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## Telangana Fire Department puts entire staff on alert in view of Diwali

Hyderabad: The Telangana State Disaster Response and Fire Department has put its entire staff on alert across the State in view of Diwali festival to meet any fire mishaps originating due to crackers or electrical lighting. Leaves of officers working at fire control room and men at the stations were cancelled and put on alert round-the-clock.

To meet the contingencies and respond to distress calls from various places including residential areas, commercial establishments and companies while burning of crackers, lighting of lamps or candles and due to short circuits, a detailed action plan was drawn out and circulated to all fire stations.

## Diwali asthana celebrations to be held at Tirumala tomorrow: VIP break darshan canceled

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) has announced the cancellation of VIP Break Darshan at the Venkateswara Swamy temple for this Thursday, coinciding with the Diwali Asthana celebrations. Only protocol celebrities will be allowed entry, and no letters of recommendation will be accepted for VIP darshans on Wednesday, as emphasized by TTD officials. The Diwali Asthana is scheduled to be held in the Srivari Temple on Thursday morning from 7 AM to 9 AM. Later in the evening, Shrimalayappa Swamy, accompanied by Sridevi and Bhudevi, will process through the streets of Tirumadha to bless the devotees.

## India, China complete disengagement in Ladakh, says defence official



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

India and China have completed disengagement at Depsang and Demchok along the LAC in eastern Ladakh. Both sides will exchange sweets on Diwali on Thursday. The local commanders will meet at the designated border meeting points along the LAC to exchange sweets, sources said. Sweets will be exchanged at all border meeting points. There are five designated border meeting points along the 3,488 km LAC. These points are Depsang and Spanngur Gap in eastern Ladakh; Nathu La in Sikkim and Bum La and Kibithoo in Arunachal Pradesh. Before the April 2020 military stand-off, the two sides often met on various occasions.

Patrolling would commence soon, sources said, adding that patrolling routes and modalities would be decided by brigade commanders. Talks will continue on setting a schedule for patrolling by troops. The process to verify removal of all temporary structures, tents, vehicles, cameras, sensors and weapons was completed, sources said. The two sides have physically verified that structures and man-made blockages on patrolling routes have been removed at Demchok. The process to remove temporary structures had started at Demchok last Wednesday and at Depsang last Thursday. Sources said patrolling that was suspended since April 2020 is expected to be resumed after the verification is done. Patrolling will be coordinated in a manner that troops of both sides inform each other before a patrol party is launched. This means patrolling would be coordinated and schedules decided in advance, sources said. These coordinated patrols are part of the measures put in place so that a face-off could be prevented on the LAC, army sources said.

## Harish Rao Responds to CM Revanth's Challenge, Ready for Padayatra



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's challenge, Finance Minister Harish Rao expressed his willingness to join Revanth on a "padayatra" (foot march) from Moosi to Vadapalli. Harish Rao, addressing the media, stated, "Tell us the time, and both I and KTR (K.T. Rama Rao) will be there." In a pointed remark, Harish Rao added, "It's not about dealing with me... first, Revanth should focus on securing his own position." Harish Rao's comments have stirred political circles, signaling a spirited exchange of words between the two leaders. This development comes amidst heightened political tensions in Telangana as the leaders engage in a back-and-forth on state issues, with Rao's response further intensifying the atmosphere.

## RTC to introduce 82 new electric buses in Warangal Region soon

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Warangal: The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) will soon introduce 82 new electric buses in its Warangal region. According to TSRTC officials, the 82 new electric buses would be introduced on Hyderabad, Nizamabad, Eturunagaram, Mangapet, Khammam and Bhupalpally routes. The electric buses include Super Luxury (18), Deluxe (14), Semi Deluxe (21) and Express (29). Delhi based JBM Company has agreed to run these buses on a gross cost contract basis. Necessary arrangements are being made at Warangal-2 Depot, which handles maintenance of buses in the Greater Warangal region.

## PM Modi to be on two-day visit to Gujarat today, set to launch projects worth Rs280 crore

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to begin his two-day visit to Gujarat on Wednesday (October 30, 2024) where he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of various infrastructural and development projects worth over ₹280 crore in Ekta Nagar in Narmada district. Later, PM Modi will address the Officer Trainees of the 99th Common Foundation Course in Aarambh 6.0. These projects aim to enhance the tourist experience, improve accessibility and support sustainability initiatives in the area. Prime Minister will address the



Officer Trainees of the 99th Common Foundation Course on the eve of the Rastriya Ekta Diwas in Aarambh 6.0. The theme for this year's programme is "Roadmap for Aatmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat." The 99th Common

Foundation Course - Aarambh 6.0 - includes 653 Officer Trainees from across 16 civil services of India and 3 civil services of Bhutan. Meanwhile, on October 31, the Prime Minister will offer floral tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai

Patel at the Statue of Unity, which will be followed by Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations. He will administer the Ekta Diwas pledge and witness Ekta Diwas Parade which will comprise of 16 marching contingents from 9 States and 1 UT Police, 4 Central Armed Police Forces, NCC and a marching band. Special attractions include a Hell March contingent of NSG, a daredevil show by BSF and CRPF women and men bikers, a show on the combination of Indian Martial Arts by BSF, a piped band show by school children, 'Surya Kiran' flypast by Indian Air Force, among others.

## Amit Shah accused by Canadian official of targeting Sikh separatists in Canada



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

A Canadian official alleged on Tuesday (October 29, 2024) that Home Minister Amit Shah ordered a campaign of violence, intimidation and intelligence gathering targeting Sikh separatists inside Canada. Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister David Morrison told Parliament members of the national security committee that he had confirmed Mr. Shah's name to The Washington Post, which first reported the allegations. "The journalist called me and asked if it was that person. I confirmed it was that person," Mr. Morrison told the committee. Mr. Morrison did not say how Canada knew of Mr. Shah's alleged involvement. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said a year ago that Canada had credible evidence agents of the Indian government were involved in the murder of Canadian Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia in June 2023. Canadian authorities have repeatedly said they have shared evidence of that with Indian authorities.

Indian government officials have repeatedly denied Canada has provided evidence and have called the allegations "absurd". India's embassy in Ottawa didn't immediately respond to messages for a request for comment on the allegation against Mr. Shah. On October 14, Canada expelled the High Commissioner and five other diplomats, alleging they were persons of interest in multiple cases of coercion, intimidation and violence aimed at quieting a campaign for an independent Sikh state known as Khalistan.

## PSU officers knock PM's door against EPFO's way of calculating higher PF pension

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Irked over the Employees Provident Fund Organisation's (EPFO) decision to calculate the higher PF pension according to pro rata basis, officers of several Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) have knocked the doors of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They have urged Mr. Modi to ask EPFO to provide higher pension as per the Supreme Court order of November, 2022 and not in proportion to the contribution to Employees Pension Scheme (EPS) made by the employees. The officers alleged in their complaints that the EPFO has issued pension payment orders to some of the recently retired officers without considering the contribution they made to the scheme before September 2014. The National Confederation of Officers' Associations (NCOA), representing more than two lakh officers and an equal number of retirees of 255 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) said in their letter to Mr. Modi, Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and several MPs in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha that the EPFO is standing against the rightful enhancement of pensions for post-2014 retirees and serving employees. They allege that there is no reply from the EPFO on their grievances. The officers said the EPFO gave several extensions to its subscribers to submit the joint option with the employer to claim higher pension. "Four months are over after this extended date and no visible improvement found on the implementation part," the NVOA said in the letter.

They alleged that EPFO's Zonal Offices in various locations have issued minimum number of pension



award letters in which detailing a method of pension calculation on a pro-rata basis, which contradicts the Supreme Court's order and EPFO's own circulars. The officers argued in their letter that such a move is against the apex court verdict "Many Regional Offices of EPFO are rejecting the joint applications submitted by the Employees/Retired Employees of CPSEs as well as other Institutions which are coming under the category of Exempted Trusts, simply by placing a lame excuse of trust rules which is totally irrelevant and against the clear verdict of Hon'ble Supreme Court," the letter said.

## KCR is Telangana's history: KTR hits back at Revanth Reddy



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao gave a strong counter to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy over his claims to erase the name of BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrababu Naidu from Telangana's history. He reminded Chandrababu Naidu's pivotal role in the Telangana statehood movement, contrasting with Revanth Reddy's political past. "When you were still carrying footwear, he breathed life into the Telangana statehood movement," Rama Rao remarked, accusing Revanth Reddy of being driven by ambition, while Chandrababu Naidu sacrificed positions for the greater cause. "He risked his life when you raised the gun on the agitators. While you carried money bags, plotting to destroy what we achieved, he was securing Telangana's future," he added.

## Secunderabad Railway Station witnesses huge rush of passengers ahead of Diwali, Chhath Puja



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Hyderabad: The Secunderabad Railway Station is witnessing a surge in passenger traffic as travelers gear up to celebrate Diwali and Chhath Puja with their families. In response to the high demand, the South Central Railway (SCR) has introduced comprehensive measures to manage the festive rush and ensure smooth travel for passengers. A total of 850 special trains will be operated on popular routes including six major routes originating from Secunderabad to accommodate the extra rush of passengers. Further, to meet the demand, extra coaches will be attached to existing trains for waitlisted passengers. These services cover key destinations such as Patna, Santragachi, and Muzaffarpur, which experience heavy footfall during the festival season. The Secunderabad-Patna route alone will see special trains stopping at important stations like Kazipet, Ramagundam, Nagpur, and Prayagraj, catering to the needs of migrant workers and holiday travelers. To ease congestion, SCR has deployed additional staff at Secunderabad station and other major stations along the routes. "Help desks are operational to assist passengers and security personnel are stationed to manage crowd control effectively. Extra ticket counters have been set up to facilitate last-minute bookings and inquiries," said A Sidhar, a SCR official. General ticketing operations have been strengthened with 14 additional counters at major stations, with plans to increase the number of counters based on demand. To manage queues and crowd during peak hours, Railway Protection Force (RPF) and ticket checking staff are also deployed. "The RPF has also undertaken measures with 250 personnel to manage the rush and ensure safety and security of passengers."

## Congratulations to the Election Commission for being included in the agenda: Manoj Jha

GNS News Agency, Oct 30, Launching a scathing attack against the Election Commission of India (ECI), which rejected the Congress allegations about irregularities in the Haryana Assembly elections, RJD MP Manoj Jha said on Wednesday (October 30, 2024) that the ECI has become a part of the agenda. He said that the ECI must be the custodian of a free and fair election, not the custodian of any machine, not of any paper. "Congratulations to the Election Commission for being included in the agenda. When the structure of Article 324 was conceived, it was not conceived in the form of a machine or paper custodian but in the form of a free and fair election. If you have even 1% doubt, then what stops you from going back to the ballot? I would like to say that the Chief Election Commissioner, you are the custodian of a free and fair election, not the custodian of any machine, not of any paper..." said the RJD.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Digital arrest

DIGITAL arrest — the term might sound like something straight out of science fiction, but it is fast becoming a real-life menace. As per government data, Indian citizens lost around Rs 120 crore to this fraud — highlighted by PM Narendra Modi in 'Mann Ki Baat' on Sunday — during the first quarter of 2024. The modus operandi is inventive: Callers posing as officials of the police, CBI, RBI or the narcotics department inform potential victims that they are under investigation on grounds such as the seizure of their postal consignments carrying drugs. They are told to cough up money or face legal consequences, including arrest. Pushed to the brink by sheer panic, coupled with the fact that these 'officials' know significant details about them, the gullible ones end up making the payment. Padma Bhushan awardee and Vardhman Group chairman SP Dswal would know what this is all about. A couple of months ago, an interstate gang of cyber criminals, who claimed to be CBI officers, duped the renowned industrialist of Rs 7 crore. Kept under digital surveillance for two days, he was not allowed to call or text anyone. The fraudsters also orchestrated a fake Supreme Court hearing through a video call. If such an influential person was rendered helpless by scammers, one can well imagine the plight of commoners. The ambitious Digital India programme, launched by the government in 2015, has largely achieved its aim of transforming India into a digitally empowered nation, but it has also made more and more citizens vulnerable to cybercrime. There is a dire need for people to be vigilant — especially the elderly, who are not very tech-savvy. With the PM himself flagging the issue, public awareness about it is bound to increase. However, this is unlikely to deter criminals from trying out new methods to commit fraud. Cybersecurity agencies ought to remain ahead of the curve rather than playing catch-up.

## Registration of builder-buyer agreement mandatory on payment of 10% of flat price in Greater Noida

greater noida Authority chairman Manoj Kumar Singh, who is also the Uttar Pradesh chief secretary, chaired the meeting attended by other senior officials. The Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority has made the registration of the builder-buyer agreement mandatory on the payment of 10 per cent of the total value of flats by buyers, so that they get a legal document, allowing them to claim their property.

"We are aiming to protect the interests of the buyers. This has been in demand for a long time," said N G Ravi Kumar, CEO, Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority, after the 136th board meeting of the authority. "In fact, flat buyers were demanding," he told The Indian Express, "that permission be granted to register the agreement between the builder and the buyer on the payment of 10 per cent by the buyer, so that they can have a legal document." Among other important decisions taken during the meeting for flat buyers and residents of Greater Noida was the one to register the agreement to sell. Buyers will need to pay the full stamp duty at the time of signing the agreement to sell. Once the buyers get the possession of the flats, they will be registered after a stamp duty of Rs 100 is paid. "Because the buyers have legal documents, the builders will not be able to commit any kind of fraud. Also, the registry department will receive the stamp duty on time," Kumar added. Authority chairman Manoj Kumar Singh, who is also the Uttar Pradesh chief secretary, chaired the meeting attended by other senior officials. The Amitabh Kant Committee's recommendations to address the obstacles of legacy projects in real estate were also discussed in the meeting. The way has been cleared to complete 73 builder projects and provide homes to the buyers. Out of approximately 62,912 flats included in these 73 projects, 30,477 have been registered so far. There are 98 projects in Greater Noida that fall under the scope of the policy prepared on the basis of the committee's recommendations. Twenty-five per cent of the amount was deposited for the 73 projects, resulting in the authority receiving an outstanding amount of about Rs 547 crore, with around Rs 1,300 crore expected to be received in a year. Completion certificates have been issued for 38,661 of the flats. The board was also informed that Gangajal is being supplied to 50 out of the 58 residential sectors in Greater Noida. "We will begin the supply of Gangajal by December this year in all 58 sectors in Greater Noida," said Kumar, the CEO. He also said that work has commenced on the plan to supply Gangajal to Greater Noida West, adding that three reservoirs have been constructed for the purpose.

## Sale of platform tickets suspended across all 3 railway stations in Ahmedabad

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

ahmedabad railway station The order comes in light of a massive rush, especially for trains like the Jansadharan Express ferrying migrant workers to states in North and East India. Hours after the crowding situation at Ahmedabad railway station got worse, with passengers trying to board trains to return home for Chhath puja and Diwali, the Ahmedabad Division of Western Railway (WR) suspended the sales of platform tickets across all three major railway stations in the city — Ahmedabad (Kalupur), Sabarmati, and Asarwa. The suspension came into effect on October 27 and will remain in force till November 6. This means that only people with valid tickets will be permitted to enter the railway stations, and relatives or others who would come to see the passengers off will not be able to enter. The order comes in light of a massive rush, especially for trains like the Jansadharan Express ferrying migrant workers to states in North and East India. While the decision to suspend sales was taken on Sunday evening itself, it was announced on Monday morning. Notably, a member of the WR Regional Rail Users Consultative Committee, on Friday and Saturday, wrote to the General Manager seeking that more special trains be run during the festive season.

## Harjinder Singh Dhama again elected president of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) House on Monday elected Shiromani Akali Dal candidate Harjinder Singh Dhama as its president for a fourth consecutive term. He defeated former president Bibi Jagir Kaur to retain the gurdwara body's top post. As many as 142 SGPC members were present as the House voted in the annual presidential election on Wednesday. While Dhama got 107, Jagir Kaur polled only 33 votes. Two votes were cancelled. The last SGPC House was

elected in 2011. More than 30 members of House have died in the last 13 years. The same House is functioning as the SGPC elections have been delayed.

Dhama's election as SGPC president once again underlines the grip of the SAD (B) over the House despite the political crisis the party is going through after the Akal Takht declared its chief, Sukhbir Singh Badal, "tankhaya" (guilty of religious misconduct) on August 30. Dhama's close associate Sohan Singh Thandal joined the BJP last week in what was seen as a setback to him. The election victory is also a relief for him. It was the first SGPC election in the last 16 years in which Sukhbir Singh Badal was not directly involved in the SAD's candidate selection.

Who is Harjinder Singh Dhama?

Born in 1956, Harjinder Singh Dhama holds a BA LLB. For the last 40 years, he has been engaged in the legal profession and voluntarily fighting the cases of Sikh militants. He has been an SGPC member since 1996. Amid the pending Akal Takht decision, how Dhama will deal with the situation will be watched as there were allegations that the SAD(B) was using the SGPC to influence the Akal Takht's decision-making.

## With Chandrashekhar Bawankule back on home turf Kamptee, Congress gears up for tough fight



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Tuesday is the last day to file nominations for the Maharashtra Assembly elections but state BJP president Chandrashekhar Bawankule, whose name was announced in the party's first list of 99 candidates, is in no hurry. The 57-year-old's nonchalance could be because he is contesting from Kamptee, his home turf in the state's Vidarbha region. Bawankule successfully contested and won the Kamptee seat thrice in 2004, 2009, and 2014. In 2019, however, he was denied a ticket. The decision came as a rude shock to the three-term sitting MLA who was the energy and excise minister in the Maharashtra government led by chief minister Devendra Fadnis at the time. While the BJP justified its decision by saying that it would field Bawankule's wife from the seat, it chose Tekchand Sawarkar instead. Sawarkar won but the decision to deny Bawankule, who represents the Teli (OBC) community, a ticket proved costly for the BJP. The party lost at least four Assembly seats in 2019 as the Teli community turned against the party. Bawankule, the BJP's OBC face, will contest against former Nagpur Zilla Parishad president Suresh Bhojar in Kamptee. While Bhojar, who polled 1.07 lakh votes against Sawarkar's 1.18 lakh votes in 2019, is banking on anti-incumbency to work in his favour, Bawankule is sure the BJP will do well.

"The party is confident of doing well across Vidarbha

## How a dispute over pangolin smuggling led to gory murder of two traders in Tamhini Ghat



Vijay Salunkhe and his brother-in-law Vikas Gosavi left Banda town in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district on June 27, 2019, telling family members they were going to meet some people for work. Until June 30, Vijay was in contact with his wife Chanda. After that, there was no contact.

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Vijay Salunkhe and his brother-in-law Vikas Gosavi left Banda town in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district on June 27, 2019, telling family members they were going to meet some people for work. Until June 30, Vijay was in contact with his wife Chanda. After that, there was no contact. Three days later, on July 3, the charred remains of Vijay Salunkhe, 32, and Vikas Gosavi, 28, were found in a thick forest area of Tamhini Ghat, inside their car, which had also been gutted. The vehicle was discovered by local villagers precariously close to a cliff overlooking the Kundalika valley. The Pune rural police launched an investigation along with the Paud police, initially suspecting it could have been an accident where the car veered off the road and plunged down the slope before catching fire. However, the investigation revealed a gory sequence of events, indicating that the two were brutally murdered and set on fire inside the car over a botched deal involving the smuggling of pangolins, one of the most trafficked animals in the world.

Salunkhe, a resident of Banda, and Gosavi, a resident of Nipani in Belagavi district of Karnataka, were both scrap traders. The duo had informed their family they were going to meet Ashok Hilam, a resident of Mangaon in Raigad district, for business purposes. They had stayed at a lodge in Mangaon. When Salunkhe and Gosavi could not be contacted, their family in Banda went to Hilam's home in Mangaon, but Hilam claimed he had gone to Baramati for work and later switched off his phone. The family subsequently registered a missing persons complaint at the Mangaon police station, only to learn from

the Pune rural police on July 4 that the two had been found dead, charred inside a car. "Initially, there were hardly any clues in the case. With the help of the chassis number of the car, the vehicle was identified and the relatives of the deceased were contacted. Initial information from the family revealed the names of Ashok Hilam, 31, and Ganesh Raghunath Waghmare, 27. We found out that the two deceased and Hilam and Waghmare were involved in the smuggling of pangolins, pangolin scales, and other banned wildlife items. In 2018, Salunkhe and Gosavi had a dispute with Hilam and Waghmare over a pangolin deal. In the same year, Hilam and Waghmare were arrested by the police for pangolin smuggling. The two suspected that a tip-off by Salunkhe and Gosavi had led to their arrest. Upon their release on bail, Hilam and Waghmare hatched a plan to murder Salunkhe and Gosavi," said an officer who was part of the investigation by the Pune rural police at the time. The officer added, "Hilam and Waghmare called Salunkhe and Gosavi, saying they had found a good deal on pangolins and pangolin scales. Salunkhe and Gosavi left Banda on June 27, 2019, and came to Mangaon. The two travelled to Pune along with Hilam and Waghmare in the car. In the Tamhini Ghat area, three accomplices of Hilam and Waghmare were waiting. The five people brutally thrashed Salunkhe and Gosavi and strangled them. They were planning to plunge the car into a deep gorge of the Kundalika valley, but they could not due to issues with the vehicle. The accused set the car on fire. We arrested the three additional suspects later." Hilam, Waghmare, and the three others—Shankar Hilam, 20, Lahanya Jadhav, 30, and Ganesh Pawar, 26—were all charged with the murder of the two traders. "A chargesheet was filed against the five accused in December 2019, and the case is currently pending in the sessions court against them," said an officer from the Paud police station. Pangolin, also known as the scaly anteater, is an insectivorous mammal that has hard scales of keratin on its body. Two of the eight subspecies of the animal are found in India. The animal has been given protected status under schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act. While pangolin scales are mainly used in traditional oriental remedies and to make luxury items, the animal's meat is also consumed and sold at a very high price in the illegal market. There have been cases of pangolins being kept in houses in India, as there is a superstition that they bring wealth. Pangolin is one of the most trafficked animals in the world and officials suspect that multiple rackets may be active in various parts of Maharashtra, where one chain captures them from forests and sells them to middlemen in cities, who then sell them to smugglers. In addition to Pune, Thane and Raigad, seizures of live animals and scales have also been made in the past from Chandrapur and Nanded districts in Maharashtra.

## Bengaluru police book Malayalam filmmaker Ranjith on charge of sexually assaulting a man



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Malayalam director Ranjith, Kerala Police register case against director Ranjith over sexual misconduct allegation Malayalam film director Ranjith. The Bengaluru police have booked Malayalam film director Ranjith Balakrishnan on charges of sexually assaulting a man. The case was initially registered in Kerala but transferred to the Karnataka capital as the complainant, a 31-year-old artist, claimed the incident took place in a hotel in the city. The FIR has been registered at the BIAL police station under section 377 (unnatural offences) of the Indian Penal Code and 66 E (violation of privacy) of the Information Technology Act.

In his complaint, the man said he met Ranjith in 2012 at East Hill in Kerala's Kozhikode city. The purpose of his visit was to meet actor Mammooty during the shoot of Bavuttiyyude Namathil, a film written and produced by Ranjith. Ranjith then collected the complainant's contact number and invited him to a luxury hotel near Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport. "He offered me alcohol and sexually assaulted me. He forced me to engage in oral sex," the complainant said, adding that Ranjith took photos and a video of the alleged sexual assault. He is also alleged to have sent the photos and video to an actress. The complaint was first lodged with the Kasaba police in Kozhikode in the last week of August. On September 9, the Kozhikode Principal Sessions Court granted anticipatory bail to Ranjith in the case. The bail was valid for 30 days. Also in August, a Bengali actress accused Ranjith of misbehaviour during the casting process of his 2009 Malayalam film Paleri Manikyam: Oru Pathirakolapathakathinte Katha and lodged a complaint with the Kochi city police. Although Ranjith denied the allegations, he was compelled to resign as head of the government-run Kerala Chalachitra Academy.

## As Pune university gifts silver coins to staff, students question 'waste of lakhs of rupees'



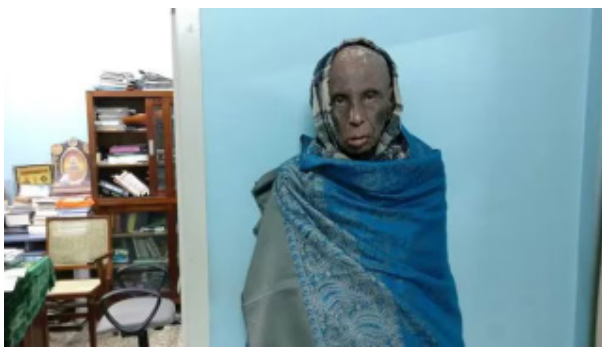
GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Savitribai Phule Pune University's (SPPU's) decision to distribute 75 gm silver coins to over 1,000 permanent teaching and non-teaching staff members as part of the 'Amrit Mahotsav' celebration in its platinum jubilee year has drawn criticism from student groups, who have questioned the expenditure. Vice-Chancellor Dr Suresh Gosavi, however, defended the move, saying the university was only following "tradition". The university was founded in 1949 and ranked 23 in the Union Ministry of Education's National Institutional Ranking Framework 2024.

"We are not opposed to teachers and non-teaching staff. Our protest is on the wrong policies of the university. If the budget of the university is in deficit, how is the administration wasting lakhs of rupees on silver coins? Are they going to compensate these lakhs of rupees by increasing the student's examination fees and other fees? If anyone is thinking of increasing the fee, we will oppose it with a strong protest," Rahul Sasane, who belongs to the student group University Student Struggle Action Committee, said. Bhushan Ranbhare, the Pune district president of the National Students' Union of India, said the money could have been put to better use. "These medals have been distributed to university staff members in celebration of the Amrit Mahotsav but they should spend money on facilities for students. The condition of the hostels is very bad and the food served in the mess frequently has insects in it. Students are as much a part of the university as staff members are," Ranbhare said.

The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), however, said it welcomed the decision. "The silver coin is to motivate employees on the occasion of Amrit Mahotsav of the university and the amount is something that the university can easily afford. But we demand students should also be provided new facilities as a part of the celebrations," Aditya Dumbre, SPPU ABVP president, said. Vice-Chancellor Gosavi explained that the tradition of gifting coins to employees began when the university turned 25. "This is a tradition that took place when the university completed 25 years and 50 years. Now we have continued it on the completion of 75 years, this celebration will not come again and again. Silver coins have been given to permanent teaching and non-teaching staff to appreciate their efforts; most of them will not be there for the 100-year celebration," Gosavi said.

## Justice K S Puttaswamy, key petitioner in right to privacy case, passes away at 98



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Justice K S Puttaswamy, former Karnataka High Court judge and the lead petitioner in the seminal 'right to privacy case', passed away on Monday, at the age of 98. Justice Puttaswamy, who was born in 1926 near Bengaluru, enrolled as an advocate in 1952 after studying at Maharaja College in Mysuru and the Government Law College in Bengaluru. He practised at the Mysore High Court before it came to be known as the Karnataka High Court and would go on to become an Additional Government Advocate before being appointed as a judge of the Karnataka High Court on November 28, 1977. Following his retirement in 1986, he was appointed as the first Vice-Chairman of the Bengaluru bench of the Cen-

tral Administrative Tribunal. He also served as the chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh backward Classes Commission. In 2012, at the age of 86, Justice Puttaswamy would be one of the first litigants to challenge the Aadhaar scheme when it was still an initiative of the UPA government at the Centre. As a part of his challenge to the Aadhaar scheme, however, the Supreme Court in 2015 decided it must look at whether citizens have a fundamental right to privacy under the Constitution of India. This led to a historic decision in August 2017 where a nine-judge bench unanimously recognised the fundamental right to privacy in the case of Justice K S Puttaswamy (Retd.) v. Union of India. The day after the verdict was delivered, Justice Puttaswamy in an interview to The Indian Express at his home in South Bengaluru, had said that the verdict was "correct and beneficial". On the hearings, he had said "I was expecting a fair-minded judgment when the arguments were on, particularly because attorney general K K Venugopal first argued that the right to privacy was not a fundamental right but then came around to the point that it was. The possibility of the court accepting the right to privacy as a fundamental right was very bright after this." "During discussions with some of my friends, I realised that the Aadhaar scheme was going to be implemented without the law being discussed in Parliament. As a former judge, I felt the executive action was not right. I filed the petition because I felt that my right was affected," he said.

## 'Driving alone, without the destination in mind, spreads your wings': Motoring enthusiast, columnist, writer H Kishie Singh dies at 85

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Kishie did his schooling at Bishop Cotton School, Shimla, and that's where he fell in love with the mountains, and went on to graduate from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and pursued his higher studies in Canada. Kishie did his schooling at Bishop Cotton School, Shimla, and that's where he fell in love with the mountains, and went on to graduate from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and pursued his higher studies in Canada. For H Kishie Singh, life was an adventure, and each day was a journey to be experienced to the fullest. The Chandigarh-based motoring enthusiast, columnist, and writer passed away late Saturday night after a brief illness and was cremated Sunday evening. He was 85.

Kishie's love for cars, motorsports, and driving is famous in Chandigarh, which has been his home for many years, and he was part of several motorsports events as an official and expert, having also participated in some early in his life. Kishie did his schooling at Bishop Cotton School, Shimla, and that's where he fell in love with the mountains, and went on to graduate from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and pursued his higher studies in Canada. His job took him to various countries, including Canada, where he freelanced with several newspapers and moved back to India in 1975, with his love for motoring taking him several paces, including driving from London to Delhi, India to Tehran, Canada to India...and across the country. "What solo travelling teaches you, no books can. Driving alone, without the destination in mind, gives you wings and so many new perspectives about life," he once said as part of a literary event. Kishie wrote a column on motoring for two decades, and later published a book, 'Good Motoring', a collection of essays written with wit and flair about his journeys worldwide and his experiences on the road. He often spoke and wrote about the lack of safety on Indian roads, how many drivers did not follow traffic rules, leading to fatal accidents, and how Indian drivers needed to learn the discipline to improve road safety and reduce deaths.

He coauthored 'Whispering Deodars' with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Khushwant Singh, Ruskin Bond and Rahul Singh, and was an integral part of the Khushwant Singh Litfest in Kasauli, with Rahul Singh, the director of KSLF, that concluded a few days ago, remembering Kishie fondly at the 13th edition of the festival. "We are really missing our good friend Kishie this time in Kasauli, as he could not drive up due to health reasons, and he has always been with us, making this festival what it is today, and giving us so many valuable inputs, and taking care of several aspects of KSLF," recalled Rahul Hari Singh, five-time national rally champion and Asia Zone Rally Championship winner, recalls several special moments with Kishie Singh at various motorsport events, including the Raid D Himalayas, where both were officials together for many years. "He was young at heart, with great energy and was always full of life. I remember there were times when he slept at night in the Gypsy, and enjoyed every bit of the journey. We often would stop in the evening on the road, to share an Old Monk, which was his favourite, and his wife Neena would pack the most amazing ham and mayo sandwiches," recalls Hari. Hari adds how Kishie not only had a love for cars, but great technological knowledge, and how all motorsport enthusiasts would wait for his column. He was brave, for he wrote about the high road taxes, bad condition of Indian roads, and he was a prized possession of Chandigarh, and his going is a tremendous loss to the motorsport community," Hari recalls that Kishie kept his cars in mint condition, and would camp with us family in a one-ton truck with a trailer, and had all the equipment for camping and driving. "He was part of several Raid De Himalaya rallies and it was great to hear him on the radio during our official trips. He lived life to the fullest, and taught us so many things about it," shares Hari. Ajay Bhardwaj, a journalist, describes Kishie as his bosom pal and mentor. "In his death, not just me but even the city has lost a prolific writer, an avid traveller, and an extraordinary human being. He had an enviable collection of books on varied subjects which he would lend me turn by turn to keep me abreast of different thoughts. His passion for motor cars and road manners was so astounding that I would invariably become part of our conversation, be it over drinks or coffee."

Kishie, adds Bhardwaj, drove across the countries to live his passion thoroughly, and was regular as a captain with Himalayan Raide de Mission for a long period, and shared not just stories of roads travelled, but a profound zest for life. "Kishie will be remembered for his kindness, wit, and boundless passion for the open road. May he now embark on his greatest journey yet, driving along heavenly highways with a heart as full as ever. Heaven has gained a soul who knew how to make every mile meaningful. You will be fondly missed, Kishie," he



adds. Lallie Sangha, a former professional rally driver, who has driven for various top teams and won the Race of Champions two times in 2002 and 2003, met Kishie in 1996, when Lallie was 18, and had just entered the field of motorsports. "At that time, there was no social media and only newspapers would be the source of information and publicity and Kishie in his motorsport column would encourage us young rallyists. He was very positive, knowledgeable and knew his subject so well and wrote with integrity. He recognised talent and had participated in several rallies in the 1980s. He was a fair judge and there was so much we young rallyists learnt from his experience and expertise," says Sangha, adding that Kishie and his mother's parents came from Sangrur.

## Baramati has always picked me, says Sharad Pawar as grand-nephew Yugendra files nomination

Yugendra will contest against his uncle Ajit Pawar in the Maharashtra Assembly elections on November 20. Yugendra will contest against his uncle Ajit Pawar in the Maharashtra Assembly elections on November 20. Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Monday accompanied his grand-nephew Yugendra Pawar as he filed his nomination from the Baramati Assembly constituency and expressed confidence that he would get elected from the family stronghold.

Yugendra will contest against his uncle Ajit Pawar in the Maharashtra Assembly elections on November 20. This is the second electoral battle between two members of the Pawar family in Baramati after the Lok Sabha contest where Sharad Pawar's daughter and NCP (SP) working president Supriya Sule defeated Ajit's wife Sunetra Pawar. Following family tradition, Yugendra sought blessings at a temple in Baramati before filing his nomination.

"I have full confidence in the people of Baramati who have been giving me strength in state politics. It started in 1965 and is going on till now. I contested so many elections from here... initially, I campaigned for myself but later on, the responsibility of my campaigning was done by citizens. I have full confidence in Baramati citizens that in this election as well they will ensure the win of the MVA candidate Yugendra with a big margin," Sharad Pawar said, adding that nobody understands the Baramati voter better than he does. On the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi allies filing nominations in the same constituencies in some seats, Sharad Pawar said there was consensus on most seats and discussions were going on in a few seats so it was decided that nominations should be filed in the undecided seats. The candidature can be withdrawn after a final decision is taken, he added. Sule, who also accompanied Yugendra, said that Baramati's voters have always stood by the NCP (SP) chief. "Baramati is always associated with Sharad Pawar everywhere," she said. "The voters of Baramati have stood with Sharad Pawarsaheb for the last 55 years. I want them to bless me as well as I will always work for them. Sharad Pawar his 'guru, guide, and role model'."

## Man assaults Delhi cop who stopped him for riding bike with illegally modified silencer



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

delhi police assault According to the police, on the night of October 26, Inspector Narpal Singh was on patrolling duty with other officers on Batla road when he noticed a bullet motorcycle heading towards Zakir Nagar market. A man punched the station house officer of the Jamia Nagar police station after he was stopped for riding a bike with an illegally modified silencer, the Delhi Police

has said.

According to the police, on the night of October 26, Inspector Narpal Singh was on patrolling duty with other officers on Batla road when he noticed a bullet motorcycle heading towards Zakir Nagar market. "The bike was making a loud noise and was stopped by the SHO. On inspection, it was found that the silencer was illegally modified, in violation of the Motor Vehicles Act. The SHO then ordered the bike to be seized as per law," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) Ravi Kumar said. However, the bike rider, Asif, 24, refused to comply, the police said. Asif called his father, Riyassuddin, who came to the spot. "The father said the police should 'settle the matter' then and there and let his son go, or else there would be consequences. When the SHO refused, Riyassuddin grabbed him by the collar and Asif punched him near the eye," DCP Kumar said. The father-son duo were arrested for attacking an officer on duty, and a case was registered against them at the Jamia Nagar police station, the police said. The SHO was taken to the Holi Family Hospital for treatment. Further investigation was in progress, said the police.

## The story of Ladakh's Arghon community

Ladakh, India's cold desert and land of rugged mountains crisscrossed by ancient passes, has stories buried deeper than those found in history books. Once a vibrant hub on the Silk Route, Ladakh connected markets stretching from Russia to eastern Europe. Today, the trade routes are quiet, but their stories remain, waiting to be told. "Ladakh is blessed with beautiful mountains and lakes, but the stories behind them remain untold. Anyone travelling to Leh should understand and know the stories of people, of communities that have made Ladakh possible," says Adiba Jahan, a young Ladakhi entrepreneur, who quit her job at an investment firm to start Dastan-e-Karwan, a storytelling project that seeks to connect visitors with the region's cultural heritage. For her, sustainable tourism means preserving not just nature, but also the unique cultural identity of Ladakh. "Travel has the power to change one's perspective on life and its multitudinous aspects. We aim to broaden the definition of travel, transforming it from a mere journey to a profound experience



that deepens one's understanding of the destination," Adiba says. In September, Dastan-e-Karwan presented the history of the Arghon community, an ethnically diverse Sunni Muslim community rooted in Ladakh. Their origins trace back to the 17th century, when traders from Yarkand and Kashgar (now in western China), and Tibet intermarried with local Ladakhi women. These mixed-race descendants settled in Ladakh and are called Arghons.

## Greenhouse gas levels surge to a new record in 2023: World Meteorological Organization

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Planet-warming greenhouse gas (GHG) levels surged to a new record in 2023, with annual mean levels of carbon dioxide (CO2), the most important GHG in the atmosphere, rising by 2.3 parts per million (PPM) between 2022 and 2023, the World Meteorological Organization said Monday. This was the 12th consecutive year when the annual mean CO2 rose by over 2 PPM. The globally averaged surface concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide GHG reached new highs in 2023, with CO2 at 420 ppm. According to the WMO, the last time the earth had a similar CO2 concentration was 3-5 million years ago, when temperatures were 2-3°C higher and sea levels were 10-20 metres higher than they are now.

The increase in CO2 between 2022 and 2023, WMO said, was slightly higher than the 2021-2022 period but slightly lower than the average annual growth rate over the last decade, and was partly caused by natural variability. CO2 emissions caused by large vegetation fires and a possible reduction in carbon absorption by forests combined with stubbornly high fossil fuel CO2 emissions from human and industrial activities drove the CO2 increase in 2023, according to WMO's annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. The El Nino weather phenomenon, which leads to warmer weather and reduced rainfall, especially in South Asia, caused record high temperatures, drier vegetation and wildfires, thus releasing more GHGs into the earth. "During El Nino years, greenhouse gas levels tend to rise because drier vegetation and forest fires reduce the efficiency of land carbon sinks," said the WMO, a specialised agency of the United Nations whose mandate covers weather, climate and water resources. WMO scientists warned that the rising CO2 concentration and its impact on climate change could cause the natural ecosystems to become sources of greenhouse gases. "The bulletin warns that we face a potential vicious cycle. Natural climate variability plays a big role in carbon cycle. But



in the near future, climate change itself could cause ecosystems to become larger sources of greenhouse gases. Wildfires could release more carbon emissions into the atmosphere, whilst the warmer ocean might absorb less CO2," said WMO deputy secretary-general Ko Barrett. She added, "Consequently, more CO2 could stay in the atmosphere to accelerate global warming. These climate feedbacks are critical concerns to human society." From 1990 to 2023, radiative forcing—the warming effect on our climate—by long-lived greenhouse gases increased by 51.5 per cent, with CO2 accounting for about 81 per cent of this increase, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Annual Greenhouse Gas Index cited in the WMO Bulletin. The WMO said that given the extremely long life of CO2 in the atmosphere, even if emissions reduce rapidly due to net zero targets, the observed temperature levels will persist for several decades. Iso pointed out that climate feedback concerns were not limited to CO2 alone. Methane present in the earth's atmosphere saw the largest three-year increase between 2020 and 2022. Observations and model simulations pointed to a rise in methane emissions from natural wetlands in response to warmer temperatures and particularly wetter land conditions during the 2020-2022 La Nina conditions.

## 'Policy after policy is made to favour PM's friends': Priyanka Gandhi on campaign trail ahead of Wayanad bypoll

Priyanka Gandhi Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi, who is making her electoral debut with the Wayanad bypoll, is on a two-day visit across the constituency addressing several public meetings. (Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi, who is making her electoral debut with the Wayanad bypoll, is on a two-day campaign trail across the constituency addressing several public meetings. At her first corner meeting in Sulthan Bathery Assembly constituency on Monday, Priyanka said that policies are made to "favour the PM's friends". Attacking the BJP-led Centre, she also alleged that values of Constitution are constantly being subverted. This is her second visit to Wayanad after filling her nominations on October 22, followed by a road show which was attended by her brother Rahul Gandhi, mother Sonia Gandhi, and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, among others. On Tuesday, Priyanka will continue her campaign trail across Thiruvambadi, Engapuzha, Eranad and Therattammal, Wandoor and Mampad, and Nilambur. The byelection was necessitated after Rahul Gandhi vacated the seat in view of his victory in Rai Bareilly constituency in the recent Parliament elections. The bypoll is scheduled to be held on November 13 and Priyanka is contesting against LDF's veteran leader and former MLA Sathyan Mokeri, and BJP's Navya Haridas, a two-time counsellor of Kozhikode



Corporation. Urging people to elect her as an MP in the November 13 bypoll, Priyanka, in an open letter to the people of Wayanad last week, promised that her work would serve to deepen the bond that her brother and former Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi made with them. If elected to power, it will be her "first journey as a public representative" of Wayanad but not her first as a "public fighter", she added. If she wins, Priyanka will be the third member of her family in Parliament along with her mother Sonia Gandhi, who is a Rajya Sabha MP from Rajasthan and the Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson, and her brother Rahul Gandhi, who is the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Rae Bareilly MP.

## UP CM Yogi Adityanath meets family of man who died in police custody in Lucknow



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

The Uttar Pradesh Government on Monday announced an ex gratia payment of Rs 10 lakh, housing, free education for children, and access to various government schemes for the family of a 32-year-old trader who died allegedly in police custody in Lucknow on October 26. A station house officer, unidentified police personnel, and two residents have been charged with murder and criminal conspiracy in connection with the death of Mohit Pandey, who used to stitch and supply school uniforms.

Mohit Pandey's mother, wife, and children met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at his official residence in Lucknow on Monday. The chief minister offered condolences and directed officials to provide immediate financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh, along with all applicable benefits under government schemes, including housing and free education for children, according to a government press release.

Adityanath assured Mohit Pandey's family that strict action would be taken against those responsible for his

death, promising that no one involved would be spared. Mohit Pandey's mother Tageshwari Devi stated in her complaint that on the evening of October 25, police took her son to the Chinhat police station following a minor dispute with a man named Adesh Kumar. They later detained Pandey's brother Shobha Ram, allegedly on charges of intoxication, when he went to inquire about his brother.

Mohit Pandey's mother further alleged that the brothers were kept in separate rooms and that the police brutally assaulted Pandey, leading to his death. She also alleged that officers later took him to a hospital to cover up the custodial torture. The police initially stated that Mohit Pandey's condition had worsened at the Chinhat police station, prompting them to take him to a community health centre, which then referred him to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, where he was declared dead. The family was subsequently informed. Mohit Pandey's family, along with others, had protested demanding action against police officials responsible for his death and also compensation and a government job for one of his family members.

Meanwhile, a video surfaced on social media showing Shobha Ram attempting to "revive" his brother in the lock-up. An FIR was filed against SHO Ashwani Kumar Chaturvedi, who was in charge of the Chinhat police station; Adesh Kumar; his unnamed uncle, unidentified police personnel; and a private person. No arrests have been made so far. Assistant Commissioner of Police Radha Raman Singh said the investigation was ongoing. SHO Chaturvedi has been suspended following his removal from the post, and the investigation in the murder case has been transferred to another police station. Bakshi Ka Talab MLA Yogesh Kumar Shukla and Councillor Shailendra Verma were also present during the family's meeting with the chief minister.

## Waqf Amendment Bill: Opposition members walk out of Waqf panel meeting, rejoin later

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Opposition members of the joint committee of Parliament on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill walked out of the panel meeting once again on Monday alleging that those with "no stake in the Waqf Amendment Bill were being invited for oral evidence" by the committee. All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi, Congress member Mohammad Jawed, and Samajwadi Party (SP) member Mohibullah Nadvi were among those who walked out of the meeting on Monday. However, they rejoined the meeting later after staying away for some time, according to sources.

A row erupted during the meeting after the Delhi Waqf Board administrator submitted a report to the committee chair. Opposition members walked out, claiming this was done without approval from the Delhi government. A letter was also submitted on behalf of Delhi Chief Minister Atishi to committee chair Jagdambika Pal, stating that the officer submitted the report to the committee without getting approval from the Delhi government and that it should be treated as "null and void". The panel's Monday meeting was the first one after Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Kalyan Banerjee was suspended for a day from the committee on Tuesday after he smashed a glass bottle during a heated discussion with BJP member and former Calcutta High Court Judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay. BJP MP Pal, who chairs the panel, later alleged that Banerjee tried "to hit the Chair" with the bottle. After the incident, BJP members demanded criminal pro-



ceedings against the TMC MP and his suspension from Parliamentary proceedings. The Indian Express has learnt that Banerjee was not present during Monday's meeting. Monday's panel meeting included oral evidence from the Delhi Waqf Board, Haryana Waqf Board, Punjab Waqf Board and Uttarakhand Waqf Board. In the second half of the day, the panel was scheduled to collect oral evidence from a group of former high court and Supreme Court lawyers, 'Call for Justice', and the Waqf Tenant Welfare Association, Delhi. The Waqf panel meeting has seen several walkouts by Opposition MPs over the last few weeks. On October 14, several Opposition MPs walked out of the meeting after a former office-bearer of the Karnataka State Minorities Commission and BJP leader deposing before the panel made a comment on Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, reportedly over the allotment of Waqf land.

## SP chief calls for unity against Mahayuti for a 'positive change'

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday called for forging a collective strategy and making a united effort to oust the Mahayuti alliance from power in Maharashtra in the upcoming assembly elections. He also slammed the BJP, which is part of the Mahayuti alliance along with the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the Ajit Pawar-led NCP and expressed his commitment to defeating the "enemies of Maharashtra and bring about a positive change". Yadav, whose party won two seats in the last Maharashtra polls and is eying a bigger share in the seat-sharing talks with its alliance partners, took to social media to share a note addressed to the "dear" people of the state and media persons.

"With your awareness, the Maharashtra Assembly elections will liberate 'Maharashtra' from the BJP's conspiracies of sabotage and its negative politics of communalism. The BJP's negative politics is unable to understand the positive strategy and mutual adjustment of the united opposition. The BJP's conspiracy to slowly destroy Maharashtra's economy has been exposed before the people of Maharashtra," he said in Hindi on X. The Samajwadi Party chief accused the BJP of having destroyed the "historic harmony and brotherhood" of Maharashtra's society as well as the political parties. "The BJP wants to weaken Maharashtra so much — economically, socially and politically — that the reins of the country's economic leadership can be snatched from Maharashtra and given to someone else," he added. The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said the "political, social and economic consciousness" that has awakened among the people of Maharashtra and mediapersons who protect the state's interests would not allow this ploy of the BJP to succeed. "The people of Maharashtra will defeat the enemies of Maharashtra's honour, livelihood, employment, trade and business. The tainted and treacherous allies of the BJP will be defeated."

"The BJP's mega-corruption did not spare even the statues of great men. Political patronage was given to those who violated the honour of girls. The combined power of the aware and progressive people of Maharashtra will defeat both the deceit and fraud of BJP," Yadav said. The Kannauj Lok Sabha MP also hoped that the impartial media personnel of Maharashtra, endowed with a sense of responsibility, will also play their traditional glorious role of the fourth pillar of democracy and will not only prevent any kind of misleading BJP propaganda from being broadcast, propagated and published but will also refute it out loud. "The efforts of all such true news-opinion channels, YouTube channels and journalists are commendable, who, despite not being well-equipped, are constantly exposing the 'anti-Maharashtra



politics of the BJP' with their indomitable courage," he said. "A joint and organised political strategy will bring an end to the 'Mahadukhi' period of the BJP-led 'Mahayuti'. Committed and determined to defeat the enemies of Maharashtra and bring about positive change," Yadav said. Elections to the 288-member Maharashtra assembly will be held on November 20 and votes will be counted on November 23.

## Junior doctors to expand protests to rural Bengal

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Kolkata: West Bengal Junior Doctors' Front (WBJDF), the umbrella body of the junior doctors protesting in the aftermath of the rape and murder of a fellow medico here, is planning to expand their base beyond urban bastions in the state to rural Bengal. "Our movement will continue unless and until the pobe on the rape and murder issue reaches a logical conclusion and our demands in the matter are fulfilled in full. The movement will not now just be restricted to the metro, urban, suburban and district headquarters. This will now be spread to remote rural areas," said Debasish Halder, one of the leading faces of the junior doctors' movement on this issue. Commenting on the floating of a rival association of junior doctors christened West Bengal Junior Doctors' Association (WBJDA) on Saturday, mainly by those junior doctors who were suspended recently by the college council of RG Kar Medical College on charges of "threat culture", Halder said it is quite queer that those accused of "threat culture" are now floating an association backed by the state's ruling party and making tall talks. Recently, one such junior doctor associated with WBJDA slapped a legal notice to Aniket Mahato, a junior doctor attached to RG Kar and another leading face of the movement against the rape and murder in context.

## Former Congress Jharkhand unit working president joins BJP



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

manash sinha joins bjp He was welcomed into the saffron party by Jharkhand BJP working president Ravindra Rai and Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Former Jharkhand Congress working president Manash Sinha on Monday joined BJP ahead of the assembly polls. He was welcomed into the saffron party by Jharkhand BJP working president Ravindra Rai and Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who is also BJP's state election co-incharge, during a ceremony at the party's headquarters. "I have served the Congress party and held different posts for the past 27 years. But, there is no respect left for dedicated workers in the party."

So, I decided to join the BJP," Sinha said after joining the saffron camp. Sinha said he resigned from all posts of the Congress party. The Assam chief minister alleged that there is no importance to the workers in the Congress, who dedicated their lives for the party.

He said Sinha's experience would be utilised at the state level to strengthen the party and win elections. Sarma alleged that poll tickets in the Congress party are given on three parameters—first offer funds to the party, second be associated with reputed families of MLA, MP or minister and third abuse Prime Minister Narendra Modi. On a question of JMM's demand for the removal of Jharkhand Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Sarma said that this might be the first time when a ruling party is demanding for an officer's removal. "The officer has been appointed by the ruling government. Now, it is demanding his removal. Actually, they wanted the officer to help them politically but it is not happening," Sarma said. The ruling JMM in Jharkhand wrote to the Election Commission on Sunday and demanded the removal of Chief Electoral Officer K Ravi Kumar and two senior IPS officers, alleging that they were working in favour of the BJP. Elections to the 81-member Jharkhand assembly are scheduled on November 13 and November 20. The votes will be counted on November 23.

## Convict Vikas Yadav's furlough request rejected, jail admin cites 'unsatisfactory' conduct

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

The Delhi Prisons administration has rejected the furlough request of Vikas Yadav, who is serving a life term in Tihar jail for killing business executive Nitish Katara in 2002, after his conduct was found to be "unsatisfactory". A senior official said he had applied for furlough a few days ago but it was rejected by the Director-General (Prisons) Satish Golcha last week. Vikas, the son of Uttar Pradesh politician D P Yadav, was awarded a 25-year jail term by the Supreme Court in 2016 along with two others for their role in the sensational kidnapping and killing of Katara.

A furlough is given in cases of long-term imprisonment. The period of furlough granted to a prisoner is treated as remission of his sentence. Furlough is seen as a matter of right for a prisoner, to be granted periodically irrespective of any reason, and merely to enable the prisoner to retain family and social ties and to counter the ill effects of prolonged time spent in prison. The order issued on October 23 by the DS-Legal, PHQ, Delhi Prisons, said, "Convict Vikas Yadav, son of D P Yadav, is undergoing life sentence in case FIR no 192/2002 (actual imprisonment of 25 years without consideration of remission). His conduct has been found to be unsatisfactory as he was punished on May 28, 2012, July 10, 2013, October 10, 2017 for violation of prison rules."

The order further states, "Vikas has been sentenced to undergo life imprisonment, which shall be 25 years of actual imprisonment, without consideration of remission by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court in CrI appeal and this order of Delhi High Court was also confirmed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. As the convict has not earned any remission including annual good conduct report (AGCR), which is a prerequisite condition, he cannot be given any furlough as per rule-1223." According to the



order, Rule 1223 of Delhi Prison Rules-2018 states that a convict must fulfil two criteria: the prisoner should not be a habitual offender and have good conduct in prison, and should have earned rewards in the last three AGCR and continue to maintain good conduct. "...Therefore, his furlough is rejected. The convict may be informed under proper acknowledgement," it states. On October 3, 2016, the Supreme Court had awarded a 25-year jail term without any benefit of remission to Vikas and his cousin Vishal for their role in Katara's killing. Another co-convict Sukhdev Pehalwan was also handed down a 20-year jail term in the case. Prior to this, the Delhi High Court, while upholding the life imprisonment awarded to Vikas and Vishal by the trial court, had specified a 30-year sentence, without any remission, to both of them. It had awarded a 25-year jail term to Pehalwan. All three were convicted and sentenced for kidnapping Katara from a marriage party on the intervening night of February 16-17, 2002 and then killing him for his alleged affair with Vikas's sister Bharti. Katara was murdered as Vishal and Vikas did not approve of his affair with Bharti because they belonged to different castes, the lower court had said in its verdict.

## 'Tata-Airbus facility will make India a leading exporter of aircraft, create jobs and boost India's MSMEs': PM Modi

Stating that the "decisions taken in the last decade" had paved the way for defence manufacturing in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Monday, expressed confidence that India would soon become a leading exporter of aircraft and meet "growing demand" in the civil aviation sector, thanks to the newly inaugurated Tata-Airbus manufacturing facility in Gujarat's Vadodra. PM Modi said that the project was a step to strengthen the "Make in India, Make for the World" mission of the government. Paying tribute to Late Ratan Tata, he said, "The (Tata-Airbus) facility is a reflection of new India's work culture... The construction of this factory started in October 2022 and is ready for production... Had we not taken definite steps 10 years ago, it would have been impossible to scale these heights. At that time... the priority and understanding was of only importing, but we decided to walk new paths and set new goals. The result is in front of us."

Welcoming the Spanish PM, Modi said: "You and your delegation are welcome in India. Last year in Delhi during the G20 Summit, we missed your presence. I am happy that I am welcoming you in India during Diwali. Welcoming the Spanish PM, Modi said: "You and your delegation are welcome in India. Last year in Delhi during the G20 Summit, we missed your presence. I am happy that I am welcoming you in India during Diwali." (PTI) "Indian players have given orders for 1,200 new aircraft to other countries but it is possible that the global manufacturers may not be able to meet India's growing demand. This factory will play a key role in designing and manufacturing civil airlines," he said. He cited the example of setting up the manufacturing facility of Canadian-German rail manufacturer Bombardier Transportation in Vadodra during his tenure as Chief Minister and said, "It was readied in record time. Today, the metro coaches being manufactured here are being exported to other countries."

The facility is expected to benefit MSMEs across the country and make Vadodra the "centre of transport engineering". He said, "Skill and job creation is our focus — the Airbus and Tata factory will create thousands of jobs. About 18,000 parts of the aircraft will be indigenously manufactured in various parts of the country. Micro and small industries MSMEs will be making these parts. The new aircraft factory will boost new skills, new industries... We are working on increasing air connectivity in smaller towns and creating Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) hubs... It will create a path for made-in-India civil aviation in the future and create an ecosystem." He added, "Vadodra city will work as a catalyst. It is a strong centre of MSMEs. We have our GatiShakti University, which is creating professionals for many industries. Vadodra is a centre for pharma, engineering, heavy machinery and several sector companies. This entire sector will become

a hub of aviation manufacturing. For this, I applaud the Gujarat government and the entire team for their advanced industrial policies..."

Stating that "key decisions" during his ten-year tenure had helped create the "right plan and partnership to turn possibility into prosperity", PM Modi said, "We changed the ordinance factory to seven big companies. DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) and HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) were revitalised and two defence corridors were set up in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Such decisions have enthused new energy into the defence sector. Innovation for Defence Excellence schemes have pushed start-ups... In the last six years, about 1,000 new defence startups have come up in India and the country's has increased by 30%. Today, we are exporting defence equipment to more than 100 countries." At the event, Spain Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said that the TASL was a "triumph" of PM Modi's "mission to turn India into an industrial powerhouse". Sanchez said, "Spain, like India, is promoting an ambitious roadmap. The IMF has raised its growth forecast for Spain. If Indian companies want to grow, they can trust Spain. In 2026, the first C295 manufactured in India will fly. It is a symbol of the Spanish aeronautical industry. A new generation of highly qualified engineers and technicians will be trained (in Vadodra). Many are currently studying at universities and they will find a highly professional horizon in this centre."

The two PMs held an open jeep road show to wave at the crowd gathered on the 2.5-km stretch from the airport to the TASL facility, with a glimpse of cultural dances from various states of India, and remarked on the cultural connections and collaborations of India and Spain. Following the event, they also held a vital bilateral discussion at the Lukshmi Villas Palace (LVP) in Vadodra. PM Modi, addressing the delegation in Hindi, said, "India's young talent is contributing to the green and digital transition goals of Spain. With increasing people-to-people relations, India opened a new Consulate in Barcelona this year and we welcome your decision to open a new Consulate of Spain in Bengaluru. I am confident our partnership will become more dynamic with cooperation in pharma, IT, science, and technology," he said. Congratulating PM Modi for being re-elected for a third term earlier this year, Sanchez said, "There is no doubt that our cooperation will continue to grow across many other areas, and even more given the celebration of the Spain-India Year for Culture, Tourism and Artificial Intelligence in 2026. Our countries complement each other. India plays a prominent role not only in the Indo-Pacific but also in the wider geopolitical context. Spain maintains privileged relations with Latin America, historic ties in the Middle East, increased presence in Africa, and is a leading voice in the European Union."

## Nostradamus pollster sticks to his US election prediction, but adds major disclaimer as he receives 'so much hate'



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Nostradamus pollster Allan Lichtman has declared that his prediction about the winner of the 2024 US presidential election will not change. While Lichtman's prediction says that Democratic contender will win the White House race scheduled to take place next week on 5 November, he claimed that he has "never experienced" this much "hate" during elections. Participate in the Festival of Gifts & get a chance to win an iPhone 15 and other exciting prizes. Play Now! On his YouTube channel, the historian informed that his prediction, which is based on 160 years of precedent, "has not changed". He, however, said there's a possibility that he could be wrong. "It's always

possible that something so cataclysmic and so unprecedented could change the pattern of history." Lichtman opens up about experiencing hate this election. Since 1984, Lichtman has accurately predicted the outcome of nine out of ten presidential elections, earning him the moniker of "Nostradamus" of polls. He uses the methodology called "The Keys to the White House", which he developed with Russian scholar Vladimir Keilis-Borok in 1981 to predict the election contest with such accuracy. Meanwhile, the polls indicate that the contest between GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump and his Democratic Kamala Harris is now closer than ever. Calling the keys very robust, objective and quantitative, Lichtman remarked, "My predictions have stood the test of time, my indicators have always been right." Lichtman insisted that his methodology and forecasts are completely "non-partisan," underlining that he was right to anticipate the "two most conservative presidents of our time," which he referred to as Trump in 2016 and Ronald Reagan in 1984 when he was elected for the second time. However, the historian disclosed that he received an extraordinary level of hatred after he predicted Harris' win. Speaking to Chris Cuomo of NewsNation, he said, "I have never experienced anything close to the hate that has been reaped upon me this time." According to him, he has been receiving offensive, violent, and threatening feedback and his family's safety and security have been jeopardised.

## JD Vance tears into CNN host over Trump's 'enemy from within' remark: 'You're taking words out of context'



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

The fiery exchange between the pair began when Tapper grilled Vance over John Kelly's suggestion that Trump fits "into the general definition of fascist." JD Vance tore into Jake Tapper for taking Donald Trump's "words out of context." During his Sunday appearance on State of the Union, the Republican vice presidential nominee lambasted the CNN host and his network for their lack of "integrity" in reporting about the former president. "A viewer of your network would have believed that Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin conspired in 2016. That was totally and preposterously false," Vance told Tapper, who grilled the Ohio senator over the ex-prez's rhetoric about target-

ing election officials who cheat. "You're taking words out of context," Trump's running mate said, adding, "If you'd like to put up a clip and actually put him in context, I think the American people would realise that Donald Trump is a hell of a lot more reasonable than the people like Liz Cheney, who would like to lie us into war." The heated exchange between the pair began when Tapper grilled Vance over retired Gen. John Kelly's suggestion that Trump fits "into the general definition of fascist." Vance, in turn, questioned CNN's "integrity" over pushing the wrongful claims made by the Harris campaign. "Now, Jake, we also should remember, I mean, step back a little bit. Ask yourself a basic question about network integrity. You guys talked about the Russia hoax nonstop," the 40-year-old venture capitalist said. However, Tapper fired back with, "FBI was investigating it, so we covered them." Vance, who was not satisfied with the journalist's defensive statements, argued, "You took the words of unnamed FBI agents and put them on your network as if they were the gospel truth. You did it again and again." "A viewer of your network would've believed that Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin conspired in 2016. Now, that was totally and preposterously false," the VP hopeful added. As Tapper accused Vance of making "false" remarks about his network, the Republican candidate asserted, "You covered it in a way that gave credence to anonymous sources [and] accusations. You did it yourself. Your network did it, Jake."

## Indian-origin man charged with attempted murder after woman, two children stabbed in London

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

An Indian-origin man was charged with three counts of attempted murder after the stabbing last week of three people – a woman and two children – in east London. Kulvinder Ram, 48, appeared at Barkingside Magistrate's Court on Monday, days after the attack in First Avenue, Dagenham. The Metropolitan Police identified him as a resident of the area. "Ram was arrested following a stabbing in First Avenue, Dagenham on Friday, 25 October. A woman aged in her 30s, an eight-year-old girl, and a two-year-old boy, were all found suffering stab injuries," a statement from the Metropolitan Police read.

Also, according to the statement, the victims' injuries were not life-threatening. Additionally, while the release did not mention if Ram, the arrested Indian-origin man, was related to the victims, it stated the involved parties were known to each other. However, it gave no further details. The incident as per a report in The Independent, police were called to a residential street in Dagenham at 5:35 pm on the day. There, officers found the woman and the two kids; the injured were rushed to a hospital as was Ram, though he was assessed and later discharged



straight into police custody. Meanwhile, Detective Superintendent Lewis Basford, responsible for policing in the area, condemned the attack as 'truly shocking' and thanked the residents for their 'assistance and patience.' "A crime scene will remain in place for some time while our officers carry out vital work and there will be an increased police presence in the area over the coming days," he said, and appealed to the members of the public to contact officers with any information that could assist in the investigation.

## Candace Owens faces huge setback as Australia denies entry ahead of her speaking tour: 'We cannot allow voices that...'

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

The Department of Immigration denied a visa for Owens, who enjoys a combined social media following of over 13 million and is a long-time Donald Trump supporter. Meanwhile, Australia's Minister of Home Affairs, Tony Burke, asserted that her planned visit has a "capacity to incite discord" and her views are best shared "somewhere else." A look at Candace Owens' controversial statements Owens, who is known for her controversial conservative views on race, gender, and social issues, had scheduled a nationwide speaking tour that caused controversy due to the history of incendiary remarks, including those that have been widely criticised as antisemitic. In the recent past, she stirred a row with her several bizarre statements, such as advancing conspiracy theories regarding Israel's role in incidents like 9/11 and the JFK assassination and bringing up the old "blood libel" myth, which falsely accused Jews of using blood in rituals. Australia justifies ban on Candace Owens "From downplaying the impact of the Holocaust with comments about [Nazi doctor Josef Mengele] through to claims that Muslims started slavery, Candace Owens has the capacity to incite discord in almost every direction," Burke stated on Sunday, as per The Guardian. "Australia's national interest is best served when Candace Owens is somewhere else."

He went on to say that Owens' disgusting, harmful, and polarizing conspiracy theories have no place in the nation for the sake of social harmony. "Australia's commitment to social cohesion and mutual respect is fundamental," he continued, adding that the nation cannot give



the stage to voices that deliberately subvert these ideals by disseminating damaging antisemitic narratives. The decision comes as Jewish leaders and other organisations demanded the government to permanently ban Owens from entering Australia. In a letter to Tony Burke, the Zionist Federation of Australia emphasised that she did not fit the character criteria for entry, pointing to her history of Holocaust denial and aggressive conspiracy theories against Muslims, Israel, and the LGBTQI community. ZFA CEO Alon Cassuto welcomed the decision, stressing that "extremism, racism, bigotry, and antisemitism are unacceptable in any form, regardless of whether they originate from the far left or right," J-Wire reported. In 2021, Owens started working at The Daily Wire, but she quit the right-wing publication this year in April reportedly following tensions with editor emeritus Ben Shapiro over different opinions on Israel's war in Gaza.

## 'Little X is adorable': Internet in awe as Elon Musk's son dons MAGA hat, shares cute moment with dad at Trump rally



The crowd of 20,000-person cheered for Musk after he promised that he could eliminate at least \$2 trillion in unnecessary spending from the federal budget if Trump were elected president.

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Billionaire Elon Musk brought his 4-year-old son to Donald Trump's historic rally in Manhattan, sporting a personalised red MAGA hat that read, "Make Voting Great Again." The Tesla CEO arrived for the star-studded rally at Madison Square Garden in New York City on Sunday with his mother Maye Musk and son X Æ A-Xii, who was pictured holding up a Trump Vance sign that also bore his father's name. Participate in the Festival of Gifts & get a chance to win an iPhone 15 and other exciting prizes. Play Now! Born on May 4, 2020, X Æ A-Xii is one of Musk's three kids with singer Grimes. Wearing his black MAGA hat, the Tesla CEO was seen cradling his kid before his speech while standing beside former First Lady Melania Trump. X not only shared a cute moment with his dad, but also with Melania, who was seen embracing him. The pictures and videos of little Musk have gone viral on social media, with one admirer writing on X, "The Musk's are all in." "Little X loves the crowd cheering," another wrote. "What a wonderful moment for Maye too. She has

to be so proud of her son," a third user stated. "Little, little X is adorable! #MAGA," the fourth user chimed in, while one more added, "Adorable. The positive vibes towards his Daddy have Lil X dancing with joy."

"Your money is being wasted," Musk tells crowd Musk is currently establishing himself as one of Trump's most well-known fundraisers and surrogates, praising the Republican candidate at numerous rallies and contributing \$75 million to his own pro-Trump super PAC. The crowd of 20,000-person cheered for Musk after he promised that he could eliminate at least \$2 trillion in unnecessary spending from the federal budget if Trump were elected president. "Your money is being wasted," Musk told the crowd. "We're going to get the government off your back and out of your pocket book." In fiscal year 2024, as per the Treasury Department, the federal government spent \$6.75 trillion but only received \$4.92 trillion in income, resulting in a \$1.83 trillion deficit. Musk's cuts would exceed this year's deficit spending and reduce the budget by over a third.

## Kamala Harris' candid admission reveals why voters are turning away

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

American elections are less than ten days away, and Kamala Harris is struggling to spin a compelling narrative to counter Donald Trump's masculine, anti-immigrant rhetoric, catalysed by the likes of Elon Musk and Tucker Carlson. Even as the national polling average still suggests a razor thin margin between the two candidates the odds are now tilting in Donald Trump's favour. Enhance your career with IIT Delhi's Design Thinking & Innovation Programme Enroll now! So, how did Kamala's initial gains lose traction with the voter? She may have recently answered this question at a CNN townhall. Stay Up to date with bold and unbiased US Election Coverage only on Hindustan Times "What weaknesses do you bring to the table?" Joe Donahue, a retail worker, prompted the Democratic candidate to reveal her vulnerabilities. "Some might call that a weakness, especially if you're in an interview or being asked a certain question, and you're expected to have the right answer right away," she said, turning indecisively between her questioner and CNN host Anderson Cooper. "But that's how I work." Harris' candid confession to sometimes struggling with on-the-spot answers, an admission that critics say is emblematic of her campaign's broader issues. As polling tightens, Harris's challenge is twofold: define her own path while differentiating herself from both Donald



Trump and her former running mate, Joe Biden. Attempts to distance her campaign from Biden's policies include a pledge to bring down grocery costs and raise the federal minimum wage. But without a solid media rollout, even her new initiatives, like the minimum wage push, have barely made a ripple. In swing states like Michigan and Wisconsin, Trump's momentum is evident, and Harris' camp acknowledges the stakes are high. A shift from her initial strategy of "rising above the fray" seems underway, with sharper language and pointed critiques of Trump's "fascist" leanings. However, the ultimate question remains: can Harris find her footing and appeal to undecided voters in the final stretch?

## Trump attacks China, says US has greatest military in the world

GNS News Agency, Oct 30 New York: In a confrontation with China, "we will kick their a\*\*," Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has said at a campaign rally, asserting, "We have the greatest military in the world." Speaking out against what he asserted was the weakening of respect for the US under President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, he said, "A report that they issued that if we end up in a war with China, we cannot win. We're not strong enough." "We have the greatest military in the world," he declared. "You don't put out reports like that and it's not true. We would kick their a\*\*." Even "assuming that's true, how stupid are you to put out a report like that," he said.

He did not say which report he was referring to, but it was likely a report from the Commission on the National Defence Strategy to the Senate Armed Services earlier this year. It said, "The Commission finds that the US military lacks both the capabilities and the capacity

required to be confident it can deter and prevail in combat" and that "in many ways, China is outpacing the United States and has largely negated the US military advantage in the Western Pacific". Trump's strong statement, tinged by a colloquial vulgarity, was in keeping with his theme of asserting that he would reclaim America's greatness, which he said had been devalued by Biden and Harris. "If we win, our enemies won't be laughing anymore," Trump said. The Madison Square Garden was packed to its capacity of about 19,000 about 90 minutes before his campaign rally was to begin, and thousands were left stranded outside after waiting for hours to get in and watched him on giant screens. Inside, whipped to bouts of frenzy, the crowd punctuated his speech with screams of, "USA, USA," and "Four more years". Although most of his nearly 90-minute speech focused on immigration and inflation, he presented himself as the keeper of world order.

## NRI businessman Yusuffali's Lulu Retail launches Rs 12,000 crore IPO in Abu Dhabi



Abu Dhabi-based retail giant Lulu Retail, promoted by non-resident Indian businessman MA Yusuffali, on Monday launched its \$ 1.43 billion (Rs 12,000 crore) initial public offering (IPO) in the Gulf region. The retail chain has confirmed the IPO range at dirham 1.94-2.04 per share, with the final pricing to be confirmed November 5. The IPO price range means an issue size dirham 5.01-5.27 billion (\$1.36-1.43 billion). Its shares will be listed on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange.

Once the IPO is concluded, Yusuffali's family — originally from Kerala — will retain an effective 60 per cent stake in Lulu Retail Holdings. Yusuffali had previously sold a 20 per cent stake in Lulu International Holdings Ltd to the Abu Dhabi Developmental Holding Company (ADQ) in 2021. Retail investors are guaranteed a mini-

mum 1,000 shares, on minimum investments of dirham 5,000 and multiple of dirham 1,000 thereafter. The Gulf region including Abu Dhabi, UAE and Kuwait have a sizeable NRI population. The company said that a total of 2.582 billion shares, each with a nominal value of \$0.014 (equivalent to AED 0.051), representing 25 per cent of the total issued shares in the company, are to be sold by the company's sole shareholder, Lulu International Holdings Ltd, where Yusuffali's family holds 80 per cent stake. Lulu Retail earned \$3.9 billion's revenue for the 2024 first-half, up 5.6 per cent on the year, while the full-year revenue in 2023 rose 5.6 per cent to \$7.3 billion. In India, the Lulu group owns malls in Kochi, Bangalore, Lucknow, Coimbatore, Trivandrum, Palakkad, Hyderabad and Calicut. Yusuffali, who is the founding shareholder of the group, and is the ultimate beneficial owner of Y International Holdings Limited which in turn holds 80% in the selling shareholder, the offer document says. The Lulu group operates retail stores in the UAE, the KSA, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain. It was the second largest grocery retailer in the UAE and the largest retailer in Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait and the fastest growing and largest pan-GCC retailer in the KSA, in each case based on the retail sales value for 2023. As of August 2024, the group operated a network of 240 stores, comprising 116 Hypermarkets, 102 Express stores and 22 mini markets, with 103 stores located in the UAE, 56 stores located in the KSA and 81 stores across the other markets.

## 'MDBs push for lending expansion but fall short of tripling targets': G20 Independent Expert Group

Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) have put in place measures to expand lending by making better use of their balance sheet and attracting additional capital through innovative channels, but the volumes involved — about 30 per cent of current lending volume — fall short of the tripling they need, given their enlarged mandate, the report card of the G20 Expert Group on Strengthening MDBs said. The 'G20 Independent Expert Group Report Card on Strengthening MDBs: An Incomplete Grade' has come after a year of the setting up of the expert group on MDBs under the G20 Indian Presidency that had Fifteenth Finance Commission Chairman NK Singh and former US Treasury secretary Lawrence Summers as co-convenors. The report card said that though every MDB has embarked on reforms, the pace and ambition of implementation falls well short of what was required to deliver on the vision set out by the group.

"Progress has been positive, with a 33 per cent increase in lending capacity and better utilisation of guarantees, the unification of the guarantee platform, and improved use of the balance sheet as per the recommendations of the capital adequacy framework report, optimising the balance sheet. This progress must be seen in the context of our goal to triple capacity. In absolute terms, there has been positive movement. However, relative to the expectations set out in what we refer to as the 'triple agenda' — aiming for 'better, bigger, bolder' goals — there remains significant work to be done," NK Singh. The expert group had outlined a triple mandate for the MDBs for eliminating extreme poverty, inclusive growth and the financing of global public goods involving tripling of the level of financing commitments, and establishing a 'Global Challenges Funding' mechanism for 'Global Public Goods'. The expert group had stressed on the need for MDBs to mobilise more private capital, greater engagement with private sector, stating that private financing worth \$740 billion per year would be required to reach overall goals for additional climate and sustainable development goals (SDGs)-related finance, an increase of \$500 billion over the 2019 level of sovereign borrowing and private participation in infrastructure.

Each MDB has moved ahead on private sector mobilisation but the numbers and prospects remain a fraction of the \$500 billion per year of private finance that was set out in the 'Triple Agenda', the report card said. "More priority is being given to reforms to improve the enabling environment for private investment, especially in the context of country platforms. Guarantees, equity and first-loss instruments to de-risk private capital are being expanded in non-sovereign MDB operations. Local currency lending, however, remains underdeveloped, with only a few examples," it said. On the group's recommendation of a tripling of concessional finance channeled through MDBs to the poorest countries, the report card said there are few signs of any meaningful rise. Expand-

## India's reliance on imported oil, natural gas grows as stagnant domestic production lags demand growth

India's reliance on imported crude oil and natural gas grew further in the first half of the current financial year as the delta between consumption growth and the more or less stagnant domestic production continued to widen.

The country's oil import dependency in April-September (H1) was 88.2 per cent, up from 87.6 per cent in the year-ago period and 87.8 per cent for the full financial year 2023-24 (FY24), per latest data from the oil ministry's Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell (PPAC). Import dependency in the case of natural gas was 51.5 per cent in the first six months of FY25, up from 46.8 per cent a year ago and 47.1 per cent for the full FY24. India's energy demand has been rising rapidly, leading to higher oil and gas imports. Reliance on imported oil has been growing continuously over the past few years, except in FY21, when demand was suppressed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The country's oil import dependency stood at 87.8 per cent in FY24, 87.4 per cent in FY23, 85.5 per cent in FY22, 84.4 per cent in FY21, 85 per cent in FY20, and 83.8 per cent in FY19.

Heavy dependence on imported crude oil makes the Indian economy vulnerable to global oil price volatility, apart from having a bearing on the country's trade deficit, foreign exchange reserves, rupee's exchange rate, and inflation. The government wants to reduce India's reliance on imported crude oil but sluggish domestic oil output in the face of incessantly growing demand for petroleum products has been the biggest roadblock. In the case of natural gas, the government wants to increase its consumption and share in the country's primary energy mix to 15 per cent by 2030 from over 6 per cent currently. The rationale behind the push for natural gas, even though it would lead to higher gas imports, is rather

simple. Natural gas is far less polluting than conventional hydrocarbons like crude oil and coal, and is usually cheaper than oil. It is also seen as a key transition fuel. To be sure though, the government has also been pushing India's oil and gas companies to increase domestic production of natural gas in a bid to keep import dependency levels under check.

India's crude oil imports rose to 120.5 million tonnes in H1 from 115.9 million in the year-ago period, while domestic production declined slightly to 14.4 million tonnes, per PPAC data. The country's gross oil import bill in the first six months of FY25 rose nearly 12 per cent year-on-year to \$71.3 billion. Natural gas imports rose 23 per cent year-on-year to 18.98 billion cubic metres in H1, and cost \$7.7 billion against \$6.5 billion a year ago.

In early 2015, the government had set a target to reduce reliance on oil imports to 67 per cent by 2022 from 77 per cent in 2013-14, but the dependency has only grown since. Cutting costly oil imports continues to be a key focus area for the government, which has taken a number of policy measures to incentivise investments in India's oil and gas exploration and production sector.

Reducing oil imports is also one of the fundamental objectives of the government's push for electric mobility, biofuels, and other alternative fuels for transportation as well as industries. While there has been a pick-up in electric mobility adoption and blending of biofuels with conventional fuels, it is not enough to offset petroleum demand growth. Total domestic consumption of petroleum products in April-September was 117.7 million tonnes, of which just 13.8 million tonnes came from domestically produced crude oil, resulting in a self-sufficiency level of 11.8 per cent, per PPAC data.

## Find out what happens to the body when you don't complete an antibiotics course



When you abruptly stop taking antibiotics, much before completing the course as prescribed by the doctor, you may be playing a risky game with your health, experts warn. Antibiotics are prescribed to eliminate bacterial infections, and they need to be taken for the full course to ensure all the harmful bacteria are eradicated. "When the course is not completed, some bacteria may survive and continue to multiply," said Dr Haricharan G, senior consultant physician, HoD, internal medicine, Gleneagles Hospitals, Lakdi Ka Pul, Hyderabad. "The infection for which the antibiotics were prescribed might not be fully eradicated, meaning harmful bacteria may still exist in your body. This increases the likelihood of the infection persisting or returning," cautioned Dr Prashant Borade, director of critical care, Gleneagles Hospital Parel Mumbai.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), antimicrobials — including antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals, and antiparasitics — are medicines used to prevent and treat infectious diseases in humans, animals, and plants. Even WHO notes that feeling better or improving

symptoms does not always mean that the infection has completely gone. "Your doctor has had years of training and has access to the latest evidence — so always follow their advice," it reads on its website. Over time, the bacteria that are still alive tend to become resistant to these antibiotics. "This can significantly make the medications or the antibiotics less effective for future use," said Dr Borade. As a result of drug resistance, WHO says that antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines "become ineffective and infections become difficult or impossible to treat, increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness, disability, and death."

Some may also notice that the symptoms associated with the infections aren't completely treated and may start to aggravate. "This can create irritation, frustration, and stress while making you fall sick again. Taking an incomplete treatment plan can also further lead to several complications or allergic reactions," said Dr Borade. Your body may also take longer to recover, and complications from the untreated infection could arise, such as abscesses or systemic spread, added Dr Haricharan. According to Dr Borade, one must complete the course as suggested by the doctor. "If you experience side effects or allergies during treatment, it is important to discuss these with your healthcare provider for appropriate guidance," said Dr Borade.

What to note?

WHO urges shorter courses of antibiotics, which may be just as effective as longer courses for some infections. "Shorter treatments make more sense — they are more likely to be completed properly, have fewer side effects, and are also likely to be cheaper. They also reduce the exposure of bacteria to antibiotics, thereby reducing the speed by which the pathogen develops resistance," read a WHO statement.

## "Never, Never Land" reaches readers across generations': Namita Gokhale celebrates latest work entering 2024 Crossword Book Awards longlist

No introduction can do justice to Namita Gokhale, an author and voice for women and children whose works empowered readers for over four decades. Her debut novel, Paro: Dreams of Passion (1984), garnered critical acclaim and popular affection, setting the stage for a career marked by boundary-pushing narratives. Now, her latest work, Never, Never Land (Speaking Tiger Books), has landed on the 2024 Crossword Book Awards longlist. "I'm delighted that my novel, Never, Never Land, has found its way to the Crosswords longlist. It's a book about old age, youth, and the spaces in between, and it carries many of my hard-earned life learnings. I think it reaches out to readers across generations," Gokhale told indianexpress.com.

Her most spoken-about work — Treasures of Lakshmi: The Goddess Who Gives — is available as an audiobook on Audible. Gokhale, who also directs the Jaipur Literature Festival, shared her thoughts on her literary journey, creative process, and what's next. Read the edited excerpts of the interview:

Q: How do you look back at your career trajectory?

Namita Gokhale: I have had a ragged graph of failures and successes, good times and bad. I have never looked at writing as a career but rather as an essential part of my life, like eating, drinking, or sleeping. And I've discovered that I learned more from the hard times and the disappointments than from the good times, though they too contributed much to my creativity.

Q: What are your thoughts as the audio version of Treasures of Lakshmi: The Goddess Who Gives recently released on Audible?

Namita Gokhale: I am delighted. It makes the text of our anthology leap out of the pages through spoken word, song, and Sanskrit invocation. The readings have been done by prominent professionals — Vidya Shah, Sunit Tandon, Vayu Nadu, and Alka Tyagi — from the world of music, theatre, spoken word performance, and Sanskrit scholarship. It truly is a very special book and a perfect gift for Deepavali.

Q: Is audio more powerful than the written word?

Namita Gokhale: Words and voice naturally belong together, and oral traditions are integral to literary heritage. Technology now extends this in new ways. Yet, the silent communion between mind and text remains equally powerful and mystical.

Q: You've mentioned that Paro isn't your best work but that you got "lucky." How do you view that period in writing and publishing compared to today?

Namita Gokhale: I deeply admire my debut novel Paro — Dreams of Passion. It was published forty years ago and has remained popular with readers across generations and stood the test of time. It was lucky to appear when it did and it marks a sort of watershed in Indian writing. But of the 24 books I have written, others are as or perhaps more important to me because of the themes and stories I was trying to convey.

Q: What is your biggest learning in the craft of writing?

Namita Gokhale: Finding and sustaining the voice of the book is essential for the craft and spirit of a story. Q: Do you think social media has democratised writing and communication?

Namita Gokhale: Social media has opened up communication and made platforms accessible. But the literary instinct is more internal, while social media is more accessible. The medium and its vocabulary are still a work in progress.

Q: Have you consciously stayed out of the limelight?

Namita Gokhale: I am the best out of the limelight. I love the different things I am fortunate enough to be doing. Having done them, it is also important to showcase and resonate with them, which I do as sincerely as I can. But I'm uncomfortable with projecting myself; it doesn't come naturally to me.

Q: Your thoughts on self-publishing.

Namita Gokhale: Editorial feedback and distribution are key elements of publishing. Some authors successfully navigate this on their own through self-publishing, while others find comfort within a traditional ecosystem. It's a personal choice.

Q: What has been your most challenging work?

Namita Gokhale: Each book has brought its joys



and challenges. I let projects flow at their own pace. The inner process of thoughts and ideas has its mysteries. One has to keep trying to remain within the ambit of grace, and to be critical of one's output, never to be complacent.

Q: If you could have a conversation with authors from the past, who would you choose?

Namita Gokhale: I would like to spend time with Lady Murasaki, the author of the eleventh-century Japanese Tale of Genji, which is considered the first modern novel. Also, from more recent times, Muriel Spark.

Q: Where do you find inspiration?

Namita Gokhale: Everywhere. The key is to be observant and open.

Q: Any advice for dealing with writer's block?

Namita Gokhale: Just let it be. Writer's block often stems from performance anxiety. Another possible reason for writer's block is that one is still processing experience and working internally to resolve the structure and format of what one is working on. So, it's best to let things brew on the back burner and work on something else.

Q: What's next?

Namita Gokhale: I am working on two or three ideas. Let's see which one gathers pace. I will keep chipping away at words and sentences and paragraphs until one of them takes form.

## OpenAI plans to launch new powerful AI model 'Orion' by December:

San Francisco: ChatGPT maker OpenAI is reportedly planning to launch its next AI model called 'Orion' in December this year which is potentially up to 100 times more powerful than GPT-4.

According to a report in The Verge, unlike the release of OpenAI's last two models — GPT-4o and o1 — Orion won't initially be released widely through ChatGPT. The report mentioned, citing sources, that the Sam Altman-run AI company is planning to grant access to companies first, in order to help them build their own products and features. OpenAI or its CEO Altman were yet to react to the report. According to the report, Microsoft is "preparing to host Orion on Azure as early as November". Microsoft also declined to comment.

"The company's goal is to combine its LLMs over time to create an even more capable model that could eventually be called artificial general intelligence, or AGI," the report mentioned. The release of Orion comes as OpenAI, which has secured a historic \$6.6 billion funding at a \$157 billion valuation, is restructuring itself as a for-profit entity.

Last month, three top executives — including Chief Technical Officer Mira Murati — left the ChatGPT developer. Of the 13 people who helped found OpenAI in 2015, only three now remain at the company. According to reports, Murati is raising money from venture capitalists to finance her own AI startup.

The new funding in OpenAI was led by previous investor Thrive Capital. The VC firm invested around \$1.3 billion. Microsoft reportedly invested a little less than \$1 billion, while Nvidia pledged \$100 million and SoftBank reportedly put in \$500 million.

"The new funding will allow us to double down on our leadership in frontier AI research, increase compute capacity, and continue building tools that help people solve hard problems," the company wrote in a blog post.

## Bala addresses 18-year age gap with third wife Kokila; takes swipe at rivals: 'Since they can't get girls, they say I married four times'



Bala was arrested recently on charges including defamation via social media, insulting womanhood and cruelty towards children, following a complaint from his ex-wife, singer-composer Amritha Suresh. Actor Bala with his wife Kokila. Days after he got married, reportedly for the third time, controversial actor Bala — known for his work in Malayalam cinema — has announced his plans to leave Kerala and settle elsewhere. He also shared that he and his new wife, Kokila, will have a child soon. Kokila, who is a relative of his from Chennai, married Bala in a ceremony held in Ernakulam on October 23.

"Kokila is 24 years old. I'm stating it openly. You can say whatever you want; or mock me. But everything that I say is true," he told the media recently. "I am a good person, but that doesn't mean I am too good a person. I lose control when I get angry. But then she (Kokila) gave me an advice: If you do good to 99 people and beat one

person, where will the good done to these 99 people go? Then I realised. Now I will proceed legally. I'm telling you frankly, I'm leaving this place. I will be with you only for a little while."

"My wife does not like the media. We will have a child soon and live happily. I will always be king; and if I am the king, she is my queen. If anyone else is jealous of this, that's their problem. Since they can't get girls, they keep saying that I married four times. And whatever I do is deemed wrong," he added. Bala further talked about his wife Kokila. "I had never felt such a love for Kokila. Today, I say with my heart, I am 42 years old now and I am the luckiest person. Wealth will come and go. I've been to the brink of death and come back. God exists. It was my mother who went ahead with her proposal. I carried her around as a child. Love that comes suddenly and the one that comes slowly are different. This decision was taken in three months. How many people go into the bedroom and cry before going to sleep? There will be no more crying. I cried for ten years. No more crying," he stated. On October 14, Bala was arrested on charges including defamation via social media, insulting womanhood and cruelty towards children, as reported by news agency PTI. The arrest followed a complaint from his ex-wife, singer-composer Amritha Suresh. After his arrest and a medical examination, he appeared in court, where he was granted bail with two sureties of Rs 25,000 each. The court also barred him from posting videos of his child on social media and instructed him to fully cooperate with the probe.

## When Abhishek Bachchan quit college to help Amitabh Bachchan as he dealt with Rs 90 cr debt: 'He had to borrow money from staff to put food on table'

Amitabh Bachchan's journey in Bollywood is one of the most inspiring tales in the industry. He began his career facing numerous failures, with none of his initial films making an impact. However, he became an overnight sensation with Zanjeer in 1973. Despite his success, he later experienced a significant setback when his company, Amitabh Bachchan Corporation Limited (ABCL), went bankrupt, leaving him with a debt of around Rs 90 crore. This challenging period was so severe that his son, Abhishek Bachchan, had to leave his education. Adding to his struggles, none of Amitabh's films were performing well at that time. Recalling the situation, in an interview with Ranveer Allahbadia, Abhishek Bachchan said, "Well, truth be told, I left university — I was studying in Boston University. I had declared my major as liberal arts, and then I majored in performing arts. And I left my education because my father was going through this really rough time, financially. He had started this business called ABCL."

He added, "I said I can't be here sitting in Boston when my father doesn't know how he's going to get dinner. And that's how bad it was. And he said it publicly. He had to borrow money from his staff to put food on the table. I just felt morally obliged to be with him. I called him and I said 'You know dad, I think I want to leave college half-way and come back and just be with you, try and help you in whatever way. At least you'll know that your boy is next to you and he's there for you.'" His father called him to his study late at night, to tell him about the financial situation. Amitabh apparently told him that 'movies aren't working out, the business isn't working out, nothing is working out'. In an interview with India Today, Amitabh Bachchan recalled, "That was undoubtedly one of the darkest periods of my 44-year-old career. I can never forget how creditors used to land at our door, be abusive, threatening and demanding, and worse still, when they



came for 'Kudkee' at Prateeksha, our residence."

At Vettaiyan audio launch event, Rajinikanth recalled Amitabh Bachchan's struggles and how he had to sell his Juhu house and other properties in Mumbai. "One day, he walked to Yash Chopra's house wearing a monkey cap because he no longer had a driver, as he couldn't pay them. He asked Yash for work. Yash immediately brought a signed cheque and gave it to him, but Amitabh declined, saying he would take it only if he was given work. And thus, he received Mohabbatein. Soon, he also got KBC", shared Rajinikanth. He added, "He did anything and everything. He did all kinds of ads. People in the Bombay industry laughed when they saw this. For three years, despite having many health issues, he worked for 18 hours a day and cleared all his dues. Not just that; he bought back the old house; he bought a total of three houses in that same lane. That's Amitabh Bachchan! He is 82 now and still works for 10 hours a day."

## Angelina Jolie reflects on 'loneliness' as a dedicated worker, drawing parallels to opera singer Maria Callas: 'It's too personal'



The Oscar-winning actors said, "I share a certain loneliness with Callas that comes from being a dedicated worker." The 49-year-old actor emphasized the parallels between her own life and that of Callas, stating, "I may be many things, but I'm a very hard worker, right?" This acknowledgement of a shared work ethic highlights the intensity and commitment that both women brought to their respective crafts.

Actor Angelina Jolie has discovered a profound connection with the legendary opera singer Maria Callas as she steps into the role in the upcoming biopic Maria. Speaking with People magazine at the American Film Institute Festival premiere in Hollywood, Jolie shared insights into her character and her personal reflections on loneliness and dedication. The Oscar-winning actors said, "I share a certain loneliness with Callas that comes from being a dedicated worker." The 49-year-old actor emphasized the parallels between her own life and that of Callas, stating, "I may be many things, but I'm a very hard worker, right?" This acknowledgement of a shared work ethic highlights the intensity and commitment that both women brought to their respective crafts.

Jolie elaborated on the emotional weight of the role, noting, "I don't want to speak too much about it because it's too personal, but there's definitely a loneliness and a work ethic." She reflected on the idea that both she and Callas might view themselves primarily as performers dedicated to their work, saying they are "probably very hard on ourselves," as per People magazine. Directed by Pablo Larrain, known for films like Jackie and Spencer, Maria portrays Callas' retreat to Paris following a glamorous yet tumultuous life in the public eye. The film also features a talented cast, including Kodi Smit-McPhee, Alba Rohrwacher, Pierfrancesco Favino, and Valeria Golino. Maria Callas, who passed away in Paris in 1977 at the age of 53, remains an enduring figure in the world of opera, and her story resonates deeply with audiences. The film received a standing ovation during its premiere at the New York Film Festival in September, further heightening anticipation for its release. At the festival, Jolie expressed her gratitude, stating, "I'm so happy to be here tonight. And I'm so happy to share this stage with these extremely talented, wonderful people and my dear friends." As per People magazine, she added, "I hope you see in this film how much we really care for the people whose lives we're sharing with you and how much they also loved art." Maria is set to hit select theaters on November 27, before becoming available on Netflix on December 11.

## When Sanjeev Kumar's 'no career post marriage' rule ended his relationship with Hema Malini: 'He wanted an all-sacrificing wife'



Actor Sanjeev Kumar, known for his versatile roles in romantic dramas and other genres, faced challenges in his personal relationships. Despite his success on screen, the Sholay actor experienced several failed romances and passed away at the age of 47 without ever marrying. One notable love story was with Hema Malini; their relationship nearly culminated in marriage, but ultimately fell apart due to Sanjeev's expectation that she would give up her acting career. Their love story started on the sets of Seeta Aur Geeta (1972). In the book, An Actor's Actor, Hanif Zaveri and Sumant Batra wrote, "Sanjeev Kumar and Hema Malini became acquainted with each other while shooting for the song 'Hawa Ke Saath Saath', in which they had to skate through the picturesque roads of Mahabaleshwar."

"In one terrifying moment, the trolley came loose while both Hema Malini and Sanjeev Kumar were on it, and veered towards a cliff. Luckily, the road bent inwards and both the actors fell away from the treacherous precipice. They escaped with minor cuts and bruises. This brush with death brought them closer. The moment they recovered from the accident, they were more concerned about each other than their own well-being. Many believe that this was the moment they began developing feelings for each other." According to the book, Sanjeev Kumar was determined to marry Hema. However, his

mother Shantaben was against having an actress as a daughter-in-law. "But, Hema won Shantaben's heart. A humble woman despite her immense success, Hema always covered her head with her pallu, and touched Shantaben's feet every time they met." Hema Malini became the only actress Shantaben approved of to become her daughter-in-law. "The Jarwalis decided to visit Hema's family in Madras and ask for her hand. Sanjeev, Hema, and Shantaben planned the visit, fixed a date, and got their tickets. As was customary, Shantaben arrived at Hema's home with boxes of sweets, and Hema Malini's mother, Jaya Chakravathy, was happy to meet Sanjeev's family. The cultural difference did not pose a hurdle, but Hema Malini's film career became a bone of contention." Hema Malini's mother Jaya Chakravathy declared to Shantaben that she would accept the marriage proposal only if her daughter would be allowed to continue her career as an actress post marriage. "For the Jarwalis family this was a difficult condition to accept. Shantaben and Sanjeev were clear from the start that they would not allow Hema to act in films after marriage. According to Gayatri Patel, Hema herself had promised Sanjeev that she would complete only her pending assignments before bidding farewell to the film world."

Hema too understood the reason behind her mother's decision as she was one of the highest-paid actresses of her time. The actress was hopeful that Sanjeev would eventually come around and allow her to carry on with her career. Meanwhile, Sanjeev hoped Hema would convince her mother. With both actors not ready to compromise, the relationship ended.

Hema herself commented on this in 1991 in the magazine Junior G, "A Sanjeev Kumar who desired a stay-at-home, all-sacrificing wife who would care for his ageing mother and support him, while he mesmerized the audience and won accolades, seems like a caricature of a male chauvinist. But before judging him too harshly, let's consider the era we are dealing with. Back in the day, it was common to look down upon women who chose to be a part of showbiz." In 1980, Hema Malini married Dharmendra. The couple have two daughters, Esha and Ahana Deol. Actors Sunny Deol and Bobby Deol are Hema Malini's stepsons.

## When Rekha's father Gemini Ganesan recalled she didn't want younger sister to join films: 'I am suffering, why should she go through same hell?'



Veteran actor Rekha had a complicated relationship with her father and late actor Gemini Ganesan. In several past interviews, the Umrao Jaan actor has opened up about her father's multiple marriages and how she grew up without a father figure. Recently, an old interview with Gemini Ganesan has resurfaced, where he spoke about Rekha and drew comparisons between his own relationships and those of actors like Dilip Kumar and Dharmendra.

In a conversation with Star & Style magazine, Gemini shared that Rekha was initially against her younger sister, Radha Usman Syed, also known by her screen name Gigi, entering the film industry. Gemini recalled, "Rekha told me, 'Appa, I am already suffering in this line. Why should my sister too go through the same hell?'" However, Gemini refrained from interfering in his children's personal choices, explaining that he believed in letting them handle their affairs independently. He cited Rekha's rumoured relationship with Amitabh Bachchan as an example of something he chose not to intervene in, despite public scrutiny. "People tell me that Rekha has messed

up her personal life by getting involved with Amitabh. But I never discuss Rekha's personal affair with her. Why should I?" he had said. Gemini also reflected on his own relationships, mentioning how his marriages to Rekha's mother, Pushpavalli, and actress Savitri, sparked scandal in the industry at the time. He said, "When I married Savitri and Pushpavalli several years ago, eyebrows were raised, and it became the biggest scandal in the industry. And yet today no one is aghast when they hear about Dilip Kumar marrying Asma or Dharmendra marrying Hema. So, in one way I think I have been the trend setter for extramarital involvements in the industry." Earlier, in an interview with Simi Garewal, Rekha shared that she never truly knew her father, who left her mother, Pushpavalli, when Rekha was just a baby. "I was a baby when he moved out of our lives. I don't even remember him being at home," she said. She also recalled attending the same school as her step-siblings and seeing her father drop them off, yet he never seemed to notice her. "Looking back, maybe I did miss him. But when you haven't tasted something, you don't know what it means. I didn't know what the word 'father' meant," she had said.

## Has Nayanthara had plastic surgery? Jawan star addresses the biggest rumour about her: 'You can pinch me, burn me...'

Regardless of how many impressive performances they deliver, female actors are still largely judged by their appearance and style. Even if they put in great effort, or embrace their natural looks, they often end up being subjected to endless scrutiny. Despite being one of South cinema's most successful stars, Nayanthara too continues to face such judgements, as if her identity is tied solely to her looks. Recently, she clarified emphatically that she has never had cosmetic or plastic surgery to enhance or restore her appearance. Mentioning that she spends the most time on her eyebrows when preparing for events and red carpets, Nayanthara expressed her deep fondness for them. "I take the time to perfect it because it's the real game-changer. I have had different brow phases over the years. Maybe that's why people think my face is changing and I keep looking different. Maybe, that's why a lot of people think I have done something to my face. But that's not true. On record... not true," she said during a chat with Hauterrfly.

The Jawan star added, "Not that it's wrong; but for me, it has just been diet. So, there's been a lot of weight fluctuation and my cheeks go in and out. You can pinch me, burn me, you'll know there's no plastic in here." Stating that her makeover as Kadhambari in the film Naanam Rowdy Dhaan (2015) is her favourite, Nayanthara said, "She's fun, unique and has a style of her own. We wanted to break the image of what a physically challenged person is usually portrayed like. And I love the fact that we could make her look fun." The actor also highlighted the importance of eating local, seasonal foods and staying hydrated, saying, "They're best for your health, skin and hair." Nayanthara also shared her lip care routine, explaining that she first uses foundation to even out her lips, applies a light dusting of powder and then overlines them with a lip liner. "I never swipe my lipstick; I usually dab it for more natural, plump and even look." She also stated that the idea behind floating her own skincare brand, 9skin, was to provide people with products that work for everyone, irrespective of their skin texture.

## Whoever raises voice will get sidelined: Basit Ali on Gary Kirsten's resignation



Basit Ali reacted on Gary Kirsten's resignation from his post as the Pakistan team's head coach in white ball cricket. He pointed out that PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi is a powerful man and whosoever will raise their voice will get sidelined.

Former Pakistan batter Basit Ali reacted to Gary Kirsten's stepping down as team's white ball head coach. Kirsten resigned as head coach of Pakistan's ODI and T20 teams, stepping down less than six months after his appointment by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on a two-year contract in April 2024. His departure comes just days before Pakistan's upcoming ODI series in Australia, leaving the role without Kirsten having led the team in a single ODI—a format where he had previously found considerable coaching success. Basit suggested that PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi is a powerful man and whoever will raise their voice will get sidelined.

"Mohsin Naqvi has come with a lot of power. The

coaches, selectors and managers are being removed. Earlier, the chairman used to be changed from time to time. Now, whoever raises their voice will be sidelined," Basit said on his YouTube channel. The statement came from PCB on Monday, October 28, saying that Pakistan cricket board had accepted the resignation. Jason Gillespie will be coaching the team during the Australia tour, which will begin in November. "Kirsten wanted a different captain"

Basit pointed out that Kirsten wanted someone else as Pakistan's white ball captain and the conflict arose when Mohammad Rizwan replaced Babar Azam at the helm of affairs. "The story started when Mohammad Rizwan was named Pakistan's new white-ball captain. Kirsten wanted a different captain and demanded another player in the team. Coincidentally, both of them are not in the team. He was thinking that maybe he could have full authority. However, he doesn't know that in Pakistan, even the PCB chairman can get changed overnight."

Rizwan takes over captaincy The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced Mohammad Rizwan as the side's new ODI and T20I captain, via a special press conference on October 27. Mohsin Naqvi, the chairman of the PCB, made the announcement at a press conference in Lahore on Sunday, where they also announced all-rounder Salman Ali Agha as the side's new vice-captain. Rizwan took over the reins of Babar Azam, who earlier stepped down as the captain of the team in limited-overs cricket.

## Erik ten Hag quits as Manchester United manager after West Ham defeat

Erik ten Hag has left his role as Manchester United manager after the side's unfortunate defeat to West Ham in the Premier League, which has left them only 3 spots away from relegation. United confirmed in their statement that assistant manager, Rudd van Nistelrooy will take over the role. Erik ten Hag has officially stepped down as Manchester United manager on October 28, a decision that comes just one day after United's controversial 2-1 loss to West Ham United in the Premier League. The defeat, marred by officiating controversies, added to the Dutch manager's woes in what has been a turbulent season for United across all competitions.

Speculation around Ten Hag's potential departure had been rife, with United's inconsistent performances sparking conversations about whether the club might move to replace him. However, Ten Hag ultimately made the decision to end his tenure on his own terms. Manchester United released an official statement confirming Ten Hag's departure and also confirmed that assistant manager Ruud van Nistelrooy would step in as interim head coach. "Erik ten Hag has left his role as Manchester United men's first-team manager...Ruud van Nistelrooy will take charge of the team as interim head coach, supported by the current coaching team, whilst a permanent head coach is recruited," United's statement read.

Ten Hag's hit-and-miss stint with United Erik ten Hag joined a struggling Manchester United in April 2022, arriving from Eredivisie giants Ajax. He initially brought success to United, securing two domestic trophies—the Carabao Cup in 2023 and the FA Cup in 2024. However, this turnaround didn't extend to consistent performances in the Premier League or European competitions like the UEFA Champions League and Europa League. After fin-



ishing 8th in the Premier League last season, United's form has dipped further this season, leaving them currently in 14th place, just three spots above the relegation zone. Despite significant spending in the 2024 summer transfer window to secure players like Manuel Ugarte, Matthijs de Ligt, Lenny Yoro, and Noussair Mazraoui, Ten Hag has yet to find a winning formula. Ruud van Nistelrooy, a former United star, will lead the team alongside the current coaching staff as United searches for a permanent successor. Fans are hopeful that Van Nistelrooy's familiarity with the club's legacy and culture will bring stability. With United in a challenging phase, all eyes are now on Van Nistelrooy to steer the team back on course. Van Nistelrooy joined United ahead of this season as an assistant coach following an impressive debut stint as head coach of Eredivisie side PSV. Given United's struggles this season, fans are eager for a quick turnaround in the team's fortunes under Van Nistelrooy's leadership and the promise of a credible figure at the helm.

## Mohammad Rizwan calls it 'great honour' to be captain of Pakistan's ODI side



GNS News Agency, Oct 30, Mohammad Rizwan has been appointed Pakistan's new ODI and T20I captain, taking over from Babar Azam after a series of disappointing World Cup performances. Rizwan called it a great honour and understood that it would be a huge responsibility for him.

Mohammad Rizwan called it a great honour on getting the opportunity to captain Pakistan in ODIs and T20Is. Rizwan replaced Babar Azam at the helm of affairs in white ball cricket ahead of Australia tour. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced Mohammad Rizwan as the side's new ODI and T20I captain, via a special press conference on October 27. Mohsin Naqvi, the chairman of the PCB, made the announcement at a press conference in Lahore on Sunday, where they also announced all-rounder Salman Ali Agha as the side's new vice-captain. Rizwan will take over their reins of Babar Azam, who earlier stepped down as the captain of the team in limited-overs cricket.

"It is a dream for any player to play for Pakistan, it is a great honour. After that, becoming the captain of the Pakistan team. It is difficult to describe. You can't express how much honoured you are. But I will give this honour in two ways. One way is that all my previous captains have been honoured by me. Simple as they were. The second is that all my previous captains have been honoured by him. I consider them as head of 24-25 crore people. It's a challenge for me. On one hand it is an honour and on other hand it's challenging. That how the team accepts this. So Inshallah, I will try to balance both," Rizwan said in a video posted by Pakistan Cricket on social media.

The newly-appointed captain also admitted that the role comes with new responsibility and he will aim to imply whatever he has learnt from his previous captains. "To handle their pressure. The responsibility is

huge. As we have done in Pakistan U-18, in the domestic and region. Allah has given us the department. But till now I have not wished for this. Because as far as I understand, all my previous captains, I have learnt from them. I have seen them. That some of their qualities are soft, emotional or angry. So we keep learning from each other. Till now, I had a wish. This responsibility is that it will be different, because Pakistan at this level and below is quite different. But from what I have learnt, may God help me to apply them," he added. Rizwan's first assignment will be Pakistan's white ball tour to Australia, where Pakistan will play three ODIs and as many T20Is from November 4 onwards. 32-year-old Rizwan will also lead them in the ODI series against Zimbabwe, starting November 24.

## Lewandowski scores brace as Barca thrash Real Madrid in Clasico

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Madrid: Robert Lewandowski scored twice, while Lamine Yamal and Raphinha also hit the target as FC Barcelona thrashed Real Madrid 4-0 in the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium on Saturday night. The win lifts Barca six points clear of Real Madrid at the top of La Liga and also means Real Madrid's run of 42 La Liga games without defeat comes to an end, reports Xinhua.

The first half saw 47 minutes of high-octane football with Kylian Mbappe having the first chance in the opening minute, although the offside flag ruled his effort out as Barca played a high defensive line.

The French striker then almost took advantage of a poor clearance from Pau Cubarsi, but his effort from distance was just over the bar with Barcelona goalkeeper Inaki Pena well off his line. Yamal looked as if he was through at the other end, but could only shoot tamely at goalkeeper Andriy Lunin under pressure before play went straight down the other end where Pena saved brilliantly from Jude Bellingham in another chance ruled out for Mbappe's offside. Vinicius Jr also got into the game as Real Madrid looked to be aggressive, firing one chance over and dragging another wide before Lunin reacted to parry Pedri's shot from outside the Madrid penalty area. Mbappe had the ball in the net in the 31st minute, but once again he had strayed behind the defense, with Madrid chalking up eight offsides in the first 45 minutes.

## Carlos Sainz claims third win in five races, Ferrari overtakes Red Bull for second



GNS News Agency, Oct 30

Mexico City: Ferrari's Carlos Sainz cruised to a commanding victory, marking a third win in five races and intensifying the constructor's battle as Ferrari leapfrogged Red Bull into second place at the Mexico City Grand Prix. It also brought the championship battle to a fever pitch as McLaren's Lando Norris called Red Bull's Max Verstappen "dangerous" after a series of on-track clashes led to two time penalties for Verstappen.

The reigning champion, who still managed a sixth-place finish despite his infractions, faced criticism over aggressive manoeuvres that underscored a turbulent season's most contentious moments. The Norris-Verstappen showdown unfolded on lap 10 after a safety car restart following a crash involving Alex Albon and Yuki Tsunoda, which had forced both drivers to retire.

As Norris, running side-by-side with Verstappen at Turn Four, took an outside line, Verstappen pushed him off-track—a move deemed too aggressive by race stewards who later penalised Verstappen. A second incident at Turn Eight, where Verstappen once again failed to give room, earned him another penalty. Norris was visibly frustrated over the radio, saying, "I was ahead the whole way through the corner. This guy is dangerous. I have to avoid a crash." In contrast to the tension surrounding Verstappen, Ferrari's Sainz delivered a flawless performance, winning from pole position and marking Ferrari's third victory in the last five races. His teammate Charles Leclerc added to Ferrari's triumph by finishing

third, securing an extra point for the fastest lap and propelling Ferrari to second place in the constructors' championship standings. Despite losing the lead to Verstappen on the first lap, Sainz quickly reclaimed it after the restart, breezing past his Red Bull rival into Turn One. Leclerc initially chased down his teammate but ultimately fell back, allowing Norris to gain ground in the closing laps. Leclerc ran wide on lap 62, and Norris seized the chance to secure a second-place finish. Ferrari's strong performance in Mexico has reignited their fight in the constructors' standings, placing them just 29 points behind McLaren and 25 ahead of Red Bull. The outcome reflected Ferrari's recent surge, with Sainz's win helping the team build on their newfound momentum. McLaren remains in the lead, but the narrowing gap has intensified a season already marked by high-stakes drama. Behind the frontrunners, Mercedes drivers Lewis Hamilton and George Russell engaged in a thrilling duel of their own. Russell initially overtook Hamilton on lap 14 but lost the position after pit stops, with Hamilton ultimately reclaiming fifth place in the closing laps. Meanwhile, Verstappen's penalties and lack of pace relegated him to a solitary sixth-place finish, and Red Bull's Sergio Perez had a race to forget, finishing last after a series of setbacks, including a false start and a collision with Liam Lawson. With Ferrari's resurgence and Norris cutting Verstappen's lead to just 47 points, the season heads into its final stretch with both driver and constructor championships still up for grabs.

## Arsenal, Liverpool draw 2-2, Man City takes Premier League top spot

London: Arsenal and Liverpool battled it out for a frustrating 2-2 draw at the Emirates Stadium on Sunday. The result sees Manchester City attain the top spot in the Premier League table. In what can only be described as a fiery encounter, Bukayo Saka, making his first appearance after suffering an injury during the October international break, did not take long to open the account on the night as he scored the opening goal nine minutes into the game. Saka was fed an over the top ball by Ben White which he cut back onto his left foot, completely bypassing Robertson in the process, and hit the back of the net.

The game was being played at a very high tempo and it did not take long for Liverpool to come back into the game. Trent Alexander Arnold's darting ball from the corner flag found Luis Diaz who nudged the ball onto a waiting Virgil Van Dijk who made no mistake in equalizing the game in the 18th minute. Arsenal responded with a set piece of their own in the 43rd minute when Declan Rice's pinpoint cross found Mikel Merino who headed the Gunners into the lead. It was the Spaniard's first goal for the club since making the switch to North London in August and helped Arsenal take the 2-1 lead into half-time.

Disaster struck for Mikel Arteta in the second-half as



Arsenal's injury list grew even further. Gabriel Magalhaes suffered a knee injury and despite an effort to stay in the game had to be subbed off which will be a cause for concern given his importance to the side. With the exit of Magalhaes, Liverpool grew into the match and started dominating possession. After repeated attempts, Arne Slot's side finally broke through in the 84th minute thanks to Salah's simple finish after the Egyptian was squared the ball by Darwin Nunez in a great position read outside the six-yard box. Despite a seven minute added period in regulation time, no winner availed and both teams had to settle for a point.

## Hockey India unveils 18-member women's team for 2024 Asian Champions Trophy

GNS News Agency, Oct 30

New Delhi: Hockey India on Monday announced the restructured 18-member Indian women's team squad for the eighth Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2024. The tournament will be held from November 11 to 20 at the newly-developed Rajgir Hockey Stadium in Bihar. As defending champions, India enter the competition with high expectations, having clinched the title at last year's edition in Ranchi. The team will face stiff competition from five other nations, including reigning Olympic silver medalists China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand in the battle for continental supremacy. The Indian team will be captained by Salima Tete while Navneet Kaur will serve as her deputy. The goalkeeping duties will be shared between experienced Savita and rising talent Bichu Devi Kharibam. The defense will be anchored by a solid line-up, featuring Uditia, Jyoti, Ishika Chaudhary, Sushila Chanu Pukhrabam, and Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke.

In the midfield, captain Salima Tete will be supported by Neha, Sharmila Devi, Manisha Chauhan, Sunelita Toppo, and Lalremsiami, all known for their dynamic play. The forward line-up boasts firepower with Navneet Kaur, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Preeti Dubey, and Beauty Dungdung leading the charge. Notably, Sushila and Beauty Dungdung make their return to the team after successfully completing their rehabilitation. Speaking on the team selection and their preparation for the tournament, dynamic midfielder Salima Tete said, "It's an incredible feeling to lead the team into another major tournament, especially as defending champions. We've trained rigorously and have a strong unit with both experienced play-



ers and young talent. Our goal is to defend our title and play with the same passion and determination we showed last year." Meanwhile, vice-captain Navneet Kaur said, "We are confident in our preparation and the chemistry we've built within the team. Playing in front of our home crowd is a huge boost, and we are ready to face tough competition from the best teams in Asia. Working alongside Salima has been great, and we are determined to make this tournament a memorable one."

India will open their Bihar Women's Asian Champions Trophy Rajgir 2024 campaign against Malaysia on November 11. India's squad for the Women's Asian Champions Trophy: Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam Defenders: Uditia, Jyoti, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Sushila Chanu Pukhrabam, Ishika Chaudhary Midfielders: Neha, Salima Tete, Sharmila Devi, Manisha Chauhan, Sunelita Toppo, Lalremsiami