

Mobile Money users: Beware of New Scam!!

Hyderabad, Aug.19 : Here is a caution to the Mobile money users (Phone Pay. Gpay, Paytm or any other third party mobile money Apps). There is a new technique scammer has come up with, to cheat the people.The scammer sends you a real deposit of money into your phone, using his number. He really sends you a small amount, say Rs.5,000 or so and you don't even doubt it. After sending this money, he sends you a message on your mobile saying that you have received some money. The natural thing for you is to get excited and then you want to check your balance. To check your balance, you will enter your PIN, which means you have validated his withdrawal request of your account. Your account will automatically allow his withdrawal request and take out the money. The trick is to just lure you with a small amount initially, to steal from your account. To protect yourself from this scam, whenever you received such an unexpected balance, first enter in, deliberately, a wrong PIN number.

CM Revanth urges Centre for adequate urea supply to Telangana



Hyderabad, Aug.19 : Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has urged the Central government to immediately supply urea to the farmers of Telangana in accordance with their sanctioned requirements.He stated that Members of Parliament from Telangana had already raised the issue with Union Ministers, highlighting the problems arising from the inadequate supply of urea to the state despite the approved allocation.Taking to X on Tuesday, the Chief Minister pointed

out that although 8.30 lakh metric tonnes of urea had been allocated to Telangana for the current Kharif season, only 5.32 lakh metric tonnes had been supplied so far - a shortfall of nearly 3 lakh metric tonnes - causing significant hardship for farmers across the state. He also referred to a representation submitted to Union Minister for Fertilizers and Chemicals, JPNadda, by the State 's Members of Parliament. The Chief Minister further stated that he had personally taken up the matter with the Union Minister and that State Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao had also written multiple times to the Centre regarding the issue. He alleged that the Union government was discriminating against Telangana by failing to supply urea as per the state's actual needs.Revanth Reddy also criticised the Centre for its continued negligence, noting that despite repeated efforts by Telangana MPs - including raising the matter in Parliament and staging protests on behalf of farmers - the supply still does not match the approved quota. The Chief Minister reiterated his demand for the immediate delivery of urea in line with the sanctioned allocation to protect the interests of Telangana's farmers.

Complete development works in order of priority: Bhatti

Hyderabad, Aug.19 At the Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting on Infrastructure and Capital Works, the Committee Chairman and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka emphasised that investments are crucial for the rapid development of the State. He directed officials to carefully utilise resources and complete development works in various departments in order of priority.

On Tuesday at the Secretariat, the Deputy Chief Minister conducted a review meeting along with Ministers and Cabinet Sub-Committee members Uttam Kumar Reddy, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, and Seethakka.On the occasion, Bhatti Vikramarka explained that traditionally, based on revenue and budget allocations, works are approved in the ratio of 1:3 — a method followed in governance for decades. However, in the last ten years, the previous rulers, without regard to income or budget allocations, had approved development works in certain departments at a ratio of 1:25. They initiated works and left them incomplete. As a result, due to a shortage of funds, works were stalled everywhere, leaving new Ministers unable to propose works in their departments, he explained. The Deputy Chief Minister informed officials that, because of the decisions of the previous government, no project is in a position to be completed now, and the government is unable to release funds for any work.Bhatti Vikramarka instructed the Secretaries of various departments to rectify the alarming and unhealthy situation prevailing in their respective departments.The Deputy Chief Minister ordered officials to first identify works that are 95 percent complete



and move forward by prioritising works in a similar manner through well-prepared plans. While undertaking development projects across departments, he stressed that representation should be ensured for all constituencies in the state.Bhatti Vikramarka advised officials to give priority to projects taken up with Central government-sponsored schemes and NABARD assistance, ensuring their completion. The Ministers cautioned officials that during the previous regime, some departments were given 100 percent priority while others were given only 10 percent, and such imbalance should not occur again. The Ministers further instructed that while spending funds on development works, simultaneous efforts must be made to increase revenues. All officers should prepare plans accordingly and move forward.

KTR spreading lies on Kaynes semiconductor industry issue - Minister Sridhar Babu



Hyderabad, Aug.19 Terming as a 'lie' the allegation made by BRS leader KT Rama Rao that the Kaynes semiconductor industry shifted from Hyderabad to Gujarat due to state government's 'failure', Minister for IT and industries Duddila Sridhar Babu today remarked that such a statement is a desperate attempt to throw mud on others and to cover his own shortcomings. Spreading falsehoods has always been KTR's habit, the minister said.Sridhar Babu, talking to newsmen, said, "The truth is clear as the Kaynes did not flee Telangana. It was lured to Gujarat only because the Centre and the BJP Government in Gujarat offered massive subsidies. KTR is well aware of this, but still chooses to deliberately mislead the people of Telangana. BRS Leaders have made it their daily routine to launch Goebbels-style propaganda, hoping people will blindly believe them. But Telangana citizens are not so gullible." According to the minister, the Central Government approved a 50% subsidy under the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) for the Kaynes project in Sanand, Gujarat. This scheme, worth Rs 76,000 crore, was launched to promote semiconductors in India. Once it was made clear that units in Gujarat would automatically receive a 50% subsidy, semiconductor firms naturally leaned towards that state. For Kaynes' proposed project of Rs 3,307 crore, the Centre sanctioned Rs 1,654.5 crore as subsidy. On top of that, the Gujarat Government gave an additional 40% subsidy. Together, subsidies covered nearly 70% of the total project cost - about Rs 2,314.9 crore. By comparison, if the same project had been set up in Telangana, the state policy would have allowed concessions worth about Rs 330 crore. Despite the ISM scheme

promising equal support across India, the Centre has extended such extraordinary generosity only towards Gujarat. This biased favoritism - "stepmotherly treatment" is something that the BJP must answer for. Instead of questioning the Centre's discrimination, KTR finds it convenient to hurl baseless charges at Telangana Government. His silence on BJP's favoritism exposes his lack of courage and credibility, the minister quipped. Even Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy admitted that the incentives given in Gujarat amount to Rs 3.2 crore per job created. This itself proves how the Centre and Gujarat lured Kaynes - not any so-called "failure" of Telangana government, he noted.

KCR and Harish Rao move High Court against Kaleshwaram commission report

Hyderabad, Aug.19 : In a significant development, BRS chief and former Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) moved the Telangana High Court challenging the findings of the Kaleshwaram Commission report. He, in his petition, alleged that the commission's report was riddled with factual errors and prepared in line with the ruling Congress government's political agenda.

Along with KCR, former irrigation minister T Harish Rao also filed a separate petition before the court seeking a stay on the implementation of commission's report. Both leaders argued that the inquiry was politically motivated and lacked impartiality It may be recalled that the state cabinet has recently approved the report submitted by Justice P.C. Ghosh, who headed the Kaleshwaram Commission. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, defending the report, said it had been prepared after an analytical investigation and that the government would table it in the State Assembly soon. He further assured that views from all political parties would be taken into consideration during the Assembly discussion.

BRAOU organised placement drive

Hyderabad, Aug.19 (NSS): Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) in collaboration with Retailers Association Skill Council of India (RASCI) organized Placement Drive for "Stipend Based Apprenticeship Program" at its campus on Tuesday. Westside, a TATA Group, Pai International, an electronics retailer and Apollo Pharmaceuticals participated.

This drive was organised for the first 200 candidates who registered under BRAOU- RASCI Stipend based apprenticeship program launched by the Dr. B. R, Ambedkar Open University. Spot offer letters were issued to the selected candidates who will join these establishments from 1st September 2025. The minimum stipend offered was Rs.13,000 per month. Students were offered these placements with the option of accommodation by some establishments. The next placement drive will be organised in 15 days for the next 325 candidates who registered for the program.

PM Modi appeals for unanimous election of Radhakrishnan as Vice-President



GNS News Agency, August 19

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday (August 19, 2025) appealed to all parties, including the Opposition, for unanimous election of NDA's Vice-Presidential candidate C.P. Radhakrishnan, as he praised his life of public service at a meeting of the ruling alliance MPs.Mr Radhakrishnan was felicitated at the meeting of MPs here by their top brass, including Prime Minister Modi and several BJP allies.Mr. Radhakrishnan is likely to file his nomination on Wednesday (August 20, 2025).Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju told reporters that Mr. Modi, in his address, appealed to various parties, especially the Opposition, to back Mr. Radhakrishnan to ensure that he is elected unanimously.Mr. Modi introduced the Maharashtra Gover-

nor, who is a seasoned BJP leader from Tamil Nadu, to the NDA MPs, citing his long public life in which he served ably in different capacities.In his speech, Mr. Modi also raised the issue of Indus Waters Treaty and slammed the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru for signing the agreement with Pakistan without taking Parliament or his Cabinet into confidence.Nehru did to burnish his own image at the cost of the interest of the country, he said, according to sources.

Over 80% of the waters was allowed to be used by Pakistan, he noted.The Modi government has put the treaty in abeyance following the Pahalgam terror attack.The Prime Minister said his government has been undoing the sins of that era, the sources added.Nehru later told a colleague that he had believed that the agreement will help resolve other issues with Pakistan but it did not happen, he noted, Mr. Modi also spoke of the S&P Global Ratings recent decision to upgrade India's long-term sovereign credit rating, saying it highlights the country's sound economy and will draw more investment.Mr. Rijiju said Mr. Radhakrishnan (67) has led a simple life away from any controversy or taint, stressing that his election as vice president will be a matter of delight for the entire country.With the BJP-led NDA enjoying a comfortable majority in the electoral college comprising MPs from the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Radhakrishnan's win is a certainty amid indications from the opposition INDIA bloc that it will field its own candidate and force a contest.

CM Revanth Reddy urge for supporting justice Sudarshan Reddy in vice-presidential poll

Hyderabad, Aug.19 :Welcoming the announcement of Justice Sudarshan Reddy as the Vice-Presidential candidate of INDIA Alliance, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy called it as a proud moment for Telugu people.Addressing media persons at the Command Control Office in Hyderabad, the Chief Minister said the NDA was "making a mockery of democracy and misusing constitutional institutions," while the INDIA bloc was fighting to safeguard the Constitution. Defeating those "conspiring to abolish the Constitution" was the responsibility of all democratic forces, he noted.

CM appealed to the parties across Telugu states to unite in support of Justice Sudarshan Reddy, and specifically urged Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao, Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan and YSRCP chief Y.S. Jaganmohan Reddy to back the INDIA Alliance nominee, stressing that the candidature transcends party lines. "Justice Sudarshan Reddy is neither a Congress member nor aligned with any political party. He has always stood as a protector of the Constitution and worked tirelessly for OBC reservations. At this juncture, it is vital that someone with his legal acumen holds such a key position, particularly to ensure the



passage of the BC Bill," he added.The Chief Minister said he was not confident that justice would be done for backward classes if the NDA candidate, Radhakrishnan, were to win. The upcoming Vice-Presidential election was not a Telangana versus Tamil Nadu contest, but rather a battle between "those who protect the Constitution and those who undermine it", he said and appealed to all the MPs to "vote according to their conscience".

Minister Jupally inspects Kadem project

Hyderabad, Aug.19 Adilabad Joint district in-charge Minister Jupally Krishna Rao on Tuesday visited the Kadem project in view of the heavy rains in the district. Details were collected from engineering department officials on the in-flow and outflow of the flood water entering the project.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that people should be alert in the wake of the heavy rains. He revealed that repair work had already been completed with funds of Rs 9 crore without any danger at the project. He said that roads in low-lying areas and villages had been damaged due to the impact of the rains and added that steps would be taken to improve transport facilities. The minister said that crop fields, residential houses and roads had been damaged due to the heavy floods. Rao said that After the rains subside, the relevant departments would conduct a survey, assess the damage and send a report to the state government. He said that they would later provide financial assistance to the victims. The minister said that search operations were underway for a fisherman, who was swept away in the flood waters and added that the state government would support the family in every way.



Ponnam unveils plans for a spectacular Ganesh utsavalu celebrations

Hyderabad, Aug.19 : Minister for Transport Ponnam Prabhakar stated said the Ganesh Utsavalu should be celebrated in the state capital with great pomp. Ponnam Prabhakar, who is an in-charge Minister of Hyderabad, held a preparation meeting with officials for Ganesh Utsavalu-2025 at MCRHRD here on Tuesday. GHMC Mayor Gadwala Vijaya Lakshmi, DGP Jitender GHMC Commissioner RV Kaman, HMDA Commissioner Sarfaraz Ahmed, Hyderabad, Cyberabad, Rachakonda Police Commissioners, Hyderabad, Medchal Ranga Reddy district collectors and officials from various departments participated in the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Ponnam Prabhakar emphasised the need for proactive measures to prevent any issues during the Ganesh Utsavalu, urging all relevant departments—including Roads and Buildings, GHMC, revenue, police, health, and electricity—to collaborate effectively to ensure the festival's success.Following the direc-

tives from Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, we are assessing the preparations and immersion for the Ganesh festival in three stages. This year, we aim to implement even better arrangements than those of last year. The celebration should involve everyone's cooperation to maintain Hyderabad's positive image, he said.The Minister noted that there are some road issues caused by recent rainfall, but these will be addressed and resolved prior to the festival. He mentioned that about one lakh Ganesha idols will be installed across the three commissionerates, with 50,000 of those located in Hyderabad city. An estimated 70,000 idols are anticipated to be taken to Tank Bund, and we must ensure that transportation operates smoothly.More cranes are to be installed. Each officer is accountable for any issues that arise within their department, he said. It is important to maintain a responsible attitude and collaborate effectively with other departments, Ponnam Prabhakar emphasised.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Alaska without a deal — The Trump, Putin summit

The much-hyped Alaska meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin concluded with no ceasefire, no agreement, and no concrete pathway toward ending the Russia-Ukraine war. For all the showmanship — a warm tarmac greeting, twin handshakes, and a joint limo ride — the summit produced little more than vague assurances, cryptic references to progress, and a reminder that when it comes to this war, there's no deal until there's a deal."

After nearly three hours behind closed doors, Trump conceded, "We didn't get there," before exiting without taking questions. His earlier claim that there was only a "25 per cent chance" of failure now looks like a self-inflicted blow to his credibility as a self-styled peacemaker and dealmaker. Putin described himself as "sincerely interested" in ending what he called a "tragedy," but offered no specifics. He warned against "sabotage" by Ukraine and Europe and insisted that "primary causes" of the conflict must be addressed — Kremlin code for its longstanding demands on arresting NATO expansion and ensuring territorial recognition of the territory gained. Apparently, Putin did not compromise on any of his demands, handled Trump with his vast diplomatic experience, leaving a window for further talks. Trump, for his part, said "many points were agreed to" but admitted that "one significant" disagreement remained, without disclosing what it was. His pledge to call Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and European leaders "soon" was small consolation to Kyiv, which had been excluded from the talks.

Putin's parting words — "Next time in Moscow" — hinted at a possible sequel, but there's no sign of a trilateral summit involving Ukraine.

Birla Opus Paints introduces India's First-Ever Paint Promise New TVC Campaign showcases Free Repainting Assurance featuring Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna



Hyderabad: Building on the significant traction gained in the decorative paints sector, Birla Opus Paints, housed under Aditya Birla Group's Grasim Industries, today announced the launch of its latest campaign — 'Birla Opus Assurance'. This initiative, a first-of-its-kind assurance in the Indian paint industry, underscores Birla Opus Paints' unwavering confidence in its advanced product quality and its commitment to exceptional customer satisfaction.

The brand films highlight the unique 'Birla Opus Assurance' proposition in an engaging manner, where Birla Opus Paints commits to redoing the painting service completely free of charge. The one-year re-painting warranty has been thoughtfully designed to cover all possible weather conditions, ensuring that the walls have withstood and been tested across all four seasons. Birla Opus Assurance thereby is an additional guarantee, over and above the existing product's warranty.

The ad campaign features the charismatic brand ambassadors, Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna who continue their successful association with Birla Opus Paints. The TVC campaign also features a talented ensemble cast of Ranveer Shorey, Murali Sharma, Seema Pahwa and Jaaved Jaaferi in separate films, where in Vicky and Rashmika don various looks and deliver the brand's promise while thanking the design and construction community for recommending Birla Opus Paint products in a creative interruption advertising style. Through this campaign, Birla Opus Paints aims to further establish itself as a truly trustworthy brand with advanced products.

Commenting on the campaign, Rakshit Hargave, CEO, Birla Opus Paints, said, "Our 'Birla Opus Assurance' initiative reflects our deep-rooted belief in the exceptional quality and performance of our products. We understand that painting homes is a significant decision for consumers, and 'Birla Opus Assurance' is our way of providing them with complete peace of mind, reinforcing our commitment to being a truly consumer-centric brand."

Inderpreet Singh, Marketing Head, Birla Opus Paints, added, "We unveil 'Birla Opus Assurance' as we ascend in our communication journey, it is a bold statement of confidence in our products' quality. The films strike a perfect balance between humour and reassurance, with Vicky and Rashmika adding their charm in different looks and situations. Through Birla Opus Assurance, we are building a brand that truly delivers on its word."

Artha Select Fund Closes at 432 Crore, 131% Oversubscribed — AUM crosses 1,200 Crore.



Hyderabad: LArtha India Ventures (AIV) today announced the final close of its "winners-only" follow-on vehicle, Artha Select Fund (ASF), at ₹432 crore, overshooting its original target of ₹330 crores by an impressive 131%. This milestone takes Artha's total Assets Under Management past ₹1,200 crores, cementing its position as India's first and only venture capital institution backed by a family office. ASF will invest in the top 15% of performers from Artha's existing portfolio of 135+ companies across Artha Venture Fund I, Artha Continuum Fund, and the soon-to-launch AVF II. The fund will write Series B and C cheques of around ₹20 crores each, for 12–14 winners over the next

four years. With 33 successful exits to date, Artha has built a proven track record of identifying and nurturing category leaders. Its flagship Artha Venture Fund I, India's first SEBI-registered microVC, is ranked No. 1 for 2019 vintage returns in India and No. 2 globally. ASF builds on that momentum, creating a capital bridge from early-stage to growth, addressing India's "missing middle" funding gap where many Series A–C companies stall due to limited capital and a lack of operational support. "ASF allows us to stay invested in our most promising companies well into their scale-up phases," said Anirudh A. Damani, Managing Partner of Artha Venture Fund & Artha Select Fund. "India has no shortage of promising ventures, but far too many face a capital drought between Series A and C. ASF ensures our winners have the firepower, strategic guidance, and operational backing to compete globally while preserving founder ownership and focus."

Indian family offices and ultra-high-net-worth individuals anchor 80% of the fund's capital, with the remaining 20% from global LPs in Singapore, UAE, Mauritius, Hong Kong, Africa, and the U.S. Sponsor AIV has committed nearly 10% of the fund. ASF's roster of backers includes household names such as Atul Kirloskar's Family Office, DSP Family Office, Shahi Exports, HIRA Group, and Anikarth Ventures — highlighting the depth of trust in Artha's disciplined investing philosophy. Srinath Ravichandran, Co-founder & CEO of Agnikul Cosmos, India's pioneering private space launch company, said: "When you're building something as complex and ambitious as a launch vehicle, more than capital, you need partners who truly believe in your mission. Artha backed us when Agniban was still on the drawing board, and with ASF, they've committed to walking the entire journey with us from seed to Series C. That conviction gave us the freedom to focus on solving engineering challenges and pushing the boundaries of what's possible, without being weighed down by constant fundraising. Their support has been both strategic and deeply personal, and that's what makes all the difference."

Surya Roshni with an investment of Rs 25 Crores, enters into Wires & Cables Segment with Turbo Flex Range Promising reliable performance for every Indian home - Lighting Your World, Wiring Your Safety

Hyderabad: Surya Roshni, one of India's most trusted names in lighting, fans, home appliances, steel, and PVC pipes, has forayed into the wires and cables segment with the launch of its new Turbo Flex range — a powerful combination of safety, durability, and versatility tailored for modern households and commercial establishments; Strengthening its position in the electrical solutions market. The newly introduced wires are available in two variants: the Turbo Flex — FR (Flame Retardant) and Turbo Flex Green — FRLSH (Flame Retardant Low Smoke and Halogen), a RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances) -compliant, eco-conscious wires built with superior safety features, a robust standard offering engineered for everyday reliability. Available in seven vibrant colors — Black, Red, Blue, Green, Grey, White and Yellow — these wires meet the growing demand for both functional safety and aesthetic alignment in residential and industrial wiring setups. The high insulation resistance (HIR) properties make these wires a trusted choice in markets increasingly conscious of both safety and sustainability.

With a firm emphasis on safety, the Turbo Flex range from Surya is PVC insulated, boasting resistance to extreme heat and ensuring uninterrupted performance even in critical conditions. Each wire is tested and rated for 1100 volts, making it highly suitable for household applications as well as commercial electrical systems. Whether it's a



fan, light fixture, or appliance, these wires promise peace of mind through their superior insulation and heat resistance. Engineered and manufactured entirely in-house at Surya's state-of-the-art Malanpur facility, the Turbo Flex wires are rigorously tested for current carrying capacity and offer high insulation resistance, anti-termite and anti-rodent protection, 101% Copper Conductivity with 99.97% copper purity. The wires are available in sizes 0.75 sq mm to 6 sq mm, confirming to BIS certification IS 694:2010. They come in a guaranteed 90-meter length and cater to both light-duty and heavy-duty applications, ensuring versatility for electricians and homebuilders.

Quality Education Should Be Provided To The Students“

“District Collector Venkatesh Dotre” “Wave Of Movement, Asifabad” “Government Schools, Welfare” “Kumrambheem, Asifabad district Reporter. Jade Srinivas. "Indian Chronicle August, 19" “District Collector Venkatesh Dotre said that students studying in hostels should be provided with quality education and nutritious food. On Monday, a surprise inspection was conducted at the Mandal Parishad Primary Higher Secondary School in Yellaram village of Asifabad mandal. The attendance records of students and teachers, quality of food and classrooms were inspected. Speaking on the occasion, the District Collector said that students should

District 'People's Problems Must Be Solved'

“Kumrambheem, Asifabad district Reporter. Jade Srinivas. "Indian Chronicle August, 19" “NHRC District Chairman Rathod Ramesh said that all the problems of the people should be resolved. On Tuesday, Asifabad SP Kantilal met Subhash Patil politely. Later, he explained the problems of the people. He asked them to be available to the people for relief measures in the wake of the monsoon. Shankar, Rajasekhhar, Purushottam and others participated in the program.

be provided with quality education and nutritious food on time as per the menu. He said that the government will take steps to provide all facilities in all government schools for the convenience of students and provide education by experienced teachers. Students should not be absent from school and should pay special attention to their He suggested talking to parents. He said that special attention should be paid to the health of students and awareness should be created on personal hygiene. He ordered to provide safe drinking water and keep the school surroundings clean. Education Officer Uday Babu participated in this program.”



TGSPDCL’s knee-jerk reaction of cable removal leads to massive internet outage in Hyd

Hyderabad: In a knee-jerk reaction to Sunday night's electrocution incident in which six people died during the Sri Krishnashtami chariot procession in Ramanthapur, the Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TGSPDCL) has begun clearing cable and internet wires from electricity poles in the city. The sudden move has left several areas without internet access, prompting citizens to take to X to express their concerns. The action comes at a time when the State government has asked IT companies to switch to 'Work From Home' mode due to the heavy rains lashing Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana.

Several netizens expressed dismay over the haphazard measures, with some even claiming their livelihoods

were affected. One user, posting under the username @SaveTheSystem, wrote: "I lost my job today due to internet disconnection. Thanks to the government. I can stop paying taxes and live a happy life provided by the government. #SaveTheSystem." Another user, @halleyji, commented: "Should have planned better even if it was in the interest of public safety. Many internet service providers are down due to this action and affecting people who WFH (sic)." Similarly, @pranaykumar562 said: "No prior notice to public, neither from ISP nor from TGSPDCL. How do you expect people working from home to work?" while tagging Telangana CMO, Deputy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, and CM Revanth Reddy.

Digital CFO Announces Nationwide Launch of Cloud- Native SaaS Accounting & Financial Management Plat- form for Millions of MSMEs and Professional Accounting Firms



Hyderabad: Digital CFO, a pioneering fintech platform developed by Chartered Accountants with deep domain expertise, today announced the nationwide launch of its Version 1.0 Cloud-Native, AI-Driven Accounting and Financial Management Software. Registrations open from 18th August 2025, enabling millions of MSMEs and professional accounting firms across India to experience a new era of intelligent, compliant, and highly automated financial management.

Since its inception, Digital CFO has been deployed in white-label sales with leading global accounting firms and for custom-built enterprise solutions on its robust platform. In November 2024, the company initiated a private beta launch of its SaaS model targeted at MSMEs. The overwhelming adoption and positive feedback during the beta phase led to strategic product enhancements, paving the way for today's full-scale launch. Built from the ground up with a focus on accuracy, compliance, and real-time intelligence, Digital CFO integrates advanced AI capabilities with a user-friendly interface. The platform eliminates manual accounting errors, automates complex compliance requirements, and delivers actionable business insights—empowering users to make informed financial decisions at speed. "This launch marks a defining moment in our journey to democratize access to advanced financial management tools for MSMEs and professionals across India," said Cheruku Srikanth, Founder & CEO of Digital CFO. "With Version 1.0, we bring the power of AI, automation, and deep accounting knowledge to every business, no matter its size helping them grow, stay compliant, and compete in a rapidly evolving digital economy." Digital CFO's Version 1.0 is cloud-native, ensuring scalability, security, and anywhere-access. The solution is hosted on Microsoft Azure, benefiting from enterprise-grade data security and privacy protections. The platform's unique Q&A-based transaction interface requires no prior accounting knowledge, making it accessible to business owners and staff alike. Key Highlights of Digital CFO Version 1.0: AI-Driven Intelligent Accounting — Automated ledger posting, error elimination, and real-time report updates.

Stay Groomed and Hygienic This Rainy Season with KAI India's Nail Clipper



Hyderabad/ New Delhi: While the monsoon offers a refreshing escape from the summer heat, it also brings increased humidity and dampness that can affect personal hygiene—especially nail care. Wet conditions often lead to bacterial and fungal build-up around nails, making regular grooming not just a routine but a necessity. Let's be honest; nail clippers don't usually get the spotlight and are often underrated, but this one genuinely deserves it. To help consumers stay effortlessly groomed and protected this season, KAI introduces its 100% stainless steel nail clipper—an ideal blend of precision, hygiene, and style for everyday use. Expertly blending the traditional Japanese craftsmanship with Indian eating habits, the KAI Tsumekiri (Nail Clipper) features a sleek, ergonomic design and a reinforced lever that ensures smooth, easy nail trimming and nail tray. Its high-grade stainless steel body offers consistent hardness and durability, retaining sharpness even in humid weather conditions. This makes it an ideal grooming tool during the monsoon, when regular nail care is especially important.

Unlike conventional clippers, the KAI Nail Clipper is a genius, designed to function without the need for excessive pressure, making each use more comfortable. It also features an integrated nail file and grime remover, allowing for easy shaping and cleaning of nails—particularly useful after exposure to muddy water or damp footwear.

"At KAI India, we are committed to enhancing everyday hygiene through thoughtfully designed products. The monsoon season often leads to overlooked grooming needs, especially when it comes to nail care. Our stainless-steel nail clipper addresses this with a durable, rust-resistant and multi-functional features that support both hygiene and ease of use," said Mr. Hitesh Singla, Head of Marketing, KAI India. "Rooted in Japanese craftsmanship, this product exemplifies our dedication to quality, innovation and daily wellness." Added Mr. Singla. The KAI India Nail Clipper is priced at just INR 199 and is available on www.kaiindiaonline.com as well as across leading e-commerce platforms & offline stores. It also comes in seven attractive colours.

Sudden Inspection of Fertilizer Warehouses by Rangareddy District Additional Collector Chandrareddy



“INDIAN CHRONICLE” “SHADNAGAR August 19” In a surprise move to ensure proper distribution and availability of fertilizers, Rangareddy District Additional Collector Chandrareddy conducted an unannounced inspection at the Man Gromor fertilizer warehouse located near Eden Plaza on Parigi Road in Shad Nagar. “During the inspection, the official thoroughly examined the urea stock levels and the e-POS (electronic Point of Sale) machine to verify compliance with distribution norms. He directed the store staff to sell urea strictly based on farmers’ actual requirements, emphasizing the need to prevent hoarding or over-distribution.” “Speaking directly to the farmers present at the

site, Chandrareddy addressed concerns about urea shortages, assuring them that there is no cause for alarm as ample stocks are available. He instructed agricultural officials to raise awareness among farmers regarding the sufficient supply of urea and encouraged them to adopt nano urea as an alternative for better efficiency and sustainability. “The event was attended by Shad Nagar Assistant Director of Agriculture Ramadevi, Mandal Agriculture Officer Nishant Kumar, AVO Technical Officer Shobharani, and staff from Man Gromor. This initiative underscores the district administration’s commitment to supporting farmers and maintaining transparency in fertilizer distribution.

Officials Inspect Site for Shadnagar Main Road Expansion



“INDIAN CHRONICLE” “SHADNAGAR, Aug 19” “Efforts to expand the main road in Shadnagar town are gaining momentum, aimed at improving transportation facilities and addressing future urban development needs. In this context, Municipal Commissioner Mrs. Sunitha, along with

officials from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), conducted a site inspection today on Tuesday.”

“Local MLA Sri Veerlapalli Shankar has already issued directives to undertake these expansion works for the public’s convenience, to alleviate road congestion, and to enhance overall accessibility. It is well-known that these orders were given with the goal of ensuring smoother traffic flow and better amenities for residents.” “In line with these directives, the officials carried out a comprehensive review of the site and announced that they will initiate the necessary steps for the road expansion. They emphasized that this project will bring convenient transportation options to the town, accelerate commercial activities, and ensure hassle-free vehicle movement without additional disruptions.

Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar Tours 2nd Ward in Rain, Vows Swift Infrastructure Fixes“

“INDIAN CHRONICLE” “SHADNAGAR, Aug 19” “Undeterred by rain and obstacles, Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar is actively touring town wards to drive development and transform the municipality into a model one. On Tuesday, he visited the 2nd ward’s Raghavendra Colony, Officers Colony, Tilak Nagar Colony, and Officers Colony Phase-2, accompanied by municipal and electricity officials, as well as party leaders. “During the tour, Shankar personally assessed drainage, road, and drinking water issues. Residents submitted petitions highlighting these problems, particularly in long-neglected areas like Tilak Nagar Colony, which he blamed on previous administrations’ indifference. “Speaking to the media, Shankar urged residents to unite beyond party lines for ward development. He assured immediate action on public needs,



including relocating a hazardous electric controller to a safer spot and installing a large drain to improve the drainage system. He criticized past leaders for empty promises and emphasized the need for real cooperation and work. “Shankar announced that development works in these colonies

would be completed by Dussehra. Grateful residents honored him with shawls and expressed thanks for his prompt response, even in the rain. “Accompanying him were Market Committee Vice Chairman Babar Khan, leaders Tirupati Reddy, Mandal President Srikanth

Reddy, Town President Chennayya, Ande Mohan, Mubarak, Bachali Naresh, Khadir, Ramesh Goud, Juttu Anil, Nandigama Shankar, Bachali Ramesh, Narsimlu, Tirupati Goud, Ramaraao, Mallesh Document, Q Set Srinu, Raghavendra Colony President Vinod Kumar, along with officials and locals.

Covering With Cover“



“The Office Of The Tehsildar is in Rain” “Roof Covering On The Office building” “This Is The Plight Of The Revenue Office. “Jainur, The revenue office at the mandal center The office was built many years ago and the revenue employees are constantly facing difficulties due to the cramped rooms. Not only the leaders but also the majority of the people who come to the office face many difficulties due to the cramped rooms. In addition, whenever there is heavy rain, the office leaks from the roof, and the revenue employees are facing difficulties in performing their duties. To eliminate the temporary problems, the Mandal Tahsildar Ada Birshav has taken temporary measures to prevent leaks by placing a polythene cover on the roof of the office. The Revenue Office building built many years ago is small, so the employees are facing difficulties in performing their

duties due to the cramped rooms. In addition, whenever there is heavy rain, the roof of the office building leaks from the roof, and temporary measures have been taken. Many leaders and people are demanding that funds be sanctioned for the new Mandal Revenue Office building and steps be taken to eliminate the problems of the people who come to the office due to the cramped rooms.”

Details Of The In- Charge Minister's Visit To The District Today“

“Kumrambheem, Asifabad district Reporter.Jade Srinivas. “Indian Chronicle August, 19” “Details Of The In- Charge Minister’s Visit To The District Today In-charge Minister Jupally Krishna Rao will inspect the flood- affected areas in Asifabad district on Today Wednesday.” “The details of his visit are as follows. He



will inspect the flood- affected area in Rebbena along with the officials.

Good roads will drive jobs to rural Telangana: Komatireddy

Hyderabad, Aug. 19 : Minister for Roads & Buildings and Cinematography Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said that quality road connectivity must be the government’s top priority, as it holds the key to drawing industries and employment to rural Telangana. Speaking at the Infrastructure & Capital Works Ministers’ Committee meeting, chaired by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka at the State Secretariat on Tuesday, the Minister said that strong road networks from the State capital to district and mandal centres will take industries into villages, creating jobs locally. People should feel confident that employment is possible anywhere in Telangana, not just in the capital,” he said.

Calling roads “the first priority for people,” the Minister said that they directly impact public transport, emergency services and perceptions of government efficiency. “In

emergencies, the speed of an ambulance is judged by the quality of roads. That is why the government must not hesitate to spend on this sector,” the Minister remarked. Pushing for rapid execution of road projects under the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM), Venkat Reddy promised accident-free roads within three years. He also stressed that timely payments to contractors are essential to remove uncertainty in the system and build confidence among stakeholders, while pointing out that, financial mismanagement by the previous government had created hurdles which the present administration is determined to overcome with a people-first approach. The meeting was attended by Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy, Sridhar Babu and Seethakka, along with Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, senior officials and secretaries of various departments.

Cm Revanth not focusing on governance; but blames KCR on every issue –Srinivas Goud

Hyderabad, Aug. 19 Criticising the Congress government for failure to announce benefits to the communities on the occasion of Sarvai Papanna Jayanti, former minister and BRS leader V Srinivas Goud today mocked that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy was “taking the name of former CM KCR even in his sleep, instead of focusing on governance.” The former minister, at a press meet in Telangana Bhavan, said that the people expected the Chief Minister to announce benefits for professional castes on the occasion of Sarvai Papanna Jayanti on Monday, but he failed to do so. “Apart from blaming KCR everywhere, Revanth has done nothing good. The Congress party promised several benefits to the Gowda community, but instead of implementing them, Revanth is only spreading lies. He was a liar during elections, he remarked.

Refuting Revanth’s claim that KCR restricted reservations to under 50 percent, Goud asserted, “KCR fought for 62 percent reservations. It was Congress leaders Swapna Reddy and Gopal Reddy who approached the Su-

preme Court and got the 50 percent cap imposed. Can CM Revanth swear on Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi that his party leaders were not responsible for this?” Referring to Sarvai Papanna’s legacy, he said “It was during KCR’s tenure that a GO was issued to hand them over to the Archaeology Department. It is Revanth’s government that gave mining contracts in those areas to Congress leaders.” He demanded the CM to prove his sincerity by enacting a law to provide 42 percent reservations for BCs, instead of indulging in falsehoods. “There is no point in taking credit for good works and blaming KCR for everything else. The government must immediately complete pending works of Palamuru-Ranga Reddy project,” he added. Highlighting the plight of toddy tappers, Goud said that some 700 had died in accidents in the last 20 months without receiving ex-gratia, and that the promised 25 percent reservation in wine shops was not implemented. Former BC Commission member Shubhprad Patel and BRS leader Gautam Prasad were present at the press meet.

Be cautious with electricity during Ganesh idol processions - CMD Faruqui

Hyderabad, Aug. 19 Expressing deep sorrow at the recent tragic incidents in Ramanthapur, Bandlaguda and Amberpet in the city where lives were lost due to electric shocks, chairman and managing director of Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (TSSPDCL) Musharraf Faruqui today urged the pandal organizers and the people to remain vigilant about electrical safety during the coming Vinayaka Chavithi festival particularly during Ganesh idol processions and at pandals. The CMD clarified that the said accidents were not due to negligence by the Electricity department but for other causes. The CMD today inspected the Bandlaguda accident site and reviewed the circumstances of the incident. Stating that the processions will be at their peak on August 27 (Vinayaka Chavithi), he directed the power officials to remain extra vigilant. He instructed them to ensure that there are no faults in the electrical network along the procession routes. The program to replace dangerous LT 11KV overhead lines with AB cables in Greater Hyderabad city is progressing rapidly. As per the orders of Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, a special drive is underway to remove dangerous hanging

cables from electricity poles, he added and appealed to the public particularly the devotees and pandal organizers to strictly follow the electrical safety measures. Further, he urged the citizens to immediately call ‘1912’ number or the nearest fuse off call center in case of fallen electrical lines or for any emergency situation. Following are the precautions to be taken during Idol processions and at Pandals : Plan the route according to the height of the idol. Inform electricity staff if there are any concerns. „Maintain at least a “two-foot distance from electrical lines” to avoid induction effects, Exercise caution while moving cranes, trucks, and tall metal idols. Avoid or minimize decorations with metal frames. Do not climb poles to take electrical connections. Connections must be obtained only through company staff. Use only ISI-marked standard wires. Avoid joined wires. Install an MCB of proper capacity for protection. Inspect surroundings before doing electrical work. Keep children away from wires, poles, and electrical equipment. In case of an electric shock, immediately provide medical help and inform electricity staff and Regularly inspect wiring. Rain-water and moisture may cause leakage and lead to shocks.

Dharmasthala secret burials case: BJP MP Veerendra Heggade dismisses charges against family as ‘totally baseless’

GNS News Agency, August 19

Dharmasthala secret burials case: BJP MP Veerendra Heggade dismisses charges against family as ‘totally baseless’ Heggade said that various claims made on social media had upset the devotees of the temple. (Credit: X/ @HeggadeD) Breaking his silence on the allegations about his family in connection with the secret burials case, Karnataka BJP MP Veerendra Heggade, who is also the head of the Dharmasthala temple, said the controversy was the handiwork of people who are envious of the development work undertaken under the aegis of the renowned temple.

Heggade has come under attack from a section of social media users after the Karnataka Government constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to inquire into allegations made by a former sanitation worker that he had been forced to bury several bodies of suspected sexual assault victims around Dharmasthala. Heggade said that various claims made on social media had upset the devotees of the temple. “They (YouTubers) created doubt, confusion and disturbance in the minds of these devotees,” he said, hoping that the SIT investigation would dismiss all incorrect claims made against Dharmasthala.

“It was a good decision of the Government to form the SIT. These issues were baseless,” he said. Heggade said that he was hurt by the allegations levelled against him during the ongoing probe around the temple town. “My followers have immense faith in me. They have no doubt about



the temple (Dharmasthala) or me,” he said, calling the allegations “totally baseless”. “It is not a moral way to fight with us.” The MP, who is a Padma Vibhushan winner, also urged the Government to initiate action against those involved in the “smear campaign” against the town. “People are hurt by this. The Government should take strict action,” he said. Social posts regarding investigation in the case have come under scrutiny after Heggade’s family sought an injunction against over 8,000 posts, a majority of which were on YouTube and Instagram. Two groups clashed near Dharmasthala earlier this month over the allegation that YouTubers had defamed the temple town. On Monday, Home Minister G Parameshwara told the Legislative Assembly that the Government would take action against those spreading misinformation about the temple town.

‘Four booked for 29-year-old tribal man’s death in Chhota Udepur’: Police

Four men have been booked in connection with the alleged murder of a 29-year-old tribal man in Chhota Udepur district’s Bodeli area, said police adding a probe is underway into the matter. According to Bodeli police station officials, the victim, identified as Sahdev Baria, allegedly jumped from a bridge over Meria river on Monday to reportedly “escape” an assault by the accused over a tractor that he had taken from one of the accused for a relative. Baria died during treatment late on Monday night. An FIR into the case was registered at the Bodeli police station based on a complaint from Baria’s uncle, Govind Baria. According to the FIR, the four accused, including the owner of a tractor showroom in Bodeli, allegedly waylaid Baria while he was riding his two-wheeler through the Meria river bridge and attacked him.

The case details were narrated by Baria, when he was

found in an injured state by his family under the bridge, according to the FIR. Baria, who was earlier employed at the tractor showroom had a fallout with its owner, Jigesh Ishwarbhai, over a tractor taken for a relative, states the FIR. As per the FIR, Baria had paid Rs 2 lakh to Ishwarbhai for a tractor before handing it over to his relative. “At that time, Sahdev (Baria) got along well with Jigesh Ishwarbhai... However, soon the owner took back the tractor and fired Sahdev from the job... later he started demanding more money for the tractor and even assaulted Sahdev on the Meria bridge for the same reason,” said the FIR. Apart from the showroom owner, other accused have been identified by their first names as Hemant and Jigesh and an unidentified accused. The FIR states that Baria’s family, on receiving a call from an acquaintance, had rushed to the crime spot and found the victim lying under the bridge.

Birsa Munda birth anniversary celebrations: Gujarat CM inaugurates 1,240 projects worth Rs 278 crore in 14 tribal districts



GNS News Agency, August 19

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel on Saturday inaugurated 1,240 development projects worth Rs 278 crore to be carried out by the state government in 14 tribal districts of Gujarat. Inaugurating the state-level celebrations as part of the 150th birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda at Mandvi taluka in Surat, the CM said: "The state government has fulfilled the Prime Minister's resolve to make forest brothers world brothers by implementing various schemes in the fields of education, health, employment and economic development."

During the event, the CM also inaugurated 1,282 works worth over Rs 200 crore under various schemes to be implemented by the Tribal Development Department in 14 tribal districts. Along with this, the individual scheme benefits worth Rs 125 crore were distributed to 6,20,846 tribal beneficiaries across the state. On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, tribal women tied rakhis to the Chief Minister. On the occasion, CM Patel paid respect to the statue of Birsa Munda. He also took lunch with a tribal family from Mandvi. "PM Narendra Modi has started the system of celebrating November 15 as 'Tribal Pride Day' in memory of freedom

fighter and tribal leader Birsa Munda from the year 2021. In 2025, his 150th birth anniversary is being celebrated across the country," the CM said. Saluting Birsa Munda, who fought against the British rule for the independence of the country and the rights of the tribal community, CM Patel said, "Due to the works and sacrifice of Birsa Munda, even today he is worshipped by the tribal community as 'Dharti Aaba' i.e. 'Father of the Earth' and 'God'. Birsa Munda had launched an armed rebellion called 'Ulgulan' (great movement) against the British rule for the land and forest rights of the tribals and had awakened consciousness, courage and valour among the tribals with the loud slogan of 'Abua Dishum.. Abua Raj...' i.e., 'Our country, our rule'. The struggle of Birsa Munda and the sacrifice made by him at the age of just 25 are a golden page in the history of the great revolutionaries of the tribal communities of India." He said that projects worth Rs 24,000 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Janatiya Adivasi Nyay Maha Abhiyan (PM-Janman Yojana) have been implemented. In the Dharti Aaba Janatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, five crore citizens of the tribal community in 63,000 villages of the country have been covered for social infrastructure facilities. He said that by providing scholarships to 1 crore tribal youths, their path to a bright future has been strengthened. CM Patel said, "The state government has provided scholarships worth Rs 4,300 crore to tribal students. Forest rights papers have been issued for 68,169 hectares of land in the state under the Forest Rights Act. The state government has provided scheme benefits to 4,265 villages in 102 talukas of 21 districts under the Dharti Aaba Janatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan." Minister of State for Tribal Development Kunwarjibhai Halpati said that the Prime Minister implemented the Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana for the development of the tribal community during his tenure as Gujarat Chief Minister, as a result of which the overall development of the tribals has become possible.

Consumer is king? Delhi govt data on redressal of complaints suggests otherwise

GNS News Agency, August 19

A response by BL Verma, Minister of State, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution in Lok Sabha, dated December 4, 2024, highlights the number of consumer cases filed before commissions between the 2020 and 2024 in the Capital and also the number of pending cases. In Delhi, approximately 4,700 cases on average were filed by the consumers each year between 2020 and 2024, according to Verma's reply to TDP MP Krishna Prasad Tenneti.

As of January 1, 2020, the consumer commissions in the Capital had 23,350 pending cases. Close to five years later, the number stood at 23,635. This means that the total number of cases disposed of in five years was almost equal to the number of new cases filed implying a stagnancy in disposal. "Despite less than 4,700 cases being filed on average, the overall pendency is not reducing. This clearly shows that there is a major issue. Cases that should be disposed of in 90 days are taking two years on average," said Professor Bejon Kumar Mishra, who has close to four decades of experience in consumer advocacy and education. He added, "In a city with a population of close to three crores, less than 5,000 people are approaching consumer commissions. This shows a lack of trust in the system." Data shared by Verma, while responding to questions related to the pendency in consumer commissions on July 29 suggests that the disposal of consumer cases across the country in consumer commissions has slowed down, the government data suggests.

Even as an average of 1.74 lakh cases were disposed of every year between 2022 and 2025, there are 5.8 lakh pending cases in all consumer commissions across the country at present with an average disposal rate of 80%. According to the Consumer Protection Act, every complaint needs to be disposed of within three months from the date of receipt of notice if the complaint does not require analysis or testing of commodities, and within five months if analysis is needed. Even as the nationwide disposal of consumer cases was approximately 7,000 and 11,000 more than the number of filed cases in 2022 and 2023, respectively; this trend reversed in 2024. Last year, the cases filed exceeded the disposed cases by over 15,000.

Data shared by the Minister in response to a different



question earlier last month also sheds light on the number of vacancies present in several state consumer disputes redressal commissions. Across the country, 18 out of 36 state consumer disputes redressal commissions don't have presidents, while vacancies exist for 62 members in these commissions. As far as district consumer disputes redressal commissions are concerned, 218 out of 685 commissions don't have sitting presidents, while there are 518 vacancies for members. On how to tackle the increasing pendency of consumer cases, professor Mishra suggested, "I feel eminent persons who have been involved in consumer rights should be made members and presidents of commissions. This way we'll be sure that the posts are being occupied by those who are serious about consumer rights." "Most customers don't know their rights, and even when they do, they usually avoid going to consumer courts. Sometimes the damage caused to them is worth Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000. Why would anyone want to hire a lawyer and pay a fee of Rs 50,000 for cases like this?" he told The Indian Express. Adding to that, Advocate Paras Jain said, "Seeking affidavit-in-evidence and written submissions by consumer courts in each and every case is frustrating the legislative intent of disposing of consumer complaints in three months..." Jain represented his brother in a 12-year-long legal battle against Emami's 'Fair and Handsome' skincare product which he eventually won. "In a civil case, when a summary judgment can be passed without seeking any affidavit-in-evidence and written submissions, Consumer Courts can also decide on the complaint in a summary manner for the speedy disposal of cases," he added.

St. Xavier's College cancels annual Stan Swamy Memorial Lecture after protest by ABVP

GNS News Agency, August 19

Xavier's College Father Stan Swamy was a Jesuit priest and a tribal rights activist based in Jharkhand. He was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on October 7, 2019, and stayed in state custody till he died at a Mumbai hospital in 2021. St. Xavier's College on Saturday called off its annual Stan Swamy Memorial Lecture after the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) protested against the event, alleging it glorified a person who was an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Bhima Koregaon case. The decision came days after the right-wing students' group wrote to the college administration.

The lecture, hosted by the department of inter-religious studies (DIRS), was to have been delivered virtually by Fr Prem Xalxo, associate lecturer, faculty of theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. He was scheduled to speak on the topic - "Migration for Livelihood: Hope Amidst Miseries." But, earlier this week, the ABVP wrote a letter to the college administration, strongly opposing the event, and demanded action from the state government against the event. "This lecture glorifies a person who was declared as the main accused in the Elgar Parishad-Bhima Koregaon case, and against whom charges have been filed under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967," said the letter. Father Stan Swamy was a Jesuit priest and a tribal rights activist based in Jharkhand. He was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on October 7, 2019, and stayed in state custody till he died at a Mumbai hospital in 2021. Stating that these lectures are usually held on August 9 on the occasion of World Indigenous Day, Rector Fr. Keith DSouza, from St. Xavier's College, said, "Our annual Stan Swamy memorial lecture has been delivered by reputed scholars who have done research in the area of history and development of indigenous peoples across the globe. The topic this year was on the theme of migration. While the lectures are on several themes related to indig-



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enous life—which no one has objected to—we understand that the contentious issue is mainly about the nomenclature of the lecture series, named after Stan Swamy. However, from a Jesuit point of view, Fr Stan Swamy was an Indian citizen who was accused, but not as yet convicted of his alleged crimes till his demise. As per our Indian criminal jurisprudence, a person is innocent unless proven guilty." Highlighting that the underlying motif of the DIRS is "respecting the other", Fr D Souza further said, "While we respect other perspectives and concerns, we hope to elicit a reciprocal attitude of respect from others as well. A controversy like this does not augur well for international higher educational relations."

'Textbook case of mishandling public money': Delhi govt set to probe irregularities in Chandni Chowk redevelopment project



GNS News Agency, August 19

The BJP government in Delhi is likely to initiate an inquiry into the Chandni Chowk redevelopment project for the alleged irregularities and cost overruns under the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) regime. The project's overall cost allegedly jumped from an estimated cost of Rs 65.6 crore to Rs 145 crore, while its initial cost of work (civil and electrical) increased from Rs 27.79 crore to Rs 105.93 crore — nearly a fourfold increase, said officials. The AAP, however, dismissed the claims and said the latest allegations against the previous government were an attempt to "dissuade (its) leaders from asking questions to the government". "The Chandni Chowk redevelopment project stands as a textbook case of how public money can be mishandled when rules are bent and procedures bypassed. In 2019, under the then Minister-in-Charge (Manish Sisodia), costs spiralled, tenders were ignored, and crores of rupees were diverted — all without mandatory approvals. Delhi deserves better," said Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh. "Under my watch, PWD will not be a playground for irregularities but a fortress of transparency and accountability, where every paisa serves the people, not personal interests," Singh added. The 1.3-km long redeveloped stretch in Chandni Chowk was inaugurated by former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in 2021. According to the internal findings by the BJP government, sources said, several steps were allegedly bypassed while transferring funds for the project. AAP leader and former Deputy CM Manish Sisodia held the portfolio at the time. It has also been alleged that the previous government violated the standard protocol for administrative approval and expenditure sanctions. "As per established norms, a revised sanction must be obtained when project costs exceed approved lim-

its. But PWD continued spending beyond the sanctioned Rs 99.68 crore without obtaining the mandatory revised approval," reads the document. To avoid Cabinet scrutiny, officials said, only an additional preliminary estimate of Rs 40 crore was submitted instead of revised preliminary estimate of Rs 145 crore. "This move appears to have been a deliberate attempt to avoid presenting the full proposal before the Cabinet, which is mandatory for projects exceeding Rs 100 crore... It has also been found that the project was executed through the same contractor without inviting fresh tenders... payments were made in violation of financial transparency and procurement norms," an official said. As per the documents, an amount of over Rs 70 crore was allegedly spent on extra items and deviations. Of the total Rs 145.72 crore spent, more than Rs 70 crore was for extra items and deviations. Further, PWD ignored the mandatory requirement of Cabinet approval even as the project cost exceeded Rs 100 crore. The documents also claim that funds were illegally diverted without the Finance department's nod. "A total of Rs 30 crore was diverted from the PWD Maintenance Head to Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation (SRDC) without obtaining mandatory concurrence from the Finance Department... The Engineer-in-Chief directly submitted the file to the Minister-in-Charge, bypassing both the Secretary in charge of the department and the concurrence of the Finance Department — a serious breach of rules and regulations," said the official. Due to these lapses in estimation and execution, the project allegedly suffered severe deficiencies in cost estimation, planning, and financial control. Overall execution lacked due diligence, resulting in large-scale irregularities and fiscal indiscipline, as per the officials. Hitting out at the BJP, the AAP in a statement said, "Rekha Gupta's BJP government knows that it won this Assembly election through cheating and voter list manipulation. They are not popular among the people. They are scared that the people of Delhi now want the AAP government back. They know that the people of Delhi love Arvind Kejriwal and AAP. Therefore, out of desperation, the BJP wants to file hundreds of false cases against AAP leaders." It added: "The people of Delhi know very well that for the last 10 years, vigilance and the Anti-Corruption Branch were under the L-G, and it was the L-G's duty to ensure that corrupt officers were punished. It was the LG who was appointing officers to various positions. Opening enquiries into old cases only shows the incompetence of their L-G."

FIR against BJP MLA Ashok Dinda for 'threatening' police personnel

GNS News Agency, August 19

THE KOLKATA Police on Saturday registered an FIR against former cricketer and BJP MLA Ashok Dinda for allegedly threatening police personnel during a 'Nabanna march' to mark the completion of one year of the rape and murder of a junior doctor at the state-run R G Kar Medical College and Hospital.

According to sources in the Kolkata Police, Dinda is purportedly seen threatening police officers in video footage. "Mr Dinda, during the rally, threatened and verbally abused our officers on duty. He also assaulted the guard of an IAS officer. Luckily, the personnel wasn't injured because he was wearing a helmet," a police officer told PTI. A senior police officer told The Indian Express, "We are still checking the video footage. If we find visuals in which any others are also threatening or misbehaving with our officers, we will file FIRs in those cases as well." On Saturday, Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, along with other BJP MLAs



including Dinda, also participated in the protest from the Park Street end. When the march was blocked with barricades, BJP supporters tried to break the barricades and march towards Nabanna, the headquarters of the state secretariat. Some BJP leaders and MLAs got into arguments with the police personnel deployed at the spot.

Knitwear to apparel, Tamil Nadu's textile belt starts feeling US's 50% tariff heat

GNS News Agency, August 19

IN TIRUPPUR, India's knitwear capital, exporters are already feeling the heat of the 50 per cent tariff US President Donald Trump announced Wednesday. They say orders are being paused, redirected, or lost entirely to competitors like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Vietnam, and Cambodia, all of whom have lower US tariffs ranging between 19% and 36%. One Tiruppur exporter told The Indian Express that his regular US shipment had already been diverted to Pakistan. Another said his American buyer asked him to "hold on" before confirming their summer order. A third revealed that buyers were previously demanding that exporters absorb the 25% tariff hike — a burden that has now doubled overnight.

The revised duties, including baseline and remedy-linked tariffs, now push effective rates for some knitted garments to as high as 64%, rendering products up to 35% more expensive than those from regional competitors. What was initially seen as a major setback is now viewed by exporters as "a de facto trade embargo". The blow comes at a particularly cruel time when Tamil Nadu's textile belt was preparing for a rebound in US orders. Tiruppur, Coimbatore, and Karur collectively employ over 1.25 million workers and export Rs 45,000 crore worth of garments annually. Just weeks ago, optimism surged on the back of the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and growing US interest in Indian goods due to elevated tariffs on China (125%-145%) and Myanmar (40%). Many exporters in Tamil Nadu had invested in new machinery to meet the expected surge. That hope is now turning into despair under the weight of retaliatory tariffs, especially with respect to China, which is now at 30% and could see a further downward revision once Beijing inks a deal with Washington DC.

"This is a setback," said K M Subramanian, president of the Tiruppur Exporters' Association (TEA). "Standalone exporting companies will be hit first. Buyers are already asking us to absorb part of the tariff. Our margins are just 5% to 7%; how can we share this cost?" Subramanian said while 30% of Tiruppur's exports go to the US, a diverse buyer base in Europe and the Middle East may provide some cushion — but not without pain. "The non-branded buyers will shift immediately. Branded ones may stay because of the social compliance and operating protocols we offer, but we will still bleed for some time." Textiles is a labour-intensive sector, and there are worries of job losses if the market shrinks. If exports contract 10-20% due to loss of orders, it can threaten 100,000–200,000 textile and garment jobs collectively in the three hubs — Tiruppur, Karur and Coimbatore — over the next few months. Tiruppur alone contributes Rs 40,000 crore to knitwear exports, supplying

global giants like Walmart, GAP, and Costco, and accounting for 55% of the country's knitwear exports. The region had hoped to expand it by 10–15% in FY2025–26. Now, the outlook is grim, with analysts forecasting a 40–50% fall in US-bound orders, especially in cotton and knitted apparel segments. The fallout is not confined to garments alone. In Coimbatore and Karur, known for home textiles, order stagnation has already begun. K Selvaraju, secretary general of the Southern India Mills' Association, said buyers have started deferring or holding off on their summer bookings for bed linens and towels — key products traditionally finalised by October. "We're hearing 'hold on' from clients who had placed advance enquiries," Selvaraju said. "If we miss this window, we miss the season." Karur alone exports nearly Rs 9,000 crore in home textiles each year, with Rs 6,900 crore going as direct exports. Coimbatore mills send large volumes of cotton towels and kitchen linens to the US — now burdened with higher duties. This isn't just about one tariff hike — its compounding an already weak environment," Selvaraju said, pointing to India's 11% import duty on cotton and a GST duty inversion that further hurts competitiveness. "Polyester raw material is taxed at 18%, yarn at 12%, but finished garments are taxed at 5%. This adds 6-7% to export costs, while competitors don't have such inverted duties." Meanwhile, the quality of cotton imports from Brazil, which make up 45% of this year's inbound shipments, is under scrutiny for not always meeting US-mandated standards. Selvaraju has urged the Centre to negotiate a cotton-forward deal, offering duty-free access to US cotton in exchange for apparel exports made from it. The global textiles market is highly competitive; India's key rivals face no such punitive hikes. Bangladesh continues with an effective rate of 35–36%, Pakistan has successfully negotiated a 19% tariff, Vietnam is at 20–21%, and Cambodia, though previously at 49%, now enjoys a 19% rate after an August 1 revision. One Tiruppur manufacturer admitted his shipment was lost to Pakistan. "They seem to have offered a better price," he said. "The order slipped."

Subramanian reiterated that Bangladesh remains India's fiercest rival in the US market. "Their 20% rate means they're much cheaper, significant when your margin is about 5%." This margin has now all but vanished. With total duties touching 64%, non-branded US buyers are already shifting to cheaper options. "They shift overnight," Subramanian warned. Industry leaders are urging for immediate policy relief. "The government had then provided an extended credit guarantee-linked scheme," Selvaraju recalled, referring to pandemic-era support. "It's time to bring that back." He also pressed for eliminating the 11% cotton import duty and restructuring the GST regime on manmade fibres. "

Iran threatens planned Trump corridor envisaged by Azerbaijan-Armenia peace deal



Since the issue had the potential to cause caste clashes in the area, the Revenue department served one more notice on Friday night directing the caste Hindus to remove the wall by 11 a.m. on Saturday (August 9, 2025). Strongly opposing the action, a large number of them staged a sit-in protest at the Collector Office on Friday night. They returned to their settlement after revenue officials made it clear that the wall would be demolished on Saturday. As the revenue and police personnel, led by Karur Superintendent of Police K. Josh Thangaiiah, began to assemble at the controversial site on Saturday morning, the leaders of the intermediate caste group came forward to destroy the wall on their own.

A triangular dynamic in South Asia’s power politics



In the complex interplay of great power politics in South Asia, the triangular relationship between the United States, India and Pakistan reveals a story. It is one about enduring strategic necessity as much as it is about the contest of political ideologies, national interests and historical legacies. United States President Donald Trump’s recent lunch with Pakistan’s Army Chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir — a deliberate overture laden with both symbolism and nostalgia — resurrects the ghosts of Cold War realpolitik. Mr. Trump’s repeated claims, despite India’s persistent denials, of having brokered a ceasefire between India and Pakistan, using trade as a lever, alongwith his high-profile interaction with the Pakistan Army chief at the White House signals an American eagerness to revert to a diplomacy of shortcuts. The Trump administration’s transactional view of diplomacy, privileging deals over doctrines, has led to a turnaround in U.S.-Pakistan relations, casting a dark shadow over the delicate trust meticulously built through decades of U.S.-India counterterrorism cooperation as well as strategic convergence on China — a feat often regarded as one of the most creditable episodes of American diplomacy after the end of the Cold War. America’s pronounced shift

Mr. Trump’s previous tenure as President was marked by an unusually blunt censure of Pakistan’s notorious double-game of a Machiavellian policy of cooperating with western countries in counterterrorism, while simultaneously supporting terror outfits that serve its regional interests. This stance had struck a chord with New Delhi’s unyielding approach toward terrorism, buttressing an already blooming ‘natural partnership’ with Washington. Yet, in the Trump administration’s second tenure, a perceptible pivot has taken shape. Very early on, the Trump White House reopened channels of security assistance to Pakistan, notably authorising \$397 million to sustain Islamabad’s F-16 fleet — ostensibly for counter-terrorism purposes. Public acknowledgments from top American military officials, terming Pakistan as a “phenomenal partner” together with Mr. Trump’s own gestures of gratitude toward Pakistan’s cooperation in counter-terror operations, reveal an unmistakable recalibration that privileges immediate strategic utility and transactional gains over previously cultivated long-term vision of bilateral relationship. By lauding Pakistan’s knowledge of Iran as “better than most”, Mr. Trump has hinted at something far more combustible — that Pakistan’s military could become a potential asset in navigating the volatile theatre of Iran-Israel conflict.

This American shift has naturally caused concern in New Delhi as it could prove a serious impediment to India’s aspirations for a principled partnership with the Trump-led White House. The U.S., the self-styled custodian of a liberal international order that India has also sought to embrace, now appears to treat Pakistan not as a terror-permissive and nuclear-armed outcaste state, but as a strategic interlocutor deserving engagement. The recalibration is supported by multiple factors: economic incentives, personal rapport with Pakistan’s military leadership, and America’s continuing desire to retain leverage in Afghanistan, and the broader region surrounding China. For Pakistan, it represents a critical opportunity to retrieve lost diplomatic space and rehabilitate its tainted global image, though domestic political currents inject ambiguity into Islamabad’s willingness to fully embrace cooperation with Washington. India’s doctrinal departure

Against this backdrop, the events of late April and early May have concretised the volatility inherent in South Asia’s security architecture. The devastating terror attack in Pahalgalam unleashed a decisive Indian military response.

India’s ‘Operation Sindoor’ marked a doctrinal departure from the long-standing policy of strategic restraint. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s declaration of a “new normal” has signalled a readiness to transcend previous thresholds, blending kinetic military retaliation with diplomatic campaign with the intent of isolating Pakistan globally and imposing accountability on the state apparatus that enables terrorist groups aligned against India. Mr. Modi’s depiction of the ceasefire as a mere pause highlights India’s broader aim to alter the calculus of Pakistan’s hostility, even as Beijing’s close ties with Islamabad and adversarial posture toward New Delhi amplify apprehensions of a two-front confrontation. On the other hand, Pakistan has intensified its dual-track strategy that seeks to combine military posturing with diplomatic engagement with the U.S. with the aim of reviving international attention on the Kashmir issue. The unprecedented promotion of Asim Munir to the rank of field marshal also marks a consolidation of military primacy in Pakistan’s national security framework. This entrenchment of a “hard state” doctrine, characterised by centralised military authority which remains fanatically resistant to civilian oversight, underscores Rawalpindi’s determination to project unbending strength amid multiple internal and external pressures.

Simultaneously, Pakistan is attempting to capitalise on its geopolitical location and diplomatic slyness to maintain its indispensability in America’s current strategic calculations. Islamabad’s outreach to Washington, which is reflected in trade negotiations, concessions over rare earth minerals, and innovative economic partnerships entwined with American business interests, suggests a cunning charm offensive to sustain international attention and economic lifelines. It is a strategy that perhaps recognises its own limitations in raw military power and economic scale but leverages the geographic centrality and personal diplomacy to maintain geopolitical relevance. The U.S.’s role in this volatile equation is characterised by a deliberate ambivalence that reflects the complexity of its competing priorities. Washington today seems to have become preoccupied to the point of obsession with tariff and trade, implying that India’s role in the Indo-Pacific attracts proportionately less attention than in the past, even though the Quad Foreign Ministers held their meeting in Washington on July 1. New Delhi’s persistent rejection of any third-party mediation in Kashmir underscores its determination to keep its core security issues tightly within its own sovereign domain. On the contrary, a Beijing-aligned Pakistan is desperate to embrace American engagement, perceiving it as a means to keep Kashmir from fading into diplomatic obscurity and to counterbalance India’s manoeuvring space. However, any American effort to “hyphenate” New Delhi and Islamabad would run counter to India’s vision of itself as a rising global power, while undermining bipartisan consensus to deepen ties with the U.S.

What drives Pakistan’s relevancePakistan’s continued relevance in American foreign policy seems to be driven by immutable facts of geography as well as carefully honed craft of personal diplomacy, giving its military leadership an inflated sense of purpose and power. Situated at the crossroads of South Asia, Central and West Asia, and bordering Iran, Afghanistan and China, there are certain quarters in Washington prone to the view that Pakistan is an indispensable linchpin to America’s regional strategy, particularly in Afghanistan and Iran where its logistical and intelligence roles are still critical. This geographic leverage likely magnifies Pakistan’s diplomatic voice in Washington, reinforcing a perception in Rawalpindi that it could help Pakistan counter India’s superior economic and demographic credentials. Personal rapport in diplomatic corridors often translates into material and political support, ensuring Pakistan’s endurance as a contradictory, yet “phenomenal” partner. As enduring strategic sympathy for India becomes hostage to the shifting sands of personality-driven politics in the U.S., and the ‘friend’ in the U.S.-Pakistan frenemy dynamic gaining the upper hand, a geopolitically conscious Washington must walk a delicate tightrope. Each party seeks to instrumentalise the U.S. to its own ends, while American policy oscillates between idealism, realism and transactionalism. Vinay Kaura is Assistant Professor in the Department of International Affairs and Security Studies at the Sardar Patel University of Police, Security and Criminal Justice, Rajasthan, and Non-Resident Fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore

Judiciary should not override executive’s decision to deport a foreign national: Home Ministry



The Union Home Ministry’s (MHA) appeal against a Jammu and Kashmir High Court order to repatriate a 62-year-old housewife who was deported to Pakistan post Pahalgalam terror attack said the “judiciary should not override” the executive’s decision to deport a foreign national. It said the High Court order was constitutionally impermissible and unsustainable, as it directed the enforcement of a judicial writ beyond the sovereign territory of India to Pakistan, where she was deported and was thus ultra vires. The Ministry also said that the court’s direction was “legally unenforceable and diplomatically untenable.” “There exists no extradition treaty, legal instrument, or international obligation binding Pakistan to return her to India. The Indian government cannot, under existing international law, compel a sovereign nation to surrender a non-citizen,” the MHA said. The Home Ministry said “courts must preserve the institutional boundaries necessary for effective governance” and the order, if allowed to stand, would establish a dangerous precedent.

The MHA filed a Letters Patent Appeal (LPA) before a Division Bench of the High Court against a June 6 order by Judge Rahul Bharti who directed the Union Home Secretary to bring back the petitioner Rakshanda Rashid in 10 days. Married to an Indian, Ms. Rashid had been staying in Jammu for 38 years on a Long-Term Visa (LTV), which was extended annually even as her citizenship application

is pending with the MHA since 1996. On April 29, at the time of deportation, the LTV did not exist, the MHA said. Ms. Rashid had said in her petition that she applied for LTV renewal in January and the application was never rejected. After the April 22 Pahalgalam terror attack, where 26 people were killed, the MHA cancelled the visas of all Pakistani citizens and asked them to leave the country by April 29. The order exempted those with LTVs or Pakistani women married to Indian citizens. The Ministry said that while passing the order, the single judge “failed to appreciate the circumstances and the national security considerations and the reasonable apprehension posed by the Pakistani nationals staying in India on account of war-like situation between India and Pakistan.” It added that the order is “contrary to the principles of judicial restraint in the matters concerning national security and international relations, particularly in dealing with the national of a hostile country.” It said the order was “based on assumption that marriage to an Indian citizen entitles her to claim a right to reside in India or to have her deportation reopen.” “Subject to control” It is well settled law that a foreign national does not acquire Indian nationality or legal residency rights solely by virtue of marriage. A foreigner does not possess a fundamental right to reside in India and their entry and stay are subject to regulatory control of the state under Foreigners Act, 1946. Because it is a trite law that a foreign national do not enjoy rights guaranteed under Article 19. The only fundamental right available to a foreigner is under Article 21 of the Constitution of India which does not confer any right to remain in India once a visa expires or is revoked,” the MHA said. The Ministry said the order would set a dangerous precedent and “may be cited by foreign nationals to invoke Article 226 for personal repatriation” and the outcome “threatens the integrity of constitutional separation and immigration enforcement alike.” The judiciary, by ordering the repatriation of a foreign national from another sovereign country, had encroached on into the domain of the Union Executive, whose functions under Article 73 include decisions regarding foreign relations, immigration policy, and national security, the Home Ministry said.

Blood and data leaks | The dark side of period tracking apps

If you are a young gadget user with a uterus, chances are that alerts about your upcoming period now come from your smartphone or your smartwatch. Period tracking apps have made it easier not just to stock sanitary pads and painkillers (and perhaps some chocolate), but they also prompt menstruating users to log their physical symptoms, track their mental health, detect potential reproductive conditions, and plan sexual intercourse based on their fertility levels. Period tracking tools are incredibly diverse, with the Apple and Google app storefronts offering many such apps that have seen millions of user downloads. Basic apps are free and merely remember the user’s menstrual cycle dates to estimate their future dates. Others offer premium features and advanced data processing so that users can share detailed health and fertility reports with their partner or a healthcare provider. Period apps can now send reminders and health alerts from a variety of devices. Period apps can now send reminders and health alerts from a variety of devices | Photo Credit: Simple Design Ltd. via Google Play Store

The more information users provide about their periods and health, the better the app gets. For this reason, period tracking app users are often encouraged to key in highly personal health information such as food cravings, bowel motions, vaginal discharge or cervical mucus, weight fluctuations, changes in breast texture, sexual activity, period flow, mental health issues, pregnancy status, and even daily facial pimples. Needless to say, this information is a treasure trove for brands and unscrupulous third-parties who want to harvest such data in order to push ads at an opportune moment. For example, a company selling “wellness” supplements that claim to reduce menstrual discomfort would want to market their ads in the Instagram feed of a young user with a history of painful period cramps, rather than to someone with a uterus. Having the data makes all the difference. More worryingly, a period tracking app could be used as evidence by law enforcement authorities in regions where abortions have been criminalised. Period app data could also be misused by abusers to harass the user, discriminate against them, carry out acts of violence, or stop them from accessing abortions. So, are period tracking apps meeting the mark when it comes to protecting their users’ data? On the flip side, is it possible that people are relying on their period tracking apps a little too much? The Google Play Store requires app developers to provide up-to-date information about their services, and explain to users how their personal data will be collected or shared. The Clue Cycle & Period Tracker by BioWink with over 50 million downloads on the Google Play Store noted that it may share health and fitness info for app functionality and personalisation purposes. The app profile clarified that health/fitness information may be collected on an optional basis.

Period tracking apps compile and process vast amounts of highly personal health data shared by their users. The Flo Period & Pregnancy Tracker by Flow Health Inc. with over 100 million downloads, meanwhile, noted that no data was shared with third parties. However, information such as the user’s approximate location and their health/fitness information could be collected on a largely optional basis for app functionality purposes, developer communications, and personalisation. The user’s approximate location could be collected for ‘advertising or marketing.’ The Period Calendar Period Tracker by Simple Design Ltd. with over 100 million downloads noted that while it might collect health/fitness information for app functionality (on an optional basis), this would not be shared with other companies or organisations. However, there are multiple apps that did not offer robust data protection measures. For example, Wachanga’s Clover—Period & Cycle Tracker app with over five million downloads on the Google Play Store noted that it may share data including users’ approximate location and their email address for purposes that included ‘advertising or marketing.’ The app developer also did not provide information about how users could request data deletion. Other period tracking apps seen by The Hindu perpetuated pseudo-scientific ideas such as syncing one’s menstrual cycle with the moon’s phases, or even comparing cycles with friends. A number of period tracking tools on app storefronts promote highly unscientific ideas

A number of critical 1-star and 2-star app reviews for Clue, Flo, Period Calendar Period Tracker, and Clover all claimed that the apps themselves overused ads to push users into paying for premium features, or repeatedly nagged users to become paying subscribers, or made them view third-party ads in order to use the app. Many of these reviews outlined users’ irritation with the intrusive ads, while others expressed frustration because months or years of



health data had been logged into the app and transferring it to another service was a challenge. More worryingly, those using period tracking apps should be aware that a Google Play developer notice is not a data privacy guarantee. In January 2021, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulator reported that Flo Health Inc. had settled over allegations that it “shared the health information of users with outside data analytics providers after promising that such information would be kept private.”

The company shared “health data from millions of users” from the Flo Period & Ovulation Tracker app to firms including Facebook’s analytics division, Google’s analytics division, Google’s Fabric service, AppsFlyer, and Flurry, per the FTC’s complaint. The Hindu reached out to Clue, Flo, Wachanga, and Simple Design for comment on the user privacy policies of each app. Only Clue and Simple Design responded. Clue CEO Rhiannon White said that app users’ health data was shared under very specific circumstances and under strict limitations and protocols, for user personalisation or research purposes. “To be very clear, when it comes to third parties — we have never and will never sell or share sensitive health data with advertisers, insurers or data brokers. That is not our business model — our business model is direct to consumer subscriptions, ensuring that our users are our customers, and we serve only them,” White said. She noted that some vetted third-party tools would process certain usage and tracked health data, with user consent, and that such tools complied with Europe’s GDPR standard. Coming to research, White explained that health data was shared in a de-identified format to help correct a “historical lack of data for research into female health.” “It is up to each user whether they want to help to close that data gap by consenting to their de-identified data being used for this purpose, which is again why we offer granular consent options within the app,” White told The Hindu. “By design, no tool we use processes sensitive user data in a way that could put our members’ health information at risk. Ever.

“Meanwhile, Simple Design clarified that users’ data was stored on their local device while opting for backup meant the encrypted file was stored only on the users’ personal cloud. “No one, including us, has the right to monitor, access, or share their data,” said Simple Design, adding that its app has been in operation for over 10 years and serves over 300 million users. From medical apps to appointments. When used correctly, period tracking apps can help patients understand their bodies and receive better care from their doctors. However, there are risks when users overly rely on their period trackers, or do not download apps from trusted developers with strong privacy policies. There is very little verified research to support the idea that aligning one’s period with the lunar cycle is helpful in any way

Dr. Batchu Sowdamini, Chief Consultant, Obstetrics & Gynaecologist, Apollo Hospitals, Health City in Arilova, Visakhapatnam, explained that a key advantage of period tracking apps was the precise identification of the fertility period, which is useful for people trying to conceive or avoid pregnancy naturally. At the same time, she noted that such apps were not a replacement for contraceptives. Tracking key elements like the length and duration of bleeding, as well as any intermenstrual spotting, helps collect useful data over time. This information, when reviewed over several months, can assist an OB-GYN in identifying patterns that may suggest underlying issues such as endometriosis, PCOS, fibroids, infertility, or even signs of cancer,” she said. However, Dr. Batchu outlined some risks that period tracking apps may pose. These included clinical limitations, emotional or psychological impacts, and privacy concerns. She warned that these apps’ predictive algorithms come with limitations and that they should not replace a medical diagnosis. “The majority of apps employ algorithms based on calendar averages, which are unreliable for users with PCOS,



(June 30, 2025), Mr. Trump is set to host Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for talks at the White House, days after Ron Dermer, a senior Netanyahu adviser, held discussions with top U.S. officials about Gaza, Iran and other matters. On Tuesday (July 1, 2025), Mr. Trump wrote on social media that Israel had “agreed to the necessary conditions to finalise the 60 Day CEASEFIRE, during which time we will work with all parties to end the War.” “I hope, for the good of the Middle East, that Hamas takes this Deal, because it will not get better — IT WILL ONLY GET WORSE,” he said.

Mr. Trump’s warning may find a sceptical audience with Hamas. Even before the expiration of the war’s longest ceasefire in March, Mr. Trump has repeatedly issued dramatic ultimatums to pressure Hamas to agree to longer pauses in the fighting that would see the release of more hostages and a return of more aid to Gaza’s civilian populace. Still, Mr. Trump views the current moment as a potential turning point in the brutal conflict that has left more than 56,000 dead in the Palestinian territory. The Gaza Health Ministry doesn’t differentiate between civilians and combatants in its death count but says that more than half of the dead are women and children. The war began on October 7, 2023, when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking roughly 250 hostages. The war has left the coastal Palestinian territory in ruins, with much of the urban landscape flattened in the fighting. More than 90% of Gaza’s 2.3 million population has been displaced, often multiple times. And the war has sparked a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, pushing hundreds of thousands of people toward hunger.

Hamas says it’s ready for a ceasefire but wants a complete end to the war in Gaza

Hamas suggested Wednesday (July 2, 2025) that it was open to a ceasefire agreement with Israel but stopped short of accepting a U.S.-backed proposal announced by U.S. President Donald Trump hours earlier, insisting on its longstanding position that any deal bring an end to the war in Gaza. Mr. Trump said Tuesday (July 1, 2025) that Israel had agreed on terms for a 60-day ceasefire in Gaza and urged Hamas to accept the deal before conditions worsen. The U.S. leader has been increasing pressure on the Israeli government and Hamas to broker a ceasefire, and hostage agreement and bring about an end to the war. Mr. Trump said the 60-day period would be used to work toward ending the war — something Israel says it won’t accept until Hamas is defeated. He said that a deal might come together as soon as next week. But Hamas’ response, which emphasised its demand that the war end, raised questions about whether the latest offer could materialise into an actual pause in fighting. Hamas official Taher al-Nunu said that the militant group was “ready and serious regarding reaching an agreement.” He said Hamas was “ready to accept any initiative that clearly leads to the complete end to the war.” A Hamas delegation is expected to meet with Egyptian and Qatari mediators in Cairo on Wednesday (July 2, 2025) to discuss the proposal, according to an Egyptian official. The official spoke on condition of anonymity, because he wasn’t authorised to discuss the talks with the media. Throughout the nearly 21-month-long war, ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas have repeatedly faltered over whether the war should end as part of any deal. Hamas has said that it’s willing to free the remaining 50 hostages, less than half of whom are said to be alive, in exchange for a complete Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and an end to the war. Israel says it will only agree to end the war if Hamas surrenders, disarms and exiles itself, something the group refuses to do. An Israeli official said that the latest proposal calls for a 60-day deal that would include a partial Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and a surge in humanitarian aid to the territory. The mediators and the U.S. would provide assurances about talks on an end to the war, but Israel isn’t committing to that as part of the latest proposal, the official said. The official wasn’t authorised to discuss the details of the proposed deal with the media, so spoke on condition of anonymity. It wasn’t clear how many hostages would be freed as part of the agreement, but previous proposals have called for the release of about 10. Israel has yet to publicly comment on Mr. Trump’s announcement. On Monday

Around \$30-35 billion of India’s merchandise exports to America at risk from Trump’s tariffs, says UBS Chief India Economist



US President Donald Trump’s decision to impose a total tariff of 50 per cent on India has put at risk \$30 billion-\$35 billion worth of New Delhi’s exports to the world’s largest economy, according to Tanvee Gupta Jain, UBS’ Chief India Economist. Consequently, India — whose merchandise exports to the US in 2024 totalled \$87.3 billion, resulting in a surplus of \$45.8 billion — faces the risk of losing almost a full percentage point from its GDP growth over two years, she said. In an interview with The Indian Express Siddharth, Jain also shed light on the possibility of India reducing its purchase of Russian oil and the Indian economy’s growth and inflation prospects in light of the RBI’s latest monetary policy decision. Edited excerpts:

US tariff on India is now 50 per cent, with a three-week waiting period. Purely in terms of the trade relations, what is your assessment of the impact?

US President Donald Trump has now announced an additional 25 per cent tariff on India for buying oil from Russia, taking the total tariffs to 50 per cent. This additional tariff is effective from August 27, that is 21 days after the executive order. There are a few sectors including pharma, smartphones, (that) are currently under section 232 investigations and are exempted from tariffs. The exempted sectors account for \$24 billion or around 30 per cent of India’s total goods exports to the US of \$87 billion. The way we look at the impact of the tariffs is as follows: we note the US accounts for \$87 billion or 20 per cent of India’s goods export, or about 2.2 per cent of India’s GDP. We multiply the new tariff rate with trade exposure to the US to get a ‘GDP at risk’ measure. Further assuming a -1 price elasticity, we estimate drag from the proposed tariffs that is 25 per cent effective from today and an additional 25 per cent effective from August 27 versus our current baseline to be 35 basis points (bps) in 2025-26 and 60 bps in 2026-27. We would stress that our estimates are subject to substantial uncertainty as the trade negotiations with the US are ongoing. In addition, other considerations for our growth forecast include how global growth pans out and if counter-cyclical policy support could help support domestic demand momentum in the face of tariff-related uncertainties. These are just scenarios that we have. We are not yet changing our estimates as a lot will depend on how the negotiations happen over the coming weeks and months.

So, the exports at risk from the tariffs are roughly \$56 billion or so. Do you have an estimate of how much that could fall by if the 50 per cent tariff stays in place?

I would say the exports at risk out of India’s \$87 billion of goods exports to the US, taking into account the exemptions, are roughly around \$30 billion-\$35 billion. The 21-day pause gives some time for the negotiations to continue later this month.

Do you see any sign of a deal with the US resulting in a meaningfully lower tariff rate without India conceding ground on its two non-negotiables: agriculture and dairy?

Taking lessons from India’s Asian peers that have negotiated a trade deal with the US — including Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines and Japan — we expect India to open its market to the US, implying zero tariffs on American goods. Like its peers, we expect India to commit to increasing purchases of energy and defence equipment from the US to bring down its goods trade surplus of \$46 billion as of 2024. However, opening up agriculture and dairy sectors to the US remains a key hurdle. These low value-added sectors could impact Indian farmers’ livelihoods — especially small ones engaged in dairy production. India’s dairy sector accounts for 3 per cent of nominal gross value added and provides a living for over 80 million dairy farmers. In our base case, we would expect a trade deal to happen sooner than later as any lingering uncertainty is a drag to overall growth. As per media reports, the US trade delegation is likely to visit India sometime in the last week of August as part of this discussion. So, we are hoping that something comes out of it. It is interesting that the start date of these additional tariffs, August 27, is a couple of days after the next round of talks between the US and India. India’s trade with Russia is clearly an issue for the US. Can India source oil from other countries without a meaningful impact on domestic fuel prices, overall inflation, and the government’s finances?

India is a net oil importer and we import almost 88 per cent of our oil requirement. So clearly, movements in oil prices will have a very important bearing on our macro stability risks, including current account, inflation, and the government’s finances. Hence, it will impact the overall

economic growth prospects. Before the Russia-Ukraine conflict began in 2022, Russia’s share in India’s oil imports was 2 per cent. This rose to 36 per cent in 2024-25. As per UBS’ oil analysts, Indian refineries are typically complex because the units are optimised to process the heavier Russian Ural. Further, the price advantage of the Ural crude to Brent, which was very favourable for India when the conflict began in 2022, has now reduced to \$2-3 per barrel on a landed cost basis. So, India may not lose much if it shifts away from Russian oil because the savings right now are only \$2 billion. But the UBS global energy team has also pointed out that the crude market is only partially pricing supply disruption due to tariff pressures on India. So, it could temporarily drive crude prices above \$70 a barrel. But if there is sufficient surplus and OPEC spare capacity, it can definitely cap the upside in prices.

There is now a pressure to finish trade deals quickly. Is there anything to be worried about in terms of these deals resulting in India giving up too much during negotiations or not extracting as favourable terms as it could have otherwise?

To be fair, India was the first country to come to the table to negotiate with the US and we are still there right now. So, it seems that India is trying to prioritise national interest and it is not in any rush to finish a trade deal quickly. The hope is that we are able to find a balanced deal between India and the US which works to both the countries’ benefit.

RBI’s Monetary Policy Committee stayed put on the repo rate, but you now expect an additional 25 bps rate cut in October given the uncertainty caused by the tariffs. How does one understand this additional easing given that the central bank’s latest forecast puts headline retail inflation at 4.9 per cent in April-June 2026?

Our inflation forecast for 2025-26 — even before the Reserve Bank of India lowered their estimate by 60 bps to 3.1 per cent — was tracking close to 3 per cent with more downside risk. This is supported by good agricultural output, favourable monsoon, and the lower global crude oil prices. The offloading of excess China capacity in India at cheaper prices could result in a disinflationary impulse. Overlaying this disinflationary impulse with RBI’s neutral policy rate assumption of 1.4-1.9 per cent, we see space for the terminal repo rate to fall towards 5-5.25 per cent range. For now, we add one 25 bps rate cut in the October meeting to our baseline, with risk of another (rate cut) if growth surprises lower, driven by US trade tariffs and/or a step shift lower in global growth.

Yes, the one-year forward inflation of 4.9 per cent looks very high because of the base effect. But I would expect the new CPI inflation series, which will likely be launched early next year, to streamline that one-year forward inflation forecast. At this point, we think the RBI has kept some ammunition in the form of monetary easing support in case growth risks are skewed towards the downside. The RBI has maintained its 2025-26 GDP growth forecast at 6.5 per cent despite the global uncertainty, although it did trim it back in April by 20 bps from 6.7 per cent. Is the RBI possibly underestimating the hit to growth — not just from the tariffs themselves but also the adverse impact on corporate sentiment from the uncertainty?

I would give the RBI some benefit of doubt because the MPC meeting took place before the additional 25 per cent tariff was announced. If we only incorporate the 25 per cent tariff that was in place before the additional tariff got announced after the RBI policy, the downside risk to GDP growth in real terms for 2025-26 was only coming to around 10-15 bps, as per our estimates.

You recently launched your rural and urban economic activity indicators, where you said household consumption recovery is expected to become broad-based over the next 2-3 quarters backed by RBI’s rate cuts, softer inflation, good monsoon, and income tax relief, among other factors. Will this recovery sustain without an appreciable rise in actual income levels?

The UBS India Composite Economic Indicator, our leading indicator with 15 high-frequency data points, suggests economic momentum softened in May. This is in line with our global growth nowcast which suggests that tariffs and global uncertainty dragged growth sharply in May after a resilient April, helped by US tariff front-loading including improved demand, production, and trade. Our activity indicators suggest rural activity improved, while urban activity remained subdued in the June quarter. We note that rural accounts for 46 per cent share of total consumption. Even as rural activity is gaining traction, we believe it is still too early to expect a broad-based recovery in household consumption as urban activity continues to soften. One of the factors supporting our view that household consumption could be the bright spot in 2025-26/2026-27 was urban demand will stabilise on monetary transmission, lower inflation, and policy stimulus from income tax relief and likely fuel price cuts. We were also expecting a pay boost under the pay commission. However, implementation of the Eighth Central Pay Commission seems likely to be delayed to early 2027. While consumption will be growth-supportive, we are not expecting a broad-based household consumption recovery anytime soon.

Internet’s newest fad claims tamarind seeds can help deal with arthritis; experts debunk



The internet’s latest fad is here, and it comprises using tamarind seeds to deal with arthritis problems. While the internet may make tall claims from now and then, we are committed to breaking down whether the same holds any real relevance. Rich in protein, dietary fibre and carbohydrates, tamarind seeds contain essential minerals like magnesium and potassium, explains Kanika Malhotra, dietician and diabetes educator. “Also rich with anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, one can use tamarind seeds as roasted, ground into a powdered format, or as an addition to smoothies, soups, and sauces.” It is this richness that acts as a contributing factor in combating digestive issues and reducing cholesterol, she said. Tamarind seeds Here’s what to consider when treating arthritis (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

Do tamarind seeds help in combatting arthritis?

According to Dr Vishal Shinde, Orthopaedic Surgeon at Wockhardt Hospitals, Mumbai Central. “Organic treatments like tamarind seeds show promise but needs more research and should be discussed with healthcare providers.” Tamarind is rich in vitamin C”, he says, which is beneficial in healing the overall body and was helpful during the pandemic. While tamarind may not directly treat arthritis, it won’t cause harm and can support general health, he fur-

Are you in a mid-career to senior job? Don’t fear AI – you could have this important advantage



Have you ever sat in a meeting where someone half your age casually mentions “prompting ChatGPT” or “running this through AI”, and felt a familiar knot in your stomach? You’re not alone. There’s a growing narrative that artificial intelligence (AI) is inherently ageist, that older workers will be disproportionately hit by job displacement and are more reluctant to adopt AI tools. But such assumptions — especially that youth is a built-in advantage when it comes to AI — might not actually hold. While ageism in hiring is a real concern, if you have decades of work experience, your skills, knowledge and judgement could be exactly what’s needed to harness AI’s power — without falling into its traps.

What does the research say?

The research on who benefits most from AI at work is surprisingly murky, partly because it’s still early days for systematic studies on AI and work. Some research suggests lower-skilled workers might have more to gain than high-skilled workers on certain straightforward tasks. The picture becomes much less clear under real-world conditions, especially for complex work that relies heavily on judgement and experience. Through our Skills Horizon research project, where we’ve been talking to Australian and global senior leaders across different industries, we’re hearing a more nuanced story.

Many older workers do experience AI as deeply unsettling. As one US-based CEO of a large multinational corporation told us: “AI can be a form of existential challenge, not only to what you’re doing, but how you view yourself.” But leaders are also observing an important and unexpected distinction: experienced workers are often much better at judging the quality of AI outputs. This might become one of the most important skills, given that AI occasionally hallucinates or gets things wrong. The CEO of a South American creative agency put it bluntly: “Senior colleagues are using multiple AIs. If they don’t have the right solution, they re-prompt, iterate, but the juniors are satisfied with the first answer, they copy, paste and think they’re finished. They don’t yet know what they are looking for, and the danger is

that they will not learn what to look for if they keep working that way.” Experience as an AI advantage Experienced workers have a crucial advantage when it comes to prompting AI: they understand context and usually know how to express it clearly. While a junior advertising creative might ask an AI to “Write copy for a sustainability campaign”, a seasoned account director knows to specify “Write conversational social media copy for a sustainable fashion brand targeting eco-conscious millennials, emphasising our client’s zero-waste manufacturing process and keeping the tone authentic but not preachy”. This skill mirrors what experienced professionals do when briefing junior colleagues or freelancers: providing detailed instructions, accounting for audience, objectives, and constraints. It’s a competency developed through years of managing teams and projects. Younger workers, despite their comfort with technology, may actually be at a disadvantage here. There’s a crucial difference between using technology frequently and using it well. Many young people may become too accustomed to AI assistance. A survey of US teens this year found 72 per cent had used an AI companion app. Some children and teens are turning to chatbots for everyday decisions. Without the professional experience to recognise when something doesn’t quite fit, younger workers risk accepting AI responses that feel right — effectively “vibing” their work — rather than developing the analytical skills to evaluate AI usefulness.

So what can you do?

First, everyone benefits from learning more about AI. In our time educating everyone from students to senior leaders and CEOs, we find that misunderstandings about how AI works have little to do with age. A good place to start is reading up on what AI is and what it can do for you. What is AI? Where does AI come from? How does AI learn?

What can AI do? What makes a good AI prompt? If you’re not even sure which AI platform to try, we would recommend testing the most prominent ones, OpenAI’s ChatGPT, Anthropic’s Claude, and Google’s Gemini. If you’re an experienced worker feeling threatened by AI, lean into your strengths. Your decades of experience with delegation, context-setting, and critical evaluation are exactly what AI tools need. Start small. Pick one regular work task and experiment with AI assistance, using your judgement to evaluate and refine outputs. Practice prompting like you’re briefing a junior colleague: be specific about context, constraints, and desired outcomes, and repeat the process as needed. Most importantly, don’t feel threatened. In a workplace increasingly filled with AI-generated content, your ability to spot what doesn’t quite fit, and to know what questions to ask, has never been more valuable.



a cocktail therapy.

What ingredients or substances are used in this therapy?

“A standard cocktail treatment consists of a combination of substances intended to protect and revitalize the skin. Antioxidants, vitamins and peptides are essential for preventing pollutants and UV radiation from harming the ecosystem,” said Dr Trupti D Agarwal, Consultant, Dermatology at Sir HN Reliance Hospital, Mumbai.

Income Tax Dept launches ITR-5 Excel utility for AY 2024-25 filing

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department on Saturday released the ITR-5 Excel Utility for Assessment Year 2024-25. This utility can be used by partnership firms, Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs), and cooperative societies to file their annual returns. Associations of Persons, Bodies of Individuals, artificial juridical persons, cooperative societies, societies registered under the Societies Registration Act, local authorities, and certain business trusts and investment funds are other eligible entities.

Entities other than individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs), companies, and those required to use ITR-7 can use the ITR-5 form. The IT department on the social media platform X said, “Kind Attention Taxpayers! Excel Utility of ITR-5 is live now and is available for filing.” The ITR-5 structure includes detailed financial disclosures, including general information, balance sheet, manufacturing and trading accounts, profit and loss statement etc. Income schedules from various sources, loss set-off, depreciation, deductions, exempt income, foreign assets, GST reconciliation, and tax relief are part of the ITR-5 filing structure.

Key updates for AY 2024-25 include new sections for MSME registration and Section 80-IAC startup deductions, along with expanded reporting for emerging income categories like virtual digital assets (crypto/NFTs). The updated



ITR-5 now permits reporting of buyback losses only if the related dividend has been taxed.

The deadline for filing returns for non-audit cases is September 15. Taxpayers can do e-verification or physically verify their returns by sending the signed form to the Centralised Processing Centre (CPC) in Bengaluru within 30 days. Supporting documents are not needed, but tax credits must match Form 26AS. Before filing, taxpayers must ensure portal registration, bank account validation for refunds, updated digital signatures, and submission of applicable statutory forms.

It’s time India scales up production to tide over shuttlecock scarcity arising from change in Chinese food preferences



Trust the French to notice that char siu (barbecued pork) has taken over the land of the Peking duck, on the Chinese dinner table. It’s not that their own confit base protein was suddenly affected, to kick off se plaindre (the complaining). The unrelated news arrived through badminton. The last three months have witnessed a steep rise in prices of shuttlecocks, and academies all over India are having to factor in this escalation in their running costs, grin and bear even though shelling out the extra cash can’t ensure that stocks will arrive. The reason cited is shortage of raw materials, arising from fewer ducks being harvested.

The shortage — either naturally resulting from a diet switch or artificially contrived, as several coaches guess — means that though India’s top players will continue to be catered to by the big corporations, Yonex and Li Ling, the vast majority of upcoming shuttlers are expected to feel the pinch in the coming months. They face anxiety not just over playing the game, but also over when the next stocks will arrive, and uncertainty if training sessions can go on without a supply glitch. While national coach Pullela Gopichand spoke of the dependency on goose feathers needing a long-term solution, coach Vimal Kumar recalled an intrepid project from 40 years ago when India had attempted to get a headstart in shuttle manufacturing, but got priced out by imports that were more cost-effective and also better in quality as the years went on.

In 1994, Kannur’s plywood businessman Mayen Mohamed, an engineer by vocation, had set out to expand into manufacturing shuttles. Kerala had a bit of a history of rearing ducks for meat, and he set up a plant to make high-quality shuttles. In this endeavor, he was joined by the legendary Prakash Padukone and Vikram Singh, another well-known shuttler. Gopichand’s All England title was still seven years away, and Indian bureaucracy dawdled as the sport developed at a glacial pace. But the entrepreneurial spirit was buzzing.

The shuttles produced under the brand name ‘PraVik’ on a small scale were high in quality, but it was never going to match Chinese large-scale manufacturing units. A box of 10 shuttles was prized, but the feather market globally would get flooded by cheaper, inferior quality shuttles, though the technology from giants Yonex and subsequently Li Ning and Victor kept improving, driving Indian brands to the periphery. The plant did not lack innovation, but when mar-

kets opened in India, survival was near impossible. The scaling up didn’t quite happen, though it remained an experiment that had briefly worked. The kuttanad tharavu mappas (duck curry) remains popular, but this side chick-goose business hasn’t quite taken off. Even today, shuttles which get labels stuck on by domestic brands like Skylark and Albatross get made — not in Kerala, but in Bengal. In the Uluberia belt of the state where hasher mangsho (duck meat) remains a delicacy, and hence ducks are raised, smallish industrial units spit out shuttles of varying quality. There’s no consistency in these handmade shuttles, and one can’t ensure that they will travel around at a uniform speed. They are either too fast, wobble or wither quickly.

“India should seriously look at setting up shuttle-making factories around Kerala and Bengal. The quality of feathers is key, but with what’s coming in terms of shortages and price rise, I’m not sure why we cannot,” says Vimal Kumar, who says most national federations camp in Hong Kong and Canton and buy the best ones that Yonex or Li Ning offer. The feather shortages however, have hit all makers big and small with even Lingmei, a smaller brand, facing supply delays. Shuttles are broadly either ACPTR (used by academies) or higher end AS-2, used by players on the competitive circuit. The absolute elite play with AS-30, 40, 50. Duck feathers are cheaper than geese but are more prominent because the stem is stronger. The cork of the shuttles, which weighs 4.5 to 5 grams, comes from Portugal and the glue from Burma. One Bengaluru coach mentions that shuttles in recent months have “felt artificial”, though he’s unable to put a finger on what could have changed. Dealerships are also grappling with a supply lag, originating from Bangladesh to China. Apparently, for a certain cost segment of feather shuttles, ducks from Bangladesh are sourced, though the import of birds is largely for meat. The Badminton World Federation has been experimenting with clones and alternative materials for a long time, but the sport, though not as expensive as tennis, remains mighty picky about feathers. Plastic shuttles are good enough to smash and drive, but shuttlers can pen ballads and reams of poetry for the delicate feel of the ‘tumble at the net’. It’s how the feather shuttle slows in flight that makes it special, while a plastic one will travel like an ugly bullet.

Though it seems absolutely ridiculous that an entire sport could be at the mercy of whether the Chinese fancy pork or duck for dinner, that is where the sport is at the moment. While plenty of feeder academies survive on nylon shuttles and hybrids, the feather shuttle is a thing of beauty. The air drag, flight and tumble is just not the same. “Synthetics — they are crap,” says a Chennai coach, struggling big time with the price rise. Maybe, the Kerala and Bengal units need to get more ambitious, and look at this crisis as an opportunity. Indians are not likely to give up on badminton just because the bird costs got prohibitive. The country is too deep now to take a step back.

‘I think it’s doubtful’: Jonny Bairstow gives honest thoughts on England future

GNS News Agency, August 19

A few years ago, England wicketkeeper-batter Jonny Bairstow was one of the staples in the national side. Fast forward to 2025, the player looks to be a long way away from making a comeback in the team with Bairstow himself not looking confident of returning in England colours. “Oh look, if that comes, that comes but I think it’s doubtful judging by the fact that I’ve not heard too much,” Bairstow said after scoring an unbeaten 86 off just 50 balls for Welsh Fire in the Hundred. Bairstow last played a T20I match for England in June 27 vs India at the semifinal of the 2024 T20 World Cup. His last ODI match was back in 2023 vs Pakistan at the Eden Gardens in an ODI World Cup group Stage match and his last Test was at Dharamsala against India in March 2024. It was also his 100th Test for the country, making him the 17th player in cricketing history to reach that milestone.

Despite having such a long career, Bairstow has never had a settled role in England’s Test side. His batting position has changed over the years and whether he would keep wicket has also never been certain. Bairstow took to the Bazball approach like a fish to water. He was the posterboy for the philosophy in its early days and gave the initial ignition to the method in the summer of 2022, helping England



chase big totals in the final innings of Tests. Bairstow played in the 2025 edition of the Indian Premier League for the Mumbai Indians and scored 85 runs in 2 matches after he was drafted in for the IPL 2025 Playoffs, replacing English compatriot, Will Jacks. His last stint in the IPL was with PBKS in 2024 where he played in 11 matches. The 35-year-old, however, has a respectable record in the IPL, mainly on the back of a strong profile with the Sunrisers Hyderabad between 2019 and 2021 and a superb 108 not out for PBKS in the league’s record 262-run chase against Kolkata Knight Riders in 2024.



At the 2024 Norway Chess, the now 19-year-old also notched up his first classical win over Carlsen. In July 2025, Pragganandhaa pulled off a stunning double over Carlsen within three days at the Las Vegas Freestyle Chess event.

started winning also. So he’s just universally strong and he’s mentally also strong which is really...” Pragganandhaa said. Asked what Pragganandhaa has that Carlsen doesn’t, the 19-year-old said: “I have never thought about this actually. If I have to speak about the style, he’s more of an intuitive player. His intuition is so good. Even though my intuition suggests a move, I usually try to go in details. It’s possible that I can catch him there because he hasn’t gone into the details. Sometimes intuition can also be wrong and I can catch him. Our games are always exciting.” Carlsen is a five-time world champion, who was never defeated in a world championship until he walked away, thus abdicating his throne. Carlsen is still world no 1 in all three formats. He has been world no 1 in every monthly rating list published by FIDE since July 2011. He first became world no 1 in 2010, but Anand dethroned him soon.

‘Are you not good enough, boss?: Sanju Samson opens up on self-doubt, comeback struggles in international cricket



GNS News Agency, August 19

India’s Sanju Samson walks off the field after losing his wicket during the first T20 cricket match between India and England at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India, Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2025. (AP Photo) India’s Sanju Samson walks off the field after losing his wicket during the first T20 cricket match between India and England at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India, Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2025. India wicket-keeper batter Sanju Samson opened up about his struggles in international cricket, a phase marked by self-doubt and challenges in making a comeback. Having made his international debut in 2015 at the age of 20 against Zimbabwe in Harare as an injury replacement for Ambati Rayudu, Samson’s career since then has been stop-start, taking five years for him to earn his next national call-up.

“Talking about the environment in Kerala, breaking into the Indian team was itself a very big thing to me. And I had

‘Sanju Samson right replacement for MS Dhoni in CSK, he’s quite popular in Chennai’, says Kris Srikkanth

GNS News Agency, August 19

Srikkanth referred to Samson’s huge popularity in Chennai and his speciality as a keeper-batter-cum leader that makes him an able fit for the 44-year-old Dhoni at CSK. (BCCI) Srikkanth referred to Samson’s huge popularity in Chennai and his speciality as a keeper-batter-cum leader that makes him an able fit for the 44-year-old Dhoni at CSK. (BCCI) The Sanju Samson IPL trade/transfer talks have gained a lot of chatter in the IPL circles since the end of a tepid 2025 season for the Rajasthan Royals where the skipper had a nominal role to play due to a couple of injury lay-offs. In Samson’s absence, the Royals seemed to have found an explosive left-handed pairing in young Yashasvi Jaiswal and the prodigious Vaibhav Suryavanshi. Reacting to the rumours doing the rounds that have tied Samson and the Chennai Super Kings, former India batter Krishnamachari Srikkanth referred to the potential union as the perfect way to replace their talismanic leader, MS Dhoni. Srikkanth, however, ceded that the Rajasthan Royals must find a way to retain Samson after having started a fresh Mega Auction cycle earlier this year with the team built around the Kerala star. Samson and Jaiswal were Rajasthan’s top retentions ahead of the auctions held in 2024, at Rs 18 crore.

“Going by the reports, there seems to be a rift between him and Rahul Dravid, but I am not fully aware,” Srikkanth said on his YouTube channel. “Look at it from a franchise point of view. They have paid him a certain amount and retained him. They have formed the team around him. All of a sudden, if you release him, what happens to the team

played for 2-3 years, and I was like, ‘You played for the country, boss well done,’ but then I realised that I couldn’t be satisfied with just this. It wasn’t enough at all so I started thinking, ‘What else, what else, what else,’” Samson told Ravichandran Ashwin on his YouTube channel. “I had already made my debut when I was 20. It took around 5 years to make my next comeback. So, that was the next big dream... I wanted to make a big comeback into the side. That took a lot of work, physically and mentally,” he added. Samson then revealed how he failed to deliver after his comeback, producing a string of low scores against Sri Lanka and New Zealand.

“I scored a 200 in the Vijay Hazare Trophy that’s when I made this comeback. I had that confidence, and after that, I got two games in New Zealand and one game in Pune. I didn’t perform there, and I went back with a lot of self-doubt. My confidence was shattered, and I was thinking on the lines of, ‘Everyone trusted you, and you didn’t score.’ You feel angry about yourself,” Samson admitted. When Ashwin asked how he handles blows to his confidence, Samson replied: “That’s something that has constantly been happening to me. And you rightly observed, right from 2014, you think you have come to the Indian team and now everything will start happening. You get the feel that you waited for this, and you are ready for this. Suddenly, unexpected things happen. But you believe that next time you will do better, and what if you flop the next time, too? You definitely go through a very big self-doubt phase.” “Are you not good enough, boss? A lot of people say, ‘Sanju, they might have played you, or they didn’t play you, they are doing this, they are doing that.’ There will be 10,000 people giving you advice,” he added.



balance? They haven’t won the IPL since 2008. “They have reached the final after that (in 2022). I don’t think I would let go of Sanju Samson. If they want to promote Riyan Parag as captain, that is their choice. I would still play Samson as a batter. He’s been paid INR 18 crore,” Srikkanth added.

“The right fit to replace Dhoni” Srikkanth referred to Samson’s huge popularity in Chennai and his speciality as a keeper-batter-cum leader that makes him an able fit for the 44-year-old Dhoni who is in the final laps of his IPL playing career. “To tell you the truth, Sanju is a brilliant player and he’s very popular in Chennai. He’s got a good brand image in Chennai. As I said, I’ll be the first one to pick him for Chennai if he is willing to leave and comes this side,” said Srikkanth. “He’s the right replacement for MS Dhoni. Dhoni can play this season, maybe not the year after and then you can have a smooth transition. But I feel if Ruturaj Gaikwad has been given the captaincy, he should be continued with,” he added.

‘I’ll drop you if you register 21 ducks’: Sanju Samson recalls Gautam Gambhir’s words of encouragement after dismal form in Sri Lanka

GNS News Agency, August 19

Sanju samson on Gautam Gambhir Sanju Samson of india and Gautam Gambhir head coach of India during the 3rd T20I between India and Bangladesh held at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Hyderabad India on the 12th October 2024 India batter-wicketkeeper Sanju Samson opened up about finding much-needed stability in his national T20I career, attributing his upturn in form in the Bangladesh and South Africa series last year to head coach Gautam Gambhir and skipper Suryakumar Yadav. The Kerala batter was a man on a mission in 2024 when he smashed his first maiden T20I century against Bangladesh and then followed it up with two tons against South Africa.

The batter, however, did not have the best of times before these two series with the Kerala player registering back to back ducks against Sri Lanka in July 2024. It was then that Gambhir had assured him his place in the line up that boosted his confidence. “The change happened after the T20 World Cup (2024). Gautam bhai came in, and Surya came in as the captain. I was playing a Duleep Trophy game in Andhra. Surya was playing for the other team. He told me, ‘There is a good opportunity coming up for you. We have seven (T20I) games (vs Bangladesh and South Africa) lined up, and I am going to give you all seven games



as an opener,” said Samson on R Ashwin’s “Kutti Stories” on YouTube. “The words coming out from the captain’s mouth itself actually felt, Oh wow, great. I played two games in Sri Lanka but was unable to score runs. I was a bit down in the dressing room, and Gautam bhai came up to me and asked what had happened. ‘I said, ‘After a long time, I got a chance, but I failed to capitalise’. He said, ‘So what? I’ll drop you if you register 21 ducks’. That’s the word which he used. That kind of confidence from the captain and the coach has definitely raised my confidence. That really helped me to go out there and perform,” he added.

Keymer stays perfect with third straight win at Chennai Grand Masters

Hyderabad: Germany’s Vincent Keymer continued his flawless form at the Quantbox Chennai Grand Masters 2025, posting his third straight victory by overcoming Karthikeyan Murali in Round 3 in Chennai on Saturday. With this win, Keymer remains the only player in the Masters section with a perfect score, emerging as the early leader in India’s most prestigious classical chess tournament.

The day also saw a strong performance from Arjun Erigaisi, who defeated American GM Ray Robson to stay firmly in the hunt for the top spot. Vidit Gujrathi bounced back with an important win over Nihal Sarin, while Awonder Liang scored his first victory of the tournament, stunning Dutch GM Jorden van Foreest. V. Pranav, one of the youngest in the field, impressed once again by holding top seed Anish Giri to a draw. In the Challengers section, Abhimanyu Puranik maintained his steady rise with a win over

Harshavardhan GB, while M. Pranesh defeated Pa Inian to keep the leaderboard tight. Leon Luke Mendonca overcame Vaishali Rameshbabu, and Adhiban Baskaran split the point with Harika Dronavalli. Aryan Chopra and Diptayan Ghosh also played out a draw in a balanced encounter.

Abhimanyu Puranik (1) bt G. B. Harshavardhan (0); M. Pranesh (1) bt Pa Inian (0); Adhiban Baskaran (0.5) drew Harika Dronavalli (0.5); Leon Luke Mendonca (1) bt Vaishali Rameshbabu (0); Aryan Chopra (0.5) drew Diptayan Ghosh (0.5). Standings – After 3rd round: Masters: 1. Vincent Keymer 3 pts, 2. Arjun Erigaisi 2.5, 3. Ray Robson 1.5, 4. Awonder Liang 1.5, 5. Anish Giri 1.5, 6. Vidit Gujrathi 1.5, 7. Jorden van Foreest 1, 8. V. Pranav 1, 9. Karthikeyan Murali 1, 10. Nihal Sarin 0.5. Challengers: 1. M. Pranesh 2.5, 2. Abhimanyu Puranik 2.5, 3. Diptayan Ghosh 2, 4. Leon Luke Mendonca 2, 5.

‘Donald Trump asked me out right after my divorce’: Emma Thompson claims she could have changed the course of American political history



Emma Thompson, while attending the Locarno Film Festival, discussed her career, love life, and a surprising call from Donald Trump that she claimed could have changed the face of American politics if she'd said yes. The Harry Potter star also addressed the Monica Lewinsky scandal during the Primary Colors shooting. The actor was joined by a star-studded list, including Faye Dunaway, Mia Farrow, Andy García, and Adrien Brody, on Friday evening for the award ceremony at the film festival.

Emma Thompson says Donald Trump asked her out Just days after Salma Hayek revealed Donald Trump once asked her out while she was still with her boyfriend, Emma Thompson says she got a similar call from the now-president. According to The Telegraph, it happened the very same day her divorce from Kenneth Branagh was finalised in court. The 66-year-old, who received the Leopard Club Award on August 8, recalled filming the 1998 political satire Primary Colors when, sitting in her van, the phone rang. "Hello, this is Donald Trump," the voice said. Thinking it was a prank, Thompson replied, "How can I help you? Maybe he needed directions from someone." Then the voice said, "I'd love you to come and stay at one of my beautiful places. Maybe

we could have dinner." Without jumping on the offer, Thompson politely replied, "That's very sweet. Thank you so much. I'll get back to you." Later, Emma Thompson realised it was actually Donald Trump, who had just split from his first wife, Marla Maples, and his team might have been on the hunt to find a suitable partner for him to take out. "I bet he had people searching for suitable women," she said, before adding, "You know, a nice divorcée, that's what he was looking for." She further said, "He even found the number for my trailer! That's stalking." Thompson laughed about what could have happened if she'd said yes. "I could have gone on a date with Donald Trump. I could have changed the course of American history!"

Thompson recalled how, while she was filming Primary Colors, the Monica Lewinsky scandal blew up, the one that led to Bill Clinton's impeachment. For her, it was strange because the movie's plot was so close to what was happening in real life. Speaking about U.S. politics, she joked that it would be nice if the only problem these days was just a sex scandal, instead of everything else going on. Emma Thompson and her ex-husband Kenneth Branagh met in 1987, fell in love while filming Fortunes of War, and tied the knot two years later. They divorced in 1995 after Branagh's affair with Helena Bonham Carter. Years later, Thompson married actor Greg Wise in 2003. Thompson's work in Harry Potter is well known, but she doesn't consider it her best creative gig. "This is not really an important part of my creative endeavour," she said. According to her, she only came to shoot for a few days and wasn't actually part of the core production unit. "I'm really sorry. I don't mean to be rude to those of you who like Harry Potter, but you know, I really came in, did a bit with glasses and hair, and then left, having been quite well paid." She added, "I'm very grateful to them." During her festival appearance, Emma Thompson also addressed her long Hollywood career, from her start as a comedian making jokes about politics to award-winning turns in films like Howards End, The Remains of the Day, Sense and Sensibility, and Love Actually.

Ravi Dewan on Raaj Kumar and Dilip Kumar's 'cold war' on the sets of Saudagar: 'Raaj kept looking in the opposite direction'

The 1991 film Saudagar featured two iconic Bollywood stars, Dilip Kumar and Raaj Kumar. While the film was widely discussed for its powerful star cast and songs, the real-life 'cold war' between its two leads also remains a talking point. In a recent interview, veteran action director Ravi Dewan revealed how Raaj Kumar would deliberately create trouble on set. In an episode of Sutradhar with Vineet Rai, Ravi Dewan was asked how Raaj Kumar and Dilip Kumar were on the sets of Saudagar. He recalled that Raaj Kumar often did many "funny" things during filming. For instance, when Dilip Kumar was shooting a death scene, and Raaj had no shot scheduled, he placed his chair just eight feet away and kept looking in the opposite direction while everyone else was focused on watching Dilip prepare. Ravi Dewan also shared another incident from the shooting of Saudagar at a hill station, where many couples would visit the sets to meet the actors and take pictures with them. On one such occasion, while Dilip Kumar was surrounded by a huge crowd, Raaj Kumar did something rather unusual. "Raaj Kumar took a chair and sat in one foot of water at a nearby waterfall. After a long time, director Subhash Ghai approached him and asked why he was sitting there, as the water was cold. Raaj Kumar replied, 'Yahan photo kheenche koi nahi aayega (No one will come here to take photos),' shared Ravi Dewan. Speaking about Amrish Puri, known for playing memorable villains in many films, Ravi Dewan highlighted his 'soft' nature off-screen. Recalling one scene, Dewan said it was planned for Amrish Puri's character to be tied



to a rope and pulled. While the first take went smoothly, Raaj Kumar, being a senior actor on set, insisted on re-taking the shot, and had it done multiple times. Ravi Dewan added that Raaj Kumar seemed to enjoy tormenting his co-stars on set. He recalled the shoot of a punch scene with Amrish Puri where Raaj would deliberately land a hard blow. For the unversed, the famous rivalry began when Raaj Kumar slapped Dilip Kumar too hard while filming a scene for Ramanand Sagar's 1959 film Paigham. The incident created a rift between the two actors, prompting Dilip Kumar to vow never to work with his contemporaries again. Despite their animosity, Raaj Kumar and Dilip Kumar went on to deliver powerful performances in Saudagar, which became a commercial success.

Divya Dutta recalls barging into Sonu Nigam's room, crying during moments of emotional vulnerability: 'One doesn't forget such things'

Are celebrity friendships truly real? Or are they all simply faking their attachment to or affection for each other to make headlines or for personal gain? From the expansive world of music to Hollywood, Bollywood and beyond, fans and observers have long had this doubt. Although it's impossible to provide a blanket answer to this question — and yes, publicity stunts are quite common — there certainly have also been friendships that transcend the boundaries of the flashy world. Although they are probably far and few, they do exist, and renowned actor Divya Dutta's recent social media post for her "bestie", legendary playback singer Sonu Nigam, stands as a testament to this.

Sharing on Instagram a video comprising pictures of them over the years, Divya, on the occasion of the singer's birthday on July 30, had opened up about how their bond has "stood the test of time". Recalling Sonu's warm gestures, including being there for her whenever she's in an emotionally vulnerable state, she described him as her "constant", underscoring their deep camaraderie.

In an exclusive interview with SCREEN, Divya Dutta elaborated on their relationship and how her friends, in general, keep her anchored. "I began with him. I still remember those beautiful times when I would barge into his room while he was doing his makeup for shows, saying, 'You continue with your work; I'm going to sit here and cry.' He would be like, 'Okay, sit and cry.' One doesn't forget such things," she recalled. Sharing how he's been there for her and has always had her back, Divya said, "I now love speaking on stage, but there was a time when it used to make me very nervous. He taught me how to interact with the audience." She continued, "In life, I think you're all about friends. They keep you sailing, especially when you're working (in such a field) and are away from your families for long periods. Even otherwise, it's your friends who keep you aligned with yourself, grounded, make fun of you, and tell you who you are. Particularly when you enter this make-



believe world, chances are that you could get swayed by all the love and attention. It's your friends who keep you anchored by making you realise what you actually are, saying, 'Listen, you're this. So, shut up and sit down.' That's very important." Renowned for her work in Bollywood and Punjabi cinema, Divya Dutta recently made her Telugu debut in a key role in Mayasabha, the political drama streaming series created by Deva Katta.

Shoojit Sircar defends National Film Awards jury amid controversy over Shah Rukh Khan and The Kerala Story wins: 'You can't question what...'



Shoojit Sircar defends National Award jury amid controversy over The Kerala Story and Shah Rukh Khan. Shoojit Sircar defends National Award jury amid controversy over The Kerala Story and Shah Rukh Khan. After the National Film Award winners were announced recently, many people expressed disappointment over Shah Rukh Khan winning the Best Actor award and The Kerala Story bagging the Best Film award. In a recent interview, Shoojit Sircar de-

fended the National Film Awards jury, stating that it's the panel's call.

During a conversation with Hindustan Times, Sircar stated, "I feel that there is no point debating this from the outside. You leave it to the jury. We might agree to disagree on many things, but finally, what matters is, who is the jury there. Because that jury is going to be your final word, and you leave it to their sensibility. You can't question what award they have given. I think we would rather question that before they start. Who is the jury? What are their sensibilities?" Shoojit Sircar is also a part of the jury of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM), for the second consecutive year. He is responsible for choosing the Best Short Films at the festival. Ahead of IFFM 2025, Shoojit spoke about the experience of judging and said, "IFFM is very dear to me. The organisers are dear friends and this particular festival is almost like a family affair. This is my fifth or sixth visit there. I normally don't participate in juries. But for this, I made an exception," he said. However, the director mentioned that judging cinema is 'very difficult'. "Before we start, we tell everyone that there are certain elements that they should take into consideration. There are technical aspects that allow you to genuinely assess the craft. Then, you should celebrate the film that really makes a difference. And then, the voice and vision of the director are very important. You look at films that bring a lot of social change and have a long-lasting impact. Of course, there are technicalities to look into it, in terms of cinematography, editing, direction, actors, everything," Shoojit explained. "When Sardar Udham's panorama selection (for the 2021 International Film Festival of India) didn't happen, I was asked the same things. I will say what I said then: 'Whatever the jury has decided, I have to accept it,' he concluded.

Hina Khan says people are hesitant to cast her after cancer diagnosis: 'You've still not recovered completely'

A year after Indian TV star Hina Khan announced her breast cancer diagnosis, she says she can sense that people from the industry are still hesitant to work with her. The actor said work took a backseat after she fell ill and she had to leave a lot of offers. She is now back on the small screen with 'Pati Patni Aur Panga'.

"This is my first project after the whole thing happened. I want to work. No one has directly said to me that, 'You've still not recovered completely', but I can sense that maybe people are hesitant for all the right reasons. It's okay. I'll have to break that norm. Maybe the show will do it, I understand it. Had I been in their place, I would've thought about it a thousand times. I'm open to auditions, where did I stop? No one has called me for the last one year, for all the reasons. I'm open to everything, please call me," Khan told PTI in an interview.

The 37-year-old actor, known for shows such as Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai, Kasautii Zindagii Kay 2, Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 8 and Bigg Boss 11, said she feels glad to have made a comeback to work with her ongoing reality show, which is currently on air on Colors Channel. The show features fan-favourite celebrity couples including Hina Khan-Rocky Jaiswal, Debinna Bonnerjee-Gurmeet Choudhary, Rubina Dilaik-Abhinav Shukla, Avika Gor-Milind Chandwani, Swara Bhasker-Fahad Ahmad, Geeta Phogat-Pawan Kumar, and Sudesh Lehri-Mamta Lehi. The show stars celebrity couples competing against each other as they open their hearts and homes to take on fun



challenges. "It was a big step for me to take up the show and it was an experiment as far as my health is concerned, like whether I'll be able to do it or not. So far so good, I get tired a bit, but apart from that, everything is fine. I'm ready to take up anything, be it a digital show, or anything, I would not take up long term commitment. If anything is offered, if they find me worthy enough, then why not," Khan said. The actor said she is keen to play a spy agent. "I want to be part of the spy universe, be it in OTT or in films. I was watching a show, 'Special Ops', I so wanted to play a spy, manifesting it," Khan said.

Mahavatar Narsimha director Ashwin Kumar says Muslim viewers told him the film strengthened their faith: 'I'm not asking you to change your religion'

Mahavatar Narsimha director Ashwin Kumar says it's not a religious film. Mahavatar Narsimha director Ashwin Kumar says it's not a religious film. Ashwin Kumar's animated mythological film Mahavatar Narsimha has turned out to be an unexpected success story. The film has now earned more than Rs 145 crore at the domestic box office within 17 days. Produced by Hombale Films and Kleem Productions, Mahavatar Narsimha is the first project from the Mahavatar series, which "will bring to life the stories of Lord Vishnu's many avatars."

In an interview with NDTV, Ashwin Kumar claimed that Mahavatar Narsimha isn't catering to only Hindus, but also people of other faiths. "I've had people from different communities, including many Muslim viewers, come up to me and say that the film strengthened their own faith. I'm not saying go convert your religion. What I'm saying is, you understand what faith is. Whether you pray to a God, believe in energy, or place your trust in the universe, this film simply asks you to surrender to that



faith," he said. Mahavatar Narsimha revolves around the evil king Hiranyakashyap, who's been blessed with a special layered immunity from Lord Brahma. After he mistreats his son Prahlada, a devotee of Lord Vishnu, the deity takes the incarnation of Lord Narsimha to save the child. However, Kumar insists Mahavatar Narsimha isn't "religious." "This is not a religious film. It's an interreligious faith film. Because love, it is a universal emotion. So is faith. Hence the film is growing in leaps and

bounds," said the director. Mahavatar Narsimha will be followed by six other animated films in the Mahavatar series which will revolve around the 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu. This Mahavatar Cinematic Universe is being backed by Hombale Films, best known for delivering pan-India Kannada blockbusters like Kantara and the KGF franchise. The next installment of the Mahavatar Cinematic Universe will focus on Lord Vishnu's sixth incarnation, Lord Parshurama. In an exclusive interview with

SCREEN, Ashwin Kumar had claimed that he considers Mahavatar Narsimha history, instead of mythology. "Mythology is a Greek term which comes from 'mythos,' which means mithya in Sanskrit. Mithya means concocted. I do not feel, in any which way, that we have a concocted past. We have a very strong past. We should celebrate that past, the puranic tales of Bharat," he said. "Our puranic tales are very long, deep, and rooted in history. It's about time we access those,