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## Four daughters of Siddipet couple crack MBBS in six years

Siddipet: In a rare achievement, four daughters of a couple secured MBBS seats in different medical colleges in the last six years. The couple, Konka Ramachandram and Sarada, had four daughters. While Mamatha, the eldest of the four, joined MBBS in 2018 and completed her degree, the second one Madhavi joined MBBS in 2020. The couple's twin daughters Rohini and Roshini cracked the National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) by scoring 587 and 536 marks respectively and got admission in MBBS this year. When the couple met with former Minister T Harish Rao seeking financial aid to meet their hostel expenses, Rao congratulated them and assured all support.

## Leopard found dead under suspicious circumstances in Nagarkurnool

Nagarkurnool: A leopard was found dead under suspicious circumstances at Chinnagandi village under Kollapur mandal in the district on Wednesday evening. The carcass of the leopard was found close to the Kollapur - Amaragiri road and soon after noticing it, local villagers informed the forest officials. As few people were cultivating maize and other crops in the area, it is suspected that the leopard might have died due to electric wires installed at a few places. However, forest officials ruled out any foul play. The claws and canines were intact and hence it was not about poaching. Similarly, there were no injuries on the body, hence electrocution has ruled out. :

## Mortal remains of Ratan Tata being taken from Mumbai's NCPA to Worli for final rites



GNS News Agency, Oct 10 Industry titan Ratan Tata's last rites were performed with full state honours at the

Worli crematorium in Mumbai on Thursday evening. Earlier, Tata was given a ceremonial guard of

honour by the Mumbai Police after his mortal remains were brought to the crematorium. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, his deputy Devendra Fadnis, Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel and Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal were present at the crematorium in central Mumbai.

"Have joined millions of Indians to grieve the sad demise of Ratan Tata Ji. Also laid a wreath on behalf of PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji," Shah said in a post on X. Shah said Tata (86) would always be remembered as a beacon of patriotism and integrity. As an industrialist respected across the world, he steered the Tata Group into global prominence. His life and commitment to the nation stand as a pole star in India's industrial landscape, the Union minister said.

He led the Tata Group with clean corporate governance, adhering to the rules, and made efforts to build a better society through the Tata Trusts, Shah said. "Ratan Tata Ji's legacy will continue to guide those who lead the industrial sector of the country for a long time to come," the senior BJP leader added.

Tata's mortal remains were kept at the National Centre for Performing Arts (NCPA) in south Mumbai for people to pay respects from 10.30 am to 3.55 pm. Later, they were taken to the crematorium for the last rites. Tata, credited with transforming the Tata Group into a globally renowned conglomerate, died at the Breach Candy Hospital in Mumbai on Wednesday night.

## Telangana CM Revanth Reddy Focuses on Increasing Revenue



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Hyderabad: Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed officials to focus on strategies for boosting state revenue in line with the annual targets. In a review meeting held with Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and senior officials from various departments, the Chief Minister emphasized the need to improve the performance of revenue-generating departments to meet the state's financial goals. The meeting was attended by Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari, and other high-ranking officials, who discussed ways to enhance departmental efficiency and achieve set targets for the year. CM Revanth Reddy urged the departments to concentrate on improving their revenue streams and ensuring that the state's financial objectives are met effectively.

## Auspicious 'Moola Nakshatra' fetches Rs 29 lakh for Basar temple



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Nirmal: The ancient Sri Gna Saraswati Devasthanam of Basar earned Rs 29.94 lakh through charges of various services and donations made by devotees in view of the auspicious 'Moola Nakshatra' as part of the ongoing Navratri festivities on Wednesday.

Executive Officer of the shrine Vijayarama Rao, in a statement, said the temple earned Rs 16.21 lakh by selling 1,621 special 'Aksharabhyasam' tickets each costing Rs 1,000, Rs 1.01 lakh by sales of general 'Aksharabhyasam' tickets, Rs 4.05 lakh through sales of 'Abhishekam' laddu and Rs 3.12 lakh by selling normal laddu. The shrine witnessed a revenue of Rs 2.47 lakh by way of sales of special darshan tickets, while sales of 'pulihora' fetched Rs 1.64 lakh. Devotees presented donations worth Rs 16,000 and copper coins worth Rs 8,000, the temple thus earning a total of Rs 29,94,850. Tens of hundreds of devotees from not only several parts of Telangana, but the neighbouring Maharashtra also thronged the shrine and performed special prayers. They conducted 'Aksharabhyasam' or initiation into the world of alphabets. They earlier had a holy dip in Godavari river and had darshan of the deity. Elaborate arrangements including temporary queue lines, shades, parking lots and special venues for 'Aksharabhyasam' were made for smooth conduct of the festivities. The TGRTC operated special buses from Nirmal and Nizamabad to Basar for the convenience of the devotees.

## KCR, BRS leaders mourn Ratan Tata's demise, hail his visionary legacy

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Hyderabad: Former Chief Minister and BRS president K Chandrashekhara Rao expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Padma Vibhushan Ratan Tata, hailing the iconic businessman as a humanitarian and visionary whose contributions transcended the business world.

He noted that Tata's demise was not just a loss to the Indian industrial sector but to the society at large, which benefited from his philosophy of inclusive development. In a statement, Chandrashekhara Rao remembered Ratan Tata's legacy of philanthropy and his belief in ensuring that the fruits of development reach the grassroots level. He said the business icon's values and actions have shown the path for societal progress and future generations. Recalling Tata's visit to Telangana, he said the State took pride in Tata's appreciation of its rapid industrial and technological growth, driven by visionary policies of the previous BRS government. He felt that Ratan Tata's demise is a loss for everyone who strives for societal progress.

## KTR files criminal defamation case against Konda Surekha



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao filed a criminal defamation case against Minister Konda Surekha, seeking criminal action as per the law in the Nampally Court. He had earlier served a legal notice to Surekha, demanding a public apology for her defamatory remarks. In his petition, KTR stated that Surekha made false and highly defamatory remarks against him with malafide and oblique motive. He termed her comments as part of a calculated attempt to damage his public image. He cited the video recordings telecast on news channels and reports published by several newspapers.

The BRS working president said Surekha made repeated, deliberate and malicious comments to defame him and damage his reputation as well as gain cheap publicity by creating sensational news to further her political agenda. He stated that there was neither any good faith nor any public interest involved in making these defamatory remarks. He said Surekha's remarks were made with the intent to damage his reputation through a conspiracy and malicious intent. Rama Rao also pointed out that Surekha had previously made such baseless remarks during the Lok Sabha elections and was reprimanded by the Election Commission for her unfounded claims. Hence, he urged the court to consider her repeated remarks without any evidence, as criminal offenses and initiate action against her under relevant sections of the law.

## Ratan Tata a legendary figure in India's corporate world, says Telangana CM

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Thursday expressed shock and grief over the passing of Ratan Tata, one of India's greatest industrialists. In a post on X, the CM office said, "A visionary leader, humanitarian, and legendary figure in India's corporate world, Shri Tata's life was an extraordinary journey of humility & success. Under his exceptional leadership, the Tata brand soared to unparalleled heights, conquering new horizons and filling every Indian with pride and unmatched contributions to making India a global industrial power have left an indelible mark, it said. "In his passing, India has lost not only an industrial icon, but a beloved son who embodied the true spirit of service and integrity."

## India-ASEAN friendship important in times of conflicts, tensions in the world: PM Modi

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday (October 10, 2024) said India-ASEAN friendship was very important at a time when parts of the world were facing conflicts and tensions. Addressing the 21st India-ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos, Mr. Modi also said he had announced the Act East Policy 10 years ago and in the past decade it had given new energy, direc-



tion and momentum to the historic ties between India and ASEAN nations.

"In the past decade,

said he believed that the 21st century, also called the Asian century, is the century of India and ASEAN nations. "India-ASEAN friendship, coordination dialogue and cooperation is very important at a time when several parts of the world are facing conflicts and tensions," he said. Mr. Modi arrived here in Laos on a two-day visit to attend the ASEAN-India and East Asia summits and further deepen engagement with countries in the groupings.

India-ASEAN trade has doubled and now stands at more than \$130 billion," he said. The Prime Minister

## Maha Cabinet seeks Bharat Ratna for Ratan Tata; passes resolution to appeal to Centre



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Mumbai: The Maharashtra Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Thursday on behalf of all citizens of Maharashtra paid tributes to veteran industrialist, Tata Sons' Emeritus Chairman Padma Vibhushan Ratan Tata and passed a resolution condoling his death. The Cabinet unanimously passed a resolution to appeal to the Centre to honour Ratan Tata with the prestigious Bharat Ratna award. "Entrepreneurship is also an effective way of building society. The country can be taken forward only by the establishment of new industries, but for that, one needs true patriotism in the heart and equally sincere concern for our society. "We have lost a social worker, visionary and patriotic leader in Ratan Tata. His contribution was phenomenal. He was the son of Maharashtra. India was proud of him. He made his and India's mark internationally, passing rigorous tests by observing self-discipline, clean administration and high moral values in running large enterprises," says the resolution.

"Ratan Tata was the great grandson of Jamsetji Tata, the founder of the Tata Group. He oversaw the affairs of the Tata Group for several years as Chairman and later as Emeritus Chairman. As the head of the Tata Group's Charitable Trust, the oldest in the country, he served with a very philanthropic attitude," reads the resolution. "Upholding of ethical values by Ratan Tata will serve as a beacon for other entrepreneurs and future generations in the industry. He was a principled worker. The Tata Group played a major role in the reconstruction of the country after Independence. Through this group, Ratan Tata kept India's flag flying at the global level. From

cars to salt and from computers to coffee-tea, the name Tata is proudly associated with numerous products," it reads.

"Ratan Tata also made his unique contribution in the field of education, health and social service. He will be remembered for his firmness after the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai. "Ratan Tata immediately gave Rs 1,500 crore to the PM Relief Fund during Covid and also made most of their hotels available for patients during Covid. His greatness will be remembered forever," reads the resolution. "He had a unique combination of innovation and philanthropy. He never compromised his 'Tata values'. He was always at the forefront in encouraging achievement and experimentation among the youth. He started an innovation centre to provide scope and employment opportunities to the youth in remote areas like Gadchiroli," it states. We were fortunate to present him with the first 'Udyog Ratna' award of the Government of Maharashtra.

## BC Welfare Leaders Thank CM Revanth Reddy for Initiating Social and Economic Survey

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Hyderabad: Leaders of the BC Welfare Association met Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to express their gratitude for the government's decision to immediately begin the social, economic, and caste survey process in Telangana. The leaders appreciated the move, which they believe will greatly benefit the backward classes in the state. The delegation, which met the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka at their Jubilee Hills residence, included BC Welfare Association President Jajula Srinivas Goud, PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, Government Whip Aadi Srinivas, MP Anil Kumar Yadav, MLA Srihari, retired IAS officer Chiranjeevi, and several other prominent BC Welfare leaders.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Against all odds

THE Haryana Assembly election results have defied predictions, handing a third consecutive term to the BJP. Though the exit polls had predicted a Congress victory, it appears the BJP's strategic campaign proved decisive as, against all odds, it bettered even its 2019 election tally. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP's Haryana leadership executed a focused and adaptive campaign, effectively negating the Congress' initial advantage. Early trends suggested a Congress wave, but the BJP quickly gained ground, consolidating its support base, especially among non-Jat communities. Nayab Singh Saini, who replaced Manohar Lal Khattar as Chief Minister earlier this year, appeared to gain in popularity among voters across castes and communities, helping the BJP overcome anti-incumbency. Additionally, the BJP benefited from strong backing by the RSS, which mobilised its cadre across the state.

In contrast, the Congress' campaign fell short of expectations. Rahul Gandhi and his leadership team seem to have overestimated their position. Its reliance on a single leader — Bhupinder Singh Hooda — and internal conflicts seemed to weaken the Congress' appeal to a broader voter base. Muddying the situation, the delay in updating poll results fuelled frustration within the Congress, with leaders raising questions over the transparency of the process. Meanwhile, the other players were reduced to ignominy — the AAP struggled to make an impact, failing to win any seat, highlighting its limited traction outside Delhi; the JJP, once seen as a formidable regional force, saw its influence wane, winning no seat. The INLD and Independents secured a few seats, reflecting minor but scattered support for the sundry.

## Bombay HC upholds tribunal finding that Shirdi trust eligible for I-T exemption on anonymous donations



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Mumbai A division bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Somsekhar Sundaresan rejected an appeal by Commissioner of Income Tax (Exemptions), Mumbai, challenging the October 25, 2023 decision of ITAT. The Bombay High Court on Tuesday upheld an order of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) which held that the Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi, was eligible for exemption from Income Tax on its anonymous donations, as it was a charitable and religious organisation. With this, the HC dismissed an appeal by the Income Tax department against the ITAT's order.

The HC held that substantial anonymous donations received in the 'hundi' by the Sai Baba Trust are not liable to be taxed under Section 115BBC (1) of the Income Tax (I-T) Act. A division bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Somsekhar Sundaresan rejected an appeal by Commissioner of Income Tax (Exemptions), Mumbai, challenging the October 25, 2023 decision of ITAT. It had concluded the hearing and had reserved its verdict on July 24, this year. The I-T department had argued that the Trust received overall donations of Rs 400 crore till 2019. However, only Rs 2.3 crore was spent for religious purposes, and major expenses were for educational institutions, hospitals and medical facilities.

This shows, the department argued, that the Trust was only a charitable one and not a religious organisation, while it was receiving donations only because of the faith of the devotees. The I-T department had said that as per the assessing officer of the I-T department, between 2015 and 2019, the trust received huge amounts as anonymous donations and the same cannot be exempted from being taxed. However, the Trust claimed that it had both charitable and religious obligations and that it was rightfully exempted from being taxed. On July 24, the bench had remarked that the Trust was receiving donations due to the faith of devotees, irrespective of them being anonymous or not. Justice Kulkarni had questioned the I-T department how it could control the sentiments of many devotees who keep visiting the temple and make donations, including anonymous donations. The Trust, through senior advocate S Ganesh, asserted that where any institution existed for charitable as well as religious purpose and the expenditure for religious purpose for a year was less than 5% of its total income, then such Trust was eligible to obtain exemption under Section 80G of the Act. "A Trust being both religious or charitable or vice-versa is a well-accepted phenomena. There can be many examples of such combinations. For such reason, a myopic reading of Section 80G would be wholly impermissible," the bench noted.

The Tribunal had noted that the Sai Baba Trust also indulged in maintenance of the temple, conduct and performance of rituals and ceremonies and providing darshan facilities for devotees, offering of prayers and performing religious festivals. The ITAT had also observed that the Trust was regarded as religious place in the state for tourists and public at large. "Therefore, approach by the I-T department would amount to an inappropriate reading of the provisions of Section 80G as also Section 115BBC(2)(b) of the Act." The bench, while holding ITAT's decision to be 'correct in law and facts,' held that the Sai Baba Trust formed under special legislation of state legislature, is "certainly a religious and charitable trust, hence the assessee rightly and legitimately claimed an entitlement under sub-section 2(b) of Section 115BBC of the Act. Such entitlement of the assessee is rightly recognised by the Commissioner of Income Tax (CIT) Appeals and the Tribunal."

## Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital opens autism intervention clinic to offer free services to young children



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

The Central Government-run Safdarjung Hospital in New Delhi has started an Autism Intervention Clinic at its child development centre where diagnosis and intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorder will be provided to young children free of cost. The clinic offers services such as psychological assessment, assessment for vision and hearing, and is expected to be a boon for thousands of poor patients from other states and those going to private clinics in the city that charge exorbitant amounts for one sitting.

The clinic's comprehensive team includes paediatric neurologists, developmental paediatricians, psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language pathologists, special educators, and trained nursing personnel. The clinic in the public sector is expected to play a significant role in autism treatment as early intervention which includes speech therapies, special education, is sure to be a gamechanger in the lives of such children. "We have patients from states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and the private centres charge a hefty amount to the tune of around Rs 1,500-2000 per hour and sometimes they are not even scientific. The therapies they provide are not proven standardised treatment. So we thought if we start the facility in the public sector, this is going to help children from poor communities and those coming from different states where there is no facility of diagnosis even," Dr Arpita Gupta, associate professor, paediatrics.

They first diagnose the child, and then examine his or her strengths and deficits. Dr Gupta said there will be an occupational therapist who will teach the child about the daily activities of living and all motor issues. According to Dr Rachna Sehgal, Professor of Paediatrics, the centre will continue to provide existing services such as EEG, BERA, NCV, and vision assessment diagnostics. The services which are currently offered on a weekly basis will

be gradually expanded to daily services. Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurological and developmental disorder that affects people's interaction, communication, learning ability, and behaviour. While it can be diagnosed at any age, it is described as a "developmental disorder" because symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life. Dr Gupta said that earlier their department used to diagnose children of only around three years but now they have a facility to diagnose infants as well. "Recent data shows the prevalence of autism has been increasing steadily. As a paediatrician we see a lot of children with early problems, early developmental issues, delay in speech so many those who are diagnosed with delay in speech often have features of autism and they may be diagnosed later also but the expertise in diagnosis is also not good in all the states," she added. A research published in Sage Journals, Journal of Indian Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, revealed that about 1 in 100 children in India under age 10 has autism, and nearly 1 in 8 has at least one neurodevelopmental condition.

Why is early diagnosis and intervention important?

According to Dr Ratan Gupta, head of the Paediatrics department at Safdarjung Hospital, the need for dedicated services has become critical with global prevalence rising to 1 in 36 children. Early diagnosis and intensive intervention by specialists can significantly improve outcomes for affected children and their families. Dr Arpita Gupta said although autism can be diagnosed at any age, it is described as a "developmental disorder" because symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life. They have problems with social communication and they have restricted behaviour. If diagnosed early in life and given proper management by a multidisciplinary team, these kids are shown to have very good improvement. "Through this clinic we hope to provide early diagnosis to children and therapy can be started for them which are very costly in the private sector and there are very few centres in the public sector which do provide the holistic approach to these kids," she added. Apart from Safdarjung Hospital, Maulana Azad Medical College also has the Child Development Centre looking after Autism Spectrum Disorder. "If intervention is started at an early stage, proper neuronal connections are made and they are helpful throughout the life and it has to be done by a multidisciplinary team," says Dr Arpita. The earlier a child receives intervention for an Autism Spectrum Disorder, the better their chances of developing new skills and reducing symptoms. Access to early intervention can help them overcome challenges by providing them with tools to overcome their deficits.

## 40 days after being declared 'Tankhaiya', Sukhbir Badal makes public appearance



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

sukhbir singh badal The Akali Dal president was declared Tankhaiya (guilty of violating Sikh religious code) on August 29 by Akal Takht for the "mistakes he made as deputy CM from 2007-2017 and the decisions he took that deeply harmed the image of the panth and caused damage to Sikh interests". About 40 days after being declared a Tankhaiya, SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal was back in action in the field on Tuesday. Leading a 'dharna' outside the deputy commissioner office in Muktsar, he protested against the rejection of nominations of party workers post scrutiny of papers and demanded criminal cases against guilty officials. The Akali Dal was on Tuesday protesting against the AAP government for making a mockery of the democracy. The party has also decided to hold a dharna in Gidderbaha on October 10.

The Akali Dal president was declared Tankhaiya (guilty of violating Sikh religious code) on August 29 by Akal Takht for the "mistakes he made as deputy CM from 2007-2017 and the decisions he took that deeply harmed the image of the panth and caused damage to Sikh interests". A day earlier, Sukhbir had himself named Balwinder Singh Bhunder as the party's working president. While Sukhbir and the other "guilty" members of the then cabinet were asked by Akal Takht Jathedar to appear before it within 15 days to seek apology, following which Sukhbir and the other SAD leaders had also appeared before it. However, the Akal Takht is yet to announce a Tankha (punishment) to Sukhbir as the next meeting of Akal Takht Jathedar and other religious heads is yet to take place. Meanwhile, raising fingers at Sukhbir's

public appearance on Tuesday, Akali Dal faction Sudhar Lehar leaders called it a violation of Akal Takht orders. Manjit Singh, executive member of Sudhar Lehar said, "It seems that Sukhbir is not even aware of panthic maryada and that's why he has violated the orders of Akal Takht."

Indermohan Singh Lakhmiriwal, another executive member, added that "either they are ignorant of Sikh religious code of conduct or they don't bother about the orders of the Akal Takht." Sudhar Lehar convenor Gurpartap Wadala and other leaders in a joint statement said that Sukhbir himself should tell the meaning of Tankhaiya or his party's senior members should say. "Tankhaiyas are often asked to offer karah parshad, recite gurbani, perform services such as washing utensils, cleaning shoes etc as part of their punishment. A senior SAD leader said, "A tankha is yet to be announced and during this period a person shouldn't communicate with anyone. Sukhbir Badal stayed away from public life for weeks together after he was announced Tankhaiya. Normally, Tankha is announced soon after a person is declared Tankhaiya, but it hasn't been done till now." Talwinder Singh Buttar, media advisor to secretariat of Akal Takht said that they were not aware of any public appearance of Sukhbir Singh Badal. "Only Akal Takht Jathedar can reveal details about Tankhaiya and the religious code of conduct involved in this declaration" Former SGPC president Gobind Singh Longowal said, "Only the Jathedar can tell in detail about the protocol to be followed for a Tankhaiya." Meanwhile, senior SAD leader Virsa Singh Valtaha said that instead of attempting to teach Akal Takht Jathedar about the Sikh code of conduct, leaders of Sudhar Lehar should first become familiar with the traditions and protocols themselves. In a statement released late on Tuesday, Valtaha said that Sukhbir participated in a protest against the Bhagwant Mann government and was for protecting public interests and democratic values. "When Sukhbir was declared a tankhaiya, he presented himself before the Akal Takht within 24 hours as a devout Sikh. Without any argument, Sukhbir humbly accepted his mistakes, symbolically tying a scarf around his neck and sought forgiveness at the Takht. Sudhar Lehar leaders should understand the difference between being declared a tankhaiya and being excommunicated from the Sikh community. Excommunication means being socially ostracised within the Panth, but Sukhbir had presented himself at Akal Takht and reaffirmed his commitment to obeying all its orders," he said.

## Punjab Cabinet OKs rules for notifying law granting ownership rights to tillers

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Punjab This comes after the Punjab Cabinet on Tuesday approved the Punjab Bhondedar, Butemar, Dohlidar, Insar, Miadi, Mukarraridar, Mundhimar, Panahi Qadeem, Saunjidar or Taraddadkar (Vesting of Proprietary Rights) Rules, 2023, prior to notification. As many as 11,231 tillers who have been occupying 4,196 acres for generations without any ownerships rights, will finally get the land transferred in their name in the revenue records after paying due compensation.

This comes after the Punjab Cabinet on Tuesday approved the Punjab Bhondedar, Butemar, Dohlidar, Insar, Miadi, Mukarraridar, Mundhimar, Panahi Qadeem, Saunjidar or Taraddadkar (Vesting of Proprietary Rights) Rules, 2023, prior to notification. With this, the Act is all set to be notified with retrospective effect from January 2020 and will be applicable for a period of at least 20 years. It took the AAP government in Punjab over a year-and-a-half, to get the rules of the Act approved. The Bill to



this effect was brought to the Punjab Legislative Assembly by former Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's government in October 2020. The Bill was then sent by former Governor VP Singh Badnore for President's assent. President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent to Bill in March 2023. As the Cabinet has now given its approval to the rules, the Act will be notified soon.

## 3 versions, 3 FIRs as lawyer dies after 'assault' in court complex

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

It is alleged that Hans died a few hours after an argument with other lawyers at the court on Monday. He was allegedly punched in the chest that led to his death. The autopsy of the victim's body was conducted on Tuesday at the PGIMER. It is alleged that Hans died a few hours after an argument with other lawyers at the court on Monday. He was allegedly punched in the chest that led to his death.

The Chandigarh Police has registered three different FIRs in connection with an incident at district court complex, in which a 41-year-old advocate died on Monday. Three advocates have been booked for culpable homicide in one of the FIRs, while in another FIR, a woman advocate and her colleague have been booked for "insulting religious feelings". The victim, Neeraj Hans, was practising at district court, and had been the former secretary of the DBA, Chandigarh. The District Bar Association (DBA) of Chandigarh also on Tuesday suspended the work in the court following the death of Hans. It is alleged that Hans died a few hours after an argument with other lawyers at the court on Monday. He was allegedly punched in the chest that led to his death. The autopsy of the victim's body was conducted A police complaint initially was made by a woman lawyer of Chandigarh, alleging that she along with her colleague had gone to pick her scooter from the parking, when a lawyer came there. At the same time, another lawyer with whom they are not in talking terms arrived there.

The complainant woman alleged to the police that both the lawyers entered into an argument with her and her colleague, when Hans (victim) also arrived there and tried to intervene following which he was punched in the chest. After some time of the incident, Hans complained of chest pain and was rushed to a private hospital in Sector 34 from where he was referred to PGIMER, where he later passed away. Meanwhile, the lawyers who have been accused of assaulting Hans have also submitted their complaint to the police. The Chandigarh Police on the matter has registered three different FIRs. In one FIR registered on the complaint of the brother of the victim, three advocates have been booked for 'culpable homicide not amounting to murder'. In the second FIR, the woman and her colleague advocate, have been booked for 'insulting religious feelings' of one of the accused advocates. While the third FIR is registered on complaint of the woman advocate against one of the other advocates under Section 74 (assault or use of criminal force against a woman with the intent to outrage her modesty) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita

## Operation 'Doctor Fixit': How cops disguised as students nabbed Rajasthan teacher in paper leak case



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Operation Doctor Fixit, Doctor Fixit, paper leak case, Rajasthan paper leak case, Rajasthan sub-inspector recruitment exam paper leak case, Indian express news, current affairs Police allege that Bishnoi took Rs 15 lakh each to give the exam on behalf of the two sisters. To avoid getting caught, she also put her photograph on the admit cards issued to the sisters, police said. She allegedly used a fake name and lived at a paying guest facility using fake documents. She even cut herself off from her contacts and stopped using a mobile phone to avoid being traced.

However, on Monday morning, after a three-month-long operation codenamed 'Doctor Fixit', a team from the Rajasthan Police's Jodhpur Range was able to arrest Varsha Bishnoi, one of the key accused in the 2021 Rajasthan sub-inspector recruitment exam paper leak case. The operation involved analysis of technical intelligence as well as investigators disguising themselves as students and tracking her down in Kota, police said. Bishnoi was a government school teacher and had been posted in Jodhpur when she allegedly got involved with recruitment exam irregularities. She is accused of writing recruitment exams on behalf of several people as a dummy candidate. According to police, during the 2021 SI recruitment in Rajasthan, dismissed SI Jagdish Sihag had got Bishnoi to sit for the exam as a dummy candidate in place of his sisters, Indubala and Bhagwati. Police allege that Bishnoi took Rs 15 lakh each to give the exam on behalf of the two sisters. To avoid getting caught, she also put her photograph on the admit cards issued to the sisters, police said. Inspector General of Police Vikas Kumar said, "She is a close relative of Jagdish Jani, the main mastermind of the paper leak scam. She was living as a paying guest in the house of a retired bank manager in Jawahar Nagar area of Kota city under the fake name of Vimala, a student, and used fake documents. To avoid being tracked down by the police, Varsha had broken all her contacts and did not use a mobile phone. "With Bishnoi absconding, the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Rajasthan Police that is probing the paper leak case even put a reward of Rs 25,000 on information leading to her arrest. According to IG Vikas Kumar, three months ago, a team from the Jodhpur Range launched Operation Doctor Fixit to apprehend her. The police said in a release: "Doctor Fixit is a product that is used to stop rainwater from leaking. The accused's name is Varsha (which means rain) and she was part of the paper leak scam. So this operation is called Doctor Fixit." Police said that based on collection and analysis of human and technical intelligence, the investigators got information that Bishnoi was hiding in Kota along with some other accused. For several days, the team disguised themselves as students and searched in dhabas, crossings, paan shops, coaching institutes, hostels, and so on. Finally, with the help of Kota SP Amrita Duhan and Kunhadi police station SHO Arvind Bhardwaj, the police team reached the suspect's location.



## Daily bus breakdowns throw traffic out of gear in Delhi. Now, a solution may be in sight



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

On Tuesday, a message was shared on the Delhi Traffic Police X handle at 2.23 pm: "Traffic is affected on Outer Ring Road in the carriageway from Nehru Place towards Savitri flyover due to breakdown of a bus on Savitri flyover. Commuters are advised to plan their journey accordingly." At 3.48 pm, a follow-up post read: "Bus has been removed." At 11.01 am, a similar post was shared of a bus breaking down at Sarita Vihar flyover loop. At 10.51 am was yet another post of a bus breakdown — this time, near Dwarka Mor Metro Station. These were among 23 breakdowns that disrupted traffic since last Friday, going by the Traffic Police's social media posts. To improve response time to bus breakdowns, the Traffic Police and the Delhi Transport Corporation have now created a common WhatsApp group to share live updates, police sources said. The move is significant, going by the number of DTC bus breakdowns that happen on Delhi roads daily. According to Delhi Traffic Police's X handle, eight breakdowns disrupted traffic just on Monday. Four were reported on Tuesday. Additional CP (Traffic) Dinesh Kumar said, "The group comprises the Transport Department Commissioner, Delhi Traffic ACPs, and all other senior officials from the two units. It has been made to increase coordination between the

Transport Department and Traffic Police to improve response time." He said response time to breakdowns has increased by over 50% since the group was created and other changes were introduced: "Earlier, if a bus (plying on the Najafgarh route breaks down in any area in Delhi, then a tow truck only from the Najafgarh depot could be called in for help. Now, with live updates being shared on the group, the nearest depot responds to a bus breakdown — no matter what the route number is."

According to the Delhi Transport Corporation, another step taken by it is specialised training of bus drivers in moving the vehicle to the side. "Earlier, when a bus broke down, the driver had to wait for a recovery van to even slightly move the vehicle to the side. Now, we have provided them with training in using hydraulic pressure systems to move the buses to the side using appropriate tools. Not all drivers have been trained yet, but soon they will be," said MD (DTC) Shilpa Shinde. MD Shinde also said the twin moves of coordination between Traffic Police and DTC, along with driver training, has eased the burden on police personnel, who earlier used to be solely responsible for informing about breakdowns and then managing resultant traffic as well. According to police sources, the group was formed 20 days ago after a meeting chaired by the L-G between the Traffic and Transport Department officials. During this, it was recommended to make a WhatsApp group to improve coordination between both departments and to avoid congestion on roads due to public transport breakdowns. Officials say more steps are being considered to ensure a smooth flow of traffic despite breakdowns of government vehicles and improve coordination between the units. "We have requested the Transport Department to permanently deploy personnel and tow trucks on VIP routes in Delhi so VIP cavalry isn't stranded for long hours due to breakdowns. In any case, routes are blocked for public use during VVIP movement. A case of breakdown may make that blockade longer," a traffic police officer said.

## After decade-long wait, group of early buyers demands handover of Amrapali flats

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

handover of Amrapali flats, National Building Construction Corporation, NBCC homebuyers, Amrapali dream valley, NBCC chairman K. P. Mahadevaswamy, Amrapali Dream Valley Enchante project, Greater Noida West, Indian Express news On Sunday, 31 owners turned up to take possession of the flats. The rest were handed over the flats Tuesday, said NBCC chairman K. P. Mahadevaswamy. A group of at least 10 homebuyers, who have been awaiting possession of their flats in the Amrapali Dream Valley Enchante project of Greater Noida West since 2015, Tuesday approached the Court Receiver's Office demanding handover of their flats.

The move came after nearly 60 customers were handed over the flats by Tuesday. A majority of these are, however, new buyers who received the flat directly from the National Building Construction Corporation (NBCC). On Sunday, 31 owners turned up to take possession of the flats. The rest were handed over the flats Tuesday, said NBCC chairman K. P. Mahadevaswamy. "It was easier for the new flat buyers to get the possession as the documentation was done directly with the NBCC and not with Amrapali," a distraught Sachin Sharma said. He, like others, booked a 2BHK flat with the Amrapali Valley in 2015. "Today, I neither have money nor a house, I have been beaten both ways," she said. However, Mahadevaswamy said work on 500 flats has been completed and is ready to move in. "Everybody will get the flat. The problem with the existing buyers is that their payment has to be verified. Once their payment is verified, they will get the keys as well," he assured, adding "There is no discrepancy between the existing home buy-



ers and the new buyers". The Amrapali Dream Valley Project began in 2010 and was supposed to be developed in three phases. The third phase began in 2014 and the builder was supposed to hand over the possession of the flats within 36 months. "We were told that the project will be initiated soon," said another buyer Anuj Maurya, a resident of Vaishali's Sector 1 who invested in a 2BHK flat in Amrapali Dream Project in 2015. However, the timeline could not be followed after Amrapali Group declared bankruptcy in 2017. Protests by around 50,000 affected customers followed the bankruptcy declaration. In 2019, a Supreme Court bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra directed NBCC to complete the unfinished housing projects in Noida and Greater Noida and hand over these to homebuyers. In 2022, Gautam Builders was appointed to take over the construction of 884 flats. "I had taken a loan of Rs 30 lakh to invest in the flat. It has been 10 years. All I have done is to pay the interest to the bank," a dejected Maurya said.

## In chargesheet, CBI lists 11 pieces of evidence – from Roy's DNA samples at crime scene to victim's blood on his clothes



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

The Central Bureau of Investigation, probing the rape and murder of a junior doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College & Hospital, has listed 11 pieces of evidence in its chargesheet to hold Sanjay Roy, a civic volunteer with Kolkata Police, as the sole accused in the case, it is learnt. In the 45-page chargesheet submitted to the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's court in Sealdah on Monday, the CBI is learnt to have said that the victim's blood was found on Roy's jeans and shoes. Also, his hair and a Bluetooth earpiece that synced with his cellphone were found from the crime scene – the seminar hall at RG Kar hospital – from where the woman's body was found on the morning of August 9, it states. The report of a swab taken from the area around the crime scene showed the presence of Roy's saliva as confirmed by the DNA report, it states, as per sources. The CBI has attached the forensic report and Roy's DNA report with the chargesheet. Sources in the CBI said they collected evidence from CCTV footage as well as the location of Roy's phone through CDR (cell detail records) to show that he was present at RG Kar hospital and on the third floor of the emergency building, the crime scene, during the night of August 8-9. According to sources, the chargesheet states that Roy's body had five blunt force injuries that were consistent with marks of resistance or struggle by the victim.

"The age of these injuries could be between 24 to 36 hours prior to the medico examination that were conducted following his arrest on August 10, a day after the

rape and murder incident," said a CBI officer. "The detection of his DNA from the body of the victim... The presence of blood stains of the victim on his jeans and footwear. A piece of short hair found from the scene of crime that matched with Roy... The pairing of one Bluetooth earphone found from the crime scene with the seized mobile phone of Roy. All these prove he committed the crime," a CBI officer said. CBI sources said Roy has been charged under BNS sections 64 (rape), 66 (causing death or resulting in persistent vegetative state) and 103(1) (murder). The case has triggered widespread outrage and led to a prolonged strike by doctors across West Bengal. Roy was arrested by Kolkata Police a day after the incident. The probe was subsequently handed over to the CBI by the Calcutta High Court. On September 14, the CBI arrested Sandip Ghosh, the former principal of R G Kar Medical College, and Abhijit Mondol, the then officer in-charge of Talal police station, in connection with alleged tampering of evidence in the case and trying to "hush up" the incident.

## Thummala insists 100 per cent procurement of farmers produce

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Hyderabad: The Minister for Agriculture, Thummala Nageswar Rao on Tuesday wanted the Central government to ensure 100 per cent procurement of farmers' produce (other than paddy) as part of the minimum support price operations.

At a review held with officials in the Secretariat, he directed the Agriculture Secretary to write to the Centre in this regard. He wanted the cap on the procurement of farmers produce to go.

The agriculture Secretary said the State Government had advised the Agriculture Department to seek permission from the Central Government to purchase 100% of the produce at the Minimum Support Price (MSP), lifting the current limit of 25% on all crops except paddy

## Crackdown on old vehicles in public parking spots in Delhi to return



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

With the undesirable combination of Delhi winter and pollution-filled days fast approaching, Delhiites will witness a fresh round of crackdown on diesel and petrol-fuelled vehicles that have completed 10 years and 15 years of age. The enforcement team, including the Delhi Traffic Police, Enforcement Wing of the transport department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), and the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), will start the drive before Diwali if pollution increases, a transport official said.

"We will start the drive after Diwali but if the pollution level deteriorates before this, the enforcement team will start the drive and impound overage vehicles parked in public places," said an official. On Tuesday, the transport department issued a public notice, along with guidelines, appealing to the public to park their overage vehicles in the individual parking area. Failure to do so could see the vehicles being lifted by the transport authorities.

"The Delhi government has de-registered 5.5 million overage vehicles that have completed more than 10 years (diesel) and 15 years (petrol)... There is a com-

plete prohibition on parking overage vehicles, including in areas outside the residences that are considered public places," the notice stated, citing figures till October 1. The deregistered vehicles include cars, two-wheelers, e-rickshaws, autorickshaws, trucks and tempos, among others. Transport department officials have advised owners of overage vehicles to park their vehicles in individual private parking; even if it's part of a residential complex, he/she should park only in the space allotted to them to avoid lifting and scrapping. Besides, owners also have options to obtain a No-Objection Certificate (NOC) to move the vehicle out of Delhi within a year of it crossing the 'age limit' or get it scrapped from a registered scrapper. "No NOC for vehicles will be issued after one year of them crossing the age limit," said the department.

Further, if the vehicle has not been moved out of Delhi within a month of NOC issuance, it will be impounded and sent to a scrapping unit, officials said. "Offenders may also be prosecuted according to the ELV (end-of-life vehicles) guidelines 2024," said officials. The aggressive campaign follows the directions of the Commission for Air Quality Management and Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. The MCD has been running a drive against ELVs since March last year. "The corporation is lifting vehicles parked in public spaces and getting them scrapped through the RVSFs (Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facilities)," said another official. Officials added that the Special Commissioner (Traffic) held a meeting with all the enforcement agencies a couple of weeks ago. The traffic police have also asked all the RVSFs and departments concerned to submit a list of vehicles scrapped last year and until October 8 this year with their make, model and registration numbers. Further, the traffic police also has plans to intensify its crackdown on illegal e-rickshaws.

## ADGP P Vijayan, suspended over security lapse, is Kerala's new intelligence chief

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Kerala intelligence chief, ADGP P Vijayan, security lapse, Kerala, Kerala government, MR Ajith Kumar, Thrissur Pooram, Indian express news, current affairs Vijayan has been credited with designing and launching the Student Police Cadets (SPC) project, and had been the nodal officer of the initiative - a first-of-its-kind in India - for several years. ADGP P Vijayan, a 1999-batch IPS officer, was Tuesday appointed as the state intelligence head after the incumbent Manoj Abraham was made ADGP law and order.

Changes in the top posts in the state police were made after MR Ajith Kumar, who is facing a slew of probes — including lapses in the conduct of the iconic Thrissur Pooram — was removed as ADGP law and order last week. Vijayan was suspended in May 2023 on charges of security lapse related to the transit of the Kozhikode train arson case accused person Shahrukh Saifi after he was arrested from Maharashtra. Vijayan, who was then an IG rank officer heading the state anti-terrorism squad, was suspended in May last year over the alleged leak of police's plan to bring Saifi back to the state. Vijayan was reinstated in November 2023 after a detailed probe found the allegations baseless. He was promoted as ADGP in May this year and was made director of the Kerala police



academy. Significantly, the suspension was on the basis of a report submitted by ADGP Kumar. The order had then stated that although he was not part of the investigation team, Vijayan was in touch with the police team, which brought Saifi to Kerala. Vijayan has been credited with designing and launching the Student Police Cadets (SPC) project, and had been the nodal officer of the initiative — a first-of-its-kind in India — for several years. The SPC scheme, meant to groom the youth, make them sensitive to societal laws and help them maintain civic discipline, was also emulated by police in other states.

## Diamond polishers call off strike in Surat after intervention by labour department



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Diamond polishers strike, labour department, diamond factory workers strike, bonus, surat diamond factories, Indian express news The workers had been protesting against their reduced income and lack of bonuses in the wake of the present slump in the diamond sector. Scores of workers of a diamond factory, who have been on a strike for the last three days, called off their stir after a visit by labour department officials here on Tuesday. The workers had been protesting against their reduced income and lack of bonuses in the wake of the present slump in the diamond sector. The death of one of their colleagues by alleged suicide on Monday is said to have further agitated them. However, Vipul Shah, owner of Asian Star, the company employing the agitating workers, said the death had nothing to do with his factory. Sources said that over 800 polishers work in the unit.

One of the diamond polishers working with the company, on condition of anonymity, said, "Every year, the company gives us bonus worth two months of salary — one in March and another during Diwali. This year, we have come to know that the company has either refused to give a bonus or decided to pay a lesser amount." The worker further said, "Our salaries are based on the number of diamonds we cut and polish. Since January, we have been getting fewer diamonds to cut and polish as a result of which our salary has gone down. We did not even get the bonus in March. We recently came to know that we won't be getting a bonus for Diwali either. So, we went on strike." The worker said that following the intervention of labour department officials, company authorities have assured the workers of getting the bonus, albeit only for Diwali. "We agreed to it keeping in mind the recession in the diamond industry. We will resume our duties Wednesday," he added. Ramnagin Singh (41), who had been working as a diamond polisher at Asian Star, died by alleged suicide. His family members said he used to earn Rs 30,000 to Rs 35,000 per month, which had reduced to Rs 15,000 over the last few months. Varachha police inspector A N Gabani said, "The kin said that Ramnagin had been upset for the last few days over his salary. He was worried about the marriage expenses of his two daughters." Surat deputy labour commissioner M C Karya said, "There was an issue over bonus between the diamond polishers and the management. Following our involvement, it was sorted out." Talking to The Indian

Express, Shah said, "Some misconception was spread by a few labourers in my factory over the bonus issue. We have assured that this year, we will only be giving Diwali bonus due to the recession. However, we will continue giving salaries to the diamond artisans on the basis of the work done by them." On the worker's death, he said, "The incident is not related to us. It could be a personal issue... we will compensate the family in days to come."

## Congress launches awareness drive in 40 tribal villages of Dang



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

ESZ row, Congress awareness campaign, Dang tribal villages, Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Area, Anant Patel, Mangal Gavit, Dang forest officials, Navsari, Indian express news Villagers take part in the drive in Dang. The local unit of Congress on Tuesday launched an awareness campaign, months after 40 tribal villages of Dang district were placed under Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Area (WGESA) by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The campaign was led by Congress MLA of Vansda (Navsari) Anant Patel.

Earlier, BJP leader and former Congress MLA Mangal Gavit, who is also a tribal leader, had held a meeting with Dang forest officials opposing the move. On July 31, the central government had issued a draft notification marking 64 villages, spanning 449 square kilometers, in South Gujarat as economically sensitive zones. According to the notification, 40 villages in Dang, five in Navsari and 19 in Tapi district have been marked as ESZ.

Sources, meanwhile, said due to strained relations between Gavit and state assembly whip-cum-MLA Vijay Patel, the former has been sidelined. "By taking up the ESA issue, Gavit wants to put himself in the political arena," said the sources. Vijay Patel, however, said: "The villages put under ESA will not be affected. We will also hold a meeting with Mangal Gavit to make him understand the same." Remarkably on the awareness campaign by Congress, Patel added: "A campaign should be carried out to make people more aware about this project."



## Backing junior doctors' hunger strike, senior doctors of RG Kar hospital resign en masse



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Expressing deep concern over the "deteriorating health" of junior doctors who are on an indefinite hunger strike for the last four days, senior doctors and faculty members at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College & Hospital on Tuesday sent en masse resignation letter to the Director of Medical Education. "The government seems to be oblivious of the deteriorating condition of the (junior) doctors on hunger strike. If the situation demands, we will begin to resign individually," said a senior doctor at the state-run hospital.

In the wake of the August 9 rape and murder of a trainee woman doctor at RG Kar hospital, junior doctors in the state went on a total "cease work". They called off their strike on October 4 and launched an indefinite hunger strike on Saturday. The resignation letter, signed by over 34 senior doctors, read: "We, the undersigned doctors of RG Kar Medical College & Hospital, have been striving to provide optimal hospital services. However, the current conditions have made it increasingly challenging to deliver the quality of patient care that is essential. The health of the protesting doctors who are currently on hunger strike, is deteriorating tremendously fast. We request the government to come into reconciliation with the protesting doctors and the ones who are sitting in an indefinite hunger strike immediately. We senior doctors of RG Kar Medical College & Hospital are giving mass resignation." A group of senior doctors also joined the hunger strike in solidarity with their juniors, who are demanding safety and security at the workplace, justice for the deceased colleague, immediate removal of Health Secretary Narayan Swaroop Nigam, and action against alleged corruption in the department among others. "The unwavering support of our seniors since day one is truly

commendable. By resigning en masse, they have sent a powerful message," said Kinjal Nanda, a protesting junior doctor. "We couldn't have come this far without the support of our senior doctors," said Abid Hassan, another junior doctor at Esplanade where his colleagues are on hunger strike. "Even during our cease work, the seniors pitched in with extra hours of duty and kept the hospital services normal as far as possible. We are not against patients, but we are fighting for a cause and want to clean the system. This mass resignation is definitely a welcome step," he added. Another junior doctor expressed anguish over what he claimed was the government's "indifference" towards their demands. "Even after 68 hours of our hunger strike, the government is not taking any steps. Therefore, the senior doctors of RG Kar have resigned. Doctors from other hospitals will also start sending mass resignation letters. This will hopefully further create pressure on the government," said Sayan Mandal, another protesting junior doctor. Meanwhile, senior doctors of the Calcutta National Medical College also warned of mass resignation if the demands of the protesting doctors were not met. On Monday, the government urged the protesting junior doctors to end their hunger strike and resume duty, assuring to complete the installation of CCTV cameras in all the medical colleges in the state in the next three days.

Chief Secretary Manoj Pant said the state government was fully committed to providing a safe workplace and urged the protesting doctors to see the government's actions in a "positive light". The chief secretary also said that a panic button or an alarm system will be installed in state-run medical institutions, as demanded by the protesting junior doctors, by November 1, and announced to launch a pilot project of a "referral system" on October 15. "We have no differences and we are doing these in a positive manner. We are requesting junior doctors to see all these things (actions taken by the government) in a positive light and end the hunger strike. We are requesting junior doctors to join work. I must say that many of them have already resumed duty. The rest of them should also return to work as soon as possible," Pant had said at a press conference on Monday. Evening, doctors from various medical colleges and hospitals, both state-run and private, joined two rallies to support their junior colleagues. One rally began at Calcutta National Medical College and Hospital, while the other started from the SSKM Hospital.

## MHA launches inquiry into former Tihar Jail Chief over alleged VIP treatment to Satyender Jain



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

The home department of the Delhi government has started conducting the inquiry and is likely to submit its report in the coming days, The Indian Express has learnt. (File Photo) The home department of the Delhi government has started conducting the inquiry and is likely to submit its report in the coming days, The Indian Express has learnt. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has initiated a departmental inquiry against former director-general (prisons) Sandeep Goel for allegedly extending VIP treatment to jailed AAP leader Satyender Jain in Tihar jail. The home department of the Delhi government has started conducting the inquiry and is likely to submit its report in the coming days. On December 21, 2022, Goel, an IPS officer of the 1989 AGMUT-cadre batch, was suspended after departmental proceedings were contemplated against him. Before Goel's suspension, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena had issued an order on November 11 asking Goel to report to Delhi Police HQ till further orders and Sanjay Beniwal was appointed in his place. Before Goel's transfer, alleged conman Sukesh Chandrasekhar, an accused in a Rs 200-crore extortion case, had accused him of allegedly taking money

from him to ensure his safety in prison.

An official said the decision to suspend Goel was taken after a report by a committee comprising principal secretaries of the Delhi government's home, law and vigilance departments noted "collusion" on his part with Jain, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with a money laundering case on May 31, 2022. A source said the MHA has now initiated a departmental inquiry and the home department is probing allegations as to how Goel provided facilities to Jain, who was the jail staff at the time, who was assigned to help Jain in his barrack, who was assigned to him etc.

In the first inquiry, video footage provided by the ED revealed that Goel spoke to Jain in his cell on October 6 for around 50 minutes (from 6.39 pm to 7.29 pm). "This reflects Goel was quite close to Jain and exhibited his unbecoming conduct at the cost of decorum. Goel also submitted his comments to the home department and had tried to project as if nothing was amiss in jail. He also tried to give colour to massage being done to Jain as if it was his health/medical necessity. Departmental proceedings are also recommended against him for lapses leading to preferential treatment to Jain," the committee had found. It also found that alleged repeated entry of Jain's family members into the deodhi (checking area) of jail no 7 without any competent authority's order was a blatant and serious violation of Delhi Prison Rules, 2018. "Deodhi is not a place earmarked for the purpose of mulakat of prisoners but is considered to be a very secure place owing to inward and outward movements of inmates by jail authorities. Therefore, strict discipline has to be maintained, otherwise it poses a threat to jail security. The fact that this happened cannot be without support of jail administration, particularly jail superintendent and DG (Prisons)," the committee further found.

## Doubling number of students for overseas scholarship, Rs 80 crore for promotion of govt schemes: Jharkhand Cabinet takes key decisions ahead of polls

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

These were some of the key decisions the Hemant Soren-led Cabinet took on Tuesday. With the state Assembly going to the polls, likely by the end of next month, the Cabinet meeting went on until late night, after which Soren spoke to the media around 11 pm. These were some of the key decisions the Hemant Soren-led Cabinet took on Tuesday. With the state Assembly going to the polls, likely by the end of next month, the Cabinet meeting went on until late night, after which Soren spoke to the media around 11 pm. Approvals of an advance amount of Rs 80 crore for 'branding' and related work for information dissemination of various schemes; Rs 21.25 lakh for ferrying the mother of a Jharkhand-cadre IAS officer by air ambulance from city to another; Rs 132 crore for procurement and installation of MRI and CT scan machines in 'Rajkiya (State) Medical College and Hospital and Sadar Hospital, Ranchi'; to increase the category-wise students from 25 to 50 under Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Overseas Scholarship Scheme; and Jharkhand Congress chief's elevation to a cabinet rank status.

These were some of the key decisions the Hemant Soren-led Cabinet took on Tuesday. With the state Assembly going to the polls, likely by the end of next month, the Cabinet meeting went on until late night, after which Soren spoke to the media around 11 pm. Announcing the decisions, CM Soren said: "There is a difference between the double engine government and the INDIA bloc government. Earlier, we used to send 25 students under the Marang Gomke scholarship scheme, and in this Cabinet, we have increased the number to 50. The students will study at various universities in the UK. Also, the Cabinet approved forming a high-level committee consisting of retired judges, state and central administrative officers, and other departments to sort out various problems such as promotion, vacancies, etc."

The Cabinet press note said that in various districts of Jharkhand, several programmes have been organised at the district or the headquarters levels to promote 'Maiyya Samman Yojana', 'Aapki Yojana Aapki Sarkar Aapke Dwar' among others, for which the department has carried out branding work. "...the branding work has been undertaken... Moreover, in light of the directives received from higher authorities, approval has been granted



to receive an advance amount of Rs 80 crore from the Jharkhand Contingency Fund for the payment of bills related to the extensive promotion and dissemination of various schemes and achievements," it said. The press note also stated that a 'post-facto approval' has been granted for the reimbursement of Rs 21,500 incurred under special circumstances for transporting the mother of Manjunath Bhajantri, 2011-batch Jharkhand cadre IAS officer, by air ambulance from Hubli, Karnataka to Chennai and back in September this year.

Additionally, under the state plan for the financial year 2024-25, administrative approval has been granted for the procurement and installation of MRI and CT scan machines at Rajkiya (State) Medical College Hospital and Sadar Hospital, Ranchi, for a total amount of Rs 132 crore. The press note also stated that Congress state chief Keshav Mahto Kamlesh has been approved as a member of the Jharkhand State Coordination Committee. The committee was formed in 2021 to maintain coordination among the coalition government in the event of the arrest of Hemant Soren, who was then embroiled in a stone mining lease controversy. The Cabinet also approved Rs 136.95 crore for the proposed construction of Jharkhand Bhawan at Vashi, Navi Mumbai, based on the technical approval received at the competent level. Additionally, the Cabinet said approval has been given to operate state-level free coaching for minority students in Jharkhand to prepare for competitive exams conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC), Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC), and various other recruitment examinations.

## Charkha to diamonds: Bullet train stations to depict ethos of state

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

From Mahatma Gandhi's humble charkha to exquisite lattice (jaali) of the Sidi Saiyyed mosque, and from the inspiring White Revolution to the radiant Surat diamonds: The eight stations of Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) Corridor in Gujarat promise to give the travellers a peek into the local designs, culture, and landmark programmes associated with the towns. A deadline of December 2025 has been set for the completion of the civil and construction works of the 508-kilometre-long corridor, popularly known as the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project.

Starting from Sabarmati, the bullet train will halt at Ahmedabad, Anand, Vadodara, Bharuch, Surat, Bilimora and Vapi. The facade of each of the stations will be designed to represent the ethos of the respective cities and towns, said authorities. While the facade of the Sabarmati station is inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's charkha at the Sabarmati Ashram, in Ahmedabad, the station - with its roof featuring hundreds of kites and facade inspired by the intricate lattice work of Sidi Saiyyed mosque - blends the city's rich culture with history. Ahmedabad Mumbai bullet train, Mahatma Gandhi, charkha, Sidi Saiyyed mosque, White Revolution, Surat diamonds, MAHSR Corridor, Bullet train stations, gujarat culture, sabarmati ahmedabad, Indian express news (LtoR) Mahatma Gandhi's charkha (spinning wheel), Kites, Sidi Saiyyed mosque jaali (latticework), White Revolution and Banyan (Vad) trees

The design of the facade of Anand station, themed on the White Revolution associated with the town where Amul was born, features shapes of milk drops in pristine white. At the next stop, the Vadodara station will reflect the foliage of Banyan trees - from which the city also derives its name. In Bharuch, the facade has been designed to replicate the indigenous Sujani weaves, which date back to 1860 AD and have received a GI tag. The Surat bullet train station will reflect its "diamond city" tag, with the facade designed to look like diamonds placed together. The station in Bilimora, which is known for its mango orchards, will have a mango yellow colour scheme integrated with white and grey. The facade of Vapi station on the bullet-train corridor is an abstract depiction of "speed" to represent the rapid industrial growth witnessed by the town. Stations as 'vibrant hubs that connect communities' Managing Director, National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), Vivek Kumar Gupta said the intention has been to create stations not for mere transportation but as "vibrant hubs that connect communities" and elevate the overall travel experience.

Ahmedabad Mumbai bullet train, Mahatma Gandhi, charkha, Sidi Saiyyed mosque, White Revolution, Surat diamonds, MAHSR Corridor, Bullet train stations, gujarat culture, sabarmati ahmedabad, Indian express news (LtoR) Sujani weaves, Mangoes, Speed to reflect the town's rapid industrialisation and Diamonds

According to Gupta, "Our idea was to pick some elements of the city that the local residents are proud of. For example, Surat is the epicentre of the global diamond industry while Vadodara is known for its abundance of Banyan (Vad) trees... We have maintained a uniform style at all the stations... This way, we are redefining the role of transportation infrastructure, turning it into a catalyst for economic growth and cultural vibrancy." NHSRCL told The Indian Express that the foundation works of all eight stations in Gujarat is complete, adding the work on the superstructures is at an advanced stage. Earlier, NHSRCL had said, "The bullet train stations are conceived as a gateway to a modern way of living. The design of each of the stations on the MAHSR line will reflect the spirit of the city they are coming up in. This will bring about an instant connection with the local populace, and promote a sense of ownership of the high-speed system.", the work on installation of 90 energy efficient escalators at the 12 stations of the corridor commenced with two escalators being set up at Anand bullet train station. Like the exterior, the interiors of the stations will meet international standards in functionality and operations, said Gupta.



NHSRCL said, "The interiors will have soothing colours and all basic amenities like waiting areas, nursery, business-class lounge, smoking rooms, etc. Some of the stations will be developed as a transport hub through integration with other modes of transportation for better, faster and hassle-free connectivity to and from the station..." The stations will have an inclusive design for specially abled passengers. "A wheelchair-friendly design, lowered ticketing counters with Braille instructions, tiles on the floor for guidance, dedicated washrooms, Braille buttons inside elevators are some of the features," NHSRCL said.

Gupta said that in order to enhance accessibility and convenience of commuters and stakeholders, and to promote economic activities around the stations area, the surrounding areas of bullet train stations have been planned to develop in accordance with the policies of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). "The areas around HSR stations at Sabarmati and Surat in Gujarat, and Virar and Thane in Maharashtra, have also been shortlisted by the respective state authorities for preparation of Station Area Development schemes," he said.

## Why BJP is using 'Jalebi' to take a dig at Rahul Gandhi after it won a third term in Haryana

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

A comment made by Rahul Gandhi about 'Jalebis' during his election campaign in Haryana has provided fresh ammunition for the BJP to target him, especially as the party has secured its third consecutive victory in the state. "On behalf of all the workers of Bhartiya Janta Party Haryana, Jalebi has been sent to Rahul Gandhi's home," read a tweet from the official X account of BJP Haryana. In the lead-up to the Haryana polls, Gandhi addressed an election rally in Gohana on October 3, where he showcased a box from the renowned jalebi-maker 'Matu Ram halwai'. He emphasised that these jalebis should be sold nationwide and even suggested that they be exported to create more employment opportunities. During his speech, he criticized the Centre and the BJP for their business policies. "I tasted jalebi in the car and sent a message to my sister Priyanka that today I have eaten the best jalebi of my life. I am bringing a box of jalebi for you too," he said.

"This involves the blood and sweat of a person from Haryana; he has been doing this work for years," Gandhi added. The Congress leader further stated, "What should happen is that this jalebi should be available all over India, and after that in the rest of the countries - in America, in Japan - this jalebi should be served in different forms." "Suppose 100 people work in their shop today, but if this jalebi goes all over the world, then 10,000 people will work in their factory," he explained. He claimed that jalebi sellers like Matu Ram have been negatively affected by the policies of the Modi government, including GST and demonetization. "Modi ji has thrown these people into a 'Chakravayuh' - first demonetization, then GST, and then all the money in the banks was given away to 2-3 billionaires," he asserted.

## Body of Territorial Army personnel abducted during anti-militancy op in South Kashmir found



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

The body of the Territorial Army personnel, who was abducted by militants a day ago from the Kokernag forests in South Kashmir, has been recovered by the Army during a search operation on Wednesday morning. Police sources have confirmed that the body was recovered from the forest in South Kashmir. According to the sources in the security establishment, the personnel abducted by the militants was a 26-year-old resident of South Kashmir's Anantnag district. The Army's Chinar Corps, earlier in the day, had said via a post on X: "Based on intelligence input, a joint counter operation was launched by Indian army along with Jammu and Kashmir Police and other agencies in Kazwan forest on 8th October. Operation continued overnight as one soldier of the Territorial Army was reported missing. Massive search operation is in progress." Sources in Jammu and Kashmir police, however, say that the Territorial Army personnel was abducted by the militants on Tuesday.

"There were inputs about militant movement in the

forest area," a senior police officer said. "The army had sent the two Territorial army personnel to pin the forest location. However, they were abducted by the militants there," the officer added. Sources said that while one of two personnel managed to escape. One soldier was shot at by the militants and was hit in the shoulder, but he ran to safety. The injured soldier was rushed to the army's 439 Field Hospital for treatment. Police sources say both the personnel are locals and associated with the 162 Battalion of the Territorial Army. "Two Territorial Army personnel encountered 3-4 militants during their reconnaissance mission. Reports suggest that two of them were foreigners," a source said.

## Man held for smuggling jaggery, ammonium chloride worth Rs 5 lakh in Nirmal

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Nirmal: A man was arrested by sleuths of a task force from Prohibition and Excise department for allegedly smuggling black jaggery and ammonium chloride (solid state) at Pembri mandal centre on Tuesday. The sleuths seized 8,600 kilograms of jaggery, 720 kgs of ammonium chloride, 200 liters of jaggery ferment and 6 liters of illicitly distilled liquor worth Rs 5 lakh from him. District Prohibition and Excise Officer Razaq said that Guguloth Rajendra Prasad was apprehended for smuggling the jaggery and ammonium chloride used for brewing illicitly distilled liquor locally known as gudumba.



## Unwilling to be burdened by anyone else's politics: Argentine Foreign Minister says rejecting BRICS



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Argentina is not willing to be a part of BRICS as it does not want to be part of any political agenda, said visiting Foreign Minister Diana Mondino in New Delhi in an interaction organised by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF). Ms. Mondino called BRICS a "very good

idea" but said, Argentina is not willing to be a member of the outfit. "We don't want to be burdened by whatever politics anybody has," said Ms. Mondino elaborating on Argentina's position on BRICS.

Argentina's President Javier Milei had written to the BRICS member countries in December 2023 rejecting the plan to join the outfit. In August 2023, during the BRICS summit in Johannesburg, Argentina had joined Saudi Arabia, Iran, UAE, Ethiopia and Egypt in becoming members of the expanded BRICS. However, Argentina's position changed after Javier Milei won the presidential election in November. Foreign Minister Mondino appreciated the economic and commercial scope of BRICS but was non committal about the overall profile of the grouping. Foreign Minister Mondino met External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar on Tuesday and the two led Argentine and Indian delegates during the 7th India-Argentina Joint Commission Meeting. "Concluded a productive and wide-ranging 7th India-Argentina JCM along with Foreign Minister Diana Mondino today in New Delhi. Took stock of our bilateral ties including in trade, space, nuclear, railways, agriculture, fisheries, health, AYUSH, people-to-people and defence ties. Also exchanged views on regional and global issues and our cooperation in multilateral fora," said Dr. Jaishankar after the meeting.

## ASEAN summit: Southeast Asian leaders to discuss Myanmar crisis and South China Sea tensions

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Myanmar's Foreign Ministry Permanent Secretary Aung Kyaw Moe, Philippine's President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Singaporean Prime Minister Lawrence Wong, Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, Laos' President Thongloun Sisoulith, Laos' Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, Indonesian Vice President Ma'ruf Amin, and East Timorese Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao hold hands during the opening ceremony of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit in Vientiane, Laos, Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2024.

Myanmar's Foreign Ministry Permanent Secretary Aung Kyaw Moe, Philippine's President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Singaporean Prime Minister Lawrence Wong, Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, Laos' President Thongloun Sisoulith, Laos' Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, Indonesian Vice President Ma'ruf Amin, and East Timorese Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao hold hands during the opening ceremony of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit in Vientiane, Laos, Wednesday.

Southeast Asian leaders gathered in the capital of Laos on Wednesday (October 9, 2024) for an annual regional forum that will focus on tackling the prolonged civil war in Myanmar and territorial tensions in the South China Sea, two key challenges that have long tested the bloc's credibility. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit will also be followed by meetings with global powers including China, the United States and Russia, which are contending for influence in the region. The timing of the meetings in Vientiane makes it likely that talks will also touch on the escalation of violence in the Middle East, although Southeast Asia has faced only indirect fallout. ASEAN's influence has historically been limited even among its own members, but the forum has often served as a platform for dialogues among superpowers looking to engage with the region.

The 10 member states of ASEAN — Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Brunei and Laos — will also hold talks with their dialogue partners from elsewhere in the region including Japan, South Korea, India and Australia on topics ranging from the economy, to climate change and energy. Lao Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone welcomed new leaders from Thailand and Singapore to the summit in his opening speech. He said Lao, one of the poorest countries in the bloc, aims to help members work together to manage geopolitical and economic challenges under its chairmanship.

"We help one another, and work together the ASEAN way," he said. "We will discuss and strengthen cooperation between ASEAN members and other dialogue partners, along with upholding the unity and centrality of ASEAN."

Thailand's Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who took the premiership in August, is the bloc's youngest leader at 38. Singapore's Prime Minister Lawrence Wong took over in May from Lee Hsien Loong, who stepped down after 20 years. Vietnam also has a new leader after President To Lam took office in August, but the country is being represented by Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh. President Joko Widodo of Indonesia, ASEAN's biggest member, is skipping the forum as his successor Prabowo Subianto prepares to take office later this month, sending Vice President Ma'ruf Amin in his stead. It will also be the first overseas trip for Japan's new prime minister Shigeru Ishiba, who was confirmed just last week. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will fill in for President Joe Biden at the meetings, while China will be represented by Premier Li Qiang. Frayed U.S.-China relations, particularly over Beijing's increasing assertiveness in the disputed South China Sea, will be a major agenda item for Blinken, said Dan Kritenbrink, the top U.S. diplomat for Asia. He could not say if Mr. Blinken plans to hold separate meetings in Laos with Chinese officials. "A number of (China)-related issues are likely to come up in the context of the ASEAN meetings, including the situation in the South China Sea and China's continuing to take a number of escalatory and irresponsible steps designed to coerce and pressure many in the South China Sea claimants," Mr. Kritenbrink said. ASEAN members Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei, along with Taiwan have overlapping claims with China, which claims sovereignty over virtually all of the South China Sea and has become increasingly aggressive in attempts to enforce them. ASEAN members and China have been negotiating a code of conduct to govern behavior in the sea for years, but progress has been slow.

Chinese and Philippine vessels have clashed repeatedly this year, and Vietnam charged last week that Chinese forces assaulted its fishermen in disputed areas in the South China Sea. China has also sent patrol vessels to areas that Indonesia and Malaysia claim as exclu-

sive economic zones. The Philippines, a longtime U.S. ally, has been critical of other ASEAN countries for not doing more to get China to back away.

Muhammad Faizal Abdul Rahman, research fellow at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, said there's little chance of clear outcomes as those not in direct conflict with China — the region's top trade and investment partner — will likely prioritize ties with Beijing. "It is the preference for conflict avoidance while getting geostrategic benefits where possible," he said. "In reality, national interests matter more than regional interests."

ASEAN's credibility has also been severely tested by the crisis in Myanmar, where close to 6,000 people have been killed and over 3 million displaced since the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021. Myanmar's junta has agreed to an ASEAN peace plan that calls for ceasefire and mediation, but hasn't followed through as it continues battling pro-democracy guerrillas and ethnic rebels. It's widely believed that considerably less than half the country's territory is under the army's control. Thailand is expected to host an informal regional consultation on the Myanmar crisis in December, although it is unclear who will attend from Myanmar. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nikordej Balangura said the meeting will be open to all ASEAN members at a ministerial level and possible to countries with a shared border with Myanmar. "Thailand is ready to coordinate to create a concerted ASEAN effort that will lead to peace in Myanmar," he told reporters. Myanmar sent Foreign Ministry permanent secretary Aung Kyaw Moe to the summit, its first high-level representative at the summit in three years, after ASEAN barred it from sending political representatives in late 2021.

Allowing a senior diplomat from Myanmar to join the meetings "will be perceived as ASEAN is compromising, confirming the concern that ASEAN is experiencing fatigue in dealing with the crisis," said Lina Alexandra, senior researcher at Indonesia's Centre for Strategic and International Studies. Chances for any significant breakthrough on the crisis remain slim, she said.

## Osama bin Laden's artist son barred from returning to France over comments on terrorism

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

A son of Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden has been barred from returning to France, where he lived for years painting landscapes in a Normandy village, after allegedly posting comments on social media deemed to have glorified terrorism. Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau said he had signed an order banning Omar Binladin from France after the judiciary confirmed the legality of a prior deportation order issued on grounds of national security.

Mr. Retailleau gave no details about the timing of the deportation or where Mr. Binladin had been sent. "Mr. Binladin, who has lived in the Orne region for several years as the spouse of a British national, posted comments on his social networks in 2023 that glorified terrorism," Mr. Retailleau said on X. "The administrative ban ensures that Mr. Binladin cannot return to France for any reason whatsoever."

Pascal Martin, who helped Mr. Binladin sell his paintings, described him as a man who opposed Islamist ideology, who earned a living from his artwork and paid his taxes. Mr. Binladin was currently in Qatar, Mr. Martin said. "We became friends and I can tell you that nothing that is being said resembles the Omar I know," Mr. Martin told Reuters. According to local weekly newspaper Le Publieur Libre, Mr. Binladin caught the attention of French authorities over a social media post on the anniversary of his father's birthday. Osama bin Laden was killed by U.S. forces in 2011. Reuters was not immediately able to locate the social media post. Mr. Martin said Mr. Binladin had told friends his social media account had been hacked. The paper reported in July 2023 that police had searched for Mr. Binladin in the village of Domfort, Normandy.

## Kamala Harris gets personal in media blitz, balks at breaking with Biden on policy



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

The U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris wanted to help voters get to know her better with a cascade of media appearances Tuesday (October 8, 2024), but the most lasting impression might have been her unwillingness to break with the U.S. President Joe Biden. Asked on ABC's "The View" how she would be different from the President she's served under for four years, Ms. Harris said "We're obviously two different people" and "I will bring those sensibilities to how I lead." However, she was not able to identify a decision where she would have gone another way. "There is not a thing that comes to mind," Ms. Harris said. The exchange encapsulated Ms. Harris' struggle to portray herself as a candidate who can deliver the change voters crave while also remaining loyal to the current administration. Some Ms. Harris aides privately winced as gleeful Republicans swiftly circulated clips of her response and Donald Trump swiped at her in a social media post, calling it "her dumbest answer so far." It wasn't until later in the show that Ms. Harris named something that she would do differently than Mr. Biden — she would put a Republican in her Cabinet. The Democratic nominee said she would welcome contributions from the other party "because I don't feel burdened by letting pride get in the way of a good idea."

The interview was a reminder that friendly media venues — the women of "The View" were nearly rapturous in their embrace of Ms. Harris — can be as treacherous for politicians to navigate as hardball journalistic interrogations. And it came at a delicate moment for Ms. Harris, whose motorcade whisked her from studio to studio in New York on Tuesday (October 8, 2024). She faced a similar question during a taping of CBS' "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert," who asked Ms. Harris "what would the major changes be" from Mr. Biden. She offered nothing other than saying, "I'm obviously not Joe Biden, so that would be one change" — then emphasised that she's also not Mr. Trump. Even though Ms. Harris' abbreviated and unexpected bid for the presidency is more than half over, she is still racing to introduce herself to voters who haven't made up their minds about her or whether to cast ballots in this year's election. Her interviews Tuesday (October 8, 2024), which included sitting down with radio host Howard Stern, were an attempt to reach as many people as possible with only four weeks to go until the end of the campaign. She also recently spoke to CBS' "60 Minutes," which aired Monday (October 7, 2024) night, and Alex Cooper's podcast "Call Her Daddy," which was released Sunday (October 6, 2024).

It's a kaleidoscopic media blitz intended to reach key demographics, from men who are longtime fans of Stern to young women who follow Cooper's frank conversations about sex and relationships. Ms. Harris' decision to open up is a sharp shift after largely avoiding interviews since replacing Mr. Biden at the top of the ticket, and it's an acknowledgment that she needs to do more to defeat Mr. Trump. Getting personal has never been easy for Ms. Harris, a lawyer by training whose first job in public life was making opening and closing arguments as a courtroom prosecutor. "It feels immodest to me to talk about myself," Ms. Harris said to Stern. "A friend of mine actually said, 'Look, this is not a time to worry about modesty, because obviously you gotta let people know who you are.'" By the

time she was finished with the interview, Ms. Harris had, by her standards, bared her soul. Some examples: She ate a family-sized bag of Doritos after Mr. Trump beat Hillary Clinton. She works out on an elliptical every day. Her first job was cleaning test tubes at her mother's laboratory, and she got fired. Her favorite Formula One driver is Lewis Hamilton. She went to see U2 at the Sphere in Las Vegas, and she recommends going with a "clear head," meaning not high on drugs, because "there's a lot of visual stimulation." Ms. Harris also said, "I literally lose sleep" over the election because "the stakes are so high." Anna Greenberg, a Democratic pollster, said Ms. Harris has to energise people who have tuned out politics because they believe "all the politicians are the same; they all say the same thing; they don't know anything about my life, I can't relate to them at all." "They want to like and trust you," she said. As if to drive the point home, Colbert's show included a very literal riff on the old political adage that Americans want politicians that they could have a beer with, and he pulled out two cans of Miller High Life.

Ms. Harris took a sip and said the last time she had drunk beer was at a baseball game with her husband Jennifer Harris, the former White House senior director of international economics, said Ms. Harris has a steeper hill to climb because of the way she became the Democratic nominee. "We did not have a good long primary to meet Kamala Harris in the way most voters are accustomed to," she said. Ms. Harris has to find a way to demonstrate the instincts and principles that "will be guiding any number of hundreds of specific policy questions that will come up in the course of the presidency." Ms. Harris used her Tuesday (October 8, 2024) appearance on "The View" to discuss her proposal to have Medicare cover in-home care for the elderly, helping to relieve the burden faced by an increasing number of families. She spoke about taking care of her own mother when she was dying of cancer, including cooking for her and picking out soft clothing that wouldn't irritate her. And she criticised Mr. Trump as selfish and uninterested in helping Americans. If you watch his grievance-filled rallies, she said, "He does not talk about what your parents need or what your children need."

Instead, Ms. Harris said, "He talks about his needs."

It was a moment that Ms. Harris' campaign would much rather get noticed than her answer about Mr. Biden. They believe that a small yet pivotal number of undecided voters want to know more about Ms. Harris before making up their minds, and that the more those voters see Ms. Harris, the more they like her. Republican communications strategist Kevin Madden said defining Ms. Harris in voters' eyes is the central challenge of the campaign. "This race is actually pretty simple in the sense that the next few weeks are about who's going to fill in the blanks on who Harris is," he said. Ms. Harris' name recognition grew when she became Vice President, but 1 out of 10 people still said they didn't know enough about her to have an opinion, according to AP-NORC polling. Recent shifts in her favorability numbers suggest that views on Ms. Harris may still be somewhat malleable. Other polls have similar results. One-quarter of likely voters said they still feel like they need to learn more about Ms. Harris, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll conducted after her debate against Mr. Trump, while about three-quarters say they pretty much already know what they need to know about her. Near the end of Ms. Harris' interview on the "Call Her Daddy" podcast, Cooper confronted the Vice President with one of the central questions of this campaign. So many people, Cooper said, are "frustrated and just exhausted with politics in general," so "why should we trust you?" Ms. Harris answered by saying, "You can look at my career to know what I care about." "I care about making sure that people are entitled to and receive the freedoms that they are due," she said. "I care about lifting people up and making sure that you are protected from harm."

## North Korea vows to block border with South Korea; to boost frontline defence postures

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

North Korea said on Wednesday (October 9, 2024) it will permanently block its border with South Korea and boost its frontline defence posture to cope with "confrontational hysteria" by South Korean and U.S. forces, while not announcing an expected constitutional revision to formally designate South Korea its principal enemy and codify new national borders. While the moves were likely a pressure tactic, it's unclear how they will affect ties with South Korea since cross-border travel and exchanges have been halted for years. North Korea's Kim threatens to destroy South Korea with nuclear strikes if provoked

North Korea's military said it will "completely cut off roads and railways" linked to South Korea and "fortify the relevant areas of our side with strong defence structures," according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). The North's military called its steps a "self-defensive measure for inhibiting war and defending the security" of North Korea. It said that "the hostile forces are getting ever more reckless in their confrontational hysteria." It cited what it called various war exercises in South Korea, the deployment of U.S. strategic assets and its rivals' harsh rhetoric. North Korea said it sent a message to the U.S. military to explain its fortification activity to prevent any misjudgment and potential accidental clashes.

South Korea's Defence Ministry said it confirmed the North Korean message with the American-led U.N. Command. It said South Korea is closely communicating and coordinating with the U.N. Command but didn't elaborate. South Korean officials earlier said North Korea had already been adding anti-tank barriers and reinforcing roads on its side of the border since April in a likely attempt to boost its frontline security posture and prevent its soldiers and citizens from defecting to South Korea. In a report to Parliament on Tuesday (October 8, 2024), South Korea's Unification Ministry said North Korea has been removing ties on the northern side of cross-border railways and nearby lamps and planting mines along the border. KCNA on Wednesday (October 9, 2024) said the Supreme People's Assembly met for two days this week to amend the legal ages of North Koreans for working and participating in elections. But it didn't say whether the meeting dealt with leader Kim Jong Un's order in January to rewrite the constitution to remove the goal of a peaceful Korean unification, formally designate South Korea as the country's "invariable principal enemy" and define the North's sovereign, territorial sphere.

At the centre of outside attention was whether North



North Korea's military said it will "completely cut off roads and railways" linked to South Korea and "fortify the relevant areas of our side with strong defence structures," according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency

Korea makes new legal claims on the waters currently controlled by South Korea off their west coast. The poorly marked western sea boundary is where three bloody naval skirmishes and two deadly attacks blamed on North Korea happened in the past 25 years. Some experts say North Korea might have delayed the constitutional revision but others speculated it amended the constitution without announcing it because of its sensitivity. Mr. Kim's order stunned many North Korea watchers because it was seen as breaking away with his predecessors' long-cherished dreams of achieving a unified Korea on the North's terms. Experts say Mr. Kim likely aims to diminish South Korea's voice in the regional nuclear standoff and seek direct dealings with the U.S. They say Kim also likely hopes to diminish South Korean cultural influence and bolster his rule at home. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are at their highest point in years, with North Korea continuing a run of provocative weapons tests and South Korea and the U.S. expanding their military drills. KCNA said North Korea on Tuesday (October 8, 2024) tested a long-range artillery system that observers say pose a direct threat to Seoul, the South Korean capital, which is only an hour's drive from the border.



## Crop insurance coverage declines in FY24 as four top insurers cut exposure



EMS News Agency, Sept 13

General insurance companies reduced their exposure to crop insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) during FY24 despite the government's push to expand the insurance coverage in the farm sector. Gross direct premium underwritten by insurers declined by 4.17 per cent to Rs 30,677 crore during the fiscal as against Rs 32,011 crore in the previous year even as farmers faced crop losses due to floods, unseasonal rains and heatwaves.

The decline is mainly due to the 32 per cent fall in premium income underwritten by state-owned Agricultural Insurance Company (AIC) to Rs 9,890 crore during FY24 from Rs 14,619 crore a year ago, according to data released by the General Insurance Council. AIC is the leading crop insurer in the country. Four government-controlled insurers — AIC, New India Assurance, Oriental Insurance and SBI General — reduced their exposure to crop insurance in FY24. What's interesting is that AIC paid claims to the tune of Rs 12,353 crore under PMFBY during the year. State-owned Oriental Insurance Company also reduced its exposure to just Rs 8.94 crore in FY24 from Rs 1,752 crore a year ago. SBI General Insurance also reduced its exposure. New India Assurance Company, the largest insurer in the country, reported a negative premium underwritten at Rs 34.41 crore as against Rs 11.38 crore last year. "Four insurers controlled by the government directly or indirectly reported a decline in crop insurance coverage. The farm sector is a vital sector of the economy. Public sector entities should have been in the forefront of providing cover to the farmers who are facing the risk of losses due to floods, heatwaves and unseasonal rains," said an official of an insurance firm. FY24 was a nightmare for farmers as they faced crop losses due to a host of factors, leading to a rise in inflation levels.

However, general insurers overall reported a 19.5

per cent rise in premium income underwritten from Rs 17,391 crore a year ago to Rs 20,786 crore. As many as eight general insurers kept away from crop insurance during the year. The PMFBY scheme, which is currently integrated with multiple stakeholders on a single platform, has covered nearly 4 crore farmers with more than 50 different crops in FY24 under the insurance coverage. More than 55 per cent of the insured farmers in the year are under non-loanee farmer category and are majorly enrolled through CSCs (common service centres) as a channel partner wherein the channel has registered an impressive 4 crore farmer applications, with 2.5 crore and 1.5 crore enrolments in Kharif and Rabi seasons, respectively. PMFBY provides a comprehensive insurance cover against failure of the crop, thus helping in stabilising the income of the farmers and encourage them for adoption of innovative practices. The scheme is compulsory for loanee farmer obtaining crop loan or kisan credit card (KCC) account for notified crops. However, it's voluntary for other/ non-loanee farmers who have insurable interest in the insured crop. The maximum premium payable by the farmers will be 2 per cent for all Kharif food and oilseeds crops, 1.5 per cent for rabi food and oilseeds crops and 5 per cent for annual commercial or horticultural crops. To expand coverage of PMFBY, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare launched AIDE (App for Intermediary Enrolment), which allows intermediaries to enrol non-loanee farmers from Kharif 2023 onwards. This initiative successfully engaged insurance brokers and resulted in 71 per cent of farmer enrolments through Point of Salespersons (PoSPs), totalling 6.88 lakh farmer applications with more than 4.15 lakh hectares of area under insurance across 11 States and 12 insurers, the Ministry said in a note to the CEOs of insurance companies and broking firms, it said. "Utilising such extensive network of over 12 lakh PoSPs via insurance brokers offers a substantial opportunity to increase non-loanee farmer enrolments. This strategy significantly enhances the enrolment of non-loanee farmers while simultaneously expanding their access to a diverse range of retail insurance products," the Ministry said. As per the service level agreement (SLA), insurance intermediaries should provide enrolment services to non-loanee farmer through the AIDE (mobile and web platform) developed by Ministry of Agriculture. Following the successful submission of the application on AIDE and the issuance of an acknowledgment to the non-loanee farmer, the premium will be collected and remitted to the insurance companies in accordance with the timeline specified in the applicable operational guidelines of PMFBY and RWBCIS, as amended from time to time.

## Central Asia, Vietnam new buzzing destinations on Indian tourist map

Social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube are brimming with posts from Indians travelling to Silk Road countries such as Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Georgia, and Southeast Asia's latest tourism hotspot, Vietnam. Before the pandemic, these destinations largely attracted more discerning travellers from India. But now, with a combination of enhanced direct flight connectivity, swift and hassle-free visa regimes, and relatively more affordable prices than the conventional touristy destinations, these countries are drawing price-sensitive Indian travellers in droves. Consider this: Passenger traffic on direct flights from India to Azerbaijan in October-March (H2) 2023-24 (FY24) jumped by a whopping 750 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y), while for Georgia, it shot up by nearly 200 per cent, as per The Indian Express's analysis of international air traffic data released by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The jump was around 115 per cent in the case of Uzbekistan, 108 per cent for Vietnam, and 70 per cent for Kazakhstan. Meanwhile, India's total outbound passenger traffic on international flights in H2 of FY24 grew 16.5 per cent y-o-y, the DGCA data shows. Besides simple visa rules and easy connectivity, these countries have an added allure: they cost nearly as much or only moderately higher than a holiday at a popular domestic destination. And Indian airlines are taking notice of the demand, increasing routes as well as frequency. In the case of countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, all of which were part of the erstwhile Soviet Union, the jump in traffic came on a low base and was largely due to the introduction of direct flights from India by the country's largest airline IndiGo in 2023. The airline felt that these markets were underserved and also saw an opportunity to stimulate demand further. Before IndiGo's flights to Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Georgia, most of these markets were served from India by their respective state carriers, essentially making them monopoly routes. Central Asia, Vietnam new buzzing destinations on Indian tourist

map. The other option was to travel via a hub airport in a third country. While that would have served existing demand, it was unlikely to have significantly stimulated demand and grown the market. There is no publicly available official data on the number of travellers from India who flew to overseas destinations via a third country. All these countries have a sizable number of Indian students, mainly those pursuing medicine.

This provides a base demand, which is now being augmented by rapidly growing leisure travel. IndiGo's entry, industry watchers say, has brought in competition on these routes, made fares competitive, and provided more options to passengers, which, along with other factors, have led to demand creation. IndiGo's announcement last month that it will run daily flights to Tashkent, Almaty and Tbilisi from August, instead of the earlier frequency of three to four a week, is being seen as a testament to the strong demand the airline is seeing in these markets. IndiGo is already operating a daily service to Azerbaijan's capital Baku. The fact that some of these destinations offer a near-European experience — at a fraction of the cost and without the hassle of obtaining a Schengen visa — while still being off the beaten path, adds to their allure. Indian passport holders currently do not require a visa for Kazakhstan for a stay of up to 14 days. For Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Georgia, electronic visas (e-visas) can be obtained easily in under a week for reasonable prices without going through a third-party or a travel agent. In fact, in some cases, travelling to these countries might cost nearly as much or only moderately higher than a holiday at a popular domestic destination, thanks to costly domestic airfares, according to industry insiders. An opportunity to travel to another country by shelling out as much as one would for a holiday in Kerala, Ladakh or Goa is a hard-to-ignore value proposition for many travel bugs itching to take off.

## Ola Electric to launch IPO next week, valuation seen at around \$4.4 billion

Ola Electric's IPO, a first for an Indian EV maker, is also one of India's biggest in a year where the country's equities markets have scaled multiple record highs and also overtaken Hong Kong to become the world's fourth-largest bourse. SoftBank-backed Ola Electric's IPO will open for retail subscription on Aug. 2, the Indian electric scooter maker said on Saturday, a stock offering that according to two sources will value the company between \$4.2 billion to \$4.4 billion.

The issue, which will open for institutional investors a day earlier on Thursday, will close for retail subscriptions on Aug. 6, the final IPO prospectus filing showed. Ola founder Bhavish Aggarwal will offload 37.9 million shares in the IPO, around 20%



lower than estimated in the draft IPO prospectus. Ola's expected valuation is about 18.5% to 22% lower than in its last funding round in September, which was led by Singapore's investment firm Temasek and valued the country's largest e-scooter maker at \$5.4 billion.

"Some marquee investors are being offered the IPO at the lower end of the \$4.2 billion-\$4.4 billion valuation," said one of the sources with direct knowledge of IPO planning. Ola is planning the IPO at a lower valuation to ensure higher participation from investors bidding for the

IPO shares, the two sources said. Ola Electric's IPO, a first for an Indian EV maker, is also one of India's biggest in a year where the country's equities markets have scaled multiple record highs and also overtaken Hong Kong to become the world's fourth-largest bourse.

## Xiaomi is launching 5 new products in India on July iiFull list of launches, how to watch it live



Celebrating its 10th anniversary in India, Xiaomi is set to launch 5 new products in India, including a smartphone, power banks and earbuds. Xiaomi is celebrating its 10 years in India. Xiaomi first entered the Indian market in July 2014. Marking its decade-long presence, the company is hosting an event in Bengaluru on July 9. At the event, the company has confirmed that it will launch 5 new products, including a smartphone, a couple of power banks, earbuds, and more. Xiaomi India will unveil the 5G Star-Redmi 13 5G, the Redmi Buds 5C, Xiaomi Robot Vacuum Cleaner X10, and Xiaomi Pocket Power Bank 10000mAh and Xiaomi Power Bank 4i 10000mAh. The launch event will be livestreamed on YouTube and on the company's official Indian website.

In typical Xiaomi fashion, the company snuck in a little fun for its fans at the event. The company has announced that there will be hidden coupons on mi.com, which will make users eligible to win 10 products every day, and vouchers worth Rs 10 Crore. Coming back to the launches at the event on Tuesday, we already have a lot

of details here and there about the products that will be unveiled.

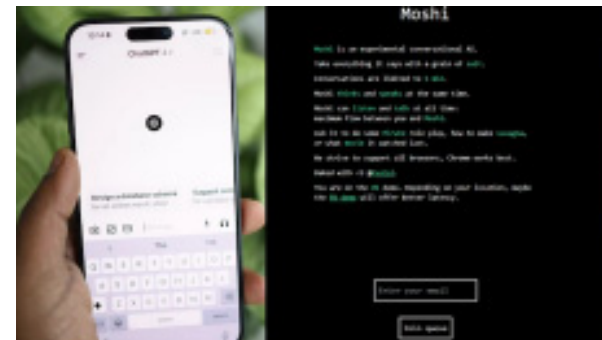
The Redmi 13 5G is confirmed to be powered by the Qualcomm Snapdragon 4 Gen 2 AE processor. The device will come with a dual-glass body and Crystal Glass Design. It will feature a 6.7-inch FHD+ display with a 120Hz AdaptiveSync refresh rate, making it a notable device in the sub-15K segment. Additionally, the phone includes a ring flash for convenient flash notifications for incoming calls and alarms. The Redmi 13 5G will be available in three colours: Hawaiian Blue, Orchid Pink, and Black Diamond. Redmi Buds 5C The Redmi Buds 5C are already confirmed to come with 40dB Hybrid Active Noise Cancellation, which effectively reduces ambient noise. They are equipped with 12.4mm Dynamic Titanium drivers. The earbuds have a Quad-Mic Setup with AI ENC. The Redmi Buds 5C will be available in three colours: Acoustic Black, Symphony Blue, and Bass White. Xiaomi Robot Vacuum Cleaner X10

After launching the Robot Vacuum Cleaner S10 at the Smarter Living event, Xiaomi is set to launch the RVC X10 in India. It features LDS Laser Navigation for precise mapping and navigation. With 4000Pa suction power, the RVC X10 will be able to effectively remove dirt and debris from various surfaces. The device includes an Automatic Cleaning Station with 17000Pa suction power for efficient dustbin emptying and a 2.5L disposable bag capable of storing up to 60 full cleaning sessions. The RVC X10 is powered by a 5200mAh battery, offering up to 180 minutes of continuous cleaning on a single charge. Xiaomi Power Bank 4i 22.5W Fast Charge & Pocket Power Bank 10,000mAh Xiaomi's new power banks, the Pocket Power Bank and the 4i 22.5W Fast Charge, combine functionality with aesthetics. Both models come with a 9-layer safety protection system, 22.5W rapid charging, Power Delivery, and Quick Charge 3.0.

## ChatGPT gets new competitor, say hello to Moshi which can understand the tone of your voice

Moshi, an AI voice assistant developed by a French company, can understand the tone of your voice and answer your questions in real time. Just a couple of days back, OpenAI was making headlines for delaying ChatGPT's much-awaited voice mode. The company had said that it had to address technical issues and ensure a high standard of quality. This came as a disappointment of sorts to all those who had been looking forward to talking to the AI chatbot. However, what if we tell you that there is another chatbot in town which can not only talk to you, but understand your tone of voice as well? Say hello to Moshi, developed by a French AI company called Kyutai. Say hello to Moshi

Moshi is an AI voice assistant that is designed to offer lifelike conversations similar to Amazon's Alexa or Google Assistant, leveraging the powerful Helium 7B language model. The new chatbot stands out with its ability to speak in various accents and employs 70 different emotional and speaking styles. It can also understand the tone of your voice as you speak to it. Also, Moshi can handle two audio streams simultaneously, allowing it to listen and respond at the same time. The voice assistant's launch was streamed live recently and has been making headlines ever since. According to a report in Tech Radar, the development of Moshi involved an extensive fine-tuning process, utilising over 100,000 synthetic dialogues created through Text-to-Speech (TTS) technology. To enhance the chatbot's voice quality, Kyutai collaborated with a professional voice artist, ensuring that Moshi's responses sound natural and engaging. "This new type of technology makes it possible for the first time to communicate in a smooth, natural and expressive way with an AI," the company said in a statement according to Toms Guide. Available for use starting now You can try out Moshi for yourself starting now as a demo version is available. All you need to do is head over to us.moshi.chat and follow instructions. For now, you can talk to the AI voice assistant for a maximum of 5 minutes. Before you start interacting with Moshi, you will come across a message that reads, "Moshi is an experimental conversational AI. Take everything it says with a grain of salt. Conversations



are limited to 5 min. Moshi thinks and speaks at the same time. Moshi can listen and talk at all time: maximum flow between you and Moshi. Ask it to do some Pirate role play, how to make Lasagna, or what movie it watched last. We strive to support all browsers, Chrome works best. Baked with <3 @Kyutai. You are on the US demo. Depending on your location, maybe the EU demo will offer better latency."

What's next?

Kyutai is committed to making Moshi an open-source project. By sharing the model's code and framework, the company aims to encourage innovation and address ethical concerns surrounding AI development. This open-source strategy is backed by prominent supporters, including French billionaire Xavier Niel. Looking ahead, Kyutai plans to integrate advanced features into Moshi, such as AI audio identification, watermarking, and signature tracking systems. These additions will help ensure accountability and traceability for AI-generated audio, promoting transparency in AI technology. If Moshi gains traction, it could serve as a catalyst for other voice-enabled AI assistants and accelerate the adoption of large language models in existing systems like Alexa. The impressive capabilities showcased by Moshi suggest a promising future for voice AI technology.

## Study shows ChatGPT fails to solve newer coding problems, cannot replace human programmers just yet

Ever since ChatGPT was unveiled in 2022, there has been a lot of talk about how the AI chatbot has the potential to replace human beings at some jobs. While some tech experts believe that the AI chatbot will take over some human jobs like coding, others have argued that the technology can never be as smart as humans and will just help them be better at their work. Some tech bigwigs have also said in the past that years from now, human programmers will not be needed at all as AI will take care of coding. But is that really the case? A recent study says not necessarily.

The research, published in the June issue of IEEE Transactions on Software Engineering, compared the code produced by ChatGPT with that written by human programmers, focusing on functionality, complexity, and security. The study found that ChatGPT's success rate in producing functional code varied widely. Depending on the task's difficulty, the programming language used, and other factors, the AI's success ranged from as low as 0.66 percent to as high as 89 percent. This wide range indicates that while ChatGPT can sometimes match or even surpass human programmers, it also has significant limitations.

Yutian Tang, a lecturer at the University of Glasgow involved in the study, noted that AI-based code generation could boost productivity and automate some software development tasks. However, it is crucial to understand both the strengths and weaknesses of these AI models. Tang emphasised the need for a comprehensive analysis to identify potential issues and improve AI-generated code techniques. To delve deeper into these limitations, the research team tested GPT-3.5's ability to solve 728 coding problems from the LeetCode platform across five programming languages: C, C++, Java, JavaScript, and Python. The study revealed that ChatGPT was fairly proficient at solving pre-2021 coding problems on LeetCode, achieving success rates of approximately 89 percent for easy problems, 71 percent for medium problems, and 40 percent for hard problems. However, the AI's performance declined significantly when dealing



with coding problems introduced after 2021. For example, ChatGPT's success rate for easy problems dropped from 89 percent to 52 percent. For hard problems, the success rate plummeted from 40 percent to a mere 0.66 percent. This suggests that ChatGPT struggles with newer coding problems, potentially due to its training data not including these more recent challenges.

Tang proposed a reasonable hypothesis for ChatGPT's varying performance. He suggested that the AI performs better with algorithm problems from before 2021 because these problems are more likely to be included in its training dataset.

As coding evolves, ChatGPT has not been exposed to new problems and solutions, lacking the critical thinking skills of a human programmer. This limitation means that while ChatGPT can effectively address problems it has previously encountered, it struggles with newer, unfamiliar issues.

The study's findings suggest that while AI models like ChatGPT hold promise for enhancing productivity and automating certain coding tasks, they are not yet a substitute for human programmers. The AI's inability to solve newer coding problems highlights the need for ongoing development and training to keep up with the ever-evolving field of software engineering.



## Kane Williamson to miss 1st Test



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

New Zealand batter Kane Williamson is doubtful for the first Test of the three-match series due to a groin injury, he suffered during the second Test against Sri Lanka in Galle. Williamson has not travelled with the team. Mark Chapman has been added into the squad as cover for Williamson. "Williamson experienced groin discomfort during the second Test against Sri Lanka in Galle and will require a period of rehabilitation before joining the BLACKCAPS Test squad in India," New Zealand cricket said in a press release.

Chief selector Sam Wells said Williamson will feature in the three-Test series but is doubtful for the opening match at M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru starting on October 16. "The advice we've received is that the best course of action is for Kane to rest and rehabilitate now rather than risk aggravating the injury," said Wells.

"We're hopeful that if the rehabilitation goes to plan Kane will be available for the latter part of the tour.

"While it's obviously disappointing to not have Kane available from the start of the tour, it provides an opportunity for someone else to play a role in an important series." Allrounder Michael Bracewell will travel with the squad for the first Test in Bengaluru before returning home for the birth of his second child and will be replaced by Ish Sodhi for the remainder of the series. Sri Lankan spin legend Rangana Herath, who was part of the coaching staff for the recent Tests against Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, will continue his role as spin-coach for the India series. Tom Latham (c), Tom Blundell (wk), Michael Bracewell (1st Test only), Mark Chapman, Devon Conway, Matt Henry, Daryl Mitchell, Will O'Rourke, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ben Sears, Ish Sodhi (2nd & 3rd Test only), Tim Southee, Kane Williamson, Will Young

## How Ayhika Mukherjee's anti-spin rubber and well-disguised deception puzzled the Koreans

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

From the high of beating World No. 1 Sun Yingsha in February to the low of being dropped from the Indian team for the Paris Olympics in July, India's Ayhika Mukherjee has had a topsy-turvy year. Yet, it's her unyielding will that has made her one of the most feared players in the world of table tennis. At the Asian TT Championships on Tuesday, she proved yet again, that despite her lowly ranking of World No 92, she can never be counted out. As it turns out, she revels in playing against the best.

Against World No. 8 Shin Yubin in the opening tie of the quarterfinal against Korea, Ayhika knew that if India had to do the unthinkable and pull off an upset, she needed to win. It was a nerve day for India too. Their match was supposed to be at 5 pm (local time) and it was only at 9 am that they received an email informing them that their match was brought forward to 12 noon. They scrambled and got ready just in time for the tie. Mentally, nothing could disturb them. Ayhika's focus was solid from the word go as she raced to an 11-9 win in the opening game. After losing the second and down 2-8 in the third, she remained unfazed. She met Yubin's ferocious forehand attacks with her defensive backhand. Instead of playing side-to-side, Ayhika varied the length, forcing Yubin to play a loose ball which she immediately punished. It was her impregnable defence and quick transition into attack which stunned Yubin, who offered hardly any resistance in the final fifth game.

India needed Ayhika's services again in the winner-takes-all final rubber against World No. 16 Jeon Jihee and this time, she did one better. After losing the first game, the 27-year-old roared back to win the contest 3-1 (7-11, 11-6, 12-10, 12-10) and seal the match for India. There's a lot of talk about the long-pimpled rubber used by Manika Batra and Sreeja Akula but opponents will want to study Ayhika's anti-spin rubber too. Her anti-



spin rubber can be used to chop and paired with a thinner sponge, can even reverse incoming spin. The only drawback is that she has to be immaculately precise with her shots. Ayhika's coach Soumyadeep Roy tells The Indian Express that she was able to succeed because she managed to slow the game down well.

"When you play against an attacking player, it's very difficult to slow the pace. But this was her main tactic and she was able to do that even in crucial points which is testament to the hard work she had put in over the last year, both mentally and physically." Speaking about her anti-spin rubber, Roy said: "It's tough to use because you have to have great control over the ball. If you play it normally, it won't slow down. You have to quickly gauge what spin your opponent is playing with." One of the reasons why Ayhika's been so successful according to Roy is because she can vary her shots by using the same action. "She can hit the ball with the same action, from the same height, but the opponent won't know how the ball will spin or whether it will spin or not. It's very difficult for the opponent to understand, which results in them making a mistake and giving her the opportunity to attack," he said.

## How Magnus Carlsen blundered against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave to lose with white



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Magnus Carlsen sat on his seat looking up in the sky, muttering away. He could not believe what he had just done. It was a blunder from the five-time world champion which was unexpected and uncharacteristic in equal measure. It took a while to sink in for the Norwegian. But finally, Carlsen threw in the towel against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave and exited the playing hall in a huff. What made matters worse was that his team, the Alpine SG Pipers, lost 5-14 to the upGrad Mumbai Masters with defeats for Richard Rapport and Daniel Dardha. Rapport, in fact, allowed Pragg's coach Peter Svidler — who had not experienced a win in his six games at the second edition of the Global Chess League — his first victory after two defeats and four draws. Only Praggnanandhaa managed a victory for the Pipers, beating Vidit Gujrathi, his senior teammate from the Indian gold medal-winning Chess Olympiad team. The rest of the games in the clash — Hou Yifan vs Koneru Humpy and Kateryna Lagno vs Harika Dronavalli — ended in draws.

The object of Carlsen's exasperation was a blunder he made on the 31st move against Frenchman Vachier-Lagrave. Playing with white pieces, Carlsen opted for the Basman-Williams Attack — which is named after International Master Mike Basman who played the variation in a tournament in 1980 in Israel — after the game started with an Anti-Grunfeld variation in the Indian Defence. With his three first moves, Carlsen played d4, c4, h4. By the 13th move, Carlsen had picked off three of Vachier-Lagrave's pawns on the centre of the board, leaving himself a pawn more on the board than his opponent. By the 30th move — rook to d4 attacking Carlsen's lone remaining knight — Vachier-Lagrave had no knights left on the board compared to Carlsen, who was down a rook. The best move at that stage, the computer pointed out later, would have been to have a rook exchange with Carlsen taking Vachier-Lagrave's piece on e5 while allowing the Frenchman to take his rook on d2. On the next move, Carlsen could have used his knight to jump Vachier-Lagrave's lone standing bishop on c6. That nifty one-two punch would have left Carlsen material up. Instead, the Norwegian chose to move his last rook from d2 to c2, indicating to Vachier-Lagrave that he was free to take his knight, which was anyway protected by the bishop. The evaluation bar immediately plunged in favour of Vachier-

Lagrave, indicating that the five-time world champion had blundered. The Frenchman never let go of his advantage on the board, despite seeing Carlsen gain back material at one stage. Vachier-Lagrave also maintained a hefty five-minute advantage on the clock. After battling on for 22 more moves, Carlsen resigned. Carlsen has had an interesting tournament so far. He lost to Alireza Firouzja in one of the earliest rounds on time after having a completely winning position, which ignited a debate on the no-increment rule that is in place for this event. Recently, he made the news for alleging that Nihal Sarin had made "several illegal moves" in the game against Daniel Dardha, a claim which was refuted by the GCL's three-member appeals commission. In seven games at the second edition of the Global Chess League, Carlsen, one of the greatest players in history, had managed to win just once, defeating Anish Giri of the PBG Alaskan Knights, despite his prowess in the faster time controls. He has been held to draws by Viswanathan Anand, Vachier-Lagrave, Anish Giri and Hikaru Nakamura previously.

## Manchester United's Harry Maguire out for weeks with muscle injury

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Manchester: Harry Maguire will miss a few weeks of action after picking up a muscle injury during Sunday's 0-0 draw at Aston Villa. The England international pulled up just before half-time following a Villa free-kick and had to be helped off the pitch by medical staff. He did not return for the second period in Birmingham and was replaced by Matthijs De Ligt, who helped the Reds preserve a clean sheet in a tight game of few chances. After the contest, Erik ten Hag said a proper diagnosis was required and the centre-back has now posted an update on his situation via Instagram. "Frustrated to pick up an injury at the weekend, will be a few weeks on the sideline for me but I'll come back stronger," he wrote. Harry has featured nine times for the Reds so far this season, starting six games and making three appearances off the bench, including in Porto on Thursday when he headed home an injury-time equaliser to complete the scoring in a 3-3 thriller. The 31-year-old was not included in Lee Carsley's England squad for the upcoming Nations League fixtures against Greece and Finland. However, Academy graduate Kobbie Mainoo was the only Manchester United player set to represent England during the upcoming fixtures. Kobbie has played in 10 of the Three Lions' 13 outings since making his bow in March but will sit out these fixtures making it the first time since 1976 that a Manchester United player is not featuring in England's squad.

## Joe Root goes past Alastair Cook to become England's leading run-getter in Tests



GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Pakistan vs England: Joe Root went past Alastair Cook to become England's leading run-getter in Test cricket. He achieved the milestone on Day 3 of the first Test against Pakistan in Multan on October 9. Joe Root went past Alastair Cook to become England's leading run-getter in Test cricket on Wednesday, October 09. The superstar batter went past the major landmark when he got to 71 on Day 3 of the first Test between England and Pakistan at the Multan Cricket Ground. Root got there in style, playing a perfectly executed on-drive as England

continued to dominate with the bat on a batter-friendly surface. As soon as Root went past the landmark, the members in the England dressing room in Multan were up on their feet, lauding the effort. Root took a moment to acknowledge the adulation and raised his bat towards the change room. Former England captain Alastair Cook had finished his Test career with 12,472 runs in 161 matches. Root went past the mark in his 147th Test, continuing to break records at will. Root, who made his Test debut in 2012, has averaged less than 40 in only one calendar year, exhibiting incredible consistency in the traditional format. Root also broke into the top five in the list of all-time leading run-getters in Test cricket. Being the only active Test cricketer with more than 10,000 runs, Root is tipped to challenge the Himalayan record of 15,921 runs held by legendary Sachin Tendulkar. Root, 33, has shown no signs of slowing down. In three of the last four calendar years, Root has scored at least 1000 runs. Despite going through a dip in captaincy before he stepped down, Root's hunger for runs never went down. With 17 hundreds in the last four years, Root has arguably been the finest Test batter in the modern era, leaving behind the other members of the Big Four — Virat Kohli, Steve Smith and Kane Williamson — in the recent past.

## Pro Kabaddi League: Mohammadreza Chiyaneh key for Haryana Steelers in season 11

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Big-money signing Mohammadreza Chiyaneh will be the key man for Haryana Steelers as they aim to finally win the Pro Kabaddi League title in season 11 of the competition. Runners-up in Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) Season 10, the Haryana Steelers are determined to go one step further in PKL 11 and capture their first-ever title. Having made the Playoffs in three of their six PKL seasons, the Steelers are confident of at least another Playoffs appearance this time around. Manpreet Singh, a former PKL champion with Patna Pirates as a player, will continue as the Steelers' head coach. After falling short in three PKL finals — twice with Gujarat Giants and once with Haryana last season — he'll be eager to finally secure the championship as a coach. Although the Steelers made few signings at the Season 11 Player Auction, they made headlines with the acquisition of Iranian all-rounder Mohammadreza Chiyaneh for INR 2.07 crore. With Chiyaneh set to play a pivotal role, here's an analysis of the team's strengths and weaknesses for the upcoming season.

Haryana Steelers boasted the league's best defense in Season 10, a key factor in their success. Their defense had three players in the top 10 for tackle points, two of whom — Rahul Sethpal and Jaideep Dahiya — remain part of the squad this season. Sethpal, who led the Steelers with 73 tackle points last season, and Dahiya, who added 68 tackle points, form a formidable defensive duo. The addition of Chiyaneh, last season's top defender with 99 tackle points, only strengthens an already solid defensive lineup. This intimidating trio is expected to make life difficult for opposition raiders in Season 11. While the Steelers' defense is rock solid, their raiding unit poses some concerns. The team lacks experienced raiders capable of leading the attack. Vinay, who scored 163 raid points last season, is the only seasoned raider in the squad. With 372 raid points across four seasons, Vinay will need to step up and be more consistent. He will be supported by Shivam Patare, who had a promising debut in Season 10 with 116 raid points. However, the rest of the raiding unit — Vikas Jadhav, Gnana Abishek S,



Sanskar Mishra, and Jayasoorya Ns — are unproven and have yet to make their PKL debuts, putting extra pressure on Vinay and Shivam to carry the team's attack. Opportunities Mohammadreza Chiyaneh, while known for his defensive prowess, also has potential as a raider. Last season, he showcased his attacking ability with 27 raid points, including two Super Raids for Puneri Paltan. This season, Chiyaneh will aim to further develop his raiding skills and contribute on both ends of the mat. Another player to watch is Vishal Tate, who managed 24 raid points in just three games last season. The Steelers will hope he can build on that performance and add depth to their attacking options.

Haryana's title hopes may be jeopardised by their lack of experience, particularly in attack. With an over-reliance on Vinay and Shivam, the team's attacking depth remains a concern. Moreover, their defense — though strong — could face issues if key players suffer injuries or a dip in form. Rahul Sethpal, Jaideep Dahiya, and Mohammadreza Chiyaneh form the backbone of their defence, and any absence could expose the inexperience of other defenders like Manikandan N, Ashish Gill, Hardeep, and Manikandan S., none of whom have made their PKL debuts. Sanjay, with just six PKL appearances, adds to the inexperience. A reliance on this defensive trio could become a vulnerability if they are unavailable during crucial moments.

## Paralympics gold medallist Sumit Antil wants to break 80m barrier in India

GNS News Agency, Oct 10

Paris Paralympics gold medallist and world record holder in men's javelin F64 event, Sumit Antil, said that he wanted to break the 80m barrier in India. In an exclusive interview with India Today, Sumit spoke about his Games Village experience in Paris and the Indian sporting ecosystem. India's star javelin thrower, Sumit Antil, once again showcased his dominance at the Paris Paralympics by winning the gold medal in the men's F64 event. On September 3, at the Stade de France, Sumit delivered an impressive throw of 70.59 meters, breaking the Paralympic record and securing his second gold medal in this event, following his victory in Tokyo 2021. Despite his success in defending his Paralympic gold medal, Sumit expressed dissatisfaction with his performance. In an exclusive interview with India Today, he revealed that he had set higher expectations for himself in the Paris competition. Sumit has frequently mentioned his goal of breaking the 80-meter barrier in the men's F64 event. Currently, the world record stands at 73.29 meters, a mark he achieved during the Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, China, in 2023. Speaking at an Adidas event on October 7, Sumit reiterated his ambition to break the 80-meter barrier in India. "I will show the distance and the margin next year in 2025. Hopefully, the Para World Championship will take place in India. Competing on home turf at such a high level is a matter of pride, and I will aim to break the 80-meter barrier here," Sumit said. His words reflected a hint of dissatisfaction, as if he felt he hadn't delivered his best performance on the grand stage in Paris. When probed further, he revealed that he experienced immense pressure to defend his Paralympic gold medal. In fact, he was so anxious that he found himself wandering around the Games Village at midnight, just hours before his event. It was so unusual that fellow high jumper Nishad Kumar stumbled upon him at that hour and jokingly asked if he remembered what day it was and when the javelin final was scheduled to take place.

"I am a normal person; I feel pressure. I feel a responsibility to perform well for India on the world stage. Those who claim they don't feel pressure must be gods; I certainly am not," Sumit said. "I had hoped for better from myself. The pressure led to mistakes. I arrived at the venue far too early. In the ten days leading up to the final, I didn't seek out Indian restaurants; I just ate whatever was available in the Games Village. While my training was solid, my diet suffered, and I think my body was a bit depleted at that time," he explained. Nishad Kumar, who was part of this conversation, shared with India Today that he and other athletes spent time relaxing with Sumit that night, helping to calm his nerves. Sumit Antil spoke candidly about the challenges he faced with food during his time in Paris. Coming from Haryana, he is accustomed to tra-

ditional Indian meals — such as roti, dal, and sabzi — which were not readily available at the Games Village. He noted a sense of cost-cutting, as food was not accessible around the clock for athletes. "I faced significant issues while eating in Paris. We should have searched for Indian restaurants, but the pressure of being the defending champion completely slipped my mind. At one point, I even wondered if there was some form of cost-cutting happening. In the Games Village, we were supposed to have access to food 24 hours, but after 11 PM, it was unavailable," Sumit explained. However, he found solace in the enthusiastic crowd. "The crowd was sold out and incredibly educated. They knew when to cheer and when to stay quiet; it was an incredible experience in Paris," he added. After returning home as a double Paralympic gold medallist, Sumit indulged in sweets — lots of them. "I can't even begin to tell you how many sweets I had once I got back. I had never felt this kind of pressure before — the whole defending champion thing. I had been very strict with my diet, even losing 10 kilograms before the Paralympics," he said. Since returning to India, Sumit has been traveling across the country, engaging in various events, appearing on multiple podcasts, and even meeting Amitabh Bachchan on "Kaun Banega Crorepati". This visibility is crucial for promoting para-sports in India. When asked to compare the sports culture in India with that in Paris, Sumit emphasised that the crowd makes a significant difference. "In foreign countries, stadiums are packed when athletes compete. But when national championships were held in Odisha in 2024, hardly anyone showed up to watch," he remarked. "I believe the government can only do so much. If the public doesn't care, there's little that can be done. Until the public awakens to the potential of grassroots talent, it will remain hidden," he added. Sumit criticised sports universities in India for their failure to produce athletes over the decades. "I have seen many talented athletes drop out due to a lack of patience, awareness, and support. Schools and universities play a massive role in this regard. There are sports universities in India that haven't produced athletes, while politicians and actors emerge from the same institutions. Why is that?" he questioned. While he critiqued the sports university system, Sumit acknowledged the prevailing mindset among parents in India, who often prioritise secure, traditional careers over the uncertainties of sports. "Every elite athlete has a moment when their families went above and beyond to support them. My educated parents understood that sports could be a profession and supported me. But how many parents have that knowledge? Playing a sport is a huge risk — out of 100 participants, only three win medals. Eventually, parents worry that a 9-to-5 job offers better security, which hampers the development of players," Sumit explained.



## 'I was in severe depression': Bigg Boss 18 contestant Shilpa Shirodkar reacts to being 'left behind' in Bollywood despite working with the biggest stars



a great position today in the banking world."

Replying to Shilpa, Gunaratna said, "It's once in 50 years that we see the arrival of a great star. I believe you were one of them, along with Madhuri Dixit. But because you left suddenly, you were left behind." Shilpa replied, "But I don't regret my decision at all." Gunaratna continued, "But your viewers do. A celeb's life is not theirs alone, they become part of their viewer's life. Watching you, Madhuri and Kangana is a delight." This is not the first time Shilpa has spoken about the contributions of her husband and daughter in her life. In the same episode, Shilpa said, "My husband and my daughter are so supportive. If I am here today, it is only because of them. The way my daughter supports me, it's unreal. I have seen my mother sacrifice things for us, so I think, if I do that for my daughter, she will be stronger." Previously, talking to indianexpress.com, Shilpa revealed the reason why she took up Bigg Boss. She said, "I have been asked this a lot and I have always said that yes I was looking for work before Bigg Boss, but nobody answers your phone and if they do, they diplomatically say that nothing is happening as of now in the industry. They shall call back when there is an opportunity, this has happened with me of late. I am an actor, I want to work, for me, Bigg Boss is also work. People look at it differently, but it's a job. My goal to do this is to get more work afterward, I am not being fake or diplomatic here, I was seeking work, but people were not ready to even meet me."

Actor Shilpa Shirodkar, who worked with several major male stars, including Mithun Chakraborty, Suniel Shetty, Amitabh Bachchan, Rajinikanth, and Govinda, in the 1990s, left acting after her 2000 film Gaja Gamini to focus on her family. In 2013, she made a comeback with the show Ek Mutthi Aasmaan. Now a part of the latest season of Bigg Boss, Shilpa opened up about falling into severe depression.

Talking to her co-contestant Gunaratna Sadavarte in the third episode of Bigg Boss 18, Shilpa revealed how her husband made sacrifices for her after she fell into depression. She said, "When I lost my parents, I went into severe depression in 2008. Apresh was doing so well in his career, but he left it all behind and brought us to India. If only Apresh had been ambitious enough to stay back and not give up his career for me, he would have been in

## 'RRR is my favourite film': Good Will Hunting star Minnie Driver says she watches SS Rajamouli's blockbuster 'every three months'



British actor Minnie Driver is a huge fan of director SS Rajamouli's RRR, which won an Oscar in 2023. In a recent video interview with ANI, Minnie opened up about her love for Indian cinema and her wish to explore the country soon. "RRR is my favourite. I love watching it with my son. It's our favourite film of all time. It's a three-hour movie and we watch it probably every three months. I think it's one of the most beautiful films ever made," she shared.

Minnie also talked about her friendship with Indian chef Romy Gill. "I'm also very good friends with an incredible, she's from Bengal and from the Punjab family, and she's an amazing chef called Romy Gill. I often talk to her about my wish to travel to India and explore the culture of India," she added.

Meanwhile, on the acting front, Minnie Driver was recently seen in The Serpent Queen season 2. She essayed the role of Queen Elizabeth I. Sharing how she prepared for the show, Minnie said, "I read a couple of books about her. I already knew quite a lot about her. I've been fascinated by her since I learned about her in school when I was a kid. I looked at a lot of pictures. I had a really beautiful book of objects from the Tudor and Elizabethan periods and there was something about seeing the gloves and the fans and the shoes and everything and just reading little things about the way in which life at court worked that it really helped." "The show is extremely clever and funny and entertaining...it's just incredibly entertaining," she said. The second season of The Serpent Queen is streaming on Lionsgate Play.

## Kartik Aaryan lists all the high-end cars he owns, says he buys them to cope with 'past frustrations' about not being able to afford a vehicle

Kartik Aaryan has gifted himself a Lamborghini Urus. Kartik Aaryan gifted himself a Lamborghini Urus in 2021, he has bought several other cars in the last couple years. Bollywood actor Kartik Aaryan's love for luxury cars is no secret. However, what drives his passion for owning some of the world's most expensive vehicles is a story of overcoming adversity. In a recent interview, Kartik revealed that his desire to own luxury cars stems from the time when he couldn't afford to buy a new vehicle. "Many years ago, when I didn't have any vehicle, I had bought a third-hand car. I got it for Rs 30,000 - Rs 35,000," Kartik shared in an interview with Bollywood Hungama, as he reminisced about his humble beginnings. But that experience sparked a determination to own his dream cars. His first new car after becoming a star was none other than the luxurious Lamborghini



Urus. When asked to list down all cars he owns now, "Seedha Lamborghini, before that I used to only buy third-hand, second-hand cars as that's what I could afford," he said. Fast forward to today, Kartik's garage boasts an impressive collection of high-end vehicles. "I have a new Range Rover. I have a McLaren, the Urus. I have a Mini Cooper, yes. Then I have one more car," he

said. Kartik attributed his car-buying spree to overcoming past frustrations. "There was a point in my life, maybe this also came from there, I couldn't afford cars. I couldn't afford to buy myself any vehicle. I was so furious about it that I had decided that I'll buy all my dream cars and fill up a garage with cars. So I never feel there is a shortage of cars." He humorously added, "I think, at times, I

buy cars to cope with the frustration, I don't even realise it." However, Kartik now feels content and happy with his collection. "I don't know what all cars I'll buy in the future because I have run out of parking space," he chuckled. On the work front, Kartik was last seen in Kabir Khan's Chandu Champion. He is now preparing for the release of the much-awaited follow-up to his hit film Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2.

## Jitendra Kumar recalls living in a 'jhopdi' in the jungle, reveals he picked up daily wage work for Rs 40: 'I was only 11 then'



Actor Jitendra Kumar, popularly known as Jeetu Bhaiya, said that his relationship with homes is long and complicated, spanning decades, families, and eventually cities. The actor, known for starring in several beloved TVF projects, including Kota Factory, recalled living in a "jhopdi" at one point in his life. In an interview with Cyrus Broacha for Housing.com, Jeetu was asked if he remembers his first-ever house. The actor said he was born in Khairthal, Alwar, Rajasthan, and recalled that he vividly remembers living in a jungle hut.

"We had a hut in a jungle. Our joint family would live there. We had one pakka makaan and one jhopdi. I have a very vivid memory of sleeping there and feeling strange. It was a very brief period. My uncle and father are civil engineers—so am I—and they quickly made two more rooms. So, we lived in a hut for six-seven months, after which the construction began," he revealed. The actor, who went on to graduate in Civil Engineering from IIT Kharagpur, said that during his summer holidays, he would pick up daily wage jobs with painters and carpenters working on under-construction houses, much to the annoyance of his father, who would feel being a 11-year-old was no age to work for money. "Often during summer holidays, I would work for dihaadi along with painters, carpenters. I would work for Rs 40 a day. Then, when my father would know, he would scold me. I was around 11-12 year old and would assist the workers! So, I have seen the process of a house getting built from scratch and been a part of that too," he added. Jitendra Kumar is best known for playing Jitu in TVF Pitchers, Jeetu Bhaiya in the series Kota Factory and for his acclaimed turn in Prime Video's beloved comedy series Panchayat.

## Triptii Dimri cried for days after Animal release, couldn't understand massive negative wave against her: 'Was a difficult month'

Turning an overnight sensation came at a personal cost for actor Triptii Dimri, who said that the wave of negativity that she received after the blockbuster debut of Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Animal was tough to deal with. In the Ranbir Kapoor-starrer, Triptii played a mole and featured in the controversial 'lick my shoe' scene, which received a lot of flak from people. After headlining streaming hits such as Bulbbul and Qala, both on Netflix, Triptii said that Animal was the first time she was exposed to criticism of this scale, which completely shook her. In an appearance on Ranveer Allahbadia's podcast, Triptii said that dealing with the hate and "nasty comments" took a toll on her, as she only focused on the negativity rather than the praise that was also coming her way.

"Pre-Animal, there was no criticism. Post the film, there has been a lot of criticism, but I think that is the side effect of being mainstream. Overall, I am happy, because I am getting to work with such important people. But initially, it was difficult, because during Bulbbul and Qala, there was absolutely no criticism. I'd read my comments and I'd be so happy and think, 'People are only writing good things, there's no problem in life.' Cut to, Animal.

"I always read all the comments, and I remember for a month I couldn't understand what was happening, I just did my job, couldn't understand why was I getting so much negativity. It was a difficult month for me, because half of the world was celebrating me and the other half was trying to put me down. I was focusing more on the negative than the positive," she added.

The actor then revealed that the hate reached a level where she couldn't take it any longer, and she cried for at



least three days. Triptii said her mechanism is to always withdraw from a conflict, and with the intense negativity that came her way, she went into a shell again. "I cried a lot after Animal, for at least two-three days. I was not used to this at all. This happened all of a sudden, and I never expected I would have to face criticism of this magnitude. People were writing rubbish, and you know how nasty they can get. I spoke to my sister, who told me to own it. 'You know what you've done, achieved what you have achieved.' I am a sensitive person, if I have a fight with someone, I go into my shell. So, even then, I was getting affected a lot. I didn't know what to focus on, there was so much happening, including work. There was no time to sit down and process," she added. Post Animal, Triptii was seen in Karan Johar-backed Bad Newz. She will now be seen in Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video, co-starring Rajkumar Rao. She also has Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3 and Dhadak 2 lined up for release.

## Shark Tank India season 4: Meet Snapdeal's Kunal Bahl, who replaces Zomato's Deepinder Goyal as new judge on reality show



Kunal Bahl, co-founder of Snapdeal and Titan Capital, as well as the promoter of Unicommerce, has joined the panel of Shark Tank India Season 4. He replaces Deepinder Goyal, founder and CEO of Zomato, in the upcoming season. Bahl is all set to bring his vast experience as a renowned entrepreneur and investor, having built and scaled numerous technology ventures and invested in over 250 start-ups.

Kunal will team up with Shark Tank India's esteemed panel, comprising Anupam Mittal (People Group's Founder and CEO), Aman Gupta (boAt Lifestyle's Co-Founder and CMO), Namita Thapar (Emcure Pharmaceuticals Limited's Executive Director), and Ritesh Agarwal (OYO's Founder and Group CEO). Together, this powerhouse panel is all set to offer expert advice and guidance to innovative entrepreneurs who pitch their business ideas on the show, seeking funding and mentorship from the "sharks" in exchange for equity. While the makers of the show have not made an official announcement on Bahl's entry, Titan Capital announced his addition to the show on X. In their tweet, they stated, "Introducing the Newest Shark: @1kunalbahl! We're

thrilled and elated to announce that our co-founder, Kunal Bahl, is joining #SharkTankIndia as the newest #Shark!" The latest promo for Shark Tank India Season 4 showcases Bahl receiving a warm welcome from his fellow sharks. Bahl's participation in Prime Video's 'Mission Start Ab' demonstrated his ability to provide mentorship and guidance to innovators. Although the premiere date for Shark Tank India season 4 has not been revealed, fans are eagerly anticipating the new season. Since its debut in 2021, the show has captivated audiences by featuring entrepreneurs pitching their business ideas to a group of investors who decide whether to invest in their company. As the show gears up for its fourth season, controversy has erupted with Deepinder Goyal, founder and CEO of the restaurant aggregator and food delivery company Zomato, will not be returning because Swiggy, one of Zomato's rivals, is going to be a key sponsor of Season 4. Deepinder said that he was "kicked out" of the show because "Swiggy sponsored Shark Tank." "The startup culture of India is too much about showmanship. I went there (on Shark Tank India) to set a different narrative, be real and change how people perceive."