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RR dist Gurukul students block highway

Students from a BC Gurukul school in Batasingaram, Ranga Reddy district, staged a protest on the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway, demanding improved conditions in their school. This resulted in traffic coming to halt for sometime. Students complained that despite drawing the attention of their teachers and management no one had responded. Frustrated by the lack of this they have been forced to sit on road. They sought immediate intervention of the government to resolve issues like inadequate food in hostels.

Congress badly exposed in front of people: PM Modi on Kharge's comments on poll promises

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday (November 1, 2024) lashed out at the Congress party and said that the grand old party is realising the hard way that making unreal promises is easy but implementing them properly is tough or impossible. Earlier, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge pulled up Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar over his statement that the State government would review the 'Shakti' guarantee. While interacting with the media, Mr. Kharge in a humorous but subtle manner said, "You have given some guarantees. After seeing them, I too said in Maharashtra that there are five guarantees in Karnataka. Now you (Shivakumar) said you will drop one guarantee." Mr. Modi took to X and said, "Campaign after campaign they promise things to the people, which they also know they will never be able to deliver. Now, they stand badly exposed in front of the people." "Check any State where the Congress has Governments today — Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana- the developmental trajectory and fiscal health is turning from bad to worse. Their so-called Guarantees lie unfulfilled, which is a terrible deceit upon the people of these States", Mr. Modi added.

ICRISAT Director General

Dr. Jacqueline d'Arros Hughes

appointed as WAF Secretary General

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Sangareddy: Outgoing Director General of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Dr Jacqueline d'Arros Hughes, is set to take up the role of Secretary General of the World Agriculture Forum (WAF) in mid-November 2024. Her career, marked by groundbreaking work in sustainable agriculture, equips her to steer the Forum towards its mission.

Dr Hughes has over 30 years of experience in agricultural research for development and is highly regarded for her leadership in tackling the pressing global challenges of food insecurity, sustainable agriculture, and rural development in some of the world's most vulnerable regions. As Director General of ICRISAT, Dr Hughes led the institute through the global pandemic, achieving significant milestones despite unprecedented challenges. Under her leadership, ICRISAT was honoured with the Africa Food Prize 2021.



Chandrababu launches free gas cylinder scheme, hands over cylinders to beneficiaries



GNS News Agency, Sept 21

In a significant step towards supporting the underprivileged, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu inaugurated the Free Gas Cylinder Scheme, part of the Deepam 2.0 initiative, at Idupuram in the Ichhapuram mandal of Srikakulam district. During the event, the Chief Minister presented a gas cylinder to a female beneficiary, Shanthamma, who expressed her gratitude as he personally lit the stove and brewed tea for her family. This gesture highlighted the government's commitment to improving the lives of women and families in need.

Subsequently, CM Naidu visited another beneficiary's home, where he handed over a pension for a single woman, reaffirming the government's dedication to social welfare. Moreover, he announced plans to assist the family in building a new house, instructing the District Collector to commence construction work the very next day. The inauguration event was attended by Union Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, along with State Ministers Nadendla Manohar, Achchennaaidu, Kondapalli Srinivas, and other dignitaries, all of whom pledged their support for the initiative aimed at enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Andhra Pradesh.

PM Modi continues Diwali tradition, celebrates with soldiers in Gujarat's Kutch

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Kutch: Continuing his tradition of spending Diwali with the armed forces and other security forces on the borders, Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated the festival of lights on Thursday with personnel from the Border Security Force (BSF), Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force in the Sir Creek area of Gujarat's Kutch. PM Modi brought festive cheer to the troops stationed at this remote and challenging border location, and was seen offering sweets to the personnel as he participated in the celebrations at Lakki Nala, near Sir Creek. This area, forming part of the creek channel of Sir Creek, marks the beginning of the creek border with Pakistan.

Known for its marshy terrain, the location poses



significant challenges for patrol operations and is under the vigilant watch of the BSF. Sir Creek, a 96-kilometer-long disputed border area between India and Pakistan, often becomes a focal point for infiltration attempts by drug smugglers and terrorists from Pakistan. However, BSF forces, including their elite Crocodile Commandos, have consistently

foiled these threats to safeguard Indian territory. During his visit, PM Modi lauded the BSF troopers for their unwavering dedication to keeping the nation's border safe and secure under challenging circumstances, sources revealed. The Prime Minister also engaged with the troops, enquiring about recent changes in their operational environment and

discussing potential adjustments to ease their duties, according to sources. PM Modi took a close look at the creek area, spending about an hour with the personnel before departing for Bhuj. This visit is a continuation of his annual tradition since 2014 - when he made a surprise visit to the Siachen Glacier - of celebrating Diwali with soldiers deployed at border posts, a gesture that highlights his appreciation for the armed forces' contribution to national security. Last year, the Prime Minister celebrated Diwali with soldiers in Lepcha, Himachal Pradesh, which is adjacent to the Chinese border. He termed the occasion of celebrating Diwali with the "brave security forces" in Lepcha as "an experience filled with deep emotion and pride".

'Not surprised EC gave itself clean chit': Congress after poll panel calls allegations on EVM batteries in Haryana 'baseless'

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Days after the Election Commission of India (ECI) termed the Congress's allegations over "irregularities during the counting of votes" in the Haryana Assembly elections as "baseless", the party on Friday said that it was not "surprised that the ECI has examined our complaints and given itself a clean chit". A Congress delegation had met the poll panel on October 9 to express concerns over vote counting in Haryana, alleging that EVMs that had 99 per cent battery during counting showed BJP wins, while those at 60-70 per cent charge registered Congress victories. On Friday, in a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, the Congress said "the answer given to the question of the machines' fluctuating batteries seeks to confuse rather than clarify". "At any rate, the ECI reply is nothing more than a standard and generic set of bullets on how the machines function rather than a specific clarification on



specific complaints. In short, while our complaints were specific, the ECI response is generic and focused on diminishing the complaints and the petitioners," the party said. It further added that "the tone and tenor of the ECI's response, the language used, and the allegations made against the INC compel us to submit the counter-response". The letter also objected to the ECI stating that "the exceptional nature of its indulgence" in engaging with the Congress on the issues raised. "We do not know who is advising or guiding the Hon'ble Commission, but it seems that the Commission has forgotten that it is a body set up under the Constitution

and charged with the discharge of certain crucial functions- both administrative and quasi-judicial," the Congress said. It also said that "the recent tone of the Commission's communications to the INC is a matter that we refuse to take lightly anymore". "Every reply from the ECI now seems to be laced with ad-hominem attacks on either individual leaders or the party itself," it said. Alleging that the ECI's reply is written "in a tone that is condescending", the party said, "If the current ECI's goal is to strip itself of the last vestiges of neutrality, then it is doing a remarkable job at creating that impression. Judges who write decisions do not attack or

demonise the party raising the issues. However, if the ECI persists then we shall have no choice but to seek legal recourse to expunge such remarks (a remedy with which the ECI is familiar since it unsuccessfully sought to do the same with a high court's unflattering but accurate observations after Covid)". The letter also said that the "pattern" sought to be identified by the ECI in its reply is "disingenuous". "The vast majority of issues raised relate to that short period from the announcement of the Model Code of Conduct to the conclusion of the elections i.e. the date of counting. The causes of action arise quickly, in literal minutes, and sometimes only become apparent after the results are declared and sometimes after the information from other booths can be compared," it read. The party also said that if the issues "are not redressed on the ground then they become redundant" and "the only remedy available is an election petition which is a lengthy process taking years to resolve".

We need to create system in which people's skills get their due: Rahul Gandhi celebrates Deepavali with artisans

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday (November 1, 2024) called for creating a system in which people's skills get their due and everyone's contribution is respected, as he shared a Deepavali video in which he interacts with paint job workers and potters. Posting the over nine-minute video, which also features him having a conversation with his nephew Raihan Rajiv Vadra, on YouTube, the former Congress chief said, "A memorable Diwali with special people—I celebrated this Diwali working with some painter brothers and making earthen diyas with a potter family." "I saw their work closely, tried to learn their skills and understood their difficulties and problems. They don't go home. We celebrate festivals happily and to earn some money, they forget their village, city, family," Mr. Gandhi said. "They make happiness from clay. While lighting up the festivals of others, are they able to live in light themselves? Those who build houses can hardly run their own houses!" he said.

"We have to create such a system — in which people's skills get their due and contribution is respected



— to makes everyone's Diwali a happy one. I hope this Diwali brings prosperity, progress and love in the lives of all of you," he said. In the video, Mr. Gandhi is seen working with labourers at the 10 Janpath residence and learning to paint walls along with his nephew. In the second part of the video, Mr. Gandhi goes to the house of a woman who makes earthen lamps with her five daughters. Mr. Gandhi tries his hand at pottery and makes 'diyas', which he says he would give to his mother and sister

597 persons arrested for playing illegal poker game, Rs. 11.47 lakh seized

Nizamabad: Police conducted coordinated raids on illegal poker game operations across the Nizamabad police commissionerate limits on Thursday night and arrested 597 individuals engaged in poker games. The police booked 116 cases against the arrested persons and seized Rs. 11.47 lakh cash from their possession.

According to reports, police teams raided several places under the commissionerate where poker games were being organised by gamblers. As many as 267 persons were arrested and Rs.5,03,570 was seized from them in the Nizamabad division.

Bibek Debroy, Chairman of PMs Economic Advisory Council, dies at 69



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Bibek Debroy, Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, passed away on Friday morning. He was 69 years old. A Padma Shri awardee, economist Debroy had earlier served as the Chancellor of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE) in Pune. "Dr. Bibek Debroy Ji was a towering scholar, well-versed in diverse domains like economics, history, culture, politics, spirituality and more. Through his works, he left an indelible mark on India's intellectual landscape. Beyond his contributions to public policy, he enjoyed working on our ancient texts, making them accessible to the youth," Modi said.

Debroy completed his early education at Ramakrishna Mission School, Narendrapur, and pursued higher studies at Presidency College, Kolkata; Delhi School of Economics; and Trinity College, Cambridge. He had worked at Presidency College, Kolkata; Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune; Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Delhi; and also as the Director of a Ministry of Finance/UNDP project on legal reforms. He was also a member of Niti Aayog up to June 5, 2019. Debroy authored and edited several books, papers and popular articles and has also been a consulting and contributing editor with several newspapers. Known for his far-reaching contributions to economic theory and policy, Dr Debroy was a respected figure in the fields of game theory, law reforms and Indology, as well as an advocate for poverty reduction and social equity. Debroy was also the Chairperson of Finance Ministry's 'Expert Committee for Infrastructure Classification and Financing Framework for Amrit Kaal', guiding strategic policy frameworks for India's long-term growth.

Revanth Reddy will be replaced after June next year, says Maheshwar Reddy



"My sources say the Congress high command has already started the exercise to choose a new Chief Minister for Telangana, said BJP LP leader A Maheshwar Reddy

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Hyderabad: Amid reports of growing differences between Chief Minister A Revant Reddy and senior party leaders over his style of functioning, BJP Legislative Party leader A Maheshwar Reddy on Friday claimed that Revant Reddy would be replaced by a new Chief Minister after June next year. Speaking to the media, Maheshwar Reddy claimed that the Congress high command was not so happy with the style of functioning of Revant Reddy and was planning to replace him. "My sources say the Congress high command has already started the exercise to choose a new CM. Revant will be replaced after June next year. Three senior ministers are in the race for the CM post," he claimed. Even though Revant went to Delhi seven times, he was not given an appointment by Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and even his sister and senior Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi did not meet him during his visit to Wayanad, this itself was an indication that the party was not happy with him, he said, adding that a large number of Congress leaders had lodged a complaint against Revant Reddy over his habit of taking unilateral decisions. Congress high command was not happy with the Chief Minister on the issue of demolitions taken up by the Hyderabad Disaster Response & Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) and Musi beautification project and that the senior Congress leaders have sent a report on the issue to the central leadership, he said, adding that Congress senior leaders have formed a group to overthrow Revant Reddy.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Senior citizens' care

THE recent expansion of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) to provide health coverage to citizens aged 70 and above is a significant move in India's public health landscape. However, the rollout on public health has sparked a public spat between the Centre and Opposition-led states, particularly Delhi and West Bengal. PM Narendra Modi has claimed that these state governments have opted out of the scheme due to "political interests".

This tension raises a pressing question: should public health, especially for vulnerable senior citizens, be subject to political manoeuvring? Ayushman Bharat offers an annual coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family. It is a boon for many elderly individuals whose healthcare needs are often financially crippling. However, notably, this welfare measure differs from the ones prevailing in Western countries. Out-of-pocket expenses in India remain quite high. The scheme's curative approach lags behind the preventive care systems seen in the west, where comprehensive, tax-funded programmes prioritise proactive health interventions.

In contrast, Delhi's health model has garnered international praise for its accessibility and preventive care focus. However, by refusing Ayushman Bharat, states like Delhi may deny their elderly residents an additional safety net. For senior citizens facing health crises, any opportunity for comprehensive health coverage can be life-changing. The political impasse only undermines their wellbeing. Healthcare for seniors must transcend the political divide. A pragmatic approach could integrate elements from both the Delhi and Ayushman Bharat models, ensuring efficient, accountable and accessible healthcare across states. A national framework that reflects a commitment to all citizens, regardless of state politics, is needed.

Karnataka engineering student falls into gorge while taking selfies, rescued after 20 hours



Around 2.30 pm, Hamsa and her friend Keerthana went to the lake bed to take selfies. According to the police, Hamsa accidentally slipped away and was swept away by the strong current, but she got trapped in a rocky gorge.

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

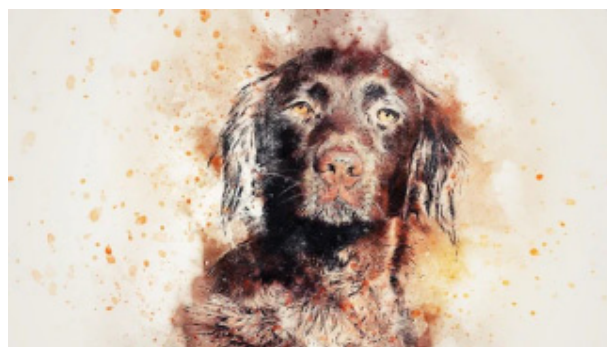
Karnataka eng student S Hamsa Gowda, a third-semester chemical engineering student at Siddaganga Institute of Technology, Tumakuru, visited the scenic Mydala Lake channel near the popular Jain pilgrimage centre Mandaragiri Hill with her friend Keerthana.

A 19-year-old engineering student was rescued in Karnataka on Monday after being trapped in a narrow, water-filled crevice for 20 hours. Fire and rescue personnel saved the woman who had slipped into the rocky gorge while taking selfies and spent an entire night in waist-deep water. The incident took place in Maidala lake near Mandaragiri Hill in the Tumakuru district, 63 km away from Bengaluru. S Hamsa Gowda, a third-semester chemical engineering student at Siddaganga Institute of Technology, Tumakuru, visited the scenic Mydala Lake channel near the popular Jain pilgrimage centre Mandaragiri Hill with her friend Keerthana. Around 2.30 pm, Hamsa and her friend Keerthana went to the lake bed to take selfies. According to the police, Hamsa accidentally slipped away and was swept away by the strong current, but she got trapped in a rocky gorge. Keerthana called the police control room. Initially, a six-member team from the fire and emergency services, along with local police, arrived at the scene by 3 pm. Despite their efforts, darkness forced them to pause the search at 8.30 pm, though they returned the next morning.

Around Monday noon, the search team discovered a dark, cave-like crevice about 25 feet from where Hamsa had initially slipped. The cavity, approximately eight feet long and six feet high, was partially filled with water, where Hamsa was found standing in waist-deep water. Hamsa was rescued by Monday afternoon and shifted to a nearby hospital. Speaking to the media from the hospital where she was admitted, she said, "I reached a dark spot and could only hear the rushing water. I realised I had not drifted far from where I fell but couldn't see or call for help." As she stood there, she conserved her energy by leaning against the rocky wall. "I stayed awake, hoping someone would find me."

As the rescue personnel came to know that there was a chance of her being alive, the team swelled to 60 by Monday morning. The teams tried to divert the water by keeping sandbags near the falls. This allowed firemen to navigate the rocky terrain and search further downstream. Firemen Yogesh, Pradeep, Manjunath, and Annappa carefully manoeuvred through slippery rocks and thick shrubs until they entered what appeared to be a natural cave formation. As the rescue personnel shouted, Hamsa responded in a low voice, which confirmed that she was alive. Later, the rescue team managed to hold her hand and bring her out of the gorge, said a police officer. K V Ashok, Tumakuru district SP, said when he visited the spot on Sunday, he was not confident that the woman would come alive because the terrain was challenging. "However, the rescue team risked their lives and managed to enter. I should also appreciate the bravery of the girl who stayed in the gorge with waist-deep water all through the night. It was a team effort. We will also ask the beat police to look into such sensitive places which can pose a danger to the public," he said.

Dog kept in Noida creche dies, body found 5.1 km away from centre, probe launched after owner alleges foulplay



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

On October 4, Nivedita Ghosh, a resident of Mayur Vihar Extension in Delhi, left her five-year-old Spaniel, Milo, at a dog creche in Noida, Paws Point. Seventeen days later, when Ghosh returned from vacation, she was informed that Milo had run away while being taken for grooming. On Thursday, October 24, Noida Police registered an FIR against the owner of Paws Point, Swati Sharma, after Milo's body was found 5.1 km from the centre. The FIR was filed under relevant sections of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act at the Sector 113 police station. Upon their return from vacation, the family

searched for Milo and found CCTV footage purportedly showing a man riding a motorcycle and a 14-year-old boy pulling the dog by its leash while riding pillion. The footage also showed the dog being thrashed. According to the complaint, both the man and the minor boy work at Paws Point. "Initially, the police sided with those involved and were trying to rush the case," Ghosh alleged. Saurav Sharma, the investigating officer on the case, told The Indian Express that the investigation is ongoing. "We have seized the bike of a man involved in this case and have issued him a challan. As we proceed with the investigation, we will add the names of those involved in the dog's death," he said. In her FIR, Ghosh alleged that the creche staff mistreated Milo and misled her about his whereabouts. "My dog suffered severe abuse, was beaten on the head and spine, and was also planned to be sold to another party," Ghosh claimed. Ghosh's daughter Manali said it wasn't the first time they had left Milo at Paws Point. "The centre charges Rs 600 per day. They killed my dog by dragging him by the leash. Later, we found him dead," she said. Meanwhile, Swati Sharma denied the allegations, stating that Milo ran away from a car while being taken for grooming. "I was driving with an assistant who works with me. I forgot to activate the child lock, and Milo escaped and met with an accident," Sharma explained.

As leaders flock to Antarwali-Saraati, Manoj Jarange-Patil holds his cards close: 'Want Marathas, Muslims, Dalits to come together'



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange-Patil's efforts to get reservation for his community may not have worked out as he planned but ahead of the Assembly elections in Maharashtra, he is now eyeing the Muslim and Dalit communities too. "I want Marathas, Muslims and Dalits to come together. I am making all efforts to unite all the communities so that we can get maximum MLAs elected and get our demands addressed," Jarange-Patil said in Antarwali-Saraati village in Jalna district, adding that he would hold a meeting with gurus and leaders of both communities before picking the candidates he would support. "We were supposed to announce the names of candidates. However, we have decided to hold a meeting with religious gurus and top leaders of Muslim and Dalit communities on October 31 and after that, we will take a decision," Jarange-Patil, who has been besieged by aspirants and supporters from across the state since early Tuesday morning, said.

Jarange-Patil said he was supposed to announce the names of candidates he would support on Wednesday. "However, we had to postpone the decision as the religious gurus and leaders could not make it to Antarwali-Saraati due to a glitch in their helicopter. Now the meeting has been scheduled for October 31," he said, adding in the same breath that he might not declare the names even on Thursday. "That will be done before November 4," he said. Asked about the identities of the leaders, Jarange-Patil refused to divulge their names. Emphasising that a change can only be brought about when different communities come together, Jarange-Patil said, "When different communities like Dalits and Muslims come to-

gether, it becomes a huge force. They have the power to bring in the change, they will uplift the lives of the poor because they know what poverty is and how it affects individuals."

Those who met Jarange-Patil on Tuesday were told that he has neither declared support for any candidate nor the ruling Mahayuti or Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi. Earlier, at a press interaction at Antarwali-Saraati, Jarange-Patil had hit out at Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis alleging he played a key role in depriving the Maratha community of the quota benefit. On Tuesday, it was no different. "Fadnavis never wanted to give reservation to the Maratha community. He tried to destroy the lives of the children of the Maratha community. He kept filing cases against our youth and they are finding it difficult to get jobs now," he said. Asked if Fadnavis had ever invited him for talks, Jarange-Patil said, "Who wants to go? Fadnavis chapter is closed for me..." "If they support, we will win": Jarange-Patil back in demand

In the last two weeks, Antarwali-Saraati has come to life again. There is a constant surge of visitors, especially ministers, leaders and aspirants from all major political parties. Meanwhile, Jarange-Patil is holed up in a bungalow deep inside the village. The bungalow belongs to the village sarpanch and Jarange-Patil decides whom to meet. His close associates said the activist has told aspirants to file nominations. "I will decide who will be the candidate the Maratha community would declare (support for)," he said. A group supporting the candidature of Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Ajit Magar travelled from Hingoli to seek Jarange-Patil's support. "We wanted to field our candidate from the Kalamnuri seat in Hingoli district. He finished the runners-up in the last election. In the current survey, his name was on top but he has not got a Sena ticket. That is why we pleaded with Jarange-Patil to support our candidate," Govind Patil, a voter from Kalamnuri, said. Mehraj Qureshi, another resident of Hingoli, said, "If the Maratha community extends support to our candidate, we are confident he will win. The Jarange-Patil factor matters a lot in our area... After meeting him, we hope he will extend his support to our candidate," Qureshi said. Amar Kale, a local villager, said, "In the last few days, minister Uday Samant, leaders Sanjay Shirsat and Intiaz Jaleel and even Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati met him." Jarange-Patil's team claimed the leaders were desperate to meet him. "Some have met him at midnight, some early morning... Some sit in the farm till he comes out of his room," said Vijay Tarak, a close associate. Jarange-Patil had decided to field 38 candidates in constituencies where the Maratha community has an overwhelming presence. He has also said that the Maratha community would support those who support their demand for reservation.

Bangladeshi man illegally staying in Bengaluru for last 12 years arrested after his first wife tips off police



The arrested has been identified as Ramzan Sheikh, alias Mohammed Ramzan Sheikh, a native of Narail in the Khulna division of southwestern Bangladesh. The police said he had been in Bengaluru since 2012 and was living in Chikka Banahalli.

GNS News Agency, Nov 1 The Bengaluru police on Monday said they arrested a 38-year-old Bangladeshi national staying illegally in the city for the last 12 years following a tip-off by his first wife. The arrested has been identified as Ramzan Sheikh, alias Mohammed Ramzan Sheikh, a native of Narail in the Khulna division of

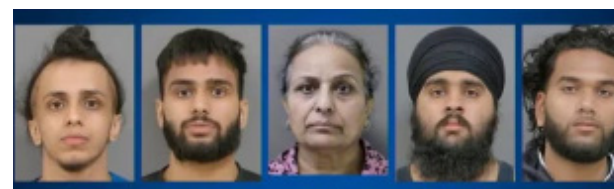
southwestern Bangladesh. The police said he had been in Bengaluru since 2012 and was living in Chikka Banahalli. They said he was involved in a scrap business and had a fake Aadhaar, voter ID, and Indian passport.

The police said he even had a birth certificate showing that he was born in West Bengal. He had

also obtained a driving licence from KR Puram RTO in Bengaluru. According to the police, Sheikh had his first marriage in Bangladesh but married again in Bengaluru and was living with his second wife and children. They said he used to visit Bangladesh using his Indian passport. In January 2023, he was arrested af-

ter one of his employees, Rasul Hawaldar, died by suicide. Sheikh was accused of abetment to suicide as there were allegations of torture and non-payment of salary. He was released on bail. His first wife, Nurjahan Begum, who lived in Bangladesh, learned through acquaintances that Sheikh was in Bengaluru and had been arrested. In February 2023, she travelled to India on a medical visa and met with the Whitefield division police to present documents proving that Sheikh was born in Bangladesh and a citizen of that country. However, after being released from prison on bail, Sheikh was able to deceive the police. Between February 2023 and September of this year, Sheikh travelled to Bangladesh twice using the Indian passport. The Internal Security Division (ISD), monitoring his movements, learned that he had returned to the city. Sheikh was subsequently arrested and taken into police custody for three days.

Punjabi woman in Brampton, two sons among five charged in major gun, drug bust



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Brampton According to police, the probe—dubbed Project Sledgehammer—started after a traffic stop led to the arrest of a 20-year-old man on firearm-related charges. A 61-year-old Brampton woman and her two sons are among five individuals now facing multiple charges following a gun and drug trafficking investigation led by Peel Regional Police. According to police, the probe—dubbed Project Sledgehammer—started after a traffic stop led to the arrest of a 20-year-old man on firearm-related charges. Following his release with an ankle monitor, detectives deepened their investigation, uncovering connections between the initial suspect and others allegedly involved in drug and weapons trafficking. In September 2024, police conducted searches at three homes in Brampton, one in Waterloo, and a storage facility in Caledon. Officers reportedly seized 11 firearms, over 900 rounds of ammunition, and illegal drugs valued at \$20,000, including cocaine and opium. The five accused include Brampton residents Narinder Nagra, 61, and her sons, Navdeep, 20, and Ravneet Nagra, 22, along with Ranveer Araich, 20, and Pavneet Nahal, 21. Together, they face more than 150 charges. Deputy Chief Nick Milinovich highlighted the rise in gun-related incidents, noting Peel police have seized 157 illegal firearms this year—an 87 per cent increase compared to last year. Milinovich called the rise in gun violence in Peel and the Greater Toronto Area a "situation unlike any we ever have seen," with 119 shootings in Peel in the first nine months of 2024, marking an 80 per cent increase over the same period in 2023.

Bank heist in Karnataka's Davanagere: Gang steals jewellery worth Rs 13 crore from SBI locker



GNS News Agency, Sept 21

The incident came to light on Monday morning when the bank employees opened the premises. The incident came to light on Monday morning when the bank employees opened the premises. A gang of thieves broke into a State Bank of India branch in Karnataka's Davanagere district and made away with gold jewelry worth Rs 12.95 crore, said the police.

The theft took place in Nyamathi town, 325 km away from Bengaluru. The incident came to light on Monday morning when the bank employees opened the premises. The police said the jewellery kept in lockers was stolen, and they suspect it might have been done on the night of either October 25 or 26, as the bank was closed those days. A police officer reported that the thieves entered the bank through a window on the left side. "They used gas cutters to break into three locker doors but were only able to successfully open one. The thieves also removed the CCTV cameras and the digital video recorder. The other two lockers contained Rs 30 lakh in cash and some jewellery. We suspect that either the gas ran out or they ran out of time," the officer said. East Range DIG B Ramesh visited the spot. Davanagere SP Uma Prashanth said they formed five teams, including five inspectors and 10 sub-inspectors. "There was also a security lapse on the bank's part, as the alarm did not go off. To mislead the sniffer dogs, the thieves scattered chilli powder throughout the bank. It appears that the thieves are professionals, and we are confident that we will catch them soon," she said. After the news broke, many customers who had pledged gold ornaments as collateral for loans gathered in front of the bank, expressing their anxiety.

Delhi High Court seeks Govt response to BJP MLAs' plea for tabling 12 CAG reports

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought responses from the Delhi Government and the Assembly Speaker to a petition filed by Vijender Gupta, leader of the Opposition, and six other BJP MLAs seeking the tabling of 12 reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General on "crucial aspects relating to governance".

Besides Gupta, the petitioners—Mohan Singh Bisht, Om Prakash Sharma, Ajay Kumar Mahawar, Abhay Verma, Anil Bajpai and Jitender Mahajan—have sought the court's directions to the Delhi Government's finance department to send a proposal to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Saxena to exercise "his duties under Article 151(2) of the Constitution of India, 1950, Regulation 210(1) of the Regulations on Audit and Accounts, 2007, and Section 48 of the Government of National Capital Territory Act, 1991," so that the CAG reports can be tabled in the Assembly. The MLAs have submitted in their petition that the CAG reports are related to "some of the most critical issues including state finances, pollution mitigation regulation and supply of liquor, appropriation accounts regarding public sector units and a performance audit on children in need of care and protection, as per the media reports".

School topper clings to life after fire at Hyderabad home, grandparents who raised her no more



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

A 15-year-old is battling for her life in Hyderabad, unaware that the grandparents, who raised her in the absence of her parents, died in a fire that engulfed their home in Yakutpura area on Monday night. Sruti Gupta, who topped her school in SSC (Secondary School Certificate) and is now in the first year of Intermediate, is in the ICU after fire and rescue personnel found her unconscious in her room on the first floor of their house.

"I think she was initially unaware of the fire on the ground floor. She inhaled the thick black smoke and fell unconscious. Her phone was in her hand and she was probably trying to call someone," said fire officer M Shaikat. Officials at Yashoda Hospital, where she is ad-

mitted, said she is in a critical condition, and is under observation in the ICU as her lungs are filled with smoke and soot.

Her aunt Gayatri Shivaram told The Indian Express, "Her life turned upside down when she lost her mother as a child. Her father migrated to South Africa several years ago and is not in touch, and her paternal grandparents have been raising her. They were the ones who took care of her all these years, like her own parents, and she is very attached to them. She will be devastated when she comes to know they are no more." Fire officials are still investigating how the fire started. Late Monday evening, they said, the blaze started in the kitchen and the fridge caught fire, before an LPG blast kept there exploded. Officials said that firecrackers the family had bought for Diwali also caught fire, which led to the black smoke. While Mohal Lal Gupta, 58, and his wife Usha Gupta, 55, could not escape, another family living in a separate portion of the two-storey house escaped unharmed. "The fire was not as deadly as the thick smoke that engulfed their home. The firecrackers were still going off when fire officers and I reached. The grandparents died of smoke inhalation," said Yakutpura MLA Jaffar Hussain Meraj. Meraj and others are demanding that the government take care of the medical treatment expenses of Sruti, provide ex-gratia to her, and arrange for her free education.

P P Divya, CPI(M) leader in dock for suicide of ADM, surrenders before Kerala police

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

CPI(M) leader and Kannur district panchayat president P P Divya made comments critical of additional district magistrate Naveen Babu at a public function in Kerala. CPI(M) leader and Kannur district panchayat president P P Divya made comments critical of additional district magistrate Naveen Babu at a public function. Hours after a district court rejected her anticipatory bail application in the case of allegedly abetting the suicide of the Kannur additional district magistrate, CPI(M) leader P P Divya surrendered before police ADM Naveen Babu was found hanging at his official residence on October 15. The previous day, Divya, then president of the Kannur district panchayat, had publicly criticised Babu at his farewell function, allegedly suggesting that he was corrupt.

The ADM's suicide had triggered outrage in Kerala, forcing the CPI(M) to remove Divya from the post of the district panchayat president. Two days after the incident, police had registered a case against Divya, an emerging woman leader in the CPI(M), on charges of abetment. She had said she would prove her innocence in the case. Since the incident, she was away from the public eye, which led to allegations that the party was shielding Divya, a member of the CPI(M) Kannur district committee. The opposition Congress and BJP had been protesting in Kannur, mounting pressure on the government to arrest her. The issue snowballed into an embarrassing situation for ruling CPI(M) at a time by-elections to two assembly seats and the Lok Sabha seat of Wayanad are being held next month. Initially, the CPI(M)'s Kannur dis-



trict leadership tried to defend Divya, saying that what she said at the send-off meeting was "well-intentioned". However, after the anticipatory bail plea was rejected, the issue once again came to the front burner of political debates, forcing the party to direct her to surrender before the police. Besides, CPI(M) district leadership in Babu's home district of Pathanamthitta stood with the deceased bureaucrat's family and sought to distance themselves from the approach of the party in Kannur. Babu was scheduled to assume office as the Additional District Magistrate in Pathanamthitta district on October 15, and was seven months from retirement. On October 14, Divya had turned up for his farewell meeting in Kannur uninvited and criticised him with regard to granting a no-objection certificate for a fuel outlet application. She then walked out of the event midway.

Coldplay and Diljit Dosanjh concerts: Amid ticket scalping, challenges and the path forward in India

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Remember those classic Bollywood films from the 1980s and 90s, where a character whispers, "Das ka bees, das ka bees," while flashing a pocketful of tickets? That playful portrayal of ticket scalping as a quick money-making scheme has become a familiar trope. But the reality of scalping today is far from charming — it's a predatory practice that goes unnoticed unless someone falls prey to it. What began as a survival instinct — hoarding — has evolved into a tool for profit. Now, instead of essentials, people hoard access. The frenzy is evident when tickets for events like Diljit Dosanjh's or Coldplay's concerts, sell out within minutes — only to reappear online at exorbitant prices.

From IPL matches to music festivals, online ticket scalping has become a widespread phenomenon. While ticketing platforms and limited regulations attempt to curb the practice, the absence of stringent government intervention has allowed it to flourish unchecked.

Historically, ticket scalping in India was synonymous with black marketing. Outside cinema halls, vendors ran the "Dus-Ka-Bees" scheme, exploiting demand for blockbuster films. Over time, the practice has evolved into a more sophisticated operation, migrating online. Scalpers now use bots and automated tools to hoard tickets in bulk, leaving ordinary consumers struggling to secure access to popular events. In some cases, event organisers themselves manipulate supply by withholding a portion of tickets from initial sales. Using bots and auto-refreshers, these tickets are quickly resold through secondary platforms at inflated prices, creating artificial scarcity.

A notable example is the case of Mandeep Singh v. State of Chandigarh (2015), where a seller was arrested for reselling World Cup match tickets on eBay and charged under Section 66A of the Information Technology Act and Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for fraud. The petitioner sought the quashing of the FIR, arguing that Section 66A had been struck down by the Supreme Court in Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015), and that no case under Section 420 was made out since there was no intent to cheat.

The Court acknowledged that Section 66A had indeed been struck down and noted that no offence under Section 420 IPC was established, as there was no inducement or deceit involved — the petitioner had openly disclosed the higher price of the tickets, and there was no legal prohibition against reselling them. The Court held that continuing the proceedings would amount to an abuse of the process of law and affirmed that, "In India, there is no legal restriction against reselling match tickets."

Loopholes in regulation and consumer protection. Although Rule 4(11) of the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020, prohibits e-commerce platforms from manipulating prices to gain unreasonable profits, its enforcement remains weak. In the case of Diljit Dosanjh's Dil-Luminati Tour concert, a legal notice was filed alleging malpractice in the sale of tickets. It was claimed that the organisers opened ticket sales earlier than advertised, resulting in immediate sellouts. This sud-

den availability and ticket unavailability were interpreted as manipulative tactics to inflate demand and prices, potentially constituting an unfair trade practice under the Consumer Protection Act. "Since tax liability can only be imposed on sellers, and most ticket-selling websites are not registered in India, they evade taxes. Events utilising government resources necessitate a legal framework to secure tax benefits and protect consumer rights," says Ayush Kaushik, an Advocate at the Supreme Court of India. In a complaint filed by lawyer Amit Vyas regarding ticketing practices for the upcoming Coldplay concert in Mumbai, it was alleged that BookMyShow engaged in unethical practices that obstructed genuine fans from purchasing tickets. The complaint accused the platform of allowing bots to purchase tickets, which then appeared on resale platforms at exorbitant prices, suggesting possible collusion between BookMyShow and third-party resellers. The complaint cited several sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, that could be applicable to the alleged scalping activities. These include:

Section 111(2): Organised Crime — If scalping is organised to manipulate ticket prices, it could be viewed as an economic offence under organised crime, especially if coercion or fraud is involved. Section 318(4): Cheating — If consumers are deceived into overpaying due to dishonest practices, this could be categorised as cheating. Section 316(2): Criminal Breach of Trust — If a ticketing platform misuses tickets for resale at inflated prices, it could be seen as a breach of trust. Section 61(2): Criminal Conspiracy — If multiple parties conspire to manipulate ticket availability through illegal means, this could be considered a criminal conspiracy. India's ticket scalping issue is addressed through laws like the Consumer Protection Act, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and state-specific legislation. For instance, Rajasthan Entertainment and Advertisements Act (1957) and Maharashtra Entertainment Duty Act (1923) prohibit ticket resale for profit and above face value, respectively. Section 3 of the Competition Act, 2002, prohibits anti-competitive agreements and practices. While ticket scalping could theoretically involve collusive behaviour aimed at manipulating market supply and pricing, proving such informal arrangements is inherently difficult. Ticket scalping typically involves individual transactions that are not easily categorised as collusive behaviour, hindering effective legal action. Furthermore, the Act does not specifically target the issue of scalping, limiting its applicability in consumer protection contexts.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 includes provisions against unfair trade practices. According to Section 2(47) of the Act, an "unfair trade practice" refers to any method adopted to promote the sale, use, or supply of goods or services that involves deceitful, false, or misleading representations or actions. These practices can include: Misleading the public about the price of goods or services, implying they are sold at a regular rate when they are not. Hoarding or destruction of goods, or refusal to sell goods or provide services in a manner that raises the cost of goods or services (as outlined in Section 2(47)(v)).

YouTube video claims IPS officer caught ex-CM Uma Bharti taking bribe; case registered



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

The 40-second video has the narrator claiming that the IPS officer went to Bharti's residence disguised as a maid and arrested her while she received kickbacks from a contractor, the FIR stated. The 40-second video has the narrator claiming that the IPS officer went to Bharti's residence disguised as a maid and arrested her while she received kickbacks from a contractor, the FIR stated. (X/

@umasribharti) Police have registered a case after a video was uploaded on YouTube claiming that an IPS officer in disguise caught former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Uma Bharti while taking a bribe, an official said on Tuesday. Based on a complaint by Bharti's personal secretary, the Bhopal police's crime branch registered a case against the unidentified person who uploaded the video on YouTube, assistant sub-inspector Lal Bahadur Singh said. According to the first information report, the video showed pictures of Bharati and Karnataka cadre IPS officer Roopa Divakar Moudgil with a misleading, baseless and objectionable commentary in a male voice. The 40-second video has the narrator claiming that the IPS officer went to Bharti's residence disguised as a maid and arrested her while she received kickbacks from a contractor, the FIR stated. The complainant stated that this was a deliberate effort to malign the senior BJP leader's image. The official said a case has been registered under sections 336 (4) (forging false documents or false electronic records causing damage or injury) and 356 (2) (defamation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Phantom, 4-year-old Army dog, dies in line of duty during Jammu encounter

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Phantom, 4-year-old Army dog, dies in line of duty during Jammu encounter. Phantom, who was commissioned into the Army in August 2022, is the second dog to die in the line of duty during an encounter with militants since last year. Phantom, a four-year-old male Belgian Malinois, Monday made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty during an encounter that broke out between troops and militants in Jammu's Khour area near the Line of Control. "As our troops were closing in on the trapped terrorists, Phantom drew enemy fire, sustaining fatal injuries," said White Knight Corps on its X handle.

"We salute the supreme sacrifice of our true hero — a valiant Indian Army dog, Phantom. His courage, loyalty, and dedication will never be forgotten," it posted, adding that "in the ongoing operation, one terrorist has been neutralised and warlike stores have been recovered thus far". The encounter broke out on Monday morning after some militants dressed in military fatigues fired at a military ambulance. Phantom, who was commissioned into the Army in August 2022, is the second dog to die in the



line of duty during an encounter with militants last year. In September 2023, six-year-old Kent, a female Labrador, laid down its life while shielding its handler during an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district. Kent, a canine from the 21 Army Dog Unit, was leading a group of soldiers on the trail of fleeing terrorists when it came under heavy fire and succumbed at the scene.

2 months after stock trading scam opened can of worms in Assam, 'mastermind' arrested from Goa

GNS News Agency, Sept 21

multi-crore stock trading scam, stock trading scam, deepankar barman, police investigation, trading scam mastermind arrested, Goa, Assam, Indian express news. Thirty-year-old Deepankar Barman's disappearance had come to light on August 21 this year, leading to panic and outrage among his clients. Over two months after the alleged mastermind of a multi-crore stock trading scam fled Guwahati, leaving scores of investors in the lurch, he was found and arrested from a homestay in Goa on Sunday evening.

Thirty-year-old Deepankar Barman's disappearance had come to light on August 21 this year, leading to panic and outrage among his clients. According to the police, Barman had claimed to be the director of a company called DB Stock Broking, and had promised clients high returns on investments — as much as 100% yearly. His disappearance and the subsequent protests and police complaints by investors had led to alarm bells among the police. In the next two weeks, a crackdown was launched, and the Assam police arrested 59 people in 28 different cases. Earlier this month, the CBI began an investigation into 41 such trading scam cases from the state.

However, Barman, whose case had led the dominoes to start falling, remained untraceable. On Sunday evening, he was arrested by a Guwahati police team with the assistance of the Crime Branch of Goa police from a homestay in Pernem district. Police also seized Rs 27 lakh in cash from his room, where he was staying alone. According to Guwahati Police Commissioner Diganta Barah, Barman fled Assam on August 18, when some local media outlets began reporting on alleged ir-



regularities in his business. "We did not know where he went, but our team ran a technical analysis, which helped us trace his location to Goa. A team from the Guwahati police stayed there for two weeks and looked for him. He had stopped using social media and old contact numbers since August 21. He also changed hotels, resorts and guesthouses frequently," said Barah. Police learnt about his current whereabouts on Saturday, following which a team from Guwahati left for Goa on Sunday morning. "Since the initial case had been transferred to the CBI, we registered a new case in Palitan Bazaar police station and sent this team. He was found in a homestay in an isolated area, far from the town. When we searched the room, we found Rs 27 lakh in his bag apart from his passport and gold jewellery. He was presented in Pernem court today for transit remand and we are going through the necessary formalities to bring him back to Assam," Barah said.

'UT status shield only temporary': Omar Abdullah warns J&K bureaucrats after getting 'assurances from highest level'

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said Monday that he had got assurances from the highest level that the Union Territory status of J&K is a "temporary phase". Addressing administrative secretaries in Srinagar, he referred to an "integrity pledge" that he administered to them and warned that if "anybody thinks that somehow the fact that we are a UT will shield you from the consequences of practices that go against the pledge, please remember the shield may last temporarily, but it is only temporary".

He also warned them against trying to "exploit" the hybrid system of governance in the UT. "I am acutely aware that we have unfortunately at this moment a rather hybrid system of governance. And I have a feeling, I am going to say it regardless of the consequences, some may feel they can exploit the system to their advantage, that they can find loopholes within this system that we have in Jammu and Kashmir at this moment," Omar said. He was referring to the governance model in J&K where Lt Governor Manoj Sinha has a say in key administrative issues and the administrative secretaries will be working under him. "But please rest assured that this is very much a temporary phase," Omar told the bureaucrats. Regarding the meetings he held in Delhi, he said: "I have just come back from very successful meetings in Delhi. I have received assurance at the highest level that their commitments made to Jammu and Kashmir, particularly with regard to the governance, will change."



"Once full statehood is restored to Jammu and Kashmir, there will be no loophole to be exploited and no advantage to be taken by playing one against the other. So please keep this in mind as we conduct ourselves," the CM told the bureaucrats. On October 16, the J&K Cabinet had passed a resolution seeking restoration of statehood to J&K "in its original form". Three days later, the Cabinet's resolution received the nod from L-G Sinha. A government statement issued Saturday said: "The restoration of statehood will be a beginning of a healing process, reclaiming the constitutional rights and protecting the identity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir." The Cabinet authorised the Chief Minister to take up the matter with the Prime Minister and the Centre for restoration of statehood. After this, Omar travelled to New Delhi and on Thursday, where he met PM Narendra Modi. His address to the bureaucrats came on his return to Srinagar.

ED conducts searches a 2nd time in Gujarat GST fraud case, accuses Mahesh Langa of 'controlling benami firm' DA Enterprises



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

The Ahmedabad Zonal Office of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted a second set of search operations at seven premises across Ahmedabad, Surat, and Bhavnagar districts of Gujarat on Sunday, in connection with a suspected nationwide Goods and Services Tax (GST) scam expected to reveal crores of rupees of losses caused to the government exchequer. During the search operations, "incriminating documents" were recovered and seized, said a statement from the agency on Monday. It alleged that based on their investigations, Mahesh Langa, senior assistant editor of The Hindu, was "controlling" a firm called M/s DA Enterprises, "from whose premises a large quantum of unaccounted cash was seized by the police authorities, and it is further gathered that various other benami transactions are suspected to have happened with shell companies."

The ED's case of money laundering against M/s

Dhruvi Enterprises & others was filed on the basis of an FIR filed by the Ahmedabad Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) of Gujarat Police, which, in turn, had been come after the receipt of a complaint from the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) against 220 shell entities of a group of "organised criminals". In the FIR, the complaint reads that M/s Dhruvi Enterprises was allegedly created based on "fake documents" to obtain GST registration. Later, the entity "raised invoices in the name of 12 different entities", including M/s DA Enterprises, who allegedly availed fraudulent Input Tax Credit (ITC) from the government's GST department. The ED statement on Monday further said, "During investigations, inquiries were made from statutory authorities, and various statements were recorded under the PMLA, which could not establish the genuineness of these transactions. Accordingly, searches were conducted at the locations of such persons/entities, to unearth (the) larger conspiracy involved in the same."

The ED had previously, on October 17, conducted their first set of searches in the case at 23 locations at Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar, Junagadh, Veraval, Rajkot, Surat, and Kodinar, including the registered addresses of the entities "availing ITC" in this case. This statement from the ED comes just a day after several media associations issued statements calling for a "fair investigation" into cases against Mahesh Langa. Notably, apart from this case, Langa is also named as an accused in an FIR filed by Gandhinagar Police regarding the theft and possession of confidential documents of the Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB).

Pune advocates send legal notice to EC, seek clarification on quota promises ahead of Maharashtra polls



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Ahmedabad, Ahmedabadnews, Gujarat, Gujarat news, Gujarat High Court, Surat gas leak, Indian Express, India news, current affairs, Indian Express News Service, Express News Service, Express News, Indian Express India NewsThe advocates said they expect a prompt response on whether discussing or promising reservations based on religion and caste during the campaign is permissible. (Representational image)Four Pune-based advocates have requested an urgent clarification from the State Election Commission (SEC) on whether promising specific reservations—such as expanding Muslim reservations, increasing OBC reservations, or granting Dhangar and Maratha reservations—could be deemed appeasement based on caste or religion, thus constituting

a violation of the Model Code of Conduct.

In a legal notice, advocates Asim Sarode, Shriya Awale, Balkrishna Nidhalkar, and Ramesh Taru wrote, "The Maharashtra State Assembly Elections 2024 have recently been announced. Campaigning by political parties and candidates has begun, and all are required to adhere to the Model Code of Conduct to ensure a free and fair election process." Sarode explained that the legal notice aims to clarify whether any reservation promises made based on caste, religion, or specific communities during the campaign, for the purpose of vote-garnishing, would constitute appeasement. He questioned, "Would such promises amount to a breach of the Model Code of Conduct applicable in the 2024 Maharashtra State Assembly Election, and could they be considered an offense under any other law?" Sarode further emphasized the need for the SEC to provide clarity through a press conference, adding, "It is crucial to know whether political party leaders are allowed, in public speeches during campaigns, to discuss reservations for specific castes or religions, and if such discussions would be considered appeasement." The advocates said they expect a prompt response on whether discussing or promising reservations based on religion and caste during the campaign is permissible. "This legal notice aims to support free and fair elections, and prior clarification on this subject would help prevent criminalization and complaints over related offenses," they stated in the notice.

Meth lab with links to Mexican drug cartel busted in Delhi-NCR; Tihar jail warden, 4 others arrested

GNS News Agency, Nov 1Two of the accused were arrested at the factory, while two others were arrested between October 25 and October 26. Two of the accused were arrested at the factory, while two others were arrested between October 25 and October 26. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has busted a methamphetamine factory in Gautam Buddha Nagar and recovered 95 kg of drugs in solid and liquid form. It also arrested five people, including a warden from Tihar jail. The factory was being used to manufacture drugs in partnership with a member of the Mexican drug cartel Jalisco New Generation, known as CJNG, the NCB said. The operation, a collaboration between the NCB and the Special Cell's Counter Intelligence unit, took place on October 25 in a factory located in the Kasana Industrial Area.

Authorities discovered various chemicals including acetone, sodium hydroxide, methylene chloride, premium-grade ethanol, toluene, red phosphorus, and ethyl acetate, along with imported machinery intended for manufacturing. Two of the accused were arrested at the factory, while two others were arrested between October 25 and October 26. An associate was apprehended in Rajouri Garden between October 27 and October 28, as reported by the NCB. "A Delhi-based businessman, who was found inside the factory at the time of the raid, along with a Tihar jail warden were instrumental in establishing the illegal factory, procuring chemicals required for manufacturing of methamphetamine from various sources and importing the machinery. The businessman had previously been arrested by Department of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in a Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act case and had been lodged in Tihar jail where he came in contact with the jail warden who became his accomplice," said NCB Deputy Director General (operations) Gyaneshwar Singh.

According to police sources, the businessman op-



erates in West Delhi and his network is spread across Delhi-NCR. According to NCB officials, the warden and the businessman roped in a Mumbai-based chemist who was to oversee the operations. In order to ensure quality checks, a member of the CJNG drug cartel sent to Delhi was also involved in the operations. The CJNG stemmed out of Mexico's Milenio Cartel, which was at the centre of Mexico's deadly drug wars. "It is believed that considering the low cost of production of synthetic drugs like methamphetamine and mephedrone, the drug mafia is increasingly shifting to setting up such clandestine labs in industrial areas so that local law enforcement agencies do not get unduly alerted because of transportation of material and machinery, waste generated from the laboratories and toxic fumes coming out of chimneys during chemical processing," DDG Singh said. According to the NCB, this was the fifth lab bust in 2024. Earlier this month, a similar operation took place in an industrial estate in Bhopal, where authorities seized approximately 907 kg of mephedrone in both solid and liquid forms, along with about 7,000 kg of various chemicals and the machinery used in the operation.

Candy maker, farmer, social worker—meet Marathas who wish to contest polls on Jarange-Patil's signal



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Last week, when Sitabai Mohite filed her nomination for the election in Maharashtra's Ghansawangi Assembly constituency, the only thought in her mind was the steep fees she had to pay for her daughter's agricultural degree. Mohite, who runs a successful gooseberry processing and nursery business in her Ghodegaon village in Jalna taluka, said she had to pay over Rs 8 lakh for her daughter's education. "If you ask me, my decision to file nomination is meant to ensure Marathas get the benefits of lower educational fees applicable for the OBC community. I have zero experience in politics, but when Maratha agitation leader Manoj Jarange-Patil asked us to file nominations, I did not bat an eyelid," she said. Former health minister Rajesh Tope of the NCP is the MLA for the constituency and is seeking re-election.

In Maharashtra, for the last 14 months, Manoj Jarange-Patil, or Dada as he is known among his followers, has emerged as a force to reckon with, especially in the Marathwada region. Incidentally, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar (also from the Maratha community) is also called Dada. Jarange-Patil sharing the same epithet, many say, is more than a coincidence. Sitabai is one of the many from the Maratha community who have decided to jump into the fray after Jarange-Patil announced his decision to field candidates. His announcement, however, has a rider—he said he would take stock of individual constituencies and make a final decision on who would remain in the electoral fray while others would be asked to withdraw their nominations. As frantic parleys go on around the activists, his supporters have already

filed their papers and expressed their willingness to withdraw if asked to. In Marathwada, Jarange Patil has a cult-like following, with people like Sitabai wholeheartedly supporting him. Laxman More, a 27-year-old farmer from the village of Sonkhed in Loha taluka of Nanded district, will file his nomination for the Nanded North Assembly seat. Over the past 14 months, More, like Sitabai, has been active in the reservation movement, and his decision to throw his hat in the electoral battle is in response to Patil's call. "Over the last 14 months, Dada has managed to do the impossible—he has united the Maratha community. We Marathas have to fight for our rights," he said. Jarange-Patil's main demand is the inclusion of the Maratha community under the Other Backward Classes and to implement the reservation using the principle of sage soyare (relations). Jarange-Patil, who hails from Jalna district of Marathwada, has trained his guns against the BJP, especially Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. His decision to field candidates can seriously affect both the Mahayuti and the Maha Vikas Aghadi in many seats. Given that Marathas constitute around 30 per cent of the state's population, Patil has proved to be a major political and social force to reckon with for everyone. Sitabai confirmed that she was offered posts by established political parties, but she refused. "If I have to fight, it should be for someone who understands the roots," she said. When Jarange-Patil was fasting, Santosh Gavane from Kaladgaon village in Ardhapur taluka of Nanded had supported his movement in a very unique way. Gavane had buried himself halfway down to show his support. Now, Gavane has filed his papers for the Bhokar seat in the district. It is the constituency from where Sreejaya, daughter of former Congress chief minister Ashok Chavan, is fighting her maiden election on a BJP ticket. Chavan is now a BJP MP in the Rajya Sabha.

"It was Dada and his movement that got 30 per cent of Marathas in Marathwada the benefit of the Kunbi certificate (Kunbi Marathas are included in the OBC category). Thus, the community is certain that Dada is the only one who can give justice to the community," Gavane said. He is a newbie in politics, but like More and Sitabai, he is certain Dada would be his trump card. All the candidates know that they will have to withdraw their papers if Jarange-Patil tells them to. They said they would abide by his decision because "whatever Dada says would be good for the community".

'Pink ticket' report: 77% of women in Delhi feel unsafe travelling in a bus after 5 pm

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

A recent report on the free public bus transport in Delhi shows that 45 per cent of women in Delhi never use the bus while 35 per cent of women ride a bus daily or three to five days a week. Titled 'Riding The Justice Route', the report was released by Greenpeace India on Tuesday, the fifth anniversary of the Delhi government's 'pink ticket' policy that made commuting on public buses free for women, after surveying the participants and assessing the impact of the scheme on their lives. As per the report, one in four women have started using buses after travel was made fare-free. After the scheme's introduction, 23 per cent of women have started using buses at least four times a week, and 15 per cent of women, who rarely or never used buses before the scheme, now use them regularly.

When it comes to challenges faced by women, the survey says that a little less than 50 per cent of women bus users feel "mostly safe" while travelling to the bus stop, waiting there, and riding a bus. The survey also suggests that 77 per cent of women feel unsafe while travelling by bus after 5 pm and two in three women find the lighting at the bus stop inadequate. Frequency also remains a challenge as 87 per cent of the women reported waiting more than 10 minutes, while a good 13 per cent waited more than 30 minutes for the bus.

"Of the 510 responses we collected, 95 per cent came from field surveys and 5 per cent from web-based channels, including social media platforms (primarily Twitter and Instagram) and WhatsApp groups," the report states. The impact of the scheme on the perception of women towards public transport across income groups is noteworthy. After the 'pink ticket' was introduced, 88 per cent of women surveyed perceived the scheme as impactful in promoting bus use among women. More than 75 per cent of women bus users in the lowest-income households use the bus at least three to five days a week, whereas 60 per cent of women bus users in middle-income households travel by bus that often. Interestingly, 57 per cent of women in the monthly household income



bracket of Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh ride a bus daily, the highest among all income groups. The survey shows that when asked how often women currently (in the past month) use the fare-free public bus transport in Delhi, 45 per cent said they did not use it even once. The survey also notes that only 75 per cent of women in Delhi said they can use the bus when they typically need to travel. More than two in three (69 per cent) women can use the Delhi Metro when they generally need to travel, and shared auto rickshaws and e-rickshaws are estimated to be the most commonly available mode of transport for women, considered available by 64 per cent of the women in Delhi. "This highlights their ubiquity and key role in women's mobility as an important intermediary mode of transport. Their role has become indispensable with the lack of reliable public transport, particularly for making short trips of less than 2 km, which, as the available evidence from transport and time use studies suggests, are the distances women in Delhi most commonly travel in their daily routine. Cabs and taxis were found available by 34 per cent of women," the report says.

Analysing bus use among different age groups, younger women have emerged as travelling more often as compared to middle-aged and older women as 64 per cent of this group ride a bus daily. However, a larger proportion of older women travel regularly by bus. Among women bus users above 45 years, only 6 per cent said they take public transport rarely.

Will you split family for power ambitions? Sharad Pawar slams Ajit on home ground Baramati

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar turned the heat on his estranged nephew and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar on Tuesday, virtually accusing him of breaking the family for his political ambitions. Campaigning for his grandnephew and NCP (SP) nominee from the Baramati assembly segment, Yugendra Pawar, the Pawar senior mimicked Ajit, who a day earlier became emotional over Yugendra's candidature at a rally. Sharad Pawar's action of pretending to wipe his eyes with a handkerchief in the middle of the speech evoked a peal of laughter from the audience. The elections to 288 seats in Maharashtra are scheduled for November 20. Votes will be counted three days later. Addressing a rally on Monday, Baramati MLA Ajit Pawar alleged that "seniors" should have ensured that a family rift is avoided, referencing to Yugendra's candidature. "My parents and brothers never taught me the sin to break the house (family)," Sharad Pawar said while addressing a rally at Kanheri town near Baramati. "People tasked me with leading Maharashtra a long time ago. I am now a mentor and have entrusted the party



affairs to the new generation," he said. Underscoring the uncertainties of politics, the former Union minister said one should not leave his colleagues for the sake of securing power for oneself. "Unfortunately, when we (NCP) were not in power, some of our colleagues suddenly woke up at dawn and took oath. That government didn't last for even for four days," Pawar said. Notably, Ajit Pawar took oath as Deputy Chief Minister when he was a member of the opposition NCP (undivided) with BJP's Devendra Fadnavis as CM at Raj Bhavan amid a political tug-of-war over the formation of a government, post the 2019 assembly elections. "He (Ajit) went to the other side to secure the deputy chief minister's

post despite having served as Deputy CM four times. You got the position most of the time. If you fail to get the position only once, will you break the house (family)?" Sharad Pawar asked. Now it is being said that I broke the family. It is a funny thing to hear, he added. The veteran politician underlined that he never created a rift in the Pawar clan and everyone listened to him as the family head. "I never did anything by going against anyone and will never do so. Going forward, regardless of anyone taking any stand, I will not go on the wrong track. I will ensure that my family will remain united," Sharad Pawar added. Targeting Ajit, the Pawar senior referred to the

former's speech at a rally. "It was said that I created a rift in the family. The sin of breaking the family was never taught by my parents and brothers. All my brothers, including Anant Rao Pawar (father of Ajit Pawar), lived with me," he added. Sharad Pawar recalled how he concentrated on politics in Maharashtra and at the national level, while domestic issues and farming were taken care of by his family members. "I could concentrate on my job because of the blessings of my brothers. I won't discriminate against their children," he added. He highlighted the "change of language" used by Ajit Pawar from the campaigning for the Baramati Lok Sabha seat to the latest emotive pitch.

Dream job at Tesla: Indian-origin BME graduate inspires with tips that helped him through months of unemployment



An Indian-origin Biomedical Engineering graduate from the University at Buffalo has finally cracked the formula "300+ applications, 500+ cold emails, 10 interviews, 1 offer" later as he landed his dream job at the Elon Musk-led multinational automotive company Tesla. On September 28 (IST), New York-based Dhruv Loya gladly celebrated his professional breakthrough on LinkedIn, sharing his latest achievement that finally greeted him at the end of a challenging journey. "I finally got a job!" Loya announced on the professional social networking site, as he updated his resume, adding Powerwall Technical Support Specialist to his list of experiences under Tesla's banner. He opened up about how the arduous path to the major career destination was overlaid with "three internships, a good GPA, and active extracurriculars." Despite cracking those milestones, making his portfolio heavier than before, he found himself at a dead-end, bringing five long and taxing months of unemployment. Not only was he professionally stuck in a quicksand-like situation, but he also underlined how other aspects of his life in the US were also running out of fuel. "Lost my lease, my health insurance, and constantly felt the ticking clock of my visa status, knowing I could be forced to leave the U.S. at any moment," he wrote online.

Before securing a full-time position as a Technical Support Specialist at Tesla, Loya was forced to move between friends' apartments and sleep on air mattresses, as every penny counted for those past few months. Now that the wait is over for him, he shared his story with the rest of the world through his SNS confession, empathising with all those people treading through the same waters of uncertainty and instability. "I know the job market is very tough, especially for international students," he added. Eventually, he shared some tips he swore by during his tough times. Yet, his recommendations were like

a breath of fresh air, considering he also advised people to give themselves enough space and time to unwind while treating the job-hunting process as a "9 to 5" in itself. "My advice to anyone facing this struggle is to treat applying to jobs as your 9-5, but make sure to use your evenings and weekends to unwind and do things you enjoy. I understand how emotionally draining this process can be," he emphasised. Next, he shared the few resources that helped him land interviews, hoping they would help others in a similar situation. Loya informed people that he relied on platforms like LinkedIn, Indeed, Handshake and Jobright.ai for job searches. On the other hand, he resorted to Hunter.io for cold emailing and ChatGPT+ to tailor his resume and cover letters. Reassuring others on the same path, Loya encouraged people, "Just keep manifesting, stay positive, and believe that things will fall into place!" Loya's previous experience includes interning as a Product Engineer at CoreHaptics, a research assistant and a senior IT technician at the University at Buffalo, a quality assurance intern at Boehringer Ingelheim and more. According to his education qualifications on his LinkedIn profile, he graduated from the University at Buffalo School of Engineering and Applied Science in May 2024 with a 3.4 GPA. He is also listed as a member of the institution's UB Rowing team and a trophy-winning recipient for his university's International Fiesta dance competition. Per a previous post, Loya opened up about his unforgettable experience as a Commercial Quality Intern at Boehringer Ingelheim. "During my 3-months tenure, I worked closely with the Commercial Quality team assisting in technical product complaints and returns, helping to foster an environment of Quality Culture throughout BI. I also helped the team automate the extreme Excel files and graphs required for the Trends report by creating a dashboard using Microsoft Power BI," he wrote on LinkedIn. "Overall, I had a very productive and amazing summer where I got to relocate and explore the beautiful Atlanta, experience my first ever baseball game, work a 9-5 job, participate in team meetings, network, and learn a lot from my team and others at BI."

A year-old vlog on the Indian-origin individual's YouTube channel captures him in action as "an international student and senior at SUNY- University at Buffalo majoring in Biomedical Engineering," who simultaneously interned at Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health! Per his private Instagram account's bio, the 22-year-old man, now settled in New York, shares his origins in Pune, India.

North Korea and Russia send political shockwaves with Ukraine war moves



North Korea's foreign minister arrived in Russia on Tuesday for talks as the Russia-Ukraine war appeared to take a dangerous new turn, with NATO and South Korea expressing alarm that North Korean troops could soon be joining in on Moscow's side.

MOSCOW/SEOUL - GNS News Agency, Sept 21, North Korea's foreign minister arrived in Russia on Tuesday for talks as the Russia-Ukraine war appeared to take a dangerous new turn, with NATO and South Korea expressing alarm that North Korean troops could soon be joining in on Moscow's side. NATO said on Monday that thousands of North Korean troops were moving toward the front line.

The development has alarmed Kyiv, which has said sanctions would not be enough and called for more weapons and an international plan to keep the North Korean troops at bay. South Korea, which remains technically at war with the nuclear-armed North decades after the 1950-1953 Korean War, also condemned the deployments, with officials in Seoul particularly worried about what Pyongyang may be providing to Pyongyang in return. North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui arrived in Russia's far east on Tuesday on her way to Moscow, Russian state media said. Russian state news agencies said it was not clear who Choe, mak-

ing her second visit in six weeks, would meet in Moscow. The Kremlin said Putin had no plans to meet her.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Tuesday and said the North Korean moves were sending the war into an unprecedented phase. "The conclusion is clear - this war is becoming internationalized, extending beyond two countries," Zelenskyy said on X. Yoon told Zelenskyy that if North Korea receives aid from Russia and is able to glean military experience and knowledge from its involvement in the war it would pose a "great threat" to South Korea's security, according to a statement from South Korea's presidential office. South Korea has said it may start supplying weapons to Ukraine if North Korean troops joined Russia's war. The Pentagon also said on Monday it would not impose new limits on Ukraine's use of U.S. weapons if North Korea entered the fight. Russian President Vladimir Putin has not denied the pres-

ence of North Korean troops in the country.

What role the North Korean troops may play is unclear. Analysts say their small number and possibly limited capabilities are unlikely to be decisive, but they could shore up Russian forces by providing manual labor or manning defensive positions. They are also likely to play a political role for Russia and North Korea, strengthening their hands in relations with China, which has an uneasy partnership with both countries, and sending a message to Washington and its allies, Western diplomats and analysts said. "The closer Moscow's ties to Pyongyang, the more leverage it expects over U.S. allies as well as China," Gilbert Rozman, of The Asan Forum, wrote for the U.S.-based 38 North programme. Moscow needed a partner hostile to the status quo, wary of China but unwilling to antagonize it, and helpful in meeting arms or perhaps labor needs, he said.

A few thousand North Korean troops will not change the course of the war so it may be a Russian attempt to underscore to the

United States just how disruptive Moscow can be if it wants to be, said one diplomat who spoke on condition of anonymity. "Integrating North Korean troops into a very complex war machine is not easy. But using their presence to scare the United States and its allies in Asia is quite simple," the diplomat said. "The key question is: to what extent is Russia actually changing its whole post-Soviet approach to North Korea?"

TROOPS TRAINING The Ukraine conflict broke out when Russia invaded its neighbor in February 2022 and has since developed into a war of attrition largely fought along front lines in eastern Ukraine, with huge numbers of casualties on both sides. The Pentagon estimated 10,000 North Korean troops had been deployed to eastern Russia for training, up from an estimate of 3,000 troops last Wednesday. The military in Russia was trying to teach military terminology to the North Korean soldiers, South Korean lawmakers briefed by the country's spy agency said on Tuesday. Moscow was also continuing to provide technical support for North Korea's attempts to field a fleet of spy satellites, the lawmakers said. For months North Korea has been providing Russia with short-range ballistic missiles, artillery shells, and other weapons, according to intelligence officials in the United States, South Korea, and Ukraine. Putin has said it is Russia's business how to implement a partnership treaty he signed with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in June, under which the two countries agreed to support each other if one of them came under attack. South Korea has yet to change its stance against openly providing weapons to Ukraine, but Seoul expedited plans to share intelligence with NATO and dispatched a senior delegation to brief officials in Brussels and Kyiv.

Russian air attacks kill four in Kharkiv, injure six in Kyiv, Ukraine says



KYIV, GNS News Agency, Nov 1, At least four people were killed and another six injured in Russia's waves of overnight attacks on Ukraine's two largest cities of Kharkiv and Kyiv, Ukrainian officials said. Another two were killed and seven injured in Russian shelling on Kherson city in southern Ukraine in the morning, a local governor said.

Russian forces have been attacking Ukrainian regions almost every night with drones, and the Ukrainian military reported that overnight they had shot down 26 out of 48 drones launched. Four people were killed in Kharkiv in the early hours of Tuesday in Russia's bombardment of the city's Osnovianskyi district, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said on his Telegram messaging channel.

A local emergency service published a video showing rescuers removing the rubble of the completely destroyed building under floodlights and carrying a black bag in which the bodies of the dead are usually

placed. That attack followed a Russian guided bomb attack on Kharkiv late on Monday that shattered much of the Derzhprom building, one of the most celebrated landmarks in the city, dating from the 1920s. In Kyiv, falling debris from a destroyed Russian drone injured six people and set a residential building on fire, the mayor of the Ukrainian capital said. One of the people injured by debris in Kyiv's Solomianskyi district was taken to hospital, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said on his Telegram channel. He said several cars were also on fire.

A Reuters witness saw smoke rising over the district's residential area, which is located in Kyiv's west. Photos posted by Kyiv's military administration on its Telegram channel showed a residential building and nearby cars burning in the dark. The administration said Ukraine's air defence units were trying to repel a Russian drone attack on the city and that drone debris fell also onto the Sviatoshynskiy district in Kyiv's west, but there was no immediate reports of damage.

In the morning attacks on Kherson, governor Oleksandr Prokudin said on the Telegram messenger that the victims of the Russian shelling were a 62-year-old man and a 66-year-old woman. Kherson region is split by the front line and regularly hit by Russian artillery, drones and missiles. There was no immediate comment from Russia about the attacks. Moscow denies targeting civilians in the war sparked by its invasion of its neighbour Ukraine in February 2022. The 2-1/2-year war has killed thousands of people, the vast majority of them Ukrainians, and it has turned cities and villages into piles of rubble. The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

China's Xi pressed Biden to alter language on Taiwan

WASHINGTON/BEIJING/TAIPEI, GNS News Agency, Nov 1, Chinese President Xi Jinping asked U.S. President Joe Biden last year to change the language the United States uses when discussing its position on Taiwanese independence, according to two U.S. officials familiar with the private conversation. During last November's Biden-Xi meeting near San Francisco, Xi and his aides asked Biden and his team to tweak the language in U.S. official statements. China wanted the U.S. to say "we oppose Taiwan independence," rather than the current version, which is that the United States "does not support" independence for Taiwan, said the people, who requested anonymity to speak about private diplomatic exchanges they participated in or were briefed on.

Xi's aides have repeatedly followed up and made the requests in the months since, according to two U.S. officials and another person familiar with the exchanges. The White House responded to a request for comment with a statement that repeated the line that Washington does not support Taiwan independence. "The Biden-Harris administration has been consistent on our long-standing One China policy," the statement read. China's foreign ministry said: "You should ask this question to the U.S. government. China's position on the Taiwan issue is clear and consistent. Taiwan's foreign ministry declined comment. The defeated Republic of China government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's communists. The Republic of China remains Taiwan's formal name and the government says it has no plans to change that given they are already a sovereign, independent state and Beijing has no right to claim Taiwan as its own."

For several years, Chinese diplomats have pushed the United States to make changes to how it refers to Taiwan's status, which remains the most sensitive area in U.S.-China relations. The unusually direct and renewed push at the leader level has not been reported previously. The United States severed official relations with the government in Taipei in 1979 but is bound by law to provide democratically governed Taiwan with the means to defend itself. China claims Taiwan as its own territory and has never renounced the use of force to bring the island under its control. It was not clear why Xi chose to raise the issue with Biden, but he has made opposition to Taiwan independence a focus of his time in office and China's military has significantly ramped up its activities around the island in recent years. The Biden administration regards the proposed language change as a non-starter. Taiwan was briefed on the recent overtures at a high level by Washington, said one of the sources. Leaders in Beijing "would love it if Joe Biden said very different things about Taiwan than he says, no doubt," said one senior Biden administration official, adding that Biden would stick with the standard U.S. formulation for talking about Taiwan independence. During his time in office, Biden has upset the Chinese government with comments that appeared to suggest the United States would defend the island if it were attacked, a deviation from a long-held U.S. position of "strategic ambiguity."

A CHANGE THAT WOULD REVERBERATE change by the U.S. to say that it opposes Taiwanese independence would reverberate through the trade-rich Asia Pacific and with U.S. partners, competitors and ad-



versaries alike. Officials from two governments in the region told Reuters they would interpret any such change in wording as a change in U.S. policy toward less support for Taipei's defense and diplomatic aspirations at a time when Beijing has ramped up military pressure. China has over the past five years staged almost daily military activities around Taiwan. Earlier this month, Beijing held a day of war games using what Taiwan said was a record 153 military aircraft as part of drills simulating blockading ports and assaulting maritime and ground targets.

Any switch in language could also be seen signaling a shift in U.S. policy from supporting the resolution of Taiwan's future through peaceful talks to one suggesting the United States stands against Taiwanese aspirations regardless of the circumstances at play. Opinion polls in Taiwan show most people support maintaining the status quo, neither seeking to join with China nor establishing a new state. In 2022, the State Department changed its website on Taiwan, removing wording both on not supporting Taiwan independence and on acknowledging Beijing's position that Taiwan is part of China, which angered the Chinese. It later restored the language on not supporting independence for the island. The two leaders are expected to speak again before Biden's term in office ends in January, talks that may come by phone or on the sidelines of next month's G20 summit in Brazil or APEC summit in Peru. APEC is one of few international forums where both Taiwan and China take part. The Democratic president will hand over the tense Taiwan issue to his successor, Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris or Republican former President Donald Trump, following the Nov. 5 election. Laurie Chen is a China Correspondent at Reuters' Beijing bureau, covering politics and general news. Before joining Reuters, she reported on China for six years at Agence France-Presse and the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong. She speaks fluent Mandarin. Yimou Lee is a Senior Correspondent for Reuters covering everything from Taiwan, including sensitive Taiwan-China relations, China's military aggression and Taiwan's key role as a global semiconductor powerhouse. A three-time SOPA award winner, his reporting from Hong Kong, China, Myanmar and Taiwan over the past decade includes Myanmar's crackdown on Rohingya Muslims, Hong Kong protests and Taiwan's battle against China's multifront campaigns to absorb the island.

Georgia conducts partial vote recount after reports of polling irregularities

TBILISI, - GNS News Agency, Nov 1, Georgia's central electoral commission said it would recount ballots at some 14% of polling stations on Tuesday after independent monitors raised concerns about the conduct of Saturday's parliamentary election. Official results said the governing Georgian Dream party won nearly 54% of the vote, but pro-Western opposition parties and Georgia's president have said the result was rigged. Thousands of people protested on Monday night in the capital Tbilisi. The European Union, NATO and the United States have demanded a full investigation into reports of vote-buying, voter intimidation and ballot stuffing raised by monitors from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and other bodies. The election commission, which previously hailed the vote as free and fair, said it would conduct a recount of ballots in five randomly selected polling stations in each of Georgia's 84 electoral districts. It did not say when the results of the recount would be made public. "To ensure transparency, all authorized representatives are invited to observe the ballot recount process," the commission said in a



statement. Official results showed Georgian Dream won 1.12 million votes - 335,000 votes more than the combined four main opposition parties, which are deeply divided. The party won huge margins of up to 90% in some rural areas, but underperformed in Tbilisi and other large cities.

Rural uptick but urban areas new points of concern in GDP growth



Incipient signs of softening consumption demand, especially in urban areas, reflected in multiple high-frequency indicators and corroborated by the earnings guidance of consumer goods companies, have raised concerns about a weakening of the growth momentum in the Indian economy. While rural demand is seeing an uptick, high food inflation and a moderation in credit growth are possible headwinds that could slow down growth in the second quarter of 2024-25.

Companies in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector have already pointed out some early signs. Top executives at Tata Consumer Products Ltd have flagged concerns over "softness" in urban demand while those at Nestle India pointed to mega cities and metros as pressure points, and blamed the indications of "muted demand" partly on high food inflation. Carmakers are pointing to worries on demand for the sector that has largely bucked India's consumption downturn so far, blaming it on heavy rains and the election-induced slowdown. All of this could have repercussions for India's growth story going forward. The sequential decline in underlying growth momentum is discernible. For Nomura India, the growth glass "looks half empty", with its latest coincident activity index — a composite index covering consumption, investment and the external sector — pointing to slower GDP growth in the second quarter of 2024-25 compared with the first quarter. In the first quarter, GDP growth had already moderated to around 6.7 per cent from 7.8 per cent in the previous quarter. During the second quarter of July-September, this could moderate even further to around 6.5 per cent (much lower than RBI's projected 7 per cent) amid a slowdown in investment and industrial activity that could compound the slowdown in discretionary consumption sector, especially in urban centres, that Nestle and Tata Consumer are alluding to.

"Real wage growth for rural agricultural and non-agricultural workers is providing some support to consumption growth. In the urban areas, new demand is not there. It's mostly status quo as urban consumers have broadly consumed a lot in the post-Covid phase and exhausted the pent-up demand," Devendra Kumar Pant, Chief Economist, India Ratings and Research said. According to the Finance Ministry's economic review for September, rural demand continues to improve, as reflected in increasing fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) volume sales and a rise in three-wheeler and tractor sales. However, urban demand appears to moderate due to softening consumer sentiments, limited footfall due to above-normal rainfall, and seasonal periods during which people tend to refrain from new purchases, the Ministry said. Broader data sets clearly point to this: Corporate sector's growth rates in revenue and profits have taken a beating if the initial trends from the financial results of listed companies for the quarter ended September 2024 are any indication, with the growth rate in net profit of 197 companies down to 6.1 per cent at Rs 83,007 crore in Q2 of 2024-25 as against 27.4 per cent (Rs 78,224 crore) in the same period of last year largely on account of a rise in expenses and input costs in the second quarter, according to data compiled by Bank of Baroda Research. The picture weakens further if the 10 banks in the sample are excluded. Rating firm Crisil said revenue growth of 5-7 per cent for Q2 is likely to be the slowest in the last 16 quarters.

Companies are also scaling down their salary outlays. Real salary and wage expenditure growth of listed non-financial corporates — a proxy for real urban wages — has moderated to 0.8 per cent in Q2 FY25 from 1.2 per cent in Q1 FY25, and is down from 2.5 per cent in FY24 and 10.8 per cent in FY23, Nomura said. Adding to these stress signals are worries about high food inflation. The RBI has indicated that food inflation continues to be a

worry and that it could be risky to talk about cutting rates at this point in time. "At this stage of the economic cycle, having come so far, we cannot risk another bout of inflation. The best approach now would be to remain flexible and wait for more evidence of inflation aligning durably with the target," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das wrote in the minutes of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held from October 7-9.

The other problem is on the external front, where protectionist measures in the US and sluggish demand in western Europe do not promise much for India's already struggling exports. During the annual meetings of IMF-World Bank in Washington last week, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the output-inflation tradeoff globally has worsened and cooling may slow down the economic momentum — which necessitates continuous data-driven policy adjustments to monitor spillovers. Speaking on the Indian economy at an event organised by the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington on Friday, Das remained upbeat and said that improving domestic demand, lower input costs and a supportive policy environment continue to spur manufacturing activity, while the services sector is displaying strong growth.

"The growth outlook reflects the underlying strength of India's macro-fundamentals, with domestic drivers — private consumption and investment — playing a major role," the central bank governor said, adding that the government's thrust on capex and healthy balance sheets of banks and corporates are expected to support private investment and that private consumption appears to be on track for a strong improvement due to the favourable agricultural outlook and the pickup in rural demand. So while the lead indicators point to a moderation in growth, certain components of growth, including government spending that had dipped during the election months, could see a pick up in the coming quarters. During April-August, central government expenditure stood at Rs 16.52 lakh crore, down 1.2 per cent from the corresponding period a year ago. Higher government spending along with efforts to bring down inflation could help India's growth in the second half of this year.

Government spending is likely to pick up as that is overdue, but the continuing moderation in credit growth, particularly consumer credit growth means constraint in terms of discretionary activity could continue. That's already reflective on the urban demand side. And on whether private capex is picking up, whether it is broadening out, with demand continuing to be soft, the changes of a pickup, especially a broad-based one, are unlikely. The positives going forward include the festive season demand, and to what extent discounts help boost consumer activity. It would also be crucial to see to what extent government capex picks up and if rural demand will hold. The Finance Ministry has flagged the need to watch the demand conditions at the margin. Citing data from Nielsen IQ, the Ministry said rural demand has strengthened in H1 of FY25, with improvement seen in rising FMCG sales of 5.2 per cent (volume growth) in Q1 FY25 as against 4 per cent seen in the year-ago period. There has also been a pickup in auto sales in rural areas by around 2 per cent in H1 FY24, with a significant increase in three-wheelers (7.4 per cent) and passenger vehicles (4.9 per cent) sales. In urban areas, however, volume growth in FMCG sales has slowed to 2.8 per cent in Q1 in FY25 from 10.1 per cent in Q1 FY24. Auto sales declined by 2.3 per cent in H1 of FY25, mainly due to lower sales in Q2 FY25 in urban areas. Housing sales and launches have also dipped in Q2 FY25, the Ministry said.

Going ahead, a further monetary easing by the US Fed post-elections are expected to boost India's capital inflows, experts said. A higher real wage growth and above-normal monsoon also augur well for consumption growth going ahead. There is a distinct possibility that government expenditure will be the biggest driver for overall economic recovery, especially if one were to consider the run rate so far and factor in the budget forecast assuming an implied growth in capital expenditure from September to March 25 should be around 40 per cent year on year. Given the contraction seen in April-August, there has to be a big improvement. Revenue expenditures from the government side should also see an improvement, which could have some impact.

Air India gets DGCA greenlight for in-house modification of aircraft interiors, collaborates with Tata Technologies

Air India has received the regulatory approval that will allow the airline to independently make aircraft interior design changes and modifications in-house and not fully depend on third party service providers. The Design Organisation Approval (DOA) from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) comes at a time when the airline has initiated a multi-million dollar retrofit programme to spruce up the interiors of its legacy aircraft. With the DOA in place, the Tata group airline is also collaborating with another group company—Tata Technologies—to enhance the cabin interiors of its fleet.

"Air India is the first airline in India to attain this level of authorisation, accelerating its ability to execute restoration tasks for continuous improvement of its fleet... The DOA is a transformative step towards enhancing Air India's in-house capabilities, which has been bolstered by decisions to set up its own engineering, maintenance and training facilities. This will enhance operational efficiency and make the airline more self-reliant," the airline said in a release. While Air India's focus currently would be on improving and maintaining interiors of its fleet and that of its no-frills airline Air India Express, the DOA certifies the company as a design organisation, which enables it to offer these services to other airlines. On its part, the airline did not comment on whether it was looking at offering services to other airlines. "Air India has chosen Tata Technologies as its strategic partner to revolutionize its aircraft interiors... Tata Technologies will provide end-to-end solutions, from design and validation to weight optimization and ergonomic considerations. These innovations are set to redefine the passenger experience by ensuring that aircraft interiors are not only functional and safe but also future proof, providing passengers with modern comfort and state-of-the-art technology," Tata Technologies said in a separate release. Tata Technologies said that its deep experience working with leading



aerospace original equipment manufacturers will be crucial in the process. Tata Technologies has expertise in lightweight materials, advanced design, and validation techniques, which it believes will help Air India optimize the fleet's performance, safety, and efficiency. "This collaboration also positions Tata Technologies as a key player in streamlining Air India's operations by integrating innovative digital thread solutions and smart Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) services. These solutions will improve operational efficiency, reduce downtime, and ensure that Air India's fleet remains in top condition, further enhancing passenger safety and operational reliability," Tata Technologies said. Air India was acquired by the Tatas in January 2022 from the government. Under government control, Air India was under financial stress, and this reflected in its product and service quality, which was seen as below the standards expected from a full-service carrier. While the now-privatised airline has ordered hundreds of new aircraft and recently initiated a mammoth fleet modernisation and expansion plan, it still has a large number of legacy aircraft that are in a rundown state. The \$400-million upgrade of the airline's entire narrow-body fleet started last month and is expected to be complete by the middle of next year.

All about Jaya Kishori, the spiritual preacher under fire for carrying Dior Book Tote worth over 2 lakh



A controversy has erupted around spiritual preacher and singer Jaya Kishori after she was spotted carrying a Dior Book Tote worth over 2 lakh. The 29-year-old Hindu preacher's choice of accessory at an airport has drawn criticism as she actively preaches non-materialism and detachment to her followers, and particularly given that the bag's cotton and calfskin construction includes leather elements — a detail that has further intensified the backlash from her followers. A person posted a video of her on X, writing: "She claims to live in a ?????? (hut) and says she has no property or money. She preaches that people should not chase after money and instead invest their time in the worship of God. But in this video, she is seen carrying a Dior bag worth 2 lakhs." Some people came to her defence as well. A person wrote, "Show me at least one clip where she is talking about not to be materialistic. Stop claiming false excuses." Social media users have also highlighted other luxury possessions, including a Rolex watch she has been seen wearing in various appearances.

Who is Jaya Kishori?

Born as Jaya Sharma on July 13, 1995, in Kolkata, Jaya Kishori's journey into spirituality began remarkably early. She claims to have started her spiritual path at the age of seven, growing up in an environment steeped in religious values and stories of the divine. This early exposure shaped her worldview and eventually led her to become one of India's prominent young spiritual orators. In a candid conversation with Ek Kahani podcast, Kishori revealed that her entry into the spiritual field wasn't a

calculated career move but rather an organic progression. "I used to enjoy stories of God, and I loved singing bhajans. That's how it started," she shared. "You begin casually — you attend an event and sing a couple of bhajans, and it goes on like that. Without realising it, things got serious." Kishori's discourse centres on instilling faith and positivity among those lacking confidence in themselves and their surroundings. Her teachings particularly emphasise the importance of family values and proper parenting, which she believes are crucial for developing competent and morally upright individuals. Her approach combines teachings from the Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta, personal life experiences, family teachings, and wisdom from various sources. Speaking to Ek Kahani podcast, Kishori addressed one of the major misconceptions about spiritual leaders: "People think we're not normal. They're curious about what we eat, how we live at home." She shared an amusing anecdote about being watched while playing badminton, highlighting the public's fascination with spiritual leaders' everyday activities. "We're exactly like you. We live with our families the same way you do," she emphasised.

Rise to prominence Today, Kishori commands a massive following across various platforms. Her YouTube channel boasts 3.61 million subscribers, while her Instagram and Facebook accounts have amassed 12.3 million and 8.9 million followers respectively. Her popularity extends beyond traditional religious discourse — she regularly appears on podcasts discussing spirituality, religion, life-coaching, and personal relationships. Her bhajans, including popular renditions like 'Shiv Stotra', 'Mere Kanha', and 'Sajan Mero Girdhari', have garnered widespread appreciation. Recognition and achievements Despite her young age, Kishori has accumulated numerous accolades. Notable among these is the 'Adarsh Yuva Adhyatmik Guru Puruskar,' awarded by RSS Chief Shri Mohan Bhagwat in 2016. Her recent recognitions include 'Iconic Woman Motivational Speaker of the year 2021' at the Iconic Gold Awards and 'Best Spiritual Influencer' at the Lokmat Digital Influencer Awards 2021. In May 2022, she received the 'Most Inspiring Woman of the Year (Spiritual)' at the Global Excellence Awards. Her impact was recently recognised with the National Creators Award for social change in March 2024, presented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Can the gold-to-silver ratio help you make the right investment choices?



Deciding whether to invest in gold or silver can feel overwhelming during Dhanteras, but content creator Prof. Vinny Arora says that simple tools like the gold-to-silver (GS) ratio might help make that choice easier. "Now one needs to take into different scenarios before making a final purchase decision, but this is a good indicator to help you make an informed investment decision," he mentions in the caption of his post. This ratio measures how many ounces of silver it takes to buy one ounce of gold, offering insight into market trends and helping investors gauge which metal might be the better buy at any given time. Historically, the GS ratio has averaged around 60:1, but in recent years, it has seen significant fluctuations.

With the current ratio above long-term averages, is now the time to invest in silver over gold? We spoke to experts to understand whether the GS ratio can guide investors in making smart decisions and what factors should be considered beyond it.

How reliable is the gold-to-silver ratio as an indicator for deciding between purchasing gold or silver?

Devendra S, financial literacy expert, tells indianexpress.com, "The gold-to-silver ratio (GS ratio) can be a useful gauge for investors in India, particularly in assessing the relative value between these two metals. Traditionally, a higher GS ratio indicates silver may be undervalued than gold. However, this should not be the sole basis for investment decisions. While the GS ratio reflects historical pricing trends, it does not account for industrial demand for silver, which has grown significantly, especially in electronics and solar power." As a financial advisor, Devendra stresses, "I recommend using this ratio as part of a broader analysis, considering factors such as global demand, market volatility, and investment objectives. For instance, during economic uncertainty, gold often performs better as a safe-haven asset, while silver is more sensitive to industrial demand cycles."

With the GS ratio currently above long-term averages, does this suggest that silver is undervalued?

Aditi Khandelwal, co-founder, Kicky and Perky, explains that with the GS ratio being well above long-term averages, often around 65:1, "there is a message that silver may be under-recognised compared to gold." However, many market forces have to be factored in before investing. Industrial demand for is on the increase for silver with its role in many industries such as jewelry, electronics, and renewable energy sources. Thus, silver's price will be supported by growing demand and will not necessarily be dependent on gold. Dishi Somani, founder of Dishi S Designer Jewellery, mentions, "A high ratio, which is usually above 80, suggests that silver might be undervalued and could be a good time to buy it. Conversely, a low ratio nearly around 50, indicates that gold might be more appealing. Historically, this ratio has ranged between 50 and 70 over the past 50 years, re-

flecting market shifts. Currently, with a ratio of around 85, silver appears undervalued."

What risks should purchasers know when using the GS ratio as a tool?

According to Devendra, while the GS ratio can be a helpful indicator, relying solely on it carries risks. The ratio doesn't consider the market supply-demand fundamentals for each metal. "For instance, if silver demand surges due to technological advancements (e.g., in solar energy or electronics), the ratio might suggest silver is undervalued, even though market forces could drive prices higher." Investors should also consider liquidity risks and market timing, especially since silver is more volatile than gold. One way to mitigate these risks is by diversifying across asset classes, not just precious metals. "Systematic investment plans (SIPs) in gold or silver exchange-traded funds (ETFs) can help spread risk over time, allowing investors to benefit from long-term trends without overexposure to short-term market fluctuations," he recommends. Disclaimer: This article is for informational purposes only and does not constitute financial or investment advice. We do not endorse any specific investment strategies. Please consult a qualified financial advisor before making any investment decisions.

High-intensity workouts more effective for weight loss in women: Study

New Delhi: Exercising to lose weight? High-intensity physical workouts may be more beneficial, especially for women, according to a study. The study, published in the Journal of the Endocrine Society, showed that more than moderate exercise, and engaging in vigorous physical activity like jumping rope, swimming, and cycling can suppress hunger levels in healthy adults. The small study noted that females may be more susceptible to this response.

Researchers from the University of Virginia in the US showed that the effect is due to ghrelin — a hormone that stimulates appetite. They noted that hunger levels are significantly reduced after high-intensity exercise, as compared to moderate-intensity exercise or control (no exercise). Lead author Kara Anderson, from the varsity, noted that people felt 'less hungry' after high-intensity exercise compared to moderate-intensity exercise. To investigate the effect of exercise intensity and sex on ghrelin levels and appetite in untrained humans the study included eight males and six females. The participants fasted overnight and then completed exercises of varying intensity levels.

Singham Again star Ranveer Singh waits patiently as officers stop him at Mumbai airport, check his papers.



Ranveer was spotted at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai on Tuesday. Though he attempted to remain incognito with a hat, shades and a face mask, passersby quickly recognised him while airport officials conducted security checks on his documents. In a video that has since gone viral on social media, Ranveer is seen patiently waiting at the airport entrance as officers verify his papers. Recently, Ranveer, along with actors Varun Dhawan and Aditya Roy Kapur, had attended an Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) match in Abu Dhabi. He was also present at the birthday celebration of Radhika Merchant, wife of Anant Ambani, on October 16. Notably, Singham Again marks Ranveer and Deepika's first film since welcoming their baby girl on September 8. Though the couple, who tied the knot in 2018, shared the news on Instagram, they have yet to reveal their child's name. While Ranveer's last appearance was in Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani (2023), Deepika's most recent film was Nag Ashwin's Kalki 2898 AD (2024).

The fifth instalment in the Cop Universe and a direct sequel to Singham Returns (2014), Rohit's Singham Again also stars Ajay Devgn, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Akshay Kumar, Tiger Shroff, Arjun Kapoor and Jackie Shroff. Bollywood superstar Salman Khan will make a cameo appearance as Chulbul Pandey, his iconic character from the Dabangg series. Singham Again is set to hit the screens on November 1, Friday.

While his Singham Again gears up for its release, Ranveer Singh was spotted at the Mumbai airport, heading somewhere. Ranveer Singh at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai.

Bollywood star Ranveer Singh is all set to make a grand comeback to the big screen after a 15-month gap with the actioner Singham Again, helmed by Rohit Shetty. What makes the movie even more special for him is that his wife, Deepika Padukone, also plays a key role in it. While Ranveer reprises his role as ACP Sangram "Simmba" Bhalerao from Rohit's Cop Universe, Deepika takes on the part of SP Shakti Shetty, the latest addition to the franchise's growing ensemble.

As the movie gears up for its worldwide release,

Citadel Honey Bunny trailer 2: Varun Dhawan and Samantha Ruth Prabhu play daring spy parents on a mission to save their daughter

As the spy thriller; Citadel: Honey Bunny, starring Varun Dhawan and Samantha Ruth Prabhu, nears its release date, the makers have built excitement among fans with the release of its second trailer. The makers on Tuesday, took to their Instagram account to share a 2:23-minute long trailer that offers a glimpse into Samantha's character, Honey, a former struggling actress who is recruited by Varun's character, Bunny, to become a spy. The plot takes a thrilling turn when, years later, the two are reunited to protect their daughter, Nadia, from the dangerous enemies of their past.

Packed with adrenaline-pumping action sequences and emotional drama, the trailer shows the chemistry between Varun and Samantha as they navigate a world of espionage, betrayal, and danger. "Spies of Citadel are here to take over #CitadelHoneyBunnyOnPrime, New Series, Nov 7," the post was captioned.

Written by Sita R Menon and directed by Raj & DK, Citadel: Honey Bunny is the Indian instalment of the global 'Citadel' franchise. The series is set against the vi-



brant backdrop of the 1990s. Executive produced by the Russo Brothers' AGBO, Citadel and its subsequent action-espionage original series span the globe, exploring the story of spy agency Citadel and its powerful enemy syndicate, Manticore. Citadel: Honey Bunny will premiere on Prime Video on November 7.

Cops arrest NOIDA man for issuing death threats to Salman Khan



tivity. The user wrote, "The accused who threatened Zeeshan Siddiqui and Salman has been arrested and is being taught a lesson. Salman is counted amongst the biggest personalities of our country. Police arrested accused Gufran from Noida".

This comes after a person from Jharkhand sent threatening messages to Bollywood superstar Salman Khan, and later issued an apology. Earlier, the person in question had portrayed himself to be a member of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, and had asked for Rs 5 crore to settle the matter. The traffic police had received a message stating that the message shouldn't be taken lightly, and if Salman wants to end the feud with Lawrence then he has to pay Rs 5 crore to settle the matter. The message further stated that if Salman fails to do so then he will face a similar fate as slain politician Baba Siddique. The cops traced the origin of the message to Jharkhand.

Baba Siddique, who joined Ajit Pawar faction of NCP, died after being shot at by unidentified persons on October 12. The firing took place outside his MLA son Zeeshan Siddique's office near Colgate ground in Nirmal Nagar in the Bandra area of Mumbai. Salman and Baba Siddique were close friends as the politician held the constituency where Salman lives. Baba Siddique's Iftar parties were considered one of the high profile events of India's entertainment capital. Several media reports state that Salman, who will be seen in a cameo appearance as Chulbul Pandey in the upcoming Rohit Shetty directorial 'Singham Again', is spending sleepless nights after Baba's assassination as he was his close friend. The security apparatus of Salman has also been beefed up owing to the threats from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang.

Mumbai: As the investigation behind the murder of politician Baba Siddique picks up pace, a person who allegedly issued death threats to Baba's friend, Bollywood superstar Salman Khan, has been nabbed. On Tuesday, an X user shared two videos of the person in police cap-

Sharad Kelkar shares how his perception towards Ravan changed as an actor

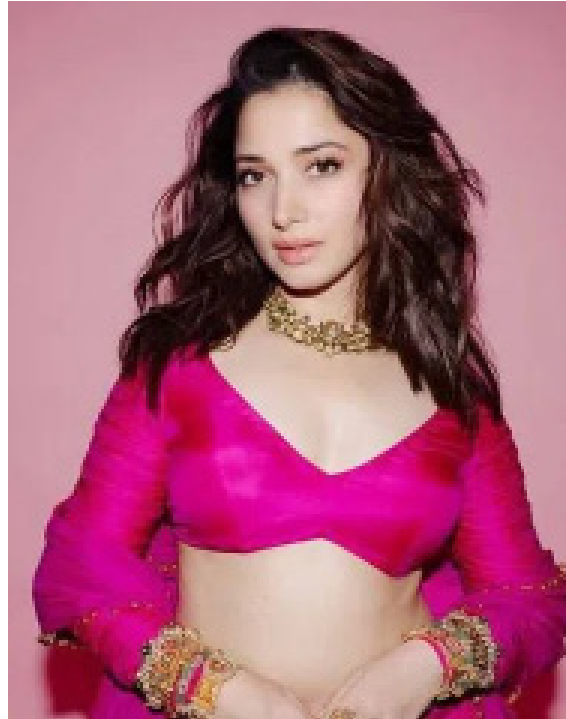
Mumbai: Actor Sharad Kelkar, who is known as the "Voice of Baahubali" in Hindi, is back to voicing Lankesh in the animated streaming series 'The Legend of Hanuman' season 5. The actor has shared that witnessing the character of Raavan as an audience and voicing the characters are two completely different things for him. Sharad's performance adds depth to Ravan, presenting a fascinating examination of ambition and fate. The new season of 'The Legend of Hanuman' offers a layered perspective on mythological heroes and villains. Hanuman's powerful Panchmukhi avatar embodies bravery and insight, while Sharad Kelkar's nuanced portrayal of Ravan explores the character's inner strength and conflict.

Talking about voicing the character of Raavan, Sharad Kelkar said, "You know, whatever I saw in my childhood, whether it was in Ravan's portrayal or in Ramlika, there's a certain way we have always viewed Ravan because we were just the audience. As an actor, I need to understand the full arc of Ravan—both before and after. So yes, what I saw growing up and what we are now depicting are quite different, with many interesting and creative elements added by Sharad Devarajan,



Jeevan, and the whole creative team of Disney Go Salsa". "It's a combined effort from all of us, and I'm happy that the audience, especially the younger ones, are enjoying it. I receive so many messages from kids, and their parents often tell me, 'My son is a huge fan' or 'My daughter loves The Legend of Hanuman'.

This is the skill Tamannaah Bhatia hopes to learn from Manish Malhotra



Mumbai: Bollywood actress Tamannaah Bhatia hopes some of ace designer Manish Malhotra's hosting skills rub off on her. Tamannaah took to Instagram, where she re-shared a picture of herself originally shared by Manish. The actress is seen wearing a beautiful saree by the designer as she attended his popular Diwali bash earlier this week. For the caption, she wrote: "Hoping some of your hosting skills rub off on me, had the best night Manish Malhotra." On the work front, Tamannaah is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film "Odela 2". Earlier this month she shared a glimpse from the movie. Tamannaah took to her Instagram stories, where she had shared a picture of herself praying in front of the temple dressed in her "Odela 2" costume. It was in March when Tamannaah shared the first look from her upcoming film "Odela", a supernatural thriller film. On the occasion of Maha Shivaratri in March, Tamannaah shared the first look from the film on X (formerly called Twitter). In the

image, the actress could be seen in maroon and orange clothes walking with a damru in one hand and a stick on the other. She also had a Shiva "tilak" on her forehead. The poster had "first time ever Tamannaah Bhatia as Shiva Shakthi", hinting that she might play a devotee of Lord Shiva. "#FirstlookOdela2 I am glad to be revealing the first look on this auspicious day of Maha Shivaratri. Har Har Mahadev! Happy Maha Shivaratri @IamSampathNandi @ashokalle2020 @ImSimhaa @AJANESH @soundar16 @neeta_lulla @SampathNandi_TW @creations_madhu," the caption read. "Odela 2" is the sequel to the 2022 digital release 'Odela Railway Station', which was based on the real incidents that happened in Odela, India. Directed by Ashok Teja, "Odela 2" also stars Hebah Patel, Vasishtha N. Simha in lead roles, alongside Yuva, Naga Mahesh, Vamsi, Gagan Vihari, Surender Reddy, Bhupal and Pooja Reddy.

Dimple Kapadia on being a celebrity: 'It's like taking an exam every second of the day; you're judged 24/7'

In today's world, where everything revolves around social media, veteran actor Dimple Kapadia feels otherwise. Revealing how she uses the medium without feeling a constant undue pressure as an actor, the 67-year-old prefers to scroll but not manage her accounts. Dimple mentioned that she finds it unnecessary to participate in the social media rat race like the rest of the people do. "But of course I scroll through Instagram," she revealed in a conversation with Vogue India, acknowledging that she enjoys observing but never felt the need to post herself. Ask if she would ever consider adapting to social media like her peers Zeenat Aman and Jackie Shroff have, and she questioned, "What for? Give me one good reason," adding, "But do I want to say anything about myself?" highlighting her unwillingness to put herself out there for people to judge. "Oh, I don't know if I'll ever be ready. It took me years to put up my art in my own house," Kapadia answered. Her colleagues may have embraced Instagram, but she finds solace in a completely different world, mobile gaming. "I love playing games on my phone," she told, naming Empires & Puzzles: Dragon Dawn. "I'm quite happy," revealing that she enjoys nothing more than being in her own Juhu apartment. "My love is my home."

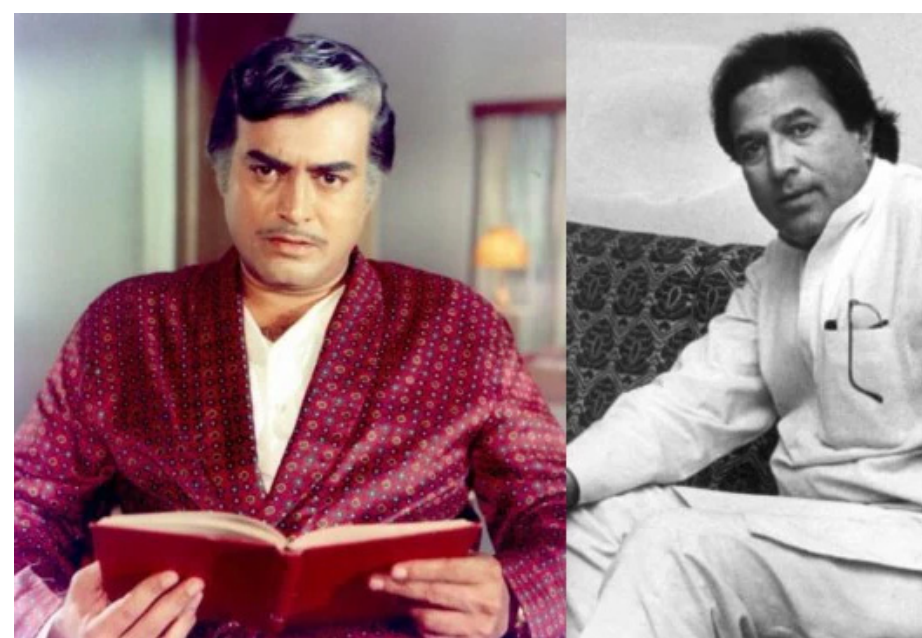
The actor, who made her Bollywood debut with the film Bobby (1973) at the age of 16, doesn't let herself get trapped between the intricacies of fame and



celebrityhood. "You can show me whatever you want to in the world. Nothing changes my mind. It's lovely that people have accepted and loved me for who I am, and I'm so thankful to them but I do not consider myself a star or an icon." She also mentioned that the life of a celebrity is not at all a piece of cake. "It's like taking an exam every second of the day. You're judged 24/7," Kapadia further added.

Rajesh Khanna 'humiliated' Sanjeev Kumar, walked in holding Hema Malini's hand: 'Sanjeev took this insult to heart'

Rajesh Khanna and Sanjeev Kumar were professional rivals and the rivalry somehow found a place in their personal lives as well. In the early 1970s, when Sanjeev and Hema Malini's families were discussing the prospect of their marriage, the couple was going through tough times as the two sides could not come to a consensus. Sanjeev's mother had put her foot down that she did not want a daughter-in-law who worked in films, and Hema's mother was certain that her daughter would not throw everything that she had built for herself for a man. At this point, Rajesh Khanna entered the picture and pulled a stunt that "humiliated and hurt" Sanjeev. In the book 'An Actor's Actor: The Authorised Biography of Sanjeev Kumar', written by Hanif Zaveri and Sumant Batra, the authors recap the episode when Rajesh Khanna tried to deepen the wedge between Sanjeev and Hema. At a social function, Sanjeev was called with Sharmila Tagore, as they were shooting for their film together. Sanjeev and Hema's relationship was hanging by a thread so they, presumably did not discuss the event. Rajesh was fully aware of Sanjeev's attendance, but Sanjeev didn't know that Kaka, as Khanna was fondly called, would be there. Sanjeev reached the



venue before time and sat on his designated place. After the while, there was a commotion in the hall as Rajesh walked in holding hands with Hema. This, left him "humiliated." "Sanjeev was humiliated and hurt. Hema was equally shocked to see him. She had merely accompanied Rajesh Khanna at his insistence and did not know of

the animosity that existed between the two. Although she could gauge to some extent the damage she had unwittingly inflicted, she did not dare confront Rajesh Khanna. Sanjeev Kumar stepped down from the stage and joined the audience in a different row, far away from them. None of them spoke to each other during the show," the book shared.

Jacob Bethell earns maiden Test call-up as England name squad for New Zealand tour



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

England have named young batter Jacob Bethell in their squad for the three-match Test series against New Zealand, starting November 28. Wicketkeeper Jamie Smith will also miss out for personal reasons. Swashbuckling young batter Jacob Bethell earned his maiden Test call-up as England named a strong 16-member squad for their upcoming three-match Test series against New Zealand. The 21-year-old recently made his debut for the Three Lions in the T20I series against Australia, after which he played all five ODIs as well. In 20 first-class matches, Bethell has scored

738 runs at an average of 25.44 with five half-centuries and a top score of 93 to his name. The southpaw is currently with the England white-ball team and will join the Test team after the series against the West Indies.

Wicketkeeper-batter Jamie Smith isn't a part of the Test squad after taking paternity leave for the birth of his child. In his absence, Jordan Cox has a chance to don the England whites for the first time. England will be looking to make amends after losing 2-1 to Shan Masood's Pakistan in the away Test series. They won the opening Test in Multan by a margin of an innings, but lost the next two Tests after Sajid Khan and Noman Ali made their batters struggle. England are scheduled to play their first Test against the Black Caps from November 28 at the Hagley Oval in Christchurch. Wellington and Hamilton will host the other two Tests from December 6 and 14 respectively. Before the Test series, Ben Stokes' England will also face New Zealand Cricket XI in a two-day practice match, starting November 23 at the Sir John Davies Oval in Queenstown. England are placed sixth in the table in the 2023-25 WTC cycle with a points' percentage of 40.79. Ben Stokes (captain), Rehan Ahmed, Gus Atkinson, Shoaib Bashir, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Bryson Carse, Jordan Cox, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Jack Leach, Ollie Pope, Matthew Potts, Joe Root, Olly Stone, Chris Woakes.

Ramiz Raja says dropping Babar Azam was a knee-jerk reaction by PCB management



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Former Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief Ramiz Raja maintained that dropping Babar Azam in the middle of the series was a "knee-jerk" reaction from the management and feels the slump in his batting form is not because of his technique but is more to do with his mental side. "He (Babar Azam) should have been asked whether he needed time off from cricket or not," Raja told reporters during a select media interaction ahead of Pakistan's white-ball tour of Australia. "Obviously, his form wasn't great, but even then, I mean, his body of work suggests that there should have been a much better way of easing him out from a Test series. So it was probably a knee-jerk reaction, but I'm sure that he'll come back as a stronger individual."

"This is probably the first time that he's been dropped in his career, and he will be eager to prove his point. So let's see how the comeback is or whether he is inspired, whether he has changed his technique, and how motivated he is because such things can spur an individual," he added. The scrutiny around Babar Azam's form has been magnified with each subsequent failure with the bat. The right-handed batter hasn't scored in 18 innings. Since the start of 2023, Babar Azam's average has been below 21 in nine Tests. "I think it's a lot to do with his temperament in Test cricket. When his form slumps, then it takes a longer time for him to make a comeback in red-ball compared to white-ball cricket. So it's a temperamental issue more than anything else."

"From a technical point of view, you see he doesn't stay still to the ball pitched on the back of the length side, so he needs to be just a little bit more side-on. Because



he's been, of late, getting out caught behind to a ball that is moving away. Also, he struggles against spin. You know he bats at number 4 in Test cricket, but in white-ball cricket, I don't think he is going to have a lot of problems against spin. Again, as I said, he needs to tweak his mental game, not his technique," he said. The loss of form during a turbulent time regarding his leadership status has impacted Babar's career. Following Pakistan's group-stage exit from the ODI World Cup in 2023, he was sacked from the captaincy in all formats. However, four months later, the T20I and ODI captaincy were returned to him, with Shaheen Afridi sacked after just one series.

Follow Viv Richards' blueprint Babar Azam's second stint was equally poor. Pakistan cricket team was eliminated from the T20 World Cup in 2024 in the first round after losing to the USA and India. Just six months after Babar Azam was reappointed, he left the captaincy, citing a desire to focus on his batting. Ramiz Raja says the star Pakistan batter has potential like legendary Viv Richards, and he must follow the blueprint of the former West Indies cricketer. "I feel Babar Azam has to achieve a lot more in Test cricket. He plays the white-ball format really well and has an average of 50-plus in both formats (T20I and ODI)... There is so much potential in Babar Azam," he said. "He has been Pakistan's best batsman in the last 10 years. Fans expect him to be a match-winner for Pakistan and, probably he himself wants to be a big-match player when there's a lot more at stake. And that's why I compared him with Richards; I think that's a great blueprint for Babar Azam to follow. The bigger the contest, the bigger the innings Richards used to play. Like Richards, Babar Azam too looks to decimate the opposition."

Harshit Rana reveals Gambhir's message after his 'dream come true' Test selection

GNS News Agency, Nov 1

India young fast bowler Harshit Rana revealed Gautam Gambhir's message for him after he earned his maiden India Test call-up. Indian young fast bowler Harshit Rana recently revealed the message he got from Gautam Gambhir after his maiden Test call-up. Notably, Rana was selected in the 18-member squad for the upcoming five-match Test series against Australia. The 22-year-old will join Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep, Prasidh Krishna and Nitish Kumar Reddy as other seamers in the team.

Recently, in a conversation with India Today, the youngster opened up about his maiden Test call-up and revealed Gautam Gambhir's special message after his selection. Notably, Rana played under Gambhir's mentorship in Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and played a pivotal role in his team's IPL (Indian Premier League) 2025 triumph. Speaking about his maiden Test call-up, the New Delhi-born cricketer called it a 'dream come true' moment and revealed how being with the team as a reserved player helped him gain valuable experience. "It's a big thing for me, I started my cricket here only (Delhi) and now I'm going to Australia with the Indian Team. It's a dream come true moment and a big thing for me. It was great to be a part of the Indian team as a reserved player because when you're with the team you get to have the same experience of an international game," Rana told India Today. Further speaking ahead, the fast bowler opened up on his plans to bowl in Australia and revealed Gautam Gambhir's first message for him after his maiden Test call-up. Rana denies getting call-up for third Test vs New Zealand



"In Australia, fast bowlers get a lot of help, I am aiming to give my best there. Rest, performances keep on going up and down but my preparation is going really well. Gautam Gambhir just told me just one thing when my name was announced that don't be lazy there," he added. Further speaking ahead, Rana also revealed he isn't thinking much about IPL retentions and denied receiving a call-up for the third Test of the ongoing series against New Zealand. Rana rose to the limelight with his phenomenal performance for KKR in the IPL 2025 where he scalped 19 wickets from 13 matches at an average of 20.15. Meanwhile, after his selection, he also shone for Delhi registering his maiden five-wicket haul in First Class cricket against Assam in the Ranji Trophy 2024-25. He registered match-figures of 7/141 in his team's ten wicket win over Assam. The youngster will be eager to continue his form if given an opportunity to make his international debut in Australia.

CSK reunion: Suresh Raina and MS Dhoni catch-up ahead of IPL retention



GNS News Agency, Nov 1

Former CSK star Suresh Raina reunited with his ex-captain MS Dhoni ahead of the IPL 2025 retention deadline. While Raina has moved on from the league, Dhoni is expected to return for the IPL 2025 edition.

Former India and Chennai Super Kings star batter Suresh Raina recently reunited with his former skipper MS Dhoni ahead of the IPL 2025 retention deadline on October 31. The duo share a rich legacy at CSK, having secured four IPL titles together in 2010, 2011, 2018, and 2021. Raina, who retired from the IPL after the 2022 season, remains one of the league's top run-scorers with 5,528 runs in 205 matches, including a century and 39 fifties. Beyond IPL success, he played a key role in India's triumphs under Dhoni's leadership, winning the 2011 ODI

World Cup and the 2013 Champions Trophy.

Their bond runs deep, with both retiring from international cricket on August 15, 2020. While Raina has moved on from the league, Dhoni is expected to return for the IPL 2025 edition. The 43-year-old, who led CSK to five IPL titles, remains a key figure for the franchise. With recent tweaks to the uncapped player rule, Dhoni is likely to continue adding to his 5,243 IPL runs and 24 half-centuries across 264 matches.

The CSK reunion Former India and Chennai Super Kings (CSK) skipper MS Dhoni has hinted at a possible return for IPL 2025, stating he wants to enjoy "whatever last few years of cricket" he can, amid ongoing speculation about his future with CSK. Questions surrounding Dhoni's plans began when he handed the captaincy to Ruturaj Gaikwad last season and started batting lower in the order. As the October 31 deadline for franchise retention lists approaches ahead of the mega auction, Dhoni's position is still a topic of interest. With a reintroduced rule allowing players who have retired from international cricket for five years to be classified as uncapped, CSK may choose to retain Dhoni under this new provision. Recently, Dhoni shared his current mindset at a promotional event in Goa, stating, "I just want to enjoy whatever last few years of cricket I'm able to play. Like how during our childhood, we used to go out and play at 4 pm, just enjoying the game."

Vishy vs the world: Viswanathan Anand defeats over 60,000 opponents in single online game

GNS News Agency, Nov 1, Viswanathan Anand chess Express AddaFile image of five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand with his wife and manager Aruna Anand in the background at the Indian Express Adda event in Chennai on July 16, 2024. Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand defeated over 60,000 opponents from the online chess community in a special online 'Vote Chess' match.

Anand was playing with white pieces and ended the game with a checkmate in just 24 moves. The game was organised to mark the 25th anniversary of the Kasparov vs The World match where former world champion Garry Kasparov took on over 50,000 voters on the Microsoft Network (MSN) and won the game after four months and 62 moves. Kasparov later called it "the greatest game in the history of chess."

How Anand defeated 60,000 players of the World in the unique match organised by Chess dot com, the Indian legend's opponents could register to vote for their

next move against Anand. Each side had the whole day to make a single move. This meant that the 60,000+ opponents that Anand faced had 24 hours to cast their vote on their next move with black pieces. The World team had the support of four coaches: IM Tania Sachdev, IM Sagar Shah, IM Kostya Kavutskiy, and FM James Canty. The World's team were able to chat in the system's comments section, exchanging ideas and strategies to try to defeat Anand. The Indian chess legend started by pushing his pawn to the c4 square, opting for an English Opening rather than his usually preferred choice of 1...e4. The English Opening is the fourth most-commonly played opening move in chess which allows the white queen the freedom to attack while also restricting black from responding with 1...d5. The former world champion then brought out his knights for a Four Knights, Kingside Fianchetto Line. By the 15th move, the World was already three pawns up. But from that point on, Anand's queen had started advancing on the World's king, putting it under duress.

Why Maria Sharapova's Hall of Fame inclusion will continue to annoy and be admired simultaneously

Maria Sharapova was recently announced as the next to be inducted into Tennis' Hall of Fame alongside Bryan brothers. It's a decision that is extremely polarizing just as the tall Russian's career was - winning all Slams and failing a drug test. Sharapova burst onto the scene in the early 2000s, and remained a force to reckon with in an era when Serena Williams ruled the courts. She finished and abysmal 2-20 against Serena, but always kept her chin up in a loss, and pushed herself to go from fast courts to winning on clay. Having caught the eye of great Martina Navratilova, she had moved to Florida with her father in 1994 and in 2001, aged 14 turned a pro. Sharapova's dominating style of play because of her power and height fetched her success and in 2004, she defeated Serena Williams at the Wimbledon for her first Major crown at age 17. In 2005, she made the semifinals of Australian Open, Wimbledon and the US Open, a run which helped her climb to the top of women's single's ranking. It was the first time she was ranked No 1. In 2006, she would clinch her maiden US Open title and in 2008 began the year by being crowned champion at the Australian Open.

After struggling with injuries, rehab and dip in form, Sharapova would come back stronger. Having started 2012 by being a runners-up at Australian Open, she would go on to win the French Open and thus become the 10th woman to complete a Career Grand Slam. After losing the next year's edition in the final, she would again lift the trophy at the Roland Garros in 2014. The grunting and the grins Sharapova was as cursed by critics as she was celebrated by fans. One thing that her pre-Social Media trolls invariably picked on, ever since her Wimbledon appearance in Girls singles at age 15, was her famous grunt, which was inadvertent given its necessity in generating power, but often cited by trolls to diss her. Tennis.com writes: "In those days, she also hummed as she hit some shots. She did that at maximum volume, too." It was telling that a Nadal grunt was never a problem, but Sharapova's was.

Not considered elegant Viewed in cold light of the day, Steffi Graf was as icy ruthless on the court, as they come. But Sharapova copped crinkled noses for her max pro-no-nonsense poker face, the purposeful tiny stomps, the pre-serve habit of walking right back to the boards, turning around and returning to baseline with clenched fists, wasn't to everyone's liking, if they craved cliched elegance. Yet she played each point as if it were her last. The double faults brought out the groans, but there was grudging respect for the pinpoint groundstrokes even as Tennis.com picks the backhand dropshot as immensely likeable. The business forays Topping the Forbes list for the richest woman athlete for 9 years till 2016, Sharapova was pinned as a glamour diva, often forgetting she won each of the Grand Slams at least once, one of only 10 women in tennis history. She was first Russian woman to reach No. 1 where she spent 21 weeks and won 36 titles. Her 2013 foray into chocolates, candies, gummies and gumbeurs through the Sugarpova brand was rightly criticised for being unhealthy. It came at a time when she was battling a terrible right shoulder injury, but the business venture for promoting sugar will remain controversial. She did study management and leadership at Harvard in that time, Marca sports reports.



Sharapova's doping ban Sharapova's career was blighted in 2016, after she was suspended after testing positive for meldonium. She contended she had been using it for a decade for a family history of heart conditions and diabetes, but wasn't aware it was banned that January. Its performance-enhancing effects have been debated, but the 15 month ban effectively ended her career, and cast shadow on her performance, even when the drug was legal. What's memorable is the press conference she addressed at a downtown hotel to speak of the doping ban. Speculation raged around whether she was retiring, but in her own spunky defiant style, Sharapova would point to the beat-up worn out carpet and ask the journalists if they thought she would end her career in a room with a decidedly unattractive carpet.

Williamson ruled out of final Test against India, may return with England series

Wellington: Kane Williamson will not travel to India for the third Test in Mumbai to ensure he is fit for the upcoming three-Test series against England, the New Zealand Cricket said on Tuesday. Williamson has been battling a groin complaint he picked up against Sri Lanka last month and hasn't featured for the Black Caps through their drought-breaking victories in the opening two matches of the series against India. "A cautious approach will instead be taken which will see Williamson continue his groin injury rehabilitation in New Zealand ahead of the first England Test starting at Hagley Oval on November 28," it said in a statement. Head coach Gary Stead said Williamson had made good progress, but the cautious approach would give him time to be fully fit for the England series. "Kane continues to show good signs, but isn't quite ready to jump on a plane and join us. While things are looking promising, we think the best course of action is for him to stay in New Zealand and focus on the final part of his rehabilitation so he'll be good to go for England," said Stead. "The England series is still a month away so taking the cautious approach now will ensure he is ready for the first Test in Christchurch," he added. The wins over India have boosted New Zealand's hopes of reaching next year's ICC World Test Championship Final.