

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

## Telangana High Court hears Kaleshwaram commission pleas

Hyderabad: Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice GM Mohiuddin of the Telangana High Court on Monday continued hearing a batch of writ petitions challenging the report submitted by the Justice PC Ghose Commission on alleged irregularities in the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project. Senior Advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for the State government, advanced arguments defending the validity of the Commission's proceedings and findings, contending that the principles of natural justice were fully complied with during the inquiry.

## Society Must Take Responsibility for Women's Safety: Chief Minister Revanth Reddy



making Telangana one of the safest states for women in the country. He said the program is intended to instill a sense of responsibility among citizens to treat women with respect and dignity. He stressed that ensuring women's safety cannot be achieved solely through laws or police patrols and that society as a whole must take collective responsibility. People should come forward to support women who face harassment or injustice instead of ignoring such incidents, he said, adding that remaining silent in such situations indirectly encourages crime. Revanth Reddy noted that women's economic empowerment is essential for the development of families, the state, and the country. He said Telangana aims to become a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2034 and a three-trillion-dollar economy by 2047, and this progress can only be achieved if women—who constitute half of society—are safe, educated, and economically empowered. He encouraged women to pursue education and career opportunities and not remain confined to household responsibilities. Women should be encouraged to develop their skills and actively participate in the state's economic growth, he said. The Chief Minister also highlighted several welfare initiatives implemented by the state government for women. He said ration cards and housing schemes such as Indiramma houses are being issued in the names of women. Self-help groups are being provided loans and shop spaces in Shilparamam to promote entrepreneurship. He added that the government is encouraging women to participate in solar power generation and compete with major business entities. Women have also been provided free travel in RTC buses, and ownership of nearly one thousand buses has been given to women to promote financial independence. Steps are also being taken to allot petrol pumps to women to help them achieve economic stability. Revanth Reddy further noted that the state government named the Women's University after freedom fighter Veeranari Chakali Illamma to honor women's empowerment. He concluded by reaffirming that the Telangana government has complete faith in women's strength and is committed to making Telangana one of the safest states for women in the country through initiatives like "Stand With Her."

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, March 7, (Indian chronicle).“Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy stated that celebrating International Women's Day alone is not enough and emphasized that society must take responsibility for ensuring the dignity and safety of women. He said that just as people react strongly when their own family members face humiliation or inconvenience, they should show the same concern for every woman in society and take necessary steps to prevent such incidents. The Chief Minister was speaking at the "Stand With Her" program organized by the Telangana Police Department at the JNTU Auditorium in KPHB on Saturday. The event was conducted under the supervision of Women Safety Wing Additional Director General of Police Charu Sinha, IPS. Several dignitaries attended the program, including Telangana Director General of Police Shivadhar Reddy, Hyderabad Police Commissioner C.V. Anand, Higher and School Education Principal Secretary Yogita Rana, Women and Child Welfare Secretary Anita Ramachandran, Cyberabad Police Commissioner M. Ramesh, Medchal-Malkajgiri District Collector Manu Choudhary, Cyberabad Municipal Commissioner Srujana, UNICEF Chief Field Officer Jalaleem Birhanu Tafesse, and film actor Sai Durga Tej. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said the Telangana government launched the "Stand With Her" initiative with the aim of

## Women Are Queens": Speakers Highlight Women's Strength and Achievements

Avnreddy Khammam Bureau Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle).“A grand pre-celebration of International Women's Day was organized at the Seva Lal Maharaj Temple grounds in Raghunathpalem Mandal, under the banner of Veeranarimanu Aashayasadhana Samithi, where multiple speakers praised the role, strength, and contributions of women in society. Speakers noted that unlike the past, there is no field today where women have not entered or excelled. Women are leading in all spheres, not just managing households but also supporting and protecting society at large. Hence, they declared, "Women are Queens." Chityala Swetha, chief guest and honorary advisor of the Samithi, emphasized that women live in a society where challenges and discrimination persist. She encouraged women to resist obstacles, fight assertively, and prove that nothing is impossible if they strive. She urged girls to move forward with courage, inspired by the example of Chityala Ailamma. Mrs. India First Runner-Up M.A. Farha highlighted that women, being equal members of society, should not remain ordinary. She stressed the importance of knowledge and education to overcome discrimination and self-doubt, while also taking care of health and financial security. She said that with proper



preparation, women can excel without barriers in any field. Social activist Vijayalakshmi reminded attendees that women form the largest segment of society and today, unlike the past, they live as influential queens. She emphasized the crucial role of education and encouraged every woman to pursue learning. Raghunathpalem CI Usman Sharif also addressed the gathering, noting that women are excelling in all areas. He stressed the importance of providing women with encouragement and support, adding that he personally works to address women's issues with empathy. The program, presided over by District President Bhukya Upendra Bai, featured speeches from L.H.P.S Banoth Bhadrur Nair, Raghunathpalem Sarpanch Gajula Krishna, and Tribal Federation State Convener Veeranna Naik. Many local leaders and activists, including Bhukya Jyoti, K. Spandana, Jansee, Nagamani, Sarojini, Banoth Usha, V. Bhadramma, Kavitha, Lakshmi, Subhadra, Rangamma, Lakshmi Naik, B. Lakshmi, Vijaya, Sharifa Begum, Prameela, Nadya Naik, Balu Naik, Sanjeeva Rao, Dasari Srinivas, Ravi Naik, Lakshman Naik, Akesh, Vijaya, Srinivas Chari, Veeranna, Dr. Ramakoti, Nagaraju, Srinivas Naik, and artists Pammi Ravi, Fakrudin, Kommu Rada also participated in the event.



## Training for village sarpanches is the foundation of village self-government.. Mugdhampelli Sarpanch Sarpanch Shiga Naresh Goud

“(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... March 7):- The Telangana State Government organized a general orientation training program for the newly elected village sarpanches of Bibinagar mandal in Bhuvanagiri constituency under the auspices of the Telangana Rural Development Organization at Bhoodan Pochampally Swami Ramananda Tirtha Rural Training Institute. On this occasion, Mugdhampally Village Sarpanch Shiga Naresh Goud participated and spoke about the purpose of the Panchayat Raj Act, the duties and rights of the sarpanches, the resolution of local problems, responsible village planning, transparent administration, effective utilization of funds, how to implement welfare schemes, how to carry out the responsibilities of the sarpanch in making villages exemplary, and how to strengthen the village progress programs. He said that these training classes on rural laws were very useful for the newly elected village sarpanches. On completion of the training, they received a certificate from the district authorities.

## Basti Baat Programme for Resolving Public Issues TPCC Labour Cell Vice President V. S. Prakash Reddy



“Nacharam, India Chorinicle, March 07: “A Basti Baat programme was conducted on Saturday under the leadership of TPCC Labour Cell Vice President V. S. Prakash Reddy, a senior Congress leader. The programme began at Renuka Yellamma Temple in Ram Reddy Nagar, Nacharam, where a coconut was broken to offer prayers to the goddess before starting the event. Later, along with Congress leaders and party workers, Prakash Reddy visited Kummara Basti Colony, walking door-to-door to interact with residents. During the visit, they enquired whether government welfare schemes were reaching all eligible people. They also created awareness about various government schemes and helped eligible beneficiaries apply for them. Immediate attention was given to issues related to schemes that had not yet reached the people. Afterwards, the team also visited residents of Erukala Basti Colony in Old Village, Nacharam, and encouraged those who had not yet received government scheme benefits to apply and make proper use of them. Application forms were also distributed to the eligible residents. Leaders Narsing Rao, Sudhakar Reddy, Feroz, Azeem, Srinivas Reddy, Naresh, Yousof, Balu Goud, Naidu, and Praveen participated in the programme. From the Mahila Congress, Women President Uma, along with Mamatha, Vijaya, Shaini, Shyamala, Radha, and Vijayalakshmi, and other members also took part in the event.

## The Telangana State Government's ambitious "Public Governance-Progress Plan" 99-day action plan is being implemented in a strict manner:- Government's Vippu Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah

“(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... March 7):- As part of the implementation of the 99-day action plan of the Telangana State Government, a preparatory meeting of the joint Nalgonda district was held at Udayaditya Bhavan in the Nalgonda district headquarters on Saturday. In this meeting, Telangana State Roads, Buildings and Cinematography Minister Sri Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Joint Nalgonda In-charge Minister Sri Adhuri Laxman Kumar, Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ailaiah along with MLAs, MLCs and Collectors of Joint Nalgonda participated. In this meeting, Nalgonda, Suryapet and A review was held on the implementation of the 99-day action plan and other development programs with ministers, public representatives and officials of Yadadri and Bhuvanagiri districts.



## Case Registered Against Five for Encroachment on Velugumatla Government Lands

“Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle).“The Konijerla Police Station has registered a case against five accused for collecting 240,000 each from villagers by falsely promising them government land in Velugumatla. This was confirmed by SI G. Suraj, Konijerla. The complaint was filed by Parikipalli Venkateswarlu, a resident of Peddamunagala village, alleging that between November 2021 and 2023, the accused — Ponnaboyin Baby (from Ankur), Kalti Ramachandraya (UCCRI (ML) District Secretary), Talluru Krishna, and Koppera Venkanna — along with Talari Ramakrishna and Pittala Srinu approached villagers claiming that around 62 acres of Bhoodan land in Survey Nos. 147, 148, 149, Velugumatla, Khanapuram Haveli Mandal, Khammam District had been allotted by the government for distribution to the poor. The accused allegedly promised that by registering their names with UCCRI (ML) and paying the money, villagers would receive 100 square yards of land through the District Collector. Believing them, villagers including Kota Balu, Thelluri Prasad, Sunkara Radhakrishna, Pittala Anusha, Bandar Ramadevi, Garlapati Nirmala, Katla Rajamma, and about 30 others paid the amounts either in cash or via PhonePe. The accused then allegedly took the villagers to the site, showed the land, and assured them it was the promised plots. Residents from nearby villages such as Chinnamunagala, Konijerla, and Gopavaram also paid money believing the same. However, the land was never handed over, and repeated inquiries to the accused were met with threats and evasive responses. Following the complaint, the Konijerla Police have registered a case and initiated an investigation.



## Grand Farewell Function for 10th Class Students

“Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle).“A grand farewell function for the 10th class students of the Zilla Parishad High School in Arempu village, Khammam Rural Mandal, was organized under the supervision of Headmaster Amanchi Satyanarayana. During the event, former Rural Mandal Sarpanchs and local leaders including Bandi Jagadish (District Congress Leader), Sarpanch Bandi Satish, Deputy Sarpanch Shaik Dawood, former APC Chairman Pappula Vijaya, former SMC Chairman Pappula Ramana, and former ZPTC Perumallapalli Mohan Rao addressed the students. They assured that all necessary facilities would continue to be provided every year and congratulated the previous batch for achieving 100% pass results in the 10th class. They also distributed incentives and cash prizes as promised and encouraged students to study

diligently this year to bring pride to their village, teachers, and parents. During the program, Pappula Ramadevi, a retired employee, once again provided students with exam pads and pens, continuing her annual tradition. Former ZPTC Mohan Rao awarded cash prizes of ₹3,500 each to the students who secured the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd ranks last year. Ward 2 member Tangellapalli Narayanamma distributed compasses, scales, and pencils to students. The event also included a welcome for the newly elected APC Chairman Ramadevi and a farewell honor for former Chairman Vijaya. The students' cultural programs entertained everyone present. The program was attended by Primary School Headmaster Nagulameera, senior journalist Venugopal, retired R.I Kanakayya, teachers Satish, Parvati, Kamala, ward members Kandula Bhaskar, Gunde Tirupayya, Motkuri Lakshmaya, students, office staff Rafi, and other villagers.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## RDI fund is a very good idea whose time came long back

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement of the Rs 1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund will go a long way in boosting not just R&D in industry but also encourage private sector participation in incorporating technological innovation in businesses. At a time when competition and other challenges in global trade are increasing, our companies can ill afford to lag behind their competitors. But that seems to be already happening. India spends very little on R&D. In reply to a question in Parliament in August, the government admitted to low gross expenditure on R&D (GERD) as a percentage of GDP; it has remained between 0.6 per cent to 0.7 per cent, which is below the global average and "lower than countries like China, South Korea, and US.

Another factor contributing to this is the relatively low investment by India's private sector in GERD, accounting for only around 36 per cent, whereas in the aforementioned countries, private sector contributions is more than 70 per cent." The government, while accepting low expenditure on R&D, often tends to gloss over the serious shortcomings. In his speech, for instance, PM Modi said, "In the last decade, our R&D expenditure has doubled, the number of patents registered in India has increased 17 times... Even in startups, India has now become the third largest startup ecosystem in the world. " Today, more than 6,000 of our deep-tech startups are working in areas like clean energy, advanced materials. India's semiconductor sector has also taken off now. Talking about bio-economy, it was worth \$10 billion in 2014; today it has reached around \$140 billion." He also talked about India's "promising presence" in green hydrogen, quantum computing, deep-sea research, and critical minerals. According to World Bank data, India's R&D expenditure in 2020 was 0.65 per cent of its GDP, whereas the figures in the same year for China, South Korea and the US were 2.56 per cent, 5.21 per cent, and 3.59 per cent. Imagine the US, with its seven times more GDP than India's, still spending more than five times in percentage terms than India!

The US doesn't want any letup in its supremacy in science: it has the strongest science and technological base in the world; over 70 per cent of Nobel science prize winners are Americans; and yet its focus on R&D stays undiminished. No slacking in efforts, no complacency. And we, in India, focus so little on R&D. Against this backdrop, the RDI fund is a valuable state intervention. The Department of Science & Technology will manage the fund through a two-tier structure. At the apex level, there will be a special purpose fund under which the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) will hold and manage the Rs 1 lakh crore corpus. At the second level will be fund managers, including alternative investment funds, development finance institutions, and non-banking finance companies. Independent investment committees will guide the fund managers to identify and recommend projects for support. The government's intention is very good, and the structure for utilizing the RDI fund also seems satisfactory. "India is working to build a modern innovation ecosystem and is focusing on improving the ease of doing research," the Prime Minister said. The success of the scheme, therefore, will now depend on the granular details of the structure and its implementation.

## Public Governance – Progress Planning Program Rally

"Chinnambavi Mandala" (Indian Chronicle) "As part of the Praja Palana – Pragathi Pranaliika (99 Days Action Plan), an awareness rally was organized on Friday at Chinnambavi Mandal headquarters. The rally was flagged off by MPDO Surna Adarsh Goud, Mandal Tahsildar Srinivas, MPO Ramaswamy, and APO Dhanunjay Raj. Officials informed that various programmes will be conducted for 99 days from March 6 to June 12 in different villages of Chinnambavi Mandal to create awareness among the public about government welfare schemes and to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries avail the benefits.



After the rally, mandal officials, students, and colony residents took a pledge. Speaking on the occasion, MPDO Surna Adarsh Goud and Tahsildar Srinivas said that under the Praja Palana – Pragathi Pranaliika programme, special focus will be given to issues such as sanitation, drinking water supply, drainage system, and road development in villages and towns. They also stated that the main objective of the programme is to increase public awareness about government schemes and ensure that all eligible people become beneficiaries. MPDO Surna Adarsh Goud, Tahsildar Srinivas, MPO Ramaswamy, APO Dhanunjay Raj, Office Junior Assistants Srinivasulu and Bheemayya, Panchayat Operator Sampangi Eshwar, Tahsildar office staff, teachers, students, and people from various villages participated in the programme.

# ATMS to make national highways safer



"S. Harpal Singh, Adilabad, March 7\*\*Watch out you compulsive traffic rule breakers, 'big brother' is watching everything including the movement of your vehicle on the busy national highway. Yes, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is almost through with introducing the Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS), a part of the digital infrastructure in the country aimed at enhancing safety, monitoring traffic and enforcing traffic laws. "As far as the NH 44 stretch in Adilabad district is concerned, the ATMS will supplement the efforts, including campaign like Arrive Alive, already launched by Adilabad Superintendent of Police Akhil Mahajan in controlling accidents. The most effective and visible measure to control accidents is at the highly treacherous and accident prone Seetagondi ghat road in the form of the 19 rumble strips laid at a distance of about 100 mtr from each other on the downhill road towards Adilabad. "The initiative is not conclusive and more safety measures are likely to be introduced on this road in near future. Mr. Mahajan constantly studies the traffic trends in order to devise improved means of accident control. "Of late, road users would have noticed a single pole in the median of national highways positioned all along at an interval of one km. These poles are fixed with sophisticated cameras, antennas, solar plates and batteries etc. "According to open information sources, the cameras are high resolution pan-tilt-zoom devices meant to monitor traffic flow, detect accidents and stalled vehicles on the highways. In fact, the AI driven Video Incident Detection System (VIDES) enables the cameras to detect 14 types of incidents and violations including wrong



lane driving, pedestrian presence and animal movement. "The cameras also help in detection of incidents in real time allowing for immediate despatch of patrol vehicles or ambulances and a panic button to seek help as it is directly connected to a control room. The automatic number plate recognition function and relevant sensors of the cameras help in reading number plates as well as other violations like speeding, no seat belt, no helmet etc which will be useful in generating fines automatically whenever such move is adopted in the country.

## Public Administration Progress Plan in 99 days of action program

Wanaparthy District Collector Adarsh Surabhi "Wanaparthy District Local Body Collector Khimya Nayak



"Wanaparthy District Correspondent Indian Chronicle "As part of the 99-day program of the Public Administration Progress Plan, a cleanliness program was organized near the Eco Park in Wanaparthy town. District Collector Adarsh Surabhi participated in this program and personally removed the garbage in the vicinity of the park. Along with the District Collector, Additional Collector Local Bodies Kheemya Nayak and Municipal Vice Chairman Madhusudhan Goud held brooms and cleaned the surroundings. Speaking on the occasion, the Collec-



tor said that as part of the Public Administration Progress Plan, the district He said that special importance is being given to cleanliness. He said that people should keep their homes and surroundings clean and that many types of seasonal diseases can be prevented through cleanliness. The Collector called on everyone to actively participate in these programs and contribute to building a clean environment. Municipal Commissioner Venkateswarlu, DPRO Seetharam, CPO Harikrishna, DYSO Sudheer Reddy, district officials, municipal staff and other staff participated in this program.

## BRS Leader Jalli Mohan Repairs Borewell with Personal Funds Colony Residents Express Gratitude



"KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, March 7 (Indian Chronicle) "Residents of Mahila Bhavan Line in Chilukanagar Division informed BRS senior leader Jalli Mohan that a borewell in their locality had been out of order for the past few months and was not functioning. "After learning that municipal officials had not taken steps to repair the borewell, Jalli Mohan spent ?10,000 from his own funds and arranged for the borewell to be repaired. The residents of the colony expressed their special gratitude to him for taking the initiative and resolving the issue. "Speaking on the occasion, Jalli Mohan requested the residents to bring any problems in the colony to his notice. He assured that he would always stand at the forefront to resolve public is-



sues. He further stated that if problems are brought to his attention, he would take them to the concerned officials and also to the notice of the local MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy to ensure their resolution. "BRS leaders Masa Shekhar, Dhanunjay Chari, Balayya, Jalli Bharat, Nandu, Farina Begum and others participated in the program.

## Brokers plundering fisheries resources with banned gillnets

### Illegal poaching with the help of Chinnambavi brokers



fy in river basins, ponds and ponds and raise them in order to improve the livelihood of fishermen. While fish fry are being purchased for crores of rupees and raised in rivers, local fishermen are expressing their grievances that not only fish larger than a kilogram, but also small, small and egg-shaped fish fry are being caught with prohibited fishing nets, which is making the lives of fishermen difficult. Locals say that some non-locals, in the eyes of some ruling party leaders, are acting as if they are blind to the bribes given by smugglers who are looting the fishery resources to the local mandal revenue, police machinery and fisheries department officials. Local area where fishing nets are prohibited Officials are fishing in broad daylight with nets The eggs are dried in broad daylight and arranged in rows. To other places by postal vehicles Why are the authorities moving? Mandal people are not taking action Expressing concern. Fisheries Department Officers, Revenue officers, Police apparatus, locals Fishermen, various people within the mandal The people of the villages are filled with grief and open arms.

"Wanaparthy Correspondent Indian Chronicle "Andhra fishermen are continuing to fish in dozens of prohibited fishing nets in the outskirts of Gadda Baswapur, Bekkem, Gudem, Peddamarur, ChinnaMarur, Vellaturu, Ayyavaripalli, Kalur, Chellepadu, and these villages in the Krishna river basin of Chinnambavi mandal of Wanaparthy district. Brokers in various villages under Chinnambavi mandal are bringing Andhra fishermen and continuing to fish with prohibited fishing nets for commissions. Agent smugglers are hunting and looting even small fish in broad daylight with prohibited fishing nets. The Telangana state government is ambitiously working to ensure the livelihood of fishermen. As part of the improvement, the fisheries department has decided to release fish



## BJP Mandal Training Camps Begin Grandly in Khammam District

"Strong Response to BJP Training Sessions Aimed at Building Capable Cadre "Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle) "Mandal-level training camps under the prestigious "Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Prashikshan Mahabhiyan – 2026" launched by the Bharatiya Janata Party began across Khammam district on Saturday in an enthusiastic atmosphere. The training programmes were inaugurated in Khammam II Town, Konijerla and Nelakondapalli mandals. The initiative is being organized by the party's Telangana state unit with the objective of developing capable party workers and building a strong organizational structure. Party leaders and key workers from various mandals attended the training camps in large numbers. Senior state-level leaders participated in the sessions and guided the cadre, injecting new enthusiasm among party ranks. The training programmes will continue across the district until the end of this month. The sessions began in accordance with party traditions. Leaders hoisted the party flag and lit the ceremonial lamp before the training began. The programme was formally inaugurated with the collective singing of the patriotic song "Vande Mataram." "The training session held in Konijerla was attended by BJP Khammam District President Nelluri Koteswara Rao. State Treasurer Devaki Vasudeva Rao and party leaders Gongura Venkateswarlu, Galla Satyanarayana, Mekala Nagender, Mandadapu Subba Rao, Kondapalli Sridhar Reddy, Gutta Venkateswarlu, Naidu Raghava Rao, Nunna Ravi Kumar, Veerelli Rajesh, Ravi Rathod, Vijaya Reddy, Shyam Rathod and Velpula Sudhakar also participated in the camp. They delivered detailed sessions on the topics assigned to them. Specially designed modules are being taught in the camps to provide party workers with a comprehensive understanding of political, social and ideological issues. Particular focus is being given to the concept of "Pancha Parivartana" (Five Transformations), which includes social harmony, environmental protection, promotion of Swadeshi awareness, family values, and citizens' duties. The sessions also cover the history and growth of the BJP, its ideological foundations, organizational functioning, future expansion strategies, and booth-level activities. In addition, workers are being trained in digital outreach, including the use of social media platforms and party digital tools such as the NaMo App and



Saral App. Leaders are also explaining the role of party workers in ensuring that central government welfare schemes reach every poor family, reflecting the spirit of Antyodaya. Discussions are being held on contemporary issues including the vision of Viksit Bharat, the challenges ahead, the role of the BJP in achieving national development, and effective engagement with the media. Party leaders stated that these training camps are serving as a strong platform to shape every worker into a committed activist capable of taking nationalist ideology to the grassroots level and effectively facing future challenges. Reiterating that the growth of workers is the growth of the party, the leadership aims to further strengthen the organization at the grassroots through these training programmes scheduled to continue till the end of the month.

## Khammam MP Raghuram Reddy Hands Over CMRF LOC of Rs 2.50 Lakh for Emergency Medical Treatment to Madaram Resident



Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "Khammam Member of Parliament Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy, through his special initiative, facilitated the sanction of ₹2,50,000 under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) for Gumpenapalli Vijayalakshmi, a resident of Madaram village in Karepalli mandal. Vijayalakshmi, who has been suffering from severe joint pain, recently met MP Raghuram Reddy and explained her health condition. Responding with compassion, the MP recommended her case to the state government for financial assistance. "Following his recommendation, ₹2.50 lakh was sanctioned through the CMRF to provide advanced medical treatment at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Hyderabad. On Saturday, MP Raghuram Reddy handed over the Letter of Credit (LOC) sanction document to the victim's family members at his residence in Hyderabad. He expressed hope that Vijayalakshmi would recover soon and return to good health. "On this occasion, the family members expressed their gratitude to MP Raghuram Reddy for understanding their difficulties and extending support for the medical treatment."

## Cases Can Be Resolved Quickly Through Mediation: High Court Judge Surepalli Nanda

Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "State High Court Judge and Member of the Board of Governors of the Telangana Mediation & Arbitration Centre, Surepalli Nanda, stated that cases can be resolved quickly through mediation and that disputes can be settled in a way that is acceptable to both parties. "On Saturday, High Court Judges Surepalli Nanda and K. Sharath, along with Khammam Principal District & Sessions Judge and District Legal Services Authority Chairman G. Rajagopal, and Telangana State Legal Services Authority Member Secretary C.H. Panchakshari, inaugurated a 40-hour mediation training program for advocates at the Nyaya Seva Sadan in the Khammam District Court premises. Speaking on the occasion, Justice Surepalli Nanda said that with the growing number of pending cases in courts, it has become crucial for parties to resolve certain disputes amicably through mediation. She noted that mediation helps deliver justice faster and also prevents relationships between the parties from deteriorating. She added that the Mediation Act has given legal recognition to this process. "She said the 40-hour training program was organized to create awareness among advocates about mediation. Participation in mediation must be voluntary for both parties, and mediators must act impartially and maintain confidentiality. She urged advocates to make good use of the training to develop communication skills and understand the legal aspects involved in mediation. "Justice Nanda explained that disputes related to family issues, property disagreements, business conflicts, service matters, child custody, and maintenance for parents can often be resolved quickly through mediation. However, criminal cases and cases involving serious allegations should not be taken up for mediation. "Mediators, she said, must patiently listen to both parties and work towards a win-win solution acceptable to everyone involved. "She also pointed out that under Section 89 of the Civil Procedure Code (CPC), courts can refer suitable cases for settlement through mediation. "High Court Judge K. Sharath said many cases remain pending for long periods due to minor issues.

Such disputes should be resolved through mediation



rather than prolonged litigation. He emphasized that mediation must take place with the consent of both parties and no one should be coerced. He noted that around 10% of cases in the state are currently being resolved through mediation. "Telangana State Legal Services Authority Member Secretary C.H. Panchakshari said that 600 advocates have already received mediation training, and another 50 advocates have begun training today. The program is being conducted by master trainers with 19 years of experience. "He added that states like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra are far ahead in implementing mediation practices and noted that mediation can also provide an additional source of income for advocates. "Khammam Principal District Judge G. Rajagopal said that master trainers from Chennai have come to provide advocates with practical skills in handling mediation cases. The training will help advocates learn how to resolve family disputes, motor vehicle accident cases, and civil disputes effectively without increasing litigation. The program was attended by Bhadradi Kothagudem District Principal Judge Vasanth Patil, district judges, advocates, and other officials.

## Lung Care Is Key to Good Health: Dr. Katragadda Yamuna

Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "Prominent citizens Dr. Katragadda Yamuna, Nunna Nageswara Rao, and bank employee K. Ramesh stated that people can maintain a strong and healthy lifestyle only by following and implementing the medical advice given by doctors. A free medical camp was successfully conducted on Saturday at Manchikanti Function Hall as part of the monthly health camp program. The camp was organized by BVK and the CPM Party Khammam Two Town Committee, which conducts such camps every month to serve the poor. On the occasion, about 400 patients were examined and provided with blood pressure and diabetes tests, while patients suffering from epilepsy and other conditions were given free medicines sufficient for one month. "Renowned chest specialist Dr. Katragadda Yamuna conducted ECG and PFT (Pulmonary Function Test) examinations free of cost for several patients. Speaking at the event, she said that protecting lung health is essential for overall well-being. She advised people to follow a balanced diet regularly to improve longevity and maintain good health. She also urged everyone to stay away from harmful habits such as smoking and alcohol consumption. "Bank employee K. Ramesh appreciated the organizers for conducting a medical camp every month in Khammam city that benefits the poor. He also promised financial support from his family to cover the cost of medicines for one month. CPM Khammam District Secretary Nunna Nageswara Rao criticized governments for showing negligence toward public healthcare. He demanded that the state government

allocate more funds to the health sector in the upcoming budget. He also urged authorities to fill vacant posts in



government hospitals. He expressed concern that poor and middle-class people face severe financial difficulties when they are forced to seek treatment in private hospitals, and stressed the need to strengthen the public healthcare system. "Free medical tests and medicines were provided under the supervision of doctors C. Bharavi, P. Subbarao, Jetta Rangarao, Adapa Jayashree, and Vinusha. "Among those who attended the program were CPM Khammam Division Secretary Y. Vikram, leaders Y. Srinivasa Rao, P. Jhansi, M. Subbarao, Bodapatla Sudarshan, J. Venkanna Babu, C.H. Bhadrani, Vasireddy Veerabhadram, P. Shivanarayana, S.K. Afzal, Prameela, Vijayalakshmi, and Sita Ramashekharam, along with several others.

## Social Welfare Officer Injured in Road Accident



Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "A Social Welfare Department officer, T. Balakrishna (44), working at the ASEO Office in Sathupalli, Khammam district, was injured in a road accident that occurred near Tanikella on Saturday. "According to reports, the accident took place while he was traveling to Wyrva on official duty. Upon receiving information, Dr. Kesagani Rajasekhara Goud, DCHS, reached the accident spot and personally shifted the injured officer to the Wyrva Area Hospital, where he was provided with immediate medical treatment.

## Women Given Priority in All Sectors Under Congress Government: Former Corporator Mandumula Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy



KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, March 7 (Indian Chronicle): "Former Uppal Corporator Mandumula Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy stated that after the Congress party came to power in the state, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has been giving top priority to women in all sectors. She said that during her tenure as corporator

in Bhagayat, funds worth ₹50 crore were sanctioned for various development works including a community hall, sports ground, roads, and other infrastructure projects. She added that these works will soon be formally inaugurated by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy also mentioned that the credit for providing around 50% reservation for women in municipal and gram panchayat elections, thereby ensuring their participation in governance, goes to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. She further stated that the government is giving importance to women in all sectors with the aim of making them economically strong and self-reliant. The Chief Minister is also working towards the goal of making one crore women in the state millionaires, she added. Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy spoke as the chief guest at the International Women's Day celebrations organized by the Bhagayat HMDA Layout Association in Uppal. The program was attended by Mekala Madhusudan Reddy, Sujatha Reddy, Swapna, Ravali, Lingampalli Ramakrishna, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Swathi Reddy, and several women participants.

## International Women's Day Celebrations at StemsSpark Resonance School, Srinagar



Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "International Women's Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at StemsSpark Resonance School located in Srinagar Colony, Khammam city. The event was organized under the leadership of School Director Konda Krishnaveni. "Speaking on the occasion, Director Konda Krishnaveni said that women have overcome many economic, social, traditional, and political challenges to achieve remarkable success in various fields. She stated that International Women's Day, celebrated every year on March 8, symbolizes women's achievements and empowerment. She emphasized that women's empowerment is essential for the development of the nation and added that prosperity and success flourish wherever women are respected. She encouraged girl students to follow the path of inspiring women and strive to succeed in today's competitive world. She also conveyed her warm Women's Day greetings to everyone. "Another School Director, Konda Sridhar Rao,

stated that women are the foundation of society and that respecting women is everyone's responsibility. He highlighted that great women such as Savitribai Phule, Mother Teresa, Malala Yousafzai, and Kalpana Chawla have set inspiring examples for the world. He said that StemsSpark Resonance Srinagar School is providing many facilities to develop confidence and competitiveness among girl students and aims to shape them into strong and capable individuals. He wished that women achieve empowerment in all fields and extended his greetings on the occasion of International Women's Day. "During the program, the management appreciated all the women working at StemsSpark Resonance School in Srinagar as teachers and non-teaching staff. Women teachers who have been performing their duties with dedication were specially honored. "The event was attended by the school principal, teaching and non-teaching staff, and students, who celebrated International Women's Day in a grand manner.

## Women Should Excel in All Fields Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy

Kishore Vaddepalli, Uppal, March 7 (Indian Chronicle): "Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that women should excel in all fields. "On the occasion of International Women's Day, Women's Day celebrations were held grandly in Venkat Reddy Nagar Division under the leadership of Dr. B. V. Chari. The MLA attended the program as the chief guest and addressed the gathering. "Speaking on the occasion, he said that women should compete equally with men in all sectors and assured that he would extend full support to them in every possible way. "BRS party state leaders Pasula Prabhakar Reddy, Srinivas Reddy, Narendra Raj Birudar, Dinesh Chettukuri, Saritha, Yadamma, Ganesh, Madduri Srinivas, Dandu Santosh, Swapna, Janaki, Aishwarya, Bhagya Rekha, Gopal, Lavangu Naveen, Chiranjeevi and others participated in the program.



## District Administration Focuses on Quality Medical Services in Government Hospitals

Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), March 7, "District Collector K. Hariitha has instructed medical officials to ensure improved healthcare services for all patients visiting government health centres across the district. She directed the medical staff to work responsibly so that people seeking treatment do not face any inconvenience. "The Collector emphasized the need to provide adequate medical facilities in government hospitals and to ensure that patients receive timely treatment. She specifically advised medical staff to give special attention to pregnant women, children, and the elderly. "Officials were also asked to regularly monitor key aspects in hospitals, including cleanliness, availability of medicines, and the presence of doc-



tors. The Collector stressed that all necessary measures should be taken to provide quality healthcare services to the public. "She further directed officials to effectively implement the

government's health programmes aimed at safeguarding the well-being of district residents. As part of the "Praja Palana Pragathi Pranal" programme, the Collector participated in a

cleanliness drive at the premises of a Primary Health Centre. On the occasion, she personally picked up a broom and helped clean the surroundings.

## Uppal Congress Senior Leaders Extend Congratulations to Vem Narendra Reddy



\*\*\*KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, March 7 (Indian Chronicle): "Senior leaders of the Congress Party from the Uppal constituency expressed their happiness over the selection of Vem Narendra Reddy, senior Congress leader and advisor to Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, as the party's Rajya Sabha candidate. "On this occasion, senior Congress leaders from the Uppal constituency met Vem Narendra Reddy and conveyed their congratulations. Those who met him included Janumpalli Venkateshwar Reddy, former AS Rao Nagar corporator Pavani Manipla Reddy, senior Congress leader Gaddam Ravikumar, Ramantapur contested corporator and Congress Party in-charge Tavidaboyina Giribabu, A-Block Congress Party General Secretary Survi Murali Goud, and Edavalli Narasimha. "Speaking on the occasion, Vem Narendra Reddy said that everyone who works sincerely in the Congress Party will receive due recognition, and that his appointment itself stands as an example of this.

## Women's Day Special Story: Dr. Hema Vanasarla

"Renowned dancer who studied, taught and passed on Kuchipudi dance to the next generation. Hema Vanasarla stands as a proof of versatile talent. SVS Kala Nikethan, a dance institute she was Founder and she aims not only to teach dance, but also to prepare students who will become gurus in the future. "Despite living in America after marriage, continuing her artistic endeavors without stopping shows her commitment. "Though my physical presence is in America, my heart will always be with my dance and my students," said Dr. Hema Vanasarla said. Following the Gurushishya Parampara, she specifically trains students to not only dance independently, but to grow to the level of teaching others. "Presently SVS Kala Nikethan is successfully running as three branches. In particular, Dr. Conducted by Hema Vanasarla's own disciples, her legacy is proudly

carried forward. Continuing the guidance given by their guru, this institute stands out for imparting the same training to the next generation. "Dr. who received three master's degrees. Hema Vanasarla's have a special interest in education. While juggling her professional responsibilities as an engineer, balancing family responsibilities, training students as the founder of a dance company, she is also recognized as a successful choreographer. Moreover, he always considers himself a constant learner and keeps on learning new things. "Career, family, art, and continuing education – moving forward in coordinating these four areas, Dr. The reign of Hema Vanasarla stands as a symbol of women's self-confidence and achievement. On the occasion of Women's Day, her achievements and the artistic legacy she created deserve a special mention.

## Sangareddy MLA Chinta Prabhakar met District Additional Collector Paandu

drinking water problems in the villages, the government's Indiramma House Scheme for the poor be implemented expeditiously, and the Indiramma Houses allotted to the MLA be sanctioned expeditiously. "Similarly, he appealed to allocate suitable land for the construction of a school building in Chimnapur village of Kandi mandal, and to take steps to start the work expeditiously as donors are ready for the construction of the building. The MLA reminded that this matter has already been brought to the notice of the District Collector several times. "Also, the MLA requested that Rs. 2.86 crore be sanctioned to Kandi, Kondapur, Sadashivapet and Sangareddy mandals of Sangareddy constituency for the works proposed under the Employment Guarantee Scheme for the year 2026-2027. He also appealed to the district administration to cooperate in ensuring the speedy completion of development works. On this occasion, the MLA said that Additional Collector Paandu will look into the issues, discuss with the concerned officials and take necessary action. Mandal party presidents Madhusudhan Reddy, Vitthal, BRS leaders GV Srinivas, Parusharam and others were present at the event.



Sangareddy MLA Chinta Prabhakar met District Additional Collector Paandu at the Collectorate office in Sangareddy on Saturday. On this occasion, he brought to the notice of the Additional Collector several problems faced by the people in Sangareddy constituency. He requested that new boreholes be sanctioned to solve the

## Learn know solutions , ACUMENTORR private limited and manson school of Business conducted

"Women's Day Session – Event conducted Transcript Summary"Date: March 7"Venue: Bhaskar Auditorium, Birla Science Center, Hyderabad" "A special session was conducted in observance of International Women's Day on March 7 at Bhaskar Auditorium, Birla Science Center, Hyderabad. "The program was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, Dr. Sasikala Garu, a gynecologist, who spoke about the importance of women in society, emphasizing their strength, resilience, and crucial role in shaping families and communities. "The Guest of Honor, Ms. Jyotidasan Advocate, addressed the gathering and explained the legal rights and protections available for women, highlighting the importance of awareness about legal safeguards and empowerment through knowledge. "Following the inaugural speeches, children recited verses from the Bhagavad Gita, adding a spiritual and cultural element to the program. "After this, Dr. Samudrala Sai Revanth, a practicing homeopathic physician with an M.D. in Homeopathy (specialization in Psychiatry), delivered a session on stress management, discussing practical ways to manage mental stress and maintain emotional well-being in



daily life. "The program continued with Ms. Hima Vidya, a CMA (Cost and Management Accountant), who shared business and financial guidance, encouraging women to develop entrepreneurial skills, become financially independent, and build economic strength. "The session focused on women's empowerment through health awareness, legal knowledge, mental well-being, and financial independence, making the event informative and inspiring for the participants."

## Awareness Program on Child Marriages by District Legal Services Authority, Khammam



\*\*\*Avnreddy Khammam Bureau Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "The District Legal Services Authority, Khammam, organized an awareness program for 10th-grade students at Pallipadu Zilla Parishad High School, within Vaira Municipality, focusing on the prevention of child marriages, child labor, and the dangers of drugs and intoxicants. During the program, female teachers at the school were honored and wished for International Women's Day in recognition of their contributions. The event was attended by Aided Organization Coordinator Srinivas, Save My Village Child Foundation representatives Sujata and P.L.V. Madhavi Latha, along with the school's teachers and students, who actively participated in the awareness

## Gravity Pharma Medicines Meet U.S. FDA Standards

Gravity Pharma earning global trust  
Production of 10 billion tablets annually with expert team



\* "Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7 (Indian Chronicle): "Gravity Pharma, a pharmaceutical company manufacturing high-quality medicines in compliance with U.S. FDA standards, is gaining international credibility. Established in 2014 in Hyderabad's Pashamylaram, the company began its business operations in the United States and has steadily grown to secure a prominent position in the global pharmaceutical sector. "Standing alongside leading pharmaceutical manufacturers in the U.S., Gravity Pharma has built a strong reputation for quality and reliability. Medicines produced in India under U.S. FDA standards are available in major pharmacy chains in the United States, including Walgreens, Walmart, and CVS. "Recently, the company successfully cleared an FDA audit without any observations, once again demonstrating its commitment to high quality standards. After launching its business operations in India in January 2025, the company has already gained the trust of more than one lakh doctors. "Gravity Pharma celebrated its first anniversary with grand events in Warangal and Karimnagar districts. The company oper-

ates a modern manufacturing facility spread across nearly four lakh square feet, producing approximately 10 billion tablets annually. "The organization has a highly skilled workforce consisting of around 300 PhD experts and 500 M.Pharmacy professionals, forming a dedicated team that supports advanced research and strict quality standards in pharmaceutical production. "Gravity Pharma offers a range of medicines in areas such as cardiac health, diabetes management, central nervous system health, and general wellness. With the support of cutting-edge technology and expert professionals, the company continues to strengthen its presence in the international pharmaceutical market. "Under the leadership of Managing Director Dheeraj Gorukanti, along with COO Tilak, India Business GMs Naresh, Vinod, Krishna Kishore, and Neuro Division GM Narender, the company is moving forward on a strong growth path. "The event was attended by Khammam Neuro Society General Secretary and noted neurosurgeon Dr. K. Jagadeesh Babu, President Dr. P. Asadharan, Organizing Chairman Dr. G. V. Murali, and several other dignitaries.

## "Women Play a Vital Role in Society": CP Avinash Mohanty

\*\*\*NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "International Women's Day celebrations were held in a grand manner at Srisastu Convention Hall in Uppal under the aegis of the Malkajgiri Police Commissionerate. Women police officers and staff from various wings of the Malkajgiri police participated enthusiastically in the event. Malkajgiri Police Commissioner Avinash Mohanty, IPS, attended the program as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, he highlighted the significance of International Women's Day and stated that women possess immense determination and capability. With dedication and commitment, women can achieve success in every field, he said, adding that women are making remarkable progress and competing on par with men in various sectors. He emphasized that respecting women is an integral part of Indian culture and noted that women today are playing leadership roles in many areas across the country. He encouraged women police personnel to perform their duties with confidence, dedication, and courage while effectively balancing their professional and personal responsibilities. The Commissioner appreciated the services rendered by women personnel in the Malkajgiri Police Commissionerate. He noted that they are efficiently handling responsibilities in several departments including law and order, traffic management, crime investigation, and women's safety. He also mentioned their role in supporting and counseling victims of domestic violence and other social issues. He stated that the achievements of women in different fields serve as an inspiration to the younger generation. He reaffirmed that the Malkajgiri Police Commissionerate remains committed to ensuring the welfare, safety, and professional growth of women personnel. Other guest speakers also attended the event and delivered seminars on topics such as health, nutrition, financial management, and psychology. Several senior officers, DCPs, women police officers, and staff from the Malkajgiri Commissionerate attended the program and made the event a success.



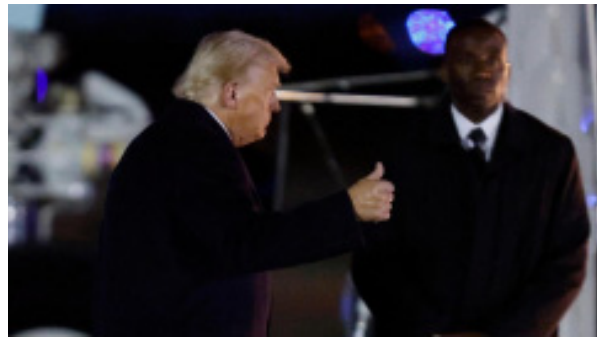
## International Women's Day Celebrated Grandly at Triveni



\*\*\*Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter March 7, (Indian Chronicle): "The Triveni Talent School in Khammam town hosted a grand program to celebrate International Women's Day. "School Principal Rajendra Prasad, who presided over the event, emphasized the importance of women's empowerment and their achievements. He highlighted that women are not weak but strong pillars of society, and that without women, human survival itself would be impossible. He urged that girls should be allowed to grow, pursue higher education, excel in prestigious jobs, and succeed even in defense and other traditionally male-dominated fields. "The program also

paid tribute to national icons like Mother Teresa, Savitribai Phule, and Rani Lakshmi Bai, as well as internationally renowned athletes P.V. Sindhu and Mary Kom, who have brought global recognition to India. The principal encouraged all the girls present to excel in their chosen fields with dedication and confidence. "During the event, female teachers working at the school were honored for their contributions. Among the participants were Central Team member Archana Thakur, Campus In-charge Charles, Transport In-charge Sandeep, Vice Principal Mustafa, female teachers, and students, who all actively took part in the celebrations.

## Donald Trump says North Korea is 'sort of a nuclear power'



GNS News Agency, March 7

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that North Korea was "sort of a nuclear power" as he left the United States for Asia on a trip that could include a meeting with Pyongyang's leader Kim Jong Un. Asked aboard Air Force One whether he was open to North Korea's demand to be recognised as a nuclear state as a precondition for dialogue with Washington, Mr. Trump replied: "Well, I think they are sort of a nuclear power. "When you say they have to be recognized as a nuclear power, well, they got a lot of nuclear weapons, I'll say that." Mr. Trump is expected in South Korea on Wednesday (October 29, 2025) for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum. U.S. media have previously reported officials from his administration have privately discussed setting up a meeting between Trump and North Korean leader Kim, who he last held talks with in 2019. Mr. Trump has said he hopes to meet Mr. Kim again — possibly this year.

Mr. Kim said last month he had "fond memories" of

Mr. Trump and was open to talks if the United States dropped its "delusional" demand that Pyongyang give up its nuclear weapons. On Friday (October 24, 2025), South Korea's Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said he believed there was a "considerable" chance that Trump will meet Kim during his visit to the peninsula next week. But a senior U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told reporters in a call on Friday (October 24, 2025) that a meeting "is not on the schedule for this trip." While no official announcements of the duo's meeting have been made, South Korea and the United Nations Command halted tours of the Joint Security Area (JSA) from late October to early November. Mr. Kim and Mr. Trump last met in 2019 at Panmunjom in the JSA in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas — the only place where soldiers from both sides face each other on a regular basis. Minister Chung said North Koreans have been spotted "sprucing up" areas near the JSA for the first time this year — cleaning, pulling weeds, tidying flower beds and taking photos. Mr. Kim met Mr. Trump three times for high-profile summits during the U.S. leader's first term. The duo's last and impromptu meeting at Panmunjom was hastily arranged after Trump extended an invitation to Kim on Twitter a day prior. That event saw the two leaders shake hands over the concrete slabs dividing North and South before Trump walked a few paces into Pyongyang's territory — becoming the first US president ever to set foot on North Korean soil. But talks eventually collapsed over just how much of its nuclear arsenal the North was willing to give up and what Pyongyang would get in return. Since then, North Korea has repeatedly declared itself an "irreversible" nuclear state.

## Donald Trump aims to clinch deal with China's Xi during Asia trip

GNS News Agency, March 7

U.S. President Donald Trump will test his deal-making capabilities on a trip next week to Asia, a region battered by his hardball trade policies, while doubts hang over his highly anticipated meeting with China's Xi Jinping. Mr. Trump, who leaves Washington on Friday (October 24, 2025) night, is set for a five-day trip spanning Malaysia, Japan and South Korea, his first to the region and his longest journey abroad since taking office in January.

The Republican leader hopes to pile up trade, critical mineral and ceasefire deals before turning to the toughest challenge, a face-to-face with Mr. Xi in South Korea. Mr. Trump is also working to maintain the signature foreign policy achievement of his second term, a fragile ceasefire he helped to strike in the Israel-Gaza conflict, while the Russian war in Ukraine rages and a trade war with China shows little sign of ending. U.S. and China trade threats on key minerals, technology

Washington and Beijing have hiked tariffs on each other's exports and threatened to cut off trade in critical minerals and technologies altogether. The trip was formally announced by the White House on Thursday (October 23, 2025). Details remain in flux, including the meeting between leaders of the world's two largest economies. Neither side expects a breakthrough that would restore terms of trade that existed before Mr. Trump's second-term inauguration in January, according to a person familiar with the conversations. Instead, talks between the two sides to prepare for the meeting focused on managing disagreements and modest improvements. An interim agreement could include limited relief on tariffs, an extension of current rates, or China committing to buy U.S.-made soybeans and Boeing airplanes. Beijing reneged on similar promises in a 2020 deal with Trump. Washington could let more high-end computer chips flow to Beijing, which in turn could loosen controls on rare earth magnets that have angered Mr. Trump. On Wednesday (October 22, 2025), U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the Mr. Trump-Mr. Xi talk would be a "pull-aside," suggesting nothing formal. Mr. Trump later told reporters the two would have "a pretty long meeting," allowing them to "work out a lot of our questions and our doubts and our tremendous assets together." China has not confirmed a meeting is planned. Trump set to visit three countries, meet world leaders Mira Rapp-Hooper, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution and former Biden administration official, said Mr. Trump's Asia policy has been defined by intense pressure on countries' trade policies and defense spending. "The high-level question on this trip is really, who does the United States stand with, and what does it stand for," she said. Mr. Trump is expected at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit, which starts on Sunday (October 26, 2025) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

There, he could oversee the signing of a ceasefire deal between Thailand and Cambodia. The deal would formal-



ize an agreement that ended the worst fighting in years between the two countries in July, though it falls short of a comprehensive peace deal. During his second term in office, Mr. Trump has branded himself as a global peacemaker. After that stop, Mr. Trump will head to Japan to meet Sanae Takaichi, the newly elected Prime Minister. Ms. Takaichi is expected to affirm plans by her predecessor to hike military spending and to make \$550 billion in Trump-directed investments in the U.S. Then, in Busan, South Korea, Mr. Trump plans to meet Mr. Xi ahead of an international trade summit. Mr. Trump is set to return to Washington before the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' forum gets under way, according to the schedule announced by the White House on Thursday. Mr. Trump has threatened to raise tariffs on Chinese imports to a total of some 155% from November 1 if they cannot strike a deal. That would almost certainly provoke a reaction from Beijing and end a truce that paused tit-for-tat hikes. Beyond trade, the two leaders are expected to discuss Taiwan, a long-running U.S.-China irritant, and Russia, a Chinese ally now subject to expanded U.S. sanctions over the war in Ukraine. "There's no intent from the U.S. side to discuss other issues," aside from China's trade, export controls and its purchases of Russian oil, according to a U.S. official, who said Mr. Trump would be prepared to reiterate previous responses if Mr. Xi raised other topics. Deal or no deal was not clear if Mr. Trump would try to resume trade negotiations with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, who is also traveling in Asia, after abruptly cutting off talks. The two "will likely see each other" on Wednesday at a dinner with other leaders, another official said. Mr. Trump is also trying to close trade deals with Malaysia and India, while shoring up a deal that has already been struck with South Korea. U.S. and South Korean relations have been strained by Seoul's concerns over the \$350 billion investment in U.S. companies sought by Trump and deportations of the country's foreign workers. South Korean President Lee Jae Myung wants Trump to pursue peace with North Korea's Kim Jong Un. U.S. officials considered, but never confirmed, a trip to the demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas, according to another person familiar with the discussions. Another U.S. official said on Friday that no Kim-Trump meeting was on the schedule for the trip.

## US eager to finalise trade deal with South Korea ahead of Trump-Lee summit

GNS News Agency, March 7

Washington: The United States is keen to "nail down" a trade deal with South Korea as soon as Seoul is willing to take "appropriate" commitments, a senior U.S. official said, as the two countries strive to bridge differences over how to implement Korea's \$350 billion investment pledge under the framework deal. The official made the remarks during an online press briefing amid uncertainty over whether Seoul and Washington could reach a breakthrough to finalise details of the trade deal before or during a summit between Korean President Lee Jae Myung and U.S. President Donald Trump, set for Wednesday in Korea.

Trump is set to pay a two-day state visit to Korea on Wednesday and Thursday, as Korea will host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in the southeastern city of Gyeongju on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, reports Yonhap news agency. "We are very keen to nail down a deal with Korea as soon as possible, as soon as they're willing to take the commitments that we think are appropriate," the official said. The official reaffirmed the Trump administration's interest in shipbuilding cooperation with South Korea.

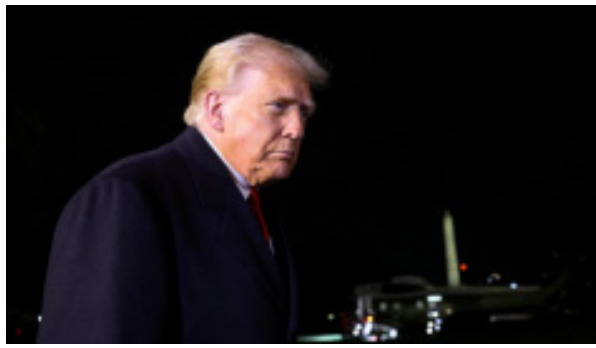
"We welcome their know-how, their capital and ... the general collaboration to help America revive its manufacturing, defense industry, shipbuilding and submarine building." The two countries reached their trade deal in late July, under which Seoul committed to investing \$350 billion in the U.S., among other pledges, in return for Washington's agreement to lower its "reciprocal" tariff and sector-specific duty on South Korean autos to 15 percent from 25



The US is keen to finalise a trade deal with South Korea once Seoul accepts "appropriate" commitments, a senior official said. The two nations are negotiating terms of a \$350 billion investment pledge ahead of the Trump-Lee summit in Korea.

percent. But the deal has yet to take effect amid negotiations to reconcile differences over a series of sticking points, including how to fund the investment package. In recent weeks, top South Korean officials, including Kim Yong-beom, the presidential chief of staff for policy, Finance Minister Koo Yun-cheol and Industry Minister Kim Jung-kwan, have visited Washington multiple times, underscoring Seoul's stepped-up efforts to reconcile differences over sticking points in the trade talks.

## Donald Trump slams 'dirty' Canada despite withdrawal of Reagan advertisement



GNS News Agency, March 7

U.S. President Donald Trump slammed Canada for playing "dirty" on Friday (October 24, 2025) as a row over an advertisement featuring former leader Ronald Reagan that prompted Trump to scrap trade talks showed no sign of abating. The Canadian province of Ontario said it would pull the offending anti-tariff ad on Monday so that negotiations could restart, after Mr. Trump alleged that the ad misrepresented the views of fellow Republican Reagan. But Mr. Trump showed no sign of backing down, saying Ontario should not have let it air during the first two games this weekend of baseball's World Series. Adding extra spice to the row, the World Series features a Canadian team, the Toronto Blue Jays, facing a US team, the Los Angeles Dodgers. The Blue Jays thrashed the Dodgers 11-4 in the first game on Friday (October 24, 2025). "Canada got caught cheating on a commercial, can you believe it?" Trump told reporters before heading on a trip to Asia.

"And I heard they were pulling the ad — I didn't know they were putting it on a little bit more. They could have pulled it tonight," Mr. Trump added. After a reporter said the ad would be pulled on Monday, Mr. Trump replied: "That's dirty play. But I can play dirtier than they can." Mr. Trump announced on his Truth Social network on Thursday (October 23, 2025) that he had "terminated" all negotiations with Canada over what he called the "fake" ad campaign. Less than 24 hours later, Ontario premier Doug Ford said he was

## Japan's new PM commits to higher defence spend, ties with India, Quad

GNS News Agency, March 7

In a dramatic announcement three days after she was sworn in, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said her government will ensure that Japan's defence spending would increase to 2% of its GDP by March 2026, two years ahead of schedule, even as she pledged support for "security partnerships" like the Quad, which includes India. Ms. Takaichi, who said the government's first priority is to tackle inflation and boost fiscal spending, was addressing the Japanese Parliament, or Diet, in an inaugural speech about her agenda in office. Ms. Takaichi, the country's first woman Prime Minister, also responded on Friday to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's congratulatory message on her appointment, saying she "looks forward" to promoting the Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

"The free, open, and stable international order with which we have become familiar is being significantly shaken by historical shifts in the balance of power and intensifying geopolitical competition," Ms. Takaichi said, citing Russia, China and North Korea as "serious concerns" and promising to deepen Japan's "multilateral security consultations" involving the U.S., South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, and the Quad. In an interview to The Hindu, Assistant Minister and Spokesperson at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Toshihiro Kitamura said India was a "unique" country for its leadership of the Global South, and that Ms. Takaichi was committed to following former PM Shinzo Abe's lead on the Indo-Pacific. Crucial partner "In order to promote the main pillar of the Japanese diplomacy, a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, India is a crucial partner. Prime Minister Takaichi is fully committed to promote further cooperation with India," Mr. Kitamura said. In the parliament speech, Ms. Takaichi also ordered a review of Japan's National Security, Strategic and Defence plans that included the commitment on raising defence expenditure.

Japan's GDP last year was about \$4 trillion (591 trillion Yen), and according to the National Security Strategy documents issued in 2022, defence spending was due to reach 11 trillion Yen, or 2%, only by the end of the financial year in 2027. The announcement on defence spending and the Indo-Pacific is significant as it comes a day before Ms. Takaichi leaves for Malaysia where she will meet with counterparts from ASEAN countries on October 26, and then will return to prepare for U.S. President Donald Trump's three-day visit to Japan beginning October 27. Ms. Takaichi promised to elevate the Japan-U.S. relationship to "even greater heights". It remains to be seen whether Ms. Takaichi

suspending the ads after talking to Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney about the spiraling row with Washington. "In speaking with Prime Minister Carney, Ontario will pause its U.S. advertising campaign effective Monday so that trade talks can resume," Ford said in a post on X. "Crooked ad" The Canadian ad used quotes from a radio address on trade that Reagan delivered in 1987, in which he warned against ramifications that he said high tariffs on foreign imports could have on the US economy. It cited Reagan as saying that "high tariffs inevitably lead to retaliation by foreign countries and the triggering of fierce trade wars," a quote that matches a transcript of his speech on the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library's website. The Ronald Reagan foundation wrote on X on Thursday (October 23, 2025) that the Ontario government had used "selective audio and video" and that it was reviewing its legal options. Mr. Trump said on Friday (October 24, 2025) night that it was a "crooked ad", adding that "they know Ronald Reagan loved tariffs." Mr. Trump and Mr. Carney are both set to be at a dinner on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in South Korea on Wednesday (October 29, 2025). But Mr. Trump said he had no plans to meet Mr. Carney. The latest twist in relations between the United States and Canada came just over two weeks after Carney visited Trump at the White House to seek a relaxation of stiff US tariffs. On Friday (October 24, 2025), Mr. Carney had sought to calm the situation, saying that his country was ready to resume "progress" on trade talks "when the Americans are ready." Canada has "to focus on what we can control, and realize what we cannot control," he added as he headed to Asia. Mr. Trump's global sectoral tariffs — particularly on steel, aluminum, and autos — have hit Canada hard, forcing job losses and squeezing businesses. For now, the United States and Canada adhere to an existing North American trade deal called the USMCA, which ensures that roughly 85 percent of cross-border trade in both directions remains tariff-free. But in a speech on Wednesday, Mr. Carney said that the United States has raised "its tariffs to levels last seen during the Great Depression." "Our economic strategy needs to change dramatically," Mr. Carney added, saying the process "will take some sacrifices and some



will also raise the Quad and scheduling the Summit due to be held in India later this year, which has been stalled due to India-U.S. tensions on trade issues.

Ms. Takaichi called Japan's population decline its "biggest problem", and struck a sharp note on immigration, suggesting controls on foreign nationals working in the country, including restrictions on land acquisition by them. "First, to clarify, PM Takaichi is not anti-immigrant or anti-migration," said Mr. Kitamura, responding to question about the concerns. "The Japanese population is declining, and we need foreign workforce to support, maintain and revitalise our economy," he said. PM Takaichi has appointed US-born Minister for Economic Security Kimi Onoda also as the "Minister in charge of a Society of Well-Ordered and Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals" to reflect the priority. "As regards to cooperation on skilling and workforce exchanges with India, the truth is that Japan does not have sufficient talent, particularly in IT and Science related industries, as India does," Mr. Kitamura added, referring to an "Action Plan" launched by PM Modi and former PM Shigeru Ishiba to promote 500,000 workforce exchanges over the next 5 years, including 50,000 skilled personnel and potential talents from India to Japan. "Prime Minister Takaichi will promote the agreement [India and Japan] have made," he said. Ms. Takaichi gave the parliament address after appointing her Cabinet, which includes several faces familiar to New Delhi. Foreign Minister Toshihiro Motegi was a minister in the Shinzo Abe cabinet (2017-19), while Internal Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi was the Foreign Minister (2021-23), under former PM Fumio Kishida, and travelled to Delhi for the G20 and Quad Foreign Minister's meeting. Meanwhile, 44-year-old Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi is the son of former Japanese PM Junichiro Koizumi, who travelled to India in 2005 to reset ties, set off strategic talks and launched the practice of annual summits with PM Manmohan Singh.

## Pakistan, Afghanistan to hold second round of border talks in Turkey

GNS News Agency, March 7

Islamabad: Pakistan and Afghan officials are set to hold the second round of talks in Turkey on Saturday to find a negotiated solution to the border tensions and curb terrorist activities from Afghan soil, officials said. The talks follow a temporary restoration of calm along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border after the first round of discussions was held in Doha on October 19. The dialogue was facilitated by Qatar and Türkiye, and both sides had agreed to meet again in Istanbul on October 25 to continue discussions aimed at addressing mutual security concerns. Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi in a statement on Friday confirmed that the agreed talks would go ahead as scheduled. Pakistan also looks forward to the establishment of a "concrete and verifiable monitoring mechanism" in the next meeting to be hosted by Türkiye in Istanbul "to address the menace of terrorism emanating from Afghan soil towards Pakistan and prevent any further loss of life of Pakistanis", he said. Andrabi emphasised that Pakistan, as a responsible state committed to regional peace and stability, does not seek escalation. However, he urged the Afghan Taliban authorities to honour their commitments to the international community and to take verifiable action against terrorist entities operating from Afghan territory. Andrabi reiterated Pakistan's demand for action against the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA). The spokesperson welcomed the outcome of the Doha meeting as a "first step" toward ensuring regional



peace and stability and appreciated the constructive roles of Qatar and Türkiye in facilitating the process. According to Andrabi, the earlier talks focused on immediate measures to halt cross-border terrorism against Pakistan and to restore peace and stability along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Afghan interim administration spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid also confirmed the Istanbul talks, saying the Afghan delegation would be led by Mawlawi Rahmatullah Najeeb, deputy minister at the Ministry of Interior. "The remaining issues (with Pakistan) will be discussed in the meeting," Mujahid said in a social media post. Pakistan has witnessed a renewed wave of militant attacks since the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 2021. Islamabad has repeatedly urged the Afghan authorities to rein in the TTP militants using Afghan soil to launch attacks inside Pakistan, but with limited success.

## China cracked down on coaching classes. Should India also do it?



The market reaction was instant and brutal. Billions of dollars in value were wiped from education giants like TAL Education and New Oriental. Stocks plummeted by as much as 60% in days. For Chinese families, this was a shock. The \$100 billion industry was suddenly gone. An ecosystem built on the hopes and fears of the middle class was dismantled by decree. But, this move did not come from nowhere. It was a response to a deep national crisis. The tutoring industry was only a symptom of a much deeper problem. At the heart of this pressure is the Gaokao, the national college entrance exam. It is a "single-plank bridge" that decides a student's entire future. Success is the only path to a good university and a good job. The first test, the Zhongkao, cuts the student body in half at age 15. Only about 50% go to academic high schools. The rest are sent to vocational schools, a path widely seen as a failure. This created a phenomenon known in China as neijuan, or "involution." It is an arms race where everyone works harder just to stay in the same place. If one child gets tutoring, all must. The private tutoring industry grew to feed this anxiety. It became a parallel education system, fueled by billions in venture capital. Marketing preyed on a parent's deepest fear: that their child would "lose at the starting line." This created a triple burden. Students lost their childhoods to endless homework and classes. Mental health issues soared. Parents faced a crushing financial burden. The high cost of education was also blamed for China's falling birth rate. This was a direct threat to long-term national security.

The state saw this as a loss of control. The industry was creating inequality, as the rich could buy a better education. It also undermined the Communist Party's ideological control over the young. And thus, the resultant "Double Reduction" policy was not a reform. It was a regulatory guillotine. Its core rule was simple: all tutoring firms for core subjects must become non-profits. This instantly killed the business model. The government also banned new licenses. It cut off all access to capital, banning IPOs and foreign investment. Publicly listed firms could no longer invest in the sector. It also banned tutoring on weekends, holidays, and summer vacations. These were the industry's most profitable times. The goal was clear. This was part of President Xi Jinping's "Common Prosperity" campaign. It was a move to curb the "disorderly expansion of capital." It was a reassertion of state control. The government, not the mar-

ket, would control the education of China's youth. The results were devastating. The industry collapsed. Within a year, 95% of offline tutoring firms were gone. New Oriental, a market giant, saw its value drop by 90%. It laid off 60,000 employees. The company pivoted to selling agricultural products on live streams just to survive. Other giants like TAL and Gaotu met similar fates. Millions of young, educated tutors lost their jobs overnight. The winners and losers. The policy created clear winners and losers. The losers were middle and lower-income families. They could no longer afford the group classes that gave their children a chance. The winners were the wealthy. They were unfazed by the ban. But, the policy's most predictable outcome was a new black market. The government destroyed the supply of tutoring but did nothing to reduce the demand. This underground market is secretive, unregulated, and incredibly expensive. Tutors are disguised as "nannies" or "family consultants." The policy's greatest irony is that it massively increased inequality. It took a widely available service and made it accessible only to the rich. Did the policy work? On the surface, some students got more sleep. Anxiety briefly fell. But the core problem was never touched. The Gaokao and Zhongkao still loom over every family. The pressure did not disappear - it just changed form. The government misdiagnosed the problem. It attacked the symptom, the tutoring industry, while leaving the disease, the high-stakes exam system, untouched. Lessons for India. And, this story is an urgent lesson for India. We see the same pressures here. Our system is also built on high-stakes exams like the JEE and NEET. These are our "single-plank bridges." This has fueled our own massive coaching industry. Cities like Kota are symbols of this pressure. And, the toll is devastating. The parallels to pre-crackdown China are impossible to ignore.

But, the most important lesson is that a China-style sledgehammer on coaching centers would be a disaster for India. It would not stop the demand. It would simply create an expensive, underground black market. This would lock out middle-class and poor families. It would make our education system more unequal, not less. In this context, India seems to be choosing a different, wiser path. In 2024, the government released guidelines to regulate coaching centers, not annihilate them. This framework bans misleading ads and enrollment of young children. It aims to curb the worst excesses. This is a pragmatic short-term step. But regulation alone is not enough. The only true, long-term solution is deep, systemic reform. We must cure the disease, not just manage the symptoms. This is the promise of India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The NEP aims to focus on critical thinking and holistic learning. It calls for reducing exam pressure and creating multiple, respected pathways to success. It tries to break the idea that one exam defines a life. Thus, if you think of it, India stands at a fork in the road. The government must pursue a two-pronged strategy. First, it must enforce its new regulations on the coaching industry. Second, it must commit to the long, difficult task of implementing the NEP's vision.

## The orthodontist who built a museum of cameras in Chennai

Back in 1997, a Chennai-based orthodontist held his first twin-lens reflex camera at a flea market in the city, and that find set off a lifelong passion. All these decades later, it has grown into a collection of about 5,800 still photography cameras, earning him a Guinness World Record for the largest collection of cameras and the most distinctive assemblage of film cameras. Each piece, from rare Polaroid models and box and folding cameras to pocket-sized miniatures, finds its place in his camera museum in Kovalam. Behind this vast collection, A.V. Arun balances his hobby while practising dentistry full-time since the 1990s. "I have clearly kept my profession and passion distinct," says Dr. Arun. "Practising dentistry is simply essential. It helps me run my life and sustain it. However, what makes it worth living is always my passion." Dr. Arun's collector's instinct was a part of him even before he arrived at dentistry. It started with bottle caps when he was in school, then miniature perfume bottles, and somewhere along the way, it evolved into a camera museum.

Whenever his dentistry conferences take him to other parts of the world, the orthodontist finds himself at the local flea markets after work. "Once, in Australia, I picked up about 40 cameras for a throwaway price," he says. "So, you will find pieces in the museum from all the crannies of the world." The precision and patience that dentistry demands seems to spill over seamlessly into his world of cameras too. When asked how he manages to juggle between both, he says the answer is simple: "No one's ever too busy." "After clinic hours, I come home to reading about cameras, cleaning them, tinkering with them -- sometimes even until 1 a.m." For someone surrounded by thousands of cameras, curiously, Dr. Arun doesn't take too many photos himself.



"Not many develop film these days," he says. "It's too expensive. But I'm more of a collector than a photographer." Collector's eye When Dr. Arun first started collecting film cameras, there was not much competition, but that changed over time. "Once, someone from Chandigarh called me up saying he had a completely wooden, British-make camera," he recalls. "Since it was made that way, courier wasn't ideal, and I took a train all the way there to bring it back myself." Well, that camera, dating back to the 1870s, is one of the oldest in his collection. "These days, collecting cameras is slowly making a comeback among young people too. And it is quite true -- what is useless to one person could be treasure to another. Only a true collector can see that." The camera museum in Kovalam opens only on Sundays, and only by appointment, to welcome fellow camera aficionados. Alongside, he also visits colleges to give talks on the history and mechanics of cameras, because some passions, as it turns out, deserve their own aperture of time.

## Government orders inquiry against officials involved in construction of Periyanaickenpalayam flyover in Coimbatore

GNS News Agency, March 7

The Tamil Nadu government has appointed an authority to inquire against officials who were involved in the construction of a flyover at Periyanaickenpalayam in Coimbatore district. In an order dated September 30, 2025, the Highways Secretary R. Selvaraj said the government has appointed D. Baskara Pandian, Project Director, Tamil Nadu Road Sector Projects, as the Inquiry Officer, who will submit a report in 45 days.

"The said Inquiry Officer is directed to conduct the inquiry following the procedure laid down in rule 17 (b) of the Tamil Nadu Civil Services (Disciplinary and Appeal) Rules and send the report to the Government expeditiously," the order said. The disciplinary proceedings are quasi-judicial in character, it added. The authority is appointed following a representation from the secretary of the Coimbatore Consumer Cause to the Prime Minister's office about "faulty design against IRC norms and improper connection of service road to the flyover." On April 21, the PMO wrote about appointing an inquiry authority. The secretary of the consumer organisation K. Kathirmathiyon alleged in a letter to the PMO in January this year that the public face safety issues and several difficulties due to poor planning and execution of the 1.8 km flyover constructed at ₹115 crore. The officials claim that it is due to "site condition". The pre-opening -- road safety



The move follows a representation from the secretary of the Coimbatore Consumer Cause to the Prime Minister's Office regarding "faulty design against IRC norms and improper connection of service road to the flyover".

audit by Eclat Engineering consultant, Hyderabad, said to be carried out on December 6, 2023 does not mention about the "serious safety lapse i.e. merging of the service road with the main carriageway -- at the end of the down ramp, though it is at "0" point by sharp right turn at 90 degrees and is totally against IRC norms." The storm water drains are not constructed and there are no streetlights on the flyover, he alleged.

## AWS outage: How Amazon cloud outage affected the global internet



The story so far: On Monday (October 20, 2025), one of Amazon Web Services (AWS) data centre, located in the east coast of the U.S., began experiencing "increased error rates and latencies." By next morning several issues were reported across AWS data centres, many of which are located in Northern Virginia. The affected data centre cluster, US-East-1, is AWS' biggest and most active. The disruption took down digital services of over 2,000 companies, according to Downtidetector. Services of Amazon, Snapchat, Signal, ChatGPT, Perplexity, Canva, Roblox, Duolingo, Fortnite, Coinbase and Epic Games online services were affected. The issue was eventually "fully resolved" by 6:53 PM ET, AWS said in a blog post.

What was the reason behind the incident?

In a status update, AWS informed users that the outage originated from a DNS error affecting the DynamoDB database application programming interfaces in the US-East-1 region. After some time, Amazon advised users experiencing issues resolving the DynamoDB service endpoints in US-EAST-1 to flush their DNS caches. The Domain Name System (DNS) essentially functions as a lookup mechanism that translates a web URL into its corresponding IP address. For instance, the IP address for the domain www.instagram.com is 57.144.150.34. When DNS fails, there's no way to retrieve the address, so even if a service appears to be operational for users running the platform, there's no incoming traffic. Consider trying to contact a friend whose phone number keeps changing, and you don't have any of these numbers memorized.

The DynamoDB database service was used by AWS to store data for Amazon's own services as well as several other customers including Amazon retail, Amazon Alexa, Lyft, Snapchat and Signal etc. DNS errors have become frequent due to various factors. It could happen in case a company failed to renew registration or during a faulty automated update or in the most common instances where the DNS service provider is changed or updating the domain address. Although DNS errors could be caused by malicious actors, this specific outage was not. It was a case of "availability," cybersecurity experts said, where the system couldn't correctly decide which server to latch on to, which led to a ripple effect. Despite how centralised cloud sys-

tems have become over time, AWS' US-East-1 region is relatively infamous for causing massive disruptions. Built in 2006, US-East-1 is also the default for swathes of services and users given it was the first AWS region. There are some global AWS services run from US-East-1 depending on its endpoints, which includes DynamoDB Global Tables among others. This could mean that services used in even Europe have infrastructure features located in US-East-1 and can be susceptible to a chain reaction.

Have there been past AWS outages?

After two prominent outages in September and December of 2021, customers were furious, calling US-East-1 a "systemic risk." The outage in December is often cited as the most severe in AWS history. It laid bare how fragile cloud dependencies could be. Lasting almost seven hours and costing S&P companies \$150 million, the outage was caused to a typo in a command entered while debugging an issue. Following the backlash, Amazon confirmed that new architectures were being rebuilt for both the AWS support case management system for customers to chat with technical support and the health dashboard. But, in June 2023, the region faced another outage taking down 100 services for around four hours with customers grappling with a recurring issue of not being able to reach out to AWS Support quickly, despite the changes. Notably, every AWS region has a minimum of three different availability zones (AZ) that are all connected separately. And while customers were suggested to allow their apps and platforms to run in different availability zones to control risks of impact, the entire region has been prone to going down taking everything with it.

Will there be more outages like this in future?

Some experts have predicted that cloud outages could increase due to the push towards introducing AI capabilities in enterprises that lead to an increased ingestion of data into the cloud, increasing the load on hyperscalers. (Global cloud computing is largely dominated by AWS, followed by Microsoft's Azure and Google Cloud.) As most experts have been warning repeatedly, the outage is a stark reminder that the over-reliance on these dominant cloud providers could bring global online companies down to their knees. Gergely Orosz, author of the newsletter, 'The Pragmatic Engineer,' listed some unlikely cases of fallout from this outage, which included Postman, an API development tool, and Eight Sleep, a sleep fitness company. "In both cases, things should have worked locally! It's what customers assumed, and it should have been possible. But clearly the dev teams found it simpler to take on a cloud dependency - and made no prep for an AWS region outage. So now customers know these are cloud products," he said in a X post. Amazon released a report with a detailed summary of the 15-hour outage saying it will be temporarily disabling DynamoDB DNS Planner and that it will add "additional protections" to prevent DNS errors in future. The AWS team will also work on improving their internal testing to look for more such problems that stretched the outage.

## Remembering Piyush 'Earthy' Pandey

I was invited to Ranjan Kapoor's home (the erstwhile Head of Ogilvy & Mather) for a party, as Sunitha, my wife, was handling the Cadbury business in O&M at that time. My wife introduced me to Piyush: "Piyush, meet my husband, Suresh. He is with Lintas," and quick came the reply from Piyush: "Oh, but I thought you told me he was in advertising!" That was Piyush for you -- quick-witted, cheeky, spunky, and combative. I have, since then, had the opportunity of meeting him and interacting with him on several occasions throughout the last 25-27 years.

In my brief stint at Ogilvy & Mather as a planner, I played cricket for the O&M team and guess who my captain was. Well, you guessed right. He was an avid cricketer and a good one at that. He played Ranji Trophy for Rajasthan during 1977-79. He was a wicketkeeper and batted one down. And his sledging skills were legendary. I remember once -- it was a CAG Shield semifinal against an agency called Trikaya (some of you may have heard the name) -- and we lost two quick wickets at the top, and he sent me in three down. I stuck around, steadied the ship for a few overs, but could not force the pace. When I got out and came back, he barked at me, "Well played, but MC, BC, are you a strokeless wonder?" I, of course, shrank into the dugout with my tail between my legs. Another example of how passionate, involved, and competitive he was. Incidentally, we won that match. I am not going to go on and on about Piyush being a creative genius or about Fevicol, or Googly Woogly Woosh (Ponds), or ZooZoo (Vodafone), or Har Ghar Kuch Kehta Hai (Asian Paints), or many, many such wonderful pieces of work which have now become folklore and are enshrined in the archives of the advertising world. One of them, of course, was the Cadbury "Kuch Khaas Hai" commercial in 1993, based on his favourite subject -- cricket. A young woman savours her chocolate while anticipating a six, and when it comes, she breaks all convention by running onto the field, unabashed and joyous. Almost 30 years later, that same ad was reinvented with the roles reversed -- a woman batter hitting the six and her partner rushing in to celebrate -- quietly signalling how Indian society has evolved. Now tell me, where else would you see an ad being reinvented decades later and still remain charming and relevant. That, truly, was the genius of Piyush -- adjusting his strokes as the pitch turned with society.

He was a son-of-the-soil, sleeves-rolled-up, let's-do-it kind of guy. He was focused, brimming with ideas, and constantly thinking about how he and Ogilvy could add value to the client's business. He was a darling of all clients he handled. Most CEOs and MDs of large MNCs would come to the ground-floor reception of the building to receive him and see him off post the meeting -- a respect that he, on his own merit, and agencies used to command once upon a time. Now agencies are commodities, vendors, and suppliers -- but that is for another day. Today is about reminiscing about the incandescent Piyush Pandey. He was a powerhouse, yet very friendly; he was a giant, yet he would put a hand around your shoulder; he was combative, yet empathetic; he took Ogilvy to dizzying heights, yet at a personal level, he used to do a lot of pro bono work for good causes. A couple of years ago, at a Sportstar Conclave, I was the moderator on a panel with him, Harbhajan Singh, and a couple of marketers who had invested heavily in cricket. I remember, while the two marketers were trying to get a word in sideways, Harbhajan and Piyush were having a blast on stage reliving some old memories (they had worked together in the past), and in his choicest Hindi, Piyush had the crowd in splits. Having said that, I could even at that time sense his frail health and weak body. In spite of that, he agreed to be part of the panel because (I like to believe) I requested -- no, pleaded -- with him, and he actually travelled to Delhi with his male nurse. It is also coincidental that Ogilvy has been the agency of The Hindu Group (my organisation) for the past 10 years. We had an agency review/pitch meeting at Chennai about a year ago, and while



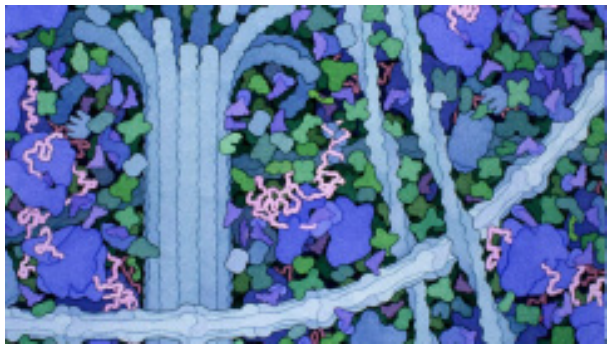
the whole Ogilvy team turned up physically, Piyush insisted that he wanted to be a part of the review and joined online. Piyush is the one who created the memorable Hindu campaign "Behave Yourself India, the youth are watching" some years ago and was very passionate about this account. Even in the review meeting, he was brimming with ideas and chomping at the bit to get in with some great work for us. That was the involvement and passion of the man. The advertising industry has lost an icon, but he has left behind a body of work and a legacy that will far outlive most of us. Piyush 'Earthy' Pandey has transcended the earth today, but he remains in our memory as a man who would always shoot for the stars.

## Calcutta High Court withdraws protection to BJP's Suvendu Adhikari for registration of FIRs against him

In a setback to Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari, the Calcutta High Court on Friday (October 24, 2025) lifted a protection granted to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader against registration of FIRs against him.

While ordering quashing of 15 FIRs against Mr. Adhikari, Justice Jay Sengupta lifted the protection granted by the High Court to the Opposition leader in 2022 against registration of FIRs against him. As per the earlier order by Justice Rajasekhara Mantha in December 2022, the permission of Calcutta High Court was necessary before lodging an FIR against the Nandigram MLA. In the order on Friday (October 24), Justice Sengupta also directed the transfer of investigation in four cases registered against BJP leaders to a joint special investigation team (SIT) comprising officials of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the State police. The development, which comes ahead of Assembly polls in the State, has evoked strong political reactions with the Trinamool Congress lauding the development. Trinamool Congress leader Kunal Ghosh said the development reflects the stand of the party that no person can be granted protection against registration of FIRs against them for an indefinite period of time. Several leaders of Trinamool Congress had expressed their displeasure against the protection granted to Mr. Adhikari. The State government challenged the Calcutta High Court's order in the Supreme Court. However, the top court did not interfere with the High Court's decision in this regard. Reacting to the development, Mr. Adhikari said it was his "personal legal battle" and he welcomed the order as FIRs have been quashed in 15 cases against him.

## Google's new AI for drug discovery is a win for scientific discovery



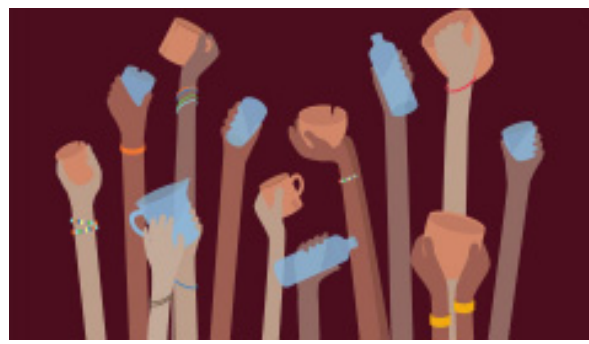
Google's launch of a suite artificial intelligence (AI) tools, which its researchers reported to be successful at not only suggested a new drug combination for cancer therapy but even stood up to early tests in the laboratory, is a signal that research-scientists ought to be integrating AI into the process of scientific discovery. Built on the Gemma family of open models, the Cell2Sentence-Scale 27B (C2S-Scale) is a 27-billion-parameter foundation model designed to "understand" the language of individual cells. "This announcement marks a milestone for AI in science," Shekoofeh Azizi and Brian Perozzi, staff scientists at Google DeepMind and Google Research respectively, in a post accompanying the announcement. "C2S-Scale generated a novel hypothesis about cancer cellular behaviour and we have since confirmed its prediction with experimental validation in living cells. This discovery reveals a promising new pathway for developing therapies to fight cancer," they added.

The C2S-Scale model was trained on a large dataset of real-world patients and cell-line data, based on which it suggested a drug called silitasertib could be used to improve the immune system's ability to identify cancerous tumours when they were nascent. To be sure, silitasertib (CX-4945) is currently in several clinical trials to treat multiple myeloma, kidney cancer, medulloblastoma, and advanced solid tumours. In January 2017, the US Food and Drug Administration granted it orphan drug status for advanced cholangiocarcinoma. However, the novelty of Google's effort was not in (re)discovering the drug but that it had scanned the vast cancer biology literature to suggest a novel use for a drug candidate. Pharmaceutical companies in their usual course spend billions of dollars and employ highly trained personnel to reveal similar insights. "It's a nice result and was a well-chosen problem to test the capabilities of an LLM [large language model]," Sunil Laxman, systems biologist at the Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine, Bengaluru, told The Hindu. "This would, in the usual course, have taken a focussed team of dedicated researchers several months to suggest such a use of the drug." "It's very good" Dr. Laxman however underlined that the model hadn't suggested something that couldn't have occurred to a trained biologist nor had discovered something new about cancer biology.

"It's very good. Not great. The average laboratory in India will not have access to a vast library of chemical compounds where they can be tested. This one had, and while it has certainly shortened the time [in this case] for a potential discovery, it isn't a path-breaking discovery." LLMs are at the core of AI and are trained on human-annotated data to understand human language and solve problems. Drs. Azizi and Perozzi have contended that their results demonstrate that it's possible to create LLMs that don't have to be trained on the rules of biological systems. Instead, they wrote, the models can be encouraged to figure the rules out just by having their successes 'rewarded' and failures 'punished'. This is how some of the most powerful chess-playing LLMs were trained. Good reasoning Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, mathematics professor Siddhartha Gadgil interpreted the findings as significant and reckoned that the best AI models in mathematics were today at the level of a "skilled mathematician but not at genius-human levels". He said there were "no reasons" to suppose that AI development would one day not be able to solve the most challenging maths problems.

"We can't say when an AI model will solve the Riemann Hypothesis but there's no reason to suppose it never can. Already there are several initiatives and even companies that are tackling unsolved mathematical problems and they do come up with novel hypotheses." Dr. Gadgil cited the International Mathematical Olympiad 2025, where OpenAI, the maker of ChatGPT, said an "experimental reasoning model" had figured out answers to the questions, which, if it were a human, would have won it a gold medal. The model followed the same time limits as human participants. Significantly, this model wasn't trained for the Olympiad but was a general-purpose reasoning model with sufficiently good reasoning powers. This said, the Olympiad's problems aren't representative examples of the problems professional mathematicians work on; they're intended for talented high-schoolers and constitute a gold standard test of mathematical talent. The Riemann hypothesis on the other hand is a problem many mathematicians are working on. It's a statement about the nature of prime numbers whose proof has eluded mathematicians for over a century. The Clay Mathematical Institute in the US has promised to reward its solver with \$1 million. "Still divided" Given the vast literature to which these LLM are exposed, they're expected to come up with novel and useful ideas about how to approach a mathematical problem an equivalent human expert wouldn't always immediately see, he added. Prof. Gadgil, who embraces LLM tools in his own research, added that his field is "still divided" on incorporating them. According to him, there were several good models that "showed no signs of plateauing and had a lot of latent capabilities that still weren't fully explored", and therefore ought to be encouraged as tools that a working researcher ought to be incorporating.

## If you really must protest



As a nationalist who loves his country like crazy, I ponder the same question as I go to bed every night: how to improve Indian democracy. One epiphany I got: ban all protests. Be 'One Nation, One Opinion'. Why can't we simply lock up any and all dissenters? I know most of you feel this way. And yet, we patriots are helpless, faced with the pseudo-democratic posturing that even certified autocrats can't seem to do without. The older I get, lesser the patience I have for imported, zero-tariff luxury items like dissent, privacy, and human rights. If I ever become the Supreme Leader of any country, I will give two options to anyone who thinks I'm wrong and they are right. One, agree with me publicly and unequivocally; two, keep applying for bail. People at protest sites are typically on a journey towards option 2, and I'm sorry to say I've known a few in my lifetime. The other day, I got a call from Balu, an anarcho-syndicalist-turned-Trotskyist-turned-corporate honcho-turned-reptile rights activist. "Which is the best place in Delhi to stage a protest," he wanted to know. "It should be centrally located," he said. "With ample parking, easy access to cholera-free drinking water, and clean washrooms, preferably stocked with Charmin Ultra Soft toilet paper." "Well," he paused to think. "It would be good if there are decent pubs within walking distance, so we can unwind with a drink or two after a long day of protesting." "I see," he said. "I once did a major anti-corruption protest there back in 2013, with someone called Thambi Hazare." "For some reason, I always thought it was Anna Hazare," I said. "How did it go?" "We won," Balu said. "People became aware. They

voted out all corrupt leaders in 2014. Since then India has enjoyed a clean government led by caring politicians who are not at all dynastic or nepotistic." "Exactly," I said. "So where is the need for protests?" "Still, some harmless protests are needed to maintain the façade that we are a democracy." "Don't disturb tourists! wasn't convinced. Even if we do need performative protests, do they have to be in a public place? Jantar Mantar, a tourist attraction, is now listed on Google as a 'protest site'. Its rating of 4.4/5 would have puzzled Maharaja Jai Singh II. As it is, tourist traffic is falling. Now, even the two-three foreigners who come to see Jantar Mantar will go back thinking injustices are rampant in a great country like India. Is that necessary? History tells us that all bad things — like communism, human rights, MGNREGA — came from protests. That's why the British banned protests in New Delhi. Now even the British are gone. So why do we need protests at all? But I understand some people are temperamentally protest-prone. They can't help it. Fine. Protest if you must. But then do it in ways that benefit the nation. Protest by paying more tax, or by donating your EPF money to the government. But don't occupy a public space and make a nuisance — that's the old way. There are a thousand new ways that don't require a protest site. Build your life around injustice. For instance, if you are as great as you think you are, you must have won some award by now — return that award in protest. If you have no awards to return, then work hard to win one, then return it. So many people won Nobel Prizes this month. If you've won any, you could decline it in protest. Or, if you're looking for something easier than the Nobel, you could win an Oscar, like Satyajit Ray did, and turn your acceptance speech into a protest speech that will reverberate around the world. But if you can't win a Nobel or an Oscar or any other return-worthy award, then shut up and sit down, or take a knee, like the Indian cricket team did. If you can't take a knee because of arthritis, take a boat, like Greta did. And that's what I told Balu also. "C'mon," he said. "Have you never been to a Bono concert? Surely you know that protesting against injustice can also be fun, with singing, dancing, catching up with old friends?" "No," I said. "I am not the protesting type. Injustice is a part and parcel of life. If you're smart, instead of protesting it, you'll build your life around injustice."

## Navi Mumbai airport and the making of a city

Like greenfield airports around the world that created tremendous opportunities for their regions and led to the making of global cities around them, the recently inaugurated and soon-to-open Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) is poised to have a similar impact. Set up by Adani Airports and state entity CIDCO, it is expected to transform the Ulwe-Panvel corridor into an emerging global city and a real estate gold mine.

This airport was first conceived about 35 years ago. It is expected to not only ease the burden on Mumbai's existing airport but also to emerge as the epicentre of economic and real estate transformation. "We are seeing a pattern of building new airports in India emerging from Navi Mumbai to Noida's Jewar and earlier in Hyderabad and Bengaluru. It begins with rapid-fire infrastructure upgrades such as expressways and Metro connections, and then proceeds to the development of aerocities," said Anuj Puri, chairman, Anarock Group.

"These include commercial office spaces, hotels, retail, and logistics hubs within a 5km to 10km radius. Housing demand rises by between 20% and 30%, more or less in tandem with the rate of job generation. Naturally, this results in prices rising by anywhere between 10% and 20% annually in the first few years," he said. "Such airport-based ecosystems emulate the best practices seen around the world and gradually become self-sustaining economic zones in their own right. They will draw in massive aeronautical and non-aeronautical revenue over the coming years," he added. Obviously, early investors in micro-markets near airports have a strong first-mover advantage and will turn very decent profits as India's aviation industry continues to grow, he pointed out. With the NMIA, the second airport in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) is becoming a reality. The real estate price in the airport's catchment area, which is already galloping, is headed for skyrocketing growth.

As more airport staff and airline crew would soon populate this region, the added demand would be created for residential real estate. Demand for commercial real estate would also see a quantum jump, sending the prices upwards. Earlier this month, the airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The flight operations have been scheduled to commence from December. "Navi Mumbai is poised to further elevate its status as a premier global metropolitan destination," said Karan Singh Sodi, senior managing director (Mumbai MMR & Gujarat) and head-alternatives, India, JLL. He said the integrated infrastructure — encompassing rail, road, and metro connectivity — would unlock unprecedented avenues for growth across all segments of real estate. "The seamless last-mile connectivity and strategic positioning of the airport are setting new benchmarks for urban development, economic opportunity, and global connectivity, reaffirming Navi Mumbai's emergence on the world stage," he emphasised. As per recent data released by Magicbricks, a real estate platform, the average property rates have climbed from ₹9,981 per sq.ft. in Q3 2023 to ₹14,299 per sq. ft in Q3 2025, marking a remarkable 43.26% increase. In the last two quarters alone, prices have jumped by 15%, underlining the city's emergence as a high-growth investment corridor. "During the last quarter, with the news of the new airport starting soon, the buyer demand rose 6.4% quarter-on-quarter (QoQ), while supply declined 10.7% QoQ, underscoring heightened competition in a tightening market," the platform mentioned. Popular micro-markets such as Panvel (₹14,400 psf), Kharghar (₹16,900 psf), and Talaja (₹9,500 psf) have emerged as top choices, attracting first-time buyers and investors alike, analysts said. Stating that the inauguration of the airport would redefine the growth trajectory of the MMR, real estate developer and president of CREDAI-MCHI, Sukhraj Nahar, said that now with the airport, Navi Mumbai's stature would be truly realised as a 'global city.' According to him, the reduction in travel time between key nodes such as Panvel, Kharghar, Ulwe, Dronagiri and Mumbai's core business districts, would further strengthen the region's economic fabric. Tata Realty and Infrastructure, a major player in residential and commercial real estate, is of the view that the airport would be a game-changer for the region, driving an expected 3% capital value appreciation till 2027 specifically for the IT sector. Its aerotropolis-style development, integrating business, housing, retail, and logistics — creates one of India's most efficient, future-ready, and economically vibrant hubs," said Sanjay Dutt, MD & CEO, Tata Realty and Infrastructure Ltd. "We are already seeing strong traction across commer-



cial, residential, retail, and data centre segments. Commercial segment has already witnessed a notable uptick in demand from domestic corporates as well as global players looking to set up GCC units in the market," Dutt said. Highlighting that commercial demand would likely be fuelled by the development of logistics parks, offices and hotels, Anshuman Magazine, chairman & CEO, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE, said the airport would catalyse transit-oriented development, further amplified by its synergy with other mega-projects like Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), and Navi Mumbai Metro Line 1. As per estimates by PropEquity, over 1 lakh units each have been launched and sold in Navi Mumbai in 2022-2025 (till August). Close to 75% of the units launched and 80% of the units sold were priced under ₹1 crore in 2024. The share of the affordable segment is the largest in launch and absorption in 2024. The majority of consumers are more inclined towards affordable segment houses (₹50 lakh). According to the firm, the demand for homes is so high that the inventory overhang reached a historic low of 14 months in 2024, the lowest since 2020. This greenfield airport will further accelerate the growth, driving sustained demand and significant price appreciation, presenting lucrative long-term investment opportunities," said Vimal Nadar, national director & head of research, Colliers India. "Further, Navi Mumbai's strategic positioning as a sub-dollar office market [monthly leasing rates below a dollar], coupled with enhanced connectivity and global access offered by the airport, is expected to drive heightened office leasing activity in the area over the next few years," he added. The proposed aerocity in the vicinity, designed to seamlessly integrate top-notch commercial, residential, and recreational spaces, will foster a new urban ecosystem that blends work and lifestyle, he added. "The market response has been strong, with apartment prices in the Panvel region rising by nearly 74% between FY 2021 and FY 2025, compared to 45% growth across the rest of Navi Mumbai. The airport is set to drive the next wave of value creation, reinforcing Panvel's position as one of the most promising growth hubs not only within the MMR but beyond," said Deepak Khandelwal, principal partner and chief sales officer, Square Yards. NMIA's inauguration comes at a time when Navi Mumbai and its surrounding growth corridors are witnessing unprecedented infrastructure development. Enhanced mobility The Atal Setu (MTHL) — India's longest sea bridge — has already bridged the gap between South Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, cutting travel time to less than an hour. Complementing this will be the Mumbai Metro Line 8, connecting T2 of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) to the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), offering smooth intra-city mobility. The Panvel-Karjat railway line, currently under advanced development, will strengthen linkages between Navi Mumbai, Raigad, and the hinterland, paving the way for new residential and industrial clusters. Together, these mega infrastructure projects are positioning the Navi Mumbai region as one of the most promising investment destinations in India's real estate landscape, according to analysts. Big urban centre Among the biggest beneficiaries of this infrastructure wave is Panvel, which has steadily evolved from a peripheral suburb to the next big urban centre. With its proximity to the airport and connectivity via the MTHL, Metro, and rail corridors, Panvel is now emerging as the preferred choice for integrated townships and self-sustained communities. Navin Makhija, managing director of The Wadhwa Group, said, "The inauguration of the Navi Mumbai International Airport marks a transformative moment for Navi Mumbai and the Panvel region. The region's accessibility, connectivity from the main Mumbai city and infrastructure undertaken within the region have made it an ideal destination for large-scale development, and its growth is inevitable."

## Gogji for a broken heart

It was a late September afternoon. Autumn had taken hold; the earth had shed her vibrant costumes from spring and summer, and was getting ready for some much needed rest. I was sitting on the verandah watching Phuphee pottering about in her kitchen garden. She walked towards me with a small kraenjil (wicker basket) full of turnips and a big smile on her face. "Walle, gogji rogan josh ranna [come, let's cook turnip rogan josh]," she said, walking towards the kitchen. Inside, I watched her perform her magic and turn the humble turnip into a dish fit for a wedding feast. She was nearly done when one of the helpers came in to inform her that a lady was waiting for her. She motioned for me to join her and directed the helper to cook extra rice for lunch.

In Phuphee's room, a woman was waiting. She lived locally. Her name was Asma. She was the headmistress of a small girls school on the outskirts of the village. After greeting her, Phuphee asked her how she could help. For a while the woman was quiet, but you could see the storm clouds gather in the corners of her eyes until they could no longer be held back and they fell in tears. Phuphee watched her for a while and then slowly got up and went to sit next to her. She put her arm around her and held her close while she cried.

When Asma had exhausted all her tears she spoke. She was married and lived with her husband and two children. She had two brothers whom she loved dearly, but for the past decade or so everything had gone wrong in her relationship with them. She still spoke to the elder one, though he had stopped making any effort to be in her life. While the younger one, whom she had been very close to, had not only stopped speaking to her, but had at different points in time abused her trust and broken her heart. She told Phuphee it had happened when he got married. She was sure his wife had cast some spell on him or poisoned his ears. Phuphee listened as Asma continued to speak about how she sometimes dreamt about the happier times they had when they were children and how much her heart ached for her brother. She asked Phuphee if she could give her a taaveez (talisman) to undo whatever spell had been cast on her brother. Or, if that wasn't possible, could she be given something to make the pain stop.

When Asma had finished, Phuphee called out for the helper and asked her to serve lunch for everyone. Spells could not be broken and hearts cannot be mended on an empty stomach, she said. The helper served the gogji rogan josh with hot rice and all of us had a second helping. As we ate, Phuphee talked about random things — the state of the



roads, the weather, and everything that was happening in the world. When we were done, she turned to Asma and said, "When someone very dear to us does cruel things, unthinkable things, it is natural to look for reasons why. After all, we are not supposed to hurt the people we love, at least not intentionally." "You know my dearest Asma, of course it is possible that some of the blame can be laid at your sister-in-law's door, but not all of it. Your brother is not a child. He is a grown man with a will of his own, and while you hold your sister-in-law responsible, you must not absolve him of the accountability he has in his actions. Your heart hurts because you have lost your brother. You know, it sometimes happens that people die before they actually die. The brother you had, who was loving and kind, has gone. The person he is now is not your brother in any real sense. The memories you have, hold them close and honour them. Do not ever feel yourself to be weak because you feel hurt or you still feel the love, because it stems from a reality you once lived. You are not deluded, you are human." We sat quietly. I had so many questions, but I didn't ask. I hoped Asma would ask Phuphee some more questions, but she didn't. After lunch, they walked to the gate while I watched from the window. Phuphee handed her a small bag and bid her goodbye. Later that day, I sat thinking about what Phuphee had told Asma and I struggled to make sense of it. Twenty years later, on an autumn day, I too would come to understand that sometimes you can lose people without them dying. In that moment all you could do was acknowledge and honour the love you once felt for a person who, though still physically alive, was dead in every other way. And despite the confusion that ensued this terrible situation, you had to honour the person you once loved and grieve the person no longer present.

## Apple foldable iPhone expected in 2026 could make foldables mainstream

New Delhi: Apple's foldable, expected around late 2026, could redefine consumer expectations and push foldables into a new mainstream adoption phase, according to a new report. The biggest structural shift is expected in late 2026, when Apple's first foldable iPhone is expected to debut. According to the Counterpoint Research report, Apple's entry would instantly expand consumer awareness and accelerate replacement demand across high-income segments. Given Apple's ecosystem influence, its launch year could dramatically reshape brand dynamics, lifting total market volumes.

The report predicts the US foldable smartphone market to grow 68 per cent (on-year) in 2025, as it enters a period of solid growth after several years of experimentation. The growth is being driven by broader form factor adoption, improved durability of foldable designs and more diversified portfolios from multiple brands. This year,

portfolio expansion and ecosystem readiness are defining the market. Samsung is set to maintain its leadership with the refreshed Galaxy Z Fold and Flip lineup, having added an FE variant to broaden accessibility, while also preparing to unveil its long-awaited tri-fold device later in the year. Meanwhile, Motorola is rapidly scaling its Razr series through wider carrier partnerships in the prepaid market, narrowing the share gap with Samsung faster than in prior cycles. According to the report, Google's Pixel 10 Pro Fold, launched in October 2025, sits between Samsung's premium offerings and Motorola's lifestyle-driven designs, testing how effectively the brand can turn its AI-first Android experiences into tangible hardware differentiation. Liz Lee, Associate Director at Counterpoint Research said that while Samsung continues to lead in maturity and ecosystem strength in 2025, Motorola's rapid expansion in the clamshell segment and Google's AI-driven approach are reshaping competition.

## Decoding brain bleeds: evolving treatments promise encouraging results



A stroke takes place when the brain suffers irreversible damage due to a sudden interruption of blood flow. Strokes are predominantly of three types — ischemic strokes, intracerebral haemorrhages and subarachnoid haemorrhages. An ischemic stroke is the blockage of blood vessels causing brain damage due to lack of blood flow. An intracerebral haemorrhage refers to bleeding inside the brain, usually resulting from the rupture of very small blood vessels due to high blood pressure. A subarachnoid haemorrhage refers to bleeding over the surface of the brain. A subarachnoid haemorrhage (SAH) is probably the least known stroke type because of its lower incidence compared to the other two, but it is also possibly the most devastating type of stroke. One of the most common reasons for a subarachnoid haemorrhage is a brain aneurysm occurring in the absence of any head injury. Before modern medical management, the mortality rates for an SAH were as high as 45% and many patients would remain disabled for life after experiencing one.

This condition gained a lot of attention recently when Game of Thrones star Emilia Clarke revealed that she suffered an SAH twice during the initial seasons of the popular show. She made a remarkable recovery both times and successfully completed all eight seasons of the show. Basic Instinct star Sharon Stone in her memoir 'The Beauty of Living Twice', has also written about her near-death experience when she suffered a subarachnoid haemorrhage in 2001. She recovered fully, but it took seven years, she revealed in her memoir.

A brain aneurysm is a balloon-like outpouching or protrusion affecting the blood vessels of the brain. A haemorrhage happens when the wall of the balloon becomes weak and ruptures. Brain aneurysms usually go undetected until they rupture and cause a subarachnoid haemorrhage. When the haemorrhage occurs, patients develop sudden severe headaches often termed as "thunderclap headaches" or "the worst headache of life". This is usually accompanied by nausea or vomiting. In most cases, the point of rupture becomes sealed temporarily after some blood leakage. However, in such cases, there is a high chance that the blood vessel may rupture again. When the amount of blood leakage is high, patients become unconscious and many unfortunately succumb even before reaching the hospital. Aneurysms can also produce less intense symptoms such as vision problems, drooping of eyelids, mild

headaches, etc. According to data from a large study published in The Lancet involving patients from multiple countries, the prevalence of unruptured aneurysm in the group was 3.2% without any other known diseases. The average age at aneurysm diagnosis is 50 years, and overall, it is more common in women. Causes and diagnosis

The precise reasons behind aneurysm formations are still not fully clear. However, uncontrolled high blood pressure and smoking are known to be prominent risk factors for aneurysm development and rupture. In some cases, a family history of brain aneurysm also plays a significant role. Patients with polycystic kidneys or connective tissue disorders are prone to aneurysm development too. When symptoms point to an aneurysm, the diagnosis is usually confirmed by a CT or MRI scan with an angiography. In high-risk patients such as those with a family history, periodic brain scans are recommended even in the absence of symptoms. Once the diagnosis is established, a catheter angiography is often required for treatment planning. Here, interventionalists introduce a catheter (thin tube) into the blood vessels of the neck through a pinhole made in the leg artery or artery at the wrist. Detailed images of the aneurysm are then acquired in the specialised X-ray machine (cath-lab/angio-suite) after an injection of radio-opaque dye through the catheter. Treating brain aneurysms

The treatment of an aneurysm depends on whether it was detected after minor symptoms, it ruptured or if it was a subarachnoid haemorrhage. In the case of a subarachnoid haemorrhage, treatment is done on an emergency basis. In other cases, it can be planned or elective treatment. Unfortunately, there is no medicine that can dissolve the aneurysm and heal the abnormal blood vessels. Broadly, there are two ways in which an aneurysm can be treated: one, via opening the skull surgically and two, via a minimally invasive or endovascular route through a pinhole in the leg artery. In open neurosurgical procedures, a metal clip is placed at the base of the aneurysm to prevent the blood from flowing inside the aneurysm. The most common endovascular option is coiling, where soft platinum coils are placed and aneurysm is packed. While the first open surgical clipping dates back to 1938, it has only been three decades since coiling was used. Now however, coiling has been established as an option as well. The choice of whether clipping or coiling is better in a given case is decided based on the location and shape of the aneurysm. The science of aneurysm treatment is changing rapidly now. Newer endovascular treatment options such as flow-diverters or flow-disrupters are emerging as promising treatment modalities with very high cure rates in difficult-to-treat aneurysms. A subarachnoid haemorrhage due to a brain aneurysm used to be challenging for surgeons. However, medical science is advancing by leaps and bounds and minimally invasive procedures and sophisticated devices are now available to help doctors take on these conditions and treat them with encouraging results. What this means for patients who suffer from strokes, is that there is hope. Getting help at the earliest through a proper diagnosis and right treatment is crucial.

## We need to talk more about Post-Polio Syndrome



It is common knowledge that poliomyelitis or polio for short, can cause acute paralysis, and fortunately, global vaccination efforts have made the disease vanishingly rare in many places. But what is less talked about is what happens years or even decades after recovery from polio. Survivors of polio may develop an insidious condition known as Post-Polio Syndrome (PPS). A light must be shone on this "long tail" of polio, because for many, the story doesn't end after the immediate recovery. Long-term consequences

The poliovirus attacks motor neurons in the spinal cord, leading to muscle weakness or paralysis in some victims. Many survivors recover significantly, thanks to the nervous system's capacity to "sprout" compensatory connections. However, decades later, that very compensation may start to fail. PPS is typically defined as the appearance of new muscle weakness, fatigue, muscle or joint pain, sometimes breathing or swallowing problems, occurring 15 to 40 years after the original polio infection. Estimates suggest PPS may affect anywhere from 25% to 40% of polio survivors, although depending on the criteria used it could range more widely (some reports say up to 80 %).

Why does PPS happen? There is no clear answer as yet, but the leading hypothesis is this: after the acute infection, surviving motor neurons expand their innervation territory (they sprout new axonal branches) to pick up the slack for destroyed neurons. Over the years, these "supercharged" neurons get overworked and eventually start to fail. In addition, normal ageing, added stress, disuse or overuse of muscles, may all contribute. Some research shows structural changes such as spinal cord grey matter atrophy in PPS patients that correlate with functional decline. At my clinic, I frequently hear polio survivors say: "I was fine for many years, but now, I am not able to walk as far any more,

I am fatigued more easily, my polio leg is weaker again, and I have more joint pain." These often are the classic symptoms of PPS: continuing weakness may occur in limbs previously affected by the original illness and, at times, in limbs that have never been affected. Fatigue, muscle cramps, joint pain and muscle pain, difficulties sleeping and cold intolerance also occur. While PPS rarely causes loss of life, significant muscle involvement may result in serious complications, such as falls, fractures, or issues with breathing or swallowing. PPS is a growing concern around the world. Since the severe polio epidemics of the 1940-60s led to millions of people surviving polio, many of these people are now older adults experiencing PPS. From a functional perspective, the decline in function can impact mobility, independence, work ability and quality of life. Currently, there is no cure for PPS. Treatment is symptomatic and supportive. Care for post-polio syndrome (PPS) predominantly aims at managing symptoms in order to allow individuals to maintain mobility. Gentle physical therapy and low-stress exercises help maintain muscle function without excessive exertion, because the more a person exerts themselves, the more fatigued they will become. Simple things such as taking breaks, pacing the day's activities, or using a cane or walker will save energy. A combination of physiotherapy, heat, and mild medication usually provides moderate-to-profound relief for pain and improvements in walking ability, offering a glimpse of better options ahead for those living with PPS. As the polio survivor population ages, clinicians and health systems need to be aware of PPS — it is frequently under-diagnosed or mis-labelled as "just ageing" or "arthritis." Vigilance involves asking about a past history of polio in older patients with new weakness/fatigue; evaluating for other causes, and then implementing a multidisciplinary care plan. From a public health perspective, it is also a reminder of just how powerful—and long-lasting—the benefits of vaccination are: preventing polio in the first place means you avoid not just the acute illness, but the decades-later burden of PPS. Surviving polio doesn't always mean you are done with it. Many people come through the acute phase, recover well and then decades later hit a second curve of new problems. As doctors, we must bring PPS into our radar, treat it with respect, and help our patients adapt their lives rather than suffer passively. For survivors, the message is: if you had polio, and you're noticing new fatigue, weakness or pain — don't just shrug it off as "ageing" — ask your doctor about PPS, get the right rehabilitation and support, and make sure mobility and quality of life remain in your hands.

## Respect the health rights of India's children

The deaths of 25 children linked to contaminated cough syrup has shocked the conscience of the nation. In a news cycle that often highlights 'man bites dog' sensationalism, the general public is largely aware of two things: that 25 children died, and that a paediatrician in Madhya Pradesh who defiantly prescribed the syrup to the children is said to have received a paltry commission of ₹2.54 a bottle; thus the cost of each of those young lives was ₹2.54.

That all this happened despite the Union Health Ministry having banned certain cough syrup formulations for children under the age of four years — as recently as April 2025 — citing the risk of contamination, is shocking. There has also been much discussion on responsibility — which agency failed in its duty to monitor and prevent the distribution of the syrup. The regulatory agencies in India responsible include the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation under the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India which handles large manufacturers of drugs and export approvals, and State drug control officers who handle the regulation, care, manufacture, sale and distribution of drugs by small- and medium-scale manufacturers.

Where the focus needs to be Rather than apportion blame, it would be wise to allow the law to take its course. The focus must be on the regulatory framework behind the distribution of paediatric medicines in India, and the challenges India faces in ensuring the protection it has guaranteed to its children in Article 39(f) of the Constitution, which is also listed as an important Directive Principle of State Policy.

Children (the age group under 18 years) make up 39% of India's population. There are a catena of laws and policies in India — approximately 13 — that are specifically designed to protect children, from the seminal National Policy for Children 1974 to the India Newborn Action Plan 2014. There are also about 10 pieces of legislation with special provisions for children such as the Pre-Conception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act to The Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act. Significantly, while these are critical interventions, they focus heavily on protecting children in the workforce (labour laws), and preventing and punishing the sexual exploitation of children. There are important initiatives for children in health and education, but the specific area of pharmacovigilance in the dissemination of paediatric drugs requires far more oversight and also the development of robust infrastructure.

In a similar context, Dr. Harry Shirkey called children "therapeutic orphans". Children are not small adults. The pharmacodynamic responses of children and adults are vastly different due to a spectrum of different physiologies. Further, clinical trials of drugs are usually conducted on adults and for ethical and other reasons almost never on children, resulting in an alarming lack of paediatric guidelines of dosage and administration. All too often, the dosage and administration of drugs for children are extrapolated from guidelines for adults, leaving children in much danger of overdose and more serious consequences. Special development strategies of drugs for children are a cornerstone of their health-care needs, particularly public health care. Overseas, the regulatory framework for children-related pharmaceuticals is an eye-opener. In the European Union, it is under the Paediatric Use Marketing Authorisation and in the United States, under the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act (BCPA). Inter alia, such legislation also provides incentives for research into paediatric drugs. India does not have a specific policy or legislation and operates on general guidelines. Since children are totally dependent on their parents or guardians for their health needs, it is necessary that the government frames clear guidelines. Health-care-related financial burdens often cause many impoverished families to fall into deeper poverty, making it even more vital that the pharmaceutical needs of children are made affordable. The essential medicine concept

Therefore, the introduction of the essential medicine concept in the health-care sector contributes significantly to the greater availability and affordability of life-saving medi-



## There needs to be a holistic framework to monitor medicine use for children

Essential medicines are those which satisfy the priority health-care needs of the population, are intended to be available in all health-care systems and are of quality and affordable. Several years ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) introduced an essential Medicine list for children (EMLc). This is used by policy makers to update the EMLc lists in their own countries. Although EML for adults are periodically revised, the EMLc for children is not addressed regularly. This requires immediate attention of policymakers. Other basic safe practices in the distribution of children's pharmaceuticals include constant education for care-givers and pharmacists, and making it mandatory to read the label, dispense the correct dosage and watch for side-effects particularly when buying over-the-counter medication. Regulation of over-the-counter medication for children especially for cough, cold and fever is an important dimension of public health care. The use of OTC medication varies in rural and urban areas, but is more common in an urban setting.

Public health-care outlets are another area of focus where clear guidelines need to be enforced in dispensing pharmaceuticals to children. A zero tolerance policy must be adopted against substitute or substandard medication. In the case of teenagers, attention must be paid to prevent the misuse of drugs. Over the last three years, WHO has issued several warnings on contaminated cough syrup. Some of these are related to cough syrup made in various places in India. Children have also died in the Gambia, Uzbekistan, Indonesia and Cameroon as a result of these contaminated syrups. India has emerged as the pharmacy to the Global South with huge exports of cough syrups, but this carries with it a responsibility to ensure the absolute safety of the medicines exported. Need for India data India's health policy with regard to paediatric medicines cannot be framed only on the basis of data on children available from other countries. Our genetics are unique to us and our research needs to be based on wholly Indian data. Nor should data on paediatric medicines be extrapolated from data that is related to adults. We owe a fiduciary duty to our children to take care in framing a health policy for them. We expect responsible policymakers to take into account diverse factors including awareness of environmental pitfalls such as how toxicity of a cough syrup may be exacerbated by malnutrition in children. Thus, adult medicines modified during administration to children can only be considered as off-label and unlicensed. They should not be used at all since they are contraindicated in terms of formulation, age and indicators. Clearly, monitoring safe medicine use in children is of utmost importance. The use of medicines not proven to be safe for children is a violation of the rights of voiceless children. India urgently needs a robust and holistic infrastructure to monitor and promote awareness of safety protocols with regard to medicines given to children.

## Louvre director acknowledges failure after jewel heist and says she offered to resign

GNS News Agency, March 7

The Louvre's director acknowledged a "terrible failure" at the Paris tourist attraction after a daylight crown jewel heist over the weekend, and said that she offered to resign but it was refused. The world's most-visited museum reopened earlier in the day to long lines beneath its landmark glass pyramid for the first time since one of the highest-profile museum thefts of the century stunned the world with its audacity and scale.

In testimony to the French Senate, Louvre director Laurence des Cars said that the museum had a shortage of security cameras outside the monument and other "weaknesses" exposed by Sunday's theft. Under heavy pressure over a heist that stained France's global image, she testified to a Senate committee that she submitted her resignation, but that the culture minister refused to accept it. "Today we are experiencing a terrible failure at the Louvre, which I take my share of responsibility in," she said. The thieves slipped in and out, making off with eight pieces from France's Crown Jewels — a cultural wound that more compared to the burning of Notre Dame Cathedral in 2019. Late detection The theft — steps away from the "Mona Lisa" and valued at more than \$100 million — has put embattled President Emmanuel Macron, Culture Minister Rachida Dati, des Cars and others under new scrutiny. It comes just months after employees went on strike, warning of chronic understaffing and not enough resources for protection, with too few eyes on too many rooms. "We did not detect the arrival of the thieves soon enough," des Cars said.

She said that the museum's alarms had worked properly, but that it currently doesn't have full video surveillance of the perimeter outside the museum, though there is a plan to provide full coverage of all the Louvre's facades. She also suggested barriers to prevent vehicles from parking directly alongside the museum's buildings, and said that she would push for a police station inside the museum, which welcomes 30,000 visitors a day and 2,300 workers. In Focus podcast | Can the stolen Crown Jewels from the Louvre ever be recovered? Disbelief among visitors Three days on, the jewels remain missing and the thieves are still at large — and reactions are divided. "For a place like the Louvre, it's unfathomable," said Amanda Lee, 36, an art teacher from Chicago. "I heard it took under four minutes. How is that possible here, with no police in sight?" Others were unperturbed. Claire Martin, a 41-year-old French lawyer from Versailles visiting with her two children during a school holiday, said that "we saw the masterpieces" even though the Apollo Gallery was shut. "We told the kids it's a history lesson. We came for the art," she said. "The police can deal with the thieves." France acknowledges failings Authorities say the thieves spent less than four minutes inside the Louvre on Sunday morning: a freight lift was wheeled to the Seine-facing facade, a window was forced open and two vitrines were smashed.

Then came the getaway on motorbikes through central Paris. Alarms had gone off, drawing agents to the gallery and forcing the intruders to bolt. As it reopened, the Louvre declined questions from The Associated Press to detail any reinforced protocols. It said that no uniformed police were posted in the corridors. With school holidays swelling demand, the day was fully booked and access limited. "I didn't notice extra security — guards as always, and no police inside. It felt like a normal day," said Tomás Álvarez, 29, a software engineer from Madrid. The loot The thieves made away with a total of eight objects, including a sapphire diadem, necklace and single earring from a set linked to 19th-



The Louvre's director acknowledged a "terrible failure" at the Paris tourist attraction after a daylight crown jewel heist over the weekend, and said that she offered to resign but it was refused

century Queens Marie-Amélie and Hortense. They also made off with an emerald necklace and earrings tied to Empress Marie-Louise, Napoleon Bonaparte's second wife, as well as a reliquary brooch. Empress Eugénie's diamond diadem and her large corsage-bow brooch — an imperial ensemble of rare craftsmanship — were also part of the loot. One piece — Eugénie's emerald-set imperial crown, with more than 1,300 diamonds — was later found outside the museum, damaged but recoverable. Fears the jewels will be destroyed Prosecutor Laure Beccuau valued the haul at about 88 million euros (\$102 million), a "spectacular" figure that still fails to capture the works' historical weight. She warned that the thieves would be unlikely to realize anything close to that sum if they pry out stones or melt the metals — a fate curators fear would pulverize centuries of meaning into anonymous gems for the black market. Beccuau said that expert analyses are underway; four people have been identified as being present at the scene, and roughly 100 investigators are mapping the crew and any accomplices, in addition to forensics experts. Security overhaul All this comes after Macron announced new measures in January for the Louvre — complete with a new command post and expanded camera grid that the Culture Ministry says is being rolled out. It also raises hard questions, including whether Sunday's breach is tied to staffing levels, and how uniformly the upgrades in the overhaul are being applied. Protection for headline works is airtight — the "Mona Lisa" is behind bulletproof glass in a climate-controlled case — yet the break-in exposed seams elsewhere in a 33,000-object labyrinth. For many French, the contrast is a public embarrassment at the landmark. It touches a raw nerve: the issue of swelling crowds and overstretched staff. In June, a staff walkout over overcrowding and chronic understaffing delayed opening. Unions argue that mass tourism leaves security lacking and creates pressure points where construction zones, freight access and visitor flows intersect. On Wednesday, the Louvre's other star attractions — from the Venus de Milo to the Winged Victory of Samothrace — were open again. But the cordoned-off vitrines in the Apollo Gallery, guarded and empty, told a different story: one of a breach measured not just in minutes and euros, but in the fragility of a nation's patrimony

## How is the jewellery sector coping with U.S. tariffs? | Explained



The story so far: India's diamond and jewellery sector has been hit due to the U.S. tariffs. While the U.S. has imposed a 50% import duty on India's cut and polished diamonds, it has imposed a 50-57% duty on studded and non-studded jewellery, upsetting decades of well-set trade. India is the world's largest exporter of cut and polished diamonds. At such a time, the sector wants government intervention which could absorb the shock caused by U.S. tariffs.

### Why government intervention?

The U.S. is the largest importer of diamonds from India. In 2024-25, India exported diamonds worth ₹46,000 crore and studded gold jewellery worth ₹23,000 crore. More-over, India's cut and polished diamond industry employs 8.2 lakh skilled workers. The U.S. tariffs are likely to affect the jobs of 1.7 lakh skilled workers, as per the Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council's prediction. Of India's exporters, 85% are Medium and Small Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) which will not be able to bear the shock of the loss of the U.S. market in the short term. The industry has therefore sought short-term measures in terms of policy reliefs, aid for workers, and monetary and marketing benefits for three to six months, to help the manufacturers absorb the shock.

### Which are the worst-affected States in India?

Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra are the worst-hit States. Most of the diamonds are cut and polished in the factories set up in Gujarat. Rajasthan has a concentration of manufacturing of jewellery with gems and semi-precious stones. Maharashtra is a manufacturing hub for studded and non-studded jewellery, and exports most of the diamonds.

### What are the sought policy reliefs?

Some of the key policy reliefs sought by the industry

are: to extend the export obligation period for exports made to the U.S. from 90 days to 270 days; allow reverse job work in DTAs (Domestic Tariff Areas) by jewellery manufacturing Special Economic Zones (SEZs); and allow SEZs to sell in the domestic market on payment of duty foregone. In simple terms, if a jewellery manufacturer imports gold for the export of jewellery, such export of ready-made jewellery has to take place within a period of 90 days. If not, an import duty of 6% and GST of 3% is levied. But with the orders from the U.S. suddenly drying up, many exporters are unable to ship their jewellery. That is why, the industry now wants the export obligation period to be increased. The industry also wants the government to allow the SEZs to sell their goods in the domestic market with import duty foregone. Currently, the exporters are allowed to sell in the domestic market, but with a duty of 20% on the finished product. This makes them less competitive as compared to domestic manufacturers. Reverse job order refers to SEZs being allowed to manufacture for domestic buyers so that idle machinery and capability can be utilised; skilled workers can stay gainfully employed; and that factories set up after years of hard work can keep running.

### What are the incentives demanded?

Some of the demands by the industry are — monetary incentives like interest subvention offered during the COVID period; temporary subsidisation of exports to the U.S.; worker-related benefits like restructuring of personal loans and inclusion under healthcare schemes; and marketing benefits such as giving exporters funding to explore newer markets. Other demands include banking incentives, liquidity packages, and finance extensions, among others.

### Why the urgency?

The tariffs are disrupting businesses which were set for almost five decades. These tariffs will disproportionately affect MSMEs which have invested for years to build up their businesses. While large exporters will be able to navigate through this change, the bottom-line will be wiped out unless the government intervenes and provides short-term relief for three to six months, says the industry. The total bailout package in the form of various incentives is likely to be to the tune of ₹500 crore as per rough industry estimates. "The U.S. forms 30% of India's gem and jewellery export. Most of this demand is fulfilled by MSMEs, which form the backbone of the sector, and which are now struggling to survive. We need urgent government help," said Kirit Bhansali, chairperson of Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

## France joins other countries in recognising Palestine: What this means for Israel, the Gaza war



Objectively, increased diplomatic recognition for Palestinian statehood is insufficient to alter the course of the ongoing war in Gaza, in the absence of decisive action against Israel. Israel is showing no signs of relenting — it has intensified its fresh offensive into Gaza City, and Netanyahu is on record saying the war won't end even if Hamas releases all its hostages. Consequently, the burden of action to end the war is shifting to states facilitating Israeli non-compliance.

European states, including the UK, are taking gradual steps to limit (but not cut off) export control licences, direct arms sales, spare components, and other military equipment to Israel. However, the United States continues to provide unconditional material and military support to Israel, and the Trump administration is set to clear \$6.4 billion more in weapons sales. Moreover, Germany, which has not joined other European states in recognising Palestine, remains Israel's second largest source of military material, with Washington and Berlin providing over 90% of Israeli defence imports. Hence, while the recognition of Palestine by more countries does increase international diplomatic pressure on Israel, there is little immediate impact on the war in Gaza. The UK, Canada, and Australia have all acknowledged this in their respective statements. A Palestinian state International law and practice for an entity to be a "State" has four principal requirements, as implied in the 1933 Montevideo Convention — a defined territory; a permanent population; a government; and a capacity to enter into relations with other states. More countries recognising Palestine practically strengthens one of these.

Territory: Israel practically occupies 100% of Palestinian territories, by virtue of its occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and now the Gaza Strip, and its decades-long control over air, land, and sea access to all these regions. These three regions represent the official State of Palestine that was established in 1988 according to pre-1967 borders, ceding Palestinian claims of sovereignty over Mandatory Palestine (Palestine as under the British mandate after World War I) and undivided Jerusalem, all of which even-

tually fell under Israeli occupation. Palestinian control over its territories is set to decrease further with Israel's construction of new settlements and the Knesset's July vote to support Israeli "annexation" of the West Bank. On September 18, Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich described Gaza as a "real estate bonanza", indicating Israel's desired territorial control over the war-torn enclave.

Permanent population: The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory concluded on September 16 that "Israeli authorities and Israeli security forces have the genocidal intent to destroy, in whole or in part, the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip." Thus far, conservative estimates suggest that 10% of Gaza's population has been killed or injured and independent estimates put the total death toll significantly past the 65,000-mark. The IDF's push deeper into Gaza has resulted in over a million famine-stricken Palestinians now in Gaza City facing continued indiscriminate bombardment. This, along with Israel's stated aim of further attacks, threatens the second pillar of Palestinian statehood. Government: The Palestinian Authority (PA) has acted as the de jure authority in limited enclaves of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, but de facto control has been with Israel. In Gaza, Hamas has served as the de jure government after ejecting the PA in 2007 (following the PA's initial refusal to accept Hamas' electoral victory in 2006). However, Hamas has governed under Israel's complete land, air, and naval blockade of the Gaza Strip. At present, global recognition of Palestine occurs alongside calls for the PA to reform, which it has committed to, and for Hamas to disarm and remove itself from Palestinian politics, which it has rejected. Even if the latter is achieved, a demilitarised Palestine will not be fully sovereign and Israel is unlikely to cede control over military and defence issues. Hence, the question of Palestinian governmental and administrative capabilities is also one for the "year after", and currently, such capabilities are undermined by Israel's illegal occupation. The reality on the ground does not weaken Palestine's case to statehood, but proves that it is only the Palestinian capacity to conduct inter-state relations where greater international recognition of statehood yields a direct benefit, for now. It allows the Palestinian Authority better international means to lobby for an end that is almost completely reliant on Israel and the United States.

### How does this affect Israel?

Israel's response to greater global support for the Palestinian cause has usually been to double down on its military activity and entrench its occupation. Following the UK's recognition of Palestine, Netanyahu asserted that "the response to the recent attempt to impose a terror state in the heart of our land will be given after my return from the US", that "a Palestinian State will never be established", and that he had personally "prevented the establishment of this terror state despite enormous pressures both from within and from outside" for years. Netanyahu had reacted similarly after the UNGA (including India) had overwhelmingly voted in favour of the two-state solution on September 13.

## India US trade deal: The much-delayed negotiations seem headed into the final leg. What lies ahead?

India US trade deal: After much back and forth, the India-US trade deal is suddenly back on the agenda again. As a high-level Indian team of officials has landed in Washington to resume negotiations for the much-delayed trade deal, there are indications that the endgame seems near. The India trade team is led by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, and there are indications that something meaningful and concrete has been communicated by Washington DC with respect to the resolve on that side too to wrap up the festering deal. To be sure, the two sides have been at this juncture months earlier too, and things can change at the spur of a moment. A draft of a deal was cleared at the official level by both countries months earlier, before an intervention by the White House to ostensibly extract more concessions from India effectively derailed the entire process. This eventually led to the talks falling through, followed by the subsequent chill in bilateral relations.

It is likely that this time around, the visiting Indian side, which includes Rajesh Agrawal, a Special Secretary in the Department of Commerce and India's chief trade negotiator, would be offering some additional concessions to sweeten the deal and package the deal in the context of furthering the strategic bilateral relationship. The view that 'India is not China' has consistently echoed in New Delhi's policy circles, and is likely to be reaffirmed in these negotiations too, at least from the Indian side. The concessions to be offered by New Delhi could include big-ticket defence purchase commitments and plans for nuclear collaborations, duly quantified with a headline number in billions of US dollars. Some of these things are likely to have been discussed at the official level, given that the Indian delegation's visit comes days after an American team led by Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch visited New Delhi earlier last week. Trade negotiations had stalled after US President Donald Trump, on August 7, stepped up pressure on India and then doubled tariffs on India to 50 per cent citing India's purchase of Russian crude. The US negotiators, who were expected to be in India on August 25, had then put off the visit.

In the subsequent weeks and months, according to government officials, there seems to be a realisation in DC that India is unlikely to yield in the face of tariff threats, just as South Korea, Japan or the European Union did. At the same time, New Delhi has repeatedly flagged its red lines and doubled down on the assertion that these would not be breached, even if that wrecked the prospect of any trade deal. There are indications now that the Indian side expects the so-called reciprocal tariffs and the punitive secondary tariffs that followed to be removed in a single step and not two separate moves, and that these would then be replaced by a single tariff number. Also, there is expectation that the draft deal that was ready earlier would now be dusted off and form the basis for these fresh negotiations, with some additional concessions thrown into the mix to clinch the deal.

The timing of the H-1B visa decision by the Trump administration over the weekend is also being seen in some quarters as a possible negotiating plank, which is now an integral part of Trump's trade playbook, given that the only country affected in a major way by that decision is India. The positive inference for India here is that additional leverage is generally thrown into the mix when the Trump administration is gunning to get a deal done, as was the case with both South Korea and the EU deals. While the move may be primarily aimed at pandering to the MAGA constituency that Trump is keen to appease, trade experts are inferring that the timing of the announcement alludes to the possibility of the decision having the potential of additional leverage against India, just like the secondary tariffs on account of Russian oil buys. The challenge for the Indian side would be to try and bring this non-tariff issue to the negotiating table too, at a time when the removal of the tariff blockade on goods and clinching a trade deal is really the primary task at hand. There have also been multiple public statements of affirmation in India that the tariffs would go. Last Thursday, Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran had said in Kolkata that additional US tariffs of 25 per cent on India levied over the purchase of Russian oil



"won't continue beyond November 30". This has buttressed the belief that backchannel negotiations have been positive.

The signs of easing of the trade tensions had begun emerging as Trump earlier this month said India and America are "continuing negotiations to address the trade barriers", and that he was "certain" there would be "no difficulty" in the talks being successful. Just hours later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in response to Trump's post, said both countries are "natural partners" and will "work together to secure a brighter, more prosperous future". Right after that, though, the US asked G7 countries to step up pressure on countries buying Russian oil, to end the war in Ukraine, as per a joint statement released by the US Department of the Treasury. The statement said the US has received "commitments" from G7 countries to increase sanctions pressure on buyers of Russian oil. China and India are the biggest purchasers of Russian oil. India has meanwhile maintained that it will continue to buy Russian oil, with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman saying earlier this month that "economic and commercial considerations" are behind India's oil purchases. India is the world's third-largest consumer of crude and depends on imports to meet nearly 90 per cent of its requirement. Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his Independence Day speech, said India "will not compromise" on the well-being of Indian farmers, fisherfolk and cattle keepers.

## Why Travel Insurance Is the Smartest Choice for International Journeys

Exploring new locations, meeting people, and experiencing cultures that are very different from our own are all made possible by travel. Travelling abroad, whether for business, school, or pleasure, is an exciting milestone. They do, however, also carry an element of unpredictability that must be disregarded. Unexpected medical problems, delayed flights, or misplaced luggage may easily ruin well-planned vacations, leaving passengers anxious and broke. At this point, travel insurance becomes an essential component of the preparation process. Ensuring peace of mind during travel is just as important as safeguarding against the worst-case scenarios. You can handle anything from minor annoyances like lost luggage to major problems that call for emergency medical care if you have the proper coverage.

Consider it a safety measure that lets you confidently enjoy the trip. For example, if you are planning a trip to Germany and purchase travel insurance Germany for it, you can lower potential risks. You may lower the risks and free up your time to concentrate on the experiences that are most important by planning ahead. Securing travel insurance is a wise and necessary choice for anyone organising a vacation outside of their country of residence, as it transforms erratic travel into a more seamless and worry-free experience. The Significance of Travel Insurance Now More Than Before

International travel has grown in popularity, but so have the associated concerns. Here are some reasons why insurance is a must for international travel.

## The Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood: What makes Aryan Khan laugh?

The mystery is solved. There was never a mystery. The one-asterisk-short title of The Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood hides the star in ba-star-ds, the ratings in reviews, and the censorious in the Censors. Whether you buy it, depends on where you stand in this chapter of Shah Rukh Khan's Bollywood story. And make no mistake, that is what it is. The outsider who is now the ultimate insider passing on the torch to son Aryan, who has to make the journey in reverse — should he choose to do so — without burning his hand. So, the father dips into his years of goodwill and, sure enough, gets the cream of Bollywood to send up a meme of Bollywood. Nothing is sacred in Star Kid With the Mostest Aryan Khan's debut as writer, creator and director of this Netflix series. No films are made, and all filmmaking is skewered, even as The Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood itself cheerfully stays in the zone of the very campy 1980s phase of the film industry, with all its trappings — undying friendships, dying fathers, illogical action, and mafia dons with filmy dreams.

The upgrade is the women, and the casualness of interactions between the sexes. They can be friends who hug and talk and swear and smoke and drink, without ending up in bed. Who knew? And that seems to be Aryan Khan's vision — Bollywood as the bastard child. As much a product of unacknowledged liaisons on and off screen, as an object of guilty pleasure. Starting with his own dad, always the star and never the actor Khan, who made his way into celluloid heaven without getting a seat at cinema's high table.

Now that he is up there with the gods though, Shah Rukh can do no wrong — even when he does. Who better than Aryan to tell us about this bastardisation? You can be on a cruise ship one day, Arthur Road Jail the next, the media's villain one day and its darling the next — without perhaps meriting any of the above, and with barely an ironical pause in the U-turns. So why not a film where a Delhi boy becomes an overnight star in a film called the Revolver, with as much subtlety about it as its title suggests? So why not the boy's "talented" musician uncle who has been an unlucky struggler all his life, but whose first struggle should be against his drinking? So why not a star kid's daughter with a silver spoon but a heart of gold, who never has to be nepo tested on either? So why not a producer who kicks a woman set designer in the stomach, causing certain injury,



and barely gets a rap on his knuckles? So why not a dig at MeToo, over a good laugh and some expensive drinks? So why not open product placements for Aryan's other dream business, D'Avoyl (he certainly has a thing for titles), with no squeamishness about it? So why not Daddy's friends and Mom's pals dropping in as Easter eggs? So why not a cop who makes random drug raids and random arrests, as the media captures him driving away with the wrong guy? So why not an awards show that everyone takes seriously, and no one does? And why not an actual illegitimate child twist with serious consequences, but where everyone moves on before you can spell trauma? And, why not communal harmony, that has become Shah Rukh's burden to bear, rubbing shoulders with casual communal stereotypes? Aryan does all this, and Aryan gets away (where are all the easily offended?) because Aryan can. He stands on the shoulders of a man who has redefined Bollywood, and who has come to know only some of it has to do with what's on screen. No Shah Rukh Khan fan will say this is a Shah Rukh Khan film. But, isn't it now? Karan Johar saying "don't f... with the movie mafia", a policeman saying "jail time only makes one more famous", Aamir Khan and S S Rajamouli discussing seriously the merits of idli-sambar vs vada-paav even as an aged, wrinkly SRK gets VFX-ed into Benjamin Button smoothness, and an eulogy that isn't without the girl's father's approval, but which marks the end of something than the start of one.

## Hyderabad airport wins top energy efficiency awards at CII event



Hyderabad: Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) has been honored with the esteemed titles of "National Energy Leader" and "Excellent Energy Efficient Unit" at the 26th National Award Ceremony for "Excellence in Energy Management," an event organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

This recognition marks a significant achievement for RGIA, as it has received the "National Energy Leader" accolade for the seventh consecutive year and the "Excellent Energy Efficient Unit" distinction for the ninth time. The awards aim to identify and honor organizations that have demonstrated outstanding performance in energy management, and to facilitate the sharing of best practices and innovative technologies across industries. The 2025 edition featured over 570 participating companies from across the country.

This recognition marks a significant achievement for RGIA, as it has received the "National Energy Leader" accolade for the seventh consecutive year and the "Excellent Energy Efficient Unit" distinction for the ninth time.

## Centre keeping watch on price tweaks, no knee-jerk reaction to complaints



On September 9, the Revenue Department had sent a letter to principal chief commissioners and chief commissioners of central GST zones. On September 9, the Revenue Department had sent a letter to principal chief commissioners and chief commissioners of central GST zones. After having issued a directive to its field officers to monitor the price changes for 54 product categories under GST 2.0, the Centre is keeping a close watch on the benefits being passed on to the consumers as the sweeping tax rate cuts became effective from September 22, government sources said Tuesday. The government has also asked consumers to raise complaints on the National Consumer Helpline about the GST benefits not getting passed on to them.

While the consumers have raised complaints on social media about prices of several items, especially in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) space, not reflecting the cut in GST rates on e-commerce platforms, the government does not want to give a "knee-jerk" reaction and will wait for the field officers to submit their report, they said. "We are monitoring the price changes. Field formations are monitoring, and we will get the first report from them by September 30. We do not want a knee-jerk reaction to such complaints," the source said. In a FAQ issued late Tuesday, the government said consumers can raise queries or complaints about not receiving benefits of GST rate changes on the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) via toll free number 1915 or Whatsapp at 8800001915. "Complaints/queries can also be registered on the Integrated Grievance Redressal Mechanism (INGRAM) portal," it said.

Under the next-generation reforms for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), multiple slabs — 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent — were replaced with a broad two-slab structure — a merit rate of 5 per cent and a standard rate of 18 per cent — in addition to a special demerit rate of 40 per cent for sin and demerit goods such as pan masala, tobacco and cigarettes. This has resulted in significant tax rate cuts for several common-use items and aspirational goods such as white goods. On September 9, the Revenue Department had sent a letter to principal chief commissioners and chief commissioners of central GST zones, first reported by The Indian Express, asking them to compile commodity-wise price data on 54 product cat-

egories pre- and post-September 22 including for fast-moving consumer goods, food and educational items, and drugs and medicines, as well as cement and white goods. The field offices have been asked to treat the price compilation exercise "on priority", asking them to submit the price change reports to the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) by the 20th of every month for the next six months. The first report has to be submitted by September 30.

Field officers have already started compiling the price data, an official said, adding that most items have seen a price reduction but some items are yet to see a commensurate reduction in prices because of the existing unsold stock. "Many retailers have started to offer price cuts but there are several retailers that have unsold stock from before September 22. And understandably, they will not offer discounts immediately on the stock procured by them before September 22 as they would not want to incur loss on such items by selling them at a discount to the consumers. So they will take some time to make the transition," an official told The Indian Express. At present, there is no legal anti-profiteering provision under GST. At the time of the rollout of the indirect tax regime in July 2017, an anti-profiteering provision was incorporated in the Central GST (CGST) Act through Section 171(2). A National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) was then set up in November 2017 to check unfair profiteering activities by registered suppliers and ensure that commensurate benefits of reduction in GST rates on goods and services and of the input tax credit are passed on to consumers by way of reduction in prices. Initially, it was set up for two years till 2019, but was later provided an extension. All GST anti-profiteering complaints were then dealt with by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) from December 1, 2022. In a notification dated October 1, 2024, the government then empowered the Principal bench of GSTAT (GST Appellate Tribunal) as the authority for anti-profiteering cases and notified April 1, 2025, as the sunset date for the anti-profiteering clause in the GST law. After the 56th GST Council meeting, held on September 3, Revenue Secretary Arvind Shrivastava had said that only around 704 cases were registered with the NAA since inception of the anti-profiteering body that is no more in existence. "Sixty per cent of the cases were initiated within the first 3-4 years of the implementation and the total profiteering amount that was alleged was around Rs 4,362 crore in 704 cases. The industry has by and large passed on the benefits of rate cuts to the consumers. At that time too, the industry made public statements and committed and you would have seen and heard that a lot of industries have already come out and have committed that they will be transmitting these benefits too," he had said. Shrivastava had also said that administratively, both at the state level as well as the CBIC level, there will be engagement with the industry to ensure that the benefits to the consumer will be transmitted to the consumers. "And we do expect that since it is to the benefit of the businesses too, it is going to happen eventually," he had said.

## The much-delayed negotiations seem headed into the final leg. What lies ahead?

India US trade deal: After much back and forth, the India-US trade deal is suddenly back on the agenda again. As a high-level Indian team of officials has landed in Washington to resume negotiations for the much-delayed trade deal, there are indications that the endgame seems near. The India trade team is led by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, and there are indications that something meaningful and concrete has been communicated by Washington DC with respect to the resolve on that side too to wrap up the festering deal.

To be sure, the two sides have been at this juncture months earlier too, and things can change at the spur of a moment. A draft of a deal was cleared at the official level by both countries months earlier, before an intervention by the White House to ostensibly extract more concessions from India effectively derailed the entire process. This eventually led to the talks falling through, followed by the subsequent chill in bilateral relations. It is likely that this time around, the visiting Indian side, which includes Rajesh Agrawal, a Special Secretary in the Department of Commerce and India's chief trade negotiator, would be offering some additional concessions to sweeten the deal and package the deal in the context of furthering the strategic bilateral relationship. The view that 'India is not China' has consistently echoed in New Delhi's policy circles, and is likely to be reaffirmed in these negotiations too, at least from the Indian side.

The concessions to be offered by New Delhi could include big-ticket defence purchase commitments and plans for nuclear collaborations, duly quantified with a headline number in billions of US dollars. Some of these things are likely to have been discussed at the official level, given that the Indian delegation's visit comes days after an American team led by Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch's visited New Delhi earlier last week. Trade negotiations had stalled after US President Donald Trump, on August 7, stepped up pressure on India and then doubled tariffs on India to 50 per cent citing India's purchase of Russian crude. The US negotiators, who were expected to be in India on August 25, had then put off the visit. In the subsequent weeks and months, according to government officials, there seems to be a realisation in DC that India is unlikely to yield in the face of tariff threats, just as South Korea, Japan or the European Union did. At the same time, New Delhi has repeatedly flagged its red lines and doubled down on the assertion that these would not be breached, even if that wrecked the prospect of any trade deal. There are indications now that the Indian side expects the so-called reciprocal tariffs and the punitive secondary tariffs that followed to be removed in a single step and not two separate moves, and that these would then be replaced by a single tariff number. Also, there is expectation that the draft deal that was ready earlier would now be dusted off and form the basis for these fresh negotiations, with some additional concessions thrown into the mix to clinch the deal. The timing of the H-1B visa decision by the Trump administration over the weekend is also being seen in some quarters as a possible negotiating plank, which is now an integral part of Trump's trade playbook, given that the only country affected in a major way by that decision is India. The positive inference for India here is that additional leverage is generally thrown into the mix when the Trump administration is gunning to get a deal done, as was the case with both South Korea and the EU deals. While the move may be primarily aimed at pandering to the MAGA constituency that Trump is keen to appease, trade experts are inferring that the timing of the announcement alludes to the possibility of the decision having the potential of additional



leverage against India, just like the secondary tariffs on account of Russian oil buys. The challenge for the Indian side would be to try and bring this non-tariff issue to the negotiating table too, at a time when the removal of the tariff blockade on goods and clinching a trade deal is really the primary task at hand. There have also been multiple public statements of affirmation in India that the tariffs would go. Last Thursday, Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran had said in Kolkata that additional US tariffs of 25 per cent on India levied over the purchase of Russian oil "won't continue beyond November 30". This has buttressed the belief that backchannel negotiations have been positive. The signs of easing of the trade tensions had begun emerging as Trump earlier this month said India and America are "continuing negotiations to address the trade barriers", and that he was "certain" there would be "no difficulty" in the talks being successful. Just hours later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in response to Trump's post, said both countries are "natural partners" and will "work together to secure a brighter, more prosperous future". Right after that, though, the US asked G7 countries to step up pressure on countries buying Russian oil, to end the war in Ukraine, as per a joint statement released by the US Department of the Treasury. The statement said the US has received "commitments" from G7 countries to increase sanctions pressure on buyers of Russian oil. China and India are the biggest purchasers of Russian oil. India has meanwhile maintained that it will continue to buy Russian oil, with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman saying earlier this month that "economic and commercial considerations" are behind India's oil purchases. India is the world's third-largest consumer of crude and depends on imports to meet nearly 90 per cent of its requirement. Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his Independence Day speech, said India "will not compromise" on the well-being of Indian farmers, fisherfolk and cattle keepers.

## SMBC raises stake in Yes Bank to 24.22 per cent, becomes largest shareholder

New Delhi: Yes Bank on Tuesday said Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) of Japan has acquired an additional 4.22 per cent stake in the Mumbai-based bank. With the acquisition, SMBC's stake in Yes Bank has increased from 20 per cent to 24.22 per cent. SMBC acquired 132.39 crore shares via off-market sale on September 22, Yes Bank said in a regulatory filing.

With the acquisition, the total holding of the Japanese entity in the bank rose to 759.51 crore shares, it said. With this transaction, SMBC has become Yes Bank's largest shareholder, while SBI continues to hold a significant stake of over 10 per cent.

## Emraan Hashmi shares his first 'big' paycheck story: 'Got 25 lakhs...Did that film because I wanted to buy my Honda Accord'



Receiving your first paycheck is a special milestone in everyone's life. It marks the beginning of your journey as an independent adult, capable of taking on the responsibilities of the outside world. You are finally able to pay for things yourself and take care of your finances. Emraan Hashmi recently shared his first 'big' paycheck story, recalling how it kick-started his journey in the Hindi film industry. In conversation with podcaster Ranveer Allahabadi, the Raaz actor shared: "I got 25 lakhs and that was my fourth film. I did that film because I wanted to buy my Honda Accord. I bought it, and then banged the car the first time I sat in it. I went to pick up my then girlfriend, now wife."

"I believe the first time you scratch a car, then you start enjoying it," he jokingly told the host. According to Mukesh Pandey, Director of Rupyaa Paisa, the urge to spend your paycheck is hard to resist; however, establishing some healthy financial behaviours early can prevent unpleasant financial habits down the road. Pandey defined financial discipline as the ability to make sound financial decisions and stay within budgets, thereby avoiding impulsive spending and steadily moving toward set goals. "Practicing financial discipline is not coming up with ways to save

money but creating certain habits that consolidate one's position in terms of finance, increase it, or keep that person secure," he said. Here are 3 things you must do after receiving your first paycheck to establish new financial responsibilities.

### 1. Create a Budget:

The first step to managing money is knowing where it goes. Write down your fixed expenses (rent, transport, EMIs) and variable expenses (shopping and entertainment). Setting spending limits allows you to control the amount you spend while being aware of your total contribution for the month. Following a budget is essentially your roadmap to ensuring you are living within your means.

### 2. Save and Invest:

Put 20% of your paycheck into a savings account or into a SIP (Systematic Investment Plan); even if it is a small amount, start the habit of saving, so that you will have something put aside for an emergency. Investing is a way of growing your earned income while requiring you to be patient and think of the long term.

### 3. Do Not Borrow:

Your first paycheck is likely to have a temptation associated with it to buy things with a credit card or to get a loan. An anecdote that needs to be repeated: it is rare to go into debt and have it work out well (aka so you can pay it back). Try to stay out of debt and likely have no debt at all. Even if you have to service outstanding obligations, try to make sure you pay off any loans and always pay your credit card invoices in full every month. Managing and building financial management is not supposed to be punitive; it is about creating stability and freedom. "Your first paycheck is not just another paycheck; it can be your first step to lifelong financial confidence," reiterated Pandey.

## 'Gen Z is redefining luxury as personal, purposeful, and progressive': Amit Aggarwal on adapting his craft, the future of Indian couture, and more

With the global spotlight firmly on Indian craft, Amit Aggarwal stands at the crossroads of heritage and modernity. Known for blending tailoring precision with structural fluidity, the couturier is pushing Indian craftsmanship into the future. His latest couture line, EXON, unveiled recently, reimagines vintage Banarasi gowns with his signature corded tessellations — contemporary yet rooted in tradition. Ahead of the festive season, Aggarwal spoke to indianexpress.com about Gen Z's evolving fashion choices, adapting his craft for modern icons, and the future of Indian couture. Read the edited excerpts below:

Q. Your latest barware collection draws inspiration from the French Alps and glacial structures — how has French fashion inspired your work?

Amit Aggarwal: The crystalline stillness of the French Alps — glaciers fracturing light, icy skies, snowy calm — became the soul of this collaboration with Grey Goose Altius. I translated that glacial serenity into translucent layers, metallic sheens, and architectural forms that embody both stillness and strength. For me, design is elemental, bold, and ever-evolving, much like nature sculpting itself.

Q. Your craft is well-loved among youth icons like Janhvi Kapoor, Rashmika Mandanna, and Ananya Panday. How do you adapt your craft to resonate with the young and modern style?

Amit Aggarwal: Fashion is an evolving dialogue. To connect with this generation, I balance innovation with wearability — bold designs that still feel effortlessly personal. Experimenting with materials, textures, and silhouettes is key, but always with space for individual expression. Young style today is about confidence and authenticity, and my craft adapts by offering versatility and a strong visual impact that complements their unique personalities. The goal is to empower them to make a statement on their own terms.

Q. How does Gen Z define luxury in terms of fashion?

Amit Aggarwal: For Gen Z, luxury is not just about exclusivity or labels. It's about authenticity, sustainability, and



experiences that carry meaning. They value pieces with stories, innovation in design and material, and fashion that aligns with their values and intersects with technology. Above all, it's about self-expression and individuality. Gen Z is redefining luxury as personal, purposeful, and progressive.

Q. A celeb you have the most fun working with?

Amit Aggarwal: I genuinely enjoy working with individuals who are open to experimentation and embrace innovation in fashion. Every collaboration brings unique energy, but when someone approaches design fearlessly and authentically, it makes the process dynamic and inspiring. Seeing muses bring garments to life with their own confidence is always rewarding.

Q. With craft and tradition taking the centre stage in global fashion lately, what does the future of Indian couture look like? How can it stand apart in the days to come? Amit Aggarwal: Indian couture has a powerful opportunity to redefine itself on the global stage. The future lies in embracing heritage while pushing innovation — age-old techniques blended with contemporary design and sustainable practices. Tradition should inspire progress, not confine it. By experimenting fearlessly and creating a dialogue between past and future, Indian couture can stay relevant, aspirational, and truly unique on the world stage.

## Nutritionist explains why timing, cooking method, and variety matter when adding dals to your diet

Dals are a staple on most Indian plates, but not everyone knows that the way you cook and eat them can completely change their nutritional impact. Holistic health nutritionist Khushi Chhabra recently explained in an Instagram post that "Dals are a powerhouse of complex carbohydrates, plant protein, fibre, vitamins, and minerals — but did you know the way you cook and eat them makes all the difference?"

She went on to highlight some practical aspects many people overlook when it comes to dals: the best way to consume each variety for maximum nutrition, who should eat them and who might need to avoid them, the right time to eat them, and the recommended daily intake. Chhabra also shared bonus tips for every dal, pointed out the wrong ways of consuming them, and offered simple tricks to make them more digestible and gut-friendly.

Her advice covered a wide range of common dals. She shared that arhar dal is safe, balanced, and best for lunch or in sambhar/rasam, while green whole moong is ideal for weight loss, diabetes, and the elderly, especially when sprouted. Urad dal boosts bone and joint strength but is heavy, so best eaten in moderation, with ginger or hing to aid digestion. Chana dal is fibre-rich and good for diabetics but can cause bloating if undercooked, whereas yellow moong is the lightest, safest, and most gut-friendly, even for children and the sick. Masoor dal is light, iron-rich, and great for weight management, but not ideal for those with kidney stones, while black urad is stamina-boosting but very heavy and should be eaten sparingly. She even addressed a widespread misconception: "Dals don't cause bloating, the cooking method does. With the right soaking, spices, and timing, dals can be your healthiest comfort food!"

To better understand how these guidelines translate into everyday eating habits, we spoke with an expert. Techniques that make dals easier to digest and gut-friendly Aarti Prabhu, nutritionist and founder at Nutrodynamix, tells indianexpress.com, "Yes, dals can cause bloating, especially if you have preexisting gut issues or sensitivi-



ties, or if they are not prepped or cooked properly." Some techniques that can make dals easier to digest and gut-friendly include: Rinsing the dals thoroughly before use. Soaking the dals for 4-6 hours to reduce anti-nutritional factors such as phytates and improve digestibility. Cooking them till well done, so that it is easier on the gut. Adding the right spices in the right quantities during preparations, such as jeera, hing, ginger, etc., to reduce gases. Using fat in moderation while cooking. Is there really a 'best time' to eat dals? Prabhu says, "Yes, and no, there is a best time to eat dals based on how they feel in the gut, but that timing is individualised. However, the timing does not affect how well our body absorbs the nutrients present in dals. Dals such as tur are heavier to digest and gassy. They are best consumed in the afternoon, and dals like moong, which are lighter, are better consumed at night. Having said that, even the overall dal preparation, quantity consumed, and foods accompanying it also matter a lot." Yes, each dal offers a varying nutritional profile. "One should decide which dal to include in their daily diet based on individual tolerance, gut issues, medical history, and overall health requirements. When introducing a new dal, it is best to start small and then increase quantity and frequency," states Prabhu.

## Arundhati Reddy receives warm welcome after Women's World Cup victory



GNS News Agency, March 7

Hyderabad: India fast bowler Arundhati Reddy, a member of the Indian team that won the Women's World

Cup by defeating South Africa in the final in Mumbai last week, was given a warm reception upon her arrival at Hyderabad Airport on Thursday. Sports Authority of Telangana chairman Shiva Sena Reddy and the VC & MD of SATG, Mrs. Sonibala Devi, received the Indian cricketer. Speaking on arrival, Arundhati said it was a dream come true to be a part of the victorious World Cup team and credited the historic victory to a collective team effort.

"It was pure joy to see the Indian team emerge as winners in such a terrific final. Truly unforgettable moments," said the 28-year-old pacer, who has been an integral part of the Indian team in major campaigns for quite some time. "Yes, we do hope that women's cricket will witness a new chapter, as this World Cup win should motivate many young girls to take up sports and dream big," Arundhati added.

## Richa Ghosh's batting mantra: 'Amol Sir assured me it was okay to take a little time to settle in before pulling off the big hits under pressure'

GNS News Agency, March 7

Stressing on how clarity of her role helped unlock her big hitting game, World Cup winning sensation Richa Ghosh, said she was told her job was to finish well. "Amol sir (Head Coach Amol Muzumdar) made everyone's role in the team very clear. For me, it was simple, play fearless cricket, look for the big shots, and finish the innings strongly. He also assured me that it was okay to take a little time to settle in. That trust he showed, believing I could pull off the big hits under pressure, helped me immensely," Ghosh told JioStar show 'Follow The Blues', while speaking of her batting.

Ghosh's cameos were bigly responsible for India getting to some big totals after the late innings impetus she provided. However preparation went back far into last two years. "Before the World Cup, I really focused on spending more time at the crease and building my innings. Whenever I got the chance to play, I concentrated on playing ground shots and making sure I didn't throw my wicket away. For me, it was all about keeping the scoreboard ticking with singles and holding up one end. That's what I worked on the most," she said. Ghosh planned to use her higher strike rate to pile pressure on opposition. "My main job was to finish innings strongly by scoring quickly in the final overs. Whenever I got the chance to bat, my focus was on applying the finishing touches. I aimed to maintain a high strike-rate and put pressure on the opposition bowlers. Scoring those extra runs reduces the pressure on our team and gives us a better chance to win," she explained.

It will be a trait that comes in handy next year in the T20 World Cup. She views deliveries as binaries – if hittable, hit. If the ball is good, then scoot to take single. Keep scoreboard ticking. Not complicating is her quality. "My mindset is simple. Whenever I come to bat, if the ball is in my zone, I go for my shots. Hitting a boundary or a six in a pressure situation really helps release the tension. If it's a good delivery, I'm happy to take a single and target the next ball. That's the method I stick to," she said. Hailing from West Bengal where the talismanic Jhulan Goswami comes from, Ghosh would pay her ode to the legend. "Jhulan didi has played a huge role in my journey. She was my Captain when I made my domestic debut for Bengal. She's always been



there to guide me, even when I started playing for India. She taught me how to adapt my game to different situations and shared invaluable advice on improving as a player. I'm truly grateful for her support," she said. She lauded the team dynamic where unity blew away outside noise of tensions especially when three losses mounted. "Honestly, our dressing room atmosphere was fantastic from day one. Even during tough phases, no one was afraid because we always had each other's backs. That support system was our biggest strength. And when we finally won the final, the feeling was just incredible, completely different and absolutely unforgettable," she told JioHotstar. Ghosh recalled how the team song came about and how it had been bubbling away within their hearts for years. "We actually created our team song a few series ago. It was something we really wanted. But we made a pact to only sing it, and reveal it to the world after we lifted the World Cup trophy. Every player contributed to it in some way. So, the moment we won at the DY Patil Stadium, we just knew we had to sing it right there on the ground. It was a magical feeling," she said. Though they had visualised the winning a day before, the euphoric moment of winning the World Cup final had left them speechless. "When those final South African wickets started falling, and Harman didi (Captain Harmanpreet Kaur) took that last catch, we all just scattered in different directions. We were so overwhelmed that we didn't even know how to celebrate! Harman didi was absolutely speechless, just pure joy. And when Deepti didi got that last wicket, even she couldn't process that we'd actually won the World Cup. We were all just living in that moment, soaking it all in before it even sank in," she added.

## Who's the gentleman in Red: This World Cup winning captain's transformation leaves netizens zapped



GNS News Agency, March 7

Arjuna Ranatunga, looking taller than ever, and considerably leaner, was smiling in red alongside Sanath Jayasuriya, Aravinda de Silva and Muttiah Muralidaran. (X) Arjuna Ranatunga, looking taller than ever, and considerably leaner, was smiling in red alongside Sanath Jayasuriya, Aravinda de Silva and Muttiah Muralidaran. (X) They were the OG Oz-cricketers, though they played in a deeper shade of blue than India. But an entire generation of Indian cricket fans dreaded their might, and were left heartbroken almost 30 years ago, when India lost in the World Cup semifinals. 13 March 1996 was the OG 19th November.

So when Sanath Jayasuriya posted a picture of the giants the Sri Lankan 1996 World Cup winning team that had defeated Tubby Taylor's Australia, it sent several Indians down the balances of nostalgia. A defeat that had back then felt like doom, also gave rise to lifetime of respect and adoration for the defiant, gutsy Lankans. The picture had swashbuckler Jayasuriya, middle order lynchpin Aravind D'Silva and ace spinner Muttiah Muralitharan all kitted out in suits. But one man in a long red, close collar shirt was unrecognisable, to the most fervent cricket fans. Arjuna Ranatunga, looking taller than ever, and considerably leaner, was smiling. And though he held the glass of pineapple punch like he would fling the ball to Chaminda Vaas or Murali any moment, it was a distinctly different looking skipper who earned everyone's love and respect by winning that final. Social media was abuzz with comments about how different he seemed, and gushing of Indians who had been awed like rest of the world. Romesh Kaluwitharana, the tiny keeper would open the innings with Jayasuriya, and go bonkers with his pinch-hitting. The heavyweights wouldn't stop – D'Silva, Ranatunga themselves and then Roshan Mahanama and Hashan Tillekaratne in subsequent years as the aggressive batters revolutionized one day cricket. The team had often been cornered by aspersions cast on Muttiah Muralitharan's bowling action, but Ranatunga with his chewing gum ruminating face, blinkless stare and steely resolve,

would lead from the front and stand sturdy rallying around the embattled spinner often called by umpires. Ranatunga would also muscle the ball, and guide several calm chases, but it was his girth that the ancient trolls would pick on, especially when Sri Lanka defeated one of the big countries. Indian fans were simply in awe of how modern that team's outlook and unyielding backing of their bowlers, would be. As such, Ranatunga and his rock sturdy leadership helped Sri Lanka drawn several mystery bowlers and unconventional actions in subsequent years. Under the Twitter post, Indian fans would wax eloquent on the impact the Sri Lankan team had on cricket minds in India, despite the Kolkata semi-final ending in copious tears. While Sri Lanka's was more a quintet with Vaas than cricket's famous quartets, they were the stuff of nightmares for Indians. A Delhi fan Harshal in the comments would say, "I'm from ??? & I get tremors seeing u guys together ?? Sanath that is not how u bat in WC match, at Feroz Shah Kotla, Delhi ??"

## Arundhati Reddy receives warm welcome after Women's World Cup victory

Hyderabad: India fast bowler Arundhati Reddy, a member of the Indian team that won the Women's World Cup by defeating South Africa in the final in Mumbai last week, was given a warm reception upon her arrival at Hyderabad Airport on Thursday. Sports Authority of Telangana chairman Shiva Sena Reddy and the VC & MD of SATG, Mrs. Sonibala Devi, received the Indian cricketer.

Speaking on arrival, Arundhati said it was a dream come true to be a part of the victorious World Cup team and credited the historic victory to a collective team effort. "It was pure joy to see the Indian team emerge as winners in such a terrific final. Truly unforgettable moments," said the 28-year-old pacer, who has been an integral part of the Indian team in major campaigns for quite some time. "Yes, we do hope that women's cricket will witness a new chapter, as this World Cup win should motivate many young girls to take up sports and dream big," Arundhati added.



## Australia's power batting is a risk at T20 World Cup 2026, reasons R Ashwin: 'If the pitches are sticky, India will be in driver's seat'



GNS News Agency, March 7

Australia's unrelenting T20 aggression was blown to pieces on a tacky pitch by India's slower bowlers during the fourth T20I in Queensland on Thursday, earning them a crucial 2-1 lead ahead of the final match of the series. After making a just-above-par 167-run total, India bundled out Australia for only 119 to register a comfortable victory. The hosts' chase petered out when all-rounder Shivam Dube removed the dangerous Tim David with a slower bouncer and proceeded to remove skipper Mitchell Marsh on 38. Spinners Varun Chakaravarty, Washington Sundar and Axar Patel then broke the back of Australia's order, sharing six wickets between them for only 49 runs.

Ashwin cautioned that Australia's all-out aggressive approach could backfire at the World Cup if the wickets proceeded to remain slightly two-paced as it was at the Carrara Oval, playing more to India's strengths. It is understood that the T20 World Cup will be slotted between the first week of February and March in India with Pakistan to play their matches in Sri Lanka. "We had said that the fixture that Aus-

tralia has set for the T20 series has suited India more than anybody else because in all these places, the ball comes a little slower, and even when you go to Brisbane, you will see that the ball comes a little slower. Obviously, the Ashes are coming, so I don't think they will give you a Test match pitch. So the pitch will come a little slower, and Australia is going to find it hard. "Many people, after previewing and looking at the team a bit, are saying that Australia's team is very strong, very powerful for the upcoming World Cup, but if the wicket comes a little slower, sticks a little, or turns a little, the performance we saw today is the kind of performance you might end up seeing from Australia even at the World Cup," said Ashwin on his YouTube channel. With their vaunted spin attack complementing the pacers led by Jasprit Bumrah, India's bowling ammunition could prove deadly if the wickets are on the slower side at the back end of the domestic season in early 2026, felt Ashwin. "But how will the wickets be in February-March? Will they stay a bit fresh, will there be dew? Dew maybe will not be late. So keeping all these factors in mind, Australia's power batting is definitely a risk, but if the wicket comes a little sticky, India is going to be in the driver's seat," he added. "Even today, Australia were in a good position, but when Dube got that double break, especially off Tim David. The last match, I had prepared a bit, and his improvement in batting, especially against spin, has been remarkable. His wicket was then taken by Dube." The Indian Express on Thursday reported that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) had shortlisted Ahmedabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai. It is learnt that three stadiums in Sri Lanka will host the matches, but there is no clarity over which those venues would be. The Indian Express understands that in a meeting held among top BCCI officials, it was decided that this time the World Cup will be played in fewer cities compared to the 2023 World Cup, and each venue is expected to get at least six games each.

## Manchester United's Ruben Amorim urges focus on future after Cristiano Ronaldo criticism

GNS News Agency, March 7

Manchester United boss Ruben Amorim has responded to stinging criticism from club great Cristiano Ronaldo, his former Portugal teammate, by urging fans and pundits alike to look forward rather than dwell on the past. Ronaldo, who won eight trophies at United, told Piers Morgan in an interview this week that United were "not in a good path" and warned that Amorim was "not going to do miracles" at Old Trafford. "We say in Portugal, 'miracles only happen in Fatima,'" the 40-year-old Al-Nassr forward said, adding that the Manchester club lacked long-term vision. Amorim, who took over from Erik ten Hag in November 2024, hit back ahead of Saturday's Premier League clash at Tottenham Hotspur. "Of course, he has a huge impact in everything he said," Amorim said on Thursday. "What we need to focus (on) is in the future. We know that we as a club made a lot of mistakes in the past, but we are trying to change that. So let's not focus on what happened. Let's focus (on) what we are doing now. We are changing a lot of things in the structure, the way we do things, the way we want the players to behave. We are doing that and we are improving." Ronaldo expressed sadness over the club's decline but insisted the problems go beyond the manager. "You have to work with smart people to create a base for the future," he said. "Right now, they don't have a structure." United have shown signs of improvement, climbing to eighth, two points off second spot, after a four-game unbeaten run. Provisional second place in the table is up for grabs on Saturday in a grudge game for Amorim's side after Spurs beat them 1-0 in last season's Europa League final to prevent the Red Devils from playing in the Champions League



this season. Amorim credited internal reforms for the turnaround. "Characteristics of the players are different in the team now," he said. "We also have players who played last year. But we are a better team. We understand the game better. We are more confident." "We reached the Europa League final confident that we could win it. But in this moment we're playing with a different confidence." Amorim added that there was a silver lining to missing out on European football this season. "It's us using the positives," he said. "Any situation you have in life, you can look at it positively or in a bad way. If you ask me whether I prefer to be here with the (Europa League) and Champions League football, I might say yes. But on the other side, you have more time to train and know your players. Arrange everything and prepare with the staff and players. So we try to use the positive thing of not playing in the midweek games."

## Quinton De Kock slams century as South Africa level three-match ODI series with Pakistan 1-1



GNS News Agency, March 7

South Africa opener Quinton de Kock continued his return to international cricket with a match-winning century to propel his side to an eight-wicket win over Pakistan in their second One Day International in Faisalabad on Thursday. De Kock, who reversed a decision to retire from the international game and made himself available again after a two-year absence, scored an unbeaten 123 to ensure a comfortable victory at the Iqbal Stadium and square the three-match series. South Africa scored 270-2 off 40.1 overs, easily chasing down Pakistan's 269-9 from their 50 overs. De Kock featured in an 81-run partnership with teenager Luan-dre Pretorius, who scored 46, as they began a strong reply. But it was the second wicket stand of 153 runs off 137 balls with Tony de Zorzi, who scored 76 off 63 balls, that set up the victory. De Kock's 22nd ODI century came up in 96 balls and with captain Matthew Breetzke he saw his side home with almost 10 overs to spare. Pakistan won the toss and elected to bat and were reeling at 22-3 in the fifth over, before Saim Ayub (53) and Salman Ali Agha (69) both scored half centuries as they put together a 92-run fourth-wicket partnership. Mohammad Nawaz chipped in with a career-best 59 to ensure a competitive total for the hosts, who had a narrow two-wicket victory over South Africa in the first ODI on Tuesday. Left-arm seamer Nandre Burger took 4-46 and leg-spinner Ngaba Peter also bagged career-best figures of 3-55 and were the best bowlers on the night. The two teams will meet in their deciding fixture, again in Faisalabad, on Saturday. Pakistan earlier won the toss and elected to bat. South Africa had lost every toss — seven — on their tour of the country. Pakistan made two changes after chasing down 264 in the first ODI on Tuesday. Allrounder Faheem Ashraf replaced struggling middle-order batter Hasan Nawaz and fast bowler Mohammad Wasim replaced leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed. South Africa left out fast

bowlers Lungi Ngidi and Lizaad Williams and drafted in pace bowlers Nqabayomzi Peter and Nandre. The Test series that the two sides played earlier was drawn 1-1. Pakistan then won the T20I 2-1.

'Virat Kohli probably greatest ODI player of all time, Gold Coast would've loved to see him and Rohit Sharma play': Steve Waugh

The fourth T20I between India and Australia was a rare men's international cricket match to be played at the Carrara Oval on the Gold Coast. A regular in women's international cricket, this was just the third men's international to be played at the ground, with the previous two also being T20Is. Steve Waugh was present at the venue for the match and said that it would've been great for the crowd here if India veterans Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli were present as well.

Kohli and Rohit had been part of the Indian squad for the first leg of their tour of Australia, which was a three-match ODI series, the only format that the pair still play in international cricket. Rohit acknowledged that this was his last appearance in international cricket in Australia. "Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma are two all-time great players." Waugh told reporters. "Virat Kohli is probably the greatest one-day player of all time. You want to see them play everywhere. People on the Gold Coast would love to see them play, but they can't play every match." Kohli bagged a couple of ducks in the first two matches but both he and Rohit went out with a bang in the series. Chasing a target of 237, Rohit and Kohli were unbeaten on 121 and 74 respectively as the pair powered India to a dominant nine-wicket win in the third ODI. Their partnership finished on 168 off 170 balls. The series marked the first time Rohit and Kohli returned to the national side after the final of the Champions Trophy in March where they defeated New Zealand. Since then, they have both retired from Tests. The two had already retired from T20Is after winning the T20 World Cup last year. Rohit became only the 10th man in history to secure 50 international centuries. Besides his 12 tons in Test cricket, Rohit is still the joint-highest century-maker in the T20I format.

## This actor-writer, raised in Kamathipura, once set conditions before working with Dilip Kumar; disrupted Bollywood with his witty dialogues



Every year, millions of dreamers flock to Mumbai, hoping to become stars. They chase fame, that one opportunity that could change their lives forever. But sometimes, destiny works the other way — sometimes stardom chases you. One such extraordinary story is that of veteran actor and writer Kader Khan, a man whose journey from poverty to cinematic greatness remains one of Bollywood's most inspiring tales. Known for his unmatched versatility and sharp wit, Kader Khan was both a prolific writer and a powerhouse performer. With his passing, an era of Indian cinema ended — one defined by dialogues, depth, and a sense of humour that no one has since replicated. One of his most memorable lines — "Bachpan se sar par Allah ka haath, aur Allahrakha hai apne saath" — seemed prophetic of his own life. From Kabul to Kamathipura

Born in Kabul, Afghanistan, Kader Khan was the fourth son in his family — and the only one to survive beyond the age of eight. "My mother believed the air of Afghanistan wasn't good for her children after she lost my three brothers," Kader recalled in an old interview on Dil Ne Phir Yaad Kiya with Samay TV. His mother decided to move to India when he was barely a year old. The family settled in Mumbai's Kamathipura — one of the city's poorest and most crime-ridden slums. "It was the worst place," he recalled, adding, "There was prostitution, crime, murder, and filth everywhere." After his parents divorced, his mother was forced into another marriage with a man who didn't earn a penny. This pushed young Kader Khan to consider dropping out of school to take up a factory job. "My friends convinced me to quit studies. But my mother stopped me. She told me, if I really wanted to help, I had to study. From that day, I never stopped studying." His mother's insistence paid off — Kader not only completed his education but went on to teach at the very college he graduated from. "I taught Applied Mathematics and Mechanics — ironically, the two subjects I struggled with the most as a student," he quipped. Within a month, his engaging teaching style earned him the Best Teacher in Maharashtra award. Kader Khan's first brush with acting came when he was just eight years old. "I used to visit a crematorium daily while my mother thought I was going to read namaz. There, I would just talk to myself. One day, an actor named Ashraf Khan noticed me. He was working on a play called Wamaq Azra and needed a child actor

for the role of a prince," he shared. Impressed by Kader's vocabulary and expression, Ashraf cast him on the spot. "Everyone loved my performance. They gave me Rs 100 and blessed me, saying this would one day turn into lakhs." Years later in college, his classmates pushed him into the dramatics club. "They made me audition, and when I read the lines, they were shocked. They gave me a role right away — and soon, I was helping them fix their scripts too." That's how his journey into theatre began. And he continued to write scripts even when he joined as a teacher. His talent eventually caught the attention of none other than Dilip Kumar. "I was teaching when the office boy came to tell me there was a phone call. When I picked up, the voice said, 'This is Yusuf Khan.' I asked, 'Which Yusuf?' and he replied, 'People in the industry call me Dilip Kumar.' I started trembling." Dilip Kumar told him he wanted to see his play. "I set two conditions — he must come before time, and he must watch the entire play. He agreed. When the play ended, his eyes were red; he was weeping. He told me he loved my performance," Kader shared. That meeting changed everything. Dilip Kumar offered him roles in Sagina (1974) and Bairaag (1976), the latter featuring the superstar in triple roles with Kader Khan as a police officer.

When his writing started to pay even before his acting career took off, Kader Khan had begun making his mark as a dialogue writer. Acclaimed writer Rajinder Singh Bedi once approached him to write dialogues for a film directed by his son, Narendra Bedi — the cult hit Jawani Diwani (1972). While he was given a month's deadline, Kader wrote the entire script in just five hours. "When I went back the same day, Bedi sahib thought I hadn't understood the narration and had come again to clarify," he recalled, adding, "But when I said I had already written it, he couldn't believe it. When I read the dialogues out loud, he was amazed — and from then on, he marketed me across the industry."

For that film, he was paid Rs 1,500 — a modest beginning for someone who would go on to write for hundreds of blockbusters. His next big moment came when filmmaker Manmohan Desai approached him for Roti (1974). "He narrated the story, and overnight, I wrote the entire script. When he heard it, he went crazy — he said, 'Tu kamaal hai yaar! Tu mujhe jote se maar.'" Kader recalled. When Manmohan asked him to quote his fee, Kader nervously said Rs 25,000. "He looked disappointed and immediately said, 'Here's Rs 1,21,000.' I was shocked." And just like that, the prophecy of that generous stranger who once gave him Rs 100 came true — his talent had finally begun to earn him in lakhs. Over the decades, Kader Khan became synonymous with sharp humour, heartfelt emotions, and memorable one-liners. Whether as a villain, comedian, or mentor, he brought depth to every role he played. Kader Khan (Photo: Express Archive) Kader Khan from acting, he was the writer of films Jawani Diwani, Benaam, Roti, Mahachor, Amar Akbar Anthony, Dharam Veer, Parvarish, Muqaddar Ka Sikander and Mr Natwarlal, among several others. Kader Khan passed away at the age of 81 after battling supranuclear palsy, a degenerative neurological disease. Yet, his voice, his words, and his wisdom continue to echo through generations of cinema lovers — a reminder that true stars don't chase fame; they simply live their destiny. As Kader said: "Mai kabhi success ke piche nahi bhaaga! Mujhe Gareebo ke dhakke ne aage kiya!"

## 'My father had a cardiac arrest while cutting Amitabh Bachchan's hair': Aalim Hakim recalls his father styling the iconic 'angry young man' look



Aalim Hakim, one of Indian cinema's leading hair-stylists, is the creative mind behind the looks of some of the biggest stars. From Rajinikanth and Shah Rukh Khan to Ranbir Kapoor and Hrithik Roshan. Aalim comes from a family deeply rooted in the art of hairstyling. His father, Hakim Kairanvi, was a celebrated stylist of his time and the man responsible for Amitabh Bachchan's iconic hairstyle of the 1970s. In an exclusive conversation with SCREEN, Aalim reflected on his father's long association with Amitabh Bachchan. "My dad's collaboration with Bachchan saab was right after his first film. Everything he did after Saat Hindustani, it was all done by my dad. Reshma Aur Shera was Amit ji's second film and Sunil Dutt was there, who was my dad's client. So it was Dutt saab who introduced my dad to him. The collaboration started then, and it lasted till the very end of his career. So all the popular hairstyles you see in films like Sholay, Zanjeer, Don, Amar Akbar Anthony, Deewaar, my dad was the man behind it," he said. Aalim shared an emotional memory about his father's final moments, which were, fittingly, spent at work: "My dad died doing his haircut. His last haircut of life was of Amit ji. He was cutting his hair, he got a cardiac arrest. It was during the shoot of Mard in Mysore. So he was doing his continuity haircut, while doing so, he complained of chest pain and next day he passed away." He also recalled how his father worked with almost every major star of that era. "My father worked with everyone. Be it Dilip Kumar, Shatrughan Sinha, Jeetendra, you name the top most stars, and my father did haircut for all of them. All of them from 60s up till 80s. And not only Indian actors but also international stars used to desire to get haircut done from my father whenever they

used to visit India. Be it Bruce Lee, or Richard Harris, or even Mohammad Ali, or England cricket player Tony Greig, all these legends got their haircut done from him." In an earlier conversation with Hindi Rush, Aalim had spoken candidly about the difficult period following his father's death and the lack of support from the industry. "They're all self-centred, and let me tell you one thing, even today they're the same. They meet you nicely, they're friendly, but you have to work for yourself. As a child, all I wanted to do was earn my father's respect back, to keep his legacy going." Aalim Hakim is currently working on several major projects, including Shah Rukh Khan's King, Ranbir Kapoor's Love and War, and SS Rajamouli's upcoming film with Mahesh Babu.

## Ayushmann-Rashmika's 'Thamma' collects Rs 25.11 crore on day one

New Delhi: Horror comedy film "Thamma", starring Ayushmann Khurana and Rashmika Mandanna in the lead roles, has earned Rs 25.11 crore on its opening day at the domestic box office, production banner Maddock Films announced on Wednesday. The film, billed as a gripping love story set against a bloody theme, is the fifth entry in the studio's much-ambitious franchise — the Maddock Horror Comedy Universe (MHCU). It was released in theatres across the country on Tuesday. Maddock Films shared the box office collection of the movie on its official social media handles. "The box-office is THAMMALA-fied! The thrill is real," the studio wrote on Instagram alongside a poster which stated that the movie amassed Rs 25.11 in net box office collection (NBOC) on day one. "Thamma" follows Alok Goyal (Ayushmann), a journalist whose life takes an unexpected turn after a mysterious encounter with Tadaka (Rashmika), an otherworldly woman who saves him during a trek in the mountains. His world unravels when he transforms into a vampire-like being — a Betaal — and is forced to confront Yakshas (Nawazuddin Siddiqui), an ancient Betaal bound in chains for over a century who now seeks absolute freedom and dominion over the world.

## 'Men come late and work late, women leave their children and work long hours': Konkona Sen Sharma supports 'progressive' Deepika Padukone



After Deepika Padukone's exit from Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Spirit and Nag Ashwin's Kalki 2898 AD sequel over her 8-hours work demand, many in the film industry have voiced their opinions. Recently, Konkona Sen Sharma weighed in on the debate and backed Deepika, calling her 'progressive' for raising the right concerns about fair working conditions for women and technicians in the industry. When asked what's the first thing that comes to her mind when she hears Deepika's name, Konkona told Filmygyan, "I feel she is very progressive, and we need many more people like her."

Talking about Deepika's demand for a fixed eight-hour shift, Konkona added, "I think there should be some rules in

the industry. We can't work for 14-15 hours. We should have a 12-hour turnaround. We should have at least one day off in the week, especially for the technicians. It should be equal. It shouldn't be like male actors are coming late and are working late and women are leaving their children and working for long hours. It should be equal." In an earlier interaction, Deepika had pointed out that demanding an eight-hour workday was not "ridiculously unfair" and implied that working conditions on film sets were often far from ideal — even for someone like her, who is a "top star" — and much worse for the crew. "I don't think what I am asking for is ridiculously unfair and I think only someone who has worked in the system enough will know the conditions that we work in. And I am saying this, if I may say so myself, a top star, so you can only imagine what the working conditions must be like for everyone else, for the crew, for example," she told Brut India.

She also pointed out how many male actors have long enjoyed eight-hour shifts without controversy. "I am not the first one who has asked for something like this. In fact, there are a lot of actors, male actors, who have been working on a 8-hour shift for years and it's never made headlines," she said. Deepika had exited Spirit, following which Vanga replaced her with Tripti Dimri over the eight-hour shift demand and other conditions. After her exit, Vanga shared a cryptic tweet implying that Deepika had rejected his film's script and accused her of playing "dirty PR games." Soon after, Deepika also exited another major project — the sequel to Kalki 2898 AD, directed by Nag Ashwin. Her exit was officially announced by Vjayanthi Movies on X (formerly Twitter), stating that they were "unable to find a partnership" and that the film deserved "commitment and much more," implying that Deepika wasn't willing to fully commit to the project. Right after her Kalki 2898 AD exit was announced, Deepika took to Instagram to share a photo with Shah Rukh Khan, officially announcing her role in the superstar's next film, The King.

## Kajol says 'nonsense, mean, horrible' things were written about daughter Nysa: 'So many photos of her as a kid, she was really upset about that'



Being a star kid means growing up under the spotlight, often before you even understand what that truly means. With constant visibility come constant opinions, and over the years, many star kids have found themselves at the receiving end of harsh criticism. From childhood pictures to public appearances, everything is dissected, sometimes even leading to unfounded speculations about cosmetic procedures. In the latest episode of her talk show Two Much with Kajol & Twinkle, Kajol addressed the criticism that her daughter Nysa has endured because of being in the public eye.

"I remember things like... when Nysa was a kid, they were writing nonsense about her, because there were so many photos of her as a kid. And you know, all the paps and stuff like that, they would say really mean and horrible things. But kids are kids, they're just cute kids. They have bad haircuts sometimes, they run around in regular clothes and not designer, fashionable airport looks. And I remember Nysa was really, really upset about that. Both my kids, in fact," she said. Joining her in the conversation, actor Janhvi Kapoor, who has also been frequently targeted online, reflected on her own experience growing up in the public eye. She shared that her late mother, legendary actor Sridevi, was deeply protective and initially didn't want her to pursue acting. "I think specifically with me, mom and dad were very innocent

in their perception of what this media, paparazzi, social media world would become. We were giving everyone so much access. And at that point, mom was still very strict about, 'I don't want you to become an actress.' She was like... It's fine if people see her with body hair and two chotis and a moustache." She further added, "It was just the worst combination of things, specifically for me, I think, because my teenage years coincided with the onset of the social media boom. All of India suddenly had this microphone where they could, like, spew judgment on everyone. And I was just coming to terms with what the hell was going on. It was really hard, because it was a lot of things happening at the same time, and a lot of judgment and scrutiny." Janhvi also admitted that sometimes she ends up laughing at herself, even trolling herself, recalling an anecdote:

"I think I troll myself a lot also. Like, I think when we were promoting Mr & Mrs Mahi, they had told us, the more animated your reactions are, the more screen time we'll get to promote Mahi. So I went to this cricket match, and I was just reacting on random things. Like nothing was happening on the field, and I was like, 'Oh God!' and all of that was happening. And then they just put a montage of me reacting and cutting to the pitch where nothing was happening. I think it was half-time. And then I only commented, like, 'I'll have to cut 50 rupees, as I overacted.'" Co-host Twinkle Khanna also added that while she doesn't face much trolling herself, the negativity directed towards children can be deeply upsetting. "I get a little bit of trolling, not too much. But it really bothers me when somebody randomly starts saying things about my kids, and I think that gets to you. You don't really care about what people say about you, but when they attack the kids, it's very sad." There has always been curiosity about whether Kajol's daughter Nysa will follow her parents into films. However, Kajol recently clarified at a News18 event that Nysa currently has no such plans. When asked what advice she would give to aspiring newcomers, Kajol shared a piece of wisdom shaped by her own experience: "First of all, I would like to say, please do not take advice from everybody. If you ask people about what you should do, then 100 people would stand up and tell you to change your nose, hand, hair colour, this or that."

## 'I failed very publicly when I was very young': Twinkle Khanna says she was not suited for acting career, became thick-skinned after that

Success can often be a fleeting feeling, and it becomes more so when it's connected to the movie business. During her stint as an actor, Twinkle Khanna worked in less than 20 films, and called it quits in just five years. Soon after, she married actor Akshay Kumar and turned entrepreneur, and later she started her career as a writer. During a recent event, Twinkle recalled the failures she has seen in her life, especially professionally, and how she is, in fact, grateful for them.

While appearing on the Tweak India Summit for 2025, Twinkle was paired with Aamir Khan's daughter, social worker and entrepreneur Ira Khan, and CEO of Edelweiss Mutual Fund Radhika Gupta. The trio were asked about failure, and here, Twinkle opened up about her career as an actor. "I failed very publicly when I was very young. I was on the silver screen, and I was doing a job that I don't think I was suited for. After that, I became sort of thick-skinned. I don't look at failures like potholes; I look at them like trampolines. I get in there, and I jump back up. That is my formula for dealing with failures," said Twinkle. Ira added to that and argued that the best way to deal with failures is to first experience them in low-stakes situations. She said, "I would like to suggest that you try something new, something you have never done before. Experience looking stupid and feeling stupid in a low-stakes environment. Go to learn some-



thing you have no idea about and take this new class with an absolute stranger so you can look really silly in front of them. Let them judge you and get used to failing at something which is not very high stakes." Twinkle has always been very candid about her thoughts.