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Government appoints Vice-Chancellors for nine State universities

Hyderabad: After a long and protracted delay, the State government announced the Vice-Chancellors for nine State universities here on Friday. The appointment orders issued by the Governor, who also happens to be the Chancellor of State Universities, include Prof. Kumar Moglaram as Vice Chancellor for Osmania University, Hyderabad, Prof. Pratap Reddy as Vice Chancellor for Kakatiya University, Warangal, and Prof. GN Srinivas as Vice Chancellor for Palamuru University, Mahabubnagar. The other appointees included Prof. Umesh Kumar as Vice Chancellor for Satavahana University, Karimnagar, Prof. Nityananda Rao as Vice Chancellor for Telugu University, Hyderabad, Prof.

President Murmu pays tribute at National War Memorial in Malawi



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Lilongwe: President Droupadi Murmu on Friday visited the National War Memorial here to pay tributes to soldiers, including those from India, who lost their lives during the First and Second World Wars. Murmu arrived in Malawi on Thursday on the final leg of her three-nation visit to Africa. She is the first Indian Head of State to visit the African nation.

"President Droupadi Murmu visited the National War Memorial in Lilongwe and paid floral tribute to the soldiers and civilians who laid down their lives during the First and Second World War and other military operations," her office said in a post on X. "The President also paid tribute to Indian soldiers whose sacrifices have been honoured in this Memorial," it said.

Murmu also laid a wreath at the Kamuzu Mausoleum, the resting place of the first President of Malawi Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda. On Thursday, she addressed the Indian community here and hailed them as a "living link" between the two nations. She also addressed the India-Malawi Business Meet and said there is immense scope for enhancing bilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture, mining, energy and tourism. Murmu was received by Vice President Michael Usi upon her arrival at the Kamuzu International Airport here. The president arrived here after successful visits to Algeria and Mauritania, where she held talks with her respective counterparts to enhance bilateral ties.

Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi charges Chief Minister Stalin with making a 'racist' remark against him



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Countering Mr Stalin's tweet in which he wondered if Mr. Ravi was being a Governor or an "Aryan", the Governor said, "Making racist remark and alleging incorrect imputations against governor by the Chief Minister is unfortunately cheap and lowers the dignity of the high Constitutional office of the Chief Minister. Since he [Chief Minister] rushed to public with his racist remarks and false imputations I am constrained to respond." A social media post by the Raj Bhavan quoted the Governor as saying that in the "regrettable tweet" Chief Minister made a "racist remark against me and levelled false allegation of showing disrespect to Tamizh Thaaai Vaazhthu. He (the Chief Minister) knows it well that I recite full Tamizh Thaaai Vaazhthu at every function and do so with reverence, pride and precision."

10 more die after consuming illicit liquor, toll at 35

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Patna: Ten more people died after allegedly consuming illicit liquor in Bihar's Siwan and Saran districts, taking the toll in the hooch tragedy to 35, an official said on Friday. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Saran range, Nilesh Kumar said on Friday that while Siwan accounted for 28 fatalities, seven deaths have been reported from Saran. "As many as 28 people in Maghar and Auriya panchayats in Siwan district have so far died after consuming suspected illicit liquor. Seven people in Ibrahimpur area under the jurisdiction of Mashrak police station in Saran district also died after consuming suspected spurious liquor," the DIG said. The suspected hooch tragedy has triggered a political blame game with opposition parties questioning the efficacy of the ban on sale and consumption of liquor, imposed by the Nitish Kumar government more than eight years ago. Locals in both districts claimed that people lost their lives after "consuming illicit liquor". On the condition of anonymity, local police officials claimed that more than 25 people from both districts are still battling for their lives at different hospitals in Siwan, Saran and Patna districts.

Group-1 aspirants caned at Ashoknagar in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: Mild tension prevailed when the police used force and resorted to lathi charge on the Group -1 aspirants who took out a rally demanding the government to reschedule the mains exams, at Ashok Nagar on Friday. Several aspirants from the coaching institutions in the vicinity and others across the city gathered at Ashok Nagar cross road and started a rally towards Indira Park. They marched forward holding placards and raising slogans demanding postponement of the exams. The police personnel deployed at the spot stopped them as they did not have any prior permission for staging protest.

PM Modi to attend BRICS Summit in Russia from October 22-23

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Russia from October 22-23 to attend the BRICS summit, the Ministry of External Affairs announced on Friday (October 18, 2024) during which he is also "expected to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from BRICS member countries and invited leaders." The big question is if Mr. Modi will hold a meeting on the sidelines with Chinese President Xi Jinping, on which official sources said there is "no clarity" as yet.

The BRICS respect "civilisational diversity" and is "free from pressure, double standards and interference in domestic affairs," Russian Envoy in India Denis Alipov said while stating that it was natural for the grouping to expand one way or another. Stating that the "geopolitical



and practical relevance of BRICS grouping was growing," Mr. Alipov said it promotes the agenda of the global south. He was speaking at an online conference on BRICS organised by India Writes Network. The Envoy added that when it comes to BRICS partner countries membership, the countries should be "economically ambitious" and "oppose illegitimate sanctions". He also called for an alternate to the SWIFT system used for global payments from which Russia was expelled

after the beginning of the war in Ukraine.

Member countries have been pushing for greater use of national currencies for trade between them. Diplomatic sources said this was a priority for Russia, while ruling out the possibility of a common BRICS currency. Another focus for Russia is the full integration of the new members. Several other countries have expressed interest in joining the BRICS, on which informed sources said that is something which has to be done

based on consensus and the immediate focus is on the full integration of recently admitted members into the existing framework.

The Summit to be held at Kazan is themed "strengthening multilateralism for just global development and security", will provide an important platform for leaders to discuss key global issues, the MEA noted.

"The Summit will offer a valuable opportunity to assess the progress of initiatives launched by BRICS and to identify potential areas for future collaboration." The BRICS which came into existence in 2006 saw the addition of five new members in 2024 - Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates and 15 summits have taken so far. The expanded BRICS has a combined population of about 3.5 billion, or 45% of the world's population.

Adani Group Donates 100 Crores to Telangana's Young India Skills University



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Hyderabad : In a significant move aimed at enhancing the skills of students and youth, the Telangana government, in partnership with private industrial organizations, has set up the Young India Telangana Skills University. The prestigious Adani Group has contributed a generous 100 crore donation towards this initiative. A delegation from the Adani Foundation, led by representatives of Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani, met Telangana Chief Minister Revanthy Reddy and handed over the donation cheque. Gautam Adani expressed his continued support for the Telangana government's efforts in skill development and youth empowerment. Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari, along with other officials, was also present during the occasion. The donation is expected to significantly bolster the state's efforts in providing skill development opportunities and employment prospects for the youth.

KTR questions Revanth's obsession with Musi river project

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Hyderabad: In a sharp rebuke, BRS working president KT Rama Rao lambasted the Revanthy Reddy government for its reckless governance and pushing unnecessary projects such as the Musi river beautification. He contrasted this with the rapid development achieved under former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao's leadership, pointing out Telangana's top position in economic growth, IT exports and environmental sustainability. Taking to X, Rama Rao slammed the Congress government's administration for lacking direction and spreading confusion. He ridiculed the Congress' obsession with the Musi river beautification project, calling it a distraction from real development. "Congress



doesn't know how to govern. Telangana became number one in per capita income and GDP growth without wasting Rs 1.5 lakh crore on the Musi project," he said. The BRS working president said Chandrashekhara Rao's leadership drove Telangana's growth, especially in the IT sector. "Despite the Modi government cancelling the ITIR project and not giving a single rupee, Hyderabad

surpassed Bengaluru in IT exports. We met our 2035 IT exports target by 2023, 12 years in advance" he pointed out.

Rama Rao noted that Hyderabad won the world's best green city award without displacing the poor in the name of Musi river project, surpassing global cities such as Paris, Bogota, Montreal and Mexico City. He said the State had also become the seed bowl of the

country. He contrasted this with Congress' "money-spinning schemes" around Musi river, questioning their real motives. He questioned the need for the Chief Minister to take up the Musi river project and the Fourth City project, except for Revanthy Reddy filling his pockets. The former Minister criticised Revanthy Reddy for belittling government schools by repeatedly claiming to be its product. He pointed out that students from residential welfare schools initiated by former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao were far more fluent in English speaking and were working in world-renowned companies across the globe. "Telangana's rise has been built on visionary leadership, not on empty promises and chaotic governance," he concluded.

AAP leader Satyendar Jain granted bail in money laundering case after 18 months



Mr. Jain was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on May 30, 2022, on the charge of laundering money through four companies allegedly linked to him

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

A Delhi court on Friday (October 18, 2024) granted bail to AAP leader and former Delhi Cabinet minister Satyendar Jain in a money laundering case, citing "delay in trial" and his "long incarceration". Mr. Jain was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on May 30, 2022, on the charge of laundering money through four companies allegedly linked to him. He is currently in judicial custody. Special Judge Rakesh Syal had reserved the order after hearing the arguments on the application from the accused as well as the ED. Mr. Jain's counsel had told the court that no purpose would be served by keeping him in further custody. "Considering the delay in trial

and long incarceration of 18 months, and the fact that trail will take long to start, let alone conclude, accused is favourably suited for the relief," said Special Judge Vishal Gogne. The judge granted the relief on a bail bond Rs 50,000 with two sureties of like amount.

The ED had opposed the application, saying that if released, Mr. Jain may influence the witnesses or flee from justice. The ED case stems from an FIR lodged against Mr. Jain by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 2017 under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

'Satyamev Jayate': AAP as Satyendar Jain gets bail The Aam Aadmi Party hailed a Delhi court granting bail to its senior leader Satyendar Jain in a money laundering case, describing the decision as a victory of truth and the defeat of another BJP "conspiracy".

"Satyamev Jayate. Another conspiracy of BJP failed as Satyendra Jain ji, who brought about health revolution in Delhi by building magnificent Mohalla Clinics, got bail from the court. The real face of BJP has been exposed again now in front of the entire country," the AAP said in a post on X. The Court granted the relief to Jain on a bail bond 50,000 with two sureties of like amount.

AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal said Mr. Jain got bail after spending more than two years in jail. "What was his fault?" he asked. The former Chief Minister said multiple raids were conducted at Mr. Jain's place but not a single penny was recovered. "His only fault was that he built Mohalla Clinics and made health services free for the people of Delhi. Modi ji put him in jail so that Mohalla Clinics could be stooped, thus preventing free treatment for the poor. But God is with us," he posted on X.

ED raids MUDA office in land scam case involving Siddaramaiah

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Bengaluru: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) sleuths conducted raids at the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) office on Friday in connection with the MUDA scam. The officials have also conducted simultaneous raids at the residence of accused number four, the land owner J. Devaraju. Sources explained that a team of 20 officers have raided the MUDA office and are verifying the documents. The ED officers' team is also raiding the residence of Devaraju and conducting search operations. The officers are also questioning him. Sources further stated that the ED will also raid the residence of CM Siddaramaiah at any time and question him and his wife Parvathy, who are the first and second accused in the MUDA scam. Prasanna Kumaar, the Secretary in MUDA said that the ED team arrived at the MUDA office in the morning. "We have been instructed to provide all information to the ED officials. The ED officials have stated that they will remain in the office till October 19. The MUDA Commissioner has instructed us to provide all details and cooperate with the ED sleuths," he stated. The ED sleuths have also sought documents from the Tehsildar office in Mysuru. The raids are also likely to be conducted at the Tahsildar office. Sources also said that the raids will also take place at the Mysuru Lokayukta office, which is also investigating the MUDA case. Welcoming the raids, complainant Snehmayi Krishna stated that, once the ED gets hold of the documents, the charges against the accused will come out in the open and no one knows who will land in prison. "This is a scam involving thousands of crores. The scam is not only about the allotment of 14 sites to the family of CM Siddaramaiah. The land belonging to the MUDA is being shown as the land belonging to private persons and thousands of sites were given away violating all rules," he stated. The scam starts from the de-notification of land in the name of the land owner, the fourth accused Devaraju. Devaraju is not the original owner and fake records are created. He was made to submit an application for de-notification. Following this Mallikarjuna Swamy, the brother-in-law of CM Siddaramaiah purchases the land and gifts it to his sister Parvathy, who is the wife of CM Siddaramaiah, Snehmayi Krishna alleged. Siddaramaiah is the accused number one in the MUDA scam. CM's wife Parvathy is named as the second accused in the case. Mallikarjuna Swamy is the third accused in the case.

TELANGANA GRAMEENA BANK ADILABAD MAIN BRANCH Beside Dwaraka Hotel, Dwaraka nagar, Adilabad			
DEMAND NOTICE TO THE BORROWER (Notice under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 Section 13(2))			
It is hereby inform that borrower Sri MD Tajuddin S/o Sri Ahmed Mohiuddin availed loan facilities from the bank and failed to pay principal and interest to the concern loan and the loan has been classified as non performance asset (NPA) Under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 notice has been issued to his last known address. But, the same has been returned without handover to him. Hence this information has been informing through this public notice.			
Name of Borrower	Property details	Notice Date	Outstanding Amount (As on Notice date)
MD Tajuddin S/o Sri Ahmed Mohiuddin H.No: 1-4-349/9/A, Masood Nagar, Adilabad-504001 Mob: 9899520350, 9494312139, 8919913209	Door No: 4-4-120/2/4 (4-7-120/1) Commercial Complex, Sy. No: 31, Plot No: 77 admeasuring 385 Sq.Yds =3465 sq.ft, situated at Revenue village, Bhuktapur, Adilabad. North: Road, South: land of Khajja Moineddin, East: Road, West: Road.	03-10-2024	Rs. 5,39,435/-
The above person has failed to pay the above mentioned amount along with future interest and incidental expenses. Hence for the rules SARFAESI Act Section 13(2) in 60 days from the notice date the above mentioned person failed to pay the above mentioned amount along with future interest and incidental expenses the bank may take SARFAESI Act Section 13(4) and any other provisions in the act. This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the Bank under available provision of any other act or any acts or legal acts.			
Date: 18-10-2024 Place: Adilabad		Sd/- Authorised Officer, Telangana Grammeena Bank, Adilabad Main Branch	

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Jaishankar in Pak

THE go-ahead to the first visit by an Indian External Affairs Minister to Pakistan in almost nine years was indication enough that behind-the-scenes diplomacy had been productive. Before going to Islamabad to attend a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, S Jaishankar had declared that India's Pakistan policy was not passive. New Delhi, the message went, was willing to respond to any positive gestures. In the Pakistan capital, he said activities characterised by the three evils of terrorism, extremism and separatism would not encourage trade, energy flows, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges. Strong words, but minus the hostility that matter-of-factly manifests itself in any forum that includes India and Pakistan. The resumption of dialogue may not be on the cards, but Jaishankar's informal interaction with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar raises hopes of ending the deep freeze in bilateral relations.

Sustaining even a limited engagement with Pakistan has remained a challenge for successive Indian governments. Islamabad's, or rather Rawalpindi's, proclivity to betray trust adds to the scepticism. Having laid on the table its non-negotiable stance against terrorism, New Delhi must continue to explore options to engage with its rogue neighbour. Keeping the channels of communication open is critical. Cricket diplomacy may or may not come to Delhi's aid, as it has in the past, but in the larger scheme of things, it can serve as an ice-breaker. The smooth completion of Jaishankar's visit is being viewed as a constructive takeaway — a baby step, but forward movement, nevertheless. The ball is now in Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's court. The track record of his brother, former PM Nawaz Sharif, in fomenting ties does not inspire any confidence.

Shouting 'Jai Shri Ram' doesn't hurt religious feelings: Karnataka HC quashes case against 2 for raising slogan in mosque



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Karnataka HCThe court quashed the case, observing that none of the ingredients of the offences alleged in the complaint had been met. The Karnataka High Court last month quashed a criminal case against two men from the Dakshina Kannada district for allegedly raising "Jai Shri Ram" slogan inside a mosque.

In an order dated September 13, Justice M Nagaprasanna said it was not understandable how shouting the "Jai Shri Ram" slogan would hurt the religious feelings of any community. The court was hearing a petition by the accused, Keerthan Kumar and Sachin Kumar, seeking to quash the case. As per the complaint, the two men barged into a mosque within the jurisdiction of the Puttur police circle on September 24, 2023, and raised "Jai Shri Ram" slogans around 11 pm. They also allegedly made threats to the effect that "they will not leave the community". A case was filed under various Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections, including 447 (criminal trespass), 295A (outraging religious beliefs), 505 (statements conducing to public mischief), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 34 (common intention). The complaint also stated that Hindus and Muslims in the area were living in harmony and such incidents would create a rift. The counsel for the two accused stated that none of the ingredients in the various IPC sections would fit with the details of what had occurred. Even entry into the mosque could not be criminal trespass as it was a public place, the counsel argued. The opposing government counsel stated that the matter ought to at least be investigated.

Citing the IPC Section 295A, the bench stated, "Section 295A deals with deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs. It is un-understandable how if someone shouts 'Jai Sriram', it would outrage the religious feelings of any class. When the complainant himself states that Hindu-Muslims are living in harmony in the area, the incident by no stretch of imagination can result in antimony. Here, it becomes apposite to refer to the judgment of the apex court... The apex court holds that any and every act will not become an offence under Section 295A of the IPC. The acts that have no effect on bringing out peace or destruction of public order will not lead to an offence," it added. The court quashed the case, observing that none of the ingredients of the offences alleged in the complaint had been met.

As Mumbai police claim Lawrence Bishnoi gang killed Baba Siddique, here are 3 unanswered questions

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Lawrence BishnoiAs per the police, when it comes to fear-mongering the Bishnoi gang has usually fired outside the residence of high-profile persons like actor Salman Khan in Mumbai and singer A P Dhillon in Canada. Even as the Mumbai police have identified two of the six accused in connection with the firing on Baba Siddique as those affiliated to jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and claimed that the NCP leader was killed to strike fear in the city, there are four unanswered questions before the force.

The Mumbai police have arrested shooters Gurmail Singh and Dharmaraj Kashyap, co-conspirator Pravin Lonkar, and Harishkumar Nishad so far. Shubham

In defamation case against BJP leader, Karnataka HC lays down steps under BNSS for courts to deal with private complaints



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Karnataka High CourtJustice Nagaprasanna said that after receiving the complaint, the magistrate or court should examine the complainant under oath, examine any witnesses, and record the proceedings in writing. The Karnataka High Court has taken note of a "procedural aberration" in the sending of a notice to BJP Bijapur MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal after a minister filed a complaint against him for allegedly making a defamatory

speech against him at a rally.

In an order passed on September 27, Justice M Nagaprasanna also directed the lower court to initiate again, within four weeks, the process of issuing a notice under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).Yatnal's counsel argued before the high court that issuing a notice the moment the complaint against the BJP leader was received from Textiles Minister Shivananda S Patil under section 223 of the BNSS was erroneous.

The bench observed, "The moment complaint is filed, notice is issued to the accused. This procedure is erroneous. Therefore, the petition deserves to succeed on this short ground of procedural aberration and the matter is to be remitted back to the hands of the concerned Court to redo the exercise from the beginning."Justice Nagaprasanna said that after receiving the complaint, the magistrate or court should examine the complainant under oath, examine any witnesses, and record the proceedings in writing. After this, a notice is issued to the accused for him to be heard, only after which the matter of cognisance will arise, the judge said.

Despite R G Kar outrage, TMC leaders appear confident of win in West Bengal by-polls

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

On the backfoot of the R G Kar rape and murder issue, West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress party is eyeing the upcoming by-polls for six Assembly constituencies in West Bengal, seats for five of which the TMC had won in the 2021 Assembly elections.Despite significant setbacks for the TMC since their landslide Lok Sabha victory this year, most notably because of the R G Kar case and protests, party leaders still seem confident of a victory in the by-polls to be held on November 13.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) Tuesday announced these by-polls for Sitai (SC), Madarihat (ST), Naihati, Haroa, Medinipur, and Taldangra as their MLAs contested and won seats in the Lok Sabha this year.Continuous protests by junior doctors for the last two months compelled the TMC government to replace the Kolkata police commissioner, Director of Medical Education, and Director of Health Service, amidst mounting allegations of corruption and a lack of cooperation with doctors and protestors.However, a senior TMC leader said, "It's true our image was tarnished. But that doesn't mean our election machinery is weakened. That was intact and this movement has no impact in the village areas of West Bengal... it is very much an urban-based movement. That only affects the Naihati votebank. Apart from that, our vote machinery remained intact.

In bypolls, ruling parties always get an advantage. So, we are expecting not only a win in these six seats, but a win with thumping margins."TMC leader Kunal Ghosh said, "TMC will win all six seats and CPIM will get the third position in every seat. I am challenging CPIM and their senior doctors who are provoking junior doctors for



fasting unto death and roaming around... if they have courage, one of them should be made a candidate and we will see how many votes they get."Meanwhile, in response to that, CPIM leader Shatarup Ghosh said, "The party will decide who will be the candidate. First... Kunal Ghosh should appear as a candidate, at least in the panchayat. Second — our appeal to the people of West Bengal — even if the corruption of the TMC can be tolerated, let them judge if this arrogance of the TMC can be tolerated."BJP Rajya Sabha MP Samik Bhattacharya said, "Where people will be able to vote fearlessly, they will vote against the TMC. Kunal Ghosh is a wise person. He realised that his future is as a political commentator and he is practicing it."Notably, while the TMC maintained their dominance in the Lok Sabha elections this year, the BJP was ahead of them in two of these constituencies: Madarihat and Medinipur by 9,000 and 11,000 votes respectively. On the other hand, the TMC was ahead in Sitai (29,000), Naihati (15,000), Taldangra (8,000), and Haroa (1,10,000).

Rising cases of discrimination, forced marriage and extortion worry LGBTIQ community

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Even as the Central Government has started nationwide consultations with the LGBTIQ community on steps to be taken for its better treatment, cases of discrimination, forced marriage and extortion through dating apps remain a cause for concern.Advocate Binduadhav Khire, an LGBTIQ activist from the Bindu Queer Rights Foundation, while talking to The Indian Express, said many in the community do not know the right legal remedies they have when faced with adverse situations.Khire said the foundation would launch its pre-litigation consultation legal aid cell for the community on October 17 to help the community to get a deeper understanding of the legal challenges and explore options related to forced marriages, discrimination, extortion and related concerns. Khire, said in the past two months they have already provided legal consultation for 7 cases.

The launch of the cell coincides with the first anniversary of Suprio vs Union of India (gay marriage case), where the Supreme Court ruled against same-sex marriage.The Centre last year set up a committee headed by the cabinet secretary to look into issues of same-sex relationships."After discussions with community members, we sent a slew of suggestions to the committee. It is our experience that the affected community members are more open to discussing these sensitive issues with persons who belong to the LGBTIQ community. Hence, we thought it made sense that preliminary legal aid consultation services be provided by LGBTIQ community advocates," Khire said.

"In the last 10 years, we have reached out to more than 2,000 gay men and transgender people. While the work of advocacy on same-sex marriage continues, the LGBTIQ community continues to face a host of legal problems at the ground level. Lack of awareness/sensitisation



of various stakeholders, lack of knowledge of law among the community and paucity of organisations that provide legal and technical support on legal issues continue to plague the LGBTIQ movement in Pune," Khire said.

To address these issues, the foundation is initiating a slew of measures to raise legal awareness and understanding on LGBTIQ issues in Pune. As more and more LGBTIQ people come out of the closet, it has become imperative that companies and institutions create a safe environment for these communities. Two important aspects of creating such a safe space are to conduct awareness and sensitisation sessions for staff and to conduct sessions for their internal complaints committee members to increase their understanding of the diversity, equity and inclusion of the LGBTIQ community."As part of the long-standing demand of the LGBTIQ community, they have started work on creating a series of short videos on 'LGBTIQ-Current Status of Law and Medical Science' to enhance the understanding of the community on legal and medical issues. The pre-litigation cell will operate on second and fourth Saturdays from 10 am to 12 noon.

paid. In the Delhi firing, the police believe deceased Nasar Shah was gunned down as he had told his partner to not pay Rs 5 crore demanded as extortion. So far, there is no indication of any extortion demand to Siddique, leaving the police in the dark about the motive behind the killing of the NCP leader, and attracting greater scrutiny when he could have scared him by firing around him.The police have claimed that Bishnoi has been using Salman Khan to create fear in the city so that he can start extortion calls in Mumbai, however, since the firing at the actor's house there have been no extortion calls reported in the city made by Bishnoi gang. While the police claim that it is possible people may not be reporting such calls, the fact that no such extortion call from Bishnoi has been reported so far does not fit their theory.

Firecracker ban can reduce nanoparticle emissions by around 22%: Study



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

FirecrackersWith the announcement of a complete ban on firecrackers in the capital on Monday (October 14), the impact assessment of the policy to reduce the nanoparticle pollutants becomes crucial. A firecracker ban can reduce up to 20-22% of certain nanoparticle emissions, revealed a recent study published in the journal, Air Quality, Atmosphere & Health, by researchers from the Delhi Technological University (DTU).

The study, titled 'Are Delhi residents exposed to lesser particle number concentration due to the firework ban in the city?', analysed air quality before and after the banning of firecrackers during Diwali celebrations of 2021 and 2022 in the national capital.The festival coincides with the onset of winter, when meteorological factors, including low wind speeds and high humidity, cause pollutants to linger in the atmosphere.

The nanoparticle pollutants, which are particularly hazardous for children and older adults, can penetrate through the skin and blood vessels due to their smaller size. The major health impacts of exposure to these are stroke, hypertension, and myocardial infarction, the study noted.With the announcement of a complete ban on firecrackers in the capital on Monday (October 14) till January 1, the impact assessment of the policy to reduce nanoparticle pollutants becomes crucial.The strict implementation of the firecracker ban, including restrictions on the sale and online distribution of fireworks, can reduce particle emissions, the study highlighted through its findings.The study measured particles within the size range of 10 to 1,000 nanometers. These nanoparticles were measured on the DTU premises. The data was collected for 11 days in both years (2021 and 2022) — the first five days pre-Diwali, followed by the date of Diwali, and the next five days post-Diwali.The inhalable nanoparticle concentration during the 2021 Diwali day was about 9.73 million nanoparticles. On the Diwali day in 2022, it was around 8.12 million nanoparticles. The total inhalable particle exposure on Diwali day decreased by approximately 1.6 million nanoparticles, around an 18% reduction from the previous year.The 2022 analysis showed that air quality remained relatively stable throughout the pre and post-Diwali periods which the study credited to the strict enforcement of a complete ban on firecrackers in the same year.The study urged also the need for "more target-based policy implementation" to meet the human health standards for clean air needs. Identifying the potential sources and ensuring the apt policy framework for its reduction can help achieve clean air goals, the study suggested.

Manoj Jarange-Patil vows to expose Devendra Fadnavis, BJP game plan against Marathas on October 20



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Activist Manoj Jarange-Patil on Wednesday vowed to expose a conspiracy, allegedly hatched by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and the BJP, against the Maratha community in the state.His remarks came minutes after Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said instead of targeting the ruling Mahayuti alliance, Jarange-Patil should ponder on the way the previous regime led by the Maha Vikas Aghadi betrayed the Maratha community."On October 20, I will expose Devendra Fadnavis and the BJP. I will reveal the conspiracy that Fadnavis hatched to deny the Maratha community the benefit of reservation," Jarange-Patil said at a press conference held in the Antarwali-Saraati village in Jalna district.Although Jarange-Patil lashed out at the ruling faction, he refrained from attacking Shinde. "The Chief Minister had promised to provide us the reservation. We had hopes on him. I told six crore Marathas that the chief minister will help us realise our dream of reservation. But Fadnavis did not let that happen," he claimed.Jarange-Patil alleged that Fadnavis tried to destroy the lives of the Marathas by keeping them away from reservation. "Fadnavis made the game plan. He told the Centre how the party will benefit through the OBCs by denying reservation to the Marathas," the activist said.Jarange-Patil further said Fadnavis misused his powers to wreck the lives of the people of the Maratha community. "But now we will not keep silent. I will ensure Fadnavis and the BJP are exposed and also make sure the party is ousted," he said.Jarange-Patil said the state government failed to implement the "Sagare soyre notification. It failed to implement the Hyderabad gazette; it failed to withdraw cases against Maratha community youths. What benefit did we get from the Mahayuti government? We were insulted, our hopes were dashed and lives were destroyed".Jarange said a meeting of the Maratha community will be convened on October 20 to decide whether to fight the elections or to ensure the defeat of the Mahayuti candidates. "

No evidence in ED case to show ex-Karnataka minister B Nagendra received Rs 94 crore siphoned from ST corporation, says court



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

While granting bail to former Karnataka minister B Nagendra, who has been named an accused in a money laundering case related to the alleged diversion of Rs 94.73 crore of funds from the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation, a special court ruled that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has not shown evidence of him receiving and using the money. Nagendra, who was arrested by the ED on July 12 on charges of laundering funds from the corporation while he was the minister of the welfare of Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka, was granted bail on October 14.

The special court also indicated that Nagendra had not been named as an accused in the predicate offence of fraud and embezzlement which was investigated and charge-sheeted by a Karnataka Police Special Investigation Team (SIT). Nagendra was granted bail even as the ED filed a prosecution complaint in connection with the scam where it stated that Rs 20.10 crore of diverted funds from the corporation was used for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and Nagendra's personal expenditure. The ED, which functions under the BJP government at the Centre, and the investigating agencies under the Congress government in Karnataka have been locked in a war of attrition over the ST development corporation scam with the central agency arresting Nagendra despite the SIT not naming him as an accused. A demand for a Central Bureau of Investigation probe is also currently pending in the Karnataka High Court for orders. "No doubt the law is well settled that in order to attract the rigours of the provisions of the Money Laundering Act, the person accused need not be arrayed as accused in the predicate offence. At the same time, the prosecution is required to indicate that the person arrayed as accused in the money laundering case had directly or indirectly received the proceeds of crime," the special court in Bengaluru has observed in its October 14 bail order.

"In the said charge sheet filed by the investigating agency, the recoveries which are made during the course of investigation are mentioned which are extracted in a form of chart by the petitioner (Nagendra). Not much dispute is attributed to the said chart and even otherwise on appreciating the aforesaid materials it would clearly indicate that no recovery was made at the behest of the petitioner herein and it is also relevant to note that as per the charge sheet filed in the scheduled offence, a total sum of nearly Rs 81 crores are being recovered from other accused persons," the special court noted in its bail order. The fact that no recoveries of diverted funds were made on the information provided by Nagendra assumes significance, the special court has indicated. The allegations "in the final report filed by the respondent (ED) requires to be considered with the final report filed in the predicate offence. Interestingly, the petitioner herein is not arraigned as accused person in the predicate offence. Even if it is accepted that it is not required under the provision of law to arraign him as an accused person, then the prosecution has to explain that he was the recipient of the proceeds of crime," the special court said.

While the ED has named Nagendra as the "kingpin and mastermind who was instrumental for commission of the entire offence", the probe has not yet established "the basic ingredient of recipient of proceeds of crime", the special court has ruled.

"At this juncture in the predicate offence, the present petitioner is not shown as accused person or in the ECIR [Enforcement Case Information Report] report it is shown that he had received the proceeds of crime but in fact it is stated that he is the kingpin and person responsible for siphon off the funds of the Corporation, which is required to be established during the course of trial," the court said. "Unfortunately for the respondent authority, though they claim to have unearthed massive documents, there are no iota of materials available in the predicate offence to indicate that the proceeds of crime was being passed on," the special court observed in its bail order.

The special court has also observed that "there is a serious tussle between the investigation being carried out in the predicate offence and in the money laundering case, wherein both are investigated by different agencies". The ED has relied on statements provided in custody by Vijay Kumar Gowda, Nagendra's personal assistant, to implicate the former minister in the money laundering case. "The investigation papers indicate that the proceeds of crime were used by him (Nagendra) for

personal and electoral expenditures including cash management during election and his personal assistant i.e., accused No.8 Vijay Kumar Gowda were involved in handling funds," the special court has noted.

The ED has alleged that Rs 20.19 crore of the diverted funds was used to support a candidate contesting the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from the Bellary constituency and for Nagendra's personal expenses. "Evidence of these expenditures was discovered during search and seizure operations and corroborated by financial analysis and statements. Details of these election expenses were retrieved from the mobile phone of Vijay Kumar Gowda, who handled the cash on Nagendra's instructions," the ED has stated. Nagendra, who resigned after the scam came to light in May 2024, is also accused of obstructing the investigation by destroying mobile phones and instructing others to remain silent. The ED arrested Nagendra and five other key accused during the investigation. "The BJP at the Centre is trying to destabilise the Congress government in Karnataka. Even though I played no role in the Valmiki scam, I have been harassed by the ED. After my arrest, the ED attempted to force me to name state leaders including CM Siddaramaiah and deputy CM D K Shivakumar. This was a scam involving the bank," Nagendra said after his release.

ED and SIT at loggerheads Parallel investigations have been underway by the state SIT and the ED into the Rs 94.73 crore fraud that occurred at the ST development corporation. The state government has accused the ED of launching a witch hunt to target CM Siddaramaiah, who is also the state finance minister and has even filed a case of alleged coercion to implicate the CM against senior ED officials in Bengaluru. While the ED arrested Nagendra and claimed that part of the Rs 94.73 crore of funds stolen from the corporation was diverted for poll funding, the SIT has not reported the finding of a direct role of the former minister in the fraud.

The stand-off between the two agencies saw the Karnataka HC intervening in August for the ED to get custody of Satyanarayana Verma, 36, a key operative in the alleged fraud. The ED was forced to approach the high court after the SIT took custody of Verma for 10 days on August 3 in connection with a case of forging documents of the labour department to create 18 fake bank accounts in the name of various companies to transfer the stolen funds. On July 17, the ED issued a statement on Nagendra's arrest stating that it had "uncovered that a substantial amount of funds were utilized to procure a significant quantity of liquor just prior to the general elections". On July 18, a team of Congress ministers in Karnataka held a press conference and alleged that a conspiracy was afoot through the ED, at the instance of the BJP at the Centre, to frame Siddaramaiah in the case.

"In the probe into the Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation fraud, we have concrete information and evidence that during the probe, the persons who are under investigation are being forced to give statements against people in top positions in the state government," state Revenue Minister Krishna Byregowda said at the July 18 briefing.

What is the ST development corporation scam? The Rs 94.73 crore Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation scam surfaced on May 26 this year after an accounts officer in the corporation died by suicide after a portion of the Rs 187 crore deposited from the state treasury and other bank accounts into the corporation's new account in the MG Road branch of the Union Bank of India disappeared. The emergence of the scam forced Nagendra to resign. The Karnataka SIT probe has found that the funds from the ST corporation were allegedly siphoned to 18 primary accounts in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh created by Verma, an accused in a similar scam in Chhattisgarh in 2022, and his associates. The funds were allegedly subsequently routed to over 170 secondary accounts from where they were withdrawn. The scam rocked the state legislature in July after Opposition parties sought Siddaramaiah's resignation, saying he should take "moral responsibility" for the fraud.

Over 20 people have been linked to the fraud so far and 14 people have been arrested by the SIT. The accused include six Union Bank of India officials, two officials of the tribal corporation (MD Padmanabha G J and accounts officer Parashuram Dugganavar) and eight others, including close associates of Nagendra. The SIT was still probing the roles of Nagendra and Congress MLA Basanagouda Daddal, the chairman of the corporation, when the ED began its money-laundering probe against the duo and carried out searches for two days on their premises. Nagendra was subsequently arrested on July 12. The SIT has obtained statements from the arrested accused to indicate that Nagendra possibly played a role in the fraud but has found no direct evidence of his role, according to applications filed in court by the SIT while seeking custody of the arrested accused. A CBI case has also been registered in the case. The CBI is investigating the role of the Union Bank of India officials in the diversion of funds.

Cabinet approves MSP hike for Rabi crops in 2025-26

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

New Delhi: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved the increase in the minimum support prices (MSP) for all mandated Rabi crops for marketing season 2025-26. The absolute highest increase in MSP has been announced for rapeseed and mustard at Rs 300 per quintal, followed by lentil (masur) at Rs 275 per quintal.

For gram, wheat, safflower, and barley, there is an increase of Rs 210 per quintal, Rs 150 per quintal, Rs 140 per quintal and Rs 130 per quintal, respectively, according to the CCEA. The increase in MSP is in line with the Union Budget 2018-19 announcement of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1.5 times of the All-India weighted average Cost of Production. According to the government, the expected margin over the All-India weighted average cost of production is 105 per cent for wheat, followed by 98 per cent for rapeseed and mustard; 89 per cent for lentil; 60 per cent for gram; 60 per cent for barley; and 50 per cent for safflower. "The increased MSP of rabi crops will ensure remunerative prices to the farmers and incentivise crop diversification," said the government. Last



month, the Cabinet approved nutrient-based subsidy (NBS) rates for the Rabi crops on phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers with a budgetary outlay of Rs 24,475.53 crore. The decision would ensure the availability of fertilisers to farmers at subsidised, affordable, and reasonable prices. The subsidy on P&K fertilisers will be provided based on approved rates for Rabi 2024 to ensure the smooth availability of these fertilisers to the farmers at affordable prices.

'Will push for White Paper on Dharavi redevelopment project if MVA comes to power in Maharashtra': Varsha Gaikwad



GNS News Agency, Oct 18 A day after the Election Commission of India announced the Maharashtra Assembly election date on November 20, Congress MP Varsha Gaikwad, representing Mumbai North Central, has said that the Opposition bloc of Maha Vikas Aghadi will reach out to the public urging them to vote to a side which can defeat the BJP, instead of wasting the votes of others. With only a month left for the elections to 288 Assembly constituencies, Gaikwad, the Mumbai Congress chief, in an interview to The Indian Express, said that in case of MVA coming to power in Maharashtra, she will push for a White Paper on Dharavi redevelopment project. She was referring to the recent government approval to allot around 140 acres of land in Madh and lease out 255 acres of ecologically fragile salt-pan land to build houses for Dharavi slum residents.

Q: Has MVA finalised the seat sharing arrangement for Mumbai?

Varsha Gaikwad: We had asked for 18 seats in Mumbai. We had two meetings and I expect that the final decision will be taken in the next two to three days. It was based on the Lok Sabha performance and also on our strength in Mumbai. We had a discussion on 20 seats and among the rest nobody has asked for 6 seats. Except for 2-3 seats, there is no difficulty in our talks. We have good communication with the Sena, NCP (SP), SP and other parties as we all know their respective strengths. The only criteria is the winning factor. We are holding a meeting today (Wednesday) and everything will be finalised.

Q: Has the Haryana poll result affected your seat sharing talks with Sena - UBT?

Gaikwad: I don't think so. During the General Elections, Congress workers honestly worked for the Sena candidates. Even Uddhav Thackeray ji knows it very well and his party workers too know it. The Congress strength has remained undivided. They (SS-UBT) know that Congress aid is required to win and we need their help as well to win. It is an alliance and we should work unitedly. The analysis of results of Haryana has shown that so many smaller parties and rebels contested and divided our votes.

Q: Are you expecting rebellion in your party as well

SC seeks affidavit from Delhi Development Authority chief over tree felling for road widening in ridge area

GNS News Agency, Oct 18, The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought an affidavit from the chairperson of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) over the controversy surrounding the alleged illegal felling of trees for widening the approach road to the under-construction Central Armed Police Forces Institute of Medical Sciences in Southwest Delhi's ridge area. A bench presided over by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, which took up a contempt plea against DDA Vice-Chairman Subhashish Panda over the issue, said that though the records showed the chairperson visited the site on February 3, 2024, and directed expediting the road widening, "at this stage, the material on the record is ambiguous on certain critical aspects on which a further elaboration will be required". Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena is the DDA chairperson. The bench also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra asked whether during the site visit, "there was any discussion with or intimation furnished to the chairperson of DDA on the permission required to be obtained from this court for the felling or removal of trees". If yes, "what steps, if any, were taken to ensure that the permission of" the Supreme Court "could be obtained before the actual work of felling took place?", the bench wanted to know. If no, "when was the chairperson of DDA first made aware of the fact that permission for the selling of trees from this court was required", it further asked. The bench noted that "the actual filling of fees had commenced on or about February 16, 2024, even before an application was moved before" the Supreme Court "and which was eventually dismissed by an order dated March 4, 2024". "What steps, if any, have been taken for the remediation and restoration of the ecological damage which has been caused for the felling of trees despite the admitted absence of any permission from this court," the bench sought to know.

"What steps have been taken to identify the officers responsible for the wilful act of suppression from this court in the application filed for permission of the fact that the felling of trees had already taken place even before the application was filed...when orders were passed on March 4, 2024, rejecting the application for permission," it further asked. The bench also wanted to know "whether any disciplinary proceedings have been instituted against the officials responsible" and "whether in the view of the chairperson...criminal action should be taken against all officials responsible for the breach of the binding directions of this court." Fixing the matter for hearing again on October 22, the bench said that "in the event that the chairperson...is of the view that disciplinary action and the initiation of criminal prosecution should be taken up, we would expect that such action should be taken in the interregnum without waiting for the directions of this court". "The affidavit which has been directed to be filed shall be personally filed by the chairperson of DDA, making a full disclosure both on the basis of the material on record and of facts which are personal to the knowledge of the chairperson, bearing in mind what transpired at the site visit on February 3, 2024," the bench said. The bench asked the DDA chairperson to file the affidavit by the next date of hearing. The affidavit should also "indicate whether

in Assembly polls?

Gaikwad: Asking for a ticket is a right of every worker. But after the announcement (of ticket) there is no point in working against the party. If we want to bring the government, we will have to work together. There is no bravery in bringing our own colleagues down. Every worker should understand that they will get opportunities in future only if the party comes to power. We tell that to the workers, leaders. We managed to stop the BJP at 240 because we worked together and we have to continue the momentum without bothering about who is getting the ticket.

Q: How do you plan to control the damage of votes due to smaller parties?

Gaikwad: In the Lok Sabha election, 18 Muslim and three Buddhist candidates contested against me and it did cost me some votes. BJP fights the election where it allows candidates to cut votes and it damages MVA. The people need to understand this. In the past, I had requested Prakash Ambedkar to join the MVA. Maharashtra's social justice department does not have a full-time minister. Issues like recruitment, attack on reservation are raging on and what is the position of Ambedkar ji for whom we have absolute respect? But whom is he trying to defeat? In alliance, every party has to make some adjustments and there's nothing wrong in it. If the ultimate aim is to defeat the BJP, then what's the point of splitting anti-BJP votes? We will need to go to people and convince them to vote for a side which can defeat the BJP and not waste their vote.

Q: Do you think this government is manipulating the administration and parties ahead of elections?

Gaikwad: I think, had this government been confident about returning to power we would not have seen them clearing 156 proposals in three cabinet meetings. It shows their insecurity. The government knows that the real issues of corruption, arrogance of power, looting state treasury and total neglect towards the problems of youth, women and farmers will lead them to defeat and that's why they have been trying different means. Look at the manner in which Adani group is gifted with hundreds of acres of Mumbai land under the name of Dharavi redevelopment. It is possibly the only example where multiple acres of land is being gifted to a company involved in any sort of redevelopment project.

Q: What will be your stand on this issue if MVA comes to power?

Gaikwad: Each and every decision of gifting land to Dharavi should be reviewed after the formation of a new government. First, it was Kurla dairy, then land at Mulund and Deonar for PAPs, then salt pan land, the land in Borivli and latest is in Deonar dumping ground. I will personally push for a White Paper on the entire decision making process for Dharavi redevelopment and I am sure that it will be granted.



the true timber of the fell trees was inventoried and the manner in which it has been dealt with. The chairperson of DDA shall take steps before the next date of listing to fix accountability in respect of any act of omission or commission on the part of officials or third parties involved. A compliance affidavit on all the above aspects shall be filed before this court by the next date of listing", the bench said in its order.

Out on bail in Valmiki corporation scam, Karnataka ex-minister Nagendra says BJP using ED to destabilise Congress govt

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Former minister B Nagendra, who was released from Bengaluru's Parappana Agrahara jail on Wednesday after getting bail in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation scam, said he had no role in the scam and that the BJP was conspiring to destabilise the state government using the Enforcement Directorate. "I have no role in this scam, yet I was arrested," Nagendra, Bellary Rural MLA told reporters, adding that he had been harassed by the ED for three months. The ED arrested Nagendra, who was the minister for scheduled tribes development, on July 12 for allegedly misappropriating the corporation's funds.

"Under pressure from the BJP's central leaders, the ED used me to try and destabilise the Karnataka Government. The BJP is conspiring to destabilise the state government by any means." The ED's chargesheet in the case named Nagendra as the mastermind behind the scam, which came to light after an officer of the Valmiki corporation, Chandrashekar, died by suicide in May 2024 alleging pressure from a minister to divert funds. However, a special investigation team formed by the state government to inquire into the scam has not named Nagendra as an accused. Registered by the police and the CBI, which had found that around Rs 89.62 crore had been diverted from the corporation's accounts into fake accounts across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and later laundered through shell entities.

After Gujarat NLU receives two consecutive bomb threats, Gandhinagar police attempting to locate sender



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Two days after Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) received back-to-back bomb threats from an unidentified source, through emails that left Gandhinagar Police scurrying to check and recheck all areas of the campus with a dog squad and bomb squad, the police are yet to make significant headway in the case. Both threats turned out to be hoaxes. The first bomb threat was received by GNLU authorities on October 13, where the email, as per the FIR filed at Infocity police station, stated, "There are bombs planted all over your GNLU campus Gandhinagar and nearby University of PDP... inform everyone including your authorities to evacuate within a

day or else you will know the consequences by tomorrow night. Any suspicious activity will be noticed and action will be taken accordingly by my men... (sic)" "Do not try to do anything to attract the attention of authorities or any offensive means... we are watching. The location of bombs will be shared only after evacuation. Member of Taliban. Allah hu Akbar Allah hu Akbar. When you meet non-believers chop their heads," the email read.

The email was followed by another on the next day, October 14. It said, "Last night, (it) was fun to watch you all... in order to save your lives, evacuate by tonight, otherwise the bags of bombs which you couldn't find yesterday will find its way to you and my men with hand grenades and sniper guns are outside your campus in secret locations and at a blink can finish your lives. Let your authorities know. The locations of students outside campus are well known to us. Allah hu Akbar May Allah bless your souls chop off the heads of non-believers." Following this second email, the phones of several people inside the campus were checked by authorities, according to the FIR filed by the registrar Dr Jagdishchandra Gangadhariya. The FIR, filed on October 14 at Infocity, booked unknown persons under BNS section 351(4) (criminal intimidation) and section 66D of the IT Act. Inspector V R Kher said, "Infocity police, LCB, and cybercrime officials are all working to try and find the sender of these emails."

'Not possible to control nature': D K Shivakumar hits back at criticism over rain havoc in Bengaluru

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Bangalore rainCitizens and BJP and JD(S) leaders have expressed ire against the state government and the BBMP after the heavy rain led to waterlogging, traffic congestion and other related issues.. (Express Photo by Jithendra M)Facing criticism from Opposition parties and citizens after heavy rain brought Bengaluru to its knees on Tuesday, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar lashed out on Wednesday, saying the "government is doing its best to manage rain havoc." "It is not possible to control nature. Opposition parties must stop tarnishing the image of Bengaluru," Shivakumar, who is also the Bengaluru Development Minister, said while speaking to reporters in the city. "Holiday has been declared for schools as a precautionary measure. There is a likelihood of rain today as well and it can result in traffic jams. The public should plan accordingly," he added. Shivakumar also said that he would hold another round of meetings with officials from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and the police and fire departments and take stock of the situation. From 'Manyata Tech Waterfall' to Bengaluru's tech hub turning into a 'rainwater hub' in Mahadevapura, citizens and BJP and JD(S) leaders have expressed ire against the state government and the BBMP after the heavy rain led to waterlogging, traffic congestion and other related issues.



Congress' weak policies have ruined Brand Bengaluru. Potential investors are backing off, questioning how a 'global tech hub' can't handle basic urban management. Wake up! The city's future is at stake," Kumaraswamy said in a post on X. Responding to the social media posts by Opposition leaders, Shivakumar said, "Can we tell nature to stop the rains? These are unexpected rains due to cyclones. The government and the people of Bengaluru are capable of handling it.

Meanwhile, the BBMP has set up a control room and has deployed a disaster management team on the ground to respond to emergency calls. In light of continuous rain in Bengaluru since Tuesday night, Tushar Giri Nath, BBMP Chief Commissioner, conducted inspections at various locations, including the Yelahanka zone which received maximum rainfall. Bangalore Central MP PC Mohan said, "Heavy rainfall has crippled Bengaluru, exposing the true cost of reckless development. We must enhance our institutional capacity to plan effectively and execute infrastructure projects with independent oversight. I urge the Government of Karnataka to: 1) Direct the BBMP and BWSSB to clear clogged drains and overhaul flood management systems. 2) Establish the BMLTA to ensure that development aligns with sustainable mobility. 3) Legislate the Active Mobility Bill to create safe, accessible streets for pedestrians and cyclists. 4) Scrap the BBMP's unscientific tunnel road project."

R Ashoka, Leader of the Opposition, said, "When Namma Bengaluru is grappling with incessant rains since the last couple of days, senior Congress leader and Karnataka Home Minister @DrParameshwara says, 'Can the rains be sent back to the sky?' This callous statement shows how insensitive and indifferent @INCKarnataka Govt is towards Bengaluru and its people."

Union Minister and JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy also took a swipe at the ruling Congress government in Karnataka. "Bengaluru's rain fury has exposed the utter collapse of infrastructure! The so-called 'Silicon Valley of India' is now drowning in its own negligence. The IT corridor is flooded, roads are impassable, and the city is sinking. This isn't just rain, it's the failure of governance.

NOC from DDA not needed to obtain power connection in unauthorised colonies: Delhi CM Atishi

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Wednesday announced that no-objection certificates (NOCs) from the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) will no longer be required to obtain electricity connections for residents of unauthorised colonies. Chief Minister Atishi, in a statement to the media, criticised the order issued by the DDA, which mandated that residents of unauthorised colonies could only get electricity connections if they obtained a written NOC from the DDA. The NOC was required to confirm that the area does not fall under land pooling. "As a result of this rule, many residents were bothered. They had to often give bribes to get electricity connections," Atishi said.



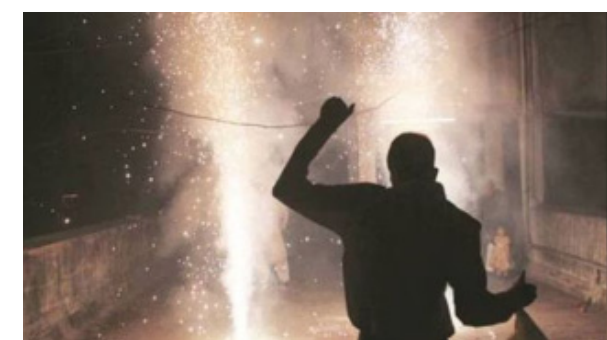
"For the past year, residents from colonies such as Swaroop Vihar Extension, Mohan Garden, Vipin Garden, and Newada Extension, among others, have been facing hardships in securing electricity connections. Many people have visited me to complain about the issue," Atishi said. "Under the guidance of Arvind Kejriwal, we have now decided that no NOC will be required, and we have ordered the discoms to ensure that electricity connections are provided within 15 days of application," she said.

Delhi has 1,731 unauthorised colonies, many struggling with inadequate infrastructure and lack of essential services. "Until 10 years ago, these unauthorised colonies were pathetic. Politicians used to go there to ask for votes, but no work was done to improve their condition," Atishi said. "In the past 10 years, ever since the AAP came into power in Delhi, these unauthorised colonies have seen drastic improvements—water lines, sewer systems, and overall living conditions have been significantly upgraded," she added.

10-year-old boy killed by 'metal splinter from firecracker burst' in Gujarat

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Police said the incident occurred late on Monday evening when the boy, Nirmal Thakor, was bursting firecrackers outside his house in Khambhat taluka. Police said the incident occurred late on Monday evening when the boy, Nirmal Thakor, was bursting firecrackers outside his house in Khambhat taluka. (File)A 10-year-old boy in Vatadra village of Anand district was killed in a freak accident when a metal splinter from a container in which the child was bursting a Diwali firecracker allegedly severed his femoral artery, causing excessive blood loss. Police said the incident occurred late on Monday evening when the boy, Nirmal Thakor, was bursting firecrackers outside his house in Khambhat taluka. In a statement of the family recorded by the Khambhat Rural police, his father Alpesh Thakor said that Nirmal was bursting a sutli bomb (bomb made with jute strings) by covering it with a metal container outside his house. The metal



box then shattered into pieces, causing the splinter to pierce his body. Nirmal was rushed to the Khambhat referral hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival due to blood loss. Police said that the boy's parents refused to conduct a post-mortem. Khambhat Rural Police Inspector SG Solanki said, " "

EC announces bypoll to 4 Punjab Assembly seats, battle of prestige for both AAP, Cong



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

The Election Commission of India (ECI) Tuesday announced that by-elections to four Assembly seats — Dera Baba Nanak, Chhabewal (SC), Gidderbaha, and Barnala — in Punjab will be held on November 13. Counting of the votes will take place on November 23, said Punjab Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sibin C. The four Assembly seats — three represented by Congress and one by Aam Aadmi party — fell vacant after MLAs from these constituencies were elected to the Lok Sabha earlier this year.

Amrinder Singh Raja Warring, who was Congress MLA from Gidderbaha, was elected from the Ludhiana parliamentary seat while Raj Kumar Chhabewal, a Congress MLA who later joined AAP, became MP from the Hoshiarpur Lok Sabha seat. Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, who was Congress MLA from Dera Baba Nanak seat, got elected from Gurdaspur parliamentary seat. Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer, who was AAP MLA from Barnala, was elected as MP from the Sangrur Lok Sabha seat. The bypolls will be prestige battle for ruling AAP even as the Opposition Congress would look to retain its seats. For the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), trying desperately to regain foothold in the state, the byelections offer an opportunity. For Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) too the elections are important. The AAP had won 92 seats in Assembly elections in 2022, the Congress 18, SAD three, BJP two, BSP and Independent one each.

SAD MLA from Banga, Sukhwinder Kumar Sukhi had recently joined AAP by resigning from Assembly in August. His resignation has, however, not been accepted by the Speaker yet. Otherwise, Punjab would have seen five by-elections in November. While it would be important for the Congress to retain its seats, the battles would be important individually also. The Punjab CEO said the notification for the by-elections will be issued on October 18. The last date for filing nominations is October 25 and the scrutiny of nomination papers will be conducted on October 28, Sibin C said, adding that the last date for withdrawal of candidature is October 30.

He further said with the announcement of the bypoll dates, the election code of conduct has come into effect in the districts where these constituencies are located — Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Sri Muktsar Sahib, and Barnala. The code of conduct will remain in force until the completion of the election process till November 25. Sibin C said as of October 10, the total number of voters in the four constituencies is 6,96,316, with a total of 831 polling stations. The Dera Baba Nanak seat has 1,93,268 electors and it will have 241 polling stations. In Chhabewal (SC) reserve seat, the number of voters is 1,59,254, with 205 polling stations. The CEO added that in Gidderbaha, the voter count stands at 1,66,489 with 173 polling stations. Barnala has 1,77,305 voters and will have 212 polling stations. Sibin C informed that Gurdaspur Deputy Commissioner Uma Shankar Gupta and Hoshiarpur DC Komal Mittal have been appointed as the district election officers (DEO) for the Dera Baba Nanak and Chhabewal (SC) assembly seats, respectively. DC Muktsar Rajesh Tripathi has been appointed as DEO for the Gidderbaha constituency, and Barnala DC Poonamdeep Kaur will be the DEO for Barnala seat. Additionally, the sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) of Dera Baba Nanak has been appointed as the returning officer for that constituency, while the additional deputy commissioner of Hoshiarpur has been named the returning officer for Chhabewal (SC). The SDMs of Gidderbaha and Barnala have been appointed as the returning officers for their respective assembly segments.

Amid land allotment row involving Siddaramaiah, MUDA chief K Marigowda quits citing health reasons

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

In the wake of an ongoing investigation against Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over alleged irregularities in the grant of land, Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) chairman K Marigowda resigned Wednesday. In his resignation letter to the Urban Development Department, Marigowda said that it was his personal decision to resign and cited health reasons.

Later while speaking to reporters, Marigowda said he was asked by Siddaramaiah to resign from the post. "I am not under any pressure. I am resigning due to health reasons. This is my personal decision. I have suffered a stroke twice and due to health concerns I put in my papers," he said. A close aide of Siddaramaiah, he was appointed as MUDA chairman after the Congress came to power in the state. His role in allegations against Siddaramaiah had come under scanner following the MUDA row, with several Congress leaders learnt to have demanded his resignation over the issue. Sources said the alleged MUDA scam — which involves irregularities in the allocation of alternate sites to several individuals by cheating true beneficiaries — came to light after Marigowda wrote a letter to former MUDA commissioner G T Dinesh Kumar. The letter was attributed to a feud



between Marigowda and another Congress leader from Mysuru over the allocation of sites. Marigowda, who highlighted his four-decade-long association with Siddaramaiah after his resignation, had claimed innocence over the entire episode recently after his fallout with the CM became public. While the alleged MUDA scam involves irregularities in the allocation of several hundred sites, the focus has remained on the alternate sites allotted to Siddaramaiah's wife B Parvathi. She was granted the alternate sites in 2021 after MUDA acquired a three-acre-16-gunta land owned by her without carrying out the land acquisition process.

Consumer court orders Godrej Projects to refund Rs 4 crore to homebuyers in 5 cases

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

abortionAmong the major promises that the company failed to deliver on was the construction of a 24-metre-wide road connecting the flats in Godrej Summit in Sector 104, Gurgaon, to the Dwarka Expressway. The National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission recently ordered Godrej Projects to refund Rs 4 crore to homebuyers in five separate cases for failing to deliver on its promises even after seven years of offering the owners possession.

"A flat purchaser who invests in a flat does so on an assessment of its potential. The amenities which the builder has committed to provide impinge on the quality of life for the families of purchasers and the potential for appreciation in the value of the flat..." held the NCDRC in its order dated October 11. Among the major promises that the company failed to deliver on was the construction of a 24-metre-wide road connecting the flats in Godrej Summit in Sector 104, Gurgaon, to the Dwarka Expressway.

"Even after offer of possession, seven years have expired, but 24-metre-wide sectorial road has not been constructed on the spot. Expensive flats were sold, representing that the project is connected with Dwarka Expressway through a 24-metre-wide road and is at a distance of 500 meters from it," said the NCDRC. The NCDRC also noted that the alternative entrance and exit built to Parcel A are under encroachments, and homebuyers who are allotted flats in Parcel B and C will have to travel



across the narrow road of Parcel A. As per the NCDRC, Godrej's shortcomings in fulfilling its obligations amounted to a deficiency in service.

According to the complainants, the project was advertised as having luxurious and modern amenities, such as a modular kitchen, carpet flooring, balcony area, swimming pool, 80 per cent open green space, and various other recreational facilities at an attractive price. As per the homebuyers, other advertised features included a 24-hour security guard at the entrance gate, regular water supply, and proper stormwater drainage integrated with rainwater harvesting. However, the homebuyers said the project's key selling feature was that the flats were connected to Dwarka Expressway through a 24-metre-wide road at a distance of just 500 metres.

No CMR paddy allotment to defaulting millers

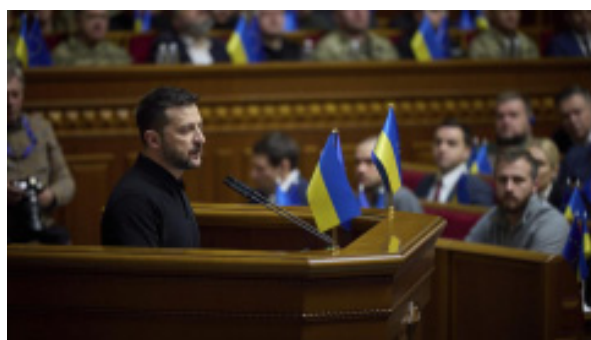
GNS News Agency, Oct 18Hyderabad: Taking a hard stance against millers who have been defaulting on custom milled rice (CMR), the State government has sought to restrict allotment of paddy for custom milling only to the millers meeting the deadlines in making their regular deliveries. A decision to this effect was made at the second meeting of the cabinet sub-committee on procurement held in the Secretariat on Wednesday.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy made it clear that there would be no paddy allocation for defaulters this season. They underlined the need for stringent measures to ensure compliance and accountability

among millers. The defaulters must promptly deliver CMR dues to the government without further delay. The ministers pointed out discrepancies in milling outputs, noting that milling 100 kg of grade A paddy would yield 58 kg of rice, while milling 100 kg of coarse paddy would have an output of 67 kg of rice.

The millers brought to the committee's attention the issues they were facing on field. Committee members, including Ministers Thummala Nageswara Rao and D Sridhar Babu, participated in the meeting online. Special Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, Secretary for Agriculture M Raghunandan Rao, Commissioner Civil Supplies, DS Chauhan, and GM Nageswara Rao were also present.

Zelenskyy's 'victory plan' includes a big hurdle for the West: NATO membership for Ukraine



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday (October 16, 2024) his plan to win his country's fight against Russia's invasion could bring peace next year, but it contains a step that some crucial Western allies have so far refused to countenance: inviting Ukraine to join NATO before the war ends. "If we start moving according to this victory plan now, it may be possible to end the war no later than next year," Mr. Zelenskyy told his country's Parliament. He has recently been trying to win approval for the plan from Western partners, who so far have stopped short of publicly voicing their support for it.

The first point in Mr. Zelenskyy's five-point plan that was presented in a speech to the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's Parliament, is perhaps the most ambitious and the most likely to make Western allies balk: letting Ukraine into NATO while the fighting continues. Mr. Zelenskyy said granting Ukraine membership in the alliance would be a "testament of (allies') determination" to support Ukraine. It may, however, be too ambitious a step.

NATO's collective security guarantee — Article 5 of the military alliance's treaty — is the pillar on which its credibility is based. It is a political commitment by all member countries to come to the aid of any member whose sovereignty or territory might be under attack. NATO makes its decisions by consensus, and many allies — including the United States and Germany — refuse to allow Ukraine in while fighting continues because they

fear being dragged into a wider war with Russia. At their summit in Washington in July, NATO's 32 members declared Ukraine on an "irreversible" path to membership in the Western military alliance. Any decision on offering to start membership talks is probably not likely before the next summit in the Netherlands in June. Ukraine's troops are having trouble holding back Russia's military might, especially in the eastern Donetsk region where they are gradually being pushed backward. Though Russia's gains have been incremental, its steady forward movement is slowly adding up and Ukraine keenly feels the need for more large-scale Western help. But there are signs that Western support may be waning, diminished by a focus on the Middle East wars and domestic political concerns. The U.S. elections next month could bring a major shift in Ukraine's fortunes, as Washington has been the biggest provider of military aid. Mr. Zelenskyy publicly acknowledged for the first time that in private talks with Ukraine its Western partners are increasingly talking about "negotiations" with Russia and much less frequently use the word "justice" in conversations about the war. He also dialled up the stakes in Ukraine, repeating his recent claims that North Korea is now sending military personnel to help Russia's war effort, as well as delivering ammunition, and that Iran and China are also aiding Moscow.

Mr. Zelenskyy's "victory plan" contains confidential sections which he didn't mention in Parliament, officials said. Other aspects of the plan include continued striking of targets on Russian soil, including the incursion into Russia's Kursk border region that began in August and more long-range drone strikes on Russian infrastructure. Ukraine, he said, also needs more air defence systems and access to a broader range of intelligence from allies. Mr. Zelenskyy noted that Ukraine is rich in natural resources, including critically important metals "worth trillions of U.S. dollars," such as uranium, titanium, lithium, graphite and others. Those Ukrainian assets, as well as the country's agricultural production, are among Russia's key targets in the war, he said, but could be shared in post-war times with partners. Also in a post-war period, battle-hardened Ukrainian troops would be an asset for NATO efforts to keep Russia at bay.

U.K., Australia, New Zealand support Canada in spat with India

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

The United Kingdom has "full confidence" in the Canadian judicial process, the Foreign Office in London declared on Wednesday, expanding the ambit of the unprecedented diplomatic crisis that has broken out between India and Canada over the alleged involvement of Canada-based Indian diplomats in the 2023 killing of pro-Khalistan preacher Hardeep Singh Nijjar. U.K. is the third member of the 'Five Eye' countries to extend support to Canada's position. Earlier New Zealand and Australia too had extended support to Canada.

"We are in contact with our Canadian partners about the serious developments outlined in the independent investigations in Canada. The U.K. has full confidence in Canada's judicial system. Respect for sovereignty and the rule of law is essential," said the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office in an official statement. The Five Eye countries — Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the U.S., and the U.K. — often coordinate closely on issues of common security interest.

The protection of political and civil rights, including the right to peaceful protest, is a key pillar of the Five Eye democracies. In the recent years, India has been uncomfortable with the campaign for so-called (online) referendum on Khalistan in all the five countries but India's arguments did not prevent the Five Eye countries to crack down on the pro-Khalistan campaigners. Emphasising the need for cooperation, the U.K. further said, "The Government of India's cooperation with Canada's legal process is the right next step." Earlier, New Zealand became first among the friends of Canada from within the Five Eye democracies to express support for the Canadian position expressing concern about the allegations from Canada.

"The alleged criminal conduct outlined publicly by Canadian law enforcement authorities, if proven, would



be very concerning," said New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters in a social media statement on X on Tuesday. Mr. Peters expressed support for the rule of law and said, "At the same time, we do not comment on the details of ongoing criminal investigations in New Zealand or abroad, other than to note that it is important that the rule of law and judicial processes be respected and followed."

Citing alleged involvement in the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, Canada has expelled six Indian diplomats, including High Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Verma. In a tit-for-tat move, India too expelled six Canadian diplomats, including the head of mission Stewart Ross Wheeler. Both sides have given time till October 19 for the diplomats to exit. Australia has come forward to support Canada's allegations and urged for respect for sovereignty of nation states. "Australia has made clear our concerns about the allegations under investigation in Canada, and our respect for Canada's judicial process. Our position of principle is that the sovereignty of all countries should be respected and that the rule of law should be respected," said a spokesperson from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia.

New UK bill aims to legalise assisted dying for people who are terminally ill

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

A new bill aiming to legalise assisted dying in Britain is to be introduced in Parliament on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, marking the first time in nearly a decade that the House of Commons will debate allowing doctors to help end people's lives after previous court challenges to change a legal blanket ban failed. Labour politician Kim Leadbeater will introduce a bill granting terminally ill people in England and Wales a way to allow physicians to help them die, although the details won't be released until later in the month ahead of a Parliamentary vote. Prime Minister Keir Starmer has promised that lawmakers will have a "free vote," meaning they will not be obliged to vote along party lines. Starmer supported a 2015 assisted dying bill and has said "there are grounds for changing the law." "There is absolutely no question of disabled people or those with mental illness who are not terminally ill being pressured to end their lives," Leadbeater said in a statement. She said it is "important that we get the legislation right, with the necessary protections and safeguards in place." Leadbeater's bill is likely to be similar to an assisted dying bill introduced in the House of Lords earlier this year that has only made slow progress. The unelected House of Lords studies and amends legislation passed by the elected House of Commons. While bills can originate in the Lords, they rarely become law. The bill introduced in the House of Lords restricts assisted dying to adults with six or fewer months to live and requires permission from the High Court after having a declaration signed by two doctors, among other criteria. Esther Rantzen, the founder of a British children's charity who has advanced lung cancer, encouraged people to write to their local member of Parliament, saying "all we are asking for is the right to choose." Rantzen said in the absence of a legal way to end her life in Britain, she plans to travel to Switzerland,



where assisted suicide is legal for foreigners. Opponents of assisted dying, however, say there is no way to change the law without endangering vulnerable people, according to actress Liz Carr, a disability rights campaigner. Assisted suicide — where patients take a lethal drug prescribed by a doctor — is legal in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and parts of the U.S., with regulations on qualifying criteria varying by jurisdiction. Naomi Richards, an anthropologist who specializes in death and dying at the University of Glasgow, said the number of people who might make use of assisted dying, if legalized in Britain, would be fairly limited, unless the public pushed for wider access. "These are questions that in a democracy will only be answered further down the road," she said. Trudo Lemmens, a professor of health law and policy at the University of Toronto, said Britain's first priority should be to address inequities in health care across the U.K. "What we've seen is that people ask for medical assistance in dying because they feel they're a burden to others," Lemmens said, referring to Canada after it legalized assisted dying in 2016. "Pressure inevitably increases to expand it beyond what is legislated."

'Our allies have taken advantage of us more so than our enemies' says Trump



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Former president and Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump on Tuesday (October 15, 2024) said the U.S.' allies have taken advantage of it more than its enemies. "Our allies have taken advantage of us more than our enemies. Our allies are the European Union. We have a trade deficit of \$300 billion with the European Union," Mr. Trump told the Economic Club of Chicago in response to a question.

"We have trade deals that were so bad that I said, who are the people that are doing it? They're either very

stupid or they're getting paid off," he said. "I put tariffs on China, 27.5%. Otherwise, we'd be flooded with Chinese cars. All of our factories would close. We'd have no jobs at all in the auto industry. That goes for electricity, which is a killer, which I've explained. I put tariffs on South Korea because they were sending in trucks. I put tariffs on fairly substantial tariffs," he said. "Do you know that our car companies make almost all of their money with the small trucks, SUVs and small trucks? If I took those tariffs, you would be inundated. Every car company would be out of business," Mr. Trump said. Responding to questions on Russia, he defended his relationship with President Vladimir Putin.

On tariff, he reiterated that India is a tough country. "India is a very tough country. It's not only China. China, I would say probably the toughest. You know what's very tough? European Union, our beautiful European countries, wonderful, wonderful. If you add them up, they're almost the size of us. They treat us so badly. We have a deficit," Mr. Trump said. "We are going to bring the companies back. We're going to lower taxes still further for companies that are going to make their product in the USA. We're going to protect those companies with strong tariffs because I'm a believer in tariffs," he added.

U.K., Australia, New Zealand support Canada in spat with India

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Harris works to energize Black male voters and denounces Trump support of 'stop and frisk'

Democratic Presidential nominee Kamala Harris warned Tuesday (October 16, 2024) that Republican Donald Trump would try to "institutionalize" harsh policing tactics that disproportionately affect Black men nationwide as she promised to push for legislation to address discriminatory law enforcement practices. During an hourlong radio town hall moderated by Charlamagne the God, host of "The Breakfast Club" show, Ms. Harris added that she would work to decriminalize marijuana, which accounts for arrests that also disproportionately impact Black men, and she acknowledged that racial disparities and bias exist in everyday life for Black people — in home ownership, health care, economic prosperity and even voting. While Ms. Harris worked to energize Black men, Trump focused on women as he faced an all-female audience during a Fox News town hall in battleground Georgia. The former President sidestepped questions about the erosion of abortion rights under his watch, leaning instead into the nation's culture wars by vowing to ban male-born athletes from competing in women's sports. Trump also stood by his recent description of his political opponents as "the enemy within" — rhetoric that evokes authoritarian regimes. Just 21 days before the final votes are cast in the 2024 presidential season, Harris and Trump are scrambling to energize key constituencies in what looks to be a razor-tight election. Harris, who would be the nation's first woman president, hopes to expand her party's advantage among female voters, while Trump is showing modest signs of progress among Black men, who have overwhelmingly backed Democrats in the past. A small shift among any group could swing the election. Ms. Harris told Charlamagne that despite the persistence of racial bias, no one has a pass to sit out the election. "We should never sit back and say, OK, I'm not going to vote because everything hasn't been solved," she said. "This is a margin-of-error race. It's tight. I'm going to win. I'm going to win, but it's tight." The Vice-President took questions that listeners called in, but also from a series of people who joined in-studio, including Pastor Solomon Kinloch Jr., pastor of Detroit's Triumph Church. When asked about reparations, or potential government payments to the descendants of enslaved people, Harris said the notion "has to be studied, there's no question about that." It's a position she's taken before, but which Trump's campaign immediately pounced on, saying the Vice President was "open" to payments that could cost billions. Trump has called for a return to "proven crime-fighting methods, including stop and frisk and broken windows policing." The tactic, deployed by the New York City Police Department, involved stopping, questioning, and sometimes frisking people deemed "reason-



ably suspicious." It disproportionately affected Black and Hispanic men, and in 2013 the policy was found to have violated the U.S. Constitution. Ms. Harris said part of her challenge is that Trump's campaign is "trying to scare people away because otherwise they know they have nothing to run on. Ask Donald Trump what is his plan for Black America. Ask him." Trump did not respond to Ms. Harris' criticism Tuesday, focusing instead on cultural issues that resonate with different groups of voters. He pledged to ban "men in women's sports," a reference to transgender women allowed to compete against women in some cases. The issue has emerged as a central focus of Trump's closing message, although there are relatively few examples across the country. When the host pressed Trump on how he would enforce a ban, Trump said: "You just ban it. President bans. You just don't let it happen." Earlier, Harris stopped by a Black-owned art gallery, joined by actors Don Cheadle, Delroy Lindo and Detroit native Cornelius Smith Jr., for a conversation with Black men focused on entrepreneurship. After taping the interview, Harris addressed a nearby watch party, telling hundreds of cheering supporters that Detroit is a town of people "who have grit, who have determined passion, and who have optimism and ambition and apply to that a lot of hard work."

She said that "makes Detroit a first-class city in the United States of America now and always has." Her comments came after Trump insulted Detroit while campaigning here last week and suggested again during remarks Tuesday in Chicago that the city is "just horrible." Ms. Harris this week also announced a series of new proposals dubbed the "Opportunity Agenda for Black Men," meant to offer Black men more economic advantages — including providing forgivable business loans of up to \$20,000 for entrepreneurs and creating more apprenticeships.

Households have started building back financial savings: RBI Deputy Governor Patra



Households have started building back financial savings: RBI Deputy Governor Patra said. Going ahead, the corporate sector's net borrowing requirement is likely to rise on the back of a revival in the capex cycle. With rise in income, households have started building back their financial savings, and are going to be the 'top net lenders' to the economy, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Michael Patra said. In the circular flow of income and expenditure that describes the working of an economy, transactions in goods, services, compensations and taxes are matched by flows of saving and investment, which represent inter-sectoral transfers of lendable resources. In India, the household sector typically generates surplus savings relative to its investment which it lends to other sectors.

Recently, net financial saving of households almost halved from its level in 2020-21 due to behavioural changes in the form of unwinding of prudential savings accumulated during the pandemic as well as shifts from financial assets to physical assets such as housing, Patra said. "Going forward, boosted by rising incomes, households will likely build back their financial assets — 15 per cent of GDP was observed during the early 2000s up to

the global financial crisis. This process has already begun — households' financial assets have increased from 10.6 per cent of GDP during 2011-17 to 11.5 per cent during 2017-23 (excluding the pandemic year)," Patra said during a speech at the CII's Financing 3.0 summit. Households' physical savings have also risen in the post-pandemic years to over 12 per cent of GDP and could rise further — they had reached 16 per cent of GDP in 2010-11. "Accordingly, households will remain the top net lenders to the rest of the economy in the coming decades," he said.

The Deputy Governor noted that the private corporate sector has drastically reduced its net borrowings from the rest of the economy, reflecting a combination of rising internal accruals and subdued capacity creation. Going ahead, the corporate sector's net borrowing requirement is likely to rise on the back of a revival in the capex cycle. "These financing requirements will largely be met by households and external resources," he said. According to Patra, net dissaving of the public sector has been moderating albeit unevenly; this sector will remain a net borrower in the economy in view of the critical role envisaged for fiscal policy in shaping India's future. He said if the nation as a whole has a deficit, it borrows from the rest of the world and the inflow of foreign savings helps finance its investment needs. However in the case of India, domestic savings have largely financed the overall investment requirements of growth, with external financing playing a supplemental role as reflected in largely modest current account deficits. As the productive capacity of the economy rises and its ability to absorb foreign resources expands, the volume of external financing and its composition may undergo fundamental shifts, but in the light of past experiences, external debt sustainability will remain a policy priority, he stated.

Education loan AUM of NBFCs to top Rs 60,000 crore this fiscal

'Education loan AUM of NBFCs to top `60,000 crore this fiscal' According to RBI data, education loan outstanding of banks was Rs 123,066 crore as of July 2024. After a robust growth of over 80 per cent and 70 per cent in fiscals 2023 and 2024, respectively, education loan assets under management (AUM) of non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) is expected to grow at a healthy clip of 40-45 per cent to cross Rs 60,000 crore in the current fiscal from Rs 43,000 crore in FY2023-24, according to a Crisil report.

Education loans, primarily those to fund courses overseas, will continue to be among the fastest-growing segments for NBFCs because of rising demand for higher education, Crisil said. On the asset quality front, metrics should remain stable despite country-specific concerns, a CRISIL Ratings analysis indicates, it said. According to RBI data, education loan outstanding of banks was Rs 123,066 crore as of July 2024.

The number of Indian students studying abroad is estimated to have doubled in the past five years to around 13.4 lakh as of last fiscal. "Only a tenth are being funded by these NBFCs, and even including education loans by banks, the financed quantum is not much higher," Crisil said. "What that indicates is that a large portion of overseas education is being funded through alternative means — informal financing, self-funding, or perhaps other forms of loans. That shows education loan companies have significant headroom for growth. Rising ticket sizes because of ascending tuition fees, inflation and living expenses are also tailwinds," said Ajit Velonie, Senior Director, CRISIL Ratings. It said strong micro-market intelligence and fast turnaround times have allowed NBFCs to carve out a niche in the education loans space. "Their specialised business model — backed by strong understanding of relevant geographies, courses, universities, tenures and profiles of students and their families — affords customisation of products, enabling better assessment of employability and risk-adjusted pricing," said a Crisil report.

The portfolio performance of these NBFCs have been resilient so far based on strong credit underwriting.

Nod for new rail-cum-road bridge on Ganga river in Varanasi to replace 137-year old Malviya bridge

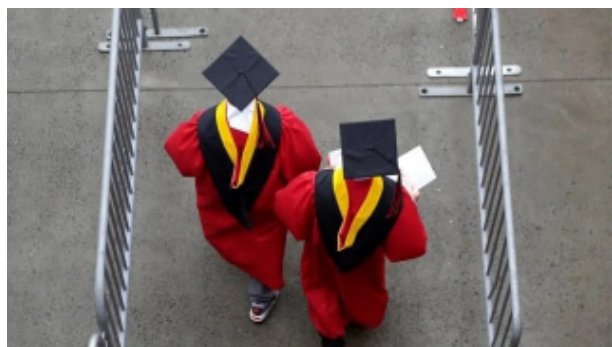
malviya bridge Officials said that the existing Malviya Bridge, the Varanasi-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya (DDU) Junction route is oversaturated and therefore it needs to be replaced. (Photo: Wikimedia Commons/Sujayadhar)

The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved a new rail-cum-road bridge across Ganga River in Varanasi with a total estimated cost of Rs. 2,642 crore. The project, which traverses through Varanasi and Chandauli districts in Uttar Pradesh, will be completed in four years and it will replace the iconic 137 year old Malviya bridge on the Ganga in Varanasi.

Officials said that the existing Malviya Bridge, the Varanasi-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya (DDU) Junction route is oversaturated and therefore it needs to be replaced. The new rail-road bridge will consist of 4 railway lines in lower deck and 6 lane highway bridge in the upper deck of the lane.

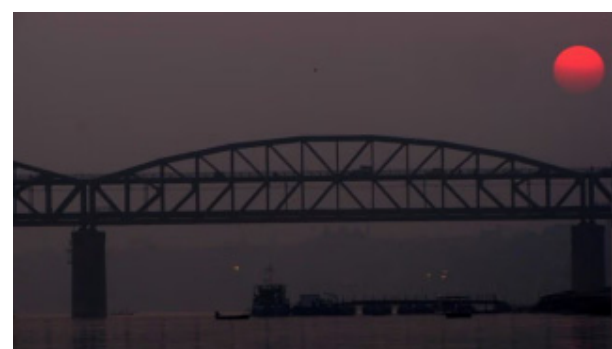
"The existing bridge is very old but due to continuous maintenance, it is still in good condition. Under the new project, the lower deck of this new bridge will have four railway lines and the upper deck will have a 6-lane highway. It will be counted among one of the biggest bridges in traffic capacity in the world. This corridor will especially connect the northern, eastern and western states and this bridge is the major connecting link on river Ganga. It will take around four years to complete," said Ashwini Vaishnav, Minister of Railways.

"It has been designed in such a way that it will last for around 150 years. It will be built according to the amount of rail and road traffic there will be in the next 100 years. Its DPR has been prepared after doing a detailed study in two years. From the point of view of traffic, this will be India's largest bridge. This will be a little more than a kilometer long bridge. Its foundation will be 120 feet deep from the surface of the river," said the Minister.



Education loans, primarily those to fund courses overseas, will continue to be among the fastest-growing segments for NBFCs because of rising demand for higher education, Crisil said. On the asset quality front, metrics should remain stable despite country-specific concerns, a CRISIL Ratings analysis indicates, it said.

"Their 90 plus days' past due (dpd), for education loans was 0.2 per cent as on March 31, 2024, whereas for private and public sector banks, gross non-performing assets were 2.0 per cent and 3.9 per cent, respectively. Peak quarterly delinquency on the vintage pool of 90 plus dpd for NBFCs was also below 1 per cent," it said. "Additionally, prepayment and foreclosure rates are high — 35-45 per cent of the loans get prepaid during the initial moratorium period of typically 3 years. And most of the loans are repaid in 5-7 years even where the contractual tenure is higher," Crisil said. However, given the recent high growth, around 90 per cent of the portfolio is currently under moratorium. So, asset quality performance over the longer term remains to be seen, it said.



Officials said that the existing Malviya Bridge, the Varanasi-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya (DDU) Junction route is oversaturated and therefore it needs to be replaced. The new rail-road bridge will consist of 4 railway lines in lower deck and 6 lane highway bridge in the upper deck of the lane.

Officials said that the project will improve capacity, efficiency and support the region's socio-economic growth. Apart from relief in congestion in the stretch, 27.83 MTPA freight is anticipated on the proposed stretch. The project covering two districts in Uttar Pradesh will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 30 Kms. Varanasi Railway Station connects key zones of Indian Railways and serves as a gateway for pilgrims, tourists and the local population. The Varanasi-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya (DDU) Junction route, vital for both passenger and freight traffic, faces heavy congestion due to its role in transporting goods like coal, cement, and foodgrains, as well as serving growing tourism and industrial demands.

All about pilocarpine, the compound used in DCGI-approved eye drops that promise to replace reading glasses



To manage presbyopia, an age-related eye condition that makes it difficult to see things up close, an eye drop has been launched — which also promises to replace reading glasses in those over 40. The PresVu eye drops, which have received a "final approval" from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI), utilise "advanced dynamic buffer technology to swiftly adapt to tear pH, ensuring consistent efficacy and safety for extended use, keeping in mind that such drops will be used for years at a stretch", according to a press statement. The drug contains 1.25 percent pilocarpine hydrochloride, a compound that has been used to treat various eye conditions and reduce eye pressure for decades. Dr Dhananjay Bakhle, consultant pharmacist and scientific adviser, Entod Pharmaceuticals, clarified that the drops contain "synthetic pilocarpine and not plant extract containing pilocarpine".

"It was only in 1874, when Pilocarpine was first discovered, that it was extracted from plants. Subsequently, once the pharma industry developed, it has always been synthesised in chemical labs and used for glaucoma.

Our product is repurposed pilocarpine for presbyopia in a different strength from the one used for glaucoma, and a much lesser dose than that," Dr Bakhle told indianexpress.com. According to the data from phase 3 clinical trials of the drug in 250 patients across 10 sites, the "drug works best in people aged 40 to 55 years with mild-to-intermediate presbyopia", which temporarily helps correct vision problems. "The eye drop must be used only under prescription by an ophthalmologist. One drop of the drug should be put in each eye every day. The effect lasts about six hours," the statement added. Taking a cue, we decided to explore more about the specific compound and how its usage impacts eye health, especially for the ageing population. Dr Maansi Sethi, eye surgeon, consultant ophthalmology, Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals said pilocarpine is a lactone alkaloid used in ophthalmology to reduce intraocular pressure and manage various eye conditions. "It is commonly employed to treat angle-closure glaucoma and ocular hypertension, as well as to constrict the pupil after cataract surgery," Dr Sethi told indianexpress.com. According to Dr Sethi, pilocarpine works by activating cholinergic receptors of the eye. "In 2021, the US FDA approved pilocarpine hydrochloride eye drops for the treatment of presbyopia, an age-related condition that affects near vision. By constricting the pupils, pilocarpine increases the depth of field, improving near vision," she said.

What to consider?

While effective, Dr Sethi noted that regular use of pilocarpine eye drops can cause side effects such as eye irritation, increased tearing, headaches, and blurry vision in some people. "Therefore, it is not recommended for everyone," she stated. **DISCLAIMER:** This article is based on information from the public domain and/or the experts we spoke to. Always consult your health practitioner before starting any routine.

Preity Zinta reveals she wanted to 'bang' her head on the wall during IVF treatment; doctor shares how to navigate fertility struggles

Preity Zinta, who welcomed twins Jai and Gia with husband Gene Goodenough in 2021 via surrogacy, recently revealed her journey to parenthood. In an interview with Vogue India, Zinta shared that she underwent multiple IVF cycles before deciding on surrogacy.

The actor candidly discussed the emotional toll of IVF treatment, admitting that it was challenging to maintain her public persona of being a "sunshine person" during such a difficult time. She said, "I have good days and bad days just like everyone else. Sometimes it's a struggle to always be happy-go-lucky in real life, especially when you're going through a tough phase. I used to feel like that during my IVF cycles." She added, "It was very difficult to be smiley and nice all the time. Sometimes I just wanted to bang my head on the wall and cry or not talk to anybody. So yes, it has to be a balancing act for all actors."

Preity Zinta also addressed the challenges faced by women in the entertainment industry, particularly in terms of balancing their careers with family life. She acknowledged the biological clock and the pressure women often feel to have children at a certain age. Dr Ashima Ranjan, Consultant Psychiatrist at Yatharth Super Speciality Hospital, Noida, shared navigating the emotional landscape of fertility struggles and the decision to pursue surrogacy is both complex and deeply personal. This journey often

involves a rollercoaster of hope and disappointment, which can lead to significant emotional strain. She added that many individuals face challenges such as depression, anxiety, and a sense of isolation throughout the process. The recurring cycles of optimism followed by setbacks can be particularly disheartening. Addressing these emotional challenges is as vital as focusing on the medical aspects of fertility treatment. It's essential to offer comprehensive mental health support to complement medical interventions, Dr Ranjan said. Understanding the impact of unsuccessful IVF attempts, potential pregnancy losses, and the physical toll of treatments is crucial. Acknowledge and address these feelings by seeking professional counseling, which can offer valuable coping strategies and a safe space to explore emotions. Support groups can provide a sense of community and help alleviate feelings of isolation by connecting individuals with others facing similar struggles.

Incorporating practices such as meditation and mindfulness can also aid in managing stress and enhancing overall well-being. Remember, there is no universal solution for building a family. Patience with oneself and the process is essential. Open communication with partners and trusted loved ones can help ease the emotional burden.

Study says your smartwatch could help detect heart attack; cardiologist verifies



A single-lead ECG can detect certain rhythm abnormalities, but a 12-lead ECG is necessary for a definitive heart attack diagnosis, he added. Additionally, wearable devices might only catch severe cases of Covid, and Dr Jain noted that patients often recognise symptoms before the device does. Hence, conventional diagnostic techniques remain more reliable for serious cardiac issues and early Covid-19 detection.

A recent study has shown how wearable devices like smartwatches and fitness trackers can detect early signs of COVID-19 and heart conditions — much before symptoms appear. Researchers found that data collected by these devices—such as heart rate, sleep patterns, physical activity, and even blood oxygen levels—could help identify subtle changes in the body. The study conducted by the University of South Australia highlighted how continuous monitoring through wearables allows for the early detection of respiratory infections, including COVID-19, and heart conditions like arrhythmias. These devices could serve as an early-warning system, helping users seek medical advice before symptoms worsen. It also stresses the potential for wearable tech to be integrated into public health strategies by providing real-time health data that can support early diagnosis and prevention.

However, Dr Anesh Jain, consultant cardiologist, at Ruby Hall Clinic, Wanowrie, Pune, said that since these devices only measure the oxygen saturation levels and provide live ECG readings, they are limited to single-

lead electrocardiograms (ECGs) which are a simplified version of the traditional 12-lead ECG. They use only one electrode to record the heart's electrical activity, providing a less comprehensive view than the 12-lead version.

A single-lead ECG may diagnose rhythm-related abnormalities like Atrial Fibrillation but is less effective for comprehensive heart attack diagnosis. For COVID-19, wearable devices are more effective in severe cases where oxygen levels drop significantly, Dr Jain added. "The accuracy of these findings is debatable. While wearable devices offer some insight into health conditions, they are currently limited compared to conventional methods," Dr Jain specified in the conversation. A single-lead ECG can detect certain rhythm abnormalities, but a 12-lead ECG is necessary for a definitive heart attack diagnosis, he added. Additionally, wearable devices might only catch severe cases of Covid, and Dr Jain noted that patients often recognise symptoms before the device does. Hence, conventional diagnostic techniques remain more reliable for serious cardiac issues and early Covid-19 detection.

Shakib Al Hasan set for Test farewell at home, included in Bangladesh squad for 1st Test vs SA



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Shakib Al Hasan is set to draw curtains on his Test career. (Sportspics)Shakib Al Hasan is set to draw curtains on his Test career. Shakib Al Hasan is set for his last appearance in Test cricket in front of the home crowd as the venerable all-rounder was named in Bangladesh's squad for the first match against South Africa, starting here on Monday. Before the second and final Test against India at Kanpur, Shakib had expressed his wish to play his final Test at home against South Africa, provided the Bangladesh Cricket Board was able to ensure his safety.

Khaled Ahmed is the only omission from the squad that recently toured India. Shakib has been accused of being involved in the murder of a student but the Bangladesh veteran was taking part in a T20 league in Canada at the time of the incident. However, Faruque Ahmed, the new president of the BCB had rejected Shakib's request saying the board was not a security agency and could not guarantee any cover for him. The sports advisor to Bangladesh's interim government Asif

Mahmud said that Shakib would be provided security once his political stance was clear. Shakib in return had issued an unconditional apology for his silence during the civil unrest in Bangladesh, which saw the ousting of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

"Firstly, I would like to pay my respects to all the students who sacrificed their lives, led the anti-discrimination movement, and were martyred or injured during the people's uprising," Shakib wrote on his official Facebook page. "While no sacrifice can compensate for the loss of a loved one, nothing can fill the void of losing a child or a brother, to those of you who were hurt by my silence during this critical period, I respect your feelings and sincerely apologise." He also passed on a message to the Bangladesh fans. "You all know that I will soon be playing my last match... I want to say goodbye with all of you around. At the moment of farewell, I want to shake hands with those whose applause compelled me to play better," he wrote. "I want to meet the eyes of those who cheered in joy when I played well and whose eyes welled up with tears when I did not. I believe that at this farewell moment, you will all be with me. Together, we will close the story that, in truth, stars not me, but all of you," Shakib added. Bangladesh will depart for the UAE following the two-Test series against South Africa to take on Afghanistan in a three-match series. Since Shakib is also a part of the ODI side, the squad's departure would also ensure his exit from the country. Bangladesh squad for 1st Test: Najmul Hossain Shanto (c), Shadman Islam, Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Zakir Hasan, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Litton Das (wk), Jaker Ali, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Taijul Islam, Nayeem Hasan, Taskin Ahmed, Hasan Mahmud, Nahid Rana.

Amir Ali's jackpot: Son of roadside garage owner in Lucknow gets Rs 34 lakh at HIL auction

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Outside the main gate of the Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam office in Lucknow's Hazratganj, an anxious Tasavvur Ali flung aside his toolbox when the phone beeped on Sunday evening. By the time he finished reading the SMS — a smartphone is still an unaffordable luxury for him — the motorcycle mechanic was tearing up. His son Amir, the text message read, had earned his fledgling career's biggest paycheque — the 20-year-old defender was picked by a yet-to-be-named Visakhapatnam-based team for Rs 34 lakh in the Hockey India League player auctions.

Within minutes, the news spread in the neighbourhood. And 'imambara chacha' had a beeline of visitors waiting to wish him. "I was over the moon. I knew Amir would make us all proud one day... but this is the first step, he will achieve a lot more," Tasavvur tells The Indian Express. Less than a decade ago, none of this seemed possible. Hockey back then was a 'dream'. The reality was harsh — at an age where players learn the basics of the sport, Amir was helping his father at the garage.

Amir Ali father The eldest of five siblings, Amir was seen as someone who'd eventually join his father's business. So, even before he could distinguish a pass from a hit on the hockey field, Amir was doing the heavy lifting at the garage. (Special Arrangement) "To call it a garage is a stretch," Tassavur interjects. "I just have a small tin briefcase and sit outside the main gate of the Jal Nigam office." The eldest of five siblings, Amir was seen as someone who'd eventually join his father's business. So, even before he could distinguish a pass from a hit on the hockey field, Amir was doing the heavy lifting at the garage.

"You know, engines are heavy to lift and it's not one man's job. It started with that. And very soon, I began servicing bikes. I was 12 years old at the time," Amir, the Junior India team captain, tells this paper. "My father told me and my brother Shahrukh, 'yeh hunar hona chahiye' (we must possess this skill). So, I helped him," Amir says, adding that the brothers continue to work there even today when they are home. At the time, Amir was already smitten by the sport — barely surprising given the unique place of pride Lucknow, and Uttar Pradesh in general, enjoys in Indian hockey. The region has produced stars who play with 'tehzeeb' and 'nazakat', be it the yesteryear wizards like Dhyana Chand or his son Ashok Kumar; KD Singh Babu or Mohammad Shahid; Zafar Iqbal or RP Singh; current heroes like Lalit Upadhyay or future stars like Rajkumar Pal. Amir is built in the same mould — a left-back who can beautifully cut inside to beat the opposition's press, a hard tackler, quick on the ball and, true to the modern-day Indian player, one who won't hold the ball for more than a few seconds. He was spotted at the age of 10 by a senior coach at the KD Singh Babu Stadium, Rashid Aziz Khan, who belongs to a genera-



tion of talent spotters that relies on instincts rather than just data. "The ground was very close to my house. Kids from my neighbourhood went there to play so one evening, I joined them too," Amir says. "Rashid sir saw something in me, and urged me to continue playing." He juggled three things for months — the mornings, Amir adds, were spent at school, afternoons helping his father at the garage and evenings at the hockey ground. There were times Tasavvur had to borrow money to meet some of his son's sporting needs, and there were times, too, when Amir had to skip training sessions to help his father at the garage.

"In 2014, I got selected at the Major Dhyana Chand Sports College in Saifai," he adds. The big break eased the financial burden on his family as far as the hockey needs were concerned. Step by step, Amir began his journey towards the national team; he is the captain of the Junior India team that will compete in the Sultan of Johor Cup starting Saturday and features prominently in senior coach Craig Fulton's post-Paris Olympics team rebuilding plan. It was also during this period when the then 10-year-old Amir would cycle roughly 12 km to watch his 'hero', former India captain and twice Olympic bronze medalist Manpreet Singh, play in the Hockey India League.

"I never missed a HIL match back then. Manpreet bhai used to play for Ranchi back then and I went to see him play," Amir says. "It's surreal that now I will play in the same team with him." Not long before Amir was picked, the Visakhapatnam franchise had snapped up Manpreet for Rs 42 lakh. When his turn came, Amir's heart started pounding. He set off a bidding war of sorts and when the auctioneer banged the gavel, he was sold for Rs 34 lakh. Compared to HIL's richer cousin, the Indian Premier League, the sum spent on the hockey players might not be eye-watering. But for someone like Amir, it is life-changing. "This is my biggest earning through hockey. I don't know what I'll do with it — usually, I give it to my father, so I'll do that," Amir says. "But as much as the money, it's also about pride. I have never seen my mother and father so happy. Family ki izzat honi chahiye, that's the important thing."

Paras Mhambrey returns to Mumbai Indians as bowling coach



Mhambrey, 54, was a part of the coaching unit of team India during the 2024 T20 World Cup triumph under Rahul Dravid's regime and left the national side after his stint ended.

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Former India bowling coach Paras Mhambrey returned to the Mumbai Indians on Wednesday and will team up with Lasith Malinga in the same capacity. The five-time Indian Premier League champions confirmed that the two will work close to each other in tandem with the head coach Mahela Jayawardene. Mhambrey, 54, was a part of the coaching unit of team India during the 2024 T20 World Cup triumph under Rahul Dravid's re-

gime and left the national side after his stint ended.

Mhambrey was a medium pacer who played for Mumbai between 1992 and 2003, picking 284 wickets in 91 first-class matches. He also holds a level 3 coaching diploma from the National Cricket Academy (NCA) and served as coach to Baroda, Maharashtra, Vidarbha, and Bengal at the domestic level before reaching the national level, eventually coaching under Dravid's regime.

This will be the second time Mhambrey will be working with the Mumbai Indians with the veteran winning several titles with Mumbai, such as the IPL 2013 and the Champions League T20 (2011, 2013) in his first stint. He was also there when the franchise finished as runners-up in 2010. Mumbai Indians official statement on Paras Mhambrey "Paras Mhambrey will work alongside current bowling coach Lasith Malinga as part of the coaching team under head coach Mahela Jayawardene. He has been a part of the Mumbai Indians coaching team earlier as well, celebrating title wins in the IPL and the Champions League T20. He's worked closely with our boys in the past, and we are super excited to have him back in the Blue and Gold" said the MI press release. Mhambrey made his international debut in the mid-1990s on the England tour and is one of the greatest coaches in Indian cricket. His experience as a coach and cricketing mind can help boost the chances of the Mumbai Indians winning the IPL 2025.

'How the hell did that happen?': Virat Kohli reminiscences when Ab de Villiers slogged Sunil Narine for 6 after initial struggles



GNS News Agency, Oct 18

After South African cricket great Ab de Villiers was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame on Wednesday, his former Royal Challengers Bengaluru teammate and close friend Virat Kohli hailed the Proteas player as the "most talented cricketer" he has played with. "You are thoroughly deserving of your place — after all, the Hall of Fame is a representation of your impact on the game, and yours has been truly unique. People have always spoken about your ability, and rightly so. You are the most talented cricketer I have played with, the absolute number one," Kohli penned in a letter to de Villiers upon the South African's induction.

The South African great averages over 50 in Tests and ODIs combined and has a strike rate of over 135 in T20s and has played many a memorable knocks in his career. Kohli in his letter would speak about one such match when Royal Challengers Bangalore were playing against Kolkata Knight Riders in 2016. "We were chasing 184 (for RCB in 2016) against an attack including Sunil Narine, Morne Morkel, Andre Russell and Shakib Al

Hasan. You came in to join me with around 70 on the board and Narine was bowling. You played and missed a couple and told me during a timeout that you weren't picking him too well. I felt I was, so I remember telling you to give me the strike and I would try and hit boundaries off him," Kohli wrote. "In the first over Narine bowled after the timeout, I was ready at the non-striker's end thinking you were definitely giving me a single. So, imagine my surprise when you back away to the leg side, Sunil follows you and you slog sweep him over square leg for a 94-metre six! I don't know what happened in the timeout to give you the belief you could do that. I just remember saying to you, 'you're a freak!' If I have a lack of belief against someone, I'd just try and get off strike — but you hit him for a 94-metre six without picking the ball. That sums you up. You could just do things our minds were not ready to process, and then everyone thinks 'how the hell did that happen?'" he added. Even though de Villiers is more celebrated for his white ball antics, he could be relied on to save his team from precarious situations in red ball cricket like in 2008, when he made an unbeaten 106* in a near five-hour stay in South Africa's successful chase of 414 against Australia, and in the corresponding 2012 Tour, made a 220-ball 33 to help his side save an Adelaide Test match. Kohli would also write about his friend's exploits in Delhi in 2015 when he faced 297 balls to score 43 runs in order to save the Test. "Everyone remembers your attacking shots but you would adapt to the situation. Take 2015, in Delhi, when you faced 297 balls and made 43 trying to save the Test match. There must have been a temptation at some stage to think 'I've faced 200 balls, I need to hit a boundary'. But once you locked yourself into what the situation required, you just kept going on and on. It all comes back to that belief in your ability," Kohli wrote.

Why Shubman Gill should not open in Rohit Sharma's absence in Australia? Anil Kumble explains

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Anil Kumble has urged India to hold Shubman Gill at No. 3 in Australia. (Sportspics) Anil Kumble has urged India to hold Shubman Gill at No. 3 in Australia. Former India captain Anil Kumble has urged Team India to resist pushing Shubman Gill to the opener's slot, should regular skipper Rohit Sharma miss one of the five Tests in the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia. According to reports, Rohit could miss the first game of the series starting at the Perth Stadium on November 22 due to personal reasons.

Gill, who started his India Test career as an opener, has been slotted down to the number 3 slot after indifferent form at the top and the subsequent success of Yashasvi Jaiswal since 2023. Gill made his Test debut in the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne during India's previous tour Down Under in 2020-21 and shone in the team's historic Test win at the Gabba, setting up a 328 chase with his stroke-filled 91. With India appearing to be short of season back-up opening options, talks have circled about Gill returning to the position in Rohit's absence. However, Kumble has urged to bury that temptation. "He (Shubman) is exceptionally talented, skilful and he's done that. He's been to Australia before. In Brisbane, he got a wonderful fifty there and he knows the conditions," Kumble told the broadcasters during Day 1 of the first Test between India and New Zealand in Bengaluru on Wednesday. Kumble instead suggested KL Rahul to take up the mantle should Rohit be unavailable in Perth. "I don't want to change that. I know there's a temptation to push Shubman Gill because Rohit is not available in the first Test. But, there's always KL Rahul that name is synonymous with change and adapting to whatever the team wants. Whether you want to open the batting or keep wickets, Rahul Dravid did that, now KL Rahul is doing that," he said.



Change in style at No. 3 Kumble also suggested that Gill was stylistically from his successful No. 3 predecessors, Rahul Dravid and Cheteshwar Pujara, and may require to make subtle changes to his gameplan in Australia. "For the last 25 years, there have been only two players who have been consistently playing (at No. 3 for India) and and it's a tough role. Both those batsmen, Rahul and Cheteshwar, contributed immensely during that period, and you know you have to balance it out. You could probably be batting the second ball of the test match, or you could be batting much later when the conditions are easier," Kumble said. "But more often than not, you get in there to control that first session and see off the new ball because we know that the Kookaburra ball after the first 25 hours, the best time to bat is between the 30th over and the 60th over. And that's what these two batters did throughout their careers, ensuring that the team was safe and the four number four, number five and number six batters, came in much later into the lineup so that they could comfortably bat and score the runs," Kumble explained. The 25-year-old Gill has played 12 Tests at No. 3, scoring 782 runs with three centuries and a 43.44 average.

Neetu David, Alastair Cook and Ab de Villiers inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame

GNS News Agency, Oct 18

Former Indian women's cricketer Neetu David has been inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. Along with her former England opener Alastair Cook and former South African middle-order batter AB de Villiers too were given the accolade for 2024. Second most ODI wickets for India David is well known for her spell against England in 1995 where she scalped 8/53. She is the second-highest wicket-taker for India with 141 wickets from 97 games in ODIs.

"It is truly an honor to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, something that I consider to be the highest recognition available to anyone who puts on their national team jersey," David said. "This comes after a lifetime of dedication to this great sport and it caps a very special journey for me to get to this point," she added. England's highest run-scoring opener There have been many memorable and marathon knocks Cook has compiled throughout his career. He also led the England side to win a Test series in India away from home in 2012. A feat no other traveling team could



"It is truly an honor to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, something that I consider to be the highest recognition available to anyone who puts on their national team jersey," David said.

achieve since. "Every time I pulled on the English shirt, I tried my best to be as good as I could be. I had the best 20 years playing cricket," Cook said. "I was very lucky to stay injury-free, meet some great people, share some great highs, and some great lows, which I think are important as well, and make memories which

I'll never forget," Cook added. South Africa's Mr 360 De Villiers with his ability to score runs all around the ground registered the fastest hundred in men's ODI cricket. Additionally, he also made pivotal contributions in the Test arena for the South African national time during the side's dominant era. "I know I would have achieved nothing without the help and support of so many teammates, coaches and support staff from my early days at school in Pretoria, through so many memorable days at the Titans and with the South Africa team — and, indeed in franchise cricket — all around the world," said De Villiers.

Priyanka Chopra greets photographers with 'namaste' as she lands in Mumbai, concerned fans ask about Nick Jonas.



Priyanka Chopra landed in Mumbai on Wednesday afternoon. The global star was seen making an exit at the Mumbai airport and greeted the paparazzi with a warm 'namaste'. After the recent videos of Priyanka landing in India was shared online, some fans asked her if 'jiju' Nick Jonas was doing well. Fans expressed their concern as Nick recently faced a security threat during his concert with Kevin Jonas and Joe Jonas in Prague. Someone from the crowd pointed a laser at Nick and the singer left the stage immediately after that. The concert was paused for 10 minutes and the person who pointed the laser was removed from the crowd. Previously, Priyanka shared a few videos on her Instagram stories as she landed in Mumbai.

Priyanka Chopra shared this on her Instagram Stories. Priyanka Chopra shared this on her Instagram Stories. Priyanka Chopra shared this on her Instagram Stories. It has been reported that Priyanka has come to India to promote her Marathi film Paani. The actor hasn't appeared in an acting role in any Indian film since 2019's The Sky Is Pink. She had announced that she would be a part of Farhan Akhtar's Jee Le Zaraa with Alia Bhatt and Katrina Kaif but there have not been any concrete announcements on the film. Priyanka will next be seen in Heads of State with Idris Elba and John Cena. She is also looking forward to The Bluff. She has also started shooting for the second season of Prime Video's Citadel.

'Worried' Arbaaz Khan says they're making sure Salman Khan is protected after Baba Siddique's murder: 'There's a lot happening'

Salman Khan and his family are facing a challenging time after the tragic death of the actor's close friend and politician, Baba Siddique, who was allegedly shot dead in Bandra by members of Lawrence Bishnoi's gang. This is the same gang that allegedly fired shots outside Salman Khan's residence. In a recent interview, Salman's brother, Arbaaz Khan, shared an update on the family's well-being and their efforts to keep Salman safe.

In an interview with Zoom, Arbaaz expressed that the family is understandably worried. He said, "We are doing fine. I wouldn't say that we are doing absolutely alright because there is a lot happening right now, in the family. Of course, everyone is worried," he told Zoom. Speaking about Salman Khan's safety, Arbaaz spoke about the family's collective efforts to protect him. "I wouldn't say we are all okay right now but we are trying to do what we can do the best. We are ensuring that everybody, along with the government and the police, is making sure that things go the way they should, and, he's (Salman) protected. Everyone is doing their best. We want to stay this way right no," he added. Salman looked vis-



ibly emotional at Baba Siddique's funeral. The politician's murder sent shockwaves through the film industry. Siddique was well-connected in Bollywood and known for hosting lavish Iftar parties. He also played a pivotal role in ending the five-year-long feud between Salman and Shah Rukh Khan at one of his famous Iftar gatherings. Baba Siddique's last rites were performed with full state honors at Bada Qabristan on October 13.

Siddharth Anand says his Fighter remark '90 percent Indians haven't flown in planes' was taken out of context: 'Free minds had free time'



Earlier this year, Siddharth Anand attributed Fighter's underwhelming performance to the audience's unfamiliarity with its setting, which sparked criticism and ridicule. Siddharth Anand recently clarified his earlier remarks and discussed the elements he might have excluded from Fighter had it been done today. (Images: Siddharth/Instagram) Despite considerable anticipation, the Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone-starrer Fighter did not achieve the expected box office success. While the film became a hit and led the charts as the highest-grossing Hindi film of 2024 for seven months, until Street 2 dethroned it, Fighter's lifetime earnings were modest compared to most recent blockbusters. This outcome was particularly disappointing for director Siddharth Anand, who had just come off the monumental success of Pathaan (2023), featuring Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone, which grossed over Rs 1,000 crore worldwide.

Meanwhile, Anand then attributed Fighter's underwhelming performance to the audience's unfamiliarity with its setting, which sparked criticism and ridicule. He had said that most Indians have never been inside an airplane and thus did not understand the airborne action sequences. Many pointed out that films with fictional or fantastical elements have also succeeded at the box office.

Recently, Siddharth clarified his earlier remarks and discussed the elements he might have excluded from Fighter. He noted that while he wouldn't change Pathaan in any way, the director stated that Fighter is his finest work to date. "It's my most evolved and honest work. It had everything commercial too. However, I think I won't do those beach songs anymore. I would try and stay honest and true to the genre. And also be very honest in its treatment. Otherwise, I still stand by my opinion that it's my finest film with great performances and the best VFX. I would probably not have had the beach songs. Nonetheless, 'Sher Khul Gaye' still works since it's set in the academy when they are celebrating a great event. It's actually a leaf out of the Air Force guys' lives," he said during a chat with Bollywood Hungama. In February, Siddharth commented that the film's aerial actioner concept might have been "alien" to much of the Indian audience, affecting its reception. "Fighter is a huge leap for a filmmaker. It's a space that is unexplored and absolutely new. It has no reference point for the audience. They are like, 'What are these planes doing?' There is a huge percentage of our country, I would say, 90 per cent, who have not flown in planes, who have not been to an airport, so how would they know what's happening in the movie? This is my dissection. They felt this is a little alien. They didn't understand what kind of exhilaration they are supposed to feel in the air action, so there is a certain initial disconnect," he told Galatta Plus. During the recent chat, he clarified that he didn't mean to imply that people's lack of experience with air travel made them incapable of understanding a film about fighter jets. "Obviously I didn't mean that. But a lot of free minds had a lot of free time to make memes. It was taken completely out of context. What I actually meant was, when seeing a film like that (Fighter), I don't know what the exhilaration is. I can understand when you have guns and cars hitting each other. This was a very true film and you probably may not get the exhilaration that I am supposed to feel in an action film. You are stuck between, 'is this an action film or a drama?' I think that translation got lost. I

Prithviraj Sukumaran @ 42: The navarasas of the multi-hyphenate talent in Tamil cinema

It was at a particularly turbulent time in his career that Prithviraj Sukumaran made his debut in Tamil cinema in 2005 as the primary antagonist of KV Anand's debut film, Kanaa Kanden. In the next ten years, the actor starred in nine more films, including Kaaviya Thalaivan (2014), before taking a really long sabbatical from the industry.

Although he has done only 9 full-length roles in Tamil, each of them were in films that offered him something new. They were all different from the kind of movies he was doing in Malayalam. When Prithviraj made his first Tamil film, he had done just 10-12 Malayalam movies, and by the time he did his 10th in 2014, he had finished 60-odd films, and won two Kerala State Awards, and became the youngest actor then to be bestowed with that honour. So, let's look at the nine films of Prithviraj through the lens of the Navarasas, the nine emotions, and how each movie gave him the opportunity to highlight one of them strongly.

Even before he made his way to Tamil cinema, he struck gold with the success of director Kamal's Swapnakoodu. His French beard, uber cool costumes, and his playful behaviour in the film, and especially in the song, "Karuppin Azhaku," made him a heartthrob thanks to the nascent-Internet era television shows that featured songs from other languages. When news of him being part of Kanaa Kanden came up, everyone was waiting for him to be the next 'chocolate boy' of Tamil cinema. He had the looks. He had the talent. He had the fan following. But to everyone's surprise, as the suave Madhan, who was one of the earliest templates of the now-famous corporate villain, Prithviraj made an impressive debut. Here was an antagonist you'd love to hate, but wouldn't hate loving either. Unlike his illustrious predecessors like Mammooty and Mohanlal, who made a rather positive start to their careers, here was Prithviraj, who didn't mind challenging the norms, and kindling your wonder about what he'd do next. This time around, Prithviraj delivered what was expected of him, but of course, with a twist. He became just the third actor after Sudhakar and Vijayakanth to star in a K Bhagyaraj directorial that didn't feature the filmmaker in the lead. It wasn't the usual romcom either, and it laid credence to his statement that he'd never act in a 'template' Tamil film. It was a beautiful love story that mixed the worlds of lived reality and a world emerging from literature, and Prithviraj was romance personified as the man who searches for the woman his mother dreamt for him. As Surendhar and Sreedhar, which were quite the archaic names for a romantic hero in the new millennium, Prithviraj tuned in an old school performance that perfectly fit the milieu of the film. Oh, and the songs by Dharan gave him a 180 degree shift from being a hard-hearted villain to a romantic hero propelling a warm romance. Of course, there is no doubt that Mozhi gave Prithviraj his most seminal work in Tamil cinema. As Karthik, he was perfect. The perfect friend. The perfect neighbour. The perfect confidant. The perfect lover. The perfect companion. The perfect everything. But what really shone through in this perfect role was his ability to elicit laughter from the audience. The Tamil cinema audience accepted him as a lover boy with a funny bone in Parijatham too, but in Mozhi, Prithviraj catered to a wider audience. It was a genre that even the most promising of stars in Tamil cinema then weren't exploring. It was a genre that Prithviraj wasn't able to explore in Malayalam either. So, he found solace in the saccharine world of Radha Mohan, and Prithviraj, in the able company of Jyotika and Prakash Raj, proved that he was not just the sweetest of them all, but could make them laugh at the drop of a hat. Oh, and he had the opportunity to be in a film that featured some of the finest songs from Vidasagar.

It is ironic how director Vasanth, known for his maverick romances, collaborated with Prithviraj, one of the most promising romantic heroes of that time, to deliver a thrilling relationship drama. In fact, this film turned up the intensity that Prithviraj hadn't yet showcased to the Tamil audience. Yes, he was angry before. Yes, he was brave before. But Satham Podatheey ensured we saw a Prithviraj that Malayalam cinema has often seen. His Ravichandran was a beautiful character with a lovely arc. It might seem like a simple character, but it was deeply layered, and Prithviraj's compelling performance simplified it for us. He was the perfect foil to Padmapriya's terrific turn as Bhanumathy and Nithin Sathya's effective Rathnavel. He sold the intensity perfectly, and was at home showcasing the vulnerability and fears of the character. And, he was blessed with the music of Yuvan Shankar Raja that took his name to a lot more households. Till this film, Prithviraj mostly starred alongside his contemporaries in genres that he was familiar with. However, in the V Priya directorial, Prithviraj had to dial up his outlandishness to stand toe-to-toe with stalwarts like Radikaa Sarathkumar and Sathyaraj. Once again, it was a pleasant no-frills love story that paired Sandhya alongside him. However, the real chemistry and the actual plot point was the battle-of-wits and ego clashes with his lover's father (Sathyaraj). In fact, Prithviraj understood the assignment and was brave enough to play second, and even third fiddle at times to accommodate the story between Sathyaraj,



Radikaa, and Sri Priya. Prithviraj serviced the film, and not the star in him, and proved that he was secure and brave enough to know stardom is just a consequence of honest acting. And once again, Yuvan Shankar Raja took care of the rest.

It is beautiful to note how Prithviraj's sensibilities shine through his choice of films. In 2005, Mohanlal made the brilliant Udhayanu Tharam in Malayalam, which was one of the biggest successes, especially for a film about the world of cinema. Considering how tough it is actually to step into the shoes of Mohanlal in Malayalam, Prithviraj was smart enough to reprise this role in Tamil. Vellithirai, the remake of Udhayanu Tharam, was made by a team that Prithviraj was comfortable with, since he worked with them in Mozhi. He was in familiar territory as he was joined by his Mozhi co-star Prakash Raj and Kanaa Kanden co-star Gopika. It was a role of a failed director trying his best to dust off the cobwebs of failures to find a honest way to success. We see him traverse this arduous journey. We see him break down in the face of adversity only to pick himself up. We see him lose the love of his life. We see him lose a lot more in his journey to making a film he loved, and yet, find it in himself to fight like a hero... a hero of his own story. Now, if that doesn't move us, then what will? Well, the songs of GV Prakash will.

Shaantham (Peace) – Ninaithaale Inikkum After stepping into the really big shoes of Mohanlal in Velli Thirai, Prithviraj decide to remake a success of his own to establish his market. If it was in today's times, we can rest assured that Lal Jose's Classmates would be released in multiple languages, especially after the super success of the song, "Ente Khalbile". But this was a different time, and he brought the Malayalam success to Tamil. On the onset, both films looked starkly different with the Tamil version obviously more flashy. But the film's core was about coming to terms with the past. It was all about attaining a sense of peace about the consequences of our mistakes. Yes, it was the quintessential college film, but Prithviraj's Shiva had the perfect arc. He starts off as a brash college-goer. There is repentance for an event that changed the course of his life, and finally... the quest for answers and more questions, leads to him finding the peace he craved for. Oh, and as always, Prithviraj struck gold with the music for the film, courtesy the brilliant Vijay Antony. Six years into Tamil cinema, Prithviraj had a release every single year from 2005 to 2010, and his brief sojourn in Tamil cinema reached its crowning glory with his presence in Mani Ratnam's Raavan. It was a take on the epic mythology, Ramayana, and Prithviraj was playing the conscientious Rama. Raavan gave Prithviraj his biggest role in Tamil cinema. Raavan took him to Cannes. Raavan had him star alongside Vikram, Aishwarya Rai, Karthik, and Prabhu. Raavan had him play a cop for the first time in Tamil. Raavan showcased his fiery intensity and displayed his rage for the first time. We had seen Prithviraj angry before, but it displayed a wrath that is not often seen on screen. It allowed him to walk on the thin line between justice and legality. Prithviraj was terrific as the cop who is always angry, and let me go out on a limb and say, a shade better than Vikram's approach to the same role in the Hindi version, Raavan. Oh, and it marked the first time AR Rahman composed for a Prithviraj film. Prithviraj temporarily signed off from Tamil cinema with what yours truly considers his finest work in the language. Although he was playing the 'kallapart' in Vasantha Balan's Kaaviya Thalaivan, his Gomathinayagam, in many ways, is the 'Raajapart' in the epic historical drama. Yes, Siddharth gets to play the straight arrow in the film, but it is Prithviraj who gets to play a role that allows him to go through a gamut of emotions. It is almost like Prithviraj played all these characters in his previous eight films to play Gomathi in Kaaviya Thalaivan. In one role, he manages to showcase surprise, love, humour, fear, courage, compassion, peace, and anger, and ticks the final box of disgust as he walks into the Ganges. It is not easy to play a character that is disgusted with itself, and yet move the audience watching the narrative unfold. This is a beautiful melange of emotions, and Vasantha Balan brought out the best of Prithviraj, and was aided in this endeavour by one of the greatest soundtracks of AR Rahman. Just because he has showcased all the nine emotions in the nine roles he has played in Tamil, it doesn't mean Prithviraj continues this sabbatical. With pan-Indian films becoming the norm, his films do get dubbed into Tamil, but it isn't the same, right?

Pankaj Tripathi to make radio debut as FM host

Mumbai: Actor Pankaj Tripathi, who is known for 'Mirzapur', 'Gangs of Wasseypur', 'Masaan' and others, is set to turn a new leaf in his chapter of life. The actor is turning into a radio host for an FM channel. The actor has a certain rhythm to his speech pattern, and his vocal texture makes him a good fit to narrate stories while entertaining the listeners on radio. He will be seen serving as the radio host for the first time for BIG FM's show 'Dhun Badal Ke Toh Dekho' season 3. Sharing his excitement, the actor said, "I am thrilled to don the hat of a radio host for the first time for BIG FM's 'Dhun Badal Ke Toh Dekho' season 3, a show that presents varied perspectives on important topics". He further mentioned, "As an actor, I've always believed in the power of screenplay, but as a host for the radio network, I'm excited to explore the power of storytelling in an audio format. Sometimes, all it takes is a change in mindset to see the world differently and with this show, we will be aiming exactly that". The first season of the show was led by Vidya Balan who discussed an array of topics which may be considered taboo, while Season 2 was hosted by Sadhguru focussing on mental wellbeing and spirituality. Pankaj Tripathi is one of the most prominent actors in Hindi cinema.

