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4th batch of Agniveers passing out ceremony held at Artillery Centre

Hyderabad: The passing out ceremony of the fourth batch Agniveers was organised at Artillery Centre, Hyderabad here on Tuesday. The event was a milestone as more than 2,600 Agniveers were absorbed into the Regiment of Artillery as Gunners, which was one of the largest courses to be trained at any regimental centre.

The Agniveers post completion of their 31 weeks of physically gruelling and mentally demanding training would be joining their parent artillery regiments. The parade along with the parents was attended by various military and civilian dignitaries.

Congress leaders begin competing for MLC graduate constituency ticket

Karimnagar: Many Congress leaders are in the competition for a ticket to the forthcoming Karimnagar-Medak-Adilabad-Nizamabad graduates MLC constituency elections.

Though the notification for the segment has not been released so far, some of the ticket aspirants have already started campaigning. Alphores Educational Institutions chairman Dr V Narender Reddy and Winners Publications owner Prasanna Harikrishna are extensively touring in the constituency besides organizing Atmeeya Sammelanams along with graduates.

Pleas of contract, outsourced workers in Health Dept fall on deaf ears



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Hyderabad: The State government remains a mute spectator to the travails of contract and outsourced workers in Telangana who have been discharging their duties at various capacities in the Health Department. Many of them have been discharging their duties for 18 year to 20 years at a meager salary and are facing an uncertain future, with nothing to fall upon after retirement. In August, the Medical and Health Services Recruitment Board (MHSRB) notified 1,931 Multipurpose Health Care Assistants (MPHA) posts for recruitment. However, there are between 6,500 and 7,000 such vacant posts that have to be notified and filled. This

raises questions over the future of the remaining MPHA workers, who do not make it in the recruitment test.

Currently, there are nearly 4,000 outsourcing and contract workers who are employed as MPHAs across Telangana. Many of them have already crossed their age limit to be eligible for the MPHA recruitment examination, which will be held on December 29. Many of them have already reached retirement age but continue to depend on a monthly salary of less than Rs 10,000. "Our members started at a meager monthly salary of just Rs 4, 000 per month and have continued to work for 18 to 20 years. State governments have utilised their services during various crisis situations including the Covid pandemic. Now is the time to recognise their services and add more MPHA posts and do justice for those who have lost their eligibility to even appear for such recruitment tests," says AITUC, State Deputy General Secretary, M Narasimha. While many in-service MPHAs who are on outsourcing and contract basis are preparing the upcoming recruitment drive, what happens to such workers who do not qualify. "The State government must have a system in place for outsourcing and contract workers who do not make it in the entrance examination. Such workers, who have been honestly and quietly discharging their duties at the ground level, must be rewarded," says Narasimha.

New criminal laws freed India from colonial legacy as envisioned by Constitution: PM

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Chandigarh: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the three new criminal laws "freed India from colonial legacy" as they "are a concrete step towards fulfilling the ideals that Constitution has imagined for the country".

Speaking at a programme to mark the implementation of the new criminal laws in Chandigarh, the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana, PM Modi said, "It's (the new criminal laws) a concrete step towards fulfilling the ideals that our Constitution has imagined for the citizens of our country... In the seven decades after Independence, the challenges faced by our judicial system were studied and thought upon. Behavioural aspects of all the laws were analysed. I thank the Supreme Court, judges and High Courts, especially of Punjab and Haryana, and Bar (association) who have taken the ownership of Nyaya Sanhita." He said decades after Independence, "our laws were revolving around the same penal mindset. Over time, efforts were made to make some little changes in laws, but their characteristic remained the same." PM Modi said, "At a time when the country is moving forward with the resolve of a united India, and as we celebrate 75 years of the Constitution, the implementation of Indian justice inspired by the spirit of the Constitution marks a significant beginning." Earlier, PM Modi along with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator Gulab



Chand Kataria, inspected the exhibition depicting the implementation of three criminal laws on the campus of Punjab Engineering College. PM Modi was briefed by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kanwardeep Kaur about the implementation of three transformative new criminal laws in Chandigarh with registration of 900 plus first information reports (FIRs) and four convictions in the past five months. These laws aim to overhaul India's criminal justice system, focusing on transparency, efficiency, and addressing modern challenges. PM Modi also inspected the exhibition depicting the implementation of criminal laws by simulating a crime scene investigation on the campus of Punjab Engineering College, where a dummy police station was set up.

4 workers killed in boiler blast at industrial unit in Gujarat's Bharuch



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Four workers were killed in a boiler blast at an industrial unit in Ankleshwar GIDC in the Bharuch district of Gujarat on Tuesday afternoon. Bharuch district administration confirmed that the blast occurred at the premises of Detox India Private Limited, which is in the business of industrial waste treatment and disposal. Speaking to The Indian Express, Superintendent of Police Mayur Chavda said, "Four labourers were killed in the blast. No one else suffered any injuries and there is no fire at the spot." Gujarat The labourers were working atop a storage tank inside the premises of Detox India Pvt Ltd, which is into industrial waste treatment. Following the blast, teams from the fire department, industrial safety and health departments, and the police reached the spot. They began a primary probe into the incident. Bharuch District Collector Tushar Sumera told The Indian Express that work on ascertaining the primary cause of the blast had been initiated. He said he was going to the spot to gather more details.

Heavy rain in southern Karnataka; schools, colleges shut in several districts

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Cyclone Fengal brought torrential rain to southern Karnataka on Tuesday, prompting authorities in multiple districts to declare holidays for schools and colleges. However, Bengaluru will remain unaffected by these closures, despite a yellow alert issued for the region. The district collectors of Dakshina Kannada, Kodagu, Chamarajanagar, Udupi, Mysuru, Chikkaballapur and Mandya have announced a one-day holiday for educational institutions on Tuesday. In Chamarajanagar, all schools and colleges, except degree colleges conducting examinations, will remain closed. Similarly, in Chikkamagaluru, the holiday applies to primary and high schools as well as anganwadis. In contrast, Jagadeesha G, Bengaluru Urban Deputy Commissioner, clarified that schools and colleges in the city would function as usual despite the adverse weather conditions. However, parents in Bengaluru expressed their concerns on social media, urging authorities to reconsider their decision. Parents urged authorities to declare a holiday as the heavy rain was causing heavy water logging in several areas, making commuting difficult. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued weather alerts for various districts. While a red alert has been issued in Kodagu, a yellow alert has been issued in Mandya, Hassan, and Bengaluru. Meanwhile, an orange alert has been issued in the Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Mysuru, Chamarajanagar, and Ramanagara districts. The IMD has forecast rainfall in Bengaluru and other parts of Karnataka over the next two days due to the effects of Cyclone Fengal. Authorities have urged residents to avoid low-lying areas, waterlogged zones, riverbanks, and beaches. In Mangaluru, where an orange alert has been issued, the district administration has declared holidays for schools, Anganwadis, and pre-university colleges on December 3. Fishermen have been advised to stay off the turbulent Arabian Sea until December 6.

More than 160 protesting farmers arrested in Noida

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Shiv Hari Meena said that they arrested more than 160 protesters at around 1.30 pm (Photo/PTI). Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Shiv Hari Meena said that they arrested more than 160 protesters at around 1.30 pm Police on Tuesday arrested more than 160 protesting farmers, including the president of Bharatiya Kisan Parishad Sukhbir Khalifa, who were holding a sit-in at the 'Dalit Prerna Sthal' here after their march to Delhi on land compensation and other demands was stopped a day earlier. The protesters had gathered from different parts of Uttar Pradesh on Monday on the call of Samyukta



Kisan Morcha and had threatened to resume their march to the national capital if their demands were not met within seven days.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Shiv Hari Meena said that they arrested more than 160 protesters at around 1.30 pm under Section 170 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita

(BNSS). The provision allows the police to carry out arrests to prevent the commission of a cognisable offence. Among the arrested were women and several farmer leaders like Khalifa and Pawan Khatana the state president of Bharatiya Kisan Union (Western Uttar Pradesh), according to the police. The protesters were taken to the Luksar jail in

CJI Khanna recuses himself from pleas challenging law on appointment of CEC, ECs



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

New Delhi: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna on Tuesday recused himself from hearing a clutch of petitions challenging the Chief Election Commissioner and the other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Condition of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 - which excludes the CJI from the process of appointment of top officials of the Election Commission. At the outset, CJI Khanna informed about his recusal and said that the matter would be heard by a different Bench. The CJI Khanna-led Bench ordered the matter to be listed in the week commencing January 6 next year and in the meantime, asked the parties to complete the pleadings. Earlier in March, the Supreme Court had dismissed the interlocutory applications seeking to stay the fresh appointments made to the poll body under the 2023 Act. Before this, the top court had refused to pass any interim order staying the implementation of the legislation.

"There will not be a stay. We cannot stay a statute like this," it had told senior advocate Vikas Singh, who appeared on behalf of a PIL litigant and argued that the impugned legislation violated the separation of power - which has been held to be a part of the basic structure of the Constitution. Several PILs were filed challenging the constitutional validity of the legislation introduced by the Parliament providing that the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and the other Election Commissioners (ECs) will be ap-

pointed by the President on the recommendation of a Selection Committee consisting of the PM, the Leader of the Opposition (or the largest opposition party) in the Lok Sabha, and a Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the PM. One of the pleas filed by a Noida-based lawyer sought directions to set aside the gazette notification issued by the Union government on December 28, 2023, and to include the Chief Justice of India in the selection committee for the appointment of the CEC and ECs. Further, it sought direction to the Union of India for implementing an independent and transparent system of selection constituting a neutral and independent selection committee for appointment of the CEC and other ECs. In March 2023, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court had held that the appointment of top officials of the Election Commission shall be done by the President on the advice of a panel comprising the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, and the Chief Justice of India.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah's Rally Rebranded As Congress Event Amid Internal Disputes

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

In a significant political development, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's planned rally in Hassan on December 5, originally envisioned as a show of strength by his supporters, has been renamed and restructured under the Congress banner. Initially titled "Sri Siddaramaiah Swabhimani Janandolana Samavesha" (Siddaramaiah Self-Respect Rally), the event will now be conducted as "Jana Kalyana Samavesha" following directives from the All India Congress Committee (AICC). The AICC's intervention came after internal complaints, including an anonymous letter warning against potential "hero worship" and its negative impact on the party's image.

Minister Sridhar Babu Launches Indiramma Illu App



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Hyderabad: Minister Sridhar Babu inaugurated the Indiramma Illu mobile application, a significant step towards streamlining housing schemes for the people of Telangana. The app aims to make housing application processes transparent and accessible, ensuring that beneficiaries can easily track the status of their applications. Speaking at the launch event, the minister emphasized the government's commitment to providing affordable housing for marginalized communities. He noted that the app would enhance efficiency and accountability in the implementation of housing schemes under the Indiramma Illu initiative. Officials highlighted the user-friendly features of the app, which include online registration, document uploads, and real-time updates. The initiative is expected to benefit thousands across the state, fulfilling the dream of owning a home for many families.

Chandrababu Vows to Tackle Rice and Land Mafia in AP

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

In a recent meeting of the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu announced his intention to crack down on the rice and land mafia operating within the state. The meeting, held on Tuesday, saw Naidu making several significant statements regarding alleged corruption and asset appropriation under the current YSRCP regime. Naidu accused the government of forcibly taking control of Kakinada Port and the Kakinada Special Economic Zone (SEZ), claiming that businessman KV Rao was awarded a 41% share in Kakinada Port while Aurobindo retained 59%. He lamented that the aggressive misappropriation of assets has become a troubling trend since the YSRCP came to power, stating, "I have never seen such grabbing of assets before."

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SYED AFSAR S/O SYED AMEER (old name) born on 04-06-1976 at Nirmal earlier was Holding Passport No. C5191554 DT: 26-11-2024 hereby changing my Name and henceforth in future I would be known as SYED AFSAR MOHIUDDIN S/O SYED AMEER (new name) H.No. 7-2-83/54-1 Indranagar, Nirmal-504106 Telangana State.

DECLARANT.
SYED AFSAR MOHIUDDIN
S/O SYED AMEER

Place: Nirmal
Date: 04-12-2024

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

GDP hits a low

INDIA's economic growth in the second quarter of FY25 has decelerated to a disappointing 5.4%, the lowest in seven quarters. This figure, significantly below last year's 8.1% for the same period, underscores the mounting pressures on the country's economic resilience. The manufacturing sector, traditionally a growth driver, is at the heart of this slowdown, grappling with declining output and subdued demand. The decline in Gross Value Added (GVA) in manufacturing to 2.2% from 14.3% a year ago highlights the sector's vulnerability to inflation and weak consumer spending. While the Chief Economic Adviser has downplayed concerns, brushing off this dip as a "one-off", there is need to remain cautious. Private final consumption and gross fixed capital formation together shaved off 1.5 percentage points from the overall growth, signalling waning confidence in household and business spending.

On the brighter side, the services sector expanded by 7.1% and the agriculture sector grew by 3.5%, driven by improved rural demand. However, these gains were not sufficient to offset the drag from manufacturing and exports, which slowed to 2.8%, reflecting global uncertainties and weaker petroleum exports.

The government's underwhelming capital expenditure — just 37% of the budgeted target for the first half — adds another layer of concern. Public spending is critical to kickstart private investments, particularly when high borrowing costs stifle corporate growth. As India faces the dual challenge of sustaining growth while managing inflation, a robust fiscal push is imperative. Without increased public investment and strategic support for manufacturing, the risk of falling below the projected 6.5% annual GDP growth looms large. The upcoming fiscal policy decisions will thus be crucial in steering the economy back on a stable growth trajectory.

'Heroin availability on streets down due to crackdown; smugglers shifting to synthetic drugs': Punjab DGP

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Punjab Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav tells Man Aman Singh Chhina that the availability of drugs like heroin on the streets and villages of Punjab has gone down drastically but the state has to battle international drug trafficking as well as drugs in transit from other states. Going by the sheer volume of drugs seized and number of arrests made, it seems there is no let up in drugs trade year after year. How do you read that?

We have made a lot of progress. The street availability of drugs has come down drastically. If you see in the past three-four months there has been hardly any death due to drug overdose. No drugs are grown in Punjab but being a transit state, (Punjab shares border with Pakistan and other states) drugs are pumped into the state. Drugs come in from Pakistan through drones or via riverine routes. Drugs such as opium, poppy husk is also coming in from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. In fact we have recovered lot of opium from Jharkhand and it has emerged as a source for the drug. Ganja comes from Himachal Pradesh. Heroin from here which is smuggled in from across the international border goes to Delhi and from there it is again re-packaged and sent back to Punjab. All these drugs come into the state and if you see our seizures and the number of arrests, its huge considering the size of Punjab. Every year we register around 12,000 FIRs under the NDPS Act and arrest around 13,000 to 14,000 accused while in the entire country there are 16,000 FIRs. So if you see the Herculean efforts being made by Punjab, which is just 2 per cent of the size of India, it is a massive enforcement act.

So the bulk of drugs are still coming from Pakistan?

Yes. This year we have also noticed a new trend. The Taliban in Afghanistan appear to have cracked down on opium production in the country. So there has been a fall in cultivation of poppy and production of opium there. In the recent seizures we have seen that smugglers are shifting to synthetic drugs like methamphetamine. Now these are coming in through drones in large numbers. Going by the data of seizures, an abnormally high number of pills are being recovered in the state.

This is good detection. What is happening is that when we crackdown on heroin and the heroin availability decreases in the market, the consumer shifts to pharmaceutical drugs like 'Signature capsule'. It was not banned anywhere. The SSPs are taking it up under relevant legal provisions with the Deputy Commissioners to seize these drugs. The diversion of these drugs for misuse is now being prevented. So we are conducting joint raids with other preventive agencies on pharmaceutical stores. Another thing which has worked is the forward and backward linkages. When you make a seizure we just don't rest with the arrest of a person from whom it has been recovered but find out where it came from and where it was to be sent.

There is a common perception that drugs cannot be sold in village and streets if the local police is not involved. How do you respond to this accusation?

We have zero tolerance for policemen who are conniving with drugs traders. We have arrested our police people when they are found involved and some have also been dismissed from service. There is a rotation policy of the government where we rotate our personnel after a fixed number of years, as is common in other civil departments too. The purpose is that no one should be able to develop a vested interest of linkages of any kind.

When the police talk about 'big fish' who have been arrested for drugs trade, what do they mean? What is the profile of a 'big fish'?

Most of these 'big fish' I am talking about are the really, really big ones, with 300 kg, 500 kg heroin seizures. We classify 'big fish' with seizures of two kg heroin and above. There are many people who are middlemen who push drugs to retailers. They come from a variety of backgrounds. Some of them are hardcore criminals also. Most of the 'pushers' are addicts-turned-suppliers. Is it worthwhile to arrest small peddlers with minuscule quantities recovered? We have seen NDPS FIRs which mention seizure of only silver foil and matchsticks. We are rather encouraging action in such cases under Section 64A of the NDPS Act. Our entire policy now, as against previous policies when jails were filled with small time peddlers, is that we do not want to arrest someone unnecessarily. Our basic principle is that we do not have to arrest the consumer

ED summons Raj Kundra for questioning in money laundering case



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned businessman Raj Kundra, the husband of actor Shilpa Shetty, for questioning in a money laundering case linked to the alleged illegal distribution of pornographic movies, official sources said. They said Kundra has been asked to depose before the investigating officer of the case this week. Some others involved in the case have also been summoned, the sources added.

The central agency raided the premises of Kundra in Mumbai and those of other persons located in some cities of Uttar Pradesh on December 29. Kundra said on Saturday that he was "fully complying" with the ongoing investigation that has been unfolding for the last four years. Shetty's lawyer had told PTI that the action was not against the actor and that Kundra was "cooperating in the investigation for the truth to come out." The money laundering case of May 2022 stems from at least two Mumbai Police FIRs and chargesheets filed against Kundra and others. The businessman and some others were arrested in the case and later granted bail. This is the second money laundering case against Kundra. Early this year, the ED had attached assets worth Rs 98 crore of Kundra and Shetty in a

cryptocurrency case. The couple, however, obtained relief from the Bombay High Court against this attachment order.

The businessman told a local Mumbai court in 2021 that there was not even an iota of evidence with the prosecution (Mumbai Police) that would connect the app 'Hotshots', used in the alleged porn films racket, with an offence under the law. According to the probe agency, the 'Hotshots' app was being used by accused persons for uploading and streaming obscene content.

Kundra had claimed there was no evidence of him being "actively" involved in the creation of alleged porn content. He had claimed he was falsely implicated and was not even named in the FIR and was dragged by the respondent (police) in the case. The businessman claimed in the plea that he is being made a "scapegoat" for reasons best known to investigators. The police had filed FIRs on the basis of complaints received from two women, while another woman had submitted a complaint at the Lonavla police station, around 120 km from Mumbai. During the investigation, it came to light that some small-time artistes were lured with the promise of giving them breaks in some web series or short stories, police had said. These actors were called for auditions and were asked to act 'bold' scenes which later turned out to be semi-nude or nude scenes, which were against the wishes of the actors, the official had said. During the police investigation, it also came to light that there are many 'porn-like apps' (applications) operating in cyberspace. The police had told the court that its probe found that Kundra set up Armsprime Media Pvt Ltd, which, through London-based Kenrin Pvt Ltd, bought the Hotshots app to upload "objectionable videos" on social media. Kundra's phone contained WhatsApp chats regarding Kenrin and its financial transactions. These conversations also revealed that he had discussed selling 119 adult films to a person for USD 1.2 million, police had said.

Court sentences former Punjab police officer to life term for kidnapping son-in-law

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

The Punjab police challan revealed that during his tenure at Julkan police station, Jagvir Singh forged and inserted false entries in the Daily Diary Report (DDR) to create fabricated evidence and save himself from legal punishment. A district court on Saturday sentenced former Punjab Police Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Jagvir Singh to life imprisonment for kidnapping his son-in-law Gurdeep Singh 14 years ago. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on the accused. The court of Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADSS) Baljinder Singh Sra sentenced Jagvir Singh to life imprisonment under Section 364 (kidnapping) and a fine of Rs 10,000, seven years under Section 466 (forgery of documents and electronic records) and a fine of Rs 5,000, and five years each under Sections 471 (using as genuine a forged document) and 474 (possessing a forged document or electronic record with intent to use it fraudulently) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). All sentences will run concurrently. On July 4, 2010, in the Phase XI area, the accused abducted Gurdeep Singh, his son-in-law, with the intention that he might be murdered or disposed of in a manner that endangered his life. Since then, Gurdeep has been untraceable. At the time of Gurdeep Singh's disappearance, Jagvir Singh was posted as the Station House Officer (SHO) at Julkan police station in Patiala. Initially, a case was registered against Jagvir Singh under Sections 364 (kidnapping) and 120-B (criminal con-



spiracy) of the IPC. Later, the charges were amended to include Sections 465 (forgery), 466 (forgery of documents and electronic records), 468 (forgery of valuable security), 471 (using as genuine a forged document), and 474 (possessing a forged document or electronic record with intent to use it as genuine). The police challan revealed that during his tenure at Julkan police station, Jagvir Singh forged and inserted false entries in the Daily Diary Report (DDR) to create fabricated evidence and save himself from legal punishment. These insertions were proven to be forged by a report from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL), Chandigarh. The case was registered based on a complaint filed by Bhupinder Kaur. She was represented by senior advocate A S Sukhija and advocate Shebaz Singh.

Over 7 lakh international students may have to leave Canada next year



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

India Canada student visa Canada has already reduced international student permits by 35% in 2024 and plans a further 10% reduction in 2025, citing housing market pressures as a key factor. With nearly five million temporary permits set to expire by the end of 2025, Canadian immigration authorities are expecting most holders to leave voluntarily. Immigration Minister Marc Miller told the Commons immigration committee earlier this week.

Of the expiring permits, 766,000 belong to foreign students, a group facing mounting challenges due to recent policy shifts. Conservative MP Tom Kmiec asked how the government would ensure compliance, noting the sheer scale of expiring visas. Miller assured the committee that monitoring mechanisms, including the Canada Border Services Agency, are in place to investigate and address violations. However, not all temporary residents will be required to leave. "Some will receive renewals or postgraduate work permits," Miller said. Such permits, typically issued for nine months to three years, allow foreign students with Canadian diplomas or degrees to gain work experience needed for permanent residency applications.

Since August this year, students from Punjab have been camping in tents in Brampton to protest against Canada's shifting policy towards them. Most of them say they had come to the country with the assumption that they would be allowed to stay. Statistics from the immigration department show that as of May 2023, over one million foreign students were in Canada. Of them, 396,235 held Post-Graduation Work Permits (PGWPs) by the end of 2023—almost triple the number from 2018. But with lakhs of PGWPs set to expire in the next one year, students face stiff competition for permanent residency amid tighter immigration policies. Canada has already reduced international student permits by 35% in 2024 and plans a further 10% reduction in 2025, citing housing market pressures as a key factor. Earlier last month, immigration minister Miller expressed concern that an increasing number of students are filing for asylum. He had said they would be hastening the process of disposing of such claims to weed out bogus

Chandigarh man alleges 'food poisoning' after drinking 'beer'; Consumer Commission orders liquor store to pay Rs 11,000



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

The complainant, Vishal Singal, alleged that he purchased four small bottles of Hopper Witbier from The Liquor Estate in Manimajra, Chandigarh, on July 10, 2023, paying Rs 280 in cash. The complainant, Vishal Singal, alleged that he purchased four small bottles of Hopper Witbier from The Liquor Estate in Manimajra, Chandigarh, on July 10, 2023, paying Rs 280 in cash.

The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Chandigarh, has directed a local liquor store and its distributor to pay Rs 11,000 to a Panchkula resident for causing mental agony and harassment after he alleged food poisoning from beer purchased from the store. The complainant, Vishal Singal, alleged that he purchased four small bottles of Hopper Witbier from The Liquor Estate in Manimajra, Chandigarh, on July 10, 2023, paying Rs 280 in cash. He purchased four more bottles the next day, paying Rs 280 via debit card.

Singal claimed he experienced uneasiness, stomach aches, and vomiting on the night of July 11, 2023, which worsened, leading to symptoms of food poisoning. He alleged that the beer bottles sold to him were old, stale, and expired. Subsequent medical tests, including an ultrasound of the abdomen and blood tests, revealed inflammation of the liver and toxin concentration in the bile ducts, which he attributed to the beer. In his complaint, Singal also highlighted that the beer bottles lacked critical details such as maximum retail price, import date, and importer or distributor contact information. He filed a legal notice against the liquor vend and its distributor before approaching the Commission. In response, The Liquor Estate and Ozark Merchandising argued that Singal had not provided evidence proving that the beer was purchased from them. They contended that the receipt submitted did not specify the beer brand and claimed the allegations were baseless. De Brabandere Brewery, Belgium, stated that the beer batch in question was manufactured in October 2021 and exported to India in November 2021. The brewery emphasised that the beer had a consumption expiry of January 6, 2023, and they could not be held liable for its sale after the expiry date. The Chandigarh Excise and Taxation Department argued that Singal failed to submit an analysis report from a recognised food analyst to substantiate his claims. The Commission found that Singal's medical reports did not conclusively prove that his health issues were caused by consuming the beer. However, it noted that Brindco Sales, another respondent, failed to contest the complaint and was proceeded against ex-parte. The Commission directed The Liquor Estate, Ozark Merchandising, and Brindco Sales to jointly pay Rs 6,000 as compensation and Rs 5,000 as litigation costs to Singal. Complaints against other respondents were dismissed.

AAP MLA Naresh Yadav sentenced to two years in Quran desecration case



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

A Malerkotla court has sentenced Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Naresh Yadav from Delhi's Mehrauli constituency to two years in prison in the 2016 Quran desecration case. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 11,000. If Yadav fails to pay the fine, his imprisonment will be extended by an additional month. Additional District and Sessions Judge Parminder Singh Grewal pronounced the quantum of punishment on Saturday, a day after declaring Yadav and two others—Vijay Kumar and Gaurav Kumar—guilty in the case. The trio was taken into custody on Friday after being convicted. The Quran desecration incident occurred on June 24, 2016, during the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)-BJP government's tenure. Torn pages of the Quran were found on Jarg Road in Malerkotla, triggering unrest and violence in the town. A mob had even damaged vehicles belonging to the then SAD MLA Farzana Alam. Police initially arrested two brothers, Vijay Kumar and Nand Kishore, along with Gaurav Kumar. However, during the investigation, Naresh Yadav's name emerged based on a statement by one of the accused. Yadav was arrested by Punjab Police on July 24, 2016, from his Delhi residence on charges of conspiring to incite communal unrest. The three convicts were sentenced under Sections 295-A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings), 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion), and 120-B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code. All sentences will run concurrently, making the total punishment two years of imprisonment with a fine of Rs 11,000. SAD leader Daljeet Singh Cheema welcomed the verdict, stating, "This judgment exposes the deep-rooted conspiracy behind the sacrifice of religious scriptures in Punjab and the real face of AAP. It proves our allegation that these incidents were part of a calculated effort to disturb peace and gain political mileage." Cheema also criticised AAP leaders, including Arvind Kejriwal and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, accusing them of defending Yadav despite the allegations. "Now, Kejriwal must explain to the country why his party MLA indulged in such a heinous crime," he wrote on social media. In 2021, Yadav and Nand Kishore were acquitted by a Malerkotla court due to insufficient evidence.

Haryana to reward whistle blowers reporting tax evasion, drug trafficking, cow smuggling



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Haryana chief minister Nayab Singh Saini has directed officials to create a scheme to reward whistleblowers providing information about tax evasion, cow smuggling, and drug trafficking. The scheme will ensure the confidentiality of informants and offer financial incentives for actionable intelligence. The chief minister has also instructed the development of dedicated online portals where citizens can report such illegal activities. "The identity and details of those sharing information on tax evasion, cattle smuggling, or drug trafficking will remain confidential. An initial fund of Rs 2 crore will be allocated to the Excise and Taxation Department to support this initiative," Saini said. He emphasised the need for intensified efforts to curb drug peddling in the state and called for collaboration between the Excise and Taxation Department, Haryana State Narcotics Control Bureau, and the police. A portal for reporting drug peddling will be launched, and informants will be rewarded for their contributions, the government spokesperson added. Issuing directives to tackle counterfeit liquor production and smuggling, Saini instructed officials to enforce strict penalties, including hefty fines, against offenders. "The ill-gotten assets of such criminals should also be attached," the spokesperson said.

Outrage in Kerala over govt employees illegally availing pension meant for the poor, Pinarayi says will act



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Over 60,000 ineligible persons, including income tax payers, in Kerala have been pocketing central government's flagship Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi — an initiative to ensure minimum income support of Rs 6,000 per year for farmers in the country. Data from the State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) shows that the figure of ineligible beneficiaries doubled since 2022, when the Centre first directed the state to screen the list and remove dis-entitled ones from the scheme after ensuring refund.

The tardy process in Kerala with regard to recovery of the money from the ineligible accounts comes close on the heels of the state finance department finding that 1,458 state government employees have been pocketing various welfare pensions meant for the weakest section of society. According to data provided at a meeting of the SLBC earlier this week, the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi in Kerala has 60,687 ineligible beneficiaries, and the amount to be refunded from them is Rs 36.40 crore. However, only Rs 13.59 crore could be recovered so far from 22,661 ineligible persons.

Government documents show that the central government had first told the state in early 2022 to weed out ineligible beneficiaries and recover the amount already paid to the accounts of such persons. At that time, the state had only 31,416 ineligible beneficiaries while 37.2 lakh farmers in Kerala were included in the scheme. However, the number of ineligible beneficiaries has nearly doubled to 60,687 as of November 2024 while the number of eligible beneficiaries in Kerala has come down — data on the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi portal shows that, as on November 30,

Kerala has only 28.1 lakh eligible beneficiaries. The state's agriculture department has been tasked to identify the ineligible beneficiaries and the central government has issued a standard operating procedure to recover the amount from the ineligible, government sources said.

"We are in the process of identifying the ineligible farmers and removing them from the data. Many ineligible persons are refusing to refund the amount credited into their accounts," one official said. Krishi Bhavans (panchayat level agricultural offices) have to examine the list of beneficiaries and weed out ineligible beneficiaries. "In some places, local politicians or panchayat members, who have enrolled the ineligible, are also delaying the recovery of the funds. We are still in the process of cleaning the list, but it is a slow process due to various factors. Respective banks have also been frequently intimidated about ineligible accounts," the official said. When the scheme was launched in 2019, the target was to cover the maximum number of people. "But we don't know how the number of ineligible (beneficiaries) has grown over the years despite screening to find ineligible had begun in 2022 itself," the official said. Meanwhile, an official with the SLBC said the banking sector can initiate refund or recovery process only on the intimation from the agriculture department.

"We have no provision to take a suo motu action. When we get intimation from the agriculture department, we hold the balance in the account (restriction) and there is an automatic process to pull out the amount to be refunded," the official said, adding that as an alternative, the government should initiate the recovery process. The ineligible beneficiaries in Kerala continue to benefit from the Kisan Samman Nidhi at a time the state's dependence on agriculture for livelihood is the lowest in the country. A recent study conducted by NABARD, as part of doubling the farmer's income agenda, had found that only 18 per cent of households in Kerala are agricultural households, whereas the figure at the national level is 57 per cent. This figure for Andhra Pradesh is 53 per cent, Assam is 67 per cent, Madhya Pradesh 64 per cent, Jharkhand 69 per cent, Karnataka 55 per cent, Gujarat 54 per cent and Tamil Nadu 57 per cent. In Kerala and Goa, 82 per cent of households were predominantly engaged in non-agricultural activities to earn their livelihoods.

60,000 ineligible beneficiaries have been pocketing Rs 6,000 meant for farmers in Kerala

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Over 60,000 ineligible persons, including income tax payers, in Kerala have been pocketing central government's flagship Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi — an initiative to ensure minimum income support of Rs 6,000 per year for farmers in the country. Data from the State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) shows that the figure of ineligible beneficiaries doubled since 2022, when the Centre first directed the state to screen the list and remove dis-entitled ones from the scheme after ensuring refund. The tardy process in Kerala with regard to recovery of the money from the ineligible accounts comes close on the heels of the state finance department finding that 1,458 state government employees have been pocketing various welfare pensions meant for the weakest section of society. According to data provided at a meeting of the SLBC earlier this week, the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi in Kerala has 60,687 ineligible beneficiaries, and the amount to be refunded from them is Rs 36.40 crore. However, only Rs 13.59 crore could be recovered so far from 22,661 ineligible persons.

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As Bihar's healthcare system crumbled and doctor shortage persisted, state failed to spend its full health budget for years, CAG finds

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Bihar healthcare system, Bihar doctor shortage, Bihar health budget, health budget, Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), Indian express news, current affairs Congress spokesperson Gyan Ranjan Gupta said leaving 31% health funds unused "shows inefficiency of the system, especially when we are too short of doctors, support staff and medical equipment". The Bihar government hasn't been able to spend 31 per cent of its total health budget between 2016-17 and 2021-22, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India said in its latest report on the state's public health, basic infrastructure and services. The figures, presented in a report that was tabled in the assembly on November 28, has drawn criticism from the Opposition. According to the CAG, "between the financial years of 2016-17 and 2021-22, the state spent only Rs 48,047 Crore (69 per cent) of total budget provisions of Rs 69,730.83 crore". The report also highlighted some other important aspects, such as massive shortage of doctors. According to the report, Bihar is still short of 66,775 doctors — 53 per cent less than the number recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and 32 per cent less than the national average. The WHO recommends 1,24,919 doctors for a population of 12.49 crore (as of March 2022), the report says. "However, only 58,144 allopathic doctors were made available in the state as of January 2022, which is

53% less than the WHO's recommended norms and 32% less than the national average," it says. Likewise, there's also a shortage of nurses, paramedical staff and essential medicines in government hospitals. While the shortage of nurses ranged from 18 per cent (Patna) to 75 per cent (Purnia), that of paramedics ranged from 45 per cent (in Jamui) to 90 per cent (East Champaran). Shortage of essential medicines ranged from 21-65 per cent in Out-Patient Departments (OPD) and 34-83 per cent for those admitted at hospitals between 2016 and 2022. During this period, 846 (44 per cent) of the state's 1,932 public health centres (PHCs) and additional public health centres (APHCs) didn't function round-the-clock. Of it, 566 (29 per cent) PHCs and APHCs had maternity services and 266 of them (14 per cent) had operation theatres. The CAG has made as many as 31 recommendations to improve health services in the state. The Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal has attacked the state government for the underutilised health budget. Significantly, the RJD was part of the Nitish Kumar-led state government from August 2022 to January 2024, when the chief minister broke the alliance to go back to the NDA. "The health sector needs special focus. The period during which RJD also shared power (2016-2017) shows that health funds were not used but the bulk of responsibility rests with the NDA government," RJD spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwari told.

'If someone marries to convert a person's religion...': Rajasthan to introduce Bill against forceful conversions, in footsteps of other states



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

The ruling BJP government in Rajasthan has decided to introduce a bill in the upcoming Assembly session to stop religious conversion by force or fraud in the state. A decision in this regard was taken during the cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Uttarakhand have already implemented similar laws. "The Rajasthan Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Bill-2024 will be tabled in the upcoming session of the Assembly to stop attempts of conversion by inducement or fraud. At present there is no specific law in the state regarding stopping illegal conversion, so its proposal was approved after consideration

in the cabinet meeting," said Law and Legal Affairs Minister Jogaram Patel.

He said that after this bill becomes a law, no person or institution will be able to convert a person by using misrepresentation, fraud, force, undue influence etc. If any person or institution carries out such an act, they will be severely punished. "If someone marries with the intention of converting a person's religion against the law, then the family court can declare such marriage invalid. In this law, the crime will be non-bailable and cognizable. In several other states, laws already exist to prevent forced conversion and Rajasthan will also follow their footsteps," said Patel.

Patel said the bill proposes that if someone wants to convert to another religion, the person will have to give an application to the district magistrate 60 days in advance. "The district magistrate will examine whether or not it is a forceful conversion," he said, adding if it is found that the conversion is not forced or under any temptation, then the applicant will be allowed to go ahead with it. In the meeting, several important decisions were also taken, including approval of 9 new policies to accelerate the industrial and economic development of the state, formation of 7th State Finance Commission, bringing ordinance for the formation of development authorities in Bikaner and Bharatpur, amendment in Rajasthan Civil Services (Revised Pay) Rules-2017 in accordance with the recommendations of Khemraj Committee, amendment in various service rules.

Gujarat bogus nursing college row: Key accused arrested for collecting fees from over 70 students since 2021

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

bogus nursing college The primary interrogation of the accused after his arrest on Friday has revealed that this organisation took money from the students to complete the admission procedure for nursing colleges located in Karnataka.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by the Narmada District police to probe into allegations of a bogus nursing college running in the district on Saturday said it has arrested the chairman of a local trust, Maa Kaamal Foundation, for allegedly cheating aspiring students from the tribal region by promising them admission into nursing courses and collecting fees from about 77 students since 2021. Rajpipla Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP) Sanjay Sharma, who is heading the SIT, said that Dr Anilkesar Gohil, the convener of Maa Kaamal Foundation, was arrested on Friday after an FIR was lodged by one tribal student, a resident of Jhagadia in Bharuch at the Rajpipla police station.

As per the FIR, Gohil had allegedly "created booklets of his foundation, enticing students with advertisements for a three-year nursing course for an initial fee of Rs 1.74 lakh and he also took an additional sum of Rs 6,500 for the examination". The complainant has alleged that no classes have been conducted since 2021 nor has she received any certificates or mark sheets.

Sharma said, "The SIT was formed by Narmada District Superintendent of Police Prashant Sumbhe after we received complaints of a possible case of cheating. It was headed by me as the DySP Rajpipla and included the Police Inspectors of Rajpipla police station, Special Operations Group as well as the Local Crime Branch of Narmada district. We conducted an in-depth investigation into the case and recorded statements of 77 students, who had been cheated in the case." Sharma added that the Maa Kaamal Foundation, run by the accused, allegedly distributed pamphlets to students completing their higher secondary courses and enrolled them for nursing courses, although the college was not present in the district. "The primary interrogation of the accused after his arrest on Friday has revealed that this organisation took money from the students to complete the admission procedure for nursing colleges located in Karnataka. The money was taken into the account of the Foundation from the students and they were taken to Bangalore for examinations but not actually made to write any exams. So they have also not received any certificates or mark sheets for three years. . . The Chairman took fees from the students but we have not come across any other agents who worked for them," he said.

The FIR states that this Trust had approached students through their schools and promoted themselves as a nursing college. The student has stated in the complaint that she visited the office of the foundation in August 2021 and met an "office clerk", who handed a brochure in which the foundation showed off a 'General Nursing and Midwifery college (GNM)' while also promising a scholarship and



placements in government and private hospitals. The FIR states names of 13 other students, who have been allegedly fleeced by the foundation, and adds that the accused also "took away original mark sheets of Class X and Class XII, leaving no option before the students but to wait in hope."

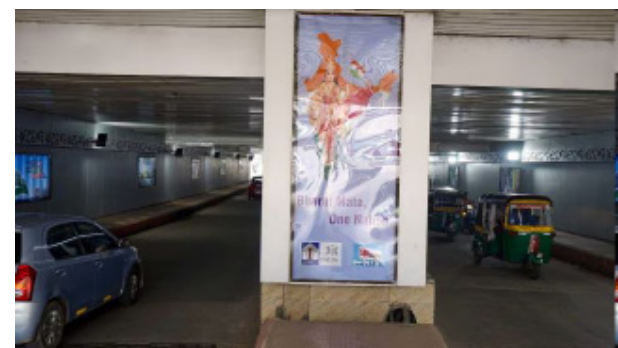
Four female teachers have been identified in the FIR as Hemali Machi, Rashmika Vasava, Radha Paswan and Manisha Vasava who conducted theory general classes in Gujarati for six months but the foundation allegedly did not start "practicals" for nursing. "Later, the foundation sent students to 13 different private hospitals to learn practicals in Surat and paid a stipend of Rs 3,000 per month," the complainant has stated. In 2022, as per the FIR, the foundation informed the students that their admission had been confirmed in a nursing college in Bengaluru in Karnataka and they would have to travel to appear for exams. "The foundation took a sum of Rs 10,000 per student for travel, stay and food in Bengaluru but told us that the hall tickets had not been issued. . . They said that we would have to appear for examinations of two academic years in one go the following year," the FIR states. It adds that three students had even received the hall ticket and appeared for the exams in Karnataka but the rest of the students were not given an opportunity to attempt any exams even in 2023. The police have received evidence of receipts of fees paid to the foundation. Aam Aadmi Party MLA Chaitar Vasava had begun an agitation against the "bogus" nursing college in Rajpipla earlier in November and also sat in protest at the office of the District administration on November 21, along with the students, who said that they had been fleeced by the foundation. Vasava had accused the foundation of running a similar racket in Surat, Navsari and Narmada district. Vasava said, "We had been raising the issue of the nursing college ever since the students came to complain to us. We had probed and understood that this foundation had no recognition from NCRT or UGC and had no power to conduct examinations or offer degree courses. We asked them to return the fees of the students. They have already cheated students and ruined three years of their life." Warning parents and students against falling prey to such fraud, Sharma said, "Whenever you take admission into any institution, do check the background, history and antecedents before paying fees. It is better to be an alert citizen. . ."

Alkapuri underpass in Vadodara to get a Railway overbridge: CM Bhupendra Patel

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Alkapuri underpass Speaking at the event where he inaugurated development works of Rs 616 crores of the Vadodara Municipal Corporation, the Chief Minister said, "There is an Alkapuri railway underpass. Very soon Vadodara will receive the gift of a railway overbridge. In what is expected to bring a major relief to residents of Vadodara, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel on Saturday announced that a railway over bridge (ROB) would come up over the Alkapuri railway underpass, which is notorious for flooding during monsoon and traffic snarl during peak hours. Commuters travelling from North-Central parts of Fatehgunj and Sayajigunj to the West of the city are often inconvenienced by these snarls. Based on multiple representations made by Vadodara Lok Sabha MP Hemang Joshi as well as his predecessor Ranjan Bhatt, the Railway Ministry has cleared the way for the construction of the ROB, which will go over the main line of the busy Vadodara Railway Junction, said officials.

The Alkapuri railway underpass — or 'garnala' as it is commonly known — is one of the crucial links for commuting within the city. Speaking at the event where he inaugurated development works of Rs 616 crores of the Vadodara Municipal Corporation, the Chief Minister said, "There is an Alkapuri railway underpass. Very soon Vadodara will receive the gift of a railway overbridge. . ."



According to officials, the clearance from the railways was a necessary step in the direction. In his letter to Vaishnav earlier this year, Hemang Joshi had said, "During peak hours, it becomes a major point of traffic congestion, causing inconvenience to commuters and affecting overall productivity. Additionally, during the monsoon season, the underpass often gets inundated, necessitating its closure and further aggravating traffic woes. This situation also hampers emergency services, posing a risk to public safety." On Saturday, the Chief Minister also inaugurated 36 completed projects of the VMC worth Rs 353.54 crore, including drainage projects worth Rs 176 crores and also laid the foundation stone for upcoming projects worth Rs 263 crores.

Two Gujarat women accused of witchcraft rescued following efforts from NGO, police



GNS News Agency, Dec 3
 Even as the state government had enacted the Gujarat Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act, the long time need for such a law became apparent in an incident reported from Bharuch on Thursday. It all started when a woman identified as Jeli Bhagu Ahir from Kaladara village in Vagra taluka of Bharuch district, a regular visitor to the Kothwa Dargah located in a village of the same name in Mangrol taluka of Surat district, accused two women from her own village, of witchcraft, black magic and therianthropy. However, the Bharat Jan Vigyan Jatha, an NGO that works on eradication of superstitions and exposure of fraudsters deceiving people, came to the rescue of the two women. Jayant Pandya, who is from the NGO, said they got the details from a local, Paresh Ahir, who said that his relative Jeli Ahir, who visits the dargah near Kim town in Surat, had accused his mother Jashu Ahir and another woman, Devi Thakor, of being witches and being practitioners of black magic and witchcraft. He said that Jeli Ahir had further accused the two women of therianthropy (belief that a human is capable of transforming into animals), and

harassing the villagers. She had allegedly proclaimed that “the truth should come out before it is too late and someone’s life is lost due to the two women”.

Paresh pleaded that the allegations were baseless and that the proclamation by Jeli Ahir had been issued out of personal enmity and jealousy but had resulted in the social boycott of the two women. The Kothwa dargah, as per Pandya, is said to be famous for “exorcism”. Every Thursday, a large crowd gathers to seek help “in the removal of bad spirits from people allegedly possessed by these unclean spirits”. The dargah sees attendees from Muslim and Hindu believers and it has a large market where attar (perfume), rose water, water, amulets, flowers, handkerchiefs, frankincense, chaadar (sheets) are sold in large quantities, he added.

Pandya then sent a letter to the SP of Rural Surat Police who assured help from the Kosamba police station. Along with the police, members of the jatha and the families of the two women, accused of being witches, reached the dargah. Inspector MK Swami told The Indian Express, “Jayant Pandya had sought a police escort and they confronted this Jeli Ahir outside the Kothwa dargah. Later, at the Palod outpost, she admitted to the fraud (of falsely accusing women of witchcraft) and the Jatha helped the relatives reach a settlement. No FIR was filed in the matter.” Jeli Ahir was taken to Palod police outpost of Kosamba police station where Pandya asked her for proof of her accusations. According to a statement from the Jatha on Saturday, Jeli Ahir’s husband, Bhagu Ahir, and her son began apologising on her behalf and after a while, even she admitted to the fraud. The police then informed them of the legal consequences of their actions leading to the entire family pleading for mercy, apologising to Jashu Ahir and Devi Thakor. The families of the two women agreed not to take recourse to the law and settle the matter since they had to continue residing in the same village, said officials.

‘Everything changed the day I lost my son’: For 3 women whose loved ones died cleaning sewers in Delhi, justice out of reach

GNS News Agency, Dec 3
 Rajkumari, Ram Kali and Saresh Devi have each lost a loved one — a husband, a son — on the job. The job? Cleaning Delhi’s sewers. For one of them, promises of compensation have gone unfulfilled. For all three, justice remains elusive. They are not alone. The lives lost are among the 94 sewer deaths over the past 15 years in Delhi, but in 75 of those deaths, for which records are available, only one case has led to conviction in court, according to an investigation tracked down and met the three women to know how their lives changed overnight and where their case stands — it found a swell of despair and helplessness. Background: Moved from UP’s Sisamau village to Delhi in search of better work opportunities; belongs to the SC community.



report received from the office of the DCP concerned, the said PW (prime witness) is stated to have left the previous address and his contact no. is not available. In view of the report received, the name of PW Rahul is dropped from the list of witnesses. “The family said they received only Rs 2 lakh of the promised compensation of Rs 10 lakh. Deepak and his second brother Sunil, 32, who does housekeeping at a mall, said they made several attempts to pursue justice. “Last year, we went to the SDM’s office to ask for the rest of the money, but they told us the trial is still pending,” Deepak said. Background: Halalpur village in UP’s Baghat, family belongs to an SC community. Case: Died cleaning a sewer in Patparganj Industrial Area in 2009. “We don’t want to fight the case. We cannot run after it from one office to another anymore. We don’t have that much money,” Nar Singh’s wife Saresh Devi (60), an anganwadi worker, said.

Records show that Nar Singh, along with co-worker Rajesh Mehto from Bihar, died cleaning a sewer in Patparganj Industrial Area, Delhi, on December 6, 2009. According to Devi, she received the Rs 10 lakh compensation only in July 2022 — 13 years after her husband’s death. “For around 13-14 years, nobody came to my aid. There have been days when there was nothing to eat at home and I had to ask neighbours for money,” she said while breaking down in tears. In the case, it was alleged that Nar Singh and his co-worker died due to negligence on the part of a contractor who was assigned the work by the state government-run Delhi State Industrial & Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC).

DSIIDC said it had given the work of installing pumps in the pump house to a firm and the accident took place away from the pump house. The Delhi Police filed a report stating it could not “trace” the accused. In his letter to the National Commission for Safai Karmacharis (NCSK), dated March 15, 2010, Y S Solanki, Chief Project Manager (ED-IV) of DSIIDC, wrote: “On 06.12.2009... I was... informed by police... an accident had taken place in the manhole. According to the scope of work covered in the said agreement, there was no mandate for the contractor to clean the manhole or send labour(ers) into (it)...” Devi has three children — two sons, Shashikant and Durgesh, who work as delivery agents at an e-commerce firm in Jaipur, and a daughter, Kumari Shanu, who is a data entry operator at a government hospital. “We never talk about the incident... but whenever I see such news on TV or read about it in the newspaper, everything comes back,” said Shanu.

Ahmedabad-Mumbai High Speed Rail Corridor: Rail Minister reviews factory making track slabs for bullet train project

bullet train According to the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), the government agency executing the bullet train project, the factory at Kim is playing a crucial role in producing tracks for the 237 km of high speed railway track in Gujarat and Dadra Nagar Haveli as it is located close to the project site and helps in timely delivery of track slabs for the project.

Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday inspected a track slab manufacturing factory at Kim village near Surat that will produce high precision track slabs for the c or the bullet train, pushing forth the ‘Make in India’ pitch of the ambitious project. The state-of-the-art high capacity factory — spread over a total area of 19 acres — will produce ‘high capacity ballastless tracks’ using advanced Shinkansen technology. Speaking to reporters at the plant, Vaishnaw said, “The tracks to be laid for the bullet train need to be of high precision and so Japanese technology was

brought in to build these slabs. Initially, the equipment used to make these slabs were brought in from Japan. However, later on, we have started manufacturing the equipment. This is now one of the world’s largest factories manufacturing tracks. The workers involved in the construction are highly skilled and have maintained a very high quality of testing.”

Vaishnaw added that the ‘precision construction’ that was happening at the village would not just benefit the bullet train project between Ahmedabad and Mumbai but also other construction projects in future where such specialised construction would be needed. According to the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), the government agency executing the bullet train project, the factory at Kim is playing a crucial role in producing tracks for the 237 km of high speed railway track in Gujarat and Dadra Nagar Haveli as it is located close to the project site and helps in timely delivery of track slabs for the project.

Rly Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw blames previous govts for industry-academia gap over decades



GNS News Agency, Dec 3
 Blaming the “narrow vision of the previous governments” over several decades for a “huge” industry-academia gap in the country, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government for allowing global manufacturing giants, including Airbus, to aid job markets with tailor made courses. Vaishnaw, who is also the Minister of Information & Broadcasting, Electronics & Information Technology, was speaking at the second Convocation of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GVS) at the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya auditorium in Vadodara. The Union Minister, who is also the Chancellor of the university, remarked that the previous governments did not have a “vision for the future” and the present government “aligned” the academics with industry requirements to provide knowledge “that would last a lifetime”.

“There has been a yearning (since times as a student) that the academics and life skills should have been taught together... We wish that the college would have taught what was practically needed to work in an industry. There was an era, about 30 years ago, when I was a college student. There was a big gap in the academics in college and the industry requirement. The reason was that those who were in power and ran governments had a narrow mindset... They did not have the vision for the future. But today, India has a leadership and vision that attempts are made for your future to ensure that educational institutes give you what

you need in your life...,” he said. Vaishnaw said that while the National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI) was a ‘pilot’ project to experiment with the idea of setting up a university for studies in transportation engineering and supply chain, GVS has turned the ‘vision into reality’.

From Airbus to Jacobs — a turnkey contractor for building semiconductor fabs — have turned to the GVS for tailor made courses, he said. Vaishnaw said, “The rationale (behind setting up the Central University) is that the practical needs are aligned with academics like a physics formula in which distance and force must be aligned. The courses have been designed with great thought... The result has come- Airbus, the largest company in the world needs 15,000 engineers. The Airbus President met PM Narendra Modi and he asked them to visit GVS. The BTech course was prepared as per the exact requirements of Airbus and they could not believe that a University could be so flexible... It has become an example that all the talent for Airbus needs across the world will come from GVS. The most precise construction and difficult construction is in Semiconductor fabs. Jacobs decided on a BTech course curriculum at GVS for design and we have an MoU for a BTech with Jacobs... Whether Jacobs manufactures the fabs in Taiwan, Germany, US, it will be manufactured by GVS alumni. Similar courses are in the pipeline with Siemens and Alstom...” Flanked by CM Bhupendra Patel and Vadodara Lok Sabha MP Hemang Joshi, Vaishnaw said, “One after the other, with a clear association with the industries, depending on their requirements, the courses are being designed. The students are receiving what they need... This knowledge will stay with you... When PM had put forth his vision that the world has such a huge transportation industry, supply chain logistics for transportation, there is not a single university in India. He wanted to make this the best university. It started with NRTI and with the experience of NRTI, the PM decided to make it a central university. He said that all the resources that are needed for infrastructure, research, internship, training and education, should be provided. After a Bill was passed by the Parliament, the university was set up. I had the opportunity to implement this visionary project of the PM.”

Ex-Delhi CM Kejriwal attacked: AAP says accused a BJP man, BJP says anyone can join party online

GNS News Agency, Dec 3
 Hours after chaos broke out at Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal’s padyatra in South Delhi’s Malviya Nagar area on Saturday evening, after a man flung liquid at him, AAP and BJP engaged in a war of words. While AAP claimed he was a BJP member, the BJP said anybody can join BJP online. The AAP alleged it was an attempt to “burn” the former Delhi Chief Minister since the man had thrown “spirit”, while the police claimed the accused had thrown “water”. The man, identified by police as Ashok Jha, was detained by security personnel present at the spot. The incident took place when Kejriwal, along with Greater Kailash MLA and Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj, was walking in a narrow lane, greeting people. Police personnel had placed ropes on both sides of the two leaders, and security personnel were walking alongside them. Asked if the sample of the liquid thrown at the ex-CM was sent for testing, a police officer told The Indian Express that they were looking for traces of the substance at the spot. “Prima facie it appeared to be water. However, police are taking samples from the spot for testing,” the officer said.



On whether the accused has been arrested, he said Jha is being questioned jointly by local police and security agencies. “He claims to be disgruntled because he hadn’t been given his past month’s salary and previous dues,” said the officer. Asked if any other person was involved, the officer said this did not appear to be the case, but they were analysing the accused’s call detail records and footage from CCTVs nearby, along with video clips shot on mobile phones by people at the spot. On whether police found any political affiliation, police sources claimed Jha told officers that he had become a member of the BJP via their missed call registration campaign and had also donated money to the AAP in the past.

DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan, however, said the party had not taken permission for the padyatra. “Despite proper police deployment for crowd control, at 5.50 pm, Ashok Jha, a bus marshal from Khanpur depot, attempted to throw water on Kejriwal while he was greeting followers. The attempt was immediately foiled as police in close proximity apprehended Jha and detained him. The motives behind his actions are under investigation,” DCP Chauhan said. In a video of the incident, Kejriwal can be seen walking in front, Bharadwaj a few steps behind him. Security personnel are

also within the cordon. As he moves forward, the man reaches out and throws the liquid on Kejriwal. The liquid also falls on two security personnel. Addressing a press conference after the incident, Bharadwaj claimed that the man attempted to kill Kejriwal as another person had come with matches and threatened to burn the former CM alive. “They were successful in throwing the spirit but were not able to light the match,” Bharadwaj claimed. Bharadwaj alleged the man was associated with the BJP. “BJP is upset after failing to maintain law and order in Delhi. BJP attacked Kejriwal for raising questions on law and order. ?Amit Shah’s failure is obvious. If a former CM is not safe in the capital, where will the common man go? Delhi is facing a complete law and order breakdown under BJP’s rule. This is the third attack on him in the past 35 days. He was attacked in Vikaspuri and Nangloi earlier,” AAP said in a statement.

Kejriwal also took on the BJP over the incident. “Amit Shah ji, what will happen if you stop me, you should stop crime in Delhi. Will crime in Delhi reduce if you stop me? Will open shootings in Delhi stop if you stop me? Will the women of Delhi become safe? Will the businessmen of Delhi become safe?” he posted on X. While the Delhi BJP condemned the incident, its spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said, “Elections are held across the country, and leaders, whether good or bad, participate in campaigns under varying levels of security. However, such bizarre incidents occur only with Kejriwal during every assembly election.” On the accused allegedly being associated with the BJP, Kapoor said, “Anybody can join BJP online. One is a BJP cadre only when he or she is assigned any party work. The question is was Ashok Jha a BJP worker?”

Only strong law can stop the rape menace: TMC’s Abhishek Banerjee

Trinamool Congress (TMC) national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday said that only a “strong law” can effectively eliminate the menace of rape in the country. While addressing a doctors’ convention, organised to announce the launch of ‘Sebaashray’ health camp programme in Diamond Harbour, Banerjee in a reference to the rape and murder of a junior woman doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, said, “Bengal has been insulted, mocked using one tragic incident. Since Day 1, I have condemned this incident and I stand by my comments that those involved should be handed capital punishment. Some would like, some won’t but I remain firm on my stance. The only solution is a strong law.” PTI reported that Banerjee said, “At a time when the country was protesting the RG Kar rape-murder, rape incidents kept occurring in every 10 minutes, according to official data... The Centre should act immediately and implement it through an ordinance if it wishes.” Additionally, he highlighted the delay in the approval of the Aparajita Woman and Child (West Bengal Criminal Laws Amendment) Bill, 2024, which Abhishek claimed has been pending with the President for two months. “If this amendment is passed, it can be implemented across the country. We have demonstrated our intent to tackle such crimes by introducing this law. I have condemned the RG Kar incident and said such perpetrators have no right to live. They should be given capital punishment,” he added. “If the President doesn’t give assent to the Aparajita Bill, I will bring a private member’s Bill,” he added.

Banerjee announced that the Sebaashray programme aims to provide free health camps across all 7 Assembly Constituencies for 75 days, starting January 2, with 40 health camps being organised daily for 10 days in each Vidhan Sabha constituency. “The programme will begin in Diamond Harbour and continue for 70 days, covering seven constituencies. In the last five days, 280 following up camps will be held across these constituencies. So far, over 1,200 doctors have signed up for these camps,” he noted. “True to his commitment, our Hon’ble MP continues to serve every individual, transcending barriers of religion and politics,” TMC posted on X. Additionally, Banerjee revealed plans for another convention in April, which is expected to host 5,000 doctors. “We will soon hold a convention of 5,000 doctors in Kolkata before March or April. We will start our campaign from January 2. The camps will run for 10 days in each Assembly Constituency. The camp in Metiabruz will be held in mid-February. In 70 days, we will cover 7 Assembly Constituencies.” “I am grateful to our doctor friends who have come here to attend this convention. When I started thinking about organising this event, I had a discussion with multiple people. The biggest challenge to provide medical assistance to 23 lakh people was the availability of doctors. A Lok Sabha has 2,000 booths. So given this, we got a figure of 400-500 doctors to cover the entire population. Yesterday, I found out that over 1,200 doctors have signed up for the health camps.” The party number two and Diamond Harbour MP stated that the state government will continue to support doctors in providing public healthcare, emphasizing that doctors and the government share a common goal. He urged doctors to refrain from ceasing work, as seen in the past, to prevent even a single patient death. “But I appreciate how the doctors work under such circumstances, and our CM has allocated hundreds of crores of rupees for their safety and security,” Abhishek Banerjee said.

Syrian army confirms rebels enter Aleppo, says dozens of soldiers killed



AMMAN, GNS News Agency, Dec 3 The Syrian military said on Saturday that rebels had entered large parts of Aleppo city during an offensive in which dozens of soldiers had been killed, forcing the army to redeploy - the biggest challenge to President Bashar al-Assad in years. The surprise attack led by the Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham has joined the frontlines of the Syrian civil war that have largely been frozen since 2020, reviving fighting in a corner of the fractured country near the Turkish border. The army said it was preparing a counteroffensive to restore state authority. The Syrian army command's statement was the first public acknowledgement by the military that rebels had entered Aleppo, which had been under full state control since government forces backed by Russia and Iran drove out rebels eight years ago.

"The large numbers of terrorists and the multiplicity of battlefronts prompted our armed forces to carry out a redeployment operation aimed at strengthening the defence lines in order to absorb the attack, preserve the lives of civilians and soldiers, and prepare for a counterattack," the army said. The army said that the rebels had entered large parts of Aleppo but army bombardment had stopped them from establishing fixed positions. It promised to "expel them and restore the control of the state ... over the entire city and its countryside".

Two rebel sources said the insurgents had also captured the city of Mara'at al Numan in Idlib province, bringing all of that province under their control, in what would be another significant blow to Assad. The fighting revives the long-simmering Syrian conflict as the wider region is roiled by wars in Gaza and Lebanon, where a truce between Israel and the Iran-backed Lebanese group Hezbollah took effect on Wednesday. The attack was launched from insurgent-held areas of northwestern Syria that remain outside Assad's grasp. Two Syrian military sources said that Russian and Syrian warplanes targeted insurgents in an Aleppo suburb on Saturday.

Speaking on Friday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry

Peskov said Moscow regarded the rebel attack as a violation of Syria's sovereignty. "We are in favour of the Syrian authorities bringing order to the area and restoring constitutional order as soon as possible," he said. The Syrian Civil Defense, a rescue service operating in opposition-held parts of Syria, said in a post on X that Syrian government and Russian aircraft carried out airstrikes on residential neighbourhoods, a gas station and a school in rebel-held Idlib, killing four civilians and wounding six others.

Item 1 of 5 Syrian opposition fighters stand in front of University of Aleppo, after rebels opposed to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad said they had reached the heart of Aleppo, Syria November 30, 2024. REUTERS/Mahmoud Hasano[1/5] Syrian opposition fighters stand in front of University of Aleppo, after rebels opposed to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad said they had reached the heart of Aleppo, Syria November 30, 2024. REUTERS/Mahmoud Hasano Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab The two Syrian military sources said Russia has promised Damascus extra military aid that would start arriving in the next 72 hours. Authorities closed Aleppo airport and roads to the city, the two military sources and a third army source said. The Syrian army has been told to follow "safe withdrawal" orders from the main areas of the city that the rebels had entered, the three military sources said.

IRAN'S ROLE IN THE REGION The rebels, including factions backed by Turkey, said on Friday their fighters were sweeping through various Aleppo neighbourhoods. Mustafa Abdul Jaber, a commander in the Jaish al-Zzza rebel brigade, said their speedy advance had been helped by a lack of Iran-backed manpower to support the government in the broader Aleppo province. Iran's allies in the region have suffered a series of blows at the hands of Israel as the Gaza war has expanded through the Middle East. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, in a phone call with his Syrian counterpart on Friday, accused the United States and Israel of being behind the insurgent attack. The opposition fighters have said the campaign was in response to stepped-up strikes in recent weeks against civilians by the Russian and Syrian air forces on areas of Idlib province, and to preempt any attacks by the Syrian army.

Opposition sources in touch with Turkish intelligence said Turkey, which supports the rebels, had given a green light to the offensive. Turkish officials were not immediately available to comment on Saturday. Turkey's foreign ministry said on Friday that the clashes between rebels and government forces had resulted in an undesirable escalation of tensions. In a statement, spokesperson Oncu Keceli said that avoiding greater instability in the region was Turkey's priority, adding that Ankara had warned that recent attacks on Idlib undermined the spirit and implementation of de-escalation agreements.

Israel military strikes kill 32 Palestinians in Gaza, medics say

CAIRO, GNS News Agency, Dec 3 The Israeli military said it killed a Palestinian it accused of involvement in Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel in a vehicle strike in Gaza, while medics said at least 32 Palestinians were killed in Israeli strikes across the enclave overnight and into Saturday. The escalation comes as leaders of Hamas were expected to arrive in Cairo on Saturday for ceasefire talks with Egyptian officials, days after Israel and Hezbollah agreed to ceasefire in Lebanon, two officials of the group told Reuters.

Later on Saturday medics said nine people were killed when an Israeli air strike targeted a vehicle near a gathering of Palestinians receiving aid in the southern area of Khan Younis south of the enclave. Residents and a Hamas source told Reuters that the vehicle targeted near a crowd receiving flour was used by security personnel tasked with overseeing aid deliveries into Gaza. Among the 32 killed, at least seven died in an Israeli strike on a house in central Gaza City, according to a statement from the Gaza Civil Defense and the official Palestinian news agency WAFA early on Saturday.

The Gaza Civil Defense also reported that one of its officers was killed in attacks in northern Gaza's Jabalia, bringing the total number of civil defense workers killed since October 7, 2023, to 88. The Israeli military said it killed a Palestinian it accused of involvement in Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel in a vehicle strike, and was investigating claims the individual was an employee of aid group World Central Kitchen. Earlier on Saturday, WAFA reported that three employees of World Central Kitchen, a U.S.-based, non-governmental humanitarian agency, were killed when a civilian vehicle was targeted in Khan Younis, southern Gaza. Egypt is hosting a Hamas delegation in Cairo on Saturday to discuss a ceasefire, two Hamas officials told Reuters late on Friday. The visit is the first since the United States announced earlier this week it would revive efforts in collaboration with Qatar, Egypt, and Turkey to negotiate a ceasefire in Gaza, similar to the recent agreement reached between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Hamas del-



egation is expected to meet with Egyptian security officials to explore ways to reach a ceasefire deal with Israel. However, progress remains limited due to disagreements between the two parties. Hamas is seeking an agreement that would end the war and secure the release of Israeli and foreign hostages held in Gaza. In contrast, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has stated that the war will only end when Hamas is eradicated. Meanwhile, a ceasefire in the parallel conflict between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah took effect before dawn on Wednesday, halting hostilities that had escalated sharply in recent months. The accord, announced by U.S. President Joe Biden, overshadowed the Gaza conflict and marked a rare moment of calm in the region. Biden has since urged Israel and Hamas to seize the opportunity for a Gaza ceasefire, reiterating his commitment to pursuing a diplomatic resolution.

Israel's military campaign in Gaza has killed at least 44,382 people and displaced nearly all of the enclave's population at least once, Gaza officials say. Vast swathes of Gaza lie in ruins. The conflict was triggered 13 months ago when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israeli communities, killing approximately 1,200 people and capturing over 250 hostages, according to Israeli officials.

Kosovo boosts security after blast threatens power supplies

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

PRISTINA, GNS News Agency, Dec 3, Kosovo worked to shore up water and power supplies on Saturday and stepped up security at strategic sites after an explosion hit a canal that sends water to its two main power plants, an incident Pristina labelled a "terrorist act" by neighbouring Serbia. Serbia's foreign minister Marko Djuric denied what he said were "baseless allegations" about Belgrade's involvement in an X post on Saturday, and suggested that Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti's government was involved, without providing evidence.

The explosion has increased tensions between the two Balkan countries. Ethnic Albanian-majority Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008 almost a decade after a guerrilla uprising against its rule, but Serbia has not recognised Kosovo as an independent state. Relations remain especially frayed in the north where the blast occurred, and where the Serb minority refuses to recognise Kosovo's statehood and still sees Belgrade as their capital. The explosion occurred around 7 p.m. (1800 GMT) on Friday near the town of Zubin Potok. The exact cause was not clear.

Kosovo's Security Council, which held emergency talks early on Saturday, said its armed forces were acti-

vated to prevent similar attacks. Item 1 of 2 A police officer patrols near the damaged canal in northern Kosovo supplying water to two coal-fired power plants that generate nearly all of the country's electricity, in Varage, near Zubin Potok.

Security was already heightened after two recent attacks where hand grenades were hurled at a police station and municipality building in northern Kosovo where ethnic Serbians live. "The Security Council has approved additional measures to strengthen security around critical facilities and services such as bridges, transformer stations, antennas, lakes, canals," the council said in a statement on Saturday. Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti accused criminal elements in Serbia for the attack on Friday, without providing evidence. "Those who did this attack are not just ordinary criminals, this is done by a well-organised structure that knows very well that cutting water in that location will also affect power production," Arben Gjakaj, former CEO of power utility KEK, told Reuters. "The situation is very critical." Power supplies appeared to be largely intact, but drinking water supply was disrupted to some areas. Energy minister Artane Rizvanolli said Kosovo was coordinating with Albania's power company to provide more electricity. She said water will be trucked to affected areas.

Joe Biden's picture with anti-Israel book leaves author Khalidi and netizens in shock: 'He has no idea what...'



Outgoing US President Joe Biden, who has consistently backed the Jewish state, grabbed a copy of a book on Friday that characterised Israel as a colonial nation in the context of Palestinian resistance. Biden was captured leaving Nantucket Bookworks and carrying a copy of "The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017" written by Rashid Khalidi, an emeritus professor at Columbia University, according to the New York Post. Build cutting-edge AI solutions with MIT's expert-led program Start Now Speaking to the Post, Khalidi said that Biden was holding his book, "I do not speak to the Post (or the Times, for that matter), so this

is not for publication, but my reaction is that this is four years too late." The Biden administration has continuously backed Israel's operations in the Middle East military. Israel has frequently received military aid, weapons, and other forms of support from the United States. Did Biden purchase the book?

However, it's still unclear if Biden purchased the book or whether it was presented to him during his visit to the shop. The creation of Israel is explained in "The Hundred Years' War on Palestine" as a "settler-colonial conquest," which was met with Palestinian resistance. Khalidi, who is well-known for his scathing criticism of US foreign policy toward Israel, attacked Biden's successor, President-elect Donald Trump, in the 2020 book, calling his government a "mouthpiece for Israel." He also referred to the government of Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu as "the most extreme government" in the history of the nation. Both pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian activists have slammed Biden's administration, and he has long identified as a Zionist. "You don't have to be a Jew to be a Zionist. I am a Zionist," he declared during his meeting with Israeli President Isaac Herzog last year. Several social media users were quick to react to the picture showing Biden grabbing the anti-Israel book, with one writing on X, "He has no idea what he's holding." "Where is 'Palestine'?" another asked. "Who is he kidding? Biden doesn't have the mental power to read a comic book let alone serious non fiction," a third user chimed in. However, a fourth user stressed, "I wish all our presidents will read this book and stop supporting Israel," while the fifth one called the whole Biden episode "staged".

Another Hindu priest arrested in Bangladesh, claims ISKCON Kolkata spokesperson

Amid the ongoing unrest over the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das, another Hindu priest, Sri Shyam Das Prabhu, was arrested in Bangladesh on Friday, ISKCON Kolkata spokesperson Radharam Das claimed. Radharam, also the Vice President of ISKCON Kolkata, took to microblogging site X and said, "Another Brahmachari Sri Shyam Das Prabhu was arrested by Chattogram Police today." Widespread protests have been taking place across Bangladesh and India, with people calling for the release of former ISKCON member Chinmoy Krishna Das.

In another post, sharing Shyam Das Prabhu's picture, he wrote, "Does he look like a terrorist #FreeISKCONMonks Bangladesh. The arrest of innocent #ISKCON brahmacharis are deeply shocking & disturbing." Notably, Chinmoy Krishna Das was arrested over sedition charges and was denied bail by a court in Chattogram on Tuesday. India had expressed "deep concern" over the former ISKCON leader's arrest, calling on the Bangladeshi government to ensure safety and security of Hindus.

Bangladesh's minority Hindus, which constitute only about 8 per cent of the 170 million population, have faced over 200 attacks in 50-odd districts since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government on August 5. Earlier in the day, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, a right wing Hindu group in India, also condemned the atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities in Dhaka, terming them



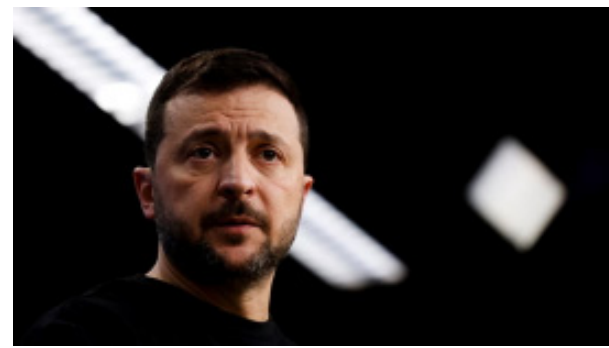
to be "alarming". The Sangh slammed the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government for remaining a "mute spectator". The RSS further termed Chinmoy Das' arrest as "unfair" and sought his immediate release. It also called upon the Government of India to continue with every possible effort to prevent the ongoing atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities. Bangladesh, meanwhile, reassured that Hindus were "safe" in Bangladesh and that there was no threat to the minorities in the country. Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus' press secretary Shafiqul Islam had also affirmed that the government is committed to ensuring that Chinmoy Das receives a fair trial.

'War could end if Ukraine's unoccupied parts come under NATO': Zelenskyy

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Zelenskyy said that once NATO membership happens, the remaining occupied regions of Ukraine can be gotten back in a "diplomatic way". The war in Ukraine could end if the country's unoccupied parts are taken "under the NATO umbrella", Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in an interview with Sky News. Zelenskyy was asked to respond to reports that said US President-elect Donald Trump's plan to end the war might involve Kyiv giving up the land taken by Russia in exchange for Ukraine's NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) membership. Build cutting-edge AI solutions with MIT's expert-led program Start Now The Ukrainian president said that parts of the country that are under his control will have to be offered NATO membership for the "hot phase of the war" to end. Provided, he said, the invitation recognises Ukraine's internationally recognised borders. Zelenskyy said that once that happens, he can get back the remaining occupied territory of Ukraine "in a diplomatic way". He further pressed on the need for a ceasefire deal, saying that it is important because it will guarantee that Russian president Vladimir Putin "will not come back". Notably, no such offer from NATO has been made to Ukraine yet.

"Ukraine has never considered such a proposal, because no one has officially offered it to us," Zelenskyy was quoted as saying by BBC. He reiterated that NATO should "immediately" cover all the regions under Kyiv's control,



something that Ukraine needs "very much". Additionally, Zelenskyy said that Ukraine has to work with the US' new president, Donald Trump, who will take office in January 2025. The collaborative work is imperative to "have the biggest supporter", he said. "I want to work with him directly because there are different voices from people around him. And that's why we need not to [allow] anybody around to destroy our communication," the Ukrainian president was quoted as saying by Sky News. Trump, throughout his election campaigns for the White House race, had vowed to end the Ukraine war as soon as he assumed office. Zelenskyy, meanwhile, had reportedly said in the past that Ukraine wishes to end the war with Russia through "diplomatic means" in 2025.

Joe Biden says working with FBI on bomb threats to lawmakers, Donald Trump cabinet picks

US President Joe Biden said on Friday that his administration was working with the FBI regarding bomb threats and "swatting" attempts made this week against lawmakers and several of President-elect Donald Trump's cabinet picks. Rep. Seth Magaziner, a House Democrat from Rhode Island, said on Friday he was targeted by a bomb threat at home, a day after six Democratic lawmakers from Connecticut reported similar threats to their homes over the Thanksgiving Day holiday. Law enforcement in each case found no evidence of explosive devices, the lawmakers said.

Pete Hegseth, Trump's choice to become U.S. defense secretary, and Lee Zeldin, Trump's pick to lead the Environmental Protection Agency, were among nominees targeted with bomb threats and swatting attempts on Tuesday and Wednesday. Swatting is a false report made to police to induce chaos and fear by drawing a potentially heavy, armed response by officers at someone's home. Law enforcement experts say it's a form of harassment that is increasingly being used to target prominent figures. "House Democrats will not be deterred or intimidated from serving the people by violent threats," Democratic House leader



Hakeem Jeffries said in a statement on Friday.

Trump was wounded in an assassination attempt in Pennsylvania in July. In a separate incident in September, a man was charged with attempted assassination after allegedly positioning himself with a rifle outside one of Trump's Florida golf courses. Biden, speaking on Friday to reporters in Nantucket, Massachusetts, where he is spending the Thanksgiving holiday, said he expected to speak to Trump again during the transition.

India continues to top road accidents fatalities globally, with over 1.72 lakh deaths in road crashes in 2023, says Gadkari



Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari Saturday said that over 4.80 lakh road accidents took place in the country last year that resulted in over 1.72 lakh people fatalities. When compared with the 2022 data on road accidents, the crashes have increased by 4.2% and there is an increase of 2.6% in fatalities. Over 4.61 lakh road accidents and over 1.68 lakh fatalities took place in 2022. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways is yet to release the 2023 report on Road Crashes in India. While addressing an event on Road safety in Lucknow Gadkari said that out of the total deaths in the accident, around 10,000 deceased are minors.

"In the areas outside schools and colleges, 35,000 accidents and 10,000 deaths took place. A total of 35,000 deaths are of pedestrians. A total of 54,000 deaths happened due to not wearing helmets and 16,000 deaths have occurred due to not wearing seat belts. A total of 12,000 deaths have occurred due to overloaded vehicles. Similarly Driving without a valid license accounted for around 34,000 of the total crashes. The remaining deaths occur due to old vehicles, old technology like not being able to apply brakes etc.," said Gadkari during the event. Gadkari further said that the most

important thing in this is that the highest number of road accident deaths in the world occurs in India and out of this, the highest number of deaths occur in Uttar Pradesh.

"There have been 44,000 road accidents in UP and out of these 23,650 deaths have occurred. Of these, 1,800 deaths are of people below 18 years of age and 10,000 are of pedestrians and two-wheelers. There have been 8,726 deaths due to over speeding," said Gadkari in Lucknow. Gadkari said that these accidents are happening because people do not have respect and fear for the law. "There are many reasons for accidents, but the biggest reason is Human Behavior. This is also true that there are potholes on the roads at many places. There is a lack of underpasses and foot over bridges. We have identified the black spots in this road engineering problem and such spots are being rectified on the National Highway by spending about Rs 40,000 crore. All roads are not under me, I am the Minister of National Highways only. There are many state highways and district roads. It also concerns the state government. The cause of the accident can be found and rectified," said the Minister. He said that instructions have been given to companies to improve automobile engineering. Along with this, an awareness program is being run.

"We are trying to ensure that the state government includes Rules of the Road in its curriculum. We were talking about reducing accidents by 50 percent by 2024, but they have not reduced. This means we need to do more work," said Nitin Gadkari. Sources said that the Road crash severity i.e fatalities per 100 crashes have marginally decreased to 36 in 2023 from 36.5 in 2022. Over speeding is the major cause of accidents, where 68.1% people in 2023 died because of this reason. Two wheelers users accounted for 44.8% and pedestrians accounted for nearly 20% of all road crash fatalities.

Deregulation, more state capacity for capex, better hiring policies in private sector needed to push growth: Chief Economic Advisor

Chief Economic Advisor, Anantha Nageswaran, V Anantha Nageswaran, capex, private sector, Indian express news, current affairs "If you do that (policy and regulatory changes), sooner rather than later, the second quarter growth numbers will become a distant and fading memory," Chief Economic Advisor said. Doubling down on deregulation, expanding state capacity for public investment, and improving hiring and compensation policies in the private sector — these regulatory and policy changes would be crucial to push growth in India, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said Friday. Pointing to the trend of a sharp growth in profits of companies without a commensurate increase in hiring and compensation leading to diminished purchasing power in the hands of people, the CEA said that the slowdown in private sector's manufacturing in some areas is "self generated".

To "sustain demand growth and capital formation in the private sector", the CEA said the "onus rests with the private sector" to improve growth in incomes for labour. Nageswaran said even as the economic growth numbers for July-September turned out to be disappointing, such policy changes in public and private sectors could be used as an opportunity to improve growth prospects. "While the number may have been somewhat disappointing for the second quarter real GDP growth, I think we should also use it as a good opportunity to put in place not only hiring and compensation policies and practices in the private sector, but also use the opportunity to double down on deregulation and think of enhancing state capacity for undertaking public investment rather than revenue expenditure," the CEA said after the release of the Q2 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data. "If you do that (policy and regulatory changes), sooner rather than later, the second quarter growth numbers will become a distant and fading memory," he added.

India's real GDP growth rate slumped to a seven-quarter low of 5.4 per cent in July-September, mainly due to sluggish manufacturing and mining, data released by National Statistics Office (NSO) on Friday showed. While pointing out that the real wage growth for urban males has done well that has resulted in overall positive real wage growth, Nageswaran said nothing of this compares to the sharp profitability growth seen by companies in the country. "The profit-GDP ratio was 4.8 per cent in FY24. The peak was 5.2 per cent in FY08, but that was a different era when global growth was high and exports were booming and overall economic growth rates both in nominal and real terms were in mid-double digits or high single digits." Considering that post-Covid recovery in profits from 2.1 per cent of GDP to 4.8 per cent of GDP is an impressive growth in just the last three years after Covid. But in comparison, both hiring and compensation growth rates have been somewhat on the



lower side or tepid. That is also somewhat endogenous in creating less purchasing power in the hands of people, less demand for FMCG goods and light consumer durable goods. That is why you see the impact on manufacturing. So, to some extent, the private sector's manufacturing slowdown in select areas is somewhat self generated," Nageswaran said.

Going ahead, he said while the 5.4 per cent print is on the lower side of the expectations, the economy is "resilient" as was seen in the case of construction, agriculture and manufacturing. "There are plenty of positive signs to take away in terms of the economy showing resilience underpinned by steady demand and partially strong manufacturing and service sector activities. Record production estimates for Kharif foodgrains and promising Rabi crop prospects. Labour market is recovering, but we can do far better than what we have been doing and to be honest, the onus rests with the private sector as well because of the endogeneity of labour, income growth and demand for manufactured goods. So, better growth in labour incomes holds the key to sustain demand growth and capital formation in the private sector," he said. The CEA, however, listed fragile geopolitical conditions as a risk, stating that it will continue to impact domestic inflation and capital flows if supply chain disruptions occur. "They will also be impacted by potential tariff actions which will impact both trade and capital flows. It may also lead to strengthening of the US dollar, leading to shortage of dollar in global markets, causing exchange rates in emerging economies to depreciate which would also tighten liquidity conditions in emerging economies," he said. The state capacity for capex needs to be improved across the country, he said. The CEA further said that developed countries are seeing "deregulation as a very important formula or ingredient for reinvigorating growth". "If we have to realise our employment, manufacturing aspirations, and aid capital formation and investment, we have to double down on deregulation, particularly among state and local governments. That will cause the trend and actual growth rates to pick up from 6.5 per cent towards 7 per cent and so on," he said.

Union govt proposes increase in FDI limit in insurance sector to 100%

At present, there are 25 life insurance companies, including the state-run Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), and 34 general insurers in the country. (Express archives) At present, there are 25 life insurance companies, including the state-run Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), and 34 general insurers in the country.

The Union Finance Ministry on Friday released a consultation paper proposing to raise the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in the insurance sector from 74 per cent to 100 per cent. The FDI limit in the insurance sector was previously increased from 49 per cent to 74 per cent in February 2021.

The government stated that the proposal to amend certain provisions of insurance laws aims to ensure accessibility and affordability of insurance for citizens, foster the expansion and development of the insurance industry, and streamline business processes. "In this regard, a comprehensive review of the legislative framework governing the sector has been conducted in consultation with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) and the industry. The proposal includes raising the FDI limit in Indian insurance companies from 74 per cent to 100 per cent, and enabling an insurer to carry on one or more classes of insurance business, as well as activities related or incidental to insurance," an office memorandum dated November 26 stated. The proposal further mentioned that the re-

quirement of Net Owned Funds for foreign reinsurers is also proposed to be reduced from Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 1,000 crore. Additionally, IRDAI is being empowered to specify lower entry capital (not less than Rs 50 crore) for underserved or unserved segments on a special-case basis.

Notably, the Chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), Debashish Panda, had earlier this month also advocated for 100 per cent foreign direct investment in the sector, citing the need for significant capital to meet the ambitious "Insurance for All by 2047" vision. The sector regulator is making efforts to attract more capital to this capital-intensive industry. According to the IRDAI Chairman, the insurance sector needs to infuse approximately ₹50,000 crore annually to double insurance penetration in the country. Insurance penetration refers to the ratio of insurance premiums written in a particular year to the gross domestic product (GDP).

As per the Economic Survey 2023-24, overall insurance penetration in the country moderated slightly to 4 per cent in FY23, from 4.2 per cent in FY22. During the same period, insurance penetration in the life insurance segment declined from 3.2 per cent in FY22 to 3 per cent in FY23, while it remained flat at 1 per cent for the non-life insurance segment. At present, there are 25 life insurance companies, including the state-run Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), and 34 general insurers in the country.

Curry controversy: Should you change clothes after cooking?



Shivee Chauhan, an Indian-origin content creator based in the United States of America, shared her method for avoiding the lingering scent of spices on clothes, especially after cooking curries, in a now-viral Instagram video. While she expressed her love for Indian food, she admitted to disliking how the pungent smell of onion, garlic, and spices tends to cling to her attire. Captioned "How to avoid the smell of Indian food," the video shows Chauhan recommending "cooking clothes" to tackle this issue. "The smell of the onion, garlic, and spices really sticks to the clothes that you are wearing. So, it's worth it to have the clothes that you cook in and always, always change out of office clothes as soon as you come back home. I also change my clothes before going out so that the lingering smell of

cooking," she said. This sparked discussion online, with many questioning if this practice is necessary. And we turned to an expert to get clarity on this.

Usha Mathew, a Malayalam YouTuber and culinary content creator, advocates wearing gloves and aprons in the kitchen—not just for hygiene but also to minimise unwanted odour. "After handling strong-smelling ingredients like onions, garlic, or meat, washing hands with lemon juice can help curb the odour. Daily washing of kitchen clothes, like aprons, is also important," Mathew said. For those sensitive to strong odours, Mathew recommended alternatives such as shallots or leeks, which offer similar flavours with less pungency. "Green garlic is an excellent substitute for those who dislike the lingering smell of regular garlic," she said. "Having indoor plants like snake plants and money plants or herbs such as mint and tulsi placed around the cooking area also helps in keeping the odour away. These plants can absorb odors while enhancing the cooking space," Mathew said.

For curries and dishes heavy on spices, Mathew advised diluting powdered spices in water before adding them to the pot. Cooking on a low flame in a covered pot also helps contain aromas. For non-vegetarian dishes, she suggested cleaning meat and fish with lemon juice or soaking them in water mixed with vinegar or lemon juice for at least an hour before cooking. While changing clothes after cooking is a personal preference, maintaining kitchen hygiene and adopting simple techniques can reduce odours and enhance your culinary experience. Whether you're team "cooking clothes" or not, these expert tips are sure to keep your kitchen fresh.

'I think there is a void in all of us': AR Rahman on coping with emptiness and therapeutic role of music in first appearance after divorce announcement

Renowned music composer AR Rahman recently made his first public appearance following the announcement of his divorce with his wife of 29 years — Saira Banu — where he spoke candidly about mental health and coping with feelings of emptiness. Appearing at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), Goa, Rahman spoke about the importance and impact of music in people's lives. Speaking about mental health, he said, "Now we all have mental health issues, depression. Because I think there is a void in all of us. That void can be filled by storytellers, by philosophy, by entertaining in a way where you don't even know that you are taking medicine, by not just catering to your carnal needs like violence and sex and all that stuff. There's much more than all that stuff."

His remarks resonate deeply with those who struggle to find purpose or joy during difficult times. Addressing feelings of emptiness or depression often requires a combination of self-reflection, meaningful activities, and building strong connections with others.

But how can individuals identify purposeful pursuits and develop connections that genuinely help in overcoming these challenges? Psychologist Anjali Gursahaney tells indianexpress.com, "Activities that align with one's values or curiosity promote dopamine release, reducing depressive symptoms and improving overall well-being."

Can creative outlets like storytelling, art, or music play a therapeutic role in mental health recovery? Gursahaney stresses, "Yes, creative outlets can play a significant role in mental health recovery, but they should be seen as complementary rather than standalone solutions. Integrating creativity with regular counselling and prescribed medications ensures a more holistic approach to healing. Even therapies like art therapy, and dance movements are a great source."

Mindfulness and meditation can reduce rumination and promote emotional regulation. Mindfulness and meditation can reduce rumination and promote emotional regulation. Art and music allow the release of suppressed emotions in



a non-verbal way, mentions Gursahaney. "Creative activities lower cortisol levels, reducing stress and anxiety, storytelling or journaling helps in understanding and reframing personal narratives, and immersion in creative tasks provides a break from negative thoughts." Some purposeful activities people can pursue to address feelings of emptiness or depression: Engaging in purposeful activities helps create a sense of accomplishment, routine, and meaning, which counteracts feelings of emptiness or depression. Here are some suggestions by Gursahaney: Self-care Habits: Building a small routine that helps them focus on the now and be present. Mindfulness and Meditation: These practices reduce rumination and promote emotional regulation. Journaling or Gratitude Practice: Reflecting on positive aspects of life shifts focus away from negativity. Start a Project: Channel your energy into something you've always wanted to try, whether it's creative, personal, or professional. Picking up Volunteer Work: Helping others fosters connection, increases gratitude, and provides a sense of purpose. Physical Activities: Yoga, dancing, or running release endorphins that improve mood and energy. Soak in the Sun: Spend time outdoors to absorb Vitamin D, which is essential for improving mood and overall well-being. Learning a New Skill: Picking up hobbies like cooking, painting, or learning a language can boost self-esteem and create a sense of progress.

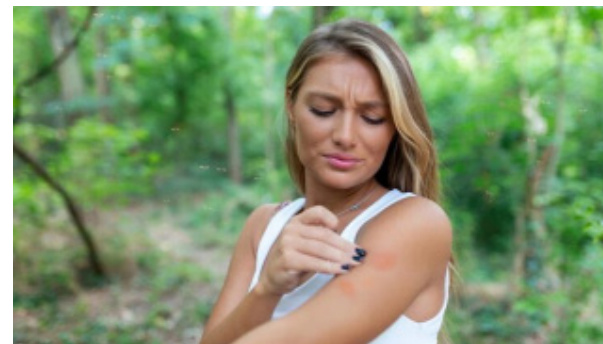
All you need to know about Japanese encephalitis

Learn about symptoms, causes, treatment, and prevention of this mosquito-borne viral brain infection. Learn about symptoms, causes, treatment, and prevention of this mosquito-borne viral brain infection. A day after the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) reported a suspected case of Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV) in the Bindapur area of South West Delhi, officials clarified that the case remains unconfirmed. MCD spokesperson Amit Kumar reassured residents, stating, "There is nothing to be concerned about or panic as Delhi does not have the congenial climatic condition for Japanese Encephalitis. To ensure public safety, the MCD has sought assistance from the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) and written to the Union Health Ministry, requesting their scientists to investigate further."

What is Japanese encephalitis?

Japanese encephalitis (JE) is a viral infection of the brain caused by the Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV). It is primarily transmitted through the bite of infected mosquitoes, especially those of the Culex species. Dr Jayanta Thakuria, Director – Internal Medicine and Rheumatology at Yatharth Super Speciality Hospitals, Faridabad, explained, "Japanese encephalitis is not directly contagious or communicable between humans. It cannot be spread through casual contact or person-to-person transmission." The virus thrives in regions with pig farming and rice paddies, as pigs and birds act as amplifying hosts. Dr Thakuria noted that while anyone in endemic areas is at risk, certain groups are more vulnerable: Young children are more likely to develop severe disease. Individuals with weakened immune systems face higher risks. Unvaccinated individuals in endemic regions are at greater susceptibility. Japanese encephalitis: Severe cases typically occur when the virus causes brain inflammation, leading to neurological complications. (Representative image)

Signs and symptoms While most people infected with JEV remain asymptomatic, severe cases can result in serious health issues. Dr Thakuria outlined the symptoms of severe Japanese encephalitis: High fever, Headache, Vomiting, Confusion or altered mental state. Dr Thakuria emphasised that vaccination is the most effective preventive measure, especially for travellers to endemic areas. Additionally,



mosquito control measures such as using repellents, wearing protective clothing, and avoiding mosquito-prone areas during peak times can significantly reduce risk. As the city awaits confirmation of the suspected case, health officials are focusing on surveillance and vector control. Public awareness about preventive measures is crucial to mitigating any potential risk.

Earliest known asymmetrical animal

Scientists have uncovered fossils of a 555-million-year-old creature, *Quaestio simpsonorum*, in South Australia's Nilpena Ediacara National Park, revealing what may be the earliest example of an asymmetrical body pattern in animals. This small, ancient marine organism, which moved across the ocean floor like a "marine Roomba," feeding on microscopic algae and bacteria, represents a significant milestone in the evolution of complex life. What makes *Quaestio* particularly remarkable is the unusual "backward question mark"-shaped structure on its back, making it the earliest known creature to display a consistent asymmetry in its body design. This discovery is crucial because asymmetry played a vital role in the development of more complex organisms, allowing for the evolution of differentiated body parts. In humans, for example, asymmetry allows organs like the heart and liver to occupy different sides of the body, contributing to functional complexity.

Mohd Rafi would undergo ‘dharam parivartan’ when he sang bhajans, says Sonu Nigam: ‘Hain vo musalmaan, namaazi aadmi’



Sandese Aate Hai singer highlighted how Mohd Rafi was able to sing for every actor during his time. “This person is singing ‘Hum Kaale Hain Toh Kya Hua Dilwaale Hain’, and also singing ‘Sarr Jo Tera Chakraaye Ya Dil Dooba Jaaye’. His voice used to suit Dilip Kumar, Johnny Walker, Mehmood, as well as Rishi Kapoor,” he said. Further elaborating on his versatile singing, Sonu mentioned, “When he sings bhajan, lagta hai koi pakka Hindu gaa raha hai. Hain vo musalmaan, namaazi aadmi hain. Inka dharam parivartan kaise hojata hai gayaki mein? (It felt like a Hindu was singing by heart, despite being a muslim. How was he able to change his religion while singing?)”

He further added, “This is a huge deal, not everyone can do it. I know so many singers who can sing Sufi songs really well, but cannot sing any bhajans. He would sing for Ramzan, Raksha Bandhan, he would sing happy songs, sad songs, even the most famous Happy Birthday song. There is nothing that he hasn’t done. Yeh kaun aadmi hai? (Who is this man?) He was a volcano, who would only used to erupt in the mic.” For the unknown, Mohd Rafi is remembered for his popular songs like “Main Zindagi Ka Saath Nibhata Chala Gaya”, “Kaun Hai Jo Sapno Me Aaya”, “Parda Hai Parda”, “Gulabi Aankhein”, “Kya Se Kya Ho Gaya”, among others.

Mohd Rafi, who is one of the most celebrated singers of Indian cinema, was recently remembered at the 55th edition of International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa. A session named ‘Asmaan Se Aaya Farishta – A Tribute to Mohd Rafi – The King of Melody’ was held in his memory where Sonu Nigam spoke about the versatility of Mohd Rafi and said that the late singer, who was a Muslim man, would undergo ‘dharam parivartan’ while singing bhajans. The

‘How can Luv Ranjan reject me to my face?’: Patralekhaa felt ‘super upset’, but she grew to appreciate the experience

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Director Luv Ranjan’s Pyaar Ka Punchnama franchise launched the careers of actors Kartik Aaryan and Nushrratt Bharuccha. The films also featured Sunny Singh, Divyenndu, Omkar Kapoor, Ishita Raj Sharma, and Sonalli Seygall. In a conversation with Mashbla India, actor Patralekhaa recalled auditioning for the second installment of the film, but was rejected by the filmmaker in an unexpected manner. She shared, “Before CityLights, I was auditioning for Pyaar Ka Punchnama 2. Luv sir was taking the auditions, and his auditions are always very elaborate. There was Nushrratt, Kartik, Omkar, Sunny, and many other girls. These three-four people were finalised, and they wanted 2 more new faces. I auditioned, and felt that I will get this role.”

“Then later on, I was in the gym, and Luv Ranjan called me. Phone tab aata hai jab aapko milta hai (You get a call when you bag the role). He asked me to come over and I felt so excited. I took a shower and wore my best clothes to head over to his office,” the 34-year-old added. But Patralekhaa was in for a shock. “He sat me down and no one was there, it was just me and him. In my mind, I thought that he will break the good news and people will come in with flowers, chocolates, and cakes. He said, ‘Yaar, yeh jaane de (Let this one go)’. At that moment, I felt really bad and thought, ‘How can he just call me and say no to my face, its not cool’,” she said.



While Patralekhaa was upset about the rejection, she later realised the importance of how the filmmaker conducted the interaction. “I came out and was super upset. I went back home and it dawned upon me later that he gave me so much respect as an artist and actor. He calls me to his office and says, ‘Beta nahi hopaaya, but hum aage jaake kaam kareng na (Child, it couldn’t work out this time, but we’ll work together in the future)’. That’s a lot, and I think that’s why I got Wild Wild Punjab,” she said.

Shah Rukh Khan gives marriage counselling to Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt: ‘Mai iss ghar mein rehna nahi chahta’

Shah Rukh Khan, Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt united for a special project, reprising their roles from their popular films Dear Zindagi, Gully Boy, and Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani, respectively. In the latest ad for Rungta TMT Bar, the trio can be seen discussing Ranbir-Alia’s marriage. In the minute-long video, Shah Rukh Khan reprises his Dr Jehangir Khan avatar, and counsels Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor. He asks, “Bunny, Safeena, how’s your marriage going?” Alia Bhatt, in her Safeena avatar, says, “I will tell you. I asked this man to get some ice, he went to Ladakh. I asked him on call, ‘Why are you so busy?’, and he said, ‘Mountains are calling.’” She then recreated her iconic line from Zoya Akhtar’s film. She said, “Itna pahado ke sath gulu gulu karega toh thoptungi na isko”.



This is third such ad for Rungta TMT Bar this year. Previously, the trio reprised their roles of Rockstar, Gangubai Kathiawadi, and Raees. Another ad had them reprise their roles from their films Student of The Year, Barfi and Jawan. Reacting to the latest ad, fans said, “This ad (Dr Jug-Safeena-Bunny) is better than the previous two (Jawan-Shanaya-Barfi and Raees-Gangu-Rockstar).” Another fan wrote, “Most entertaining ad.” Others joked, “I thought Shah Rukh is going to beat them with that rungta steel bar.” On the work front, Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt are gearing up for their second feature film together, Love and War. Directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, the film will also star Vicky Kaushal in the lead role. On the other hand, Shah Rukh Khan is gearing up for his film, King. The film, directed by Sujoy Ghosh, will also star his daughter, Suhana Khan.

Ranbir chimed in, “Dr Jehangir, mai udna chahta hu, daudna chahta hu, bas iss ghar mein rukna nahi chahta (I can’t stay in this house).” A curious SRK asks, “But, why?” Ranbir complained, “The other day I climbed the roof to watch the sunset, it broke. I don’t feel safe.” Alia Bhatt replied, “Who asked you to do rock climbing at home?” Stopping the argument between the couple, Shah Rukh said, “I have heard both of you, I have a solution for you.” Pulling a Rungta Steel TMT Bar from behind a wall, Shah Rukh quipped, “If you will use this to build your home, I can’t guarantee your marriage, but your home will never break.”

Ramesh Sippy says he ‘didn’t consult’ Javed Akhtar about making changes on Sholay set: ‘Sometimes he was there, sometimes he wasn’t’

Director Ramesh Sippy, the man behind Sholay (1975), the most influential Indian film of all time, was very particular about his process. In fact, he didn’t even have to consult the film’s co-writer Javed Akhtar before making any alterations. In a masterclass session at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), Goa, recently, Sippy recalled devising a memorable scene featuring Amitabh Bachchan and Jaya Bachchan, shot during the magic hour. He explained, “The scene between Amitabh and Jaya, there was a silent love between them, because she is a widow. This sequence suddenly felt right just at that time when day turns into night. When I spoke to the cameraman, he said that we can only shoot at that magic hour, so we had only those two minutes.”



said a single word about what his son is doing there, shooting one scene in 23 days. He wanted me to make it my own way.” When asked if Javed Akhtar, writer of Sholay along with Salim Khan, was present on the sets of the film, Sippy replied, “Yes, sometimes he was there and sometimes he wasn’t. He was very much there in that sense.

He added, “We used to shoot other scenes from morning till lunch, then after lunch we used to start setting up for this shot. The moment the magic hour was there, we took the shot. My father (GP Sippy), who was the producer, never

R Madhavan reveals how he protected his marriage when girls were fawning over him: ‘Obviously this created insecurity’



Recently, AR Rahman and Saira Banu announced their separation after 29 years of marriage. Vandana Shah, who claimed to be representing them in the proceedings, appeared for several interviews to talk about the separation. More recently, she spoke to actor R Madhavan about the points that married couples should consider in the eventuality of a divorce. During the conversation, Madhavan said that his wife Sarita was insecure when he first started out as an actor. But certain financial decisions brought stability to their relationship, and they have been happily married for 25 years.

Discussing finances on the YouTube channel For A Change, Madhavan said, “I was an actor. I was starting off and was being hailed as the chocolate boy, and girls were

fond of me. Obviously, this would create an insecurity for the woman. And having this insecurity is good enough for a marriage to become unstable. I used to ask my parents what they did, and they said, ‘We decided to spend our lives together so why assume that things are going to go wrong? We are going to say things are going to go right’. They always had a joint account for everything. I said, ‘That makes a lot of sense.’ He added, “If Sarita is going to feel insecure every time she looks at her bank account. It is better that we look at it together and say, ‘This is a joint account, this belongs to both of us and you are an equal signatory on it.’ So, I am going to assume that this marriage is going to work and I am going to say that I trust you and I hope you trust me.” Madhavan shared this approach to finances “worked” for the couple quiet well. He said, “There was never a doubt about how much I am earning. She handles the whole economics. In fact, all the cars and properties we have bought so far... we are joint owners.” The actor quipped, “I am one of the guys who lives off his credit card so all the money is with my wife.”

Before becoming an actor, R Madhavan was a communication and public speaking coach. He met his wife there, while she was training to become an air hostess. In an interview with Times of India, the actor recalled that Sarita asked him out for a thank you dinner after she landed her first job. It was from this moment that their love blossomed. After dating each other for eight years, the couple tied the knot in 1999 in a traditional Tamil wedding. In 2000, he got the opportunity to star in Mani Ratnam’s film Alaiy Payutham, which became an instant success. The couple have a son, Vedaant Madhavan.

Her movie review: Urvashi, Parvathy Thiruvothu and Aishwarya Rajesh’s film is insincere and performative

Her movie review: Just as ‘his’ stories don’t often delve into resilience and struggles, ‘her’ stories too needn’t always centre around overcoming social barriers; they can also be tales of everyday lives that are only occasionally eventful, despite being marked by covert misogyny. While director Lijin Jose’s Her — which finally got released after a two-year delay — partly fits this description, it falters big time, leaving audiences with a somewhat impassive impression.

Lijin Jose is undoubtedly one of the filmmakers who played a key role in ushering in a new wave in Malayalam cinema — marked by unconventional visual and storytelling techniques — with his debut directorial Friday (2012) starring Fahadh Faasil and employing a hyperlink narrative. Her, the director’s first feature film in 10 years, revolves around five women — Santha (Urvashi), Ruchi (Parvathy Thiruvothu), Anamika (Aishwarya Rajesh), Reshma (Ramya Nambessan) and Abhinaya (Lijomol Jose) — hailing from different socio-economic backgrounds. “It is not an anthology, each of these (five) women has their storylines but some of them are interconnected,” Lijin had said during a pre-release interview with OTTplay and true to that, the central thread connecting the five characters is their shared connection to the multifaceted city of Thiruvananthapuram, where the entire film unfolds. Sikandar Ka Muqaddar movie review | Neeraj Pandey’s Netflix film is a rare beast in Bollywood. a pulpy character study with twists you don’t see coming



Interestingly, Lijin and writer Archana Vasudev ensure that each storyline retains its distinct tone and individuality, without significant overlap, yet the narratives are subtly intertwined through coincidences or certain shared elements. While some of the characters face life-altering challenges, others deal with seemingly minor inconveniences; however, a closer look reveals that even these smaller struggles hold profound significance within the context of each one’s personal life. The film opens with Anamika rushing to attend a crucial PSC interview, after a rough start to her day, which includes a quarrel over the phone with a loved one who disapproves of her pursuing this job. Following an impressive animated title sequence, accompanied by a motivating track composed by Govind Vasantha, the first shot in the film features a line of fire ants, known for causing a burning sensation when they sting. While ironing her saree during the call, Anamika notices an ant crawling onto the fabric, almost intruding on her conversation, much like a swargathile katurumb (a Malayalam adage meaning “black ant in heaven,” referring to unwelcome intrusions). Though she gently removes the ant without harming it, as with many intruders, it soon returns, sticking to her saree unnoticed.

On her way to the interview centre, the ant starts biting her between her thighs, causing immense discomfort. Her attempts to find a restroom for relief are thwarted by the lack of accessible options in male-dominated public spaces. Desperate, she takes an auto-rickshaw for privacy, only to face further harassment from the pervert driver. Anamika’s story poignantly shows the challenges women face in even the simplest of situations, where removing a biting ant from one’s body is a vexing task in a world rife with predatory gazes. On a broader level, it also serves as an analogy for the nosy tendencies of society, where boundaries — both physical and personal — are constantly violated.

While the story of influencer-cum-movie producer Reshma highlights the elitist behaviour of the glitterati, exploiting anyone and everyone for personal gain without a second thought, Santha’s arc also shows the importance of intimacy and communication in romantic relationships, regardless of age. At the same time, Abhinaya’s story explores the critical role of sexual synergy before committing to lifelong partnerships like marriage as well. Ruchi’s tale, on the other hand, is deeply personal, chronicling a chaotic morning in her life that culminates in a severe panic attack and mental breakdown-inducing situation — tragically on an important day at work. Woman of the Hour movie review | Anna Kendrick’s inventive serial killer thriller takes stabs in the dark

In its runtime of just about 97 minutes, Her does offer a glimpse into the lives of five different women but, unfortunately, comes across as insincere and performative. The movie lacks an organic flow, with elements seemingly inserted just for the sake of it rather than purpose. As the movie begins, we see Aishwarya Rajesh breaking the fourth wall. While this can be seen as a testament to the subjects the movie deals with, its needlessness is too glaring. This choice is further undermined by Anamika’s second fourth-wall break at the end when her storyline intersects with Ruchi’s. These moments, instead of adding depth, create an unwarranted distance between the characters and the

audience. Even without these shots, the essence of Anamika and Ruchi’s storylines is clear, making these artistic choices feel redundant. Moreover, since not all the stories in the movie engage in direct discourse with the audience, these fourth-wall breaks feel disjointed and poorly executed. While Lijin succeeds in conveying the tension and discomfort that Anamika experiences, her storyline as a whole lacks cohesion, feeling like a collection of disconnected scenes devoid of any depth. Meanwhile, the depiction of a few token “perverts” in her world serves no meaningful purpose, as these characters and their actions are inadequately written into the story. Aishwarya’s performance fares well in high-tension moments but falls short in others, particularly during the opening phone conversation, which comes across as contrived and unnatural. Sookshmadarshini movie review | Basil Joseph, Nazriya Nazim deliver a suspenseful and hilarious mystery comedy. The portrayal of social media celebrity Reshma is another weak point. Although her hyper personality requires exaggeration, Ramya’s performance feels extremely amateurish. Her character and arc feel excessively artificial, as though shaped by superficial observations from social media trends, resulting in an uninspired and lacklustre arc here. Unfortunately, this issue extends to the Abhinaya track too, which suffers from similar shortcomings. In contrast, Santha’s arc stands out as the film’s most compelling one, thanks to Urvashi’s masterful and natural performance. Paired with Pratap Pothan (in a posthumous role) as her husband, the two share a delightful on-screen chemistry. Urvashi’s flawless dialogue delivery, unmatched by the younger actors in the cast, underscores why she is an absolute GOAT. She beautifully portrays Santha’s subtle jealousy towards an Alexa device her husband interacts with more than her, imbuing the character with layers of depth through even the slightest gestures.

While Parvathy’s story is also compelling, bolstered by her strong and deeply personal performance, Lijin and Archana fail to fully capitalise on its potential. Towards the end, the film reveals Anamika and Ruchi as romantic partners and the insincerity, apparent in other parts of the movie, becomes all the more glaring here. The depiction of their lesbian relationship feels like a token gesture, seemingly added to tick off a checklist of elements typically associated with feminist films. This performativity also prevents Her from achieving the depth and resonance of other feminist works, such as B 32 Muthal 44 Vare (2023). Instead, it feels like a calculated attempt to capitalise on the popularity of feminist narratives, inadvertently trivialising the very movement it seeks to represent. On the technical front, the film benefits from Govind Vasantha’s evocative music and Sameera Saneesh’s excellent costume design, both of which provide moments of polish in an otherwise uneven effort.

Thalapathy Vijay’s son Jason Sanjay gears up for directorial debut

Hyderabad: Tamil superstar Thalapathy Vijay’s son Jason Sanjay is all set to make his directorial debut in Kollywood, putting an end to speculations about his acting debut. Earlier, there were rumors that he might be a part of the Tamil remake of the Telugu hit Uppena, but those plans have been put on the backburner.

Actor Sundeep Kishan is set to star in the directorial debut of Jason Sanjay. Thaman has been roped in to compose the film’s music, and the production is backed by Lyca Productions. Though details of the cast and crew are yet to be known, the makers unveiled a special video announcing the project.

On the professional front, Sundeep Kishan was last seen in Raayan, with Dhanush. Mazaka and SK31 along with JasonSanjay01 are to be released in 2025.

Suryakumar Yadav to play last two Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy games for Mumbai



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

India's captain Suryakumar Yadav has informed Mumbai team management that he is available to play their last two games in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. (AP | PTI) India's captain Suryakumar Yadav has informed Mumbai team management that he is available to play their last two games in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. India's T20 captain Suryakumar Yadav has informed the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) selectors that he will be available for selection for the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy and will

play the last two T20 games in Hyderabad. Mumbai will take on Services and Andhra on December 3 and December 5 in their last two games. Yadav missed four league games due to his sister's marriage and he is now expected to join the Mumbai team on Monday evening. "He has informed us that he is willing to play the last T20 game and MCA has added his name. He will be flying on Monday," a source in the MCA confirmed.

It will be interesting to see if the Mumbai side decides to alter its batting positions for India's short format captain. Mumbai has been starting their batting with Prithvi Shaw, Angkrish Raghuvansi, Shreyas Iyer and Ajinkya Rahane. If Yadav makes it, he will have to slot in at number five. The Mumbai Indians' 360 player bats in the top four for the Indian team. The team management and Mumbai captain Iyer will take a call on Yadav's batting position. When asked by an MCA official about Yadav's batting position, he said, "Yadav is a team player, he can bat at any position, he can sacrifice his position if the team wants too. He has never missed a domestic game despite playing for India. When free, he is the only India player, who plays matches at Mumbai's maidaans. He just likes to play." Mumbai has won two games out of three in the ongoing Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy and they are scheduled to take on Nagaland today.

Magnus Carlsen says Gukesh has 'generally not impressed' him at World Chess Championship

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Gukesh contemplates his next move against Ding Liren in game 5 of the World Chess Championship in Singapore. (PHOTO: FIDE/Eng Chin An) Gukesh contemplates his next move against Ding Liren in game 5 of the World Chess Championship in Singapore. Former world champion Magnus Carlsen has said that Gukesh, who at the age of 18 is bidding to become the youngest ever world champion, has not impressed him so far over the course of five games at the ongoing World Chess Championship against the reigning world champion Ding Liren.

"Gukesh has generally not impressed me so far. Ding has probably done a little bit better than we had thought. Well, we didn't expect much (before the start of the world chess championship). But Gukesh has probably been a little bit worse," said Magnus Carlsen in a recap video on the Take Take app. After five games, the score in the best-of-14 World Chess Championship match stands level with both players having 2.5 points each after winning one game apiece and drawing the remaining three. Gukesh, though, has had the chance to play in three games so far with the white pieces. Game 5 ended in a draw despite Gukesh blundering on move 25, which saw Ding Liren have the chance to attack. But Ding made an error of judgement on the 25th move that was criticised by Magnus



Carlsen. Playing knight c4 (25.Nc4) instead of knight to a4... I'm not shocked. But it was soft. Really really soft," said Magnus Carlsen before adding: "In today's game, even though we should criticise Ding for not going knight to a4 instead of knight to c4, it was a win for Ding. No doubt about it. It increased his chances of him winning the match and it probably increased his confidence in what he's doing as well." Magnus Carlsen said that he didn't think Gukesh would be happy after the Game 5 draw. "A game like today would have been frustrating for Gukesh a little bit, because he cannot really outplay Ding or get chances with the white pieces," Carlsen said.

What happened when India played its last 50-over match with red ball and white clothing in 2000



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After a rain-marred day in Canberra on Saturday, India's preparations for the pink-ball Test in Adelaide were limited to a 50-overs-per-side practice game against the Australia Prime Minister's XI on Day 2. It is not very often that we see a 50-over game being played in all whites with a red or pink ball. Though red-ball 50-over matches were a common sight in the '90s, the last international ODI with the red ball and white clothing interestingly involved India, when they hosted Zimbabwe in 2000. In their final game of a five-

match series on December 14, 2000 – India's last fixture of the 20th century – the teams played an ODI in white flannels with the red ball. Follow our liveblog of the second day of the India vs Australia Prime Minister's XI Test here: IND vs PM's XI day 2

India won the match by 39 runs, as a well-rounded performance by the current national selector Ajit Agarkar saw the side cross the line comfortably. He scored 67 off 25 deliveries, aided by a quickfire half-century in 21 balls. Incidentally, Agarkar eclipsed Kapil Dev's record of 22 balls to become the fastest Indian player to score a half-century in ODIs, helping India cross the 300 on the scoreboard. He partnered up with Reetinder Sodhi who scored 53 off 67 balls. Agarkar then went on to pick three wickets in the match as Zimbabwe was bundled out for 262, earning him a well-deserved Man of the Match award. Interestingly, the match also marked the first time Rahul Dravid captained the Indian side ahead of his future full-time as the skipper across formats. India eventually won the series 4-1 after downing Zimbabwe 1-0 in the Test series that preceded the limited-overs games. Twenty-four years later, India are playing a similar format against PMXI in Canberra, even though the game will not warrant a place in the official record books.

Who is Jacob Bethell, Barbados-born England batter who scored quickfire fifty on Test debut

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

England's 21-year-old batter Jacob Bethell played at number three for the first time in his first-class career on Test debut against New Zealand in Christchurch this week. Bethell was lauded his performance in the first innings, where he faced 34 balls against a challenging new ball spell, then cashed in when the game was virtually over in the second during a manic 104-run chase in 12.2 overs. Before pulling for six in what would end up being the game's final over, the left-hander smashed eight fours, including four in five balls off fellow debutant, Kiwi rookie Nathan Smith. Bethell closed the chase as reached fifty off just 37 balls, making it the second-quickest fifty on Test debut.

Jacob Bethell is a promising young cricketer, who was born in the Caribbean island of Barbados. He has lately received recognition for his international



cricket performances, having made his T20I debut for England against Australia on September 11, 2024. Bethell is an all-rounder renowned for his aggressive hitting style and left-arm orthodox spin bowling. In T20 cricket, he has a strike rate of 137.57. Meanwhile, Jacob Bethell was also picked for Rs. 2.60 crore by Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the IPL 2025 Mega Auction last week. Earlier this month,

Bethell also became the youngest Englishman to score a T20I fifty, scoring a half-century at the age of 21 years and 17 days against West Indies in Barbados, his birthplace. Veteran Tim Southee, who is also one of the players caught in Bethell's onslaught in the final stretch of his Test career, is incidentally the only player in Test history to reach a half-century on debut faster

than the Englishman. The argument around England's choice to bat Bethell at No. 3 despite his lack of experience in the position and his inability to reach a first-class hundred was largely resolved by his knock. Nevertheless, Bethell has proven that he can handle the red ball just as effectively after making an impression in white-ball cricket for England in recent months.

A thunderbolt has hit women doubles – it's Liu Sheng Shu's close to 400 kph smash



GNS News Agency, Dec 3

In 2010, Indian badminton was on the cusp of something truly formidable but not quite yet in fashion then – women's doubles. The country had unearthed Ashwini Ponappa, a shuttler amenable to playing doubles. It was Jwala Gutta who handpicked Ashwini, and cannily for her variety in the most unobtrusive of the sport's skill-sets – the defensive service. But Ashwini would soon unleash what was then the fastest smash on the women's circuit, measured at 260 km/hr, and Indian doubles was suddenly carrying serious heft, and a promise of making a mark. A World Championship medal followed. 14 years on, at last week's China Masters, home contender Liu Sheng Shu sent down a smash at a bombastic 397.1 kph. Along with Tan Ning, 21, Liu has regained the World No 1 spot. The Paris Games silver medalist Liu, 20 years of age, cannot be definitively said to be in possession of the hardest smash. But at Shenzhen last week, she led a trioka of Chinese doubles shuttlers who were smacking the shuttle upwards of 390 kph. Liu-Tan have ushered in an era of power-hitting (hence the nickname) into women's doubles, and given their success, going forward, most will attempt to slot into the same style – hard-hitting, short snappy rallies, with overwhelming offensive flurries. It's a huge departure from what women's doubles had come to be associated with – long, never ending rallies (often around 100 shots long) and unbelievable defense. Make no mistake, Liu and Tan had a 84-shot rally, winning it with steady nerveless defense. But that makes the well built pair's game even more formidable – they can defend if they need to, but at all times, they will come at opponents with blistering offense. It's the decisive, game changing Chinese advantage over Japanese and Korean running, rally games. Liu, the younger of the two, also the leader amongst the two, is 1.75 m tall, and was picked out by Beijing Olympics WD champ Du Jing, who coaches at Liaoning province. Chinese media reported that at age 4, while strolling in the mall with mother Zhu Mingyue, Liu clung onto a badminton racket and wouldn't let go till a pair of rackets were bought for 200 yuan. The mother-daughter went to the town square that evening, and Liu caught 30 shuttles in a row, prompting her admission to a sports school at age 6.

She had prodigious smashing power from the back court, by 10 she made the provincial team, and got into the national centre when Du Jing forwarded her credentials, vouching for her potential. Her mother Zhu, told Chinese

media she was good at TT, rope skipping, roller skating and running, but badminton more or less looked her calling. Paired with Tan, another aggressive shuttler, Liu won the 2022 Junior World Championships. At the Paris Olympics, the bustling Chinese would create a stir, going on to win silver after decimating Koreans Baek-Lee, a defensively sturdy pair, with the inevitable power-play. There really is no subtle way to say this – but power is everything in this sport, and it can render contests lopsided, if backed by solidity in defense. What's surprised the Chinese legends though is how the duo haven't paused for a breath since Paris. The Chinese combine have been in 5 straight Super Series finals in the past few months, winning 3. The Chinese shuttlerati weren't immediately impressed. Chinese doubles legend Cai Yun who now finds their relentless staggering, had reckoned they were more like two singles players playing doubles, lacking continuity and coordination and with slow racket raising at the net. The aftermath – the Chinese duo trained so hard that now they boast of one of the most intimidating and accurate games at the net. It's not quite the silken deception, but wristy power scythes even at the net. The front court game, a weakness as per the Chinese legends once, is now short-range turns of the knife. It was bad enough that their power smash from the back was backed by agility in defense. But now opponents have to contend with high quality net play. From both of them. They stand side by side, but can backtrack just as easily as charge the net. It was their first back to back titles, and they landed in Shenzhen exhausted from winning in Japan, and spent the day at dope testing, missing on court acclimatization.

Such is the competition in China in the era of their greatest pairing Chen-Jia, themselves near unplayable, that Liu-Tan had never won a title in China until last week. They would tick that box finally at Shenzhen. Liu Sheng Shu incidentally grew up as a fan of Japanese Yuki Fukushima, an aggressive shuttler known for her speedy deep clears, someone who raised the WD tempo with her attack. Defensive rally games might survive a few years, but cannot outlast Chinese aggressive games. In their earlier meeting at China, Indians Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand couldn't avoid a straight sets loss to Liu-Tan, but the Chinese are bound to push Treesa Jolly to bolster her attack, for she can go toe to toe with them on raw power. However, Treesa did the smarter thing of playing 'placement badminton', to briefly unsettle them. With Gayatri, who loves a good mental game, she can weave patterns to induce some chaos within the Chinese, because unpredictability is a fine weapon against power. But it's an uphill task fending Liu-Tan off, point after point, set after set. Even forcing a decider could prove difficult. But the power-hitting levels are through the roof, and the world is in the path of a proper blizzard. They remain a monogreen to transcribing audio softwares – Liu and Tan, often misheard as 'New in Town'. They sure stomp to the tunes of 'new sheriff in town' given how they've shaken up how women's doubles is played.

World Chess Championship: Why chess legend Judit Polgar was left 'speechless' by Gukesh's 3rd move in Game 5



The fifth game of the World Chess Championship between Gukesh and Ding Liren saw the 18-year-old from India play with white pieces. The game ended in a 40-move draw. Game 5 saw the French Defence being employed on the chess by Ding Liren as Gukesh started with 1.e4. But chess legend Judit Polgar was less than impressed by the Indian teenager's third move: 3.exd5. "I'm just speechless to tell you the truth. I just couldn't believe my eyes when I saw this. I was like 'what is this?' This is game 5, the way Gukesh came in to the playing hall it was clear to me that now it is going to be the time. Now it's going to be sharp. And he goes e takes d5! It is so much not Gukesh," said Judit Polgar on the Chess24 stream where she was doing live analysis.

You can check out the move by move action from Game 5 between Gukesh and Ding Liren and also play along in the interactive below. Scroll down to read our updates in real time from Game 5. Asked if maybe the Indian had chosen the line because of the first game loss where Ding had also employed the French Defence against him which had

resulted in a win for the world champion, Polgar said: "This is not how 18-year-olds deal with it. Especially since he levelled the match after that (setback). This is the biggest shock of the match so far. What does Gukesh want to prove with that 3.exd5? Can you imagine that this would become the new fashion if Gukesh the challenger wins the game today after playing this."

Joe Root breaks Sachin Tendulkar's record to become highest 4th innings run-scorer in Test history

GNS News Agency, Dec 3

Joe Root surpasses Sachin Tendulkar to become highest 4th innings run scorer (Reuters) Joe Root surpasses Sachin Tendulkar to become highest 4th innings run scorer England batter Joe Root surpassed the legendary Sachin Tendulkar for most runs in Test run chases during his team's eight-wicket win against New Zealand at the Hagley Oval in Christchurch. Root surpassed Tendulkar's tally of 1625 runs in the fourth innings as he remained unbeaten on 23 off 15 deliveries, with England chasing down a 104-run target in only 12.2 overs – the fastest 100-plus run chase in Test history. Playing in his 150th Test, Root also leapfrogged compatriot Alastair Cook (1611), Graeme Smith (1611) before surpassing Tendulkar. Root went past Tendulkar's aggregate in 11 fewer innings, taking his overall fourth innings tally to 1630 in 49 innings with a 40-plus average, two centuries and eight fifties. However, only 620 of Root's runs have resulted in England wins, with 715 being the corresponding figure for Tendulkar. Only former South African cap-



tain Smith has recorded over 1000 fourth-innings runs in victories. Only 3,144 runs separate Root (12,777) from Tendulkar (15,921) on the Test run-scoring charts with the Yorkshireman having played only 55 innings less than the Indian batting maestro. Earlier, Root fell for a four-ball duck in the first innings to Kiwi debutant Nathan Smith, making him only the third batter after Steve Waugh and Ricky Ponting to fall for nought in their 150th Test match.

Golden Eagles soar to victory in nail-biting TPGL finale in Hyd

The summit clash followed a match play format featuring four singles and two doubles matches, ending in a 3-3 tie. In the singles, both the Golden Eagles and the Valley Warriors claimed two victories each. Similarly, the doubles matches were evenly split, with each team securing one win. The suspenseful playoff came down to Mithun Reddy G (Golden Eagles) and Madhav Kota (Valley Warriors), both

playing off a 5 handicap. In a gripping finish, Reddy sank the crucial putt, clinching the Golden Eagles' hard-earned victory and the season championship. The match play format of the summit clash saw 4 singles and 2 doubles matches, with the scores tied at 3 points each. In singles, the Eagles and Warriors shared the spoils, winning two matches apiece.