

INDIAN CHRONICLE

25 September, 2025|Thursday | Volume No:13| Issue No: 190    Pages: 8+8    www.indianchronicle.com    Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)    ₹ 3

## Restored Bathukamma Kunta welcomes all for celebrations

Hyderabad, Sept.24 The historic Bathukamma Kunta at Amberpet has been fully restored and is ready to welcome devotees and visitors from September 26, 2025.The Telangana government, through HYDRAA, undertook the restoration, which included cleaning, beautification, and improved amenities to enhance the lake's cultural and religious significance during the Bathukamma festival.Authorities assured that arrangements have been made for a safe and festive atmosphere, especially for women participating in the floral celebrations. Local communities are preparing with enthusiasm, and the restored Bathukamma Kunta is expected to attract large gatherings this year.

### Revanth to attend Bathukamma celebrations at revived lake on Sept 26



Hyderabad, Sept.24 Principal Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao has directed officials to work in coordination to successfully conduct the grand Bathukamma celebrations in Hyderabad.The celebrations includes the major event at Saroor Nagar Stadium on September 29 and the Bathukamma celebrations at the Bathukamma Kunta on September 26. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will attend the Bathukamma Kunta celebrations.

The Chief Secretary on Wednesday held a teleconference with senior officials to review the preparations of the prestigious Bathukamma festivities organised under the supervision the State Government.He said extensive arrangements should be made for September 29 celebrations as the event is likely to be recorded in the Guinness Book of Records.The Chief Secretary stated that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy would participate in the Bathukamma celebrations at the restored Bathukamma pond in Amberpet on September 26. As a large number of women are expected to attend with Bathukammas, the GHMC and Hyderabad officials were instructed to make appropriate arrangements for the event.He directed the GHMC Commissioner to send invitations to the elected representatives and VIPs regarding the inauguration programme of Bathukamma Kunta in a timely manner.Ramakrishna Rao said since a large number of women are likely to reach Bathukamma Kunta from 4 PM onwards, basic facilities like sanitation, proper security, drinking water facility etc. should be provided.

### THC DIVISION BENCH STAYS SINGLE JUDGE ORDER ON GROUP-1 POSTS

Hyderabad, Sept.24 The Telangana High Court (THC) on Wednesday stayed the single judge's verdict directing theTelangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) for re-evaluation of Group-1 Mains examination papers or to conduct fresh examination. Any further proceedings by TGPSC is subject to the final outcome of the appeals, the bench noted.On Sept 9, the Single Judge had set aside the final marks list of the Group-1 examinations and directed the TGPSC either to manually re-evaluate the answer scripts or to conduct the examination afresh. Challenging the order, the TGPSC filed an appeal before the division bench. Besides, several selected candidates who were aggrieved by the Single Judge's ruling, also filed separate appeals. Petitions were filed by Paramesh Matta of Nandanam village in Bhuvanagiri mandal and 221 other candidates as the respondents.

When the appeals came up for hearing, the counsels appearing for the appellants argued that the single judge failed to consider their explanation regarding the discrepancy in candidate numbers and the fact that 719 candidates had secured identical marks in the Group-1 Mains examination. They also stated that there was no evidence to suggest that 14.8% of the candidates who appeared for the exam at Kothi Women's College were among the top 500. After staying the single judge order, the division bench adjourned the case for further proceedings to October 15.

### Harish Rao lashes out at Congress govt over Krishna River water row

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Hyderabad: Former Minister and senior BRS MLA T Harish Rao on Wednesday lashed out at Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy for making reckless statements on Telangana's rights on Krishna River water. With their contradictory statements, ignorance and political compromises, the duo were weakening Telangana's case before the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal, he said.In a strong rebuttal to Uttam Kumar Reddy, Harish Rao pointed out glaring contradictions in the government's stand. While Uttam Kumar Reddy earlier spoke of securing 763 TMCft, Revanth Reddy sought a blanket NOC (No Objection Certificate) from Andhra Pradesh for 500 TMCft, and later claimed the State's rightful share was 904 TMC. "Who is correct? The Chief Minister or the Irrigation Minister? Every word counts, and their ignorance is pushing Telangana into a dangerous position," he warned.The senior BRS legislator accused the Congress of committing a historic betrayal by agreeing to a 299:512 TMCft ratio between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

## 71 Maoists surrender in Dantewada under Chhattisgarh's 'Lon Varratu'

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Raipur: In a major breakthrough for peace and rehabilitation efforts in South Bastar, 71 Maoists, including 30 with bounties totalling Rs 64 lakh, on Wednesday laid down arms and surrendered to authorities under the Chhattisgarh government's flagship initiatives – Lon Varratu (Come Back Home) and Puna Margem (Rehabilitation and Regeneration).Among the surrendered cadres were 21 women and 50 men, many of whom were deeply involved in violent activities over the past decade. The most prominent among them was Baman Madkam, carrying an Rs 8 lakh reward, who had participated in multiple police-Naxalite encounters across villages like Dugaiguda, Ambeli, Velagadaram, and Gundam between 2011 and 2024.Other notable surrenders included: Shamila alias Somli Kawasi (Rs 5 lakh re-

## HCA healthcare inaugurates first Global Capability Centre in Hyd



Hyderabad, Sept.24 Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu on Wednesday inaugurated the first Global Capability Centre (GCC) of HCA Healthcare outside the United States at Raidurg, Hyderabad.HCA Healthcare, a Fortune 100 company with operations across the U.S. and the U.K., runs 190 hospitals, 2,400 care sites and employs more than 3.16 lakh people worldwide. With

## Congress betrayed Gig workers: KTR



Hyderabad, Sept.24: BRS working president K. Taraka Rama Rao demanded that the Congress government immediately implement the promises made to gig and platform workers under the Abhayastam Declaration.He strongly criticised that the Congress party, which released a special declaration for gig workers during the election campaign, has completely ignored the issue after coming to power.

Members of the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union (TGPWU) met KTR at Telangana Bhavan on Wednesday and shared their difficulties. They said that although the Congress party had made several promises, not a single one has been implemented. Speaking on the occasion, the BRS working president assured them that BRS would stand by gig workers and that he would question the government until their problems are resolved.

KTR demanded that the government immediately establish the Gig workers welfare board, ensure social security including insurance, provide fair wages, and release compensation for deceased workers as promised by the Congress. He reminded that Rahul Gandhi himself had said he would take responsibility for the implementation of these promises and urged him to respond immediately to the problems faced by gig workers.KTR expressed anguish that the families of gig workers Ahmed Bin Abdul Ouder, Sham Sunder, and Lokurthi Naresh, who tragically lost their lives, have still not received the 75 lakh accidental insurance compensation announced by the government, even though all

## Telangana CID cracks illegal online betting racket across three States, eight arrested

Hyderabad: In a major breakthrough against illegal gambling, the Telangana Crime Investigation Department (CID) has uncovered a widespread online betting racket operating across Rajasthan, Gujarat and Punjab and arrested eight online betting operators.

According to officials, the suspects were running betting operations through six mobile applications — Taj0077, Fairply.live, Andhra365, Vlbok, Telugu365, and Yes365."These platforms were allegedly used to lure thousands of unsuspecting users into wagering money, causing heavy financial losses to the citizens," CID officials said.

## Seethakka calls for fast-track Medaram development master plan works

Hyderabad, Sept.24 In a relief to Congress government, the Telangana High Court on Wednesday dismissed petitions challenging the state government's proposed reservations for Backward Classes (BCs).

Two petitions were filed against the government order allocating 42% reservations to BCs in local body elections. One of the petitions, filed as a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), argued that granting 42% reservation to BCs was inappropriate.During the case hearing on Wednesday, the High Court expressed displeasure at the petitioners, and questioned the basis of filing a PIL solely on newspaper reports and clarified that 'news articles' cannot be relied upon as per Supreme Court rules. The petitioners had sought directions to ensure that the total reservations do not exceed 50%, claiming that giving 42% to BCs would surpass this limit and cause injustice to other communities in local bodies. They referred to Supreme Court verdicts and provisions of the Panchayat Raj Act to support their claim.However, the High Court rejected the petitions, allowing the government to proceed with the 42% BC reservation in local body elections.

## Seethakka calls for fast-track Medaram development master plan works

Hyderabad, Sept.24The state government has intensified the development efforts concerning the Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara.With the Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's official endorsement of the plan, the Ministers have issued definitive instructions to hasten the development activities.

Minister Seethakka held a video conference from the Secretariat, while Minister Konda Surekha participated from Warangal. The meeting included Endowment chief secretary Shailaja Ramaiyar, R&B ENC Mohan Naik, Panchayati Raj ENC N. Ashok, and other departmental officials.

During the discussions, the Ministers stated that with the Chief Minister's approval of the Medaram development plan, the countdown has commenced for what they described as a significant event. They emphasized the collective role in this momentous endeavor, asserting that this effort will have a lasting impact.The Ministers highlighted that the development initiatives should help maintain the reputation of Medaram for a millennium, ensuring that devotees face no difficulties.Further, Minister Seethakka instructed that the working drawings and structural designs related to the Medaram development plans should be completed swiftly. Correspondingly, cost estimates should be prepared and tenders should be called immediately for the development works, she said.

## Two injured in fireworks mishap at Indiramma houses inauguration by Ponguleti

Khammam: Two persons were injured while a Kolatam artist fainted during the inauguration of Indiramma houses by Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy at Arempula in Khammam rural mandal on Monday.Local Congress leaders mobilised a large number of Kolatam and Dappu artists from various mandals to welcome the Minister. However, the event turned chaotic when fireworks were set off. A rocket went astray and fell into an auto-rickshaw loaded with firecrackers. Within moments, the auto caught fire, forcing people to run in panic to escape the blaze.A Kolatam artist, P Shivani of Bodulabanda in Nelakondapalli mandal, and a police constable, Balu of Tirumalayapalem police station, sustained injuries in the mishap. A local woman, Devayani of Arempula, fainted during the commotion.Constable Balu and Devayani were shifted to a hospital in Khammam for treatment, while Shivani

required documents were submitted. He said it is shameful that Congress is betraying gig workers who continued to serve the public even during critical times like the Covid pandemic.

KTR demanded that the government immediately pay 75 lakh compensation to the families of the deceased gig workers and set up the Gig Workers Welfare Board without further delay. He also assured that if the government brings a special law for the welfare of gig and platform workers, the BRS party would extend its full support.Stating that it has become Congress' habit to make promises only for votes and later abandon them, KTR demanded that if Congress has any sincerity, it must immediately fulfil the promises made to gig workers. He emphasised that the welfare of gig workers should not remain confined to mere declarations but protecting their security, dignity, and rights is the government's moral and political responsibility.

## Two injured in fireworks mishap at Indiramma houses inauguration by Ponguleti

Khammam: Two persons were injured while a Kolatam artist fainted during the inauguration of Indiramma houses by Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy at Arempula in Khammam rural mandal on Monday.Local Congress leaders mobilised a large number of Kolatam and Dappu artists from various mandals to welcome the Minister. However, the event turned chaotic when fireworks were set off. A rocket went astray and fell into an auto-rickshaw loaded with firecrackers. Within moments, the auto caught fire, forcing people to run in panic to escape the blaze.A Kolatam artist, P Shivani of Bodulabanda in Nelakondapalli mandal, and a police constable, Balu of Tirumalayapalem police station, sustained injuries in the mishap. A local woman, Devayani of Arempula, fainted during the commotion.Constable Balu and Devayani were shifted to a hospital in Khammam for treatment, while Shivani

## HIGH COURT DISMISSES PETITIONS CHALLENGING BC RESERVATIONS



Hyderabad, Sept.24 In a relief to Congress government, the Telangana High Court on Wednesday dismissed petitions challenging the state government's proposed reservations for Backward Classes (BCs).

Two petitions were filed against the government order allocating 42% reservations to BCs in local body elections. One of the petitions, filed as a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), argued that granting 42% reservation to BCs was inappropriate.During the case hearing on Wednesday, the High Court expressed displeasure at the petitioners, and questioned the basis of filing a PIL solely on newspaper reports and clarified that 'news articles' cannot be relied upon as per Supreme Court rules. The petitioners had sought directions to ensure that the total reservations do not exceed 50%, claiming that giving 42% to BCs would surpass this limit and cause injustice to other communities in local bodies. They referred to Supreme Court verdicts and provisions of the Panchayat Raj Act to support their claim.However, the High Court rejected the petitions, allowing the government to proceed with the 42% BC reservation in local body elections.

## Seethakka calls for fast-track Medaram development master plan works



Hyderabad, Sept.24The state government has intensified the development efforts concerning the Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara.With the Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's official endorsement of the plan, the Ministers have issued definitive instructions to hasten the development activities.

Minister Seethakka held a video conference from the Secretariat, while Minister Konda Surekha participated from Warangal. The meeting included Endowment chief secretary Shailaja Ramaiyar, R&B ENC Mohan Naik, Panchayati Raj ENC N. Ashok, and other departmental officials.

During the discussions, the Ministers stated that with the Chief Minister's approval of the Medaram development plan, the countdown has commenced for what they described as a significant event. They emphasized the collective role in this momentous endeavor, asserting that this effort will have a lasting impact.The Ministers highlighted that the development initiatives should help maintain the reputation of Medaram for a millennium, ensuring that devotees face no difficulties.Further, Minister Seethakka instructed that the working drawings and structural designs related to the Medaram development plans should be completed swiftly. Correspondingly, cost estimates should be prepared and tenders should be called immediately for the development works, she said.

## Two injured in fireworks mishap at Indiramma houses inauguration by Ponguleti



was administered first aid by locals at the spot.Despite the incident, the Minister continued with the programme.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Political leadership can make CEA's prediction true

Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran has struck a cautiously optimistic note on India's growth trajectory, even as global uncertainties loom large. While not downplaying the adverse effects of US President Donald Trump's tariffs and tightening of American visa norms, Nageswaran exuded confidence that the Indian economy will manage to grow closer to the upper end of the government's projected range of 6.3-6.8 per cent in the current fiscal. This optimism, though carefully hedged with caveats, comes at a time when India must demonstrate resilience against both domestic and external pressures. On the fiscal front, Nageswaran reaffirmed the government's commitment to keeping the deficit contained at 4.4 per cent of GDP in 2025-26, even after substantial revenue sacrifices. These include the earlier round of personal income tax reductions and the recent revamp of the goods and services tax (GST)—decisions that, while politically and socially popular, have taken a significant toll on the exchequer. Yet, the CEA pointed to an encouraging outcome: the GST 2.0 package, he estimated, has generated net household tax savings of more than Rs one lakh crore. This injection of disposable income, in his view, is likely to boost consumption demand and partly neutralise the drag of external headwinds. Nageswaran also expressed satisfaction with bond yields, noting that lower borrowing costs—down almost three percentage points over the last decade—have not only eased fiscal pressures but also made Indian sovereign debt attractive to the investors. Interestingly, he noted that the "China-plus-one" strategy being adopted by multinational corporations—a diversification away from exclusive dependence on Chinese supply chains—continues to favour India.

## World Heart Day 2025 Is Near: But Are We Truly Following Better Heart Health Protocols?



Hyderabad: As World Heart Day 2025 approaches, the spotlight once again falls on the urgent need to safeguard India's heart health. Despite decades of awareness campaigns, India continues to face an alarming rise in cardiovascular disease. The question that must be asked is not whether we know what protects the heart, but whether we are consistently practicing those habits in daily life.

Cardiologists warn that while awareness about heart health has increased, implementation of heart-friendly practices remains patchy. India's changing lifestyle, combined with sedentary jobs, high stress levels, processed food consumption, and widespread tobacco use, has contributed to the rising burden. Every year, heart disease strikes younger populations, with more cases reported in people under 45 years of age than ever before. "World Heart Day is not just a date on the calendar, it is a reminder that prevention is within our control," said Dr. M. Ramakrishna Reddy, MD DM Cardio, Sreeram Heart Centre, Hanamkonda, Warangal. "The real issue is not lack of information but lack of adherence. We know what works—balanced diets, regular physical activity, quality sleep, managing stress, and avoiding tobacco and excess alcohol. Yet, too many people continue to postpone lifestyle changes until a health crisis occurs. Every skipped check-up, every extra packet of processed food, every cigarette smoked adds up. If we want to see fewer young Indians in ICUs with heart attacks, then following heart health protocols must become a daily discipline, not an occasional campaign." At the core of prevention lies diet. Research consistently shows that eating more whole foods, fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and lean proteins supports cardiovascular health. In contrast, processed foods rich in salt, sugar, and trans fats are directly linked to high blood pressure, obesity, and diabetes—all powerful drivers of heart attacks and strokes. Portion control and hydration also play key roles in maintaining a healthy weight, yet both are often ignored in urban routines where eating on the run has become a norm. Physical activity is another cornerstone of prevention. Global recommendations urge adults to engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise weekly. But data from India indicates that fewer than one in four adults meet this minimum requirement. Long working hours, heavy dependence on vehicles, and the rapid rise of screen time have collectively made inactivity one of the silent killers of this generation.

## Strategy evolved at 1st meeting of new office bearers of T-BJP

Hyderabad, Sept.24 ): The first meeting of the newly appointed Telangana BJP working committee members was held today under the leadership of state president N. Ramchander Rao at the party's state office. The meeting reviewed ongoing party activities, discussed preparations for the Jubilee Hills bye-election and upcoming local body polls, and chalked out future programmes. Organizational General Secretary Chandrashekhar, National Executive Committee member Garikapati Mohan Rao, and other state officials participated.

## HDFC ERGO Achieves a Milestone with the 10th Insurance Quiz Junior Finale Engaging ~3600 Schools Nationwide



Hyderabad: India's leading private sector general insurance company, HDFC ERGO, hosted the grand finale of the 10th edition of Insurance Quiz Junior 2025, marking a milestone in its nationwide outreach. The event brought together some of the brightest young minds from across the country, covering a journey that saw students' participation from ~3,600 schools from across ~560 cities. The finale celebrated knowledge and the spirit of learning among students from diverse backgrounds and regions in the country.

After an intense battle of wits, Hrishant Singh and Suryansh Mishra from Sunbeam Lahartara, Varanasi emerged winners, claiming the champions title. Close on their heels were New Era Senior Secondary School and Cambridge Court High School, securing the first and second runner-up positions respectively. This year's theme, 'Decade of Impact', perfectly captured the remarkable evolution of the Insurance Quiz Junior. What began in 2016 with just 18 schools in Mumbai has now grown into a nationwide movement, impacting over 25 lakhs students since its inception. The grand finale concluded on a high note, with the winners receiving a cash prize of 2,25,000, the first runners-up taking home ₹1,50,000, and the second runners-up awarded 75,000. Commenting during the grand finale of this decade long initiative, Anuj Tyagi, MD & CEO, HDFC ERGO General Insurance, said, "Over the past 10-years,

Insurance Quiz Junior has grown into an insurance awareness movement that goes far beyond competition — it's a catalyst for change. With participation from around 3,600 schools covering nearly 560 cities and deep engagement from government schools, and vernacular educational institutions, we are reaching corners of Bharat. By conducting the Quiz in five regional languages, English, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, and Bengali, we're making financial literacy truly inclusive. As India advances toward IRDAI's vision of 'Insurance for All by 2047,' we take pride in nurturing a generation that is not only insurance-aware but also empowered to lead financially secure lives. These young minds will be the torchbearers, carrying the message of insurance inclusion around the country." The Quiz commenced with an impressive participation of ~3,600 teams, with each team represented by two students from the same school, in the preliminary rounds, progressing through the cluster and zonal stages. Ultimately, six teams earned their place in the grand finale. These finalists included four zonal winners and two teams that qualified through the Eliminator round. The finalists were: Sunbeam Lahartara from Varanasi, BJEM School from Bhubaneswar, Army Public School Golconda from Hyderabad, Cambridge Court High School from Jaipur, New Era Senior Secondary School from Vadodara, and Little Angels Matriculation School from Namakkal.

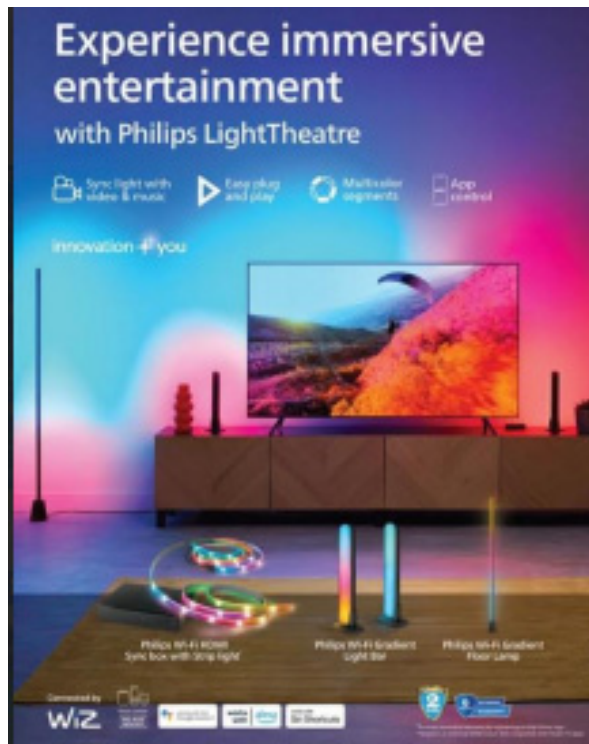
## Signify launches Philips LightTheatre: Brings smart immersive entertainment for Indian homes ahead of the festive season

Hyderabad: Signify (Euronext: LIGHT), the world leader in lighting, today announced the India launch of the revolutionary Philips LightTheatre, introducing a groundbreaking smart lighting solution designed to transform home entertainment into an unparalleled immersive experience. This innovative system seamlessly integrates dynamic lighting with visual and audio content, bringing movies, music, and gaming to life like never before.

As consumers increasingly seek holistic entertainment solutions that go beyond the screen, the Philips Smart Entertainment Range is designed to meet this demand, offering an all-in-one solution that delivers a truly cinematic experience in the comfort of home.

The Philips LightTheatre is engineered to redefine how consumers interact with their entertainment. The system utilizes advanced Philips LightTheatre HDMI Sync Technology, which reads signals directly from video source via HDMI input, making lights dynamically respond to the colors on your TV screen for real-time accurate syncing. The system utilizes advanced Philips LightTheatre HDMI Sync Technology, which reads signals directly from any HDMI-connected device, instantly analyzes the colors and sounds, and projects ultra-accurate light effects onto the surrounding walls. Compatible with Philips gradient light bars, gradient floor light, and other Wi-Fi connected lights, creating a holistic immersive experience. This creates a captivating 'light theatre' effect that extends the on-screen action beyond the television, drawing viewers deeper into the content.

Talking about the product launch C Arun Kumar, Head of Consumer Business - Signify, Greater India said, "At Signify, innovation is at the heart of everything we do. In India, where digital entertainment is becoming a way of life, the quality of how people experience content has never been



more important. Philips LightTheatre transforms everyday viewing into an immersive, cinematic experience, allowing people to not just watch but truly feel every moment. Whether it's sports, music, or movies, with LightTheatre, we are re-defining home entertainment as a seamless blend of technology, emotion, and lifestyle."

## MLA B.L.R Inspects Ongoing Box Drain Works at Bhavani Nagar Colony, Mallapur Division



"Nacharam, (Indain Chornical), September 24: Uppal MLA Sri Bandari Laxma Reddy along with local Corporator Devender Reddy inspected the RCC Box Drain works worth Rs.78 lakhs being executed at Bhavani Nagar Colony junction in Mallapur Division. "Speaking on the occasion, the MLA instructed the concerned officials to maintain quality standards in the execution of the box drain works. "GHMC Kapra Circle AE Sravanti, local leaders Kattarla Bhaskar, Phail Praveen, Santosh Yadav, Rangareddy, Mallareddy, Satish Reddy, and local colony residents Babu, Azeem, Srimannarayana, Hanuman Das and others participated in the program.

## Rs 525 CR RETAINING WALL PROJECT LAUNCHED FOR KHAMMAM CITY

Hyderabad, Sept.24 The Telangana Government has launched a Rs.525.36 crore project to build a 17-km retaining wall along both sides of the Munneru river in Khammam city, providing a permanent solution to recurring floods. Khammam, a fast-growing hub for education, healthcare, trade and agriculture, has long suffered from monsoon floods triggered by the overflowing Munneru stream. In September 2024, a cloudburst caused flash

floods that damaged government infrastructure worth Rs.757 crore and displaced hundreds of families. The retaining wall - 8.5 km each in Khammam Urban and Rural mandals, with a height of 10 to 15 meters - will be built with service roads and a modern drainage system.

The design can manage up to 10,000 cusecs of flood discharge, with drainage capacity of 379 cusecs on the left bank.

## Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy Inspects Children's Vaccination Program at Meerpet HB Colony

Nacharam, (Indian Chornical )September 24: Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy, along with local Corporator Jeripothula Prabhudas, inspected the vaccination program for children held at the Ward Office in Meerpet HB Colony Division. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy said, "Vaccination is one of the most important ways to protect children from life-threatening diseases. Vaccines train the body to fight infections, thereby building immunity before exposure to illness. By following the vaccination schedule, every child can be safeguarded from major diseases. "He further emphasized that vaccines play a vital role in protecting children against BCG, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Hepatitis B, and Hib. "The MLA also interacted with the medical staff to understand the details of the ongoing vaccination drive. "ANM Nagubai, health staff, and several local leaders also participated in the program.

## Helping Hand for a Differently-Abled Child "Ranjith Naik Exemplifies Humanity"



"Shaik Sharief, Bhadrachalam, September 24, Indian Chronicle: "A 13-year-old differently-abled girl, Chitti, residing in Subhashnagar Colony, Bhadrachalam, has been struggling with livelihood issues. With her mother bedridden due to illness, she has been living under the care of her grandmother, Alima, facing severe difficulties in daily sustenance. "Upon learning of their plight from Alima, MeeSeva operator Bhukya Ranjith Naik responded with compassion. On Wednesday, extending support to the family, he arranged for the distribution of 25 kilograms of rice, which was handed over to the child by Mother Theresa Welfare Association President Koppula Murali, Government Junior College Lecturer Bhukya Man Singh, and Government Teacher Daravat Bhaskar. "Speaking on the occasion, they appealed to society to emulate the humanitarian outlook of Ranjith Naik and to extend possible assistance to those in need. "The program saw the participation of Bhukya Ranjith Naik, Kondapalli Naveen Kumar, and others

## Mana Bathukamma 2025 Full Video Song Released; Telangana's Grand Flower Festival



Hyderabad, September 2025: The Mana Bathukamma 2025 full song video, presented by the Telangana Tourism Development Corporation, has officially been released, bringing the festival's cultural vibrancy to life through music and visuals. This initiative, supported by the Government of Telangana, is a dedicated effort to visually capture the grandeur of the Bathukamma Festival — a celebration that carries one of the most historical legacies among the flower

festivals of the world. Mana Bathukamma Video Song 2025 Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ymsNw2wlqWA> Festival on Screen From the rhythmic beats inspired by blossoms to the colourful visuals of women celebrating in unison, the anthem reflects the very soul of Bathukamma. The video has already struck an emotional chord with audien

ces, who describe it as "a masterpiece of Telangana culture" and "a song that every household will celebrate with this season."

Creative Brilliance behind the Anthem

- Lyrics: Gorati Venkanna
- Music: Suresh Bobbili
- Voices: Aditi Bhavaraju, Mangli, and Goreti Venkanna
- Choreography: Eashwar Penti (Premalo fame)
- Direction: Badrappa Gajula
- Cinematography: Shyam Dupati | Second Camera: Uday Gurrala
- Presented and Produced by : Boosam Jagan Mohan Reddy, Managing



## Kerala Model School Hosts Exuberant Bathukamma Celebrations Ahead of Festive Break.



“P.S. ASHOKAN”Indian Chronicle”Jammikunta, September 24: “In a vibrant and culturally immersive prelude to the forthcoming festive holidays announced by the Telangana State Government, Kerala Model School, Jammikunta, hosted a magnificent Bathukamma celebration on campus. The event, held a day prior to the official break, radiated cultural pride and witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, faculty, and parents alike. “The school campus was transformed into a breathtaking floral panorama, as students and teachers came together to craft exquisite Bathukammas—beautifully arranged stacks of native seasonal flowers that symbolize femininity, environmental reverence, and devotion. Clad in traditional attire, students performed elegant Bathukamma folk dances, accompanied by melodious renditions of age-old songs that echoed Telangana’s rich cultural heritage. “Chairman Mr. Benny K. S. and Headmistress Mrs. Jolly graced the occasion, lauding the school’s efforts to seamlessly blend aca-

ademic rigor with cultural enrichment. “Addressing the gathering, Mrs. Jolly remarked, “Bathukamma is more than just a festival—it is an ode to womanhood, a tribute to nature, and a testament to our cultural identity. Through celebrations like these, we aspire to instill in our students a deep appreciation for tradition and ecological awareness. “She also conveyed heartfelt Dasara greetings to the entire school community, extending wishes for joy, well-being, and prosperity. “The event was further elevated by the active involvement of parents, whose presence alongside educators and students created a strong sense of unity and belonging. Their collective participation exemplified the school’s commitment to fostering not just academic excellence but also social and cultural consciousness. “With an atmosphere filled with joy, reverence, and togetherness, the resoundingly pre-Bathukamma celebration at Kerala Model School stood as a resounding tribute to Telangana’s enduring traditions and communal harmony.

## Nacharam Division Women Participate in Bathukamma Celebrations at Necklace Road



“Nacharam, (Indian Chornical) September 24: As part of the Bathukamma festival celebrations organized under the auspices of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) at Necklace Road today, around 50 women from Nacharam Division took part under the leadership of Corporator Shanthi

Sai Jen Shekhar. “Former Nacharam Division Mahila President Preeti Reddy, along with Sai Jen Shekhar, Katta Buchanna Goud, Vittal Yadav, Bhupal Reddy, Dasari Karna, Chandrashekar, Vasu, Krishna and others actively participated in the program.

## TGSRTC becomes first public transport corporation to integrate AI technology

Hyderabad, Sept.24: In a pioneering step towards leveraging advanced technology, the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) has become the first public transport corporation in India to adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI) in its operations. This landmark initiative marks a new era in public transport management, focused on enhancing efficiency, reducing operational costs, ensuring commuter convenience, and improving employee welfare.

TGSRTC has partnered with Hansa Equity Partners LLP to implement the AI project across all depots. The firm will provide technical expertise, strategic planning, and specialised training for TGSRTC’s dedicated technology team, ensuring seamless execution. Employee health monitoring: Through the grand health challenge, medical reports of over 40,000 employees are being analysed using AI and machine learning to identify health risks and promote preventive care. A successful pilot in six depots is now being scaled up corporation-wide. This will help improve crew productivity significantly. AI-driven scheduling: TGSRTC is preparing to introduce automated, demand-based scheduling of bus services. AI models will analyse traffic patterns, festivals, weekly trends, and passenger demand to optimize fleet deployment. This will contribute to greater resource utilisation cutting the wastage.

Operational efficiency: AI will be utilised to monitor employee performance, streamline operations, and minimise costs, while ensuring faster and commuter-friendly services. A detailed presentation on AI implementation was recently made to Minister for Transport and BC welfare Ponnamp Prabhakar at the Secretariat, on Wednesday. The

session was attended by Vikas Raj, special chief secretary, Transport and Roads and Buildings dept, V.C. Sajjanar, managing director of TGSRTC, and other senior officials.

The Minister lauded TGSRTC’s forward-looking approach, observing that AI is shaping the future across sectors worldwide. He commended the corporation’s initiative and urged officials to ensure collaborative execution for long-term success. On this occasion, Ponnamp Prabhakar felicitated Trinadha Babu and Suneel Regulla of Hansa Equity Partners LLP for their vital contributions since the inception of the Strategic Deployment Plan (SDP) in 2021, as part of their Corporate social responsibility (CSR). TGSRTC officials emphasised that the AI project stems from the success of the strategic deployment plan, initiated in 2021. The SDP has been instrumental in aligning TGSRTC with modern transport requirements, improving passenger services, Digital transformation and strengthening financial sustainability.

Managing Director V.C. Sajjanar, highlighted that AI adoption is a strategic leap to prepare TGSRTC for future challenges. He stated that AI integration will significantly enhance speed, transparency, and accuracy of services, while enabling smart scheduling to meet dynamic passenger needs. He expressed pride that TGSRTC is setting a national benchmark by being the first in India’s public transport sector to adopt such technology. The review meeting was also attended by executive directors Munishekar Khushrosha Khan, Venkanna, Rajasekhara, Chief traffic manager Sridevi, Chief Personnel Manager Ushadevi, Chief Engineer (IT) Sridevi, and other senior officials.



area, 241 in Srirampur area, 167 in Ramagundam-3 & Adriyala areas, 156 in Ramagundam-1 area, 64 in Mandammarri area, 21 in the corporate area, 20 in Kothagudem area, 19 in Manuguru area, 11 in Bellampalli area, and 6 in Yellandu area as general assistant category-1 employees.

## Strategy evolved at 1st meeting of new office bearers of T-BJP

Hyderabad, Sept.24 : The first meeting of the newly appointed Telangana BJP working committee members was held today under the leadership of state president N. Ramchander Rao at the party’s state office. The meeting reviewed ongoing party activities, discussed preparations for the Jubilee Hills bye-election and upcoming local body polls, and chalked out future programmes. Organizational General Secretary Chandrashekhar, National Executive Committee member Garikapati Mohan Rao, and other state officials participated.

Briefing the media, party general secretary Dr. Goutham Rao said a series of public service initiatives will be carried out till October 17 as part of the “Seva Pakhwada” programme. The party also resolved to create awareness

on welfare schemes of the Modi government and inform consumers about the new GST rates benefiting the poor, middle class, farmers, students, and MSMEs. Special campaigns will be held at district and assembly levels, along with events to promote the ‘Swadeshi’ movement. A major cultural programme, ‘Mera Desh Pehle’ (My country first) - highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s life journey - will be organized on September 30 at Hitech City, Hyderabad, with over 10,000 people expected to attend. The meeting also finalized agitation plans to expose what it termed the Congress government’s failures and broken promises. The BJP expressed confidence of securing victory in the forthcoming election. State General Secretary Vemula Ashok and Chief spokesperson and media in-charge NV Subhash are also present.

## HCA healthcare inaugurates first Global Capability Centre in Hyd

Hyderabad, Sept.24: Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu on Wednesday inaugurated the first Global Capability Centre (GCC) of HCA Healthcare outside the United States at Raidurg, Hyderabad.

HCA Healthcare, a Fortune 100 company with operations across the U.S. and the U.K., runs 190 hospitals, 2,400 care sites and employs more than 3.16 lakh people worldwide. With an annual revenue of \$70 billion, the company has now chosen Telangana for its maiden overseas GCC. The Hyderabad facility, spread over 4 lakh sq. ft., involves an investment of \$75 million (₹620 crore). It is expected to generate 3,000 jobs by 2026, with 1,200 positions already created in IT, supply chain, procurement, human resources, finance and accounting. Speaking at the inaugu-

ration, Sridhar Babu said the investment was a testament to Hyderabad’s global-class infrastructure and highly skilled talent pool. “Hyderabad is rapidly emerging as a global hub for healthcare, pharmaceuticals and life sciences, with world-class hospitals, over 800 pharma companies, leading life sciences GCCs and advanced healthcare infrastructure. The city is uniquely positioned to deliver affordable healthcare at international standards,” he said.

Senior officials, including special chief secretary Sanjay Kumar, Telangana Life Sciences director Shakthi Nagappan, IT Advisor Sai Krishna, HCA healthcare executive vice president & CFO Mike Marks, GCC Senior Vice President Emily Duncan and Hyderabad Centre Head & Vice President Atul Kapoor were present on the occasion.

## HARISH, KTR SLAMS CONG & BJP OVER KRISHNA WATERS & PUBLIC ISSUES

Hyderabad, Sept.24 : Former Minister Harish Rao on Tuesday launched a scathing attack on the Congress government over Krishna river water allocations. Alleging that the ruling party had betrayed Telangana’s interests, he accused CM Revanth Reddy and Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy for speaking in contradictory tones - sometimes citing 500 TMC, sometimes 904 TMC, and at other times 763 TMC.

“Congress wrote a death warrant for Telangana by agreeing to 299 TMC as against Andhra Pradesh’s 512 TMC during state bifurcation. You are traitors in the irrigation history of the state,” the BRS leader said, and recalled that former CM KCR fought in the Supreme Court and with the Centre to secure Telangana’s rightful share under Section 3. He accused the Congress of succumbing to AP CM Chandrababu Naidu’s pressure by remaining silent on the Banakacharla project. Meanwhile, BRS working president KT Rama Rao came down heavily on both the state and Central governments. He charged the Revanth Reddy government with ‘third-degree torture’ of the farmers who are demanding urea and failing to fulfill even a single promise of its Farmers’ Declaration. KTR ridiculed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for reducing GST slabs ahead of Bihar polls after ‘looting Rs.15 lakh crore in the last eight years’. He reminded that the promises of giving Rs.15 lakh per per-



son, doubling farmers’ incomes, and bullet trains remain unfulfilled, while the fuel and gas prices have soared. Accusing Revanth Reddy of acting to please Modi and Chandrababu, KTR said: “When Karnataka is raising Almatti dam height with Rs.70,000 crore, it’s acceptable. But for Kaleshwaram project which was built to irrigate 40 lakh acres with an expenditure of Rs 93,000 crore is branded as a scam. Where is the Rs.1 lakh crore corruption they claim?” Welcoming doctors Ontela Rohit Reddy and Gogula Gautami Reddy into BRS, KTR urged the educated youth to join politics. People will soon realise the contrast between KCR’s welfare-driven rule and the Congress’ failures, and once again elect KCR as CM, he noted.

## Health camp in hyd under "Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan"

Hyderabad, Sept.24): The “Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan (SNSPA)”, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Women and Child Development, is strengthening healthcare access and awareness for women and children across India.

As part of the campaign, a series of health screening and awareness camps are being organised at CGHS Wellness Centres in Hyderabad. At the CGHS Wellness Centre, CGO Towers, Kavadi Guda, a Cancer Screening Camp was held under the guidance of Dr. Pradeep, Senior CMO, offering free check-ups and expert counselling on breast and cervical cancer. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Jyothi Jonnadula highlighted the importance of early detection in effective cancer treatment. The Additional Director

General, PIB, also addressed participants on the ‘Swachhatsav’ campaign, linking good health with clean surroundings, and distributed jute bags to encourage reduction of plastic use. Simultaneously, the CGHS Wellness Centre-IV, Begumpet, hosted a Metabolic Liver Diseases Screening Camp for women beneficiaries, with nearly 100 participants. An awareness session on the use of medicinal plants, led by Dr. Rohini Prathaban,

Additional Director, CGHS Hyderabad, in collaboration with AYUSH physicians, was also conducted. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 17, 2025, the “Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan” aims to ensure comprehensive health screenings for women, focusing on anaemia, hypertension, diabetes, and cancer, while building stronger and healthier communities.

## Protest by Contract Workers in Front of Yellandu MLA Camp Office“--

-- If the contract workers’ share in profits is not paid, the movement across Singareni will intensify, warn JAC leaders. ““Rayala Kishore, Yellandu Constituency, September 24, Indian Chronicle: The Singareni contract workers’ unions Joint Action Committee (JAC) staged a dharna on Wednesday in front of Yellandu MLA’s camp office under the leadership of Sheikh Yakub Shavali, demanding a fair share for contract workers in the profit bonus. ““On this occasion, JAC leaders B. Madhu, Pedda Boyina Satish, and Bhanoth Ram Singh said that the profits earned through the hard labor of contract workers in Singareni have been disrespected with a mere ₹500 increase. They recalled that the MLAs of the coal belt had promised to raise wages within a month, but even after 22 months, the wages were not increased. Now,



they alleged, severe injustice is being done to laborers regarding the profit share. ““They stated that during the Chalo Pragathi Bhavan program organized on the 12th by the JAC, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka gave assurances to the representatives but later failed to keep his word. They criticized that, like a boatman who changes his word after crossing a river, the actions of the Revanth Reddy government have been exposed in this

profit-sharing issue. ““The leaders strongly condemned coal belt MLAs for agreeing silently when only ₹500 was added. They pointed out that while a regular worker working alongside earns ₹1.90 lakh, a contract worker doing the same job is told to celebrate with just ₹500 — something acceptable only to the Revanth Reddy government. ““They warned that if the matter of profit share is not settled, the movement will intensify further across Singareni. They

called upon contract workers to be prepared for united struggles, as there is no path left other than fighting. ““The program was attended by JAC leaders Abdul Nabi, Payam Venkanna, Mallela Venkateshwarlu, Talluri Krishna, Kottapalli Raghu, Tarun, Lingamurthy, Upender, Venkatabbayi, Sumitra, Jamuna, Ganga, Rajeshwari, Saïda, Chilakamma, Durga, Manju, Manemma, Nirmala, Madhu, Durgarao, Sharada, Baburao, Leela and others.



# Reddy Seva Sangham Sets the Stage for Grand Bathukamma Festivities.“



“Inaugural Executive Meeting Emphasizes Unity, Culture, and Community Engagement”“P. S. ASHOKAN”INDIAN CHRONICLE“Manthani, September 24 –“The newly appointed executive committee of the Reddy Seva Welfare Sangham convened its first official meeting on Wednesday at the association’s headquarters in Manthani, under the leadership of President Musukula Surender Reddy.”“The core focus of the session was to meticulously plan and execute the upcoming Bathukamma celebrations—a cherished symbol of Telangana’s cultural identity. The committee members arrived at a unanimous resolution to ensure that this year’s festivities are celebrated with grandeur, authenticity, and community spirit.”“In his opening address, President Surender Reddy underscored the importance of preserving traditional values while embracing inclusive participation from all members. Discussions covered a wide range of organizational aspects including logistics, floral arrangements, cultural programming, and volunteer mobilization.”“Key Office Bearers in Attendance:“Vice President: Karaka Kondal Reddy”“General Secretary: Eluka Satyanarayana

Reddy”“Joint Secretaries: Mosapatu Ramana Reddy, Moola Shekhar Reddy”“Executive Members: Nambu Prabhakar Reddy, Allam Ramana Reddy, Gantla Surender Reddy, Maram Satyanarayana Reddy, Rekkala Kishan Reddy, Masireddy Rajireddy, among others.”“The meeting was further enriched by the presence of senior community leaders and former office bearers, whose experience and wisdom provided valuable perspective. The distinguished guests included:“Former President: Mandala Satyanarayana Reddy”“Former Secretary: Bellamkonda Ravinder Reddy”“Former ZPTC Member: Moola Sarojana Purushotham Reddy”“Former Manthani Municipal Chairman: Pendru Rama Suresh Reddy”“The association extended deep gratitude to these stalwarts for their guidance and insightful suggestions, which are expected to contribute significantly to the success of the celebrations.”“This inaugural meeting not only marked the commencement of a new leadership chapter, but also reaffirmed the Sangham’s dedication to safeguarding cultural heritage, promoting unity, and strengthening community bonds through meaningful initiatives.

# Annapurna Devi Alankaram at Mahankali Temple in Uppal

“NSR, Medchal - Malkajigiri Staff Reporter, Uppal, Sept 24, Indian Chronicle: The Sharannavaratri celebrations are continuing with devotion at the Mahankali Temple in Uppal. On the third day, Wednesday, the deity was adorned in the form of Annapurna Devi and offered darshan to devotees. Following the rituals, an annaprasadam program was organized. Temple chairman Telkala Mohan Reddy, trustees Mashetty Raghavendra, Meenampalli Andalu, and Gummadelli Krishna participated along with temple priest Naveen Kumar. Devotees including Pujari Hanumantu, Manda Suman Krishna Reddy, Krishna Reddy, Gummadelli Raju, Kanamain Naresh, Kanyamain Suresh, Teega Giridhar, and Meenampelli Tarun joined in large numbers.



# Indiramma house construction work should be completed quickly: Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector



Hanumantha Rao”“Yadadri Bhuvanagiri..Indian Chronicle..(September 24):- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that the construction work of Indiramma houses should be completed quickly. On Wednesday, the District Collector inspected the construc-

tion work of Indiramma houses in Masai Peta village of Yadagirigutta mandal...”“How many houses are under construction in the village? The Gram Panchayat Secretary and Housing AE were asked whether the construction work of the houses is going on quickly until the sanction is granted and whether the bills are being paid immediately. He spoke to the beneficiaries of Indiramma houses. We have told them throughout the district that sand will be given free of cost for the construction of the house, bricks, steel, etc.

He said. He asked the beneficiary of Indiramma’s house if her names were registered in the ration card. Did she get the rice from the ration shop and whether she would get free electricity. We got the names registered in the new ration card and after doing so, we have been getting rice from the month. We are eating the same. We also get zero electricity bills. Now Indiramma’s house has also been sanctioned and we are completing the house work quickly. We will also have to move in soon. We are very happy. Our 20-year dream of building a house has come true, they expressed joy. The concerned officials participated in this program.

# Karimnagar Police Bust Juvenile Bike Theft Racket.“

P . S . A S H O K A N “ I n d i a n Chronicle”Karimnagar,September 24:”“In a decisive crack-down on vehicle theft, the Karimnagar Rural Police successfully apprehended a trio of juvenile offenders involved in a spate of two-wheeler thefts across the city. The operation, conducted under the supervision of Karimnagar Rural CI A. Niranjan Reddy, led to the recovery of 13 stolen motorcycles.”“The arrests were officially announced during a press conference held on Wednesday at the Karimnagar Rural Police Station, where ACP Vijay Kumar and CI Niranjan Reddy detailed the case.”“According to police sources, multiple complaints had been lodged in recent weeks regarding missing two-wheelers in the jurisdictions of Karimnagar Rural, I Town, and II Town Police Stations. Responding swiftly, the rural police launched a focused investigation and intensified patrolling in sensitive areas.”“During routine surveillance near the Bommakal flyover, officers noticed three minors behaving suspiciously. Upon interrogation, the juveniles confessed to stealing 13 bikes, which were later retrieved from various hidden locations.”“The minors were produced before the Juvenile Justice Board and have been remanded to juvenile cus-



tody as per legal procedures.”“Speaking to the media, ACP Vijay Kumar commended CI Niranjan Reddy and his team for their swift, strategic, and effective action, which led to the successful resolution of the case and recovery of property worth lakhs of rupees.”“The incident underscores the commitment of Karimnagar police towards maintaining law and order and their vigilant approach in curbing juvenile delinquency and organized petty crimes.

# Indiramma Homes: A Testament to Dignity and Empowerment for the Underprivileged.“



“ P . S . A S H O K A N “ I n d i a n Chronicle”Konaorapet,September 24:”“Calling the Indiramma Housing Scheme a “beacon of self-respect and socio-economic empowerment for the marginalized,” Government Whip and Vemulawada MLA Adi Srinivas emphasized the transformative impact of welfare governance during his visit to Nimmeppalli village on Wednesday.”“While personally inspecting the slab work of beneficiary Sunke Madhavi’s house, sanctioned under the Indiramma scheme, the MLA witnessed a deeply emotional moment — the beneficiary, moved to tears, expressed heartfelt gratitude as her long-cherished dream of owning a home took shape.”“Public welfare is the cornerstone of people’s governance,” said the MLA.”“He noted that 52 Indiramma houses have been sanctioned in Nimmeppalli alone, with construction progressing swiftly. He praised the local administration and beneficiaries for effectively utilizing government assistance to build safe and dignified homes.”“In a strong critique of the previous BRS regime, Adi Srinivas remarked:”““Apart from the houses sanctioned under the Congress-led Indiramma scheme, not a single double-bedroom house was provided in the last ten years by the previous government.”“Issuing a bold challenge, he stated:”“> “We said we wouldn’t seek votes in any village without Indiramma houses. Now, we ask — can you show us a village without a single double-bedroom house? If so, you must stop seeking votes there.”“He reiterated that the Congress government is steadfastly fulfilling its electoral promises, moving ahead with transparency, commitment, and a pro-poor vision. Beneficiaries, he said, are calling their

new homes “fortresses of safety and symbols of pride,” reflecting the emotional and material security these initiatives bring.”“He also highlighted the government’s gesture of distributing new clothes during housewarming ceremonies, symbolizing not just shelter but celebration, dignity, and inclusion.”“Distinguished Attendees:”“The program witnessed the participation of several key leaders and dignitaries:”“Kachakaya Ellayya – Chairman, Konaorapet Market Committee”“Thallapalli Prabhakar – Vice Chairman”“Sheikh Firoz Pasha – Mandal President, Congress Party”“Banda Narasayya – Chairman, PACS”“Jagan Reddy – District President, Kisan Cell”“Chepuri Gangadhar – District Vice President, Congress Party

# Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District: District administration steps to increase godown facilities:



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao”“Yadadri Bhuvanagiri..Indian Chronicle..(September 24):- The district administration is taking steps to increase godown facilities in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Since the godown facilities in the district are not adequate, godowns will be constructed in view of future needs. These godowns will be constructed for cooperative societies through the World Largest Green Storage Scheme. Financial assistance will be available from NABARD for this. These will be constructed in three cooperative societies that are close to railway lines and have land suitable for the construction of godowns in the district.

# Little Flower Degree College NSS Special Camp Concludes

“NSR, Medchal - Malkajigiri Staff Reporter, Sept 24, Indian Chronicle: The week-long NSS Special Camp organized by the NSS unit of Little Flower Degree College successfully concluded at Madharam village under Ghatkesar Municipality limits. During the camp, students actively participated in various social activities aimed at creating awareness among villagers. Key programs included Swachh Bharat activities, a health camp, voter registration awareness, promotion of digital payments, awareness on girl child education and prevention of school dropouts, and road safety campaigns. Special emphasis was also laid on village cleanliness and environmental protection. On the final day, students carried out plantation drives at the village temple, school, bus stand, and other locations, along with painting work at the bus stand to enhance the village’s appearance. The camp saw active participation from NSS Program Officer Dr. M. Prashanth, members including Naveen Kumar, faculty, and volunteers. Village elders and residents appre-



ciated the efforts of the students and acknowledged their contribution. Former sarpanch Yadagiri congratulated Dr. M. Prashanth and all NSS volunteers for the successful conduct of the camp.

# Rs. 5.98 Crore Sanctioned for Development Works in Charlapalli Division“



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajigiri Staff Reporter, Cherlapally, Sept 24, Indian Chronicle: At the 8th GHMC Standing Committee meeting, development works worth a total of Rs. 5.98 crore were sanctioned for Charlapalli Division, following the efforts of Division Corporator Bonthu Sridevi Yadav. Out of this, Rs. 3.13 crore has been allocated for CC road works covering several colonies, including Sri Sai Venkat Enclave, Shiva Sai Nagar, Srinivasa Enclave, V.N. Reddy Nagar, Shubhodaya Colony, Nagarjuna Nagar, Sonia Gandhi Nagar, Vaishnavi Enclave, Sai Krishna Nagar, Indira Nagar, and Nehru Nagar. The main stretch will begin from Sri Sai Venkat Enclave under Ward No. 3. In addition, Rs. 2.85 crore has been sanctioned for the construction of a new Storm Water Drain (SWD) from TIFR via Sai Nagar to Krishna Reddy Nagar, linking to Kushaiguda main road. This long-pending project is expected to provide a permanent solution to flooding and waterlogging issues in the surrounding colonies during the monsoon season. Corporator Bonthu Sridevi Yadav expressed gratitude to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for approving these funds. She also acknowledged the efforts of Vem. Narender Reddy, who contributed towards getting clearance for the SWD project.

# Regularization of 1,258 Contract Workers in Singareni.“

“P.S.ASHOKAN”Indian Chronicle”Godavarikhani, September 24:”“In a significant move aimed at strengthening labor welfare and long-standing demands, Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) Chairman and Managing Director N. Balam announced the regularization of 1,258 contract workers across various operational areas of Singareni.”“In an official statement, CMD Balam revealed that the company is issuing orders to regularize contract workers who have completed 190 shifts in underground mines and 240 shifts in open cast and surface operations, converting them into General Assistant Category-1 employees.”“Workers who have completed at least one year of service before December 31, 2024, and fulfilled the required shift criteria, will be eligible for this regularization process. This decision is set to benefit workers employed across multiple regions and mining divisions of SCCL.”“This landmark decision follows a series of discussions between SCCL management, including CMD N. Balam and Director (Personnel) Gautam Potru, and the recognized trade union — Singareni Collieries Workers Union (SCWU - AITUC). The management responded positively to the union’s representations, leading to the issuance of this favorable directive.”“On Wednesday, the General Manager (Personnel), IR & PM was instructed to send formal proposals to all regional areas for implementation of the regularization process, as per the CMD’s orders.”“Breakdown



of Beneficiaries by Area:”“RG-1 Area: 303 workers”“Bhoopalpally Area: 250 workers”“Srirampur Area: 241 workers”“RG-3 & Adriyala Areas: 167 workers”“RG-2 Area: 156 workers”“Mandamarri Area: 64 workers”“Corporate Office: 21 workers”“Kothagudem Area: 20 workers”“Manuguru Area: 19 workers”“Bellampalli Area: 11 workers”“Yellandu Area: 6 workers”“CMD Balam emphasized that this regularization drive reflects the company’s commitment to the dignity, security, and welfare of its workforce, especially those who have diligently served in some of the most challenging conditions.







# How Maharashtra plans to connect you to Navi Mumbai International Airport



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

With the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) set to open on September 30, the Maharashtra government is finalising a multimodal connectivity plan to ensure seamless access to the new facility from Mumbai and across the state. The strategy integrates road, rail, Metro, and bus networks to cater to both short- and long-distance travellers.

Once inaugurated, the NMIA will begin with a modest eight to 10 air traffic movements per hour, which is projected to increase to 30 movements per hour during peak times by 2026. The first phase of the airport is designed to handle 20 million passengers annually, according to NMIA officials, making approach connectivity critical to its smooth operation. “Navi Mumbai International Airport Limited (NMIAL) is actively collaborating with government authorities to develop multimodal connectivity, leveraging both existing and upcoming infrastructure. NMIA will be well-connected via road, rail and water transport, offering seamless access while helping to decongest the region,” an NMIA spokesperson said. A key element of the access strategy is the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), also known as the Atal Setu. The 22-km sea bridge connects Sewri in South Mumbai to Nhava Sheva in Navi Mumbai, slashing commute time significantly. Passengers from South Mumbai

will be able to reach Ulwe, where the NMIA is located, in just 20 minutes from the end of the bridge.

From other parts of Mumbai, the existing Sion-Panvel Highway continues to be the main access road to NMIA. It connects the Mumbai city and eastern suburbs to Navi Mumbai through Chembur, Vashi, Nerul and Belapur before reaching Panvel. The Eastern Freeway provides another option, carrying traffic directly from South Mumbai to Chembur before joining the same highway. Additionally, CIDCO, Navi Mumbai’s planning authority, is constructing a new elevated corridor between Thane and NMIA. Designed for speeds of up to 100 kmph and featuring six interchanges, the corridor will cut travel time from 90 minutes to just 30 minutes. The Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) is preparing dedicated airport express bus services from key hubs, including Pune, Thane, Dadar, Vashi, and Panvel. These services will feature electric buses, offering a green and efficient option for airport access.

Rail connectivity will play a key role in linking NMIA with regions beyond Mumbai. The Panvel railway station, a major hub for suburban and intercity trains, will serve as a feeder point. Passengers arriving from Pune, Raigad, Nashik, and the Konkan belt can transfer to shuttle buses that will take them directly to the airport terminal. CIDCO has also proposed the activation of Targhar and Kharkopar railway stations to serve both airport staff and passengers. In the longer term, Metro connectivity is being explored, with feasibility studies underway to extend the existing Belapur-Pendhar Metro line to Ulwe, directly linking the airport. South Mumbai passengers will be able to drive via Atal Setu, reaching the airport in under 40 minutes, traffic permitting. Travellers from Thane may prefer dedicated airport express buses over navigating multiple road corridors. Commuters from Pune or Raigad can take trains to Panvel, followed by airport shuttle services. Residents of Navi Mumbai, especially in Ulwe, Kharghar, Kamothé, and Panvel, will benefit from the proposed feeder buses.

# After schools and CM Secretariat, Delhi High Court is latest bomb threat target: Why police haven’t been unable to stop them for 3 years

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

On Friday morning, the official email address of the Delhi High Court received a message claiming that three bombs had been planted on the premises. Soon, panic spread throughout the court complex. The proceedings were halted, and the court complex was emptied to run the compulsory scan by the bomb disposal squads. Like dozens of such earlier threats, this too was a hoax. In the last year, there have been over 30 such bomb threats in the Capital. It started on May 1. The first such threats were issued to schools and then to hospitals, causing large-scale disruption and panic.

Now that the Delhi High Court has been targeted, disrupting court proceedings, the case of unresolved hoax bomb threats — and tracing the people behind them — has emerged as the single biggest challenge to the Delhi Police. In fact, a similar bomb threat email had disrupted work at the Delhi Chief Minister’s Secretariat, Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC) and University College of Medical Sciences on Tuesday (September 4). In the past year, schools, colleges, hospitals, and various government and private institutions have received over 30 fake bomb threat emails. In the earlier cases, the Delhi Police cited the use of a VPN (Virtual Private Network) — an encrypted connection over the Internet which helps the sender hide their identity — to send the emails as the reason for the roadblock. In the HC’s case, too, it initially appears that the email was sent using a VPN. Police said the Cyber Wing has begun an investigation and is working to identify the sender. Bomb threats to schools via emails or messages are not new. In 2022, a private school in Sadiq Nagar received such a threat, and in 2023, similar threats were sent to different schools on three separate occasions. In several of these cases, the police discovered that school students were behind the emails. They were later caught and given counselling. The students said they mainly sent such bomb threats to avoid examinations, get a day off, or simply as a prank. The main issue, however, began last year in May when over 200 schools and other institutions received bomb threat emails. Since the emails were sent in bulk, the agencies registered a First Information Report (FIR) under sections pertaining to conspiracy and other relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). A specialised unit of the Special Cell’s Counter-Intelligence (CI) was tasked with conducting the probe.

The email threats continued in June, August, October, and November, triggering concern in several schools, colleges, hospitals, airlines, and other government institutions. The police decided to club all these cases under the initial FIR registered by the CI unit. Use of encrypted connections A senior police officer said the cases that re-



main to be solved involve emails sent via a VPN. In the cases that they did crack, no VPN was used. Last December, the police had zeroed in on a student who had emailed a bomb threat to his school to avoid an examination. The student had simply used an email ID without VPN, making it easier for the police to track him. The child was counselled and allowed to go. In July this year, investigation allegedly revealed that a minor boy had sent fake threats to two educational institutions — Delhi University’s St Stephen’s College and St Thomas School in Dwarka. He was briefly detained and released after counselling. In this case, too, the boy had not used a VPN, an officer said. The officer said that when the servers are based abroad, they seek assistance from central agencies to collect details. “Over the past few months, in most cases, the domains used in emails were traced to European countries. However, accessing the IP (Internet Protocol) addresses or other sender details is nearly impossible, as they are encrypted and masked using VPN or proxy servers,” he added. The officer added, “If we try to understand VPN as a layman... when we are talking to each other, it is direct connectivity, but if we are connected through a VPN, we communicate via multiple domain servers.” Cyber expert Shashank Shekhar, who is the co-founder of the thinktank FCRF, said tracing the location of a person using a VPN is inherently challenging because VPNs are designed to mask the user’s real IP address by “routing traffic through multiple servers across different countries.” “Advanced VPN services also implement features like multi-hop routing and no-log policies, which further obscure digital footprints. When threat actors send emails using such anonymised networks — often coupled with encrypted email services or compromised accounts — it significantly limits the ability of law enforcement to pinpoint the true origin,” Shekhar said. “In recent cases involving threat emails sent to schools in Delhi, the attackers have leveraged such techniques, creating multiple layers of obfuscation that delay or derail attribution efforts, especially when international cooperation is required to access logs or trace traffic,” he added.

# Shiv Sena demands action against Sena UBT MP Sanjay Raut for ‘provocative’ remarks

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

According to the Shiv Sena delegation, Raut’s remarks are not only inflammatory but also intended to create fear and instability in society. According to the delegation, Raut’s remarks are not only inflammatory but also intended to create fear and instability in society. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena Thursday submitted a memorandum to Mumbai Police Commissioner Deven Bharti demanding strict action against Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut for allegedly making provocative statements.

The Shiv Sena delegation that met Bharti alleged that Raut, by circulating a video of recent violence in Nepal and warning that similar unrest could occur in India, attempted to incite disorder and indirectly threaten Prime Minister Narendra Modi. According to the delegation, such remarks are not only inflammatory but also intended to create fear and instability in society. The memorandum further stated that Raut has repeatedly sought to undermine democratic institutions — including the Election Commission, the judiciary, the administration, and the media — by spreading distrust. Shiv Sena leaders claimed that since Raut cannot succeed through democratic means, he is resorting to provocative speeches that could spark violence. The delegation urged the police to take immediate cognizance of the matter and initiate strict legal action against Raut to prevent



The Shiv Sena alleged that Sanjay Raut, by circulating a video of the recent violence in Nepal and warning that similar unrest could occur in India, attempted to incite disorder and indirectly threaten Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

any attempts at disturbing public peace. The delegation comprised Shiv Sena MP Milind Deora, party secretary Sanjay More, MLA Tukaram Kate, spokespersons Sanjay Nirupam and Sheetal Mhatre, Prof Jyoti Waghmare, Sanjana Ghadi, former corporator Sushiben Shah, Trushna Viswasrao, Suvarna Karanje, and Asha Mamedy.

# ‘Mails sent from Outlook, mention of RDX’: Cops suspect role of repeat offender behind bomb threats to Delhi, Bombay HCs



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Hours after the high courts in Delhi and Bombay received bomb threat emails on Friday, forcing most judges to rise abruptly before noon, the Mumbai police said they suspect the role of an elusive threat mail sender who has been evading them for months in over 12 similar cases. The email sent to the official ID of the Delhi High Court at around 8.40 am said that the judges’ chamber will detonate after “middy prayers”. It also mentioned the names of some political leaders from South Indian states. The threat was later declared to be a hoax.

While the contents of the email sent to the Bombay High Court have not been revealed, investigators suspect that the same person is behind both, considering that the emails have been sent on the same day, an officer said.

# Gujarat’s ‘largest Durga Puja event in West India’: BCA set to host 88th edition of festival

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

The association anticipates a daily footfall of approximately 70,000 devotees and visitors, who will partake in the sacred morning ‘Bhog’ and the evening cultural programmes. The association anticipates a daily footfall of approximately 70,000 devotees and visitors, who will partake in the sacred morning ‘Bhog’ and the evening cultural programmes. The Bengal Cultural Association (BCA), Ahmedabad will be holding the largest ever Kalibari and Durga Puja celebrations in the state, with its 88th edition to take place from September 27 to October 2, over a sprawling event area of more than 1 lakh square feet. The traditional centerpiece of the festival, the idols of Goddess Durga and other deities, are currently being meticulously crafted by skilled artisans. As preparations are in full swing to host one of Gujarat’s most popular Durga Puja celebrations, the six-day festivities will commence with Anandamela on September 27 and culminate with the Maha Dashami idol immersion on October 2. The association anticipates a daily footfall of approximately 70,000 devotees and visitors, who will partake in the sacred morning ‘Bhog’ and the evening cultural programmes. “This year’s celebration is designed to be a vibrant cultural cauldron, showcasing the rich heritage of Bengal. For the first time at this scale, we will have the famous traditional chhau dance of Kolkata,” Anal Mukherjee, President of BCA, Ahmedabad told The Indian Express. The event will also feature an eclectic mix of local talent and renowned artists from Kolkata like celebrated singers Ankita Bhattacharya, Pabitra Chakraborty, Bristilekha Nandini, and Prantik Sur. More than 50 stalls



will be installed, including a diverse range of home-cooked Bengali food at home at over 20 thematic food stalls. “This will be the largest Bengali cultural event in West India. The atmosphere will be kept vibrant and engaging with a lineup of quizzes, singing competitions, and artistic performances by local members, ensuring there is something for everyone. Over the years, even non-Bengalis have also become a part of the event and it has become a well-accepted cultural amalgamation in the city,” Priyanka Roy, the spokesperson of BCA, told this newspaper. “As a proud bastion of Bengali culture in Gujarat, we are thrilled to invite people from all communities to join our 88th Kalibari Durga Puja. This festival is a celebration of unity and shared heritage,” Mukherjee said. The BCA has recently inaugurated a new community building in Ahmedabad as a symbol of the vibrant Bengali culture. It will host classes for music, dance, and drawing, and also function as a community space for prayer meetings, guest accommodations, and celebrations.

# Work on Rs 129-crore ROB for east-west connectivity in Bhandup to begin next month



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Come October, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is set to launch full-fledged work on a 530-metre-long Road Over Bridge (ROB) in Bhandup, Mumbai, which is estimated to cost Rs 129.43 crore. In what is projected to cut travel time by nearly half and reduce traffic load on the existing routes, the new bridge will link the LBS Marg and Veer Savarkar Marg near Bhandup railway station and provide an alternate means of east-west commute.

What is the project all about?

In a bid to alleviate east-west congestion in the eastern suburbs, the BMC planned a new ROB in Bhandup for which a tender was invited in November 2022. Spanning a length of 529.53 metres, the bridge will connect the busy LBS Marg on the western side to the congested Veer Savarkar Marg on the eastern side. Passing over the railway tracks, the bridge will commence near the Bhandup station on the west side and land near Menon College on the eastern side. As of now, the civic body has launched the construction of piers on the western flank. On the eastern side of the bridge, BMC said that work is underway to procure permissions pertaining to prevailing encroachments, trees as well as acquire nods for acquisition of a part of salt pan lands. Currently, the commuters travelling from east to west in Bhandup have to travel via the existing Jogeshwari Vikhroli Link Road (JVLRL) route or the Andheri Goregaon Link Road (AGLR). These routes are situated five kilometres apart and are burdened with heavy traffic, particularly during the peak travel hours. According to officials, an old railway crossing at Bhandup, which once served as an alternative route, was closed for vehicular movement in the early 2000s, leading to calls from residents to reopen it. The new bridge will establish a vital connection between Bhandup East and West, reducing travel time by half. Officials noted that the bridge is located just 100 metres from the closed railway crossing. Along with the recently opened Vikhroli bridge, this new ROB will further ease congestion on the JVLRL and AGLR routes. The bridge spans a total length of 529.53 metres, with 233.50 metres on the eastern side and 207.30 metres on the western side. Approximately 89 metres of the total bridge length will extend over the railway tracks. The structure will comprise three lanes, with a deck width of 11.50 metres on the BMC portion and 15.60 metres on the railway portion. The bridge will feature a total of 14 spans: seven on the eastern side, five on the western

side, and two over the railway area. “The new Bhandup ROB will ease traffic congestion in the eastern suburbs by providing a new route for citizens. Following the monsoon, we will commence full-fledged work on the new Bhandup ROB from October. As we are facing some delays on the eastern side owing to the presence of trees, encroachments and some obstructions, we have already started pier foundation work on the western side. Even work on acquiring permissions for the eastern side is progressing well and we will soon start work on that portion as well. Additionally, as the bridge will pass over a railway line, the Railways is currently reviewing the General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) for the bridge,” a senior BMC officer stated.

# Acquitted in 7/11 Mumbai train blasts case, teacher seeks Rs 9 crore compensation for wrongful incarceration

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Abdul Wahid Din Mohammed Shaikh outside Arthur Road jail. (Express Photo by Ganesh Shirsekar) Shaikh, who was awaiting the final verdict, submitted his formal appeal on Friday. “Despite brutal suffering, I continued to believe in the justice system, which ultimately acknowledged my innocence,” he wrote. (Express Photo by Ganesh Shirsekar) Nearly a decade after he was acquitted in the 2006 Mumbai train blasts case, Dr Wahid Shaikh, a schoolteacher and one of the individuals accused in the case, has submitted a formal appeal to the National Human Rights Commission as well as Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission, seeking compensation of Rs 9 crore for the losses he endured during his nine years of wrongful imprisonment. Shaikh was arrested in the 7/11 serial train blasts case, where seven bombs ripped through Mumbai’s suburban trains during rush hour, killing over 180 people and injuring hundreds. He spent nine years in jail before being acquitted in 2015 by a special court. On July 21, 2025, the Bombay High Court acquitted all 12 individuals previously convicted in the 2006 train blasts case, holding that the prosecution had utterly failed to prove their guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. Shaikh, who was awaiting the final verdict, submitted his formal appeal on Friday. “Despite brutal suffering, I continued to believe in the justice system, which ultimately acknowledged my innocence,” he wrote. He has demanded Rs 9 crore as compensation for what he calls an “irreparable loss” to his liberty, dignity, and life trajectory. Among the specific damages he lists are physical and psychological torture during police custody; loss of crucial years of his youth, from age 28 to 37;



# Poland says Russian drone incursions could not have been a mistake, contradicting Trump



WARSAW, GNS News Agency, Sept 24Poland rejected on Friday a suggestion by Donald Trump that Russian drone incursions into its airspace could have been a mistake, a rare contradiction of the U.S. president from one of Washington's closest European allies.Poland, backed by aircraft from other NATO, shot down drones that had violated its airspace on Wednesday, the first time a member of the Western military alliance is known to have fired during Russia's war in Ukraine.

Make sense of the latest ESG trends affecting companies and governments with the Reuters Sustainable Switch newsletter. Sign up here.Russia said its forces had been attacking Ukraine at the time and that it had not intended to hit any targets in Poland. Trump told reporters in Washington on Thursday: "It could have been a mistake."

But Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk responded on X: "We would also wish that the drone attack on Poland was a mistake. But it wasn't. And we know it."After strong condemnation of Russia by European leaders over the incident, Germany said it had extended air policing over Poland.The United Nations Security Council was set to meet on Friday at Poland's request to discuss the incident. NATO called a press conference for 1500 GMT by its head, Mark Rutte, and its top military official, Supreme Allied Commander Europe Alexus Grynkewich, who is a U.S. Air Force general. For Warsaw's leadership so directly to contradict Trump is almost unheard of, and a sign of Europe's alarm at the U.S. president's willingness to give weight to Moscow's account.Poland is among the closest U.S. allies in Europe. It has praised Trump for calling for greater European military spending, and has been praised in turn by the Trump administration for devoting the largest share of its economy to defence of any NATO ally, including the United States itself.

Polish Deputy Defence Minister Cezary Tomczyk said: "I think this is a message that should reach President

Trump today: there's no question of a mistake - this was a deliberate Russian attack."Warsaw has portrayed the drone incursions as an attempt by Russia to test the capabilities of Poland and NATO to respond. Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski was visiting Kyiv on Friday.Item 1 of 2 Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk stands in front of Polish Air Force F-16 fighter jets as he holds a press conference regarding the threat posed by Russian drones in Polish airspace at the 32nd Tactical Air Base in Lask, about 30 km south-west of Lodz, Poland, September 11, 2025. Agencja... Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab Read moreThis week's incident has raised questions about NATO's preparedness for drone attacks and the security of Europe's civil air transport.European leaders say it is the latest demonstration that Moscow has no interest in a peace deal in Ukraine, weeks after Trump hosted President Vladimir Putin in Alaska and withdrew a demand that Russia accept an immediate ceasefire.Trump has repeatedly set deadlines for Moscow to agree a ceasefire or face new sanctions, only to row back.European officials have been in Washington this week hoping to coordinate sanctions on Russia with the U.S. administration. Announcing such sanctions in tandem was previously standard practice but has not taken place since Trump returned to office.EU member states agreed on Friday to a regular six-month extension to their existing list of travel bans and freezes on bank accounts of people and companies over the Russian invasion.Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Friday peace negotiations were on pause and that "the Europeans are hindering this" peace process.On Thursday Paris said it would deploy three Rafale fighter jets to help Poland protect its airspace and Germany said it would strengthen its commitment to NATO's eastern border. Japan said it had decided to lower its price cap on Russian crude oil to punish Moscow for its continued war in Ukraine.Russia and its close ally Belarus began a long-planned joint military exercise on Friday involving drills in both countries and in the Baltic and Barents seas.Dismissing concerns abroad about the exercise, Peskov said Western European countries were suffering "emotional overload" and that Russia did not pose a threat to them.Russia also pressed on with attacks on Ukraine, killing three people in the northern Ukrainian region of Sumy, local Ukrainian prosecutors said.Ukrainian drones attacked Russia's northwestern port of Primorsk, setting fire to a vessel and a pumping station, the regional governor said. It was the first reported drone strike on one of the country's largest oil and fuel export terminals.

[1/2]Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk stands in front of Polish Air Force F-16 fighter jets as he holds a press conference regarding the threat posed by Russian drones in Polish airspace at the 32nd Tactical Air Base in Lask, about 30 km south-west of Lodz, Poland, September 11, 2025. Agencja... Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab Read moreThis week's incident has raised questions about NATO's preparedness for drone attacks and the security of Europe's civil air transport.European leaders say it is the latest demonstration that Moscow has no interest in a peace deal in Ukraine, weeks after Trump hosted President Vladimir Putin in Alaska and withdrew a demand that Russia accept an immediate ceasefire.Trump has repeatedly set deadlines for Moscow to agree a ceasefire or face new sanctions, only to row back.European officials have been in Washington this week hoping to coordinate sanctions on Russia with the U.S. administration. Announcing such sanctions in tandem was previously standard practice but has not taken place since Trump returned to office.EU member states agreed on Friday to a regular six-month extension to their existing list of travel bans and freezes on bank accounts of people and companies over the Russian invasion.Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Friday peace negotiations were on pause and that "the Europeans are hindering this" peace process.On Thursday Paris said it would deploy three Rafale fighter jets to help Poland protect its airspace and Germany said it would strengthen its commitment to NATO's eastern border. Japan said it had decided to lower its price cap on Russian crude oil to punish Moscow for its continued war in Ukraine.Russia and its close ally Belarus began a long-planned joint military exercise on Friday involving drills in both countries and in the Baltic and Barents seas.Dismissing concerns abroad about the exercise, Peskov said Western European countries were suffering "emotional overload" and that Russia did not pose a threat to them.Russia also pressed on with attacks on Ukraine, killing three people in the northern Ukrainian region of Sumy, local Ukrainian prosecutors said.Ukrainian drones attacked Russia's northwestern port of Primorsk, setting fire to a vessel and a pumping station, the regional governor said. It was the first reported drone strike on one of the country's largest oil and fuel export terminals.

# Israel intensifies Gaza City strikes as many residents refuse evacuation

CAIRO, GNS News Agency, Sept 24 Israeli strikes killed at least 40 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on Friday, local health authorities said, most of them in Gaza City where many residents are staying put despite Israeli evacuation orders because they have nowhere safe to go.Israel has stated its intention to take full control of the ruined city, where about a million people are sheltering, as part of its plan to wipe out the militant group Hamas, and has been intensifying its attacks, residents said.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here."The explosions never stopped since yesterday," said father-of-two Adel, 60, who lives in Gaza City close to Beach refugee camp. He did not wish to give his full name for safety reasons."Many families left their homes and that is what the occupation wants," he told Reuters via a chat app. "By these bombardments they are telling people 'You either leave your area or die there.' "Witnesses said at least 15 houses inside Beach camp had been hit by air strikes, and the Israeli army had since called the occupants of other houses telling them strikes on their homes were imminent. They were now scrambling to leave, and neighbours feared their own homes would be damaged.Medical sources said 14 civilians were killed in a single strike on a house in the Al-Tuwam area, in the north of the city.Several deadly strikes hit targets in the south of the territory, where some of those fleeing the bombardment of Gaza City have been heading.Amjad Al-Shawa, head of the Palestinian NGOs Network, which liaises with the U.N. and international aid groups, told Reuters an estimated 10% of people in Gaza City had left since Israel announced its plan to take control of it a month ago.

The Israeli army said it had started expanding an area of the southern Gaza Strip it calls "Crossing 147" in order to increase the volume of aid entering a designated humanitarian zone. This was in preparation to receive the population leaving the northern area, it said."It should be emphasised that upon completion, the crossing's intake capacity will rise to 150 trucks per day - triple the current



level, thereby enabling increased entry of aid, with an emphasis on food," the army said in a statement.The U.N. and many foreign governments, including those of countries traditionally allied with Israel, have condemned the Gaza City evacuation order, called for a ceasefire, and sharply criticised conditions in the humanitarian zone.Israel's military assault on Gaza has killed more than 64,000 people, mostly civilians, according to local health authorities, caused a hunger crisis and wider humanitarian disaster, and reduced much of the enclave to rubble.The territory's health ministry has said at least 411 people, including 142 children, have died of malnutrition and starvation in the enclave.The war was triggered by Hamas-led attacks launched from Gaza on southern Israel on October 7, 2023, in which 1,200 people, mostly civilians, were killed, and 251 taken hostage, according to Israeli tallies.On Friday, Israeli police said an attacker from a Palestinian area of the West Bank had been arrested after carrying out a stabbing attack on guests of a hotel at a kibbutz near Jerusalem.Israel's ambulance service said two people had been taken to hospital.Additional reporting by Ali Sawaf in Ramallah and Ronen Zvulun in Jerusalem; Writing by Estelle Shirbon, Editing by William Maclean

# 'Like a military operation': Koreans describe anxiety after US immigration raid

INCHEON,GNS News Agency, Sept 24, South - South Korean workers who returned home on Friday after being detained for a week by U.S. immigration authorities described their horror over the raid at their workplace in the state of Georgia and their relief at being reunited with their families."It was like a military operation," said one of the workers of the September 4 raid at the car battery plant that is owned by Hyundai Motor and LG Energy Solution, adding the authorities had deployed across the site in less than 10 minutes.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.Like many others who spoke to Reuters after their charter plane landed at Incheon airport, he declined to give his name due to the sensitivity of the matter.A second worker said U.S. government agents had arrived at the site in helicopters and armoured vehicles and had separated workers according to visa type, arresting those on the ESTA visa-waiver programme or with a B-1 business traveller visa.

Workers' phones were confiscated, and some were unable to inform their families back home until their eventual release.In total, some 475 workers - including more than 300 South Korean nationals - were detained at the plant, in the biggest single-site operation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in its history.U.S. officials said the workers were engaged in activities beyond the scope of their visa authorisation or had overstayed their visas."I am really relieved now," said Hwang In-song, the brother of a detained engineer. "I was so worried and couldn't

sleep well for a week."The anxiety of the detainees and their families increased further when diplomatic wrangling over the terms of their release delayed their departure.Item 1 of 2 A South Korean worker who was detained in a huge immigration raid last week at the site of a U.S. car battery project involving Hyundai Motor and LG Energy Solution in the U.S. state of Georgia, hugs a family member in the long term parking lot at the Incheon International Airport in Incheon,... Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab Read more"I didn't know when I would actually be able to leave. That was the hardest part," said one of the workers.Asked about life at the detention center in Folkston, Georgia, where they were held, he said: "It was the worst."Others complained about the quality of the food and said the water smelt of bleach.The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement did not immediately respond to Reuters' questions about the allegation of poor conditions at the facility.The wife of one subcontractor engineer, who gave only her surname Kim, said her husband had been arrested on his first day of work at the site, adding she had believed his B-1 visa status allowed him to work as a supervisor.She said she now feared that it would be hard for him to get U.S. visas and to make business trips, adding:

JA South Korean worker who was detained in a huge immigration raid last week at the site of a U.S. car battery project involving Hyundai Motor and LG Energy Solution in the U.S. state of Georgia, hugs a family member in the long term parking lot at the Incheon International Airport in Incheon,... Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab Read more"I didn't know when I would actually be able to leave. That was the hardest part," said one of the workers.Asked about life at the detention center in Folkston, Georgia, where they were held, he said: "It was the worst."Others complained about the quality of the food and said the water smelt of bleach.The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement did not immediately respond to Reuters' questions about the allegation of poor conditions at the facility.The wife of one subcontractor engineer, who gave only her surname Kim, said her husband had been arrested on his first day of work at the site, adding she had believed his B-1 visa status allowed him to work as a supervisor.She said she now feared that it would be hard for him to get U.S. visas and to make business trips, adding:

# China's newest aircraft carrier sails through Taiwan Strait for the first time



GNS News Agency, Sept 24 China's newest aircraft carrier has sailed through the Taiwan Strait, the navy said on Friday (September 12, 2025). The body of water separates China from Taiwan, the self-governing island that Beijing says must come under its control. The sailing could serve as a warning to the U.S. and others against support for Taiwan, though China played down any such motive.The Fujian, which is doing sea trials ahead of its commissioning, was heading to the South China Sea to conduct training and scientific experiments, the Navy said in a short post on social media.The Navy said the carrier's activities were not targeting anyone else. A social

media account affiliated with state media quoted an expert saying the Taiwan Strait was the normal and most reasonable and efficient route for the carrier to reach the South China Sea.

It was the first time the Fujian had passed through the strait, the post by the Yuyuquantian account said.The U.S. Navy sends warships through the strait periodically, as do some of its allies, in a warning to Beijing against any attempt to use force to establish its claim to the island.Taiwan and China split in the civil war that brought the communists to power in 1949. The defeated Nationalist government fled to Taiwan and set up its own government on the island.The U.S. does not officially recognize the government in Taiwan, but it provides weaponry for its defence and says that any resolution of the differences between China and Taiwan should be peaceful and not by military force.China's military said last week that it was on high alert after the Canadian frigate Quebec and the Australian destroyer Brisbane sailed through the strait. It accused the two warships of provocative actions that it said heightened security risks.Japan's military said it had spotted the China's latest carrier for the first time on Thursday afternoon.The Fujian, together with two guided-missile destroyers, was sailing southwest about 200 kilometres (125 miles) from the disputed Senkaku islands, or the Diaoyu islands in Chinese. Both countries claim the remote and uninhabited territory.

# Trump says Charlie Kirk shooting suspect in custody



GNS News Agency, Sept 24 Mr. Trump said a Minister who is also involved with law enforcement turned in the suspect to authorities. "Somebody that was very close to him said, Hmm, that's him," Mr. Trump said.Kirk was killed by a single shot on Wednesday (September 10, 2025) in what police said was a targeted attack, and Utah's governor called it a political assassination. Kirk co-founded the nonprofit political organisation Turning Point USA and was a close ally of Mr. Trump.Authorities recovered a high-powered, bolt-action rifle near the scene and had said the shooter jumped off a roof and vanished into the woods after the shooting.Kirk was speaking at a debate hosted by Turning Point at Utah Valley University at the time of the shooting. He was taken to a local hospital and pronounced dead hours later.Federal investigators and State officials on Thursday (September 11, 2025) released photos and a video of the person they believe is responsible. Kirk was shot as he spoke to a crowd gathered in a courtyard at Utah Valley University in Orem.

More than 7,000 leads and tips had poured in, officials said. Authorities have yet to publicly name the suspect or cite a motive in the killing, the latest act of political violence to convulse the United States.Grisly video shared online

# Australia approves world-first vaccine to save koalas from chlamydia

Melbourne: A regulator has approved a world-first vaccine to protect koalas from chlamydia infections, which are causing infertility and death in the iconic native species that is listed as endangered in parts of Australia.The single-dose vaccine was developed by the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland state after more than a decade of research led by professor of microbiology Peter Timms.The research showed the vaccine reduced the likelihood of koalas developing symptoms of chlamydia during breeding age and decreased mortality from the disease in wild populations by at least 65%.

The recent approval by Australia's veterinary medicine regulator means the vaccine can now be used in wildlife hospitals, veterinary clinics and in the field to protect the nation's most at-risk koalas, Timms said on Wednesday."We knew a single-dose vaccine — with no need for a booster — was the answer to reducing the rapid, devastating spread of this disease, which accounts for as much as half of koala deaths across all wild populations in Australia," Timms said in a statement."Some individual colonies are edging closer to local extinction every day, particularly in southeast Queensland and New South Wales, where infection rates within populations are often around 50% and in some cases can reach as high as 70%," Timms added.Deborah Tabart, chair of the conservation charity Australian Koala Foundation, said resources being spent on vaccinating koalas should be redirected at saving koala habitat."At the risk of sounding flippant, how can anyone be so delusional as to think that you can vaccinate 100,000 animals? It's just ridiculous," Tabart said on Friday.Tabart's foundation estimates there are fewer than 100,000 koalas in the wild. The government-backed National Koala Monitoring Programme estimated last year there were between 224,000 and 524,000 koalas.

"I accept that chlamydia is an issue for koalas, but I also want people to understand that they're sick because they haven't got any habitat," Tabart said.The Queensland Conservation Council, an umbrella organisation for more than 50 environmental groups across the state, welcomed the vaccine. But the council's director, Dave Copeman, echoed Tabart's focus on preserving koala habitat."It's really good news. Chlamydia is one of the key stresses that has been putting pressure on koala populations," Copeman said."Koalas were at risk before chlamydia outbreaks, and they will remain at risk even if we manage chlamydia perfectly, because we keep on destroying their habitat," he added.Koalas are listed as endangered species in the states of Queensland and New South Wales and in the Australian Capital Territory, with habitat loss due to wildfires and urban expansion as the major threats. Chlamydia can cause urinary tract infections, infertility, blindness and death.Treatment with antibiotics can disrupt an infected koala's ability to digest eucalyptus leaves — its sole food source — leading to starvation, the university said in a statement.The research has been supported by the fed-



eral, New South Wales and Queensland governments.Federal Environment Minister Murray Watt said his government had contributed to the vaccine's development through a 76 million Australian dollar (\$50 million) Saving Koalas Fund."We know that koalas need help to fight diseases like chlamydia. It's a widespread threat impacting their reproductive health and causing infertility," Watt said in a statement.Koalas are iconic Australian marsupials, like wombats and kangaroos. They spend most of their time eating and sleeping in eucalyptus trees, and their paws have two opposing thumbs to help them grasp and climb up tree trunks.Australia's wild koala populations have declined steeply in the past two decades.Facing compounded threats from disease, habitat loss, climate change and road collisions, koalas could become extinct by 2050, according to a 2020 assessment from the New South Wales government.

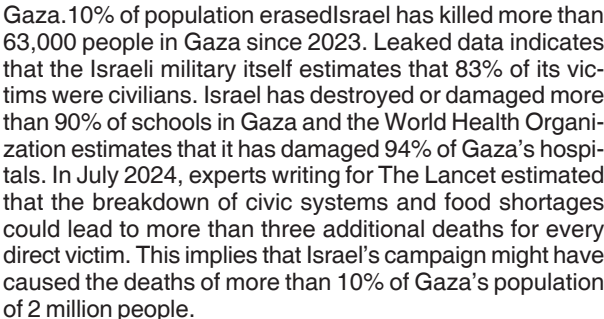
# From hypertension alerts to sleep scores: Apple Watch Series 11 gets smarter

Cupertino (California): Tech giant Apple on Tuesday launched the new Watch Series 11 with all-new health features and top-notch functions across the board. Apple Watch 11 is the slimmest one to date, and includes new features like 5G cellular connectivity and stronger glass.

It is also the first Apple Watch with the ability to monitor for chronic high blood pressure (hypertension) by reviewing data collected over the past 30 days. The Watch will have live translation capabilities.A new Sleep Score feature on Watch 11 uses metrics like how long you've been asleep and your sleep stages to help you better understand the quality of your rest over night. Apple said the Series 11 will get "up to 24 hours" of battery life and will come in both recycled aluminum and polished titanium finishes.



## Remembering late south Indian actor Bhanumathi on her birth centenary



The UN has officially declared a famine in Gaza, with the UN Secretary General calling it a “man-made disaster”. The UN Under-Secretary General, Tom Fletcher, pointed out that this is a “famine within a few hundred metres of food” where “food stacks up at borders because of systematic obstruction by Israel.” Israel’s supporters sometimes argue that its continued campaign is necessary to ensure its security in the aftermath of the attack of 7 October 2023. But former Israeli security chiefs undercut this justification in August 2025 by calling on their government to end the war. This echoes calls made by families of the remaining hostages in Gaza, who have been frustrated by the Israeli government’s refusal to strike a deal to secure their release.

# AI may well become God for Gen Z and Gen Z Alpha. But what kind of God would it be?

It refers to my internal compass and my apparent, relative disregard for the external. AI recognizes that value judgements have to be mine, but orients me to a larger framework that Marxians would call "bourgeois". Does that mean all the learning that AI has done has shown that these values are indeed natural, self-evident values across countries following apparently diverse ideologies? Mr. Sridharan says the training data is still largely from the "civilized" world where such values are embedded, and others may need to catch up on "civilized" values when they are fully integrated into the AI world. AI would make capitalism uniformly complete across the world, he infers.

In the film world, P. Bhanumathi was a singing superstar of yesteryears, a senior who commanded the respect of icons Sivaji Ganesan and M.G. Ramachandran (MGR). But she was, and remains, much more than that. Born in a family of modest means but blessed with prodigious talent, Bhanumathi, whose birth centenary fell on September 7, 2025, was a feminist icon who lived by her own rules, even as other female stars had to conform to a male-dominated world. Many incidents testified to her individuality, which stemmed from the confidence she had in her talents. Own method of acting

Born at Doddavaram in Andhra Pradesh, Bhanumathi acted in the Telugu film *Vara Vikrayam* in the role of Kalindi, a musically talented girl, when she was just 13. The film, highlighting the dowry system, was directed and produced in Calcutta by C. Pulliah, a friend of her father, Venkatasubbiah. In her biography, Bhanumathi says she

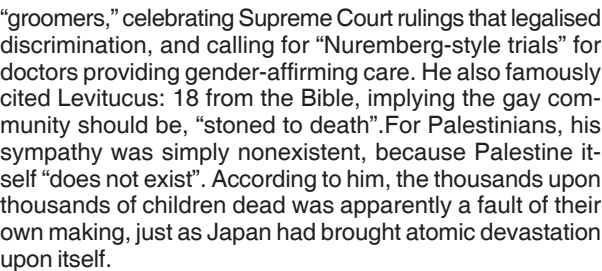
# The assassination of Charlie Kirk and the conditionality of empathy

Kirk's genius, if you can call it that, was in knowing that cruelty makes better content than civility and that senses of disdain ran through his all his work. He derided affirmative action by claiming Black leaders "stole a white person's spot." He suggested Black pilots might not be qualified, described Black women in customer service as "moronic," and recycled every tired trope about absent Black fathers and criminality. He compared Black Lives Matter to malevolent forces, called Martin Luther King Jr. "awful" and the Civil Rights Movement a "huge mistake." He trafficked in the great replacement theory, warning that migrants would "eliminate" white Americans and that Haitians were "infested with demonic voodoo". For women, his message was just as cruel: stay home, remain fertile, and forget careers. College, he recently told a fourteen-year-old girl, was worthwhile only as a means to snag a husband. Birth control, he claimed, made women "angry and bitter." On an episode of *Jubilee*, he once implied that he would force his 10-year-old daughter to carry a pregnancy to term if she was raped.

To queer folk, he offered only contempt, branding them

Her pairing with MGR in Ali Babavum Narpadhu Thirudargalum (the first Gevacolor picture), Malaikkalan, Madurai Veeran, and Nadodi Mannan became iconic. The duet, "Summa Kidantha Nilathai Kothi", in Nadodi Mannan announced MGR's political ideology and ambitions. Her leading roles in Sivaji Ganesan-starrers such as Rangoon Radha, Ambikapathy, and Arivali were celebrated for their stories and songs. In Ambikapathy, she rendered the iconic songs, including "Masila Nilave Nam Kathalai" and "Kannile Irukpathanna Kanni Ilam Maaney". The song, "Azhagana Ponnu Naan", echoed all over Tamil Nadu. In Annai, she rendered another famous number, "Poovagi Kaayagi Kanitha Maram Ondru". "She sang all the songs in her films. She also made it a point of including at least one keerthana of Thyagaraja in her films, particularly in Telugu films. 'Nagumomu', 'Vandanamu Raghunandana', and 'Pakkala Nilabadi' are some of the Thyagaraja keerthanas popularised by her in films," said Mr. Bharani, who has returned from the U.S. to run the Bharani Studio, set up by his parents. For Bhanumathi, self-respect prevailed over all other considerations. She quit Missimmamma as she felt she was not treated with respect by Mahini Studios. "But for my quitting, Tamil cinema would not have gained a great talent like Savithri," she says without regret. An expert in astrology, Bhanumathi predicted that MGR would scale great heights and achieve fame after reading his palms. At a function organised by the film industry to felicitate him, MGR recalled Bhanumathi's prediction.

Later, she was appointed the Principal of the Music College of Madras. Despite her popularity, Bhanumathi shunned the limelight. President S. Radhakrishnan urged her to contest from the Ongole Lok Sabha constituency in 1968. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Brahmananda Reddy backed his proposal. But she declined. "My husband said that in politics, one day you get garlands and the next day stones. We wrote to Dr. Radhakrishnan, politely rejecting his proposal," she says.

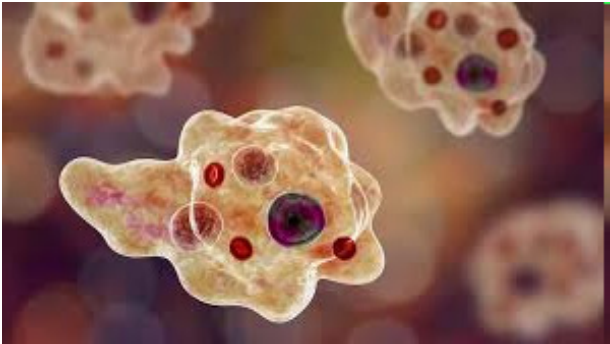


The catalogue of ugliness is long, but the themes of delegitimation, dehumanisation, and division were consistent. Rather than simply disagreeing with people or their beliefs, Kirk periodically marked them as suspect by their race, gender, faith, and sexuality. The list could go on, but the cumulative effect was clear that Kirk specialised in stripping others of their sense of self, and what he sold to his loyalists was the permission to feel that cruelty was righteous. The American right has long dabbled in fascist aesthetics, with the cult of the leader and mythic nationalism. Kirk was an eager apprentice in this tradition, blending Trumpian bluster with an evangelical zeal. He embraced the Seven Mountains Mandate, envisioning Christian domination over every sphere of life. The deeper irony is that Kirk was undone not just by one bullet, but by the political culture he helped fertilise. He thrived on talk of enemies, traitors, grooming, invasion, decline and replacement. This is what happens when a culture soaks itself in the language of violence. These are the tools of fascism. But violence is never loyal. What fascism never admits is that the tools of terror it hones can be turned back upon its wielders, and the gun that Kirk defended as liberty's price was, in the end, pointed at him. The United States has been edging toward this kind of collapse for years, with Trump nearly shot in Butler, Steve Scalise wounded at baseball practice, and Paul Pelosi blooded in his own home.

Charlie Kirk speaks while wearing a shirt with a picture taken during Republican presidential nominee and former U.S. President Donald Trump's attempted assassination on Day 3 of the Republican National Convention (RNC), at the Fiserv Forum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S., July 17, 2024. Charlie Kirk speaks while wearing a shirt with a picture taken during Republican presidential nominee and former U.S. President Donald Trump's attempted assassination on Day 3 of the Republican National Convention (RNC), at the Fiserv Forum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S., July 17, 2024. What comes next may be even darker. Trump has already dubbed Kirk "a great warrior." The right has a talent for transmuted its fallen into martyrs, with each one proof of the left's perfidy and fuel for the bonfire of grievance.



# Kerala to launch mass campaign on preventive measures against amoebic meningoencephalitis



This year, 41 cases of amoebic meningoencephalitis have been reported in the State and there are 18 active cases at present, Health Minister Veena George said here on Monday. The State government has intensified surveillance and preventive action as cases have been reported from Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Kozhikode, Wayanad, and Malappuram districts. All districts have been asked to stock adequate drugs for treating the infection. At a high-level meeting chaired by her here, it was decided that the Health department would lead a mass campaign, with the help of local self-government bodies, Water Resources department and Haritha Kerala Mission, as amoebic meningoencepha-

litis is being reported from several districts now. The first preventive step would be the cleaning of all water resources in the State, Ms. George said. The Minister directed that all health workers take part in the campaign. As part of the preventive measures, all wells and water storage tanks in houses and institutions across the State should be cleaned and chlorinated on August 30 and 31. Houses, hospitals, educational institutions, hostels and apartment complexes should take part in the exercise and ensure that their water storage tanks are cleaned properly. Resorts, theme parks

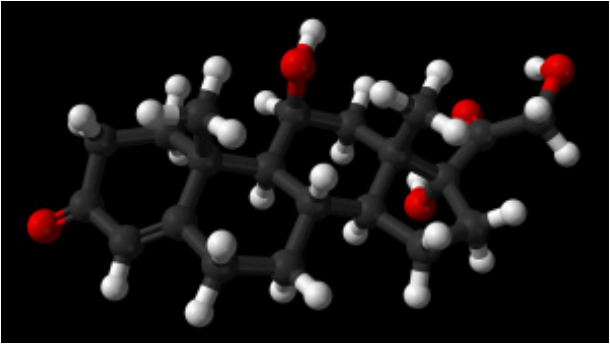
Resorts, water theme parks and swimming training centres should ensure chlorination of the pools and other water sources and ensure that the chlorination levels are adequate. Strict action will be taken under the Public Health Act against those who fail to comply. All drinking water sources will be checked by health workers. In addition, ponds and other public waterbodies will be cleaned, and channels carrying waste into them will be closed. Local bodies have been asked to remove accumulated algae and waste from ponds, lakes, and other sources. People entering waterbodies are advised to take doxycycline tablets to prevent leptospirosis. After the Onam holidays, special drives will be held in educational institutions to train teachers and students on preventive measures against amoebic meningoencephalitis. Warning boards will be placed near ponds and waterbodies where amoeba has been detected.

# Why cortisol is more than a ‘stress hormone’

Stress is a health concerns that affects both physical and mental well-being. The World Health Organization’s (WHO) 2019 data estimates that 12 billion working days were lost globally due to depression and anxiety, a cost of U.S. \$1 trillion annually. Both globally and in India, psychological stressors are significant contributors to the disease burden. High levels of stress and lack of treatment for mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, are major public health concerns, with significant barriers including social stigma and a lack of resources. Chronic, prolonged stress is also a contributor to elevated Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) axis activity -- the body’s main stress response system and cortisol production, which links stress to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular disease (CVD), stroke, and diabetes.

And at the centre of this discourse is cortisol often dubbed the “stress hormone.” Experts however say that this label is misleading. Cortisol is not just about stress; it is essential for survival as it influences metabolism, immunity, gut health and even cardiovascular function. Calling cortisol a stress-causing hormone is a misnomer, says K. S. Thalavai Sundar Ram, surgical endocrinologist, VS Hospitals, Chennai. “It helps the body stay agile in fight-or-flight situations, regulates metabolism, blood pressure, and has anti-inflammatory effects -- provided levels remain within a normal physiological range.” Priyanka Vignesh, associate consultant, endocrinology, MGM Healthcare, Chennai says that cortisol’s strong anti-inflammatory action makes it a therapeutic mainstay in autoimmune and inflammatory diseases. “Corticosteroids regulate glucose and fat metabolism, suppress immunity, and modulate inflammatory responses”

Abhay Ahluwalia, senior consultant, endocrinology and diabetology, Narayana Hospital, Gurugram explains how long-term imbalance can be damaging. “Excess cortisol may cause Cushing’s syndrome leading to high blood pressure, weight gain, mood swings, and loss of skin elasticity,” he says. Conversely, a deficiency may trigger Addison’s disease, with symptoms including low blood pressure, skin darkening, and poor appetite. Dr. Vignesh also highlights cardiovascular risks, “Chronic glucocorticoid (any of a group of corticosteroids like hydrocortisone which are involved in the metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and fats and have anti-inflammatory activity) exposure can cause uncontrolled diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia, obesity and increases the risk of myocardial infarction and stroke.” She also points to mental health consequences, including depression, psychosis and sleep disturbances. Modern routines can have a significant impact on cortisol levels. Cortisol follows a circadian rhythm, peaking in the early morning and dipping at night. Disrupted sleep cycles, night shifts and constant digital engagement alter this rhythm. “Staying up late at night



and chronic stress can cause excess cortisol secretion, leading to Cushing’s-like (symptoms that resemble those of Cushing’s syndrome ) features,” notes Dr. Sundar Ram, recommending fixed sleep schedules. Dr. Vignesh says that constant digital exposure dysregulates the cortisol axis, fuelling obesity, diabetes and memory issues, “Night-shift workers, airline pilots and soldiers face chronic stress due to disturbed circadian rhythms, making them more prone to metabolic and cardiovascular diseases.” The hormone’s influence extends to digestion and immunity as well. “Excess or deficient cortisol affects the immune system, triggering irritable bowel-like symptoms and worsening inflammation,” says Dr. Sundar Ram. According to Dr. Vignesh, cortisol is deliberately used to suppress immunity in conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, asthma, dermatitis, and transplant medicine. But long-term exposure may cause ulcers and, in rare cases, pancreatitis. Dr. Ahluwalia points to an altered gut microbiome as another consequence, linking high cortisol levels to intestinal inflammation, flatulence and conditions such as Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis. Early detection of altered levels of cortisol is key. “Morning blood tests, late-night salivary cortisol and 24-hour urinary cortisol estimation are commonly used,” explains Dr. Sundar Ram. Dr. Vignesh notes that fasting morning cortisol levels (6–8 a.m.) remain the primary test, with suppression and stimulation tests helping to identify abnormalities. Dr. Ahluwalia adds that advanced methods, including electronic sensors and AI-based analysis, now allow 24-hour ambulatory cortisol monitoring, particularly useful for high-stress professions. Experts emphasise the need to shed misconceptions. “It is incorrect to think cortisol causes stress, it is vital for survival,” stresses Dr. Sundar Ram. Experts also point out that misuse or chronic exposure can weaken bones, causing osteoporosis, fractures, cataracts, glaucoma and recurrent infections. Dr. Ahluwalia notes growing evidence linking even non-pathological high cortisol levels to metabolic, cardiovascular and psychiatric illnesses, making stress management essential in modern life.

# Who should teach future doctors? The debate over non-MBBS Ph.D. faculty

Non-MBBS faculty, specifically Medical M.Sc. and Ph.D. holders, are now permitted to teach in medical colleges in India, with a limit of 30% of the total faculty posts in the Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, and Pharmacology departments, according to the National Medical Commission’s (NMC) regulations finalised in June 2025. NMC is the statutory body in India to regulate medical education, professionals, and medical institutions in the country. This decision reverses a 2020 restriction that had reduced this allowance to 15% and is aimed at addressing faculty shortages and expanding medical education access. The allowance, however, has faculty—non-MBBS and MBBS degree holders—at medical colleges across India divided and at loggerheads about who should be ideally allowed to teach future doctors? MBBS doctors-teachers argue that the inclusion is a dilution of medical education standards, but what is also true is the fact that the argument is also about employment and job security.

India with 780 MBBS colleges offering over 1.18 lakh seats has the largest number of medical colleges in the world. Brazil with approximately 389 colleges is a distant second. India has also registered an increase of over 100% in medical colleges rising from 387 before 2014 to 780 in 2025. Additionally, MBBS seats have surged by 118%, growing from 51,348 before 2014 to 1,18,135 in 2025. Non-MBBS faculty teach foundational science courses, including Anatomy, Biochemistry, Physiology, and Pharmacology. Employing non-medical educators in medical education is a globally accepted practice, with even countries like the United States having non-medical educators forming the vast majority of faculty in preclinical subjects, and exactly like in India the roles of non-medical faculty primarily involve teaching subjects that do not require direct patient care.

Shashank Kambali, president, The M.Sc Medicine Association, a group representing non-MBBS faculty, states that there is growing resentment amongst doctors about the appointment of non-MBBS teachers. “They argue that we lack clinical knowledge and don’t have experience in seeing patients. Many non-MBBS graduates come from practicing backgrounds such as Bachelor’s in Dental Surgery, Phys-



iotherapy and Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery and B.Sc Nursing, and more, and have received medical training during post-graduation,” he said adding that the increase in medical colleges has given rise to demand for the teachers. “The ground reality is that the non-availability of teachers in non-clinical subjects is allowing MBBS graduates into PG in non-clinical branches through policies such as NEET-zero percentile, enabling students with the poorest of the poor performance in NEET PG to secure admission in PG,” he added. Refuting these claims and stating that the quality of Indian medical education is under strain following the dilution of eligibility norms in the Medical Institutions (Qualification of Faculty) Regulations, 2025, Anoop Singh Gurjar, Head of Anatomy, GMC, Pali said that by permitting non-MBBS faculty we are compromising the clinical and academic integrity of training Indian Medical Graduates. These candidates lack patient or clinical exposure during graduation. The 2025 order is a grave misstep. India already has adequate postgraduate seats — 1,228 in Anatomy, 1,125 in Biochemistry, 1,263 in Physiology, 1,607 in Microbiology, and 1,329 in Pharmacology — more than many clinical specialties — ensuring a sufficient MBBS-based faculty pool. By contrast, veterinary and AYUSH systems permit only registered graduates to teach. Allowing non-MBBS faculty in medical colleges is thus inconsistent and unjustifiable,” he said.

# Men and osteoporosis: busting the myth that only women are at risk



Many men are often surprised when they receive an osteoporosis diagnosis, as it typically isn’t on their health radar. And so, it’s time to discuss a health topic that clearly is not talked about enough— osteoporosis in men. Osteoporosis is considered largely a “women’s disease” by many. This however, is a myth. Osteoporosis poses a huge problem for men, especially those beyond the age of 50. The problem lies in the fact that very rarely are people diagnosed with osteoporosis until after a fracture has occurred. Most fractures occur at the spinal bones, hip bones, or wrist bones. The sooner one starts paying attention to bone health, the better are the chances to avoid serious fractures with age. When the condition is overlooked in men, it can predispose them to serious fractures that may leave them with a dramatic change in their quality of life. It is important to understand how this occurs, who is at risk, and— most importantly—how to take action regarding your bone health, by first getting tests as part of your regular visits to the doctor.

While it is more often suspected of in postmenopausal females due to oestrogen playing an important role in bone density, it is crucial to not lose sight of the fact that men too, are subject to the same elements that cause bones to deteriorate over time. In fact, studies show as many as 8-20% of men in India have osteoporosis, and the prevalence only goes up with age. Indian men are at risk for osteoporotic fractures, particularly hip fractures, and the total number of fractures is poised to increase dramatically in the decades ahead, as our population ages. In men the bones are initially denser than in women, but over time, they too lose bone density. Men over the age of 50 will have fractures at increasing rates just as women do, but at a slower pace than women. Men’s rate of bone loss will catch up with them when they enter their 70s and 80s, and this is when they will experience fractures due to low bone density. In fact, 1 out of ev-

# The gender angle to India’s economic vulnerabilities

India’s economic ascent, which is now valued at \$4.19 trillion, has earned it a firm place in the global growth story. The country is poised to become the world’s third-largest economy. Yet, this momentum now faces a formidable disruption — the proposed 50% tariffs by the United States President Donald Trump on Indian exports. Targeting \$40 billion in trade, these tariffs could shave off nearly 1% from India’s GDP, striking labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, gems, and leather and footwear which are critical industries that disproportionately employ women.

Unlike China, which has weathered U.S. tariffs through its manufacturing scale and diversified exports, India remains vulnerable. The U.S. accounts for 18% of India’s exports; an increase in tariff could lead to 30%-35% cost disadvantage against competitors such as Vietnam leaving Indian exporters exposed. In this moment of crisis, these words appear prescient: “The strength of a nation lies in the strength of its women.” India’s failure to economically empower half its population is not just a social concern. It is now a strategic liability. The tariffs threaten to destabilise employment for millions of Indian women. The textiles, gems, leather and footwear sectors, which employ nearly 50 million people, face a projected export decline of up to 50%. Additionally, India’s existing low female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) has remained stuck between 37% and 41.7% far below the global average and China’s 60%. According to the International Monetary Fund, closing the gender gap could boost India’s GDP by 27% in the long term Yet, this is a promise that is stifled by cultural constraints, policy inertia and systemic barriers to employment.

India is inching closer to its peak of its demographic dividend — a period where the working-age population vastly outnumbers dependents. This window, which could close by 2045, once fueled growth in China, Japan, and the U.S. — economies now past their prime demographic advantage, with flattening growth curves. India must act to convert this fleeting dividend into sustained prosperity, and this means fully integrating women into the workforce. Labour participation by rural women has inched up, but mostly in unpaid and low-productivity family work. In urban India, female workforce participation has stagnated. Safety concerns, unreliable public transport, lack of sanitation, and the crushing burden of unpaid care work continue to push women out of schools and jobs. India risks the fate of Southern European economies such as Italy and Greece, where low FLFPR has placed a long-term drag on growth. The urgency is clear as it is a now-or-never moment. Lessons from abroad, solutions at home

Global superpowers offer a road map. The U.S. leveraged women’s labour during the Second World War with equal pay and childcare. China’s post-1978 reforms drove 60% FLFPR through state-backed care and education. Japan raised its FLFPR from 63% to 70%, boosting GDP per capita by 4%. The Netherlands’ part-time work model, with equal benefits, suits India, where women prefer such roles. These nations invested in legal protections, care infrastructure, and skills training, which are areas where India lags. Instead of short-term populism or blanket cash transfers, India needs structural reforms that empower women as economic agents. Karnataka’s Shakti scheme, which offers free public bus travel to women, is one such intervention. Since its launch in 2023, female ridership has surged by over 40%. The scheme has enhanced women’s mobility for work, education, and enterprise — especially in rural and peri-urban areas. This has enabled more women to gain improved access to job markets, decrease their dependence on male family members, and achieve greater autonomy.

Redirecting spending from broad welfare schemes to targeted programmes such as tax incentives for female entrepreneurs, digital inclusion drives, and gender-focused skilling platforms can yield more sustainable gains. Formalising gig and part-time work through updated labour codes and social protections would bring millions of women into the formal economy. Urban Company, a leading gig platform, has onboarded over 15,000 women service providers. These workers earn ₹18,000-₹25,000 in a month, along

ery 3 hip fractures that occur worldwide are in men. These fractures are especially dangerous, since they can be debilitating, affecting every aspect of the individual’s life, with reduced mobility, loss of independence and mental health trauma all likely to ensue from such incidents. Men are at also a higher risk for fractures because they tend to be more physically active compared to women as they age. The age factor: After the age of 50, the level of testosterone in the body naturally drops. Testosterone helps keep bones strong, and so, age is a risk factor, as bones deteriorate with a decline in testosterone, and this becomes noticeable the older men grow. The absence of adequate physical activity after the age of 50 compounds this. Insufficient activity: – Insufficient weight-bearing activity is a risk factor for young males. This is exacerbated by poor lifestyle factors such as slouching over a desk for excessive periods, a lack of fruits and vegetables in the diet, and excessive alcohol consumption. These habits are not only associated with gaining weight but they also worsen bone brittleness as men age.

Co-morbid conditions: With age, many men may also have co-morbid conditions such as diabetes. Other conditions that lead to low testosterone such as hyperthyroidism in males can also be a factor. Long-term steroid treatment (for instance, for asthma or arthritis) can also precipitate osteoporosis through age. Smoking and alcohol: Nicotine and alcohol abuse are considered stressors to bone development. They selectively deplete calcium and lead to lower bone mass. Alcohol also has direct effects and impacts immunity and metabolism. Both tobacco use and alcohol should be minimised to ensure better bone strength. Calcium and vitamin D deficiency: Without calcium and vitamin D you are risking brittle bones. Vitamin D aids in the absorption of calcium. Many men spend too little time getting sunlight and end up with vitamin deficiencies, often without knowing it. Move: Aim for at least 30 minutes of weight-bearing exercise like walking, jogging or resistance exercise to stimulate the body to create and maintain bone. Eat a bone-healthy diet: Aim for 1,000 to 1,200mg of calcium and 600-800 IU of vitamin D per day from dairy, vegetables, or supplement. Decrease smoking and alcohol: Aim to stop smoking and limit alcohol to two units per day to protect your bone. Get screened: If you are older than 50 or younger than 50 with risk factors, talk to your doctor about getting a screening with a bone scan. Use anti-slip footwear, also known as slip-resistant or non-slip shoes; avoid entering poorly-lit rooms, avoid walking in cluttered spaces and install grab bars and non-slip mats in restrooms. Anti-slip tapes are a simple and effective way to increase safety and prevent falls on staircases.



with access to accident insurance, maternity benefits, and skill development. The platform’s emphasis on safety, training and transparent pay highlights how gig work can be empowering particularly for semi-skilled urban women. On the public side, Rajasthan’s Indra Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme has created over four crore person-days of work, with nearly 65% of jobs going to women. Its flexible, neighbourhood-based jobs in sanitation, greening and care work have enabled many first-time workers — especially those restricted by domestic duties — to enter the workforce. These cases show that when the state recognises and supports non-traditional work, it can unlock massive economic value. The looming U.S. tariff shock should serve as a wake-up call. India’s economic vulnerabilities are not just due to external threats. They also stem from internal neglect, especially in tapping the potential of working-age women. Empowering women is not a social gesture. It is a growth imperative. It is the linchpin of demographic dividend utilisation, export competitiveness and equitable development. If India seeks to become a true global powerhouse, its progress must be built on the shoulders of both its men and women. India stands at a crossroads. It can rise by investing in its women. Or it can falter by ignoring them. One path leads to resilience and inclusive growth. The other path leads to missed opportunities and economic fragility.

# CCMB Hyderabad scientists unveil how cells can self-revive, expedite tissue regeneration

Hyderabad: A new discovery from Hyderabad-based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), brings forth a novel way to expedite tissue repair and regeneration. The discovery opens a new frontier in cell biology, poised to engage experts of regenerative medicine and cancer biologists to re-examine their understanding. CCMB in a press release on Tuesday said.

A team of scientists led by Dr Santosh Chauhan has shown that cells have a built-in way to revive from the brink of death. The process of revival is highly programmed and mimics developmental growth. The scientists demonstrated that such a revival, which they called Programmed Cell Revival, sped up skin wound healing and repaired corneal burns in mice, stimulated tail regeneration in frog tadpoles, promoted nerve repair in worms, and enhanced blood stem cell production in fruit flies. The study has been published in EMBO Journal. This finding overturns the dogma that once a cell begins to die, its journey is irreversible. “What we see is not accidental survival of cells. Rather, we have found that cells across organisms have the ability to follow a common mechanism that can reactivate their developmental, metabolic, and immune pathways to restore their full cellular function. This discovery reshapes how we think about life, death, and healing at the cellular level,” commented Dr Chauhan. The scientists have filed for Indian and international patents for this finding.



## In Nepal’s remittance-dependent economy, why the social media ban ended up having an outsized impact



Anti-corruption protests in Nepal were sparked by a ban on 26 social media apps, before spiralling into a wider anti-corruption movement that ended up toppling the government after the mostly leaderless protests spilled over into Kathmandu’s streets. Social media may have been the immediate trigger for the unrest, but in Nepal, apps such as Facebook and Whatsapp played an increasingly outsized role for multiple reasons. It gave people, especially youngsters, a platform to vent anger against the moribund economic prospects and the general lack of opportunities. More importantly, these were vital communication channels for the Nepalese people to keep in touch with family members increasingly working abroad, in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Malaysia, apart from India.

These were also a channel for routing some of the remittance money, a big source of Nepal’s national income. The collapse of the domestic economy, the bristling anger over corruption, unemployment, and the fact that a lot of Nepalese politicians had become really rich and their children were posting snapshots of their lavish lives on social media – all these reasons could have played a part. Young activists were picking these pictures and sharing them on social media, which led to these apps becoming even more relevant for young Nepalese. And finally, a rumour that the two largest parties are getting together to form a grand coalition because leaders of both the parties were under investigation for corruption by the previous government, stoked the simmering unrest. This also played out on social media. The ban was read as a signal to brush these under the carpet, triggering an uproar.

Nepal has over eight per cent of its population living and working overseas and the remittances that they send back to that country amounts to over 33 per cent of Nepal’s Gross Domestic Product, the fourth highest in the world after Tonga, Tajikistan and Lebanon. To that extent, apps such as Facebook and WhatsApp were vital for families to keep in touch with their relatives abroad. And the reason why they were working abroad was because of dwindling opportunities back home, all of which contributed to stoking unrest. The social media ban was akin to rubbing the proverbial salt in festering wounds. With a population of over 30 million, Nepal was anyway undergoing a significant demographic shift, with young individuals aged 16–25 years constituting over 20 per cent of the total population, while those between 16–40 years accounting for over 40 per cent. According to Aashiyana Adhikari, a Research Officer at the Centre for South Asian Studies in Kathmandu, the shift in the demographic profile, while highlighting Nepal’s “youth bulge” or “population dividend”, also comes at a time when there was a marked increase in the number of young Nepalese workers migrating abroad in search of better educational and employment opportunities, especially over the last decade. This trend has a dual economic impact: while it significantly boosts the GDP through remittances sent home, it simultaneously resulted in brain drain in most upcoming sectors. “This drain, in turn, potentially undermines the full realisation of the benefits that the demographic dividend could otherwise offer Nepal,” according to Adhikari. In many rural areas of Nepal, for instance, remittances had led to a noticeable decline in engagement with agriculture,

with young, able-bodied individuals preferring to migrate abroad rather than engage in farming, leaving many agricultural fields fallow. This resulted in a decline in local food production and an increased reliance on imported goods. The influx of remittance money also created an environment where those remaining in Nepal were less inclined to seek employment or engage actively in the economy, choosing instead to rely on foreign remittance for their everyday living, making the problem more cyclical.

According to World Bank estimates, there has been a “broad-based and deep reduction” in poverty levels as evidenced by the poverty headcount ratio measured at US\$ 6.85 per day, which fell from 90 per cent in 1995 to below 50 per cent in 2023. Despite this achievement, the sobering reality is that Nepal’s economy has struggled to keep pace regionally and globally and has not generated enough quality jobs in the non-agricultural sector, it said. Between 1996-2023, the economy grew at an average real annual rate of 4.2 per cent, respectable given the challenges of domestic conflict and multiple external shocks, according to the Bank. However, this rate lagged that of peer countries. Within South Asia, Nepal’s growth rate ranked just sixth out of eight countries. The key factor behind the poverty reduction and resilience in the wake of shocks has been migration and the inflow of remittances, which was becoming increasingly important for the economy. Meanwhile, overall labour productivity remained low, with weak competition in logistics and transport, as well as subpar infrastructure and limited exports, which had not contributed to real economic growth over the past decades. Appreciating real exchange rates and domestic trade policies, including high tariffs and excise taxes, further constrained exports. The manufacturing sector has been in steady decline from an already low base, while the tourism sector, a key growth and job opportunity, remained underdeveloped. The development of hydropower has progressed slowly, restricting its potential to shape the economy and facilitate stronger growth.

According to a study on ‘The Role of Remittances in Household Spending in Rural Nepal’ led by Resham Thapa-Parajuli of the Central Department of Economics, Tribhuvan University that employed ‘two-stage least squares’ regression – a statistical technique that is used in the analysis of structural equations – to analyse the impact of foreign remittances on total household consumption expenditures in rural Nepal, showed that foreign remittances “significantly and positively affect total household consumption”. It found that the presence of elderly members tended “to reduce total consumption, potentially due to their lower consumption needs or their contributions to household income”. Bhubanesh Pant, former Deputy Director, Research Department, Nepal Rastra Bank, in a paper said that despite the lack of accurate data on the real volume of funds transferred, there was ample evidence that remittance flows were substantial, stable relative to other forms of development finance, and well-targeted to vulnerable families, both as “support during a crisis” and as “an income-smoothing mechanism”.

“As the number of workers going abroad for employment continues to rise, the corresponding growth of remittances has become a critical flow of foreign currency into Nepal. This has been partly the result of measures undertaken by the concerned officials to streamline financial systems, dismantling controls and creating incentives, with the aim of attracting remittances particularly through the official channels, Pant noted. In order to further encourage the inflow of remittances to the country through official channels, and to promote the tendency to exchange these remittances of foreign exchange into local currency, Pant said it was imperative that government policies “be conducive to the inflow of remittances”. The social media ban ended up sending exactly the opposite signal, and ended up precipitating the crisis.

## Before GST 2.0, almost 40% of consumers could just about manage food shopping: Survey

While the Goods and Services Tax (GST) cut announced by the GST Council with effect from September 22 will bring much-needed relief to Indian consumers, a new report has cautioned that a large proportion of shoppers were barely able to find the money to spend beyond food items earlier in the year. According to PwC India’s Voice of the Consumer 2025 report that focused on the food industry, released on Thursday, 32 per cent of the respondents said they were ‘financially coping’ while another 7 per cent said they were ‘financially insecure’.

“There is a fair bit of a cost-of-living crunch in the sense that household savings as a percentage are lesser today than they were four years back, whereas the liabilities have actually gone up,” Hitanshu Gandhi, retail & consumer markets lead (director), PwC India, said. Referring to monthly data that the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has recently started releasing on the merchant category-wise break-up of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions, Gandhi said that the high position of debt repayment reflected “fairly heavy stress on households”. “Therefore, when we asked ‘How comfortable do you feel about paying your bills’, while 60 per cent in India was financially secure, 32 per cent said ‘Look, I am paying the bills, but after that... there is very little left over for any leisure.’”

As per the NPCI data, Rs 3.5 lakh crore or nearly 13 per cent of total UPI payments in the first four months of 2025-26 were for the merchant category ‘debt collection agencies’. The PwC survey was based on responses from 21,075 people globally, of which 1,031 were Indians. Conducted in the first two months of 2025, the survey respondents were primarily in the 18-44 age bracket, with two-thirds of them based in large cities. Impact of rate revision on household budgets, formalisation As per the report, the GST rate cuts will likely make household budgets “more manageable”. However, it also said that consumers are adopting money-saving behaviours, including shopping at different stores. PwC officials were also not sure how much of a boost consumption would get from the tax cut-induced price reductions.

“Some of the chatter that we are picking up is that price reduction is great. But a lot of that price reduction is going to translate into buying a better electronics product, going on a trip, or eating out — provided you are already consuming a fair bit of branded play,” said Ravi Kapoor, partner and leader-retail and consumer sector, PwC India. The GST rate cuts are also expected to push up demand for goods made by the formal sector. “If I take a 5-10-year view, formalisation is going to be very good, because the consumer wants it. The consumer wants trust, quality, and nutrition. If you are able to guarantee all of these things, then why stay infor-



mal? Become a formal brand, like what is happening in beauty and personal care, where branded players are mushrooming beyond the big players,” Kapoor said, adding that “quality of consumption” was going to get a leg-up. “A favourite example of mine is the consumption of basmati rice — from getting consumed on specific occasions such as when I am making biryani to replacing other kinds of rice and consuming it as part of my daily schedule. There are multiple examples of upgrades which are possible across categories,” Kapoor added. Economists have estimated that the GST rate cuts could boost India’s GDP growth by as much as 60 basis points (bps) and bring down retail inflation by nearly 100 bps over a full year. However, questions remain over how much of the tax cut will be passed on to consumers in the form of reduced prices.

## Online gaming company Zupree to lay off 170 employees after ban on real-money gaming

New Delhi: Online gaming company Zupree announced on Thursday that it will lay off 170 employees, about 30 per cent of its workforce, after the government passed a Bill banning online games involving money in August. Zupree joins other real-money games (RMG) companies like Games 24x7, Baazi Games and Mobile Premier League that have sacked employees after the ban.

“This has been a tough call for us but was necessary to adapt to the new regulatory framework. Our colleagues who are leaving us have been an integral part of Zupree’s journey and we will always remain thankful for their contribution,” said Dilsher Singh Malhi, founder and chief executive officer of Zupree.

## You might be unknowingly risking your life by using this item in the kitchen



Black plastic might seem like a harmless kitchen staple, but what if I told you it’s quietly contaminating your food? Layne Kilpatrick, aka the hormone specialist on Instagram, recently shared a video highlighting the perils of using black plasticware in the kitchen. According to him, many black plastic utensils are made from recycled electronics like TVs and computer casings, loaded with flame retardants and heavy metals. A 2024 study found 85% of black kitchen items contained banned flame retardants, some in alarmingly high concentrations, he quoted in the video. “Heat those utensils in a pan or pot of oil, and those chemicals can leach into your meal. That means every stir, flip, or scoop could be dosing your food with hormone disruptors and carcinogens linked to thyroid problems, reproductive issues, and neurotoxicity,” said Kilpatrick, adding that no level of exposure is truly safe. “The fix is simple: swap out black plastic for stainless steel or wood. And don’t microwave plastic utensils or reuse them.” Small change. Big impact. Curious, we decided to consult a health expert to gain a deeper understanding. Consultant dietician and diabetes educator Kanikka Malhotra told indianexpress.com that black plastic utensils raise concerns due to the potential leaching of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) during cooking.

How do PAHs from black plastic utensils leach into food?

## ‘It was about being able to climb three floors’: Anshula Kapoor opens up about being body shamed as a child, ‘retreating into a shell’

We often equate fitness with a slim body. While it’s alright to have a vision of a fit body, demeaning one’s natural appearance is an act of bullying. That is precisely what happened to Anshula Kapoor in her childhood, about which she recently opened up. Anshula revealed how bullying made her conscious about her body and compelled her to resort to “emotional eating” during difficult times, especially after her parents had separated. “People think teasing others, saying ‘you’re so ugly, you’re so fat,’ will help them, but it doesn’t work like that. Constantly making someone feel like they don’t deserve to breathe the same air as you just because they look different can seriously affect a person’s mental health,” Anshula told Yuva. Adding that the constant bullying and body shaming often make people fall for the false concept of beauty, and also takes a toll on a person’s mental health, Anshula said: “It was never about looking a certain way or being a certain weight — it was about being healthy, being able to climb three floors. But the more people taunted me, the more I retreated into my shell.”

But why do people often mistake fitness for a perfect body?

According to Dr Arpita Kohli, Psychologist at PSRI Multispecialty Hospital, Delhi, many people equate fitness with external appearance because of the cultural emphasis on slimmness and toned bodies as symbols of health. However, fitness is not about how someone looks, but about how their body functions. “Actual fitness includes strength, endurance, flexibility, and most importantly, mental well-being. Someone can appear thin yet be unhealthy due to poor lifestyle habits, while another person with a different body type may be physically fit. This misunderstanding often comes from media-driven ideals that promote appearance over health,” Dr Kohli told indianexpress.com. Appearance over health is not just a media construct, but a societal stigma, the expert stressed, adding that often, childhood bullying, as was in Anshula’s case, leaves “childhood scars.” “Repeated negative comments can make individuals internalise the belief that their worth depends on size or looks. This creates low self-esteem and makes them more likely to chase unrealistic standards of the ‘perfect body’,” Dr Kohli reiterated. The constant negativity and body shaming may lead to anxiety, depression, disordered eating, and body dysmorphia.

Even in Anshula’s case, the distasteful comments forced her into becoming a grief eater. “I didn’t realise I was

## ‘You can easily create a mess’: As astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla says he ‘ate water in space,’ expert lists digestive challenges in microgravity

Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla, who returned to India in August 2025 after his historic visit to the International Space Station (ISS), has won netizens’ hearts again. This time, with a quick tutorial on how to eat in space. Sharing a fun video on Instagram, the Indian Air Force pilot said, “Eating and drinking in space is a challenge... Never thought I would have to learn to eat again... Here I am explaining why habits matter when you are eating in space. If you are not mindful, you can easily create a mess...”

Living in space made Shukla learn survival hacks like “eating water.” “You can even eat water in space. It is fun, but you have to be really careful as things go all around,” he quipped in the video. Shukla discovered that a simple process called ‘peristalsis’ is responsible for digestion in zero gravity. “We don’t need gravity to digest food.

A process called ‘peristalsis’ is responsible for digestion, which is gravity-independent. It is the contraction and relaxation of muscles to push food down through the digestive tract. “Reiterating Shukla’s observation, Dr Anjana Kalia, Ayurvedic Doctor & Nutritionist, agreed that astronauts can face certain unique digestive challenges in microgravity.

So, how does digestion in space vary from digestion in gravity?

Dr Kalia explained that on Earth, gravity helps separate gas from liquid in the stomach, allowing burping to release excess air. While in space, gas bubbles can mix with

Malhotra said that the leaching of PAHs from black plastic utensils into food is a concern, especially during high-heat cooking. Here’s how it happens: Heat: High temperatures increase the movement of molecules, causing PAHs to migrate from the plastic into food. Fatty foods: PAHs are lipophilic, meaning they dissolve more readily in fats. Cooking fatty foods with black plastic utensils enhances leaching. Length of contact: The longer the utensils are in contact with hot food, the greater the potential for leaching. High-risk cooking methods: Cooking methods that involve high heat and prolonged contact with utensils pose the highest risk. This includes frying because the combination of high oil temperature and long cooking time significantly increases PAH leaching. Malhotra shared that PAHs are probable carcinogens that may put one at risk of getting cancer. This means long-term exposure significantly increases the risk of developing various cancers, including lung, colorectal, and breast. “PAHs are not readily broken down by the body, and can accumulate in organs over time. This accumulation can lead to liver damage as it can impair its normal function, hindering its ability to detoxify the body. Accumulated PAHs can also strain the kidneys, potentially leading to kidney dysfunction. Additionally, studies suggest PAH exposure can disrupt hormonal balance and fertility in both men and women,” she explained. While less studied compared to other health risks, Malhotra said that PAH exposure can irritate the airways and exacerbate existing respiratory conditions like asthma. This is especially concerning for individuals already struggling with breathing difficulties. “The severity of the effects depends on various factors like frequency, duration of exposure, and individual health. However, it’s crucial to minimise exposure to these potential toxins for overall health,” she added.

What can you use instead?

Silicone: Heat-resistant and inert, silicone utensils are the ideal choice for cooking. However, choose food-grade silicone as it will last longer. Wooden utensils: These are natural and generally safe, but avoid using them for vigorous stirring or high-heat cooking.



an emotional eater until two years after my mom died. I must have gained 25 kilos in a year after her passing, and I didn’t realise I was eating my grief. Food became my comfort when everything felt out of control,” she said in the interview. According to health experts, there’s a strong neurological link between stress, emotions, and eating behaviour. Stress activates cortisol, which can increase cravings for high-fat, high-sugar foods. Emotional distress often pushes people toward “comfort eating” as a way to soothe negative feelings.

So, how do we cope with these emotions?

To differentiate, individuals should pause and ask: Am I hungry for food or comfort? “Strategies like mindful eating, keeping a food-mood diary, practising relaxation techniques, and having structured meal times can help break the cycle,” said Dr Anjana Kalia, Ayurvedic Doctor & Nutritionist at Bloom Clinix, Delhi. Dr Kalia elaborated that fitness should ultimately be about living better, not just looking different. “I encourage patients to track health markers, including energy levels, sleep quality, improved blood work, and mental well-being. I also stress the importance of small, consistent lifestyle changes such as balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, and stress management. Celebrating non-scale victories—like climbing stairs without breathlessness or feeling more energetic—helps clients embrace a holistic journey,” she concluded.

food and liquid, making simple burps more difficult and sometimes uncomfortable—astronauts call this a “wet burp.” “This can lead to bloating, indigestion, or mild nausea.” She elaborated that in space, where gravity is absent, peristalsis becomes even more crucial. It ensures that food and liquid move safely from the mouth to the stomach and through the intestines, allowing astronauts to eat and digest normally despite weightlessness. Shubhanshu Shukla Shubhanshu Shukla with fellow astronauts associated with Axiom Station. (Photo: Instagram/gagan.shux)

Beyond peristalsis, what other physiological processes in the human body are essential for digesting nutrients in space?

Dr Kalia shared that several processes work alongside peristalsis to ensure proper digestion. For instance, digestive enzymes secreted by the stomach, pancreas, and small intestine break down proteins, fats, and carbohydrates into smaller molecules. “Even the bile from the liver helps emulsify fats, making them easier to absorb. However, not many know that the small intestine is critical in absorbing nutrients into the bloodstream through specialised structures called villi and microvilli.

These processes depend on chemical activity and cellular transport mechanisms, not gravity,” she said. This means that nutrient breakdown and absorption can continue efficiently in space, provided astronauts maintain a balanced diet. Dr Kalia concluded.



## ‘Wonder if cricketers work harder than we do’: Rani Rampal’s blunt take on pay disparity between cricket & other sports in India



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Rani Rampal, the former Indian women’s hockey player, has highlighted the stark pay disparity between cricket and other sports in India. This comes against the backdrop of cricket’s overwhelming dominance in the country in terms of popularity, commercial size, and public appeal. Rampal, who had led the Indian women’s hockey team, emphasised the critical need to support sports other than cricket. “We respect every athlete and sport. But I honestly wonder if cricketers work harder than we do, since they receive more money and support,” Rampal was quoted as saying by Sportstar.

“The kind of struggle Mirabai Chanu has undergone, has a cricketer done that? Still, the sponsors end up going towards cricket. They can support us as well. It’s maybe

because cricket has more visibility. Cricketers know that playing the Ranji Trophy can sort their careers. For us, even playing at the Olympics is not enough. They struggle financially. Parents often say that ‘khel se roti nahi milegi’ (Sport won’t earn you a living) to discourage kids from taking up sport. It’s a hard fact. There is discrimination and we need to do something about it,” she said during an event in New Delhi on Friday. “Tough to qualify for Olympics’ At the same event, Tokyo Olympics silver-medallist weightlifter Mirabai Chanu voiced her opinion on the need for support that does not depend solely on sporting success. “It is tough to qualify for the Olympics and just be there. It’s a big achievement for us, just to participate. I felt like I wanted to win medals for India. As a woman athlete, I have to go through a lot. I was on my period during the Paris Olympics. We fight through the pain during training also and it gets tough. Due to cramps, you can feel pain. But we are athletes and we have to make that effort,” Chanu said. “I tried a lot to win in Paris. I had a hip injury at the Asian Games, so the come-back after that was tough. The bodies are different for male and female athletes and we practise according to that. At times, I feel I push myself too hard and get injured. In Paris, I felt as if my body was not working the way I wanted it to. Everyone was hoping; I tried my best but it was not to be. When we win medals, we get praise. But the criticism is also severe when we don’t win. This needs to change, it should not happen,” she added.

## Kamran Akmal says on-field spat with Gautam Gambhir in 2010 ‘a misunderstanding’: ‘He was talking to himself about the miss....’

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Kamran Akmal and Gautam Gambhir were involved in one of the most infamous spats in the history of India vs Pakistan encounters back in Asia Cup 2010. The former Pakistan wicketkeeper recently opened up about the confrontation, saying that it stemmed from a misunderstanding. “It was a misunderstanding. Gautam is a very good person. We had toured Kenya together for an ‘A’ team event and became good friends. In that Asia Cup match, I appealed when he missed a shot. He was talking to himself about the miss, but I thought he said something to me. That’s how the misunderstanding happened,” Akmal said to Telecom Asia Sport.

What was the incident?

The incident happened in the 2010 edition of the Asia Cup when the two sides squared off in Sri Lanka’s Dambulla. Saeed Aijmal was bowling to Gambhir and the India batter missed a shot with the ball missing the under-edge of the bat by a whisker. But Akmal who had pounced on the ball made a huge appeal for caught behind appeal but it was ultimately turned down. During the drinks break, Gambhir and Akmal charged at each other before the matter was defused by MS Dhoni as well as the other Pakistani players.



What was Gambhir’s take? On being asked the main reason behind the heated exchange, Gambhir, on a talk show with Vikram Sathaye, had said, “I missed it fully. He appealed in such a way that he thought that the ball hit the bat. Then I told him that there is no point in appealing because nothing like that happened, we just got into a heated argument and then it just got from bad to worse.” Gambhir will be in the head coach’s seat this time around as India take on Pakistan in an Asia Cup Group A match on Sunday, their first after the two countries were on verge of war following the Pahalgam terror attack earlier this year.

## ‘Planning occurred based on the game situation’: Ishant Sharma explains differences between playing under MS Dhoni and Virat Kohli



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Indian pacer Ishant Sharma has opened up about the differences between playing under MS Dhoni and Virat Kohli’s captaincy during his career. The 37-year-old said that the former believed in going with the flow of the game, while the latter had a plan in place before the match and adapted based on how the game moved.

“Mahi bhai (MS Dhoni) ke team main difference kya tha? Mahi bhai aise insaan hai jo field pe cheezay karte hai. Unko field pe kama pasand hai. The planning occurred based on the game situation. (What was different about playing under MS Dhoni? Mahi bhai was someone who did things on the field. He liked doing things on the field). “With Virat (Kohli), that wasn’t the case. There was a basic plan, and

then based on how things progressed, we assessed and made decisions. MS Dhoni was not a big believer in meetings. He had a simple funda that you will learn only if you make mistakes. He thought that if you made one mistake and how much time you take to make the next mistake, that is consistency,” Ishant said on Raj Shamani’s podcast. Don’t think God will come and win you the game, Ishant recalls MS Dhoni’s advice from 2013 Champions Trophy final

Ishant also recalled the advice MS Dhoni gave to the team during the 2013 Champions Trophy final. The lanky pacer said that Dhoni told them that if the Men in Blue were to win the match, they had to work things out on their own, adding that god was not coming to save them. “During the 2013 Champions Trophy final, it was raining and everyone thought the game would be washed out. He said, yeh match hoga, chota hoga par yeh mat sochna ki bhagwan aake match jeetayega. Khudh he kuch karna padega, sab cheezay. Bhagwaan pe maano, lekin khudh pe vishwas karo.” (This match will happen. It would be a shortened game, but don’t think that god will come and win you the game. You will need to do everything on your own. He says have faith in god, but have belief in your own self too),” Ishant said. India won the 2013 Champions Trophy, beating hosts England by five wickets. Dhoni retired from Test cricket in 2014 and from all forms of international cricket in 2020. Virat Kohli retired from T20Is after the World Cup triumph in 2024. He announced his retirement from Test cricket in May 2025.

team coming into a crucial match,” he added. “Win over Sri Lanka has infused positivity in the side’ Pakistan were clinical with the ball, particularly in the first half of the Sri Lankan innings, as they restricted Charith Asalanka’s side to a score of 133/8. However, they nearly made a mess of the chase despite the target only being 134, losing four wickets in their first 10 overs. At 80 for five, the match was wide open with Pakistan still needing 54 runs and a defeat would have knocked them out of the race of the tournament. However, they found two willing soldiers in Hussain Talat (32 not out, 30 balls) and Mohammad Nawaz (38 not out, 24 balls), who collected the remaining runs with composure as Pakistan touched the tape with two overs to spare.

The win over Sri Lanka on Tuesday, Talat said, had infused a lot of positivity in the side and if the team could play just two matches with the right intensity, it could lift the Asia Cup trophy. “We are very confident and the atmosphere in the camp (is good) given that we have been playing non-stop cricket for such a long time and the kind of options we have.”

## Sakshi Malik names daughter, inspired by Japanese legend



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

India’s celebrated Olympic medalist in women’s wrestling, Sakshi Malik, in a social media post, revealed that she has named her daughter Yoshida, after legendary Japanese Saori Yoshida. The 42-year-old Japanese was the sport’s most dominant juggernaut starting 1998, and won three Olympic golds at Athens, Beijing and London in 55 kg division. She would have won a fourth at Rio, but lost the final to take home silver in reclassified 53kg.

With Yoshida visiting the Inspire Institute in Karnataka, for a coaching camp, Sakshi uploaded a clip of her conver-

sation with the legend on Insta. “I’m very happy to see you in India. You are an inspiration for everyone, all girls in India,” Sakshi is heard saying. “My daughter is 8 months old and her name is Yoshida. Named after my inspiration Saori Yoshida,” she proceeds to narrate in the reel. Yoshida had a staggering run at the World Championships where she was undefeated from Chalkida in 2002 to Las Vegas in 2015, winning at every edition in between. There are golds from New York in ’03, Budapest in ’05, Guangzhou in ’06, Baku in ’07, Tokyo in ’08, Herring in ’09, Moscow in ’10, Istanbul in ’11, Edmonton in ’12, Budapest in ’13 and Tashkent in ’14 besides. In 2007, Yoshida was the first woman to be awarded Japanese Athlete of the Year, pointing to her immense inspiration. She remained at 55kg competition weight for 12 years, before dropping to 53 after Olympics shuffled the weight categories. Sakshi promised she would be back on the mat and training after a year after she was told, “I remember watching you in 2016 Olympics.” The legend Yoshida’s only loss came at the Rio Games against Helen Maroulis. It’s akin to Vinesh Phogat inflicting a rare defeat on Yui Susaki at the Paris Olympics, for Japanese women’s wrestling has long streaks of dominance. Susaki went 95 matches without losing to non Japanese. Yoshida faced her first defeat in her 89th match. And just like her, Yoshida was a global inspiration for every female wrestler.

## ‘I never dreamt of that’: Speed king Nihal Sarin, leading the Candidates race in FIDE Grand Swiss, reveals his pursuit of ‘good chess’

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Grandmaster Nihal Sarin is often considered a master of shorter time controls, but he is now demonstrating his abilities in classical chess by leading the FIDE Grand Swiss 2025 tournament in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. After beating the sole leader after round 6, Iran’s Parham Maghsoodloo, Nihal is in the joint lead with 5.5 points from seven rounds alongside Germany’s Matthias Bluebaum. Nihal has won four rounds, and his win over Maghsoodloo was special as he outplayed Iran’s No. 1 in an extremely complex endgame.

The 21-year-old is also close to qualifying for the prestigious Candidates Tournament. The winner of that 8-player event will earn the right to challenge the current World Champion, 18-year-old Indian D. Gukesh. When asked about this potential scenario, Nihal said he never dreamt of qualifying for the Candidates and that should he seal his spot, it would be a massive bonus for him. “I never dreamt of that, but okay. I mean, still a lot of games to go and I just hope to play good chess and that’s all I can do. And if I somehow manage to win, it’s just a massive bonus,” Nihal said after winning the seventh round. He also had some insightful observations on how the game proceeded against Maghsoodloo, where the Iranian fought till the very end before losing the battle.

‘Slav Exchange has dodgy reputation’ “It was a crazy game. I don’t think it was expected from the opening be-



cause Slav Exchange generally has a very dodgy reputation, but I just tried to play something interesting,” he said. “Of course, Parham will never back out of a fight and it was a very interesting game. It became quite crazy and in a lot of moments I thought I was in some trouble and towards the end, I thought he was in some trouble. In the very end with no time — as you said — everything was flying and nobody knew what was happening and in these scrambles, you need quite a bit of luck and fortunately, it was on my side today because towards the end... towards move 40, I ended up with a completely winning position I don’t know how,” added Nihal before revealing how he spent the rest day doing nothing.

## Satwik-Chirag fend off generation-leaping Malaysians Arif-Yap who had Aaron Chia in coaching chair



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

It took a stress-free, near non-chalant surge of points from 16-20 to 20-all in the second set, for Satwiksairaj Rankireddy to finally beam a wide grin, and recapture the joy of men’s doubles: the contest is meant to be frenzied and fun, a dopamine for duos with racquets, and sometimes points get won or lost on a lark of a racquet angle. Satwik and Chirag Shetty lost that set, 20-22, but won the match 21-14, 20-22, 21-16 against the young pairing of Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap to reach the Hong Kong Open semifinal. It’s just how this last fortnight has been — on odd days, the Indians beat Malaysians with the redoubtable Aaron Chia in opponent ranks, and on even days, they again beat Malaysians without Chia. Though their most skilled opponent is always lurking on the horizon. On Friday at Kowloon for the Super 500 Hong Kong Open, Chia — who lost at Hong Kong Coliseum earlier this week — sat on the coach’s chair alongside legendary Malaysian coach, Herry Iman Pierngadi.

India’s own Malaysian, coach Tan Kim Her, was around to calm the Indians down and remind them that they have the heavy arsenal, but might not need to pull it all out, for next week’s China Masters is the big one in September. But Arif and Yap are no mugs. Something of a cross between Minions, laced with attacking intent, and Chia himself, who brings the brains to their offensive plays, the new Malaysians can be a handful. Chia was clearly at hand to tell them how to harangue the Indians, because he’s historically been good at it, though this World Championship saw Satwik-Chirag counter him clinically.

The tournament might be a Super 500, but it’s where most countries are testing and tweaking their newly launched pairs for the next Olympic cycle. Especially the Malaysians and Taiwanese, who promise to make life difficult for all top pairings. Yap-Arif are thus the leaping generation, and went about targeting the Indian vulnerabilities — body defense on shots coming at their ribs, the seeds of which are those nightmarish Chia racquet-angles. Both Chirag and Satwik were alternately targeted, but always in a flurry. This would comprise of pushing them back with one shuttle to the back court, forcing out lifts from them, and then repeatedly ping-ponging their torsos with some intense smashing into the body. It’s not a bad plan, but to assume either Satwik or Chirag can be peppered was optimistic. It’s so early-2024. Resultantly, while they copped the attack, their defenses held strong, the lifts weren’t smotherable, and they neatly shifted to their own attacking gears. Once there, the Malaysians were hapless witnesses to their own fading off.

The holding off in the siege needed effort, but like many

pairings have discovered this last year, Satwik-Chirag are not one-dimensional attacking robots. The Malaysian plans came undone when they stopped hitting down the middle and went for the flanks. Even the lines where the drift watched their shuttle career off course. Even there, it was because Satwik was ready to guard the periphery. However, it is Chirag who is always the target of Malaysian offensives. They boxed him in with their attacks, but he used his agility to deflect the angles and repeatedly punished them, returning the cross attack with interest. Roving the back court, he found the short smash tweaks to find gaps. A serve of his in the second, when the Indians had a chance to close out, was deemed an error as the Malaysian moved out of the way and let it fall. But he shrugged it off and ensured that the decider gave the opponents no respite, and not a sniff of the lead. The young Malaysian pairing left the court chuckling with the two coaches at some of their plans coming apart. It’s probably the biggest takeaway from how Malaysians and Indonesians play — keep the fiendish fun of doubles alive, no matter what.

## Dollazzo strikes gold in ISSF World Cup

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Hyderabad: Italy’s Danilo Dollazzo, who finished second behind India’s Rudranksh Patil in the Cairo World Championship in 2022 and was fifth in the Paris Olympics last year, shattered the men’s 10m air rifle finals world record on competition day three of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol stage in Ningbo, China. Indian shooters, meanwhile, despite some solid performances, were still searching for a first final appearance at the Ningbo World Cup.

India’s former world number one Divyansh Singh Panwar shot 630.0 in qualification to finish 19th. Sweden’s Paris silver medalist Victor Lindgren took the final qualifying spot with 632.3. Among other Indian contenders, young Umamahesh Maddineni finished 39th overall with 627.7, while Niraj Kumar was further back in 54th with 626.1. Former students of Valerian Grammar School, Bolarum, will organise the 12th Jaya Rao Memorial Inter Schools Football tournament only for Government Schools in memory of their school’s Physical Education Teacher from September 15 to 16 at Bolarum High School Grounds here.

The event is only for schools from the twin cities, and there is no entry fee; and each school will be gifted two footballs to promote the sport.

U Mumba edged past the Patna Pirates in a nail-biting contest, pulling off a thrilling 40-39 victory in the penultimate match of the Pro Kabaddi League at the Vishwanath Sports Club in Vizag on Thursday. Ayan Lohchab scripted history to become the first player to record successive 20-point games in PKL history, but was left heartbroken as a costly unforced error in the dying seconds tilted the game away from his side. For U Mumba, Amirmohammad Zafardanesh starred with a Super 10, while Anil made vital contributions in what turned out to be a high-scoring night.



## Jugnuma The Fable movie review: Manoj Bajpayee delivers one of his all-time best performances



Some films come up to you, and slowly draw you in, until you are firmly within their spell. This is what happened to me when I watched 'Jugnuma: The Fable': the quality of life being lived in the slow lane — the film is set in 1989, in the upper reaches of the Uttarakhand hills — where nothing much seems to happen, one day passing uneventfully into another, is ruptured by the growing feeling of something more, something elemental, something beyond our grasp. What writer and director Raam Reddy, with the help of cinematographer Sunil Borkar, and a cast which is one with the plan, has managed to pull off is quite remarkable. The two-hour film weaves in the prosaic, the quotidian, with quiet strokes of magical realism, leaving us wondering about our world, and the tantalising possibility of other worlds. Dev (Manoj Bajpayee), owner of one of the biggest apple orchards in the area, is grappling with the mysterious burning of a tree on one of his patches, leaving his long-time estate manager Mohan (Deepak Dobriyal) equally puzzled. Could it be just a one-off, or is it a pattern? Are the villagers who have worked in the orchards for generations, upset about pesticides being used on the trees? Is the skeletal tree a message, to keep the ecology of the place as is? Will Dev, whose outhouse stores a pair of massive wings which he has engineered himself, escape his troubles, as a feathered streak? Other puzzles crop up. A group of nomads have camped just above the homestead where Dev lives with his family, the jam-making, melodious-voiced wife Nandini (Priyanka Bose), the tear-about young son Juju (Awan Pookot) and

his two inseparable Alsatians, and the visiting-on-a-hotel-break teenage daughter Vanya (Hiral Sidhu). The wanderers do not use words, but seem to communicate through humming, and one amongst them, a handsome horseman, catches Vanya's fancy: who are these people, and are they responsible for the fires, which are spreading through the orchard? Reddy's observational approach, which we saw in his debut feature 'Tithi', is at play here too, but that was a burlesque; here, he ambitiously takes in more, and gives us more. In a few places the specific and the abstract do clash, and sit uneasily on screen: a village woman (Tillotama Shome) is used as a conduit for recounting a folk tale about other-worldly creatures who forget their origins and become earthlings, and while there is power to the tale, the telling of it draws attention to itself. The film also comments on casteism, classism and capitalism in the way Dev comes across to his workers: there is an acknowledgement of their connection built through generations — the land, and its abundant gifts, has been passed on to Dev through his father and grandfather — but there's also a brusqueness bordering on arrogance. The power struggle in the hills, with a greedy patwari and a group of armed guards showing up to 'help' Dev while everything is crumbling, is evident: who do the hills really belong to? The question is deeply political and always relevant, and is something to think about. It's when the film stays gentle, it is most piercing. Priyanka Bose is lovely as a woman who has found her rhythm in taking care of home and hearth and the occasional beautifully-rendered song. The young actors are very good, too. This is easily one of my top favourite Manoj Bajpayee performances (after 'Shool' and 'Gangs Of Wasseypur'), and it is a pleasure to see him slide into his character's skin and make it his own: Deepak Dobriyal's pitch-perfect act as the raconteur who is both let down and raised high, is a cherry on top. 'Jugnuma' (riffing off the jugnos/fireflies — jugnu-numa — on screen?) lives up to its name: how much you lean into its fablesque qualities will depend entirely on what you think about the power of imagination. I do believe us earthly creatures can soar, reaching places beyond our horizons. Jugnuma The Fable movie cast: Manoj Bajpayee, Deepak Dobriyal, Priyanka Bose, Tillotama Shome, Hiral Sidhu, Awan Pookot, Ravi Bish. Jugnuma The Fable movie director: Raam Reddy. Jugnuma The Fable movie rating: 3.5 stars

## Before live-in, Sharmila Tagore cautioned Soha Ali Khan that Kunal Khemu might delay marriage: 'He might not feel the incentive to propose'

Soha Ali Khan married Kunal Khemu after years of dating and living together. In a recent conversation with *Hauterfly*, Soha opened up about how her mother, veteran actress Sharmila Tagore, has always been very open about everything and never interfered in her children's decisions. However, when Soha decided to enter into a live-in relationship with Kunal, the legendary actress had some advice to offer. Recalling the conversation, Soha said, "The only thing she told me was, for example, if you are going to live together before marriage, there are some men who might delay the marriage, and need a push. If you are waiting for him to propose, after living together, he might not feel the incentive to propose. So maybe think about that if you are going to live together. That's what amma (Sharmila Tagore) said before we entered into the live-in."

She added, "Of course, eventually, he (Kunal) did propose and then we got married. But we did speak about where this relationship was going, and it was not pushy at all because marriage was quite irrelevant for us; we were very happy living together. But other people wanted us to get married for good reasons like stability, family, etc., so we took the step for them. It wasn't like we were opposing it or that we wanted to live unmarried — it just was irrelevant. But we knew some people would be happy with us getting married, so why not?" In a separate interview with *The Hollywood Reporter India*, Soha Ali Khan also reflected on another piece of relationship advice from her mother. She shared: "My mother told me that women should take care of the man's ego, and a man should take care of a woman's emotions. If you're able to do that, then you are going to



have a long and successful relationship. A lot of people today will feel men also have emotions and women also have egos, but that advice has stood me in good stead. I feel that long-term relationships are the most challenging things, and you need friends there because if you take everything to your partner, you will put too much pressure on the relationship." Soha Ali Khan got engaged to Kunal Khemu in July 2014 in Paris and tied the knot in Mumbai on January 25, 2015. The couple welcomed their daughter, Inaaya Naumi Khemu in 2017.

## Satish Shah ragged me, yelled at me on the sets of Sarabhai vs Sarabhai, says Rajesh Kumar: 'I had tears in my eyes, never brought wife on set because...'

Sarabhai Vs Sarabhai continues to remain one of the most beloved sitcoms of the 2000s. Featuring an ensemble cast of Ratna Pathak Shah, Rupali Ganguly, Sumeet Raghavan, Satish Shah, and Rajesh Kumar, the show still enjoys a cult following. Rajesh Kumar, who brought the iconic character Rosesh Sarabhai to life, recently opened up about his experiences on set, including how he was often ragged by his co-stars and why he never had the confidence to bring his wife to the shoot.

Speaking on the YouTube channel *Be You With Shraddha S*, Rajesh credited his co-actors for shaping Rosesh into a memorable character. "Rosesh worked because of the reactions. It wasn't just the way he spoke or his attitude. The magic happened because of how Ratna Pathak Shah or Satish Shah responded to him. Even today, when I'm around the five of them, I instantly become Rosesh because they still treat me like him. If I forward something in our WhatsApp group, no matter what it is, they still troll me—especially Satish ji," he shared with a laugh.

Their bond, he revealed, remains as strong as ever. "Satish ji still says, 'Tu chup reh, tu toh bol hi mat,' and I just go quiet. I tell him, 'Kaka, I am 50 now!' and he replies, 'So what? You will always be our Rosesh.' Till date, we call each other by the same names—Ratna ji is still 'Moma,' she calls me 'Roshu,' Rupali calls me 'Roshu Bhaiya,' Sumeet is 'Bade' and I'm 'Chote.' With Satish ji, I say 'Dad' or 'Kaka.' After the shoot, our bond only grew stronger. We can truly say we are a Sarabhai family."

Recalling his early days on set, Rajesh admitted he felt overwhelmed. "I was ragged mostly because I was doing comedy for the first time, and on top of that, I was acting opposite stalwarts like Satish ji and Ratna ji. I was nervous



throughout the 1.5 years of shooting. Though I was married, I felt like a bachelor on set because that's how they treated me. I never brought my wife there. I didn't want her to see how they treated me—it scared me. Even Devan Bhojani would tease me, saying, 'Reaction dene nahi aata hai!'" He also remembered a particularly tough day when he struggled with a long monologue. "There was this one scene where I had to deliver a 1.5-page dialogue about the activities I did while being insomniac. I kept forgetting the lines—we did at least eight takes. Satish ji got angry and said, 'Call me when he remembers his lines.' The way he said it brought tears to my eyes. I couldn't tell if it was anger, insult, or just ragging. After that, I went to my director and asked for some time. Even now, I remind Satish ji that he once made me cry, but he never agrees." Despite the challenges, Rajesh considers those experiences invaluable. "I learnt a lot from all of them."

## 'Big mistake': Amrapali Dubey on Pawan Singh touching Anjali Raghav inappropriately during a show, says a woman should call police



Pawan Singh was accused of inappropriately touching Anjali Raghav during an event in Lucknow and when the video of the incident was shared on social media, Pawan issued an apology. Now, Bhojpuri actor Amrapali Dubey has also spoken up about the incident and said that Anjali should have complained to Uttar Pradesh police right there and then. She also added that she did have a word with

Pawan who admitted that this was a grave mistake. In a chat with Siddharth Kannan on his YouTube channel, Amrapali said, "As a woman, I was feeling disgraced. No woman should have to go through this. Pawan Singh issued an apology afterwards and I felt like calling him up and asking him what happened but then I felt that I shouldn't. I felt like giving a call to Anjali and telling her that you should work with decent people, and don't judge everyone in the industry by one person's actions." Amrapali said that she did not call Anjali as she did not have her contact details.

She then added that Anjali should have complained to UP police right there. "This happened in Lucknow. Do you know UP police? They will take anyone to task. We have seen UP police in action. You should have complained there and then." Amrapali said that if Pawan's intentions were to remove a black spot from her waist, which he had since claimed, then he should have went on the show. Or if he was going to do it himself, then he should have sought her permission. "I can believe that his intentions weren't bad. But you can't claim that afterwards, you need to ask the woman before you touch her without her consent," she said and added that she spoke to Pawan before he went for Rise and Fall. "I called him before he went on the show. I told him that before you share a stage with anyone, you should have a contract with them," she said and when asked to explain the "contract", she claimed she was being "sarcastic." "Pawan said this was a big mistake. He said, 'I shouldn't have done it'."

## Kannada filmmaker S Narayan and family booked for dowry harassment

In her complaint filed at the Jnanabharati police station, Pavithra accused her husband, Pavan, and her in-laws of harassing her for additional dowry from her family. Pavithra was even asked to find a job and support her unemployed husband, who has yet to complete his education. In her complaint, Pavithra said, "Since Pavan hasn't completed his degree, he has no job. So, I started working to look after the family. Some time ago, he took Rs 1 lakh from me and Rs 75,000 from my mother to buy a car. Meanwhile, my husband's family started Kala Samrat Film Academy, and I pledged my mother's gold to help them financially. Later, the academy shut down. Again, they asked me for money and I took a professional loan of Rs 10 lakh. They repaid only part of the money in monthly instalments and then stopped." According to *The Times of India*, the police have issued notices to S. Narayan and his family in connection with the case. The filmmaker has not yet responded to these developments. S. Narayan made his directorial debut with *Chaitrada Premanjali* (1992) and has since helmed several popular Kannada films, including *Anuragada Alegalu*, *Megha Maale*, *Thavarina Thottilu*, *Bevu Bella*, *Surya Vamsha*, *Simhadriya Simha*, *Daksha*, *Na Panta Kano*, and *Manasu Mallige*, among others, over a career spanning 33 years. He has also appeared as an actor in films such as *Chaitrada Premanjali*, *Galate Aliyandru*, *Balagalittu Olage Baa*, *Old Monk*, and *Sugarless*. His most recent directorial venture was the suspense thriller *5D*, released in 2024.



## Janhvi Kapoor calls Ishaan Khatter one of the 'most talented actors' in India, hasn't received due 'credit'; praises producer Karan Johar: 'The battles he fought...'



Filmmaker Karan Johar has been quite vocal about his production banner Dharma Productions receiving criticism for his commercial films (*Nadaanianyan* — Ibrahim Ali Khan, *Khushi Kapoor*), while little recognition for his artistic projects (*Homebound* — Ishaan Khatter, Janhvi Kapoor, Vishal Jethwa). The Neeraj Ghaywan directorial has received global acclaim, with standing ovations at many international film festivals, including Cannes and IIFM. Now, before the premiere of their movie at TIFF, the cast of *Homebound* spoke to Sucharita Tyagi in an interview. They addressed the concern that Karan Johar got more trouble for backing their film, instead of being rewarded.

During the candid chat, Ishaan was asked about how it felt that Dharma Productions threw their full might behind this unique film, and he replied, "It would be wrong to not first credit Mr Karan Johar. I said this to him recently as well...that if all films with a big heart and artistic endeavour had a nurturer like him, that would be the dream. Everybody who is a part of the film really believes in it and had some kind of feeling for it. The film had a real soul. It's because of Karan this film was made, so hats off to him!" Janhvi continued, "It is genuinely a testament to the fact that what matters to this man is cinema and art, and not just commerce, which is such a rarity in this day and age. There was no real requirement for him to put his money, name, and backing. It won't even come to the forefront but we know the amount of battles that he fought continuously for this film. It probably put him in more trouble than it has rewarded him. But, he will continue to do so."

The actor then praised her co-star Ishaan Khatter for his performance in the film and contributions to the industry. "I think that he is maybe one of the most talented actors we have in our country and for whatever reason, I don't think he has been given as much credit as he deserves within Indian cinema and whatever commercial aspect. So, to see him on that stage and to see a performance like this being witnessed and appreciated by the world, I felt like good work eventually gets recognition. I don't think there was

anyone who was more deserving of that recognition," Janhvi expressed. She added, "Same with Vishal. He has auditioned his a\*\* off for this film. His journey from how he started getting into this to how he is dealing with being in all of these new scenarios, and the performance that he has given, the kind of man that I have seen him turn into for the past couple of months. He never lost sight of who he is, it has made me so proud of him. To see him on this world stage killing it...he did a Gujarati folk rap in one of his early interviews. I was so thrilled." Janhvi Kapoor also appreciated *Homebound*'s director Neeraj Ghaywan for his honesty as a person. "Neeraj sir is the most honest filmmaker in our country, hands down. He practices what he preaches. He is a good man, and I have so much value for him. That stuff needs to be rewarded. It should be rewarded. I was just so happy to be tugged along the way. It was a real thrill to be a part of this film," she concluded. *Homebound* has been produced by Karan Johar, Adar Poonawalla, Apoorva Mehta, and Somen Mishra. The co-producers of the film are Marijke de Souza and Melita Toscan Du Plantier. It tells the story of a childhood friendship between two men — a Muslim and a Dalit. Premiered at Cannes Film Festival's Un Certain Regard section, the film received a nine-minute long standing ovation.

## Honey Singh reveals Nora Fatehi is 'singing in Punjabi' for track 'I'm So Rich'

Mumbai: Dancing diva Nora Fatehi has lent her voice to the song 'I'm So Rich'. Sharing a glimpse, Punjabi rapper-singer Yo Yo Honey Singh revealed that she is singing in Punjabi. Nora took to her Instagram stories, where she posted a sneak-peek from the recording session with Honey Singh and wrote: "Recording Im So Rich." Honey Singh reshared the clip and captioned it: "She is singing in Panjabi guys." Earlier, the actress shared a monochrome picture of a mic with the caption: "Straight off the flight let's go." She later posted a boomerang from the studio, writing: "Jet lagged! But ain't nothing gonna stop me."

In August, Honey Singh — often called the Bluetooth King of India — teamed up with singer Shaeli Oswal for the upcoming track *Sajna*. The first look of the music video was unveiled on Wednesday.

Shaeli Oswal became a household name with his 2006 superhit *Soniye Hiriye*, followed by soulful numbers like *Tere Naal Naal*, *Jaan Ve*, and *Tuhi Toh Meri Dost Hai*.