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Three of family, who consumed weedicide, die in Telangana's Mancherial

Mancherial: Three of four members belonging to a family, who allegedly attempted to die by suicide by consuming a weedicide at Kasipet village in Thandur on Tuesday, died at the MGM Hospital in Warangal on Wednesday morning. Thandur Sub-Inspector Kiran Kumar said Samudrala Mondaiah (60) and his wife Sridevi (50) breathed their last early on Wednesday morning, while their daughter Chaitanya (30) died on Tuesday night. The condition of Mondaiah's son Shiva Prasad is said to be critical. According to preliminary inquiries, the four tried to kill themselves by consuming weedicide as they were depressed over a financial crisis caused due to losses in online games played by Shiva.

Journalists from Telangana, Andhra Pradesh protest against Mohan Babu's attack on journalists



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Hyderabad: Condemning the attack on TV9 Telugu reporter and other journalists by actor Mohan Babu, several Journalists from Telangana as well as Andhra Pradesh staged protests demanding the immediate arrest of the actor. Reacting to the attack, the Telangana State Video Journalists Associations and other Journalist Associations, on Wednesday, called for protests at the actor's residence and Film Chamber in Film Nagar and also registered a case at the police station. Several journalists from Andhra Pradesh also condemned the attack on the media. The journalist also staged a protest at the Ambedkar statue in Kuppam. Mohan Babu's effigy was burnt and slogans were raised against the actor. The Jana Sena coordinator Naresh, TDP councillors Damu, Zakir, Somu, and Suresh have expressed their support to the journalists protesting in Kuppam. The alleged assault occurred when the media persons reached the actor's residence to report on the ongoing rift in the Manchu family. Upon questioning about the feud, the actor snatched the mic from a TV9 journalist and hit him on the face leaving him severely injured. The actor's aides later allegedly chased the media out of the actor's residence using physical force.

28,101 candidates to appear for group-II test at 85 centres in Khammam



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Khammam: The district administration has been gearing up for conducting the group-II examination to be held on December 15 and 16. Additional Collector P Srinivas Reddy on Wednesday held a meeting with concerned officials to review the arrangements for the examination. The exam would be held in two sessions from 10 am to 12.30 pm and from 3 pm to 5.30 pm for which proper arrangements have to be made, he told officials. As many as 28,101 candidates would appear for the test at 85 examination centres set up in the district and the exam would be monitored by two regional coordinators. Vijaya Engineering College principal, Dr. V Chinniah would be the regional coordinator-1 to supervise 40 examination centres while SBIT principal Dr. G. Rajakumar as the regional coordinator-2 would supervise 45 examination centres. Srinivas Reddy said that the strong room would be under the supervision of district revenue officer and revenue division officer. MPDOs have been appointed as joint route officers to move the question papers to exam centres and tahsildars have been appointed as flying squad officers to check every three to five examination centres. The additional Collector suggested that the chief superintendent and invigilators of the examination centres should hold a meeting on December 14 on conducting the examination. The chief invigilator should conduct a thorough inspection of the examination centre premises a day before. He said that medical camps should be set up at examination centres and steps should be taken to ensure uninterrupted power supply. Special buses should be arranged by the RTC to ensure that the candidates reach the examination centres on time. District revenue officer M Rajeshwari, ACP N Narsaiah, regional coordinators Dr. V. Chinniah, Dr. G. Raj Kumar, DM&HO Dr. B. Kalavati Bai and others were present.

High Court Grants Relief to Mohan Babu, Orders Surveillance at Residence

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court has provided temporary relief to veteran actor and former MP Mohan Babu in a case linked to a family dispute. The court has exempted him from appearing before the police for questioning and instructed officials to keep his residence under watch. The High Court directed the police to monitor Mohan Babu's house every two hours.

International recognition for Osmania University's short film

Hyderabad: The Osmania University Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMRC) Director P Raghupathi's short film has brought laurels to the university at the international level.

Raghupathi was recently honored with the best short film award for the short film 'Reaching the Unreached' in the development category at the prestigious 16th International Short Film Festival held in Jodhpur, Rajasthan. He bagged a cash prize of Rs.50,000, a trophy, and a certificate. The short film has also been selected for screening in the human rights category.

Rs 1,751 crore loans sanctioned to poor artisans under PM Vishwakarma scheme

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Banks have sanctioned loans to the tune of Rs 1,751 crore to poor artisans such as blacksmiths, masons, potters, carpenters and tailors under the PM Vishwakarma scheme as of October 31, the Parliament was informed. Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha that the government has taken various measures to overcome the challenges faced by borrowers, particularly in rural areas and to facilitate easy flow of credit to cater to their needs. According to figures provided by the minister, over 2.02 lakh accounts have been opened under the PM Vishwakarma scheme with a total sanctioned loan amount of Rs 1,751.20 crore. The government launched PM



Vishwakarma on September 17, 2023, to provide end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople who work with their hands and tools. These traditional artisans and craftspeople are referred to as 'Vishwakarmas'. The financial outlay for the scheme from FY 2023-2024 to FY 2027-28 is Rs 13,000 crore.

According to data compiled by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the PM

Vishwakarma Scheme has made considerable headway with 2.58 crore applications submitted so far, of which 23.75 lakh applicants have been successfully registered for receiving benefits under the scheme after the three-stage verification process. Close to 10 lakh people have received toolkit incentives of up to Rs 15,000 through e-vouchers under the scheme to buy modern tools suitable for their occupation. The loans ex-

tended to the artisans carry a 5 per cent interest rate, subsidised by the government. Interest Subvention: The Government of India provides 8 per cent interest subvention, effectively reducing the overall loan cost. The loan can be repaid over 18 months for the first tranche and 30 months for the second tranche. The PM Vishwakarma Scheme covers artisans and craftspeople of 18 trades who work with their hands and tools. The objective of the scheme is to help traditional artisans and craftspeople to become entrepreneurs and self-reliant. Formal training in the form of Basic Skill Training has been initiated for the upgradation and modernisation of traditional skills of artisans and craftspeople under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme across 26 States/UTs of the country.

Mohan Babu should immediately issue a public apology: Press Club President Balavardhan



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Wanaparthy: Journalists under the leadership of President Balavardhan protested against the unprovoked attack on Ranjith, a prominent TV channel journalist, by film hero and producer Mohan Babu at the Press Club office. Speaking on the occasion, the journalists said...the attack on the media representatives who came to cover the news at Mohan Babu's house is a proof of your arrogance and your degradation. They demanded a public apology for the attack on the journalists. The attack in the presence of the police has once again proved that the safety of journalists is not assured, and they said that the government leaders should respond to this and punish the attackers severely. Ramesh, Srinivasulu, Ravinder Goud, KM Basha, Vijay, Parasha Ramulu, Balaraaj, Chiranjeevi, Atiq Pasha, Rajendra Prasad, Gopi, Uma Shankar, Srikanth, Rajesh, Ashok, Ramesh, Manyam, Ravi, Kumaraswamy, Mahesh, Shankar, Prakash and others participated in this program.

Lok Sabha passes Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024 despite disruptions

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

The Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was passed on Wednesday (December 11, 2024) in the Lok Sabha, despite disruptions. The Bill was passed five months after it was introduced on the floor of the House. All the provisions in the erstwhile colonial-era Indian Railway Board Act, 1905 are proposed to be incorporated in the Railways Act, 1989 through this Bill. It is intended to simplify the legal framework and reduces the need to refer to two laws. The Bill also proposes to amend the Railways Act, 1989 to provide statutory backing to the Railway Board, which has functioned without such a sanction since it began functioning.

The statutory powers seek to enhance the functioning and independence of the Railway Board. The provisions added to the amended Bill authorise the Central government to decide the composition of the



Railway Board. This includes the number of members, their terms of service, and their qualifications and experience. The Bill also proposes to improve operational efficiencies and decentralise powers, granting greater autonomy to Railway Zones. Increasing autonomy has been a long-standing demand, supported by various committees, including 2014 Sreedharan Committee.

The Bill proposes to establish an independent regulator to oversee tariffs, safety, and the participation of the private sector in the

established as a branch of the Public Works Department before Independence. "When the network expanded, Indian Railways Act, 1890, was enacted to enable proper functioning of different railway entities," Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated in the amendment. Mr. Vaishnaw further stated that the railway organisation was separated from the Public Works Department and the Railway Board Act was enacted in 1905. "A contemporary railway law, the Railways Act was enacted in 1989 by repealing the Indian Railways Act, 1890. However, the Railway Board continued to function through an executive decision without any statutory sanction," he said. "The current Bill proposes to simplify the legal framework by incorporating the proposals of the Indian Railway Board Act, 1905 in the Railways Act, 1989. This will reduce the need to refer to two laws," Mr. Vaishnaw had said earlier, while introducing the Bill in the Lok Sabha.

Rahul Gandhi meets Speaker with request to expunge remarks against him



Mr. Gandhi said the BJP has been making "baseless" allegations against him to "distract" attention from the Adani issue, but he would not be provoked by any of these charges.

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi met Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday (December 11, 2024) and asked him to expunge derogatory comments made by BJP MPs against him, and ensure the House functions smoothly. Mr. Gandhi said the BJP has been making "baseless" allegations against him to "distract" attention from the Adani issue, but he would not be provoked by any of these charges. "I held a meeting with the Speaker. I told him that

derogatory comments against me should be expunged. The Speaker said that he would look into it," Mr. Gandhi said.

"Our aim is that the House must run and discussion should happen in the House. No matter what they say about me, we want that there should be a debate on 13th December," Mr. Gandhi said. "They don't want a discussion on Adani. In the end, we will not leave this. They will keep levelling allegations on us but the House must function," he added. Earlier in the day, Congress Deputy Leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi wrote to the Speaker, urging him to examine the party's complaint against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's "defamatory remarks" against Rahul Gandhi and remove them from the record. Mr. Gogoi said after the Speaker's decision, the Congress party is keen to participate in the legislative business listed for the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament. Meanwhile, when Mr. Gandhi was asked about the BJP alleging links between the Congress leadership and U.S. billionaire investor George Soros, he said, "They will continue to make allegations, but whatever charges they make, we would want the House to function. Whatever charges they make against me, let them." "Though it is not our responsibility to run the House, we will allow the House to function 100%," Mr. Gandhi added. Earlier in the day, Mr. Gandhi and Congress MPs were joined by some other INDIA bloc MPs in greeting BJP members with placards and national flag, as they urged them to allow the House to function. Rahul Gandhi also met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and sought to present the flag but Mr. Singh moved on after exchanging pleasantries.

SC relaxes Sisodia's bail condition (Ld)

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed a plea filed by senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia seeking relaxation of the bail condition requiring him to report to the Investigating Officer semi-weekly. A bench headed by Justice B.R. Gavai decided to delete the bail condition requiring Sisodia to report to the Investigating Officer every Monday and Thursday between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. "We do not find the said condition is necessary and the same is therefore deleted. However, it is directed that the applicant (Sisodia) shall regularly attend the trial court," ordered Justice Gavai-led Bench. Earlier on Monday, the Bench, also comprising Justice K.V. Viswanathan, agreed to list on December 11 the plea moved by Sisodia after senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi mentioned it. In August this year, the Supreme Court granted bail to the senior AAP leader, saying that he cannot be kept behind bars for an unlimited period of time in the hope of a speedy completion of trial in the alleged excise policy case. Pronouncing the verdict on Sisodia's bail pleas, a Bench presided over by Justice Gavai had said: "In the present case, in ED as well as CBI matter, 493 witnesses have been named and the case involves thousands of pages of documents and over lakh pages of digitised documents." "It is thus clear that there is not even a remotest possibility of the trial being concluded in the near future. In our view, keeping the appellant behind bars for an unlimited period of time in the hope of speedy completion of the trial would deprive him of the Fundamental Right of Liberty given under Article 21 of the Constitution."

Mamata Banerjee: Centre must act, protect minorities in Bangladesh

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday (December 11, 2024) said the Centre must give protection to minorities in violence-hit Bangladesh, and bring back "those willing to return". Ms. Banerjee also claimed that fake videos were being purposefully circulated, as certain sections were trying to foment communal tension. "We want protection for minorities in Bangladesh."

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ADE JYOTHSNA RANI W/O ADE DHARMENDER (old name) born on 01-06-1980 at Mangalgi earlier was Holding Passport No. V9681186 Dt: 12-04-2022 hereby Changing my Name and henceforth in future I would be known as BANKA JYOTHSNA RANI W/O ADE DHARMENDER (new name) H.No.3-78, Narnoor, Adilabad-504311, Telangana State.

DECLARANT.
BANKA JYOTHSNA RANI
W/O ADE DHARMENDER

Place: Narnoor
Date: 12-12-2024

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Thawing the frost

THE meeting between the foreign secretaries of India and Bangladesh in Dhaka on Monday marks a cautious attempt to mend ties strained since the ouster of Sheikh Hasina's government. The political upheaval in Bangladesh and the ensuing asylum provided to Hasina by India cast a shadow over bilateral relations. This shift, compounded by rising tensions over minority harassment and diplomatic incidents, underscores the complexities of managing a relationship deeply rooted in shared history and mutual interests. The discussions in Dhaka focused on contentious issues, such as attacks on minorities, including Hindus, and the arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das on sedition charges. While New Delhi raised concerns over the safety of minorities, Dhaka argued that these incidents stem from political, not religious, factors. Such narratives reveal the challenges of bridging divergent perspectives, particularly when public sentiment and political optics are involved. Interim leader Muhammad Yunus' administration has emphasised the need for a pragmatic relationship with India, balancing dignity with cooperation.

His call to "forget transient matters" highlights the urgency to de-escalate tensions and prioritise long-term goals, such as trade and border management. India's insistence on protecting minority rights, coupled with Bangladesh's call for equity, underscores the need for nuanced diplomacy that respects each nation's sensitivities. India, with its strategic commitment to a stable South Asia, must tread carefully. Overplaying its hand in domestic Bangladeshi politics risks alienating the current regime, potentially eroding trust. Meanwhile, Dhaka must recognise that India's concerns about minority safety and political stability are not merely rhetorical but reflect broader regional stability imperatives. This diplomatic reset is a crucial opportunity.

Why did three students drown in Rau's IAS basement? Here's what CBI says



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

An insufficient drainage system, highly unstable main entrance gates used as floodwater barriers, a cubicle with a lockable door at the entry point that got blocked preventing students' escape — these are the key submissions by the CBI in its chargesheet in the drowning case of three students at the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajinder Nagar in July this year. The danger of flooding "could be fathomed by an ordinary passerby", and by allowing the students to use the basement, the coaching centre risked their lives, the CBI alleged in the chargesheet submitted in Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court. Currently, the agency is probing the angle of corruption, The Indian Express has learnt.

Meanwhile, nearly five months after the July 27 incident, the Supreme Court Friday sought a response from states on the model rules drafted to prevent such instances at coaching centres. According to the CBI chargesheet, there was moderate rainfall — as per India Meteorological Department standards — on July 27, as a result of which, the main road in front of Rau's IAS got flooded. This is in contrast to the submission of the accused's counsel that there was "heavy rainfall" on the day of the incident. In the evening, around 30 students were in the basement when the incident took place, the probe agency stated.

Soon, a Force Gurkha SUV was being driven on the road near the coaching centre's main entrance steel gates. The gates, which were used to prevent rainwater from entering the premises, however, could not withstand the pressure created by the vehicle on the fateful day, the CBI said. This resulted in the basement flooding. The vehicle driver Manuj Kathuria was arrested and granted bail by a Delhi Court a few days later. The CBI further alleged that the drainage system in the locality was insufficient to carry the floodwater load. The chargesheet, however, pointed out that no pipe of Delhi Jal Board had burst in the area on the day of the incident. It also submitted an IIT Delhi report that stated that the main entrance gates of the building were highly unstable to be used as floodwater barriers.

Inspection by IIT Delhi experts, the agency stated, found that 8-inch 'risers' had been constructed to prevent water from entering the basement and two pumps were installed to pump out water. A "choked" water harvesting pit was also present at the entrance of the coaching centre, the agency stated. "All the four co-owners of the basement... let out the basement to M/s Rau's IAS Study Circle for being used for commercial purposes despite having knowledge that the basement could be used only for the purpose of household storage, parking, etc," the CBI stated citing a completion-cum-occupancy certificate, dated August 2021, of the building. The owners received a monthly rent of Rs 4 lakh and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had, on August 4, 2023, issued a show-cause notice to the coaching centre with a direction to stop the misuse of the property.

The CBI further submitted that a month before the accident, Kishor Singh Kushwaha, a civil services aspirant, had lodged an online complaint against the basement being used for coaching purposes and thus endangering students. Students and staff told the CBI that the basement flooding was a regular affair, it was submitted. The investigating agency had in October filed the chargesheet against six accused, namely Parvinder Singh, Harvinder Singh, Sarabjit Singh, and Tajinder Singh — the co-owners of the building where Rau's IAS was allegedly running a library in the basement; coaching centre CEO Abhishek Gupta; and centre coordinator Deshpal Singh. Currently, all the accused are out on interim bail.

87 roads, NH blocked in Himachal Pradesh due to snowfall, rainfall



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Shimla snowfall December 2024: Shimla snowfall December 2024: The weather department predicted light rain and snowfall at isolated places over Lahaul and Spiti, Chamba, Kinnaur, Kangra, Shimla, Mandi, and Kullu districts for Rainfall and light snowfall disrupted the flow of traffic on 87 roads and National Highway-3 connecting Kullu Valley, Lahaul, and Spiti in Himachal Pradesh in the last 24 hours till 9 am At least 58 roads were blocked in Shimla district, followed by 17 in Kinnaur district, and six in Kangra district. Roads blocked in Shimla included Dhalli to Chharabra Kufri, Shimla-Chopal Road, Narkanda Road, and Chanshal Road, among others. Besides roads, 457 electricity supply lines were also affected across the state. Himachal Roadways Transport Corporation (HRTC)

bus services were also affected in the upper reaches of the state, particularly in the Shimla district. With the roads becoming slippery owing to the snowfall, drivers were advised not to drive until the snow was cleared or it melted away. Shimla city received the season's first 2.5 cm snowfall on Sunday. Khadralla and Jubbal in Shimla district received 5 cm of snowfall, whereas Chaupal received 4 cm of snowfall. The maximum snowfall of 6.7 cm in the state was recorded at Koksar in Lahaul and Spiti district.

Anupam Kashyap, Deputy Commissioner (Shimla), said despite inclement weather all schools will remain open in Shimla on Monday. He added that the district administration is prepared to tackle any situation and some of the blocked roads have been cleared. Meanwhile, the weather department predicted light rain and snowfall at isolated places over Lahaul and Spiti, Chamba, Kinnaur, Kangra, Shimla, Mandi, and Kullu districts for Monday.

It added that dry weather is likely to prevail in the rest of the state for the next seven days. Further, the minimum and maximum temperatures are set to fall by 2-3 degree Celsius in many parts of the state during the next 48 hours. Dense fog is expected over some parts of the reservoir area of Bhakra dam in Bilaspur district and Balh Valley in Mandi district during early morning, morning, and late-night hours in the next two days. A cold wave was likely at isolated pockets in low hills and plains on Tuesday and Wednesday, the weather department said.

Gauri Lankesh murder trial: witness tells court key accused showed locations used for planning attack on rationalist Narendra Nayak

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

A witness in the 2017 murder case of journalist Gauri Lankesh last week testified in a special court that in 2018, he witnessed the identification of a location in Mangalore where a member of a crime syndicate, arrested for the murder, claimed to have stayed to plot an attack on rationalist Narendra Nayak in 2016. The 58-year-old witness told the special court on December 5 that he was called on July 28, 2018, by the police to be a witness to places shown in Mangalore by alleged arms trainer Rajesh Bangera for a crime syndicate as locations used for surveillance on a fresh target and training shooters. The panchnama witness (a person who testifies to the details of a crime scene investigation recorded in a document called a panchnama) identified Bangera, 56, accused number eight in the murder of Lankesh, as the person who claimed to have provided arms training to shooters in Mangalore and also conducted surveillance over the activities of Nayak. Bangera is alleged to have trained the shooter accused in the murder, Parashuram Waghmore, a former Sri Rama Sena activist from the Vijayapura region, and other youths from Karnataka and Maharashtra recruited by a crime syndicate between 2012 and 2018 to use guns to carry out killings.

Bangera took the police team and witnesses to a secluded place on the Villa road, where he claimed to have trained a few youths in the usage of guns and subsequently to a location near the Mangla stadium in Mangalore, where he claimed to have conducted surveillance over Nayak for two days, the witness told the court. A Karnataka Special Investigation Team (SIT) has arrested 17 people for the shooting of Lankesh on the doorstep of her home in Bengaluru on the night of September 5, 2017. The SIT filed a 9,235-page chargesheet on November 23, 2018, in the case, stating that the murder was carried out by an organised crime syndicate group whose key members acted according to principles and guidelines outlined in a book called Kshatra Dharma Sadhana published by the radical right-wing group Sanatan Sanstha. The trial in the case has been underway since July 2022, and 16 of the 17 accused, including Bangera, have been granted bail because of a delay in proceedings. However, five of them have not been released from jail due to other cases against them. For the first time in the Lankesh murder, the trial has been held over two consecutive weeks since December 4. The members of the right-wing crime syndicate accused in Lankesh's murder were also implicated in the murders of rationalist Narendra Dabholkar in Pune on August 20, 2013, and leftist thinker Govind Pansare in Kolhapur on February 16, 2015 (both in Maharashtra), and scholar MM Kalburgi in Dharwad in Karnataka on August 30, 2015.

What the SIT chargesheet indicates on other plots The SIT has indicated in its chargesheet that the right-wing extremist group involved in the shooting of Lankesh in Sep-



tember 2017 also watched over the activities of the Nayak in Mangalore in the year 2016 after identifying him as a target. The SIT has enclosed details of panchnama at various locations in Mangalore. Bangera and a Mangalore youth, who was recruited and trained to carry out an attack, monitored the rationalist's activities for two days. As per the panchnama, an associate living in Mangalore pointed out the rationalist's home to Bangera. The SIT probe has also found that Bangera trained four youths in the use of guns prior to carrying out the surveillance work. According to court documents, one of the youths who was trained was taken along by Bangera for the surveillance activity.

The SIT also found a diary belonging to the main accused, Amol Kale, with an entry stating "KA new practice and deployment" with the names Bhagawan, NN, Nijuguanand and Kaka listed as "targets".

The SIT has indicated that this entry in the diary of Amol Kale outlined plans of the right-wing extremist group for targeting four people: writer K S Bhagawan in Mysore, rationalist Narendra Nayak in Mangalore, anti-superstition campaigner and seer Swami Nijuguanand, and the late playwright Girish Karnad in Bengaluru. The diary entry also lists the identity of the gang members identified to carry out the four attacks — with the names "Govinda, Builder" (now identified as Ganesh Miskin and Parashuram Waghmore, the rider in the Lankesh shooting) listed against the target Bhagwan, the nickname "driver" against the target NN, the nickname "fruits" against the name Nijuguanand and the name "laundry" against the target identified as Kaka. The group was allegedly in an advanced stage of targeting Kannada writer K S Bhagwan in Mysore in February 2018 when the SIT probe in the Lankesh murder achieved a breakthrough, resulting in a disruption of the plan. A separate case has been registered by the Karnataka Police over the K S Bhagwan murder plot and seven of the 18 people accused in the Lankesh murder have been charged.

AAP releases second list of 20 candidates, Manish Sisodia shifted to Jangpura



Among those dropped this time include Narela MLA Sharad Chauhan, Mustafabad MLA Haji Yunus, Deoli MLA Prakash Jarwal and Trilokpuri MLA Rohit Kumar. Sources said Praveen Kumar from Jangpura, also a three-time MLA, has been dropped this time around, because of significant anti-incumbency against him.

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Delhi AAP released the first list of 11 candidates on November 29 which was finalised during the AAP's Political Affairs Committee meeting chaired by party convener Arvind Kejriwal. Delhi Assembly Polls 2025, Aam Aadmi Party second Candidate list: In its second list of candidates for the Delhi Assembly elections scheduled in February 2025, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Monday changed nominees in 20 of the 70 constituencies in the Capital. There are widespread changes in the AAP candidate list, with the ruling party dropping 13 of its sitting MLAs.

Two sitting MLAs, Manish Sisodia and Rakhi Bidlan, have been fielded from new constituencies of Jundpura and

Manipur, respectively. Avadh Ojha, a popular UPSC coaching teacher and motivational speaker who joined the AAP recently, replaced Manish Sisodia in Patparganj. Rakhi Bidlan contested and won the Mangolpuri seat thrice. Rakesh Jatav Dharamrakshak will now contest from the seat in North West Delhi. Vikas Bagga and Punardeep Singh Sawhney (Saby), the sons of two MLAs — Krishna Nagar's S K Bagga and Chandni Chowk's Parlad Singh Sawhney — have found a place in the AAP list. Among those dropped this time include Narela MLA Sharad Chauhan, Mustafabad MLA Haji Yunus, Deoli MLA Prakash Jarwal and Trilokpuri MLA Rohit Kumar. Sources said Praveen Kumar from Jangpura, also a three-time MLA, has been dropped this time around, because of significant anti-incumbency against him. "The party has only one criterion in mind this year — candidate popularity. We have decided to drop anyone who has a negative image among the people, be it for any reason. This is one of the toughest elections we have ever contested and we will not take any changes," a senior AAP leader said. Out of the list of 20 candidates, the AAP also declared its candidates on seats where the BJP is in power — Rohini and Gandhi Nagar. From Rohini, the Arvind Kejriwal-led party has nominated Pradeep Mittal, and fielded Naveen Choudhary (Deepu) from Gandhi Nagar. There are also a few surprises on the list. The candidates announced for the Timarpur and Shahdara seats, Surendra Singh Bittu and Jitender Singh Shunty, however, did not come as a surprise as sitting MLAs and senior AAP leaders Dilip Pandey and Ram Niwas Goel had opted out of the race before the list was announced. The AAP released its first list of 11 candidates for the Delhi Assembly polls in November, and named six leaders recently inducted from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress.

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis flags overcrowding at Assembly building, urges Speaker to prevent it from turning into a 'bazaar'



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday urged the newly elected Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar to limit crowding at the Legislative Assembly building premises and prevent it from turning into a "bazaar". "What I am going to say now may not be appreciated by few MLAs. But it needs to be said. We have observed in the last few years that with every MLA come 20-25 people. The Legislative Assembly building premises become so crowded that sometimes it becomes difficult even to move," said Fadnavis. He was speaking on a resolution moved to congratulate the unanimously elected Speaker Narvekar.

"I don't want to use the word. But I can't find a better alternative to describe the situation. This premises should not become a bazaar," he said, asking how the House would function properly in case of overcrowding. Fadnavis requested the Speaker to address the issue and take measures to control the crowd. Opposition Nationalist Congress Party (SP) leader Jayant Patil echoed the chief minister's sentiments. He said the Speaker needs to control the number of people entering the Legislative Assembly (LA) building. "No. of people entering LA needs to be controlled"

"A large number of delegations come to meet ministers in this building. There could be an arrangement whereby ministers can go outside the premises and accept the demand letter from those delegations. Many times, so many people enter that it becomes difficult even for ministers to give a reply. It needs to be controlled," said Patil. The three-day special session of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly began on Saturday and is set to end on Monday.

Ex-NCW chief Rekha Sharma fielded from Haryana as BJP names 3 candidates



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

The BJP on Monday announced three candidates, including former National Commission for Women chief Rekha Sharma from Haryana, for the December 20 Rajya Sabha bypolls. The party also fielded Ryaga Krishnaiah from Andhra Pradesh and Sujeet Kumar from Odisha, the two leaders who switched over from the YSRCP and the BJD, respectively. Krishnaiah had resigned his Rajya Sabha seat and left the YSRCP. Sujeet Kumar had resigned from his upper house seat after which he was expelled by the BJD. Three vacancies arose in Andhra Pradesh when YSRCP members Venkataramana Rao Mopidevi, Beedha Masthan Rao Yadav and Ryaga Krishnaiah quit their membership in August.

Yadav and Krishnaiah's terms as Rajya Sabha members were to end on June 21, 2028, while Mopidevi was to retire on 21 June, 2026. A vacancy occurred in Odisha when Sujeet Kumar quit his seat following which he was expelled by the Biju Janata Dal. His term was to end on April 2, 2026. Krishan Lal Panwar of the BJP had quit his Rajya Sabha seat from Haryana following his election as an MLA in the recent state polls.

2 students fall from fourth floor of PG accommodation in Rohini, dead



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

DTU students dead, indian express The students were pursuing a BBA from Delhi Technological University (DTU) and Bhagwan Parshuram Institute of Technology (BPIT), police said. Two students died after falling from the fourth floor of their PG (paying guest) accommodation in Delhi's Rohini on Monday, an official said. The police had earlier said the students had jumped from the fourth floor. The deceased have been identified as Ishaan, a resident of Bharatpur, Rajasthan, and Harsh, a resident of Delhi's Palam Colony, the official said.

They were pursuing BBA from Delhi Technological University (DTU) and Bhagwan Parshuram Institute of Technology (BPIT), he said. "A PCR call was received at 1:10 am at the KNK Marg police station informing that two boys had fallen from the terrace of a building.

How a Rohingya man built his house in Pune and got Indian ID for Rs 500



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

In July, the Pimpri-Chinchwad police arrested four Rohingya people—two men and their wives—for allegedly staying in India illegally. They lived at Dehu Road, a cantonment area in Pune. An investigation revealed that one of them, Mujammil Mohammad Amin Khan, 43, has constructed a house in Pune and procured Indian identity documents including passports for himself and his wife. As per police records, Khan did a "Maulana course" from an Islamic organisation in Myanmar and used to live there with his wife and two daughters. The family migrated to Bangladesh around December 2012. While staying at a refugee camp in Bangladesh, Khan searched for work, but failed and came to know about job opportunities in West Bengal.

Meanwhile, according to the police, Khan separated from his wife and married a Rohingya woman named Shafiq, who then had a son. He allegedly infiltrated into India with his second wife and son in mid-2013 by crossing the international border at West Bengal with the help of racketeers. He went to Kolkata, but could not get proper work. Khan then came to Pune by train and took up a job at a private company in Talegaon MIDC. The company gave him a room where he moved with his family. The investigation revealed that an employee at the company, who has not been traced yet, was involved in bringing people from Myanmar and Bangladesh to Pune. To supplement his income, Khan started selling kids' clothes at Dehu Road after bringing them from Bhiwandi in Thane district. The investigation further revealed that Khan had procured an Aadhaar number from a shop in Bhiwandi, just by paying Rs 500, without submitting any documents. The police suspect that agents in Bhiwandi submitted forged documents in Khan's name at the Aadhaar enrolment centre, getting him the Aadhaar card, which became his Indian identity document. He then got an Aadhaar card for his wife too, they said. At a mosque in Pune, Khan happened to meet one Kamalabhai, who told him about the supari (betel nuts) business. Khan thus started selling supari in local markets. He

came in contact with Chandrabhaga Kamble in Dehu Road during this period. The police said Khan "purchased" about 600 square feet of Kamble's land, located next to her house in Dehu Road's Gandhi Nagar area, by paying her Rs 80,000 in cash. They did not prepare any documents for the property deal. Khan took possession of the land and constructed a house on it. Without getting noticed by any police agencies, he lived there for about a decade with his family pretending to be Indian citizens. His wife gave birth to a daughter and he procured Indian passports and continued to sell supari.

But Khan landed in the police net when a team of the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad's Pune unit reached his house in July with Shahid alias Sohiddul Shaikh, 35, a Rohingya man from Myanmar. The ATS had arrested Shaikh from Dehu Road for allegedly residing in India illegally with his wife since 2015. Shaikh told the police that "Mujammil Mamu" of Dehu Road was also from Myanmar. It was then the police took Khan into custody. An FIR was registered against Shaikh, Khan and their wives on July 27 at the Dehu Road police station in the jurisdiction of the Pimpri-Chinchwad police commissionerate. They were booked under sections of the Foreigners Act and the Passport Act. As per the FIR, the police seized mobile phones, SIM cards, Aadhaar cards, PAN cards, and Bangladesh currency notes from the suspects, along with Indian passports issued to Shaikh, Khan and Shafiq. Khan's "Maulana course" certificate and a Myanmar identity card bearing his name and photograph were also seized, as per the FIR. The police said the suspects were released on bail later and that the case was pending in court. When The Indian Express visited Khan's house in Dehu Road twice, it was found locked. He and his family members were not available for comment. Family members of Chandrabhaga Kamble, who sold her land to Khan, said they were not aware of his foreign nationality. Kamble passed away a few years ago and the land still belongs to her on government records, whereas Khan seems to have got the electricity bill in his name, the police said. Neighbours said they know Khan as a supariwala and have not seen him for the last few days.

Police seek cancellation of passports The Pimpri-Chinchwad police have written to the Passport authorities to cancel the passports of Mujammil Khan and other suspects from Myanmar. Indian passports were seized from several intruders from Bangladesh arrested in Pimpri-Chinchwad this year. The police have informed passport offices in Pune and Goa about 65 Indian passports allegedly procured illegally by Bangladesh and Myanmar nationals. Some Bangladeshis even went abroad using Indian passports, said V D Raut, Assistant Police Inspector, Anti-Terrorist Bureau (ATB) of the Pimpri-Chinchwad police. Deputy Commissioner of Police Shivaji Pawar, who supervises the ATB, said activities of suspicious foreign nationals were being watched closely.

Mega APAAR Days in schools this week

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

With only 60 percent completion of Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) identity generation for school students in Maharashtra, state's school education department has designated two days (Monday and Tuesday) as 'Mega APAAR Days', to accelerate the process. On these two days, schools are expected to conduct special drives or maximise their efforts to generate APAAR ID, a unique identification number for each student to keep academic records. Schools, however, complain of technical glitches and other issues related to the process making it difficult for them to complete the task of APAAR ID generation for all students.

A schoolteacher from South Mumbai said, "It is already a humongous task involving students from pre-primary to secondary section. Each case is unique with many also having issues such as mismatching names due to different spellings, incomplete AADHAR registration of the child, among others." Schools complain that with the size of work that this entails, it is inappropriate for the government to set days or deadlines for schools to just focus on generation of APAAR ID. When launched in October in Maharashtra for school students, schools were asked to complete the process by November 20. It was then extended with the announcement of two Mega APAAR Days on November 29 and 30. Now the deadline is further extended and two more days are designated for the work. "The department is working as if schools have no other task to complete. Board exams are also approaching," said a teacher from a school in the suburbs while also adding that the requirement of



consent from parents adds to the complication. "Each child's parent has to provide a written consent to generate APAAR ID in his/her name. While most parents agree easily, there are some who raise concerns. Counselling of parents then takes some more time," said the teacher. Mahendra Ganapule, former head of the Maharashtra School Principals' Association, said, "On one side when there are issues to get consent from parents, in case of children whose parents have saved their child's data on Digilocker, the information is directly sourced from there as we initiate the APAAR ID generation process." Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) ID is a 12-digit unique identification system for each student of India under the One Nation One Student programme of the Central government. Serving as the digital identity of each student, APAAR ID aims to facilitate processes such as academic tracking, digital storage, credit transfer among others.

Pune airport sets new record with 204 flight movements in one day, find out what led to surge in operations



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

The Pune International Airport (PIA) recorded its highest-ever flight movement on Sunday, with 204 flights operating within 24 hours — 102 departures and 102 arrivals, according to airport officials. Airport director Santosh Dhoke attributed this achievement to the commencement of the winter schedule on October 27, which included the addition of several regional and international flights to the airport's fleet. This was the first time in the airport's history that it surpassed 200 flight movements in a single day. Previously, the airport recorded exactly 200 flights on two occasions: September 16 and October 14, before the start of the winter schedule. With expanding national and international connectivity offered by various airlines, the Pune airport continues to witness a steady rise in both passenger traffic and flight operations. Dhoke stated that the rise in local and national connectivity, driven by airline companies and supported by slot distribution from the Airport Authority of India, has been a key factor behind the rise in operations. "With the start of the winter schedule, we introduced flights to various local destinations such as Bhopal and Indore, added two flights to South India, and increased services to Delhi. Additionally, the merger of Vistara and Air India has encour-

aged better slot utilisation," he said.

"Slot utilisation refers to the specific time allotted to airlines for their operations. However, in some cases, airlines fail to fully utilise these slots due to factors like low passenger traffic, a shortage of crew members, or aircraft unavailability," added Dhoke. He further noted that while these factors have significantly contributed to the rise in flight movements, regional connectivity to destinations like Nanded, Sindhadurg, and Jalgaon has also played an important role in improving slot utilisation.

BJP's Rahul Narwekar elected unopposed as Maharashtra Assembly Speaker

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Rahul Narwekar During his tenure as Maharashtra assembly speaker, Narwekar had ruled that the party led by Eknath Shinde was the legitimate and "real Shiv Sena" after a split in the Bal Thackeray-founded party. (File Photo)

BJP MLA Rahul Narwekar was on Monday elected unopposed as the speaker of the 15th Maharashtra legislative assembly. Narwekar filed his nomination papers on Sunday and was elected unopposed as the opposition alliance Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) decided not to put up a contest. The BJP leader, who was the speaker in the 14th assembly for two and a half years, was re-elected from the Colaba assembly seat in Mumbai in the November 20 assembly elections. Governor CP Radhakrishnan will then address the joint session of both Houses of the state legislature.

AAP legal cell chief Sanjeev Nasiar removed as vice-chairman of Delhi Bar Council over 'irregularities' in law degree



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Sanjeev Nasiar On September 3, an inquiry by a sub-committee flagged many alleged discrepancies in his degree, including that the law programme at the college was unauthorised, alleged tampering of records, and that the law degree was introduced after BCI regulations in 2008. The Bar Council of India (BCI) on Saturday removed Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) legal cell chief Sanjeev Nasiar from the position of vice-chairman of the Bar Council of Delhi (BCD) over alleged irregularities in his Law (LLB Hons) degree. The BCI also resolved to refer the matter to the Central Bureau of

Investigation. The BCI decided to take action against Nasiar following a meeting on December 7. It said Nasiar's degree was "highly questionable".

Responding to his removal from the post, Nasiar said the BJP had weaponised the BCI against him. "I have done nothing wrong... I'm not scared of any investigation," he added. On September 3, an inquiry by a sub-committee flagged many alleged discrepancies in his degree, including that the law programme at the college was unauthorised, alleged tampering of records, and that the law degree was introduced after BCI regulations in 2008 (whereas Nasiar's degree is dated 1988). The Delhi High Court had on August 12 directed the Bar Council of Delhi to provide the requisite documents to the BCI while hearing a petition alleging that Nasiar's degree was forged. "Needless to say, it would be open for the BCI to conduct inquiry/take action, as it may deem appropriate, in any event of any wrongdoing being uncovered on the part of the concerned university," the high court had said while hearing the petition filed by former president of Delhi Bar Association Naresh Chand Gupta who was represented by advocate Sunder Singh Chauhan. Calling the action against Nasiar a "punishment" for his support of the AAP, senior party MLA Durgesh Pathak claimed that the complaint against him was 18 months old and was dismissed by the high court.

Lodged in murder case, youth attacks three staff members in Dongri child correction home

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

A 19-year-old youth lodged in Dongri child correction home in a murder case, has attacked three staff members at the facility and also caused damage to the property by creating ruckus on Saturday. The Dongri police have registered an FIR against the youth and may arrest him soon. As per the police complaint, correction home staffer Sanjay Bhoir on Saturday evening had gone to serve food to the youth lodged at the facility. The accused teenager had then hit Bhoir from behind. Bhoir complained to his senior (Grihpal) Dhondku Rathod, who then called the youth to his office to talk. When confronted with Bhoir's allegations, the young man did not show any remorse, got aggressive and tried to strangle Rathod. Rathod screamed for help and the security staff present nearby, policeman Dattatray Ghuge, rushed to his help and pulled the accused youth behind.

The youth got more aggressive and he then picked up a pen from the table and attacked Ghuge with the intention of stabbing him in the neck. But Ghuge put his hand in the middle and averted his attack, but sustained injury on hand. After this, the accused youth started vandalising articles in and outside the office. He damaged many things including the LED television set, said a source from the Dongri children's home. Due to commotion, other staffers gathered and overpowered the accused teenager and took him to a separate room. The injured staffers were given medication and the Dongri police were informed. On the complaint of Ghuge, a fresh case was registered against the teenager.

Sources said that recently his family had come to meet him. The family also told him about the demise of a distant



relative. "Since then, he has been showing desperation to go out," said a correction home source. The accused teenager, who hails from eastern suburbs, is lodged at the facility when he was 17, on charges of murder. His case has been transferred from Juvenile Justice Board (court) to special children court. "He is a habitual troublemaker at the child correction facility. In the past too he has attacked staff and abused them. He also bullies other minors lodged in the facility. Despite several counselling and doctor's sessions, there has been hardly any improvement in his behaviour," an officer from the Dongri child correction home said. He has given death threats to staff at the facility, and they are scared for their personal safety as well as of other kids, the officer added. The police have booked the youth under sections 132, 352, 351(3), 115(2) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and 3 of Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act.

Mumbai temp dips to 13.7 degree Celsius, city wakes up to coldest December day since 2015

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Mumbai woke up to a chill in the air as the minimum temperature further dipped to 13.7 degree Celsius on Monday morning in what is the coldest December day in the past nine years when the temperature dropped to 11.4 degree in 2015. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Mumbai's cold spell will continue through the week with the minimum temperature likely to remain below 20 degree until Friday at least. In its forecast bulletin, IMD said the minimum temperature is likely to remain below 17 degree Celsius until at least Wednesday, following which it may spike to remain in the range of 19 to 21 degree until the weekend. The daytime temperatures are also expected to oscillate between 31 to 32 degree Celsius until Saturday.

After days of sweltering under above-normal temperatures, IMD's Santacruz station recorded a temperature of 13.7 degree on Monday — 5.6 degrees below the normal, while the Colaba coastal observatory logged 19.2 degree. This marked a significant drop of over 11 degrees in the past three days when the minimum temperature in Mumbai had hovered around 25 degree Celsius until Friday morning. This dip on Monday brought Mumbai its cold-



est December day since 2015 when the minimum temperature dipped to 11.4 degree on December 24. Records also show that in the past decade, the second lowest temperature for the month of December had been recorded in 2018 at 14.4 degree Celsius. The city's coldest day in the last nine years on Monday came after Mumbai recorded 37.3 degree Celsius — its hottest December day since 2008 — last Wednesday. Many weather experts have attributed this sudden change in weather conditions to the waning effects of Cyclone Fengal and the easterlies.

Probe launched after 'misappropriation' of Rs 59 lakh detected in Bengaluru reserve police unit



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) has initiated an investigation into the alleged misappropriation of over Rs 59 lakh in the City Armed Reserve (CAR) of the Bengaluru police. The inquiry comes after a complaint by assistant administrative officer (AAO) D Rajalakshmi against former second division assistant (SDA) Prashanth D S and retired AAO Saroja B Bijapur. According to the complaint, the irregularities occurred between 2020 and 2023. During an audit conducted by the accountant general, a discrepancy of Rs 59,80,839 in lent guard charges was identified for the financial years 2020-21 to 2022-23. Further scrutiny revealed unauthorised transactions in a Canara Bank account designated for these funds. Prashanth, who was transferred in 2021, reportedly failed to hand over relevant files to his suc-

cessor. Despite this lapse, Saroja, who was the AAO at the time, did not initiate any disciplinary action. Rajalakshmi alleged that the duo's actions amounted to a breach of trust, resulting in a significant loss to the government. The CCB has registered a case under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including 120B (criminal conspiracy), 408 (criminal breach of trust by clerk/servant), 409 (criminal breach of trust by public servant), and 420 (cheating). Investigations are on to determine the extent of the fraud and accountability.

Man jumps from Uppal skywalk, escapes with injuries

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Hyderabad: A man was injured when he allegedly attempted to die by suicide by jumping from the Uppal skywalk on Monday. He escaped with injuries and his condition is said to be stable. Reportedly upset over some personal issues, the 42-year-old man from Bhavani Nagar decided to end his life. He climbed up the skywalk and jumped. However, due to lower height, he only sustained injuries. On witnessing the incident, the motorists and pedestrians rushed to rescue him. He was immediately shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment.

NRAI warns dine-in restaurants on deep discounts



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Hyderabad: The National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI), the apex body representing the restaurant industry, on Monday has issued an advisory to its members regarding the potential long-term adverse effects of large-scale in-dining discount programs and aggregator payment platforms. These programs, while appearing beneficial in the short term, could threaten the economic stability and autonomy of restaurants and disrupt the restaurant ecosystem. In the recent past, deep discounting has caused significant challenges in the food delivery market, and the NRAI warns that similar tactics are being employed to capture the dine-in market through aggressive aggregator payment gateway adoption.

The NRAI emphasizes that deep discounting presents substantial economic hurdles to the restaurant business. Unlimited and unsustainable discounts alter price structures, setting unreasonable expectations for customers and undervaluing the dining experience. These practices disproportionately affect small, independent enterprises, who lack the financial resources of larger, better-funded competitors, making it harder for them to compete and survive in the long run. Sagar Daryani, NRAI President said, "Our industry is at a crossroads, and the decisions we make now will shape the future of dine-in operations. Deep discounting may appear appealing in the short term, but they also pose long-term risks to restaurants' independence and viability, especially when mandatorily bundled with the aggregator's

payment gateway."

He further added, "As the voice of the industry we are committed to protecting the interests of the restaurant community and ensuring a fair and sustainable ecosystem. NRAI encourage the members and the broader restaurant community to engage with industry colleagues, consult their platform representatives about these programs' tangible benefits, and exercise thoughtful caution and sound judgment before deciding to participate." Aggregator payment gateways provide various issues for eateries. These networks reward clients with aggressive discounts and cashback, which are sometimes sponsored at the expense of the restaurants themselves. However, restaurants must pay substantial commissions on transactions, ranging from 4-8%, significantly higher than the 1-1.5 percent charged by standard payment gateways.

Data control and dependency are major challenges with aggregator platforms. These systems pick up crucial revenue and customer data from restaurants without offering any additional value in exchange. As customers become more reliant on these gateways, restaurants face a significant risk of losing direct ties with their customers, thereby transferring them into the aggregator's ecosystem and compromising the restaurant's autonomy. Irreversible ecosystem transformations are a major worry, as shown by the delivery market, where customer behaviours influenced by discounts have resulted in unsustainable business models. Similarly, in the dine-in industry, aggregator platforms might capitalize on this model by gradually increasing discount requirements and commission rates, leaving restaurants with little control over their operations and pricing tactics. The NRAI advocates restaurants to be cautious and thoroughly consider the terms and conditions of aggregator payment systems before making decisions, taking into account the financial implications of deep discounting campaigns. It is critical to examine cost-effective and independent payment options in order to eliminate unnecessary dependency on such platforms. Furthermore, protecting client relationships is critical and restaurants should maintain control over customer involvement and data to ensure long-term viability and autonomy in their operations.

Over 25,000 fans flock to Karan Aujla show

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

All roads in Punjab led to the Sector 34 Exhibition Ground on Saturday evening, as fans queued up hours before the opening of the box office to gear up for Punjabi music sensation Karan Aujla. "We know that Aujla will come on stage at 8 pm and wanted to be here by 5 pm as we don't have fan-pit tickets, which were priced very high, so we wanted to be nearer to the stage. We are a group of five here from Patiala, and this show is special, as Chandigarh is the first city in India he is performing in," a jubilant Mitali Dua, a student, said.

Following sold-out international arenas, Aujla's highly anticipated, 'It Was All A Dream' tour exploded onto Indian shores with a triumphant commencement in Chandigarh. Presented by Team Innovation and supported by Live Nation, the event attracted over 25,000 enthusiastic fans and was a fully packed show from across the region. Aujla's high-energy two-hour performance, showcasing his signature style, captivated the audience with hits like 'Admiring You', 'Winning Speech', 'Tauba Tauba' and 'Softly' as he performed alongside his long-time collaborator and Toronto-based producer Ikky. This tour marks a significant step in his global mission to bring modern Punjabi music to a wider audience.

Aujla captivated the audience with high-energy visuals, foot-tapping dhol beats and rhythm, stunning dance moves, and the grand finale featuring a show of fireworks. In a touching moment, a fan gave Aujla a portrait of him that he generously signed for the fan. "The success of the Chandigarh show proves the innate power of Punjabi music. This tour is just the beginning; I'm excited to bring my music to even more people around the world," stated Aujla. Karan Aujla show Chandigarh Rush outside the venue of Singer Karan Aujla show at Exhibition ground in Sector 34 of Chandigarh on Saturday. The singer-cum-songwriter spoke fondly of his parents, whom he had lost at an early age, urging his fans to love their parents unconditionally. "My parents are also with me for this show, as they love his songs, especially Tauba Tauba," smiles Sarabjit Singh.

December will have Chandigarh witness performances of some more of the biggest names in the industry with Diljit Dosanjh on 14th of this month and AP Dhillon on 21st, events for which tickets sold out well in advance. City choked, residents held hostage: BJP leader and former mayor slams admn for Karan Aujla's concert The event of Punjabi music star Karan Aujla on Saturday in Chandigarh has not gone down well with BJP leader Arun Sood. He said in a city like Chandigarh where one cannot smoke publicly, saw people consuming liquor openly in the event. Sood also claimed that the entire city was choked with residents living in the vicinity of the event held hostage for hours. "Due to the event of Aujla in Sector 34 ground on Saturday, half of Chandigarh was affected due to traffic jams and the residents of nearby sectors had to face a lot of trouble the en-



tire day," former state BJP chief and mayor Sood, said. He said people remained confined to their homes for the whole day. His remarks come ahead of events of acclaimed Punjabi singers Diljit Dosanjh and AP Dhillon in Chandigarh. Expressing concern over the upcoming concerts in the city, Sood said he plans to take up the issue with Chandigarh Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria.

He said such events may not be held in Sector 34, which has critical hospitals around and already sees heavy traffic, and instead permission be given in Sector 25 ground. "Chandigarh is a small city. More than 20,000 people were there yesterday (Saturday). Similarly, on December 14, in Sector 34 ground of Chandigarh, a bigger program of famous Punjabi singer Diljit Dosanjh is going to be held and after that on December 21, singer A P Dhillon's program is being held. Thousands of spectators and fans will come to these programs, along with a large number of vehicles," Sood said in a statement. He added Sector 34 is right in the middle of the city and heavy traffic coming from Delhi, Haryana and Punjab also passes through the road near Sector 34 and Sector 32 hospital.

"It has been seen that whenever a big event takes place in Sector 34 ground, all the roads nearby are closed for several hours and the traffic comes to a standstill due to which people have to face a lot of trouble. Many ambulances carrying critical patients from Punjab and Haryana go to PGIMER and Sector 32 hospital through this road and they also have to face a lot of trouble," the former mayor said. "Now, looking at the huge crowd expected for the events on December 14 and 21, it seems that the roads around these sectors will remain closed for almost the entire day. All the citizens living around these sectors will have to face inconvenience again. God forbid if someone faces a medical emergency, then they will be left to their fate." The BJP leader clarified that he has no objection to such events and the only demand is that the administration should cancel these programs from Sector 34 and give permission for the program at Sector 25 ground or any suitable place outside the city so that the citizens of Chandigarh can be saved from the trouble.

Over 40 Delhi schools receive bomb threats over email; searches on, students evacuated

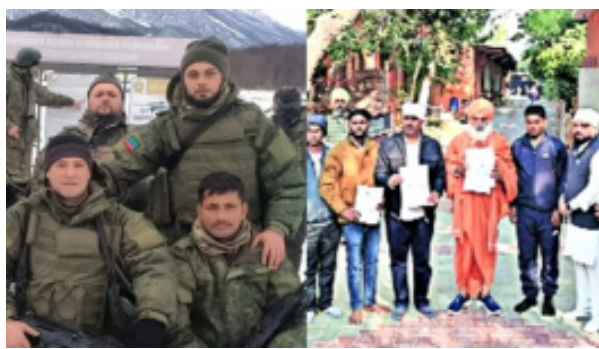
GNS News Agency, Dec 11

A string of bomb threats over emails targeting nearly 40 schools across Delhi sent the police on high alert on Monday morning, sparking panic and evacuations. Schools, including DPS, R K Puram, DPS Vasant Kunj, G D Goenka, Paschim Vihar, The British School, Salwan Public School, Modern School, Cambridge School, and multiple DAV schools, received emails late Sunday. The first alert came from GD Goenka Paschim Vihar at 6.15 am, followed by DPS R K Puram reporting a similar threat at 7 am. said the Delhi Police. The emails, sent at 11.38 pm on Sunday, claimed bombs had been placed in the schools.

The Delhi Police, Bomb Disposal Squads (BDS), and fire department officials were deployed to the affected campuses, conducting thorough sweeps. Officials said no suspicious objects have been found at any location so far, but the threat emails caused significant disruption. Students and staff were evacuated as a precautionary measure, and the schools have been temporarily closed while investigations are underway. Cybercrime teams are working to trace the

sender of the emails. Delhi Chief Minister Atishi took to social media to write about the threats. "After the daily incidents of ransom, murders, firing in Delhi, now threats of bombing of schools are being received. The law and order situation in Delhi has never been so bad before. The BJP-ruled central government has failed in its only task of providing security to the people of Delhi," Atishi wrote on X. AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal also hit out at Union Home Minister Amit Shah for "such a bad state of law and order" in Delhi. In a post on X, the former chief minister wrote, "The people of Delhi have never seen such a bad state of law and order in Delhi before. Amit Shah ji should come and answer the people of Delhi." This is not the first time multiple schools have received threats on the same day. In May, more than 100 schools received bomb threats that turned out to be hoaxes. Weeks later the Delhi airport and hospitals across the city also received bomb threats via email. In August, over 100 hospitals and malls across the Capital received emails containing bomb threats. All of them turned out to be hoax threats.

Cheated by travel agents, forced into Russia-Ukraine war: Youths return to tell harrowing tale of deceit, confinement



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Youths from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, who returned from Russia months after being forced into military services, said that travel agents not only cheated them but also stole their salaries by accessing their bank OTPs while they were on the battlefield where phone network was a rare thing. The victims, lured by the promise of high-paying jobs in the Russian food packaging industry and as homeguards, were recruited into the Russian army shortly after arriving in the country. The victims said that they were enticed by travel agents who assured them that Russia had an urgent demand for labour due to the ongoing war. "We were told that there was ample work in the food packaging industry and we will get paid at least Rs 1.95 lakh," said Shamsheer Singh of Ajnala in Amritsar. Karan, who is just 18, added that they traveled on tourist visas. "The agents promised us that they will arrange work visas for us once we reach Russia. However, the nightmare began almost immediately upon landing," said Karan, who is also from Amritsar. Rajat Gupta, another youth from Kurukshetra in Haryana, said that he was among a group of 22 Indian youths from Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, West Bengal, and Rajasthan, who went to Russia on April 6, 2024, and were similarly deceived.

"We worked there for several months and my salary was Rs 2 lakh. I was under the impression that I was accumulating cash that will be sent my family back home. But when I reached a safe place, away from the battlefield, I realised that every penny was withdrawn," said Gupta, adding that there were several others from India in the battlefield. A similar harrowing experience was witnessed by Rakesh Yadav, a young man from Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh who returned after eight months from the Russia-Ukraine war. During his time on the battlefield, Yadav witnessed the death of one of his companions in a Ukrainian drone attack. He narrowly escaped the attack by diving into a bunker. In another tragic incident, on June 17, 2024, a grenade explosion claimed the life of his colleague, and his death was only communicated to his family after six months by Russian authorities.

Russia-Ukraine war, Rakesh Yadav, Punjab news, Indian Express (Left) Rakesh Yadav (seated right) near Kursk and (right) Yadav and his family with Rajya Sabha MP Balbir Seechewal. Yadav also shared details about his forced recruitment. He and five others were lured to Russia eight months ago by an agent promising them home guard jobs. However, upon arrival, they were forcibly enrolled in the Russian army and made to sign documents in Russian, a language they couldn't understand. Repeated refusals led to physical abuse, and after just 15 days of training, they were thrown into active combat. Yadav spoke emotionally about the near-death experiences he faced. He recounted several bombings, injuries, and the constant fear of dying. At one point, the stress was so overwhelming that he contemplated taking his own life. His hand was injured in a bomb blast during one of the attacks, further underscoring the perilous nature of his situation. Gupta added that they were first transported to St Petersburg, where documents written in Russian were presented to them. "A translator, who was working with the agents, misled us about the content of the documents. He read out what appeared to be a contract for work, but we now know that it was something different," Gupta said, adding that in reality, they had unknowingly signed documents that led to their recruitment into the Russian army.

Shamsheer added that after receiving basic training on weapon handling, landmine operations, and communication equipment, they were sent to deliver weapons and war materials near the Ukraine border. "For days, we trekked through forests, carrying dangerous supplies. We would walk for three to four days, passing lifeless bodies of fallen Russian soldiers, to deliver materials to those still fighting," Shamsheer said. Though they were promised a hefty salary, the youth allege that their earnings were siphoned off by the agents. "We were on the frontlines, risking our lives while they were stealing our hard-earned money. At the time of signing contract they made some app and took all our bank accounts with a promise to send our money to our families when we will be in the battle field," said Gupta, adding that agents were charging Rs 50,000 to Rs 1.5 lakh from the youth to send them to Russia which was not a big amount but their main agenda was to steal their salaries. Even as Yadav's return was facilitated by Rajya Sabha member Balbir Seechewal, there are more than 25 Indian recruits still being forced to fight in Russia. Families from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Kashmir, and Maharashtra, including those of Mandeep, Kanhaiya Kumar, and Deepak, who are still stranded in Russia, have now reached out to Seechewal seeking his intervention. They said that they are not being able to reach their loved ones and fear for the worse. The families got to know that Kanhaiya and Deepak were injured in grenade explosions but couldn't reach them after that. The families have urged Seechewal to escalate their cases with the Ministry of External Affairs, hoping for swift action and the return of their children.

Condition in Delhi slums deteriorating due to corrupt AAP govt: BJP steps up protests

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

The BJP Delhi unit held protests across the city Sunday as it doubled down on its campaign against the AAP to highlight local infrastructure issues of slums. The party said in a statement that protests were held in 968 small and large slum clusters. At the Govindpuri slum, South Delhi MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said the conditions were poor due to a corrupt AAP government. "There are no proper roads, sanitation or drinking water facilities. Residents of these slums are deprived of basic amenities. Once the BJP forms the government, it will work to fulfil the aspirations of slum residents," he said. With Delhi Assembly elections expected in February next year, the BJP is focusing on unauthorised colonies and slums that are considered an AAP stronghold.

Earlier, MPs and senior party leaders had spent a night in the houses of residents of unauthorised colonies. On Sunday, Delhi BJP general secretary Vishnu Mittal said senior party leaders will stay in slum clusters on the night of December 15 and talk to the residents about their issues. Northwest Delhi MP Yogender Chandoliya was part of a protest at Bawana's JJ Colony, while West Delhi MP



Kamaljeet Sehrawat was present at the Goyla Dairy slum. She accused the AAP government of forcing slum-dwellers to live without any facilities. Other BJP MPs and senior leaders such as Parvesh Verma and Ramesh Bidhuri, Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta, MLAs Abhay Verma, O P Sharma and Jitendra Mahajan, and former Delhi BJP president Satish Upadhyay were also part of the protests in various Assembly constituencies.

Taking a leaf out of AAP's book, why BJP & Congress are promising subsidies

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

After aiming brickbats at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over its 'freebies' — from electricity to water and free transport for women — both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress have decided to switch tack ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls next year. To boost its support base, especially among the poor, both parties will offer free electricity — AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal's 'first and popular revri' — but bigger and better, say leaders. According to Delhi government officials, electricity subsidy has been in place since the Congress-led Sheila Dikshit government but zero bills for up to 200 units and 50% subsidy for up to 400 units were brought in by the AAP government. Full consumption charges are levied above 400 units currently.

In the revised budget estimates for 2024-25, the government has allocated an additional Rs 350 crore for the power subsidy scheme; it had set aside a budget of Rs 3,250 crore in March. Data shows that on average, around 22 lakh families get zero bills while 40.22 lakh domestic electricity consumers avail benefits of the electricity subsidy from the Delhi government. Data also shows that the AAP government has spent Rs 24,944.65 crore in the last 10 years from 2014-15 on the power subsidy through discoms. On its part, the BJP has announced that it will not only continue the electricity subsidy implemented by the ruling AAP government but extend it to commercial owners and middle-class residents if it comes to power. "The party has decided that all public welfare schemes will continue once it comes to power — the BJP will deliver it better than before and extend it to a new section of the public," Delhi BJP Virendra Sachdeva had said last week while announcing the party's 'Meri Dilli Mera Sankalp BJP' campaign. Asked what more the BJP is offering to counter AAP, Sachdeva told The Indian Express: "All public welfare schemes running in Delhi will continue because these schemes are not run by any party, but is a government scheme by the state's exchequer. If we come to power, we will reduce power surcharges such as PPAC (power purchase adjustment cost), pension charge, load, cess etc. This way other sections of society can also avail of the facility and discoms will get their income. This summer, for instance, the actual bill was Rs 40 but after surcharges,



people were getting a bill of Rs 100. In Haryana, the commercial electricity consumption charge per unit is Rs 8. But in Delhi, it is Rs 18 to Rs 22 per unit... When Haryana can charge Rs 8 per unit (as a commercial charge) why can't Delhi? These are the additions the BJP will bring once it comes to power. We are working on a plan."

Asked about the party's 'free ki revdi' jibe against the AAP previously, a senior BJP official said: "Following surveys and an analysis of the voting pattern in Delhi, the party has realised that the people care a lot about subsidy schemes — especially free bijli. This has been the AAP's strong pitch due to which it gained popularity... and the voting percentage of the lower middle class is higher. However, a large number of the middle and upper middle class are not availing of this scheme... To crack that code, the BJP will pitch continuing the exciting subsidy, proving AAP wrong, and also promise to take the scheme to those sections that aren't currently availing it." BJP officials said they have started preparing the manifesto and an initial draft is ready, and these schemes are likely to be added. The Congress, meanwhile, has announced that it will not only provide the electricity subsidy but will double it by taking it to 400 units. Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav, during the Dilli Nyay Yatra last week, said, "Congress will provide 400 units of free electricity when it comes to power, which will be an honest assurance unlike Kejriwal's fake free power and water promises as he has only deceived the people..." Yadav added, "

Romania's far-right presidential candidate denounces cancelled vote at closed polling station



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Romania's defiant far-right presidential candidate, Calin Georgescu, on Sunday (December 8, 2024) stood outside a closed polling station to denounce a Supreme Court's unprecedented decision to annul the first round of the vote in which he emerged as the frontrunner. The Constitutional Court on Friday (December 6, 2024) canceled the election after a trove of declassified intelligence alleged Russia organised a sprawling campaign across social media to promote Mr. Georgescu. "Today is Constitution Day and there is nothing constitutional in Romania anymore. I am here in the name of democracy," Mr. Georgescu, 62, told media in Mogosoaia, outside Bucharest. "By cancelling democracy, our very freedom is cancelled." The Court cited the illegal use of digital technologies including artificial intelligence, as well as undeclared sources of funding. Without naming Mr. Georgescu, the Court said one candidate received "preferential treatment" on social media platforms, distorting voters' expressed will. Despite being a huge outsider who declared zero campaign spending, Mr. Georgescu topped the polls in the first round on Nov. 24, and was due on Sunday (Dec. 8, 2024) to face reformist Elena Lasconi of the Save Romania Union party in a runoff. Thirteen candidates ran in the first round of the presidential race in the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member country, the aftermath of which was gripped by myriad controversies including a recount of the vote ordered by the same Court. New dates will be set to rerun the presidential vote from scratch.

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis said in a statement marking Constitution Day on Sunday (Dec. 8, 2024) that "we find ourselves in a moment of profound responsibility

toward the values that characterise us as a nation". "The Romanian Constitution defines the framework within which the state and political life operate, serving as a shield against threats to democracy," he said. "In turbulent times, state institutions are called upon to act with calm, wisdom and respect for the law, the Constitution and democracy."

George Simion, the 38-year-old leader of the far-right Alliance for the Unity of Romanians, told reporters outside a closed polling station in Bucharest on Sunday (Dec. 8, 2024) that the annulment amounted to an attack against democracy, saying Mr. Iohannis should "take a step back and respect the Constitution, not mock it." "It is Constitution Day. It is a day of significance for Romanians. It is a day when Romanians should have gone to vote freely," he said, adding that "blood was shed for this 35 years ago", referring to Romania's revolution in December 1989 that overthrew communism. After Mr. Georgescu unexpectedly topped the polls in the first round, his success left many political observers wondering how most local surveys had placed him behind at least five other candidates before the vote. Many observers attributed his success to his TikTok account, which now has 6.2 million likes and 565,000 followers. But some experts suspected Mr. Georgescu's online following was artificially inflated, while Romania's top security body alleged he was given preferential treatment by TikTok over other candidates. On Saturday (December 7, 2024) Romanian prosecutors conducted raids at three properties in the central city of Brasov linked to Bogdan Peschir, who is suspected of illegally financing a campaign to promote Mr. Georgescu. The raids were based on suspicions of voter corruption, money laundering and cyber fraud, prosecutors said. The secret services alleged that Mr. Peschir paid \$3,81,000 (361,000 euros) to TikTok users to promote Mr. Georgescu content on the Chinese-owned platform. Intelligence authorities said information they obtained "revealed an aggressive promotion campaign" to increase and accelerate Mr. Georgescu's popularity. There is no clear link between Mr. Peschir and alleged Russian interference. Russia denies meddling in Romania. On Friday (December 6, 2024), Mr. Georgescu's would-be Opponent Ms. Lasconi also strongly condemned the Court's decision to annul the elections, saying it was "illegal, immoral, and crushes the very essence of democracy" and that the second round should have gone forward.

Tonga's Prime Minister quits moments ahead of no-confidence motion in parliament

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Tonga's Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni abruptly resigned in parliament on Monday (December 9, 2024) ahead of a planned no-confidence vote in his leadership, capping a period of fraught relations between his government and Tonga's king. Mr. Sovaleni, who took office in 2021, did not specify a reason for his departure but his resignation halted the no-confidence motion expected on Monday. It was not immediately clear who would succeed him.

His resignation comes less than a year before a national election in Tonga, a South Pacific island nation of 105,000 people, and it highlighted the occasional tensions between Tonga's monarchy and elected lawmakers in a still-young democracy after reforms that transferred powers from the royal family and nobles to regular citizens in 2010. A statement on the Tongan Parliament Facebook page said Mr. Sovaleni, 54, quit "for the good of the country and moving Tonga forward." Video from Tonga's parliament on Monday showed the leader making brief and emotional remarks in Tongan before the no-confidence vote was scheduled to take place. Mr. Sovaleni's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. His leadership had survived a previous no-confidence vote in September 2023. In recent months, Mr. Sovaleni's tenure was marked by difficult relations with Tonga's head of state, King Tupou VI. Although the sovereign's predecessor ceded power voluntarily in the 2010 democratic reforms, Tupou VI retains powers to dissolve parliament, appoint judges and veto laws.

The king at times made his dissatisfaction with Sovaleni apparent, including by withdrawing confidence in him as Defence Minister in February. Some lawmakers at first decried the king's pressure on Mr. Sovaleni and his Foreign Minister as unconstitutional, but both eventually resigned their posts in April — although Mr. Sovaleni remained Prime Minister. A month earlier, Mr. Sovaleni had been photographed at a traditional ceremony of apology to the king, but neither side publicly addressed the event. When Tonga hosted the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting in August, the king was travelling abroad and did not attend the conference — a significant event for the small Pacific nation — which analysts said was a snub to Mr. Sovaleni and his government.



Speaking to Radio New Zealand on Monday, Mr. Sovaleni did not signal a particular reason for his departure. Asked whether his decision was prompted by disagreements with the king, Mr. Sovaleni said that "differences in views" were normal. "I'm not sure whether that's the reason," he said, according to RNZ, adding that he still did not know why he and Tonga's Foreign Minister had lost the king's confidence earlier this year. "But we still provide respect to his majesty," Mr. Sovaleni told RNZ. "Whatever we do, we always consider that relationship. So maybe you can ask someone else."

His successor will be selected by Tonga's 26 lawmakers in a vote. The parliament is made up of 17 lawmakers elected by the public and nine who are nobles, elected by a group of hereditary chiefs. Mr. Sovaleni entered parliament in 2014 and had been a minister since 2019. He led Tonga as the tourism-dependent country struggled to rebound from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, growing threats from climate change and a catastrophic 2022 volcanic eruption and tsunami, which battered beachfront resorts, homes and businesses around Tonga's 171 islands. A former senior public servant who also worked in the private sector before entering politics, Mr. Sovaleni is the son of a former Tongan Deputy Prime Minister. He attended high school in New Zealand and studied at the University of Oxford and the University of the South Pacific, attaining master's degrees in computer science and business.

President Park Geun-hye, who was thrown out of office in 2017 after being impeached by parliament over a corruption scandal, prosecutors failed to search her office and ended up receiving documents outside the compound because presidential officials turned them away. After refusing to meet with prosecutors while in office, Ms. Park underwent questioning by them and was arrested after the Constitutional Court approved her impeachment and ruled to dismiss her as president in March 2017. The main opposition Democratic Party called Mr. Yoon's martial law imposition "unconstitutional, illegal rebellion or a coup." It has filed complaints with police against at least nine people, including Yoon and his former defense minister, over the rebellion allegations. South Korean prosecutors on Sunday (December 8, 2024) detained former Defence Minister Kim Yong Hyun, who allegedly recommended that Mr. Yoon declare martial law. He became the first person detained in the martial law case. The Defense Ministry last week separately suspended three top military commanders over their alleged involvement in imposing martial law. They were among those facing the opposition-raised rebellion allegations. On Saturday, Mr. Yoon issued an apology over the martial law decree, saying he won't shirk legal or political responsibility for the declaration. He said he would leave it to his party to chart a course through the country's political turmoil, "including matters related to my term in office." Since taking office in 2022 for a single five-year term, Mr. Yoon, a conservative, has been on a near-constant collision course with his liberal rivals who control parliament. The liberals have introduced a slew of motions seeking to impeach some of his top officials.

More than 900 people died in Jonestown; Guyana wants to turn it into tourist attraction



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Guyana is revisiting a dark history nearly half a century after U.S. Rev Jim Jones and more than 900 of his followers died in the rural interior of the South American country. It was the largest suicide-murder in recent history, and a Government-backed tour operator wants to open the former commune now shrouded by lush vegetation to visitors. This proposal is reopening old wounds, with critics saying it would disrespect victims and dig up a sordid past. Jordan Vilchez, who grew up in California and was moved into the Peoples temple commune at the age of 14, told The Associated Press (AP) in a phone interview from the U.S. that she has mixed feelings about the tour. She was in Guyana's capital the day Mr. Jones ordered hundreds of his followers to drink a poisoned grape-flavoured drink that was given to children first. Her two sisters and two nephews were among the victims. "I just missed dying by one day," she recalled. Ms. Vilchez, 67, said Guyana has every right to profit from any plans related to Jonestown. "Then on the other hand, I just feel like any situation where people were manipulated into their deaths should be treated with respect," she said.

Ms. Vilchez added that she hoped the tour operator would provide context and explain why so many people went to Guyana trusting they would find a better life. The tour would ferry visitors to the far-flung village of Port Kaituma nestled in the lush jungles of northern Guyana. It's a trip available only by boat, helicopter, or plane; rivers connect Guyana's interior instead of roads. Once there, it's another six miles via a rough and overgrown dirt trail to the abandoned commune and former agricultural settlement. Neville Bissember, a law professor at the University of Guyana, questioned the proposed tour, calling it a "ghoulish and bizarre" idea in a recently published letter. "What part of Guyana's nature and culture is represented in a place where death by mass suicide and other atrocities and human rights violations were perpetuated against a submissive group of American citizens, which had nothing to do with Guyana nor Guyanese?" he wrote.

Despite ongoing criticism, the tour has received support from the Government's Tourism Authority and Guyana's Tourism and Hospitality Association. Tourism Minister Oneidge Walrond told the AP that the Government is backing the effort at Jonestown but is aware "of some level of pushback" from certain sectors of society. Ms. Walrond said the Government has already helped clear the area "to ensure a better product can be marketed," adding that the tour might need Cabinet approval. "It certainly has my support," Ms. Walrond said. "It is possible. After all, we have seen what Rwanda has done with that awful tragedy as an example." Rose Sewcharan, director of Wonderlust Adventures, the private tour operator who plans to take visitors to Jonestown, the support buoyed her. "We think it is about time," Ms. Walrond said. "This happens all over the world. We have multiple examples of dark, morbid tourism

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around the world, including Auschwitz and the Holocaust museum. "Luring tourists The November 1978 mass suicide-murder was synonymous with Guyana for decades until huge amounts of oil and gas were discovered off the country's coast nearly a decade ago, making it one of the world's largest offshore oil producers. New roads, schools, and hotels are being built across the capital, Georgetown, and beyond, and a country that rarely saw tourists is now hoping to attract more of them.

An obvious attraction is Jonestown, argued Astill Paul, the co-pilot of a twin-engine plane that flew U.S. Rep Leo J. Ryan of California and a U.S. news crew to a village near the commune a day before hundreds died on Nov. 18, 1978. He witnessed gunmen fatally shoot Mr. Ryan and four others as they tried to board the plane on Nov. 18, and fly back to the capital. Mr. Paul told the AP he believes the former commune should be developed as a heritage site. "I sat on the tourism board years ago and did suggest we do this, but the Minister at the time lashed the idea down because the Government wanted nothing to do with morbid tourism," he recalled. Until recently, successive Governments shunned Jonestown, arguing that the country's image was badly damaged by the mass murder-suicide, even though only a handful of Indigenous people died. The overwhelming majority of victims were Americans like Ms. Vilchez who flew to Guyana to follow Jones. Many endured beatings, forced labour, imprisonment, and rehearsals for mass suicide.

Those in favour of a tour include Gerry Gouveia, a pilot who also flew when Jonestown was active. "The area should be reconstructed purely for tourists to get a first-hand understanding of its layout and what had happened," he said. "We should reconstruct the home of Jim Jones, the main pavilion, and other buildings that were there." Today, all that is left is bits of a cassava mill, pieces of the main pavilion, and a rusted tractor that once hauled a flatbed trailer to take temple members to the Port Kaituma airfield. An offering to the land. Until now, most visitors to Jonestown have been reporters and family members of those who died. Organising an expedition on one's own is daunting: the area is far from the capital and hard to access, and some consider the closest populated settlement dangerous. "It's still a very, very rough area," said Fielding McGehee, co-director of The Jonestown Institute, a nonprofit group. "I don't see how this is going to be an economically feasible kind of project because of the vast amounts of money it would take to turn it into a viable place to visit." Mr. McGehee warned about relying on supposed witnesses who will be part of the tour. He said the memories and stories that have trickled down through generations might not be accurate. "It's almost like a game of telephone," he said. "It does not help anyone understand what happened in Jonestown," he added. He recalled how one survivor had proposed a personal project to develop the abandoned site, but those from the temple community said, "Why do you want to do that?" Mr. McGehee noted that dark tourism is popular and that going to Jonestown means tourists could say they visited a place where more than 900 people died on the same day. "It's the prurient interest in tragedy," he said. If the tour eventually starts operating, not everything will be visible to tourists. When Ms. Vilchez returned to Guyana in 2018 for the first time since the mass suicide-murder, she made an offering to the land when she arrived in Jonestown. Among the things she buried in the abandoned commune where her sisters and nephews died were snippets of hair from her mother and father, who did not go to Jonestown. It felt like a gesture that honoured the people that died," Ms. Vilchez said.

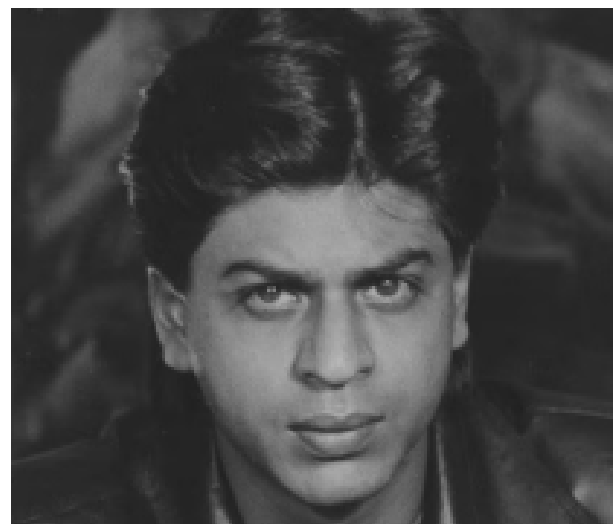
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Allu Arjun film expected to close in on Rs 900 crore mark

The Rule juggernaut is facing its first big challenge. And according to early reports, the movie has done almost Rs 20 crores in advance booking just in the morning show.

Having an almost 23.75% occupancy rate for the Telugu version and 22.42% for the Hindi version on a working day morning is a strong showing. Considering the film released across the country in maximum number of screens, it won't be a surprise if it manages to make similar numbers to its first Friday. In the domestic market, Pushpa 2, across all six versions – Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, and Bengali, made Rs 93.8 crore on Day 2 (Friday). So, it is expected that the Monday numbers would be similar to this, and end up pushing the worldwide collection to almost Rs 900 crore. If this trend continues, Pushpa 2: The Rule might break into the Rs 1000 crore club within a week of its release. It has already become the fastest film to reach the Rs 600 crore club, and it is continuing to break records like it is just another Monday at the office. In comparison, the domestic numbers of Prabhas' Kalki 2898 AD, which is the highest grossing film of the year so far, was at Rs 494.5 crore at the end of Week 1. Pushpa 2: The Rule crossed the Rs 500 crore mark in India within four days of the release. With the Rs 1000 crore club entry not a pipedream anymore, it would be interesting to see where Pushpa 2 lands in the overall scheme of things. SS Rajamouli's Baahubali 2 currently holds the top spot in the domestic collections of Indian films with a whopping Rs 1416.9 crore in gross collections, followed by Prashanth Neel's KGF 2 with Rs 1000.85 crore. The question on everyone's mind now is whether Pushpa 2 will join them in the prestigious Rs 1000 crore club.

When Shah Rukh Khan told Rajat Sharma he 'hated' him, revealed he bought Rajesh Khanna's car and hired his driver



Rajat Sharma also shared how deeply Shah Rukh Khan admired Rajesh Khanna, aspiring from the very beginning of his career to reach similar heights of stardom. Renowned journalist Rajat Sharma recently took a nostalgic trip down memory lane, recalling how Shah Rukh Khan charmed him in their very first meeting.

How does one win over a billion hearts and keep adding more? If only the answer were that simple, every one of us would be a Shah Rukh Khan. But, as fate would have it, there's only one King Khan — a fact even renowned journalist Rajat Sharma, best known for the iconic chat show Aap Ki Adalat, wholeheartedly agrees with. Recently, Sharma took a nostalgic trip down memory lane, recalling how SRK charmed him in their very first meeting and managed to do so within just four lines of conversation. He also shared how deeply Shah Rukh admired Rajesh Khanna, aspiring from the very beginning of his career to reach similar heights of stardom. "Once, I was in the airport and Shah Rukh also happened to be there. This was after the release of Baazigar. He came up to me and said, 'Sir, I know you,' and I replied, 'I also know you.' Till then, the only film star who had been on Aap Ki Adalat was Rajesh Khanna. SRK then told me, 'Sir, but I hate you. Mein nafarat karata hoon aapse.' I was shocked and asked why. He said that when the woman cleaning the floor came near me, she said, 'Sharma saab, could you please move' and when she went near him, she said, 'Ey Shah Rukh, move.' He asked, 'What should I do sir? Should I wear glasses or roam around with a computer (to get that much respect)?' He was a charmer and won my heart in just four sentences," Sharma said during a chat with ANI.

...Rajat Sharma revealed that they ended up talking for the entire flight and by the time they landed, he had become a fan of Shah Rukh Khan. "He then asked me, 'Sir, have you ever hung upside down?' I was like, 'Why should I?' He replied, 'I can hang upside down on a tree for three hours and still I am 'Ey Shah Rukh' and you are 'Sharma saab'. He asked me to try hanging upside down at times." Sharma also recalled how, as they were exiting the airport, SRK casually invited him to visit a movie set and under what he described as a kind of spell, Sharma immediately agreed. "Shah Rukh had a red-coloured car back then. He said, 'This car belonged to Rajesh Khanna and I

bought it. The driver sitting behind, he worked for Rajesh Khanna and I hired him as well. Now, just like you brought Rajesh Khanna on Aap Ki Adalat, you should bring Shah Rukh Khan too.' I told him but he had just done one or two films, but he insisted."

'A month later, while planning an Aap Ki Adalat schedule in Mumbai featuring Bai Thackeray, Sharad Pawar and Gulshan Kumar, Rajat Sharma suggested including the "charmer" Shah Rukh Khan as a guest. His team initially resisted, arguing it would dilute the show's stature. "So far we have brought only the biggest superstar Rajesh Khanna and now by bringing this guy (SRK), you will make our stature fall," they told him. But Sharma was confident in Shah Rukh's potential and the episode turned out to be a huge success. "He came out with flying colours. He later told me, 'If 5,000 people loved me earlier (before appearing on the show), now 5 lakh people do.' 18 years later, he reappeared on the show and as I was about to ask my first question, he stopped me and told the audience, 'My first every big interview was on Aap Ki Adalat and I want to thank you for making me such a big star.' That's his greatness. Shah Rukh would have become a star either way, he had the potential in him. But these words showed his large heartedness," he added.

Diljit Dosanjh breaks silence on black marketing of tickets for his concerts: 'This is not something new'



cert, Diljit Dosanjh shared a video of himself enjoying poha at a local stall, chatting with the stall owner and meeting locals.

Alia Bhatt trades her swanky drive for a quick autorickshaw ride

Mumbai: Bollywood star Alia Bhatt, who was recently seen in the theatrical movie 'Jigra,' ditched her swanky car, and took a quick ride as she sat in an autorickshaw. The actress was recently spotted at the Versova jetty in Mumbai, as she got down from the boat and took an autorickshaw. She was seen wearing an oversized striped shirt and a pair of wenge coloured pants.

Of late, many celebrities are opting for jetty rides from Versova to shooting spots in the Madh Island area of Mumbai as it saves time compared to the road ride of almost 90 minutes. Other actors like the Kannada superstar Yash, and Kiara Advani were also seen taking the jetty in order to reach the shooting spots.



Recently, Alia kickstarted the month of December by installing a Christmas tree at her home. The actress took to the Stories of her Instagram and shared a video which showed the Christmas tree. The Christmas tree was adorned with ornaments bearing the names of her family, husband Ranbir Kapoor and their daughter Raha, who turned 2 years old last month.

Amitabh Bachchan calls himself a 'huge fan' of Allu Arjun: 'May you continue to inspire us all'



Pushpa 2 has become the biggest Indian film of the year by earning a total of Rs 829 crore gross worldwide, according to the makers. With his performance in the Sukumar-directorial, Allu Arjun has become a fan favourite globally. Amid the success of the movie, an old interview of the actor from the promotions of the 2021 film Pushpa: The Rise has resurfaced. In the video, Allu Arjun can be seen praising Amitabh Bachchan, and expressing his desire to grow old as gracefully as the megastar. Now, Big B has re-

acted to the clip. The actor took to his X handle to share the old video and he captioned the post: "Allu Arjun Ji, so humbled by your gracious words... you give me more than I deserve... we are all such huge fans of your work and talent... may you continue to inspire us all... my prayers and wishes for your continued success!"

Soon after, Allu Arjun replied to his post, and wrote, "Amitabh ji, you are our super hero... and listening to words like this from you is surreal. Thank you for your kind words, generous compliments and heart full wishes... Humbled by your humility." Two years ago, during an interaction with Bolly2Box, Allu Arjun was asked to name one actor from Bollywood who inspires him the most. The actor replied, "Amitabh Bachchan really inspires me with his long career span. We have grown up watching his movies and he has had a great impact on all of us while growing up. I am a huge ardent fan of Amitabh Ji. Till date, despite his age, he is extremely active. I keep thinking, even if I get really old, I should be acting like Amitabh Bachchan, who has worked so beautifully all these years." Pushpa 2: The Rule, the sequel of Pushpa: The Rise, released in theatres on December 5. The film also stars Rashmika Mandanna and Fahadh Fasil in the lead roles.

Chunky Panday on facing financial crisis, and restarting from scratch: 'I didn't have money to buy alcohol for a party'

Hustle is a rather important talent to have in a world like cinema where contacts and relationships make things go round. Despite facing the dizzying heights of success, and the alarming lows of failures, actor Chunky Panday is someone who stuck through everything to keep himself relevant over the years. Of course, he now calls himself the father of Ananya Panday and the husband of Bhavana Panday, but Chunky is a star in his own right. In an interview with Curly Tales, he opened up about various aspects of his career. "I made my debut in 1987. In 86, Govinda started. In 1988, 89, and 90, we had Aamir, Salman, and Shah Rukh making their debuts. In subsequent years, we also had Ajay Devgn and Akshay Kumar starting. So, my honeymoon phase lasted just one year," pointed out Chunky, who pragmatically said that he was doing a musical chair of multi-starrers but didn't have a chair when the music stopped.

Reminiscing on how he developed the urge to relaunch his career in Hindi cinema, Chunky Panday narrated an incident that happened at a wedding. "A small boy came and asked if I was actually a hero. I told him to ask his mother about me. But then I realised I had to win that kid's heart with my films. I wanted to appeal to children. That is why I did films like Housefull etc..." said Chunky, who revealed that he is enjoying this phase as an actor, and reiterated that he doesn't regret anything about his cinema career. "I have really enjoyed my journey." Zeroing down on the kind of choices he made as an actor in his initial phase, Chunky said, "I hadn't seen so much money. And those were the times when you used to showboat about the number of films you were working on. I didn't know to slow down. I didn't know how to choose properly. And the others were smarter in selecting roles, and phasing out their films."

Talking about restarting his career after his return from Bangladesh where he had a brief stint as a superstar in their industry, Chunky pointed out that there was a generation that had no idea about him. Bhavana Panday shared that it is during such times that relationships come in handy. "We tell Ananya that success might come and go, but maintain relationships. Be nice and kind. It will come back to you someday in life. Chunky's second innings hap-



pened because he was nice to people. When you are at your lowest, and if you were horrible before, no one is giving you a second chance," said Bhavana.

Delving into the psyche of an actor who has seen it all to restart from scratch, Chunky Panday said that it was important to give up one's ego. "Actors should be shameless. You can't be too self-conscious," said Chunky. Talking about facing a financial crisis due to the ups and downs in his career, Bhavana said, "He never made us feel it. Of course, there were people around us who were doing better, and had better things. But we were comfortable, and we were happy." But the maverick Chunky pointed out that during one of his lowest phases before getting married to Bhavana, he faced an economic 'crisis'. "It was 1996, and some of my money was locked in a real estate deal. I threw a party at that time, and I didn't even have money to buy alcohol for it. I had to call my friend and ask for help," said Chunky, whose cheeky smile was swiftly countered by Bhavana's response. "It's a good thing you didn't have money to buy alcohol." On the work front, Chunky Panday was recently part of Anupam Kher's Vijay 69, and will next be seen in Sajid Nadiadwala's much-awaited Housefull 5.

Akshay Kumar calls Twinkle Khanna 'trophy wife' after she bags award for her book: 'She earns her own accolades'

Twinkle Khanna is known for her witty and tongue-in-cheek humour, but it was her husband, Akshay Kumar, who brought his own brand of wit to celebrate her recent achievement. Twinkle won an award in the Popular Fiction category at the Crossword Book Award 2024 for her book Welcome to Paradise. Akshay reposted Twinkle's post, where she is seen proudly holding her trophy. With his trademark humour, Akshay captioned the photo, "My trophy wife-literally (laughing emoji). But she earns her own accolades. So proud of my Crossword Popular Choice Award winner (kissing face emoji)."

Akshay Kumar lauded Twinkle Khanna for winning an award. Akshay Kumar lauded Twinkle Khanna for winning an award. Earlier, Twinkle Khanna shared a video of herself receiving the prestigious award, along with a photo of the trophy placed on a table at her house next to her book. Her pet dog, Mr Jeeves, could be seen sitting next to the trophy. In the post, Twinkle also shared a hilarious anecdote about how her celebration turned into a bit of a fiasco when Mr Jeeves ate the chocolate cake that was part of her



Twinkle Khanna's career took a turn since her marriage to Akshay Kumar in 2001, when she decided to step away from acting, admitting she no longer enjoyed the profession. Since then, she has become a successful author, with Welcome to Paradise and Pyjamas Are Forgiving being among her popular books

celebration hamper.

She wrote, "Last night, Welcome to Paradise won the Crossword Book Award 2024 in the Popular Fiction category and I decided to celebrate. Among the goodies in one of the hampers was a chocolate cake. I sliced a piece, left it on the coffee table, and when I came back—Mr. Jeeves, had consumed it. This led to

a midnight dash to the vet to get my 'celebration' pumped out of his stomach. These things only happen to me, which is why I'll never run out of stories. Mr. Jeeves is a little tired but fine, and so am I." Twinkle Khanna's career took a turn since her marriage to Akshay Kumar in 2001, when she decided to step away from acting, admitting she no longer en-

joyed the profession. Since then, she has become a successful author, with Welcome to Paradise and Pyjamas Are Forgiving being among her popular books. Last year, she completed her Master's degree in fiction writing at Goldsmiths, University of London, marking another milestone in her career.

High time Mo Salah gets counted among the most elite forwards in the world



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

A fan waved a banner during Liverpool's 2-0 cancer over Aston Villa last month: "He fires a bow. Now give Mo his dough." He was referring to Mohammed Salah's trademark bow-and-arrow goal celebration as well as the contract dance with his employers. There are rumours that the club and its talisman have finally agreed to a new contract, but the period of uncertainty dragged on interminably. Salah would publicly admit that he was "more out than in," and that "it could be his last game at Etihad." The manager Arne Slot disarmed the tension, saying, "maybe, he knows about the 115 charges." None of the rumours or the supposed stand-off has diminished Salah's form this season. Rather, refreshingly, he has been more influential for his club than ever before. Just one-third of the season past, he has already racked up numbers that dazzle. In 21 games, he has amassed 15 goals and hatched 12 assists, fuelling Liverpool to the top of the league and the Champions League title.

The narrative was not supposed to unfold this way. After a late-slump last season, a public bust-up with former manager Jurge Klopp, a new manager taking over, age climbing and the infinite riches of Saudi dialling him, it seemed that curtains were being fastened on arguably Liverpool's most celebrated player of this century. But he stayed back, whether that was on his wish or the manager's insistence or the incapacity to strike a lucrative deal with a Saudi club, Salah stayed. And he could lead Liverpool to just their second league triumph this century.

Mohamed Salah contract situation Liverpool Manchester City Liverpool's Mohamed Salah runs celebrating after scoring his side's second goal from the penalty spot during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Manchester City at Anfield Stadium, Liverpool, England, Some call it Salah's second wind. It is, and yet, it is not. Numerically he never endured a slump or wild fluctuations of form. Since 2017, when Liverpool acquired him, he has not endured a poor season. In every season, he has stroked 20-plus goals in all competitions. Barring the 2020-21 season, he has assisted 10 or more goals every season.

Yet, this season has been a resurgence. He has rediscovered his joy in being out there in the red shirt, skinning defenders, leaving them in a wake like the smoky contrails of a fighter jet, weaving his left foot like a paintbrush, coaxing the football to traverse wicked bends. Watching him has been the most joyous experience in a league that is getting stiflingly physical and tactical this season. It could be warm words of his manager, or the affection of the crowd, or his own steely will to not let age diminish his prowess. It's evident that the 32-year-old is not as quick as he once was. Often, wingers that lose pace repurpose to a more central role. Thus, they could conceal their loss of pace but continue to remain a central figure. But Salah has been getting progressively wider this season. He would hold the width and then cut into the edge, from where he would shoot the ball goal-wards or curl it to the back-post. He makes up for the yards of explosive pace he has lost with his trickery and composure in one-on-one situations, his vision to design the perfect pass and the precision to find the most suitable man. He barely loses the ball, carries it through a maze of legs, and is seldom out-wrestled, though he is not a physically imposing presence. He has mastered the difficult chore of using his body to keep the defender pressing him away from the ball. The sweetest first touch in the league had made him the receiving outlet for long diagonal balls from the deep, often hoofed by Virgil van Dijk.

He keeps on adjusting to new challenges and set-ups. The old forward-line has long gone. He doesn't get service from the left as Sadio Mane used to; Darwin Nunez is unlike the hardworking Roberto Firmino. The midfield is different, more dynamic but less creative. But Salah has no worries. These are little things that he has polished in his pursuit of perfection. Klopp once admitted: "Every year, something new is in his toolbox. A subtle change that really makes you appreciate the genius that he is. He is a delight for any coach to have." Almost toxically obsessed about his game, he watches his missed chances from open play, he studies the movements of the defenders that could mark him. "Every single detail, every quirk, every pattern, he would pore over them with a scientist's eye," Klopp would once say. A streak of scientific artistry guides his game, not anarchy of thought. It perhaps explains his staggering consistency that makes him one of the grandest players in the Premier League era. He could own his place as one of the greatest goal-scorsers the country has seen. He is eighth on the list (170). But there is little fun for him without the assists. He is eleventh on the charts, above Thierry Henry. The numbers he shares with the French legend are eerily identical. In 370 games in all competitions, both have netted 226 goals. Salah has assisted eight more goals. But the numbers are not the measure of either. Both bring an ineffable beauty into the game. And it is high time Salah is counted among the most elite forwards in the world.

Border-Gavaskar Trophy | 'I took a lot out of my ability to find a way': Marnus Labuschagne on finding form at Adelaide



GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Marnus Labuschagne form in Adelaide Australia's Marnus Labuschagne celebrates scoring fifty runs during the day two of the second cricket test match between Australia and India at the Adelaide Oval in Adelaide, Australia, Border-Gavaskar Trophy: With a total of five runs in the opening Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy at Perth, Australian batsman Marnus Labuschagne came into the Pink Ball Test at Adelaide with lots on stake. The 30-year-old had only scored one century in his last 40 innings and played a crucial knock of 64 runs in tough conditions in Australia's first innings to play his part in the hosts' ten wicket win in Adelaide on Sunday. Labuschagne has shared how he coped with the disappointing start in Perth and bounced back.

"At the end of the Perth Test, I knew I wasn't moving into the ball well. There were a lot of things I didn't like about how I played. The positives I took out of it was (despite) my technique and how I was playing, I managed to last (nearly) 60 balls out in the middle. For me, I took a lot out of my ability to find a way," Labuschagne told cricket.com.au.

The right-handed batsman, who had made his Test debut against Pakistan at Dubai in 2018, had an average of 60.82 in his first 52 innings with ten hundreds and 13 half centuries. But the next 40 innings saw his average dropping to 40 and only seven half-centuries and one hundred in that period. With many in Australia questioning his place in the Australian team, Labuschagne got support in the form

of former Australian coach Justin Langar as well his batting mentor Neil D'Costa and Australian batting coach Michael di Venuto.

According to Labuschagne, one of the foremost things was to tweak the technique of shifting his weight into the ball more and a shift in his pre-ball trigger movement. "I wanted to get a gauge on different things. It took all week really to try and work on different things, find out if that worked, and keep filtering through until I found out what I needed to. The 10 days off was about trying to reconnect moving into the ball, lining the ball up nicely and finding out where I was missing the link there. I was hitting day after day for nine days straight, just finding a way to get back to where I wanted to be. That was the journey I started on Tuesday and I wanted to make sure that when I got here in Adelaide that I was able to be in a position to trust it and go out and play," said the batsman. Coming at number three on the opening day of the Pink Ball Test at Adelaide after India were bowled out for a first innings total of 180 runs, Labuschagne and opener Nathan McSweeney saw a tough hour of bowling by Indian pacers in night conditions with the duo adding 63 runs before the end of day's play. Labuschagne would end his innings at 64 runs off 126 balls before he fell trying to slash the ball.

According to a BBC report, the Australian batsman had averaged 15.33 against good length deliveries since 2022 and his average against balls outside off-stump dropped to 17.50 from a world leading average of 78.33 since his debut to 2022, one of the reasons being his early foot movement.

"The things I changed were more pre-ball. It was my pre-ball set-up and getting a better alignment there, getting my head pushing more forward. They were all things before my trigger. I've batted so many different ways over the last four or five years so for me it was about which way I want to get back to – and reconnecting that with my new stance. It wasn't as difficult as it may sound, but it was just for me to find out, 'Okay I'm going to do this trigger, I'm going to set up like this and lining the ball up really well and get myself in a really good position,'" signed off Labuschagne.

'He doesn't have to prove himself': Kapil Dev extends support to under-fire Rohit Sharma

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

IND vs AUS: Former India skipper Kapil Dev extended his support to Rohit Sharma after India's loss to Australia at Adelaide in the 2nd Test of the Border Gavaskar Trophy, saying that the 37-year-old does not have to prove anything to anyone at this stage of his career. "He doesn't have to prove himself. He has done this for many, many years, so let's not doubt somebody. I won't doubt him. I hope his form comes back, that's important," Kapil said during the launch of the Vishwa Samudra Open, a PGTI event set to begin at the Delhi Golf Club on Tuesday. "With one or two performances, if you doubt someone's captaincy, I mean, just six months back when he won the T20 World Cup, you wouldn't have asked me this question. Let it go, knowing his ability and talent, he will come back. They will come back strongly," he added. Rohit hasn't had the best of times as India's Test skipper in recent matches with India to Australia off the back of a 0-3 whitewash against New Zealand at home. Rohit missed the first Test vs Australia in Perth owing to the birth of his second child and Jasprit Bumrah captained India to a 295-run victory in his stead. After returning to the side for the Adelaide Test, Rohit is still struggling



for form, having scored just 3 and 6 in pink-ball Test after dropping down the batting order. India ultimately went on to lose the match by 10 wickets. Asked if Bumrah is shaping up well to take over the reins from Rohit, Kapil said, "I think it is too early to talk about that. With one performance, you can't say he is the best, and with one bad performance, you can't say he doesn't deserve it. "Let a player play a lot of cricket, take on a lot of captaincy. Ups and downs will come, and then you judge a person by how he reacts in difficult times, not in good times. In good times, we don't have to judge. When he is down and out..." he added.

Raygun musical barred ahead of Sydney opening, as the Olympic breakers's legal team insists she 'owns' the kangaroo dance

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

Australia's Rachael Gunn, known as B-Girl Raygun, competes during the Round Robin Battle at the breaking competition at La Concorde Urban Park at the 2024 Summer Olympic Australia's Rachael Gunn, known as B-Girl Raygun, competes during the Round Robin Battle at the breaking competition at La Concorde Urban Park at the 2024 Summer Olympic. Australian comedian and musician Steph Broadbridge had to cancel a musical based on breakdancing Olympian Raygun after her lawyers sent across a cease and desist letter, saying that the Olympian owned the dance moves. Rachel Gunn became famous at Paris Olympics for her unconventional moves, which received no marks, but got a lot of run play and gushing guffaws. Her lawyers swung in to trademark the poster for the musical 'Raygun the Musical', ahead of its Sydney debut at Kinselas Hotel in Darlinghurst which was sold out. The A\$10 ticket, will be refunded Broadbridge said. Earlier Raygun's lawyers told Broadbridge that



she was "not allowed" to do the kangaroo dance because Gunn "owns" it. Guardian quoted her legal and management team as saying, they were committed to protecting her intellectual property and ensuring that her brand remained strong and respected. Gunn's unconventional moves – notably sprinkler and kangaroo-hop – went viral after Olympics.

Broadbridge was under-terred, and said in her Instagram response, "That one did puzzle me – I mean, that's an Olympic-level dance. How would I possi-

bly be able to do that without any formal breakdancing training?" She promised to be "back soon" and "with a whole new story arc," reported Guardian. Broadbridge had been distraught. She had earlier told Sydney Morning Herald, "I was obsessed with the story and desperate to see what happened in terms of how the different generations and the different genders responded." The musical was to feature a cast of eight people, puppets and original songs including You May Be a B-Girl, But You'll Always Be an A-Girl To Me, I'm Breaking Down

and I'm a Celebrity.? Post Sydney, it was on the programme of comedy festivals at Melbourne and Edinburgh next year.? Broadbridge had been terrified how her muse Raygun would view it. But she was slapped with a notice. Guardian put out a statement from Gunn's legal team that said: "While we have immense respect for the credible work and effort that has gone into the development of the show, we must take necessary steps to safeguard Rachael's creative rights and the integrity of her work."

Mohammed Shami stars with 17-ball 32 to set stage for Bengal's win vs Chandigarh in Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy

NS News Agency, Dec 11

Mohammad Shami vs Chandigarh Mohammad Shami in action with the bat against Chandigarh in Syde Mushtaq Ali Trophy. (Screengrab: BCCI Domestic x) Mohammad Shami kept himself firmly in the limelight when he smashed a 17-ball 32 runs with he bat and then came on to bowl 13 dot balls and took 1 wicket to help Bengal defeat Chandigarh at the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. With the bat, he smashed two sixes and three fours, taking 19 runs off Sandeep Sharma's over, the final of the innings, helping Bengal post 159. He would then return with the ball, snapping up Chandigarh opener Arsalan Z Khan off just his third delivery. He bowled at an average speed of 135 clicks with one delivery even cranking in the range of 139 kmph. Bengal have set a target of 160 in front of Chandigarh ?? Mohd. Shami provides a crucial late surge with 32*(17) Karan Lal top-scored with 33 (25) Meanwhile, as reported by this newspaper a couple of days ago, The Board of Control for Cricket in India is awaiting National Cricket Academy's nod to fly Shami to Australia for the remaining three Tests of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. The senior selection committee is awaiting the latest fitness test results from NCA for his inclusion in the Test squad. It is understood that the BCCI has already prepared the clothing for the pacer and even his visa is ready and once declared fit, will fly to Australia at the earliest.



Though India got off to a winning start at Perth, they missed Shami's presence in the Adelaide pink-ball Test which the visitors lost by 10 wickets. On Sunday, captain Rohit Sharma said the team management is concerned about Mohammed Shami's fitness but suggested doors are open for the Indian speedster to join India's Test squad in Australia. "We are just monitoring him because while playing Syed Mushtaq Ali, he got some swelling in his knee, which hampers his preparation to come and play a Test match," Rohit told reporters after India's ten-wicket loss. "We want to be very careful, we don't want to bring him here, he pulls up sore or something happens." "We want to be more than 100% sure with him because it has been a long time. We don't want to put pressure on him to come here and do the job for the team."

Why experts feel Rohit Sharma should return to opening slot in remaining Tests vs Australia

GNS News Agency, Dec 11

IND vs AUS: Both Sunil Gavaskar and Ravi Shastri opined that India skipper Rohit Sharma would be best suited if he returned to his preferred opening slot in the next Tests against Australia. After missing the 1st Test in Perth and India's victory in that match, Rohit said he did not want to tinker with the winning combinations and brought himself on at No.6 at Adelaide for the 2nd Test with KL Rahul opening the innings with Yashasvi Jaiswal.

But Rahul could not capitalize on his good form from Perth, scoring 37 and 7 in the two innings in the pink ball Test. Rohit, meanwhile, looked 'subdued' at No.6, according to the experts, scoring just 3 and 6. "That's the reason I want him at the top. That's where he can be aggressive and expressive. Just thought he was a little too subdued, just seeing his body language," Shastri told 'Star Sports'. "The fact that he didn't make runs, I don't think there was enough on the field there. I just wanted to see him more involved, and a little more animated," the former India coach added. "He should return to his regular spot. We should remember why Rahul had opened. He did that because Rohit Sharma was not available for the first Test. I can understand why they kept him as an opener in the second Test, he had a 200-plus partnership with Jaiswal." Gavaskar said on 'Sports Tak'. "But now that he couldn't score this Test, I feel Rahul should go back to No. 5 or No.6 and Rohit Sharma should open. If Rohit scores quickly in the beginning, then he can score a big century also later," he added.



After missing the 1st Test in Perth and India's victory in that match, Rohit said he did not want to tinker with the winning combinations and brought himself on at No.6 at Adelaide for the 2nd Test with KL Rahul opening the innings with Yashasvi Jaiswal.