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## Women SHGs to buy and hire out buses to TGSRTC

Hyderabad: The Telangana government has taken another step forward to financially empower women Self Help Groups (SHG) by deciding to provide bank loans to enable these groups to purchase buses and give it for hire to the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC). The government is contemplating to rope in SHGs for operating buses, particularly in rural areas and on routes where there are inadequate or no bus services. On an experimental basis, RTC has decided to allocate hired buses to women's associations in Mahabubnagar and Karimnagar districts.

## Man held for cheating businessman of Rs.7.19 crore in cyber fraud

Hyderabad: The Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) on Wednesday arrested a man from Bengaluru for allegedly cheating a businessman of Rs. 7.19 crore. The arrested Sunil Kumar Maasthi Rathnappa (35), a resident of Bengaluru, along with his friends Giri and Rathod befriended the victim Kondamallepalley of Nalgonda district. According to the police, Sunil, Giri and Rathod told the victim stating that a huge amount that was transferred as 'international remittances', was seized by the customs department at the RGI Airport Hyderabad. The trio made the victim believe that the amount would be released if they managed to pay some amount towards transaction as advance tax, fee and other charges.

## PM Modi launches development projects of over Rs 7,600 crore in Maharashtra

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday virtually laid the foundation stone of various development projects of more than Rs 7,600 crore in Maharashtra. He laid the foundation stones of the upgradation of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in Nagpur and the New Integrated Terminal Building at the Shirdi Airport in the state via video conference. The prime minister also virtually inaugurated the Indian Institute of Skills Mumbai and Vidya Samiksha Kendra in Maharashtra and launched 10 new government medical colleges in the state.

The upgradation of the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in Nagpur will be done with a total estimated project cost of around Rs 7,000 crore, as per officials. It will serve as a catalyst for growth across multiple sectors, including manufacturing, aviation, tourism, logistics, and healthcare, benefitting Nagpur city and the wider Vidarbha region. The New Integrated Terminal Building at the Shirdi Airport, to be set up at a cost of Rs 645 crore, will provide world-class facilities and amenities for the religious tourists coming to Shirdi, the officials said. The construction theme of the proposed terminal is based on the spiritual Neem tree of Saibaba. The 10 new government medical colleges in Maharashtra, launched by the PM on Wednesday, are located in Mumbai, Nashik, Jalna, Amravati, Gadchiroli, Buldhana, Washim, Bhandara, Hingoli and Ambernath (Thane). While enhancing the under-graduate and post-graduate seats, the colleges will also offer specialised tertiary healthcare to the people, as per the officials. The Indian Institute of Skills



(IIS) Mumbai has been set up with an aim to create an industry-ready workforce with cutting-edge technology and hands-on training. Established under a Public-Private Partnership model, it is a collaboration between the Tata Education and Development Trust and the Government of India. The institute plans to provide training in highly specialised areas like mechatronics, artificial intelligence, data analytics, industrial automation and robotics among others.

The Vidya Samiksha Kendra (VSK) of Maharashtra will provide access to students, teachers and administrators to crucial academic and administrative data through live chatbots such as Smart Upasthiti, Swadhyay among others. It will offer high quality insights to schools to manage resources effectively, strengthen ties between parents and the state, and deliver responsive support. It will also supply curated instructional resources to enhance teaching practices and student learning, the officials said.

## CM Revanth Reddy orders for completion of SC sub-categorisation, BC caste survey in 60 days

GNS News Agency, Oct 9 Hyderabad: The State government will constitute a 'One-Man Commission' to implement the sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes (SC), in accordance with a recent Supreme Court verdict. The Commission, to be headed by a retired High Court judge, is tasked with submitting its report within 60 days. This report will serve as the basis for issuing new job notifications, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy announced during a review meeting held at the Secretariat on Wednesday.

The meeting, attended by members of the Cabinet sub-committee on SC categorisation, analysed the sub-categorisation process and its implementation in States like Punjab and Tamil Nadu, as well as the ongoing measures in Haryana. To prevent legal challenges, the Chief Minister emphasised the need for the commission's swift and precise work. The 2011 census will serve as the reference for the SC census, and all necessary data will be collected from various departments. Chief Secretary A Santhi Kumari was directed to ensure that all required information from various departments is made available to the commission for the preparation of its report. The Chief Minister also ordered the commission to visit one district per day, covering all 10 erstwhile districts, to receive complaints and appeals directly from the public. In



parallel, Revanth Reddy gave his nod to the BC (Backward Classes) social, economic, and caste survey across the State. Drawing from models used in States like Bihar and Karnataka, he wanted a comprehensive survey to help shaping future policies. The State Planning department has been tasked with overseeing the process, while a senior IAS officer will be appointed for coordination. The Chief Minister set a 60-day deadline for the completion of the BC caste survey, with the final report to be submitted by December 9. Following the survey, local body elections will be held immediately, he said.

## KTR lashes out at Congress over 'Bulldozer Raj' in Telangana

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao launched a scathing attack on the Congress government in Telangana, accusing it of creating a fearful atmosphere during the Dasara festival with its "Bulldozer Raj." He stated that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is neglecting public welfare and focusing on projects like the Musi Riverfront Development to siphon off funds. "We thought Bulldozer Raj was confined to Uttar Pradesh, but Revanth Reddy has brought it to Telangana," remarked Rama Rao, while addressing Congress leader Mohd Allaaddin and others from from Serilingampally who joined the BRS. Rama Rao criticised the Congress government, saying it was failing to deliver on promises. "If K Chandrashekhara Rao was still the Chief Minister, farmers would have received Rythu Bandhu benefit, and women would have got Bathukamma sarees. Now, even DJs have been banned during the festivities," he remarked.

He pointed out that every section of society is dissatisfied after 10 months of Congress rule. "Rahul Gandhi promised to waive off crop loans upto Rs 2 lakh by December 9 last year, but as the next December approaches, nothing has been done. While Rahul Gandhi and Revanth Reddy got jobs, Telangana's youth are still waiting," he said. The BRS working president also highlighted the unkept promises to women and senior citizens. "Around 1.6 crore women are still waiting for their Rs 2,500 allowance, and senior citizens haven't seen the promised Rs. 4,000 pension. Revanth Reddy promised one tola of gold for brides under Kalyana Lakshmi/Shaaadi Mubarak, but they haven't even received one tola of iron," he said.

Rama Rao accused the Congress government of focusing on the Rs. 1.5 lakh crore Musi Riverfront project



for personal gain. "Welfare schemes don't offer commissions, but beautification projects do. Rahul Gandhi, his brother-in-law Robert Vadra, and Revanth Reddy are plotting to loot public funds under the guise of beautification," he said, adding that Revanth Reddy was citing fund shortage for implementing welfare schemes, but was gearing up to spend a massive Rs 1.5 lakh crore.

The BRS leader said people were feeling the absence of former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao amid the Congress's "Bulldozer Raj." He also condemned the arrest of former MLA Patnam Narendar Reddy, who was detained for supporting farmer protests in Kodangal, Revanth Reddy's constituency. "If Revanth Reddy cannot convince farmers in his own constituency, how can he lead the State?" he asked, demanding the immediate release of BRS activists. Rama Rao reaffirmed BRS's commitment to fight for the poor and against Congress's injustices. "We fought Modi, and we will continue fighting for the people of Telangana. K Chandrashekhara Rao and BRS are the true protectors of secularism and justice in the State," he said.

## Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini meets PM Modi as BJP moves to form third-time government



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Wednesday ahead of the formation of the BJP government for a record third consecutive term in Haryana after winning 48 out of the 90 Assembly seats in the state. Sources in the Haryana BJP said that important issues, including the date and venue for the swearing-in ceremony of the new government, had to be discussed. BJP leaders indicated that the swearing-in ceremony would take place on Dussehra on Saturday. "We are planning a grand victory ceremony on the occasion of the swearing-in ceremony. Panchkula's Tau Devi Lal Stadium and Parade Ground Sector-5 are among the options for the venue," a senior BJP leader told The Indian Express. The BJP leadership will also take a call on the number of ministers who can be inducted into the state cabinet. Haryana can have 14 ministers, including the chief minister. The BJP has to look for new faces as only CM Saini and ministers Mahipal Dhandra

and Mool Chand Sharma have made it to the Vidhan Sabha. The BJP had earlier announced Saini as the CM face of the party for the Assembly polls. Terming his meeting with the PM as a courtesy call, Saini said, "I have told Pradhan Mantri ji about the landslide victory of BJP in Haryana. I told him that the people of Haryana have a lot of affection for you which resulted in the formation of the double-engine government in Haryana for the third time."

When asked about the oath ceremony, Saini said, "I don't know about it. Our parliamentary board will decide this. The parliamentary board's decision will be acceptable to all. The legislative group of the party will elect its leader." On the issue of Congress questioning the EVMs, Saini said, "The survey reports were one-sided and in the favour of Congress. The Congress was propagating such an environment that they have come to power. In the past 10 years, we have done so much work under the leadership of Modi ji. On that basis, I had stated that there would be a one-sided victory of BJP with a big mandate which the people of Haryana have proved." Alleging that the Congress has been insulting Dalits, Saini said, "Congress did not respect Dalits ever. The Congress has been insulting Dalits. They did not give honour to Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar. The Congress insulted him and the Constitution. Their lies have worked in Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana. Now, their lies will not work. Their lies were rejected in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Now, the people of Haryana have shown them the doors." While the BJP won 48 seats in the Haryana Assembly elections, the Congress won 37, leaving two seats for the INLD and three for Independents.

## Congress analysing unexpected Haryana results... thank people of J&K: Rahul Gandhi

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

A day after the Congress's electoral calculation went wrong as the BJP managed to go past the halfway mark in Haryana for a third consecutive time, senior leader and MP Rahul Gandhi Wednesday said that the party would be analysing the unexpected results.

Reacting to the results of the Assembly elections that were announced on Tuesday, Rahul said: "My heartfelt thanks to the people of Jammu and Kashmir - India's victory in the state is a victory of the Constitution, a victory of democratic self-respect. We are analysing the unexpected results of Haryana. We will inform the Election Commission about the complaints coming from many assembly constituencies." He added: "Heartfelt thanks to all the people of Haryana for their support and to our Babbar Sher workers for their tireless hard work. We will continue this fight for rights, for social and economic justice, for truth, and will keep raising your voice." On Tuesday, the Congress had declared that it will not accept the Haryana verdict, alleging there was a "conspiracy" hatched through "manipulation" of Electronic Voting Machines. The Congress allegation — it is the first time that a mainstream party has refused to accept the mandate alleging manipulation of EVMs — came even as its stalwarts in Haryana, Kumari Selja and Bhupinder Singh Hooda, conceded defeat with Selja targeting the Hooda camp for the loss.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters, Congress communication head Jairam Ramesh said, "I would like to reiterate that the results in Haryana



are unexpected, surprising and that we don't accept them because this is a defeat of democracy and a win of the device."

He said the party has received "very serious complaints on the process of counting, the functioning of EVMs in at least three districts. There are more that are coming in." "It (the verdict) goes against ground reality. It goes against what people in Haryana had made up their mind for, which was for change and transformation. Under these circumstances, it is not possible for us to accept the results that have been announced today. Serious questions have been raised by our candidates..."

We will bring it to the notice of the EC. What we have seen today in Haryana is a victory for manipulation, a victory for subverting the will of the people and it is a defeat for transparent, democratic processes. The chapter on Haryana is not complete," he said.

## Govt to continue universal supply of fortified rice, says anaemia remains a widespread issue



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

In April 2022, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs decided to implement the rice fortification initiative throughout the country in a phased manner by March 2024. In April 2022, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs decided to implement the rice fortification initiative throughout the country in a phased manner by March 2024. The Government approved on Wednesday the continuation of the universal supply of fortified rice under all central schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) in its present form, from July 2024 and up to December 2028. A decision to this effect was made in the meeting of the Union cabinet that met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a statement, the Government said, "The rice fortification initiative will continue as a central sector initiative with 100% funding by the Government of India as part of PMGKAY (food subsidy), thus providing a unified institutional mechanism for implementation." "Accordingly, in line with the Prime Minister's address on 75th Independence Day on the necessity of nutritional security in the country,

the initiative 'Supply of fortified rice throughout the Targeted Public Distribution System, Other Welfare Schemes, Integrated Child Development Service, PM POSHAN in all states and Union Territories' to address anaemia and micronutrients deficiency in the country was taken up," the statement said. In April 2022, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs decided to implement the rice fortification initiative throughout the country in a phased manner by March 2024. "All three phases have been successfully completed and the target of universal coverage to supply fortified rice in all schemes of the Government was achieved by March 2024," the statement added. "According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) conducted between 2019 and 2021, anaemia

## Shilpa Shetty and Raj Kundra challenge ED's eviction notices for Juhu, Pune properties in Bitcoin case

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Actor Shilpa Shetty and her husband, businessman Raj Kundra, have approached the Bombay High Court challenging eviction notices issued to them after their residential premises in the city's Juhu area and a farmhouse near the Pawna dam in Pune district were provisionally attached by the Enforcement Directorate. They have also sought a stay on the execution of the notices dated September 27 pending a hearing on their petitions.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## J&K's clear verdict

JAMMU and Kashmir has spoken, and in no uncertain terms. The decisive victory of the National Conference-Congress alliance marks a new beginning for the five-year-old Union Territory. Getting a chance to have their say in the Assembly elections after 10 years, the voters have chosen stability over a fractured mandate. The prospects of detested political manipulations in case of a hung House have been rejected. A clear majority also puts paid to the controversy over the nomination of five legislators — who have voting rights — by the Lieutenant-Governor. Now begins the real test for the winning alliance and the Centre — how to negotiate the handover and exercise of power. Equally important is building trust, and the onus for it is on these two entities. A confrontational start would amount to sheer disrespect of the people's verdict.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the residue of past events informs the present to a great extent. The trauma of violence, the regional divide, the communal tensions, the perceived sense of injustice and a heightened notion of victimhood — it's been tough going for the erstwhile state. After a long time, the spectre of poll boycott and contempt for the electoral process has been lifted. Voters' enthusiastic participation in the election campaign lends hope. The new government, thus, has the added responsibility of grasping the message sent by the electorate — shift the focus from political wrangling to what the people really want, improve their lives and give them the agency they deserve.

The NC-Congress alliance is not new to holding the reins of power, but it must recognise the altered reality. There is no room for a repetition of mistakes. The restoration of statehood may be a legitimate demand, but it must look beyond the rhetoric and work for social cohesion and economic prosperity.

## Qubit's Navigo helps homebuyers experience real-time, ultra-photorealistic look of bare apartments



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Explaining how Navigo caters to the choices of the customers, Parge said that in cases when the buyer who is interested in a right-wing apartment and gets to see a left-wing one instead, Navigo visualises the whole layout as if it were mirrored. Explaining how Navigo caters to the choices of the customers, Parge said that in cases when the buyer who is interested in a right-wing apartment and gets to see a left-wing one instead, Navigo visualises the whole layout as if it were mirrored. Ajay Parge from Pune, who has worked in 3D visualisation for over three decades, realised that home buyers are left to rely solely on their imagination when they visit a bare property premise despite the luxury residential real estate market growing at an unprecedented rate.

To fix the dilemma of buyers, Parge's startup Qubit, founded in 2023, developed Navigo to make real-time, ultra-photorealistic visualisations of their property where buyers can explore their property from every possible angle, at any time of the day. "This allows them to see the exact view from their balcony or window," Parge told The Indian Express, adding that it helps in reducing post-sale regrets. After about nine months of testing on live projects, the startup has implemented Navigo in 12 projects and their current profit margin is over 35 per cent. Explaining

how Navigo caters to the choices of the customers, Parge said that in cases when the buyer who is interested in a right-wing apartment and gets to see a left-wing one instead, Navigo visualises the whole layout as if it were mirrored.

"In another scenario, we may show a 4 BHK layout, and for a buyer wanting a 3BHK, we suggest they imagine adding a wall near the door of one of the bedrooms. Everyone who has purchased property has likely encountered these kinds of situations. This often leaves the customer feeling uncertain. Even after deciding to purchase a particular property, they frequently visit the site again once the RCC structure is completed to check if their decision was the right one," said Parge, explaining how home buying in India is an emotional decision for nearly every family. He mentioned that if a buyer feels emotionally connected to a property, they are more likely to make the decision to purchase it. Unfortunately, in the real estate industry, especially for upcoming projects, we never show the customer their home, he added. "Instead, we present a typical show flat with plush interiors and then tell them, 'You'll receive a bare shell, not like this'." One of the key challenges that Parge's startup had to encounter was finding skilled talent with expertise in both gaming engines and architectural visualisation. To overcome this, they trained the existing team, who already had deep knowledge of architectural visualisation, to work on gaming engines. The future of real estate, according to Parge, involves AI-powered property management, virtual reality tours, and blockchain for seamless transactions. The game is changing, and those who embrace tech will lead the way. However, he added that despite all the tech, real estate remains people's business. "Personal connections, empathy, and understanding buyer needs will always be the true differentiators. The best real estate professionals know it's not just about properties, it's about the people who live, work, and thrive in them. The future of real estate will belong to those who balance tech, lifestyle, and human touch," he said.

## Delhi High Court rejects woman's plea seeking FIR against Arvind Kejriwal, others in AAP worker's death in 2013



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

The Delhi High Court on October 4 dismissed a review petition against a sessions court order last year that refused to direct the lodging of an FIR against AAP leaders Arvind Kejriwal, Kumar Vishwas, and four others under the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act in relation to a party worker's death in 2013. The petition was moved by Kalawati, 60, the mother of the deceased AAP worker Santosh Koli, alleging murder and political conspiracy which led to her daughter's death. Santosh died while she was on her way to Kausambi to attend a party meeting while riding pillion on a bike after an unknown vehicle hit the two-wheeler on June 30, 2013.

Santosh succumbed to her injuries on August 8, 2013. An FIR was lodged at the time against "unknown persons" at Ghaziabad police station but after drawing a blank in their investigations subsequently, the police filed an 'untrace final report' before a magistrate court. The magistrate court accepted the same on June 28, 2019. Kalawati then moved with a protest petition in 2019 where further probe was ordered for and on April 2, 2022, she filed a complaint before the Nand Nagar police station in Delhi seeking registration of FIR against Arvind Kejriwal, Kumar Vishwas, and other party workers Vandana, Kuldeep Pawar, Gaurav and Pankaj, under the provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the SC/ST Act.

The court of Justice Neena Bansal Krishna, while rejecting Kalawati's plea, reasoned, "Once the FIR about this incident had already been registered, in which the investigations had been undertaken and when further investigations have already been directed on the Protest Petition of the complainant-Kalawati, the law does not permit the registration of second FIR on the same incident... It is also pertinent to observe that the entire incident in which Smt. Santosh Koli suffered grievous injuries which eventually proved to be fatal, had happened in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh and no part of the said incident occurred in the jurisdiction of Delhi." The court also observed that while her April 2022 police complaint sought invocation of the SC/ST Act, no such averments were made in her protest petition earlier. "...the petitioner-Kalawati has completely failed to disclose the facts on the basis of which such sections are sought to be invoked. Moreover, neither any caste-based abuse or remarks to insult, abuse or humiliate have been uttered in the present matter, which is the most common offence committed generally against the victims under the SC/ST (POA) Act, 1989 and no offence as enumerated in Section 3 of the SC/ST (POA) Act, 1989 has been made out... the petitioner-Kalawati imputes motive on the named persons to have allegedly murdered her daughter because of their caste, which is essentially based on her hunch and has no basis," the court recorded. Upholding the sessions court order rejecting Kalawati's plea seeking registration of FIR, the Delhi High Court dismissed her plea.

## Arvind Kejriwal, Atishi 'desperate to conceal' what's 'inside his Rs 45 crore palatial home': BJP's Vijender Gupta

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Kejriwal atishiThe Bharatiya Janata Party has accused Kejriwal of spending crores of rupees on the official residence of the chief minister in Delhi and neglecting the development of unauthorised colonies in the national capital.

A day after questions regarding the handing-over process of former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's official residence to incumbent Atishi were raised, Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta on Tuesday alleged a cover-up and demanded it should be locked until an inspection mandated by the procedure. Vijender Gupta alleged Arvind Kejriwal has made deliberate attempts to obstruct the mandatory handing over of his house to the Public Works Department, fearing that after it is handed over, PWD will carry out a routine inspection of the CM's house to verify inventory. "This of course is a blatant bid to prevent the department from making necessary inquiry into the Sheesh Mahal scam that he has presided over," the BJP leader said.

Demanding the "immediate PWD inspection of the CM's residence" and the department "puts a lock on the house till it is formally inspected, inventoried and allotted", Gupta said, "The people of Delhi deserve to know what their chief minister is so desperate to conceal inside his Rs 45 crore palatial home." The Bharatiya Janata Party has accused Kejriwal of spending crores of rupees on the official residence of the chief minister in Delhi and neglecting the development of unauthorised colonies in the national capital. Questioning what he alleged was the "convenient hospitalisation" of a senior official associated with the CM's residence who has its keys, Gupta said it was "alarming" that Atishi had already taken possession of the house. "This sequence of events clearly demonstrates Arvind Kejriwal's desperate attempts to prevent PWD from inspecting his 'Sheesh Mahal'. What is he trying to hide from the public?" Gupta asked. According to the AAP, the Delhi Government's General Administration Department issued a no-dues certificate indicating Kejriwal had paid all water, electricity and telephone bills associated with the CM residence, and PWD has issued a 'Vacation Report' to the party national convener. "A look at this report indicates that the junior engineer of PWD concerned has inspected the house, checked the inventory, and only thereafter issued a vacation report."

## 'We are in a golden cage': Sonam Wangchuk claims Centre reneged on promises made to people of Ladakh

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Sonam WangchukWangchuk said Ladakh's grievances stem from what he describes as the government's failure to deliver on promises made before and during the abrogation of Article 370. Climate activist and education reformer Sonam Wangchuk has resumed his indefinite fast in protest against the government's lack of conversation on the Ladakh issue. Wangchuk, who was initially detained on September 30 when attempting to enter Delhi as part of the Dilli Chalo Padyatra, claimed that the Centre has reneged on promises made to the people of Ladakh after the abrogation of Article 370.

On entering Delhi, Wangchuk and other activists were detained but later released after they began fasting inside the prison. The protesters had demanded two conditions for breaking their fast: a visit to Rajghat to pay their respects to Mahatma Gandhi on his birth anniversary and a meeting with one of the top leaders—the Prime Minister, President, or Home Minister. However, despite assurances from the authorities, no meeting was scheduled. "They told us that they couldn't assure us a meeting because the leaders would be extremely busy, so we asked them to give us a date, even if it was weeks later, so we could decide whether to go back to Ladakh or stay in Delhi, and they had agreed to give us a date by October 4, on which condition we had agreed to break our fast on October 2 and to not hold a massive demonstration at Jantar Mantar the next day," he said.

On October 4, after receiving no further correspondence from the government, Wangchuk resumed his fast, accusing the government of trying to deceive the protesters. "They can fool us once, but they can't fool us twice. They wanted us to leave for Ladakh so that we would lose all the attention the Dilli Chalo Padyatra had brought to the issues... So we decided to proceed with the Anshan for which we asked for permissions to do it at Jantar Mantar, which would have been a valid place to hold the indefinite strike. We even signed an agreement that it would be only from 10 am to 5 pm, but it was rejected." "Despite asking for permission multiple times, they refused. So we decided to sit at Ladakh Bhawan for the Anshan, expecting to be detained again, but surprisingly, nothing has happened so far..." he added.

Wangchuk said Ladakh's grievances stem from what he describes as the government's failure to deliver on promises made before and during the abrogation of Ar-



icle 370. When asked about the support he had shown during the abrogation, he said, "Our support wasn't about 370 itself; we wanted to get out from under Kashmir and become a Union Territory (UT)." While Ladakh rejoiced at becoming a UT in 2019, Wangchuk clarified that the region had expected a UT with its own legislature. "Instead, we got a colony-type rule by the Lieutenant Governor (L-G). There's no people's participation, and the L-G's word is law," he remarked. "This was promised in official meetings and was even at the top of their manifesto in the 2019 and 2020 elections. We supported the move (370 abrogation) because we thought that something recorded in an official meeting and promised during elections would be implemented but we were let down in the next two to three years. We learned that they are not even willing to discuss that." Criticising the lack of consultation on Ladakh, he said, "Right now, it's not better than it was before the abrogation of Article 370... It's like we jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire." Comparing the situation to a cage, Wangchuk argued that while the government touts its increased budget for Ladakh, the region lacks real autonomy. "They say they have tenfolded the budget for Ladakh, but for what? The budget is decided by a single person who doesn't understand the region. He comes for three years, takes two to understand the area, makes mistakes, and then leaves. We are in a golden cage." Despite the current situation, Wangchuk expressed hope that Ladakh's plight would not be permanent. "I want to believe that we're in transition and that our leaders will understand what we are saying. When it served them, they were happy to have our support during the abrogation, but now that we remind them of their promises, they are not happy anymore."

## Bombay High Court disposes contempt plea alleging non-compliance of orders on potholes, roads by civic bodies; revives PIL

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday disposed of the contempt petition filed by a lawyer alleging non-compliance with the 2018 orders of HC by civic authorities to repair potholes along all arterial roads in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). A division of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar passed a judgement in a contempt petition by lawyer Raju Thakker and found that authorities had made efforts for compliance with the 2018 directions, and therefore, were not in contempt of the said orders.

However, considering the "public welfare and importance", the court revived the suo motu Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in which the court passed directions in 2018 and sought detailed replies from the civic authorities. The court said it was difficult for it to keep issuing directions in the contempt plea, hence it was reviving the PIL. "This court is of the considered opinion that respondents have made bonafide efforts for compliance with directions, therefore, they cannot be held to have committed contempt of orders dated February 24 and April 12, 2018. However, taking into consideration the public welfare and public importance of directions, in the light of the recognition of fundamental rights under Article 21, the PIL stands revived. Respondents are directed to take immediate corrective action and ensure full compliance with the directions of this court of 2018," the bench held. "The respondents shall submit a detailed compliance report through the affidavit in reply within eight weeks from today, failing which other coercive steps shall

be taken against them. List PIL on December 3, 2024. Contempt petition stands disposed of," the bench added. In February and April 2018, a division bench led by Justice Abhay S Oka (now a Supreme Court judge) passed orders on suo motu PIL, directing the repairing of potholes along all arterial roads in the city and devising a uniform mechanism to redress citizens' grievances related to bad roads and potholes.

During earlier hearings this year, the Bombay High Court raised concerns over the slow progress made in the work related to concreting all roads falling within the limits of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and stressed the need for a 'unified body' to maintain roads in Mumbai. Last year, the court summoned commissioners of six municipal corporations in MMR, including those of Mumbai, Thane, and Navi Mumbai, to explain why contempt should not be issued against them for disobedience and non-compliance with orders about potholes, uncovered manholes and poor condition of roads. Thereafter, while stating that the cause of deaths of pedestrians or cyclists falling in manholes or potholes is "man-made" and not a natural cause, the high court directed an immediate inspection through a spot survey by BMC officials accompanied by advocate-commissioners across 24 wards to inspect whether manholes across the city are covered and submit a report. The high court also directed BMC and the Mumbai Police to take deterrent measures against the theft of manhole covers and directed the installation of protective grills on all manholes.

## ‘I accept people’s verdict’, says Iltija Mufti as she concedes early defeat in Srigufwara-Bijbehara constituency



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Iltija Mufti has conceded an early defeat in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections 2024. The 37 year old daughter of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti was contesting from Srigufwara-Bijbehara constituency which is halfway through its counting process. "I accept the verdict of the people. The love & affection I received from everyone in Bijbehara will always stay with me. Gratitude to my PDP workers who

worked so hard throughout this campaign," said Iltija in a post made Tuesday on X.

Iltija is currently trailing from the Bijbehara constituency where Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri of the National Conference (NC) is leading by 4334 votes. Sofi Yusuf is the BJP candidate from this constituency. The young politician made her electoral debut with the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections this year. Iltija made her way into politics as the media advisor for Mehbooba after the PDP chief was detained following the abrogation of Article 370 last year. Iltija was also seen campaigning for her mother in the recent Lok Sabha polls in the Anantnag-Rajouri seat, from where the PDP chief had lost. Iltija emerged as a strong voice in Kashmir, amid the detention of major political leaders in Kashmir. Bijbehara is the traditional family seat of the Mufti family and comes under district Anantnag. Iltija took over the seat as the 2024 PDP candidate by replacing senior party leader Abdul Rehman Veeri, who represented the constituency from 1999 to 2018. He has now been moved to Anantnag East. Bijbehara was previously won by PDP leader Abdul Rehman Bhat in 2014.

## Early trends suggest NC-Congress edge in Jammu and Kashmir, PDP languishes, Independents struggle to make a dent

GNS News Agency, Oct 9 Going by early trends, the National Conference-Congress alliance appears to be heading to form the government in Jammu and Kashmir, while Independents and smaller parties – tagged by some as the BJP’s proxies – are failing to make a mark. The trends will give a sigh of relief to former chief minister and National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah, who is himself leading from both the Budgam and Ganderbal seats. "By this time tomorrow, it will all be clear. Now if only I could go to sleep and wake up 24 hours later. I'd be a happy person, Nerves," Omar tweeted on Monday night. Any party or alliance needs to win 46 seats to form the government in the 90-seat assembly in Jammu and Kashmir. There has been confusion, however, over the nomination of five members. While the National Conference-Congress alliance is inching towards the majority mark, early trends suggest that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has failed to hold even its south Kashmir stronghold.

While Omar is leading from both seats, Iltija Mufti, daughter of PDP president and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti, is trailing behind National Conference's Bashir Ahmad Veeri from the Bijbehara assembly seg-



ment. PDP's youth president Waheed Parra, however, is leading in Pulwama assembly segment. Trends also suggest that the National Conference is sweeping Srinagar city, leading in seven of the eight assembly seats of the city.

The Jamaat-e-Islami backed candidates also seem to have failed to make a mark in the assembly elections, and the banned outfit's only winning prospect, Sayar Ahmad Reshi, is trailing behind Communist leader M Y Tarigami.

## Engineer Rashid’s word of caution to parties: ‘Don’t form govt till J&K statehood is restored’

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

A day before the J&K Assembly election results are declared, Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) president and Baramulla MP Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, on Monday urged the mainstream political parties of Jammu and Kashmir to hold off on government formation until J&K's statehood is restored. Rashid is on interim bail till October 12 and is expected to return to Tihar the following day. At a press conference, said, "I understand the INDIA alliance has its limitations. The Congress took votes in Kashmir but remained silent on (Article) 370. Right now, I have a suggestion to all of them, till statehood is restored to us, try not to form government."

Stating that he does not wish to "add bitterness" to the atmosphere, Rashid said even if a party or an alliance did secure a majority, "it would be better if all these parties should focus on one point and tell the Union government to return statehood, now that elections are over". Urging all parties, including the National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to come together, Rashid said, "This is not a big issue. Modi ji has anyway changed the goalpost. Unitedly, they should tell the Union government to restore statehood so it restores some dignity and if they want the support of the AIP, we will support them." He said his party's support would be irrespective of the fact of who gets a majority because "the government that takes over will have limited powers".

Termining this the "wish of every voter", Rashid said that political parties in J&K "should move beyond issuing statements and take practical actions to restore the self-confidence and rights of the people". If all the elected representatives of J&K stand united and tell the Centre that they will stay away from efforts at government formation till statehood is restored, "it will be good for the people", said the MP.

NC vice president Omar Abdullah hit out at Rashid, saying he was playing into the hands of the BJP. "The man goes to Delhi for 24 hours and comes back to play straight into the hands of the BJP. The BJP would like nothing more than to extend central rule in J&K if they aren't in a position to form a government," Abdullah posted on X. Rashid, who was granted bail last month to campaign for the Assembly elections, said on Monday, "For five years, the Gupkar alliance and the so-called regional parties did not do anything. Now that elections are over, I humbly request the INDIA Alliance, PDP, Peoples Conference, Apni Party and others to stand united now." On the issue of nomination of members to the J&K Assembly, Rashid questioned the Centre's claims of integration of J&K, saying, "If Modi ji and Amit Shah ji claim that integration is complete with ek nishan, ek vidhan, why is there this system of nominations for J&K?"

Rashid said Kashmiri Pandits were eligible to contest elections and were stakeholders "just as other Kashmiris are." Nominating members is "against the spirit of democracy and Constitution," he added. With the exit polls also indicating that no party or coalition in J&K may end up with a simple majority, the confusion regarding the five members to be nominated to the Assembly by the Lieutenant Governor has parties worried. While most parties have said Lt Governor Manoj Sinha should not make the nominations without the "aid and advice" of the Council of Ministers that will be sworn in soon, the BJP



has said he is not required to as per the J&K Reorganisation Act. Several legal experts The Indian Express spoke to also differed over what the changes implied. Rashid's AIP contested 34 of the 90 Assembly seats in J&K, largely in Kashmir. During his campaign, the MP targeted all the parties and said his fight was "for the people of Jammu and Kashmir" and not for power.

## NC says no fiddling with people's mandate, warns BJP of indulging in 'jugaad'

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Srinagar: National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah Tuesday asserted there should be no "fiddling" with the mandate of people in Jammu and Kashmir, and the Centre and the Raj Bhavan must not indulge in any "machinations".

"Transparency should be there. Whatever happens should be done in a transparent manner. There should be no fiddling with the peoples' mandate. If the mandate of the people is against the BJP, then the BJP should not indulge in any 'jugaad' (machinations) or something else," Abdullah said as early trends from counting of votes showed the party ahead of the BJP and other rivals. "The Raj Bhavan and the Centre should accept the decision of people the way we did in the Parliamentary polls," Abdullah told reporters here. The NC leader, who is contesting the assembly polls from Ganderbal and Budgam seats, expressed hope his party's alliance with the Congress will with the polls. "We have hopes of a win, but the rest is in the hands of God. We will come to know around the noon what the people of J-K have decided," he added. When asked about the provision about the nomination of five MLAs by the LG, the former chief minister of the erstwhile state of J-K said the administration should await the advice of the elected government. "Some lawyers have given their opinion. Our lawyer, who helped us win on the Ladakh (symbol) issue (in Lok Sabha election), has said the LG has no right to nominate the MLAs. This is the right of an elected government after the assembly is formed." "This happens in Parliament as well. When Pranab Mukherjee was the President, who was made President by the Congress party, when the nominations happened, it was done on the advice of the Modi government, and he did not nominate the Congress members," Abdullah said.

## Abdullah father-son duo on a different page – Farooq bats for alliance with PDP, Omar says ‘put a lid on speculation’



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

With exit polls predicting a hung Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference (NC) president and former chief minister Farooq Abdullah said his party is open to forming an alliance with its political rival, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). "Even if we don't need it (PDP's support to form the government), we will still take it," Farooq Abdullah said Monday when asked about the possibility of a post-poll alliance with the Mehbooba Mufti-led party. "We have to move together if we have to save this state," he said.

However, on the same day, the senior Abdullah's son and NC vice president Omar Abdullah has called any talks of a post-poll alliance with the PDP "premature speculation". The PDP's Iltija Mufti has also termed them

as "unnecessary speculation". Farooq said everyone must stick together in J&K to overcome the "difficult situation" that it is in. "We are in a very difficult situation, we have a tough job ahead. See the situation of our children – educated with high degrees but without any jobs. See the drug menace that we see today. All the contracts are going to people from outside. We can't even collect a spoon of sand (from the river bed)," he said, adding: "All of us have to strive together."

Both the NC and the PDP are constituents of the INDIA bloc as well as the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD). However, they did not fight the Assembly election as part of an alliance and fielded candidates against each other. In a post on X, Omar Abdullah was not as reconciliatory towards the PDP as his father. "They (PDP) haven't extended support, they haven't offered support, and we don't know what the voters have decided yet, so I really wish we could put a lid on all this premature speculation for the next 24 hours," he said. This stance was echoed by Iltija Mufti, the media adviser for her mother and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti. "Unnecessary speculations. Let me put the record straight. PDP's senior leadership will take a call on extending support to a secular front only once the results are out. This is our official stand," she posted on X. According to exit polls, the NC-Congress alliance is likely to get most seats but may fall short of the majority. In such a scenario, the PDP may play an important role in the government formation. The votes will be counted Tuesday.

## CBI faces rap from special court over probe into National Games stadium

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

A special court in Ranchi has pulled up the Central Bureau of Investigation for filing a closure report in its probe into alleged irregularities in the construction of a mega sports complex between 2006 and 2008 for conducting the 34th National Games in the Jharkhand capital. The probe stemmed from allegations that there was embezzlement of public money during the construction, with the estimates increasing from Rs 206 crore to Rs 425 crore. Allegations had also emerged of irregularities in inviting the consulting firm as well as the companies for construction work. The National Games were held from February 12-26, 2011.

Special Judge Prabhat Kumar Sharma, in his order last month, said the CBI submitted the final closure report "without examining" relevant people. The court also noted that "it can't be said" that the investigation was done in a "proper way". The CBI investigation was ordered by the Jharkhand High Court in April 2022 based on a cluster of public interest litigations. In December 2023, the CBI filed a closure report in the probe. "During the course of investigation, no criminality could be detected on the part of any person or public servant," the CBI closure report dated December 27 last year states. The Ranchi CBI Court, in an order dated September 9 this year, however said, "It can't be said that the investigation was done in a proper way as the evidence has not been collected by the IO (investigating officer) in a manner required as per the law for the fair investigation. Amazingly the IO of the case for reasons best known to him remained unaware towards the witnesses, who are acquainted with the facts, mentioned in the complaint on the record and ignored them." The court then said that statements of all persons who filed the PILs should be recorded and placed on record.

The court also said details should be collected and placed on record regarding monetary transactions, with the details of officers and persons who have taken part in

## 144 aspirants bought leaked NEET-UG paper: CBI



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

cbi, neet-ug paper leak, NEEET paperleak case chargesheet, modus operandi, exam fraud, medical colleges, Jharkhand, Indian express "After leaving the school premises, he handed over the photos of the Q-paper to his accomplice Surendra Kumar Sharma who was at the Raj Guest House, Hazaribagh," the CBI Spokesperson said. The CBI has identified 144 candidates who had allegedly paid to get NEET-UG leaked and solved papers hours before they were to take the examination for admissions in medical colleges. "In its third charge sheet filed last week, the agency has named Pankaj Kumar who stole the papers from Oasis school in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand in collusion with its principal Ahsanul Haque and vice-principal Md Imtiyaz Alam. The crime was allegedly committed once trunks carrying the paper reached the school from the bank vault after 8 am on May 5, the day of the examination," a spokesperson of the CBI said. Haque was the city coordinator for Hazaribagh and Alam was designated the centre superintendent by the National Testing Agency for conducting the NEET UG-2024 examination. The spokesperson said the chargesheet with over 5,500 pages, carrying findings on the basis of 298 witnesses, 290 documents and 45 material objects, gives a detailed modus operandi of the gang that had leaked the paper. "Haque and Alam allegedly allowed Kumar, a civil engineer of the 2017 batch of the National Institute of Technology, Jamshedpur, to enter the room where the trunks were kept," the spokesperson added. "Once inside, Kumar tampered with the hinges of the trunk containing the question papers, removed one question paper and photographed all its pages. He put back the paper and resealed the trunk before exiting the control room. Pankaj used a sophisticated tool kit to open



the process of allotment of tender and signed on bills for payments and received benefits, if any. In January 2008, a report by a Jharkhand Assembly committee, formed to look into the allegations, had said that the reason for the huge increase in the cost of the project "is the government's apathy, negligence of government officials, and complete dependence on consultants and contractors for planning, designing and construction". This report was also cited in the PILs filed in the High Court. "An increase of 150 percent in the cost of the project... blatant violation of accepted rules, regulations, codes and traditions in the selection of suppliers of scheduled category materials, for which responsible persons should be identified and punitive and corrective action should be taken," the report stated. Among the allegations CBI investigated was the selection of a consultant company for concept, design, consultancy and supervision work. Despite another firm getting higher marks on the selection parameters, the tender selection committee rejected it on the ground that it did not submit relevant papers during the submission of the bid. The CBI, in its closure report, said, "As such, it is not possible to establish the abuse of official position against any public servants over this allegation."

and seal the trunk. This tool kit was seized by CBI from the residence of Pankaj Kumar," the spokesperson said. "After leaving the school premises, he handed over the photos of the Q-paper to his accomplice Surendra Kumar Sharma who was at the Raj Guest House, Hazaribagh," the CBI Spokesperson said. Nine medical students solved these question papers at the Guest House in Hazaribagh. These solved papers were allegedly scanned and electronically sent to different locations where gangs received them, printed them and handed them to the aspirants who had paid money.

## Overpriced consoles and a game of the year: Weekly Gaming News Roundup

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Hyderabad: A look at the PS5 Pro and Sony's Astro Bot: This last two weeks in the world of gaming have been all about Sony as the Japanese conglomerate dominated the news for a variety of reasons. Firstly, for pulling the cord on the live service first person shooter Concord after just two weeks, then for the launch of Astro Bot – a game most people are calling a game of the year contender, and lastly for lifting the hood on the PS5 Pro, a mid-gen refresh available from November 7 and priced at a whopping 700 USD! This Sony centred article begins by ignoring the unexpected demise of Concord and instead focusing on the latter two pieces of news. Let's talk the PS5 Pro first. The biggest question most players are asking after baulking at that incredible price is what makes the Pro so expensive? The 9-minute announcement video on YouTube has been followed by a deluge of memes and vitriol as most of us have wondered if the pricing is reflective of how monopolistic and uni-dimensional the console market has gotten. Add to this the significant number of press articles either trying to justify the price or trying to advocate for building gaming PCs at the price that will be a lot more capable than the Pro, and I feel that most of us have missed the point. Launching a console refresh seems ridiculous to me when there are so few exclusive games and hardly any that have utilized the power of the PS5 and its superfast SSD.

## We are ready to protest for another 15 years if constitutional safeguards not given: Ladakh Buddhist Association President



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

The Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), an influential religious body in Ladakh, said on Monday (October 7, 2024) that it was ready to protest for another 15 years, if necessary if the demand for constitutional safeguards was not met. LBA president Cherring Dorjay Lakruk said in an interview to The Hindu that any adverse action against climate activist Sonam Wangchuk had consequences in Ladakh. After his detention by the Delhi Police on September 30, people had resorted to stone pelting and stopped traffic in Ladakh, causing inconvenience to tourists from other parts of the country. Mr. Wangchuk and 20 volunteers have been sitting on an indefinite hunger strike, surviving on salt and water at Ladakh Bhavan in Delhi since Sunday after he failed to get an audience with the Prime Minister, Home Minister or the President of India. Mr. Wangchuk, who along with 150 people from Ladakh had set out on a foot march from Leh on September 1, was detained by the police as the contingent reached the Delhi border on September 30. After remaining in detention for five days, Mr. Wangchuk was released

on October 6.

Mr. Lakruk is also the co-convenor of the Leh Apex Body (LAB), a civil society organisation, which along with the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), has been protesting for the past four years seeking Statehood, inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution (tribal status for Ladakh), employment opportunities for the local people and a Rajya Sabha seat and a Lok Sabha seat each for the two regions. "The arrest of Sonam Wangchuk could lead to law and order problems. After Mr. Wangchuk was detained in Delhi, people reacted spontaneously and there was a law and order problem here. A call was given to stop vehicles from plying and when somebody tried to go against it, stones were pelted and vehicles were damaged but our volunteers controlled the situation. The tourist season is going on, the government should not do anything adverse," Mr. Lakruk, a former member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), said. He said Mr. Wangchuk was ready to sit on a fast for 28 days but would call it off if the government invited the high-powered committee for talks in the next few days.

"We have not spoken with the Lieutenant Governor. To resume talks or not is in the hands of Home Minister Amit Shah, nothing happens in the Ministry without his nod. We started the protest under compulsion. Staying away from home and sitting on a fast is not easy. We are prepared for a long haul, the struggle may continue for 10-15 years. We know it will not be solved immediately. We have to keep hammering so that the conscience of the people is alive," he said. Ladakh became a Union Territory without a Legislative Assembly on August 5, 2019 after the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution was read down by the Parliament.

## Derogatory remarks against any religion unacceptable, says Yogi Adityanath

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Monday (October 7, 2024) that derogatory remarks against any faith or sect are unacceptable, but anarchy in the name of protest will also not be tolerated. Mr. Adityanath was speaking at a meeting with senior officials that reviewed the law-and-order situation. The CM's remarks follow objectionable remarks against the Prophet Muhammad by the priest Yati Narsinghanand.

The alleged defamatory comments led to tension in various parts of U.P., with stone-pelting reported in Saharanpur. "Derogatory remarks against deities, great figures, or saints of any caste, religion, or sect are unacceptable. Anarchy in the name of protest will not be tolerated either. Anyone who makes derogatory remarks will be dealt with strictly under the law. People of all religions and sects must show mutual respect," said Mr. Adityanath. "Every citizen should have a sense of gratitude towards great figures, but this cannot be imposed on anyone," he added. The U.P. CM said that anarchy, vandalism, or arson in the name of protest will not be tolerated, warning



that anyone attempting such violence will face the consequences. Mr. Adityanath directed that every district and police station must ensure the Sharadiya Navratri and Vijaydashami festivals are celebrated in an atmosphere of joy, peace, and harmony. "Identify those who seek to disrupt the environment and take strict action. Deal firmly with anyone acting against the law," he added.

## Kolkata rape and murder case: CBI files chargesheet against prime accused Sanjay Roy



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) filed a chargesheet in the rape and murder of a doctor at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital.

The chargesheet filed before a court in Kolkata at Sealdah, 58 days after the incident shook the State named Sanjay Roy, the only accused arrested in connection with the crime. So far, the CBI's investigation has focused on Roy as the only suspect in the rape and murder. The accused, a civic police volunteer, was arrested by the Kolkata Police before the CBI took over the investigation in the case. Questions have been raised about the involvement of multiple persons in the gruesome crime but the chargesheet filed by the agency on Monday by naming only one accused has for the time being, ruled out involvement of multiple persons.

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud is also monitoring the investigation in the case and has issued a series of directives to both the Union government and West Bengal administration. The CBI has submitted to the Supreme Court the progress of investigation in the case. The CBI, however, has arrested five others in various other aspects relating to the case, including Sandip Kumar Ghosh, the former principal of the State-run health facility and Abhijit Mondal, former officer-in-charge of Tala police station, for tampering evidence in connection with the rape and murder. The agency is simultaneously probing the financial irregularities at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital and five persons including Mr. Ghosh have been arrested in this regard. Meanwhile, resident doctors of State-run hospitals who are on a hunger strike continued their fast-unto-death for the third consecutive day on Monday. They announced that they will organise a rally in Kolkata from central Kolkata's College Square to Esplanade around 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday to press for their demands.

The doctors who had called off cease-work last week are pressing for fulfilling 10 points with the primary being ensuring safety and security of medical professionals in State-run hospitals. Seven doctors from various medical colleges in the State have joined the hunger strike and their health parameters remained normal on Monday. West Bengal Chief Secretary Manoj Pant on Monday held a press conference and appealed to the

## Why did the Supreme Court strike down 'casteist' provisions in India's prison manuals? | Explained



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

The Supreme Court on October 3 declared that caste-based division of labour in prisons is "unconstitutional" marking a significant milestone in addressing institutional biases entrenched in India's correctional system. Accordingly, a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud struck down several provisions in State prison manuals that reinforced such caste differences for being violative of the fundamental rights of prisoners.

What was the case?

The court was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition filed by journalist Sukanya Shantha highlighting provisions in prison manuals in States such as Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala that legitimised caste inequalities. For instance, it was pointed out that the separation of Thevars, Nadars, and Pallars in different sections of the Palayamkottai Central Jail in Tamil Nadu constituted a "glaring instance of caste-based segregation of barracks". Similarly, the Rajasthan Prison Rules, 1951, allocated latrine duties to the "Mehtar" caste — a Scheduled Caste community — while Brahmmins or "sufficiently high caste Hindu prisoners" were assigned to the kitchens, thereby perpetuating caste-based labour divisions.

How do prison manuals reinforce colonial stereotypes?

The now-repealed Criminal Tribes Act, 1871, permitted the British colonial regime to designate certain marginalised communities as "criminal tribes" based on the stereotypical notion that they were "born criminals." Following the revocation of the Act, these groups were reclassified as "denotified tribes" yet prison manuals continued to label them as "habitual offenders" sans any conviction. The court noted that such classification perpetuates colonial-era caste-based discrimination, exacerbating the social and economic marginalisation of these communities. Citing examples from various prison manuals, the court highlighted that Rule 404 of the West Bengal Jail Code stipulates that a convict overseer may be appointed as a night guard only if "he does not belong to any class that may have a strong natural tendency to escape, such as men of wandering tribes." Similarly, prison manuals in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala define "habitual criminals" as individuals who, by "habit," are "robbers, housebreakers, dacoits, thieves, or receivers of stolen property" or who "habitually commit extortion, cheating, counterfeiting coins, currency notes,

stamps, or forgery," even in the absence of any prior convictions. Further, the rules in Andhra Pradesh equate "a member of a wandering or criminal tribe" with "a bad or dangerous character, or one who has ever escaped or attempted to escape from lawful custody," thus prohibiting their employment in any labour outside the prison walls.

How are fundamental rights of prisoners violated?

Underscoring that caste may be employed as a criterion for classification only when it seeks to benefit victims of caste discrimination, the top court ruled that the prison manuals failed to achieve this objective and instead contravened Article 14 of the Constitution. "Segregating prisoners on the basis of caste would reinforce caste differences or animosity that ought to be prevented in the first place," it reasoned. The judges further opined that differentiating between inmates based on "habit," "custom," "superior mode of living," and "natural tendency to escape" offends principles of substantive equality. The ruling also flagged the perpetuation of both direct and indirect discrimination against marginalised communities. "By assigning cleaning and sweeping work to the marginalised castes, while allowing the high castes to do cooking, the Manuals directly discriminate. This is an instance of direct discrimination under Article 15(1)", the Bench asserted. Furthermore, assigning specific tasks to these communities based on their purported "customary" roles, rather than offering "more skilled, dignified, or intellectual work," was deemed to result in indirect discrimination. Referring to prison rules that require food to be cooked by members of a "suitable caste" or "menial duties" to be exclusively performed by communities "accustomed" to such work, the court noted that these practices constituted untouchability, prohibited under Article 17 of the Constitution. "When Prison Manuals restrict the reformation of prisoners from marginalised communities, they violate their right to life. At the same time, such provisions deprive prisoners from marginalised groups of a sense of dignity and the expectation that they should be treated equally", the Chief Justice further underscored.

What were the directions issued?

All States and Union Territories were directed to amend their prison manuals and rules within three months to abolish such discriminatory practices. The court also mandated the removal of the "caste column" and any references to caste in the registers of undertrials and convicts maintained in prisons. Several lacunas were also flagged in the Union government's Model Prison Manual, 2016, and the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023. The 2016 manual, in particular, faced criticism for offering a vague definition of "habitual offender", allowing States to define the term based on stereotypical assumptions against denotified tribes. Consequently, the court ordered that necessary reforms be implemented in both the 2016 manual and the 2023 Act within three months. To ensure compliance with these directives, district legal services authorities and boards of visitors were tasked with conducting regular inspections. Additionally, police authorities were instructed to refrain from arbitrarily arresting members of denotified tribes without adhering to the guidelines established in prior Supreme Court rulings.

## Dhangar reservation: Sudhakar Shinde committee submits report

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

The Sudhakar Shinde committee, formulated by the Maharashtra government to address the issue of the Dhangar reservation, submitted its report to the Maharashtra government on Monday (October 7, 2024). It is likely to be tabled in the cabinet meeting which will be held Days after the protest of the Dhangar community seeking the benefit of the Scheduled Tribe reservation, the committee has finally submitted the report. "The report has been submitted to the government today. But it is a confidential document. The details cannot be divulged by the committee. The government will decide whether to make it public or not," a committee member toldt is crucial on the background of the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly election where the Dhangar community claims to hold sway over 92 of the 288 seats. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde had recently promised the Dhangar community of reservation under ST category.

Meanwhile, in a significant step, the Maharashtra government has also invalidated the caste certificates issued to the seven Dhangads in the State. This year, during a hearing in the Bombay High Court, the State government had submitted that there are no 'Dhangads' in Maharashtra. The interveners had brought to the notice of the court that seven members of 'Khillare' family in Sambhajinagar had 'Dhangad' certificates. The government has now invalidated them. "This supports our claim that we are the Dhangads mentioned in the Constitution as the Scheduled Tribe in Maharashtra," Ganesh Keskar, Dhangar leader, told The Hindu. The tribal community has already indicated that it will oppose any such move by the government. The Sudhakar Shinde committee was appointed to study whether the State government can give ST certificates to Dhangars under the current provisions of law. The committee was asked to study how other State governments had accommodated the Dhangars in



their states. The committee had accordingly visited several States before submitting the report. Though the Dhangar reservation issue is not new in Maharashtra, this is the first time that the community which has over 1.5 crore population in Maharashtra, has changed the strategy to claim that 'Dhangad' should be read as 'Dhangar'. Till now, several studies have been done in Maharashtra to determine if Dhangars fulfil the criteria to belong to Scheduled Tribes. The ST list has the mention of 'Oraon Dhangad'. Several committees in the past have concluded that Dhangars do not fit into the criteria for STs. "After these Dhangad caste certificates have been made invalid, it supports our claim. Now, the way has been paved for the government to issue a GR stating that Dhangad should be read as Dhangar. Devendra Fadnis had promised us in 2019 that Dhangars will be given reservation. If Eknath Shinde fulfils his promise tomorrow, the Dhangar community will stand by him," Mr. Keskar said. The tribal community has already indicated that it will not take this lying down. Tribal MLAs had jumped on the safety nets of the State Secretariat recently against the Dhangar reservation demand.

## MP woman loses Rs 46 lakh to fraudsters after 5-day 'digital arrest'

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Indore: A gang of fraudsters allegedly duped a 65-year-old woman of Rs 46 lakh after subjecting her to fake interrogation for five days, in a latest case of 'digital arrest' in Madhya Pradesh's Indore, police said on Tuesday. 'Digital arrest' is a new method of cyber fraud, in which the fraudsters scare people by making audio or video calls by posing as law enforcement officers and confine them to their homes by giving them the false pretense of arrest. A member of the fraudsters gang called the woman last month and posed as an officer of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Rajesh Dandotiya said. "The gang member deceived the woman by saying that a person misused her bank account for drug trafficking, terrorist activities and money laundering and due to her collusion with that person, an arrest warrant has been issued against her," he said. The fraudster deceived the woman through a video call by saying she was placed under



"digital arrest", the official said, adding she was subjected to fake interrogation for five days. During the questioning, the woman was threatened that if she did not transfer the money deposited in her bank account to the accounts mentioned by the gang, then her and her children's lives could be in danger, he said.

## Israel claims it killed another Hezbollah commander in Beirut strike



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Beirut: The Israeli military said on Tuesday it had killed a senior Hezbollah commander in a strike on Beirut, a day after the one-year anniversary of the October 7 attack was marked by mourning and demonstrations around the globe.

The military said the strike killed Suhail Hussein, who it said was responsible for overseeing logistics, budget and management of the militant group. Palestinian militants in Gaza fired a barrage of rockets into Israel on Monday, underscoring militants' resilience in the face of a devastating Israeli offensive in Gaza that has killed about 42,000 Palestinians, according to local medical officials, destroyed large areas and displaced around 90% of its population. A year ago, Hamas-led militants blew holes in Israel's security fence and stormed into army bases and farming communities, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250.

## North Korean soldiers 'highly likely' killed in Ukraine: Seoul



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

North Korean soldiers are likely fighting in Ukraine alongside Russian troops, with some believed already killed and more expected to be sent, Seoul's defence chief said. Ukrainian media reported this weekend that six North Korean military officers were killed in a Ukrainian missile attack on Russian-occupied territory near Donetsk on October 3. Seoul's Defence Minister, Kim Yong-hyun, told lawmakers Tuesday that it was "highly likely, considering various circumstances" that the report was true. "We assess that the occurrence of casualties among North Korean officers and soldiers in Ukraine is highly likely, considering various circumstances," he said. North Korea is expected to send more regular sol-

diers to support Russia's war effort, he added. "The issue of deploying regular troops is highly likely due to the mutual agreements that resemble a military alliance between Russia and North Korea," Kim said. Experts have long said North Korean missiles are being deployed in Ukraine by Russian forces -- something both Moscow and Pyongyang have denied. South Korea also claims Pyongyang has sent thousands of containers of weapons to Russia for use in Ukraine. The nuclear-armed North has publicly bolstered military ties with Moscow in recent years. President Vladimir Putin made a rare visit to Pyongyang in June, where he signed a mutual defence agreement with leader Kim Jong Un. Analysts have warned that the recent ramped-up testing and production of artillery and cruise missiles by the North could be in preparation for shipments to Russia. North Korea is barred by UN sanctions from any tests using ballistic technology. But Moscow used its UN Security Council veto in March to effectively end UN monitoring of violations, for which Pyongyang has specifically thanked Russia. North Korea is expected to scrap a landmark inter-Korean agreement signed in 1991 at a parliamentary meeting this week as part of Kim's drive to officially define the South, Washington's security ally, as an enemy state.

Moscow and Pyongyang have been allies since North Korea's founding after World War II and have drawn even closer since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

## Hurricane Milton advances to Category 5 as Florida orders evacuations

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Florida's storm-battered Gulf Coast raced against a Category 5 hurricane Monday (October 7, 2024) as workers sprinted to pick up debris left over from Helene two weeks ago and highways were clogged with people fleeing ahead of the storm. The center of Hurricane Milton could make ashore Wednesday (October 9, 2024) in the Tampa Bay region, which has not endured a direct hit by a major hurricane in more than a century. Scientists expect the system to weaken slightly before landfall, though it could retain hurricane strength as it churns across central Florida toward the Atlantic Ocean. That would largely spare other states ravaged by Helene, which killed at least 230 people on its path from Florida to the Carolinas. "This is the real deal here with Milton," Tampa Mayor Jane Castor told a news conference. "If you want to take on Mother Nature, she wins 100% of the time." Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said Monday that it was imperative for debris from Helene to be cleared ahead of Milton's arrival so the pieces cannot become projectiles. More than 300 vehicles gathered debris Sunday.



federal workers were called on to help in one of the largest mobilizations of federal personnel in history.

Milton's approach stirred memories of 2017's Hurricane Irma, when about 7 million people were urged to evacuate Florida in an exodus that jammed freeways and clogged gas stations. Some people who left vowed never to evacuate again. By Monday morning, some gas stations in the Fort Myers and Tampa areas had already run out of gas. Fuel continued to arrive in Florida, and the state had amassed hundreds of thousands of gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel, with much more on the way, DeSantis said. A steady stream of vehicles headed north toward the Florida Panhandle on Interstate 75, the main highway on the west side of the peninsula, as residents heeded evacuation orders. Traffic clogged the southbound lanes of the highway for miles as other residents headed for the relative safety of Fort Lauderdale and Miami on the other side of the state.

Candice Briggs, along with her husband, their three young kids and their dog, planned to head to a hotel north of Jacksonville less than two weeks after Helene sent a foot and a half of water into her family's home in the Tampa Bay community of Seminole. The family had just settled into their temporary lodgings at an extended family member's home when they had to evacuate again before even finishing their post-Helene loads of laundry.

"Most of the tears I've cried have been out of exhaustion or gratitude. Just that we're safe and that we followed our instincts to evacuate," Mr. Briggs said. "Mostly I am grateful. But I am overwhelmed and I am exhausted." Mr. Briggs was worried about her storm-damaged house, where workers have already torn out feet of sodden drywall, leaving behind exposed beams she fears will be even more vulnerable to the towering wall of water that forecasters say Milton could lash against the flood-prone stretch of the Gulf Coast. Even though Tanya Marunchak's Belleair Beach home was flooded with more than 4 feet (1.2 meters) of water from Helene, she and her husband were unsure if they should evacuate. She wanted to leave, but her husband thought their three-story home was sturdy enough to withstand Milton.

"We lost all our cars, all our furniture. The first floor was completely destroyed," Ms. Marunchak said. "This is the oddest weather predicament that there has ever been." In Mexico, dozens of residents and tourists lined up with suitcases to catch an evacuation ferry off Holbox island on the eastern tip of the Yucatan Peninsula, popular for its shallow seascapes. The low-lying, flood-prone island may be one of the closest points that Hurricane Milton brushes before moving toward Florida. Off-and-on resident Mariú Macías, joined by her daughters, was calm and smiling but afraid of what Milton could do. "We are afraid something might happen to us," she said. "We're going someplace safer."

Milton's wind speed increased by 92 mph (148 kph) in 24 hours — a pace that trails only those of Hurricane Wilma in 2005 and Hurricane Felix in 2007. One reason Milton strengthened so rapidly is its small "pinhole eye," just like Wilma's, said Colorado State University hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach.

The storm will likely go through what's called an "eye wall replacement cycle," a natural process that forms a new eye and expands the storm in size but weakens its wind speeds, Mr. Klotzbach said. The Gulf of Mexico is unusually warm right now, so "the fuel is just there," and Milton probably went over an extra-warm eddy that helped goose it further, said University of Albany hurricane scientist Kristen Corbosiero. The last hurricane to be a Category 5 at landfall in the mainland U.S. was Michael in 2018. With the storm approaching, schools in Pinellas County, home to St. Petersburg, were being converted into shelters. Airports in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Orlando planned to close. Walt Disney World said it was operating normally for the time being. In Mexico, Yucatan state Gov. Joaquín Díaz ordered the cancellation of all nonessential activities except for grocery stores, hospitals, pharmacies and gas stations starting Monday, and Mexican officials organized buses to evacuate residents from the coastal city of Progreso. It has been two decades since so many storms crisscrossed Florida in such a short period of time. In 2004, an unprecedented five storms struck Florida within six weeks, including three hurricanes that pummeled central Florida.

## Elon Musk says he is 'all in' on Trump in U.S. election



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Elon Musk is ramping up his public support of Donald Trump, telling Tucker Carlson in a conversation streamed Monday (October 8, 2024) that he is "all in" on the Republican Presidential candidate. After appearing alongside Trump at a weekend rally, the world's richest man used a cozy two-hour chat with Mr. Carlson to push talking points, including what he said was the threat to democracy if Democrat Kamala Harris prevails in November's election.

"My view is that if Trump doesn't win this election, it's the last election we're going to have," the Tesla and SpaceX boss told Mr. Carlson. Mr. Musk, who has increasingly courted controversy in recent years, said he believed "illegals" — migrants — were being deliberately transported to a handful of key States, where if they are eventually granted citizenship, they would become Democrat voters. "Now these swing-state margins are sometimes ten- twenty-thousand votes. So what happens if you put hundreds of thousands of people into each swing State?" So my prediction is, if there's another four years of a Dem administration, they will legalize so many illegals that... the next election there won't be any swing states,

and this will be a single-party country." The assertions from Mr. Musk — who is himself from South Africa — are a common refrain on the political right, which alleges a conspiracy between Democrats and immigrants. Mr. Musk is increasingly becoming a surrogate for Trump on the campaign trail and is reportedly planning to make a number of stops in battleground states in the coming weeks. Over the weekend, he unveiled a program promising to pay \$47 to anyone who registers voters in Pennsylvania, Georgia, North Carolina, Arizona, Michigan, Wisconsin and Michigan. The scheme is looking to copy successful referral programs the South Africa-born entrepreneur has used in the past with his Tesla electric cars. In his nearly two-hour chat with Mr. Carlson, in which the two men chuckled repeatedly at each other's pronouncements, Mr. Musk said he had thrown his full backing behind fellow billionaire Trump. "If he loses, it's going to be hard for you to pretend you never supported him," said Mr. Carlson. "I'm like, all in, baby," replied Mr. Musk. "How long do you think my prison sentence is gonna be?" he chortled, laughing at the idea that the tables would turn against him under a Democratic administration. "Will I see my children? I don't know."

## North Korea's Kim again threatens to use nuclear weapons against South Korea, U.S.



GNS News Agency, Oct 9

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned again that he could use nuclear weapons in potential conflicts with South Korea and the United States, as he accused them of provoking North Korea and raising animosities on the Korean Peninsula, state media reported on Tuesday, October 8, 2024. Kim Jong Un has issued similar threats to use nuclear weapons preemptively numerous times, but his latest warning came as outside experts say North Korea could ramp up hostilities ahead of next month's U.S. Presidential election. In a Monday (October 7, 2024) speech at a university named after him, "Kim Jong Un University of National Defence", he said that North Korea "will without hesitation use all its attack capabilities against its enemies" if they attempt to use armed forces against North Korea, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency. "The use of nuclear weapons is not ruled out in this case," he said. He said North Korea's nuclear response posture must be fully enhanced because South Korea and the United States are pushing to beef up their military alliance based on joint nuclear and strategic planning, a move that he said would increase the danger of breaking the balance of power on the Korean Peninsula. Mr. Kim apparently refers to the new South Korea-U.S. deterrence guideline that the two countries signed in July to integrate South Korean conventional capabilities with U.S. nuclear weapons to better deal with North Korea's evolving nuclear threats. South Korea has no nuclear weapons.

Since adopting an aggressive nuclear doctrine in 2022, North Korea has repeatedly vowed to use nuclear weapons first if it perceives the leadership in Pyongyang as under threat. However many experts question if North Korea could really do so because its military is outgunned by the U.S. and South Korean forces. U.S. and South Korean officials have warned that an attempt by North Korea to use nuclear weapons would result in the end of the Kim government.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula deepened in recent weeks, with North Korea unveiling a facility to produce weapons-grade uranium, a nuclear ingredient, and continuing a run of missile tests. In recent responses to questions from The Associated Press, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said that North Korea's disclosure of that facility was likely an attempt to grab U.S. attention ahead of next month's Presidential election, and the North will likely stage major provocations like a nuclear test explosion and a long-range missile test. Many analysts say North Korea will likely leverage its enlarged nuclear arsenal for U.S. concessions like sanctions relief after a new U.S. administration is inaugurated. North Korea earlier said its rubber-stamp parliament was to meet on October 7. But as of Tuesday, state media hasn't said whether the parliament meeting began as scheduled. Observers say the parliament meeting was likely meant to constitutionally declare a hostile "two-state" system on the Korean Peninsula to formally reject reconciliation with South Korea and codify new national borders. In January, Mr. Kim ordered the rewriting of the constitution to remove the long-running State goal of a peaceful Korean unification and cement South Korea as an "invariable principal enemy." All exchange and cooperation programs between the two Koreas remain dormant since a broader US-North Korea diplomacy on the North's nuclear program collapsed in 2019. Since late May, North Korea has floated thousands of trash-carrying balloons toward South Korea, reviving a Cold War-style psychological campaign. On Tuesday, South Korea's military said North Korea was again launching such balloons across the border.

## Harris calls Trump 'incredibly irresponsible' for spreading misinformation about Helene response

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Vice President Kamala Harris on Monday (October 7) called former President Donald Trump "incredibly irresponsible" for spreading falsehoods about the federal response to Hurricane Helene's destruction, offering especially sharp words as a new storm bears down on Florida with just weeks until Election Day. "There's a lot of mis- and disinformation being pushed out there by the former president about what is available, particularly to the survivors of Helene," Ms. Harris told reporters before boarding Air Force Two to fly to New York. "It's extraordinarily irresponsible. It's about him. It's not about you."

Helene has killed more than 220 people in six States, and Category 5 Hurricane Milton is on a path toward Florida's Gulf Coast. Trump has made a series of false claims in the wake of Helene, including saying incorrectly that the federal government is intentionally withholding aid to Republican disaster victims. He also falsely claimed the Federal Emergency Management Agency had run out of money because all of it had gone to programs for immigrants in the country illegally. Ms. Harris said, "the reality is that FEMA has so many resources that are available to folks who desperately need them now, and resources that are about helping people get back on

their feet and rebuild and have places to go."

"People are entitled to these resources, and it is critically important that people apply for the help that is there to support," the vice president added. "All those resources were created for just these types of moments, in an emergency situation, knowing that folks are entitled to have the relief that they so rightly need." Trump also said during a visit to Valdosta, Georgia, last week that President Joe Biden was "sleeping" and not responding to calls from Georgia Governor Brian Kemp. Mr. Biden had, in fact, spoken with Mr. Kemp and said of Trump, "He's lying, and the governor told him he was lying." Ms. Harris also criticized another high-profile Republican, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, suggesting he's "playing political games" and engaging in "political gamesmanship" in Helene's wake. Ms. Harris's office says the Vice President reached out to DeSantis last week in the storm's aftermath. DeSantis said Monday that he "didn't know that she had called" and "they didn't call me." "It wasn't anything anybody in my office did in saying that it was political," Mr. DeSantis said. But Ms. Harris, asked about Mr. DeSantis, said "People are in desperate need of support right now, and playing political games at this moment in these crisis situations ... is utterly irresponsible."

## Tax dept forms internal committee to review I-T Act, invites public suggestions



The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the body overseeing the Income Tax Department, in a statement said the public can send their suggestions on the website by entering their mobile number and validating it via one-time password (OTP).

"The committee invites public inputs and suggestions in four categories: simplification of language, litigation reduction, compliance reduction, and redundant/obsolete provisions. To facilitate this, a webpage has been launched on the e-filing portal with the following link: <https://eportal.incometax.gov.in/iec/fooservices/#/pre-login/ita-comprehensive-review>. The public can access the page by entering their mobile number and validating it via OTP," the CBDT said.

Aanchal Magazine is Senior Assistant Editor with The Indian Express and reports on the macro economy and fiscal policy, with a special focus on economic science, labour trends, taxation and revenue metrics. With over 12 years of newsroom experience, she has also reported in detail on macroeconomic data such as trends and policy actions related to inflation, GDP growth and fiscal arithmetic. Interested in the history of her homeland, Kashmir, she likes to read about its culture and tradition in her spare time, along with trying to map the journeys of displacement from there.

Income Tax dept, internal committee, I-T Act review, public suggestions, public suggestions, compliance reduction, e-filing portal, otp, budget 2024-25, direct taxes code, Indian express newsIn the Union Budget 2024-25, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced a review of the Income Tax Act, 1961, to make the Act concise, lucid, easy to read and understand.

The Income Tax department on Monday announced the formation of an internal committee to review the Income-tax Act and invited public inputs and suggestions on four key areas — simplification of language, litigation reduction, compliance reduction, and obsolete provisions.

## As Russia seeks to expand trade in rupee-rouble, RBI & SEBI remain wary

GIVEN THE sanctions on Russia and the complexities around expanding the rupee-rouble trade, the Central government and India's financial regulators continue to be wary with several proposals of Sberbank AG, Russia's largest bank, still not being cleared. A recent stocktaking by the government shows that ECGC Ltd had retained Russia's 'high risk' rating in its country risk assessment list, market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India had restricted Sberbank's FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investor) licence to trading only in WTI oil and natural gas derivatives, and that the bank was also not involved in the e-rupee pilot project of the Reserve Bank of India.

While some of these issues were likely discussed during the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Russia, emails seeking comment from RBI and SEBI on the current status did not elicit a response. Sberbank had set up a branch in India in 2010 with an objective to support Indo-Russian trade and create a strategic presence. According to sources, sensing opportunities to sell gold in the Indian market, Sberbank AG sought a licence from the RBI to export 100 tonnes of Russian gold bars to India and directly sell in national currencies to jewellers. Its application for an import licence in December 2023 was rejected by the RBI in March this year citing "supervisory concerns". Further, the Russian side also pointed out that the 15 per cent import duty on Russian gold is 1 per cent higher than that on UAE gold which attracts 14 per cent given India's bilateral agreement with the West Asian country. Russia has sought a similar agreement with India.

While the Ministry of External Affairs and the Embassy of India in Russia supported a relook of ECGC's country risk classification list, it continues to be fixed at C2 — or high risk — level. Seeking a review, Sberbank AG said that ECGC's model of risk assessment did not



consider the existence of trade in national currencies. The risk of rupee or rouble trade is non-existent, it claimed. Despite this, no changes were made to the risk level in the list as of March ending this year.

Financial regulators SEBI and RBI are unclear if Russia is still a member of the Financial Action Task Force following its suspension after Russia attacked Ukraine in 2022. Sberbank said Russia is still a member of FATF, and hence requested the government to issue a clarification to the regulators. Further, Russian stakeholders including banks have reported difficulty in accessing government of India sides, and those of the RBI and SEBI, due to internet firewalls. To continue normal business, one of the issues on the agenda was a request to allow unhindered access to various government-related sites. Sberbank said addressing these issues would help expand the rupee-rouble trade, including trade in commodities, payment of dividends to Indian companies (many oil PSUs dividends are stuck) for their projects in Russia. It said since these trades are conducted outside the Western financial system, they were immune to external disruptions.

## Indian alcoholic beverages to have up to 10 revenue growth in FY25: ICRA

Alcoholic beverages (alcobev) companies in India are expected to report a revenue growth of 8 to 10 per cent in this financial year supported by a revival in consumption of spirits, according to a report by rating agency ICRA. The growth in the topline will also be helped by the premiumisation trend, it added. Moreover, "revenue increase in FY2025 will additionally be supported by the price hikes granted by a few state governments in the current fiscal," it said. However, operating profit margin (OPM) is expected to remain stable at 12-13 per cent in FY2025 due to decline in packaging material cost, despite increase in grain prices in H1 FY2025. "During Q1 FY2025, the spirits industry reported a 9 per cent year-on-year increase in revenues, supported by 5-7 per cent improvement in realisations, while volumes grew by 2-4 per cent," it said. Even the beer industry witnessed a higher revenue growth of 12 per cent in Q1 FY2025 owing to 3-5 per cent increase in volumes and 7-9 per cent in realisations. However, capex by the alcobev companies is expected to moderate to 2-3 per cent of their operating income in FY2025 and FY2026, as key players have en-



hanced their capacities recently. "Companies in ICRA's sample set incurred capital expenditure (CAPEX) of more than Rs 1,000 crore each in FY2023 and FY2024, around 4 per cent of their operating income, indicating an investment revival after the pandemic," it said. This capex was primarily towards distilleries and brewery capacity additions and enhancement of manufacturing infrastructure, including maintenance.

## Ola Electric 'skids off the road', share price touches its lowest at Rs 86

New Delhi: From a show-cause notice from the government to consumers flooding social media platforms over myriad complaints regarding its e-scooters and service centres' — while its share continues to slide — there appears no respite for Bhavish Aggarwal-run Ola Electric. On Tuesday, Ola Electric's share touched its lowest at Rs 86 apiece — before recovering a bit a massive 43-35 per cent drop from its all-time high of Rs 157.40 a few days earlier. The stock made its public debut at Rs 76 apiece.

In a stock exchange filing, the EV company admitted that it has received a show-cause notice from the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA). "The Central Consumer Protection Authority has provided a timeline of 15 days to the company to respond to the show cause notice. The company will respond to the CCPA within the given timeframe with the supporting documents," said the EV company. According to the show-cause notice, Ola Electric appears to be in violation of several provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

It took serious note of the complaints by consumers related to manufacturing defects, partial or no refunds on booking cancellations, recurring defects despite servicing, overcharging, inaccurate invoices, and multiple issues with batteries and vehicle components. The National Consumer Helpline, operated by the Department of Con-



sumer Affairs, received 10,644 complaints since September last year related to Ola Electric. Nidhi Khare, Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, said: "The CCPA is looking into a large number of complaints about Ola Electric, mainly related to service inefficiencies."

"We hope the company addresses these concerns promptly and resolves the issues faced by consumers," she mentioned. Meanwhile, aggrieved customers continued to flood social media platforms, sharing their plight with hardware and software issues with its flagship electric two-wheeler. "Even after the big announcement in service expansion, service centres are working the same. I delivered my scooter to Ola 3 weeks ago and received it last Saturday after completion of repair."

## Tanya Maniktala says Kill co-actor Lakshya works out even at 2 am; we find out if it is advisable to exercise at odd hours



Tanya Maniktala recently revealed that her Kill co-actor Lakshya is extremely "diligent" about his fitness routine. "If he had a 4 a.m. roll call, he would be at the gym at 2 a.m. He would be very diligent about his workout," Maniktala shared in a conversation on the Khaane Mein Kya Hai show. Working out has many health-related benefits, including favourable effects on body weight, body fat, blood pressure, lipid levels, and blood glucose. Consultant neurologist Dr Sudhir Kumar, Apollo Hospitals Hyderabad, said the ideal timing depends on the person's schedule. "The usual timings for workouts are mornings,

afternoons, and evenings, as most people sleep between 10 pm and 6 am. If a person's work starts early and finishes early, evenings are the preferred time for workouts. However, if a person needs to log into the office at 11 am, mornings may be the preferred time for workouts. If a person has a 3-4 hour break during the afternoon, he/she may choose afternoons for their workouts," said Dr Kumar.

Is it fine? Dr Kumar contended that if a person's schedule is such that he/she gets time only at 2 or 4 am to work out, then it is fine. "If the working hours are from 4 to 5 pm until 1 or 2 am, then working out at 2-4 am is ideal. However, the key is to ensure eight hours of sleep and optimum time for recovery. If the person works out between 4 and 5 a.m., they should be sure to sleep for about 8 hours — until 1 to 2 pm," said Dr Kumar. However, he highlighted that the said workout timing may not hold well for most who work during conventional hours. "One study found that people who exercise at the same time every day spend more time working out per week than people who train at different times. Ultimately, it seems that consistency is key, rather than a specific workout window," said Dr Kumar.

## Having '2 eggs is not a high-protein breakfast'; know why

Are you struggling to lose fat? Take a closer look at what you eat, especially for breakfast. If fitness experts are to go by, anything less than 30 grams of protein is not enough. Fitness coach Chace Chambers took to Threads to explain it with some simple equations, suggesting that having "2 eggs is not a high-protein breakfast." Instead, one should opt for:

\*2 eggs + a cup of egg whites is a high-protein breakfast or

\*2 eggs + 2 chicken sausages is a high-protein breakfast, or

\*2 eggs + 2 Greek yoghurt is a high-protein breakfast.

"If it's got less than 30 grams of protein, it's not a high-protein breakfast," said Chambers.

To understand more, we spoke to Jinal Patel, dietician, Zynova Shalby Hospital, Mumbai, who said that starting the day with a protein-rich breakfast helps stay energized and improves cognitive function. "Protein helps stabilise blood sugar levels, improving concentration and focus throughout the morning. Those who eat protein early in the day are more likely to make healthier food choices later and will be able to manage cravings for high-sugar snacks," said Patel. Agreeing with the post, Patel said that eating Greek yoghurt, eggs, or nuts helps manage hunger by promoting feelings of fullness. "When it comes to high-protein breakfast, it is believed that any



meal having some protein content is sufficient, though it should ideally exceed 30 grams," said Patel.

Moreover, protein plays a pivotal role in metabolic function, and having less than 30 grams might not provide enough energy for optimum performance and recovery post-exercise or after sleep, contended Patel. "It is better to add at least 40-50 gms of protein to breakfast. It is also essential to consult an expert regarding an ideal protein quantity for breakfast," said Patel. Consult an expert regarding the right kind of foods that are higher in protein and will be beneficial for you. "One is advised not to skip breakfast as it is the first meal of the day," said Patel. **DISCLAIMER:** This article is based on information from the public domain and/or the experts we spoke to. Always consult your health practitioner before starting any routine.

## Melania Trump reveals what first attracted her to Donald Trump in new memoir



In a recent video shared on social media to promote her upcoming memoir Melania, the former First Lady and model reflects on their first encounter in New York City back in 1998.

Melania Trump has opened up about the four qualities that first drew her to her husband, Donald Trump, the billionaire property mogul turned former US President, who is now running as a Republican candidate in the 2024 election. In a recent video shared on social media to promote her upcoming memoir Melania, the former First Lady and model reflects on their first encounter in New York City back in 1998.

"From the moment Donald and I met, there was an undeniable spark," she recalls. "There was something magnetic about him: his confidence, his charm, his humour, his vision." Dressed in a houndstooth jacket and cast in a noir-like light, Melania goes on to describe their star-studded wedding in January 2005. "Our wedding was a beautiful affair — a breathtaking gown, a perfectly curated menu by a renowned chef, and captivating live performances by musical legends," she says. A montage of photographs from the ceremony, which took place at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, plays during the video. Among the notable guests in attendance were celebrities and public figures like Don King, Barbara Walters, Apprentice producer Mark Burnett, Tony Bennett, Billy Joel, Paul Anka, Simon Cowell, and Rudy Giuliani, according to The Palm Beach Post. This short clip is the latest in a series of videos Melania has shared to promote her forthcoming memoir, which is set to be released on Tuesday. Wearing a classic outfit, the former first lady appears in the video promoting her new memoir on 7

October 2024.

Although she has remained largely absent from her husband's latest presidential campaign, only appearing briefly at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee in July, Melania has stepped back into the spotlight in recent weeks to promote her book. Her media appearances have included an interview with Fox's Maria Bartiromo on Sunday. In the book, advance copies of which were obtained by The Guardian and The Daily Beast, Melania Trump discusses her views on women's rights and access to abortion, recounts an unauthorised visit to the White House Situation Room, and defends her nude modelling career. "I have always believed it is critical for people to take care of themselves first," she writes, addressing the subject of abortion in a stance that appears to diverge from her husband's. "It's a very straightforward concept; in fact, we are all born with a set of fundamental rights, including the right to enjoy our lives. We are all entitled to maintain a gratifying and dignified existence. This common-sense approach applies to a woman's natural right to make decisions about her own body and health." In other videos shared on social media, she has criticised the FBI's 2022 raid on Mar-a-Lago in search of classified documents, reflected on the birth of her son Barron Trump and his experiences with bullying, condemned alleged efforts to "silence" her husband, and hinted at a potential conspiracy behind an attempted assassination in Butler, Pennsylvania.

## Vidhu Vinod Chopra dismissed me first during struggling days, recalls Sanjay Leela Bhansali: 'To this day, I stand up and talk when he calls'



Filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali recently opened up about his humble beginnings, reflecting on how he, an outsider living in a Mumbai chawl, rose to become one of the top directors in the Hindi film industry. In a conversation with The Hollywood Reporter, Bhansali shared memories of the time filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra reluctantly gave him his first job as an assistant, eventually coming to accept him.

He recalled, "My walking into the film world was impossible. How did this boy living near Bhindi Bazaar would come here. That boy never spoke well, had no friends, who had no influence but there is path and it's a long path." Bhansali revealed that it was his sister's efforts that helped him connect with Vidhu Vinod Chopra, though Chopra was quick to dismiss him at first. He explained, "My sister worked with Vidhu Vinod Chopra. She ap-

proached his ex-wife Renu Chopra, who forced him to take me. Vinod Chopra came and in his characteristic style, he dismissed me. Then he accepted me and I worked with him for 8 years." Reflecting on the impact that experience had on him, Bhansali said, "He made me iron and steel. After working with him for 8 years, you can face anything in the world. Till date if Vinod Chopra's call comes, I stand up and talk. That is the gratitude I feel towards somebody who changed my life." Bhansali recently directed the web series Heeramandi, marking his debut on the OTT platform. He will next helm Love and War, starring Bollywood couple Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor, alongside Vicky Kaushal. While this will be Vicky's first project with Bhansali, both Alia and Ranbir have previously collaborated with the filmmaker in Gangubai Kathiawadi and Saawariya, respectively.

## Amitabh Bachchan is the reincarnation of his grandfather, believed Harivansh Rai Bachchan: 'Uske roop mein mere pitaji ki aatma aa rahi hai'

GNS News Agency, Oct 9

Actor Amitabh Bachchan was born in the year 1942 to the illustrious poet Harivansh Rai Bachchan. He went on to honour the family name by establishing himself as one of the greatest movie stars that the country has ever seen. His father predicted that Amitabh was cut out for great things, and actually believed that he was a reincarnation of his own grandfather, Pratap Narayan Shrivastav.

Special guest Aamir Khan will reveal this piece of trivia in an upcoming episode of Kaun Banega Crorepati, hosted by Amitabh. In a promo, Aamir asks Amitabh if he remembers the time of his birth, and said that his father had written about Amitabh's birth in detail. He proceeded to read Harivansh Rai Bachchan's recollections about Amitabh's birth, and said, "When Teji woke me up and said that she is having labour pains, it was an auspicious timing. I had a vivid dream and I was so amazed by it that I couldn't stop myself from sharing it with Teji. In my half-asleep state, I told her, 'Teji, you will have a boy and my father's soul is coming in his form.'" The audience cheered, as Amitabh willed up. Aamir will be joined on the episode by his son, actor Junaid Khan. The episode will be aired on October 11 on Sony Entertainment Television. Amitabh has been hosting KBC for two decades



now. The show is largely credited for reviving his career, which had been affected by declining popularity as a leading man, and the failure of his ambitious business venture ABCL in the 1990s.

Aamir was last seen in the film Laal Singh Chaddha, which emerged as a major commercial misfire. He will next be seen in the film Sitaare Zameen Par, which is set for release in December. He will also begin the Oscars campaign for his production, Laapataa Ladies, directed by his ex-wife Kiran Rao. The comedy drama has been selected as India's official entry for next year's Academy Awards.

## Shah Rukh Khan's comments about Devdas being 'spineless' disputed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali: 'He's not a loser'

Actor Shah Rukh Khan has often spoken about his opinion of Devdas, the iconic self-destructive romantic that he played in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's film. There has been a debate about whether the film glorifies his perceived toxic behaviour, and Bhansali admitted in a recent interview that 'some actors' working on the film also had their reservations about how the character was being portrayed. But, Bhansali said, he viewed Devdas as the ultimate romantic hero. He spoke about these differences in a new interview with The Hollywood Reporter India. He said, "What is the story of Devdas? That he's a loser, he doesn't do anything, he gets upset... My actors didn't understand why we're telling this story. They said, 'Oh, it's romanticising alcoholism'. I said, 'This is the story of a man who loved.' What is our biggest duty in this life? To love and give love. Does anyone love like Devdas. I wanted to say, 'If you love somebody, that's how you love'. Devdas is a story of a man who loved. People have been making Devdas (for years). Why? They say he's a loser. He's not a loser. He's the most noble of any of my characters. He loved Paro. You ask him anything, he would say, 'Paro'. That is love. That is a love story."

Shah Rukh had voiced his reservations about playing the character in a recent interview at the Locarno Film Festival. He said, "I don't like to play characters that demean women, I didn't want him to be liked in the film for the reason that he disses a woman and doesn't commit to her. I wanted him to come across as a person who is spineless and not somebody you should look up to. Bhansali made the film beautifully, but I don't think anybody wants to be Devdas, it is not a character you take back home. I just didn't want a character who has commitment issues with women to become popular in a different sense, I think I achieved that."

Even though Shah Rukh and Bhansali haven't worked together since, the actor announced at Locarno that his company now owns the rights to the film. He also touched upon the many difficulties that they faced while making it. He said, "It was the most expensive film being made in India so it went through its own share of troubles.



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Money issues, and producers vanishing, we had to complete the film in a few days. It went overtime, over budget, but I had a great time doing the film because I felt it kind of was a tribute... memory to my mother who loved the film." He said that he was advised not to do the film because it would go against his image, but said that he did it for his mother, who loved the story. At a News18 event, Shah Rukh said had also spoken about the morality of the characters that he plays. He said, "I am a guy who is hopeful and tells happy stories. The heroes I play do good things, they give hope and happiness. If I play a bad guy, I make sure he suffers a lot, he dies a dog's death, because I believe goodness begets goodness. And I believe badness deserves a kick in the back side." The actor will next star in a film titled The King.

## Ranbir Kapoor's performance in Saawariya climax made Sanjay Leela Bhansali weep: 'His talent is second to none'

Ranbir Kapoor didn't have the most positive experience working as an assistant to director Sanjay Leela Bhansali, before he went on to make his acting debut for him with the film Saawariya. But he said that the experience shaped him into a better performer. In an interview, Bhansali recalled spotting Ranbir's acting talent, and predicting that he will go on to do great things. Ranbir was originally supposed to debut with a Bhansali film titled Balika Vadhu, which would've starred his now-wife Alia Bhatt. In an interview with The Hollywood Reporter India, Bhansali recalled being moved to tears while watching Ranbir's performance in the climax of Saawariya. He said, "The climax of Saawariya is one of my most favourite pieces of mine... What an actor can do, in seven minutes of complete silence. The way he performed, in one shot... I would just sit there and cry. Because I realised that this is an actor. Whether he's a good person, bad person (doesn't matter). He's a great actor. It shouldn't matter to you whether I'm a good human being or a bad human being..."

Recalling his experience working with Ranbir on the film Black, he said, "I haven't worked only with stars. I've worked with wonderful actors. Nana Patekar is a wonderful actor, only in front of the camera. The rest we will not discuss. Manisha Koirala is a wonderful actor, Seema Biswas is a great actor. What Shah Rukh did in Devdas was very, very special... I have never looked at them as stars. Ranbir, when he was assisting me, I said, 'You're a great actor, you have talent that is second to none'... I have been very fortunate."

In an earlier interview with Neha Dhupia, Ranbir



had outlined the physical and emotional abuse that he suffered at the hands of Bhansali during his days as an assistant. He said that the experience became so overwhelming that he quit the project midway. "When I assisted Mr (Sanjay Leela) Bhansali (on Black), he used to really treat me as an assistant director. I used to be kneeling down for hours, he used to hit us, he used to abuse us... that only hardens you and prepares you for the world... He was beating me... after a point it got so heavy and I felt so tortured that I had to quit the film at a point... I think it was like 10 or 11 months into my job and I am like, 'Listen I can't do this, its getting to me. I think I am too sensitive and emotional'. And he got to know me so well and he kind of kept poking into that... he got too much, went crazy as far as I was concerned," he said. Against all odds, and nearly two decades after they worked together on Saawariya, Ranbir and Bhansali will reunite on a new project. Titled Love and War, the film also stars Alia and Vicky Kaushal, and is currently slated for a 2026 release.

## Bigg Boss 18: Vivian Dsen's comment about new stars running behind success offends Shehzada Dhami, says, 'If you think about the end result...'

Bigg Boss 18 has begun with 18 contestants who walked into the house on Sunday. Right from the first morning of the show, drama began in the house where actor Shehzada Dhami emerged as a red flag, while actor Vivian Dsen came across as a strong contender. While all contestants are currently busy showcasing their quirks, the highlight of Monday's episode was Vivian Dsen's intense conversation about stardom with Shehzada Dhami and Avinash Mishra. While sitting in the garden, Vivian revisited how becoming a star during his time was difficult, his assessment left Shehzada Dhami offended. Vivian Dsen said, "Earlier it took ages to become a hero, you will only see those 10-15 heroes." Reacting to this, Shehzada kept his counterview and said, "But you worked when the audience was only focused on TV." Avinash Mishra also asked Vivian not to generalize everyone with one perception. Vivian further explained, "Do we have those kinds of serious actors working right now? I am purely talking about acting here, not good looks or a good body. Your primary job is to be a good actor, the mindset today is influenced by short-spanned success. The success ratio has reduced today because it is getting to people's heads faster."

As Shehzada took offense to these remarks from Vivian, he once again brought up his controversy with Rajan Shahi and said, "I was so focused on my acting, but that attitude about 'oh I am a big star' relies on other factors too. Even if production houses think they have made actors big today, they work with this approach. They are like, if you don't work according to me, why should I



make you a star? That mindset of I am a star-maker is wrong. And if you say that new actors don't work hard, I find it offensive." Keeping his take on Shehzada's point, Vivian added, "This is probably a dark phase you went through. In 36 years of my life, I have learned one thing, your success and your capacity will never be decided by what you do, but by the kind of beating you can take, get up, and start moving with the same intensity. Focus on your work, if you keep thinking about the end result, you will never be successful." While the conversation ended here, later Arfeen Khan, Vivian, and Avinash were discussing how Shehzada keeps bringing up this controversy again and again. Avinash also pointed out how Salman Khan asked Shehzada to move on, while Arfeen stated that the young actor was playing the victim card and people like these cannot survive in the game for long.

## When Gauri Khan said she respects Shah Rukh Khan's religion but wouldn't convert: 'My relatives wondered if SRK will change my faith'

Gauri Khan and Shah Rukh Khan have been married for nearly 33 years, celebrating both Hindu and Islamic festivals together while maintaining their individual faiths. Their interfaith marriage often become part of numerous discussions, particularly regarding Gauri's choice not to convert. On Gauri's birthday, let's revisit her reflections on this decision. The couple tied the knot in October 1991, but their journey to marriage wasn't without its challenges. Initially, Gauri's parents were hesitant as theirs would be an inter-faith wedding. In a conversation with Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla on their show First Ladies, Gauri recalled, "We changed his name to Abhinav so they would see him as a Hindu boy, but that was really silly and childish."

At the time of their wedding, many in Gauri's family worried that Shah Rukh might pressure her to convert to Islam. Shah Rukh fondly recalled this incident in an interview with Farida Jalal, and said, "I remember when Gauri's traditional family was sitting there, whispering, 'He's a Muslim boy. Will he change her name? Will she become a Muslim?' So, I jokingly said, 'Okay Gauri, put on your burkha, and let's read the namaaz.' The entire family stared at us, thinking I had already changed her religion. I teased them, saying, 'From now on, she will wear a burkha all the time and her name will be Aysha.'" In the first season of Koffee With Karan, Gauri spoke about her decision not to convert. She said, "There is a balance. I respect Shah Rukh's religion, but that doesn't mean I would convert. I believe everyone should follow their own faith, and there should be mutual respect. Shah Rukh would never disrespect my religion either." However, she mentioned that her mother still struggles with the situation, often reacting with confusion when Aryan tells her, "I am a Muslim." During her conversation on Ladies First, Gauri shared, "During Diwali, I lead the pooja, and the family follows. On Eid, Shah Rukh leads, and we follow. It's a beautiful arrangement, and the kids embrace both traditions. In fact, they tend to lean more toward what Shah Rukh says. Both Diwali and Eid are fantastic for them." In a 2013 interview with Outlook Turning Points, Shah Rukh revealed how practicing both religions at home confused their children. "Sometimes they ask me what religion they belong to, and like a good Hindi movie hero, I philosophically declare, 'You are Indian first, and your religion is humanity,' or I might sing an old Hindi film song, 'Tu Hindu banega na Musalmaan banega - insaan ki aulad hai insaan banega,' set to Gangnam Style." Beyond being Shah Rukh Khan's wife, Gauri is an accomplished professional in her own right, serving as a



film producer, fashion designer, and celebrity interior designer. In 2018, she was named one of the "50 Most Powerful Women" by Fortune Magazine, and in 2008, she graced the cover of Vogue India, which referred to her as the "First Lady of Bollywood." Despite being married to one of the most influential figures in the world, Gauri has maintained her individuality since their marriage in 1991. The couple are parents to Aryan, Suhana and Abram Khan.

## Sonam, Rhea, Anand celebrate Karan Boolani's birthday in Maldives

Mumbai: Bollywood actress and fashionista Sonam Kapoor along with her sister Rhea Kapoor and husband Anand Ahuja made her brother-in-law's birthday extra special in Maldives. The family is currently holidaying in Maldives and even shared some heartfelt moments featuring the birthday boy, who has made movies such as "Thank You For Coming".

Sonam shared a string of pictures of Boolani with her son Vayu among many other moments. For the caption, she wrote: "Happy birthday to the amazing @karanboolani! Your positivity and passion inspire us all. Grateful to have you as part of our family. Here's to another year of adventures, laughter, and unforgettable moments! Love you loads! #BirthdayBoy #FamilyLove." Rhea shared a special note for her husband and even posted a string of clips of them watching a movie together at the beach.

