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TTD releases Rs. 300 special darshan tokens for January 2025

TTD releases Rs. 300 special darshan tokens for January 2025 Highlights Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam has released the Special Entrance Darshan tokens for the January 2025 today at 10 am. Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam has released the Special Entrance Darshan tokens for the January 2025 today at 10 am. The TTD has advised the devotees to make use of the opportunity and book the tickets at official website of TTD. On the other hand, the TTD will also release the accomodation quota for the January 2025 today. The devotees are entitled to book the tickets only through official website.

RGIA officials urge flyers to arrive early at airport, warn of cab shortage

Hyderabad: As the festive season approaches, officials at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), Hyderabad, are urging passengers to plan ahead and arrive early due to potential cab shortages and increased number of travellers.

With Diwali around the corner, authorities are expecting a surge in travel activity. "Cab shortages may affect your journey," the advisory warns, citing increased demand.

Cyclone Dana set to be severe; Armed Forces on high alert in Odisha, Bengal



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

New Delhi: Cyclone Dana is expected to severely impact the coastal regions of Odisha and West Bengal. In response, the Indian Navy has launched extensive preparations for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations. The Eastern Naval Command has activated its disaster response mechanism in coordination with naval officers stationed in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and West Bengal.

Two ships from the Eastern Fleet have been deployed with essential supplies, including rescue and diving teams, to support relief efforts by sea. The Indian Navy remains on high alert, closely monitoring the situation, and has assured full support to those affected by the cyclone. The Ministry of Defence has also stated that medical aid will be provided upon request from state authorities. For this, the Navy is in coordination with units such as Base Victualling Yard (BVY), Material Organisation, and Naval Hospital INHS Kalyani. As part of the preparedness, the Navy has stockpiled essential items such as clothing, drinking water, food, medicines, and emergency supplies. Disaster response pallets have been strategically positioned on roads and key areas likely to face damage from the cyclone. In addition to naval efforts, flood relief and diving teams are on standby, ready for coordinated rescue and relief operations. The Indian Air Force and Coast Guard have also taken precautionary measures to safeguard life and property in the region.

Revolt in Congress again: Jeevan Reddy questions top party positions for turncoats



coats

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Hyderabad: Continuing his tirade against the State leadership for encouraging political defections, Congress MLC Jeevan Reddy asked how can turncoats, including former Minister Pocharam Srinivas Reddy, could be given top positions at the cost of ignoring the services of leaders who were loyal to the Congress. Taking serious objections over the State leadership encouraging defections, the MLC wrote a letter to AICC chief Mallikarjun Kharge. Addressing media persons later here on Thursday, he said the turncoats MLAs and leaders were dominating party affairs and calling the shots in different constituencies.

"At this juncture, what is our position in the party?" he asked, also alleging that former Minister Pocharam Srinivas Reddy was the leader of the turncoats. He had held a meeting with turncoat MLAs and leaders and directed them to dominate the Congress leaders in the constituencies, he alleged, stating that the high command was against defections into the party. The Congress had got a clear majority in the Assembly and did not need support of any turncoats, he said. "Will the Congress government not survive without support of turncoat MLAs? Is this the democratic governance Rahul Gandhi promised?" Jeevan Reddy asked. Interestingly, TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud has been claiming that defections into the party were as per the high command's instructions. But Jeevan Reddy took strong objection to the defections into the party reminding that it was the Congress which was fighting against defections by elected public representatives. Defections were not only against the party's policy but also creating lot of unrest among loyal leaders. Still, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy openly welcomed BRS MLA Dr Sanjay into the party. "When his entry was opposed by the cadre in Jagtial, I was personally summoned to New Delhi after Ministers Mallu Bharti

Modi-Xi talks on BRICS sidelines carries 'great significance' to improve relations: China

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

A day after the landmark bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Russia's Kazan, China on Thursday said it carried a "great significance" as they reached "important common understandings" to improve bilateral ties. "They reached important common understandings on improving and developing China-India relations and set the course to steer bilateral relations back on the path of steady development," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a media briefing in Beijing, Lin further said China "stands ready to work with India to view and handle the bilateral relations from a strategic height and long-term perspective." He added that China is ready to enhance communication and cooperation, as well as strategic mutual trust, along with handling differences properly and ensuring that bilateral ties are brought back to the path of steady development as



soon as possible. Modi PM Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping during a meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan on Wednesday. (AP Photo) "They agreed to view and handle China-India relations from a strategic height and long-term perspective, prevent specific disagreements from affecting the overall relationship, and contribute to maintaining regional and global peace and prosperity and to advancing multiplicity in the world," Lin also said. The spokesperson added that Modi and Xi have agreed to "make good use of the Special Representatives mechanism on the China-India boundary question, ensure peace and tranquility in the border areas, find a fair and reasonable settlement, step up communication and cooperation in multilateral fora, and safeguard the common interests of developing countries."

disputes", Xi also called for "more communication and cooperation" and said "people in our two countries and the international community are paying great attention to our meeting". At the start of the meeting, Modi said, "We welcome the agreements that we have reached over the border. Maintaining peace and tranquillity over the border should remain our priority, and mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual sensitivity should remain the basis of our relationship. I am confident that we will hold talks with an open heart and our discussions will be constructive."

Xi, on his turn, said, "Mr Prime Minister, it's my great pleasure to meet you in Kazan. It's the first time for us to have a formal meeting in five years' time. Both, the people in our two countries and the international community, are paying great attention to our meeting. China and India are both ancient civilisations, major developing countries, and important members of the Global South. We are both at a crucial phase in our respective modernisation endeavours."

Ready to go jail for the public, farmers, says KTR

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Adilabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao asserted that he was ready to be jailed for the sake of the people and farmers. Addressing a gathering of farmers at the 'Rythannala Poru Bata' meeting at Ramelela ground here on Thursday, Rama Rao said he was ready to go to jail for the people and farmers. People would revolt against the government and trash leaders of the Congress soon for failing to fulfill its poll promises soon. Listing out the broken promises of the Congress, he pointed out that even the one tola of gold to promised to the beneficiaries of the Kalyana Lakshmi scheme was not given yet. Stating that farmers would have to lodge a complaint against the government for evading payment of Rythu Bandhu or not initiating the promised Rythu Bharosa scheme and for not extending the crop loan waiver in a full-fledged manner, he said even the unemployed would have to lodge a complaint against the government for not providing 2 lakh jobs per annum. No leader of the Congress would be left in the State if all sections lodged complaints against the government.

Rama Rao cautioned that the BRS would not remain silent if cases were booked against farmers. He stated that none would keep quiet if someone demolished their houses. He cited a case registered against Bodigam Ganganna for allegedly abusing Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. Occupants were given house sites



and permissions during the regime of the Congress. He also asked whether cases be booked against the Congress which claimed to keep its words within hundred days at the office or against the farmers or the poor. Cheating cases should be registered against those who duped the farmers and the public, he said, adding that illegal cases would not be tolerated. Rama Rao also asked the public to warn people in Maharashtra about the Congress, since the State was going for polls soon, and inform them what was happening in Telangana, especially with regard to poll promises. Asking officials to discharge duties as per the law, he asked them not to cross the line by succumbing to pressure exerted by public representatives or ministers.

Broad consensus with China to restore ground situation along LAC in Ladakh: Rajnath Singh



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Three days after India announced that an agreement had been reached with China regarding disengagement in Ladakh, in his first remarks on the development, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Thursday that broad consensus had been achieved following talks between the two countries to "restore ground situation". Speaking at an event, Singh said, "India and China have been involved in talks both at diplomatic and military levels to resolve their differences in certain areas along the LAC. Pursuant to the talks, broad consensus has been achieved to restore ground situation based on the principles of equal and mutual security." Singh, who was

speaking at the Chanakya Defence Dialogue programme organised by the Indian Army and the Centre for Land Warfare Studies, added that this showed the power of dialogue. "The consensus achieved includes patrolling and grazing to traditional areas."

Cabinet approves Rs1,000 crore venture capital fund for 40 space sector startups

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

The Union Cabinet on Thursday (October 24, 2024) approved setting up of a ₹1,000 crore venture capital fund to help space sector start ups, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. The fund is expected to support approximately 40 startups in the sector and will accelerate private space industry's growth. It will also push advancements in space technology and strengthen India's leadership through private sector participation, the government said. The capital infusion will also create a multiplier effect by attracting additional funding for later stage development.

Cabinet approves 2 rail projects covering Andhra, Telangana, Bihar with estimated cost of Rs 6,798 crore



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved two rail projects covering Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Bihar with a total estimated cost of Rs 6,798 crore, the government said. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the doubling of the Narkatiaganj-Raxaul-Sitamarhi-Darbhanga and Sitamarhi-Muzaffarpur section in Bihar covering 256 km and construction of a new line between Errupalem and Namburu via Amaravati covering 57 km.

Both these projects will mainly benefit Andhra Pradesh and Bihar in which the BJP is in alliance with the TDP and the JDU respectively. "The doubling of Narkatiaganj-Raxaul-Sitamarhi-Darbhanga & Sitamarhi-Muzaffarpur Section will strengthen the connectivity to Nepal, Northeast India and border areas and facilitating movement of passenger trains along with goods train resulting in the socio-economic growth of the region," an official release said. "The new rail line project Errupalem-Amaravati-Namburu traverses through NTR Vijayawada and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh and Khammam district of Telangana," it said. According to the government, these two projects covering eight districts in the three states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Bihar will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 313 km. Highlighting the benefits of these two projects, it said the new line project will provide connectivity to approximately 168 villages and about 12 lakh population with 9 new stations. Besides, it added, the multi-tracking project will enhance connectivity to two aspirational districts (Sitamarhi and Muzaffarpur) serving approximately 388 villages and about 9 lakh population. According to the government, these are essential routes for transportation of commodities such as agriculture products, fertilizer, coal, iron ore, steel and cement. Talking about the impact on freight operations, it mentioned that the capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of magnitude 31 MTPA (Million Tonnes Per Annum).

31 women, 4 transgenders rescued from street flesh trade in Kukatpally



GNS News Agency, Oct 24 Hyderabad: In a joint operation conducted by Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) and teams from Kukatpally and KPHB police to curb street prostitution, 31 women and 4 transgender persons were caught and rescued from a flesh trade on Wednesday night. The operation under the supervision of K Srinivas Rao, ACP Kukatpally, was focused on preventing street prostitution at Bhagyanagar bus stop, KPHB metro station, Kukatpally and vicinities. Following complaints from citizens on street prostitution becoming rampant in these areas, four special teams were formed for the operation. These teams included the ACP, three inspectors, seven sub-inspectors, two assistant sub-inspectors, and 36 police constables. According to the police, as a result of the operation, 31 women and 4 transgender persons involved in street prostitution were caught. Four cases were registered at Kukatpally police station, and one case was registered at KPHB police station under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956. "The individuals caught were produced before the Tahsildar in Kukatpally for binding them over to ensure good behaviour. After completing the bind-over procedure, they will be released with notices issued under Section 35 of the BNSS Act," Srinivas Rao said. Earlier this month, a similar operation was conducted with the same special teams during which 22 individuals were caught and cases were booked at Kukatpally and KPHB police stations. The Cyberabad Police said they will strictly enforce laws against prostitution and related activities. "

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Sacrilege cases

THE grant of prosecution sanction by the Punjab Government sets the stage for resumption of the trial against the Dera Sacha Sauda chief in three sacrilege cases dating back to 2015. The Supreme Court had recently lifted the stay imposed by the Punjab and Haryana High Court on proceedings against the self-styled godman. The cases involve the desecration of the Sikh scripture in Faridkot district. Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh was among those booked for causing religious hurt following the registration of multiple first information reports. The delay in taking the cases to their logical conclusion has added to the political sluffest. The AAP government has been facing flak for inaction from within its own ranks. Even after nine years, closure is nowhere in sight.

The dera chief remains a controversial figure over actions considered blasphemous by the Sikh community. Ram Rahim is already serving a 20-year sentence for rape and murder in a Rohtak jail. The frequent parole granted to him by the Haryana government is viewed as a sign of the influence he holds. Public perception, thus, started gaining ground of a deliberate attempt to prevent bringing him to justice in the sacrilege cases. For Ram Rahim's followers, such insinuations and ennuis put him at a distinct disadvantage. As per the special investigation team of the Punjab Police, the dera chief was one of the main conspirators and among the 12 persons indicted for the sacrilege incidents. The way forward is a fair and time-bound trial.

The incidents of sacrilege and the firing on protesters in 2015 continue to rankle. A mature and more nuanced vocabulary by political leaders in matters of such sensitive nature would help. Social harmony cannot be held hostage to the alleged misdeeds of an individual.

With a free, online journal, Pune and Delhi academics are serving up a different kind of cuisine

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

While the world knows Gauri Lankesh as a firebrand, it was her neighbour, the eminent artist Pushpamala N, who drew attention to another side of the murdered Bengaluru-based journalist and activist. "The Gauri we knew was also a lively, pretty, gregarious person with a great sense of humour. She used to throw large parties and was a good cook. She had given me several recipes which I use till today," says Pushpamala in an interview published in an online journal, On Eating. Pushpamala also talks about creating a performance around food, Gauri Lankesh's Urgent Saaru, and the short film, Rashtriya Kheer and Desiy Salad (National Pudding and Indigenous Salad), in 2004.

On the other hand, the pathbreaking Dalit writer from Bengal, Manoranjan Byapari, talks about how he used to be a cook and a servant at a tea shop. "I neither made the tea, nor sold it. All I did was work there — washing the dirty glasses," he says in an article published in On Eating. Byapari reveals a little-known side of food politics. "I'd found work at a sweet shop there (Jalpaiguri). They didn't pay me anything — I was just given food... To balance this iniquity, I was driven to polish off ten pieces of sandesh, rosogollas, kalakands and chamchams. Each of them were priced at four annas. That's how I calculated my income," he writes. Pune "I think food is a very important part of human life and experience. I'm not talking of fancy food, or one being a foodie, but just a basic necessity that you need to live," says Ray.

Food is served from a range of perspectives in On Eating, each edition of the magazine peppered with complex sociocultural, political, gender and economic realities that steam up in kitchens and tables across the country. Possibly the only such magazine of its kind in India, On Eating is the brainchild of two academics, Pune-based Kunal Ray and Delhi-based Sumana Roy. "I think food is a very important part of human life and experience. I'm not talking of fancy food, or one being a foodie, but just a basic necessity that you need to live," says Ray.

Both being teachers of the English language with an affinity for words, eating and reading about eating, Ray and Roy decided to start an online magazine, oneating.in, amid the uncertainty of the pandemic when a locked-down world went aggressively online with recipes for coffee, pasta, bakes and more. What the duo decided early was that the magazine would be multilingual and accessible to people who do not read only the English language. Byapari's article was the first, published May 2021. Since then, stories, from original writings and translations to essays and poems, exquisitely illustrated, have been uploaded every month, creating a colourful menu in languages ranging from Bangla to Malayalam to Tamil to Hindi. "Kunal and I are both accidental academics. While both of us are interested in creating an archive of eating cultures of the Indian subcontinent, we are also particular in making this accessible to those without a specialist vocabulary. We like well-written, well-researched essays that reveal unexpected histories," says Roy. Her relationship with food is not unlike her relationship with everything else around her "of interest, wonder, curiosity, like, dislike, remembrance". "Food makes it possible for me to experience the wonder of this world inside my mouth," says Roy. Ray is "not a great cook but you had to cook to eat to survive during Covid". Roy would send him "little recipes and voice notes and I would cook".

The magazine is also unusual in not publishing excerpts or Instagram-style recipes. Instead, it has consistently maintained an intellectual depth and long-form articles that, clearly, target the thoughtful reader in an age of fast reads. Articles are through submissions but, every so often, it is the founders who seek out writers, such as the dancer Leela Samson. "Food is extremely important for a dancer, but there's no writing about what a dancer eats. My only brief to Leela akka was to lead us in understanding this. She constructed an essay giving very interesting insights about her life," says Ray. Another dancer, Mallika Sarabhai, talks about her life in the essay, "Food as Autobiography" while the writer Gita Viswanath talks about nasal feeding of her bedridden mother. Politician Shashi Tharoor, who enjoys eating, starts with "What can a Malayali writer think about when asked to write about food and eating?"

PETA moves Karnataka High Court against holding bullock races outside Udupi and Dakshina Kannada



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

PETA has requested that the Government be restrained from giving permission to hold bullock races outside the two districts and also be directed to enforce provisions of amended Act as well as Supreme Court directions in any further race. PETA has requested that the Government be restrained from giving permission to hold bullock races outside the two districts and also be directed to enforce provisions of amended Act as well as Supreme Court directions in any further race. for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or PETA, has moved the Karnataka High Court against holding bullock races such as kambala outside the districts of Udupi and Dakshina Kannada, where such races are held as part of local culture. As the matter was heard on Tuesday by a bench

of Chief Justice N V Anjaria and Justice K V Aravind, PETA, represented by senior advocate Dhyan Chinappa, submitted that the Karnataka Government had introduced an amendment to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to allow kambala on the grounds of culture, which was subsequently upheld by the Supreme Court.

The counsel said, "Now they have said they will hold it in Bangalore, in Shimoga... These two places require the animals to be brought by trucks. From Dakshina Kannada to Bangalore travelling 300 km and then, they will be made to run in this race..." Chinappa said that it was argued before the Supreme Court that kambala was of cultural importance in the two districts. "Emboldened by that, you cannot start conducting it in different parts of the state," he added. The kambala race involves two bullocks directed by a driver running with them.

In response to a question by the high court as to whether holding the event would amount to cruelty to the participating animals, the counsel said, "They are brought here in trucks and are made to race. This becomes a commercial event and no longer traditional. There are tickets, food courts, VVIP seats, lakhs of people expected to come for such events.... It cannot be a show. It has to be a traditional function, which is part of the culture of a particular area." The animal rights group also requested that a November 2023 government order giving permission for such races to be declared ultra vires and that action be taken against organisers of such races in Bengaluru.

Citizens write to BMC seeking Bandra Fort's restoration back to original state, more green cover



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

A week after writing to the state archeological department over the 'altered' aesthetics of the 400-year-old Bandra fort, residents have now rallied together and written to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), raising concerns over the concretisation of the Bandra fort garden, which has significantly depleted the green cover. With nearly 80 signatories, the letter — addressed to BMC officials including the assistant commissioner of H/ward and civic chief, Bhushan Gagrani — has called for the restoration of the Bandra fort garden back to its original glory by removing the newly concretised sections inside the garden and for the plantation of more bushes, shrubs and shade-giving indigenous trees to help combat the heat.

Seeking to restore the Bandra Fort (Castella de Aguada) — built by the Portuguese in 1640 — the state archeological department issued a Rs 70 lakh work order for executing repairs on the structure. Furthermore, the BMC — under whose possession the nearby garden lies, launched beautification works on the garden last year. While repair work on the fort is still underway, the beautified garden was opened to the public earlier this month.

However, local residents and activists were taken aback to find that not only had the restoration tampered

with the original character of the fort, but also the green cover of the garden had been reduced significantly, owing to the concretisation. On Tuesday, residents submitted a letter to the senior civic officials expressing their dismay at the drastic reduction of greenery and the concretisation work in the garden, deeming it 'unsustainable' and 'anti-nature'. "This 'redevelopment' of our existing green spaces by needlessly uprooting and replacing plants, changing the flooring tiles, and concretising large areas which costs a whopping Rs 18.23 crore of taxpayer's money is absolutely unnecessary and a sheer waste and misuse of funds," read a part of the letter. Natasha Pereira, a local resident who has been frequenting the fort since childhood, told The Indian Express that the recent concretisation has resulted in significant heating of the open space, much to the displeasure of residents. "The once green lawn (near the waterfront promenade) has been replaced with concrete/basalt tiles in which the sun's blazing heat is glaring to one's eyes. Earlier, there used to be one-metre high shrubs, which have been removed and replaced with small bushes instead. Shockingly, even the lotus pond is gone. While the garden used to be nice and cool earlier, it has become very hot owing to concretisation," lamented Pereira.

Besides restoring the greenery, the residents — in their letter — have also appealed to the BMC to restore the lotus pond and install benches beneath trees. For its part, the BMC maintains that the beautification has only been undertaken in the previously undeveloped areas, with more indigenous plantations slated to be undertaken in the next phase of works. A senior official from BMC said that the existing green spaces have remained untouched. "We have carried out some development work behind the amphitheatre near the remains of Byramjee Jeejeebhoy and the temple to make the space more accessible for the disabled. We have put up basalt in the front portion, where there used to be pebbles, but we have also installed a lot of planters. Towards the entrance, we have also planted tall trees to enhance greenery," he said.

Pimpri MLA Anna Bansode likely to be denied ticket as NCP scouts for 'winnable' candidate



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

As Maharashtra gears up for Assembly elections in November, the local unit of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) on Tuesday hinted that sitting MLA Anna Bansode might be denied ticket in the reserved constituency of Pimpri citing poor health and also because some leaders are upset with his style of functioning. "The party is looking for candidate who will ensure a victory... We have several aspirants even from Maha Vikas Aghadi who are trying to get our nomination," Yogesh Behl, the newly-elected president of NCP Pimpri-Chinchwad unit, told reporters.

Bansode who was elected twice from Pimpri has been under fire from voters due to his inaccessibility. He is close to Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. Behl said that some leaders have complained to party national president Ajit Pawar that Bansode should be replaced. "In the last five years, Bansode has been working in the constituency. However, he has not been able to give his cent per cent due to health reasons," he said.

Behl said the party has received applications from leaders such as Jitendra Nanaware, BJP leader Seema Sawale, Republican Party of India (RPI) leader Chandrakanta Sonkamble and even from former MP Gautam Chabuskar of the Shiv Sena. "The party has not decided who should be given the ticket. Bansode might be continued. But at the same time, the party is giving a deep thought whether to bring a new face. The party leaders are weighing the options based on the feedback they are getting," he said. Behl said Seema Sawale, a former BJP corporator, has for months been trying to get NCP nomination from Pimpri. "She has been touch with the voters and has been working in the constituency," he

said. Behl said Jiteendra Nanaware is young and his known for taking up public cause. "He has the backing of Shiv Sena MP Shirang Barne. He is also close to me..." Behl said. Behl said Chandrakanta Sonkamble is from RPI (A). "She is ready to join our party. Even Ramdas Athavale has contacted our party chief. He however is backing her claim as RPI candidate," he said. When Ajit Pawar had staged rebellion in 2019, Bansode was the only MLA who remained with him till the end. The rebellion fizzled out but Bansode struck close rapport with Ajit Pawar. According to sources in the NCP, Ajit Pawar would not like to replace Bansode who stood by him during difficult time. "However, now things have changed. Ajit Pawar wants a leader who will win him a seat. Every seat matters in this election. As a result, the party is thinking of replacing him," the source added.

No brand value of Tejashwi Yadav: Assam CM Himanta over seat sharing among INDIA bloc allies in Jharkhand

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday alleged that RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav has "no brand value" in the INDIA bloc as he "failed" to get adequate seats for the upcoming Jharkhand assembly polls despite "visiting CM Hemant Soren's residence thrice". Sarma, who is also the BJP's election co-in charge for Jharkhand, accused the ruling JMM of lacking candidates for the upcoming polls. His comment comes after some BJP leaders joined the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha ahead of the assembly elections. "Tejashwi Yadav has no brand value. He stands exposed before the masses of Bihar. He went thrice to Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's home (for seats) but to no results..." Sarma alleged.

Sarma also said he felt "sad" about difficulties faced by Yadav over seat-sharing arrangement among INDIA bloc partners in Jharkhand.

Nilesh Rane to join Shinde Sena, will contest from Kudal-Malvan



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Nilesh Rane, son of BJP leader and former Union Minister Narayan Rane, will join the Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Wednesday and will contest from the Kudal-Malvan constituency in the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly polls. Announcing his decision to join the Shinde Sena, Nilesh, a former MP from Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg, said, "I will be joining the Shiv Sena in the presence of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Wednesday at 4pm."

Nilesh added that he is happy that he got an opportunity to contest elections on the bow and arrow symbol, on which his father Narayan Rane started his political career. "The Kudal seat has gone to Shiv Sena in the seat sharing arrangement between the ruling Mahayuti alliance. Since I have been working in this constituency for the past few years, I have been supported by BJP, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and Guardian Minister Ravindra Chavan," he said. Nilesh would be in a fray against Shiv Sena UBT leader and staunch opponent of Rane family Vaibhav Naik, who is the sitting MLA from the seat. Naik had defeated Narayane Rane from the Kudal-Malvan constituency in 2014. Nilesh's brother Nitesh Rane is the sitting BJP MLA from Kankavali constituency and will be in the fray again this year to retain the seat.

Ex-Pune corporator links I-T raid on relative to his 'challenge' to Kothrud BJP candidate Chandrakant Patil

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Former Pune BJP corporator Amol Balwadkar appeared to suggest on Tuesday that his wrestler brother-in-law, Abhijit Katke, was raided by income tax officials because he was posing a challenge to Maharashtra minister Chandrakant Patil, the party's candidate for the Kothrud Assembly seat. Although the BJP has denied him the ticket for the Kothrud seat, Balwadkar said he was yet to take a final decision on contesting the election and also that he was not scared of anyone.

"I don't know how and why the income tax sleuths raided the property of Katke, who is a known wrestler and has brought fame to the state as well as the country. He is my brother-in-law. I have learnt from my relatives that the income tax officials mentioned my name at least four times saying they will investigate me as well," Balwadkar said. "I am not a big leader. So I don't know what the intention behind troubling my relative is. We are a family of farmers and run a small business. There is nothing wrong that we have done. The BJP declared its candidate two days ago and I have since been silent, as I am yet to take a decision on whether to contest the polls or not. I am not scared of anyone," he added.

Balwadkar, who said he had worked for the BJP for the last 10 years, had sought the party's ticket to contest Maharashtra Assembly elections 2024. He had alleged that Patil had been putting pressure on the BJP to make him withdraw his demand for the Kothrud seat, adding that the party had sidelined him after he had declared his intention to contest the Assembly election. A day before the BJP declared Patil as its candidate, the ruling party's state chief, Chandrashekhar Bawankule, visited Balwadkar to persuade him not to do anything that would affect the party's performance.

Migratory falcons spotted in Manipur's Tamenglong district, patrolling for roosting sites intensified

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

A substantial number of Amur Falcons (Falco amurensis) have been sighted in Manipur's Tamenglong district after completing their remarkable migratory journey, covering several thousand kilometers. In response, the district authorities, along with forest officials, have intensified patrols around the birds' roosting sites.

"A large number of Amur Falcons have been spotted in the district. We have increased patrolling, particularly at night, around the birds' roosting sites," said Kh. Hitlet, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Tamenglong. He added that there are over seven roosting sites in the area. These migratory visitors, locally known as 'Kahuaipuna,' arrive in northeastern India, particularly in Manipur and Nagaland, in large numbers during October. They are on their southbound migration from their breeding grounds in northern China, eastern Mongolia, and far eastern Russia. During their stopover, which lasts three to four weeks, the falcons build fat reserves by foraging on termites before continuing their journey to their wintering grounds in South Africa.

Last year, the forest department recorded around 1.41 lakh falcons at a single roosting site in Chuilion. This year, the district authorities, along with the forest department, are focusing on radio-tagging the birds. "We plan to radio-tag two falcons by the end of November, once they have built up sufficient fat reserves to avoid harming them. As for the census, it will be conducted every two years," explained Kh. Hitlet.

Day after India-China border agreement, Beijing says 'reached solution on relevant matters'



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

India-China LAC Agreement: More than four years after the military standoff sent bilateral ties between India and China south, the two countries agreed on the disengagement and patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). (File photo) India-China LAC Agreement: More than four years after the military standoff sent bilateral ties between India and China south, the two countries agreed on the disengagement and patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). (File photo) India-China Border Agreement: A day after India said that it had reached an agreement with China on patrolling arrangements in the border areas, Beijing said on Tuesday that the two sides "have reached a solution" on "relevant matters" but did not give any details.

The Global Times reported that in response to questions about the reported agreement between India and China on border patrols in disputed areas, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian "confirmed progress".

"China and India have maintained close communication through diplomatic and military channels regarding border-related issues. Currently, the two sides have reached a solution on the relevant matters, which China

views positively. In the next phase, China will work with India to effectively implement the solution plan, spokesperson Lin Jian stated," the Global Times said. On the bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the margins of the BRICS Summit starting Tuesday in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan in Russia's southwest, Jian reportedly said, "We will keep you updated if anything comes up." The announcement of the agreement was made on Monday by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri in New Delhi. "Over the last several weeks, Indian and Chinese diplomatic and military negotiators have been in close contact with each other in a variety of forums. As a result of these discussions, agreement has been arrived on patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas, leading to disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020. We will be taking the next steps on this," Misri had said, briefing reporters. On Monday, during an interaction at the NDTV World Summit, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had called it a "positive and good" development. "I think it creates a basis... peace and tranquillity, which should be there in the border areas, which was there before 2020, we will be able to come back to that," he had said.

Jaishankar had referred to Misri's statement, saying, "What foreign secretary has said is what I can also say: That we have reached an agreement on patrolling, and with that, we have gone back to where the situation was in 2020. We can say that the disengagement process with China has been completed... There are areas where, for various reasons after 2020, because they had blocked us, so we had blocked them. So what has happened is we have reached an understanding which will allow the patrolling." This development took place four and a half years after Chinese incursions in eastern Ladakh triggered a military standoff along the Line of Actual Control and sent bilateral ties south.

7,000 resident doctors on strike, medical services crippled in Rajasthan, 100 surgeries postponed at Jaipur hospital

Medical services across Rajasthan have been impacted as 7,000 resident doctors from the state's government hospitals went on strike demanding better security, increased stipend, and revision of the mandatory bond policy, among others. The strike, which has been going on since October 19, has severely affected the Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Hospital in Jaipur — one of the state's most important hospitals where people from across districts come for their healthcare needs.

More than 100 surgeries were postponed at the hospital on Tuesday as a result of the strike. The general wards and the ICU were among the worst-hit departments of the hospital. Parshuram Meena (56), from Sawai Madhopur, had come to SMS Hospital for a kidney operation, but could not get an appointment with a doctor. "I came to Jaipur on Monday, but I still have not been able to meet a doctor," Meena said Tuesday. "My surgery was supposed to happen on Wednesday, but looking at the situation, I am thinking of going back and returning next week. This is a helpless situation," he said. While the state government has urged the striking doctors to get back to work, they say they have not got any assurances from the government. Dr Saket Dhadhich, media adviser of the Jaipur Association for Resident Doctors (JARD), said: "We do not want to continue with the strike because we know the problem the patients face. But the government has not given us any assurances." On the demands of the doctors, he said: "We have demanded better security and infrastructure arrangements in all medical colleges for doctors' security. Stipend should be increased, because it has not been done for the last four years. Also, junior specialists should be recruited in all branches in which postgraduate degrees are awarded. There are eight total



demands and we want each to be accepted."

Deepak Maheshwari, principal of SMS Medical College, however, criticised the doctors, saying the strike was continuing even though the government had accepted many of their demands. "This is the eighth strike in one-and-a-half years. What problems do these doctors have that they go on strike so frequently? Should we stop attending patients for every small inconvenience? The state government had tried to convince the doctors to call off the strike and even accepted many of their demands. They must talk to the government and find a solution to this," Maheshwari said. He said the doctors currently working at the hospital are doing longer shifts to take care of patients. Government hospitals outside Jaipur have also been impacted, with resident doctors holding strikes in districts including Ajmer, Udaipur, and Sikar. While emergency and trauma wards of most of the hospitals continue to function, surgeries and routine work have been postponed.

Bombay HC grants bail to Sachin Waze in bribery case filed by CBI

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Waze's another habeas corpus plea in connection with Antilia bomb scare case and the death of businessman Mansukh Hiran registered by National Investigation Agency (NIA) is pending before the HC and he has not availed relief in the same as yet. Sachin Waze's another habeas corpus plea in connection with Antilia bomb scare case and the death of businessman Mansukh Hiran registered by National Investigation Agency (NIA) is pending before the HC and he has not availed relief in the same as yet. Waze had claimed before Justice Sonak that he had spent over two years in prison for a case where no chargesheet had been filed despite having been granted pardon by the special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court as approver and he was a wit-



The bench said that conditions for Waze to be released on bail will be set out by the trial court. Waze's another habeas corpus plea in connection with Antilia bomb scare case and the death of businessman Mansukh Hiran registered by National Investigation Agency (NIA) is pending before the HC and he has not availed relief in the same as yet. Waze had claimed before Justice Sonak that he had spent over two years in prison for a case where no chargesheet had been filed despite having been granted pardon by the special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court as approver and he was a wit-

ness in the case. Despite this, his bail pleas were being rejected by the special court while the other accused were let out on bail, the plea argued. Waze, through senior advocate Aabad Ponda, sought to be released under section 167(2) of the CrPC as no chargesheet had been filed against him as an accused. In his handwritten petition, Waze claimed that he had not been named as an accused in the chargesheet, but was named a witness. Despite this, his bail pleas were being rejected by the special court while the other accused were let out on bail, the plea said. The bench permitted Waze to

withdraw his plea that challenged the constitutionality of section 306(4) of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and granted liberty to challenge the same in appropriate proceedings and kept the said contentions open. The section deals with granting of pardon to accomplices and sub-section (4) states that the approver may be detained in prison till completion of the trial. In August this year, after an HC bench led by Justice Bharati H Dangre concluded the hearing and reserved its order on Waze's plea, Justice Dangre recused herself from the matter and said a bench comprising her cannot pass an order in the same.

Do you own something antique but not sure what to do with it? This firm can help you preserve it



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

An elderly woman from Mumbai approached Pune-based Studio Gestalt with a unique problem: her home was filled with old and valuable books, but with no children or descendants, she didn't know whom to pass them on to. Studio Gestalt, founded by architect couple Prerna Shetty and Shreemay Phadnis, stepped in to help. They created a digital inventory of her books, ensuring she had a record of all her titles. They then searched for the right client and someone sensitive to heritage acquired the collection and turned it into the pride of his library. In India, heritage conservation is often associated with large-scale projects involving museums and historical institutions. However, Studio Gestalt has carved out a niche by focusing on personal valuables, ranging from everyday items like a grandfather's pen to a family heirloom painting. "No one was catering to this sector. We realized that everyone has some form of heritage—something they cherish and want to preserve—but they don't know where to go," explains Phadnis. Studio Gestalt is named after a theory that suggests people perceive objects and situations as a whole, rather than just a collection of parts. Both founders hold postgraduate degrees in conservation. Phadnis has worked at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya in Mumbai and the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority as a conservation planner, while Shetty was an architectural researcher with noted architect Brinda Somaya. Studio Ge-

stalt is named after a theory that suggests people perceive objects and situations as a whole, rather than just a collection of parts. Studio Gestalt is named after a theory that suggests people perceive objects and situations as a whole, rather than just a collection of parts.

When they started Studio Gestalt in 2018 with partner Apoorva Deshpande, their portfolio included interior design, architecture, and commercial projects. "After a while, we realized our hearts weren't in it," says Phadnis. The COVID-19 pandemic made the architects pause and reflect. While many senior architects and conservationists were working on large-scale projects for the government and international organizations, the duo turned their focus toward preserving the heritage of ordinary people. "We found that people saw heritage in their old bungalows, in treasured letters, books, photographs, and even in the stories passed down from their elders," says Phadnis.

The reimagining of Studio Gestalt in 2018 coincided with a growing awareness among Indians about their personal legacies. "We're now at a time when people in India are more conscious of conserving their heirlooms and sentimental assets. With nearly 80 years since Independence, the third or fourth generation wants to cherish their historical artifacts and memories," adds Phadnis. Studio Gestalt engages in a range of activities, including research and publication, inventory and archiving, historic interiors, conservation architecture, and educational outreach. Sometimes, individuals drop by with a cherished object and ask, "Iska kuchh ho sakta hai kya (Can anything be done with this)?" One man owned a painting but wasn't sure of its value or how to care for it. On the other end of the spectrum are large-scale projects, such as one in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh, focusing on the River Narmada and her riverbanks. Studio Gestalt is also a consultant to the Holkar Cultural Center, an initiative by the royal family of Indore. "Our architectural and urban conservation projects are large-scale and are our main revenue sources. We also work with private clients from aristocratic or wealthy merchant families for conservation and archiving projects," explains Phadnis. One such project involved a family from Pune with an aristocratic background who owned a mahirap (a traditional wooden partition) in one of their wadas (traditional houses). Though the family no longer lived in the wada, they wanted to preserve the mahirap, which featured glass panels, wooden frames, and intricate Pauranic figurines painted on it. "That was a challenging yet unique project. We even had to source squirrel hair brushes from Udaipur to restore the painting," says Phadnis. Though they consulted with art conservationists, the couple also worked on many of the panels themselves. "We love to be hands-on with whatever we're doing," Phadnis adds. As Studio Gestalt celebrates its third anniversary in November, the team is busier than ever. "We want to help people understand their heritage, how to engage with it, and how to conserve it," says Phadnis.

Terrorists who targeted construction firm possibly came from Pakistan via Gurez, then Bandipore, investigators believe

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

At the funeral of Dr Shahnawaz Dar, who was among the seven persons killed in the terror attack in J&K's Ganderbal district Sunday. He was laid to rest at his ancestral village in Budgam district on Monday. (Express photo by Shuaib Masoodi) At the funeral of Dr Shahnawaz Dar, who was among the seven persons killed in the terror attack in J&K's Ganderbal district Sunday. He was laid to rest at his ancestral village in Budgam district on Monday. Police in Jammu and Kashmir have picked up around 50 men for questioning from across central Kashmir's Ganderbal district as it probes the terror attack on an infrastructure project near Sonamarg that killed seven employees of a construction firm. As per police sources, initial investigation suggests militants who targeted the employees are likely to be infiltrators from Pakistan who made their way to the district from Bandipore.

Seven employees, including a local doctor, of APCO Infratech were killed on Sunday when terrorists opened fire on their camp at the strategic Z-Morh tunnel, which connects Kangan town and Sonamarg tourist resort on the Srinagar-Leh national highway. Police sources said that while they don't have any credible leads into the attack as of now, they have picked up suspects from different parts of the district. "Each police station in the area has rounded up suspects. They are being questioned to seek any credible lead that could help in a breakthrough," a police source said. Police sources also said the attack-



ers likely infiltrated into the Valley recently. "Our questioning of the survivors suggest that the attackers were not locals. There is a high likelihood that they were Pakistani terrorists who infiltrated into the Valley recently from the Gurez sector," the police source said. A high mountain range to the rear of Kangan connects Gurez and Bandipore. "The militants seem to have escaped to the forests after the attack," said a source.

As per the survivors, on Sunday evening, two men wearing woolen shawls appeared at the campsite of the Z-Morh tunnel and opened fire at multiple locations. While three of the deceased hailed from Bihar, one each hailed from Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Jammu. A local doctor from central Kashmir's Budgam was also among the dead.

Police bust fake court in Gujarat; conman who posed as 'judge' arrested

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Ahmedabad: Police have uncovered a nefarious scheme orchestrated by a man masquerading as a judge in his own fake tribunal and passing 'judgements' since 2019 especially in land deals in Gandhinagar area. Morris Samuel Christian, since arrested, is accused of orchestrating a deception that fooled many into believing they were in a legitimate court. Police said Christian, the mastermind behind this elaborate ruse, wielded his gavel to pass judgments in favour of his clients, all within the fabricated walls of his office. The bogus tribunal, reminiscent of a real courtroom, worked undetected for years, with its roots tracing back to as early as 2019. Initial probe suggested that Christian preyed on unsuspecting individuals entangled in land disputes, promising swift resolutions in exchange for hefty fees.

By assuming the role of a judge, he exploited the vulnerable, manipulating the course of justice for personal gain. The elaborate charade involved Christian's associates posing as court personnel, creating a façade of authenticity to dupe his clients. The elaborate theatrics, complete with a mock courtroom setting in Gandhinagar, lent an air of legitimacy to his deceitful proceedings.

In 2019, Christian passed an order in favour of his client using the same modus operandi. The case was pertaining to a government land under the district collector while his client had staked claim on it and wanted to

add his name in revenue records related to the plot in question located in Paldi area, a police release said on Monday.

Without an authority or order issued by any court under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, Christian told his client he has been appointed as the "official arbitrator" by the government. The conman then initiated fake proceedings at his 'court' and passed an order in favour of his client, directing the collector to add his client's name in the revenue records of that land, the release said. To implement the order, Christian, through another lawyer, filed an appeal in the city civil court and attached the fraudulent order passed by him.

The court registrar, Hardik Desai, recently found out that Christian is neither an arbitrator nor is the order of the tribunal genuine. Following his complaint, the Karanj police here lodged an FIR under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 170 (pretending to hold any office as a public servant) and 419 (cheating by personation). The conman was arrested for allegedly cheating people by posing as a judge of an arbitral tribunal and passing favourable orders claiming he has been appointed as an arbitrator by a competent court to adjudicate legal disputes, the release said. The accused is already facing a cheating complaint filed at the city's Maninagar police station in 2015, it added.

Using YouTube videos, woman from remote Odisha village defies odds to clear civil services exam



GNS News Agency, Oct

With her family unable to afford coaching classes, Bini Muduli watched YouTube videos and took mock tests online to prepare for the Odisha Civil Services (OCS) Examination. When the results came out on Saturday evening, she had become the first from the small Bonda community, which is considered a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) by the government, to clear the state civil service exam.

Not losing hope despite not making it to the final merit list on her first attempt in 2020, Bini this time secured 596th rank. "I knew that my parents would not be able to afford my coaching. But I decided that would not

hinder me in achieving my dream of becoming a civil servant," the 24-year-old. Regarding her preparation, she said, "I started preparing online by watching YouTube videos and other online study material. I followed videos of toppers to learn the examination strategy." Even accessing the internet was not easy. She had to leave her home village, Mudulipada in Malkangiri district, to the nearby town of Govindpali, where internet services are available. Her father, Ram Muduli, works as a cook and caretaker at a government high school, and her mother, Sunamali, is an anganwadi worker. She went to school at a government school in Malkangiri's Bonda Ghat, and then at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya. "After completing my post-graduation in Botany from Vikram Devi (Autonomous) College, Jeypore, I started working as an ayurvedic assistant to financially support my studies. After I failed to make it to the interview round (previously), I realised that my preparations were not enough and that I had to work harder. Then I appeared for the online mock tests, which helped me a lot," Bini said. She said her parents and relatives had always been supportive and were even happier than her about her achievement. As a civil servant, Bini said she would work for the overall development of the tribal community, especially in ensuring education for girls. She also said she would work to ensure that benefits of all tribal development schemes of the government reach the intended beneficiaries.

3 years after NIA court cleared Assam MLA Akhil Gogoi, he is charged under UAPA in same case

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Akhil Gogoi at an anti-CAA protest in Assam in December 2019. (Express file photo) Akhil Gogoi at an anti-CAA protest in Assam in December 2019. (Express file photo) A Special NIA Court Tuesday framed charges against Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi and three others, including under sections of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, for their alleged role in the 2019 anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests in the state. This comes more than three years after an NIA court cleared Gogoi of all charges in the case.

The case against Gogoi, an Independent MLA and leader from the regional outfit Rajgor Dal, and his associates had been filed at the Chandmari police station in December 2019. It is one of two cases filed against him during the anti-CAA protests in the state, which had turned violent. On Tuesday, Special Judge S K Sharma framed charges against Gogoi under section 18 of the UAPA, which pertains to conspiracy or attempt to commit a terrorist act, as well as under IPC sections pertaining to criminal conspiracy, promoting enmity between different groups, and assertions prejudicial to national integration. However, the court dropped two significant charges made by the NIA in its chargesheet – section 39 of the UAPA, which pertains to support given to a terrorist organisation, and section 124A of the IPC, which pertains to sedition. The FIR had alleged that Gogoi "secretly merged" his organisation, KMSS, with the Revolutionary Communist Centre and the latter was later merged with the banned CPI (Maoist). Gogoi was in jail for over one-and-a-half years after his arrest on December 12, 2020. On July 1, 2021, he was released after a special



NIA court cleared him of all charges, stating that there was no "prima facie materials to frame charges against the accused persons" and the "ends of justice demands that the accused be discharged, without making him suffer the process of trial." This was appealed by the NIA in the Gauhati High Court and in February last year, and the HC allowed the NIA to frame charges.

"Challenging an oppressive state is very difficult and heavy work. Today's charges make one thing clear: the government is still working against us... The court had given us relief, this court had said that the charges against are completely false charges and that this case cannot be taken up in court. Now again the government is pressing for the case to be taken up," said Gogoi after Tuesday's court proceedings. Gogoi's legal representative Santanu Borthakur said, "Once the court frames the charges, there are two options. Either to face trial or to approach the High Court against this. We are mulling over the matter and after studying the verdict, we will talk to our client."

Death toll in Bulandshahr cylinder blast rises to 7; rescue ops continue



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

The death toll in an oxygen cylinder blast in a two-storey house in Sikandrabad of Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr district late on Monday mounted to seven after a man succumbed to his injuries on Tuesday even as the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and local teams continued their rescue operation.

Officials said the blast was so powerful that the house, which had 24 occupants, was reduced to rubble at around 8 pm Monday. While Rajjudin, 58, his wife Rukhsana, 45, their sons Aas Mohammed, 26, and Salman, 11, their daughter Tamanna, 24, and granddaughter Hija, 3, were killed on Monday night, their other son, Shahrukh, 23, died on Tuesday. They were buried Tuesday afternoon. Rizwan Mohammed, the son-in-law

of the deceased couple, said his wife Tamanna had been living with her parents for the last two days. "She was nine-month pregnant and our minor daughter too lost her life in the incident," he said. Renu Singh, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Sikandrabad, said 13 people, including two women and a minor girl, were rushed to the hospital where six of them died on Monday. "Some of them in serious condition while those with minor injuries have been discharged after primary treatment. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has expressed shock over the incident and directed officials in Bulandshahr to speed up the rescue mission and also to ensure proper medical treatment to those in the hospital," said Singh.

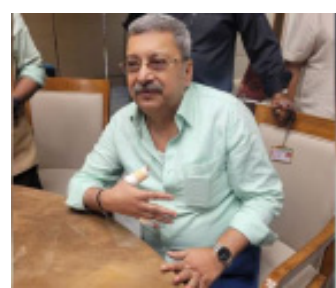
Chandra Prakash Singh, District Magistrate, Bulandshahr, said their priority is to rescue all those trapped in the debris and ensure immediate medical help to them. "The rescue work is likely to continue till late night today. What caused the blast will be known after the inquiry but our primary probe suggested that the oxygen cylinder was mishandled, causing the blast," said Singh. Shlok Kumar, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), said Rajjudin's wife Rukhsana was admitted to the hospital following a complaint of breathlessness for the last few days. She was released Monday evening but her condition deteriorated soon after she reached home. "The family members soon arranged an oxygen cylinder to provide her relief but it exploded somehow as a result the house collapsed," said Kumar.

TMC's Kalyan Banerjee hurts himself after breaking bottle during row with BJP's Abhijit Gangopadhyay

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Banerjee reportedly hurt his thumb and finger, which started bleeding during the row, and was provided first aid by officials and MPs present during the meeting. Kalyan Banerjee reportedly hurt his thumb and finger, which started bleeding during the row, and was provided first aid by officials and MPs present during the meeting. The meeting of the joint committee of Parliament on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill took a dramatic turn on Tuesday after Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Kalyan Banerjee smashed a glass bottle and ended up hurting himself during a heated discussion with BJP MP Abhijit Gangopadhyay. Banerjee reportedly hurt his thumb and finger, which started bleeding during the row, and was provided first aid by officials and MPs present during the meeting. He was later seen being escorted back to the meeting room by All India Majlis-e-Tehadul Muslemeen president Asaduddin Owaisi and Aam Aadmi Party MP Sanjay Singh. The committee chaired by BJP's Jagdambika Pal was listening to the views of a group of retired judges and lawyers when the Opposition mem-

bers questioned their stake in the bill. The committee was scheduled to hear the views of Cullack-based Justice in Reality and Panchasakha Bani Prachar Mandal and five Indian Union Muslim League MPs on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024. Last Monday, several Opposition MPs walked out of a meeting of the joint House committee after a former office-bearer of the Karnataka State Minorities Commission and BJP leader deposing before the panel made a comment on Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, reportedly over the allotment of Waqf land. The 31-member committee has been tasked by the



Lok Sabha to scrutinise the contentious Bill, which has drawn protests from Opposition parties and Muslim organisations. It has witnessed stormy scenes since its first meeting on August 22.

Stand by law on madrasas, Uttar Pradesh government tells SC



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday informed the Supreme Court it stands by its law on madrasas and the Allahabad High Court should not have held the entire law as unconstitutional. On Tuesday, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra posed a specific query to Additional Solicitor General K M Natraj, appearing for the state government, on whether he stood by the validity of the law as it provided the authority to regulate madrasas as well.

"Are you standing by the validity of the Act," the CJI asked the law officer the moment he commenced his submissions on a batch of pleas against the high court verdict. The Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 regulates the operation of madrasas in the state and was framed to ensure quality education, while adhering to constitutional principles, in such institutions. On March 22, the Allahabad High Court had declared the Act as "unconstitutional" and violative of the principle of secularism, and asked the state government to accommodate madrasa students in the formal schooling system. The state government had supported the law in

the high court. However, it did not file any appeal against the verdict. After the SC bench posed the query, Natraj said, "I support the validity of the Act. Since, the constitutionality (of the law) has been struck down, we want to say something. We are defending the legislation. The state did not file a SLP (special leave petition)." The state government filed its response in the high court standing by the Act and it cannot deviate from the stand, the law officer added. Striking down the law in its entirety would be incorrect and it was not the case of legislative competence, said Natraj, adding that it was struck down on account of fundamental rights. "Entire legislation need not be struck down," he said.

The bench, in the meantime, noted, "As a state, you have wide powers under Section 20 (of the madrasa law) to ensure basic quality of education in madrasas and as the state if you find that the basic level (of education) is not followed then you always can intervene." Natraj said a law could be struck down if it was either against fundamental rights or lacks legislative competence. Earlier in the day, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for a litigant, assailed the high court verdict. Referring to what HC had said about shutting madrasas and students going to normal schools, Rohatgi said, "My fundamental right is violated as I will not be receiving religious instructions." He added, "Hundreds of people are studying in madrasas and you cannot force somebody, this is not secularism." The hearing is underway. On October 21, the bench said the state had a vital interest in ensuring quality education, other than religious teachings, at government-aided madrasas so that students live a "decent" life after they pass out. On April 5, the CJI-led bench had provided a breather to about 17 lakh madrasa students by staying the verdict of the Allahabad High Court that had scrapped the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, calling it "unconstitutional" and violative of the principle of secularism.

Supreme Court extends interim anticipatory bail for Malayalam actor Siddique in sexual assault case

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

The Supreme Court Tuesday extended by two weeks the interim anticipatory bail granted to Malayalam actor Siddique, who is facing allegations of rape. A bench of Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma also allowed the request of Siddique's counsel Senior Advocate V Giri to respond to the status report filed by the Kerala Police. Seeking dismissal of the plea, Senior Advocate Ranjit Kumar, who appeared for Kerala, said Siddique is not cooperating with the rape investigation. "When he is coming (for investigation), he comes with a prepared statement that he won't answer anything more and that he can't recollect. Also, after FIR, he has closed his Facebook account. He does not want us to get access to that. We have to approach third parties to access," Kumar said.

To the bench's query about the delay in lodging the complaint of the incident dating to 2016, the senior counsel said the victim gathered the courage to come out in the open only after the report of the Justice Hema Committee, which exposed the casting couch and other exploitations in Malayalam film industry, was released. In their report, the Kerala Police urged the court not to give precedence to the liberty of Siddique over "the threat of disrupted investigation", saying there was "a stockpile of evidence" against the veteran actor and his custodial interrogation was necessary. On September 29, the SC granted Siddique interim protection from arrest, after he moved the top court following the Kerala High Court's rejection of his plea for anticipatory bail on September



23. The veteran actor has twice appeared before the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed after several women actors raised sexual assault complaints following the release of the Justice Hema Commission report.

In their report filed in the top court, the Kerala Police contended that Siddique, booked for allegedly raping an actress, was an "extremely influential person" and could "obstruct the course of justice and scuttle the investigative machinery". The police expressed apprehension that the "witnesses who have boldly come forward after the Justice Hema Commission report will step back" if his interim protection was indefinitely prolonged. As per the prosecution case, with the intention to rape the victim, Siddique tactfully lured her by promising a role in a film and thereafter raped her at a Thiruvananthapuram hotel on January 28, 2016.

Day after India-China agreement, Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi says wants to restore trust first



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

A day after India announced that an agreement had been reached with China on patrolling rights, Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi said India wanted to restore trust and go back to the status quo of April 2020, before Chinese incursions in Eastern Ladakh led to a standoff. Speaking on the sidelines of the Colonel Pyara

Lal Memorial Lecture organised by a think tank – the United Service Institution of India – General Dwivedi said: "We want to go back to the status quo of April 2020. Thereafter, we will be looking at disengagement, de-escalation, and normal management of the Line of Actual Control. This normal management of LAC will not just stop there. There are phases in that also. So this, what I'm saying, has been our stance from April '20."

He added: "As of now, we are trying to restore the trust. How the trust will be restored? It will get restored once we are able to see each other and we are able to convince each other, look the buffer zones which have been created, we are not creeping [into] and both have to reassure each other. Patrolling gives you that kind of advantage... As we restore the trust, the other phases will also follow through." The agreement, announced by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Monday, means India and China have agreed to restore patrolling rights to each other in the Depsang Plains and Demchok region, where the problems existed before April 2020.

New LeT-linked terror group module dismantled after raids across Kashmir: J&K Police

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

militant killed Police identified the newly formed militant organisation as Tehreek-e-Labaik Ya Mulim (TLM), which they said was an offshoot of the banned Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT). The J&K Police's Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK) wing has conducted operations across several districts of the Kashmir Valley on Tuesday and said that it busted the recruitment module of a newly formed militant group with links to Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT). According to police, they conducted the operations after getting inputs about an "active" militant module. Raids were carried out in several locations across Srinagar, Budgam and Ganderbal in central Kashmir; Kulgam, Anantnag and Pulwama in south Kashmir; and Bandipora in north Kashmir. Police identified the newly formed militant organisation as Tehreek-e-Labaik Ya Mulim (TLM), which they said was an offshoot of the banned Lashkar-



e-Toiba (LeT). The busted recruitment module of the TLM was run by a Pakistan-based Lashkar commander called Baba Hamas, police said. The operations came two days after seven people, most of them from outside J&K,

Bill Maher shares his views on dating and marriage amid Noor Alfallah romance rumours: 'It's not Hinduism'



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Comedian Bill Maher, 68, addressed his dating choices in a recent edition of The Skinny Confidential's Him & Her podcast. Maher's interview came following reports that he was seeing Al Pacino's ex-girlfriend Noor Alfallah after they were spotted together leaving the Chateau Marmont in Los Angeles. However, Alfallah, 30, has denied all of the rumors. Participate in the Festival of Gifts & get a chance to win an iPhone 15 and other exciting prizes. Play Now! Bill Maher admits he doesn't pursue women of his age. The host of Real Time with Bill Maher initially insisted that he wasn't enthusiastic about dating, but he later acknowledged that he usually doesn't pursue women of his age. "I'm not looking. I'm good," Maher informed podcast hosts Lauryn Evarts Bosstick and

Michael Bosstick that women found him more "attractive" due to his unavailability. "Nothing that I could have predicted when I was your age came to pass. Like I would never have imagined that at this age, anyone—and again, like I'll say this just generally—my dating is not age-appropriate," he stated. Michael then inquired as to if his romantic inclinations were viewed in an unconventional manner, being younger than the ideal age for a relationship. Maher's response was, "Not just perceived, they literally are." The political expert reacted savagely, despite admitting that he might receive criticism for being too blunt. "The people who are pissed off at that, f*** you. You do you, I do me. You do what works for you." Moving forward, Maher opened up about his thoughts on marriage and how he is still far from making any commitments. "I don't believe in it. It's not Hinduism, there's no belief in it," he stated regarding the marriage. "It would ruin everything. I mean, I'm not going to. I love to talk about this subject, but it's tough because I also don't really ever want to divulge the details of my own personal life." While most people won't "understand it," the comedian admitted that his decision to stay single surely "works" for him. In a message to his fans, he urged them to follow their own choices rather than marrying and starting a family merely to satisfy social expectations. He admitted that he doesn't believe in marriage, but added that some couples do have good marital life.

Pakistani man scans palm to pay for groceries at Chinese store: 'China living in 2050'

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

A Pakistani content creator shared a video of friends using China's palm payment technology at a grocery store, showcasing the country's tech advancements. In recent years, China has emerged as a leader in technological advancement, particularly in infrastructure and payment systems. Social media platforms are rife with videos and images showcasing the country's innovative approaches. Recently, a video shared on Instagram by Pakistani content creator Rana Hamza Saif has captured the attention of internet users, highlighting a fascinating new payment method that exemplifies China's cutting-edge technology. In the video, filmed in Zhuzhou, Saif and his group of friends visit a local grocery store. The clip shows one of the friends making a purchase using a palm payment system, which leaves others in the group visibly astonished. Saif explains that if a person's palm is registered, they can make payments anywhere in China with just a wave of their hand. Following the successful transaction, some friends express their disbelief, while others applaud this remarkable leap in technology. "China is Living In 2050" reads the caption of the post. The clip has quickly gone viral, racking up over nine million views on Instagram, with comments flooding in from viewers who are equally impressed by the advancement. One viewer expressed amazement, stating, "This is the future; I can't



believe we're seeing it today!" Another commented, "China is always a step ahead in technology—what an incredible system!" Users were keen to share their thoughts, with one saying, "This would make life so much easier; I hope it spreads globally." The excitement surrounding palm payment technology isn't limited to Saif's video. Earlier, Harsh Goenka, chairman of RPG Group, shared a similar clip on X, illustrating how the technology is transforming lives in China. In his video, a woman describes her experience using the palm payment method on the Beijing subway. She mentions, "Living in China, I'm used to cashless payments using QR codes and even facial recognition technology, and now I can even pay with my bare hands."

Central Park Five file defamation suit against Trump over debate comments

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

The Central Park Five -- five Black and Hispanic teenagers wrongfully convicted for the 1989 rape of a white jogger -- have filed a defamation lawsuit against Donald Trump over false statements he made during a September presidential debate. Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump speaks during an ABC News presidential debate with Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump speaks during an ABC News presidential debate with Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. The five Black and Hispanic teenagers who were wrongfully convicted for the 1989 rape of a white jogger in New York's Central Park sued Donald Trump for defamation on Monday over statements he made at last month's US presidential debate. Known widely as the Central Park Five, the defendants spent between five and 13 years in prison before they were cleared in 2002 based on new DNA evidence and the confession of another person.

Trump, the Republican nominee for the White House, falsely said at the September 10 debate with Democrat Vice President Kamala Harris that the Central Park Five had killed a person and pleaded guilty. The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Philadelphia by Yusef Salaam, Raymond Santana, Kevin Richardson, Antron Brown and Korey Wise, called Trump's statements "demonstrably false". Salaam is now a member of the New York City Council. A spokesperson for Trump's campaign on Monday called the case "just another frivolous, election interference lawsuit, filed by desperate left-wing activists".



A lawyer for the plaintiffs, Shanin Specter, said in a statement that Trump's remarks "cast them in a harmful false light and intentionally inflicted emotional distress on them." Specter denied any political motive in the lawsuit. "I'm not commenting on politics. We are seeking redress in a court of law," he said. The plaintiffs are seeking unspecified monetary damages for reputational and emotional harms as well as punitive damages. Trump has drawn criticism before over his statements about the Central Park Five. After the jogger's assault, he spoke out about the case and took out a full-page ad in several New York newspapers calling for the reinstatement of the death penalty. Trump in 2019 stood by his prior comments about the Central Park Five, and declined to apologise. Trump asked a US appeals court in September to reject a \$5 million verdict finding him liable for sexually assaulting and defaming the writer E Jean Carroll. A different jury in January ordered Trump to pay Carroll \$83.3 million for having defamed her and damaging her reputation in June 2019 after she first accused him of rape.

Israel goes after Hezbollah's web of tunnels in south Lebanon

Tel Aviv: Israeli forces have spent much of the past year destroying Hamas' vast underground network in Gaza. They are now focused on dismantling tunnels and other hideouts belonging to Hezbollah militants in southern Lebanon. Scarred by Hamas' deadly raid into Israel last year that sparked the war in Gaza, Israel says it aims to prevent a similar incursion across its northern border from ever getting off the ground. The Israeli military has combed through the dense brush of southern Lebanon for the past two weeks, uncovering what it says are Hezbollah's deep attack capabilities — highlighted by a tunnel system equipped with weapons caches and rocket launchers that Israel says pose a direct threat to nearby communities. Israel's war against the Iran-backed militant group stretches far inside Lebanon, and its airstrikes in recent weeks have killed more than 1,700 people, about a quarter of whom were women and children, according

to local health authorities. But its ground campaign has centered on a narrow patch of land just along the border, where Hezbollah has had a longstanding presence. Hezbollah, which has called for Israel's destruction, is the Arab world's most significant paramilitary force. It began firing rockets into Israel a day after Hamas' attack. After nearly a year of tit-for-tat fighting with Hezbollah, Israel launched its ground invasion into southern Lebanon on October 1 and has since sent thousands of troops into the rugged terrain. Even as it continues to bolster its forces, Israel says its invasion consists of "limited, localised and targeted ground raids" that are meant to destroy Hezbollah infrastructure so that tens of thousands of displaced Israelis can return home. The fighting also has uprooted more than one million Lebanese in the past month. Many residents of southern Lebanon are supporters of the group and benefit from its social outreach.

Donald Trump makes more debunked claims about FEMA disaster response: Report



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Surveying storm damage in North Carolina, former President Donald Trump on Monday blasted federal emergency responders whose work has been stymied by armed harassment and a deluge of misinformation. Surveying storm damage in North Carolina, former President Donald Trump on Monday blasted federal emergency responders whose work has been stymied by armed harassment and a deluge of misinformation, but he said he was not concerned that the aftermath of Hurricane Helene would affect election results in the battleground state.

Trump was asked whether it was helpful to criticise hurricane relief workers after the Federal Emergency Management Agency recently paused work in the area because of reports they could be targeted by militia. He responded by again assailing the agency and repeating the falsehood that the response was hampered because FEMA spent its budget helping people who crossed the border illegally. That claim was debunked weeks ago by US Representative Chuck Edwards, R-N.C., who stood behind Trump as he spoke.

"Well, I think you have to let people know how they're doing," Trump told reporters in Swannanoa, outside Asheville. "If they were doing a great job, I think we should say that, too, because I think they should be rewarded... If they're doing a poor job, we're supposed to not say it?" Trump's campaign and that of his Democratic rival, Vice President Kamala Harris, are ramping up their campaigns in the final two weeks before Election Day.

Trump had three stops in North Carolina on Monday. After the Asheville area, he held a rally across the state in Greenville and spoke at a faith leaders event in Concord, where he appealed to Christian voters by repeating his criticism of transgender athletes playing on women's sports teams and his proposal to conduct a large-scale deportation operation. Trump said that during his administration, he fought for Christians "like no president has ever fought before." Harris on Monday focused her campaigning efforts on the "blue wall," travelling to suburban Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin. She held a series of conversations with Republican Liz Cheney moderated by GOP strategist Sarah Longwell, publisher of the Bulwark, a commentary site for anti-Trump conservatives, and conservative radio host Charlie Sykes. Trump won those three states in 2016 and lost them in 2020, and Harris could all but lock up the presidency if she swept them. Cheney, a former Wyoming congressman who lost her seat after she spoke out against Trump following the January 6, 2021, insurrection, offered advice to her fellow Republicans who are uneasy with Trump but not comfortable broadcasting support for a Democrat. "You can vote your conscience and not ever have to say a word to anybody," Cheney said.

HURRICANE HELENE DISPLACED THOUSANDS OF VOTERS Many North Carolina counties affected by Hurricane Helene moved Election Day precincts or

changed early voting sites. Thousands of voters remained displaced or without power or water as early voting commenced. Both parties are scrambling to check their turnout operations. "We're working every channel we can, you know?" Republican National Committee Chair Michael Whatley, a North Carolinian, said. "We're going to be doing phone calls. We're going to be doing direct mail. We'll be doing emails and digital -- basically anything we can do to let people know where to go." Despite extensive damage across western North Carolina, Trump said he saw no reason for the storm to cast doubt on the North Carolina election results. "No, I think in a way, it's the opposite," Trump said. "I mean, we're so impressed, and I think they have a pretty good system here." Republican Renee Kyro, who lives a short drive from the devastated mountain town of Chimney Rock, said she knows "plenty of Trump supporters who lost everything," and others who remain in their homes but don't have reliable internet or phone connections and may not know their polling location.

"I'll go door to door if I have to," she said. State Senator Natalie Murdock, who doubles as political director for Democrats' coordinated campaign in the state, said the party has the apparatus to reach their target voters in the disaster zone. Field workers in some of Democrats' two-dozen-plus offices around the state have engaged in recovery efforts, distributing water and other supplies to residents. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, a Democrat, urged Trump not to "share lies or misinformation" about the storm recovery. Many storm survivors lost everything, and they want help and truth, Cooper said Monday at a briefing in Asheville. "We should work together to give them both," the governor said. "Storm recovery cannot be partisan." Edwards, who represents Asheville and surrounding areas in Congress, put out a long statement last month debunking "outrageous rumors" that FEMA was halting trucks from bringing in supplies, abandoning rescue efforts to bulldoze Chimney Rock, running out of money and more. He did not defend FEMA from Trump's criticism Monday. Instead, Edwards, who owns McDonald's franchises, presented Trump with what he called a "French fry certification pin" in a nod to the former president's photo opportunity Sunday at one of the fast-food restaurants. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre called Trump's FEMA comments "dangerous" and said they had been debunked on a bipartisan basis. She said 5,500 federal personnel were in North Carolina and Florida after Helene and Hurricane Milton and noted that \$2 billion in federal assistance had been approved for those affected in North Carolina. "They are dangerous," Jean-Pierre said of Trump's remarks. "They are unhelpful. It is not what leadership looks like." Democrats are running both Helene and Mark Robinson. Even before Helene, North Carolina was all the more compelling because of its history of split-ticket voting. It's one of the few states that features competitive governor's races concurrent with presidential contests. Democrats have carried the presidential electoral vote just once since 1992 — in Barack Obama's narrow win in 2008. Republicans have won just one governor's race in the same span. Four years ago, Cooper won re-election by 4.5 points despite Trump outpacing Biden. He's prevented by term limit laws from running again. Democrats hope Republican gubernatorial nominee Mark Robinson's latest struggles, centered on CNN's revelations that the state's first Black lieutenant governor once called himself a "Black Nazi" and posted lascivious statements on a porn website, turn thousands of Cooper-Trump voters into supporters of Harris and Democratic gubernatorial nominee Josh Stein. Robinson has denied the allegations and sued CNN, calling its report defamatory.

Russian media backs Trump over Kamala Harris in US election despite neutrality

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As the US elections approach, Russian state media appear to favour Donald Trump over Kamala Harris, despite official claims of neutrality. This bias is evident in the portrayal of both candidates, raising questions about Moscow's true stance. Russian officials from President Vladimir Putin down say it makes no odds to Moscow who wins the White House on November 5. Yet anyone watching Kremlin-guided state media's coverage of the US election would conclude Donald Trump is strongly favoured.

State TV's main Channel One news programme this month showed video of billionaire Elon Musk and TV host Tucker Carlson denigrating Democratic candidate Kamala Harris before zooming in on what it cast as a series of stumbling performances. Harris' tendency to burst into fits of laughter, something Putin himself spoke about sarcastically last month, has featured prominently in broadcasts and state TV has played compilations of her least eloquent statements during the campaign. By contrast, the same Channel One report portrayed Trump and running mate JD Vance as sure-footed and imbued with common sense on everything from transgender politics to immigration, but facing sinister forces as evidenced by assassination plots. The Kremlin says the choice of who becomes the next US president is a matter exclusively for the American people and that it will work with whoever is elected. It has denied steering coverage, although some former state media employees have spoken publicly about weekly Kremlin meetings at which guidance on different issues is given. The state media's apparent preference for Trump may be no surprise. Trump has been far less openly supportive of Ukraine in its war against Russia than incumbent President Joe Biden or Harris, raising fears in Kyiv that it could lose its most important ally if he wins. Trump, who has repeatedly praised Putin over the years and boasted of having a good working relationship, last week blamed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for helping start the war.

This month he declined to confirm reports he had spoken to Putin on several occasions since leaving office in 2021 saying only: "If I did, it's a smart thing." Harris by contrast has called Putin "a murderous dictator", vowed to continue backing Ukraine, and said that opposition politician Alexei Navalny's death was "a further sign of Putin's brutality." The Kremlin has denied any hand in Navalny's demise. State TV has often showcased guest speakers on its prime time geopolitical talk shows who express a preference for Trump, even if their reasons sometimes vary. Andrei Sidorov, a senior academic at Moscow State University, told a major state TV talkshow this month that Trump would be better for Russia because he would stir division that could trigger a long-held fantasy of anti-Western Russian hawks - the disintegrated



tion of the United States during infighting between its constituent states. "I am for Trump. I was always for Trump - he's a destroyer. If he's elected ... then civil war will really be on the agenda," Sidorov said, forecasting a Democratic win would see the same "crap" as now continuing. A 2017 US intelligence report said Putin had directed a sophisticated influence campaign to denigrate Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton and support Trump in the 2016 race for the White House. The Kremlin denied meddling and Trump denied any collusion with Russia during that campaign. Despite the two current candidates' different approaches to Moscow, some Russian officials - who are navigating the worst period in US-Russia relations since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis - have expressed wariness of both.

Harris, they say, would mean a continuation of what Moscow sees as Biden's proxy war with Russia "to the last Ukrainian." Trump, who raised hopes in Moscow of better ties before he took office in 2017, is remembered for imposing sanctions when in the White House despite warm words about Putin. In Moscow's eyes, he appeared boxed in on Russia policy by the wider US political establishment. "I have no illusions. (When Trump was president) he had several conversations with President Vladimir Putin. He received me at the White House a couple of times. He was friendly," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov recalled in September. "But sanctions against the Russian Federation were imposed under President Trump on a regular basis. As a result, we concluded that we need to rely on ourselves. We will never in our history count on 'a good guy' getting into the White House." One senior Russian source said there were different views at top levels of the Kremlin about Trump, but confirmed some believed a Trump victory might not go well for Moscow. "Look what happened last time he became president. Everyone said beforehand that US-Russia relations would benefit, but they ended up even worse. Trump says a lot of things but doesn't always do what he says," said the source, who declined to be named given the matter's sensitivity.

Electronic components subsidy policy: Centre, industry disagree over job creation



electronics industry, Electronic components subsidy policy, industry disagreement, job creation, employment generation schemes, manufacturing incentive policy, MeitY, IT Ministry, Indian express, economy news An employee works at the television assembly production line of a factory belonging to Hanel electronic company in Hanoi March 1, 2011. There is a standoff between the electronics industry and the Centre over employment numbers in a new electronic components manufacturing incentive policy currently being drafted — with the industry pushing back on the government's job creation demands, saying that the numbers don't reflect the level of mechanisation available. The Indian Express has learnt. Faced with the employment issue, the government is keen on linking jobs creation to subsidies that companies could avail under the electronic components manufacturing incentive policy, which the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) is working on. As part of deliberations on the policy last week, the industry said that the government was estimating job creation under the scheme to be higher than by at least 50-60 per cent. This tussle has delayed the formulation of the policy.

"Take printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) for instance. The government is asking that we employ 3-4 people per PCBA unit produced locally. But, we are telling that the process is highly mechanised, and only needs 1-2 people per unit. There are many other components on which there has been a lot of back and forth as far as employment is concerned," an industry executive said.

Incentivising electronic components manufacturing is the next key frontier for India, after it successfully managed to localise assembly of finished electronics products such as smartphones. However, as smartphone companies like Apple and Samsung ramped up their assembly processes, it has resulted in a surge in import of component imports given that India has very little footprint in the domain, which is largely dominated by China. The in-

centive policy for electronic components could have a government subsidy component to the tune of Rs 40,000 crore, with the expected investments in the space to the tune of Rs 82,000 crore. The government is exploring various incentive models, including subsidising either operational or capital expenditure or a combination of the two, depending on the type of component. In an internal assessment, the government has also identified a "huge" demand-supply gap in the electronic components sector — to the tune of \$100 billion for domestic consumption alone, and \$140 billion if India wants to export some components. That would be almost ten times of what India's current domestic capacity is. In 2022-23, electronic components production in the country stood at \$10.75 billion accounting for only about 10 per cent of total electronics production.

In a deck prepared by the IT Ministry, the government has identified three key challenges facing India in terms of electronic components manufacturing. First is the current lack of domestic scale in the country. Second is a high investment to turnover ratio — in terms of finished products such as smartphones, which is what India is currently focusing on, every rupee of investment can bring it around Rs 20. However, in case of electronic components, every rupee worth of investment will bring in between Rs 2- Rs 4. And third is that because India has big domestic demand, a large chunk of components are being imported: electronics imports is the second largest import commodity after oil, and account for nearly 75 per cent of the total electronics production in India. Going by this trend, component demand is expected to reach \$160 billion by 2028-29. "As component imports continue to grow at around 12 per cent, our component production with exports would have to grow by a CAGR of more than 53 per cent to meet demand," the deck prepared by the IT Ministry said. This is why it is critical for the country to work out a domestic manufacturing scheme in the components sector. The deck acknowledges that while post the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for smartphones has resulted in a near tapering of imports of finished products, import of key components and sub-assemblies, including integrated circuits (ICs) increased from \$29 billion in FY21 to \$46.5 billion in FY23. Under the incentive policy, the government could offer an opex subsidy for non-solder mask passive components, flex PCBA, and sub-assembly display and camera modules. Mechanics, capital goods used in electronics manufacturing, and Lithium cells for electronics may receive capex subsidy. PCBs with more than eight layers, flex PCBs, and solder mask defined passive components could qualify for both an opex and capex subsidy.

India set to benefit as global LNG markets head towards supply glut, subdued prices, says ICRA

India, which is among the top importers of LNG, depends on imported gas to meet nearly half of its domestic requirements. (File Photo) India, which is among the top importers of LNG, depends on imported gas to meet nearly half of its domestic requirements. With major additions in global liquefied natural gas (LNG) production capacity expected to lead to a supply glut over the next few years, India is set to benefit as prices of LNG, or super-chilled gas, are likely to stay subdued for an extended period, according to rating agency ICRA.

"Globally, about 193 MMT million metric tonnes) of the LNG production and liquefaction capacity is slated to be added over the course of the next four years. Significant capacity addition amid expectation of modest demand growth in the global natural gas consumption will keep the LNG prices under check, benefitting India," ICRA said in a note on Wednesday. Liquefaction is the process of converting natural gas into a liquid state at ultra-low temperatures. Transportation of gas as LNG is the most viable and is considered second to only transportation by pipelines. For countries like India, which are not connected with international gas supply pipelines, importing gas in this super-chilled and liquid form is the only feasible option.

Global LNG prices saw high volatility over the past couple of years—2022 and 2023—due to a combination of reasons that included rapid recovery in global demand as the COVID-19 pandemic ebbed and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on global energy markets. But with close to 200 million tonnes of liquefaction capacity expected to be added globally between this year and 2028, supply constraints could be a thing of the past, at least in the near to medium term. India, which is among the top importers of LNG, depends on imported gas to meet nearly half of its domestic requirements. With indications that the global LNG market is likely to turn into a buyer's market with additional capacity coming onstream, countries like India stand to gain by saving valuable foreign exchange. "Global natural gas consumption is expected to witness modest growth, given the focus of the major natural gas consumers in regions of the European Union, Japan & Korea towards other sources of energy. Amidst



these demand headwinds, the LNG capacity addition over the next four years, which is equivalent to around 41% of the current global LNG production capacity, is expected to result in downward pressure on the global LNG prices," said Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice President and Group Head, Corporate Ratings at ICRA. Natural gas consumption in India is expected to grow by 6-8% YoY in 2024-25 (FY25), supported by softer LNG prices and an uptick in domestic gas production, per ICRA estimates. "The share of LNG in the gas mix is projected to increase from 48% in FY2024 to 50% in FY2025. However, since domestic production is expected to start moderating from FY2028 onwards, the reliance on LNG would further rise as India looks to increase the share of natural gas in the energy mix," the rating agency said.

The government has been pushing for higher consumption of natural gas in India, with an aim to increase the share of the fuel in the country's primary energy mix to 15 per cent by 2030 from over 6 per cent at present. The push for higher natural gas consumption, even if it leads to higher imports, is not without reason. Natural gas is far less polluting than conventional hydrocarbons like crude oil and coal, and is usually cheaper than oil, for which India depends on imports to meet over 85 per cent of its requirement. As the country moves towards green energy and future fuels, natural gas is seen as a key transition fuel in that journey. Various sectors, including the likes of city gas distribution, fertilizer, power generation, and refineries and petrochemicals, are seen as major growth areas for natural gas demand in India.

Apple eyes bigger slice of India's streaming market with Airtel deal

Premium users of Airtel's broadband and postpaid services can access Apple TV+ and Apple Music later this year as part of their plans. Premium users of Airtel's broadband and postpaid services can access Apple TV+ and Apple Music later this year as part of their plans. Apple is tying up with India's Airtel to offer the telecom firm's premium customers its music and video streaming services for free, potentially giving the US firm access to thousands of consumers in a price-sensitive market.

The move comes as competition tightens in India's \$28-billion entertainment market and an \$8.5-billion merger of the Indian media assets of Reliance and Walt Disney faces close scrutiny from regulators. "Apple TV+ will come bundled with premium Airtel WiFi and Postpaid plans," Airtel said in a statement on Tuesday, though the companies did not disclose a deal value for the partnership or information on costs. With mostly English-language content, Apple TV+ is a small player in the Indian market, where its rivals include Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ Hotstar and billionaire Mukesh Ambani's JioCinema. Apple is following competitors in bundling streaming services with telecom plans to grow its audience more quickly.



Premium users of Airtel's broadband and postpaid services can access Apple TV+ and Apple Music later this year as part of their plans. Airtel will shut its music app Wynk in this process, two sources with direct knowledge of the matter said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Airtel has about 281 million subscribers for its India telecom offerings, while its top rival, Ambani's Reliance Jio, has about 489 million.

Here's what makes Saudi Arabia's Rub'al Khali desert one of the most inhospitable places on Earth



saudi arabia desert Discover the Rub'al Khali, the world's largest sand desert, with its extreme climate, stunning landscapes, and historical significance. Imagine a vast expanse of sand, stretching as far as the eye can see. Welcome to the Rub'al Khali, or the Empty Quarter, the world's largest continuous sand desert. This sun-scorched wilderness, shared by Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE, and Yemen, is a place of breathtaking beauty and extreme conditions.

Towering dunes, some reaching heights of 820 feet, dominate the landscape. Despite the harsh climate, the desert's hues of red and gold create a stunning spectacle. Temperatures can soar above 50°C in summer, and drop dramatically at night. Rainfall is scarce, often less than 3 cm, making this desert one of the driest places on Earth. Yet, life finds a way, with salt-tolerant plants and desert animals thriving in this unforgiving environment. While it remains one of the least inhabited places on Earth, its allure continues to draw explorers and researchers intrigued by its secrets. The desert

stretches over 650 kilometres. To explore this desolate landscape, travellers can embark on a journey along Saudi Arabia's Highway 10, the world's longest straight road. This approximately two-hour drive from Haradh to Al Batha near the UAE border offers a glimpse into the Rub'al Khali's harsh yet mesmerising beauty.

telangana man, saudi desert death, indian express The Rub'al Khali is a desert of extremes—vast, remote, and harsh, yet filled with hidden beauty and a rich history. (Wikimedia commons) Though it was largely unexplored until the 20th century, in recent decades, several oil and gas reserves have been discovered beneath its sands, contributing to Saudi Arabia's prominence as a leading oil producer.

The Rub'al Khali holds deep cultural and historical importance in the Arabian Peninsula. It has been home to Bedouin tribes for centuries, who navigated its vastness on camels. These nomadic groups have long relied on their deep knowledge of the desert for survival, fostering a unique culture of resilience and self-reliance. Additionally, the desert played a key role in ancient trade routes. Frankincense caravans once traversed its expansive dunes, linking the Arabian Peninsula to distant markets in the Mediterranean and beyond.

Exploration has also revealed archaeological remains, including ancient human settlements and stone tools, suggesting that the region was once more hospitable. The Rub'al Khali is a desert of extremes—vast, remote, and harsh, yet filled with hidden beauty and a rich history. The Empty Quarter is not only a natural wonder but a testament to the resilience of life in the most challenging of environments.

Jacqueline Fernandez nails a rigorous Pilates session; tips to combine it with other workouts for maximum benefit

Through relentless dedication and a disciplined lifestyle, actor Jacqueline Fernandez has become synonymous with peak physical conditioning and extraordinary flexibility. In a video shared recently by her trainer, Yasmin Karachiwala on Instagram, Fernandez can be seen pushing herself through an intense Pilates workout, showcasing her dedication to fitness and inspiring fans to follow suit.

The clip highlights the challenging nature of Pilates and its effectiveness in building core strength, flexibility, and overall body conditioning. But, while Pilates alone offers numerous benefits, combining it with other exercises can lead to even more impressive results. Benefits of combining Pilates with other forms of exercises

Akshay, managing director at Fit Club, agrees, "Combining Pilates with other forms of exercise, such as strength training or cardio, offers a multitude of benefits that can enhance overall fitness and well-being." Pilates focuses heavily on core muscles, which are essential for maintaining stability and balance during other workouts. A strong core also reduces the risk of injury and improves performance in exercises like lifting weights or running. "The controlled movements and stretches in Pilates increase flexibility, which can enhance the effectiveness of strength training and cardio workouts by allowing a greater range of motion," Akshay informs. Pilates emphasises proper alignment and posture, which can help correct imbalances caused by other forms of exercise and reduce the risk of injuries. It can also "aid in muscle recovery and reduce soreness after intense workouts."

Pilates enhances muscular endurance, helping you to sustain longer and more intense workouts, whether they involve lifting weights or engaging in high-intensity cardio. Specific Pilates exercises that complement certain types of workouts more effectively, as mentioned by Akshay: Upper Body Workouts: After a strength training session focusing on the chest and triceps, Pilates exercises like 'Arm Circles' and 'Push-Up Prep' can help stretch and strengthen the upper body, promoting muscle recovery and flexibility. Lower Body Workouts: Following a leg day, Pilates exercises such as 'Leg Circles' and 'Shoul-



der Bridge" target the lower body muscles, improving hip flexibility and aiding in recovery. Core Workouts: Pilates exercises like the 'Plank' and 'Hundred' are excellent for enhancing core strength, which is fundamental for all forms of exercise. These moves stabilise the torso and improve overall balance.

*Cardio Workouts: Incorporating Pilates exercises like the 'Roll-Up' and 'Spine Stretch' can help stretch and lengthen muscles after a cardio session, reducing muscle tension and enhancing flexibility. Pilates focuses heavily on core muscles, which are essential for maintaining stability and balance during other workouts. (Source: Freepik) Precautions to take when combining Pilates with other high-intensity workouts-Start Gradually: Begin by incorporating Pilates sessions two times a week and gradually increase the frequency as your body adapts. -Seek professional guidance: Working with a qualified Pilates instructor can ensure you are using the correct form and techniques, which is crucial for preventing injuries. -Balance Your Routine: Ensure that your Pilates exercises complement your primary workouts-Listen to Your Body: Pay attention to how your body feels and respond accordingly. If you experience excessive soreness or fatigue, adjust your routine. -Warm-Up and Cool Down: Always include a proper warm-up before and a cool-down after your workouts. This prepares your muscles for exercise and aids in recovery.

On what basis your left (or right) arm is chosen for blood donation

After getting an answer to why a particular arm is chosen (over the other) to administer vaccines, we wondered if the same logic applies when donating blood. This query made us reach out to experts who explained the reason behind the choice of arm, and whether it makes any difference to the blood donated. When donating blood, you can generally use either arm. But "most people use their non-dominant arm for a few practical reasons," said Dr Aklesh Tandekar, head consultant critical care, Wockhardt Hospitals Mira Road.

In simple words, this means that if a person is right-handed, the lab technician would choose the left arm for blood donation, and if a person is left-handed, the technician would likely choose the right arm. According to Dr Dr Tandekar, this practice is followed to minimise the risk of complications and to ensure that the patient's dominant arm is not affected, especially if multiple blood draws are needed. Choose the arm that feels more comfortable



and relaxed during the donation. This will help you maintain a steady position throughout the process, making it easier for the phlebotomist (blood collection specialist) to find a vein," said Dr (Brig.) Anil Khetarpal, deputy chief, medical services and chairperson, department of blood centre and transfusion medicine, Artemis Hospitals. *Activity level: Using the non-dominant arm helps avoid discomfort or inconvenience in daily activities post-donation. *Recovery: Any bruising or soreness will be

less disruptive if it occurs in the non-dominant arm. *Vein suitability: The nurse or phlebotomist will examine both arms to determine which has the better vein for donation. "Sometimes, one arm may have more prominent veins or better access," said Dr Tandekar. "They are trained professionals and prioritise comfort and efficiency during the process," added Dr (Brig) Khetarpal. If one arm is affected by an injury or condition, the other will be utilised. "Alternating arms can occasionally aid with vein healing. The deci-

sion will ultimately be based on the phlebotomist's assessment and the arm with the best veins is chosen," said Dr Meet Kumar, clinical director, haematology and bone marrow transplant, Marengo Asia Hospitals, Gurugram. blood vein The nurse or phlebotomist will examine both arms to determine which has the better vein for donation. Does the choice of arm impact the blood donation process? In most cases, the arm you donate blood from doesn't significantly impact the donation process, emphasised Dr (Brig) Khetarpal. "

Dalljiet Kaur says ex-husband Shalin Bhanot has not contacted their son in a year, reveals she invited him to Kenya: 'Don't want to check on your son?'



the last one year, and has never expressed any desire to know what brought Dalljiet and Jaydon back from Kenya.

Talking to Galatta India, Dalljiet said, "With my ex, there has been zero communication for about a year, or maybe more. He hasn't really reached out so I don't have any communication. I tried to be amicable with him for nine years. Every time he would ask to meet Jaydon, I would never refuse. Very happily I made them meet because I thought it was good for Jaydon. I was very selfish like that. I was more than happy him meeting Jaydon."

Dalljiet Kaur said that she wondered why Shalin Bhanot was not interested in knowing what transpired in Kenya that led to her and Jaydon's return to India. "You don't want to check on your son? You don't want to know what happened from the horse's mouth? You have my number. The world wants to know. You don't want to know? But that's his karma," she said. When asked categorically if Shalin did not reach out to meet Jaydon, Dalljiet said that "not a single message" had come from his end. "It was always a pattern that he would reach out. I made it a point for him to meet Nikhil. I asked him that you come to Kenya, stay with us, it will be good for Jaydon. He said yeah yeah. And then gayab," she said.

Dalljiet Kaur, who got married to Kenya-based businessman Nikhil Patel in March 2023, has been quite open about the troubles in her marriage. Now, in a recent interview, Dalljiet opened up about her ex-husband Shalin Bhanot, with whom she shares a son named Jaydon, and said that Shalin has not reached out to their son in

Anupam Kher says friendship with Kirron Kher turned into love: 'She was in a tough marriage, I had just been ditched by a girl'

Anupam Kher and his wife, Kirron Kher, have been married for almost four decades. In a recent interaction, Anupam shared details about their long-standing friendship, which began during their college days in Chandigarh, and eventually blossomed into love after they reconnected in Mumbai. At the time, Kirron was married, while Anupam was struggling to find work in the film industry. However, fate had other plans, and their friendship evolved into something deeper as they both faced challenges in their respective relationships.



Speaking to Shubhankar Mishra, Anupam reminisced, "I wasn't married; Kirron was married, and we were best friends for 12 years. She was my senior in college. She was a star—she was first in her class, the best actress, and an India-level badminton player. I moved to Mumbai, and she came to Mumbai after her marriage to Gautam Berry. As strugglers, Satish Kaushik and I would often go to Kirron and Gautam's house for dinner, and she would give us Rs 50 for a taxi, but we would save that money and travel by bus instead."

Anupam shared how their relationship shifted from friendship to love, recalling, "When she was going through a tough time in her marriage, and I was going through a

bad relationship—after the girl I was with had ditched me—Kirron and I fell in love and got married." When asked about what he loves most about Kirron, Anupam revealed, "She is the most honest person—bindas, honest, beautiful, caring, and she has a strong character. We were good friends, and that friendship translated into love and then into marriage." Anupam and Kirron tied the knot a year after the release of Anupam's debut film Saarangsh. In the same interview, Anupam also mentioned that his stepson, actor Sikander, still lives with them.

Priyanka Chopra was no conventional beauty but her eyes were so khatarnak,' recalls Suneel Darshan



Priyanka Chopra was just beginning her career in the Hindi film industry when she met filmmaker Suneel

Darshan for a role in his film Andaaz. In a recent interaction, Suneel revealed how he was initially "shocked" when he saw Priyanka for the first time, as she didn't fit the conventional beauty standards. However, her confidence and captivating voice convinced him to cast her in Andaaz.

Speaking on a YouTube channel, Suneel recalled, "For Andaaz, I wanted something fresh. I had already thought of casting Akshay Kumar and Lara Dutta for the lead roles. After finalizing them, I was looking for someone to play a slightly smaller role than Lara's. Many girls auditioned, and one day, a secretary brought Priyanka to meet me. When I first saw her, I was shocked because she wasn't a conventional beauty. We spoke for about 15 minutes. Her voice was so zabardast (powerful), and her eyes were so khatarnak (dangerous). I decided within those 15 minutes to cast her and told her that one day she would have a stature similar to that of Rekha."

Salman Khan joins forces with Ajay Devgn in Rohit Shetty's Singham Again

Putting an end to speculation, Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is confirmed to make a special appearance in Rohit Shetty's Singham Again. The film's team has confirmed that Salman will reprise his iconic character Chulbul Pandey from the Dabangg franchise, joining forces with Ajay Devgn within Rohit Shetty's expansive cop universe. This cinematic universe already boasts an impressive lineup, including Kareena Kapoor Khan, Ranveer Singh, Akshay Kumar, Deepika Padukone, Tiger Shroff, Ravi Kishan, Arjun Kapoor and Jackie Shroff. This exciting crossover brings together two legendary characters, Chulbul Pandey and Bajirao Singham, played by Salman Khan and Ajay Devgn, respectively, for the first time on screen. Fans can expect a mix of high-octane action and unforgettable comic moments in the new film, releasing on November 1. Salman Khan and Ajay Devgn have previously collaborated in no-



table films, including Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam (1999) and Vipul Shah's London Dreams (2009). Furthermore, Salman made a cameo appearance in Ajay Devgn's Son of Sardaar (2012). As the movie gears up for release, director Rohit Shetty shared insights into the

film's extensive shooting schedule, spanning multiple locations. Inspired by the epic Ramayana, the film's narrative dictated filming across various sites in India and Sri Lanka, as per the story of Ramayana. Rohit told Filmfare, the cast and crew "travelled all the way from Maharashtra to Sri Lanka."

He said, "The locations are all places where the incidents have happened. Many of us know the story but not the actual location where it happened. So that is the unique point in this film." Rohit Shetty's Singham Again, the fifth film in the successful Singham franchise, sees Ajay Devgn return as Singham.

Jaya Bachchan is very sensitive, says senior journalist: 'If she likes you she will talk to you nicely'



Actress Jaya Bachchan has been celebrated for her roles on the big screen, however, her image in the media is that of a strict disciplinarian who often schools the paparazzi. However, recently, senior journalist Bhawana Somaaya shared that Jaya Bachchan is very sensitive. During a podcast, Bhawana revealed that the Kabhie Khushi Kabhie Gham actress is very warm and nice to talk to.

Responding to Jaya Bachchan's negative public image, Bhawana said, "Everyone is normal and they speak nicely only, Jayaji is also very warm and nice, she is very sensitive. Once when the camera was flashing in her eye, I saw it was the photographer's mistake. Now, if

you react a certain way and it gets blown out of proportion then it is in nobody's control. It has become a game for the media, the paparazzi, whether it is Uorfi Javed or anybody else." She also spoke about one quality that she loves about Jaya Bachchan, pointing out how the actress has her individuality. "Jayaji has her personality, when Amitabh Bachchan wasn't talking to the media that time we used to meet a lot. Like when Smita Patil was hospitalized, or at Prithvi Theater or I had gone on Pukaar shooting. Her treatment is individual, what ban has been imposed by her husband does not make a difference to her. If she likes you she will talk to you nicely, she does not even remember if you are a journalist or whoever. From then to now, it's been like that only with me."

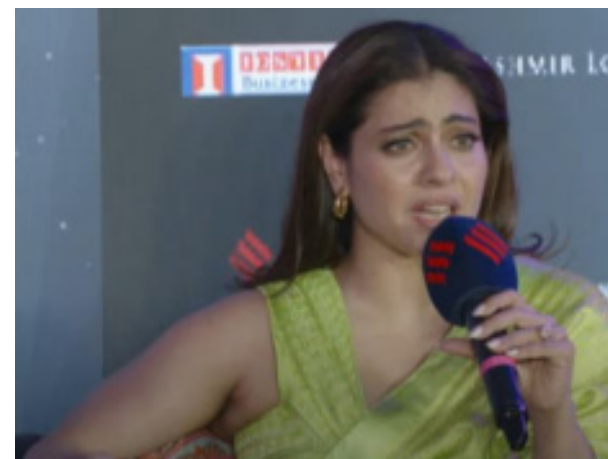
Kajol answers why she picked 'red flag' Shah Rukh Khan over 'green flag' Salman Khan in KKHH, admits she disagreed with Simran in DDLJ

Actors Kajol and Kriti Sanon appeared together on Expresso to promote their upcoming Netflix thriller Do Patti. During the conversation, Kajol reflected on two of her most popular past movies, Kuch Kuch Hota Hai and Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, and the somewhat controversial decisions that her characters made. In both romantic dramas, Kajol starred opposite Shah Rukh Khan. Kajol agreed that she made a 'toxic choice' when confronted with the option of choosing a green flag or a red flag character to be with in Kuch Kuch Hota Hai.

She joked, "It was correct script-wise." Kajol was also asked about some of the choices that her character Simran made in DDLJ, and she said, "I didn't agree with Simran in a lot of places." When Kriti pointed out that SRK's Raj also fasted on Karwa Chauth for her, Kajol answered, "Haan toh? I don't understand why people have to starve themselves. Bhookha kisko rehna hai?"

Kajol said that she wishes she 'had known the effect' that the film was 'going to have on society', when it was pointed out that the performance that is now associated with Karwa Chauth was popularised in these films. Asked if she feels guilty sometimes about putting pressure of women to look pretty while starving, she said, "Not at all! I don't feel guilty for all these things. I don't feel guilty for eating also. Never feel guilty for eating. I don't feel guilty, I eat. That's why I look like I'm from a khata-peeta khaandaan. Films reflect society, and society is a reflection of films. Yes, we can influence them up to a point, but I don't think it's all about the film either. Films do influence society, no two ways about it, but saying that I should feel guilty because people are keeping Karwa Chauth fast is a bit much.

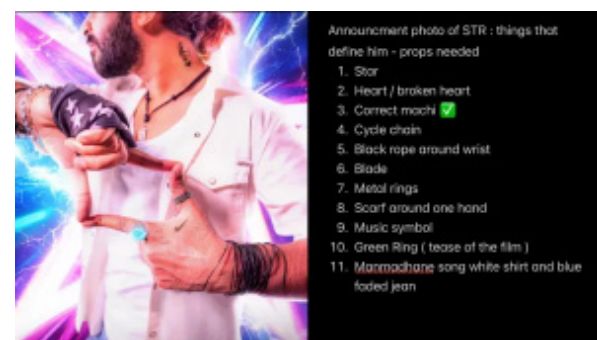
Women feel pressure because they put pressure on themselves. Have you seen Barbie? I love the rant that she does. I feel all these pressures we women take upon ourselves. Most of our pressures are what we term as the



'good girl effect'. We want to be good women, and that's what we've been taught since the time we were probably in our mothers' wombs. Feminism has nothing to do with a man; it has to do with a woman, and how she sees herself. If I see myself as beautiful, strong, and balanced, then I am beautiful, strong and balanced. Nobody in this world can convince me otherwise." Director Karan Johar has often apologised for what he has described as 'flawed' gender politics in Kuch Kuch Hota Hai. He said at an IIMUN event, "I feel like I have grown as an individual, The first film that I made, Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, I firmly believe that the gender politics of that film was all wrong. It is propagating incorrect gender politics, there is a lot of surface-ness in that film. Of course, there is nostalgia so you love it, but you don't scratch the surface of the film and see that what Rahul is doing is actually not what I would want all the Rahuls in the audience, or all the boys in general, to do." Kajol and Kriti will be seen in Do Patti, which is set for a Netflix release on Friday.

Director Ashwath Marimuthu promises to bring back vintage Silambarasan TR in AGS Productions' STR 49

In the early 2000s, the symbol of youthful rebellion in Tamil cinema was today's rather sober ATMAN Silambarasan, who was once the Little/Young Super star Simbu. High on entertainment, and receiving flak for its brash nonchalance, Silambarasan TR's films were a subgenre in Tamil cinema. Be it Manmadhan, Vallavan, Dum, and even Vinnaihaandi Varuvaaya, Simbu-isms took over any film he was part of. But then, over the years, especially since his physical transformation, Silambarasan mellowed down. Of course, his pizzazz was still intact, but it almost felt like he moved past the antics that made him the favourite of the youth. Now, Oh my Kadavule director Ashwath Marimuthu, who will be helming Silambarasan TR's next, tentatively titled STR 49, has promised to bring back the vintage STR.



Ashwath, who is currently helming Pradeep Ranganathan's Dragon, backed by AGS Entertainment, is reuniting with the banner for STR 49. In a buildup to this announcement, Silambarasan had posted, "Dum + Manmadhan + Vallavan + Vtv in Gen Z mode = NAMBA NEXT!!!" and "Dei 2k kids, '90s mood la nalaiku sharp ah 6.06 pm ku varen."

In the announcement poster, we indeed see the mid 2000s Silambarasan coming to the fore, including his famed hand gestures, and it promises to be a riot. In fact, Ashwath Marimuthu listed out the various tools he used to bring back the vintage STR. Titled "Announcement photo of STR: Things that define film", the props included a star, heart/broken heart, the 'Corrected Machi' symbol, black

rope around wrist, cycle chain, blade, metal rings, scarf around one hand, musical notation tattoos, green ring (tease of the film), and the white shirt and blue faded jeans he wore in the song "Manmadhane" from the movie, Manmadhan. Ashwath's list to recreate vintage Silambarasan in STR 49 Ashwath's list to recreate vintage Silambarasan in STR 49

The first look poster includes all these props, and has made all the right noises on social media, as the hype for the film has already reached feverish proportions. While there have been no official confirmation about the cast and crew, it would be interesting to see if Ashwath ropes in his usual composer Leon James for the project, which just might be his long-awaited entry into the big league.

Sanju Samson reveals he was set to play T20 World Cup Final, lauds captain Rohit Sharma: 'He gave me 10 minutes before the toss'



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Sanju Samson on missing T20 World Cup Final and captain Rohit Sharma. While Samson was part of India's squad for the T20 World Cup this summer, the swashbuckling keeper-batter didn't make a single appearance during the course of India's winning campaign. Sanju Samson took the spotlight in India's last T20I appearance against Bangladesh, scoring a maiden hundred as India posted the second highest total in the format's history. In a recent conversation, the swashbuckling keeper-batter has revealed that despite not having made a single appearance in the T20 World Cup, he was in line to feature in the all-important summit clash against South Africa this summer.

"I had a chance to play the final. I was told to stay ready. I was. However, they decided before the toss that we would go with the same team. I was like, no worries. I was in that type of mood," Samson conceded in a video on Vimal Kumar's YouTube channel. "During the warm-up, Rohit (Sharma) took me to the side and started to

explain to me why he is making that decision. He was like, 'You understood, na?' You know his way, very casual? I told him, 'Let us win the match and then talk.' You focus on the match. He came back a minute later and said, 'I know you are cursing me in your mind.' I think you're not happy. I feel like you have something on your mind. I told him, 'As a player, I want to play,' he added. The 29-year-old, who has played across 33 T20Is and 16 ODIs for India, went on to praise the Indian captain for providing him with a clarity over the last-minute call ahead of the T20 World Cup Final. "I said I totally respect that you came and explained me. I told him, 'I will have a regret; I could not play a World Cup final with a leader like you.' This will be a regret in my heart that I missed a World Cup final with a leader like Rohit Sharma. That will stay in my life," Samson said. IND vs BAN 3rd T20I: Sanju Samson quotes Hyderabad: India's Sanju Samson celebrates his century during the third and final T20 International cricket match between India and Bangladesh at Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium, in Hyderabad, Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024. (PTI Photo/Shailendra Bhojak) "After this, I thought, such a big thing like a World Cup final. Before the final, you have changed your decision. You spent 10 minutes with the player that is not playing just before the toss. He gave me 10 minutes before the toss. "If I were in his place, I would be thinking about the players who are playing or my batting. 'I'll explain to Sanju later', that is what normally you'd think. At that point, he thought, 'I have to explain to Sanju, why I took that decision.' At that point, he won a place in my heart that will stay for a lifetime. "While India went on to win the T20 world title after 17 years as Rohit Sharma – and Virat Kohli – called it quits from the shortest format of the game, Samson has emerged as a leading contender for a place in the new T20I side following his recent power-hitting display.

Bengaluru achieve league record; NT head coach bemoans schedule and Bagan run Kolkata derby



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

The Kolkata Derby between East Bengal and Mohun Bagan SG will always be one of the most eclectic matches in Indian football with an average crowd of 60,000 and a rivalry that spans over a century. The off-field rivalry between fans sets this match up as one of the most sought-after fixtures in the sport.

On the field though, in terms of results, there seems to be no rivalry. Mohun Bagan have dominated East Bengal, stretching their unbeaten run against their city rivals to nine in the Indian Super League. On Saturday when the two teams met again, Bagan romped to an easy 2-0 victory. Such was their dominance that East Bengal could muster just one shot on target. Bagan controlled the tempo of the match from start to finish, as a goal each from Jamie Maclaren and Dimitrios Petratos in either half was enough for Jose Molina's men to secure their eighth win against the Red & Gold Brigade in ISL. Bagan have arguably the best side on paper this season with a focus on their attack. And it was on full display in front of the capacity crowd. Attack after attack, the Mariners maintained a high momentum and tested the Red and Gold Brigade. Their relentless attacks finally bore fruit in the 41st minute when Manvir Singh, with a sensational cross, found Maclaren in space. The Australian tucked it past Prabhukhan Gill to hand Mohun Bagan Super Giant the lead.

The second half saw more of the same as Bagan enjoyed majority of possession, but this time, their attack was even more relentless. Bagan's Liston Colaco needs to be singled out for praise. The winger kept finding himself in the right spaces, starting counter-attacks and even trying long-rangers. To have an Indian player with such confidence on the ball is a great sign for the national team. East Bengal need to recover, and fast. They are last

on the ISL table with five losses from as many games and things don't seem to be looking upward. Their struggles have also been marked by significant changes off the field. Head coach Carles Cuadrat, who led the team to victory in the Kalinga Super Cup 2023, resigned, leading to the hiring of Oscar Bruzon, former manager of Bangladesh Super League club Bashundhara Kings.

Table-top clash In the week's top-of-the-table match, 10-man Bengaluru FC held onto their 1-0 lead to beat Punjab FC and maintain their unbeaten run this season and their position as league leaders. Considering their abysmal result last season, they seem to have done a complete turnaround, even setting a new record for most minutes without conceding from the start of an ISL season (481 minutes) overtaking Jamshedpur FC (389 minutes at the start of 2017-18 season). A solitary goal from Naorem Roshan Singh was enough to hand Zaragoza's side their fourth victory of the season. And it was a blinder of a goal. Jorge Pereyra Diaz's cross from inside the 18-yard area deflected onto the path of Roshan. The left-back, with a clear view of the goal, bulged the net with a thunderous left-footed drive that gave the goalkeeper no chance.

Punjab have been excellent this season, but against a sturdy Bengaluru defence, they struggled to create inroads and were forced to try long-rangers to no success. With the loss, they slid to fourth on the ISL table though they have a game in hand. ISL scheduling 'complete disaster' Indian national coach, Manolo Marquez, who is also the head coach of FC Goa, came out strongly against the scheduling of the ISL games, saying it's detrimental to both the clubs and the national team. "The breaks are very big because the fixtures are a complete disaster. This is the reality. They don't take care about the national team," Marquez said. "The national team finished (playing on Saturday) then the ISL doesn't start six or seven days later. But they stopped the ISL (on October 5) and the national team has to play in two (three) days." Lebanon withdrew in the end but if Lebanon had played, then we would have had to play them three days after the last ISL game (before the international break), which is not normal." Marquez said he preferred if the games were played on weekends, a solution that could benefit the ISL clubs. "I don't want to speak about TV rights, but to play one ISL game every day (is not for me). I prefer all the games over the weekend, if it's possible to play altogether, then better," he said.

Is the future of Commonwealth Games a stripped down and budget-friendly version?

GNS News Agency, Oct 24 What struck Commonwealth Games smack in the face was Victoria, Australia throwing their hands up in the air just two years before the 2026 edition, pleading their inability to host. (Reuters) What struck Commonwealth Games smack in the face was Victoria, Australia throwing their hands up in the air just two years before the 2026 edition, pleading their inability to host.

Post-colonial realities of the day, economic pragmatism and irrelevance of the former Empire, effectively mean the freshly proposed 10-sport Commonwealth Games will barely draw a nostalgic sigh.

Glasgow has stepped in to salvage the 2026 edition, after Australia refused the burden. And the bemused member nations, are frankly staring at a future where these Games, if they survive the relevance debate, look headed in the direction of becoming budgeted affairs, cutting down not only on extravagance but also on some staples like hockey, badminton, squash and TT. The big blow to the quadrennial came not when Durban pulled out of hosting the 2022 edition, though it was a sign of things to come. What struck the Commonwealth Games smack in the face was Victoria, Australia throwing their hands up in the air just two years before the 2026 edition, pleading their inability to host. What further drove in the reality was that neither India, Canada nor Malaysia, with some semblance of economic fortitude among the Commonwealth nations, volunteered to take on the responsibility. South Africa and New Zealand weren't even deliberated, and for the second time, UK has opted to pick the tab, to keep the fraying fabric of the Games from coming undone. Future enthusiasm from the mildly well-off countries is not in evidence, though 2030 will be an accurate marker. As things stand, Glasgow will host a severely pared down version, with 4 venues in an 8 mile



radius, athletes put up in hotels, and a hugely restricted number of participants.

Besides the racquet sports being jettisoned, the immediate disciplines getting culled are the team sports like hockey, cricket and rugby, and they will be left wondering if they can ever return to the fold, given tight budgets, and athlete-to-medal ratios considered in this cold calculation. Only netball found favour, though Glasgow has done well to try to integrate the para-sports programme into the able-bodied one, with one eye firmly on inclusion.

For India, the mandate is clear – get started on sports like Athletics, swimming, gymnastics and cycling in earnest, and use the opportunity to scale up these programmes if it has any serious aspirations to hold the Olympics. Inspiration can be found in their BRICS buddy Brazil which raised its Athletics, Gymnastics and Swimming profile from scratch after being allotted the 2016 Olympics. India's medal standing at 2026 might look miserable, but if it can get started on these sports, it will help the country in the long run.

Hockey, cricket, wrestling, badminton, TT dropped from CWG program



GNS News Agency, Oct 24

CWG: Hockey and cricket, sports in which India secured medals in Birmingham will be omitted from the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. (Hockey India/PTI) CWG: Hockey and cricket, sports in which India secured medals in Birmingham, will be omitted from the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. Six of the 12 sports in which India won a medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games have been axed from the 2026

edition. Sports where India managed podium finishes in Birmingham but will be omitted from the Glasgow Games are badminton, cricket, hockey, squash, table tennis and wrestling.

Some other sports in which India have raked in medals in the past editions but which were not part of Birmingham, like shooting and archery, also remain excluded from the Commonwealth Games 'Lite', where only 10 sports will feature due to cost-saving measures. The Games will take place from July 23 to

badminton has been played in every edition of the CWG since 1966, squash and hockey have been a part of the programme since 1998. Table Tennis has featured at every Games since 2002. The decision also marks a rare occurrence of no racquet sport being included in a multi-discipline event. At the 2022 CWG, India won 61 medals, including 22 gold.

Wrestling (12), boxing and table tennis (7 each), badminton (6), hockey and squash (2 each), and cricket (1) accounted for more than half of the medals – 37. The rejigging of the sports programme will severely affect India's tally, given that apart from athletics and para-athletics, boxing and weightlifting, the country does not have strong gold medal contenders.

One of the major reasons for a curtailed programme is that Glasgow stepped in as a last-minute replacement as a part of a rescue deal to ensure the CWG took place in 2026.

Mohammed Shami seeks inspiration from 'fighter' Rishabh Pant

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Mohammed Shami says he is inspired by Rishabh Pant's patience and wants to play a couple of Ranji Trophy games before flying to Australia for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, starting on November 22. "I had spent time with Rishabh at the National Cricket Academy, where he was doing the rehab after his injury. I have seen the images, which were so scary. What inspired me the most that I never saw him sad. All his ligaments were broken but he continued his rehab with a laugh on his face. It was a massive learning for me as well. His positive attitude taught me the importance of patience," Shami said on the sidelines of an event in Gurgaon on Monday.

The 34-year-old pacer, who hasn't played for India since the 2023 ODI World Cup, was seen bowling to assistant coach Abhishek Nayar after the conclusion of the first Test between India and New Zealand at the Chinnaswamy Stadium on Sunday. "It felt great yesterday. Before that, I had been bowling with a half run-up because I didn't want to put too much load on my body," he said. Mohammed Shami is gunning for a Ranji Trophy return before the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Mohammed Shami is gunning for a Ranji Trophy return before the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "We decided yesterday that I would bowl at full intensity for the last two sessions and I gave my 100%. It felt good, the results were encouraging. Hopefully, I'll be back on track soon."

Shami had been sidelined with a left Achilles heel injury for almost a year and the recent setback has derailed his comeback for the Australia tour but the bowler is optimistic about his fitness. "I know everyone has been thinking about whether I will go to Australia or not but that series is still far away," he said. "The only thing I want to focus on is how to keep myself fit and how to get as strong as I can for the tour. I know what kind of an attack we want for that Test series, so it's better for me to work on the nuances and spend some more time on the ground before going. "If I get fit and I get a gap of eight to ten days, then it's better that I play one or two domestic matches before going to Australia."

"I don't know when I can play next but the day I feel comfortable about bowling 20-30 overs and I get the nod



from the doctors, I'll make a run to play a match. I want to spend as much time as I can on the ground before going for the Australia series. Shami confirmed that he is still unsure about his availability for Bengal's next round Ranji Trophy fixture, beginning October 26. "Not sure about the next fixture but if I would feel that I am ready to bowl 20 overs per day and doctors will give me a go ahead I will run from my rehab," he said. The India fast bowler is also optimistic that the Rohit Sharma-led team will again win the series in Australia. Shami had played a crucial role in India's first-ever Test series win in Australia in 2018-19, when he bagged 16 wickets in four matches. However, he had played just the first Test, in Adelaide, when India toured next in 2020-21 before he returned home with an injury. "We can still win. We enjoy the bounce. We won because we have four different fast bowlers. We just need to put some runs on the board and our bowlers can do the job," he said. Shami credited India's pace battery for winning the Test matches abroad. "We have worked as a unit since 2014. "India never had three bowlers at a time who could bowl over 140kph. Maybe two at max. Now we even have some on the bench who can bowl 145kph," he said. "Every opponent waits for one easy kind of bowler, but that's how you create fear that all our bowlers are 145kph and have different kind of skills. And we showed how to fight when we toured overseas. Earlier we used to be on the safe side or our pace attack wasn't that aggressive. Abhi it ka jawaab patthar se dete hai (Now we know how to play it back)."

Mumbai's top club removes Jemimah Rodrigues over her father's 'religious activity'

GNS News Agency, Oct 24

Khar Gymkhana, one of Mumbai's oldest clubs, has cancelled the membership of Indian women cricket team's leading batter Jemimah Rodrigues. According to Khar Gymkhana officials, the action was taken after some members objected to her father Ivan using the club premises for "religious activities" and alleged that events were organised to "convert" the "vulnerable". The decision to cancel her membership was taken at Sunday's annual general body meeting here. Text messages and phone calls Monday to Jemimah Rodrigues and her father for comments remained unanswered.

Confirming the action, Khar Gymkhana president Vivek Devnani told The Indian Express: "The honorary three-year membership given to Ms Jemimah Rodrigues was revoked pursuant to a resolution passed by the members who attended the general meeting held on October 20, 2024." Khar Gymkhana managing committee member Shiv Malhotra spelled out the reasons. "We came to know that Jemimah Rodrigues's father was attached to an organisation called Brother Manuel Ministries. They booked the presidential hall for almost a year and a half and held 35 events. We all know what was happening



there," he said. "We hear about conversions all over the country, but it's happening right under our nose. There was dancing, expensive music equipment, big screens. As per Khar Gymkhana's bye-laws Rule 4A of the constitution, Khar Gymkhana does not permit any religious activity," Malhotra said. Former Khar Gymkhana president Nitin Gadekar said he was informed about the "religious activity" by a staff member. "Me, Malhotra and a few other members went to see it. We saw the room was dark, trance music was playing and a lady was saying 'He is coming to save us'.