence."

Speaking about claims made by BJP leaders that there has been a dip in terror activities in the Valley since the abrogation of Article 370, Farooq Abdullah said, "They say that if the National Conference and Congress come to power, terrorism will be on the rise. I want to ask them if they managed to end terrorism with the abrogation of Article 370."The Union Home Minister is in Jammu to kickstart the BJP's campaign ahead of the Assembly polls in the state. Regarding the abrogation of Article 370, Shah had said on Saturday: "Mothers and sisters in Jammu and Kashmir have got their rights and this NC-Congress (combine) wants to withdraw it. Indian Express on WhatsApp and get latest news and updates

### Heavy Rains and inflows spark fresh flood fears in Khammam's Munneru River

GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Hyderabad: Heavy rains on Saturday night and huge inflows from upstream have triggered fears of fresh flooding in the Munneru River in Khammam district, a week after the devastation. With the water level in Munneru rising to 16 feet on Sunday, authorities issued the first warning signal and shifted people from flood-affected areas to relief camps.

The river, which flows through Khammam town, was in a danger zone. The huge inflows from upstream created fears of fresh floods in colonies on the banks of the lakes. If the water level reaches 24 feet, the irrigation authorities will issue a second warning signal. Khammam district Collector has ordered the closure of roads in all flood-affected areas.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, who rushed to Khammam on Saturday night, visited a few relief camps



EAM Jaishankar in Saudi Arabia for

**India-GCC foreign ministers' meeting** 

**Rahul Gandhi begins US visit** 

with warm welcome in Dallas

Sabha elections. The Congress leader will be in Dallas, Texas, on September 8 and in Washington, DC, on September 9-10.

Earlier, announcing Rahul Gandhi's visit, IOC chief Sam Pitroda said that the Indian diaspora, including NRI residents, technocrats, business leaders, students, media fraternity and even political leaders, are eager to welcome the Congress MP and are looking forward to having an interaction with him."There are lots of events planned with a variety of people be-

cause they also have interest in the states where Congress party runs governments, particularly the tech cities like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Pune. We see great interest in conversation with business and technologi-

> informed. "We look forward to a very successful visit and look forward to welcoming Rahul Gandhi to the US,' Pitroda said on a concluding note.He also said that he was 'bombarded' with

cal community," he further

good momentum and garnering people's support with his views on many issues of public interest. Political watchers anticipate his US visit to be more newsworthy and stir larger controversy back home this time.Rahul won elections from two Lok Sabha constituencies - Rae Bareli and Wayanad, however, he chose to retain the former and leave the latter for his sister, Priyanka Gandhi.In June this year, he was appointed the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha after getting a nod from the Congress Working Com-

mittee (CWC).



### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Forty-one IAS officers, mostly district magistrates, were transferred in a major bureaucratic reshuffle in Bihar.While Bhojpur DM Raj Kumar was made the managing director of Bihar State Cooperative Milk Producers Federation (COMFED), Sheohar DM Pankaj Kumar was appointed director (primary education) in the Education Department, according to a notification issued by the General Administration Department late on Saturday.

Director in Mines and Geology Department Mohd Navvar Igbal was shifted to the Food, and Consumer Protection Department as special secretary. Jamui DM Rakesh Kumar was appointed director (chakbandi) in the Directorate of Land Records and Survey.Director (Mid-day meal) in the Education Department Mithlesh Mishra was appointed DM of Lakhisarai, while Rohtas DM Navin Kumar was made commissioner in the Transport Department.Araria DM Inayat Khan was appointed registrar in the State Cooperative Societies Department. Vidya Nand Singh, deputy director in the Panchayati Raj Department, was appointed director in the Planning Department.Begusarai DM Roshan Kushwaha was appointed DM of Samastipur. Sheikhpura DM J Privadarshani was made director in the Department of Revenue and Land Reform.

# Malayalam actor Vinayakan arrested in Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyd

GNS News Agency, Sept 8Hyderabad: South Indian actor Vinayakan was taken into custody by RGI Airport police for allegedly creating ruckus at the Shamshabad airport on Saturday. The actor arrived at the RGI Airport from Kochi and was scheduled to take a connecting flight to Goa when allegedly under influence of alcohol he had an argument with gate staff and misbehaved with them. The CISF personnel noticed the commotion and tried to pacify him. However the actor allegedly misbehaved with the CISF men who then overpowered him and handed him over to RGI Airport police.

# trade with GCC countries

GNS News Agency, Sept 8

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar arrived here in the Saudi capital on Sunday on a two-day visit to attend the first India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers'

meeting.Jaishankar is here on the first leg of his threenation tour that will also take him to Germany and Switzerland."Arrived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to take part in the First India -**Gulf Cooperation Council** Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Thank Abdulmajeed Al

Smari, Deputy Minister for Protocol Affairs for the warm reception,' Jaishankar said in a post on X.The GCC is an influential grouping comprising the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait. The total volume of India's

stood at USD 184.46 billion in the financial year 2022-23.In Riyadh, Jaishankar is also expected to hold bilateral meetings with foreign ministers of several GCC member countries.Ahead of the visit, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi on Saturday said India and the GCC enjoy a deep and multifaceted relationship, including in areas of trade and investment, energy, cultural and people-to-people ties."The GCC region has emerged as a major trading partner for India and is home to a large Indian expatriate community, numbering around 8.9 million," it said in a statement."The Foreign Ministers meeting will be an opportunity to review and deepen institutional cooperation between India and the GCC across various sectors," it said.

# **Indian Chronicle English Daily** Punjab bites the bullet

ACUTE fiscal stress has compelled the ruling AAF bite the bullet in Punjab. It has withdrawn the previus Congress government's decision to provide power ubsidy of Rs 3 per unit to domestic consumers having connected load of up to 7 kW (kilowatt). The valuedded tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel has been inreased, making both dearer in a state where fuel prices are already on the higher side. The cash-strapped govrnment is expecting that the twin moves will lead to avings/earnings in the range of Rs 2,000-2,500 crore er year; however, it will have to be prepared for a acklash from lakhs of affected people. This is a deserate attempt by the government, which is nearing the alf-way mark of its tenure, to give fiscal prudence a hance. Subsidies have been bleeding the state exhequer dry for more than two decades. Successive overnments have banked on them to woo farmers and ther categories of consumers. According to the State Finances Audit Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, tabled in the Assembly earlier his week, power subsidy constituted the lion's share 68-99 per cent) of the total subsidies in the state beween 2018 and 2023. Over the years, several experts, ncluding former deputy chairman of Planning Comnission Montek Singh Ahluwalia, have recommended ationalisation of power subsidy to improve Punjab's iscal health. However, the political leadership has been eluctant to take the plunge due to electoral considerations. It is hoped that AAP will stay the course, which is a tough one but a must to help the state make in economic turnaround. Constantly living beyond one's means is a recipe for disaster, with the CAG redlagging a 'continuous mismatch' between receipts and expenditure. Commendably, the Congress government n neighbouring Himachal Pradesh has shown the way y insisting on financial discipline

### After sudden cheetah deaths in Kuno, Centre turned to Reliance's wildlife facility for help

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

After three cheetahs died in just over a month last year in Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park, the National Tiger Conservation Authority in May 2023 called in experts from Reliance's wildlife facility in Gujarat to review health monitoring protocols, official records show.

The National Tiger Conservation Authority's (NTCA) Assistant Inspector General of Forests Abhishek Kumar wrote to the CEO of Reliance Industries' Jamnagar-based Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre (GZRRC) on May 11, 2023, requesting that a team of experts be sent to Kuno to "review health monitoring protocols" and provide advice to "ensure the welfare of the cheetahs" following the deaths of three cheetahs between March 27 and May 9.Kumar's letter said Project Cheetah was the first intercontinental reintroduction of a wild, large carnivore species with "no comparable historical precedent" and it was not surprising that a project of such a "magnitude and complexity would face many challenges"."Due to careful planning and execution, all 20 cheetahs survived the initial capture, guarantine and lengthy transport to the purpose-built quarantine and larger acclimatisation enclosure in Kuno. We are to understand that Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre has expert veterinarians who are handling a substantial number of cheetahs in captivity," read the letter, seen by PTI.GZRRC director Brij Kishor Gupta wrote back on May 24, 2023, saying a four-member team would visit Kuno on May 25-26. The team included "senior veterinary officers" Jorge Francisco Soares and Nitin Yashwant Tambe, lab in-charge Mandeep and Gupta himself. In response to PTI's question via email, Gupta said, "The National Tiger Conservation Authority requested GZRRC last year to assess the healthcare protocols of cheetahs being followed at Kuno, we sent our team of experts veterinarians and (the) director and found that they are following the right protocol for health care management of cheetahs." GZRRC experts visited Kuno only once, Gupta said but gave no clear answer on whether they were providing any guidance or support to the project at present. Gupta added that all forms of interaction, engagement and knowledge exchange conducted by the GZRRC with government and non-government entities in the fields of animal welfare, research and conservation were carried out "strictly on a non-commercial basis".As part of the first ever intercontinental translocation of big cats, a total of 20 cheetahs - eight from Namibia in September 2022 and 12 from South Africa in February 2023 - were brought to Kuno.Since their arrival, eight adult cheetahs - three female and five male - have died. Seventeen cubs have been born in India, with 12 surviving. This brings the total number of cheetahs, including cubs, in Kuno to 24, all of which are currently in enclosures. Three cheetahs — one male and two female — died between March 27 and May 9, 2023. According to Project Cheetah's annual report for 2023-24, Namibian female cheetah Sasha died due to "chronic renal insufficiency" on March 27, 2023, becoming the first mortality in the project."Sasha developed kidney problems after her arrival and received continuous care for two months but, unfortunately, she did not respond positively to the treatment and passed away," the annual report says.South African male cheetah Uday "suddenly died" on April 23, 2023, within the larger acclimatisation enclosure "without displaying any prior symptoms". South African female cheetah Daksha died on May 9, 2023, due to injuries from a violent encounter with a male coalition during a mating attempt, according to the report. The GZRRC experts' visit was immediately preceded by the death of three cubs born to Namibian cheetah Jwala between May 23 and May 25 due to extreme heat. Bhopal-based wildlife activist Ajay Dubey questioned the need to involve GZRRC in the project when "top wildlife experts from the NTCA, Wildlife Institute of India, South Africa, and Namibia are already part of it"."The government even sent staff from the Madhya Pradesh wildlife department for training in cheetah management in South Africa and Namibia. What did they learn?" he asked."And even if you have approached GZRRC, why keep it a secret? There is no mention of the support sought from Reliance Industries' wildlife facility in the annual report of Project Cheetah," he added. , 🛋 🦳 🗑

# Water, wonderful scenery make Aji-I dam part of Rajkot's identity and existence



### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

As gentle waves susurrate and lush green trees sway gaily downstream, undergraduate students Drashti Chavda, Shreya Limbasiya and Akruti Thummar can't have enough of clicking selfies from the top of Aji-I dam on the eastern outskirts of Rajkot.Mansukh Vairagi, 57, a retired bus driver of a private university and his grandson Dhiyom smile as scores of catfish come on the surface and jostle to devour the balls of wheat dough the duo are throwing in the waters. Sandeep Daki, 38, a carpenter from the coastal Mangrol town of the Junagadh district, struggles to control the excitement of his daughters Tanvi, 8, and Bhavya, 3, as they run around on the dam wall secured by an iron grill. A couple chooses the waters overflowing the dam as the backdrop of their pre-wedding photoshoot.

Amidst a buzz of visitors, four motor pumps in the dam's intake well and six others on a floating barge keep humming, pumping thousands of litres of water to a downstream water treatment plant of Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC). The irrigation canal dug through hard basalt rock at the dam is filled with seepage, weeds, and floating litter, indicating it has not been used recently. The canal passes through a garden on the dam site, with three bridges across it adding to the beauty of the scenery.Built between 1952 and 1954, Aji-I dam is an irrigation tank owned by the Gujarat government's irrigation department. Since its construction, it has served primarily as a source of drinking water for residents of Rajkot, the biggest city in the water-starved Saurashtra region of present-day. Rajkot was the capital of Saurashtra state before Gujarat was created in 1960 by merging Saurashtra, Kutch, and parts of Maharashtra." Aji-I was designed for dual purpose-to supply drinking water to residents of Rajkot, then capital of Saurashtra state and to make available water to farmers for irrigation as agriculture was the main source of livelihood for a majority of the populace," Vasant Rajyaguru, an engineer who retired from RMC as city engineer (waterworks) in 2019 after serving the civic body for more than three decades says. He adds that his maternal grandfather Dipaklal Ishwarchandra Joshi was the engineer who designed the dam

Amin Marg in Rajkot is named after Mohan Amin, the contractor who constructed the dam, says Rajyaguru. "Rajkot sudhrai (Nagar Panchayat or area council) started drawing drinking water from Aji-1 dam in 1958 after a water filtration plant was commissioned. Water used to flow to the city due to gravitational force," the retired engineer says, adding, "Aji-I dam greatly augmented availability of drinking water in Rajkot, which was then depen-

dent on waters of small Randarda lake constructed in 1897 and a few wells.

Engineers say the canal from Aji-I used to channel surplus water to Randarda Lake. Aji-I dam was among the first major dams to be constructed in the Saurashtra region after Independence, the others being Machhu-I (completed in 1959) in present-day Morbi district, Shetrunji (1965) in Bhavnagar and Bhadar (1964) near Gondal town in Rajkot district. Aji-I dam was constructed on the Aii river, which originates from Sardhar Ridge, around 25 km east. As per the Water Resources Department of Gujarat, the dam has a catchment area of 142.45 square kilometres. The dam has a 668-metre-long brick-masonry wall, including the spillway and 2.76 km long earthen bund. It has a submergence area of 6.58 sq km. It has a gross storage capacity of 933 million cubic feet or about 26,400 million litres. A hill on the northern end of the brickmasonry wall of the dam affords breathtaking views of the dam and the garden downstream. On the top of the hill is an aquarium, a remnant of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Park, a zoo on the dam site that was shifted to nearby Pradyuman Park in 2008."Not many cities in India have as scenic an entry point as Rajkot and a dam as large as Aji-I dam right at the entrance of the city," says Jignesh Barchha, a local, while pointing out that as one enters Rajkot from the east, one gets to drive on the section of Aji dam's earthen bund which forms part of Rajkot-Bhavnagar state highway. One can also see waters overflowing the dam while driving on National Highway 27, which passes through the eastern part of the city.

The dam site has become a popular recreational green zone and a tourist attraction with Doordarshan's transmission tower making the surroundings complete. "I had visited Aji-I dam as part of a school trip more than a decade ago and it looked so beautiful even then," says Daki's wife Rekha, 25.It was not until 2017 that the Aji-1 dam was realised to the optimum capacity. Rajkot residents would cope with water cuts during the summer until a bulk water pipeline was laid to pump water from the Maliya branch canal of the Narmada dam in 2012-13.

When former Rajkot mayor Vijay Rupani took over as chief minister of Gujarat in 2016, work started on a war footing for laying a giant underground canal pipeline from the Dholidhaja dam, the tail end of Saurashtra Branch Canal of the Narmada dam project, to Aji-I dam as part of Link-III of Saurashtra Narmada Avataran Irrigation (SAUNI) Yojana. In 2017, Narmada water was pumped into the Aji-1 dam through the SAUNI pipeline 2017. The dam has never gone dry since, as the irrigation department generally fills it with Narmada waters twice yearly. Chavda, the college student, likes the scenic beauty that the Aji-I dam affords. "Atal Sarovar, which was opened early this year, is very good. But I like Aji-I for its beautiful views," she says. "Unlike most of other places in the city, this one is less crowded an peaceful, making it very good for photography," declares Limbasiya.

"The best part of the Aji dam site is that it is a clean and calm place, ideal for children to play and enjoy without paying any entry fee," says Vairagi. The Aji-I dam is critical for Rajkot's water security as the RMC draws 140 million litres per day (MLD) from it, meeting one-third of the civic body's water needs for approximately 1.5 million residents of Rajkot."The biggest advantage is that water flows with gravity to wards 5,6,17 and 18 of the city, thus saving pumping costs," says Kishor Dethariya, RMC's incumbent city engineer (waterworks). "Once Aji-I is filled to its capacity, it will have enough water to supply to Rajkot for four months," Dethariya adds.

# **AAP** feels the pinch of Punjab's huge funds crunch

Society doesn't like anybody breaking own family; have realised my mistake: Ajit Pawar



### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Noting that society doesn't like rifts in families Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has said he experienced it and has already admitted his mistake, an apparent reference to the contest between his wife Sunetra and cousin Supriya Sule in the recent Lok Sabha polls. This is the second time in less than a month that NCP leader Pawar publicly admitted he had made a mistake by fielding his wife against NCP (SP) leader Sule, the daughter of his uncle Sharad Pawar, and noted politics should not enter the home.

The "admission" of mistake came against the backdrop of poor performance by the NCP, one of the constituents of the Mahayuti alliance in the state, in its maiden general elections after a split in the party.Addressing the Jansamman rally organised by the NCP in Gadchiroli city on Friday, Ajit Pawar tried to discourage party leader and state minister Dharmarao Baba Aatram's daughter Bhagyashri from crossing over to the Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP). Speculation is going around about a potential contest between Bhagyashri and her father in the upcoming state assembly elections.

"Nobody loves a daughter more than her father. Despite giving her away in marriage in Belgaum, he (Aatram) stood by her in Gadchiroli and made her the president of Zilla Parishad. Now you (Bhagyashri) are set to fight against your own father. Is this right?" the deputy CM asked the gathering."You should support your father and help him win because only he has the capacity and determination to develop the region. The society never accepts breaking one's own family," he said.

This is like breaking the family, Ajit Pawar said, referring to the rift between Bhagyashri and her father over her political move."Society doesn't like this. I have experienced the same and accepted my mistake," he said. The NCP led by Ajit Pawar suffered a severe drubbing in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, losing three of the four constituencies, including Baramati, it had contested. In contrast, the Sharad Pawar-led faction won eight out of the 10 seats it contested.Aatram, an MLA from Aheri in Gadchiroli district, has sided with Ajit Pawar."Aatram's daughter learnt politics from her father. Aatram was a 'vastad' (master) in politics who always kept one move close to his chest and played it at the appropriate time. Like the vastad, Aatram too doesn't teach everything to his pupil,"Ajit Pawar

Karnataka High Court quashes RPF case against techie who built ticket app

GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Facing an acute funds crunch, Punjab's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government has taken a series of tough financial decisions, including a partial rollback of power subsidy, hike in the VAT on petrol and diesel, and increase in bus fares by 23 paise per km, inviting criticism by the **Opposition**.

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Facing an acute funds crunch, Punjab's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government has taken a series of tough financial decisions, including a partial rollback of power subsidy, hike in the VAT on petrol and diesel, and increase in bus fares by 23 paise per km, inviting criticism by the Opposition. The government hopes to mop up an additional Rs 2,500 crore from these measures. However, the rollback in the power subsidy is a particularly thorny move for the AAP as its government had continued this grant of Rs 3 per unit up to a 7KW load introduced by the previous Congress regime, after it came to power in 2022. This was over and above the offer of 300 units of free power per month to all consumers, which was one of its poll promises.

The withdrawal of the subsidy, which is expected to affect at least 12 lakh consumers during the summer months and 1.5 lakh in the winter, will help the state exchequer save Rs 1,800 crore a year, as well as raise an additional Rs 300 crore in revenues on account of the various taxes levied on power supply to the tune of 20%, a government functionary said. However, as some officials pointed out, it would have served the AAP government better to have withdrawn the power subsidy when it implemented 300 units of free power in July 2022, implementing the first of its poll promises. The subsidy was not needed after this, the officials said, adding that suggestions to this effect to the AAP government had gone un-

heard

With the free-power promise being one of the cornerstones of the AAP government, including in Delhi, the issue is set to be played by the Opposition. What will give them additional fuel is that after the hike in VAT, petrol and diesel in Punjab are now among the costliest in northern India. While petrol is now up 61 paise to Rs 97.44 per litre, diesel has been hiked by 92 paise to Rs 88.03 per litre.However, the Bhagwant Singh Mann government was left with few choices given that the cash crunch has forced it to even delay the salaries of its employees this month; they were eventually paid on September 4 instead of on the 1st. "Now, when the freebies have bled the exchequer dry and the government is unable to pay the salaries of its employees, this step has been taken. Now, the government will face criticism," an official said. "If more measures are not taken, the government will not be able to pay salaries next month also. We have been in overdraft," the official added.

By the end of this fiscal year, the government's outstanding debts are expected to rise to Rs 3.74 lakh crore. Before it was partially withdrawn, the power subsidy alone was set to cost the state exchequer Rs 24,000 crore over the course of the 2024-25 financial year, owing in large part to the prolonged heatwaves this year. The state's revenue deficit is also projected to hit Rs 24,000 crore in 2024-25. In 2023-24, Punjab's debt-to-GDP ratio stood at 47.6%, as per the Reserve Bank of India.Fulfilling its other poll promises, the AAP government also provides free transport for women in state-run buses, which costs the exchequer around Rs 650 crore every year. Earlier this year, a proposal had been made to end this scheme, which was shot down by CM Mann.

But then, after presenting this year's Budget without any new tax proposals, the Mann government had imposed new taxes, including the recent "green tax" on older vehicles. Last month, the government hiked the motor vehicle tax by 0.5%-points to 1%Leader of the Opposition (LoP) and Congress MLA Partap Singh Bajwa has accused the AAP government of "burning holes in the pockets of the common people" on the pretext of raising revenues."In one of its most shameless moves ever, the AAP government has increased the prices of retail fuel and also withdrawn the scheme of giving subsidised power... Enhancement in the price of the diesel will not only cost farmers dearly but also add to the inflation," Bajwa said. He pointed out that the government had earlier promised to raise revenues from other sources, including Rs 20,000 crore from mining and Rs 34,000 crore by ending corruption."The way the AAP government is handling the economy demonstrates that Punjab has been swiftly moving towards bankruptcy under the AAP regime," Bajwa said. He also accused the government of "squandering Rs 750 crore annually" on its "fake" publicity expenditure. "If it really cared so much about the deteriorated fiscal health of the state, it should refrain from spending so recklessly."

The Karnataka High Court has quashed a case filed by the Railway Protection Force against a techie who developed an online app to facilitate speedy booking of tickets on the IRCTC portal. The court pointed out that the app — 'Tatkal for Sure' — does not involve any purchase of tickets by the developer to constitute an offence under the Railways Act.An IIT-Kharagpur graduate, Gaurav Dahake, 34, a resident of Aurangabad in Maharashtra, approached the Karnataka High Court earlier this year after he was chargesheeted by the RPF in a case from 2020 where he was accused of unauthorised supply of railway tickets under the Railways Act, 1989, which constitutes a jail term of three years.Dahake, who founded the startup 'buyhatke.com' - an online price comparison service for products - also developed the Tatkal for Sure application in 2017 to help railway ticket buyers grab an emergency quota ticket in 45 seconds after bookings open, as opposed to the nearly five minutes taken for transactions while going directly through IRCTC.After initially offering the app free of cost, the developer began charging Rs 30 per transaction and this resulted in the railways cracking down on him under Section 149 of the Railways Act for the procurement and supply of railway tickets without official authorisation.

In his plea against the chargesheet filed by the RPF, the techie argued that he had not procured or distributed railway tickets required to attract an offence under the Railways Act. The railways, however, argued that during the RPF investigations the techie confessed that he earned a Rs 12.49 lakh profit by charging the user fee of Rs 30 per ticket.On whether Dahake had illegally procured or supplied railway tickets, the HC in its order stated that "the answer would be unequivocal and an emphatic no"

### IMD issues heavy rain alert across Telangana, moderate showers likely in Hyderabad

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Hyderabad: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an orange alert for several districts in Telangana from September 8 to 10, warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places.

Districts such as Mahabubabad and Khammam are likely to experience intense downpours, while Adilabad, Kumuram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, Mulugu, Bhadradri Kothagudem, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Siddipet, Sangareddy, Medak, and Kamareddy are under yellow alert.

Hyderabad is expected to see moderate, scattered rains, particularly in the evenings, with no widespread or heavy rainfall forecast. Thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds (30-40 km/h) are predicted in all districts.



### **INDIAN CHRONICLE**

# **MHA extends ban on Gurpatwant** Pannun's Sikhs for Justice by 5 years



GNS News Agency, Sept 8

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Tuesday extended ban on pro-Khalistani terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun's outfit Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) by another five years. The terror outfit was first banned in 2019. In a notification, the home ministry said that SFJ has been indulging in activities "prejudicial to the internal security of India and public order". The ministry added that SFJ's activities have the "potential of disrupting peace, unity and integrity of the country." According to the ministry, SFJ has been found to be involved in anti-national and subversive activities in Punjab, with the intention to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India. The SFJ

has been accused of "being in close touch with militant outfits and activists, and is supporting violent form of extremism and militancy in Punjab and elsewhere to carve out a sovereign Khalistan out of the territory of Union of India.

The ministry alleged that the pro-Khalistani outfit has been encouraging and aiding activities for the secession of a part of Indian territory from the Union of India and supporting separatist groups fighting for this purpose in India and elsewhere. The Centre it is of opinion that if the "unlawful activities of SFJ" are not controlled immediately, the pro-Khalistani outfit will escalate its "subversive activities including attempts to carve out Khalistan Nation out of the territory of Union of India by destabilising the Government established by law."The Centre said if uncontrolled, the Pannun-led outfit will continue advocating the secession of Punjab from the Union of India and formation of Khalistan."It will propagate anti-national and separatist sentiments prejudicial to the territorial integrity and security of the country, and escalate secessionist movements, support militancy and incite violence in the country."Gurpatwant Singh Pannun was designated as a terrorist by the Centre in 2020. He is one of the founders of Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) and actively lobbies for a separate state for Sikhs, which they call Khalistan, in the US, Canada and the UK.

# 'We are on right track': Pramod Sawant on Karnataka protests over PRAWAH visit

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

PANAJI: Goa chief minister Pramod Sawant on Tuesday responded to protests in Karnataka over the visit of the PRAWAH river authority for inspection of the Mahadayi basin along the Goa-Karnataka border, saying it shows that the Goa government was on the right track."I do not know why Karnataka is upset. It (PRAWAH) is an independent authority," Sawant told reporters in Panaji on Tuesday, referring to protests in Belagavi in Karnataka over the visit of the Mahadayi Progressive River Authority for Water and Harmony (PRAWAH).

The PRAWAH river authority was set up by the Jal Shakti ministry in May last year to oversee compliance and implementation of the decisions of the Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal."They are conducting an inspection. Our members are on the team. It is necessary for the authority to conduct a fair inspection and that report will be submitted. If they shred my photo or burn it, it means we are on the right track," Sawant added.

On Sunday, the team visited multiple sites for an onthe-spot assessment of the project work on the Mahadayi river basin. The Belagavi district police said over a hundred police personnel were deployed in Kanakumbi village to ensure the safety of the team.Sawant said Goa welcomed the PRAWAH inspection and was confident that the authority would take the right decision for Goa.Protesters in Karnataka's Belagavi on Monday



stopped a government-run interstate bus from Goa and criticised the Goa government for opposing Karnataka's water diversion plan.Goa has opposed any diversion of waters of the River Mahadayi which originates in the Western Ghats in Karnataka, takes a detour via Maharashtra and enters Goa as the Mandovi.

The Mahadayiriver basin drains an area of 2,032 sq.km., out of which an area of 375 sqkm lies in Karnataka, 77 sqkm in Maharashtra and the rest in Goa.Both the Goa and Karnataka governments have, for very different reasons, challenged the final award granted by the Mahadayi Interstate Water Disputes Tribunal which granted Karnataka a total of 13.42 Thousand Million Cubic Feet (TMC) of water in its August 2018 decision

### **Gross enrolment ratio of girls in higher** education rises in Tripura: CM Manik Saha

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Tripura Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha said on Saturday that the gross enrolment ratio of girl students in higher

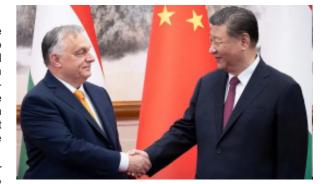


### 'Peace mission 3.0': Hungary PM Orbán makes surprise visit to China to discuss Ukraine war

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Beijing: Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán made a surprise visit to China on Monday, after similar trips to Russia and Ukraine, to discuss prospects for a peaceful settlement in Ukraine.'Peace mission 3.0' is how Orbán captioned a picture posted early on Monday on X depicting him after having stepped off his plane in Beijing. He was being greeted by Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Hua Chunying and other officials. Orbán later met with Chinese President Xi Jinping, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

Besides Russia and Ukraine, the end of the war "depends on the decision of three world powers, the United States, the European Union and China," Orbán wrote in a Facebook post showing him shaking hands with Xi.Orbán met with Xi just two months ago when he hosted the Chinese leader in Hungary as part of a threecountry European tour that also included stops in France and Serbia, which unlike the other two is not a member of the European Union or NATO.Hungary under Orbán has built substantial political and economic ties with China. The European nation hosts a number of Chinese electric vehicle battery facilities, and in December it annunced that Chinese EV manufacturing giant BYD will open its first European EV production factory in the south of the country. His previously unannounced visit comes on the heels of similar trips last week to Moscow and Kyiv, where he proposed that Ukraine consider agreeing to an immediate cease-fire with Russia. His visit to Moscow drew condemnation from Kyiv and European leaders."The number of countries that can talk to both warring sides is diminishing," Orbán said. "Hungary is slowly becoming the



only country in Europe that can speak to everyone."Hungary assumed the rotating presidency of the EU at the start of July and Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested Orbán had come to Moscow as a top representative of the European Council.Several top European officials dismissed that suggestion and said Orbán had no mandate for anything beyond a discussion about bilateral relations. The Hungarian Prime Minister, widely seen as having the warmest relations with Putin among EU leaders, has routinely blocked, delayed or watered down EU efforts to assist Kyiv and impose sanctions on Moscow for its actions in Ukraine. He has long argued for a cessation of hostilities in Ukraine but without outlining what that might mean for the country's territorial integrity or future security. That posture has frustrated Hungary's EU and NATO allies, who have denounced Russia's actions as a breach of international law and a threat to the security of countries in Eastern Europe.

### "The lifeblood": 42% of startups in **California founded by immigrants**

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Washington: As many as 42 per cent of all startups in California are founded by immigrants who are the lifeblood of the Golden State, its Governor Gavin Newsom told a group of eminent Indian Americans at a fundraiser. Newsom, a senior Democratic Party leader, made these remarks in Massachusetts on Monday."Fourty-two per cent of all startups in California are founded by immigrants, and they are the lifeblood of our State. Amid the vitriol, xenophobia, and nativism that permeates much of our politics, particularly from figures like Donald Trump, we in California have endured and emerged stronger, Newsom said at a fundraiser in Massachusetts.

"We overcame the divisive rhetoric of Prop 187 in the 1990s, and today, we celebrate our diversity rather than merely tolerate it. As a result, we lead in manufacturing, boast the highest number of scientists, researchers, and Nobel laureates, and continue to drive innovation globally," he said.

Hosted by US India Security Council president, Ramesh Viswanath Kapur and his wife Susan at their home in Winchester on July 8, the fundraiser was attended by eminent Indian Americans from in and around Boston.Kapur in his remarks expressed gratitude to Newsom for his decisive veto of the proposed SB 403 bill, which aimed to ban caste discrimination, and for his interest in visiting a Hindu temple in Florida in the coming months.

The room, filled with many Indian-origin attendees,



entrepreneurs, and young people, erupted in applause recognising Newsom's steadfast support for entrepreneurial initiatives and his principled stance on critical issues. Kapur also stated that he feels the Governor has a good chance of being the 47th President of the USA.Addressing the unique strengths of Massachusetts, Newsom highlighted how renowned institutions of higher learning serve as conveyor belts for talent, fostering competition not just on price but on talent. He noted that what sets California and Massachusetts apart is their human capital-the best and the brightest. This spirit of inclusiveness and growth ensures that everyone benefits. In a state where 27 per cent of the population is foreign-born, this mindset is crucial. California, a majority-minority State with a population equivalent to 21 other States combined, must see itself in the context of the world.

education increased in Tripura after their college fees were first waived in 2022. He attributed the state's growth in education to the ambitious National Education Policy (NEP)."This academic year (2024-25), 37,450 girl students enrolled in general degree colleges, compared to 35,800 boy students. In the previous academic year (2023-24), more girl students (35,650) enrolled in degree colleges than their male counterparts (35,800)," the chief minister said.Saha, who is also in charge of the education portfolio, said this during his speech at the platinum jubilee programme at Ramkrishna Mahavidyalaya in Kailashahar of the Unakoti district.

Dr Saha said the state government had taken several initiatives in line with the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign, including 33 per cent reservation for women in government jobs, the establishment of pink toilets, and 50 per cent reservation for women in government stalls.Saha assured the 'maharajas' of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashram that no one would encroach on their land in the future. "Education and healthcare are our top priorities. We will not compromise on these. We are committed to the development of our state. We do not just met many challenges, but we have succeeded," he said.

speak; we act," said Saha. He also said the next generation would greatly benefit from the NEP implemented in all state-run colleges and thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the policy.

The state has also introduced the 'Lakshya' scheme to prepare aspirants for competitive examinations. Additionally, he said it would open Dhamma Dipa University at Sabroom, while Techno India University and Aryavart International University are in progress."We aimed to transform Tripura into an educational hub in the northeastern region. We have dental and nursing colleges now. We

# Man who filmed rape on busy footpath in Ujjain arrested

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Ujjain rape case arrestThe police said the woman, in her complaint, named the accused as Lokesh, who was arrested within two hours of registering the FIR. Lokesh allegedly promised to marry the woman, made her drink liquor and then raped her, police said. (Representational Photo/Express Archives)Madhya Pradesh police have arrested a man who allegedly filmed the rape of a woman on a busy footpath in Ujjain district, police said Saturday. Superintendent of Police, Ujjain, Pradeep Sharma said that the accused, Mohammad Salim, 42, is an autorickshaw driver.

Sharma said that after the incident came to light, district police, cyber and social media teams were "deployed to find out who made the video of the incident and made it viral"."Within a few hours, the teams identified the accused who made the video. The accused has also been found to have a previous criminal record," Sharma said.Sharma said questioning of the accused was underway. The mobile phone of the accused is being examined, he said.

Police have booked Salim under Sections 72 (disclosure of identity of victim of certain offences), 77 (whoever watches, or captures the image of a woman engaging in a private act...), 294 (sale of obscene content) of the BNS, Section 67 of the IT Act and Section 4 of Inde-

cent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act.

According to police, the woman was raped on a footpath in Koyla Phatak, one of the busiest intersections, on Wednesday. The incident was shot by a passerby and several people saw the incident, yet nobody intervened, police said. The police said the woman, in her complaint, named the accused as Lokesh, who was arrested within two hours of registering the FIR. Lokesh allegedly promised to marry the woman, made her drink liquor and then raped her, police said.Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav meanwhile promised strict action in the case and accused the opposition of doing politics on the crime but keeping mum on the Kolkata rape-murder. The opposition has slammed the BJP government in MP claiming that it has failed to protect women. Asked about the Ujjain incident, Yadav told PTI in Ujjain that there is a rule of law in Madhya Pradesh and the government will deal strictly with whoever commits a crime.

"No one will be spared. Be it Ujjain or (anywhere in) the state, we are committed to good governance under the leadership of the Prime Minister," he said. Ujjain is the hometown of Yadav, who also holds the portfolio of home ministry. He said, "Those who are doing politics should look into their own affairs. It will be understandable if they take care of the states ruled by them. They do not open their mouths on the incident in Kolkata (rapemurder of a trainee doctor)."

# **US with Meghan Markle, expert says**

**Prince Harry has 'huge regret' over life in** 

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Prince Harry is reportedly holding onto a "huge regret" over his life in the US. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex settled in Montecito, California, after stepping away from royal duties in 2020. While the couple is living happily with their two children, Archie and Lilibet, the Duke is feeling "lonely," according to royal expert Tom Quinn

Things went downhill for Prince Harry after the release of his memoir, Spare, in which he admitted to past drug use. Although he made it clear that he used "magic mushrooms" for recreational purposes only, The Heritage Foundation was not convicted. The powerful conservative think tank accused Prince Harry of lying about his previous drug use on his US Visa application."Harry initially thought this couldn't possibly happen to him as the normal rules don't apply to a Royal Prince, but he is increasingly realizing that in the United States being a Prince doesn't actually count for very much. But one thing is for sure Harry deeply regrets ever making his drugtaking public," Quinn said, referring to the Duke's legal woes.

The expert continued, "It never occurred to him that this might end up threatening his whole life plan," adding, "During his first six months in the States Harry found



everything new and exciting, but the glamor is definitely wearing off. However big your garden, and Harry and Meghan's garden at Montecito is enormous, there's only so much you can do when you have no practical skills and you have always paid people to cook, clean and garden for you."Quinn went on to say, "Harry has never done any of these practical things, so after he's taken the dog for a walk in the morning, he finds the day long and lonely. Meghan does her best to support Harry, but she is in her natural environment and he is in a strange unfamiliar world which grows increasingly unfriendly," per The Mirror.

### **Mourning in Kyiv as rescuers clear** rubble from children's hospital

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

President Zelensky said 38 people in Ukraine were killed, including four children, and 190 wounded in a wave of nearly40 missiles targeting the country.Rescue workers were clearing debris and Ukraine was in mourning Tuesday, the day after deadly Russian strikes tore open a children's hospital and sparked international condemnation.President Volodymyr Zelensky said 38 people across Ukraine were killed -- including four children -- and 190 wounded in the wave of nearly 40 missiles that targeted several towns and cities.Officials announced a day of mourning in the capital with flags to be hung at half mast and entertainment events postponed, as cranes and first responders were working at the scene of the Okhmatdyt paediatric hospital.Zelensky said rescue work was ongoing at several of the attack sites and that patients from Okhmatdyt had been transferred to other facilities. The interior ministry said it had completed its search for survivors at the hospital and that two people were killed there and 32 wounded. Eight children had been hospitalised, it said."We are continuing our work to

increase the protection of our cities and communities from Russian terror. There will be decisions. The world has the necessary strength for this," Zelensky added.He has been urging allies to bolster Ukrainian air defence systems and was expected to renew those calls as a NATO summit kicked off later Tuesday in Washington. The Ukrainian president also called for a United Nations Security Council meeting on the strikes that claimed some 10 lives in his hometown of Kryvyi Rig.Likely a 'direct hit'Zelensky said some 400 rescuers had responded to the strikes but hundreds of volunteers gathered at the Okhmatdyt complex on Monday to help clear rubble and search for survivors.City officials told AFP that the two people killed at the hospital were both adults, a doctor and a visitor.Kyiv's mayor said three more people had been pulled dead from the rubble of a housing bloc in a central district that was also struck in the attack. The total killed in the capital was 31 with 117 wounded, the city's military administration said. Ukraine said a Russian Kh-101 cruise missile had smashed into the renowned children's hospital but Moscow blamed Ukrainian air defence systems.







"Khalistan Zindabad" and "Pakistan Zindabad". It also

mentions pro-Khalistani terrorists Hardeep Singh Nijjar,

who was shot dead in Canada in June 2023 by unknown

assailants); Avtar Singh Khanda, who died in a Canada

hospital, a few days before Nijjar's killing; Paramjit Singh

Panjwar, who was shot dead in Lahore by two unidenti-

fied motorcycle- borne gunmen in May 2023; Maulana

Rahim Ullah Tariq Karachi; a Jaish-e-Mohammed terror-

ist shot dead in Karachi by unknown people in Novem-

ber 2023; Bashir Ahmad Peer, a self-styled commander

of terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen who was gunned down

by unknown assailants in Rawalpindi in February 2023;

and Maulana Ziaur Rahman, a cleric associated with ter-

ror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba who was shot dead by unknown

bike-borne men in Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Karachi, as he was

on his nightly stroll. The letter accused Brar and Sran of

"interfering in Sikh religion" by toeing the BJP and the

RSS line and threatened them to quit the BJP. It also

accused the duo of resorting to "nefarious designs" to

"vitiate communal harmony between Sikhs and Muslims"

and threatened to "take revenge very soon". It said that

Manjinder Sirsa also spoke the RSS language and would

be taught a "lesson". In an apparent reference to

Srinivasulu, the letter warned that "Srinivas of BJP" should

# **Rajasthan Sikh leader Tejinder Pal Timma** booked over 'anti-national' Facebook post when Amritpal Singh took oath as MP



GNS News Agency, Sept 8

The Rajasthan Police have booked prominent Sikh leader Tejinder Pal Singh Timma for allegedly uploading a video on social media glorifying Waris Punjab De chief and radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh, who took oath as MP on July 5. The FIR against Timma, the president of Gurudwara Baba Deep Singh on Padampur Road in Rajasthan's Sri Ganganagar, was lodged at the Old City police station. It alleged he made "inflammatory anti-national statements and supported those demanding Khalistan, inciting people against the country and the government.'

Timma has been booked under sections 152 (acts endangering the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India) and 197 (1)(C) (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration) of the new criminal law Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which replaced the colonial-era Indian Penal Code (IPC). Similar offences pertaining to sedition were covered under IPC Section 124 A.Timma alleged that the FIR against him was based on the complaint of his rival, Lakhwinder Singh, who has been excommunicated from Akal Takht. He also claimed that the civil and police administration was pained by his activism focused on Sikh rights in Rajasthan.Supporters of Waris Punjab De Chief Amritpal Singh celebrate in Ludhiana, after he took oath as an MP. (PTI) Supporters of Waris Punjab De Chief Amritpal Singh celebrate in Ludhiana, after he took oath as an MP. (PTI)Lakhvinder, a resident of Gulab Bagh, filed a complaint alleging that Timma posted a video on social media while sitting in his office at the Gurdwara Baba Deep Singh on the afternoon of July 5.In the purported video posted on Facebook on the day Amritpal took oath, Timma said, "BJP leaders welcomed the slogan of Hindu Rashtra from an MP while taking oath with thumping tables in Parliament House. However, speaker OM Birla imposed restrictions on raising any slogan while taking oath just one day ahead of Amritpal Singh taking oath as he would have raised pro-Khalistan slogan in the parliament."Detained under the National Security Act (NSA) in an Assam jail, Amritpal was taken to Delhi for oath-taking. He won Lok Sabha elections 2024 from Khadoor Sahib in Punjab as an Independent candidate. The FIR, however, also mentioned the episodes of Timma's arguments with civil and police administration officials in the past. "The accused, Tejinder Pal Singh Timma, also used threatening language to insult the collector at the collector's office in Sriganganagar. Prior to this, he had also issued threats and insults while standing in front of the superintendent of police's office, claiming that anyone who intervened would face dire consequences. Earlier, he had used threatening language in front of the collector, boasting that they were the ones who assassinated Indira (Gandhi) in Delhi.

"If the accused continues to demand Khalistan, it could incite public outrage, potentially leading to any untoward incident. The accused, Tejinderpal Singh Timma, has connections with individuals who demand Khalistan, and he has been sharing his photos and videos with them. Furthermore, he displays Khalistan flags at various gatherings and events, promoting them within the country..." the FIR added.Takht Damdama Sahib Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh reacted sharply to the registration of the case and said the new criminal laws were being used to suppress minorities. Takht Damdama Sahib, in Punjab's Bathinda, is one of the five seats of Sikhism's temporal authorities.

He wrote on Facebook, "There was hunch from the beginning that the new laws might be used to suppress minorities. The hunch was proven true when the Ganganagar police registered a case of treason against Tajinderpal Singh Timma under the new laws based on a complaint filed by an anti-Panthic individual. It appears that the first case under these new laws in the entire country has been registered against a Sikh."Meanwhile, Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal said he was shocked by the FIR. "Jathedar Timma had categorically stated that he is opposed to any act of communal hatred and violence... There is not a single word in Jathedar Timma's utterance which is against the unity and integrity of the country in anyway," said Badal.

Who is Tejinder Pal Singh Timma?Timma is a former leader of the All India Sikhs Student Federation. He was arrested from Golden Temple during Operation Blue Star in 1984 and remained in Jodhpur jail under the NSA. Since 2007, he has been the Sri Ganga Nagar Chamber of Industry secretary. Additionally, he serves as the chairman of the Rajasthan Dharam Parchar Committee, a wing of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). He is also the convener of the Sikh Advisory Committee Rajasthan and organised a congregation of Amritpal at Sri Ganganagar. Timma was honoured for his service during the Covid-19 pandemic."We fund girls for higher education of all religions into crores every year. We do social work, and respective governments have honoured us many times for our contribution to society's welfare. I have been made a target because I oppose the BJP and RSS infiltration into Sikh affairs. The complainant is a blue-eyed boy of BJP. I have opposed the BJP in Rajasthan assembly elections as well as Parliament elections," said Timma in reaction to the FIR."Recently, I had arguments with the administration over a series of episodes where Sikh rights were suppressed. I objected as Sikhs were not allowed inside polling stations with religious symbols, such as Kirpan, on voting day for Parliament elections. Similarly, I objected to the incident of stopping a Sikh child from appearing in an examination while wearing Sikh symbols protected by laws. Both the BJP and the administration were pained with me, and it is the reason that the case has been registered," added Timma.

# Aspirants unhappy as Maharashtra govt adds only 50 seats at govt medical colleges



medical colleges. This year, there are 4,830 seats

# **3 BJP leaders get death threats** in letter sent to party HQ in Chandigarh



### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

The letter accused Brar and Sran of "interfering in Sikh religion" by toeing the BJP and the RSS line and threatened them to quit the BJP. The letter accused Brar and Sran of "interfering in Sikh religion" by toeing the BJP and the RSS line and threatened them to quit the BJP. (X)Three BJP leaders, Parminder Singh Brar, Delhibased Manjinder Singh Sirsa, and Tajinder Singh Sran, have allegedly received death threats in a letter sent to the party's Punjab headquarters in Chandigarh earlier this month. The letter attributed to Khalistan Zindabad Force also warned BJP's general secretary (organisation) for Punjab and Chandigarh, Manthri Srinivasulu, to leave the state. The letter in Punjabi threatened to avenge the "killing of our brothers in Canada and Pakistan by the BJP government" and contained a packet of powder, which the BJP leaders suspect to be a "sample of an explosive". Sran said he lodged a complaint with Chandigarh Police on Monday. "The issue is being examined and action will be taken as per law," Chandigarh Director General of Police (DGP) Surendra Singh Yadav said.

"The letter was received at the Punjab BJP office in Chandigarh on July 1. It was addressed to me by name. I recently returned from abroad and yesterday Tajinder Sran opened the letter. He told me on phone about the threats in the letter and a powder, which may be RDX. The powder has been handed over to Chandigarh police and they will get it examined," Punjab BJP general secretary Parminder Brar told The Indian Express on Tuesday.As per police sources, the powder-like substance received in the letter was being examined by the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL)."Police are also not ruling out the possibility that the letter could have been sent by some mischievous element as similar threats have been received earlier," a Chandigarh police official said.

The handwritten letter included slogans like

# 'It is illegal': MP Manish Tewari slams Chandigarh administration's rejection of free water plan

GNS News Agency, Sept 8 On his first visit to the Chandigarh Municipal



leave Punjab, saying "We have no enmity with him, but we will not spare those who betrayed the Panth". It also said that gurdwaras in Delhi and Guru Sahib "will be soon released from the RSS".Sran will lead a delegation of BJP leaders to meet DGP Yadav on Tuesday. "We will provide details of several social media accounts that have been targeting me, Brar Sahib, and Sirsa Sahib by labelling us as anti-Sikhs. They have been carrying out this false propaganda for a year and a half and we had brought the matter to the notice of Punjab Police earlier also. These social media accounts have lakhs of followers. Apart from Chandigarh DGP, we will also meet the Punjab DGP," Sran told .

GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Out of 14 applications for new medical colleges in Maharashtra, including ten government-run and four private colleges or deemed universities, only two have received NMC nod. (File Photo)Out of 14 applications for new medical colleges in Maharashtra, including ten government-run and four private colleges or deemed universities, only two have received NMC nod. Although the Maharashtra government had assured to add close to 1,000 seats at government medical colleges across the state, only 50 have been approved by the National Medical Council (NMC) for admissions in the academic year 2024-25. According to candidates, that is hardly any relief.

Till last year, there were 4,780 seats at government

Out of 14 applications for new medical colleges in Maharashtra, including ten government-run and four private colleges or deemed universities, only two have received NMC nod. Among the two are the G T hospital in Mumbai and the MGM Nerul with an approved intake of only 50 seats each for this academic year. An aspirant of medical studies said, "The MGM Nerul is a deemed university, which means higher fee structure in line with private medical colleges. That leaves us with only 50 more seats at government medical colleges. In the backdrop of assurances to add nearly 1,000 new seats at government medical colleges, only 50 is hardly any relief." Earlier this year, the Maharashtra government had announced that the state will get ten new government medical colleges in Mumbai, Nashik, Buldhana, Hingoli, Gadchiroli, Washim, Jalna, Amravati, Bhandara, and Thane. The authorities had further said that the government medical colleges will have 100 seats each. The state government had also sanctioned close to 4,000 posts of teaching and non-teaching staff for these colleges. According to officials, the NMC rejected the applications of all the government medical colleges, except GT Hospital, since they failed to meet the prescribed norms.While the Maharashtra government has decided to appeal for a review of the applications, Brijesh Sutaria, whose ward is an aspirant of medical studies, said, "The state government should have taken proactive steps and realise the grave need for having more seats at government medical colleges. The 50 additional seats are welcome but it will not have the desired impact."

# How PN Panicker, father of library movement in Kerala, made masses literate

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

International Literacy Day: In the 1990s, when the literacy rate in India was still around 52 per cent, a man in Kerala's Neelamperoor took it upon himself to educate the masses. Known as the father of the library and literacy movement in Kerala, Puthuvayil Narayana Panicker is credited with establishing libraries across the state in the 1990s. The activities he initiated triggered a popular cultural movement in Kerala, leading to universal literacy in the state.

The Renaissance movement, led by reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Narayana Guru, and EV Ramasamy Periyar, profoundly impacted the discourse in Kerala. Malayalam literature experienced a new lease on life with works like Vallathol's poems, such as Kochu Seetha and Kumaran Asan's Chithavishtayaya Seetha, which deconstructed male hegemony. Amidst this socio-cultural-political transition, Panicker, a primary school teacher by profession, rose to prominence as he took newspapers to public places such as tea stalls and read them out loud, thus prompting dis-

### cussions

Prof. C Raveendranath, former state education minister, says Panicker was the most important person who taught society the relevance of reading. "After the age of the Renaissance, it was Panicker who taught the public how information transforms into knowledge. It's after profound reading and debate that information turns into knowledge and, in the next phase, into wisdom. Reading enables us to transform the knowledge we gain from nature into wisdom. Panicker made reading more public, and libraries became the heart of the village. As education catered to upper-caste people in society before the Renaissance, Panicker helped bridge the gap among the elderly through his activities promoting literacy."

After moving to Ambalapuzha, Panicker, along with Karur Karayil Sivarama Pillai, launched a reading house in 1936 in memory of P K Narayana Pillai, a renowned Malayalam critic and a judge of the High Court of Kerala. Panicker was the first to introduce newspapers like Malayala Manorama and Samadarshi to his panchayat.

Corporation's General House as MP, Congress leader Manish Tewari on Tuesday termed as illegal the Union Territory administration's decision to reject a project to provide free water and parking facilities after it was passed by councillors."When the agenda was passed in March..I wasn't there that time. When I read in the newspaper that the administration has rejected the decision... I would like to mention that as per law, there is section 423 in the (Municipal Corporation) Act, which says that the government may annul an illegal proceeding passed by the house... In the first place I would say that giving free water to people wasn't illegal... and in that case too, the law says that the government shall serve a showcause notice first to the civic body. Basically, give them an opportunity first," said Tewari, who as the MP for Chandigarh is the ex officio member of the General House."Why didn't they serve a showcause notice first? The Act mentions the use of the word 'shall' and not 'may' as far as serving showcause is concerned, about hearing the corporation first. I don't want to use hard words, but I will say that the decision taken by outrightly rejecting the agenda is illegal," Tewari said. The newly elected MP also said that "the civic body may write back to the administration quoting section 423". The Chandigarh administrator last month rejected the agenda of free water passed by AAP and Congress councillors, stating that the civic body was already making losses and that providing 20,000 litres of water to every family would cause a huge revenue loss.Congress councillor Gurpreet Singh wondered how the administrator outrightly rejected an agenda on water sent by elected representatives. "We may pass any agenda. This is such a matter of shame that we are all the

ones who have been elected by the public and our agendas are rejected...and they (administration) issue public statements. Was there any showcause given either by the administrator or secretary (local government) about why the agenda doesn't fit well?" he said. "Are we meant just to get pavers installed or get the sewer drains cleaned? Are we here just to have lunch or tea or get an office after being elected," he asked. Singh lamented that "Chandigarh has set a new trend". "What kind of trend is this? We need an explanation," he asked.Chandigarh Mayor Kuldeep Kumar clarified that he had "not received any show cause notice or any letter from the administration regarding the rejection of the water agenda". AAP councillor Yogesh Dhingra said it was surprising that no councillor had been taken into confidence when the decision was taken. "We are splurging crores on the rose festival, which is just for a day or two, but we can't spend just a bit of money on giving free water to people," he added.BJP councillor Kanwarjeet Rana said his party had "never opposed the water project".

### With an eye on Haryana Assembly polls, Selja announces state-wide padyatra with a focus on urban areas

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

In what is being seen as an attempt to create a parallel power centre in the Congress's Haryana unit ahead of the Assembly elections, party general secretary and Lok Sabha MP from Sirsa Kumari Selja on Monday announced she will hold a foot march in urban areas across the state to strengthen the organisation. The announcement comes days after the June 26 meeting of AICC chaired by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi where Selja accused party affairs in-charge Deepak Babaria of being more inclined towards the Bhupinder Hooda camp and ignoring other leaders.With this padyatra, which will begin in the last week of July, party sources said Selja is also trying to convey her show of strength to the party high command ahead of the Haryana Assembly elections. In announcing a state-level event and bypassing the Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee (HPCC), Selja has also indicated she has the backing of the party high command for her padyatra, they added.While talking to, HPCC chief Udai Bhan said, "She

is a general secretary in the AICC. She has announced her programme. It was not discussed with us, but it is good if she is taking out this padyatra. Wherever she will go, she will promote the Congress party and mobilise the party workers". "As far as the PCC is concerned, we are touring across the State. In the coming days, there shall be programmes of Member of Parliament Deepender Hooda ji, [Bhupinder] Hooda ji, and mine too. By the time we go to the Vidhan Sabha polls, we will have covered each and every Assembly constituency of Haryana. We are getting immense response from the people. Our worker-level meetings are getting converted into public rallies due to the enthusiasm among the people who have made up their minds to bring Congress to power this time," Bhan added.Selja said through the padyatra, which will be conducted with hundreds of her supporters from across Haryana, people will be informed about the "misrule of the BJP". "Through this yatra, the message of Congress's National President Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi will be communicated to every urban voter.









Cannard met with White House physician Dr Kevin

vice president under President Barack Obama and as

president, was treated by the same doctor for migraines

in 2016, the former official told Reuters. The doctor came

to the White House once a month then as part of his

rotation, the individual said.Jean-Pierre refused to con-

firm or elaborate on Cannard's visits. At the media brief-

ing, she was frequently challenged by reporters and said

she wanted to respect the privacy of all involved for secu-

rity reasons. She said Biden had seen a neurologist three

times connected to his annual physical exam. She did

not explain Cannard's presence at the White House but

suggested it might be connected to treating some of the

military personnel who work at the White House

complex. There are thousands of military personnel that

come to the White House and they are under the care of

the medical unit," she said.

### **INDIAN CHRONICLE**

# Indian-origin bar owner in Singapore jailed for 13 years for raping minor

GNS News Agency, Sept 8

A 42-year-old Indian-origin man was sentenced to jail for 13 years and four weeks in Singapore on Monday, on charges of raping a runaway 17-year-old girl. The accused was identified as Raj Kumar Bala, who worked at a bar at Dunlop Street in the Little India district.Bala would also receive nine strokes of the cane for committing the crime. According to his defense lawyer, Bala was asked to be released on bail pending appeal.

During a hearing, the court learnt that the survivor was 17 years old in February 2020, when she ran away from the Singapore Girls' Home.She found out about a job opportunity at Bala's Don Bar and Bistro through another runaway who was working there. The other runaway was also sexually assaulted by Bala in a charge that stood down for the time being. The survivor went down to the bar and met Bala for an interview, who described the

job duties to her, including serving customers and making drinks. He offered her the role, saying she could stay at the bar with other runaways. The survivor worked at the bar for a few days, but police received a tip-off about people who absconded and worked there. The survivor, along with another girl, fled the bar to escape a police raid on February 22, 2020.Later, they were picked up by Bala, who drove them to his condominium, telling them they could stay there, before drinking alcohol with the girls.He raped the survivor while she was heavily intoxicated and also engaged in sex acts with the other girl. The incident came to light after the survivor surrendered herself to the home in July 2020. The survivor's lawyer told the court there was "considerable personal harm" inflicted on her, and that she blamed herself for being in an intoxicated state, thus leading to her rape.Her testimony in court, which was corroborated by her former boyfriend, illustrated how the trauma from her past would be revived in a way that negatively affects her well-being, the judge noted. The court also learnt that Bala knew the survivor was on the run from the police and was dependent on him for income and shelter.Bala faces other pending charges, along with 22 more charges related to five other victims, mainly for sex offences. According to news agency PTI, Bala is accused of raping and molesting a victim identified in court documents as B1, raping and sexually assaulting a victim identified as B5 and raping, molesting and threatening another victim identified as B6.He is also accused of sexually penetrating a minor under the age of 16, identified as B7, and molesting and causing alarm to another victim, identified as B8.

# **Tropical storm Beryl kills 3 in Texas, 2.7** million people without electricity

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

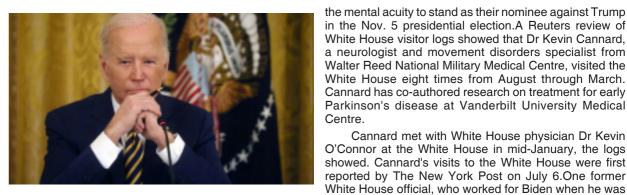
Beryl, the season's earliest Category 5 hurricane on record, weakened from a hurricane after pounding the coastal Texas town of Matagorda before moving across Houston, the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) said. Tropical Storm Beryl brought howling winds and torrential rain to southeast Texas on Monday, killing at least three people, flooding highways, closing oil ports, cancelling more than 1,300 flights and knocking out power to more than 2.7 million homes and businesses.Beryl, the season's earliest Category 5 hurricane on record, weakened from a hurricane after pounding the coastal Texas town of Matagorda with dangerous storm surges and heavy rain before moving across Houston, the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) said. The agency said conditions could spawn tornadoes in Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas

The storm, which was expected to rapidly weaken as it moved inland, swept a destructive path through Jamaica, Grenada, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines last week.It killed at least 11 in Mexico and the Caribbean before reaching Texas, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick told reporters. In Texas, a 53-year-old man and a 74-yearold woman were killed in two incidents by trees that fell on their homes in the Houston area on Monday.A third person, a City of Houston employee going to work, drowned in an underpass, Patrick said.Oil refining activity slowed, and some production sites were evacuated in the state that is the nation's biggest producer of U.S. oil and natural gas."For those of you in northeast Texas, be aware. You will have tropical storm winds, maybe as late as midnight or 1 am. You will have flooding, you will have rain, and you need to stay off the roads," Patrick said.State officials had yet to assess the economic damage as officials remained on a rescue footing while powerful winds continued to blow. Restoring power would take several



most of Houston, Mayor John Whitmire said."We're literally getting calls across Houston right now asking for first responders to come rescue individuals in desperate life safety conditions," Whitmire said. The storm had strengthened to a Category 1 hurricane as it crossed the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico before making landfall. But the NHC said it was expected to weaken into a tropical depression overnight and a post-tropical cyclone on Tuesday

That was still enough to deliver more heavy rain as moved northeastward from eastern Texas on Monday afternoon, across Arkansas on Tuesday, into the Lower Ohio Valley on Tuesday night, and finally into the Lower Great Lakes on Wednesday, the US National Weather Service said. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the US Coast Guard had positioned staff to assist with search and rescue efforts. FEMA also readied water, meals and generators to boost local response efforts, according to the Biden administration. Schools said they would close as the storm approached. Airlines cancelled more than 1.300 flights. and officials ordered a smattering of evacuations in beach towns.Small businesses in Houston, including package delivery services and chiropractors, delayed openings or were closed on Monday.More than 2.7 million homes and businesses in Texas lost power, according to Patrick and PowerOutage.us.Several counties in southeastern Texas, including Houston, where many US energy companies are headquartered, are under a flash-flood warning as thunderstorms unleashed up to nearly 12 inches (30 cm) of rain in some areas. Closures of major oil-shipping ports around Corpus Christi, Galveston and Houston ahead of the storm could disrupt crude oil exports, along with shipments of crude to refineries and motor fuel from the plants. The Corpus Christi Ship Channel has re-opened, while the Port of Houston was projected to resume operations on Tuesday afternoon.Some oil producers, including Shell and Chevron, evacuated personnel from their Gulf of Mexico offshore production platforms ahead of the storm.Marathon Petroleum Corp's refinery in Texas City was hit by a power interruption on Monday amid the storm, the company said in a statement.



### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

US President Joe Biden is not being treated for Parkinson's disease, the White House said on Monday, after the New York Times reported that visitor logs showed a doctor specialising in the illness visited the White House at least eight times from August through March.Concerns that the president might be suffering from an undisclosed illness have risen since Biden stumbled, appearing frail and losing his train of thought at times, in his June 27 debate against Republican Donald Trump

"Has the president been treated for Parkinson's? No. Is he being treated for Parkinson's? No, he's not. Is he taking medication for Parkinson's? No," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told a briefing.Biden is battling criticism from some Democrats that he lacks

# **Opposition leader Gonzalez left country for** asylum in Spain, says Venezuelan official

Joe Biden not being treated for

**Parkinson's: White House** 

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

"Former Venezuelan Opposition Presidential candidate Edmundo González has left the South American country after seeking asylum in Spain," according to a senior Venezuelan official. The surprise departure by the candidate who Venezuela's Opposition and several foreign Governments consider the legitimate winner of July's presidential race is a serious blow to efforts to unseat President Nicolás Maduro and comes just days after the Government ordered his arrest. Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodríguez said in a message posted on Instagram that Mr. González, who has not been seen since the election, had sought refuge in past days at Spain's embassy in Caracas. She said the Government decided to grant Mr. González safe passage out of the country to help restore "the country's political peace and tranquility."

Edmundo González, a 75-year-old former diplomat, was a last-minute stand-in when Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado was banned from running. Previously unknown to most Venezuelans, his campaign nonetheless rapidly ignited the hopes of millions of Venezuelans desperate for change after a decade-long economic freefall.While Mr. Maduro was declared the winner of the July vote, most western Governments have yet to recognize his victory and are instead demanding that authorities publish a breakdown of votes. Meanwhile, tally sheets collected by opposition volunteers from over two-thirds of the electronic voting machines indicate that Mr. González won by a more than 2-to-1 margin. The tally sheets have long been considered the ultimate proof of election results in Venezuela. In previous Presidential



Elections, the National Electoral Council published online the results of each of the more than 30,000 voting machines, but the Mr. Maduro-controlled panel did not release any data this time, blaming an alleged cyberattack mounted by its opponents from North Macedonia. Attorney General Tarek William Saab, a staunch Mr. Maduro ally, sought Mr. González's arrest after he failed to appear three times in connection to a criminal investigation into what it considers an act of electoral sabotage.

Mr. Saab told reporters that the voting records the opposition shared online were forged and an attempt to undermine the National Electoral Council.Experts from the United Nations and the Carter Center, which, at the invitation of Maduro's government, observed the election, determined the results announced by electoral authorities lacked credibility. In a statement critical of the election, the U.N. experts stopped short of validating the opposition's claim to victory, but they said the voting records it published online appear to exhibit all of the original security features

# Yemen's Houthi rebels claim they

days, said Thomas Gleeson, chair of the Texas Public Utility Commission. More than 2,500 first responders were deployed statewide, said Nim Kidd, chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

Following warnings that it could be a deadly storm for communities in its path, people rushed to board up windows and stock up on fuel and other essential supplies.Before daybreak, strong gusts and torrential rain lashed cities and towns such as Galveston, Sargent, Lake Jackson and Freeport, television video showed.By late morning, many fallen trees blocked roads in Houston as the worst of the storm passed, with persisting winds and some road flooding, rendering lanes on major freeways impassable. The city barricaded flooded areas.

Crews using a life jacket and a ladder fire truck rescued a man from a truck on a flooded stretch of freeway, video posted on social media by Houston's local ABC station showed. Patrick said there were several other rescues.Floodwaters exceeded 10 inches (25 cm) across

### 'Defiant' Biden dares detractors to challenge him at Democratic convention

GNS News Agency Sept 8

Washington: US President Joe Biden dared his detractors on Monday to challenge him at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago next month, amidst increasing voices from within his own party colleagues that he should step down from the November 5 presidential election.Biden, 81, who has been attacked by his own party colleagues after his poor performance at the Atlanta debate on June 27 against his Republican rival Donald Trump, adopted a defiant approach on Monday. He called the popular "Morning Joe" show challenging his opponents to bring this issue in Chicago next month. Later in the evening, he told his national finance committee members that he is done talking about the debate."We need to move



forward. Look, we have roughly 40 days till the convention, 120 days till the election. We cannot waste any more time being distracted," Biden said in a private call with donors on Monday, according to a recording obtained by Politico."I have one job and that is to beat Donald now I am not talking about Trump. I am absolutely cer-

tain I am the best person to be able to do that. So we are done talking about the debate, it is time to put Trump in a bulls eye," the President said, according to Politico.Earlier in the day, he gave a phone interview to MSNBC. "I am getting so frustrated by the elites nee. "

you guys - the elites in the party, 'Oh, they know so much more.' Any of these guys that do not think I should run, run against me. Announce for President, challenge me at the convention. Biden said.During the interview, Biden asserted that he will be the Democratic nomi-

### shot down another U.S. MQ-9 drone

GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed early Sunday (September 8, 2024) they shot down another American-made MQ-9 drone flying over the country, marking potentially the latest downing of the multimillion-dollar surveillance aircraft. "The U.S. responded with airstrikes over Houthicontrolled territory," the rebels said. The U.S. military did not immediately respond to a request for comment over the Houthi claim. The rebels offered npictures or video to support the claim as they have in the past, though such material can appear in propaganda footage days later. However, the Houthis have repeatedly downed General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper drones in the years since they seized Yemen's capital, Sanaa, in 2014. Those attacks have exponentially increased since the start of the Israel-Hamas war and the Houthis launched their campaign targeting shipping in the Red Sea corridor.Houthi military spokesperson Brigadier General Yahya Saree made the claim in a prerecorded video message. He said the Houthis shot down the drone over Yemen's Marib province, a long-contested area home to key oil and gas fields that's been held by allies of a Saudi-led coalition battling the rebels since 2015.

General Saree offered no details on how the rebels downed the aircraft. However, Iran has armed the rebels with a surface-to-air missile known as the 358 for years. Iran denies arming the rebels, though Tehran-manufactured weaponry has been found on the battlefield and in seaborne shipments heading to Yemen despite a United Nations arms embargo. The Houthis "continue to perform their jihadist duties in victory for the oppressed Palestinian people and in defense of dear Yemen," Mr. Saree said.

Reapers, which cost around \$30 million apiece, can fly at altitudes up to 50,000 feet (15,240 meters) and have an endurance of up to 24 hours before needing to land. The aircraft have been flown by both the U.S. military and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) over Yemen for years.After the claim, the Houthis' Al-Masirah satellite



Yemen's Houthi rebels have claimed they shot down another American-made MQ-9 drone flying over the country, marking potentially the latest downing of the multimillion-dollar surveillance aircraft

news channel reported multiple U.S.-led airstrikes near the city of lbb. The U.S. military did not immediately acknowledge the strikes, but the Americans have been striking Houthi targets intensely since January. The Houthis have targeted more than 80 merchant vessels with missiles and drones since the war in Gaza started in October. They seized one vessel and sank two in the campaign that has also killed four sailors. Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by a U.S.-led coalition in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets, which have included Western military vessels as well. The rebels maintain that they target ships linked to Israel, the U.S., or the U.K. to force an end to Israel's campaign against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran. Those attacks include the barrage that struck the Greek-flagged oil tanker Sounion in the Red Sea. Salvagers last week abandoned an initial effort to tow away the burning oil tanker, leaving the Sounion stranded and its 1 million barrels of oil at risk of spilling.

# Musk again rakes up EVM issue before US elections, X users not convinced

Yemen's Houthi rebels have claimed they shot down another American-made MQ-9 drone flying over the country, marking potentially the latest downing of the multimillion-dollar surveillance aircraftSan Francisco: Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk on Tuesday again raked up the electronic voting machine (EVM) issue before the US presidential elections in November, vouching for paper ballots and in-person voting mechanisms. In a post on X social media platform, the tech billionaire said, "EVMs and anything mailed in is too risky". Electronic voting ma-

chines and anything mailed in is too risky."We should mandate paper ballots and in-person voting only," said the X owner, displaying some US-based news stories about EVMs. However, not many X users supported his theory."On the contrary, paper ballots are easily manipulated through booth capturing. EVMs with factory-embedded programmes cannot be hacked easily and must be used," said an X user. In an earlier post, Musk claimed that when combined with main-in ballots, the system is "designed"• to make it impossible to prove fraud.



### **MONDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2024**

# **Regulator has reacted, govt has** nothing further to add: Finance **Ministry on Hindenburg report on Sebi**



Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth said there is "nothing further to add" by the government on the issue as both the regulator and the concerned person have given the statements. Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth said there is "nothing further to add" by the government on the issue as both the regulator and the concerned person have given the statements. In the first official reaction from the Ministry of Finance on the Hindenburg revelations against Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth said there is "nothing further to add" by the government on the issue as both the regulator and the concerned person have given the statements.

"SEBI has given a statement. The concerned person has given a statement. I have nothing further to add," Seth told reporters outside North Block.Seth, as the Department of Economic Affairs Secretary, holds the position of

part-time member in the SEBI board. A detailed query sent by The Indian Express to the DEA Secretary did not elicit a response. When asked about whether SEBI Chairperson will step aside from the case, Seth reiterated, "Both of them, the concerned person as well as the regulator, have made the statements and there is nothing further to be added by the government.'

After the US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research on Saturday made a series of allegations against SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, Sebi on Sunday came out in Buch's defence and said the regulator has adequate internal mechanisms to address issues related to conflict of interest, which include disclosure framework and provision for recusal. Relevant disclosures required in terms of holdings of securities and their transfers have been made by the Chairperson from time to time. SEBI said on Sunday." Chairperson has also recused herself in matters involving potential conflicts of interest," the regulator said.On Saturday, the US-based Hindenburg Research, in a post on X (formerly Twitter) alleged that Buch and her husband had stakes in obscure offshore funds used in the Adani money siphoning scandal. The shortseller alleged that the couple invested in Global Dynamic Opportunities Fund (GDOF), in which Vinod Adani, brother of Gautam Adani, had invested. This report by Hindenburg Research comes almost 18 months after it had first kicked up a political storm in January 2023, alleging the Adani Group of "brazen stock market manipulation" and "accounting fraud". The port-to-energy conglomerate had denied all these allegations; the Supreme Court had rejected the demand for a CBI or court-monitored probe.

# Adani Group shares tank after latest Hindenburg allegations against Sebi chief

Shares of Adani Group companies remained under pressure on Monday after Hindenburg Research in its recent report alleged that the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch had a stake in 'offshore entities used in Adani money siphoning scandal'. While shares of Adani Enterprises fell 3.09 per cent, shares of Adani Energy Solutions opened 17 per cent lower on the BSE. Adani Power, Adani Green Energy and Adani Total Gas declined by 4.98 per cent, 6.96 per cent and 5.57 per cent. Adani Wilmar opened 3.88 per cent down and NDTV tanked 11 per cent.

The Sensex, however, dropped 375.79 points, or 0.47 per cent and Nifty declined 47.45 points, or 0.19 per cent at the opening. On Saturday, quoting "whistleblower documents", Hindenburg had alleged, "SEBI's Chairperson and her husband, Dhaval Buch, had stake in obscure offshore entities used in Adani money siphoning scandal."Gautam Adani-led Adani group on Sunday denied the allegations made by Hindenburg and termed those malicious, mischievous and manipulative'.

It also reiterated that its overseas holding structure is fully transparent, with all relevant details disclosed regularly in numerous public documents."The Adani Group has absolutely no commercial relationship with the individuals or matters mentioned in this calculated deliberate effort to malign our standing. We remain steadfastly committed to transparency and compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements," the Adani group said in the statement. For a discredited short-seller under the scanner for several violations of Indian securities laws, Hindenburg's allegations are no more than red herrings thrown by a desperate entity with total contempt for Indian laws, it said. The latest allegations by Hindenburg, however, did not have much impact on domestic equity market indices, Sensex and Nifty."Domestically, there is the Hindenburg report and its likely fall out. It appears that this "revelation" is unlikely to impact the market meaningfully. The buy on dips strategy which has been working well in this bull run is likely to work again," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.



include disclosure framework and provision for recusal.Sebi on Sunday had advised investors to remain "calm and exercise due diligence" before reacting to such reports. "Investors should remain calm and exercise due diligence before reacting to such reports. Investors may also like to take note of the disclaimer in the report that states that readers should assume that Hindenburg Research may have short positions in the securities covered in the report," Sebi said.A joint statement issued by Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband said that "the investment in the fund referred to in the Hindenburg report was made in 2015 when they were both private citizens living in Singapore and almost 2 years before Madhabi joined Sebi, even as a Whole Time Member".

Madhabi Puri Buch, an alumnus of IIM Ahmedabad, became a Whole Time Member in the Sebi in 2017 and its Chairperson in March 2022."Sebi has strong institutional mechanisms of disclosure and recusal norms as per the code of conduct applicable to its officers. Accordingly, all disclosures and recusals have been diligently followed, including disclosures of all securities held or subsequently transferred," the joint statement stated.On Monday, Hindenburg Research again hit back at Madhabi Puri Buch alleging that she ensured the accounts with ties to Adani 'be registered solely in the name of Dhaval Buch', her husband, two weeks after her appointment as SEBI Chairperson and "redeemed the funds through her husband's name". "Despite disclaiming control, a private email she sent a year into her SEBI term shows she redeemed stakes in the funds through her husband's name, as per the whistleblower documents," Hindenburg alleged on Monday.

# **Do peanuts help lose weight?**



No one food can help you lose those extra kilos and achieve your weight loss target. But there are some that when consumed as part of a healthy diet - can help you realise your goals sooner. One such food is peanuts, according to certified yoga trainer Saurabh Bothra who said that these nuts are nutritious, filling, economical, and energy-dense. "These are not just peanuts but a treasure for you. When consumed in the right quantity, they are beneficial in managing our weight," Bothra said in an Instagram reel.

But what about peanuts makes them ideal for weight loss?

Highlighting peanuts' ability to help curb cravings, experts said they can indeed support weight loss when

had as part of a balanced diet. Rich in healthy fats, protein, and fibre, they promote satiety and help manage overall calorie intake. "When eaten in moderation, peanuts can be a beneficial supplement to a weight loss program. Their high content of protein and fibre encourages fullness and lowers total caloric consumption," said Sushma PS, chief dietician, Jindal Naturecure Institute.Additionally, peanuts provide good fats that increase feelings of fullness and reduce cravings. "They are a wise snack option; despite their high-calorie and nutrient-rich composition, they offer important vitamins and minerals," said Sushma.

What types of peanuts are ideal for consumption?

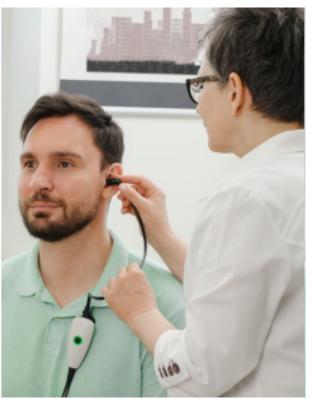
To maximise their advantages, choose unflavoured and unsalted peanuts instead of ones with additional sugars and salt, which might negate their beneficial effects, suggested Sushma. You can even boil peanuts and have them, shared Bothra, adding that traditionally, peanuts are added in dishes like poha, upma, chutneys, and homemade peanut butter"Integrating peanuts into meals or as a snack, alongside a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, can enhance nutritional quality and support weight management goals effectively," stressed Neelima Bisht, chief clinical nutrition, dietetics department, Paras Health, Gurugram.As always, personalised dietary guidance from a healthcare professional is recommended to ensure individual nutritional needs are met.

# If you use eardrops in monsoon, stop right now!

Are you obsessed with using eardrops? If you nodded yes, today is the day you must stop, especially with the monsoon raging fast as it can also pose challenges for your ear health.Dr Rajesh Dhir, Senior ENT Consultant at HearClear, explains how increased humidity during monsoons can impact your ears and why using eardrops can make it worse. Monsoon's high humidity creates a breeding ground for bacteria and fungus, significantly increasing the risk of ear infections. These infections can cause itchiness, redness, swelling, and discharge in the ear canal

Swimmer's ear, another common monsoon-related problem, is a bacterial or fungal infection of the outer ear canal, Dr Dhir said. It can lead to severe pain, redness, swelling, and even greenish-yellow pus discharge, potentially blocking the ear canal and affecting hearing.Humidity can also affect earwax production, he added. "Moist air softens earwax, which can harden and cause blockages during drier periods. Additionally, fluctuating humidity levels can worsen tinnitus, a condition characterised by ringing or buzzing sounds in the ears,' Dr Dhir said.

While eardrops might seem like a quick fix for ear discomfort during monsoons, Dr Dhir warns against selfmedication. Using over-the-counter or unprescribed eardrops can do more harm than good. They might:Worsen Earwax Blockage: Certain drops can stimulate excess earwax production, further aggravating the problem.Cause Irritation and Inflammation: Ingredients in some eardrops can irritate the ear canal, leading to inflammation and discomfort.Factors influencing hearing damage from earphone use Remember, early diagnosis and proper medical care are crucial for addressing any ear problems you might encounter. (file)Trigger Antibiotic Resistance: Using antibiotic eardrops without a doctor's guidance can contribute to antibiotic resistance.Potentially Lead to Hearing Loss: In severe cases, misuse of eardrops can damage the ear canal and affect hearing.Essential ear care tips for the monsoon seasonHere are some simple steps Dr Dhir suggested you can take to protect your ears during the monsoon:



ear canal and cause infections. Protect Hearing Aids: If you wear hearing aids, use dehumidifiers, or protective covers to shield them from moisture damage. Clean and maintain your hearing aids regularly to ensure their optimal functioning.Limit Water Activities: Avoid swimming or other water activities during heavy monsoon rains to minimise the risk of contaminated water entering your ears and causing infections.Consult a Doctor: If you experience any ear pain, discomfort, discharge, or worsening tinnitus, consult an ENT specialist for proper diagnosis and treatment.By following these tips and avoiding self-medication with eardrops, you can ensure your ears stay healthy and comfortable throughout the monso

In response to the allegations made by Hindenburg, Sebi came out in defence of Madhabi Puri Buch stating that the regulator has adequate internal mechanisms for addressing issues relating to conflict of interest, which

# Sebi backs chief Buch after Hindenburg report: **Disclosed, recused on conflict of interest**

A day after the US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research made a series of allegations against Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, Sebi came out in Buch's defence and said the regulator has adequate internal mechanisms to address issues related to conflict of interest, which include disclosure framework and provision for recusal.Relevant disclosures required in terms of holdings of securities and their transfers have been made by the Chairperson from time to time, SEBI said on Sunday."Chairperson has also recused herself in matters involving potential conflicts of interest," the regulator said, backing its Chairperson and advising investors to remain calm and exercise due diligence. The SEBI press statement came soon after Buch and her husband Dhaval Buch issued their second statement within a gap of 24 hours. In their second statement issued on Sunday, they said their investment in the offshore funds, mentioned by Hindenburg Research in its latest allegations, were made in 2015 when they both were 'private citizens' living in Singapore. The investment was made almost 2 years before she joined Sebi as a Whole-Time Member, it said. The SEBI statement backing her is significant since the market regulator's board has Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth, Secretary of the Ministry Corporate Affairs Manoj Govil and RBI Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao as members, besides four Whole-Time Directors. Major decisions of the Sebi are decided in the board meetings. The market regulator also advised investors to remain "calm and exercise due diligence" before reacting to such reports. "Investors should remain calm and exercise due diligence before reacting to such reports. Investors may also like to take note of the disclaimer in the report that states that readers should assume that Hindenburg Research may have short positions in the securities covered in the report," Sebi said.On Saturday, the US-based Hindenburg Research, in a post on X (formerly Twitter) alleged that Madhabi Puri Buch and her

husband had stakes in obscure offshore funds used in the Adani money siphoning scandal. The short-seller alleged that the couple invested in Global Dynamic Opportunities Fund (GDOF), in which Vinod Adani, brother of Gautam Adani, had invested.SEBI, over the years, has built a robust regulatory framework that not only aligns with best global practices but also ensures protection of investors, the regulator said. "The allegations made by Hindenburg Research, against the Adani Group, have been duly investigated by SEBI," it said."Supreme Court in its order of January 3, 2024 noted that SEBI had completed 22 out of 24 investigations into the Adani group. Subsequently, one more investigation was completed in March 2024, and one remaining investigation is close to completion," the regulator said. During the ongoing investigation in this matter, more than 100 summons, around 1,100 letters and emails have been issued to seek information. "Further, more than 100 communications have been made seeking assistance from domestic/foreign regulators and external agencies. Also more than 300 documents containing around 12,000 pages have been examined," it said. On the show-cause notice issued to Hindenburg, Sebi said it has been issued by following the due process of the law. "It is noted that Hindenburg Research has itself made the show cause notice issued to it available on its website. The show cause notice contains the reasons for its issuance. The proceedings in this matter are ongoing and the same is being dealt with in accordance with the established procedure and in compliance with the principles of natural justice," it said.On the allegations that REIT regulations benefited a large "conglomerate", Sebi said regulations are notified after approval of the SEBI Board. "As a measure of transparency, the agenda papers for Board meetings and outcomes of Board discussions are also published on SEBI website. Hence, claims that such regulations, changes to regulations or circulars issued related to REITs were to favour one large multinational financial conglomerate, are inappropriate," it said.

using cotton swabs, which can push wax further into the might encounter.

Regular Ear Cleaning: Regularly clean your ears season. Remember, early diagnosis and proper medical with a soft, damp cloth to remove excess earwax. Avoid care are crucial for addressing any ear problems you

# This is what happens to the brain when you experience a burnout



Today, the phenomenon of burnout has become an all-too-familiar reality for many individuals, especially in work environments. While the physical and emotional manifestations of burnout are widely recognised, the impact it has on the brain, one of the most important organs in our body, is often overlooked. Neha Cadabam, senior psychologist and executive director at Cadabams Hospitals and Mindtalk, "In the brain, high stress hormones like cortisol can shrink the hippocampus, a key area for memory and learning. This can make it harder to concentrate, remember things, and make decisions.<sup>3</sup>

Another area affected by burnout, she adds, is the prefrontal cortex (PFC), the CEO of your brain. It handles planning, focus, and managing emotions. Burnout weakens the "connection between the PFC and the amygdala, your fear center". This can make you feel constantly overwhelmed, with negative emotions like frustration and irritability taking over. Effect of chronic stress and burnout on a person's cognitive abilities and emotional health

Chronic stress and burnout are like a one-two punch to your cognitive abilities and emotional well-being. Here's how they are affected, according to Cadabam:Cognitive Abilities: As mentioned earlier, burnout shrinks the hippocampus, leading to memory problems, difficulty concentrating, and trouble making decisions. It's like trying to run a marathon with a sprained ankle - things just get slower and more challenging. Emotional Health: Burnout weakens the connection between the PFC, which helps regulate emotions, and the amygdala, the fear center. This can lead to feeling constantly overwhelmed, irritable,

and frustrated. It's like your brain's "chill" button is broken, and negativity keeps getting turned up to eleven.Burnout can also dampen your motivation and eniovment of life, she says. "This is because chronic stress reduces dopamine production, a feel-good chemical released when you achieve something or experience something pleasurable.Cadabam explains, "Stress hormones like cortisol are like firefighters - they're there to help in a crisis. But in burnout, cortisol becomes a chronic overeacter, constantly flooding the brain."

This has a negative impact on several areas:Hippocampus: Chronic cortisol shrinks the hippocampus, leading to memory and learning difficulties.Prefrontal Cortex (PFC): High cortisol disrupts communication between the PFC and the amygdala, making it harder to focus, manage emotions, and feel calm.Reward System: Cortisol can also dampen dopamine production, making it difficult to feel motivated and find enjoyment in activities. Effective ways to help the brain recover from burnout"Techniques like mindfulness meditation, exercise, and spending time in nature have all been shown to reduce stress hormones," Cadabam recommends. Activities that challenge your brain in a positive way, she continues, including learning a new skill or playing a game, can help strengthen neural connections. Finally, don't underestimate the power of sleep. When you sleep, your brain consolidates memories, processes emotions, and recharges for the next day.

### Ex-Twitter board member sues Elon Musk's X for \$20 million

New York: Billionaire Elon Musk-run X social media platform has been sued by a former Twitter board member for \$20 million.Omid Kordestani, former Twitter (now called X) executive chairman, has sued the social media platform, claiming that Musk refused to cash out more than \$20 million worth of shares that belong to him, according to reports.

Reports further said that Kordestani had received most of his compensation in stock but after Musk bought the company, he allegedly refused to pay him for those shares, according to the lawsuit.







Ranga Reddy

When Asha Bhosle confessed her competition with sister Lata Mangeshkar, was afraid she'll be overshadowed: 'Didi ke hote mujhe kaam nahi milega'



Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle remain the two singers who ruled over the Indian cinema with their melliflous voices and their popularity transcends generations and regions. However, there was a time when Asha, who turns 91 today, was fearful that she will be overshadowed by her extremely talented sister, forcing her to rethink her future. It was this fear that made a young Asha change her voice and learn and experiment with various song forms — including film music, pop, ghazal, bhajans, traditional Indian classical music, folk songs, qawwalis and Rabindra Sangeet, among others. And today, she holds Guinness World Record for having recorded 12,000 songs in 20 languages, Dadasaheb Phalke Award, and Padma Vibhushan.

In an interview with India Today, Asha Bhosle recalled a silly mistake by a production man, which turned her life upside down. She said, "I come from a family of musicians. Right from my father to my sister, they were all singers. My voice was very much similar to didi (Lata Mangeshkar). Initially when I sung, my voice would come out same as didi. Once a man called me. During those days, music records would not have the name of the singers but actors. So the actor in that particular film was Asha (Parekh), and so the record was tentatively titled Asha Pictures. He mistook Didi's voice to mine. He said, 'Yeh Asha ka gaana hai', I clarified right then, 'No, its not me. Its my sister's song. Then he apologised and was like, 'My bad'."

This one incident was enough to give her sleepless nights. She recalled, "I thought to myself, if I will continue to sing in a similar voice to didi, then I will never get work as long as didi is in the business. I won't have a name and fame of my own""After this incident, I began to change my style of singing. I started to watch English movies to learn western songs, observe how they would sing in English. I also learnt how to sing Qawwali, Ghazal, the voice modulations needed in different form of singing. I started to learn it all", she added.Asha Bhosle eventually became the voice behind songs like "Aaja Aaja" (Teesri Manzil), "O Mere Sona Re" (Teesri Manzil), "Piya Tu Ab To Aaja" (Caravan), "Do Lafzon Ki Kahani" (Don) "Yeh Mera Dil" (Don), "Disco Station" (Hathkadi), "Mera Kuch Samaan" (Ijaazat), "Raat Akeli Hai" (Jewel Thief), "Chura Liya Hai Tumne Jo Dil Ko" (Yaadon Ki Baaraat), "Roz Roz Aankhon Tale" (Jeeva), "Tumse Milke" (Parinda), and the list goes on. She teased her listeners with her unique voice, very much different from that of her sister's.

Having established a niche for herself in the industry, there were many times that the singer collaborated with her sister Lata Mangeshkar. However, the collaborations used to make Asha Bhosle extremely concscious. "Be it Main Chali Main Chali" (Padosan in 1968), "Chhap Tilak Sab" (Main Tulsi Tere Aangan Ki in 1978), or the other 90 songs she recorded with her, the experience remained the same.

In the same interview, Asha said, "Whenever I used to record with didi, I had to be extremely conscious. I had to be prepared as to what different thing will she add this time to this song. We had a thing of adding our own touch to songs we sang, so I used to be worried, what new thing would she add. There was a pressure to give an equal attempt at adding something new to the song, to leave my mark." She confessed, "There was definitely a competition between us". However, she clarified, "It was a healthy one. This (competition) enhanced our songs."

Click for more updates and latest Bollywood news along with Entertainment updates. Also get latest news and top headlines from India and around the world Jyothi Jha works as a Copy Editor at the Indian Express. She brings in more than 5 years of experience where she has covered Entertainment majorly for TV9, NDTV and Republic Media. Apart from Entertainment, she has been an anchor, copy editor and managed production team under the Politics and Daily News segment. She's passionate about Journalism and it has always been her first choice, she believes in what George Orwell had once said, " Journalism is printing what someone else does not want you to do, rest everything is public relations".

# Ananya Panday on facing judgements: 'No matter what you do, people will find something negative to say'

Actress Ananya Panday has been garnering praise for her performance in the Amazon Prime Video show Call Me Bae. Recently, Ananya spoke to Indianexpress.com about her character in the show and also about facing judgments as a celebrity. The actress also shared her take on whether women are empowered today.

In Call Me Bae, Ananya's character Bella/Bae faces certain kinds of judgments at every step. When Ananya was asked if she has been in a similar situation in real life where there has been underestimation at every turn, the actress said, "There is judgment and people say all kinds of things to all sorts of people. But I have realized over time to not pay heed to that because people will say whatever, no matter what you do, how you do it, they will find something negative to say at the end of the day. So I think it is about doing good work and focusing on that." At the show's trailer launch, Ananya Panday was asked how important was it for her to make sure that her character did not come across as a bimbet. She said, "The first step for me was not to think of Bae as that. She has her vulnerabilities and flaws, so both Colin and I not judging her was important. As an actor, it was important for me to be fully convinced by what Bae was saying even though it might seem ridiculous to everyone around. I couldn't make fun of her. I had to deeply believe what she was saying and I feel like on the surface Bae might look like something else, but when you get to know her, automatically that perception will be shaken off."



Watch Ananya Panday's full interview rid

# Alia Bhatt dons action avatar to save her brother in this Vasan Bala film



While there is no doubt that Alia Bhatt is one of Indian cinema's top-tier talents, her avatar as a producer is proving to be an interesting aspect of her career. After the success of the Netflix dark comedy Darlings, Alia is back in the producer's chair for the upcoming film, Jigra. Directed by Vasan Bala, the movie, also starring Vedang Raina, is an action-packed prison break film featuring a doting sister who would go to any lengths to save her brother. The teaser opens with a grim-looking Alia talking about having no one in her life except her brother, who is fihting a race against time. background, we are shown how a bloodied Alia Bhatt fights against all odds, and becomes a hero to help her brother, played by Vedang Raina, imprisoned in a foreign prison. She is helped in this endeavour by Manoj Pahwa and Rahul Ravindran. The teaser oscillates between the sibling love, and how Alia's character explodes prison walls, bursts through flames in a car, and escapes bullets and bombs to ensure she is able to hug her brother one more time. Along with Alia Bhatt, the film is backed by Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta, Shaheen Bhatt and Somen Mishra, and co-produced by Marijke DeSouza. Written by Debashish Irengbam and Vasan Bala, Jigra will hit the screens on October 11.

With the "Phoolon ka Taaron" song playing in the

### Salman Khan, Kareena Kapoor, Sara Ali Khan and others celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi with the Ambanis.

Ganesh Chaturthi 2024 was celebrated in the country on Saturday and while the enthusiasm was at its peak, it was the Ambani's Ganesh Chaturthi celebration that became the highlight of the evening. The who's who of the Hindi film industry attended the festivities at the Ambani household in Mumbai. Celebrities like Salman Khan, Ananya Panday, Kareena Kapoor Khan-Saif Ali Khan, Sidharth Malhotra, Kiara Advani, Aamir Khan, and many more were seen at the Ambani family's Ganesh Chaturthi celebration.

On the occasion, Ananya Panday looked stunning in a golden saree, while Shraddha Kapoor was seen donning a red attire. Her Stree 2 co-star Rajkummar Rao was also seen at the celebration with his wife Patrlekhaa. Riteish and Genelia Deshmukh also made a stunning appearance at the event. Aamir Khan was seen with his sons Junaid and Azaad as he visited the Ambanis for the Ganpati darshan. Salman Khan also made heads turn in his traditional avatar.Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani complimented each other as they posed for the paparazzi, while Kareena Kapoor and Saif Ali Khan also spilled



around some sass as they walked the red carpet. The Ki and Ka reunion between Kareena and Arjun Kapoor created quite a frenzy on social media. Sonam Kapoor, Tamannaah Bhatia, Sachin Tendulkar, Jackie Shroff and family were also seen at the celebration. In July, Nita and Mukesh Ambani's youngest son Anant Ambani got married to Radhika Merchant. The event on Saturday marked Radhika and Anant's first Ganesh Chaturthi celebration.

### Meiyazhagan teaser: A heartwarming peek into

Match Ananya Panday's full interview righ here:Talking about feeling empowered as a woman in this day and age, especially with all the atrocities happening around, Ananya Panday shared, "There is no black or white when it comes to feeling empowered. Things have gotten better in our industry. The guidelines, the safety protocols are put in place. The power of choice that female actors have now, the sheer number of women on a set, in that way, there is a lot of progress. But then there is also the flipside where it seems almost regressive. So I don't think we can put it into the black and white box."Lastly, Ananya Panday spoke about beauty standards in the film industry. She said, "Beauty is very subjective. For me, it is so much beyond how someone looks. It is about how they can affect me as a person. So, I feel beauty standards will always exist, but I don't think it is just physical beauty.'

# Directors' body suspends Arindam Sil over sexual misconduct allegation



Bengali filmmaker Arindam Sil was suspended by the Directors' Association of Eastern India (DAEI) following a complaint of sexual misconduct by an actress.Sil is the first big name in the Bengali film industry, also called Tollywood, against whom action was taken after allegations of sexual harassment shook the Malayalam film industry. The suspension came into force with immediate effect, said a letter sent by DAEI late on Saturday."Due to certain allegations made against you, and prima facie evidence we have with us, which are of deep concern and is maligning to the entire organisation, DAEI has decided to suspend you from membership for indefinite period or till the allegations against you are cleared," said the letter sent by DAEI president Subrata Sen and secretary Sudeshna Roy.Arindam Sil, who is also a wellknown actor, told reporters that what was being construed as misbehaviour was unintentional. The filmmaker said the incident being referred to happened recently when he was explaining a scene to the actress during the shooting of a film.

"No one objected to my actions or conduct at that

time," Sil claimed.The DAEI took up the matter after the actress filed a complaint with the West Bengal Commission for Women. The DAEI then sought an explanation from Arindam Sil, and he wrote a letter to the body, "expressing apology".Sil claimed that everyone who worked in the film and was present at the time of the incident would testify that his action was "unintentional". "They just took the decision," he said, referring to the suspension.Sudeshna Roy said the DAEI took a considered view of the matter after talking to all concerned parties.Arindam Sil is known for his detective films such as Har Har Byomkesh and Mitin Mashi, besides the Shabor series.

### Directors' body suspends Bengali filmmaker Arindam Sil over sexual misconduct

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# Karthi and Arvind Swamy's quirky bromance

Karthi's luck with sophomore directors in Tamil should be a case study of sorts. After working in the second Tamil films of directors Pa Ranjith (Madras), H Vinoth (Theeran: Adhigaaram Ondru), M Muthaiah (Komban), Bakkiyaraj Kannan (Sulthan) and Lokesh Kanagaraj (Kaithi), Karthi's next Meiyazhagan marks 96 director Prem Kumar's second Tamil film. The makers recently released a heartwarming teaser of the movie that stars Arvind Swamy alongside Karthi. Netizens have been raving about the quality of the teaser, and how it is a welcome move away from the kind of promotional materials bombarding their lives and timelines.

Unlike the flashy teaser cuts that feature hero elevation, song promos, action sequences, and romantic sojourns all crammed into a 90-second bouquet of sorts, Meiyazhagan takes a different route. We are introduced to the town of Needamangalam where a rather urbane character, played by Arvind Swamy, feels out of place. There is a wedding happening in the backdrop, and soon, we see him find a seemingly unlikely companion in his vibrant and naive townsman cousin played by Karthi.

From here, we have a collection of scenes that is reminiscent of the initial meet-cutes between Kamal Haasan and Madhavan in Anbe Sivam. We see Arvind



gradually get equal parts amused and agitated by Karthi's shenanigans that are unadulterated and pure from the heart. Govind Vasantha's beautiful background score elevates the feel-goodness of the teaser, and sets the expectations at the perfect level ahead of the film's release on September 27. Backed by Jyotika and Suriya's 2D Productions, Meiyazhagan has been shot by Mahendran Jayaraj, edited by R Govindraj, and also stars Sri Divya in a prominent role. Apart from Meiyazhagan, Karthi is also working on Nalan Kumarasamy's Vaa Vaathiyaare, and PS Mithran's Sardar 2.

# Shraddha Kapoor and Rajkummar Rao's horror-comedy earns close to Rs 520 crore

Stree 2 box office collection day 24: Shraddha Kapoor and Rajkummar Rao's latest film Stree 2, which hit screens on August 15, has been dominating the box office for almost a month. On its day 24, Stree 2 saw a 100 per cent jump in its collection. As per industry tracker Sacnilk, early estimates for Stree 2's 4th Saturday suggest that the film earned Rs 8.75 crore. On Friday, the movie had managed to collect Rs 4.5 crore. With this, the film's total collection has also crossed Rs 500 crore. As per Sacnilk's report, Stree 2's lifetime domestic collection stands at Rs



, 516.50 crore. <sup>C</sup> However, according <sup>S</sup> to the official figures re-

leased by Maddock Films (the banner that produced Stree 2), the Amar Kaushik 526.43 crore in 22 days in India.



### Muralikant Petkar, the man who launched a How India's U-15 winner trained in China, won local tournament at 6 **billion Indian dreams in Paralympics**



### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Mumbai: As the largest-ever Indian contingent left the country for Paris to participate in the upcoming 2024 Paralympic Games starting on August 28, all of the participants will be dreaming of winning the biggest prize in their respective sports discipline — a gold medal.The contingent is expected to break the record for India's bestever medal haul in Paris 2024 with Paralympic Committee of India President Devendra Jhajharia, himself a twotime gold medallist in javelin throw at the Games, predicting the country to bag more than 25 medals. India is hoping to improve on the 19 medals won in the 2020 Games in Tokyo, which included five gold. While members of the 84-strong contingent gunning for gold medals at the Games, many of them may not be aware of the person who launched these billion dreams - India's first gold medallist at the Paralympic Games.

Murlikant Rajaram Petkar made history in the 1972 Paralympic Games in Heidelberg, Germany when he won a gold medal in the Men's 50m Freestyle 3 competition, twice improving on the World Record on his way to a golden triumph. In the final, he clocked 37.331 seconds and set a new World Record after breaking the previous record in his first race in Heidelberg. A soldier of the craftsman rank in the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME) of the Indian army, Petkar suffered debilitating injuries when the army camp he was staying at in Srinagar came under aerial attack during the 1965 war with Pakistan

Petkar, who was 28 when he won the historic gold medal, took to the swimming pool in times when disabled people did not get much support from the government and society. He was advised to participate in sports to speed up his rehabilitation after suffering the injury.He had to surmount many hurdles to participate in the Paralympic Games of 1972, and one of those who extended him monetary help was former India cricket captain Vijay Merchant, who was at that time heading an NGO for disabled people and arranged for Petkar's ticket to Germany.Petkar's story is one of the resilience and hardship of a boy from rural Maharashtra who set pulses racing with his masterful achievements in the swimming pool and gained tremendous adulation in the immediate aftermath of his Paralympic Games triumph. However, his achievement as the first Indian to win an individual gold medal in either the Olympics or Paralympic Games was forgotten by people for decades and was not even part of the toughest of general knowledge guiz contests. He did

not even get an Arjuna Award for his achievements. The fact that India did not win another gold at the Paralympic Games till 2004 when Jhakharia won in Athens too did not bring out his story into the limelight.

But Murlikant Petkar emerged in our conscience once again in 2012 when the Paralympic Games in London were televised in India and people were mesmerised watching HN Girisha winning a silver medal in the Men's High Jump F42. At that time even the PCI administration had no idea about Petkar's achievement. The legendary swimmer finally got due recognition from the government when he was awarded the Padma Shri in 2018.

Born on November 1, 1944, at Peth Islampur in Sangli district of Maharashtra, Petkar's life was progressing on an upward trajectory as he was emerging as a boxer of repute in the Services and bagged a silver medal in the International Services Sports Meet at Tokyo, Japan in 1964.On returning to his home base in Secunderabad, he was given a short vacation and a trip to Jammu and Kashmir as a reward for bringing laurels to his Army Unit. The visit to Kashmir was arranged by his Unit Commandant and his stay was scheduled at the army camps in Srinagar. It was during this vacation that Petkar's life took a drastic turn. Not a frontline soldier, Petkar was caught in a war between India and Pakistan and the camp in Srinagar where he was staying came under enemy attack."I was out for tea in the afternoon when a siren was blown to indicate an aerial attack. I tried to rush back to my room but firing had already started," recollects Petkar, who received multiple bullet injuries and was also run over by an army vehicle in the chaos.Rendered paraplegic for life, the young army soldier did not wallow in grief for long and launched a second innings that took him to greater heights than he could probably have achieved as a boxer. Within three years of his injury, Petkar represented India in the 1968 Paralympic Games in table tennis and reached the second round in men's singles.Petkar moved to INHS Asvini, the Navy hospital in Mumbai (then Bombay) for rehabilitation and was asked by the physiotherapist there to take up swimming as part of the programme. That changed his life once again as the upper body strength that he had gained as a boxer helped him in swimming and Petkar soon became the best in his class in the world, eventually winning the gold medal in the 1972 Paralympic Games."I was always confident of my abilities and gave my best in the first race itself and set a world record. The final was guite tough. Normally I am not bothered about the lane I swim and set the world record from the first lane. But for the final, I wanted the middle lanes (3rd or 4th) and I got the third. I thought it was a good omen and gave it my best shot," says Petkar of his competition in 1972. While the gold in the 1972 Games was his crowning glory, Petkar won a lot of other medals for India. In a career spanning two decades, Petkar won medals at the Stoke Mandeville International Paraplegic Meet held in England where he consistently outdid his records and won the General Championship Cup for five consecutive years (1969-73); the 3rd Commonwealth Paraplegic Games held at Edinburgh, Scotland, where he bagged gold in 50m freestyle swimming, silver in javelin throw and bronze in shot put and the International FESPIC Games in Hong Kong in 1982 where he created another world record in 50m swimming. However, he would always regret the fact that he could not participate in another Paralympic Games and win more medals for India.After his retirement, he set up a swimming pool for disabled people in Pune and ran it successfully for many years. Currently, the 79-year-old Petkar is spending his retired life in Pune where his son Arjun is posted. And every time an Indian contingent leaves for para-sports events, Murlikant Petkar is one of the many extending his wishes to the participants, telling them to win laurels for the country and tread the path that he paved decades ago in Germany - a path towards Paralympic gold medal.



### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Rabinarayan Patri knows a thing or two about China and badminton. He informs that there is no "trophy culture" on the junior circuit of the badminton capital of the world - the tournament winners get medals and better quality racquets. He should know. His daughter, Tanvi, won a local tournament as a resident of China, at Kunshan, when she was just six years old. And on Sunday, Tanvi, now 13, won her first international title, the Asian Under-15, at China's Chengdu. It was in China - a country known for its tough training and an assembly line of champion shuttlers — that Tanvi picked up the sport and trained in its fundamentals for two-and-a-half years.

Patri, who was born in Odisha's Balasore, is a software professional with Cognizant. In 2015, the company gave him a chance to work with Nike's sports vertical. Patri had other options, he could have gone to the US, but, on a whim, he opted for China's Jiangsu province."I chose China; though Jiangsu is small, it is sports-oriented and known as their biggest table-tennis and badminton hub," he explains. "After office, I would play at a nearby court. I loved badminton in college, but there were no facilities back then. Tanvi followed me to the courts and a local centre coach was very friendly and interested in training her," he recalls. Tanvi's fundamentals were honed at one of the finest shuttle hubs in China. "For footwork, they would actually teach her how to place the foot in striding — it was like the ABCD of badminton for the first six months. She had to practice the service, 200-300 a day, which I've never seen in India, because the game starts there," he recalls. "Children don't usually smash when that young. But her coaches would smash at her body, so her defence improved quickly; and because children like to respond in kind, she started copying smashes," he says. Tanvi Patri India's Tanvi Patri clinched the under-15 girls singles title at the Badminton Asia U-17 & U-15 junior championships. (BAI Media)As was the system in China, the local coaches - Zhang Lei and Wu would urge Patri to remain by the courtside for three days a week. "Their coaches teach parents too, and tell them to practice at home before returning the next day. So I stood for four hours, picking up stuff. I also got a net installed at my apartment in China, so her net-game got sharp," he says, adding that he always had 200-300 shuttles stocked at home.

After the Patris returned to India in 2020, the videos of little Tanvi doing her drills were sent to the coaches at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) in Bengaluru, and she was invited to train there. She is now under the wings of the PPBA and the NGO, Olympic Gold Quest.PPBA coach Sagar Chopda says Tanvi's strong technical base was evident from the outset. "She has trained in China, so she is technically very strong -everything, from her movement to court coverage to the sense of when to play a stroke. There are some shuttles which we, as coaches, think she won't reach, but she gets under them. This is something very rare in a 13year-old," says Chopda.

Tanvi's mother, Sailabala, works with Infosys in Bengaluru now. Her interest in badminton was limited, but she got Tanvi started on a fitness routine when in China."We had a large Olympic-standard stadium with synthetic track and football field behind our house in China. Everyone would train there, so if you didn't run you felt like a lazy person. It was a free facility, so my wife and I started running, and Tanvi followed. She was doing five kilometres daily when she was seven-and-a-half years old," recalls Patri.What Tanvi misses in Bengaluru is her second-love, skating. "She learned to skate in China... She loved going fast, I encouraged skating because it helps her stay balanced on a badminton court. If you see, she is rarely imbalanced, or falling down," says Patri.The family's commitment to badminton has been relentless. When the Covid pandemic struck, they shifted to rural Odisha. "Some may have used it as an excuse to stop training. But Tanvi would insist on swimming in a large temple pond which had clean water and not many people. And we played at a small court on the outskirts, where there were only teenaged boys and older men. She was only nine years old, but she played with them. That accelerated her skill and she grew competitive. Her thinking was that if he beats me. I'll beat him too," he recalls Patri recounts how he seeks to shield Tanvi from distractions. "Everyone at the academy has headphones on, listening to music. But there could be side-effects like deafness and loss of balance which we aren't aware of," he says. "On the whole, I want her away from all electronics, including mobile phones," he says.With athletes who find early success, there is always the fear of burnout and overtraining. But Patri clarifies that he's not pushing too hard. "She has the willingness to train and is motivated; we won't push her. There's no need to force her to train. But the ultimate target is Olympics gold, and I told her no Indian (female) has taken it yet. The Olympics is so far, but if she's okay, we can target 2028. In the meantime, there are smaller Olympics like the All-England and World Championship," he says. While he is a Lin Dan fan, and often told Tanvi stories of the Chinese legend and Michael Phelps, Patri says he couldn't stop her from becoming a Viktor Axelsen fan. "Earlier, Lin Dan yes. But now, she has pictures of Viktor Axelsen everywhere. Posters, stickers and everything," he says. It should be alright, since Axelsen became a double Olympic champion at Paris, after his gold at Tokyo.

# **Manpreet Singh on Indian hockey's revival:** 'The mindset. That's the biggest change... (Earlier) We went to the Olympics just to participate'

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Manu Bhaker has a new fan. She is just two-and-ahalf years old, and is the daughter of India's hockey talisman Manpreet Singh. "Even at home, she says her name," Manpreet smiles.Jasmine, Manpreet adds, also had a bronze medal around her neck after the Paris Olympics the one her father, and one of India's go-to men in crisis, won.At the Tokyo Olympics, Manpreet led the team on its return to the podium after more than four decades. In Paris, he held the team together. Marshalling the midfield, dropping back to help the defence when the situation demanded and rushing out to stop penalty corners. In an interview with The Indian Express, the former captain who has made 378 international appearances, reflects on the campaign, explains how Indian hockey - after decades of hurt and disappointment - managed consecutive podium finishes at the Olympics, and why he is optimistic about the future of this team.

moment. But everyone remained confident. We first started winning continuously in Asia, then we started to look at moving up the ladder in the world. For that, it really helped that we began playing very frequently against top teams. That really built our confidence.

# Want a jump smash like Viktor Axelsen? **Olympic champion reveals his workout secrets**

### GNS News Agency, Sept 8

Two-times Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen has revealed the secret behind his powerful smashes and his incredible agility in the badminton court. The 30-yearold in a 54-second reel he shared on Instagram has given a sneak peak of his training regime. In the video, Axelsen has shared two of his exercise routines. Axerlsen says the trap and bar exercise is the key behind his powerful smashes. It gives him the perfect amount of balance and strengthens his legs, which are crucial when he goes for a smash and has suggested the budding shuttlers add it to their routine to level up their game."Trap bar exercise can be a game changer for badminton players," he said."It's a great alternative to squats and deadlifts."Building strong legs and explosive strength boosting balance plus it gives you the power you need for a stronger jump smash."In the second part of the video, Axelsen explains why the Bulgarian split squats or dumbbell lunges are perfect for badminton athletes and how over the years it has enhanced his agility."They build single leg strength enhance balance and improve agility," he explained.Padukone Paris: India's Lakshya Sen (blue) during the Men's Singles Semifinal badminton match against Denmark's Viktor Axelsen at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris, France, Sunday, Aug. 4, 2024. (PTI Photo/Ravi Choudhary)"Key for quick direction changes on the court, plus they help prevent injuries by enhancing stabilizer muscles."Axelsen and social



mediaThe Dane is also attuned to the power of social media and its ability to help grow badminton's popularity, with one million followers on Instagram and both Weibo and TikTok accounts."I don't take lightly the visibility that social networks offer me. It's a good opportunity to introduce my sport and make a name for myself as well," he was quoted by AFP.Axelsen, the Olympic championEarlier this month, Axelsen defended his men's singles title Monday by beating Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand for the gold medal. Axelsen defeated Vitidsarn 21-11, 21-11 in the final in just 52 minutes. Axelsen became the first European to win back-to-back badminton singles gold at the Olympics. Like in Tokyo three years ago, his medal in Paris is the only one earned by a European in the sport.

# **PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi blames lack of 'elite** players pool' for Pakistan's poor show in Test cricket

Pakistan cricket chief Mohsin Naqvi says a lack of quality backup is eroding the strength of the test squadPakistan cricket chief Mohsin Naqvi says a lack of quality backup is eroding the strength of the Test squad.Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi has blamed the lack of "talent pool" for national team's poor outings in the Test cricket.PCB chief's statement came in the wake of the embarrassing 10-wicket loss to Bangladesh in the first Test in Rawalpindi. Pakistan has been searching for a test win at home since its last victory over South Africa at Rawalpindi in December 2021. The first-test loss was its fifth at home in that span, which also includes four draws."It was a very disappointing loss," Naqvi told reporters on Monday. The problem is

the selection committee has no pool to turn to for highquality replacement players.Losing to Bangladesh is sad but the selection committee had given the team 17 players," Naqvi said. Festive offer Masood Pakistan's Naseem Shah, second right, celebrates with teammate after taking the wicket of Bangladesh's Zakir Hasan during the third day of first cricket test match between Pakistan and Bangladesh, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan,"If the coach or captain aren't playing some of them, that's their decision. The team management may have made a mistake, but that has nothing to do with the selection committee."Naqvi had spoken about conducting a big overhaul after Pakistan was eliminated from the Super Eight at the T20 World Cup.

Have you had the time to reflect on the campaign? Is there a moment that makes you smile?

Of course. The smiles on our faces after winning the medal; that was a very satisfying moment, the happiness that we won medals at back-to-back Olympics. You could see it on the faces of each and every one of us. Till the semifinal, all our matches went well during this campaign. The team showed a mindset that... we keep talking about those things. The semifinal was a close match. It could have been better. But it's better not to get into ifs and buts.

You made your debut at the Olympics 12 years ago, when India finished 12th out of 12 teams. Even one Olympic medal looked a distant possibility back then. Now, the team has won two. What has changed?

The mindset. That's the biggest change. Earlier, we thought, 'oh, we are playing Australia!' We went to the Olympics just to participate. That has changed. I think the pandemic was a very bad period for most but for us, the team, it was a good period, to be honest. During that period, we spent a lot of time at the camp and understood the value of hard work, and began respecting each other as teammates. Also, before Tokyo, we had defeated almost every team in the Pro League. So the momentum was there and confidence. A lot has changed since 2012. There's a lot more use of analytical tools in hockey now, the fitness has to be good. If you aren't fit, it's not possible to survive in international hockey. So those things have changed too. We had to have the knowledge and understanding of how to execute our gameplans. Slowly, as the coaches started to come - first Terry (Walsh), then Roelant (Oltmans)... coaches kept coming but one thing everyone ensured is that the Indian hockey masala remained front and centre. Everyone knew Indian players had magical skills and that should remain an integral part of how the team played. Continue playing attacking hockey. Then, there was the Hockey India League. Suddenly, we were all playing with our idols. For example, I looked up to Moritz Fuerste. So when I played with him, I looked at not just how he played but also how his mindset was off the field, the way he prepared himself for a match.It has taken us a long time to reach this far. There were blips too; the Asian Games bronze in 2018 was one such

The Olympic cycle hadn't been particularly smooth, though. After the medal in Tokyo, the team couldn't reach the quarterfinals of the World Cup last year. How did the team come back from that?

We were very disappointed. We were in good form; had a good group stage at the World Cup. But in the prequarterfinal, we didn't play our game against New Zealand. When we returned to the camp, we spoke about it openly and immediately shifted to the next assignment rather than dwelling on what had already happened. It was important to take lessons from that defeat and ensure we don't repeat the same mistakes. A basketball player has said 'you never lose, you always learn.' It taught us how to maintain our level in crucial matches. Those lessons helped us in Paris...This had been in the works for a long time. Craig (Fulton, the chief coach) gave us a lot of freedom and his philosophy is such that it allowed us to make mistakes. If we made one, the team would be there to back up. We had two or three plans going into a match. The opponents are watching us, too. So Craig had back-up plans and a back-up for the backup too.

You said the pandemic helped in team bonding. This time, you all went to the Alps. Such trips are not common in Indian hockey. Were you surprised by the idea?

We didn't know a thing about it. And that was the fun part. From a luxurious life, you were living in the woods, a hard life. The same thing happens during a game too. You never know what's going to happen in the next moment. You have to adapt. The drills we did - there was one involving rope climbing, for example - taught us how to guide each other, how to have each other's backs. It was scary. Hockey field se seedha ice par... different experience. If they had told us beforehand, you would have had the option of pulling out. But here, we didn't know until we reached there.

Back-to-back Olympic medals, the team that still has scope for improvement and the return of the Hockey India League... is the team ready to take the next step?

The HIL will be a very big platform for the next generation. As a young player, when you share the dressing room and learn from them (top players), it gives you wings. I can sense that more people are following us now. And we are now at a stage where the sport is ready to explode.New Delhi: Indian Hockey player Manpreet Singh with his family on his arrival at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, in New Delhi, Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024. Indian Hockey team won bronze medal at the Paris olympic. (PTI Photo/Manvender Vashist Lav) New Delhi: Indian Hockey player Manpreet Singh with his family on his arrival at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, in New Delhi, Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024. Indian Hockey team won bronze medal at the Paris olympic. (PTI Photo/ Manvender Vashist Lav)

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