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Woman alleges harassment by ASI's son led to husband's suicide

Telangana: Woman alleges harassment by ASI's son led to husband's suicide

Parents and the wife of an hotel owner address pressmen after he commits suicide due to loan harassment from ASI's son in MandamarriMancherla: Parents and the wife of a hotel owner in Hyderabad have alleged that the hotel owner died by suicide recently as he was unable to bear the harassment from the son of an assistant Sub-Inspector working with Srirampur police station.

Government hikes commercial LPG cylinder prices; check revised rates

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

New Delhi: Jet fuel, or ATF, price was on Tuesday reduced by 6.3 per cent to its lowest level this year, while the rate of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants was hiked by Rs 48.5 per 19-kg cylinder in the monthly revision done in line with international oil price trends. Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) price was cut by Rs 5,883 per kilolitre, or 6.29 per cent, to Rs 87,597.22 per kl in the national capital, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the lowest price of jet fuel this year. The price reduction, the second in a month, will help ease the burden of airlines for whom fuel makes up for almost 40 per cent of the operating cost. Prices were on September 1 cut by Rs 4,495.5 per kl, or 4.58 per cent. The ATF rate in Mumbai was reduced to Rs 81,866.13 per kl on Tuesday from Rs 87,432.78 previously. Prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes.

Alongside, oil firms increased the price of commercial LPG by Rs 48.5 to Rs 1,740 per 19-kg cylinder. This is the third straight monthly increase. Prices were hiked by Rs 6.5 per cylinder on August 1 and by Rs 39 on September 1. The three rounds of increase follow four monthly price reductions. In four price reductions, rates were cut by Rs 148 per 19-kg cylinder and now in three rounds of increase, prices have gone up by Rs 94 per bottle. Commercial LPG now costs Rs 1,692.50 per 19-kg cylinder in Mumbai, Rs 1,850.50 in Kolkata and Rs 1,903 in Chennai.

The rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on the first of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate. Prices of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates had been cut Rs 2 per litre in mid-March. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 a litre in Delhi while diesel is priced at Rs 87.62.

Revenue authorities begin demolition of houses on Musi river bed



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Hyderabad: The revenue authorities on Tuesday started demolition of houses in Musi River bed at Chaderghat and other places amidst huge police presence. Over 200 workers started demolition of the structures manually using sledge hammers and crow bars since morning. At a few places, there were arguments between the local people and the revenue officials over the 'hurried demolition'. The authorities maintained that in the first phase, the revenue department and Musi Riverfront Development Corporation Limited (MRDCL) officials started demolishing of houses at Chaderghat. "A total of 163 residents had voluntarily come forwards and opted for 2 BHK houses. All of them were allotted the houses and are moving out. Another 700 families have to vacate the houses," said Hyderabad Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), K Mahipal. The demolition of houses took place at Narsingi, Jiyaguda, Chaderghat and few other places on the Musi River stretch.

Large scale solar, green hydrogen plants will be set up in Telangana, says Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Hyderabad: Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said with renewable energy set to contribute substantial new power generation capacity in future, the State government was taking steps to set up large scale solar and green hydrogen plants across the State. The Deputy CM was addressing the press after visiting the research and development centre of Yamanashi Green Hydrogen Company, located 100 km from Tokyo. During his discussions with Yamanashi officials, Bhatti proposed a joint venture to set up green hydrogen plants and BESS technology in Telangana.

PM Modi holds bilateral meeting with Jamaican counterpart Holness

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday (October 1, 2024) held a bilateral meeting with Jamaican counterpart Andrew Holness in New Delhi. The bilateral meeting was followed by delegation-level talks between the two leaders. Visiting Prime Minister of Jamaica met PM Modi at Hyderabad House here in the national capital earlier today. The Jamaican PM is on an official visit to India from September 30-October 3. This is his first visit to India, and also the first ever bilateral visit of a Prime Minister of Jamaica to India.



Prior to this, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Holness have met several times on the sidelines of multilateral meetings. Before his meeting with Prime Minister Modi today, Mr. Holness offered floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat. "Honoring 'Father

of the Nation'! PM @AndrewHolnessJM of Jamaica offered floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat today," Ministry of External Affairs said, sharing a post on X along with pictures. The Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness arrived in New

Delhi on Monday (September 30, 2024) at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marking his first-ever visit to India. The Jamaican PM was warmly received by Minister of State for Finance, Pankaj Chaudhary. India and Jamaica share strong historical and cultural linkages, reflected in their shared colonial past, values of democracy and freedom, and passion for cricket, according to a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs. This visit is expected to bolster bilateral relations, enhance economic cooperation, and solidify the longstanding bonds between Jamaica and India.

'You destroyed their homes, their dreams,' says KTR slamming Revanth Reddy's bulldozer politics

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Tuesday denounced Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and the Congress leadership for betraying the people of Telangana through demolitions under the guise of the Musi Riverfront Development Project. He condemned the razing of homes and shattering the lives of many, especially children. "Dear Chief Minister, you demolished their homes and dreams. These children search through the ruins of their demolished house, for their life's memories. Will you and your Ministers tell them that you destroyed their homes to build malls? Is this the people's governance you promised?" he asked, sharing a video of two young girls at their partially demolished house in Shankar Nagar near Chadarghat in Musi riverbed on Tuesday.

Targeting Rahul Gandhi directly, the BRS working president questioned the contradiction between the Congress leader's national rhetoric and the actions of the local Congress government. "Take a look at your demolition sarkaar in Telangana. You promised to stand by the people, but have you heard the voice of Telangana's public against the bulldozer politics of your Chief Minister?" he asked. He wanted Rahul Gandhi to visit the Musi project affected areas and witness the ground reality. Rama Rao also pointed out the inconsistency in



the Congress's stance on corporate relationships, where Rahul Gandhi declares fight against Adani in Delhi, while Chief Minister Revanth Reddy joins hands with Adani in Davos. Similarly, for Congress leaders, Bulldozer Raj is wrong in Uttar Pradesh, but right in Hyderabad. "Who is right and who is wrong?" he asked. He also criticised the Congress's double standards on MLAs defections, drawing attention to its actions in Telangana. He pointed out that the Congress was encouraging defections in Telangana, while opposing defections in other States like Himachal Pradesh. "Is this righteousness or opportunistic politics?" he asked.

Sonam Wangchuk, Ladakhis detention unacceptable: Rahul Gandhi



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday (October 1, 2024) termed as "unacceptable" the detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and other Ladakhis, and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi would have to listen to Ladakh's voice. Around 120 people from Ladakh, including Mr. Wangchuk — who had marched to the national capital demanding Sixth Schedule status for the Union Territory — have been detained by the Delhi Police at the national capital's border. "The detention of Sonam Wangchuk ji and hundreds of Ladakhis peacefully marching for environmental and constitutional rights is unacceptable," Mr. Gandhi said in a post on X. The detention of Sonam Wangchuk ji and hundreds of Ladakhis peacefully marching for environmental and constitutional rights is unacceptable. The former Congress chief also asked why elderly citizens were being detained at Delhi's border for standing up for Ladakh's future. "Modi ji, like with the farmers, this 'Chakravayuh' will be broken, and so will your arrogance. You will have to listen to Ladakh's voice," Mr. Gandhi said. In a post on Instagram shortly before being detained, Mr. Wangchuk shared visuals from the Delhi border, where their buses were stopped amid huge police presence. The climate activist can be seen in the video interacting with police officials. In his post, Mr. Wangchuk said several vehicles of the Delhi Police and its Haryana counterpart were accompanying their buses. While they initially thought that they were being escorted as they approached the national capital, it was clear they were

going to be detained. He said around 1,000 police personnel had been deployed at the Delhi border and they were informed that heavy deployment of security forces was made at the Ladakh Bhawan in Delhi, and in areas where students from the Union Territory resided. "It appears they don't want to allow this padyatra to take place," he said. The padyatra was organised by the Leh Apex Body which, along with the Kargil Democratic Alliance, is spearheading an agitation over the past four years to demand statehood for Ladakh, its inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, early recruitment process along with a public service commission for Ladakh, and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil districts. The Delhi Police on Monday banned gatherings by five or more persons, carrying banners, placards, and arms, and protests in the central part and bordering areas for the next six days, citing law and order issues, including calls for protests by several organisations.

DJ sound systems prohibited during religious processions in Hyderabad

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Hyderabad: Hyderabad City Police Commissioner CV Anand has issued orders prohibiting Disc Jockey (DJ) sound systems which are powered mobile speakers delivering high decibel sound and firecrackers, during religious processions in the city.

The order came after a recent coordination meeting by the Hyderabad Police with organisers of various religious processions, representatives of various political parties and government departments to discuss the concerns raised by the citizens during the recent religious processions. As per the notification issued on September 30, the use of DJ sound systems, DJ sound mixers, sound amplifiers and other high sound generating equipment, appliances and apparatus or contrivance which is capable of producing or reproducing the sound are prohibited during religious processions.

SIT probe into laddu 'adulteration' issue temporarily stalled



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Tirupati: Andhra Pradesh DGP Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao on Tuesday said that the state government constituted Special Investigation Team (SIT) will temporarily stall its probe into the alleged 'adulteration' of Tirupati laddus with animal fats case as the matter is sub-judice in the Supreme Court. Over the last two days, the SIT has probed the procurement and sampling processes, trying to understand how it is possible to adulterate the laddus, said Rao.

"First they (SIT) have to understand the process, study it and take all the information, but in the meantime, an order has come from the Supreme Court and in line with that, we have stopped it (probe)," the DGP said while speaking to reporters. When the case is being examined under the purview of the apex court, it is not appropriate to talk more, he said, hinting at the next hearing of the case in the Supreme Court on October 3. The top court was hearing a batch of pleas, including those seeking a court-monitored probe into the alleged use of animal fat in making Tirupati laddus.

Andhra Pradesh notifies new liquor policy, to allow private retailers



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Vijayawada: The Andhra Pradesh government has notified a new liquor policy, allowing private retailers to sell spirits on the lines of Haryana and others with the state expecting to rake in Rs 5,500 crore revenue. In a complete overhaul of excise policy based on best practices from other states, Andhra Pradesh has decided retail sales of liquor through 3,736 notified private shops across the state. The new policy will take effect from October 12, 2024, as per the notification dated September 30, 2024. The permission to sell IMFL (Indian-made foreign liquor) and FL (foreign liquor) will be granted to private persons or entities through a selection process, the notification said.

The period of licence for selling IMFL and FL by shops shall be from October 12, 2024 to September 30, 2026, it added. Out of the total number of shops to be licensed in 2024-26, as many as 3,396 will be in the open category, while 340 shops will be reserved for allocation to 'Geetha Kulalu' (a toddy tapping community) with a view to empower them and promote equity and social justice.

The selection process for granting licence will be through a draw of lots and an applicant can apply for more than one shop. There shall be no restriction on the number of shop licences a person can hold, it added. Applicants will have to deposit a non-refundable fee of Rs 2 lakh for each shop. As per the notification, the retail excise tax (RET) ranges from Rs 50 lakh for locality with population of 10,000 to Rs 85 lakh per annum for a municipality or municipal corporation having population above 5 lakh during the fiscal 2024-2025.

It will be increased by 10 per cent for 2025-26. The overall exercise is estimated to result in the state government raking in Rs 5,500 crore. The RET per annum shall be paid in six equal advance instalments as applicable for each year during the licence period 2024-26.

As per the notification, the retailer margin will be 20 per cent on issue price across all categories of IMFL and FL, including beer, wine and RTDs (ready to drink). For the premium stores, the notification said, "In order to provide an enhanced and high-end retail experience within the state of Andhra Pradesh, a total of 12 Premium Store Licences shall be granted as a separate category." These premium stores shall be strategically located across major municipal corporation cities namely Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Rajamahendravaram, Kakinada, Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Kadapa, Anantapur or any other city as notified by the state government from time to time, it added.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Luxury trumps health

THE reprimand by the Punjab and Haryana High Court has exposed glaring mismanagement in the Punjab Government's financial priorities, especially its indulgence in luxury spending while healthcare obligations remain unmet. Despite receiving Rs 350 crore from the Union Government under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme, the state has failed to release these funds to hospitals, which means it owes medical institutions Rs 500 crore. The state has been unpardonably negligent about public health despite hospitals across Punjab struggling to provide adequate care to patients due to financial constraints.

The court's move to withhold the salaries of senior health officials is a significant step toward accountability. However, the deeper issue lies in the state's apparent disregard for essential services like healthcare, which has been exacerbated by its allocation of resources toward non-essential expenditures such as new cars for politicians, office renovations and costly media advertising. The fact that funds intended to support critical healthcare services have been diverted for lavish expenditures on luxuries not only exposes poor governance but also raises concerns about the administration's commitment to public welfare.

Punjab's financial troubles are compounded by its massive fiscal deficit, which has already put a strain on essential public services. The state's misallocation of funds signals a broader issue of governance failure. Reports have pointed out that while politicians and bureaucrats benefit from these lavish outlays, hospitals and healthcare providers are left battling mounting debts and underfunding, directly impacting patient care and public health outcomes. The HC's demand for transparency regarding government spending is a step in the right direction.

8: Delhi Police tell court how they busted 'fake' I-T raid involving police officers and Haryana gang

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

At around 8 pm on August 2, the doorbell of a businessman's home in Preet Vihar rang several times. When Anupam Aggarwal opened the door, he found eight men standing outside. They told him they were from the Income Tax (I-T) Department and were there to conduct a raid on his premises. Among the men, two were in police uniforms — Constable Hemant, deployed with the traffic unit in Dwarka, and Constable Naresh, a beat officer at East Delhi's Preet Vihar Police station.

Recently, Delhi Police's Special Cell submitted in a court these men were allegedly fraudsters, who knew that the I-T Department was investigating the businessman, and hatched a planned a conduct fake raid to "loot" him. The Special Cell said these "IT officers" were operating while a court was hearing the bail plea of Sandeep Sahu, one of the men who allegedly "raided" the businessman's house and was arrested in connection with the case on August 15. Sahu was among the eight men arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell in connection with the case. The Special Cell informed the court that as per Aggarwal, the group also carried an I-T Department order in the name of his brother Dilip, with them. Following this, Dilip and his wife Deepa were allegedly asked to hand over their phones — a Vivo Pro 5 and an iPhone 11. The phones of three other family members were also taken away, following which the "IT officers" allegedly started searching the entire house, the Special Cell said. However, Anupam told the men that I-T searches had already taken place at his house and a woman officer's presence was required while conducting such raids. The group allegedly didn't respond to him and instead issued an I-T notice, the Special Cell submitted in the court. When the "I-T officers" were leaving, Aggarwal's wife Rashmi noted down the number of one of the two white-coloured vehicles in which they had arrived and then called the police who registered a First Information at the Preet Vihar Police station. Among other sections, the accused were also booked for cheating by personation (Section 419(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita). As per the recent Crime in India report by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), just six people were booked for this crime in Delhi in 2022. The Special Cell submitted before the court "secret sources" told them during their investigation that certain police officers were involved with a gang from Southern Haryana known as "Lalit@Radhe" in the "I-T raid". Constable Hemant assigned to the traffic unit, a suspect, was questioned by the Special Cell. During the questioning, Hemant allegedly admitted his involvement in the case, submitted the Special Cell. Hemant also named his associates — Amit Kumar Turan alias Khadda, Kuldeep alias Doctor, Lalit alias Radhe from Bhiwani, Ankit Rathi from Rohtak, and Sonu from Bhiwani among others. According to the Special Cell's investigation, Amit Kumar Turan contacted Head Constable Rakesh posted with the Anti-Auto Theft Squad (AATS) in Dwarka, and he allegedly received the Instagram ID of gangster Kuldeep alias Doctor from Rakesh. While communicating with Kuldeep, Turan allegedly told him they had information that Rs 150 crore in cash and 2.5 quintal of gold had been kept at the residence of Anupam Aggarwal. The Special Cell also alleged that the accused connected through Zangi, a private messaging application. To make a plan to loot the cash and gold at Anupam's residence, Amit Kumar Turan, Constable Hemant and Ankit Rathi met gangster Kuldeep at Le Dhansa Border, Preet Vihar, and Satya Niketan in late June, as per the Special Cell's submissions in court. The Special Cell also relied on CCTV footage from the Preet Vihar Police station from July 3, which allegedly showed Amit Kumar Turan with Constables Hemant and Naresh Kumar. Kumar was allegedly involved in the plan by Hemant. As per the Special Cell, all three were discussing the plan to loot Anupam together. Seeking bail Sandeep Sahu, who was arrested in connection with the case on August 15, moved a bail plea in Chief Judicial Magistrate Nabeela Wali's court in the Patiala House Courts. The Special Cell opposed his bail plea on the grounds that many other co-accused are yet to be arrested and that if released on bail, Sahu might indulge in similar activities again. Advocate Pravesh Dabas, representing Sahu, however, said there was no incriminating evidence against Sahu to link him to the crime. Stating that he had been wrongly framed in this case, Dabas argued that the accused was also cooperating with the police.

Shouting 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' would not promote disharmony: Karnataka High Court



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Karnataka High Court on an order passed on September 20, Justice M Nagaprasanna said, "Sloganeering Bharat Mata Ki Jai would only lead to harmony and never a discord." The Karnataka High Court has dismissed a case against a group of men from Mangalore in a First Information Report (FIR) filed under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections pertaining to promoting enmity between groups, insult, and intimidation in June. In an order passed on September 20, Justice M Nagaprasanna said, "Sloganeering Bharat Mata Ki Jai would only lead to harmony and never a discord."

In this case, the Mangalore residents were returning after celebrating the oath-taking of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 9. When they reached Boliyar under the Ullal Taluk in the Dakshina Kannada district, they were allegedly attacked and two of them were stabbed by a group of 25 people objecting to them shouting the slogans of "Bharat Mata ki Jai". The day after the Mangalore residents registered a case for attempted

murder, a man named P K Abdulla filed a case, which is before the High Court, alleging the Mangalore residents came to a mosque in Boliyar and threatened him and others with dire consequences, telling them to leave the country. The counsel for the group of Mangalore residents argued that they were only shouting the slogan along with the PM's name, after which they were attacked. The counsel also argued the case against them for promoting enmity was a counter-blast case filed by a person who wasn't involved in the incident.

On the other hand, the opposing counsel stated that the attack on the Mangalore residents was a separate incident to be investigated, while the alleged threats made by them should also be investigated at least. The bench observed, "The complainant ... claims to be the president of Mohiuddin Jumma Masjid, Boliyar. The issue now is what stopped the complainant from registering the complaint on the very day, that is on 09-06-2024, if the petitioners had threatened in whatever manner that is narrated in the complaint. The complaint registered by the petitioners narrates minute details. They being assaulted is a matter of record, as statements of the petitioners were taken from the hospital where they were undergoing treatment for injuries. For having done the act of assaulting the petitioners, it cannot but be construed that the complaint made by the complainant is a counterblast, to the complaint made by the petitioners." Quashing the case against the Mangalore residents, the court said, "Permitting even investigation into the case at hand would be prima facie permitting investigation into the sloganeering of Bharat Mata Ki Jai... which can be no stretch of imagination be promoting disharmony or enmity amongst religions."

Unkept Promises: In Pune Cantonment, from illegal hawkers to bad roads, residents complain of endless woes



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Commuters using the Wanowrie Road that houses Command Hospital, Armed Forces Medical College and Artificial Limb Centre face a harrowing time due to the reduced carriage width. Commuters using the Wanowrie Road that houses Command Hospital, Armed Forces Medical College and Artificial Limb Centre face a harrowing time due to the reduced carriage width. Dissent in the Congress camp has led to a plateful of contenders from the party for the Pune Cantonment Assembly seat that goes to polls later this year. What's notable is this is the only constituency among the six in Pune city that the Congress delivered as a strong lead for their candidate during the Lok Sabha elections — Ravindra Dhangekar. Instead of cashing in on this voter support, the party seems to be grappling with internal divisions. Meanwhile, BJP representatives have highlighted development projects they have undertaken. But issues like traffic congestion, poorly maintained major roads, unauthorised constructions, illegal hawkers remain unresolved. Reserved for Scheduled Castes candidates, this constituency has a 2.9 lakh electorate and is spread across Pune Camp (Cantonment), Wanowrie, B T Kawade road, Ghorpadi, SRPF, Azad Nagar, Kashewadi, Rajewadi, and also includes some of the areas of Bhavani Peth, Mangalwar Peth and Kasba Peth. Some of the iconic spots in a state of neglect

This constituency boasts of some of Pune's most iconic places including Chhatrapati Shivaji Market, Ohel David Synagogue (Lal Deval), Pune Race Course, Empress Garden, M G Road and is a cosmopolitan mix of Muslim, Christian, Maratha, Dalit and other communities. Illegal hawking and delays over repairs are among concerns that are yet to be seriously addressed. Despite the Pune Cantonment Board's anti-encroachment drive to clear M G Road, the hawker menace persists. Restoration of the Grade 1 heritage structure Chhatrapati Shivaji Market without disturbing the facade and roof structure has been an ambitious project but faces delays. Vendors at the fish section had suffered losses due to a fire in 2021 and technical issues have delayed the renovation.

Karnataka unveils India's first-ever Global Capability Centre policy, aims for 500 new centres and 3.5 lakh jobs by 2029

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

The policy outlines a vision to establish 500 new GCCs by 2029, contributing significantly to the state's economy and creating 3.5 lakh jobs. The draft policy is now open for public comment and the government has invited inputs to refine and strengthen the policy. A GCC is an offshore facility that provides services to a parent organisation, most often a multinational corporation. Karnataka is home to over 30 per cent of India's GCCs and accounts for 35 per cent of the country's workforce in this sector. The policy has also set an ambitious target for the state to aim for an economic output of \$50 billion from GCC operations by 2029. The new GCC policy also aims to create an investor-friendly environment to attract GCCs and facilitate their expansion in Karnataka; position Karnataka as a global leader in Artificial Intelligence (AI), promote research and development tailored for GCCs; foster a research and development-driven environment focused on deep-tech and emerging technologies and provide platforms for collaboration between GCCs and the local innovation ecosystem, helping to generate cutting-edge solutions. Moreover, the policy also encourages decentralised growth through the 'Beyond Bengaluru' initiative, spreading GCCs across various regions in the state. The policy places a heavy emphasis on creating Global Innovation Dis-

tricts in Bengaluru and beyond. These districts will provide state-of-the-art infrastructure, fostering collaboration among startups, academic institutions, and businesses. The government has also proposed creating Centers of Excellence (CoEs) focused on emerging technologies like AI and machine learning. Karnataka already houses 21 such CoEs and aims to expand further through public-private partnerships. Recognising the need for balanced regional development, the government's 'Beyond Bengaluru' initiative promotes the growth of GCCs in cities like Mysuru, Hubballi-Dharwad, Tumakuru, and Shivamogga. Companies that set up operations in these areas will receive a special package of financial incentives, including rent reimbursements, internet cost subsidies, and property tax exemptions. The policy also supports the establishment of Nano GCCs, which require fewer employees, making it easier for companies to set up operations. A Center of Excellence for AI will also be established in Bengaluru, focusing on the research and development of artificial intelligence. The policy also introduces an AI Skilling Council to develop AI-specific curricula, which will be implemented across the state's educational institutions. The government has allocated Rs 100 crore to support joint research between GCCs and academic institutions, with a focus on solving real-world business and societal challenges.

27 arrested in Surat stone-pelting mob incident get bail



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

The Surat district court Friday granted bail to all 27 arrested in a stone pelting incident — which had followed the detention of six minors who were allegedly involved in pelting stones at a Ganesh pandal in Surat city on September 9. One of the minors allegedly pelted a stone, while travelling with five others, at a pandal in the Varyavi bazaar area during Ganesh Chaturthi. Local people had taken them to the Saiyedpura police. When news of the incident spread, a crowd of 200-300 people gathered near the station, pelting stones at the police and public. That night, police arrested 27 people who were allegedly breaking off doors of different flats.

Additional District and Session Judge R K Modh directed that the accused, who are all residents of Lalgate, "should not enter" the Lalgate police station until the police file a chargesheet. The application was filed by the accused's lawyers on September 17, while the hearing was carried out on September 18, 21 and 23. Bail was granted on a bond of Rs 25,000. Speaking to The Indian Express, Zafar Belawala, one of the defense lawyers, said, "In our arguments, we mentioned that after this rioting incident, there was a Shanti Samiti meeting between (Hindu and Muslim) communities, called by police. After this, Ganesh Visarjan and Eid-e-Milad festival passed peacefully in the city. All the accused were arrested from their homes, and they were not present on the spot. They are from good, respected families and they don't have any criminal records. They are the only earning members of their family. If their bail had not been granted, it would have been a pre-trial punishment. Those injured into the stone pelting incidents are now stable and they have joined their duties."

Public prosecutor Arvind Vasoya said, "We pressed before the court that if the accused are released on bail, they may again damage the peaceful atmosphere of the city in the upcoming festivals. The accused may also tamper with evidence, threaten witnesses, and escape from the country. We are studying the bail order and after seeing it, we will further decide our action." In the order, the court directed that the accused should submit their passport if they possess one. They have to register attendance at the police station in the first week of every month until the chargesheet is filed by the police.

On September 10, the 27 accused were produced before the Surat district court by Lalgate police, who demanded police remand of 14 days. The court had granted police remand of two days until September 12. The accused were later sent to judicial custody at Surat central jail on the same day. At the time of the arrests, police registered an offence under BNS Act sections BNS Act 109 (attempt to murder), 115(1) (voluntarily causing hurt), 189(2) (unlawful assembly), to resist the execution of any law or of any legal process), 190 (unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object), 191(2) (rioting), 324(4) (mischievous causing loss of above Rs 1 lakh), 125 (endangering life or personal safety of others), and 121(1) (voluntarily causing grievous hurt to deter public servants from their duty).

ED attaches properties worth Rs 22.78 crore in Punjab foodgrain tenders scam, former Cong minister Ashu among accused

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) until now has attached properties worth Rs 22.78 crore in the alleged money laundering case related to food grain tenders scam in the Punjab's food, civil supplies and consumer affairs department. Former Congress minister and ex-Ludhiana West MLA Bharat Bhushan Ashu who is among the accused was arrested by the ED on August 1 at its Jalandhar headquarters after he was called for questioning. The properties attached, belonging to people involved in money laundering, include immovable properties situated at Ludhiana, Mohali, Khanna and other parts of Punjab and movable properties in the form of FDRs, gold jewellery, bullions and bank accounts, the ED said in a statement on Friday.

Ashu, also Punjab Congress' cowering president, is accused of being involved in the multi-crore Punjab foodgrain transportation and labour cartage tenders scam during his tenure as Punjab's food and civil supplies minister during the previous Congress government. Ashu continues to be in jail. The ED said that its investigation revealed that Ashu favoured selected contractors for allotting tenders and promised higher profits to them, thereby collecting bribes from them through Rajdeep Singh Nagra, Rakesh Kumar Singla and others including a few government officers of his department. The bribe money was further laundered to purchase movable and immovable properties using a network of shell entities.

The ED said: "Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jalandhar has provisionally attached properties worth Rs 22.78 crore (approx) in a money laundering case related to Tender Scam in the Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs when Bharat Bhushan Sharma alias Ashu was Cabinet Minister, in the Ministry of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Government of Punjab.

The Enforcement Directorate initiated investigation on the basis of various First Information Reports (FIRs) registered by the Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, under various sections of IPC, 1860 and Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 related to "Tender Scam" in Department of Food and Civil Supplies. "Earlier, ED had conducted two searches dated 24.08.2023 and 04.09.2024 in the case at 28 locations in different parts of Punjab. Further, during investigation, Bharat Bhushan Sharma Ashu and his close aide Rajdeep Singh Nagra were arrested under PMLA, 2002 on 01.08.2024 and 04.09.2024 respectively for committing the offence of money laundering and both are in Judicial Custody at present. Further investigation is under progress," the Central agency stated

Mumbai's Mahalaxmi, Thane railway stations set to witness residential and commercial projects, RLDA invites bids for development



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

The Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA), a statutory body under the Ministry of Railways, has announced two significant development opportunities in Mumbai and Thane, inviting bids for commercial and residential projects at Mahalaxmi and a commercial tower at Thane railway station. Both projects are set to reshape the respective areas, bringing economic growth and modern infrastructure to these locations. At Mahalaxmi, the RLDA has opened bidding for the development of a prime land parcel measuring over 10,800 square metres for a lease period of 99 years. The site is positioned for high-end residential and commercial developments, including luxury hotels and Grade-A office spaces. Located in a sought-after part of the city, this project is expected to contribute significantly to Mumbai's ongoing urban transformation.

The land parcel offers a Floor Space Index (FSI) of 4.05, allowing developers to utilize the space for multiple uses, potentially creating iconic structures that will add to Mumbai's skyline. The reserve price for the land is set at Rs 805 crore, reflecting the immense potential of the site for premium developments. "There is surplus land available with the rail department out of which some sites have been chosen for infrastructure utilization which in turn will also create employment opportunities. The chosen sites hold tremendous potential for high-end projects,

and we expect strong interest from developers. It offers them a chance to develop something remarkable that will drive economic growth and create new job opportunities for the surrounding areas," said an RLDA official dedicated to these projects. Following the invitation for bids at Mahalaxmi, the RLDA also invited bids for the construction of a Commercial Tower at Thane Railway Station. The project is part of the Station Area Traffic Improvement Scheme (SATIS) under the Ministry of Urban Development's Smart City Mission. The Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) has already constructed a 2.24-kilometre elevated road to improve mobility around the station. The project aims to reduce traffic congestion and ensure organized growth in the bustling Thane area. The proposed Commercial Tower will be located on Central Railway's land above the deck area at Thane station. The eight-floor building will feature modern commuter facilities, including food courts, commodity vendors, platinum-rated green office spaces, underground parking, lifts, escalators, solar systems, a terrace garden, and an open-air restaurant. The site in Thane is demographically located at the heart of the city's commercial hub, surrounded by institutions, offices, residences, and mixed-use establishments. With unorganized shops and homes currently occupying the area, the project presents a chance to give a new face to the east side of Thane.

The Commercial Tower will be designed as a multi-modal transit hub, connecting commuters to suburban trains, the proposed metro, and local bus services. The complex will also include essential civil infrastructure such as water supply, drainage, electrical systems, telephones, and internet connections. The project will cater to Thane's growing demand for modern office spaces while enhancing the city's transit infrastructure. Both the Mahalaxmi and Thane projects are crucial for the RLDA's broader goal of optimizing railway land for commercial and public use. These initiatives are expected to significantly improve local mobility, create new business opportunities, and contribute to the development of well-organized urban spaces in Mumbai and Thane.

Minor raped in Pune: MLA Ravindra Dhangekar says college authorities knew of assault, seeks police action

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Congress MLA Ravindra Dhangekar staged a protest outside the Pune police commissionerate on Friday over the rape of a 16-year-old girl from a college in the city and demanded action against the college authorities who he alleged were aware of the assault but did not inform the police. "We demand that the police carry out a fair investigation in this case. Justice should be delivered to the girl. The police should also act against the college authorities who tried to hide the incident. I have submitted a letter to the police," Dhangekar said, adding that officials of the organisation that runs the college were also aware of the sexual assault.

A First Information Report (FIR) in the case was registered at a police station in Pune following the girl's complaint on Wednesday. The police have arrested two ac-



used, aged 20 and 22, and detained two minors, both 16. According to the police, the assaults took place at various times between April and September, at separate places, and prima facie, no direct link between the four accused has come to light.

MVA leaders hold symbolic inauguration of Civil Court to Shivajinagar stretch of Pune Metro, protest delay in starting service



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Mahavikas Aghadi symbolically opened the underground metro at Civil Court metro station after a tug of war with police on Friday to protest against PM Modi. (Express Photo Arul Horizon) Mahavikas Aghadi symbolically opened the underground metro at Civil Court metro station after a tug of war with police on Friday to protest against PM Modi. With the Pune Metro service on the Civil Court to Shivajinagar route getting delayed following the cancellation of its inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, the opposition Maha Vikas

Aghadi (MVA) on Friday staged a protest outside the Civil Court station. The protesters also symbolically inaugurated the metro service, raising slogans against the Prime Minister for the delay.

The official inauguration of the Pune Metro stretch and a public rally were scheduled for Thursday, but the Prime Minister's visit was cancelled due to heavy rainfall. It was then decided that the inauguration would take place virtually on September 29, after which the service on the route would commence. In response, the Congress and NCP (SP) declared they would conduct their own inauguration if the service did not start by Friday. Accordingly, members of all the MVA parties attempted to enter the Civil Court station but were stopped by the police. The MVA protest was led by city Congress chief Arvind Shinde, city NCP (SP) chief Prashant Jagtap, city Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Sanjay More, and Congress legislator Ravindra Dhangekar. Along with leaders and party workers, they raised slogans against the Prime Minister, asserting that the Pune Metro belonged to the public, not to any ruling party or leader. To mark their protest, they symbolically cut a ribbon, inaugurating the metro service on the route ahead of the official event.

Delhi court allows IM member Yasin Bhatkal to speak to ailing mother via video call

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

A Delhi court on Thursday rejected Indian Mujahideen (IM) operative Yasin Bhatkal's plea for one-day custody parole to meet his ailing mother but permitted one video call where he could speak with her. Bhatkal's mother is critical after undergoing heart surgery earlier this month. ".....concerned jail superintendent is directed to allow applicant/accused Yasin Bhatkal @ Ahmad Siddibappa to interact with his mother through video conferencing one time only," Additional Sessions Judge Hardeep Kaur said in an order on Thursday.

The judge also imposed certain conditions on Bhatkal, who is in Tihar Jail - he would only speak to his mother in Hindi and the jail authorities were at liberty to record the conversation for "security" purposes. Bhatkal, who was represented by counsel M S Khan, Prashant Prakash, Quasar Khan and Rahul Sahani, argued that he needed to visit his mother as the greatest bond in this world is that between a mother and a son. He also said that it was his mother's wish to meet him as she had a heart ailment. The counsel had also requested the court for video conferencing permission to speak with his mother for three days a week.



Each forward of objectionable WhatsApp message can't be interpreted as creating rift in society: Bombay HC



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Bombay HC Whatsapp message forward The HC bench quashed an FIR lodged against a man booked for forwarding an objectionable post against Babasaheb Ambedkar on a WhatsApp group.

The Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court recently observed that each forward of an objectionable post on social media platforms including WhatsApp cannot be interpreted to have been done to create unrest in the society or between two groups of people. In observing so, the bench quashed an FIR lodged against a man booked for forwarding an objectionable post against Babasaheb Ambedkar on a WhatsApp group. A division bench of Justices V V Kankarwadi and S G Chapalgaonkar passed the verdict on September 19 on a criminal application by one Dnyaneshwar Wakale, 34, a resident of Khultabad in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district, argued through advocate R V Gore. The plea sought direction to quash the 2018 FIR against Wakale for offences punishable under Sections 295-A (outraging religious sentiments) and 153-A (promoting enmity between two groups) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and provisions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. "We are aware of the sentiments of the people when such objectionable posts are created and then made viral. The reality in life nowadays is that there is rampant use of smart phones and the

WhatsApp messenger or any such App and the social media but certain persons are not that techno-savvy and in such circumstances they will land in trouble on some occasion. People are also interested in forwarding every stuff in the form of messages, photos, videos, reels etc. and even on many occasions not even watching that they will forward it," the bench observed.

"People are required to exercise self-restraint in such situations and not to forward whatever is received on such Application or social media platforms. Anyway, each forward of such message cannot be interpreted to create unrest in the society or two groups of people or two races," it added. The prosecution had claimed that the complainant in the case received an objectionable post that insulted Ambedkar from another person and after further enquiry, he came to know that the present applicant had initially posted it on a certain WhatsApp group. The complainant was not a member of the said group.

Advocate Gore for the applicant argued that the police failed to investigate the origin of the post and if it was created by the applicant. He said that the applicant had no intention to hurt the feelings of any community and had immediately apologised to the said group. The bench observed that "unless the post is sent by the member of a group to another person who is not from the group, the question of it going viral does not arise." It questioned the 'quality of investigation' by terming it of 'low standard'. The high court noted that the entire chargesheet failed to show that there was any effort by the police to find out as to who was the member of the group who had made it viral or sent it to the person who was not a member of the group. The bench also expressed displeasure over the district court taking cognisance of the chargesheet without ascertaining whether the police had taken proper sanction from authorities for invoking certain offences. Quashing the FIR, the HC said, "We want to put the Judges of the District Judiciary on guard and direct them that they should consider these provisions whenever they are necessary and pass detailed orders in respect of the same."

NIT Hamirpur student expelled for threatening female student over video call

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

A first-year B Tech student at the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh, has been booked for threatening and using foul language during a video call with a female student from the same institute. The accused student has since been expelled from the institute for his actions. The incident, which took place on Wednesday night, sparked an unrest at the institute, with many students rallying in support of the woman and demanding action against the accused, a student of Electronics and Communication Engineering. Sources revealed that both the victim and the accused reside in the institute's hostels.

According to a source, "The woman was in her hostel room when she received a video call from the man. He threatened her and used foul language, causing her to break down. Her friends came to her aid, and she informed them about the call. Following this, the female students reported the matter to the authorities and began protesting." The police were later called to the



scene. Bhagat Singh Thakur, Superintendent of Police, Hamirpur, said, "The victim lodged a complaint, based on which an FIR was filed. She reported that the suspect had been stalking her on social media for a long time, but she tried to ignore him." Meanwhile, Archana Santosh Nanoty, Registrar of NIT Hamirpur, assured the students that strict action would be taken against anyone found involved in illegal activities.

Woman creates ruckus outside Devendra Fadnavis office, removes nameplate, breaks potted plants



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

An unknown woman on Thursday trespassed into the sixth floor of Maharashtra's secretariat, and attempted to vandalise the office of Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, the Mumbai police said. According to the police, the woman created a ruckus, removed the name plate of Fadnavis in his office, broke the potted plants near the cabin around 7 pm and escaped from the building. The incident, the video of which went viral on social media, has raised security concerns in the Secretariat with the police still struggling to identify and trace the woman. The CCTV footage shows the woman expressing outrage outside the high security cabin of Fadnavis in the state government's headquarters in Mumbai. She is seen hurling objects in the lobby in protest against the deputy CM, said the Marine Drive police on Friday. Meanwhile, Fadnavis said the police are trying to identify the woman and address her concerns. "We will try to understand why the woman was upset. The government headquarters Mantralaya doors are always open for common persons. They walk in and out daily with their problems seeking solutions," he told reporters in Shirdi.

On a query on security lapse, Fadnavis said, "Well, we have never restricted people coming to Mantralaya. How can we stop the common man from coming to the government office? Only when there are alerts do we take additional precautions to ensure flawless security". A senior police officer said the Mantralaya is comparatively empty at 7 pm but the staffers at the deputy chief minister office were present when she came. "However, they realised that something was wrong only when she started yelling. As it was a woman, the security personnel did not intervene and instead video recorded the incident. She escaped when the staffers called for help from the authorities," the officer added. He further said that the Marine Drive police are in the process of registering a case. "We were waiting for the security personnel of the Mantralaya to lodge a complaint. We will soon register a First Information Report (FIR) and our teams are already on the job to locate the woman," said an officer. The investigators are checking whether the woman followed the protocol at the time of entering the Secretariat or man-

aged to get in illegally. Fadnavis also referred to the previous instances where an individual walked inside the CM's office and attempted self-immolation and another person jumping from the first floor. All these instances depict there are issues which individuals want to draw our attention. Similarly, in this case also we will try to find out the concern of the woman and address it. Asked if the incident was the Opposition's ploy to embarrass the government, he said, "whatever be the reason we will find out and address the woman's concern."

Renukaswamy murder case: Darshan says he is innocent

GNS News Agency, Oct 1 Bengaluru: Kannada film actor Darshan, who was arrested in the Renukaswamy murder case and is presently lodged in Ballari district prison, has said in his bail petition that he is innocent and has been framed. The High Court Bench headed by Justice M Nagaprasanna will hear the matter on Friday. Darshan's bail petition further said he has been "fixed" in the case. "Barring the major injury on the head, no major injuries were found on the body of Renukaswamy. There is no clarity on his exact time of death. There are contradictions between the statements before the court and the medical reports. There is no evidence to prove that Darshan has committed the crime of murder," it stated. The authorities have created evidence against Darshan in the case, the bail petition states. Further, the bail petition states that superstar Darshan has a fan following in Karnataka and other countries. The details of movable and immovable properties have also been mentioned in the petition. Sources confirmed that arrangements are being made by his wife Vijayalaxmi to bring Darshan to Bengaluru from Ballari by helicopter if the court accepts his bail petition. On June 9, Renukaswamy was abducted from Chitradurga and brought to Bengaluru, where he was confined in a shed at Pattanagere and brutally assaulted. Renukaswamy was murdered, and his body was dumped in a drain at Sumanahalli. In connection with this case, 17 people, including Darshan and his partner Pavithra Gowda, were arrested on June 11 morning. All the accused are currently in jail and are under judicial custody. After 102 days of arrest, Darshan had, last Saturday, submitted a bail petition through his counsel at the sessions court. His counsel had also pleaded for an emergency hearing on the matter. Meanwhile, Darshan was grilled at the Ballari prison by Income Tax sleuths in connection with money transactions between the accused linked to the brutal murder of his fan Renukaswamy.

Will identify place to bury Badlapur sexual assault case accused, Maharashtra government tells HC



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

The Maharashtra government on Friday told the Bombay High Court that its police department is taking steps to identify a place for the burial of the deceased accused in the Badlapur sexual assault case. The state lawyer also stated that two police officers were deployed outside the house of the deceased accused to avoid any untoward situation in light of his father's claims that the family had received threats.

A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite-Dere and M M Sathaye was hearing an application by the father of the Badlapur sexual assault case accused who was gunned down earlier this week in alleged "retaliatory firing". In his plea, the father sought direction to the chief officer of the Ambarnath Municipal Council to provide land and make necessary arrangements for his son's burial. He also sought police security for himself and his family. On September 25, the state lawyer, during the hearing on the suo motu PIL initiated by the bench in light of the Badlapur case, said that a high-ranking police official would communicate with local authorities to make ar-

rangements for the burial of the deceased. However, the father claimed that the authorities have not allotted any place for burial as yet.

On Friday, Public Prosecutor Hiten Venegaonkar for the state police submitted that police personnel had been deputed at the accused's father's residence to ensure that no untoward incident took place. "If there are any threats made to the family, the police will take appropriate steps," the bench noted. Venegaonkar said that the police are keeping a watch and taking precautions to ensure no law and order problem is created. Venegaonkar also submitted that as far as providing land for burial was concerned, the police were taking steps to identify a suitable place and the immediate family of the deceased would be informed about the same. The state lawyer submitted that some comments made by the petitioner's lawyer on the need for the burial of the body were causing hindrances. Venegaonkar further submitted that the enquiry by the authorities found that there was no such custom of burial in the family of the deceased or the community and their lawyer made a comment that they wished to bury the body so that it could be exhumed in the future. The bench said that the community would not decide what the parents' choice for disposal of the body is and that it was the police's lookout to maintain law and order situation. It cautioned the petitioner's lawyer that such comments would jeopardise his client's case. "Our endeavour is to only get the truth out," Justice Dere remarked. Venegaonkar submitted that the authorities will identify some secluded place, and instead of making an "event" out of it, the burial can take place silently in the presence of family members and police personnel accompanying them. The bench recorded the statement and posted further hearings on Monday.

EC seeks explanation from Maharashtra govt, police for not complying with directions to transfer officials



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Election Commission seeks explanation from Maharashtra government Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioner Sukhbir Singh Sandhu started a two-day review on Friday. The Election Commission sought explanations from Maharashtra government and police after finding that they have failed to comply with its instructions to transfer officials ahead of Assembly elections in the State. With elections due in November, the EC had on July 31 instructed the government and police to transfer all officials posted in their home districts, and those who have been in the same place for three or more years. The chief secretary and director general of police were asked to submit action-taken reports by August 20. Despite reminders on August 22, September 11 and September 25, the EC is yet to get full reports, it said in a letter to the chief secretary on Friday. While a partial report from the additional DGP was sent, "no report has been

received in the commission from the chief secretary till date," the EC wrote. Asking for reports to be sent immediately, the EC asked the chief secretary and DGP to "explain the circumstances as to why compliance reports have not been furnished even after lapse of the stipulated time limit despite reminders in the matter." According to sources, the issue came up during the EC's ongoing review of poll preparations in Mumbai on Friday. The commission, comprising Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioner Sukhbir Singh Sandhu started a two-day review. The CEC is learnt to have expressed his displeasure at the delay in compliance with EC's instructions. Sources said around 100 inspectors of Mumbai Police and several revenue department officials across the state who were due for transfers are yet to be transferred. Elections to Maharashtra and Jharkhand Assembly are due, with Maharashtra Assembly's term ending November 26 and Jharkhand's on January 5, 2025. Earlier this week, the EC visited Jharkhand to review poll preparations in the state. The EC had decided not to schedule Maharashtra Assembly elections along with the ongoing Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir elections, which were announced on August 16. For the previous three election cycles at least, the Haryana and Maharashtra polls were scheduled together. When asked why the EC had decided to de-link the Haryana and Maharashtra elections, the CEC said J&K elections had to be held before the deadline of September 30 as ordered by the Supreme Court, and this was not a factor in previous election cycles. The requirement of forces was higher in J&K and the EC could not hold more than two polls at the same time, he said.

Renukaswamy murder case: Darshan says he is innocent

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Bengaluru: Kannada film actor Darshan, who was arrested in the Renukaswamy murder case and is presently lodged in Ballari district prison, has said in his bail petition that he is innocent and has been framed. The High Court Bench headed by Justice M Nagaprasanna will hear the matter on Friday. Darshan's bail petition further said he has been "fixed" in the case. "Barring the major injury on the head, no major injuries were found on the body of Renukaswamy. There is no clarity on his exact time of death. There are contradictions between the statements before the court and the medical reports. There is no evidence to prove that Darshan has committed the crime of murder," it stated. The authorities have created evidence against Darshan in the case, the bail petition states. Further, the bail petition states that superstar Darshan has a fan following in Karnataka and other countries.

The details of movable and immovable properties have also been mentioned in the petition. Sources confirmed that arrangements are being made by his wife Vijayalaxmi to bring Darshan to Bengaluru from Ballari by helicopter if the court accepts his bail petition. On June 9, Renukaswamy was abducted from Chitradurga and brought to Bengaluru, where he was confined in a shed at Pattanagere and brutally assaulted. Renukaswamy was murdered, and his body was dumped in a drain at Sumanahalli. In connection with this case, 17 people, including Darshan and his partner Pavithra Gowda, were arrested on June 11 morning. All the accused are currently in jail and are under judicial custody. After 102 days of arrest, Darshan had, last Saturday, submitted a bail petition through his counsel at the sessions court. His counsel had also pleaded for an emergency hearing on the matter. Meanwhile, Darshan was grilled at the Ballari prison by Income Tax sleuths in connection with money transactions between the accused linked to the brutal murder of his fan Renukaswamy. Darshan is also facing



cases in connection with receiving royal treatment at the Central Prison in Bengaluru. Nine officers attached to the prison department were suspended and three FIRs were slapped on Darshan and others in the case.

Darshan admitted to assaulting Renukaswamy, a fan of the actor allegedly killed by him and his aides for sending obscene messages to his partner Pavithra Gowda, but claimed that he was informed about the victim's death later, according to his 20-page statement mentioned in the charge sheet filed by the police probing the case. In the 3,991-page charge sheet submitted to the 24th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (ACMM) court on September 4, Darshan has provided graphic details of how he attacked Renukaswamy who was kidnapped and kept in captivity by his gang. The charge sheet also revealed that Renukaswamy chatted with Pavithra Gowda by creating a fake ID on Instagram under the name Gowtham. He repeatedly told her that he would send her pictures of his private parts and even claimed that he was better than Darshan, the charge sheet stated.

Liquor scam: Hemant Soren's ex-principal secy named in the Chattisgarh ACB's FIR

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Chhattisgarh's anti-corruption branch, probing an alleged liquor scam in the state, has registered an FIR against a 'syndicate' comprising Jharkhand-cadre IAS officer Vinay Choubey, who was the Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Hemant Soren when the 2022 Excise Policy was implemented in Jharkhand. Choubey is currently the Principal Secretary Panchayati Raj Department in Jharkhand. The FIR was registered after Vikas Singh — a Chattisgarh ACB official — on September 9 named two officials from Jharkhand, including former Excise Secretary Vinay Choubey, and the current Joint Secretary of Excise Department Gajendra Singh.

The FIR, registered under Prevention of Corruption Act among other sections, states, "... (The FIR was registered against the) syndicate for conspiring with the officials of Jharkhand to change the excise policy of Jharkhand and getting the tenders of the liquor to the people of the syndicate, thereby committing fraud and causing loss of crores of rupees to the (Jharkhand) government." Choubey deliberately applied the eligibility rule as a condition for the liquor supply agency and placement agencies to participate in the tender. The FIR stated that the work of wholesale supply of both Indian and foreign liquor was done by the syndicate and a condition of minimum turnover of Rs 100 crores continuously for two financial years was included in the mandatory eligibility criteria among others. The FIR reads: "... Due to the earlier practice of contractors in Jharkhand, no firm fulfilling the above condition could be eligible in Jharkhand. Due to the said rule, the syndicate's partners... were awarded the tender for wholesale supply of Indian and foreign liquor."

Similarly in the manpower supply, a total bank guarantee amount of Rs 11.28 crore was imposed for 310 shops across Jharkhand, the FIR said. "Also, a turnover of Rs 50 crores for 3 years was made mandatory for the companies to participate... The conditions were imposed according to the efficiency of the agencies working in Chhattisgarh and it was not possible for every company to participate in the tender in a normal way... The owners of all the above companies gave the work of manpower supply to one person Siddharth Singhania in Ranchi on their behalf, who opened an office in Ranchi and supplied manpower alone on behalf of all the



companies." Earlier, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) had earlier arrested various persons including the then Chhattisgarh IAS officer Anil Tuteja and others in a 'liquor scam' in Chhattisgarh investigated during the Congress' rule in the state — a charge rebuked by the earlier Bhupesh Baghel government as 'political vendetta' by the Centre. In the same case, officials from Jharkhand were called by the ED in Chhattisgarh for questioning, since both the states had similar policies with similar companies implementing the new policy. However, none of the Jharkhand officers were named. During the ACB's preliminary probe, a diary was recovered from a manpower supplier Siddharth Singhania which showed a plan for the sale of illegal liquor in Jharkhand like Chhattisgarh. "On reading the diary, it is clearly visible that a planning has been done to make the sale of liquor illegal in Jharkhand like Chhattisgarh. (There were writings) like: 'support of both police and excise will be necessary', 'one group will have to be brought on our side', 'liquor of Haryana and Punjab will have to be controlled', and 'Basant Soren and Yogendra Tiwari will be our main enemy'." Yogendra Tiwari was earlier arrested by the ED October 19 last year in a case of illegal earning through fraud committed in the sale of liquor, money laundering. Basant Soren is the brother of Chief Minister Hemant Soren. The current FIR involving Choubey stated that in January 2022 the syndicate in Chhattisgarh along with Vinay Choubey and others in Jharkhand ended the contractor system in the sale of country and foreign made liquor and replaced it with the system then implemented by the Chhattisgarh State Marketing Corporation Limited (CSMCL).

SC pulls up Delhi air quality panel over failure to curb pollution, stubble burning

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Delhi air pollution The bench noted that the commission was set up for the purposes of better coordination, research, identification and resolution of problems surrounding the air quality index (AQI) and matters connected therewith. The Supreme Court Friday said that the Commission for Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and adjoining areas "needs to be more active" to check pollution due to stubble burning in areas under its jurisdiction. A bench of Justices AS Oka and Augustine George Masih said "there are multiple reports/affidavits filed by the commission" and "so we cannot say the commission has not taken any action." It said, "We are of the view that though the commission has taken certain steps, the commission needs to be more active. The commission must ensure that its efforts and directions issued actually translate into reducing the problem of pollution." The bench noted that the commission was set up for the purposes of better coordination, research, identification and resolution of problems surrounding the air quality index (AQI) and matters connected therewith. The court agreed with the Amicus Curiae senior advocate Aparajita Singh "that the commission has not performed the way it was expected to perform considering the object for which the commission was set up." The bench pointed out that the AQOM Act has been "in existence for more than three years now. There are hardly 85 to 87 directions issued so far by the Commission under section 12 (1) of the Act. No action has been taken even after finding that the directions have not been implemented." The court said that possible action could be taken under section 14 of the Act against those flouting the act and indulging in stubble burning. The court noted that the



CAQM chairperson who was present during the day's hearing through video conferencing "states that the three committees mentioned in section 11 (1) "are holding only one meeting every three months. The sub-committee on monitoring and identification and the sub-committee on safeguarding and enforcement have been assigned important tasks. We wonder how they are performing those tasks by meeting only once in three months." The court also said it would like to know from the Commission about the meetings held by the committees under section 11 (1) and the decisions taken thereunder." It said the Commission "must also place on record details of the meetings of the three committees therein, and the decisions taken therein." It said that "the Commission must immediately step into action to ensure that equipment provided at the cost of the central government for avoiding stubble burning are actually used by the farmers." The court directed the Commission to file a compliance report, which it will consider on October 3.

'Unwarranted': SC sets aside Madras HC condition asking YouTuber Felix Gerald to shut his channel

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

The Supreme Court set aside the condition imposed by the Madras High Court asking YouTuber Felix Gerald to shut down his channel as a pre-condition for bail. On September 6, 2024, a three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud had stayed the condition set by the high court on Gerald asking him to take down his YouTube channel 'RedPix 24x7'. On Friday, the Supreme Court bench confirmed its September 6 order and said the "imposition of such a condition was unwarranted and extraneous for a decision on the application for bail".

"The petitioner has already been released on bail in connection with FIR... for offences punishable under the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Women Act, 2002 and Information Technology Act, 2000. However, while granting him bail, the HC directed that the petitioner shall close down his YouTube channel. We are of the view that imposition of such a condition was unwarranted and extraneous for a decision on the application for bail," the bench said. "We are of the view that the petitioner be released on bail independent of the condition so imposed by the high court. We accordingly set aside



the condition with the high court to the effect that the respondent shall close his YouTube channel. The September 6, 2024 order passed by this court shall stand confirmed with the above clarification", the bench ordered. Gerald was arrested for hosting an allegedly "objectionable" interview of YouTuber Savukku Shankar on his channel where Shankar made some comments against Madras High Court judges and women police personnel. Granting Gerald bail on July 31, the high court, however, asked him to close his channel.

Maternity, paternity leaves for Odisha govt employees becoming parents through surrogacy

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Odisha paternity leave While the state government has now been providing maternity leave of 180 days to female employees to natural and adoptive mothers and 15 days of paternity leave to male employees, this provision for surrogacy has been under consideration for a while.

Odisha government employees can now avail maternity and paternity leave even in cases of parenthood by surrogacy. The state's Mohan Majhi government has approved 180 days of leave for mothers and 15 days for fathers in such cases. A notification from the state finance department issued Thursday said: "A state government female employee, having less than two surviving children, who becomes a 'surrogate mother' shall be eligible for maternity leave of 180 days." Surrogate mother means a woman who agrees to bear a child (who is genetically related to the intending couple or intending woman) through surrogacy from the implantation of embryo in her womb and fulfils the conditions as provided in sub-clause (b) of clause (iii) of Section 4 of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, said the notification. A state government female employee having fewer than two surviving chil-

dren, who becomes a 'commissioning mother' — a biological mother who uses her egg to create an embryo implanted in any other woman — shall be eligible for maternity leave of 180 days.

A male employee of the state government having fewer than two surviving children, who becomes a 'commissioning father' — biological father of the child born through surrogacy — shall be eligible for paternity leave of 15 days within the period of six months from the date of delivery of the child. "If both surrogate mother and commissioning mother are state government employees, both will be eligible for 180 days of maternity leave each," the notification said. While the state government has now been providing maternity leave of 180 days to female employees to natural and adoptive mothers and 15 days of paternity leave to male employees, this provision for surrogacy has been under consideration for a while. While hearing a petition of a female employee who attained motherhood through surrogacy but denied 180 days leave on June 25, the Orissa High Court ruled that female employees who become mothers through surrogacy have the same right to maternity leave and other benefits as provided to natural and adoptive mothers.

'Shocking, Ministers can't veto experts' picks,' Scientists write second letter to Govt on National Science Awards



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Nearly 200 scientists and academicians have raised concerns about "non-academic considerations" in the selection of recipients for the newly instituted Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (RVP), India's top science award. In a recent letter to Principal Scientific Advisor Professor Ajay Sood, scientists, including former IISER Kolkata director Soumitra Banerjee and former IUCAA director Naresh Dadhich, warned that giving the Science and Technology Minister the final say on awardees undermines the core principles of scientific practice and could hinder the country's research development. The scientists urged immediate action to address these issues.

This is the second letter written by the scientific and academic community expressing concerns over the selection criteria for RVP. The first was written last month by 26 Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar awardees. The Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar — which replaced many well known scientific awards including the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize — was awarded for the first last month. A total of 33 scientists were awarded under four categories this year. The government, at the time it announced the newly-constituted Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar had said that a Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar Committee (RVPC), headed by the Principal Scientific Advisor, would identify the awardees. As first reported by The Indian Express on September 17, at least three of the names recommended by the committee were dropped from the final list. This included: Suvrat Raju, a physicist at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research; Prateek Sharma, physicist at Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru; and Suman Chakraborty

of IIT Kharagpur, who won the Infosys Prize for Engineering and Computer Science in 2022.

Incidentally, two of the three scientists, Raju and Sharma, were critical of IISc for its last-minute cancellation of a discussion on UAPA last year, which was to be led by student activists Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita. Both physicists had also signed open letters on the Citizenship Amendment Act and NIA action in the Bhima Koregaon matter. The latest letter dated September 24, by 176 scientists and academicians, states: "procedures and criteria for determining Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskars should be, and seen to be fully fair, transparent and free of extraneous considerations." The letter asks for possible reasons for excluding the names of some of the scientists from the final list of awardees. Further, the missive highlights that after the first communication from the 26 Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar awardees, the government made changes to the awards website, updating the selection criteria to say that the recommendations of the RVPC will be sent to the minister of Science and Technology. The latest letter states that while it is understood that the selection committee recommends the names of winners to the president or the prime minister's office. "What is new however, is names getting dropped at the discretion of the minister — something that has been unheard of for all these years," says the letter, adding that it indicates that the selection of awardees henceforth will be based on non-academic consideration as well." They further added that this raises a larger concern, setting precedent for ministers to use unrestricted vetoes to overrule any recommendations of expert committees. The letter says: "Academics disliked by the government for any reason may be sidelined from not just awards, but also scientific grants, recruitments, promotions." The letter has been signed by former directors of several top scientific institutions as well as Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar award winners such as former director of IISER Kolkata Soumitra Banerjee, who is an SSB awardee and was also one of the organisers of March for Science in India to promote scientific temper. It also includes Jayant Murthy, former director of Indian Institute of Astrophysics and former director of Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics Naresh Dadhich. It also includes well-known mathematicians and SSB awardees SG Dani and Dipendra Prasad.

Republican-led group challenges Georgia's new hand-count ballot rule

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

A Republican group, Eternal Vigilance Action, is challenging Georgia's new rule requiring poll workers to hand-count ballots. The group, founded by former state Representative Scot Turner, has amended an existing lawsuit to contest this new rule, arguing it infringes on legislative authority. A hearing is set for October 4. Dawn Stephens (right) and Duane Taylor prepare ballots to be mailed at the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections in Charlotte, North Carolina. A Republican-led group, Eternal Vigilance Action, is contesting Georgia's recent mandate requiring poll workers to hand-count the total number of ballots. This new rule was passed by a majority of the State Election Board, which consists of three Republican members who have received praise from former President Donald Trump. The new hand-count rule has raised alarms among Democrats and voting rights advocates, who fear it could create confusion and undermine public confidence in the election results, especially if Trump loses to Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris in November. The US presidential election is set on November 5.

The group founded by former state Representative Scot Turner, Eternal Vigilance Action, amended its existing lawsuit on Wednesday to challenge the new rule, adopted by the board last Friday. The group had already been suing the board over previous rules related to vote certification—an important process for finalising election results. One of these earlier rules allows for an undefined "reasonable enquiry" before county election officials certify results, while another permits officials to review all election-related documents generated during elections, reported the news agency Associated Press (AP). Turner's lawsuit is scheduled for a hearing on October 4 before Fulton County Superior Court Judge Thomas Cox. The group is requesting that Cox either overturn the new rules or pause their implementation until after the November presidential election. In a telephone interview, Turner explained that his lawsuit is rooted in constitutional principles.

"They are not an elected body. They are not accountable to voters; therefore, they should not have law-making authority," he said regarding the State Election Board, reported AP. The new counting rule stipulates that three separate poll workers must count the total number of ballots at each polling place until all three counts agree. If a scanner holds more than 750 ballots at the end of voting, the poll manager may decide to begin counting the next day. Voters in Georgia make selections using a touchscreen voting machine, which produces a paper



ballot that includes a human-readable list of choices as well as a QR code for vote tallying. Proponents of the new rule argue that it is essential for ensuring that the number of physical ballots matches the totals recorded by scanners, check-in computers, and voting machines. The three workers must count the ballots in groups of 50, with the poll manager responsible for explaining and resolving any discrepancies while documenting them. In a memo issued before the election board voted on the new rule, Attorney General Chris Carr's office stated that the rule is "not tethered to any statute" and could be considered "impermissible legislation."

The memo warned that any rule exceeding the board's authority is unlikely to withstand legal scrutiny. Turner sees his lawsuit as a way to present Carr's arguments to a judge. His amended lawsuit also adds challenges to rules requiring daily public updates on early voting and potentially allowing more partisan poll watchers to observe the vote tabulation process.

Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and county election officials had cautioned against the new rule, expressing concerns that it could delay the reporting of election night totals and undermine the chain of custody of ballots. However, they noted that results would not be delayed if poll workers sent the memory cards recording the votes to the central tabulation location before finishing the manual count. Additionally, a lawsuit from state and national Democratic groups is contesting the two certification rules, with a judge setting a Tuesday bench trial for that case. The State Election Board has faced criticism in recent months as it considers new rules, many of which have been proposed by Trump allies and are viewed as potential threats to public confidence in election integrity. "They are providing bonfire material for conspiracy theorists to attack the legitimacy of elections based on the complaints of a very noisy minority of Republican voters," Turner stated.

US says China's new nuclear attack submarine sank during construction

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Washington: Satellite imagery showed that China's newest nuclear-powered attack submarine sank alongside a pier while under construction, a senior US defence official said. The sinking of China's first Zhou-class submarine represents a setback for Beijing as it continues to build out the world's largest navy. Beijing has become increasingly assertive in pursuing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, which is crucial to international trade. Meanwhile, China faces longtime territorial disputes involving others in the region including Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. The United States has sought to strengthen ties to its allies in the region and regularly sails through those waters in operations it says maintains the freedom of navigation for vessels there, angering Beijing.

The submarine likely sank between May and June, when satellite images showed cranes that would be necessary to lift it off the bottom of the river, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide details about the submarine loss. China has been building up its naval fleet at a breakneck pace, and the US considers China's rise one of its main future security concerns.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington on Thursday said it was "not familiar with the situation" and it did not have information to provide. The US official said it was "not surprising" that China's navy would conceal it. The submarine's current status is unknown. The identification of the sunken nuclear submarine was first reported by The Wall Street Journal. Thomas Shugart, a former US Navy submariner and an analyst at the Center for a New American Security, first noticed the incident involving the submarine in July, though it wasn't publicly known at the time that it involved the new Zhou-class vessel. Satellite images from Planet Labs PBC analyzed by The Associated Press show what appears to be a submarine docked at the Shuangliu shipyard on the Yangtze River before the incident. An image taken June 15 appears to show the submarine either fully or partially submerged just under the river's surface, with rescue equipment and cranes surrounding it. Booms surround it to prevent any oil or other leaks from the vessel. A satellite image taken August 25 shows a submarine back at the same dock as the submerged vessel. It's not clear if it was the same one. It remains unclear if the affected submarine had been loaded with nuclear fuel or if its reactor was operating at the time of the incident.

Israel seeks peace but fighting for life, Benjamin Netanyahu tells UN Assembly



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Benjamin Netanyahu, while addressing the United Nations General Assembly, asserted that Israel will fight "until we achieve total victory" and no longer tolerate daily Hezbollah rocket fire.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a powerful address at the United Nations General Assembly on Friday, reaffirmed Israel's commitment to peace, pointing out that his country is fighting for its life in the face of "savage enemies" who want its annihilation. "Israel is seeking peace despite fighting for its life in the face of savage enemies who want its annihilation," Netanyahu said. "My country is at war, fighting for its life. We must defend ourselves against these savage murderers. Our enemies seek not only to destroy us, they seek to destroy

our common civilisation and return all of us to a dark age of tyranny and terror," he added.

Further in his speech, Netanyahu made it clear that Israel will fight "until we achieve total victory" if Hamas does not surrender. The Prime Minister also said that his country will no longer tolerate daily rocket fire on its territory by Iran-backed terror group Hezbollah. "Enough is enough," he asserted. The Israeli Prime Minister also pointed to the plight of 60,000 residents of northern Israel, forced to flee their homes due to the threat from Hezbollah. "How long would the American government tolerate that?" he asked, drawing a comparison with the situation. "We won't rest until our citizens return safely to our homes," Netanyahu stated, stressing that Hezbollah's refusal to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 for the past 18 years has allowed it to expand its military presence right up to Israel's borders, endangering both Israeli and Lebanese civilians. "Hezbollah puts a missile in every kitchen, a rocket in every garage," he added. Netanyahu also reaffirmed Israel's right to self-defense, pledging that as long as Hezbollah continues its "path of aggression", Israel Defense Forces (IDF) will not cease its operations. He also noted that Israeli forces have already targeted senior Hezbollah military commanders and key missile infrastructure and vowed to continue efforts to degrade the group until all military objectives are achieved.

Wall Street wary as Donald Trump-Kamala Harris election stirs economic concerns

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Many Wall Street executives are hesitant to back either Donald Trump or Kamala Harris in the upcoming US presidential election. They are concerned Trump's economic policies may create instability, while Harris is seen as an unknown factor who may continue Biden's regulatory approach. Many Wall Street executives are hesitant to back either Donald Trump or Kamala Harris in the upcoming US presidential election. Many Wall Street executives have reservations about backing either candidate in the US presidential election, worried that former President Donald Trump's policies will hurt the economy but wary Vice President Kamala Harris will lean too far left.

While multiple Wall Street heavy-hitters including Bill Ackman, John Paulson and George Soros have backed a candidate, many other senior executives are still weighing the economic policies central to the closely fought race and the ramifications for legal and democratic institutions, according to conversations with two dozen executives in recent weeks. Despite a track record implementing Wall Street-friendly measures, Republican candidate Trump's policies threaten to create economic and policy instability, many executives said. While Harris would be a safe pair of hands, she has only been the Democratic candidate since late July when President Joe Biden exited the race and remains a big unknown, they said. Many worry the Vice President will continue Biden's regulatory crackdown on lucrative Wall Street businesses.

Among the executives were Republican and Democrat supporters, including a handful who are publicly backing Trump or Harris, and others with no obvious partisan affiliation. "Most expect Trump to continue where he left off, which is certainly more populist, protectionist and aggressively deregulatory," said Bruce Mehlmann, partner at bipartisan lobbying firm Mehlmann Consulting with clients in all sectors. "But they're eager to better understand who Harris is and what she believes," Mehlmann said, adding it did not appear that Harris' Wednesday economic speech had offered more insight for Wall Street firms. As with his first presidency, Trump is promising to cut taxes and regulations, but most executives said the benefits could be erased by his planned import tariffs which could spark inflation, while tax cuts could widen the US deficit. Trump ramped up his planned tariffs in comments this week. Karoline Leavitt, Trump campaign National Press Secretary, said in a statement that Wall Street investors want Trump to win because they remember that his policies "fuelled growth, drove down inflation, and kept more money in everyone's pockets." Billionaire investor and Trump backer Paulson told Reuters on the sidelines of a September New York event at which Trump outlined his economic plan that tariffs would boost revenues, helping to reduce the deficit. Harris' plan, which analysts predict would be better for the economy, calls for hiking taxes, likely denting company earnings and stocks but partly offsetting an expected widening of the deficit. She has said little on financial policy but has touted her tough stance on banks as a former prosecutor and said she will continue Biden's assault on hidden bank fees. A Harris spokesperson pointed Reuters to endorsements by hundreds of economists and CEOs.

In an email to Reuters, billionaire entrepreneur and Harris backer Mark Cuban noted that stocks rose when company taxes were higher, adding: "Anything that is a



step towards reducing the deficit is a plus." But he said that both candidates are making promises they may not be able to keep. "Neither candidate's policies have any details about how they would get passed."

For many firms, a Harris White House and Republican Senate, which would block tax increases and force Harris to pick moderates for top jobs, is the best-case scenario. So far, donors tied to the securities and investment sectors have given \$8.7 million to the Biden/Harris campaign versus about \$3 million to Trump, data from nonpartisan donation tracker OpenSecrets as of August 21 shows. Those contributions, capped in the thousands of dollars, come from individuals and political action committees (PACs) and are not comprehensive because there are several other ways to route cash to support candidates. In a nod to the policy whiplash and personnel churn of Trump's first presidency, his felony conviction and role in the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol, some executives also worried Trump would undermine democracy and the rule of law. A few flagged concerns about his stances on Federal Reserve independence, immigration and abortion. Michael Bright, chief executive of the Structured Finance Association, a Washington lobby group representing lenders and investors, said that in addition to Jan. 6, some of his members had soured on Trump due to his role in helping to overturn federal abortion rights when president. "I would say financial services voters are split pretty evenly," said Bright, whom Trump nominated in 2018 to run government housing agency Ginnie Mae. Many will vote "with their hearts" for Harris, he added. The role of populism in personnel picks was another theme. Several executives fretted that Harris would stick with Biden's progressive agency heads, although a few said they believe she may be friendlier to the industry than Biden. "She is practical and pragmatic," said Jon Henes, Harris' national campaign finance chair in 2020 and CEO of corporate consultancy C Street Advisory Group, adding that Harris believes in sensible regulation that allows for transparency and certainty. A more populist Trump and the Republican Party may pick inexperienced loyalists hostile to Wall Street to lead the agencies, some executives said, although others believe he would again pick traditional industry conservatives. Trump's appointment of Cantor Fitzgerald CEO Howard Lutnick as co-chair of his transition team may be a good sign, some said. Lutnick is tapping his Wall Street network to staff a potential second Trump administration. Lindsey Johnson, CEO of the Consumer Bankers Association, said Trump can "draw from a deep well of people that were in the Administration last time that have great experience in the financial industry."

New York City Mayor Eric Adams charged with bribery over trip to India

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

New York: Eric Adams, the outspoken Mayor of the largest US city, has been charged with bribery and campaign financing irregularities by Federal prosecutors, and one of the allegations relates to a trip he took to India. The charges released on Thursday said after he purchased economy class tickets for himself and his domestic partner to India in 2016 on Turkish Airlines he accepted upgrades to business class, which prosecutors assert was valued at nearly \$13,000 that he did not disclose receiving it in his official filings. The prosecutors put the amounts he illegally benefitted from at \$100,000. No one connected to India is mentioned in the indictment, which centres on his alleged ties to Turkey. Most of the allegations, including that about the trip to India, relate to the period he was the President of the city's Brooklyn borough before he became Mayor in 2022. Adams, who is African-American — only the second from the community of the city's 110 Mayors — and is a Democrat. However, he has been at odds with the administration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, criticising their border policies that let in more than 12 million illegal immigrants overwhelming New York and other cities. In a statement professing his innocence, he cited his criticism

of the Federal government's inaction on "its broken immigration policies". On a day he was on his way to Washington to lead a group of Mayors in a protest over the fallout of illegal immigration, Federal agents launched a search of the house of his campaign finance official causing him to abandon the protest and turn back to New York. A former police captain, he has also been tough on crime, drawing criticism from the party's Left and at variance to some of the lenient policies that Harris had once advocated.

The Turkish government, businesses, educational institutions, and local administrations allegedly gave him free hospitality and funneled campaign contributions illegally to him through third parties. Besides his trip to India, he is alleged to have received free tickets, upgrades, or hospitality for visits to Turkey, China, Hungary and Sri Lanka. In return, among other things, he helped the 36-storey Turkish Consulate tower get a fire department clearance, according to the indictment. The charges against him were unveiled two days after Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan severely criticised the West in a speech at the United Nations General Assembly. The city of 8.25 million people has been in turmoil for several weeks with several top officials, including the Police Commissioner and the schools Chancellor resigning after they came under investigations.

'Incipient signs' of strain in auto, FMCG sales warrant monitoring: Finance Ministry report



Overall, the Ministry said there are strong foundations of macroeconomic stability in India with steady growth, investment, employment and inflation trends, a strong and stable financial sector and a resilient external account including a comfortable foreign exchange reserve position. However, the continuing uncertainty in global economic prospects is a challenge on the macroeconomic front, it said. "We will likely encounter a cycle of policy rate cuts globally, amid fears of a recession in advanced economies and continuing geopolitical conflicts," it said. Chart 2 The Naukri JobSpeak index retreated to negative growth territory in August, recording a year-on-year contraction of 3.4 per cent. Going ahead, the pick up in public expenditure is expected to add growth and investment impetus. In the farm sector, higher kharif acreage is visible and adequately replenished reservoir levels will potentially give a fillip to the upcoming Rabi crops as well, the Finance Ministry said. However, the skewed spatial distribution of rain may have an impact on farm output in a few regions. On the inflation front, the Ministry said the headline retail inflation remained benign in August 2024 at 3.7 per cent, with softening food inflation and steady core inflation. Even though replenished reservoir levels and higher kharif sowing acreage augur well for the food price outlook, the effect of the skewed spatial distribution of the monsoon warrants monitoring, it said. In the absence of any serious adverse climate shocks, rural incomes and demand should get stronger, and food inflation will be milder. Labour market indicators indicated a strong outlook for the next quarter, the Ministry said. EPFO added 10.5 lakh new members in July 2024, with 59.4 per cent of new members added being in the 18-25 age group, the Ministry said, adding that this indicated that most individuals joining the organised workforce are youth, mainly first-time job seekers, it said. The purchasing managers' employment sub-index softened marginally while continuing to be in the expansionary zone for the sixth consecutive month in August, it said. The Naukri JobSpeak index retreated to negative growth territory in August, recording a year-on-year contraction of 3.4 per cent. "The job market showed steady performance in the first half of the month, but a unique clustering of holidays in the latter half significantly impacted the overall index. Despite the overall dip, several sectoral sub-indices, including AI-ML, FMCG, pharma/biotech, auto, etc., saw significant growth," the report said. For growth, the Ministry pointed out that the high-frequency indicators and the Q1 GDP print fits well with the real GDP growth projection of 6.5-7 per cent. "On balance, the GDP growth of 6.7 per cent in Q1 FY25 and the movements in high-frequency indicators till August fit well with the real GDP growth projection of 6.5-7 per cent for FY25 provided by the Economic Survey 2023-24," the Ministry said.

There are "incipient signs" of strain in certain sectors in the Indian economy such as automobiles and fast-moving consumer goods sales in urban areas, Ministry of Finance said in its monthly economic review for August released Thursday. These signs of strain, the Ministry underlined, may turn out to be transient with the onset of festival season, but they "warrant monitoring". "There are also incipient signs of strains in certain sectors. For instance, the automobile dealers' body, FADA, has pointed to moderating sales of passenger vehicles and a build-up of inventory. Data from Nielsen IQ indicated that the growth of fast-moving consumer goods sales in urban areas slowed in Q1 FY25. While these may turn out to be transient with the onset of the festival season, they warrant monitoring," the review said. The Ministry also flagged concerns about the boom in stock markets around the world and the likelihood of a correction, which will result in spillover effects globally. "Stock markets around the world are booming, reinforced by recent policy announcements in a few countries. Consequently, the risk of an eventual correction has risen. If the risk materialises, the spillover effect may be felt globally as well. Amidst these concerns, low oil prices is a bright spot for the economy," it said.

The low level of public spending has been a concern this year, especially the decline in capital spending by states in the current financial year, the Ministry said, adding that it is expected to pick up going ahead. "Owing to the general elections during April-June, the general government expenditure is gathering pace only gradually in the current financial year... it is clear that household and private investment supported the growth, as the capital expenditures of both the Union and state governments were lower in Q1 FY25 because the period was an election quarter. Government expenditure is poised to improve in the upcoming quarters," it said. During April-July, capital expenditure by the Centre stood at Rs 2.6 lakh crore in the current financial year, down 18.8 per cent as against Rs 3.2 lakh crore in the year-ago period.

Sebi Board likely to approve 'New Asset Class' and MF lite regulations

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), in its Board meeting on September 30, is likely to take up a host of measures, including the introduction of new asset class and mutual fund lite regulations. The board may also clear the proposal to launch a product which would be a combination of rights issue and preferential allotment of shares. The meeting assumes importance as it is the first board meeting of Sebi since the Hindenburg Research and Congress' recent allegations of 'conflict of interest' against its Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband Dhaval Buch. The Buchs have denied any wrongdoing. One of the key focus areas which the Sebi board members are likely to discuss is the recent concerns raised by the Sebi officers on issues around unprofessional work culture and house rent allowance (HRA). In July, the Sebi had proposed to introduce a 'New Asset Class' which will offer investment products between mutual funds and portfolio management services (PMS). The new category of products, to be introduced under the mutual fund structure, is set to have a minimum investment limit of Rs 10 lakh.

Earlier this year, the markets regulator had floated a consultation paper to introduce Mutual Fund (MF) Lite regulations for passively managed mutual fund schemes. This relaxed regulatory framework for passive MF schemes is aimed at reducing compliance requirements,



increasing penetration, facilitating investment diversification and fostering innovation. The Sebi board is also likely to tighten the norms to curb speculative trading in the Futures & Options (F&O) trading. In July this year, the capital markets regulator had proposed a series of short-term measures to curb speculative trading in index derivatives, including restricting multiple option contract expiries, raising the size of options contracts and intraday monitoring of position limits. Last month, the Sebi Chairperson had said that the regulator received nearly 6,000 responses on the consultation paper on measures to strengthen index derivatives framework.

Diamond exports set to plummet to decade low level

India's cut and polished diamond (CPD) exports are set to decline to decade low levels of \$12.5-13.0 billion, reflecting a year-on-year contraction of 18-19 per cent in FY2025. The decline is led by a 13-14 per cent decline in volumes along with the softening of average realisations by 5-6 per cent. Diamond exports from India contracted by 28 per cent in FY2024, led by the worsened global macro-economic conditions and increased competition from lab-grown diamonds (LGD).

With sustained subdued demand conditions in the two key consuming markets - the US due to inflationary pressures and China on account of changing consumer preferences away from diamonds, the downturn in exports continues, with the industry witnessing a 19 per cent YoY contraction in diamond exports in four months of FY2025, ICRA said in a note. While some sequential improvement in volumes is expected in the coming months, driven by the onset of the festive season, the same will be offset by continued pressure on polished prices, especially given the current high inventory levels. The rating agency has retained its sector outlook at 'Negative'. According to Sakshi Suneja, Vice President & Sector Head - Corporate Ratings, ICRA, diamond players have been facing a persistent demand slowdown in the US and China due to weak economic conditions and continued inflationary pressures. Demand from China has been additionally impacted by the renewed popularity of gold amid economic uncertainties prevailing in the country.

Besides, geopolitical tensions and restrictions imposed by G7 countries on Russian diamonds have impacted demand across Europe. Furthermore, lab-grown diamonds, which are priced significantly lower than natural diamonds, continue to impact the demand for large-sized diamonds in the range of one to three carats, ICRA said. India remains the only bright spot globally, with increasing preference for diamond studded jewellery. The polished prices have been declining since April 2022 following a demand slack, dropping to an all-time low in



August 2024.

The pressure on the polished prices is expected to continue in H2 FY2025 as well despite the onset of the festive season, as diamond players offload their current high inventory. Rough prices, which saw some correction in recent months, are now expected to remain firm as most miners have announced production cuts in FY2025 to match the demand, the rating agency said. This, coupled with intensified sanctions on Alrosa PJSC, the third largest roughs' supplier, by G7 nations, should restrict any further price correction in roughs. Consequently, the rough-polished differential is expected to remain under pressure. This, along with reduced scale of operations, will shave off 60-70 bps of OPM of Indian diamondaires in FY2025, in ICRA's assessment. "The credit profile of Indian diamond players weakened in FY2024 due to stretched working capital cycle led by inventory pile-up amid a slowdown in demand and increase in global lending rates," it said. The credit profile of the diamond players is likely to remain subdued in FY2025 following the reduced scale of operations, lower profitability and continued stretched working capital cycle. However, the impact of decadal low levels of scale of operations will be less pronounced in some entities, which can control their working capital efficiently and limit its dependence on external debt. Thus, inventory management will be critical from the credit perspective, ICRA said.

Alia Bhatt shot action scenes while pregnant with Raha; how to be careful while doing strenuous work when you're expecting



Alia Bhatt's trainer, Anshuka Parwani, reveals the workout routine that helped the actress prepare for the action-packed role of antagonist in "Heart of Stone" while pregnant. Alia Bhatt's trainer, Anshuka Parwani, reveals the workout routine that helped the actress prepare for the action-packed role of antagonist in "Heart of Stone" while pregnant. Alia Bhatt's fitness trainer recently revealed that the actor managed to shoot action scenes even when she was pregnant with Raha while filming her debut Hollywood film Heart of Stone. In an interview, Anshuka Parwani said that despite working remotely due to the Covid-19 pandemic, she was able to guide the Jigra actor through a rigorous workout routine that prepared her for the film's action-packed scenes.

"I still remember, Alia was shooting for her first international project, Heart of Stone. That role required Alia to do a lot of action sequences, and of course, at that point, I knew she was pregnant with Raha. Alia and I started preparing for that role while she was expecting. In fact, while she was shooting for it, we were working out remotely because, unfortunately, at that time, I did not travel with her. It was Covid-19, so I wouldn't train anybody online without the awareness of their body and yoga," she told India Today.

Praising the star's positive attitude and awareness of her body during pregnancy, Parwani added: "The fact that Alia was pregnant and had to do action sequences—

nobody would be comfortable training her online in such a situation. But because Alia has that kind of awareness, during that stipulated period, we did train remotely. I don't think anybody could even tell that she was pregnant during the shoot of the film or while she was doing those action sequences. Alia sailed through it like a breeze. Her attitude in approaching things was literally everything because she knew it was a natural process, and with some adjustments here and there, it all became a cakewalk. I'm not saying it's a very simple process, but it's the right attitude that eventually matters." According to Dr Kaishreen Khan, Consultant- Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Motherhood Hospitals, Kharadi, Pune, doing strenuous activities during pregnancy is not recommended for many women as "it can increase the risk of miscarriage or preterm birth." "You will also be shocked to know that strenuous exercise can reduce blood flow to the fetus and placenta and toward the mother's vital organs causing a problem for the baby. It can also lead to growth-related issues for the baby," she added. Unfortunately, doing strenuous activities can also raise the chances of injuries in mothers, which could require hospital admission. "One should not just follow any trend on social media or try to do anything just because your favorite celebrity is doing it," Dr Khan warned. "Strenuous activities are a strict no-no during pregnancy and one should consult the doctor and follow instructions given by him/her."

From humble beginnings in Delhi to high fashion ramp in Milan: Nakul Bhardwaj makes history as first Indian male model on Versace runway

In a groundbreaking moment for Indian fashion, 21-year-old Nakul Bhardwaj has etched his name in history as the first Indian male model to grace the Versace runway at Milan Fashion Week's Spring Summer 2025 show. This milestone marks a significant shift in the fashion landscape, showcasing the growing influence of Indian talent on the global stage. Standing tall at 6' 3", Bhardwaj's journey from a Delhi studio apartment to the prestigious Versace catwalk is nothing short of inspiring. His debut wasn't limited to Versace alone; the young model has also walked the ramp for luxury powerhouses Ferragamo and Bottega Veneta, solidifying his place among fashion's elite.



Reflecting on his whirlwind experience, Bhardwaj shared with Hindustan Times, "I was at a friend's place in Milan and worried about not getting a callback from any of the castings I have been to. Just then, my phone rang and upon checking it was an email that said 'Job-Versace.' It was one of the best feelings I have ever experienced." When asked about his hometown, Bhardwaj tells models.com about his deep love for nature. "Located in Vikasnagar, Uttarakhand, India, the best aspect of this place is its immersion in nature amidst the mountains. However, its downside is the limited exposure to the outside world, making it an ideal retreat for those seeking escape," he says.

The model's rise to fame is a testament to his unique blend of athleticism and modelling prowess. A self-described competitive spirit and high-adrenaline sports enthusiast, according to his portfolio, he has been passionate about parkour since the age of seven. This physical agility, combined with his striking looks, sets him apart in the fashion industry. Behind Bhardwaj's success also lies a strong foundation of familial support. He credits his mother as his primary source of inspiration, driving him to work hard and stay consistent in pursuit of his dreams.

"My mother is the one who inspires me to work hard and consistently. I have always loved modelling and have looked up to many of the greatest models in the business," he shared in his portfolio. The fashion world took notice of his talent immediately. At the Versace show, he walked right after supermodel Gigi Hadid and just before Vittoria Ceretti, a placement that speaks volumes about the confidence placed in this newcomer. Social media buzzed with excitement as videos of his walk circulated, with one user commenting, "Damn, walking in the middle of Gigi and Vittoria." Another wrote, "Happy to see that Indian models walking in top shows of world." Bhardwaj's agency, Anon Models, captured the essence of his meteoric rise in an Instagram video that has amassed over 8 million views. The clip shows his transition from practicing his walk in a modest studio apartment to commanding the Versace runway, embodying the dreams of countless aspiring models. This watershed moment for Bhardwaj follows in the footsteps of Avanti Nagrath, who became the first Indian female model to open a Versace show in 2022. Together, they represent a new era of Indian representation in high fashion, breaking down barriers and paving the way for future generations.

UPI continues to be the preferred choice of payment method in India

Mumbai: The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions have grown at a stellar pace of 75 per cent Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR), while UPI spends surged at 68 per cent CAGR in the August 2019-August 2024 period, a report showed on Friday, as the card industry's growth remained tepid.

The immense popularity of UPI is seen from the transaction volume ratio which stands at 38.4 times of credit card transaction volumes, according to the report by Axis Securities. UPI remains a preferred medium for lower-value payments as 96 per cent of the transaction volume is less than Rs 2,000, although the contribution to total UPI spends was 33 per cent (as of August).

However, given the lower ticket size of UPI transactions, the UPI-to-Credit Card spends stood at 0.3 times in August, which is largely stable at current levels. The industry's net card additions stood at 9,24,000 in August compared to 7,55,000 in July.

However, the pace has decelerated sharply (down

34 per cent YoY on a year-to-date basis). "We believe it reflects the issuers' caution and cherry-picking customers amidst asset quality concerns in the segment. In the first five months in FY25, the industry added 3.7 million cards compared to 6 million in the same period in the last fiscal," the report mentioned.

With changing consumer preferences shifting towards the use of credit cards and UPI, debit cards as a payment medium have not been able to maintain pace. In contrast to credit card growth, debit card transaction volumes and spends have de-grown sharply by 20 per cent and 6 per cent CAGR over August 2019-August 2024, said the report.

Private banks have been outperforming their public and foreign peers across metrics. In August, private banks added 583,000 customers of the total industry additions of 924,000 customers (63 per cent market share in customer sourcing). The report expects resumption of growth momentum with the upcoming festive season.

Working with icons Bachchan, Rajinikanth is thrilling, nerve-wracking privilege: Rana



anticipation is palpable. The film boasts an ensemble of immensely talented individuals, and it has the potential to be something special. But it is the audience's verdict that matters most. I truly hope they embrace it with the same enthusiasm we have poured into making it."

Over the years, pan-India films such as the "KGF", "Baahubali," and "Pushpa" franchises have not just broken records but also reshaped the box-office landscape, giving strong competition to Hindi films. Along with enchanting the Indian audiences, pan India films have proved that regional storytelling can resonate on a grand scale. Talking about what makes pan India films so popular, the 39-year-old star said: "Cinema is universal, we're just divided by languages just the way the country is – but to the audience, it's an emotion, an excitement, and a story. When you tell stories that touch hearts, language, and region become irrelevant." "The success of "Baahubali," "Minnal Murali" "Hanuman," and "Manjummel Boys" are classic examples of cinema that reverberated globally," added the actor, who made his Hindi film debut in 2011 with "Dum Maaro Dum".

Why did it take so long to call Hindi and regional films simply 'Indian films'?

Rana, who is hosting IIFA Utsavam, said: "India means unity in diversity – that is our strength. We are able to create more, and more regional power with stories to tell, and only cinema that cuts across five or more states or languages should even be called Indian Films." "The rest I think, will keep identity with language as it is a simple way for audiences." The actor says IIFA Utsavam is all about celebrating the magic of cinema, and he plans to bring a blend of fun, laughter, and a bit of behind-the-scenes magic to the viewers. "It is not just about handing out awards; it is about sharing stories, exploring the passion that makes cinema, truly an incredible medium that we all love, it is a dream, and celebrating the brilliance of those who make it happen. I want the audience to feel that they are a part of this celebration – not just watching it." He calls hosting an adventure. "It is all about spontaneity, wit, and the challenge of holding the audience's attention. It keeps me on my toes! I love the interaction, the instant connection with the audience, an exchange that brings the whole event to life."

Abu Dhabi: Star Rana Daggubati, who is gearing up to share the silver screen with cinematic legends Amitabh Bachchan and Rajinikanth in the Tamil action drama "Vettaiyan," expressed his excitement, calling it a thrilling privilege that also brings a rush of nerves. Talking to IANS exclusively on the sidelines of IIFA, Rana said: "Working with icons like Mr. Bachchan and Rajinikanth sir is nothing short of a timeless opportunity. It is a privilege that comes with a bundle of nerves, but more than that, it is exciting." "It is a chance to learn, to understand what it takes to reach the zenith of artistic excellence."

With such an amazing cast for the film, which also stars Fahadh Faasil, does he agree it is a perfect recipe for a blockbuster? "I am incredibly excited, and yes, the

Sai Pallavi's powerful first-look glimpse from 'Amaran' unveiled



Mumbai: The makers of Sivakarthikeyan starrer-'Amaran' took to their social media handle and unveiled the first look of Sai Pallavi. On Friday, the makers took to their Instagram account and shared the character glimpse of Sai Pallavi, essaying the role of Major Mukund Varadarajan's better half, Indhu Rebecca Varghese.

The makers captioned the post, "#SaiPallavi as Indhu Rebecca Varghese, the Heart of Amaran". The video starts with a shot of a parade that later comes to Indhu as she walks towards the stage. In the video, the actual byte was also added in which, she says, "What country needs to see today, is the man he was, not my sorrow".

Later, the glimpse shows Prime Minister Narendra Modi offering the Ashok Chakra to Indhu which later transitioned to Sai Pallavi. The glimpse gives you a gentle touch of Sai's character in the film as she calls Sivakarthikeyan 'Mukundhe' which is purely a goosebump moment with a blend of violin in the background. The end shot comprises the entire belief of Indhu which she still has for the love of her life which sums up with, "Yes, I am forever in a long-distance relationship with my love".

tionship with my love".

The glimpse perfectly captures the charm and grief of Sai Pallavi in the role of Indhu which will be another powerful role for her after her thought-provoking performance in 'Gargi'. 'Amaran' helmed by Rajkumar Periasamy features Sivakarthikeyan, Sai Pallavi, Rahul Bose, Bhuvan Arora, Shree Kumar, Shyam Mohan, Mir Salman and Gaurav Venkatesh in pivotal roles. The music has been done and composed by G.V. Prakash Kumar and the cinematography has been executed by CH Sai. The film is based on the life of Major Mukund Varadarajan who lost his life during a search operation in the valley of Kashmir. It is an adaptation of the book series 'India's Most Fearless' written by Shiv Aroor and Rahul Singh. 'Amaran' has been bankrolled by Kamal Haasan, R. Mahendran, and Sony Pictures International Productions which will be released theatrically on October 31, 2024 in Tamil and Telugu languages. Apart from this, Sai Pallavi will also feature in the Naga Chaitanya starrer- 'Thandel' helmed by 'Karthikeya 2' fame director Chandoo Mondeti.

Adah Sharma: I won't take a shortcut or do something that is morally incorrect

Mumbai: Actress Adah Sharma is ready for the release of her new web series, "Reeta Sanyal," where she portrays a dedicated lawyer and sharp detective tackling crime. Utilising her quick wits and instincts, she navigates complex cases with finesse. With her chameleon-like ability to adapt to any situation, she skillfully maneuvers through perilous legal challenges. Talking about the same, Adah, known for her work in 'The Kerala Story', and 'Bastar: The Naxal Story' said: "Like Reeta, I think Adah is also righteous so I identified with that. I won't take a shortcut or do something that I think is morally incorrect even if I know I would get what I want." "Reeta also loves her country just like me. Reeta gets into a lot of trouble for speaking up and standing with the truth and she knows there is another way but she still chooses to stand with the truth. I have faced situations in real life where I've been through exactly the same emotion so I identified with her. Reeta is also a human lie detector, she can tell when people are lying just like me," added the 32-year-old actress. Produced by Rajeshwar Nair and Krishnan Iyer under the banner of Keylight Productions and directed by Abhirup Ghosh, the series is based on the character created by the acclaimed writer Amit Khan. The series also includes a stellar star cast — Rahul Dev, Ankur Rathee, and Manik Papneja in key roles.



The Tribe trailer: Jaaved Jaaferi takes a dig at influencers as his daughter Alaviaa, Ananya Panday's cousin Alanna try to make it big in LA



Amazon Prime Video recently unveiled the trailer of its upcoming original reality series The Tribe. The nine-episode unscripted series is produced by Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta, and Aneesa Baig. The show will delve into the journeys of five young and affluent content creators—Alanna Panday, Alaviaa Jaaferi, Srushti Porey, Aryaana Gandhi, and Alfia Jafry, along with digital evangelist and investor, Hardik Zaveri.

The over two-minute-long trailer promises to take viewers into the glamorous and dramatic lives of these influencers as they leave behind their families and step out of their comfort zones to relocate to Los Angeles in order to pursue their dream. The promo offers an exciting glimpse into The Tribe, showing glamour, drama, friendships, and fights between Ananya Panday's cousin Alanna Panday, actor Jaaved Jaaferi's daughter Alaviaa, Srushti, Aryaana, and Alfia. The show will reveal whether they will turn CollabTribe—a visionary content creation hub backed by their angel investor, Hardik Zaveri—into a massive success or will it come crashing down. The trailer also features Jaaved Jaaferi, who takes a dig at the

influencers. He says, "Koi bhi lukha aake influencers ban jata hai (Any random person today becomes an influencer)." Talking about the show, Hardik Zaveri said in a statement, "My vision is to bring this incredible group of talented women together under one roof, to create dynamic content as a united force. I firmly believe that working as a collective amplifies everything—whether it's wealth, fame, or style. My role in this journey is to provide them with the tools and resources they need to achieve all that and more." Alanna Panday, who recently welcomed her first child, shared her excitement of taking part in the show and said, "he Tribe has been a wild ride, and I'm excited to give an unfiltered look into my process of content creation." She added, "It's a show that's all about realness, authenticity, and celebrating brown girls making it big in Los Angeles—with raw, unfiltered conversations about our lives and aspirations in today's world. On camera, our lives may look picture-perfect, but it's the nuances, hardships, and triumphs behind the scenes that shape our journeys and careers. And that's exactly what The Tribe brings to the fore."

An unapologetic vanity project for Brad Pitt, George Clooney

Who doesn't want to see Brad Pitt and George Clooney play off each other? Their grey stubbles, their slight crow's-feet, their aching backs, their weakening eyesights, their car dashboards with painkillers? Wolves is indeed an unapologetic vanity project for two of Hollywood's most charming stars, who have woven movie magic together before. But, what's vain is also in vain here. Directed by Jon Watts, who earned his stripes with the Tom Holland-starring Superman films, Wolves screams attention to itself, for something best enjoyed if you are not doing so – starting with that tweaked spelling of the title.



If you did try to join the dots, you would realise how dotty the plot is – starting with a district attorney who is in somewhat of a pickle, and racing straight onto drugs, Albanians, Chinatown, Croatiens... you know, basically guys on whom any dirt will stick. The reason you may not ask more of Wolves, as it springs flimsy twists after twists into a stretched plot, is because you have George Clooney and Brad Pitt to look at. They don't even have any names to distract us as they invoke a very Newman-Redford vibe. The premise is that the aforesaid district attorney played by an under-used Amy Ryan calls Clooney (let's call him Fixer No. 1) after a young boy she has taken up into a penthouse suite crashes into some glass and passes out. Just the kind of scandal that would end a politician's career. Enter Fixer No. 1, who takes great trouble to emphasise how he's the best there is at the job.

But just as he has literally got down his knees to start the clean-up, enters Fixer No. 2. In the shape of Pitt. It turns out that he has been hired by the hotel's mystery owner, "who wants no scandal at my new, very exclusive establishment". These Fixers operate as lone wolf – the title, get it? So can the Nos. 1 and 2 work together? Especially when a whole lot of drugs enter the scene and the young man who has them in his backpack turns up not so

dead. While the actors are still in that hotel penthouse, the film holds promise, even in the way how George Clooney and Brad Pitt get onto each other's nerves. Surely there has to be a fly in this soup, as there usually is when hotels harbouring politicians have secret cameras? But no, the two with the young man in a car trunk are quickly up and about and racing about town to keep the story propelling forward. Austin Abrams, who plays the young man, has to be given credit for almost stealing the scene from the two veterans. He is earnest and edgy, and as he prattles nervously, he of course helps the leather jacketed, growly and suspicious seniors see how they are "basically the same guy". Even if their growing affection for the young man is too obvious a plot device, both Clooney and Pitt know just how to infuse warmth into it. They also know – and we know that they know – that all this comes easy to them and that, at the end of the day, this movie is about the two playing themselves. Still, if you have these two charmers and your longest scene is of Abrams running around town in undies – even if the Euphoria actor can streak, and make some very effective grunts – you have a problem. Apple perhaps knows this, which is why Wolves had a very short theatrical run before ending on streaming.

Love, Sitara movie review: Sobhita Dhulipala film aims for some fresh strokes

Past misdemeanours tumbling out during a family reunion is the familiar theme around which 'Love, Sitara' revolves. The upcoming nuptials of a Two States couple, the Malayali Sitara (Sobhita Dhulipala) and Punjabi Arjun (Rajeev Siddhartha) in her family homestead in Kerala is the trigger: in short order, the lid is blown off the dark secrets that Sitara's beloved Hema Chechi, the younger sister of her stoic mother (Virginia Rodrigues) has lived with for a long time. Too long, as the heartbroken Sitara, who is gatekeeping secrets of her own, discovers. A rom com cum family drama is also a familiar genre, and within that the film tries for some fresh strokes. The depiction of the matriarchal set-up is done well, with a strong grandmother (B Jayashree) holding the



reins of her household, which consists of a dairy she runs, as well as the daughters who live with her, Sitara's mother and father (Sanjay Bhutiani), and the unmarried Hema, an airhostess struggling with a romance that doesn't seem to progress beyond

clandestine trysting. Fresh faces help. The women play well with each other. Bhutiani, as Sitara's hotel owner dad, plays the rake with conviction, and you can see that the man in Hema's life is a liar. Both Dhulipala and Siddhartha share warm vibes, and you

can believe that they are a couple, even if some of their exchanges, especially at a family dinner, feel contrived. It is good to see Sonali Kulkarni in roles that have heft, and Rodrigues too is believable as a long-married woman who knows what to see and what to unsee.

Off-stump line, mastery of lengths, using the breadth of the crease: How Akash Deep bought the wickets Bumrah and Siraj couldn't



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Growing up in Sasaram, a city in the Rohtas district in Bihar, the only cricket stadium that Akash Deep knew was Green Park, some miles away in the Uttar Pradesh heartland. He used to think, "Idhar sab kuch hara bhara hoga (It must be greenery everywhere)." But little did he know that the tracks here once used to be as flat as the Grand Trunk Road, which was built by Sher Shah Suri, an Afghan warlord from Sasaram, before it started churning out low turners.

The deck for the second Test between India and Bangladesh was slightly different, placid but with a tinge of grass, but typically without bounce and carry. Under overcast conditions, Rohit Sharma chose to bowl, the first time since 2015 an Indian captain had decided to sent the opposition in. However, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj struggled to find their lengths. But just when it seemed that the Bangladesh openers had weathered the storm, Akash began his business. The strapping seamer removed both the openers in an incisive spell that read 10-4-34-2, as India reduced the visitors to 107 for three before incessant rain forced premature close of play.

The difference between Akash's success and the toil of Bumrah-Siraj was the length. To the tentative opener Zakir Hasan, who Bumrah had beaten on a loop in his 24-ball ordeal, he brought the length back a bit after a full length ball in his first over. His tame stab produced a nick to gully which Yashasvi Jaiswal smartly grabbed. Akash celebrated like someone who had imagined this dismissal before. In fact he had. For the past couple of days, he has spent considerable time with bowling coach Morne Morkel. On Thursday, with the South African in tow, he bowled around the wicket to the left-handed batters. Multiple plastic cones were placed on the spots deemed ideal against them. After each ball, Morkel gave him feedback, who himself was a menace for the southpaws.

The game awareness belied the fact that he is playing just his third Test and that he is getting sharper and more accurate with every game. If Zakir's dismissal was something he had home-worked, Shadman Islam's was something he conceived in the second over, which he bowled to Mominul Haque. After troubling Mominul with clever change in angles by using the crease, he trapped Shadman in front, another left-hander, with a ball deliv-

ered wider from the crease. He used the crease smartly and subtly to create the angles against the left-handed batters, like Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami. Akash Deep celebrates Zakir Hasan wicket. The difference between Akash's success and the toil of Bumrah-Siraj was the length. The angle prompted the on-field umpire in thinking that the ball was sliding down. Rohit Sharma too was not enthused, but Akash pleaded and Rohit reviewed, upon which the decision was overturned. Rohit hugged the speedster, an act that showed he had won his captain's trust. The pacer had talked about the influence of Rohit. "I had hesitation initially that there would be pressure, but Rohit bhaiya made things simple. I haven't played under such a supportive captain," he said.

Hazlewood impact

The other influential figure is his life his is former IPL teammate Josh Hazlewood, even though his run-up, action and skiddy pace are more reminiscent of Shami. From the Australian metronome, he learned the art of attacking the off-stump line. "I used to watch his bowling on YouTube and now I was bowling in tandem with him. Most of our discussions used to be on bowling the off-stump line, how he sets up batsmen, and his game preparation," Akash Deep has once told this newspaper. "Josh told me that the Test cricket length will always be effective. That off-stump line has given him so many wickets in all formats. My biggest takeaway was the way he stuck to his strength and waited for the batsmen to commit mistakes. Kabhi kabhi aisa lagta tha jaise wo chess khel raha hai batsman ke saath (Sometimes, it seemed like he was playing chess with batsmen)," he said. If he stays fit, Akash looks like someone that has already booked his place for the Australian tour and can give a stiff competition to Mohammed Siraj in the playing eleven.

Thoroughbred Akash bowled almost one-third of the overs on Day 1. Fittingly, former Bengal coach, Arun Lal, who played a pivotal role in Akash's career, calls him a lambi race ka ghoda. "He is someone who can bowl 25 overs a day and will still look at the captain for more. I am not surprised with his rise," Arun Lal told The Indian Express. "Whenever I see him take wickets, I jump from my seat. It's a Cinderella story. The hardship he has faced, and the personal losses, he has suffered but he kept going. This self-belief has taken him to this level. I don't want to jinx him, but he is only going to get better," Lal added. Despite the cloud cover and the ball hooping around it was not simply a case of putting the ball in the right areas. After all, the city goes by the moniker Manchester of the East, and not the real Manchester, where dark clouds are ominous signs for batsmen. The bounce was far from ideal—Bumrah's first ball reached Rishabh Pant on one bounce. The lack of bounce meant the edges fell short, or ran to the point boundaries. Bumrah, who bowled three maidens on the trot, stood frustrated. Siraj looked off-colour, and Rohit introduced Ashwin as early as the eighth over. He soon consumed captain Najmul Shanto, who was sweeping and reverse sweeping him. Soon pounded in rain and the day was called off. The shining light on the gloomy day, though, was Akash.

Ashwin-Jadeja are better than Kumble-Harbhajan, but with a rider

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

With every home series, India's spin all-rounders R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja are rewriting the record books. They surpassed Anil Kumble-Harbhajan Singh as the most successful spin-bowling pair during the England series. Jadeja needs just one more wicket to become second-fastest player in Test history to complete the double of 300 wickets and 3000 runs after Ian Botham. With 99 wickets, Ashwin is the most successful Indian bowler in a fourth innings of a Test. The off-spinner now has 73 fourth-innings wickets at home with only Shane Warne above him with 77 scalps. As India's two premier all-rounders go about charting their greatness, their numbers suggest Ashwin and Jadeja have eclipsed Kumble and Harbhajan at home conditions. Most effective in home conditions 481 – the number of wickets taken by Ashwin and Jadeja in 45 home Tests they have played together.

Unlike Kumble and Harbhajan who played only 34 Tests and accounted for 356 wickets together, Ashwin and Jadeja have been able to play more games and hence have easily surpassed their tally. But unlike Kumble and Harbhajan, who didn't have a very potent pace bowling pack operating in tandem, Ashwin and Jadeja have been part of an all-round attack. It means, India have taken more wickets. In the 45 they have played together so far, India have taken 828 wickets with Ashwin and Jadeja accounting 58 per cent of those. But when Kumble and Harbhajan started to bowl regularly as a pair, India mostly had an inexperienced pace attack, and had to take the bulk of the workload. As a result, they sent down more overs and took 65 percent of the overall wickets that India accounted for in the 34 matches they played together.

If we scrutinise the numbers further, Ashwin and Jadeja's corresponding numbers at the end of 34 Tests at home throw up something interesting. With 197 wickets Ashwin is slightly behind Kumble's tally of 201 wickets. But Jadeja with 162 wickets is ahead of Harbhajan's 155. However, together as a pair, Ashwin-Jadeja (359) overtake Kumble-Harbhajan's (356) tally at the end of 34 Tests. But in terms of percentage of wickets taken in the period, Ashwin-Jadeja's stands at 57, while the two retired spinners had 65 percentage.

Ashwin and Jadeja have together featured in 45 Tests at home, 11 more than what Kumble and Harbhajan played together. But out of those, only 17 have seen Day 5 finishes (9 wins, 8 draws). However, Kumble and Harbhajan were part of Tests that ended on the final day on 26 occasions (8 wins, 14 draws, 4 losses). It is a fair reflection of the pitches that India have played in the two eras. In the 2000s, India mostly played on traditional Indian decks that underwent wear and tear only gradually. Rank turners were not common. But over the past decade, India have altered between playing on flat, low decks and rank turners especially after the World Test Championship came into effect. As a result, out of the 45 home Tests Ashwin and Jadeja have played so far, 13 have finished on Day 4, 14 on Day 3 and one on Day

2. Those numbers definitely tell a story about how far the arrival of DRS has helped spinners in general. With DRS in play, umpires have been bold in terms of their decision making, especially with regards to the LBW calls. Even in case umpires turn down an appeal, Ashwin and Jadeja have been able to use DRS to turn things around. Ashwin and Harbhajan, whose off-breaks naturally bring LBW into the equation, it is the former who has seen more success. Ashwin has 63 LBW mode dismissals, while Harbhajan had only 12. Kumble and Jadeja – who mostly attacked the line of stumps have 52 LBW scalps. Even in this aspect, in terms of the wickets taken, Ashwin-Jadeja duo has been more consistent in terms of attacking the stumps. Apart from the LBW dismissals, Ashwin (59) and Jadeja (52) have also bowled batsmen more often than their predecessors. Out of their 481 wickets at home, 111 have been bowled, which is a clear indication of how consistently they have attacked the line of stumps, a strategy that India have followed over the past decade. Kumble-Harbhajan duo had 61 of the bowled with the former alone accounting for 40. One of the constant themes in the home Tests over the past decade has been how often India's captains have handed the new ball to Ashwin and Jadeja. It means, out of the 481 wickets they have taken on home soil, 274 have been batsmen who slot in the top six. Ashwin has 157 of those and Jadeja 117. This despite the duo having very good pace bowlers in Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Umesh Yadav, Ishant Sharma over the years who have taken the new ball regularly. In all, the top six accounted for 56 percent of their total wickets. Out of their 356 wickets, Kumble-Harbhajan had 201 scalps from the top 6, which is 56 percent of their overall tally. During their playing time, India mostly had Zaheer Khan as the lone constant pacer at home. It meant Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, MS Dhoni all relied extensively on Kumble and Harbhajan for wickets at home. Interestingly, even Ashwin-Jadeja also have identical percentages. In the fourth innings, where spinners are mostly in play, the two legendary pairs have played a dominating role. In fact, percentage wise, it is the Kumble-Harbhajan duo who is most effective, but if one factors in the wickets alone, it is the Ashwin-Jadeja pair that is way ahead. While 25 percent of Kumble-Harbhajan's wickets at home have come in the fourth innings, for Ashwin and Jadeja it is only 23 percent. But in terms of wickets, both Ashwin-Jadeja (113) have more than Kumble-Harbhajan's 90. Ashwin India's Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja during the first day of the first test cricket match between India and Bangladesh, at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, in Chennai, Thursday, Sept. 19, 2024. (PTI Photo) It is needless to say, but on the batting front, Ashwin and Jadeja have outperformed both Kumble and Harbhajan individually and as well as a pair. Kumble and Harbhajan both had Test centuries, but the former's lone three-figure mark came at the Oval. The two had nine scores of 50 and above including two centuries from Harbhajan. But Ashwin and Jadeja have 28 at home including seven centuries.

Neeraj Chopra aims for podium finish in 2025 Tokyo World Championships



GNS News Agency, Oct 1

Sonepat: Promising to be 100 per cent fit for the new season, India's two-time Olympic medal-winning javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra on Friday said a podium finish in the 2025 Tokyo World Championships is the next big target on his mind going forward. The 26-year-old is back in the country after winding up his season with a second-place finish at the Diamond League finale in Brussels. This was after he became the first Indian track-and-field athlete to claim successive Olympic medals by adding a silver in Paris to the momentous gold clinched in Tokyo.

"The season is over now. The biggest target for next year is the World Championship, and we will begin preparations for that now. The Olympics are always on our minds, but we have four years for that," Neeraj said on

the sidelines of a conference on 'Mission Olympics 2036' organised at the Sports University of Haryana here. The world championship is scheduled to be held from September 13 to 21 next year. Chopra battled an adductor muscle niggle throughout the year and it also affected his performance at both the Olympics and the DL finale, where he also competed with a fractured left hand.

He had spoken about consulting doctors at the end of the season to decide whether to go for a surgery to fix the problem. Asked about his fitness, Chopra played down concerns and also stated that he will look to improve his technique. The Haryana-lad is trained by renowned German biomechanics expert Klaus Bartonietz. "It was an injury-plagued year but injury is fine now, I will be 100 per cent fit for the new season," he asserted. "Technical issues are also there but we will work on them. I will look to improve my technique. I do like to train in India but when competitions start, I prefer to train abroad," he said. Reflecting on India's Olympic performance, which yielded six medals but no gold this time, Chopra pointed out that the country could have got more as reflected by the half a dozen fourth place finishes. "There were a lot of fourth positions. (But) this time, we had a very good performance in the Paralympics and won several medals. In the coming times, we expect strong performances in both the Olympics and the Paralympics," said Chopra. Chopra has been working hard to hit the 90m mark but hasn't managed so far despite coming close. In the Paris Olympics, his silver-winning throw was 89.45m and he was bested by Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who broke the Games record with a 92.97m effort. At the DL finale, Chopra threw 87.86m to miss the top finish by just one centimetre.

Dwayne Bravo named KKR mentor after announcing retirement, parts ways with CSK

GNS News Agency, Oct 1

"Over his illustrious career, he has played 582 T20 matches, taken 631 wickets, and scored nearly 7,000 runs. With more championship wins than any other cricketer, Bravo's experience is unparalleled," KKR stated in an official release. Bravo will take on the role from Gautam Gambhir who led the Knight Riders to their first IPL title since 2014 earlier this year. Gambhir later vacated the position as he took on the head coach role with India's senior men's side. "I've been part of the Trinbago Knight Riders for the last 10 years in the CPL. Having played for and against the Knight Riders in various leagues, I have a lot of respect for how they operate. The owners' passion, the professionalism of the management, and the family-like environment make it a special place. This is the perfect platform for me as I transition from playing to mentoring and coaching the next generation of players," Bravo said. KKR also confirmed that Bravo will be seen in the role across the Knight Riders' global franchises, including the Caribbean Premier League, Major League Cricket and ILT20. Venky Mysore, CEO of Knight Riders Group, said: "DJ Bravo joining us is an exciting development. His relentless drive to win, along with his vast experience and deep knowledge, will greatly benefit our franchise and players. We're also pleased that Bravo will be involved with our other franchises globally, including CPL, MLC, and ILT20." The move also marks Bravo's long-standing association with the Chennai Su-



per Kings, first as a player between 2011-15 and 2018-22 and the bowling coach since 2023. Retirement earlier in the day featuring in his final season of the Caribbean Premier League as a player, Bravo's tournament with the Trinbago Knight Riders was cut short with an injury. Bravo, the highest wicket-taker in T20s, later made his retirement official on Friday. "Today is the day I say goodbye to the game that has given me everything. From the age of five, I knew this was what I wanted to do—this was the sport I was destined to play. I had no interest in anything else, and I dedicated my entire life to you. In return, you gave me the life I dreamed of for myself and my family. For that, I can't thank you enough," Bravo wrote in an Instagram post.

WFI president Sanjay Singh, Brij Bhushan's aide, bars wrestlers from competing in World Championships selection trials

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Wrestlers train on the eve of the 2023 Senior National Wrestling Championships at the railway stadium in Jaipur. Wrestlers train on the eve of the 2023 Senior National Wrestling Championships at the railway stadium in Jaipur. Still fighting for recognition from the sports ministry, the Sanjay Singh-led Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) has excluded the medalists from the National Championships held in Jaipur earlier this year – which was backed by the government – from taking part in their selection trials for next month's World Championships. In contrast, those who won medals at the WFI-conducted Nationals in Pune, a competition not recognised by the government, have been given the green signal to take part in the trials, which will be held on the outskirts of Delhi on October 7.

The World Championship will be held in Tirana, Albania, from October 28 to 31 in non-Olympic weight categories. However, nearly eight months after the two Nationals were held, the country's elite wrestlers have inadvertently become a part of a tug-of-war between those jostling to control the sport. "For no fault of theirs, the wrestlers have been made to pay a price," a coach said. "The two Na-



tional Championships were held because of a peculiar situation the sport found itself in. After all these months, to take action against one set of wrestlers is unfortunate. "The Jaipur National Championships were organised in February by the Railway Sports Promotion Board and had the blessings of the government. Since the suspended WFI held the event in Pune around the same time, the sports ministry had said it would not recognise the competition. In a circular dated September 24, the WFI – headed by Sanjay Singh, a loyalist of erstwhile president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who faces sexual harassment charges – outlined the eligibility criteria for the wrestlers to compete in the selection trials.

'All medal winners of

the 2023 Senior National Wrestling Championship held at Pune', gold and silver medalists of the 2024 Senior Federation Cup, second-placed wrestlers from the U-23 selection trials to be held on October 6, and all wrestlers selected for the 2024 Asian Championship and Asian Olympic Qualifying tournament would be eligible for the World Championship trials. According to national coaches, the WFI's decision will result in several top-level wrestlers, who won medals at the Jaipur Nationals but weren't a part of the team for the continental competitions, being unable to compete in the trials. The government is yet to formally recognise the Sanjay Singh-led committee that is running the WFI. After he won the election, the government set

aside the results owing to Sanjay's 'proximity' to Brij Bhushan. In the aftermath, the Indian Olympic Association formed an ad-hoc committee to govern the sport. The two nationals were an outcome of this move – the WFI conducted its championship in Pune while the ad-hoc committee held a tournament in Jaipur. Most of India's elite wrestlers, who needed the Sports Authority of India's funding for their Olympic preparation and certificates for government jobs, featured in the Jaipur Nationals. Apart from them, hundreds of wrestlers from Services, Railways and states like Haryana, Punjab, Kerala and Odisha took part in the competition. Owing to factionalism at the state level, some wrestlers from these states also took part in the WFI-held national championships.