

INDIAN CHRONICLE

8 December, 2024 | Sunday | Volume No:12 | Issue No:256

Pages: 8+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)

₹ 3

35-year-old woman electrocuted while drying clothes

Mancherial: A woman was accidentally electrocuted while drying clothes on an iron wire through which electricity was passing at Madaram township in Thandur mandal centre on Saturday. Police said that Pulagam Sumalatha (35), wife of auto-rickshaw driver Tirupathi, died on the spot when she touched the wire which was electrified due to faulty wiring. She was alone at the time of the incident. Some neighbours noticed her body and alerted her family members, who in turn informed police about the incident. Police shifted the body to a government hospital in Bellampalli for post-mortem.

Five killed as car plunges into lake in Telangana's Bhongir district

Bhongir: In a tragic accident, five persons were killed after the car they were travelling in, lost control and plunged into a lake near Jalalpur village in Bhoodan Pochampally mandal of Yadadri Bhongir district early on Saturday.

The victims, identified as Harsha, Dinesh, Vamshi, Balu, and Vinay, were residents of LB Nagar. The accident occurred when their car veered off the road and crashed into the lake. One individual, a youth from Lakshmapuram village in Valigonda mandal, managed to escape. Police reached the spot and joined the villagers in salvage operations. More details are awaited.

Praja Palana Praja VIJAYOTSAVALU

Tentative Schedule of Proposed Cultural Programmes at

“ Stage-1 - Opp. Rajiv Gandhi Statue” from 7th to 9th December, 2024



S. No.	Date	Time	Name of the Programme	Name of the Team Leader	Contact No.
1.	07.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Orchestra – Songs	Ramamurthy & Team Kala Sagaram	9542477688
2.		6.00 – 6.45 PM	Perini Natyam	K. Santosh & Team S.T. Govt. College of Music and Dance, Hyderabad	9550926710
3.		6.45 – 7.30 PM	Kathak	Ravinder Raju & Team	9849297679
4.		7.30 – 8.00 PM	Kuchipudi	Indira Parasharam & Team	8008221459
5.		8.00 – 9.00 PM	Bhaktha Pahlada Surabhi Natakam	Jachandra Varma & Team	9494507007
6.	08.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Songs by TSS Artists	Vadde Shankar	9885266596
7.		6.00 – 6.45 PM	Bonala Kolatam	G. Neela & Team	9985534347
8.		6.45 – 7.15 PM	Mohini Attam	Mythili Anoop & Team	9030040525
9.		7.15 – 8.00 PM	Bharatanyam	P. Pramod Reddy & Team	9848867399
10.		8.00 – 9.00 PM	Theatre Skit	Birru Kiran & Team	9550092506
11.	09.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Songs by TSS Artists	Vadde Shankar	9885266596
12.		6.00 – 7.00 PM	Odissi	Sudipta Panda & Team	7842425421
13.		7.00 – 7.45 PM	Fusion	Arza Varshini & Team	8790298578
14.		7.45 – 8.30 PM	Magic	Janardhan Kesamoni	9848524657
15.		8.30 – 9.00 PM	Oggu Dolu Vinyasam	M. Ashok & Team	7032583486

Anchor: Sri Mallam Ramesh - 9603677961

Coordination from Department of Language and Culture:

1. Sri P. Narsimulu, Field Officer - 9177945965
2. Sri T. Ravikanth, Lecturer – 7799208494
3. Sri D. Krishna Kumar, Senior Assistant – 9912155525
4. Sri J. Ashwin Kumar, O.S. – 9440014250

S. No.	Date	Time	Name of the Programme	Name of the Team Leader	Contact No.
1.	07.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Folk Songs & Dance	V. Srinivas Goud & Team	9440282149
2.		6.00 – 6.45 PM	Kuchipudi	Nadiya & Team	9966002396
3.		6.45 – 7.30 PM	Bharatanyam	Samatha Rao & Team	9618528976
4.		7.30 – 8.15 PM	Fusion	Neha Singh & Team	9963878209
5.		8.15 – 9.00 PM	Ventriloquism Mimicry	Prateek Ramesh Banjara	8074189783 8465098637
6.	08.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Songs by TSS Artists	Myaka Raju	9948835036
7.		6.00 – 7.00 PM	Perini	Sandeep & Team	8639777606
8.		7.00 – 7.45 PM	Kuchipudi Dance	Priyanka Barde & Team	9533477072
9.		7.45 – 8.15 PM	Magic & Mimicry		
10.		8.15 – 9.00 PM	Chindu Yakshaganam	Chindu Srinivas & Team	9866641647
11.	09.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Songs by TSS Artists	Myaka Raju	9948835036
12.		6.00 – 6.45 PM	Kuchipudi Fusion	Bindu Abhinay & Team	9989499391
13.		6.45 – 7.30 PM	Perini	Ch. Pavan Kumar & Team	9849373848
14.		7.30 – 8.15 PM	Oggu Katha	Gajarla Devaraju	9908232954
15.		8.15 – 9.00 PM	Qawwali & Sufi Sangeeth	Parvez Hussain Nizami Qawwal	9885669783

Anchor: Sri Sadashiv – 9849439098

Coordination from Department of Language and Culture:

1. Sri C. Ravichandra Babu, Assistant Lecturer - 6281551247
2. Sri Nageshwar Rao, Assistant Lecturer – 9866358487
3. Sri P.V. Ramanamurthy – 9849161112
4. Sri Vinod, O.S. - 8019102427

S. No.	Date	Time	Name of the Programme	Name of the Team Leader	Contact No.
1.	07.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Tyagaraja Keertanas	Davvuri Padma Priya & Team	9704693919
2.		6.00 – 6.45 PM	Perini Natyam	D. Raj Kumar & Team	7731901986
3.		6.45 – 7.30 PM	Kuchipudi	Vasumathi Varkala & Team	8008200669
4.		7.30 – 8.00 PM	Skit	Prabhakar & Team	9951190564
5.		8.00 – 9.00 PM	Qawwali & Sufi Sangeeth	Zakir Hussain Taj & Team	7981439633
6.	08.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Songs by TSS Artists	Jatath Balu	9912018595
7.		6.00 – 6.45 PM	Odissi	Arpitha & Team	7093504779
8.		6.45 – 7.15 PM	Kuchipudi Dance	G. Ravi Kumar & Team	9704830973
9.		7.45 – 8.15 PM	Ventriloquism & Mimicry	Lakkarapu Ramesh	9849009743
10.		8.15 – 9.00 PM	Chindu Yakshaganam	P. Krishna & Team, NZB	8008596639
11.	09.12.2024	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Songs by TSS Artists	Jatath Balu	9912018595
12.		6.00 – 6.45 PM	Kuchipudi	Koka Vijayalaxmi & Team	9849465103
13.		6.45 – 7.30 PM	Bharatanatyam	Sridevi & Team	9912557000
14.		7.30 – 8.45 PM	Magic & Mimicry	Siripuram Srinivas & Team	8790974887
15.		8.45 – 9.00 PM	Kathak	Chandra Tapa Saha & Team	8019601037

Anchor: Sri J.S. Aravind – 9848273161

Coordination from Department of Language and Culture:

1. Sri R. Nagaraju, Field Officer - 7386364333
2. Sri Jayakumar Acharya, Assistant Lecturer – 9440235530
3. Sri Jayakishan, Lecturer – 9848874027
4. Sri Sunil, O.S. – 9618112364

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Groundwater crisis

PUNJAB and Haryana are on the brink of a groundwater crisis that could jeopardise not only the region's agricultural backbone but also the nation's food security. Recent data from the Central Ground Water Board paints a grim picture: Punjab's Stage of Groundwater Extraction (SoE) stands at a staggering 163.76%, while Haryana follows closely with 135.74%. These figures indicate that groundwater extraction in these states far exceeds natural recharge, pushing aquifers to critical depletion levels.

The crisis is primarily driven by the cultivation of paddy, a water-guzzling crop that dominates Punjab's agricultural landscape due to assured procurement and subsidies. Despite efforts to promote alternatives like maize or pulses, farmers remain hesitant, citing inadequate minimum support prices (MSP) and procurement guarantees. As groundwater levels plummet — they are expected to drop below 300 metres by 2039 in Punjab — the quality of water deteriorates, rendering it unfit for both irrigation and drinking. In addition to agricultural practices, rapid urbanisation and industrial growth have exacerbated the crisis. Cities like Gurugram and Faridabad in Haryana have been drawing more than double their extractable groundwater, highlighting the unsustainable pressure on this vital resource. The state governments, along with the Centre, must urgently implement measures such as expanding canal-based irrigation, incentivising crop diversification and ensuring robust water pricing mechanisms to discourage over-extraction. The Jal Shakti Abhiyan and Atal Bhujal Yojana have laid the groundwork for rainwater harvesting and aquifer management. But, unfortunately, their impact remains limited. It raises questions over the ability of the two states to reverse the alarming decline. Without immediate and concerted action, the groundwater crisis could spiral into a national emergency, threatening livelihoods and food security.

Angry fans in Gujarat protest delayed screening, deface multiplex property

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

In Vadodara, a multiplex located in the Manjalpur area saw people protesting and vandalising film posters outside the waiting area when the multiplex management failed to start the 6.20 am show on time. (File Photo) In Vadodara, a multiplex located in the Manjalpur area saw people protesting and vandalising film posters outside the waiting area when the multiplex management failed to start the 6.20 am show on time. Fans of the much-awaited Allu Arjun-starrer Pushpa 2 created a ruckus at multiplexes in Vadodara and Jamnagar on Thursday, where the first-day first show screening at 6.20 am was delayed due to operational reasons, forcing the police in both the cities to intervene.

In Vadodara, a multiplex located in the Manjalpur area saw people protesting and vandalising film posters outside the waiting area when the multiplex management failed to start the 6.20 am show on time. The show, which was supposed to be housefull, saw the crowd turn up as early as 5.30 am — with some arriving from as far as Dabhoi and Waghodia. When the show did not begin even half an hour after 6.20 am, angry protestors took on the management and demanded a refund. Harsh Singh, a residential student from a private university in Waghodia, told The Indian Express, "Five of my friends and I wanted to catch the movie before the university lecture. We had been waiting for the film since 'Pushpa: The Rise' was released. Accordingly, when we realised that the film would have the first show at 6.20 am, we immediately booked tickets. We were excited and left Waghodia at 5 am in order to avoid delays. However, the irresponsible behaviour of the multiplex ruined our day." Singh said that the show commenced after 8.30 am and left the group with no choice but to miss the University lecture. "We had paid so much for the tickets and the management was not willing to refund easily as the show had begun, eventually." While the management of the multiplex called the Manjalpur police station to control the situation after the angry protestors damaged posters and LED screens, police officials of Vadodara city police said no offence was booked.

An officer of the Manjalpur police station said, "Two staff members tried to calm down the crowd. The multiplex had not cancelled the show but due to an operational delay, they were unable to begin on time. We asked the people to not take the law in their hands." A similar scene played out at the multiplex's Jamnagar franchise when the 6 am show was delayed. The police in Jamnagar rushed to the spot to bring the crowd under control. A staff member of the Vadodara multiplex said, "The hard drive, which is an encrypted USB stick containing the digital cinema package (DCP) of the film, had not arrived in time at the multiplexes although the movie was scheduled to have the first show at 6.20 am. The moment we received the file and the key, it was immediately released. We had requested the people to understand the problem as there was no cancellation planned. A few people who sought refunds were handed over the same. Several people also chose to eventually watch the film."

As frequent digging threatens gas pipelines, Mahanagar Gas launches helpline

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

With infrastructure projects ramping up across Mumbai, frequent digging activities pose a serious risk to underground gas pipelines, potentially leading to hazardous accidents. To tackle this issue, Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL) has launched a helpline number under its safety initiative, 'MGL Sahayogi'. The helpline—1800 2100 2100—encourages residents to report unsafe or unplanned digging in their areas, aiming to prevent accidental damage to pipelines. Such incidents can lead to gas leaks, fire hazards, and disruptions in gas supply to households and CNG stations, compromising public safety. Speaking at the campaign's launch, Ashu Shinghal, managing director of MGL, emphasised the importance of public vigilance. "Ensuring safe and uninterrupted gas supply is our top priority. Through the 'MGL Sahayogi' safety awareness campaign, we hope this appeal will encourage people to be more vigilant, in the interest of their own safety and the safety of the city they live in," he said.

At Deve Gowda's home turf Hassan, Siddaramaiah says era of former PM over



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched an attack on former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda at his home turf in Hassan on Thursday, saying that "by joining hands with communal forces", the Janata Dal (Secular) supremo had "lost the morality to have 'secular' in the party name". The era of Deve Gowda was over, Siddaramaiah said during a massive 'Janakalyana Samavesha' event held on Thursday. "He says he will continue in politics till his last breath. I am not opposed to it. But, don't pursue vendetta politics. Don't say that you will finish others off politically," Siddaramaiah said, attacking Gowda for his remarks about removing the Congress government in Karnataka.

"I want to say one thing to Deve Gowda. By joining hands with communal forces, you have lost the morality to

have 'secular' in the name of your party," the chief minister said, referring to the party's alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party. "Deve Gowda used to say that his was a secular party.... Ahead of the previous (Lok Sabha) election, in 2019, you should have heard his speeches. He had said that BJP will not return to power and if Modi becomes PM, he would leave the country," Siddaramaiah recalled. He also accused Gowda and his son, Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H D Kumaraswamy, of cheating BJP leader B S Yediyurappa. "In 2006, Kumaraswamy became CM for the first time. But he cheated Yediyurappa and the government fell. Who cheated? (It was) Mr Kumaraswamy and Mr Deve Gowda," he said, referring to the BJP-JD(S) coalition government from 2006 to 2008. "Again in 2018, he became CM with our support. But he could not protect the government," Siddaramaiah alleged. On the criticism against guarantee schemes by BJP and JD(S), Siddaramaiah said it was akin to opposing benefits extended to the poor. "We will continue guarantee schemes until 2028. After that too, we will form the government and implement the guarantee schemes," he said, adding that the government would not stop them at any cost. Deputy Chief Minister and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president D K Shivakumar attempted to put an end to talks about differences between him and Siddaramaiah over 'power-sharing' in Karnataka. "I am with Siddaramaiah today, will be with him tomorrow and till I die," he said.

Though the 'Janakalyana Samavesha' was organised jointly by KPCC and Swabhimani Okkoota, the event was initially planned to be a Siddaramaiah-centric programme held in the wake of allegations levelled against him. A group of various associations from backward classes and supporters of Siddaramaiah had announced the event after which the state Congress decided to hold it under the banner of the party along with the associations.

Home prices in Pune surge 28%, push residents to city's outskirts

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Home prices in major Indian cities have increased significantly, with Pune registering a 28 per cent spike in the first half of the financial year 2024. This sharp surge has led to a steady drop in property sales, including in Pune, New Delhi and Mumbai. According to a recent report published by real estate consultancy ANAROCK, a three per cent decline in overall unit sales has been observed in comparison to the property sales in 2023.

The report highlighted the real estate trends from the top seven cities—the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Delhi and the National Capital Region, Bengaluru, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata. Delhi-NCR registered the highest spike with average home prices going from Rs 93 lakh to Rs 1.45 crore, while Kolkata recorded the slowest jump, going from Rs 53 lakh to Rs 61 lakh between the first half of FY 2024 to the first half of FY 2025. The steep increase in prices has pushed several residents of Pune city to the outskirts in search of affordable housing. The average home prices in the city have risen from Rs 66 lakh to Rs 85 lakh, burdening the already frail microeconomic conditions of several individuals and families.

"Several people I know have recently been forced to relocate to the outskirts of the city. This is due to the high cost of renting houses near workplaces in areas like Magarpatta, Kharadi and Kalyani Nagar, which are major IT hubs. I have to commute regularly to my office in Magarpatta from Hinjewadi Phase I, which has created a disruption in my work-life balance. While living on the outskirts definitely saves me money on food and other basic expenses, the daily commute is exhausting. The traffic during peak office hours increases the travel time by almost twice as much, making a distance of even 10 km feel really long," said Aryan Singh, a young IT professional working in the city. Crumbling infrastructure compounds the problem for many. Under the Smart City Development plan, the Pune Municipal Corporation has allocated approximately Rs 100 crore towards infrastructure projects that include road projects and riverfront development. The Pune Housing and Area Development Board, a division of the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority has also announced the sale of 6,294 homes across the city. The home prices range from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 1 crore and 2,340 homes can be booked under the first-come-first-serve scheme while



418 flats come under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

"A systems approach is crucial for well-planned cities. While some areas in the major cities are fortunate to have rudimentary urban planning, the physical and ecological limits to urban planning have never been considered. The natural contours of the land and drainage patterns have not been respected. Planning with ecological considerations of water availability, topography of the land, wilderness, and green cover are the foundations of sound urban planning. Hardscapes cover aquifer recharge areas, even as groundwater dependency grows in peri-urban areas," said Gurudas Nulkar, director of the Centre for Sustainable Development at the Gokhale Institute, Pune. Pune has also witnessed a rapid population growth, with an increase of approximately 2,00,000 residents in the past year alone. Migration and urban expansion have led to a massive demand in the real estate sector, inflating the market prices. "This price surge is a course correction in itself. The prices had not increased between 2016 and 2020 while construction costs kept growing. So, to achieve stability in the demand and supply, this appreciation has been realised. The spike has also aided in the development of projects on the fringe areas of the city, which would allow the middle class to secure homes at affordable prices. With increased connectivity and better infrastructure, this boom would benefit everyone in the longer run," said Pramod Khairnar, president of CREDAI for Maharashtra. While this rise in prices would lead to the overall development within Pune city, the flip side is that the population density would become concentrated in areas that do not possess well-equipped infrastructure and healthcare and other social services, further straining the already underdeveloped areas.

Veg thali cost rises by 7 pc in November as tomato, potato prices surge

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

The representative cost of home-cooked vegetarian thali rose by seven per cent and that of non-vegetarian thali by two per cent on a year-on-year in November, rating firm Crisil said. Vegetarian thali cost rose to Rs 32.7 from Rs 30.5 a year ago due to increase in the prices of tomato and potato, which collectively account for 26 per cent of the thali cost, Crisil said. Price of tomato increased 35 per cent on-year to Rs 53 per kg from Rs 40 per kg in November 2023. Non-vegetarian thali cost rose to Rs 61.5 in November from Rs 60.4 a year ago.

Crisil said the price of potato increased 50 per cent on-year on a low base to Rs 37 per kg from Rs 25 per kg in November 2023 due to a 20 per cent on-year decline in arrivals amid low yield following late blight infestation in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Further, price of pulses rose 10 per cent on-year due to lower opening and pipeline stocks. Prices are expected to dip once fresh arrivals begin in December. "Adding to the cost, vegetable oil prices rose 13 per cent on-year due to import duty hike, coupled with the festive and wedding season demand," Crisil said. An 11 per cent drop in fuel cost — from Rs 903 last year for a 14.2 kg LPG cylinder in Delhi to Rs 803 currently — prevented further increase in the thali cost. For the non-veg thali, an estimated decline of 3 per cent on-year in broiler prices, which account for 50 per cent of the non-veg thali cost, arrested the cost increase, it said.

On-month, the cost of veg thali declined 2 per cent in November, while that of non-veg thali remained flat. Tomato prices declined 17 per cent on-month with fresh supplies from Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat in October, but lower arrivals in November capped further decline, Crisil said. It said rise in prices of vegetable oil, onion and potato by 4 per cent, 4 per cent and 1 per cent on-month, respectively, arrested further decline in thali cost. For the non-veg thali, an estimated 2 per cent rise in broiler prices led to stable thali cost, it said. Meanwhile, a 10.9 per cent spike in food prices lifted India's retail inflation to a 14-month



high of 6.2 per cent in October, from 5.5 per cent in September, with prices of vegetables and edible oils rising at a sharp pace not seen in recent years. The price rise pace in October marked a breach of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) upper tolerance limit for inflation, with rural India facing a sharper uptick of 6.7 per cent, while urban consumers encountered an inflation of 5.6 per cent. The RBI's monetary Policy Committee (MPC) which retained the Repo rate at 6.50 per cent in the October monetary policy, will meet on Friday to review the policy.

What does a moderate earthquake feel like?

Hyderabad: According to the National Institute of Seismology, individuals who have experienced earthquake of 5.3 magnitude might have experienced a sensation like a heavy truck striking a building, stationary cars rocking noticeably and dishes and windows at homes rattling alarmingly. Residents might have felt tremors indoors and outdoors too during the day. Telangana: 5.3 magnitude earthquake hits Warangal, Kothagudem, Khammam

Sambhal administration may put up posters of people involved in mosque survey violence



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

sambhal mosque The violence erupted over the second round of the survey conducted at the mosque in Kot by a team of the Archaeological Survey of India. The district administration in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal may on Thursday put up posters of those involved in the violence that led to four deaths during a court-ordered survey of Shahi Jama Masjid on November 24.

"After studying the footage of the sample collected by a drone, we were able to get pictures of those involved in the violence and now we will most likely put up their posters today," said District Magistrate Rajender Pensiya. Pensiya told The Indian Express that the administration has identified at least 400 people, 32 of whom have been arrested. "We are working on designing the poster so that we can exclude those who have already been arrested," he said. Pensiya also said that keeping the Friday prayers in mind, 30 magistrates have been deployed and the presidents of all the mosques in Sambhal have been called for a peace meeting. There will be three-layer security at the mosque on Friday. The violence erupted over the second round of the survey conducted at the mosque in Kot by a team of the Archaeological Survey of India. The first round of the ASI survey was initiated on November 19, hours after a Chandausi court ordered it on applications filed by eight petitioners claiming that the mosque had been built after destroying a temple. On November 27, Superintendent of Police Krishnan Kumar Bishnoi said 25 people had been arrested over the violence. "We have collected the CCTV footage and anyone who is involved in destroying the state property will be severely punished," he added.

15 students have narrow escape before their school bus goes up in flames in Pune's Kharadi



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Fifteen students travelling on their school bus in Pune's Kharadi area had a narrow escape as they managed to get down soon after smoke started emanating from the vehicle and before it was engulfed in flames on Thursday afternoon. Officials from the Pune fire brigade said the incident occurred on the bus of Phoenix World School, Kharadi, around 2.45 pm at Tulja Bhavani Nagar.

"There were around 15 students on the bus who were on their way back from school. Initial information suggests that the driver of the bus spotted smoke emanating from the engine section. He stopped the bus and made all the students get down before he also got down. Minutes later the fire spread all over the bus," said a fire brigade official. "The driver had called the fire brigade control room. Our fire tender reached the spot within minutes and brought the fire under control. No person was injured in the incident," the fire official said. Information about the cause of the fire is awaited.

Savitribai Phule Pune University promises students to address UGC's term limit norm, PRN row

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

The Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) administration has informed its law and engineering students whose Permanent Registration Numbers (PRNs) were blocked due to the University Grants Commission's (UGC) term limit rule that it will attempt to resolve their issues within 15 days. The assurance was reportedly given in writing, with the administration emphasizing that the final decision lies with the UGC. But the university has said that it would also take the initiative to address the grievances.

The development follows a sit-in protest staged by a group of students last month, demanding the unblocking of their PRNs to enable them to complete their final-year examinations. The protest, which lasted 12 hours, drew attention to the plight of students who exceeded the maximum term limit of N+2+1 years, as prescribed by the UGC. The protesting students argued that they were unaware of the term validity rule when they re-enrolled after personal and financial setbacks. University officials maintained that the rule was implemented following a 2015 UGC notification and reiterated their inability to override the regulation. Mahesh Kakde, SPPU's director of examinations, stated that while the university has supported thousands of students with backlogs, the UGC's rigid stance on this matter limits their intervention. One engineering student, who enrolled in 2017 but had to discontinue studies for financial reasons after one year, mentioned that many students who took admission in 2017-18 and later discontinued due to various reasons were not informed about the PRN blocking rule when they rejoined college. "There are students who enrolled in 2013 and for the next ten years till 2023, their terms continued without blocking their PRN ID. However, such decisions have not only caused mental harassment for students but will also place an additional financial burden on their families," he said.

High court quashes one of two FIRs stemming from same incident against former AAP councillor Tahir Hussain



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

The Delhi High Court on November 26 quashed and set aside a second FIR lodged at the Khajuri Khas police station regarding the 2020 Delhi riots stemming from the same incident against former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) councillor Tahir Hussain. The court directed that the chargesheet from the second FIR be treated as a supplementary chargesheet in the first FIR. Two FIRs were lodged stemming from a single incident of riots on February 24, 2020, that occurred in the same premises, except one occurred on the ground floor and the second on the first floor of the building. The first FIR was lodged on February 25 based on a complaint by a constable booking Hussain for the offences of rioting, mischief by fire, and trespassing under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) as well for offences under the provisions of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act.

The incident occurred in Pradeep Parking, and at the time, food was also being prepared for a wedding on the

same premises. The second FIR was lodged on February 27 based on a complaint by Tejveer Singh, whose niece was due to solemnise her marriage, and preparations were underway in the building for the same. Singh alleged that Hussain and others forming part of the mob had attacked the building, and after setting fire to the vehicles parked in the Pradeep Parking, the rioters moved to the first floor of the building in question, where food was being prepared for the marriage ceremony. The rioters then allegedly set fire to the goods and ran away.

Hussain had moved before the Delhi HC seeking quashing of the second FIR on the ground that since both FIRs arose out of the same transaction that took place on the same day in the same building, two FIRs could not have been registered. The prosecution had, however, argued that charges had been framed in the two cases by the trial court. A comparison would show that only three counts of charge are common in the two cases, while five counts of charges framed in the trial case stemming from the second FIR were not part of the charges framed in relation to the first FIR, thus necessitating two separate trials. Ruling that "both the incidents are a part of the same incident", the court held that the second FIR needs to be quashed. However, Justice Subramonium Prasad noted, "... this court cannot ignore the fact that trial has started in both the cases and the victims in both the cases are different and quashing FIR No.116/2020 (second FIR) will cause injustice to the victims in the said FIR. The mistake of the Prosecution in filing two FIRs for an incident which has occurred in the same building cannot result in injustice to the victims in FIR No.116/2020, who will have no remedy in law if FIR No.116/2020 is quashed."

Security up at Shambhu border ahead of farmers' Delhi march; extra barricading draws flak

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Ahead of Friday's farmers' march to Delhi, the police forces in Haryana and Punjab have tightened security on both sides of the Shambhu border, even as protesters have gathered at the site on NH 44 in large numbers. On Thursday morning, the Haryana police added three layers of barricading towards the Punjab side. A wire mesh and traffic barricades with wheels were added and a tent was erected. The seven-layer barricading includes a wall, iron nails, barbed wires, etc. "These additional barricades towards the Punjab side by the Haryana Government show that the Punjab Government is hand in glove with Haryana," said Tejveer Singh from the Bharatiya Kisan Union Shaheed Bhagat Singh, a Haryana-based farmer union that has been part of the protest since its beginning. The Bharatiya Kisan Union-Ekta and a few other unions from Haryana too are part of the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM), which along with the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) has announced the march towards Delhi.

The Punjab police increased their strength towards the Shambhu border on Wednesday. They also met farmer union leaders near the highway police picket later. Mandeep Singh Sidhu, Deputy Inspector-General, Patiala Range, told The Indian Express, "We held a meeting with the union leaders of the KMM and the SKM (non-political) on Thursday afternoon. We appealed to them to stay peaceful. We told them that the country's vice-president has spoken in favour of farmers and that their concerns are being taken care of. So the union leaders need to stay peaceful. They have given us a positive response. However, extra security arrangements will of course be done at the location ahead of their



Dilli Chalo plan." Meanwhile, the crowd at the Shambhu border has been growing with farmers from Taran Taran, Amritsar, Ferozepur, Bathinda, Sangrur, and Patiala as well as Haryana districts such as Ambala and Sirsa having reached the protest venue.

"On December 6 afternoon, about 100 farmers will march by foot under the leadership of Surjeet Singh Phool, Satnam Singh Pannu and a few others," said Sarwan Singh Pandher, coordinator of the KMM. Tejveer Singh of the BKU Shaheed Bhagat Singh said, "About 100 volunteers each will go on a daily basis and try their best to walk from the Shambhu border... Our jathas plans are ready till December 12 and they will march ahead daily. Let's see what they (the governments) do. They will stand exposed if they refuse to let us go even by foot." "Farmers have volunteers to take care of medical help, community kitchens, traffic management, etc. They will hold another meeting and announce the final plan in the evening," he added.

Motion urging Centre to 'lure' airlines to fly to Europe, US from Kolkata passed in WB assembly

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

A motion was passed unanimously in the West Bengal assembly on Thursday, urging the Union government to "lure" airlines to operate direct international flights to Europe and the US from Kolkata. State minister Chandrima Bhattacharya, who moved the motion in the House, said the Centre and the West Bengal government should work together in this regard. "This House resolves to urge upon the Union government... to lure various international and domestic airlines to operate direct international flights to Europe and the United States of America from Kolkata on a regular basis so as to end the difficulties faced by the fliers from the region, as also to promote huge potential of tourism," the motion, passed unanimously by voice vote in the House, said.

Supporting the proposal, Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari said BJP MLAs would be part of any delegation sent by the House to the Union aviation minister for increasing international flight connectivity from Kolkata. He, however, accused the ruling Trinamool Congress of not providing land for augmentation of some airports in the state for civil aviation, including at Hasimara and Kalaikunda, which belong to the Indian Air Force. Adhikari claimed that the augmentation of a secondary runway at NSCB Airport here was also facing impediments.

Asserting that the exit of Tata Motors from Singur also acted as a negative for the state, he said passenger de-



mand and economic viability are some of the main criteria for international or domestic airlines to come to the city. Tata Motors shifted its Nano car plant from Singur to Sanand in Gujarat in 2008 following an anti-land acquisition agitation. Bhattacharya, the Minister of State (independent charge) for Urban Development and Municipal Affairs, said direct connectivity to Kolkata from Europe and the US will be of great help for students, businessmen and tourists. She said that owing to limited international connectivity, fliers from the city or the eastern part of India travelling to and from Europe or the US are forced to make stopovers at Delhi, Mumbai, Dubai, Doha, Abu Dhabi or Singapore. Bhattacharya said the last direct connectivity to Europe from Kolkata was discontinued in 2022.

Housing society members in UP's Moradabad on relay dharna to expel sole Muslim family

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Hindu flat owners in Moradabad in UP have threatened to continue their protest till the local administration cancels the flat's registry. Hindu flat owners in Moradabad in UP have threatened to continue their protest till the local administration cancels the flat's registry. Hindu flat owners in a posh residential society in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad city have been holding a relay dharna since Tuesday demanding the ouster of the society's sole Muslim family, a doctor couple who bought a flat there recently.

They have threatened to continue their protest till the local administration cancels the flat's registry. District Magistrate Anuj Singh said the administration's priority is to maintain law and order at the place. "We are talking to both groups to find an easy and amicable solution to the issue," he added. The protesters said one Dr Ashok Bajaj sold his flat last week to Iqra and Yunus Chaudhary and that the flat is situated exactly opposite to a temple on the society's premises.



"Don't want Muslim families here" "We have the TDI City Housing Society, in which nearly 450 Hindu families have been living for the last few years and we do not want Muslim families here. We will be forced to move out of the society as more and more Muslim families will start moving here. We have met local officers and demanded that the registry be annulled soon," said Arvind Agarwal.

IIT-Madras under scanner for making school students participate in product test without telling parents



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Following complaints of inaction from the IIT management, the state education department has ordered an inquiry and replaced the school principal. (File Photo) Following complaints of inaction from the IIT management, the state education department has ordered an inquiry and replaced the school principal. A "product test" conducted on students of Vana Vani Matriculation Higher Secondary School inside the IIT-Madras campus has sparked a row, with parents alleging that the school management and IIT authorities did not obtain their consent. Following complaints of inaction from the IIT management, the state education department has ordered an inquiry and replaced the school principal. IIT-Madras has claimed that they have issued warnings to professors involved in the process.

The test took place on August 19. According to parents, students were made to wear a "smart insole" inside their shoes and a smartwatch. They were asked to walk and jump short distances while data was collected. Parents allege they were not informed about the test. The school is run by IIT-Madras and operates on the institute's premises. After complaints to the IIT-Madras management and the director K Kamakoti allegedly went unanswered, par-

ents filed a complaint with the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC), alleging that the test violated rules under the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019, and the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

The SHRC member, V Kannadasan, told The Indian Express that he received complaints alleging that clinical product trials were conducted without the parents' consent. "The latest complaint talks about certain invasive aspects of the trial process. We have already demanded a reply from the state school education director," Kannadasan said.

IIT Madras, however, issued a statement denying that clinical trials or medical device testing had taken place. It said the activity was a feasibility study to test the potential of a cost-effective smart insole assembled from commercially available components. They claimed that the study lasted less than ten minutes per student and involved no invasive procedures or administration of substances. The institute said the insole did not make direct contact with the students' bodies. A communication from the school's managing committee to parents said no stimulants, invasive procedures, or harmful actions had been part of the study. It also said there were no implications for the students' health but advised that parental consent must be obtained for future activities. Sources in IIT-Madras claim the process was all about assessing the walking ease with the insole and data was collected using a smartwatch, and argue that the activity did not fall under the category of clinical trials and therefore did not require parental consent. "A fact-finding committee was formed by IIT-Madras to investigate the incident. The committee found that the faculty did not seek prior approval from parents. It found that while the study did not involve medical or clinical procedures, the protocol had not been followed," the official source said. Based on the findings, IIT-Madras replaced the school principal, M Sathishkumar, and issued warnings to the faculty involved. The study was stopped the same day it began, August 19.

7 MBBS students at Himachal Pradesh government medical college suspended for ragging

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

The students will also be barred from participating in any regional, national, or international sports or cultural events, the college authorities said. The students will also be barred from participating in any regional, national, or international sports or cultural events, the college authorities said. Seven MBBS students of Dr Yashwant Singh Parmar Government Medical College Nahan in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmour district were suspended for three months and fined Rs 75,000 each after being found guilty of ragging their juniors. The students will also be barred from participating in any regional, national, or international sports or cultural events, the college authorities said.

The alleged incident took place on November 26 and an anti-ragging committee meeting held on December 2 under the chairmanship of Dr Rajeev Tuli, the principal, decided to suspend the students. The suspension period came into effect from Wednesday. "After an anonymous complaint, the institutional inquiry committee found seven students of 2nd year MBBS 2023 batch involved in the ragging of their juniors on November 26, 2024. These students behaved rudely with their juniors and took them to private accommodation and made them to stand for long period,



used abusive language and made them to complete academic assignments," a statement issued by Tuli's office said, adding that the students did not "do any physical harm" to the juniors. An official at the principal's office said that in 2022-23, a ragging incident had come to light at the college. At the time, five students were suspended for 45 days. "This time, we enhanced the suspension period to three months (90 days) to give a strict signal to the students. The family members of those found guilty and punished were informed about their misconduct," the official added.

Delhi court denies police request for custody of AAP MLA Naresh Balyan in MCOCA case, cites lack of jurisdiction

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

A Delhi court Thursday dismissed an application of the Delhi Police seeking Aam Aadmi Party's MLA Naresh Balyan's custody for 10 days in connection with a case lodged against the legislator under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA). The Delhi Police had sought the transfer of Balyan's case to the special court dealing with cases against MPs and MLAs.

"I do not have the power to transfer the case. Show me a precedent where this has been done. What was the need to come here? This is a sheer waste of my time... show me a judgment," said Additional Sessions Judge Vandana Jain of Dwarka Court. Following this, the prosecution submitted the judgement of former Delhi MLA Rambir Shokeen before the Court. However, Judge Jain granted liberty to the investigation officer (IO) to move an application for seeking Balyan's custody before an "appropriate court" (an MP/MLA Court). Balyan, who represents Uttam Nagar constituency in West Delhi, is likely to be shortly produced before Rouse Avenue Court now. Balyan, who was already in police custody in connection with an extortion case, was arrested on charges under MCOCA on Wednesday. Later in the day, Balyan was granted bail in the extortion case. The extortion case against Balyan stems from a police com-



plaint filed by Gurcharan, a resident of Mohan Garden in West Delhi, alleging that in July 2023, he had received an extortion call from gangster Sangwan demanding Rs 1 crore. Balyan's name surfaced later last year after a Hindi news channel aired recordings of a phone call allegedly between Balyan and Sangwan. MCOCA was invoked against Sangwan this year in connection with a separate extortion case. Police officers said Balyan's name cropped up in the case as an alleged facilitator to settle the extortion demand made by Sangwan to a businessman.

Siddaramaiah's appeal against MUDA probe: Karnataka High Court adjourns hearing to January 25

The Mysuru unit of the Karnataka Lokayukta police registered a case on September 27 against Siddaramaiah and others on charges of corruption, cheating, forgery on the basis of a private complaint referred by a special court for elected representatives on September 25. The Mysuru unit of the Karnataka Lokayukta police registered a case on September 27 against Siddaramaiah and others on charges of corruption, cheating, forgery on the basis of a private complaint referred by a special court for elected representatives on September 25. The Karnataka High Court on Thursday adjourned to January 25 the hearing into appeals filed by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and a former Mysuru landowner against its order facilitating an investigation into alleged illegalities in the allotment of 14 Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA) housing sites to the chief minister's wife B M Parvathi. A division bench of Chief Justice N V Anjaria and Justice K V Aravind issued notices to RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna and two others in the two sets of appeals by Siddaramaiah and J Devaraju, whose property was bought by the CM's family and exchanged for MUDA housing sites. The division bench adjourned the appeals noting that they would require a lengthy hearing. The HC, however, refused to stay proceedings in a petition be-

fore a single judge filed by Krishna seeking a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe against the CM in the alleged MUDA land scam case from the 2021 period. Siddaramaiah and former Devaraju appealed before the division bench against Justice M Nagaprasanna's September 24 order facilitating an investigation of corruption and fraud charges in the MUDA land grant to the CM's wife. (https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/bangalore/karnataka-high-court-dismiss-siddaramaiah-plea-mudascam-9585242/) Devaraju had also filed an appeal against a November 5 order of Justice Nagaprasanna seeking a status report on investigations by the Lokayukta police into the alleged land scam on a plea by Krishna for a CBI probe. During Thursday's arguments, senior counsel Dushyant Dave, who appeared for Devaraju, argued that the single judge's order of September 24—in a case in which Devaraju was not made a party—had severely compromised his position on account of strong observations of fraud suggested by the single judge in the matter. The counsel for Devaraju argued that he was dragged into a case at the age of 80 despite selling his farmland legally to the CM's son-in-law nearly 20 years ago, and the HC did not hear his version of events.

Syrian army says it has withdrawn from the city of Hama after insurgents broke through its defenses



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

The Syrian army has withdrawn from the central city of Hama after insurgents broke through its defenses, the military said on Thursday (December 5, 2024), in another setback for President Bashar Assad. The announcement came hours after opposition fighters said they had entered the city and were marching toward the center. The Syrian army said it redeployed from Hama and took positions outside the city to protect the lives of civilians. Insurgents captured larger part of Aleppo. The capture of Hama, Syria's fourth largest city, is another blow for Assad days after insurgents captured much of the northern city of Aleppo, the country's largest city. On Thursday morning, Syrian insurgents said they entered Hama after three days of intense clashes with government forces on its outskirts, part of an ongoing offensive. The Syrian army said in a statement later that a number of troops were killed after resisting the insurgents for days. It accused the attackers of relying on suicide attacks to break through the defenses of the city. Hama is one of the few cities that remained under full government control during Syria's conflict, which broke out in March 2011 following a popular uprising. Its capture would be a major setback for President Bashar Assad. The offensive is being led by the jihadi group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham as

well as an umbrella group of Turkish-backed Syrian militias called the Syrian National Army. Their sudden capture of the northern city of Aleppo, an ancient business hub, was a stunning prize for Assad's opponents and reignited the conflict which had been largely stalemated for the past few years. Next target likely to be Homs. The next target of the insurgents is likely to be the central city of Homs, the country's third largest. Homs is about 40 kilometers (25 miles) south of Hama. Aleppo's takeover marked the first opposition attack on the city since 2016, when a brutal Russian air campaign retook it for Assad after rebel forces had initially seized it. Intervention by Russia, Iran and Iranian-allied Hezbollah and other militant groups has allowed Assad to remain in power.

The latest flare-up in Syria's long civil war comes as Assad's main regional and international backers are preoccupied with their own wars. Tens of thousands of people have been displaced by the renewed fighting, which began with the surprise opposition offensive Nov. 27. The insurgents claimed on their Military Operations Department channel on the Telegram app Thursday that they have entered Hama and are marching toward its center. "Our forces are taking positions inside the city of Hama," the channel quoted a local commander identified as Maj. Hassan Abdul-Ghani as saying. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, said fierce battles were fought inside Hama. "If Hama falls, it means that the beginning of the regime's fall has started," the Observatory's chief, Rami Abdurrahman, told The Associated Press before the city's capture. Hama is a major intersection point in Syria that links that country's center with the north as well the east and the west. It is about 200 kilometers (125 miles) north of the capital, Damascus, Assad's seat of power. Hama province also borders the coastal province of Latakia, a main base of popular support for Assad. The city's name is known for the 1982 massacre of Hama, one of the most notorious in the modern Middle East, when security forces under Assad's late father, Hafez Assad, killed thousands to crush a Muslim Brotherhood uprising.

South Korea's Yoon replaces Defence Chief as parliament is poised to vote on his impeachment

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

South Korea's President accepted the resignation of his Defence Minister on Thursday (December 5, 2024) as opposition parties moved to impeach both men over the stunning yet short-lived imposition of martial law that brought armed troops into Seoul streets. The main opposition Democratic Party and other small opposition parties submitted a joint motion to impeach President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday over his martial law declaration the previous night. Martial law lasted about six hours, as the National Assembly quickly voted to overrule the President, forcing his Cabinet to lift it before daybreak Wednesday. On Thursday, Mr. Yoon replaced Defence Minister Kim Yong Hyun with Choi Byung Hyuk, a retired four-star general who is South Korea's ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Mr. Yoon's office said it didn't provide any further comments by Mr. Yoon. He hasn't made any public appearances since he announced in a televised address that his government was lifting the martial law declaration.

The opposition parties earlier submitted a separate motion to impeach Mr. Kim, alleging he recommended Mr. Yoon impose martial law. On Wednesday, Mr. Kim offered to resign and apologise for causing disruption and concern to the public. Mr. Kim said "all troops who performed duties related to martial law were acting on my instructions, and all responsibility lies with me," according to the Defence Ministry. The impeachment motion on Mr. Yoon was introduced at a parliamentary plenary session early Thursday, meaning it can be put to a vote between Friday and Sunday. By law, the motion will be scrapped if it isn't voted within 72 hours of its parliamentary introduction. Opposition parties can submit a new impeachment motion if the current one is scrapped or voted down, according to National Assembly officials.

Prospects for Mr. Yoon's impeachment aren't clear as Mr. Yoon's ruling conservative People Power Party decided Thursday to oppose the motion's passage. Choo Kyung-ho, the floor leader of the PPP, told reporters that his party would hold another meeting to determine how to oppose the motion's passage. Observers say PPP members could simply boycott a floor vote or cast ballots against the motion. Impeaching him would require support from two-thirds of the single-chamber National Assembly, or 200 of its 300 members. The opposition parties together have 192 seats and they need additional votes from the PPP. Some experts earlier said the motion will likely be passed through parliament as 18 PPP lawmakers, who belong to an anti-Yoon faction in the party, already voted down Mr. Yoon's martial law decree together with opposition lawmakers. But speaking to reporters Thursday, PPP leader Han Dong-hun, head of the anti-Yoon faction, said he would work to ensure that the impeachment motion doesn't pass though he remains critical of Mr. Yoon's action, which he described as "unconstitutional." Han said that there is a need to "prevent



damage to citizens and supporters caused by unprepared chaos."

Experts say rival factions in PPP could unite not to repeat their traumatic experiences following the 2016 impeachment of scandal-ridden conservative President Park Geun-hye, which happened after some lawmakers at her own party voted to impeach her. Mr. Park was eventually removed from office and arrested in 2017, and the liberals easily won the presidency in a by-election as conservatives remained in disarray. If Mr. Yoon is impeached, he will be deprived of his constitutional powers until the Constitutional Court rules. Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, who holds the No. 2 position in the South Korean government, would take over presidential responsibilities.

The impeachment motion on Mr. Yoon accuses him of attempting a "self-coup" by mobilising the military. It also says Mr. Yoon's declaration failed to meet the constitutional requirements that such steps should only be considered in severe crisis situations. The motion also argues that his move to declare a suspension of political party activities and deploy troops in an attempt to seal the National Assembly amounted to rebellion. Mr. Yoon's martial law declaration, the first of its kind in more than 40 years, harkened back to South Korea's past military-backed governments when authorities occasionally proclaimed martial law and other decrees that allowed them to station soldiers, tanks and armoured vehicles on streets or at public places such as schools to prevent anti-government demonstrations. Until Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, such scenes of military intervention had not been seen since South Korea achieved a democracy in the late 1980s. After Mr. Yoon's declaration, troops carrying full battle gear, including assault rifles, tried to keep protesters away from the National Assembly as military helicopters flew overhead and landed nearby. It wasn't clear how the 190 lawmakers were able to enter a parliamentary hall to vote down Mr. Yoon's martial law decree. Opposition leader Lee Jae-myung and National Assembly Speaker Woo Won Shik were seen climbing over walls. As troops and police officers blocked some from entering, they didn't aggressively restrain or use force against others.

North Korea's Kim vows 'invariable support' for Russia's war in Ukraine

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Seoul: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed his country will "invariably support" Russia's war in Ukraine as he met Russia's defence chief, the North's state media reported Saturday. A Russia military delegation led by Defence Minister Andrei Belousov arrived in North Korea on Friday, amid growing international concern about the two countries' expanding cooperation after North Korea sent thousands of troops to Russia last month. The official Korean Central News Agency said that Kim and Belousov reached "a satisfactory consensus" on boosting strategic partnership and defending each country's sovereignty, security interests and international justice in the face of the rapidly-changing international security environments in a Friday meeting. Kim said that North Korea "will invariably support the policy of the Russian Federation to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity from the imperialists' moves for hegemony." KCNA said. North Korea has supported Russia's invasion of Ukraine, calling it a defensive response to what both Moscow and Pyongyang call NATO's "reckless" eastward advance and US-led moves to stamp out Russia's position as a powerful state. Kim slammed a US decision earlier in November to let Ukraine strike targets inside Russia with



US-supplied longer-range missiles as a direct intervention in the conflict. He called recent Russian strikes on Ukraine "a timely and effective measure" demonstrate Russia's resolve, KCNA said. According to US, Ukrainian and South Korean assessments, North Korea has sent more than 10,000 troops to Russia and some of them have already begun engaging in combat on the frontlines. US, South Korean and others say North Korea has also shipped artillery systems, missiles and other conventional weapons to replenish Russia's exhausted weapons inventory.

Rashid urges Taliban government to reconsider ban on medical training for women



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Afghanistan's captain Rashid Khan gestures to his players during the men's T20 World Cup cricket match between Afghanistan and Bangladesh at Arnos Vale Ground, Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Monday, June 24, 2024. Afghanistan's captain Rashid Khan gestures to his players during the men's T20 World Cup cricket match between Afghanistan and Bangladesh at Arnos Vale Ground, Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Afghanistan cricket superstar Rashid Khan on Wednesday (December 4, 2024) urged the Taliban government to reconsider the ban on medical training for women in the country, saying the decision will profoundly affect their future and dignity. Media reports stated that the Taliban's leadership has ordered private and public institutions to stop providing medical courses for women in Afghanistan. In September 2021, a month after they returned to power, the Taliban stopped schooling for girls after grade six. They banned women from University in December 2022. Khan said edu-

cation held a central place in Islamic teachings and that the faith emphasised the pursuit of knowledge for men and women. He said Afghanistan needed professionals in every field, especially the medical sector.

"It is with deep sadness and disappointment that I reflect on the recent closures of educational and medical institutions for the sisters and mothers of Afghanistan. This decision has profoundly affected not only their future but also the broader fabric of our society," Khan wrote on X. "The pain and sorrow they express through social media serve as a poignant reminder of the struggles they face. Afghanistan, our beloved homeland, stands at a critical juncture," he added. Dire shortage of medical professionals reports have stated that Taliban's decision will only worsen the conditions where Afghanistan is facing dire shortage of medical professionals. "The country desperately needs professionals in every field, especially in the medical sector. The acute shortage of female doctors and nurses is particularly concerning, as it directly impacts the healthcare and dignity of women. It is essential for our sisters and mothers to have access to care provided by medical professionals who truly understand their needs," said the former captain. "I sincerely appeal for the reconsideration of this decision so that Afghan girls may reclaim their right to education and contribute to the nation's development. Providing education to all is not just a societal responsibility but a moral obligation deeply rooted in our faith and values." The 26-year-old added. The European Union on Wednesday condemned the Taliban for violating human rights and women's access to education following media reports that Taliban leaders have ordered private and public institutions to stop providing medical courses for women and girls in Afghanistan.

Amnesty International says genocide being committed against Palestinians in Gaza, Israel rejects accusation

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Amnesty International accused Israel of committing genocide in the Gaza Strip during its war with Hamas, saying it has sought to deliberately destroy Palestinians by mounting deadly attacks, demolishing vital infrastructure and preventing the delivery of food, medicine and other aid. The human rights group released a report Thursday (December 5, 2024) in the Middle East that said such actions could not be justified by Hamas' October 7, 2023, attack into Israel, which ignited the war, or the presence of militants in civilian areas. Amnesty said the United States and other allies of Israel could be complicit in genocide, and called on them to halt arms shipments. "Our damning findings must serve as a wake-up call to the international community: this is genocide. It must stop now," Agnès Callamard, Secretary General of Amnesty International, said in the report.

Israel, which was founded in the aftermath of the Holocaust, has adamantly rejected genocide allegations against it as an antisemitic "blood libel." It is challenging such allegations at the International Court of Justice, and it has rejected the International Criminal Court's accusations that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defense minister committed war crimes in Gaza. "The deplorable and fanatical organisation Amnesty International has once again produced a fabricated report that is entirely false and based on lies," Israel's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Israel accused Hamas, which has vowed to annihilate Israel, of carrying out a genocidal massacre in the attack that triggered the war, and said it is defending itself in accordance with international law.

Amnesty's report adds an influential voice to a growing list of players that have accused Israel of committing genocide — which would put it in the company of some of the deadliest conflicts of the past 80 years, including Cambodia, Sudan and Rwanda. The accusations have largely come from human rights groups and allies of the Palestinians. But last month, Pope Francis called for an investigation to determine if Israeli actions amounted to genocide, and Saudi Arabia's crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, who has signaled readiness to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, accused it of committing genocide. Israel says it is at war with Hamas, not the people of Gaza. And key allies, including the U.S. and Germany, have also pushed back against the genocide allegations. But Amnesty accused Israel of violating the 1951 Genocide Convention through acts it says are intended to bring about the physical destruction of Gaza's Palestinian population by exposing them to "a slow, calculated death."

Amnesty said it analyzed the overall pattern of Israel's conduct in Gaza between October 7, 2023 and early July. It noted that there is no casualty threshold in proving the international crime of genocide, which is defined by the United Nations as acts intended to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. To establish intent, Amnesty said it reviewed over 100 statements by Israeli government and military officials and others since the start of the war that "dehumanized Palestinians, called for or justified genocidal acts or other crimes against them." Israeli officials have previously said that such statements were taken out of context or referred to their stated goal of destroying Hamas, not Palestinian civilians. Israel says it goes to great lengths to protect civilians and comply with international law - including ordering civilians to evacuate areas ahead of airstrikes and ground offensives. It also says it has facilitated the deliveries of large quantities of food and humanitarian supplies - a claim that is disputed by

the U.N. and aid organizations working inside Gaza. On Sunday, a former top Israeli general and defense minister accused the government of ethnic cleansing in northern Gaza, where the army has sealed off the towns of Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahia and the Jabalya refugee camp and allowed almost no humanitarian aid to enter. Amnesty said it found that Israel "deliberately inflicted conditions of life on Palestinians in Gaza intended to lead, over time, to their destruction." Those actions included the destruction of homes, farms, hospitals and water facilities; mass evacuation orders; the restriction of humanitarian aid and other essential services. It also analyzed 15 airstrikes from the start of the war until April that killed at least 334 civilians, including 141 children, and wounded hundreds of other people. It said it found no evidence that any of the strikes were directed at military objectives. It said one of the strikes destroyed the Abdelal family home in the southern city of Rafah on April 20, killing three generations of Palestinians, including 16 children, while they were sleeping. An Associated Press investigation identified at least 60 families in which at least 25 members had been killed. Amnesty has previously angered Israel by joining other major rights groups in accusing it of the international crime of apartheid, saying that for decades it has systematically denied Palestinians basic rights in the territories under its control. Israel has also denied those allegations. Israel blames civilian deaths on Hamas, lack of aid on UN. Israel says it only targets militants and blames civilian deaths on Hamas because the militants fight in dense, residential areas and have built tunnels and other militant infrastructure near homes, schools and mosques. It blames the lack of humanitarian aid on United Nations agencies, accusing them of not delivering hundreds of truckloads of aid that have been allowed in. The U.N. says it is often too dangerous to retrieve and deliver the aid. It blames Israel as the occupying power for the breakdown of law and order — which has enabled armed groups to steal aid convoys — while also accusing it of heavily restricting movement within the territory. The war began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on October 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking around 250 hostages, including children and older adults. Some 100 captives are still held inside Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead. Israel's retaliatory military campaign has killed more than 44,500 people, according to Gaza health officials, whose count doesn't distinguish between civilians and fighters, though they say more than half the dead are women and children. The offensive is among the deadliest and most destructive since World War II, and has destroyed vast areas of the besieged coastal territory. It has displaced some 90% of the population of 2.3 million, often multiple times. Hundreds of thousands of people have crammed into squalid tent camps with little in the way of food, water or toilets. Aid groups say the population is at risk of disease and malnutrition, especially as winter sets in. Experts have warned of famine in northern Gaza, which Israel has almost completely sealed off since launching a major military operation there in early October. Hamas militants have repeatedly regrouped there and in other areas, and the group has faced no major internal challenge to its rule. Amnesty says the U.S. needs to press for an end to the war.

The United States, which has provided crucial military aid to Israel and shielded it from international criticism, has repeatedly appealed to Israel to facilitate more aid, with limited results. The Biden administration said in May that Israel's use of U.S.-provided weapons in Gaza at times likely violated international humanitarian law but that the evidence was incomplete.

British Minister assures UN probe into rights violations in Bangladesh

A British Minister has assured a New Delhi-based rights group of the U.K.'s support for a United Nations inquiry into human rights violations in Bangladesh. The Rights and Risks Analysis Group (RRAG) wrote to Catherine West, the British Minister for the Indo-Pacific, about Bangladesh's situation before she visited Dhaka on November 16-17. The group raised concerns over the deteriorating law and order situation, vendetta politics, increased attacks on indigenous peoples and religious minorities, and the need to support the demand of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to establish a country office in Bangladesh. Ms. West said that during her visit to Bangladesh, she had urged the country's Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus, and Foreign Affairs Advisor Md Touhid Hussain "to restore peace and order, ensure accountability, and create a peaceful pathway to an inclusive and democratic future, respect for human rights and the rule of law." She also said that the U.K. supported the United Nations' work in conducting an impartial and independent fact-finding mission to identify human rights violations. The RRAG highlighted criminal cases filed against 2,71,587 persons, mainly political opponents,

from August 5 to October 31; acts of violence against at least 74 journalists; increased attacks on indigenous peoples, with the killing of at least four indigenous persons and injuries to at least 75 indigenous Juma people; damages to at least 142 houses, shops, and Buddhist temples from September 19 to October 1 in the Chittagong Hill Tracts; over 2,000 acts of violence against Hindu minorities; and absence of independence of the judiciary. The RRAG requested Ms. West to urge Bangladesh to allow the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to establish a country mission to extend the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to investigate incidents beyond August 20 to cover the human rights violations against religious minorities and indigenous peoples. The rights group also sought the implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord of 1997 in letter and spirit, and the publication of the report of the inquiry commission headed by the Additional Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Mohammad Nurullah Noori into the recent acts of violence upon indigenous peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh.

Macron seeks new PM as government resignation looms

shortest-serving prime minister in modern French history when Macron approves his resignation. The two men met for over an hour on Thursday morning, French media said. Barnier had been due to hand in his resignation during that meeting but there was still no official confirmation after he left the Elysee presidential palace. **TURMOIL**

The political turmoil in France further weakens a European Union already reeling from the implosion of Germany's coalition government, and comes just weeks before Trump returns to the White House. Any new prime minister will face the same challenges that led to Barnier's downfall, notably pushing the 2025 budget through a deeply divided parliament at a time when France needs to fix ailing public finances. "This is the logical conclusion of what France and its lawmakers are at the moment: a mess," 75-year-old Parisian Paulo told Reuters, commenting on the latest developments. Macron precipitated the current crisis with an ill-fated decision to call the snap election in June. He has a mandate until 2027 but faces growing calls to resign. "The main culprit for the current situation is Emmanuel Macron," Marine Le Pen of the far-right National Rally (RN) told TF1 TV late on Wednesday. A French president cannot be pushed out unless two thirds of lawmakers decide he has gravely failed to fulfil his role, according to a never-yet-invoked article of the constitution. Some 64% of voters want Macron to resign, according to the Toluna Harris Interactive poll for RTL broadcaster. A small majority of voters approve of parliament bringing down Barnier, but many are worried about its economic and political consequences, the poll showed. Under French constitutional rules, there can be no new parliamentary election before July. "Until potential new elections, ongoing political uncertainty is likely to keep the risk premium on French assets elevated," SocGen analysts said in a note.

"Political uncertainty is likely to dampen both investment and consumer spending. The political uncertainty has been unnerving investors in French sovereign bonds and stocks for weeks. French bonds and stocks rallied on Thursday on what some traders said was profit-taking following the widely expected outcome of the no-confidence vote. But the relief rally is unlikely to last, given the scale of political uncertainty. The fall of France's government leaves the country without a clear path towards reducing its fiscal deficit and the most likely outcome is less belt-tightening than previously planned, credit rating agency Standard and Poor's (S&P) said.

PARIS, GNS News Agency, Dec 7, French President Emmanuel Macron was meeting allies and senior politicians on Thursday as he sought to swiftly appoint a new prime minister, a day after far-right and leftist lawmakers ousted Michel Barnier's minority government. Francois Bayrou, whose name is often cited by French media as a possible successor to Barnier, was due to have lunch with Macron, Le Parisien newspaper and other media reported. Bayrou is a veteran centrist politician and a close Macron ally. Outgoing defence minister Sebastien Lecornu is also cited as a possible candidate for prime minister. There was no word yet of a possible Macron meeting with him.

Three sources told Reuters on Wednesday that Macron aimed to appoint a replacement swiftly, with one saying he wanted to do so before a ceremony on Saturday to reopen Notre-Dame Cathedral - renovated after a devastating fire. U.S. President-elect Donald Trump among world leaders expected to attend. Allies in Macron's own camp joined the chorus urging swift action. After the late June and early July snap elections, it took Macron nearly two months to appoint Barnier. "I recommend that he proceed quickly to the appointment of a prime minister, it's important, we must not leave things up in the air," National Assembly president Yael Braun-Pivet told France Inter radio before meeting Macron around noon. Macron, who is due to give a televised address to the nation at 8pm (1900 GMT), will also meet the head of the Senate at 1400 GMT, French media said. Barnier, a veteran conservative who became prime minister barely three months ago, will become the

South Korea's Yoon faces impeachment vote, investigation for treason

SEOUL, GNS News Agency, Dec 7, South Korean opposition lawmakers said on Thursday they would vote this weekend to impeach President Yoon Suk Yeol for his botched attempt to impose martial law, and police said they were investigating claims of treason against him and top ministers. Yoon's declaration of martial law late on Tuesday sought to consolidate power, ban political activity and censor the media. It sparked outrage in the streets and concern among South Korea's international allies. The defence minister, who recommended the move, has resigned. Lawmakers of the opposition Democratic Party planned to seek a vote in parliament to impeach Yoon at about 7 p.m. (1000 GMT) on Saturday, a party spokesperson told reporters. "The Yoon Suk Yeol regime's declaration of emergency martial law caused great confusion and fear among our people," Democratic Party lawmaker Kim Seung-won told the National Assembly earlier. Yoon's ruling People Power Party is divided over the crisis but said it would oppose impeachment, with the party in turmoil and two years left in Yoon's five-year term.

The Democratic Party needs at least eight of the 108 ruling-party lawmakers to back the bill for it to pass with a two-thirds majority in the 300-seat parliament. Fighting for his political future, Yoon accepted the resignation of Defence Minister Kim Yong-hyun on Thursday and nominated his ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Choi Byung-hyuk, as a replacement.

Kim had recommended Yoon declare martial law on Tuesday, according to the interior minister, a senior military official and the opposition's filing to impeach Yoon. Kim also ordered the deployment of troops to the parliament, Vice-Defence Minister Kim Seon-ho said, adding that he was unaware of the martial law order until Yoon declared it. "I have fundamentally opposed the mobilisation of military forces under martial law and have expressed negative opinions about it," Kim Seon-ho told a parliament hearing on Thursday, apologising and taking responsibility for failing to prevent it. South Korea's army chief has also offered to resign, the Yonhap news agency said.

The chief of investigations for the national police confirmed to a parliamentary hearing that the force was investigating accusations of treason and other related crimes over the declaration of martial law. The complaint was filed by an opposition party and activists.

The probe includes Yoon, his interior minister, and the ousted defence minister. Yonhap news agency reported that the prosecution and the Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials had also received complaints and were considering investigations. The former defence minister faces a travel ban while the investigations progress, broadcaster YTN said. Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said Japan's "security situation may be fundamentally changed" in light of the instability in Seoul and North Korea's rising military assertiveness. Item 1 of 6 People protest during a candlelight vigil to condemn South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's surprise declarations of the failed martial law and to call for his resignation in Seoul, South Korea, December 5, 2024. REUTERS/Kim Kyung-Hoon

[1/6] People protest during a candlelight vigil to condemn South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's surprise declarations of the failed martial law and to call for his resignation in Seoul, South Korea, December 5, 2024. REUTERS/Kim Kyung-Hoon

The commander of U.S. Forces-Korea, General Paul LaCamera, warned American troops to stay vigilant, avoid areas with protests, and tell superiors of travel plans in case "something unexpected" happens. Yoon had been embraced by leaders in the West as a partner in the U.S.-led effort to



unify democracies against growing authoritarianism in China, Russia and elsewhere. But he caused unease among South Koreans by branding his critics "communist totalitarian and anti-state forces". In November, he denied wrongdoing in response to accusations of influence-peddling against him and his wife, and he has taken a hard line against labour unions.

The impeachment plan follows a night of chaos after Yoon declared martial law and armed troops attempted to force their way into the National Assembly building in Seoul, only to stand back when parliamentary aides sprayed them with fire extinguishers. The commander of the martial law troops said he had no intention of wielding firearms against the public, and Kim, the vice defence minister, said no live ammunition had been provided to those troops. "The people and the aides who protected parliament protected us with their bodies. The people won, and it's now time for us to protect the people," the Democratic Party's Kim said. Many protesters said they feared a return to the dictatorships and martial law that marked much of South Korea's post-war period. "For the sake of my children, this must be stopped no matter what," one protester, Kim Hye-Min, said on Thursday at a demonstration outside parliament. "We cannot go back to the 1970s." The crisis rattled global financial markets and South Korea's benchmark KOSPI index if the impeachment bill passes, South Korea's Constitutional Court would then decide whether to uphold the motion - a process that could take up to 180 days. If Yoon were to be suspended from exercising power, Prime Minister Han Duck-soo would fill in as leader. If Yoon resigned or was removed from office, a new election would be held within 60 days. Yoon, a career prosecutor, squeezed out a victory in the tightest presidential election in South Korean history in 2022, riding a wave of discontent over economic policy, scandals and gender wars. But his support ratings have been at around 20% for months and the opposition captured nearly two-thirds of parliament seats in an April election.

Indian bus headed to Kolkata attacked in Bangladesh, alleges Tripura Minister

Agartala: Tripura's Transport Minister Sushanta Chowdhury alleged that a bus on the way to Kolkata from Agartala was attacked in Bangladesh. The incident happened on Bishwa Road in Bangladesh's Brahmanbaria district, he said. "A Sahyamoli Paribahan bus on the way from Tripura to Kolkata was attacked in Bangladesh's Brahmanbaria Bishwa Road. The incident terrified Indian passengers on the bus. The bus was maintaining its lane when a truck intentionally hit it. At this point, an autorickshaw came in front of the bus, and the bus and the auto-rickshaw collided," Chowdhury said in a post on Facebook on Saturday, sharing photos of the bus. "Following this incident, locals started threatening Indian passengers on the bus. They also raised anti-India slogans and hurled expletives at the Indian passengers, giving them life threats. I strongly condemn the incident and urged the administration of the neighbouring country to ensure the safety of Indian passengers," he added.

New York police hunt for man who killed UnitedHealth executive Brian Thompson



NEW YORK, GNS News Agency, Dec 7, New York police were searching on Thursday for the man who killed UnitedHealth executive Brian Thompson in a brazen attack outside a Midtown Manhattan hotel and was last seen fleeing into Central Park. Thompson, the CEO of UnitedHealth's insurance unit, was shot from behind on Wednesday morning in what police described as a targeted attack by a masked assailant lying in wait. It came just before the company's annual investor conference at the Hilton on Sixth Avenue.

The words "deny," "defend" and "depose" were carved into the shell casings found at the scene, police sources told ABC and the New York Post. Reuters has not independently verified that information. The words mirror the title of a book critical of the insurance industry published in 2010 titled "Delay Deny Defend." Investigators have not yet named a suspect and were still looking for a motive, the New York City Police Department said during a press conference on Wednesday morning. They have not provided a briefing since. "This does not appear to be a random act of violence," New York City Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch told reporters. "Every indication is that this was a premeditated, pre-planned, targeted attack." Security video showed the shooter behind Thompson, 50, raising his handgun and firing at his back. Police said the gunman arrived outside the hotel several minutes before Thompson and waited for him

to walk past before firing, ignoring other passers-by. The suspect, wearing a hooded sweatshirt and balaclava and wearing a gray backpack, fled on foot before mounting an electric bike and riding into Central Park, police said.

Police published a number of photographs of the suspect taken from video cameras in the area, including one with the gun raised and pointed toward Thompson and another of the suspect fleeing on a bike. Other photos captured a glimpse of his eyes, brow and the bridge of his nose as he stood in a cafe, with a caption asking the public for any help in identifying the man. The killing took place on the morning of the city's annual Christmas tree lighting at Rockefeller Center a few blocks away. The event went ahead as planned under heavy security. UnitedHealth is the largest U.S. health insurer, providing benefits to tens of millions of Americans, who pay more for healthcare than people in any other country. Thompson, 50, had been the CEO of UnitedHealthcare, a unit of UnitedHealth Group, since April 2021. The company has been grappling with the fallout from a massive data hack of its Change Healthcare unit that provides technology for U.S. healthcare providers, disrupting medical care for patients and reimbursement to doctors for months.

Thompson had worked at UnitedHealth since 2004 in several divisions, according to a biography later removed from the company's website. "Our hearts go out to Brian's family and all who were close to him," the company said in a statement. Thompson's wife, Paulette, told NBC News on Wednesday that he had been receiving some threats related to his job, but was not specific. In a later statement she said "Brian was an incredibly loving, generous, talented man who truly lived life to the fullest and touched so many lives." Police departments in both Maple Grove, Minnesota, where Thompson lived, or in Minnetonka, where UnitedHealth is based, said they had no record of threats against him. The Minneapolis Police Department said there was "no occurrence" of Thompson in its records. Get weekly news and analysis on U.S. politics and how it matters to the world with the Reuters Politics U.S. newsletter. Sign up here.

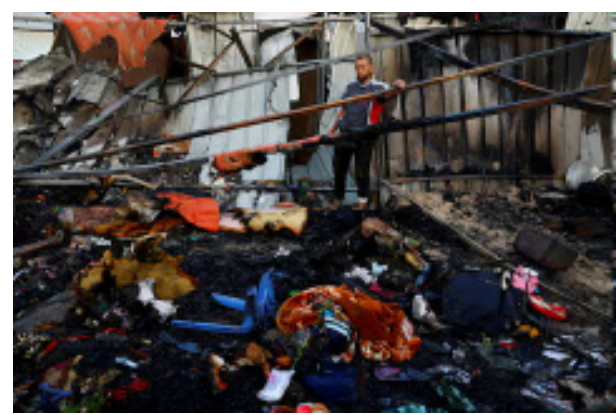
Dozens dead in Israeli strikes on Gaza; Palestinians say Amnesty 'genocide' declaration comes too late

CAIRO/GAZA, GNS News Agency, Dec 7, The Israeli military killed at least 39 Palestinians in strikes across the Gaza Strip overnight, medics said on Thursday, including at least 20 in an attack that set ablaze tents sheltering displaced families in a crowded camp.

Residents carried a body wrapped in carpets out of the charred wreckage of the makeshift shelters in Mawasi, near the beach west of Khan Younis in southern Gaza, where tens of thousands of people have sheltered for months. Israel calls the area a humanitarian zone and has long told people to go there for their safety. Mourners said the latest attacks demonstrated that a new declaration from international human rights group Amnesty International that Israel was guilty of genocide in Gaza - strongly rejected by Israel - had come too late.

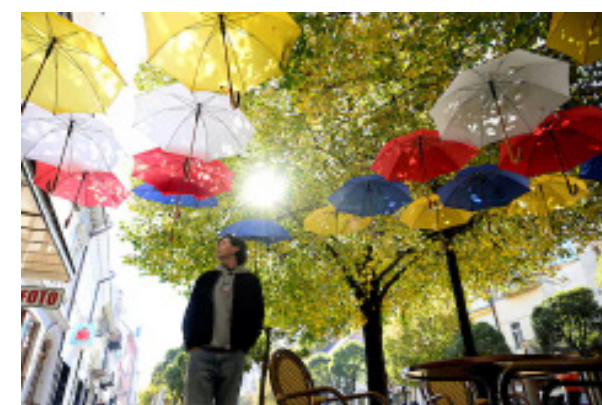
Gaza medics said the 20 confirmed dead in the Israeli strike there included women and children. Israel said the strike targeted senior Hamas operatives, whom it did not identify. The strike set several large tents ablaze, and the fire was worsened by the explosion of cooking gas canisters and burning furniture of the displaced people. On Thursday the area was strewn with charred clothing, mattresses and other belongings among the twisted frames of burnt-out shelters. "We don't see anyone from the whole world standing by us or helping us in this situation. Let them stop this crazy war that's against us. Let them stop the war," said Abu Kamal Al-Assar, a witness at the site. The attack came on the day Amnesty International released its report saying Israel's actions in Gaza met the definition of the crime of genocide. Israel strongly rejected that accusation, denouncing Amnesty as a "deplorable and fanatical organisation". At a funeral in Khan Younis, where relatives wept over the white-shrouded bodies of people killed the day before, resident Abu Anas Mustafa called the Amnesty report "a victory for Palestinian diplomacy", although he said it "came late".

"It is the 430th day of the war today, and Israel has been carrying out massacres and a genocide from the first ten days of the war," he said. Other Israeli strikes reported on Thursday hit Gaza City, where medics said an attack



destroyed a house where an extended family had taken shelter and damaged two nearby homes, killed at least three people. The Israeli army says militants frequently use residential buildings, schools, and hospitals for operational cover. Hamas denies this, accusing Israeli forces of indiscriminate attacks and ignoring the plight of civilians in harm's way. In Rafah, near the borders with Egypt, an Israeli strike killed three Palestinians on Thursday, medics said. Three others were killed in a separate air strike in Shejaia, in eastern Gaza City, they added. Israel launched its assault on Gaza after Hamas-led fighters attacked Israeli communities on Oct. 7, 2023, killing 1,200 people and capturing more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies. Since then, it has laid much of the Gaza Strip to waste, forcing nearly the entire 2.3 million population from their homes. Authorities in the Hamas-run territory say more than 44,500 Gazans have been killed, with thousands of others feared dead under the rubble. The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here. Reporting by Nidal al-Mughrabi in Cairo, and Mohammad Salem and Hussam al-Masri in Gaza Writing by Nidal al-Mughrabi Editing by Peter Graft Our Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles., opens new tab A senior correspondent with nearly 25 years' experience covering the Palestinian-Israeli conflict including several wars and the signing of the first historic peace accord between the two sides.

Ukraine's teenage boys fear a dark dilemma: Fight or run



KYIV, GNS News Agency, Dec 7, A month before turning 18, Kyiv native Roman Biletskyi left his family and boarded a train westwards to escape Ukraine and any prospect of fighting in its grinding war. "I delayed the decision until the very end," he told Reuters from his college dorm in Slovakia where he travelled to in February. "It was a one-way ticket." Not all Ukrainian teenagers made the same call. Andriy Kotyk, by contrast, joined the army early in the war in 2022 after he turned 18. "I thought everything through and decided I should sign up," Kotyk, clad in body armour and cradling an automatic rifle, said from his posting in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region where he was awaiting vehicle repairs after surviving a drone attack.

"I said ... I will go to defend my homeland," he added. "It's better to serve than to run." Ukraine has forbidden most adult males from leaving the country in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion of February 2022. Reuters interviews with half a dozen young Ukrainians, as well as relatives, army recruitment officers and officials, point to a bleak dilemma facing thousands of boys and their families as adulthood looms: Should they stay or go? Although most stay, some

like Biletskyi have chosen to head abroad to avoid any prospect of injury or death in the trenches. As the war marches towards its third anniversary, Russia has the ascendancy and Ukraine is desperate to bolster its depleted and ageing ranks. More than 190,000 Ukrainian boys aged between 14 and 17 have registered for temporary protected status in European Union countries since the conflict began, according to EU data, among millions of people who have fled the country. While Ukraine's military call-up age is 25, having been lowered from 27 in the spring, there is growing pressure from allies to recruit more young people, a move Kyiv has rejected.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told Reuters on Wednesday that Ukraine had tough decisions to make. "For example, getting younger people into the fight, we think, many of us think, is necessary. Right now, 18-25 year olds are not in the fight," he said in an interview. "I thought I would regret it if I didn't go," said the former, who had been filled with dread as his 18th birthday approached. He recalled his family's agonising preparations to get him packed and on the road. "The clock was ticking," added Biletskyi, who's now studying business management at a university in Slovakia's capital Bratislava. "We acted without any emotion. We all understood I had to go." Kotyk had graduated from music school before the war made him feel duty-bound him to enlist with the army along with four of his friends. His introduction to adulthood was to participate in Ukraine's liberation of the southern city of Kherson in late 2022. "The first two military assignments were really, really scary," said the infantryman, who's now 21. "Then I got used to it." He acknowledged the war had changed him profoundly - "I got rid of childish thoughts" - though still harbours hopes of returning to his passion of singing, someday, and marrying. He said he understood why many young men decided to leave the country, and didn't want to judge them, though the exodus stung because those who stayed to fight were stretched.

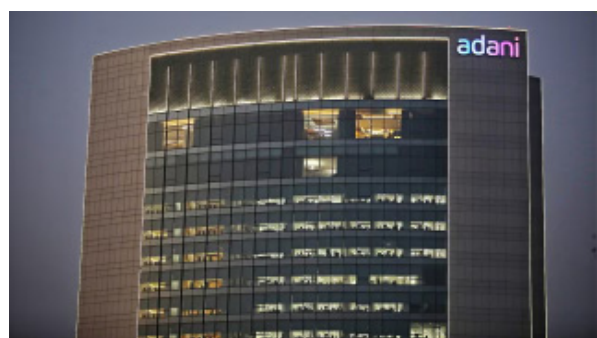
Air India Express to start direct flights between Pune and Bangkok from December 20



flights linking Surat and Pune to Thailand's vibrant capital." Air India Express (AIX) announced on Wednesday that it will launch direct flights between Pune and Bangkok starting December 20. AIX will offer three weekly flights between Pune and the Thai capital, with fares starting at Rs 6,500 for Xpress Lite and Rs 7,000 for Xpress Value. As per the official press release, the Pune-Bangkok flight departs at 8.40 am and arrives at 2.30 pm, operating on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The return flight from Bangkok to Pune departs at 3.35 pm and arrives at 6.25 pm on the same days. Shubham Tigga hails from Chhattisgarh and studied journalism at the Asian College of Journalism. He previously reported in Chhattisgarh on Indigenous issues and is deeply interested in covering socio-political, human rights, and environmental issues in mainland and NE India. Presently based in Pune, he reports on civil aviation, other transport sectors, urban mobility, the gig economy, commercial matters, and workers' unions. You can reach out to him on LinkedIn..

EMS News Agency, Nov 30air india express, flight, business aviation, indian expressThe release stated, "Air India Express has reached a significant milestone in its expanding network, now connecting 51 destinations across India, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Operations to Bangkok will commence on December 20, 2024, with direct

Nine Adani Group firms trade higher; Adani Total soars nearly 19%



founder chairman of the ports-to-energy conglomerate, his nephew Sagar, or Vneet Jaain in any count related to conspiracy to violate the FCPA, Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), said in a stock exchange filing. AGEL is at the heart of the allegation of USD 265 million bribes being paid to Indian officials to secure solar power sale contracts that could bring in USD 2 billion of profits over a 20-year period to the firm.

The three — executives at AGEL — have only been charged with securities fraud conspiracy, wire fraud conspiracy, and securities fraud, the company said. In general, the penalties for such charges are less severe than bribery. Adani Group had last week denied all allegations as baseless, and said it would seek legal recourse to defend itself.



Services, said. In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo were trading in the green while Shanghai and Hong Kong quoted lower. The US markets ended lower on Wednesday. Vijayakumar added that large institutions would prefer to wait and watch for clarity on US President Elect Donald Trump's policies and its likely impact on trade and the global economy. Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.21 per cent to USD 72.68 a barrel. The BSE benchmark climbed 230.02 points or 0.29 per cent to settle at 80,234.08. The Nifty rose 80.40 points or 0.33 per cent to 24,274.90.

Equity markets rise in early trade amid buying in HDFC Bank, SBI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty opened on a positive note in early trade on Thursday amid buying in blue-chip stocks like HDFC Bank and State Bank of India. The BSE benchmark Sensex rose 95 points to 80,329.08 in early trade. The NSE Nifty went up 48.15 points to 24,323.05. From the 30-share Sensex pack, HDFC Bank, Adani Ports, ITC, State Bank of India, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Motors, IndusInd Bank and Tata Steel were among the gainers.

Tech Mahindra, Infosys, HCL Technologies, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services and Power Grid were among the laggards. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 7.78 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. "The consolidation phase in the market is likely to continue in the near-term. A clear positive for the market is the cessation of relentless selling by Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs). This will give confidence to retail investors to again start buying aggressively. "But there is no room for such high optimism. Strong dollar is a negative for emerging markets and, therefore, FIIs are unlikely to turn aggressive buyers," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial

South Korea's central bank cuts key rate to nurse slower economy



the federal deficit. The Bank of Korea said South Korea's economy has been losing its growth momentum amid weak domestic consumption, slowing exports and decreasing employment. "Going forward, domestic consumption will see a mild recovery, but the recovery in exports is likely to be weaker than initially anticipated due to intensifying competition and strengthening of protectionist trade policies in key industries," the bank said in a statement.

India clocks impressive 67 per cent growth in total exports in 10 years

New Delhi: As demand for Indian products in the global market surges across categories, the country's total exports reached about \$778 billion in FY2023-24, compared to \$466 billion in FY2013-14, a whopping 67 per cent growth.

India's share in world merchandise exports also improved from 1.66 per cent to 1.81 per cent, with the country advancing in rankings from 20th to 17th position, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, responded to a Parliamentary query. The feat was achieved as the government implemented several initiatives to sustain and accelerate export growth. The country's trade performance demonstrated stability and moderate growth during the first quarter of the current financial year, according to a NITI Aayog Trade Watch report. According to the report, India's total trade in H1 2024 experienced a 5.45 per cent year-on-year increase to reach \$576 billion compared to 2023. Merchandise imports showed consistent growth, with Q1 FY25 exports rising by 5.95 per cent to \$110 billion and imports increasing by 8.40 per cent to \$173 billion, leading to a growing trade imbalance. In Q1 FY25, Indian iron and steel exports experienced a massive decline (33 per cent) primarily due to weak domestic demand and excess capacity in China which resulted in an oversupply of steel in the global markets.

South Korea, Bank of KoreaThe Bank of Korea said South Korea's economy has been losing its growth momentum amid weak domestic consumption. South Korea's central bank on Thursday lowered its key policy rate for the second straight month and said the country's economy will grow at a slower pace than it initially anticipated. Following a meeting of its monetary policymakers, the Bank of Korea cut its benchmark interest rate by a quarter percentage point to 3 per cent. The bank lowered its outlook for the country's economic growth from 2.4 per cent to 2.2 per cent for 2024 and from 2.1 per cent to 1.9 per cent for 2025.

It was the second straight month that the bank took steps to lower borrowing costs and expand money supply, despite the lingering effects of high inflation and alarming levels of household debt, as concerns grow about a faltering economy. The bank had also slashed its policy rate by a quarter percentage point to 3.25 per cent in October, which presented its first rate cut since May 2020, when the economy was grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic. The bank said the country's trade-dependent economy is facing growing uncertainties in global economic trends and inflation, which it said could be impacted by the policies of the new US government led by Donald Trump and ongoing geopolitical conflicts.

Since winning reelection, Trump has vowed to slap huge new tariffs on foreign products entering the United States, including those from Mexico, Canada and China, which he insists will create more domestic jobs and shrink

Here's how long different syrups last after opening and the health risks of using expired ones



Many people have a habit of using syrups long after they've been opened without considering whether they're safe for consumption. Whether it's maple syrup, cough syrup, or fruit syrups, the shelf life can vary significantly depending on the type and how it's stored. But how long is it safe to use these syrups once the bottle has been opened? Understanding the proper storage and expiration guidelines for syrups is crucial for avoiding potential health risks and ensuring the best taste and effectiveness. Alok Singh, a food science expert at Diga Organic Farms, provides insights into how long different syrups can be safely consumed after opening and the best practices for storage.

How long can different types of syrups be safely consumed after being opened?

The shelf life of syrups varies depending on the type. Singh explains, "Maple syrup, once opened, can typically last up to 1 year if stored in the refrigerator. Its low water content prevents bacterial growth, but keeping it cold helps preserve its flavour and freshness for longer periods." Singh advises that fruit syrups, such as those made from berries or other fruits, generally have a shorter shelf life. Once opened, they should be consumed within 6 to 12 months if refrigerated. Because these syrups often contain more sugars and sometimes artificial preservatives, they can last longer than fresh fruit but are still susceptible to spoilage due to their higher water content. "Regarding medicinal syr-

ups, he notes, "Medicinal syrups, such as cough syrups, usually have a printed expiry date that should be adhered to. Once opened, they can typically be consumed for up to 6 months, but always check the packaging for specific recommendations. Storing them in a cool, dry place can help extend their effectiveness, though refrigeration is not usually required."

What are the signs that a syrup has gone bad?

Singh outlines several indicators of spoiled syrup: **Texture Changes:** If the syrup becomes unusually thick, lumpy, or develops crystals or grit, it may no longer be safe to consume. **Colour and Clarity:** A change in colour, such as darkening, or a shift from clear to cloudy appearance, can indicate bacterial or mould growth. **Taste and Smell:** Spoiled syrups often have a sour or fermented smell, or they might taste off — more bitter or less sweet than usual. **Mould:** Visible mould growth, often seen on the surface of the syrup or around the cap, is a definite sign the syrup has gone bad.

How does refrigeration affect the shelf life of syrups once opened?

Singh stresses the importance of proper storage: "Proper storage, including refrigeration, can significantly extend the shelf life of syrups. Maple syrup, for example, should be refrigerated after opening, as it is prone to mould growth at room temperature." He adds, "Fruit syrups, which contain more water, can also benefit from refrigeration. They are more likely to spoil if left at room temperature because moisture encourages bacterial growth." Singh advises that medicinal syrups "generally not be refrigerated unless specified by the manufacturer. Most of these syrups contain preservatives that help maintain their stability at room temperature. However, they should always be stored in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight."

Are there health risks associated with consuming expired syrups? Singh warns, "Consuming syrups past their recommended usage period can pose several health risks, even if they appear normal. Spoiled syrup can contain mould or bacteria, which could lead to foodborne illnesses. It's always safer to follow the expiration dates or recommended time frames for use. Even if a syrup looks and smells fine, it may still harbour harmful microorganisms, especially if it has been improperly stored, he asserts.

'Mazaa aagaya,' says Hina Khan as she enjoys traditional Kashmiri breakfast; know all about the dish here

In June 2024, Hina Khan revealed her battle with Stage-3 breast cancer, sharing that she is undergoing chemotherapy. Despite the challenges, she has continued to connect with her fans, offering glimpses of her life and moments of joy. Recently, the actor delighted her followers with a snapshot of her traditional Kashmiri breakfast, featuring "Keasher tchot te harse" (Harisa) — a nostalgic nod to her roots in the picturesque valley of Kashmir. Sharing the picture, Hina wrote, "Keasher tchot te harse (Harisa) all the way from Kashmir. After so long... Mazaa aagaya," bringing attention to two iconic Kashmiri delicacies deeply intertwined with the culture and winters of the region. For those who don't know, Khan was born to a Kashmiri Muslim family and spent most of her formative years in Srinagar. Recently, Hina delighted her followers with a snapshot of her traditional Kashmiri breakfast, featuring "Keasher tchot te harse" (Harisa) (Source: Hina Khan/Instagram)

What is Keasher tchot?

Keasher tchot, or Tshir chote, is a Kashmiri rice bread made with a rice flour batter, says head chef and restaurant consultant Tarveen Kaur. It is derived from the traditional tchot or girda, a leavened flatbread with a golden crust that is a staple in Kashmiri households. Tchot, soft yet slightly chewy, is made with simple ingredients like flour, yeast, and water. Often paired with noon chai (salted tea), tchot is more than just a bread. It represents sustenance, simplicity, and the warmth of community, often enjoyed during breakfast or evening gatherings in Kashmiri homes. For many, it evokes memories of frosty mornings in the valley, where freshly baked bread mingles with the aroma of noon chai. Harisa: A winter tradition born of necessity. Harisa, on



the other hand, is a dish synonymous with Kashmiri winters. This rich, slow-cooked mutton delicacy is a favourite comfort food when temperatures plummet and snow blankets the valley, Kaur explained. Its origins trace back to an age-old tradition of preparing high-calorie, fatty meals to keep warm during the harsh winter months. Prepared with sheep or goat meat and short-grained rice, harisa is slow-cooked overnight with spices such as fennel seeds, cinnamon, and cardamom. This process ensures the meat becomes so tender it can be mashed into a stew-like consistency.

The dish is garnished with mutton kebabs and methi maaz (lamb intestines cooked with dried fenugreek) and drizzled with smoking mustard oil. The result? It is a deeply flavourful and hearty dish that brings warmth and joy during the coldest days. For those unfamiliar with Kashmiri cuisine, dishes like harisa and tchot offer a glimpse into the region's culinary genius. From the soft, comforting bread to the luxurious richness of Harisa, these foods embody Kashmir's culture, history, and resilience.

Do not wash your turkey and other Thanksgiving tips to keep your food safe

Ready or not, the holidays are here. It's a time when many Americans accustomed to preparing simple meals find themselves responsible for safely serving multi-dish feasts. It's no easy task. Outbreaks of some types of food poisoning tend to rise in November and December, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tainted turkey, undercooked stuffing and germ-laced gravy from holiday buffets have all led to past illnesses — and even deaths — CDC investigators have found. It can be tricky for occasional cooks to prepare big meals in a way that avoids the common hazards that can make people sick, said Donald Schaffner, a food science expert at Rutgers University. "Cooking takes longer with big masses of food. Cooling takes longer with big masses of food," said Schaffner, who co-hosts the food-safety podcast "Risky or Not?" Together with podcast co-host Benjamin Chapman, a food scientist at North Carolina State University, Schaffner outlined common ways to keep holiday meals both festive and safe. Prepare the turkey Nearly 90% of U.S. hosts plan to serve turkey on Thanksgiving this year, according to the turkey producer Butterball. But raw turkey can harbor illness-causing bacteria such as salmonella, campylobacter and other germs. It must be handled safely to prevent those bugs from contaminating refrigerator surfaces, sinks and kitchen counters. A frozen bird must be thawed first. There are several accepted methods, including in the refrigerator, in the microwave or in cold running water, Schaffner said. "All of these methods pose risks," he cautioned.

A frozen turkey needs about 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds of weight to thaw in a refrigerator, according to the Agriculture Department. If you use a microwave or the cold water method, the bird must be cooked immediately. For details about safe turkey handling, check out the thawing and cooking calculators created by the USDA. And don't wash the turkey. It's a bad idea to rinse it in the sink, even though many cooks still insist on the practice, often out of habit, said Chapman. "Anything that hits that surface and generates spray is going to basically spread contamination around your kitchen," he said. Instead, pat the turkey dry

with paper towels and toss them, or use a kitchen towel and disinfect it in the laundry. turkey How you handle the rest of the meal — mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans or yams — is just as important as the main dish.

What about roasting?

Turkey needs to reach a cooked temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit before serving. The best way to tell if it's cooked is to use a tip-sensitive digital thermometer inserted in the innermost section of the thigh, not touching the bone. Don't rely on the plastic pop-up thermometers stuck in some commercial turkeys. Chapman's past research shows that those buttons can activate well before the bird is actually done. At the same time, don't determine doneness by relying on signs such as golden-brown skin, whether the meat is no longer pink or whether the juices run clear. "None of those are great indicators of temperature," Chapman said. Side dishes and leftovers How you handle the rest of the meal — mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans or yams — is just as important as the main dish. It's crucial to avoid the so-called danger zone of temperatures between 40 degrees and 140 degrees Fahrenheit, where bacteria can easily grow. The key is to keep hot foods piping hot and cold foods cold — and to refrigerate everything promptly, Schaffner said. "The recommendation is that you get those leftovers into the refrigerator within two hours of when they came off of the stove," he said. Make sure to refrigerate dense foods like sliced turkey, cooked sweet potatoes or gravy in shallow containers to help them cool down fast. Schaffner's recent research showed that foods cooled in containers at a depth of no more than 2 inches posed little risk of growing dangerous germs. Keep it clean One key way to avoid food poisoning is through scrupulous cleaning in the kitchen. Wash your hands before preparing food and after touching raw poultry. Use separate cutting boards, knives and other utensils when handling raw meat and fresh foods such as vegetables and salads. Pay close attention to any surface that may be contaminated. It's important to clean first with soap and water and then sanitize with a disinfectant — a two-step process.

Mammootty's problematic Valyettan is back in theatres: Why are we still reviving, re-celebrating past blunders?



(Siddique), Dasan (Manoj K Jayan), Shankaran Kutty alias Monkuttan (Sudheesh) and Appu (Vijayakumar) — who collectively embody the Pandavas. Standing against them is their cousin Sivaraman, a Duryodhana-like figure determined to bring about Madhavanunni's downfall. Supporting Sivaraman is his father, the ageing and visually impaired Kuttikrishnan Nair, a clear parallel to Dhritarashtra. To further emphasise the elite status of the fictional Arakkal family, the makers chose Cheloor Mana — a renowned ancestral home of the Namboodiris, located in Thriprayar, Thrissur district — as their ancestral home in the film. The film's "connection" to Kannur and its anti-Islamic undertones extend beyond the apparent appropriation of Arakkal. While the central story is a Yudhishtira vs Duryodhana tale, Ranjith introduced a secondary villain to Valyettan: Mambaram Bava Haji (NF Varghese), a Muslim man portrayed as a ruthless mafia don who runs a parallel government from his residence. While Kannur was the Arakkal dynasty's main centre, Mambaram is also a place in the Kannur district and is located in Thalassery taluk. Given that the film is set in Thrissur, a district with no shortage of significant locales for names, it is hard to believe Ranjith chose these elements arbitrarily, particularly since he's a self-proclaimed Leftist.

The movie's problematic nature doesn't end there, with its treatment of women being especially egregious. What makes these troubling depictions even more baffling is that they exist solely to glorify Madhavanunni. For a significant portion of the film, Devi (Shobana) is portrayed as a new jinee at the local Anganwadi and has moved into one of Madhavanunni's rental properties after relocating to the area. However, it is revealed only later that she is actually his wife — a marriage he entered into almost as an act of "service" after her wedding was abruptly called off at the last minute. Madhavanunni, however, kept their relationship a secret from his brothers and others, believing it would set a "bad precedent" to marry someone he chose without involving his family. To maintain this facade, he goes to absurd lengths, speaking about Devi only in a disrespectful and dismissive manner. In one instance, before their marriage is revealed to all, Devi visits the Arakkal house to see Madhavanunni because he seldom visits her. His reaction to her presence is one of disgust, projecting a toxic, hyper-masculine persona. Valyettan, Valliettian, Vallyettan, mammootty, mammootty movies, mammootty new movie, mammootty malayalam movie, mammootty best movies, valyettan movie, valyettan 2024, valyettan review, valyettan movie review, valliettian movie, valliettian review, Malayalam movies, Malayalam movies 2024, Malayalam movies 2000, Shaji Kailas, shaji kailas director, ranjith, ranjith movies,

The film also perpetuates harmful stereotypes about disability, particularly in its depiction of Monkuttan, who has a leg impairment. Throughout the movie, he is either mocked or subjected to exaggerated pity by all his brothers. For example, within 30 seconds of screen time, Madhavanunni delivers two lines that reveal deeply prejudiced attitudes towards people with disabilities. First, he jokingly remarks that Monkuttan's body lacks "finishing" physically, and immediately afterwards, he expresses concern to Raghu that no woman — except perhaps a financially struggling neighbour — would consider marrying "someone like him with such shortcomings." Notice the classist undertone in that remark too. While some might argue that these portrayals reflect the filthy societal attitudes of the (apparently bygone) eras, it's pathetic that some makers can derive humour only cynically from others' sufferings, as though they have no better tools at their disposal than sadism. Despite being one of the weakest scripts in terms of emotional depth in Ranjith's repertoire, Valyettan remains a fan favourite and this enduring appeal largely stems from Mammootty's commanding presence and Shaji's ability to capitalise on the traits that define the megastar as the ideal embodiment of Malayali masculinity. From his authoritative posture, striking body language and magnetic screen presence to his masterful dialogue delivery, precise enunciation and chemistry with co-stars, Mammootty has excelled here. His ability to convey vulnerabilities and emotions through subtle expressions and gestures, rather than overt displays, further elevates his performance as Madhavanunni. While Valyettan doesn't boast as many memorable mass one-liners as Ranjith's Devasuram (1993), Aaram Thampuran (1997), Narasimham or Ravanaprabhu, Mammootty's powerful performance compensates for this shortcoming. George's makeup and Ezhumalai's costumes for the megastar also contributed to the character's iconic stature. Rajamani's exceptional background score, which has since become legendary, has also played a key role in Valyettan's continuing popularity. Among the songs composed by Mohan Sitara with lyrics by Girish Puthencherry, the track "Niranaazhi Ponnii" stands out as a defining piece, symbolising both Malayali masculinity and Mammootty's on- and off-screen persona as a patriarch.

Netflix reveals its upcoming docuseries tracing life of Bollywood's Roshan family

Mumbai: On Wednesday, Netflix revealed its upcoming documentary series, "The Roshans", which will explore the illustrious legacy of Bollywood's renowned Roshan family. The series will include candid interviews with industry peers, friends, and colleagues, sharing their insights on the family's remarkable influence. Directed by Shashi Ranjan, the documentary will trace the legacy of the Roshans, starting with the patriarch, the legendary music composer Roshan. It will also highlight the careers of his sons' filmmaker Rakesh Roshan, composer Rajesh Roshan, and Rakesh's son, Hrithik Roshan. Netflix took to its Instagram handle to announce the first poster and wrote, "A profound journey through legacy and love with the family that brought music, magic, and unforgettable moments to Hindi cinema. Watch The Roshans, coming soon, only on Netflix." The poster features Hrithik Roshan, Rakesh Roshan and Rajesh Roshan. In a statement, the Roshan family said, "We are incredibly excited to partner with Netflix and share previously untold stories that shaped our lives. The platform allows us to reach viewers from across the globe, and it's an honor to showcase our journey to the audience." Sharing his experience, director Shashi stated, "Directing this docu-series has been an incredibly rewarding journey. Being invited into the Roshan family's world and entrusted with their legacy is a privilege I am grateful for. It is an honour to bring their story of creativity, courage, and commitment to the world, and having Netflix house the legendary movie family's stories was undoubtedly the only way to go."

Bigg Boss 18: Vivian Dsen opens up about missing his three daughters, says, 'There's a lot of anxiety'



When asked if he misses his family, Vivian expressed, "I miss them a lot. There's a lot of anxiety, and I feel nervous. That's why I stay quiet." Anurag then questioned how he thought his children would be reacting to seeing him on-screen 24/7 in the Bigg Boss 18 house. Vivian responded, "I don't know how my elder daughter will react. I'll only know once I go home. Sometimes, we say things in anger without realizing it. I've always been antisocial, and it takes me time to deal with people." Talking about his anger issues, the 36-year-old actor credited his daughters for having control and said, "I do get angry, especially with my wife—I express openly. But I've calmed down a lot now. My daughters are here, and I can't get angry in front of them. Main toh maar kha lunga. Sometimes they'll scream at me and leave, and my wife reminds them, 'Your father never raises his voice.'"

Vivian is also being tagged as the 'ladla' of Colors and Bigg Boss since the beginning. The director pointed out at the label and asked what is means, after which he replied, "Look, many meanings can be derived from ladle but if you look closely then there is a loyalty factor. I have remained very loyal to my work and my network although the competitor networks have tried a lot to come in the middle. They even gave me a blank paper and went away asking what I should write."

With new guests Anurag Kashyap and Shalini Passi entering the Bigg Boss 18 house, the upcoming episode will witness an interesting turn. In the latest promo, contestants Shilpa Shirodkar and Vivian Dsen opened up about their personal lives with Anurag. Vivian, who is now married to an Egyptian journalist Nouran Aly, got candid about his previous marriage with Vahbbiz Dorabjee and three daughters — two step-daughters and one biological daughter Layan. In a heart-to-heart conversation with Anurag, Vivian said, "I have been married twice. Once I have been divorced. I have three daughters." Anurag then asked, "How do you feel knowing your kids are watching you and what will they think?"

Comedian Sunil Pal claims he was kidnapped near Delhi, details his ordeal

Comedian and actor Sunil Pal has alleged that he was kidnapped from the outskirts of Delhi. According to Pal, he was lured to the location under the pretext of attending an event in Haridwar. The organisers had even transferred an advance payment to confirm the deal. However, things took a dark turn when they stopped for snacks on route to the venue. A man pretending to be a fan allegedly pushed him into a car and drove away.

According to Pal, he was blindfolded and taken to a secluded spot where several people were waiting. His captors reportedly demanded a ransom of Rs 20 lakh for his release. When Pal told them he didn't have that kind of cash on him, nor his debit card, they supposedly started negotiating and looking for other ways to get the money. "They took possession of my phone but allowed me to use it to reach out to friends and arrange for the funds. Once they received approximately Rs 7.5 lakh, they released me the next day and even provided me with Rs 20,000 for my travel expenses," Pal shared in an audio statement with SCREEN.

Pal claims that the incident has left a lasting impact on his mental well-being. He initially didn't plan to speak publicly about the ordeal, but his wife had already contacted the police, prompting him to share his account. Pal alleged that his captors erased all call records from his phone and destroyed any evidence that could lead the police to their



identification. They also allegedly obtained personal information about his family, which has left him concerned for their safety. The police investigation into the matter is currently underway, with the authenticity of Pal's claims yet to be confirmed. Meanwhile, Pal has been reunited with his family in Mumbai, after he returned home on Wednesday, December 4.

Allu Arjun's Pushpa 2: Makers express grief after woman dies in Hyderabad theatre stampede, vow to support family

The much-anticipated premiere of Allu Arjun's Pushpa 2 on Wednesday night at Hyderabad's Sandhya Theatre, RTC Crossroad, took a tragic turn when a 39-year-old woman lost her life, and her nine-year-old son was critically injured in a stampede. The boy is currently admitted at a hospital. The incident occurred as massive crowds gathered at the theatre, with Allu Arjun himself present during the chaos. The film's producers, Mythri Movie Makers, issued a heartfelt statement expressing their sorrow over the tragedy and vowed to support the grieving family. The statement, shared on X (formerly Twitter), read, "We are extremely heartbroken by the tragic incident during last night's screening. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and the young child undergoing medical treatment. We are committed to standing by them and extending all possible support during this difficult time. With deep sorrow." We are extremely heartbroken by the tragic incident during last night's screening. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and the young child undergoing medical treatment.

The victim was identified as M Revathi, who had attended the premiere with her husband, M Bhaskar, their son, and their seven-year-old daughter. According to the police, the stampede occurred when the theatre gates, unable to withstand the pressure of the surging crowd, collapsed. M Bhaskar, devastated by the loss of his wife and the critical condition of his son, recounted the harrowing ordeal in a video. He explained how the chaos unfolded, "When Allu Arjun arrived, the crowd suddenly swelled, and I got separated from my wife and son. My daughter and I were outside, while Revathi and our son were inside. Ini-



tially, when I called, she said they were inside, but later her phone was switched off. As my daughter cried, I dropped her off at a relative's place and went back to find my wife and son. By then, they were gone. Some people showed me a video, and I recognized them. I was told they were taken to Durga Bai Deshmukh Hospital. Around 2 PM, I was informed that her body had been moved to Gandhi Hospital as she had passed away." Pushpa 2: The Rule is the sequel to the 2021 blockbuster Pushpa: The Rise, which earned Allu Arjun the National Award for Best Actor in 2023. Directed by Sukumar, the film also stars Rashmika Mandanna and Fahadh Faasil in pivotal roles.

Keerthy Suresh's wedding invite goes viral, actress to marry longtime boyfriend Antony Thattil on Dec 12

Keerthy Suresh, who recently confirmed her relationship with her childhood friend Antony Thattil, is all set to get married to him on December 12, according to viral wedding invite. A week before the couple's wedding, a wedding invite has surfaced online with the first names of Keerthy and Antony. It reads: "It is our great pleasure to inform you that our daughter is getting married on December 12 in an intimate gathering. We hold your blessings in high regard and sincerely hope you will keep them in your thoughts and prayers. We would be grateful if you could shower your blessings upon them as they begin a new chapter of their lives together. With warm regards and lots of love G Suresh Kumar and Menaka Suresh Kumar." Wedding bells are ringing! #KeerthySuresh & #Antony's love story reaches its beautiful destination on Dec 12th! ??

Keerthy Suresh recently shared her first picture with her fiancé. Sharing a throwback photo from their Diwali celebrations, Keerthy wrote, "5 years and counting (infinity symbol and nazar amulet emojis). It has always been Antony x Keerthy (lykyk) (laughing and red heart emojis)." Soon after making her relationship Instagram official, Keerthy Suresh visited Tirupati temple. During an in-



teraction with the media outside the temple, the actress shared she is getting married in December. She said, "I am getting married next month. That is why I came for the darshan of Srivaru. The wedding will take place in Goa." On the work front, Keerthy Suresh is gearing up for the release of Atlee's Baby John, co-starring Varun Dhawan. The film is set to release on December 25.

IND vs AUS | 'I don't think it will play any role': Ravi Shastri on if 2020 Adelaide debacle will haunt India



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

India Australia Adelaide Ravi Shastri India's Mohammed Siraj is hugged by teammate Virat Kohli after taking the wicket of Australia's captain Pat Cummins on the third day of the first cricket test between Australia and India in Perth, Australia, IND vs AUS: Former India coach Ravi Shastri who was at the helm when India last played a pink ball Test in Australia at the Adelaide Oval, said that the side which will take the field once again in the same venue on Friday, won't be haunted by the 36-all out debacle which

happened in the 2020/21 series.

In that fateful match, India had suffered the ignominy of posting their lowest ever total of 36 in Test cricket in the second innings leading to the Aussies winning the match by 8 wickets. "I don't think it (Adelaide drubbing) will play any role but it should be at the back of their mind because you know things happen very quickly with a pink ball. You realise that in a session of play if things don't go your way and the bowling is good, things can happen rapidly. What we did after that 36 was — like I said at that time — that I'd never seen, and I said it in the dressing room, I'd never seen so much of playing and nicking as opposed to playing and missing," Shastri said in the ICC Review. "And I'd watched cricket for about 40 years. And to be honest, that was a session where hardly any player played and missed. If he did anything, he got a nick. So it was not beating the bat. You know, the bowlers (being) unlucky... it was just the batsmen being unlucky on that day," he added. India under Ajinkya Rahane would ultimately make a remarkable turnaround in the series with a victory in Melbourne and then a draw at Sydney before winning the whole thing 2-1 with their historic coup at Brisbane.

India's Pink-Ball Test record: Most runs, wickets, high scores ahead of Border-Gavaskar Trophy match

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

India will play only their fifth pink-ball Test when they meet Australia at the Adelaide Oval in the second Border-Gavaskar Trophy from This will be India's second day-night Test match away from home, with the last overseas outing also being at the same venue in 2020. That particular match was one that Indian supporters would have loved to forget quickly in the aftermath, but it is now remembered almost lovingly because of what happened afterwards. India's first pink-ball Test match was in 2019 against Bangladesh. Kolkata's Eden Gardens hosted the historic match that the Indians won comfortably. Contrasting totals: Highest and lowest scores for India in Pink-Ball Tests So far, India has played four pink-ball Tests. Following their victory over Bangladesh, India lost to Australia in 2020 before defeating England and Sri Lanka at home in 2021. India's highest day-night Test score came in their first appearance against Bangladesh when they compiled 347/9 declared in Kolkata. Their lowest total in Test history, an ignominious



36 all out, came at the hands of Australia in their last Adelaide visit. Ravichandran Ashwin has taken 18 wickets for India in pink-ball Tests. He is followed by Axar Patel and Umesh Yadav in the top three in Day-Night Tests.

Why the series matters to Rohit Sharma and Pat Cummins beyond the results

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

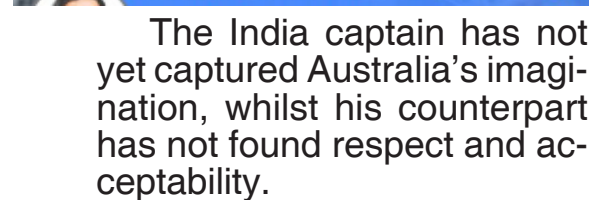
For the past few days, Rohit Sharma and his men have been walking to the stadium from their hotel across a bridge over the river Torrens. It is a simple pleasure that they can't indulge in India. Even here, if anyone stops them for a selfie, it's the Indian-origin fan. They cross the river, walk past the statue of Clem Hill, a legendary cricketer from these parts, at the stadium entrance and breeze through the sliding glass doors into the arena. Thursday was a particularly burning day in Adelaide, temperatures hovering around 38-40 degrees, so hot that the Aussies wrapped up their optional net session within 20 minutes and fled. A couple of weeks ago, in India, before the birth of his second child, Rohit was moping around alone in the dressing room at the Wankhede Stadium. His teammates had left, the Kiwis were celebrating politely in the room next door, and Rohit sat ruminating. Suddenly, things stir and change dramatically. He becomes a father again, and even as he is "holding the baby in my hands", his team is thumping the Aussies. On his flight to Perth, he asks for an internet connection to check the match scores. By the time he lands, Virat Kohli is blasting the ball to all around the park. Sometimes, a week can be really long and action-packed.

Twelve years ago in Australia, on the 2011-12 tour, he was facing selection dejection, unable to make his Test debut. Two days before the Sydney Test, he even attended a press conference. Usually, it meant back then that he might play. He would talk about "I would know tomorrow if I am playing". He didn't. Coming after a year when he missed the ODI World Cup, his life and career must have seemed like spiralling out of his control. In a chat with The Indian Express a couple of years ago, he talked about how all the developments in that period made him almost detest the "talented" label. "Kuch matlab nahi hai yaar, that word ka" (It has no meaning). What does it even mean? You have to perform." Eventually, he would get the chances but he wasn't consistent. Especially in Tests. Then suddenly Ravi Shastri as coach, and Virat Kohli as captain offered him the chance to open in Tests.

Shastri once told this newspaper about making Rohit the opener. "I had already told him but he wasn't sure. Then one day, finally, he agreed. I knew he had it in him but he worked his bloody a*** off to make it work." Shastri would know, after converting into an opener from the lower order. But Shastri's game, in a sense, was almost suited for the role. Rohit's wasn't. He made tweaks in as basic aspects as how he gripped the bat. It hurt his wrists, but he did it for hours together for days to make it a muscle memory. The bat that would flash outside off had to be controlled, and since 2018, he had turned into a classical Test opener. Until recently, in his attempt to set the agenda for the team, he had become a tad too adventurous as an opener. Now he has to quit that role. He had to make that decision too. "It was an easy decision as a team (to make KL Rahul open at Adelaide), not easy for me (as a player), but very easy for the team," he said, smiling, on Thursday. In search of love Not that he would care, but the four remaining Tests would also determine Rohit's relationship with Australia. He is a star in India. England too saw the best of him in 2018 as an opener. But in Australia, where he did play important knocks in 2018-19, doesn't quite have a relationship with him.

Ahead of the series, various media in Australia ran promotions. Some even used Hindi and Punjabi. Kohli's face was splashed all over the papers and television. Rohit was hardly mentioned. That Australia's marketing wigs didn't think Rohit's face would be a star attraction in Australia was intriguing. Australia has always been like this. In India, we might rate and rave about cricketers performing in other countries, but the Aussies' respect comes almost only when the players score consistently in their grounds.

Ricky Ponting averages over 50 in Tests but in 14 Tests in India, his average is just 26.48. His only hundred



The India captain has not yet captured Australia's imagination, whilst his counterpart has not found respect and acceptability.

came in 2008 in Bangalore on a paata batting track in a drawn game where neither team finished their second innings. Still, Indian fans rave about him. That doesn't quite happen in Australia. So, Rohit's relative anonymity isn't quite a surprise in this context. Rohit was last seen in Australia, sitting on the stairs at the Gabba, rising up in joy to celebrate Rishabh Pant's off drive that brought home a memorable triumph. He now gets a chance to entrench himself in the imagination of the Australian public. He might have loved to do it as an opener but as a captain, he has made the right decision to let Rahul set the template. If things don't go to plan, Rohit might still open at some stage, but that's for future. It's as a middle-order batsman that he now will have a crack at Australia. It's what he did growing up as a cricketer. It allows him the freedom to have a pop at the bowlers if things have already gone well for the team by the time he arrives at the crease. If he is walking into a semi-crisis, he has developed the tools since 2018 needed to survive it. Couple of days before the game, he had a rather long session at the nets, coming early before the rest and batting for two stints. He focussed on footwork and where he stood at the crease. He stood with his back leg on the popping crease, making an effort to plant the front foot down the pitch and facing the bowler. He also took considerable care to land the front foot on his toes, rather than the heel. The toe-landing allows him that mobility to push back if needed, and quickly at that, or lean fully into the forward defensive push or the drive. Or in other words, transfer of balance seemed to be the area of focus. Support staff Abhishek Nayar and Ryan ten Doeschate would give him thumbs up as he walked off eventually, looking satisfied with his training. Revival, respect His counterpart Pat Cummins has had a rather interesting week. The contrast between the fortunes of the two teams has been stunning to say the least. A role-reversal, of sorts. Not particularly from inside the camps, but the talk that's been swirling around them or the outside noise as the players term it. On Thursday, Cummins was posed a few questions about how the team is viewed by the Australians. "Do you feel like there's almost a little bit of a desire to see this side fail?" "What's the Australian way of playing?" "Is there really a divide within the team?" Like his teammates in the preceding days, Cummins kept shrugging and denying. The reactions in the country to the first Test loss has been extraordinary. All this would have seemed so distant when India went down for 150 on the first day at Perth. Bumrah struck, the youngsters stood up, and in a blink, Australians were buried and ever since gasping for breath and coping a lot of heat. But as India found out in Perth, after being whitewashed at home by New Zealand, nothing succeeds like success. A win in Adelaide will bring back not just the series on even keel, but would allow Cummins to continue doing it his way. The outside noise will then drop. Though to be fair to both Cummins and Rohit, these are two individuals who are at absolute ease with their style of functioning and confident of doing it their way. But irony is indeed blowing in the Australian wind. Not just the Indian captain, but even the home captain is playing to make sure he is respected in Australia.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar records hat-trick in must-win SMAT match for Uttar Pradesh vs Jharkhand



GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Bhuvneshwar Kumar's hat-trick helped UP beat Jharkhand by 10 runs in a must-win SMAT match on Thursday. Bhuvneshwar Kumar's hat-trick helped UP beat Jharkhand by 10 runs in a must-win SMAT match Uttar Pradesh captain Bhuvneshwar Kumar recorded his maiden T20 hat-trick in the final Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy group-stage match against Jharkhand After setting a 161-run target in a must-win game at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, Bhuvneshwar's economical self only conceded six runs in his first three overs with the new ball. The 34-

year-old later returned with the ball for his final over in the 17th and removed Robin Minz, Bal Krishna (0), and Vivek Anand Tiwari (0) to finish with figures of 4-1-6-3. Bhuvneshwar's spell eventually turned out to be the game-changer as UP edged out Jharkhand by 10 runs.

Bhuvneshwar is the fourth bowler to record a hat-trick this SMAT season after Akash Madhwal, Shreyas Gopal and Felix Alemao. During Uttar Pradesh's opening Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match against Delhi at the Wankhede Stadium last month, Bhuvneshwar became the first Indian pacer to bag 300 T20 wickets, eclipsing Jasprit Bumrah to the mark. Only spinners Yuzvendra Chahal (364), Piyush Chawla (319) and R Ashwin (310) have picked up more wickets than Bhuvneshwar in the T20 format among Indians. 90 of Bhuvneshwar's career wickets have come in national colours between 2012 and 2022, making him the second-highest wicket-taking pacer for India.

The swing king from Meerut made his T20 debut in a Champions League T20 game in 2009 for the Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium. He went wicketless in his maiden outing, conceding 31 runs in four overs against Delhi Daredevils. In 176 games, Bhuvneshwar has racked up 181 wickets, making him the most successful seamer in the tournament's history.

12 memorable years for Lewis Hamilton with the Silver Arrows comes to end, but is he still hungry?

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

Lewis Hamilton will end his contract with Mercedes at the end of the season Lewis Hamilton will end his contract with Mercedes at the end of the season Sir Lewis Hamilton will bid adieu to the silver arrows after his final race in Abu Dhabi. Hamilton's term with Mercedes is coming to an end after 12 glorious years. This weekend will be his final race with Mercedes. And he will make a Switch to Ferrari in 2025. The Brit has won 84 races during his tenure with them and has led the team to two constructors championships.

In his debut Grand Prix with the arrows, he finished on the podium. This was a promising start to his career, as he later won his first Grand Prix with Mercedes, the Hungarian GP. The British driver did not begin his career at Mercedes, but rather with McLaren, where he won his first driver's title in 2008. Later, he had a slump in his career with McLaren and joined Mercedes in 2013. As a result, he won six driver titles: 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. Hamilton is the only driver in Formula One history to match Michael Schumacher's record of seven world championship wins.

In 2021, he was once again leading the way, but this time he was up against a challenger from Red Bull adversary and eventual four-time World Champion: Max Verstappen. The season's last race was a debatable one,



with Verstappen beating Hamilton by a single point while Mercedes kept the title. Mercedes then plummeted down the order, dragging Hamilton's form with it. It has struggled to stay up with the other teams, winning only five races in three years, including a winless 2023. The 39-year-old has had a terrible season with his W15, frequently expressing his unhappiness. He was consistently outpaced by George Russell, despite both drivers winning two races each. As the season comes to an end, Hamilton will undoubtedly want to put the agony behind him and reflect on the memories he has made with a squad that propelled him to the top. Hamilton now has the opportunity to write a new chapter in his Formula One career at Ferrari, but whether he goes down in history as the record holder remains to be seen.

India vs Australia, Women's ODI: Harmanpreet Kaur-led side collapse from 89/4 to 100 all out

GNS News Agency, Dec 7

India vs Australia: Harmanpreet-led India collapse to 100 all-out, register third lowest total against Australia. India vs Australia: Harmanpreet-led India collapse to 100 all-out, register third lowest total against Australia. From 89/4, India lost 6 wickets for the next 11 runs in a stunning collapse against world champions Australia at the Allan Border Field in Brisbane on Thursday. It was India's third lowest score against Australia away from home in the history of women's ODIs (behind 74 in Auckland back in January 1982 and 89 all out in Adelaide, February 2006). Jemimah Rodrigues, who batted at number five, top-scored for India with a 23 off 42 balls. No other batter reached the 20s. After Harmanpreet Kaur won the toss and opted to bat first in Brisbane, India never looked like they got a hang of the conditions, stumbling right through the powerplay. Smriti Mandhana's last ODI knock was a century against New Zealand in the series decider at home, but she fell early by going after a wide one. It'd be the first of five wickets for Megan Schutt, who returned an impressive five-wicket haul here Thursday. Priya Punia (3 off 17), playing in place of the dropped Shafali Verma, struggled for any rhythm in her comeback game. In her attempt to break the shackles, was caught at backward point off Schutt. Harleen Deol fell for a laborious 19 off 34



balls. Skipper Harmanpreet was trapped in front by pacer Annabel Sutherland. Rodrigues looked comfortable in the middle until she was bowled by Kim Grath as she tried to run a delivery down to the third. And that was the start of the collapse as a top-heavy batting unit barely showed any resistance lower down the order. From 62 for three, India were all out for 100 in 34.2 overs, as the last three batters got out with the score reading 100 on the board. Schutt completed her maiden five wicket haul by casting Priya Mishra. In response, Australia were off to a flying start thanks to Phoebe Litchfield and debutant Georgia Voll, and despite losing a few wickets, prevailed comfortably, scoring 102/5 in just 16.2 overs.

Rohit Sharma confirms KL Rahul as opener for Adelaide Test: 'I'll bat somewhere...'

IND vs AUS: Rohit Sharma confirmed that he will bat in the middle-order in the second Test in Adelaide. (PTI) IND vs AUS: Rohit Sharma confirmed that he will bat in the middle-order in the second Test in Adelaide. On the eve of India's pink-ball Test against Australia in Adelaide, captain Rohit Sharma has confirmed that KL Rahul will partner Yashasvi Jaiswal as opener in the pink-ball affair. "KL will open (in Adelaide). The way he batted and his partnership with Jaiswal was instrumental in that first test win. The way he has batted outside India, he deserves it. I will bat somewhere in the middle. It was a fairly simple decision. Personally, it wasn't easy (as a batsman) but for the team, it was an easy decision to make," Rohit told reporters in Adelaide on Thursday. The 37-year-old Rohit, who has arguably been India's leading Test since the inception of the World Test Championship in 2019, has been under scrutiny ever since the team's 0-3 home series whitewash against New Zealand in November. Rohit only crossed fifty once in six innings the series and finished with 93 runs. His average of 15.16 was the worst of his Test career in a series where he played at least three matches. India captain Rohit Sharma on Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin (currently batting in the Adelaide nets): "These two will play a role in the rest of the series. We will look at the pitch and decide." "Missing the first Test in Perth due to the birth of his second child, Rohit was replaced by Rahul at the top of the order. Rahul and Jaiswal forged a crucial second-innings stand, a record 201 partnership that helped India brave a first-innings debacle to set up a 295-run win over the hosts. After a stop-start Test career between 2013 and 2018, Rohit moved up to opening in Tests in late 2019, and amassed 2685 runs in 64 innings with nine hun-



dreds, the most for India in the period. Ashwin, Jadeja remain crucial

While both of India's spin stalwarts R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja missed out on the opening Test, Rohit affirmed that the duo will be integral in the remainder of the series. Off-spinner Washington Sundar played as the lone spinner in Perth where the seamers led by Jasprit Bumrah dominated proceedings. "I wasn't there personally to break the news to Ashwin and Jadeja that they won't be playing at Perth. The management went with the best team they thought that suited that pitch. These two will play a role in the rest of the series. They have been massive to India's record in the past. We shall look at the pitches and decide," Rohit said. Rohit also lauded Sundar as a valuable all-round asset and said: "Washington came to Australia on the last tour, got crucial runs and took wickets. Unfortunately, he got injured. He is a solid all-rounder. The team gets confident with players like him. I just hope he stays injury free. I only see his graph going up from here."