

Four vehicles gutted in fire accident in Siddipet

Siddipet: Short circuit resulted in a fire accident at a residence in Maruthi Nagar in Siddipet town in the early hours of Wednesday. A car, and three two-wheelers parked inside the house, valuables in the house were gutted in the fire accident. Only one person was sleeping on the roof of the house when the fire accident took place. When the locals alerted the youngster after noticing fire emanating out of the house, the youth escaped unhurt in the incident. Following information, a fire tender was rushed to the spot and doused the fire.

Thunderstorms to lash Hyderabad and districts of Telangana

Hyderabad: People in Hyderabad and all the districts of Telangana State are set to witness a major change in weather pattern from today, with intense heat replaced by a significant drop in temperatures, cloudy conditions and rains in the form of thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds and hailstorms, throughout the rest of this week. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)-Hyderabad has said that from today to Sunday, all the districts of Telangana State will receive rains.

Kiren Rijiju Blasts UPA Government

"Parliament Was Being Claimed As Waqf"

New Delhi: The promised eight-hour debate on the Waqf Amendment Bill - which proposes changes to laws that decide how Muslim charitable properties are administered - began Wednesday afternoon with Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and the opposition trading jabs after the bill was tabled in the Lok Sabha. Mr Rijiju began with jabs at the Congress, claiming the party had made "questionable" changes to Waqf laws when in power, including the denotification of "123 major buildings... given to the Waqf". The Congress-led UPA government, he said, would have given the Parliament to the Waqf if not stopped. His introductory speech was rebutted by the Congress' Gaurav Gogoi, who first accused Mr Rijiju of making "misleading statements" and labelled the Waqf amendments "an assault on the Constitution". Mr Gogoi also asked why the Minority Affairs Minis-



try did not mention this bill in any of the four meetings of its parliamentary committee in 2023, a year before the amendments were presented. "A case going on since 1970 in Delhi involved several properties, including the Parliament building. The Delhi Waqf Board had claimed these... the case was in court but then the UPA denotified 123 properties and gave them to the Waqf Board," the Union Minister said on the

'Parliament to Waqf' charge. "If we had not introduced this amendment today, even the building we are sitting in could have been claimed as Waqf property. If Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government did not come to power... several other properties would also have been de-notified," the Union Minister said. Mr Rijiju then criticised the opposition for standing against changes, insisting there will be no al-

terations to the management of mosques and that the amendments were "a property management issue". "The government has nothing to do with religious sentiments," he said, pointing out, "The role of Waqf boards is to supervise management of Waqf properties... this (the proposed law) is purely a provision for governance and supervision. It is simply a matter of property management."

"Dilute, Defame, Divide, Disenfranchise" : Congress' '4D' Attack On Waqf Bill

New Delhi: Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi launched a fierce counterattack Wednesday - after Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju tabled the Waqf Amendment Bill - accusing the BJP-led government of trying to "defame (and) disenfranchise minorities" and staging an "4D assault on the Constitution". Mr Gogoi also questioned the government over a contentious provision - that donations can only be made by a Muslim who has been practicing his/her faith for at least five years. It is a sad situation, the Congress leader said, when the government takes it on itself to issue 'religious certificates'. "Today the condition of minorities has become such the government will give a 'certificate' of their religion. Will they ask for certificates from other religions also... whether they have completed five years? Why is this being asked of Muslims? Why is the government interfering in religion?" In his lengthy rebuttal to Mr Rijiju, the Assam leader began by accusing the Union Minister of making misleading statements, which earned him a reprimand from Speaker Om



Birla. "This bill is an assault on the Constitution..." he began, firing a '4D' attack at the BJP. "The aim is to dilute the Constitution, defame and disenfranchise minorities... divide Indian society." Mr Gogoi also pointed out the Minority Affairs Ministry did not mention this bill in four meetings of its parliamentary committee in 2023, a year before the amendments were suddenly tabled. This talk of "reform" of the Waqf laws - as Mr Rijiju had stressed in his speech - is a diversion to help the BJP dilute the election process and destroy communal harmony, Mr Gogoi continued. "... in BJP-ruled states

Muslims weren't allowed to offer Eid prayers (on Monday)," he claimed, accusing the government of making a smokescreen of Waqf changes to "vilify minorities". The Congress leader also ripped into the functioning of the joint parliamentary committee that had been tasked, last year, with reviewing the proposed changes to the Waqf laws. Opposition MPs on the committee were furious over their suggestions being discarded and protested further after their dissent notes were excluded from the final report. These notes were later reinstated. "I have never seen a JPC like this before," Mr Gogoi

said, pointing out the committee did not hold clause-by-clause discussions and that the opposition's inputs was ignored. "People with no connection to the Waqf boards were called to speak," he said, underlining a frequent complaint. Trinamool MP Kalyan Banerjee and Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav also spoke in the House. Mr Banerjee, who was on the Waqf JPB, said the Bengal party "opposes the Bill in its entirety". Mr Yadav, who bantered with Amit Shah over the identity of the next BJP chief, said he was eager to see how many women candidates the party will nominate for the October Bihar election.

Akhilesh Yadav Jabs BJP Over Delay In Choosing Chief, Amit Shah Replies

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha witnessed a banter between Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav after the latter fired a barb at the ruling BJP for its delay in electing a party president. Addressing the House during the debate on the Waqf Amendment Bill, Mr Yadav said the BJP was facing in-fighting as leaders compete to prove who the "worse Hindu" is. "I am not saying this just like that. The party, which claims to be the world's largest party, could not elect its national president," he said. At this, Mr Shah stood up and said, "Akhilesh ji said something with a smile. And I will respond with a smile." Pointing to the Opposition benches, the Home Minister said, "All the parties there have to elect their national president from among five people of the family. We must follow a process and choose a chief



from 12-13 crore members. So it takes time," Mr Shah said, drawing a big cheer from BJP MPs. Addressing Mr Yadav, the BJP veteran said, "You won't take time. I am telling you, you will be party president for 25 years. No one can change." The Samajwadi Party chief responded with a smile and added a jab. "The yatra held a few days back, was it a yatra to mark the 75-year extension?" The remark was widely seen as a reference to the 75

years-age rule for senior BJP leaders. Mr Yadav, who represents Kannauj, said the Waqf Amendment Bill has been brought to "cover the government's many failures", including demonetisation, unemployment and price rise. "This country has a mixed culture. You are saying we have introduced two women members to Waqf board. I will see how many women get BJP tickets in the Bihar election. BJP is talking about identifying Muslim

brothers' land under Waqf so that they can draw a curtain across Hindu brothers who died or went missing at the Kumbh," he said. "They should tell us the names of 30 people who died there and about the 1,000 who went missing. Where is the list?" Mr Yadav said the land "where China has set up villages" is more important than Waqf land. "The government must guarantee that no Waqf land would be used for any other purpose," he said.

Amid Waqf debate in Parliament, MK Stalin's 'Withdraw Bill' demand to PM Modi

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his personal intervention to withdrawal of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, which was introduced in parliament today for debate and passing. All the non-NDA parties, including Mr Stalin's DMK, have united to block the bill, which proposes changes to laws that decide how Muslim charitable properties are administered. The Opposition has contended that the bill is unconstitutional and violates the fundamental right to practice religion, Article 14, which guarantees equality before law and Article 15, which bars discrimination on basis of religion. Sections of the Muslim community maintain the amendments are geared to help the government gain control of the Waqf properties. The Tamil Nadu Assembly has already passed a resolution to urge the Centre to withdraw the bill.

In his letter, Mr Stalin said the Constitution grants every citizen the right to follow their respective religion and it is the duty of the elected governments to uphold and protect this right. But the proposed amendments in the bill have not taken that into consideration and the amended law is "bound to severely harm the interest of Muslim community," he wrote. He cited multiple points in his letter to cite how the bill can interfere with and undermine the religious autonomy of the Waqf boards as well as the Muslim community. As examples, he cited the proposed mandatory inclusion of two non-Muslim members in waqf boards. The removal of the 'Waqf by user' provision threatens the status of many historical Waqf properties, he wrote. The stipulation that the "individuals who practiced Islam for at least five years only can donate properties to Waqf will prevent non-Muslims from donating properties to Waqf



which will hinder the syncretic culture of the country," he added. The government has contended that the law is being amended to empower women and children, who have been suffering under the existing rules. The bill requires that money received by the Waqf Board must be used for the welfare of widows, divorcees, and orphans in the manner suggested by the government. Union minister Kiren Rijiju said, "The government has nothing to do with religious sentiments... The role of Waqf boards is to supervise management of Waqf properties... this (the proposed law) is purely a provision for

governance and supervision. It is simply a matter of property management". Mr Rijiju also claimed that previously "any land could be declared as Waqf property". "We have removed that provision. This provision was misused to such an extent that the number of properties increased to lakhs. Temples and gurdwaras had been claimed as Waqf land despite no records of mosques in those areas, he said. "Sundereshwar Temple in Tamil Nadu was declared Waqf... in Karnataka, thousands of acres of land... in Haryana, a Sikh gurdwara was also declared Waqf," he added.

"Development At Cost Of Biodiversity Is Destruction" : Dia Mirza Backs Hyderabad Students

Hyderabad : Actor Dia Mirza has come out in support of the students protesting against the redevelopment of 400 acres of land adjacent to the Hyderabad Central University. Calling for a sustainable future, she has given a call to save the forest in Gachibowli. Development at the cost of biodiversity is destruction, said Ms Mirza, who is from Hyderabad. "Students are raising their voices for a future where nature thrives. Forests, not IT parks, offer young people a chance at a

sustainable tomorrow. 'Development' at the cost of biodiversity is DESTRUCTION. Save Kancha Forest in Gachibowli, Hyderabad," her post read. The Telangana government plans to set up an IT park on the land and has asserted it has nothing to do with the university. Raising environmental concerns, the students claimed the construction plan threatened the forest's flora and fauna. The students, who have been protesting the auction of the land, have



announced an indefinite boycott of classes until their demands are met. The situation escalated on Sunday when bulldozers arrived to flatten the land.

A confrontation ensued and the students were thrashed by the police, who accused them of obstructing government officials from doing their work.

"Centre Won't Interfere In Religious Institutions": Who Said What On Waqf Bill

New Delhi: A fierce showdown between the government and opposition members is underway in the Lok Sabha over a key legislation that seeks to improve the administration of Waqf properties in the country. The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was taken up in the Lower House this morning for consideration and passage. Union Ministers Amit Shah and Kiren Rijiju were among those who backed the Bill while opposition MPs like Akhilesh

Yadav and Gaurav Gogoi vociferously opposed it. Union Minister Amit Shah: "It was your (Opposition) insistence that a Joint Parliamentary Committee should be formed. We do not have a committee like the Congress. We have a democratic committee, which brainstorms. Our committee discusses, deliberates on the basis of discussions and makes changes. If the changes are not to be accepted, then what is the point of the com-



mittee?" Union Minister Kiren Rijiju: "The government is not going to interfere in any religious institution. The changes made in

the Waqf law by the UPA government gave it overriding effect over other statutes, hence the new amendments were required.

Bengaluru Techie Kills Wife, Stuffs Body in Suitcase, Then Attempts Suicide

Bengaluru: A 36-year-old tech professional in Bengaluru allegedly murdered his wife and stuffed it into a suitcase before fleeing to Pune, where he later attempted suicide. The incident took place in Bengaluru's Doddakan nahalli area. The victim has been identified as 32-year-old Gauri Anil Sambekar, while the accused, Rakesh Rajendra Khedekar, both of whom are native of Maharashtra. The couple had been living in Bengaluru for the past year. According to reports, both were having dinner on Wednesday night when arguments started. Gauri allegedly threw a knife at Rakesh, injuring him. In retaliation, Rakesh allegedly attacked her with the same knife, killing her on the spot. The grisly crime came to light when Gauri's body was discovered packed inside a suitcase at their residence. According to initial forensic analysis, the victim had



been stabbed multiple times in the neck and abdomen, with her body later dismembered into eight to ten pieces before being concealed. "The couple hailed from Maharashtra and shifted to Bengaluru one

year ago. The owner of the house called the police control room after finding the body in the suitcase. The woman completed her bachelors in Mass Media and the accused husband worked at a private firm. He was working from home," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) Sarah Fathima. Rakesh allegedly called Gauri's parents after committing the crime, confessing to the act over the phone. The parents, alarmed by the confession, immediately informed the Maharashtra police, who in turn alerted their counterparts in Karnataka. "Matrimonial discord seems to be the primary reason behind the murder," said B Dayanand, Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru, said. Following the crime, Rakesh fled Bengaluru and was tracked down in Pune through a co-ordinated operation involving call detail records and digital surveillance. He was found in an unconscious state, having consumed poison in an attempt to end his life. He is currently hospitalised in Pune. A police team from Bengaluru has already left for Pune to escort Rakesh back to the city once his condition stabilises.

Centre Raises Dearness Allowance For Union Government Employees By 2%

New Delhi: In a salary increase for central government employees ahead of the 8th Pay Commission, the Union cabinet approved a 2 per cent increase in dearness allowance. After this revision, the dearness allowance (DA) will rise from 53 per cent to 55 per cent. DA is provided to government employees to compensate them against price rise

because of inflation. Following a 3 per cent hike in October last year, the DA increased to 53 per cent of basic pay in the last update. The government's 8th Pay Commission, which was approved by the Centre in January this year, revised the wages and allowances of central government employees. The formal constitution of the

commission, which involves the appointment of a chairman and at least two members, is expected soon. Although DA and DR will continue to be revised on a biannual basis, this would probably be the final revision before the commission begins its deliberations with various stakeholders. Employees forums have sought the amalgamation

of the two components with basic salary before the next Pay Commission report is implemented. Under the 5th Pay Commission, the rule was to merge basic pay with DA once key allowance crosses 50 per cent. The government integrated DA with basic pay in 2004. However, this practice was discontinued under the subsequent 6th and 7th Pay Commissions.

Tributes Paid on Sarvai Papanna's Death Anniversary

Medchal-Malkajgiri, April 02(National Express) Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, along with Meerpet Housing Board Colony Division Corporation Prabhudas, paid homage to Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud by garlanding his statue at HB colony Main road on the occasion of his 315th death anniversary. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA highlighted Sarvai Papanna Goud as a symbol of Telangana's Bahujan self-respect and bravery. He emphasized that Papanna's contributions to political and social equality will be remembered in history. "This is a moment for everyone to recall his struggle, determination, and historical role. His fight for equal representation in governance, regardless of caste and religion, was remarkable," he stated. The MLA also underscored efforts to fulfill Papanna Goud's



vision by empowering thousands of Dalit and Bahujan leaders in Telangana. The event saw the participation of former MLA NVSS Prabhakar, former corporator Srinivas Reddy, BJP division president Ram Pradeep, Congress

division president Polepaka Anjaiah, Electricity Bc employees Union General Secretary Muthyam Venkanna Goud, BC youth president Ananthula Rammurthy Goud, podupunoori Mallesh Goud, bhupal Goud, Chandraiah Goud, ettaiah

Goud, Suresh Goud, Naveen Goud, Ashok Goud, Anjaiah Goud, Balraj Goud, Satish Goud, Venkataiah Goud, Sailu Goud, Goud JAC Co Convenor Muthyam Mukesh Goud, Das Goud Laxminarayana Goud community leaders who paid their respects.

UP Student, Denied Chance To Sit For Exam Over Fees, Dies by Suicide: Cops

Pratapgarh: A Class 9 student was found hanging in her room in Uttar Pradesh's Pratapgarh district after she was allegedly denied permission to appear for her annual exam and humiliated over unpaid fees by her college administration, police said. According to a complaint filed by her mother Poonam Devi, Riya

Prajapati (17), a student at Kamala Sharan Yadav Inter College, was not given her admit card due to outstanding fees of Rs 800, they said. She alleged that her daughter was humiliated by college manager Santosh Kumar Yadav, principal Rajkumar Yadav, staff member Deepak Saroj, peon Dhaniram, and a teacher,

who is yet to be identified, when she went to appear for the exam on Saturday, a police officer said. The girl was not allowed to sit for the exam and was asked to return home. Additional Superintendent of Police (East) Durgesh Kumar Singh said, citing the complaint. Hurt by the humiliation,

Riya returned home and died by hanging herself in a room, police said. The complainant also alleged that the college staff threatened to ruin her daughter's future, leading her to commit suicide, they added. A case has been registered, and an investigation is underway. The body has been sent for post-mortem, police

"Nothing Really Matters Anymore": Fans Upset Over Studio Ghibli-Style AI Art



dio Ghibli art created using OpenAI's latest text-to-image model, which is available only through ChatGPT's paid version. But not everyone was impressed, with one X user asking if they "truly value art so little that it's just a filter for your profile pic?" The person urged them to rather pay the artist and "make something real." Another person commented, "People act like this is a good thing but all the soul has been sucked out of society, we really are at the peak, nothing really matters anymore." Not just that, several people pointed out how the AI tool was being used to generate controversial studio Ghibli-style AI art of events such as the 9/11 attack on the US in 2001 as well as the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. "With #Ghibli style even scary events look like cozy art," one X user wrote, sharing an AI-generated image of the attack on the Twin Towers. Another user shared how people were "celebrating" Babri Masjid's demolition using the AI tool. The assassination attempt on US President Donald Trump at an election rally last year was also among the AI images shared by some users. **Copyright concerns** The viral trend has also led to ethical concerns about AI tools trained over copyrighted creative works, The Associated Press reported. OpenAI has encouraged the 'Ghiblification' experiments on the internet, with its CEO Sam Altman changing his X profile picture into a Ghibli-style portrait. "The gpt-4o update is GOOD," he said in a post. The company, which faces copyright lawsuits over its flagship chatbot, said its latest tool was taking a "conservative approach" to mimic the aesthetics of the individual artists. It claims to have added a "refusal which triggers when a user attempts to generate an image in the style of a living artist". Still, it has permitted "broader studio styles" that have been used widely to generate "truly delightful and inspired original fan creations." **What Hayao Miyazaki said about AI** As people went about reimagining themselves in Studio Ghibli world, an old video of its co-founder Hayao Miyazaki went viral. In the clip, the renowned filmmaker, known for masterpieces such as Spirited Away and My Neighbor Totoro, said the AI would not understand the real feelings of humans, adding it was an "insult to life itself". "I can't watch this stuff and find [it] interesting. Whoever creates this stuff has no idea what pain is whatsoever. I am utterly disgusted. If you really want to make creepy stuff, you can go ahead and do it. I would never wish to incorporate this technology into my work at all," Mr Miyazaki told FarOut Magazine. "I strongly feel that this is an insult to life itself," he added.

Trader's Nose Chopped Off In Karnataka's Belagavi In Fight Over Shop Setup

Belagavi: A dispute over setting up a shop on a pavement turned violent when one trader's nose was chopped off in Karnataka's Belagavi. Sufiyan Pathan, 42, wanted to set up his shop in the city's Khade Bazaar's Khanjar Galli, when disagreement from another person led to a heated argument. The accused Ayan Desai then took out a knife and chopped Sufiyan's nose. A man identified as Sameer Pathan sustained injuries during the altercation. Sufiyan is currently undergoing treatment at Belagavi's



BIMS Hospital. The police has registered a case and launched a search for Desai.

Kapil Dev, Pranav Adani Attend Launch Of Adani-PGTI Golf Training Academy In Ahmedabad

New Delhi/Ahmedabad: Adani Enterprises Director Pranav Adani and former India cricketer and 1983 World Cup winning captain, Kapil Dev, today attended the Adani-PGTI golf training academy launch at Belvedere Golf & Country Club in Ahmedabad. Mr Dev, the President of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) - the controlling body for professional golf in India - met golfers at the club in Ahmedabad. Mr Adani wore the golfer's cap and was putting on the greens with the ball going in the hole in one stroke. Meanwhile, the former India captain played a perfect golf shot. The Adani Group is set to enter Indian professional golf with the launch of 'Adani Invitational Golf Championship 2025', in partnership with the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI). The partnership also extends to the establishment of the golf training academy at the Belved-



ere club. The group said the "Initiative intends to pro-

mote and broaden golf's accessibility and elevate its status as a mainstream

sport, and also to cultivate the next generation of global champions from India.

"Anti-India Rhetoric": BJP As Mamata Banerjee Differs On Economy Prediction

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, during her official visit to the United Kingdom, disagreed with a prediction that India would become the world's largest economy by 2060, drawing flak from the BJP, which accused her of tarnishing the nation's image on foreign soil. Mamata Banerjee made the remarks during a conversation at Kellogg College, Oxford University. The interviewer mentioned that India had already overtaken the UK to become the fifth-largest economy and was projected to become the third-largest soon, with predictions indicating that the south Asian nation would top the global economic rankings by 2060. In response, Mamata Banerjee said, "I will differ from that. There are so many things about which I should not



speak here... internal and external affairs matters... I cannot disclose. I have some other opinions." She went on to explain, "Because every country is facing trouble after COVID-19, and with the turmoil going on in the world... if an economic war-like situation is underway in the world, how do we expect that we will gain? Let us hope for the gain, we can only hope. It is our dream to see my country our best. But it depends..." BJP leaders

criticised the Trinamool Congress supremo's remarks, accusing her of tarnishing India's reputation on foreign soil. Union minister and BJP's state unit president Sukanta Majumdar expressed his disapproval, calling her response an "insult" to the office she holds. "India has surpassed the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy, a moment of pride for every Indian! Yet, Mamata Banerjee is tarnishing India's reputation on

foreign soil." Her anti-India rhetoric is not only shameful for every Indian but also an insult to the constitutional office she holds. It is evident that you have failed as a chief minister, but do you even hesitate to call yourself an Indian? @MamataOfficial. Disrespecting the nation on foreign soil is equivalent to openly opposing India," Mr Majumdar wrote on X. The BJP's IT Cell head, Amit Malviya, also criticised Mamata Banerjee's stance, sharing a video clip of her comments on X. "West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has a problem with India becoming the world's largest economy. This is truly shameful. She is a disgrace to the constitutional office she holds. Who behaves like this on foreign soil?" Mr Malviya wrote.

High Court Grants Fresh Bail To Asaram For 3 Months On Medical Grounds

Ahmedabad: The Gujarat High Court on Friday granted fresh temporary bail for three months to self-styled godman Asaram, who is serving life imprisonment in a rape case, on medical grounds following a split verdict. The Supreme Court had on January 7 granted interim bail to Asaram till March 31 in this case registered by the Gujarat police. At present, he is undergoing ayurvedic treatment in Jodhpur, Rajasthan. As the three-month period was coming to an end on Monday, his lawyers moved the high court seeking bail for another three months, starting from April 1. The matter came up before a division bench of Justice Ilesh J Vora and Justice Sandeep Bhatt earlier in the day. After hearing both sides, the bench gave a split verdict as Justice Vora granted him bail while Justice Bhatt expressed a dissenting view and dismissed the application. The matter was then listed before a third judge, Justice A S Suphia, in the afternoon. His lawyer senior advocate Shalin Mehta argued that 86-year-



old Asaram was suffering from heart and kidney ailments, and the only treatment available to him was ayurvedic 'panc hakarma'. The treatment at a Jodhpur-based ayurvedic facility had only just begun and would take another three months, the lawyer said. The SC, while passing the bail order in January, had given liberty to Asaram to approach the Gujarat HC for any relief on medical grounds after March 31, he pointed out. After getting relief here, his client will have to approach the Rajasthan High Court to get bail in another case, ad-

vocate Mehta said, adding that otherwise Asaram will have to go behind bars in Jodhpur on April 1. Advocate Hardik Dave, representing the Gujarat government, argued that though the state was not against Asaram getting treatment, the HC needed to verify if he really needed it. After going through the documents on record, Justice Suphia granted Asaram bail for three months, noting that he had not fully recovered yet, and had not misused his previous bail. After the Supreme Court on January 7 granted interim

bail to Asaram in the case of rape registered by the Gujarat police, the Rajasthan High Court granted him interim bail in the Jodhpur rape case. He was released late on the night of January 14. Asaram's interim bail marks a temporary release after spending more than 11 years in jail. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in April 2018 for raping a girl at his ashram in Jodhpur in 2013. In 2023, Asaram was convicted by a court in Gujarat for raping a woman disciple at his ashram in Motera area of Ahmedabad.

Pregnant Woman Loses Child As MP Hospital Refuses Admission, Probe Ordered



Ratlam: An inquiry was ordered after a pregnant woman in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district was allegedly turned away twice from a health centre and her newborn died after she delivered hours later while being rushed to the facility on a hand-cart by her husband. The incident took place in Sailana town in the intervening night of March 23 and 24, officials said. The video of the man taking his

wife to the hospital for a third time went viral on social media. "At 9am on March 23, Krishna Gwala, a resident of Kalika Mata Mandir Road in Sailana, took his wife Neetu to the community health centre where nurse Chetna Charel sent them away saying the delivery would take place after two-three days. At 1 am, she again experienced labour pains and was rushed to the hospital," said Sailana Sub

Divisional Magistrate Manish Jain. "This time nurse Gayatri Patidar refused to admit Neetu post examination saying delivery would be after 15 more hours. The couple returned home. After she felt labour pains, her husband took her to hospital in a hand-cart for the third time," he said quoting the complaint. She delivered at 3am enroute but was later told by health authorities that the newborn had died. "Gwala has

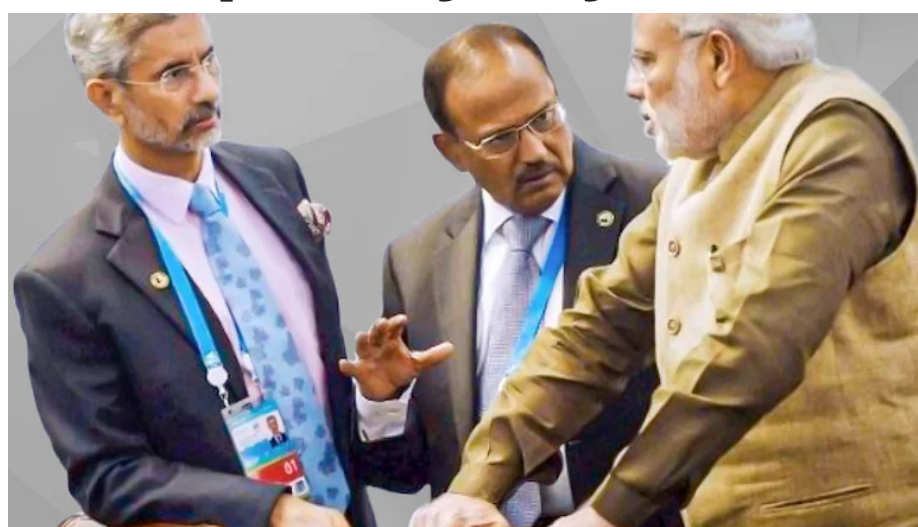
blamed the hospital management for the death of the child and has demanded action. A thorough probe will be conducted into this incident," Mr Jain said.

Dr MS Sagar, the in charge CMHO of the district hospital, said Collector Rajesh Batham ordered an inquiry into the death of the newborn. "The investigation at the district level found negligence in duty. A show cause notice has been issued to Sailana Block Medical Officer (BMO) Dr PC Koli. A letter has been sent to the state Commissioner of Health Services seeking action against on duty doctor Shailesh Dange," he said. Nursing officer Chetna Charel has been suspended with immediate effect while services of NHM contract nursing officer Gayatri Patidar has been terminated, he said.

10,000 Indians Jailed Abroad Freed In A Decade - How Diplomacy Played A Part

New Delhi: Going to jail is a nightmarish thought for most people, but being imprisoned in another country can be a hellish experience. Like nationals of many other countries, thousands of Indians too, have been languishing in prisons overseas - some for a few years, some for decades. Their voices and appeals unheard because of the lack of proximity to their home country. After being elected the first time in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wanted this situation to be tackled on priority by the Ministry of External Affairs. At the time, the number of Indians in jails abroad had well exceeded 10,000. Many of those prisoners were in jail for petty reasons - like fishermen, who unknowingly ventured into the territorial waters of a neighbouring nation, or villagers who inadvertently crossed an unmarked border post, or travellers who accidentally overstayed their visa limit. Over the last decade the Government of India has stepped up efforts to bring back such Indian nationals and allow them a fresh start. While the Ministry of External Affairs, through diplomacy and its network of embassies and consulates, has helped secure the release of many such individuals, some tougher negotiations has seen a direct involvement by the prime minister, who, over his three terms so far, has built on a rapport with global leaders far and wide.

The freedom of nearly 10,000 Indian nationals



have been secured so far since 2014, a release by the Ministry of External Affairs has said. "The latest instance is the pardon of 500 Indian prisoners in UAE," the foreign ministry said, adding that "It reflects the strong bilateral ties between India and UAE". "Since 2014, the prime minister has prioritised the welfare of Indian citizens abroad, ensuring the safe return of nearly 10,000 Indian nationals imprisoned abroad through diplomatic negotiations and high-level interventions," the statement read. It highlighted some key instances where several countries agreed to release or pardon Indian nationals due to diplomatic efforts: UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - Between 2022 and 2025, each year UAE has pardoned hundreds of Indian prisoners, including some during the holy month of Ramzan or the festival of Eid. In 2022, UAE released 639 Indian prisoners. In 2023, the count went beyond 700. In 2024 944, and

in 2025, it has been 500 so far.

SAUDI ARABIA - In 2019, during his visit to India, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had ordered the release of 850 Indian prisoners. QATAR - In a big diplomatic victory for New Delhi, after much negotiations, including at the highest levels, Qatar agreed to the release of 8 Indian Navy veterans who were facing a death penalty. Most of them were subsequently allowed to return to India. IRAN - In 2023 and 2024, Iran released 43 and 77 Indian nationals respectively from its jails. In 2023, out of the 43, 12 were fishermen. BAHRAIN - As a gesture of friendship and kindness, the Government of Bahrain decided to release 250 Indians who were in prison in 2019. They were freed during PM Modi's visit to the country that year. KUWAIT - In 2017, after several rounds of talks via diplomatic channels, the Emir of Kuwait agreed to release 22 Indian nationals

and reduce the sentences for 97 others.

SRILANKA - After regular interventions and mediation via diplomatic channels, Sri Lanka has, on many occasions, released Indian fishermen who accidentally and unknowingly cross into its territorial waters. Since 2014, a total of 3,697 Indian fishermen have been released by Sri Lanka.

PAKISTAN - Since 2014, after repeated and relentless diplomatic efforts with Islamabad, New Delhi has managed the release of 2,639 fishermen and 71 civilian prisoners.

Emphasising on the Government of India's "unwavering commitment" to protecting Indian citizens abroad, the statement said that "A lot of these breakthroughs were made possible due to the personal rapport PM Modi has build with global leaders." Over the last decade, India's global diplomatic and economic stature has grown significantly, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

Arrested Assam Journalist Granted Bail In Second Case

Guwahati: Arrested Assam journalist Dilwar Hussain Mozumder was granted bail by a court on Friday, a day after he was re-arrested in a second case immediately after his release on bail in the first case filed by a bank official when he had gone to cover a protest against financial irregularities in the institution.

Mr Mozumder was granted bail by the First Class Judicial Magistrate Hira Jyoti Das on a surety of Rs 20,000. The Chief Reporter of the digital portal 'The Crosscurrent' will, however, stay in judicial custody for the night as it was late for the formalities to be completed.

His lawyers said that the formalities for furnishing the bond will be done on Saturday. Mr Mozumder was rearrested in a case filed by the managing director of the Assam Cooperative Apex Bank Limited D Saikia on Tuesday, which was not disclosed to his family and lawyers earlier, for allegedly attempting to steal valuable bank documents.

The complainant had alleged that when the bank employees noticed the accused, they raised an alarm, causing the accused to flee the scene. During the incident, the accused disturbed the bank's operations, threatened the employees, and made caste-based derogatory remarks towards the security guard, who belongs to the ST community, and a case was registered in the Panbazar police station for criminal trespass, mischief causing loss or damage



criminal intimidation," robbery" as a type of theft or extortion involving threats or actual harm and voluntarily causing hurt under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The police took Mr Mozumder to his residence twice in the morning and seized some documents. Mr Mozumder was initially arrested on Tuesday midnight after being detained for over nine hours by the police after he had questioned the managing director of the Assam Cooperative Apex Bank Limited about alleged financial irregularities in the institution during a protest programme here by the students' wing of a political party.

Mr Mozumder, who is also the assistant general secretary of the Gauhati Press Club, was first arrested under Section 351(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for criminal intimidation or the act of threatening someone to harm them or force them to do something, read with relevant sections of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled

Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. He was granted bail for a surety of Rs 20,000 but was not released the same day as the formalities could not be completed and he was sent to judicial custody.

His lawyers waited the whole day on Thursday to complete the formalities for his release but when the bond was furnished, police rearrested Mr Mozumder in connection with the second case and whisked him away from Guwahati Central Jail to Panbazar police station. The Gauhati Press Club (GPC), in an emergent executive meeting, decided to protest Mr Mozumder's arrest and all journalists will wear black badges at their workplaces while performing their duties from Friday to Sunday. It was also decided that a general meeting of all journalists will be held to discuss the issue of 'Safety of Journalists' and a memorandum will be prepared to submit to appropriate authorities, according to a GPC statement.

The Press Club of India (PCI), in a statement, expressed 'shock' at the re-arrest of the senior digital

media journalist and also concern that an attempt was made to shift the attention from the core issue - that of preventing a journalist from carrying out his official duty which is a grave infringement of the freedom of press guaranteed under Article 19 (1) (A) of the Constitution.

The Assam Women Journalists' Forum (AWJF) also condemned the rearrest of Mr Mozumder in a second case after he was granted bail in the first by a Gauhati court following his arrest on Tuesday midnight. The AWJF expressed concern that a narrative is being used to undermine journalists who might not fit into the government's definition of a 'legitimate' journalist, with some sections also attempting to malign certain journalists, including women media persons, a statement issued by the forum said. The Delhi Union of Journalists (DUJ) also condemned the "vindictive arrest and re-arrest" of Mozumder and congratulated Assam journalists for organising protests demanding his release.

National Express

Voice of the Republic - Mirror of the People

Thursday, April 3, 2025

Do NOT cut trees Worse than murder

The Supreme Court has ruled that cutting down trees is worse than killing people and has imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh for every tree cut down. The Taj Trapezium Zone has been set up to prevent illegal cutting of trees in an area of 77,10,400 km around the Taj Mahal to protect it from pollution. 454 trees were cut down illegally in Dalmia Farms in Mathura Vrindavan within its limits. The Supreme Court has rejected the petition filed by Shisha Shankar Agarwal, who is responsible for cutting down these trees. It expressed its anger that there should be no mercy in cases of harming the environment. It warned that it would take at least 100 years to restore the greenery of the 454 trees that were cut down. This verdict is a warning to the current world, where forests are being cut down haphazardly in the name of projects. Forests are like the lungs of the earth. They not only clean the air, but also maintain the climate balance. According to a 2010 United Nations estimate, 16 million tons of forests are being destroyed worldwide every year. This is equivalent to the size of the state of Michigan in the United States. 30 million acres of forests are being destroyed across the country. Generally, a tree absorbs 1.47 kg of carbon dioxide and provides 1.07 kg of oxygen to produce one kg of new wood. An acre of trees provides enough oxygen for 18 people to last a lifetime. Professor Wangari Maatham won the Nobel Prize in 2004 for her campaign to plant millions of trees in Africa. Environmental scientists say that bamboo forests play a key role in absorbing carbon dioxide. A single Bima bamboo plant absorbs 500 kg of carbon dioxide and releases 350 kg of oxygen in a year. Only when 33 percent of the earth is covered in forests can we breathe air. In 1739, the residents of Philadelphia, led by Benjamin Franklin, launched a movement to eliminate waste and gave birth to the environmental movement, and in 1949, an American environmentalist named Altolio Pauld, through his writings, highlighted the problems faced by society due to environmental pollution. The first step towards environmentalism was taken in 1970 by an illiterate woman named Chandi Prasad Bitta, who started a protest against deforestation in a village called Gopatreshwar in Garhwal district of Uttaranchal, by mobilizing the people of her village. Later, the Chipko movement was led by S. Bahuguna for the protection of forests in North India. The Chipko movement created awareness among women. Similar to the Chipko movement, Norwegian environmentalist Wangari Maathai launched the Greenbelt movement and created awareness among women for 30 years and planted 3 crore saplings. There are many non-governmental organizations working for environmental protection in the country. It is very important to protect trees and forests. Trees protect the soil. They block sunlight.

They protect the soil from becoming dry and desert. They absorb carbon dioxide and prevent global warming. They control floods. They help increase groundwater. Due to the reduction in the area of forests, there are many changes in the environment due to the reduction in rainfall. We do not even have 13 percent of the area of forests that should be 33 percent. If we calculate the value of the services provided by a 50-year-old tree, we will be able to see the value of trees. We will be able to know the indirect benefits. In 50 years, a tree produces 2.50 lakhs worth of oxygen. It is said that the value of the benefits provided by birds, small animals, insects is worth 2.50 lakhs. Controlling humidity in the air and cleaning water provides a benefit worth 3 lakhs.

Cutting a tree causes a loss of Rs. 15.70 lakhs to the ecological balance. In total, the real value of a tree is Rs. 16 lakhs. In 2012, a rule was issued by the government that trees older than 50 years should not be cut to maintain the ecological balance. The Tree Protection Act came into force in the country in 1994. Edicts say that Ashoka planted trees as early as 268 BC. Environmentalists say that if farmers grow mulberry, aegisa, maddi, tumma, neem, neredu, banyan and ravi trees on the waste lands of their fields, the temperature will drop by 3 to 4 degrees Celsius. It is necessary to remember the advice of scientist APJ Kalam that every person should plant ten trees and take care of them so that they grow and grow, and that whatever we do to the environment, we get back from the environment.

Telangana government says 400 acres belong to State, not University of Hyderabad

Hyderabad: Amidst the ongoing row over the proposed auction of 400 acres by the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC), the State government continued to claim that the 400 acres at Kancha Gachibowli belonged to the State and not the University of Hyderabad. In a statement released by the Chief Minister's Office, in which the version of the TGIIC was added, the government claimed that development works and auction of the land would not affect the ecosystem, including the rocks. No lake existed in the land allotted for development, it said, also claiming that it had legally proved the ownership of the land in the court. The land, which was allotted to a private company 21 years ago, was acquired through a legal battle, it said. The statement read that in 2004, the then State government in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh had allotted the land to a private company. The Congress government acquired the ownership of the land by legally winning the case in the Supreme Court. Disputes, if any, created on the ownership of land would be contempt of the court, the statement said. "A survey report disclosed that the University of Hyderabad did not own even a single inch of land. No lake was found in the development plan being undertaken by the government in the particular land parcel. The envisaged new development plan will not damage the existing rock formation in the land," the statement said. Claiming that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was giving top priority to sustain-



able development of the local area and conservation of the environment in every plan, the CMO's statement alleged that some political leaders and realty groups were opposing the project and misleading the students for their vested interests. Alleging that there were "misleading stories published in some media outlets" regarding ownership of the 400 acres of land in survey no. 25 in Kancha Gachibowli village, it quoted the TGIIC as saying that the land was allotted in 2004 to IMG Academies Bharat Private Limited for development of sports facilities. On November 21, 2006, the State government cancelled the allotment of land to IMG Academies Bharat Private Limited for not commencing the project. The same land was allotted to the AP Youth Advancement, Tourism and Cultural Department. However, IMG Academies India Private Limited filed a Writ Petition in

the High Court in 2006 regarding the allotment of the land. This legal battle continued for a long time and the High Court gave orders in favour of the government on March 7, 2024. But the IMG Academies India Private Limited challenged the High Court order in Supreme Court. The State government fought against the petition. On May 3, 2024, the Supreme Court dismissed the petition filed by IMG Academies. Complying with the court orders, the government took the possession of 400 acres of land. Subsequently, on the request of TGIIC, the Deputy Collector and Tahsildar of Serilingampally Mandal confirmed that the 400 acres of land in survey number 25 at Kancha Gachibowli was owned by the government. The authorities suggested that the land should be acquired for development works without encroachment.

On June 19, 2024, the I&C

Department suggested the State Government to measure and transfer the rights of 400 acres of government land in Kancha Gachibowli based on the new policy for land allotment as per GOMS No. 571, Revenue (Assign-1) department, issued on September 14, 2022. Further, on June 19, 2024, the TGIIC submitted proposals to allocate 400 acres to them for setting up IT and other projects and also requested permission to acquire the land. Accordingly, on June 24, 2024, the State Principal Secretary to Revenue Department issued orders transferring the rights of 400 acres of government land in Survey No. 25, Kancha Gachibowli village, Serilingampally Mandal, Rangareddy district to TGIIC. "Thus, the 400 acres of land are in the possession of the government. The revenue records clearly said the land was not forest land as reported in a section of the media

but rather owned by the government," the statement added. As per the TGIIC version, the TGIIC Cyberabad Zonal Manager on July 04, 2024, wrote a letter to the Registrar of University of Hyderabad, requesting cooperation in identifying the common boundaries of the 400 acres of land allotted to the Corporation. The TGIIC officials along with a team met the Registrar of University of Hyderabad on July 7, 2024 and explained their project proposals to him. On July 19, 2024, with the consent of the University of Hyderabad Registrar, the survey was conducted in the presence of the University officials, University Registrar, University Engineer, University Executive Engineer, Revenue officials, Revenue Inspector, and Mandal Surveyor. The officials finalised the boundaries the same day. "The Buffalo Lake and Peacock Lake are not in the limits of 400 acres, which are being developed by the TGIIC. False reports are published in a section of media on this particular issue," it claimed, adding that after examining the survey, the TGIIC prepared a plan to preserve the famous Mushroom rock and other rock formations as green spaces in its layout. Later, the Corporation decided to prepare a comprehensive Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for sustainable development in the area in the master plan, it said. The statement asserts that the TGIIC had not encroached upon the lands of the University of Hyderabad and had not damaged any of the existing water resources (lakes) and rock formations.

Arrangements underway for BRS silver jubilee celebrations, public meeting on April 27

Hyderabad: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) is leaving no stone unturned to make its silver jubilee celebrations a grand spectacle. The party has finalised Elkathurthy in Hanamkonda district as the venue for the massive public meeting on April 27, where a staggering 10 lakh people are expected to gather. With weeks of preparation in full swing, all eyes are now on April 27. BRS working president KT Rama Rao, who already chaired meetings with the party cadre in two erstwhile districts, is scheduled to hold around eight more meetings to discuss the arrangements for the public meeting. A meeting of the top leaders is expected to be chaired by party chief K Chandrashekhar Rao this week, where separate committees will be appointed to oversee the arrangements including venue arrangements, route planning, security and logistics. Organising committees are being formed across Telangana, with coordination at the constituency level to ensure participation from all districts. After inspecting multiple locations, the party high command finalised Elkathurthy, located at the junction of NH-563 and NH-765DG, ensuring connectivity from all parts of

Telangana. The party leaders have already submitted a representation to the Kazipet ACP for security arrangements and traffic management. The meeting is aimed at showcasing the party's strength following its defeat in Assembly and Lok Sabha polls.

Over 1,213 acres have been secured for the event, with 154 acres allocated for the main venue, 1,059 acres designated for parking to accommodate around 50,000 vehicles, including RTC buses and private transport, ferrying people from all across the State. Farmers owning these lands have also been consulted, with no-objection approvals secured for utilising lands for the public meeting. With rising summer temperatures, the party leaders were instructed to prioritise public convenience. To tackle the scorching heat, BRS is ensuring supply of over 10 lakh water bottles and another 10 lakh buttermilk packets for attendees to prevent dehydration. Around 1,500 volunteers will be deployed for crowd management. Ambulances will be stationed along major highways – along Warangal-Karimnagar Highway and Siddipet-Elkathurthy Highway for medical emergencies.

Man lodges complaints against popular hotel in Secunderabad, alleges assault

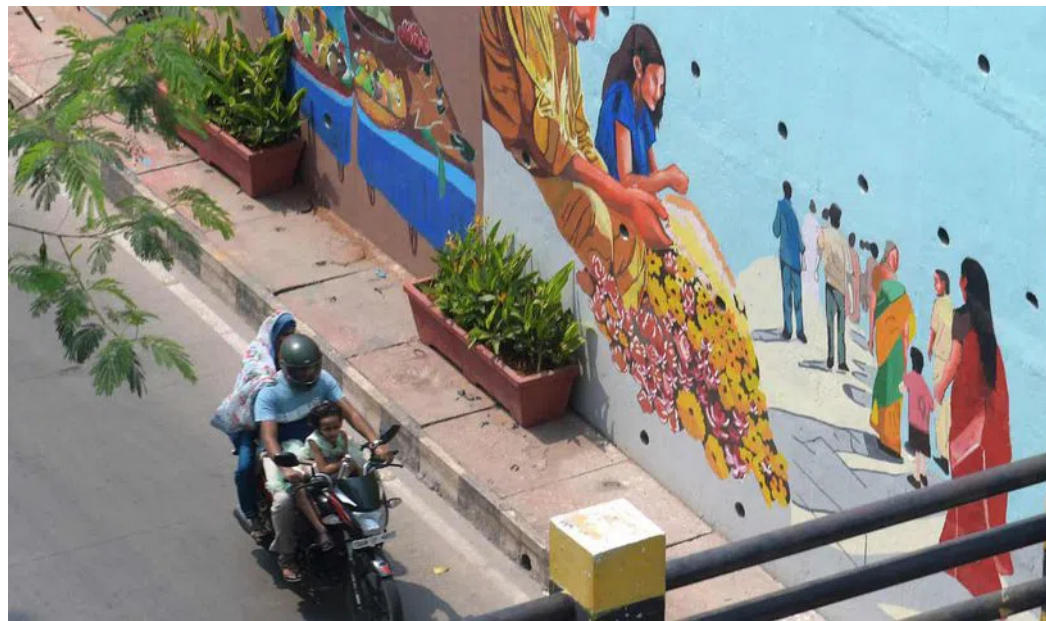
Hyderabad: A customer approached the Monda Market police alleging he was assaulted by the Alpha Hotel staff in Secunderabad.

Recently, the complainant Shripkhar Kumar from Shamirpet had come to Secunderabad on a personal work. After completing the work, he went to Alpha Hotel bakery section on the ground floor to buy a cake for his daughter's birthday.

As per available information, the staff at the bakery section had showed him a cake and Shekhar raised a doubt of its freshness, quality and preparation time. This, allegedly did not go down well with the hotel staff who picked up an argument with Shekhar and ended up abusing and assaulting him.

Based on a complaint, the Monda Market police booked a case and are investigating.

Telangana to experience relief from intense heat as temperatures all set to drop



Hyderabad: Ending the prolonged and intense spell of heat, people in Hyderabad and Telangana districts can expect a temporary reprieve with significant temperature drops and rain this week. Forecast by IMD-Hyderabad, maximum temperatures are expected to drop below 36 degrees Celsius in most of districts in Telangana State. Weather is expected to remain unchanged and dry. However, a gradual temperature drop of 2 to 4 degrees Celsius is forecast across Telangana from Wednesday to Saturday, according to IMD-Hyderabad.

IMD-Hyderabad has issued a yellow alert for several Telangana districts on Wednesday. Thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds (40-50 kmph) are expected in isolated areas of Nizamabad, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Kamareddy, Mahabubnagar, Adilabad, Kumaram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Nirmal, Jagtial, and Rajanna Sircilla districts." For Thursday, an orange alert (high intensity) for thunderstorms accompanied with lightning, gusty winds (40-50 kmph) and hailstorms has been issued for Vikarabad, Mahabubnagar,

Wanaparthy, Narayanpet and Jogulamba Gadwal districts of Telangana State. On the same day (Thursday), a yellow alert of thunderstorm accompanied with lightning and gusty winds (40-50 kmph) has been issued for Nizamabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Kamareddy, Adilabad, Kumaram Bheem Asifabad, Nirmal, Nalgonda, Siddipet, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Nagar kurnool districts of Telangana. Similar yellow and orange alerts of heavy thunderstorms, hailstorms and gusty winds have been extended for Friday and Saturday by IMD-Hyderabad.

University of Hyderabad 13-year-old resident's open letter to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy

Hyderabad: In a heartfelt open letter to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on the State government's decision to auction 400 acres of land in Kancha Gachibowli, a 13-year-old University of Hyderabad (UoH) resident raised a powerful question: Who in their right mind would willingly destroy their lung spaces. Expressing concerns that air quality will be ravalling Delhi's if an environment like this vanishes, Janya Kaaveramma KC said these

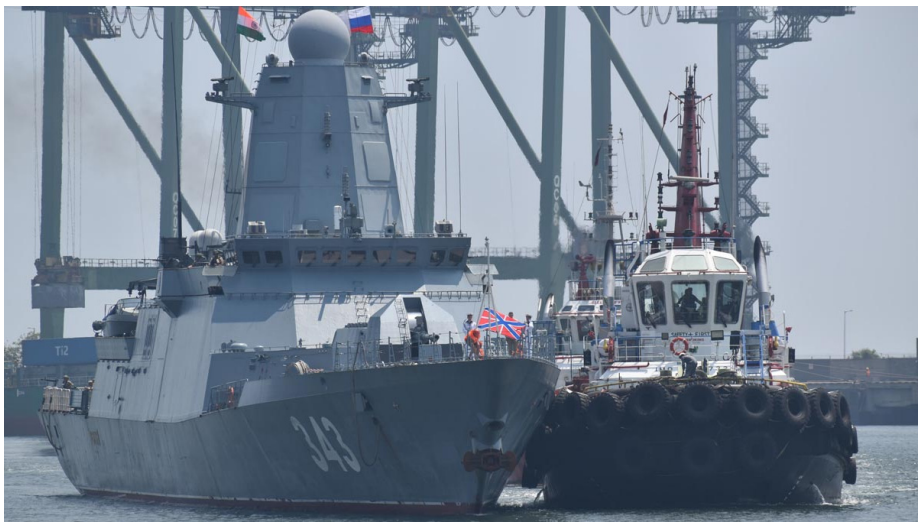
trees are lungs of Hyderabad. In the letter, she expressed puzzlement as to how the government, occupied with educated and experienced adults, was planning to auction 400 acres of biodiversity for money. Stating that she had the privilege of living in the nature filled university, Janya said the idea of the forest being destroyed was heart wrenching. "Growing up in this rapidly developing city, the university is the one haven of greenery still present in this

land of concrete. Every day, I see so many rare birds, insects, and reptiles just while walking on the road. I do not want them to be on the roads just because they have nowhere else to go," Janya said. Referring to New York city, hub of the world's finance and economy, that managed to thrive with 840 acres of forest land (Central Park) at its centre, Janya said if New York can, why cannot the State government protect and preserve its biodiversity.

Warships, missiles and manoeuvres: Russia, India set to flex naval might in Bay of Bengal

New Delhi: Russian Federation Naval ships Pechanga, Rezkii and Aldar Tsydenzhapov and Indian Navy ships Rana, Kuthar and Maritime patrol aircraft P81 are part of the 14th edition of the Indian-Russia bilateral naval exercise INDRA, taking place.

The harbour phase of the exercise will include the opening ceremony, subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs), reciprocal visits, sports events, and pre-sail briefings between personnel from both navies, while advanced naval drills, including tactical manoeuvres, live weapon firings, anti-air operations, underway replenishment, helicopter cross-deck landings and exchange of sea-riders will be part of the sea phase. The sea phase will take place in the Bay of Bengal, and the harbour phase in Chennai. These exercises and interactions aim to boost maritime cooperation, strengthen bridges of friendship, exchange best operational



practices and bolster diplomatic ties between the two nations. The joint manoeuvres offer "another opportunity to check the readiness for joint operations and address a broad range of issues," said Captain 1st Rank Aleksey Antsiferov who commands the Russian Pacific Fleet's warships. "Indra Navy is the format of the drills that allow for exchanging experience, sharpening the skills and practicing joint actions, establish-

ing contacts and bolstering strategic partnership between India and Russia for jointly countering military threats at sea," news agency TASS quoted him as saying. He clarified that the manoeuvres are not directed against any states and are not related to any changes in the military and political situation in the world. "Their basic goal is to maintain stability in the World Ocean where our fleets operate," he said and expressed confi-

dence that the drills will result in increased cooperation between the two navies. Since its inception in 2003, Exercise INDRA epitomises the long-term strategic relationship between the two Navies. The exercise has evolved into a symbol of maritime cooperation, showcasing the two nations' commitment to enhancing naval interoperability and operational synergy, the defence ministry said in a release.

Army Officer Charged For Allegedly Raping Cop On Pretext Of Marriage

Bhopal: An Army officer has been charged with raping a female constable of the Madhya Pradesh police posted in Bhopal city on the pretext of marriage in an incident dating back to 2012, police said. Varun Pratap Singh (48), a Lieutenant Colonel currently posted in Haldwani, Uttarakhand, was charged on Thursday under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) sections 69 (sexual intercourse by using deceitful means or making a false promise of marriage) and 351 (2) (criminal intimidation) on a complaint filed by the 42-year-old survivor, they said citing the first information report (FIR). The accused had threatened to harm the survivor if she filed a police complaint against him, it said. When contacted, Bhopal Police Women Security Assistant Commissioner Nidhi Saxena said the accused was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Army and "We have informed his unit (about the case)." "If he comes down for interrogation, then its fine, otherwise arrest procedure would



have to be followed," Saxena said. His alleged act of establishing physical relationship with the woman on the pretext of marriage and then renegeing on his promise falls under the definition of rape, the police officer explained. According to the complainant, a constable with the MP police in Bhopal, she first met Singh, who claimed he was a bachelor and posted at an Army canteen, in 2012. The woman claimed the Army officer called her to his place in Bhopal on December 25, 2012, and established

"consensual physical relations" with her after promising to marry her. In the complaint, the survivor stated that in 2013 she came to know that the Army officer was already married. When she confronted Singh over his marital status, he told her he was about to divorce his wife. After that he started delaying marriage with the survivor on some pretext or the other and cooked up stories like his parents were unwell, according to the FIR. On February 24, 2025, the survivor came

to know that the Army officer was in simultaneous relationships with other women whom also he had promised to marry, it said. When the police constable contacted Singh, currently posted with the Army Service Corps (Mechanized Transport) battalion and questioned him about his relationships, he started arguing and said he won't marry her now, said the FIR. "Varun told me that if I lodge a complaint, he will bump me off and hang me," the survivor stated in her complaint.

Tariffs Loom, Foreign Secretary Misri Speaks To US Deputy Secretary Of State

New Delhi: Days before US President Donald Trump's "tit-for-tat" tariff kicks in, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Friday spoke with US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau, focusing on the bilateral trade, including reduction of barriers to achieve a balanced trade relationship. Mr Misri and Landau also discussed the India-US cooperation in the areas of defence and migration and mobility.

The two officials "touched on the growing bilateral trade, defence and technology cooperation, and issues relating to mobility and migration", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. Mr Misri underlined the deepening convergence of India-US strategic interests, it said in a statement. Both sides agreed to remain engaged on matters of "mutual concern", the MEA said, without elaborating. US State Department Spokesperson Tammy Bruce said Mr Misri and Landau discussed "on-



going efforts to reduce barriers to achieve a fair and balanced bilateral trade relationship" and strengthen collaboration in defence and technology.

US Assistant Trade Representative Brendan Lynch is currently in India and holding talks with his Indian interlocutors on firming up a bilateral trade agreement (BTA). The talks are taking place days before Trump's reciprocal tariffs on the United States' trade partners kick in from April 2. In a

readout, Bruce said Mr Misri and Landau also discussed efforts to boost security and prosperity throughout the Indo-Pacific region. Landau thanked Mr Misri for "India's assistance in addressing illegal immigration to the United States and asked the Government of India for continued cooperation on this issue".

The MEA, in its statement, said both sides "agreed to remain engaged on matters of mutual concern". Congratulating

Deputy Secretary Landau on his recent confirmation by the US Senate, the foreign secretary underlined the deepening convergence of India-US strategic interests, it said. The two also touched on the growing bilateral trade, defence and technology cooperation, and issues relating to mobility and migration, it said. Mr Misri also extended an invitation to Landau to visit India at his earliest convenience, the MEA added.

Former HC judge Nirmal Yadav acquitted in 2008 cash-at-door case



Chandigarh: A special CBI court in Chandigarh on Saturday acquitted former Punjab and Haryana High Court judge Justice (Retd) Nirmal Yadav in the 2008 cash-at-judge's door case Court of Special CBI Judge Alka Malik had heard the final arguments in the case on Thursday and posted

the pronouncement of verdict for March 29.

On August 13, 2008, a packet containing Rs 15 lakh was wrongly delivered at the residence of Justice Nirmaljit Kaur, another sitting high court judge. It was alleged that the cash was meant for Justice Nirmal Yadav as a bribe to influ-

ence a property deal. An FIR was filed on August 16, 2008, but the UT administration transferred the case to the CBI on August 28, 2008. In November 2010, the Punjab and Haryana High Court granted permission to prosecute Justice Yadav, which was approved by the President in the following

year. The CBI filed a chargesheet soon after the President's approval.

There were a total five accused in the case, one of whom died during the trial. "I have not committed any crime, and there is nothing incriminating found during the entire trial against me," Justice Yadav had said in her final arguments. The verdict comes amid a raging controversy over the recovery of a huge stack of cash at the residence of Delhi High Court judge Justice Yashant Varma. The Supreme Court has transferred Justice Varma to his parent Allahabad High Court and constituted a three-member committee to probe the allegations against him. The apex court has directed the Allahabad High Court not to assign any judicial work for now to Justice Varma.

Explained: Why Delhi police couldn't register criminal case against Justice Yashwant Varma over cash recovery row?

New Delhi: The fire at the residence of then Delhi High Court Judge Justice Yashwant Varma on March 14 has left several questions unanswered, including why even after two weeks, there is no police action in the case and no FIR as yet. Justice Varma was recently transferred to Allahabad High Court, however, no judicial work has been assigned to him.

Under the Constitution, only the president and governors are granted immunity from criminal prosecution. But then, there are other provisions that put a check on police action against a sitting High Court or Supreme Court judge. The police cannot slap an FIR on a sitting High Court or Supreme Court judge owing to a 1991 Supreme Court ruling which mandates the chief justice of India must grant permission for police to proceed further. It's a safeguard to stop frivolous cases from clogging the courts or targeting judges unfairly. In the 1991 case, a complaint was made to the CBI against K. Veeraswami, a former High Court chief justice, following which a case was registered

against him under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act 1947. A five-judge constitution bench had then ruled, "Due regard must be given by the government to the opinion expressed by the chief justice. If the chief justice is of the opinion that it is not a fit case for proceeding under the Act, the case shall not be registered. If the CJI himself is the person against whom the allegations of criminal misconduct are received, the government shall then consult any other judge or judges of the Supreme Court." In another case, while dealing with allegations of sexual harassment, the top court in 2014 laid down an in-house procedure to probe allegations against a judge of constitutional courts. "If the committee has concluded that there is substance in the allegations for initiation of proceedings for the removal of the judge concerned, the CJI shall proceed as under: The judge concerned will be advised, by the CJI, to resign or to seek voluntary retirement; in case the judge concerned does not accept the advice of the CJI, the CJI would require the



chief justice of the High Court concerned, not to allocate any judicial work to the judge concerned," the guidelines stated. "If the judge concerned did not abide by the advice of the CJI to resign, the CJI would intimate the president and the prime minister about the findings of the committee, warranting initiation of impeachment." The in-house process in Justice Varma's case is underway but it operates behind closed doors. Although the Supreme Court released initial documents—an unprecedented move—the committee's deliberations and final report remain secret unless made public by the CJI. At present, the in-house committee is analyzing CCTV footage, interviewing staff, and assessing forensic evi-

dence, with its members visiting Varma's Delhi residence on March 25. The Supreme Court has directed Varma to preserve his phone data and sought security records from the past six months, indicating a thorough probe. It is reliably learnt that in Justice Varma's case, the Delhi police commissioner apprised the chief justice of the findings of the police control room and fire department, including photographs and videos of the cash allegedly found in the storeroom of his official residence. But, an FIR can be registered in the case only when the government—in this case the Union law ministry—consults the CJI on the issue and the latter deems it a case for police investigation.

65-Year-Old Man Beheaded, Torso Burnt During 'Black Magic' In Bihar: Cops

Aurangabad: A 65-year-old man was allegedly killed and his torso was burnt in a 'Holika Dahan' fire as part of 'black magic' rituals in Bihar's Aurangabad district, a police officer said. The deceased has been identified as Yugal Yadav (65), he said. Police have arrested four persons, including a relative of a 'tantric', in connection with the incident, the officer said on Friday, adding that the tantric is absconding.

Aurangabad Superintendent of Police (SP) Ambrish Rahul told reporters on Friday, "Madanpur police station on March 13 received a missing complaint about Yugal Yadav, a resident of Gulab Bigha village. A case was registered and a special investigation team was formed by the police to trace him. During the investigation, officials came to know about the discovery of human bones from the ashes of a Holika Dahan fire in the neighbouring village of Banger." Officials inspected the site and



found charred human bones and Yugal's slippers from there. A dog squad was immediately deployed which took the investigators to the house of Ramashish Rikyasana 'tantric'. While Ramashish was not present at the house, his relative, Dharmendra, was taken into custody as he gave conflicting statements about the whereabouts of the former, said the SP.

"During interrogation, Dharmendra confessed that he and others had kid-

napped and beheaded Yugal as a part of black magic rituals. His torso was then burnt in the Holika Dahan fire. Based on Dharmendra's statement, police recovered the victim's severed head from a nearby field," said the SP. The official said "Ramashish Rikyasana had conducted the ritual on behalf of Sudhir Paswan, who was seeking a child. Dharmendra also admitted that the group had earlier sacrificed a teenager, whose body was dumped in a well

in the same locality." A total of four people, including Sudhir Paswan, Dharmendra and two others, have been arrested, police said. A minor boy has also been taken into custody in connection with the incident, police said. "Police have seized the weapon of offence and sent the recovered human bones for scientific tests, including DNA examination," said the SP. A manhunt has been launched to nab tantric Ramashish Rikyasana, he added.

Ambuja Cements Appoints Vinod Bahety As CEO, Ajay Kapur As Managing Director

New Delhi: Ambuja Cements, part of Adani Group, in a top-level reshuffle, has appointed Vinod Bahety as its new CEO and designated the incumbent Ajay Kapur as the managing director. The board of Ambuja Cements has approved the "Appointment of Vinod Bahety as Additional Director and Whole-time Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Company for a term of three years", the company said in a regulatory filing. Besides, Ambuja Cements, the second largest cement producer in the country, has also announced the appointment of Rakesh Tiwary as Chief Financial Officer of the company. The board also approved the appointment of Praveen Garg as a Non-Executive Independent director on the Board of the Company for three years.



All these changes are going to be effective from April 1, 2025, the filing said. Meanwhile, ACC, a step-down subsidiary of Ambuja Cement, also informed the cessation of Ajay Kapur as its whole-time director and CEO. The board of ACC also approved the appointment of Vinod Bahety as Additional Director and whole-

time director and CEO of the company for three years from April 1, 2025. Bahety is currently the Chief Financial Officer of Cement business since September 16, 2022. He has more than 25 years of experience in various leadership positions in the manufacturing and finance industries. Prior to joining as the CFO of Ce-

ment business, he served as the Group Head for Merger & Acquisition at Adani Group. Billionaire Gautam Adani-led Adani Group entered into the cement business in September 2022 after acquiring Ambuja Cement from Swiss firm Holcim for cash proceeds of USD 6.4 billion (about Rs 51,000 crore).

Delhi Minister Refutes Arvind Kejriwal's Claims On Power Outage

New Delhi: Delhi Power Minister Ashish Sood strongly refuted Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convenor Arvind Kejriwal's claims about power cuts in the national capital's Jagatpur Extension area. He labelled Mr Kejriwal's allegations as exaggerated and politically motivated. Mr Sood assured that electricity in the area has improved, describing the reported outages as minor incidents rather than prolonged interruptions. Mr Sood challenged Mr Kejriwal's statements on social media, noting that data from the past year shows 21,597 power cuts lasting an hour or more -- an average of 59 outages per day. He also dismissed Mr Kejriwal's claims of no power cuts over the last decade as misleading, accusing him of spreading false information. To back his argument, Mr Sood cited planned outages con-

ducted for maintenance purposes and shared January 2025 data, which recorded 3,278 power cuts. He highlighted improvements made under his leadership compared to the previous administration and outlined initiatives like a 24x7 control room, joint monitoring with DISCOMs and DTL, and readiness to procure extra power when needed.

Mr Sood criticised Mr Kejriwal for lacking administrative experience, claiming his team withheld critical information. Using State Load Dispatch Centre data, he countered the AAP leader's statements and reiterated efforts to ensure stable power supply across Delhi. Notably, in the run-up to this year's Assembly Elections in Delhi, both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress had made a promise to continue providing free electricity to the residents of the national

capital if they come to power by defeating the AAP.

The free electricity scheme of the previous AAP government was among several freebies which were believed to be quite popular among the Delhi residents. The free electricity plan of the then AAP government, according to political observers, also played a key role in boosting its credibility to a considerable extent among the masses. However, plagued by graft allegations and the imprisonment of key leaders including Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Satyendar Jain and Sanjay Singh, the AAP suffered a major blow to its credibility ahead of the 2025 Assembly elections. The change of leadership after Mr Kejriwal walked out on bail in connection with the Delhi excise policy case which saw Atishi at the helm, also did little to help the AAP's campaigning



strategy ahead of the elections. Mr Kejriwal, however, promised to assume the leadership role if the AAP emerges victorious, but the party, after scoring a massive majority in the 70-member Delhi Assembly in the 2015 and 2020 elections, managed to win only 22 seats. The BJP, which bagged 48 seats, went on to form the government eventually under the leadership of Rekha Gupta.

Disha Salian Was Depressed Over Father's Misuse Of Money: Cops' Closure Report

Mumbai: The Mumbai police's closure report in the Disha Salian death case had termed it a suicide and asserted she was battling depression due to various reasons, including misuse of her money by her father, an official said. Disha Salian was a former manager of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. She allegedly committed suicide by jumping off the 12th floor of her building in Jankalyan Nagar in north Mumbai's Malad area on June 8, 2020, as per police. The closure report by Malvani police, which probed the incident, was submitted to a superior of-



ficer (as per rules for accidental death report) on February 4, 2021. As part of the probe, Malvani police recorded statements of her friends and some witnesses, during which it came to light that she was depressed due to some

failed projects, misunderstanding with friends and misuse of her money by her father, the official said. The police had also recorded statements of actors with whom Disha Salian was communicating on behalf of her company, he added.

After the case got entangled in an acrimonious tussle between political parties, the Mumbai police set up a Special Investigation Team, though its report is still awaited. Last week, her father Satish Salian moved Bombay High Court seeking a fresh probe into the mysterious circumstances under which she was found dead in June 2020. He also urged the HC to order the registration of a First Information Report against Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray, and transfer of the probe to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Woman Can Be Held Guilty Of Instigating Rape: Madhya Pradesh High Court

Bhopal: A woman can be held guilty of instigating rape, even if she is not the prime accused in the case, the Madhya Pradesh High Court said. The court said that under section 109 of Indian Penal Code (IPC), a person who abets or encourages a crime is equally responsible in the eyes of the law. It referred to the IPC as the crime took place on August 21, 2022, nearly two years before the new

criminal laws came into effect. Justices Pramod Agarwal and Prashant Gupta were hearing a case pertaining to the rape of a woman in Bhopal's Chhola Mandir police station area. According to the prosecution, the accused's mother and brother encouraged the survivor to get into a physical relationship with him, leading to the crime. The court upheld that the mother's act of instigation made her an accomplice in

the crime. It held the man guilty of rape.

In her complaint, the survivor alleged that her neighbour had initially proposed to marry her. When she went to his house, his mother and brother sent her to a room, where he locked the door and raped her. Later, he refused to marry her. The neighbour was charged under sections 376 and 376(2) - both dealing with rape, 506 (criminal intimidat-

ion) and 34 (common intention) of IPC. His mother was charged under section 109 (abetment to rape). Explaining the rationale behind the court's remarks, government advocate CM Tiwari said: "Since the mother encouraged the survivor to get into a relationship, the court found her equally responsible. The accused was convicted of rape and the woman was considered an equal participant in the crime."

Ex-CEO and MD of TCS S. Ramadorai honoured with Sankara Ratna Award

New Delhi: Sankara Nethralaya Medical Research Foundation honoured S. Ramadorai, former CEO and MD of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) with the Sankara Ratna Award 2024 in recognition of his contributions to nation-building. Tamil Nadu's Minister for Information Technology and Digital Services, Palanivel Thiagarajan presented the award. "As CEO of TCS, I had the privilege of partnering with Sankara Nethralaya to implement the Tata Hospital Management System and develop an advanced Ophthalmic Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system to enhance patient care," said Ramadorai in his acceptance speech. Thiagarajan lauded Ramadorai's leader-



ship, noting that under his tenure, TCS grew from a \$155 million company to a \$6 billion enterprise. "It is not a simple achievement, and such success stories are very rare. Only a special person would be able to accomplish that," he said.

During his speech, Ramadorai acknowledged the Tata Group's longstanding association with Sankara Nethralaya, citing Jamshedji Tata's belief that businesses exist to serve the community. Ramadorai also emphasised the need

to expand world-class, affordable healthcare to remote regions of India. The Sankara Ratna Award recognises individuals who have showcased outstanding leadership and made significant contributions to society.

India Sending Relief Material To Quake-Hit Myanmar

New Delhi: India will send around 15 tonnes of relief materials in a military transport aircraft to earthquake-hit Myanmar, sources said. The C130J aircraft of the Indian Air Force will shortly take off for Myanmar from the Hindon air force station, they said.

The relief materials being sent include tents, sleeping bags, blankets, ready-to-eat meals, water purifiers, solar lamps, generator sets and essential medicines, the sources said. A powerful earthquake rocked Myanmar and neighbouring Thailand on Friday, destroying buildings,



bridges and a monastery. At least 144 people were killed in Myanmar, where photos

and videos from two hard-hit cities showed extensive damage. At least 10 died in

the Thai capital, where a high-rise under construction collapsed.

Madhya Pradesh's Maihar bans sale of meat, eggs during Chaitra Navratri

Bhopal: The Maihar district administration in Madhya Pradesh has banned the sale and purchase of meat, fish and eggs within the limits of Maihar Nagar Palika during the Chaitra Navratri festival from March 30 to April 7.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Department has declared Maihar as a religious city where lakhs of devotees come everyday to visit the Maa Sharda temple.

Maihar Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Vikas Kumar Singh issued the order under section 163 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) which grants the power to issue immediate preventive orders in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger. Those who violate the order will be punished under section 223 of the BNS,



which deals with the disobedience to an order duly promulgated by a public servant. Situated on the top of the Trikut Hill, Maa Sharda Mandir is considered one of the Shakti Paathas. The temple is around 5 km away from Maihar railway station. Pil-

grims climb 1,063 steps to reach the top of the hill. Earlier, a BJP MLA from East Delhi had demanded the closure of meat shops in the national capital during the nine-day festival. Ravi Kant, who represents Trilokpuri assembly constituency, had said the meat

shop should remain closed to maintain sanctity and ensure cleanliness across Delhi. Much like Sharad Navratri, Chaitra Navratri also symbolises the triumph of good over evil. Both these are nine-day festival dedicated to Goddess Durga.

Elderly Couple Loses Rs 50 Lakh To Cyber Fraud In Karnataka, Dies By Suicide

Belagavi: An elderly couple in Khanapur taluk, Belagavi district, died by suicide after falling victim to cyber fraud and alleged harassment, police said on Friday. Diogjeron Santan Nazareth (82) and his wife Flaviana (79), residents of Beedi village in Khanapur, had no children, police added. A two-page handwritten death note left behind by Diogjeron stated their decision to end their lives and requested that no one be blamed, as they did not want to live at the mercy of anyone, police said. The incident came to light on Thursday when neighbours

found Flaviana lifeless on the bed, while Diogjeron's body was discovered in the underground water tank of their house, they added. Diogjeron, a retired Maharashtra government secretariat employee, died by stabbing himself in the neck. Injuries were also found on his wrist, police said. Flaviana is suspected to have consumed poison, though confirmation awaits the autopsy report, they added. In the death note, Diogjeron named two individuals-Sumit Birra and Anil Yadav. He wrote that Birra, who claimed to be a telecom department official from New

Delhi, informed him that a SIM card had been fraudulently purchased in his name and was being used for harassment and illegal advertisements. Birra later transferred the call to Yadav, who claimed to be from the Crime Branch. Yadav demanded details of Diogjeron's property and finances, threatening legal consequences over the alleged SIM card misuse, according to the death note, police said. Falling prey to the scam, Diogjeron transferred over Rs 50 lakh to them, but they continued to demand more, police added, citing digital transaction records. He also mentioned taking

a gold loan of Rs 7.15 lakh, with interest due on June 4. "The amount should be paid, and the gold should be sold. The amount received after adjusting the principal and interest should be paid to the named persons," the note read.

Diogjeron further stated that he had borrowed money from friends and requested that the loans be repaid by selling his wife's gold bangles and earrings. "Now I am 82 years old, and my wife is 79. We have no one to support us. We do not want to live at the mercy of anyone, so we have taken this decision," the note said.

"F-1 Visa Revoked": Why US Is Asking Hundreds Of International Students To Self-Deport



Washington: Hundreds of international students studying in the US have received emails from the US Department of State (DOS), telling them to self-deport as their F-1 visas (student visas) have been revoked owing to campus activism. The crackdown is not limited to students who physically participated in campus activism, but people who shared or even liked 'anti-national' posts have reportedly also been targeted in these emails.

Some Indian students may also be at the receiving end of such emails, for something as innocuous as sharing a social media post, The Times Of India reported, quoting Immigration attorneys who confirmed the development.

According to the latest Open Doors report, of the 1.1 million international students studying in the US in 2023-24, 3.31 lakh are Indian students. The diktat followed US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's announcement about the revocation of several international students' visas for so-called anti-national activities.

"It might be more than 300 at this point. We do it every day. Every time I find

one of these lunatics, I take away their visas...Every country in the world has a right to decide who comes in as a visitor and who doesn't," Rubio said at a press conference in Guyana on Thursday, without elaborating on whose visas had been revoked.

Speaking to reporters on the plane back to Washington, Rubio said the 300 revoked visas were a combination of student and visitor visas. He said he signed every single action. "At some point, I hope we run out because we've gotten rid of all of them, but we're looking every day for these lunatics that are tearing things up."

Rubio's office recently also launched an AI-powered app, "Catch and Revoke", to detect and cancel the visas of students found supporting Hamas or other designated terrorist organisations. As part of the crackdown, the DOS (which includes Consulate officials) is also scrutinising even new student applications, be it for an F (academic study visa), M (vocational study visa), or J (exchange visa). If found guilty, applicants will be denied the opportunity to

study in the US.

What did the email say?

The email received by students from the authorities asked them to self-deport themselves using the CBP Home App that the US President Donald Trump administration launched on March 10.

"On behalf of the United States Department of State, the Bureau of Consular Affairs Visa Office hereby informs you that additional information became available after your visa was issued. As a result, your F-1 visa with expiration date XXXXX was revoked in accordance with Section 221(i) of the United States Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended," the TOI reported, citing the email.

"The Bureau of Consular Affairs Visa Office has alerted the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which manages the Student Exchange Visitor Program and is responsible for removal proceedings. They may notify your designated school official about the revocation of your F-1 visa," it added.

The document warned the student that if they stay in the United States with-

out lawful immigration status, it could lead to fines, detention, and/or deportation. "It may also make you ineligible for a future US visa. Please note that deportation can take place at a time that does not allow the person being deported to secure possessions or conclude affairs in the United States. Persons being deported may be sent to countries other than their countries of origin," it further read.

It further said that if the deported students want to return to America in the future, they would need to apply for a fresh visa, and then their eligibility will be reassessed. "As soon as you depart the United States, you must personally present your passport to the US embassy or consulate which issued your visa so your visa can be physically cancelled. You must not attempt to use your visa, as it has been revoked. If you intend to travel to the United States in the future, you must apply for another US visa, and a determination on your eligibility for a visa will be made at that time," the mail added.

'Visa Not A Birthright'

Rubio, earlier this week, stressed that the US visa was "not a birthright" and people who were found violating the terms of visitation would have to leave.

"I don't know when we've got it in our head that a visa is some sort of birthright. It is not," US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on CBS News's Face The Nation show. "It is a visitor into our country, and if you violate the terms of your visitation, you are going to leave," he added.

Stranger Fixes Bangladeshi Journalist's Collar During Live Reporting

Dhaka: Bangladeshi journalist Redwan Ahmed Shawon stood on a pavement and recorded his piece-to-camera. On his left, multiple cycle rickshaws moved in a queue. On his right, a bespectacled man, in a beige kurta, and a bag hanging from his shoulders, came from the opposite direction. Then the unexpected happened.

He almost moved past him, paused, looked back, thought for a moment and

then adjusted Mr Shawon's collar. He then went about his business as usual, while the journalist continued reporting for Ekhn TV. The heartwarming moment captured on live television quickly went viral, a respite from the controversies and debates that often dominate social media. Sharing the post, Mr Shawon wrote, "Pookie Hujur," which roughly translates to "cute sir". The comments section was full of positive reactions,



praising the simplicity and kindness of one stranger towards another. "Brother, what a beautiful moment. There are still so many humble people around us.

Just like an older brother," a user said. Another added, "I really like this." "It's foolish to criticise someone who has done a good job," read a third comment.

Is Elon Musk Planning To Step Down From Trump's DOGE Team? Here's What He Said



Washington: US President Donald Trump's billionaire ally Elon Musk has signalled that he is planning to step down from his cost-cutting role at the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) by the end of May after reducing the US deficit by \$1 trillion, slimming current total federal spending levels down to about \$6 trillion. Fifty-three-year-old Tesla chief and several top aides at DOGE sat down for Fox News' "Special Report with Bret Baier", where they talked about their work to improve America's balance sheets and how they were reaching closer to their goal, which would halve the annual federal deficit. Mr Musk, who was appointed as a special advisor to Presi-

dent Trump as he spearheaded the government's cost-cutting efforts, said "he's done". He said his team was averaging "\$4 billion a day" and had accomplished "most of the work required to reduce the deficit by a trillion dollars within [130 days]". "I think we will accomplish most of the work required to reduce the deficit by a trillion dollars within [130 days]," Mr Musk told Baier when asked about how quickly he expected to achieve his cost-cutting target.

"Our goal is to reduce the waste and fraud by \$4 billion a day, every day, seven days a week. And so far, we are succeeding... Unless this exercise is successful, the ship of America will sink," he added. That could

mean that Mr Musk's work of spearheading the DOGE operation could finish as soon as the end of May.

The DOGE chief and his seven team members- Aram Moghaddassi, Steve Davis, Brad Smith, Anthony Armstrong, Joe Gebbia, Tom Krause, and Tyler Hassen- further detailed their efforts to slash waste, fraud, and abuse in various government agencies. "The government is not efficient, and there is a lot of waste and fraud, so we feel confident that a 15 per cent reduction can be done without affecting any of the critical government services," Mr Musk said. As per DOGE estimates, the department's efforts, including workforce reductions, asset sales and contract cancellations, have saved US taxpayers \$115 billion as of March 24. "America will be solvent," Mr Musk declared. "The critical programs that people depend upon will work, and it's going to be a fantastic future. And are we going to get a lot of complaints along the way? Absolutely."

Musk's Remark After Tesla Protests

Elon Musk's remarks

about stepping down from the DOGE role came amid nationwide protests against his electric vehicle company, Tesla. In the last month, Tesla's share price witnessed a steep decline and fell by over 5 per cent last Monday.

Speaking to staff in Austin last Thursday, Mr Musk admitted: "I'm stretched pretty thin. I have like 17 jobs." Talking about attacks and vandalism targeting his company, he noted that it sometimes 'feels like Armageddon' when he watches coverage of them on TV.

"There are times when there are rocky moments, a little bit of stormy weather... But what I'm here to tell you is that the future is incredibly bright and exciting, and we're going to do things that no one, I think, has even dreamed of," he told employees. Mr Musk is also facing numerous lawsuits that claim DOGE acted without legal authority and violated privacy laws. So far, he has defended his work at DIGE and pushed back on mounting criticism of the massive disruption caused by the department's work.

How Donald Trump's Tariff War Could Leave Millions Of Americans Without Toilet Paper

Ottawa: US President Donald Trump's proposed tariffs on Canada could trigger an unexpected crisis in America, leading to panic-buying seen at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. The Trump administration's plan to almost double duties on Canadian softwood lumber could disrupt the supply chain for something nobody wants to be caught without-- toilet paper.

Trump has promised to hike duties on softwood lumber to 27 per cent as soon as April 2, with the possibility of additional levies pushing the rate to more than 50 per cent. The move could hit the availability of northern bleached softwood kraft pulp (NBSK), a material derived from wood chips that

is used to make toilet paper and paper towels, according to a report by Bloomberg.

NBSK is prized for its tensile strength and constitutes about 30 per cent of standard US bathroom tissue and half of a typical paper towel. Last year, the US imported 2 million tons of Canadian NBSK, Brian McClay, chairman of Trusted Providers of Global Pulp Market Information, told Bloomberg, highlighting the longstanding reliance of American paper goods producers on Canadian pulp. "Some of these mills in the United States, some of the big branded products, not only want softwood pulp from Canada, they want softwood pulp from this par-



ticular mill - they've been using it for 30 years and they will not change," McClay said.

"If Canadian pulp mills close because they don't have the fiber supply, I can't think of any other option for them - they just can't switch the recipe around," he said. McClay warned that if import taxes on lumber exceed 50%, as they're currently on track to, "that's going to put some sawmills out of business, and that'll reduce the

supply of wood chips.

"Because we don't really cut trees for making pulp in Canada, we depend on residual chips from sawmills. It would certainly boost the cost and probably reduce output," he added.

Reminder Of Pandemic Panic

The scenario risks reviving painful memories of pandemic-era toilet paper shortages, when store shelves were stripped bare amid panic buying.

Cars Set On Fire, Shops Looted As Nepal Pro-Monarchy Protest Turns Violent



Kathmandu: Authorities in Nepal have over 100 people as the government investigates the deadly violence that occurred during a protest march organised by the supporters of the former king Gyanendra Shah, seeking the restoration of the constitutional monarchy in the Himalayan country. Parts of Kathmandu on Friday witnessed a tense situation after pro-monarchy protesters pelted stones, attacked the office of a political party, set fire to vehicles and looted shops in the capital.

Two people, including a television cameraman and a protester, were killed in the

clashes that injured at least 112 people, authorities said, after police used force to stop the stone-throwing crowd from marching towards the parliament building in the capital Kathmandu. The Army was later called out to control the situation. Authorities imposed a curfew in parts of the capital at 4.25 pm on Friday, which was lifted from 7 am on Saturday, according to a notice issued by Kathmandu District Administration Office. So far, police have arrested 105 agitators who were involved in burning houses and vandalising vehicles during Friday's demonstration.

Those arrested included the general secretary of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party,

Dhawal Shumsher Rana, and a central member of the party, Rabindra Mishra, among others.

Protest In Nepal

The protesting monarchists were demanding the reinstatement of the monarchy and a Hindu kingdom. The demonstration turned violent after Durga Prasai, the convenor of the agitation, broke the security barricade, riding a bulletproof vehicle, and headed towards Baneshwor, where the Parliament building is located. Prasai, the key person behind Friday's violent demonstration, is at large, Superintendent of Police of

Kathmandu District Police Range Apil Bohara said. Police said officers fired rubber bullets and live rounds into the air, after using tear gas and water cannons against the crowds. Some demonstrators pelted stones at police, according to reports.

"A protester has died of a gunshot wound," police spokesman Dinesh Kumar Acharya told news agency AFP. Acharya said that a journalist died after protesters set the building he was filming from on fire. During the violent demonstration, 14 buildings were set on fire and nine were vandalised.



Nine government vehicles were torched and six private vehicles were vandalised, according to authorities.

According to the police, 53 police personnel, 22 Armed Police Force personnel and 35 protesters were injured in Friday's incident. Protesters also attacked the Kantipur Television building and Annapurna Media House in the Tinkune area. "This is sheer vandalism, arson, looting and anarchy. It cannot be a protest," cabinet spokesman Prithvi Subba Gurung, the minister of communication and information technology, told news agency Reuters.

Monarchy In Nepal

A specially elected assembly scrapped the 239-year-old monarchy in 2008, under an accord that ended a Maoist insurgency which had killed 17,000 people in 1996-2006 and turned Nepal into a secular, federal republic from a Hindu kingdom. The last king of the Himalayan nation, 77-year-old Gyanendra, has lived with his family in a private house in Kathmandu as a commoner since being toppled. In the 16 years since the abolition of the monarchy, Nepal has seen the formation of 14 governments. The political instability has stymied economic growth, prompting millions of young people to seek work abroad, mainly in

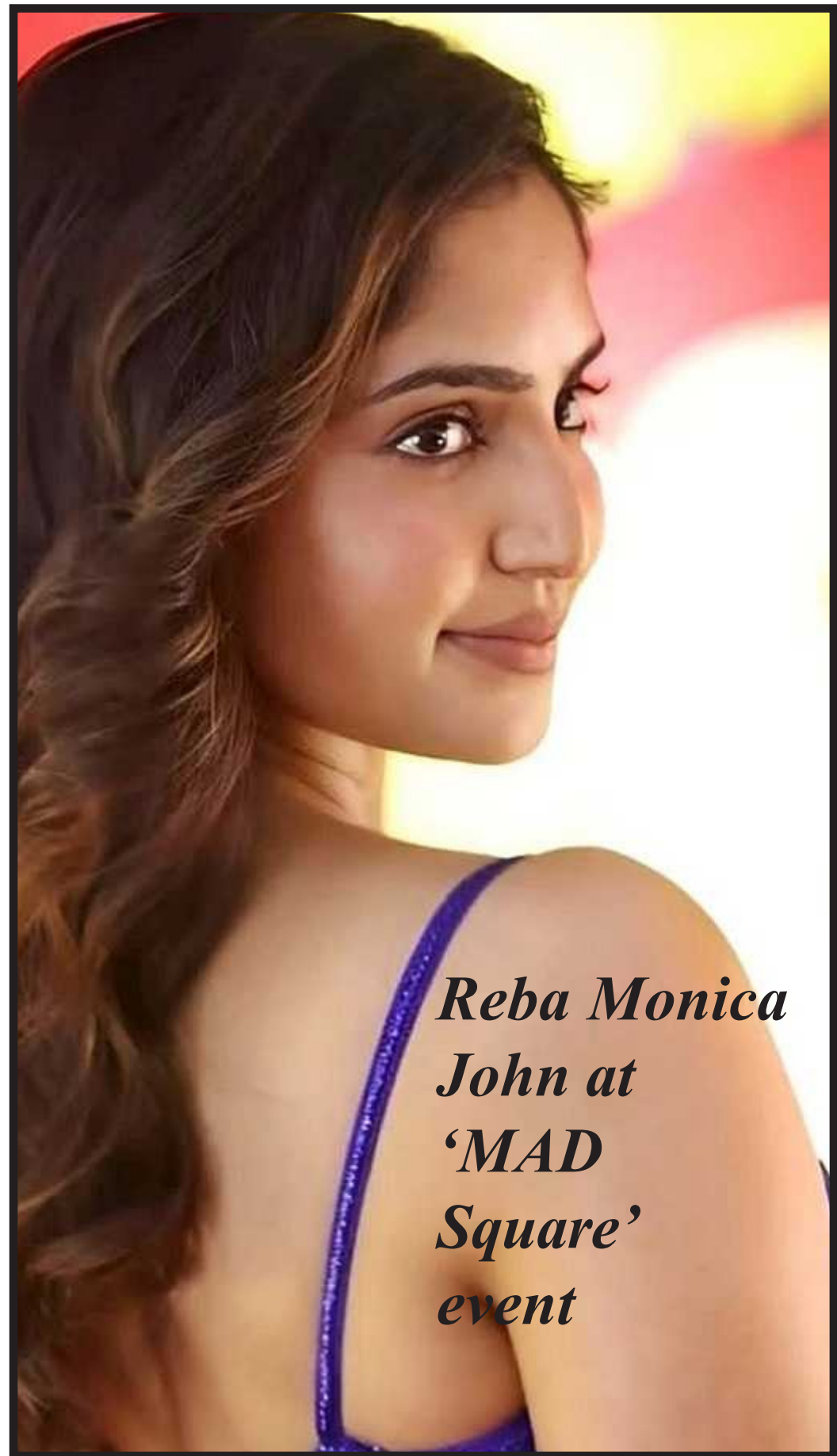
the oil-rich Middle East, South Korea and Malaysia. Public frustration has been rising over the failure of successive governments to deliver on commitments to develop the economy, which remains reliant on aid and tourism. But the pro-monarchy moment gained momentum after the former king appealed for support in a video message telecast on Democracy Day (February 19). Following this, the pro-monarchy activists also held a rally on March 9 in support of the former king, who landed at the Tribhuvan International Airport from Pokhara after visiting religious places in different parts of the country.

Is Aditi Rao struggling for offers after marriage?

Aditi Rao Hydari recently tied the knot with actor Siddharth, and the couple is enjoying their marital bliss. Despite her recent success in a web series, Aditi had hoped that her marriage wouldn't affect her career opportunities.

In a candid conversation with Farah Khan on her YouTube channel, the actress admitted that, despite the massive success of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Heeramandi, she has not been receiving new offers.

Describing the situation as a "drought," she acknowledged the unexpected slowdown in her career. Meanwhile, rumors suggest that Aditi Rao is being considered for a role in the recently launched #Mega157, starring Megastar Chiranjeevi and directed by Anil Ravipudi. However, no official confirmation has been made yet.



Reba Monica John at 'MAD Square' event

"Painful To Watch": Ambati Rayudu's Honest Admission On CSK's Horrid Start To IPL 2025

An iconic franchise in the Indian Premier League (IPL), Chennai Super Kings are off to a tough start to the 2025 campaign, losing two of the first three games. The likes of Ruturaj Gaikwad, Rachin Ravindra and a few others have managed to score some runs but other around them have struggled to contribute. In the bowling department, Noor Ahmed has been CSK's finest performer but others haven't some as much consistency. But, where CSK have let their fans down the most, is arguably the fielding department. Even former CSK star Ambati Rayudu, a part of the IPL commentary panel this season, said that it has been 'painful' for him to watch how Ruturaj's men have conducted themselves in the field in the

first three matches.

"When you're playing a close game, these one-percenters really matter. We saw quite a few incredible catches in this match-it's rare to see that! On the other hand, Chennai Super Kings didn't field well at all, except for maybe one or two stops in the infield. Rajasthan Royals were really up for it, and this shows that fielding is not just about having a young side-it's about anticipation and awareness. Riyan Parag's catch, when Shivam Dube was going strong, was a real game-changer," Rayudu said on JioHotStar. "Chennai Super Kings have never been known for their fielding - maybe in their earlier years - but what they've done in their first two matches this season has been



quite poor. Dropping easy chances and struggling in the outfield - these are areas they need to address quickly. Some of CSK's mistakes were quite painful to watch," he said. Even Gaikwad said at the post-

match presentation ceremony that fielding has been a concern for the franchise, with players leaking roughly 8-10 runs extra. CSK are next scheduled to take on the high-flying Delhi Capitals on April 05.

Napoli Beat AC Milan To Stay On Heels Of Serie A Leaders Inter



Napoli stayed on the heels of Serie A leaders Inter Milan on Sunday after beating AC Milan 2-1 to remain three points off the pace in the Scudetto race. Antonio Conte's side were ahead with a minute on the clock through Matteo Politano's thumping low finish, and once Romelu Lukaku scuffed in his 400th career goal in the 19th minute the hosts had a big enough cushion to claim the three points. Sunday's win was huge for Napoli as next week's fixture at fourth-placed Bologna is the only one of their final eight league matches to be against a team in the top half of the division. And unlike Inter, who squeezed past Udinese 2-1 earlier on Sunday, Napoli have no European or Italian Cup commitments and can fo-

cus exclusively on trying to win their second league crown in three seasons. "We can only take it one game at a time," said Politano told. "We believe in ourselves, we have to try to make our fantastic fans happy and then we'll see where we are at the end of the season." Milan, who lost Ruben Loftus-Cheek to acute appendicitis, were dismal in the first half but the introduction of Rafael Leao and Santiago Gimenez after the break helped shake Sergio Conceicao's team from their stupor. Gimenez could have cut the gap from the penalty spot in the 69th minute but Alex Meret saved his low effort, following a foul on Theo Hernandez by Philip Billing.

Another substitute in Luka Jovic pushed home Herna

ndez's low cross with six minutes to go, but Milan stay ninth and nine points away from the Champions League positions after leaving it too late to mount a comeback. Milan now face Inter in the first leg of their Italian Cup semi-final on Wednesday before Fiorentina visit the San Siro next weekend, with their Champions League hopes hanging by a thread. "We were too slow to get into the game, the first pass they sent forward led to their first goal," said Conceicao. "It wasn't the opening 20 minutes we prepared... we fixed some things in the second half and created lots of chances. I think a draw would have been a fair result." Goals in the opening half an hour from Marko Arnautovic and Davide Frattesi were just enough to give Inter their third straight win ahead of the first cup derby with Milan.

But nervy Inter almost threw the points away after coach Simone Inzaghi made a series of changes midway through the second half and Oumar Solet halved the deficit for Udinese with a rocket of a shot in the 71st minute. Inter have a huge month coming up as they also face a titanic Champions League quarter-final with Bayern Munich and tricky fixtures with fourth-placed Bolo-

gna and Roma which could be crucial to their title defence. "We almost failed to win a match which we started really well. At a certain point we just stopped playing," said Inzaghi, who was sent off after blowing his top at his team and officials in the final minutes. Inzaghi will be happy to have seen second-string players step up given his team's upcoming commitments, with Arnautovic and Frattesi giving Inter a fully-deserved two-goal lead at half-time by sweeping home Federico Dimarco crosses in the 12th and 29th minutes. And Inter have also all but ended Atalanta's slim hopes of winning their first league crown, with the Bergamo outfit nine points off the pace with eight matches remaining after slumping to a 1-0 defeat at Fiorentina. Moise Kean inflicted a first league away defeat for Atalanta since August when he confidently netted his 16th goal of the season on the stroke of half-time after robbing Isak Hien on the half-way line. "We lacked the dynamism and energy to give Fiorentina any difficulty... we just have to put it behind us and look ahead," said Gasperini. Cagliari strengthened their bid to avoid relegation by thumping rock-bottom Monza 3-0 and moving six points clear of the drop zone.

Barcelona Restore La Liga Lead In Girona Romp

Robert Lewandowski bagged a brace as Barcelona eased to a 4-1 victory over Girona to move three points clear at the top of La Liga on Sunday. After second-placed Real Madrid pulled level on points with them by beating Leganes, Hansi Flick's side restored their advantage at the Olympic Stadium. Lewandowski responded to Madrid striker Kylian Mbappe's double with one of his own to stay three goals ahead in the race for Spain's golden boot. Barcelona, unbeaten this year in 20 matches, took the lead through a Ladislav Krejci own goal near the end of the first half. Arnaut Danjuma pulled Girona level but Lewandowski netted twice and Ferran Torres finished off the rout.

"We played with patience, we had a plan and if we play with that plan we can always score a lot of goals and win the game," veteran striker Lewandowski told DAZN. The 36-year-old said he had the legs to keep playing for seasons to come.

"I know a lot of people are talking about my age but... I want to play more years at the top level," said the Poland international. "I feel very good physically, I think looking at the stats there's no difference now to a few years ago."

Girona beat Barcelona twice last season but have struggled to hit those heights again and sit 13th. "They were superior," admitted Girona coach Michel Sanchez. "There's a difference between the teams and that's the truth... Barcelona dream of titles every year."

Flick rotated some of his usual suspects with the Copa del Rey semi-final clash against Atletico Madrid in mind. Barca were below their free-flowing best in the first half despite dominating, occasionally threatening through the dynamic running of teenage star Lamine Yamal and frantic energy of Fermin Lopez. Barcelona wanted a penalty when Fermin was brought down by Yaser Asprilla on the edge of the box and a free-kick was given. A VAR review showed the contact was inside the area but the referee decided Lopez fouled Asprilla as they came together, much to Barcelona's chagrin. Paulo Gazzaniga produced a sensational save with his fingertips to push out a Ronald Araujo header but Barca found a way through before half-time. Yamal's dangerous free-kick aimed at Eric Garcia was deflected into his own net by Krejci at the near post. Girona had produced very little of note in the first half but were



back level eight minutes into the second through Danjuma. Daley Blind played the Dutch striker through and he beat Wojciech Szczesny with a clinical low finish. However, Barcelona were swiftly back in front as La Liga's top goalscorer Lewandowski notched his 24th of the campaign. Lopez nodded the ball across the six-yard box and Lewandowski contorted his body to reach it and flick it between Gazzaniga's legs. The forward secured Barcelona's victory with his 25th, slotting home after substitute Frenkie de Jong pushed forward into space and fed him. There was time for Torres to add a fourth after Gerard Martin found him and for the brilliant Yamal to bend a strike against the crossbar. This was remarkably

the 20th time this season Flick's side have scored four goals or more from 45 games, with a potential treble in their sights. "This is what I love about my team, they always want to score goals, it's always like that," Flick told reporters. "This is the mentality and the attitude of the team and it's good, I think everyone loves it, you love it, the fans love it, the club loves it, and everyone is happy at the moment." Elsewhere fourth-place Athletic Bilbao were held to a 0-0 draw at home by Osasuna, allowing Villarreal to cut the gap on them to six points after beating Getafe 2-1. Real Betis, sixth, won their sixth game in a row to stay on Villarreal's tail, beating rivals Sevilla 2-1 in a derby clash.