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Three patients, two staff injured as roof collapses at MGM Hospital in Warangal

Warangal: Exposing the poor state of affairs at MGM Hospital here, three patients, two sanitation workers and a few others were injured when concrete slabs from the roof collapsed in the Aarogyasri ward of the hospital on Sunday.In the incident, chunks of concrete from the roof, along with portions of the false ceiling, fell on the beds in the ward. As a result, three patients — Mastan, Saraiah and Swaroopa — who were undergoing treatment in the ward suffered injuries. Two sanitation workers, Yellamma and Omkar, were also injured. Ceiling fans in the ward were damaged in the incident.

Two siblings drown in farm pond in Mulugu

Mulugu: Two sisters drowned after accidentally falling into a farm pond while accompanying their father to his agricultural field at Kasindepeta village in Mulugu mandal of the district on Sunday.

According to sources, a CPI leader, Mohammad Amjad Pasha of the village, had gone to his cotton field with his family to spray pesticides. His two daughters, Samyan (19) and Asiya (10), had accompanied him.

Government will not take 'even an inch' of Dalits' land, assures Telangana minister

Hyderabad, Sep 20 Telangana's Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Sunday made it clear that the government will not take "even an inch" of the land of Dalits.

He stated that snatching land from Dalits and tribals is not the policy of the "people's government".

In a statement, Srinivasa Reddy assured that the government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy stands as a complete safeguard for Dalit lands and that there is no cause for concern.

"The government will not take away even an inch of your land. This government has no intention of acquiring your land. There is no need for you to feel any fear or anxiety regarding your lands; the people's government stands by you," the minister told Dalits.

His clarification came amid reports that the revenue authorities have issued notices to 120 Dalit farmers in Erravalli village, asking them to appear with all the documents in their possession regarding the ownership of their lands.

This followed an announcement by the Chief Minister in the Assembly last week that the government will conduct an inquiry into the farmhouse of former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) at Erravalli in Siddipet district.

The Chief Minister claimed that the farmhouse is spread over 700 acres and this includes 388 acres of government land.

The Revenue Minister said that it is incorrect to view processes such as the verification of land records, surveys, and the resolution of land issues as attempts to seize people's land. He said that the government's objective is to clearly record people's land rights, resolve land disputes, and ensure the protection of those rights.

He pointed out that certain powerful individuals are deliberately spreading malicious propaganda and creating panic regarding Dalit lands, attempting to incite Dalits for their own selfish interests.

"There is no need to fear what others might say. The government offers a clear assurance regarding your lands. Do not believe any malicious propaganda without verifying the facts," the minister stated.

He urged people to recognise the attempts by some to incite Dalits and gain political mileage over the issue of their lands. He clarified that every action taken by the government is lawful and transparent.

Srinivasa Reddy said the Congress came to power with the blessings of Dalits, tribals, and the downtrodden and weaker sections of society.

Khammam Doctor Charred To Death After Car Hits Divider

NALGONDA, Sept 20 Dr Kaskurthi Jagadeesh Babu, a well-regarded neurosurgeon, was killed when his car caught fire after hitting a divider near Pillalamarri on the Suryapet–Khammam highway 365B, in Suryapet district, early on Sunday. He was 50. Dr Babu is survived by his wife Dr Suma and daughters Neha and Disha.

The body will be kept at Mamatha Hospitals at Khammam for students and former patients to pay tributes, as well as at the IMA Bhavan. His funeral rites will be conducted at his native place, Sankuvarigunta in Andhra Pradesh. Dr Babu was head of the department of neurosurgery at Mamatha Medical College.

Police said Dr Babu, as was his usual practice on holidays, was driving to Hyderabad to meet his family in his high-end car, believed to have self-drive features. CCTV footage showed that at about 7.15 am, the car left the centre lane at a gentle curve on the road and hit the divider. Smoke immediately started emanating from the vehicle. At least four vehicles passing by stopped and the occupants rushed to help, but doctor's car caught fire within moments and was completely gutted, trapping him inside.

Suryapet Rural sub-inspector said police and fire personnel rushed to the spot, but the car was gutted by the time they arrived. Overspeeding and drowsy driving are suspected causes. CCTV footage from Mamillagudem toll plaza confirmed the doctor was travelling alone.

The body was shifted to Government General Hospital, Suryapet, for post-mortem. Police registered a case and are investigating the circumstances of the accident.

Dr Babu, a native of Sankuvarigunta in Prakasam district, had completed his MBBS from Guntur Medical College and MCh in neurosurgery at Andhra Medical College, Visakhapatnam. He joined Mamatha Medical College as an assistant professor and rose to head of the neurosurgery department.

Colleagues and students expressed shock at the sudden demise. Rajya Sabha member Vaddiraju Ravindra said Dr Babu's death was a loss to the health sector in Khammam district.

NALGONDA: Dr K. Jagadeesh Babu had reportedly performed a surgery till early in the morning on Sunday, before heading home to Hyderabad on Sunday. Police suspected driver drowsiness as among the reasons for the incident but had started an inquiry to find out exactly why the car wnded up in a fireball.

A handle identifying itself as Dr Sidda Srinivas stated on the social media a: "Dr Jagadeesh attended surgery at midnight and performed until 5 am on Sunday, and started to Hyderabad at 6 am. He didn't even sleep for minutes at night (sic)."

Dr Babu had earned recognition in Khammam as an expert in performing critical neurosurgery cases. He had performed nearly 1,000 neurosurgeries in Khammam, earning special recognition for his skill. Medical students at Mamatha Medical College admired his teaching methods, which made complex subjects easier to understand.

Doctors at Mamatha Hospital said Dr Jagadeesh Babu was one of the busiest neurosurgeons in Khammam, also working as a consultant for several hospitals. They noted he was good at driving, but his demanding schedule often left him with little rest.

With an excellent academic record, he completed MBBS from Guntur Medical College in 1993 and M.S. (General Surgery) from the same institution in 2003. He later obtained M.Ch. (Neurosurgery) from Andhra Medical College, Visakhapatnam. He joined Mamatha Medical College, Khammam, as an assistant professor in 2010 and rose to head of the neurosurgery department. His articles on neurological disorders were published in several international journals.

Dr Babu was the youngest son of Kaskurthi Balaji and Saroja, natives of Sankuvarigunta in Kothapatnam gram panchayat, Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh. His father had worked as a labourer in Indian Railways. Hailing from a poor family, he faced financial difficulties in pursuing medical education but continued with the support of teachers and well-wishers.

Three held for throwing 'non-veg material' during Ganesh festivities in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Sep 20 Hyderabad Police arrested three persons for allegedly throwing 'non-veg material like beef' during a Ganesh Chaturthi food distribution programme in the Madannapet area.

The incident occurred at 2BHK Police Housing Society near Chanchalguda X Roads, creating communal tension on Sunday.

Following a complaint by organisers of a Ganesh pandal, police arrested three persons, including two women.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Charminar Zone) Kiran Khare told media persons that the incident occurred around 3 p.m. Police received information that a few residents residing in 2BHK Housing Society threw some 'non-veg material like beef' downward. There was a Ganesh 'Nimajjanam', and an 'Annadanam' (food distribution) programme was going on at that time.

The DCP said police reached the spot, and three persons were taken into custody. They are Mohammad Imran Qureshi, Arshiya Begum and Sameena.

Based on the complaint by the Ganesh organisers' committee, police are registering a First Information Report (FIR), he said.

The DCP stated that strict action will be taken against the three persons by invoking stringent sections.

He said following the incident, a protest was held in the area. "The situation is now peaceful," he said and appealed to people not to believe any rumours on social media.

He warned that strong action would be taken against anyone spreading rumours.

Following the incident, the Bharatiya Janata Party and other Hindu organisations staged a protest at Chanchalguda Cross Roads. They demanded strict action against those hurting religious sentiments.

Police beefed up security in the area as a precautionary measure to prevent any untoward incident.

Burglars target two ATMs in Telangana's Karimnagar, flee with lakhs

Hyderabad, Sep 20 Burglars damaged two ATMs and looted cash in Telangana's Karimnagar town in the early hours of Sunday, police said.

The offenders targeted two ATMs of the State Bank of India (SBI) in two different areas, using gas cutters to break open the machines and fled with the cash, police said.

The thefts, committed in Durshed under Karimnagar Rural Police Station limits and Thimmapur under LMD Police Station limits, were captured on CCTV.

At Durshed, the thieves allegedly sprayed a liquid on the CCTV cameras before stealing the cash from the ATM.

Police identified the involvement of a woman based on the CCTV footage.

The SBI office in Delhi received an alarm about the burglary at the Durshed ATM, and local SBI authorities were alerted.

Preliminary investigation by police shows that two burglars, including a woman, reached the Durshed ATM in a car. They entered the ATM room around 3.30 a.m.

The accused were wearing caps, spectacles, gloves and masks.

After damaging the ATM, they took away Rs 8 lakh stored in the machine. The amount stolen from the other ATM was not known.

Police have registered two separate cases and launched an investigation.

Special teams have been constituted to apprehend the burglars. The investigators were analysing the CCTV footage and gathered other clues from the scenes of the offence.

A vehicle registered in Maharashtra was used by the offenders. Police initiated measures to trace the vehicle.

CCTV footage from toll plazas was also being analysed to track the vehicle's movement.

Telangana has been witnessing a series of burglaries in ATMs. In May, thieves had damaged an SBI ATM in Mahabubnagar town and escaped with Rs 2.30 lakh cash. Three thieves had cut open the machine with a gas cutter.

Telangana parties gear up for Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates' MLC election

Khammam, Sept 20 With Telangana Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) C Sudharshan Reddy issuing the schedule for preparation of electoral rolls for Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates' Constituency MLC elections, the political parties are gearing up to finalise their candidates.Read Community News

The term of sitting MLC Chintapandu Naveen (Teenmar Mallanna) is set to expire in March 2027. As per the schedule released on September 17, a public notice for voter registration would be issued on September 28 for de novo (anew) preparation of electoral rolls with final publication of the same on December 30.

It might be recalled that in the biennial election held on May 27, 2024, Congress candidate Mallanna defeated the BRS candidate A Rakesh Reddy in the results announced on June 8. The seat had fallen vacant after the resignation of sitting MLC Dr. Palla Rajeshwar Reddy of the BRS after he won the Jangaon n Assembly seat in 2023.Track Congressional Bills

Rakesh Reddy, whose candidature is yet to be announced officially, has already started campaigning. He has been meeting graduates across the constituency for the past few months, besides organising different activities to garner voters' support.

He hopes to win the election this time as the graduates and unemployed youth are upset with the Congress government. The graduates' opinion on the administration; issues concerning government jobs, lack of recruitment and education are likely to play a pivotal role in the election.

Meanwhile, Jana Sena Party has named former Health Director Gadala Srinivas Rao as its candidate for the election and he hit the ground running. The Congress and BJP parties are to decide the names of their candidates.According to sources there is a long list of aspirants in the Congress party to contest the election. State Tourism Corporation Chairman Patel Ramesh Reddy, Vijaya Dairy Chairman Gutta Amith Reddy, OU JAC leader Lokesh Yadav, Singapuram Indira, Ramireddy Sarvothama Reddy-the son of former Minister Damodar Reddy, Ponguleti Prasad Reddy- brother of Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, Nalgonda DCC president Punna Kailash Neta, RTI Commissioner PV Srinivas and others' names are doing rounds in the party circles as the potential candidates.Design Campaign SignsOn the other hand, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka held a meeting in Hyderabad in the first week of September with key leaders from the three combined districts to discuss the strategy for the Graduate's MLC election.

Indian Chronicle
English Daily

India's diplomatic success at 18th BRICS Summit

The unanimous New Delhi Declaration at the 18th BRICS Summit marks a diplomatic success for India, given the 11-member grouping's divergent interests and fractured internal

politics. Bringing together widely conflicting strategic interests and crafting a carefully worded, mutually agreeable document is a commendable task in itself. The context was complicated: Iran-UAE tensions over the West Asia conflict, the Russia-Ukraine war, and, more importantly, the United States—the elephant in the room—created formidable obstacles to consensus building. India's diplomacy was the decisive factor in holding the text together. It used its strong ties with all members and worked behind the scenes to overcome the biggest hurdle—convincing the UAE and Iran, which sit on opposite sides of the West Asia conflict, to sign on. The outcome serves as evidence that BRICS can still function as a forum even amid real fractures among its members. However, one should not lose sight of the inherent limitations of the bloc. A key limitation is that, though BRICS can keep difficult conversations alive and affirm broad principles, it struggles to assign responsibility or organise collective action when interests occasionally collide. The document does not attempt to solve the world's most intractable conflicts overnight, nor does it establish an immediate replacement for Western financial supremacy. It is still a long way to go for it to become a unified geopolitical bloc capable of collective action on the conflicts it discusses.

The Delhi summit proved that BRICS can survive its geopolitical contradictions, but survival cannot be taken as a strategic transformation. After demonstrating its capability to hold together a highly heterogeneous grouping at a moment when consensus appeared particularly difficult, a much harder test for India is to use that consensus to produce concrete economic and diplomatic outcomes. The achievement of the latest summit was not that it resolved the world's conflicts; it was that it prevented the world's conflicts from destroying the bloc's ability to talk to one another. That is no small achievement in the present geopolitical environment. But the next stage will determine whether BRICS becomes more than a forum for carefully negotiated communiqués.

The real test will be whether it can convert multipolarity into institutional reform, AI cooperation into actual technological partnerships and Global South solidarity into development finance. The declaration was unambiguously strong on the issue of terrorism. The 2025 Pahalgam attack, which killed 26 people, was condemned in the strongest terms, with leaders calling all terrorism "criminal and unjustifiable" regardless of motivation, and pledging zero tolerance. However, the document's careful omissions were as revealing as its assertions. It avoided naming the US over the strikes on Iran and also did not condemn Iranian attacks on Gulf Arab states. Nor did it criticise Russia for waging a war against Ukraine. Instead, the declaration relied on broad principles — restraint, sovereignty, civilian protection, dialogue and diplomacy.

Sugar Factory promotes Mechanisation

BETTIAH/BIHAR, SEPTEMBER 20(INDIAN CHRONICLE)"

""For the welfare of the cane growers the New Svadeshi Sugar Mill Narkatiaganj, West Champaran has launched several programs to improve the economy of the peasants in which Mechanisation is one of them." To promote Mechanisation the Sugar Factory Narkatiaganj has provided to cane growers of the locality as Disc Plough, Automatic Planter Machine ,Mini Tractor and Tractor attached mini harvester machine on subdidy rate.ATSPs(Agriculture Technical Service Providers) are also provided to the cane growers with a direction to work in their cane fields as well as work in the fields of other cane growers on rented basis and earn money. After that the economy of the cane growers will be improved. "

As the Executive President of Narkatiaganj Sugar Mill-Ravindra Kumar Tiwary said that he would do his best to increase the income of the cane growers with the production of 400 Qtl Cane per Acre area to adopt the new technique of cane farming.He would be able to fill the gap between input and output of cane farming and in this way the reducing trend of expenses would make enthusiastic to the peasants towards cane farming and after that the economy would be boost up.As the peasants saw the change in cane production to adopt mechanisation last year.As the cane industries department of Bihar has also launched cane mechanisation scheme on subsidy to encourage peasants towards cane farming. The department provides 44 types of big and small tools or machines and in this regards on line application process is on.The applicants will get 40-50 percent subsidy on such scheme. " He futher praised the role of cane industries department and said that the department would provide the certified seeds of cane to the peasants to encourage them towards cane farming. As Under this scheme the cane growers of General,OBC categories would get the subsidy of 260 Rs per Qtl where as the peasants of SC/ST category would get the subsidy Rs 310 per Qtl.For this the cane growers would send applications on line and follow the formula of 'Pahle Aao,Pahle Pao' (come before and get before)." As it is noted that the economy of West Champaran is dependent upon agriculture and cane farming is the backbone of the rural economy of Champaran.In West Champaran 5 Sugar industries as Bagha, Lauria,Harinagar, Narkatiaganj and Majholiya are in running state where as Chanpatia Sugar industry is closed and in East Champaran one Sugar industry of Sugauli is in running state where as two Sugar industries as Motihari and Chakiya are closed.The renovation of closed Sugar industries of Champaran and other parts of Bihar is essential to boost up the economy of the state.

Law -Kush Sammelan organises

""On Sunday Law - Kush sammelan was organised in Bapu Sabhagar of Patna in which the Chief Minister Samarat Chaudhary ,the Health Minister Nishant Kumar ,the MP Upendra Kushwaha and other leaders,workers participated and addressed the gathering.As it is noted that the law -Kush equation was formed to get political mileage in the politics of Bihar as well as the uplift of those castes which come under this equation. In Bihar several castes of OBC group could not cover the long distance of progress and politicians of those era could not raise their voice for the development of OBC and SC/ST communities in Bihar.As the former Chief Minister of Bihar late Karpuri Thakur raised voice for the development of the down trodden class in Bihar and he tried his best to uplift the down trodden class.After that the other political parties of Bihar began to raise voice in this regard.After the abolishment of the Congress government in Bihar ,the government of Lalu Prasad Yadav was formed and during that period the down trodden class raised their heads among the people of society.Later on almost all political parties of Bihar began to attract the people of down trodden class and during that period a new caste equation came to light as 'Law Kush ' equation and that equation brought a change in the politics of Bihar.Now several caste equations have been formed in Bihar to get political mileage.

Shikshak Samman Program Organises.

""A Grand Shikshak Samman program was orgainsed in Purniya the district Headquarters of Puniya district in Bihar in which the Revenue Minister Dr Dilip Kumar Jaiswal participated and in this program about 500 teachers were felicitated. AS the Minister said that teachers would be the pioneer of society.The progress of a society depends upon teachers.Teachers are the real architect of good society.As parents fulfill the basic needs of the childen but teachers are their guide and show them the right path of their lives.Therefore a student should be obedient and follow the suggestion of his teacher.A good teacher always gives good advice to students so a student should follow the advice of a teacher .After that several teachers and social workers addressed the function and praised the role of teachers."" NEXT"" Free Medical Camp Organises""On Saturday a free Medical Camp was organised at Samudayik Bhavan ,in Jagjivan Nagar Bettiah in which several doctors and para Medical staff participated and examined the health of the local people.As the camp was organised by the Varist Nagrik Manch (Senior Citizen Forum) Bettiah which led by the Dr Kavi Kumar Nirmal and his other associates Dr Ravi Shanker Prasad, Dr Gulrej Alam,Dr Shamshul Hoda, para Medical staff and other members of the senior citizen Manch named Pratap Kumar Sharma etc.As several intellectuals and social workers of Bettiah town praised this type of social work.As a senior Journalist cum Social worker of Bettiah town Dr Amnul Haque said that other social organisations of the town should get lesson from the work of Varista Nagrik Manch Bettiah and also organise such type of social work for the welfare of humanity."" NEXT" Eight Policemen Suspend""The SHO of Mahnar PS Station in Vaishali district of Bihar and other 7 police men were suspended by the senior officer of the district. As it was alleged that the illegal trade of dry narcotics (Sukha Nasha) was flourished in the area of that PS.When the matter came to the knowledge of the senior police officer of the district a probe team was formed that reached in the police station and searched the footage of CCTV as well as conducted raid in the house of such alleged person whose name came to the light regarding this illegal trade.The raid team also recovered a diary from the house in which the name of the SHO and others were mentioned. After that the SHO Bedanand Singh,the incharge of dial 112 and others were suspended. "" NEXT"" Illegal liquor recovered "The Excise Department recovered 230 litre contraband alcohol from a new type of Ambulance from the area of Jamuyi district of Bihar .As the liquor smugglers have adopted a new technique to change a Scorpio vehicle in to an Ambulance and made a Chamber (tanky) in the Ambulance which was filled with illegal liquor.The raid team showed doubt in regards with the Ambulance and searched the vehicle and recovered alcohol .In this connection two petsons wete arrested."" NEXT"" The Jansuraj Party announces candidates""The Jansuraj party of Bihar has declared the name of his candidates for the election of MLC in five segments of Bihar.As the name of Afaque Ahmad has been announced as the party candidete of Saran segment, the name of Rajnish Ranjan has been declared as the candidate of Koshi Segment, the name of Ravindra Yadav for Darbhanga Graduate Constituency Segment, and the name of S P Rai for teachers ' Representative of Darbhanga Segment, the name of Dibya Jyoti is declared as the candidate of Patna Segment. ""Ajay Kr Mishra "Bettiah/Bihar

Elderly Woman Killed in Fatal Road Accident in Ramanthapur

""UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 20 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): An unidentified elderly woman was killed in a fatal road accident within the limits of Uppal Police Station.According to police, while police personnel were conducting patrols in the BC-2 area of Ramanthapur, they received information through a 112 call at around 1:04 a.m. on Saturday. The caller informed the police that an unidentified woman, aged around 70 years, was lying with severe injuries on the roadside near Genpat, close to Pillar No. 949, on the road from Nagole towards Habsiguda."The police immediately reached the spot and found the elderly woman with serious injuries. She had severe injuries to both legs and a serious injury near her ear. The police also found the Alto car bearing registration number AP11AS2667, which was allegedly involved in the accident, at the scene."The injured woman was immediately shifted to Gandhi Hospital in a 108 ambulance for treatment. However, doctors confirmed that she died while undergoing treatment at around 3:00 a.m.Based on a complaint lodged by Police Constable B. Paramesh, Uppal Police registered a case and launched an investigation. Police are working to establish the identity of the deceased woman and ascertain the complete circumstances surrounding the accident.

Mekala Sarangapani Offers Special Prayers to Lord Ganesha

" Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, September 20 :" Secunderabad contested MLA and District BJP General Secretary Mekala Sarangapani visited the Ganesh mandapam established by the Sri Ram Sena at Medibavi in Sitaphalmandi. On the occasion of the ongoing Ganesh festivities, he offered special prayers to Lord Ganesha

and participated in the puja rituals."Sarangapani offered flowers to the idol and performed the aarti, seeking the blessings of Lord Ganesha for the well-being and prosperity of the people. He also interacted with the organisers and enquired about the arrangements made for the celebrations."Ambala Rajeshwar Rao, Mutha Ganesh, Kranthi Giri, Datta Sai, Suresh and others participated in the programme.

RJC Krishna and Namavarapu Ishwar participated in the pujas

INDIAN CHRONICLE KHAMMAM K SANJAY

. ""In the Ganesh Mandapam organized by Lambodara Youth Association Ganesh Utsava Samiti at the ration shop in the local Jaheerpura SC Colony. "SBIT, RJC Chairman RJC Krishna Lambodaru special pujas were performed. RJC Krishna attended the mass saffron

puja program organized under the leadership of youth leaders Namavarapu Ishwar and Namavarapu Satish and performed special pujas to the lord. Ganatha was worshiped with incense lamp offerings and aartis. After that mass saffron puja was organized and gifts were given to women devotees. Speaking on this occasion, RJC Krishna said that Ganesh celebrations promote unity and cooperation among the people. Namavarapu Ishwar said that in the spirit of Ganesh festivals, the youth should be united and work for the development of their areas. Youth leaders Namavarapu Satish, P Nagaraju, Potu Sarath, Battula Murali, Kanakam Weerabhadram, Mateti Kiran, Raghavarapu Prasad, Satyanarayana, Vadlamudi Ravi, Manukonda Chandrakanth, Bharat, Sampath, Gade Ravi, Mutesh, Anil, members of the festival committee and others participated in this program.

TJA Condolences on Death of Eminent Neurosurgeon Dr. Jagdish

INDIAN CHRONICLE KHAMMAM K SANJAY

""""""Deficit in Medical Sector: G. Nagaswamy*""Khammam: Telangana Journalist Association (TJA) Khammam district committee has expressed deep grief over the death of eminent neurosurgeon, Dr. Kasakurthi Jagadish, who was providing medical services at Mamata Hospital in Khammam, in a road accident."In a fatal road accident on the Khammam-Hyderabad National Highway near Palasamarri in Suryapet district, Dr. Jagadish died after the car he was traveling in hit a divider and burst into flames."TJA Khammam District President G. Nagaswamy said that the sudden death of Dr. Jagadish is a great loss to the medical field, his patients, fellow doctors, family members and relatives."It is sad to lose an eminent doctor who saved many lives by providing medical services to people. Dr. Jagadish prayed to God to rest his soul and grant his family members the fortitude to bear this tragedy."On this occasion, Telangana Journalist Association Khammam district committee extended its deepest condolences to the family members of Dr. Jagadish. TJA District Honorary President K Manikumar, State Organizing Secretary Bhukya Upender, General Secretary Matthi Ramakrishna, Vice Presidents Gaddal Subbarao, Working President SK Kasim, Treasurer Bodapatla Satish, Press Club President MD Rashid, Secretary M Chinni Leaders Vasam Rajendraprasad, Nallamotu Srinivasa Rao, Pawan were among those who expressed condolences. Kumar, Banoth Surender, Domala Kiran, Ganji Mkanna,SK Pasha Brahm and othe

MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Offers Special Prayers at Ganesh Mandapam in Raghavendra Nagar

""Nacharam, September 20(INDIAN CHORNICLE): """Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy offered special prayers to Lord Ganesha at a Ganesh mandapam set up in Sri Raghavendra Nagar of HMT Nagar Division on the occasion of the ongoing Ganesh festival."The MLA visited the Ganesh mandapam and participated in the special puja conducted by the organisers. He performed the traditional rituals and offered prayers seeking the blessings of Lord Ganesha for the well-being, peace and prosperity of the people."Speaking on the occasion, Bandari Lakshma Reddy conveyed his greetings to the devotees and organisers celebrating the Ganesh festival. He appreciated the efforts of the local residents and organisers in conducting the celebrations with devotion and maintaining a festive atmosphere in the locality."He said that Ganesh festival celebrations bring people together and promote unity, devotion and a spirit of community participation. He wished that the festival would be

celebrated peacefully and successfully, with everyone extending cooperation to the organisers and authorities."The MLA also interacted with local residents and devotees during his visit and enquired about the arrangements being made at the Ganesh mandapam. He extended his best wishes to the organisers and devotees and prayed for the prosperity and welfare of the people of the constituency."BRS state leaders Saizen Shekhar and Medala Mallikarjun Goud, along with Makthal Shekhar Goud, Sangam Yadagiri and other local leaders, organisers, devotees and residents participated in the programme.

MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy and Neredham Bhaskar Goud Visit Ganesh Pandals in Beerappagadda

"UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 20 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Ganesh Navratri celebrations are continuing with religious fervour in the Beerappagadda area of Uppal Assembly constituency. As part of the celebrations, Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy visited several Ganesh pandals and performed special prayers.Former TRS state secretary Neredham Bhaskar Goud, TRS state leader Bandala Praveen Mudiraj, and others participated in the programme. They offered special prayers to Lord Ganesha and prayed for the happiness, prosperity, health and well-being of the people."On the occasion, the organisers of the Ganesh Utsav committees felicitated MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy, Neredham Bhaskar Goud, and Bandala Praveen Mudiraj. Later, they participated in the community meal organised as part of the celebrations and served food to devotees

.A large number of devotees visited the Ganesh pandals and offered special prayers during the festivities. Utsav committee organisers, local leaders, activists and devotees participated in the programme in large numbers.

SHAMIRPET HOSTS LANDMARK ELECTRIC VEHICLE UNVEILING BEFORE 2,000 DELEGATES.

""HYDERABAD, September 20, 2026 — Premier Shamirpet hospitality destination demonstrates world-class infrastructure and large-scale event handling capabilities during high-profile corporate launch."Celebrity Resort, Shamirpet, reaffirmed its status as a premier destination for mega-scale corporate and brand events by successfully hosting a flagship Electric Vehicle (EV) launch, gathering an elite audience of over 2,000 attendees."The high-octane event brought together prominent automobile industry stalwarts, corporate executives, tech innovators, and EV enthusiasts from across the region. The seamless execution of the launch highlighted the resort's ability to combine expansive outdoor and indoor venue spaces with top-tier technical support and comprehensive hospitality operations."Designed to accommodate grand corporate showcases, Celebrity Resort provided state-of-the-art event logistics, premium catering, and streamlined guest management for the massive gathering. The successful hosting of this national-caliber automotive launch underscores the resort's strategic position as the location of choice for high-impact product unveilings, corporate summits, and brand activation events in Telangana."> "Hosting an event of this scale for the rapidly evolving electric vehicle sector reflects our commitment to offering world-class infrastructure and unmatched hospitality," said a venue representative. "We continue to set high benchmarks for hosting major corporate and industry gatherings.""> "About Celebrity Resort, Shamirpet"Situated in Shamirpet, Hyderabad, Celebrity Resort is a leading luxury hospitality and event venue known for hosting large-scale corporate conferences, brand launches, social gatherings, and destination events. Featuring versatile convention facilities and extensive green lawns, the resort provides end-to-end event management solutions tailored to international standards."Media Contact:"Press Relations Office"Celebrity Resort, Shamirpet, Hyderabad"Email: media@celebrityresorts.com | Phone: +91 40 1234 5678"Website: www.celebrityresorts.com

Wushu Tournament Organised

Journalist-Ajay Kr Mishra "BETTIAH/BIHAR, SEPTEMBER 20 (INDIAN CHRONICL)" The News "16 th State level' Wushu Tournament ' 2026 was organised at Khel Bhavan cum Byayamshala Bettiah on Saturday in which the District Magistrate West Champaran Taranjot Singh and the Mayer of Bettiah Nagar Nigam Mrs Garima Devi Sikaria participated and enlighten the candle and inaugurated the function." In this Tournament the players of various districts arrived about 150 .As the DM welcomed all the players and expressed his good wishes to them .He also said that the search of sports merit would be on in the district.As the young players should take part in this sport .They should do regular practices of sports to get success in their lives.As in this Tournament 150 men and women players, 50 technical officers participated. The senior Wushu coach Bijendra Singh and Sumit Kumar were also presented." In this Tournament the players performed well .As Isha Mishra and Aprajita Mishra -Muzaffarpur, Sonali Kumari -Patna, Arpita Das -Bhagalpur, Puja Kumari -Darbhanga, Raj Kumar (Muzaffarpur) etc won the medals.On this occasion the District Sports Officer-Rakesh Kumar, Dr Rajesh Raushan, the Vice Chairman of Bihar Yushu Sangh -Mukut Madi, the General Secretary-Suman Mishra, the District Secretary-Alok Kumar and others were presented. As the Chairman of wushu Sangh West Champaran-Pratik Admin congratulated all the participants and expressed his well wishes." As it is noted that several Tournaments have already been organised in Bettiah and this type of organised Tournaments encouraged the adolescent of the district towards games and sports.""Ajay Kr Mishra "Bettiah /Bihar

Ex-Servicemen Seek Special Law, District Welfare Offices in Telangana

""Hyderabad Correspondent, September 20 (Indian Chronicle): The Telangana Ex-Servicemen Welfare Association has urged the State government to create a dedicated legal and administrative framework for the welfare of former military personnel and their families. The association sought a resolution in the State Assembly urging the Centre to enact a special law for ex-servicemen welfare. It also demanded that the reservation for ex-servicemen in Telangana Public Service Commission recruitments be increased to 2 per cent and the qualifying marks reduced from 40 to 30 per cent. It highlighted difficulties faced by children of serving personnel in claiming local status due to frequent transfers and sought changes to the rules affecting their education and employment opportunities. The association also alleged irregularities involving assigned and ex-servicemen land and called for a government white paper detailing such land holdings. It sought the recovery and re-allotment of encroached land to eligible beneficiaries. Other demands included dedicated welfare offices and community halls in every district, besides a separate corporation and a special committee to address ex-servicemen's grievances.

ACP Ramanamurthy launched Maha Annadana program

INDIAN CHRONICLE KHAMMAM K SANJAY

"ACP Ramanamurthy, Three Town CI Mohan Rao and 27th Division Corporator Dodda Nagesh inaugurated the Maha Annadana program organized by Khammam Srinivas Nagar 17th Division Shri Bala Ganesh Utsav Committee on the occasion of its second anniversary. On this occasion, they said that it is admirable to organize food donation programs at Vinayaka mandapalas, and that food donation is greater than all donations, it is a great virtue. Wished that the grace of Lord Ganesha be on everyone. Srinivasa Rao, Rajasekhar, Khayyum, Valluri Tirupati Rao, Dodda Nagaraju, Gunu Gundla Nagarjuna, Chidagani Sudhakar, Jakkula Lakshmana Rao, Kommu Mallaiah, Male Vijay, Satish, Santhosh, Jala Nageswara Rao, Sheikh Pasha, Prasad, Kommu Mallaiah were the leaders in this program. Others participated.

Lions Club International Bestows Prestigious Honors on Exemplary Educators at Secunderabad Convocation

Congress outlines 100-day plan for nationwide caste enumeration campaign.

Karimnagar September 20, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): The Congress is preparing a 100-day nationwide campaign on caste enumeration, drawing on the organisational experience of its Telangana unit, where a war room and call centre were used to coordinate the caste census exercise at the grassroots level, party sources said.

Rudra Santhosh Kumar, who coordinated the war room, call centre and digital monitoring arrangements during the Telangana exercise, has been appointed AICC war room coordinator for the proposed national campaign, according to the sources. The AICC has issued an appointment letter assigning him the responsibility, they said.

The proposed national war room will coordinate State-wise programmes, training, organisational activities, digital monitoring and weekly progress reports. The campaign is expected to be implemented over 15 weeks, with activities being taken up in phases across States.The Congress's Telangana experience is expected to form part of the organisational framework for the national campaign. During the caste census exercise in the State in 2024-25, a dedicated war room and call centre were operated from Indira Bhavan under the leadership of TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud.

According to party sources, the system facilitated regular coordination with party workers and organisational representatives at the mandal, block, village and booth levels. More than 2,000 workers and organisational representatives were contacted every day during the nearly 45-day exercise, while the party also coordinated with over 100 caste associations and about 35,000 booth-level workers across Telangana, the sources said.The proposed national mechanism will seek to replicate such coordination across different organisational structures in the States. State-level war rooms, master-trainer programmes, district-level training and monitoring mechanisms extending to the mandal and village levels are among the measures under consideration.The issue was discussed at a national OBC workshop held at AICC Indira Bhavan in New Delhi on September 8. The workshop was chaired by AICC national coordinator Koppula Raju and attended by AICC OBC national chairman Anil Jaihind Yadav, AICC Minority department chairman Imran Pratapgarhi and representatives of OBC and Minority departments from various States.Mr. Rudra Santhosh Kumar made a presentation at the workshop on the proposed 15-week campaign, covering State-level war rooms, selection and training of master trainers, district-level programmes, digital monitoring and weekly reporting, party sources said.The national war room is proposed to serve as a coordination platform for receiving feedback from States, identifying implementation-related issues and providing guidance during the campaign.

Kerala power cuts put Satheesan government under pressure

Thiruvananthapuram: The power crisis is fast emerging as the first major political and administrative challenge for the V.D. Satheesan government, with the Left Opposition stepping up its attack over the continuing power cuts and contrasting the situation with the previous decade when Kerala had largely remained free of scheduled power restrictions.Electricity Minister Sunny Joseph's admission on Tuesday that no final decision has been taken on buying power from NTPC at around Rs 30 a unit has added to the uncertainty.The minister said such high-cost procurement would impose a huge financial burden on the state and would require Cabinet approval.He also declined to say how long the current power cuts would continue, saying the government was trying all possible options to resolve the crisis at the earliest.The CPI(M) led Left is using the shortage to portray the new government as incapable of managing the power sector, pointing out that routine cuts had virtually disappeared during the 10 years of the Pinarayi Vijayan government.The political challenge for the Satheesan government is that consumers, rather than statistics on power availability, are now directly experiencing the impact of the shortage.But power sector experts argue that the present crisis cannot be viewed merely as a failure to procure enough electricity at short notice.Engineering physicist and power sector expert K.S. Manoj said the shortage exposed a deeper vulnerability in Kerala's power system, its dependence on external power, volatile procurement costs and the absence of sufficiently strong long-term planning.

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34 yrs ago in Ahmedabad, a chilling gangland killing – and a saga that continues

EMS News Agency, Sept 20

Back in the early 1990s, a former Congress leader and member of the Rajya Sabha named Rauf Valiullah was brought down by gunshots to his head outside Madhuban Building in Ahmedabad's Ellisbridge area. It was one of the most sensational cases of gangland violence in the city at the time.Thirty-four years after that politically charged assassination, the Gujarat High Court has ruled that a member of the gang whose leader allegedly ordered the hit on Valiullah must continue to remain in jail.

Iqbal Hussain Dhobi alias Laliyo Kasambhai, a convicted member of the Abdul Latif gang that struck terror in Ahmedabad three decades ago, had filed a plea seeking premature release after serving the sentence imposed on him in the 1992 murder case.Advocate Hemant Raval, appearing for Dhobi, argued that the former gangster had been acquitted in most of the other criminal cases registered against him – and that he was not the principal assailant in the Valiullah case, but only a co-accused.On October 9, 1992, Valiullah, who was general secretary of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee at the time, was shot in the head in broad daylight at close range outside Madhuban Building by an underworld hit team of several armed men.Valiullah, who was accompanied by an associate named Pradeep Dave at the time, was allegedly about to expose a deep criminal-politician nexus before the central leadership of the Congress party. He had come out of the building and was about to get in his car when the assailants struck.

The killing of Valiullah was allegedly ordered by gangster and bootlegger Abdul Latif, a man who started his criminal career as a gambler-turned-bootlegger, before going on to having a thriving career in organised crime, with the reputation of being the only known pointsman in Gujarat of Dawood Ibrahim.'Raees', the 2017 film by Rahul Dholakia that was set largely in Ahmedabad and starred Shah Rukh Khan, was seen to have close parallels with the life of Abdul Latif, even though the filmmaker and the actor had denied these connections.Latif, who was accused in dozens of cases including the 1993 Bombay blasts, was killed in an alleged police encounter in Ahmedabad in 1997. The Valiullah murder was one of the most sensational cases linked to the gangster – and as recently as in June this year, the Ahmedabad Crime Branch had swooped on another accused in the case, Mohammad Taslim Shaikh, who had jumped parole in 2019.Shaikh, the absconding accused in the Valiullah murder, was found to be living in Rajasthan with his family from a second wife.

Hemant Raval, counsel for Dhobi, told the HC that his client's role could not be equated with that of the principal assailant. He stressed that Dhobi was a co-accused and had been acquitted in most of the other cases lodged against him.Raval also submitted that Dhobi had served more than 22 years in prison and had received a "good conduct" report from the jail. He had been carrying out the tasks assigned to him in jail with responsibility, Raval submitted.The state government opposed Dhobi's plea. Counsel for the state pointed to the case of Dhobi's co-accused Sajid Ali alias Danny, and Mohmed Umar Majid Ahmed Pathan alias Mohmed Fighter alias Mohmed Pahelwan, both of whom had sought premature release after completing their sentences.The state said that Sajid Ali's petition challenging the refusal of his release was pending before the Supreme Court.

Valiullah, the Congress Rajya Sabha MP, was 47 years old when he was killed. The murder was closely linked to the gunning down of nine persons on August 3, 1992, including Hansraj Trivedi, described by the prosecution as an alleged supplier of illicit liquor, at the Radhika Gymkhana Club in the Odhav area of Ahmedabad.Police registered a case in the Gymkhana murder, but the investigation drew public criticism over the failure to arrest Abdul Latif and members of his gang, who were perceived to be responsible for the killings.According to the prosecution, mounting public pressure on the police to nab the accused nudged Latif and his associates to devise a plan under which some peripheral members of the gang would surrender, allowing the principal accused to remain beyond the reach of the law.The prosecution alleged that Latif sought the assistance of local Congress party politician Hassankhan Shamsherkhan Pathan, alias Hassanlala, to facilitate the surrender.Valiullah, who had allegedly learnt of their plan, was preparing a memorandum for the Congress party's high command to expose what the prosecution described as "a criminal-political nexus" in the state.According to the prosecution, Valiullah's opposition to the proposed arrangement led Abdul Latif and his gang to decide to eliminate him and 'create such fear that no one else would step forward to oppose the plan".The task of killing Valiullah, according to the prosecution, was entrusted to Rasoolkhan Yakubkhan Pathan alias Rasool Party and his associates. Rasool Party, who remains absconding, is also accused in the 2003 assassination of former BJP minister Haren Pandya as one of the conspirators.

Role of Dhobi, and what happened before the killingDhobi's alleged role in the conspiracy figured in his confessional statement during the trial. According to the prosecution, he described his association with Rasool Party and recounted the events leading to Valiullah's murder.The prosecution submitted that on October 9, 1992, Dhobi was summoned through another accused and given a revolver loaded with six bullets. He was allegedly instructed to shoot Valiullah if another accused, Mohmed Fighter alias Mohmed Pahelwan, failed to carry out the killing.Gang members allegedly tracked Valiullah for several days. On October 9, 1992, a group of accused was deputed to carry out the killing. Around 2.30 pm, Valiullah was shot at close range while entering a Maruti car parked outside Madhuban Building.Pradeep alias Bakkabhai Nautamlal Dave, who had accompanied Valiullah and was present at the spot, lodged the FIR at Ellisbridge police station.A case was registered for murder and criminal conspiracy, along with offences under the Arms Act and the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA).The investigation was initially handled by an Ahmedabad police team but was subsequently transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation. The CBI filed charges under various provisions of TADA, the Indian Penal Code and the Arms Act.Two subsequent charge sheets were also filed, and the three cases were eventually consolidated for trial before the designated TADA court.

Reel stars' year-long feud, social media trolling end in midnight ambush at Pune cafe

.A year-long grudge aggravated by relentless social media trolling between two local 'reel stars' culminated in an attempt to murder inside a Pune eatery on Independence Day, leading to the arrest of 12 people. Among those arrested are the main conspirators, a notorious history-sheeter, and both the owner and manager of the eatery where the attack occurred.According to the Deccan police, the dispute originated about a year ago following a minor vehicular collision in the Kaas Pathar area of Satara district involving engineering student Madhavi Rajesh Kumbhar, 23, and Atharva Pramod Jagtap, 19. Both Madhavi and Atharva, residents of Kalepadal and Ambegaon respectively, command active followings on Instagram as content creators.

"Following the initial altercation, the duo engaged in a public feud, posting retaliatory videos targeting each other. The online trolling further fuelled the tension, prompting Madhavi and her associates to plot an ambush," said Sub Inspector Yogesh More.The violent encounter happened in the early hours of August 15 at Cafe Flying Gypsy in Shivajinagar on Shirole Road. Around 3.30 am, as Atharva prepared to leave the premises, the group allegedly ambushed him.Atharva attempted to enter the cafe for safety, but history-sheeter Rahul Sitaram Waghmare, 20, allegedly pursued him inside and slashed him with a sharp weapon. Waghmare's accomplices, including several minors, allegedly assaulted Atharva before fleeing the scene.A police team rushed to the spot, ensured the injured teenager received medical treatment, and began an investigation based on Atharva's complaint. The Deccan police registered a case under charges of attempt to murder and other relevant provisions.

Series of arrestsUsing CCTV footage from the cafe and surrounding areas, the police first arrested Madhavi, a diploma student in electronics and telecommunication, and her associate Snehal Sanjay Sonke, 20, a fellow content creator working in real estate.The police tracked down and arrested the main assailant Rahul Waghmare, who had a prior criminal record at the Kalewadi police station, along with co-accused Shivanand Talwar, 21; Aditya Bhalerao, 22; Priyanshu Bhosale, 22; and Prem alias Pamya Salve, 22.On August 19, the police arrested cafe owner Hemant Patil, 42, and manager Prem Deepak Patil, 21. "The duo was charged with illegally operating the venue past permissible midnight hours and attempting to destroy evidence by scrubbing bloodstains from the crime scene," said SI More.By August 21, three more suspects, Vaishnavi alias Siya Ravindra Bhaskar, 22, Samiksha Shailesh Shelke, 21, and Vaibhav Madhukar Bhagwat, 21, were taken into custody.The police also apprehended three minors and sent them to an observation home, while the adult accused have been remanded to magisterial custody at the Yerwada jail.

Offices advised WFH tomorrow, schools to hold online classes

Following heavy rain that inundated several parts of the Millenium City on Monday, the Gurgaon district administration urged all corporate offices, as well as government and private educational institutions, to switch to work from home (WFH) and online modes on Tuesday (August 25).The advisory was issued by District Magistrate-cum-Chairperson of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Uttam Singh, to curb traffic snarls and facilitate road and drainage clearance by civic agencies.

"In view of the heavy rainfall in the district Gurugram on 24.08.2026, there are chances of waterlogging and traffic congestion. Therefore, all corporate offices and government and private schools/institutions in the district are advised to guide their employees to work from home from 25.08.2026, so that traffic congestion can be avoided and repair works of roads and drains can be carried out smoothly by civic agencies," the official order stated.The DDMA has forwarded the directive to the District Education Officer (DEO) and District Elementary Education Officer (DEEO) to ensure necessary compliance across all government and private schools in the district, and to the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPRO) for wide public outreach.

Gurgaon records 75 mm rain in 9 hoursAccording to data shared by the district administration, Gurgaon tehsil recorded the highest rainfall in the district at 75 mm between 8 am and 5 pm on Monday.This was closely followed by Badshahpur at 65 mm and Wazirabad at 64 mm.Among

other areas, Kadipur and Harsaru sub-tehsils recorded 40 mm of rainfall each, while Manesar clocked 36 mm. Sohna received 16 mm, Pataudi 12 mm, and Farrukhnagar recorded 7 mm of rainfall during the same period.The intense spell of rain led to heavy waterlogging on several major stretches, service lanes, and underpasses across the city, including key junctions along the Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway, Subhash Chowk — where school buses were stuck for three hours — and internal sector roads of Sector 45, 52, slowing traffic movement during peak hours.Teams from the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) and the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) have been deployed on ground with mobile pumps and machinery to drain waterlogged roads and de-silt overflowing storm drains.

YouTuber Ajeet Bharti booked for 'derogatory remarks' against MP Chandra Shekhar Aazad

EMS News Agency, Sept 20

The Delhi Police has booked YouTuber Ajeet Bharti for allegedly making derogatory remarks against Nagina MP Chandra Shekhar Aazad during his show — Andolan Hatao Nautanki — on his YouTube channel.

He was reportedly discussing the issue of reservation and the protests at Jantar Mantar.The case was registered at North Avenue Police Station on a complaint lodged by the Azad Samaj Party (Kanshi Ram) on Sunday. Chandra Shekhar is president of the party and founder of the Bhim Army.According to the FIR, Bharti allegedly used his public digital-media platform to publish content in which he repeatedly made "caste-based, abusive, humiliating, sexually degrading and potentially inflammatory statements" about the MP and Dr B R Ambedkar.

The screenshot annexed to the complaint identifies the accused as Ajeet Bharti (@ajeetbharti) and displays a verified X account.The video and screenshot also identify the programme as SB79: Reservation Hatao Andolan Nautanki & More | Saptahik Bakaiti. They display the date and time as August 22, 2026, at 10:11 pm, with approximately 23,100 views.The complaint stated that the video and screenshot have been submitted as prima facie electronic evidence identifying the account and establishing the public circulation of the material.

It further requested the investigating agency to obtain the original platform records, URL/permalink, account information, upload data, metadata, views, comments, reposts and other relevant information directly from the platform concerned.According to the complaint, the impugned recording contains a continuous sequence of statements concerning caste, reservation, marriage and members of Scheduled Caste communities. It alleges that the accused repeatedly invoked caste identity in a derogatory and humiliating context.Police said Bharti has been booked under sections of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, as well as provisions relating to promoting enmity between different groups, criminal intimidation, and Section 67 of the Information Technology Act.A police officer said an investigation has been initiated and that Bharti may be called for questioning soon.

Delhi rain disrupts flight operations; several flights diverted, airlines issue advisories

New Delhi: More than a dozen flights from Delhi Airport were rerouted as heavy rain and thunderstorms lashed Delhi-NCR on Monday, while airlines issued advisories urging passengers to check their flight status before heading to the airport, according to multiple reports.Taking to social media platform X, the airlines said adverse weather conditions were affecting flight operations and schedules.

IndiGo said it was closely monitoring the situation and advised passengers to check real-time flight updates and factor in extra travel time due to possible traffic delays."Bad weather over #Delhi has impacted flight schedules. We are closely monitoring the weather and doing our best to get you where you need to be, safely and smoothly," IndiGo wrote on X.Similarly, Air India cautioned that weather-related disruptions could impact flights to and from Delhi, urging travellers to verify their flight status before leaving for the airport."Adverse weather conditions may impact flight operations to and from Delhi today," the airline said.

Akasa Air said severe weather in Delhi had affected certain flights across its network, while SpiceJet warned that arrivals, departures and connecting flights could face delays due to the conditions."Due to severe weather conditions in Delhi, certain flights across our network have been impacted. We realize that this may inconvenience your travel plans and seek your patience and understanding. While this situation is completely beyond our control, please rest assured that our teams are always ready to assist you," Akasa Air posted on X.Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued weather alerts for Delhi, forecasting heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, lightning and strong gusty winds in parts of the capital.Earlier, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) issued travel guidelines for flyers."Before you travel, stay informed about local weather conditions at your departure and arrival cities," AAI said on X.It also advised travellers to arrive at the airport well in advance, as rain could affect road traffic. "Arrive at the airport well in advance to avoid delays," the AAI said.

Govt monitors onion prices, plans calibrated buffer releases to check volatility

New Delhi: The government is closely monitoring onion prices, market arrivals and availability across states to ensure adequate supplies and protect consumers from undue price volatility, government sources said on Monday, adding that onion availability is currently comfortable to meet domestic demand in the coming months, supported by an estimated production of 307.37 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) in 2025-26 which is in line with the previous year's production of 307.67 LMT.In addition, buffer stocks are available for calibrated market intervention, said sources.

The government remains committed to protecting consumer interests while keeping farmer interests at the centre of its price-stabilisation approach.Onion prices have generally shown seasonal uptick and volatility from August -September onwards owing to increased festive season, weather conditions, supply-chain movements and demand conditions during this period.Timely bulk release in mandis and targeted retail sales in major consumption centres play a critical role in augmenting supplies and moderating undue price volatility during the lean season, said sources."Consistent with the strategy adopted in previous years, Onions are being released from buffer stock in calibrated manner based on continuous monitoring of prices and market conditions across states during the current year as well. The timing, quantity and destination of such releases are calibrated according to prevailing market conditions and identified requirements in consumption centres," according to government sources.Moreover, initiatives such as Kanda Express (bulk transportation by rail rakes) enhance logistical efficiency and facilitate the large-scale movement of onions across the country.The Kanda Express initiative, launched in 2024-25, has been scaled up subsequently.

During 2024-25, onion buffer stocks were transported through 14 railway rakes carrying nearly 12,000 MT of onions to five cities. In 2025-26, operations expanded substantially, with 86 railway rakes transporting around 88,000 MT of onions to 16 major cities across the country.Building on the successful experience of the previous year, the transportation and disposal release of onions from Nashik to key consumption centres commenced from August 24.The initiative will initially cover five major consumption centres — Chennai, Madurai, Delhi, Kochi and Guwahati — with additional destinations to be included subsequently based on emerging market requirements, said sources.

Bank strikes in September to disrupt services across India

Kolkata: Banking services across India are likely to be affected in September as the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella body of nine bank employees' and officers' associations, has called for a nationwide strike in two separate spells.

The first strike is scheduled for September 11, followed by a three-day strike from September 28 to 30. The protests are expected to significantly disrupt banking operations, particularly in public sector banks.The disruption will be more pronounced towards the end of September, with bank branches already scheduled to remain closed on September 26, the fourth Saturday, and September 27, Sunday. The three-day strike on September 28, 29 and 30 will extend the disruption for five consecutive days.Banking services will also be affected from September 11 to 13, with the one-day strike on September 11 followed by the weekend holidays on September 12 and 13.The UFBU has also warned of an indefinite strike from October 26 if its demands are not addressed.

According to a statement issued by the UFBU on Monday, the four-day strike has been called primarily to press for the introduction of a five-day working week in the banking sector and withdrawal of the performance-linked incentive (PLI) system.Under the five-day working week demand, all Saturdays and Sundays would be declared holidays for bank employees. At present, banks generally remain closed on Sundays and the second and fourth Saturdays.The UFBU has termed the PLI system discriminatory and contrary to the understanding reached between bank employees' unions and the Indian Banks' Association (IBA).The unions have also raised concerns over several unresolved issues related to the next wage revision.

These include updating and improving pension benefits, introducing a uniform dearness allowance formula for all pensioners and settling other pending demands.The UFBU said its meeting on Sunday unanimously decided to launch protest actions to press the demands.

While bank branches will be closed on strike days, ATM and digital banking services may continue to operate depending on the bank and availability of cash and technical services. Customers have therefore been advised to plan essential branch-based transactions accordingly.

New Zealand Parliament passes legislation for FTA with India

EMS News Agency, Sept 20

New Delhi: New Zealand's Parliament passed legislation needed for the free trade agreement (FTA) with India with lawmakers voting 93-29 in favour, according to Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay.McClay said the vote showed strong parliamentary support for the agreement and its expected economic benefits.He said the FTA would give New Zealand exporters greater access to India, one of the world's largest and fastest-growing economies.According to McClay, 57 per cent of New Zealand exports to India will become duty-free when the agreement takes effect.Geographic ReferenceOnce fully implemented, tariffs will be removed or significantly reduced on 95 per cent of exports.The minister further noted that kiwifruit industry alone is expected to save about NZ$125 million in tariffs over five years.He added that the agreement would provide faster border clearance and improved access to India's growing middle class, which is increasing demand for food, technology, education, tourism, professional services and other products.McClay said negotiations were announced in March 2025 and that the government expects the agreement to enter into force later this year.He said the FTA would help New Zealand exporters expand business ties and support a goal set by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon to double two-way trade by 2030.The agreement will take effect once both countries complete their respective ratification procedures.Earlier in August, a report said that India's economic rise makes it a strategic partner for New Zealand and the recently signed free trade agreement (FTA) between the two nations is expected to deliver significant gains.A report from Australia-based Westpac Institutional Bank highlighted India's scale and growth potential suggesting that the FTA could add close to 0.1 per cent to New Zealand's GDP over the next decade."India is one of the world's fastest-growing major economies and offers access to a market of 1.4 billion people – one fifth of the world's population," the report said.

US cannot lose AI race to China: Blanche

Washington: The United States cannot afford to lose the artificial intelligence race to China, Attorney General Todd Blanche has said, while promising action against Chinese individuals and companies that steal from American technology businesses.Speaking during a media availability at the White House, Blanche described AI as highly beneficial and rejected calls for the Justice Department to regulate or slow the technology."We can't lose the AI race to China, right?" Blanche said. "President Trump says that, everybody says that, but they say it because it's true."

His remarks came after questions about warnings from technology leaders that rapidly advancing AI systems could pose national security and other serious risks.Blanche said the Justice Department would investigate criminal conduct connected to AI but would not assume the role of a technology regulator."There's plenty of cases involving AI that we've charged individuals," he said. "I do not think it's the job of the Department of Justice to regulate.""We're prosecutors, not regulators, so we're not going to try to regulate AI," Blanche added.The attorney general said AI offered significant benefits to American society. He also backed President Donald Trump's contention that the recent political debate over possible AI dangers was being driven partly by the approaching midterm elections."AI is extraordinarily beneficial to our society," Blanche said. "There's a lot of great work that AI does."He questioned why Democratic senators were raising the issue two months before the election after what he described as a prolonged period of silence."So to talk about the timing of this as being nothing but an effort to influence the midterms, I shouldn't have to say that out loud," Blanche said. "Of course, that's what it is, and that shouldn't be what drives the decisions that we're making around AI."Asked whether the US government should take action against China for the alleged theft of information from American AI companies, Blanche drew a distinction between China as a country and individual actors operating there.

"When you say China, you're talking about an entire country," he said.Blanche said Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping had a strong working relationship despite

disputes involving companies and individuals in China."Those two presidents have a great relationship and they get along, they make deals together," Blanche said.He said misconduct by actors and companies in China predated the Trump administration and was likely to remain a law-enforcement concern."The Department of Justice and other agencies in the executive, of course, we're doing everything we can to combat that and to go after that in the right way," Blanche said."But I don't think it's fair to just label China as a country. There's bad actors in China that are doing it, which we're definitely going to go after."Blanche declined to say whether OpenAI, Google and Anthropic would need antitrust waivers to work together on security measures for their AI models. He said any such decision would involve multiple factors and an established Justice Department process.He encouraged technology companies to address problems involving their systems and to work with the government when necessary.The United States and China are competing for leadership in advanced semiconductors, computing infrastructure and AI models. Washington has imposed restrictions intended to limit China's access to some cutting-edge chips and manufacturing equipment.India is also expanding its AI infrastructure, semiconductor ambitions and digital economy. The outcome of the US-China technology competition could influence global supply chains, investment flows and the standards governing AI systems used in India and other major markets.

Iran war costs US 38 billion usd, CBO says

Washington: The US military campaign against Iran cost the Pentagon about $38 billion through July and could consume another $2 billion to $3 billion each month, according to the Congressional Budget Office.The nonpartisan agency also warned that the conflict has depleted critical missile-defence stocks, increased energy prices and added to inflation across the American economy.The CBO examined operational, logistical and economic costs associated with Operation Epic Fury, which began on February 28.

The initial phase lasted until a ceasefire took effect on April 8. President Donald Trump declared the ceasefire over on July 10 after attacks on tankers passing through the Strait of Hormuz.The $38 billion estimate includes $21.7 billion to replace missiles and other munitions. It also covers $10.4 billion in additional flying hours, $2.7 billion in higher military fuel costs, $1.9 billion for equipment lost in battle and $1.5 billion in other operational expenses.

Replacing expended munitions was the largest single expense. The total included $13.1 billion for missile-defence interceptors and $7.3 billion for land-attack cruise missiles.The estimate does not include the cost of repairing or rebuilding US military facilities damaged by Iranian attacks. It also excludes diplomatic operations, foreign assistance and the long-term cost of medical care and disability compensation for injured service members and veterans.CBO said the Pentagon did not provide the information it requested. The agency relied instead on government databases and publicly available reports, leaving its findings subject to "considerable uncertainty".The report warned that the United States may have used between one-half and two-thirds of its missile-defence interceptor inventory since June 2025."Although DoD does not reveal the number of munitions it has on hand, a comparison of the reported expenditures of missile defense interceptors with the total numbers that DoD has purchased to date indicates that the United States has probably used between one-half and two-thirds of its inventory of those munitions since June 2025," CBO said.Rebuilding the stocks could take at least five years, even if the Pentagon accelerates procurement."The shortfall would become especially problematic if a conflict arose with an opponent whose arsenal included large numbers of ballistic and cruise missiles," the report said.

CBO specifically identified China as possessing an arsenal that could play a major role in any military conflict involving Taiwan.The conflict has also disrupted oil and natural gas shipments through the Strait of Hormuz and shipping through the Red Sea. CBO said the resulting increase in energy costs added 2.3 percentage points to the annualised inflation rate during the second quarter of 2026.The agency projected that inflation in the first quarter of 2027 would be 0.5 percentage points higher than it had forecast before the war. Higher inflation is also expected to push up interest rates on US Treasury securities.Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth told Congress in July that operations against Iran would cost $37.5 billion through September. The White House has requested $87.6 billion in supple-

mental funding, including $67.1 billion for the Pentagon. CBO said about $42.3 billion of the Pentagon request appeared directly related to the conflict.

Tesla to unveil long-delayed next-generation Roadster on October 1

New Delhi: Tesla CEO Elon Musk has announced that the electric vehicle maker will unveil its long-delayed next-generation Roadster on October 1, nearly a decade after the company first showcased plans for a successor to its original sports car.Tesla's official account on social media platform X posted "Go for launch" along with a graphic displaying October 1 as the date for the event. Musk, who also owns X, subsequently responded to the post, writing, "New Tesla Roadster Unveil 10.01."The announcement comes after years of delays surrounding the Roadster programme. Tesla first unveiled the next-generation model in 2017 and had initially said that deliveries would begin in 2020. However, the vehicle's development has repeatedly been pushed back.The Information reported in August that Tesla was planning to unveil the redesigned Roadster as early as that month. The report also said the event could feature a demonstration of a limited-edition version equipped with cold-gas thrusters developed in collaboration with SpaceX.The reported demonstration is expected to take place at SpaceX's test facility in McGregor, Texas, according to the report.The Roadster project has also evolved significantly from Tesla's original plans. The vehicle is reportedly being developed as an all-new carbon-fibre hypercar after the company abandoned an earlier approach that would have used components based on the Model S PlaidThe latest announcement comes as Tesla continues to expand its focus beyond conventional electric vehicles and towards autonomous driving. Last week, the company began offering limited rides in its two-seater Cybercab in Austin, Texas. The vehicle does not have a steering wheel or pedals and is designed around Tesla's vision for fully autonomous transportation.

US-China AI race intensifies as both sides weigh risks and capabilities

Hong Kong: As the rapid development of artificial intelligence triggers a renewed debate about its risks, the United States and China continue to race to develop increasingly powerful models even as they express concerns of their own.The US has outpaced China and other countries for years in AI model capabilities, research, citations and other areas. But China has been rapidly catching up as an AI superpower, even as US-led restrictions have blocked it from accessing some of the most advanced technologies, including cutting-edge chips and the machines used to make them.

Experts and recent reports, including one by the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence, say China has emerged as an AI counterweight to the US and this year appears to be erasing the US lead."The gap between US and Chinese models is narrow and fragile," said Samm Sacks, a senior fellow at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies' Institute for America, China, and the Future of Global Affairs.The current debate takes on greater importance ahead of Chinese President Xi Jinping's expected visit to Washington this month to meet US President Donald Trump, as experts say the future of AI will depend significantly on what China and the US do and don't do.Here's a quick look at some of the most important Chinese AI models and the concerns in both Washington and Beijing:Moonshot AI leads strong competition from Chinese companiesBeijing-based startup Moonshot AI made a splash with the release of Kimi K3, taking Silicon Valley by surprise with capabilities close to those of US rivals. It was ranked No. 3 globally in model intelligence in July, shortly after its release, behind Anthropic's Claude Fable 5 and OpenAI's GPT-5.6 Sol, according to AI benchmarking platform Artificial Analysis. But Kimi K3 now ranks ninth, behind new frontier models from Anthropic, OpenAI, Meta and SpaceXAI, indicating that China's AI lead is fluid.AI startup darling DeepSeek was the first to upend global stock markets by proving Chinese AI models were capable of challenging the US lead. The company's R1 model, released in January 2025, was more cost-effective than similar US models. In April, DeepSeek previewed its powerful V4 model, saying it had made big improvements in knowledge, reasoning and "agentic" capabilities, referring to the ability to plan and execute multiple complex steps with limited human guidance.The powerful GLM-5.2 from startup Z.ai, which rolled out in June, raised Silicon Valley eyebrows with comparisons to the most advanced Anthropic and OpenAI models. Z.ai then launched GLM-5.3 in August with improved coding and agentic capabilities that pushed it up the global AI model rankings.In July, China's Alibaba previewed its Qwen3.8-Max model, which the tech giant said was its most powerful model in the series, challenging Anthropic's Claude Fable and OpenAI's GPT.China worries about AI risks to security and governanceChina's state security minister has warned that artificial intelligence poses a range of potential threats to the country, frompolitical and ideological security to cyberattacks, data leaks and challenges to governance.In an article published Sunday, Chen Yixin said the technology could threaten China's political, institutional and ideological security if used by "hostile forces and individuals with ulterior motives". Some individuals might use AI-generated deepfake audio and video to create "political rumors" on a massive scale, he wrote.Chen specifically mentioned the capabilities of Anthropic's Claude and OpenAI's GPT as examples of how AI could be used to more easily identify and "weaponize" cybersecurity vulnerabilities. He warned that certain nations and groups can now "execute complex hacking tasks". Top Chinese leaders have said China should accelerate AI development and pursue technological self-reliance. But they have also noted the need to control the risks and establish a global framework for AI governance.US accuses China of extracting American model capabilitiesThe US has accused China's AI developers of engaging in what it has called "industrial-scale distillation", in which AI models are trained to copy or imitate the capabilities of more powerful ones.In the most comprehensive report by the government to date, the FBI, National Security Agency and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency said on Sept. 8 that Chinese AI developers extracted capabilities from some of the most advanced AI models in the US in "aggressive, malicious, and targeted distillation activities".Also on Sept. 8, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told an event that "the Chinese distill our models and they can never get ahead of us". China has rejected the claims and said distillation is commonly used across many AI companies. It asked the United States to refrain from making "unfounded accusations" and accused the US of pursuing a "monopoly of the AI industry".Distillation is a standard technique used across the AI industry, but the US agencies levelled a more specific accusation that Chinese firms used unauthorised access and other methods to extract restricted capabilities from American frontier models, said Lizzi C Lee, a fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute's Centre for China Analysis."These are still contested allegations at this point, but I think the strategic implication is already important," she said."The US spent a lot of energy controlling the inputs into frontier AI, especially chips. But now it seems that it is finally discovering that it may also have to think about the outputs of frontier AI as a form of technology transfer," Lee said."The US labs spend enormous amounts of compute pushing out the frontier. But Chinese developers can learn from those systems," she said. "And Chinese companies then (can) release very capable open-weight models that spread globally."

How Trump's war on EVs derailed America's auto-factory revival

The Ultium Cells facility in Lordstown, Ohio, in May. The $2.3 billion plant was built during the auto industry's biggest investment binge in generations. REUTERS/Quinn GlabickiThe Ultium Cells facility in Lordstown, Ohio, in May. The $2.3 billion plant was built during the auto industry's biggest investment binge in generations. REUTERS/Quinn GlabickiA wave of manufacturing investment promised to revive struggling heartland towns and build a U.S. supply chain for electric vehicles and batteries. But policy changes since Trump's return to office have upended the boom, costing thousands of jobs.

September 16, 20264:30 AM GMT+5:30Updated 9 hours agoLORDSTOWN, Ohio - On a Friday afternoon in May, three men sat chatting on folding chairs inside Lordstown's local United Auto Workers hall. Normally, they'd be on their shift at the massive battery plant a few miles away. But they'd been out of work all year.The factory – owned by General Motors and South Korea's LG Energy Solution – announced last fall that work would stop in January because of slow electric-vehicle sales. Their joint venture, Ultium Cells, indefinitely let go about 480 employees, and told the remaining 850 factory workers they wouldn't be needed for many months.That announcement came a few weeks after U.S. President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans killed a $7,500 tax credit that was intended to jumpstart consumer demand for electric cars, sending U.S. EV sales tumbling. The layoffs were a sobering letdown after the burst of optimism when the factory opened four years ago, said Steve Baier, one of the workers passing time inside the union hall."This plant is important to so many people," Baier said. "It's devastating."The $2.3 billion, gleaming-white battery plant looms over an interstate an hour from Cleveland. It was built during the auto industry's biggest investment binge in generations. Between 2019 and 2024 – starting in Trump's first term and extending through the Biden administration – the U.S. auto industry launched a massive wave of domestic manufacturing projects as it embraced an electric future.Steve Baier, who worked at Ultium Cells, speaks to Reuters at the local United Auto Workers hall in Lordstown in May. Layoffs at the town's EV battery plant have been devastating, he said. REUTERS/Quinn Glabicki

The spending blitz promised an American auto-factory renaissance after decades of decline. The U.S. needed its own EV-and-battery manufacturing base to break away from China, which was increasingly dominating EVs and their supply chains. Anti-China trade policies – launched during Trump's first term and continued under Joe Biden's presidency – and federal EV subsidies to buttress the market ensured that America's EV transition would require U.S. plants and workers.But since Trump returned to office, an array of automotive, environmental, trade and immigration policies has undermined factory projects and employment in Lordstown and across America's heartland. Cancellations of EV projects and related battery facilities have snowballed, killing or jeopardizing tens of thousands of jobs, according to a Reuters analysis of data from Atlas Public Policy, a nonpartisan research firm that tracks clean-energy investments.

These policies are undercutting Trump's long-stated goal of creating auto-manufacturing jobs – core to his economic vision. And they are putting the United States further behind China and Europe in developing electric vehicles, some analysts say.The fallout is landing mostly on a swath of red states stretching from Georgia to Indiana, which drew so much EV-related investment it earned the nickname the Battery Belt. About 87% of the announced EV-related investments were in states Trump won in 2024, according to Reuters' analysis of the Atlas data, which tracked activity from 2015 through August 24 this year.A shuttered entrance to the EV battery factory in Lordstown in May. Work stopped in January because of slow EV sales, though some workers returned in August. REUTERS/Quinn GlabickiU.S. EV investment had slowed even before Trump's policies froze the market. Americans weren't gravitating to electric cars in the numbers automakers had predicted, with some consumers turned off by high prices and range anxiety. But auto executives have cited Trump's policies in their decisions to scrap massive investments in EV and battery factories. Ford CEO Jim Farley said watching EV sales plummet after the tax credit expired last September "was really the impetus for us to make the call" on a massive writedown of EV investments.In response to Reuters questions, White House spokesman Kush Desai didn't directly address the impact of Trump's anti-EV policies on auto-manufacturing employment, which has declined since Trump took office. He faulted the Biden administration for fueling "artificial demand" for EVs with subsidies. Trump, he added, "is slashing red tape, renegotiating broken trade deals, and cutting taxes to secure trillions in new manufacturing investments – including billions from domestic and foreign automakers." Desai said the investments reflected announced commitments from companies and countries.Between 2019 and 2024, U.S. auto-manufacturing investments more than doubled from the prior six-year period, and EVs accounted for all of that growth, according to the Center for Automotive Research, which tracked announced projects.The electric shift was partly driven by carrot-and-stick measures implemented under Biden, including stricter fuel-economy rules for gasoline-powered vehicles to cut carbon emissions and tens of billions in subsidies for battery production. But market forces also pressured automakers to act. Tesla's stock-market valuation was approaching $1 trillion and startups like Rivian and China's NIO were drawing investors and customers. One by one, automakers vowed to go big on electric cars and battery tech.

Electric vehicles charge in the parking lot of the Ultium Cells facility in Lordstown. Trump's EV policies have undercut his long-stated goal of creating auto-manufacturing jobs, a Reuters analysis of Atlas Public Policy data shows. REUTERS/Quinn GlabickiUnlike past U.S. auto-factory booms, EV manufacturing promised a deeper industrial base and expanded supply chain, requiring a shift in the types of factories needed, said James Rubenstein, a professor emeritus of geography at Miami University of Ohio. It wasn't practical, for instance, to rehab an engine plant to make batteries. Entirely new capital investments were needed.But last year, nearly $20 billion worth of projects were canceled, the Atlas data show. Fresh-investment announcements slowed to around $6.5 billion last year – just 29% of the amount a year earlier and a fraction of the $55 billion the industry pledged at the peak, in 2023."Electrification is about as big a disruptor as we've had," Rubenstein said. Trump's rollbacks, he said, "push it back."The Atlas data show the projects canceled between January 2025 and August this year had promised about 27,000 jobs. That's likely an undercount because some project announcements included in the data didn't have job-creation estimates. The tally also excludes projects that were scaled back rather than canceled, and those where the EV portion of a wider investment couldn't be isolated.About four-fifths of the canceled investments were in red states, the Reuters analysis showed.Some of those losses may be offset by a boost in auto-factory investments for gasoline vehicles since Trump returned to office.

When Northeast women become "Others" in Andhra Pradesh

Last week's violence involving students from Northeast India and local students at RK Nursing College in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, raises questions that go far beyond a single altercation. At its heart lies a larger concern about the safety, dignity and social inclusion of young Northeast women who travel thousands of kilometres from their homes in pursuit of education and professional mobility.

The incident, which unfolded on 21–22 August, reportedly began with the theft of a mobile phone belonging to a Rongmei Naga nursing student. She had left it for charging in the hostel while taking a shower and was preparing to travel home the next day. The phone was later recovered without its SIM card and charger. The alleged offender was said to be a local student.Missing Belongings

The episode, however, did not emerge in isolation. Thirty-one students from Manipur, Nagaland and Assam, including Rongmei, Zeme, and Maring Nagas and Meitei students, expressed frustration over repeated instances of missing belongings. Some students claimed that, during earlier journeys home for holidays, items from their luggage had gone missing and were subsequently found among the belongings of other students. Yet, according to them, these grievances were not subjected to a transparent institutional inquiry.When the students requested their teacher to file an FIR over the 21st August case, their request was declined. Tensions escalated into an argument. Subsequently, some local students allegedly contacted their parents, following which a group gathered outside the college with sticks and stones. Police personnel, including women constables, arrived to control the situation. Six Northeast girls were injured during the confrontation.

The Northeast students alleged that they were pressured to pack their belongings and leave the college, prevented from recording the events, and attempt to physically separate them by the police. The police reportedly maintained that they needed to appear strict towards the Northeast students to calm the local people. The Northeast women reported that they were denied breakfast and lunch on 22 August and were left deeply traumatised.The immediate question is what institutional failures allowed unresolved grievances to accumulate to the point of confrontation?If belongings were repeatedly reported missing, were proper inquiries conducted? Was CCTV footage examined? Was there a functional grievance-redressal mechanism through which students could safely register complaints?For many students from Northeast India, migration to other parts of the country involves a social transformation. At home, an individual may identify as Meitei, Naga, Mizo, Khasi, Garo, Assamese or through another distinct ethnic or tribal identity. Outside the region, however, these complex identities are often collapsed into a single, homogenising category—the "Northeasterner".

Physical appearance, language, food habits and cultural practices can make regional identities unusually visible. This is where the idea of racialised "othering" becomes important. Racialised exclusion does not always take the form of explicit abuse or acts of violence. It operates through everyday stereotyping, ridicule, suspicion, exclusion or differential treatment. This does not mean, however, that every disagreement involving a student from Northeast India should automatically be described as racism. Such conclusions must be based on evidence.

Students from Northeast India are increasingly moving across the country for education and employment. Yet mobility does not automatically produce inclusion. For them, a hostel is not merely a place of accommodation. It is her temporary home. The college, therefore, becomes not only a site of learning but also an important structure of care, authority and protection.The young women involved in the Kakinada episode are not merely students. They are also migrants, women and members of ethnic communities whose identities become particularly visible outside their home region. These social locations intersect to create specific forms of vulnerability.

A student who is far from home may worry not only about theft or physical violence, but also about retaliation, academic consequences, loss of accommodation and the absence of local support networks.A local student may have access to family, friends, language and social networks that a migrant student does not possess. Recognising such differences is not a demand for "special treatment". It is a recognition that formal equality does not always produce substantive equality. Treating unequal circumstances as though they were identical can itself reproduce inequality.

The response to conflict cannot simply be to ask migrant students to "adjust", remain silent or leave. At the same time, local students should not be collectively blamed merely because of their regional identity. Collective blame would reproduce the same logic of "othering" that we seek to challenge.One of the dangers in situations such as this is the rapid transformation of an individual dispute into a conflict between "locals" and "outsiders". Once this happens, individual responsibility can disappear into collective identity. An incident of this nature can become a regional conflict. This is why educational institutions must intervene early, fairly and decisively.

In this case, North East Connect Association (NECA) Hyderabad intervened to support the Northeast students, who lacked immediate local support.The reported assurance by the Superintendent of Police that no student would be forced out of the hostel, along with the warning that action could be taken against the institution if the matter was not properly addressed, is therefore significant. The temporary relocation of the students and efforts to resolve the situation may provide immediate relief, but the larger question remains how the institution can ensure that such insecurity does not recur.

Education must also provide protectionThe Kakinada episode should prompt a broader examination of private professional institutions that actively recruit students from across India. Families send their daughters far from home because they believe education will provide dignity and a better future. Institutions that enrol students from distant regions have a corresponding responsibility to ensure accessible grievance redressal mechanisms, non-discriminatory administrative procedures and protection against intimidation.

Students cannot be treated merely as enrolment numbers or sources of institutional revenue. Educational institutions must create systems that take these unequal conditions seriously. A "Northeast Cell" should be formed in every colleges/universities in South India, like Delhi University.The immediate requirement in the Kakinada case is a transparent investigation, and those found responsible for violence, theft or other wrongdoing must be held accountable through due process. Racialised exclusion is not always produced through acts of hatred. It can also be sustained through silence, indifference and an unequal willingness to listen.The young Northeast women who travelled to Andhra Pradesh did not leave home to become symbols of a regional conflict. They travelled in search of education, professional opportunity, dignity and a future.The real test of an inclusive India is not whether people from different regions can enter the same classroom. It is whether they can live there with dignity, security and the confidence that, when they face injustice, the institution will listen to them and protect them.

Trump administration moves to impose more than $100,000 fee for H-1B worker visas

President Donald Trump's administration on Monday released a proposed regulation to codify an unprecedented more than $100,000 fee on new ?H-1B visas for highly skilled foreign workers that Trump first imposed last year but has been blocked by the courts.The fee ?first imposed by Trumpin a temporary proclamation last year, opens new tab

vastly raises the cost of the visas that are heavily relied on in the tech, education and research sectors.Jumpstart your morning with the latest legal news delivered straight to your inbox from The Daily Docket newsletter. Sign up here.A federal judge in June ruled that the fee was illegal and blocked the Trump administration from collecting it. A Boston-based appeals court is reviewing that decision while a different court considers whether a ?judge in Washington, D.C., properly rejected a challenge to the fee by a major business group.Trump's 2025 proclamation imposing the fee expires ?in September, one year after it was issued, but directed the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to adopt regulations making it ?permanent.The proposed $103,265 fee by DHS, posted online in the Federal Register on Monday to be formally published on Tuesday, kicks off a 30-day public comment period. The ?rule could be finalized by the end of the year.The H-1B program allows U.S. employers to hire foreign workers with training in specialty fields and offers ?65,000 visas annually, with another 20,000 for workers with advanced degrees, approved for three to six years.sharply increased the cost of obtaining some H-1B visas, which had typically come with about $2,000 to $5,000 in fees, depending on various factors.

DEBATE OVER VISA PROGRAMTrump, a Republican, and other critics of the H-1B program say it is abused by many ?companies who replace American workers with cheaper foreign labor. But business groups and many individual companies have said the visa program is needed to address ?a lack of qualified American workers for some jobs and to allow U.S. businesses to recruit top talent.About 70 employers had paid the $100,000 fee on a total of ?85 visa ?applications as of late February, according to court filings.In imposing the fee, Trump invoked the president's power under federal immigration law to restrict the entry of certain foreign nationals who would be detrimental to U.S. interests.

The fee is being challenged by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the largest U.S. business lobbying group, Democratic-led states and a coalition of unions and employers. Those lawsuits could be amended to challenge the rule proposed this week once it is finalized.

LEGAL CHALLENGES MOUNTThe lawsuits claim that ?Trump's power to restrict entry does ?not allow him to override the ?law that created the H-1B visa program. The states and groups that sued also say that the Homeland Security Department cannot impose fees, taxes or other means to generate revenue for the United States without permission from Congress.The ?Trump administration has maintained that the fee is not a traditional tax and that courts have little power ?to question the president's ?authority to restrict entry into the country.Amid Trump's broader immigration crackdown, employers last year registered for about 344,000 H-1B visas, down more than 25% from 2024 and fewer than half of the 794,000 visas sought in 2023, according todata, opens new tabfrom U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.The Trump administration has also ordered enhanced vetting of H-1B applicants ?and proposed ?a new visa selection process that would favor higher-skilled and better-paid workers. Earlier in August, ?the Department of Homeland Security in a separate rule

added fees of up to $4,500, opens new tabto applications to extend the stay of H-1B workers or to transfer employees based in other countries to the ?United States.Reporting by Daniel Wiessner in Albany, New York; Additional reporting by Daphne Psaledakis and Susan Heavey in Washington; Editing by Alexia Garamfalvi and Matthew LewisOur Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles., opens new tabDan Wiessner (@danwiessner) reports on labor and employment and immigration law, including litigation and policy making. He can be reached at daniel.wiessner@thomsonreuters.com.

Trump's Kim gambit deepens doubts over US reliability at a key moment for Asia

TOKYO/TAIPEI/NEW DELHI,- Donald Trump's olive branch to North Korea's Kim Jong Un at the expense of a long-standing ally comes at a pivotal moment for U.S. security ?ties in Asia, as partners from Japan to India reassess how much they can rely on Washington.The U.S. president's abrupt decision to cut back military drills with South Korea last week, which he described ?as hostile to Pyongyang, has reinforced fears that Trump's unpredictability could strain alliances that have long maintained peace in the region, government officials and security experts said.

Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here.Japan worries it too could find itself in Trump's cross-hairs as it embarks on thorny security negotiations; Taiwan is warily watching an upcoming summit between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping; and India is growing less certain of its place in Washington's strategic calculus."The decision will certainly fuel growing doubts in the region about U.S. security commitments," said Jeremy Chan, a senior analyst with political risk consultancy ?Eurasia Group and former U.S. diplomat in Japan and China.

Adding to the anxiety, the United States cancelled another military exercise with South Korea scheduled for next month, Seoul said on Monday, after Washington cited constraints on U.S. ?forces due to the Iran war.Trump has been frustrated by the failure of U.S. allies to support the war and made it clear that many of them must spend ?more on their own defence, a White House official said when asked about such concerns.He is eager to restart talks with North Korea and secure a win on the international stage to counter his unpopular conflict with Iran, according to a ?person briefed on discussions between U.S. and South Korean officials.

'EXTREMELY TROUBLING' FOR TOKYOTrump's push to meet Kim - which has so far drawn a frosty response from Pyongyang - could backfire and embolden nuclear-armed North Korea, said Itsunori Onodera, an influential Japanese lawmaker ?and former defence minister.Such a prospect is "extremely troubling" for Tokyo, he said on a Fuji TV news programme last Thursday. Despite Trump's overtures, Pyongyang fired a volley of ballistic missiles off its east coast earlier that day, triggering alerts in neighbouring South Korea and Japan.

What worries Japanese officials more is Trump's approach as Tokyo embarks on talks with Washington over how much it should pay towards the cost of hosting U.S. forces, America's largest overseas deployment.Japan is bracing for the possibility that Trump could, with little warning, demand a sharp hike that would ?be politically difficult to swallow, said a senior Japanese government official, requesting anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.Trump could also wield upcoming U.S. military exercises with Japan in October as leverage, analysts say. Officials in Washington and Tokyo ?said they did not expect the exercises to be curtailed, though Trump could change his mind at any point, they cautioned.The drills, known as Keen Sword, may already be smaller than their 2024 iteration because of the diversion of U.S. assets and personnel ?to the conflict ?with Iran.That shift - which recently saw America's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier in Asia, the USS George Washington, depart for the Middle East to relieve the beleaguered USS Abraham Lincoln - has stirred concern that U.S. deterrence against China is being eroded.During a visit to Asia this month, Pentagon policy chief Elbridge Colby said working with allies to ensure combat readiness along the so-called first island chain that runs from Japan through the Philippines is a priority for Washington.

TRUMP, XI AND TAIWANNowhere are concerns about China's growing military pressure more acute than in Taiwan, the democratically governed island claimed by Beijing.Trump has held up approval of a $14 billion package of arms sales to Taipei in order to maintain warm relations and a fragile trade truce with ?China's Xi.

As Trump prepares for his latest round of ?summitry with Xi in Washington next month, officials in ?Taipei say they expect Washington will at the very least carve up the

Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here.Japan worries it too could find itself in Trump's cross-hairs as it embarks on thorny security negotiations;

arms sales into smaller chunks to try and avoid upsetting Beijing too much.Domingo Yang of the Taiwan defence ministry's think tank, the Institute for National Defence and Security Research, says there is a distinction between Trump's rhetoric and actual U.S. behaviour, noting U.S. intelligence sharing, training and patrols ?with Taiwan remain substantial.A U.S. Navy aircraft transited the Taiwan Strait on Friday in a move the United States described as demonstrating its "commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific."Trump's ?latest actions have also rocked confidence ?in India, where the U.S. risks squandering years of efforts to draw New Delhi closer as a counterweight to Russia and China, security analysts say.It also comes after the Pentagon's decision in June to rename its Asia military headquarters to Pacific Command from Indo-Pacific Command, a move some analysts say is a sign India is no longer as strategically important to Washington.

The Pentagon denied any such shift. But Trump's steep tariffs on Indian exports and repeated claims that he had mediated an India-Pakistan ceasefire had ?already exasperated New ?Delhi. Officials there are now "very, very cautious" about committing to long-term defence deals with Washington, according to two Indian sources with knowledge of the ?matter."The latest decision only reinforces President Trump's transactional view of foreign affairs and serves as a reminder that differences over specific policies, even among allies, can carry costs for the broader bilateral relationship," said Pearl Pandya, senior analyst at Armed Conflict Location & Event Data, a conflict monitoring group.

Reporting by ?John Geddie, Yukiko Toyoda, Nobuhiro Kubo and Tim Kelly in Tokyo; Ben Blanchard in Taipei; Aftab Ahmed in New Delhi; Greg Torode in Hong Kong; and Michael Martina, Idrees Ali, Trevor Hunnicutt and Phil Stewart in Washington; Editing by Lincoln Feast.Our Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles., opens new tabJohn is the lead writer for Japan & Greater China, reporting on everything from elections to earthquakes. Previously based in Singapore and London, his work has received several journalism accolades, including a 2022 SOPA Award for Excellence in Reporting on the Environment.Ben joined Reuters as a company news reporter in Shanghai in 2003 before moving to Beijing in 2005 to cover Chinese politics and diplomacy. In 2019 Ben was appointed the Taiwan bureau chief covering everything from elections and entertainment to semiconductors.Aftab Ahmed is Reuters' South Asia Chief Correspondent for Politics, based in New Delhi. He leads coverage of political developments, government policy, defence, security and elections across South Asia. During his career, he has reported on some of the region's most significant stories, including India-Pakistan tensions and conflict, India-China relations, civil unrest and protest movements, and major economic and business developments. His reporting provides readers with on-the-ground insight into the political, diplomatic, security and economic forces shaping South Asia.

Looming US sanctions on Iran put China oil buying in spotlight

SINGAPORE, China has for several years been the biggest buyer of Iranian oil, putting its purchases in the spotlight as the U.S. threatens heavy economic sanctions on Tehran.Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent was scheduled to hold ?a press conference at 1 p.m. EDT (1700 GMT) on Monday.

The Reuters Power Up newsletter by columnist Ron Bousso provides everything you need to know about the global energy industry. Sign up here.Following are key details on China's ?oil trade with Iran, which last year averaged 1.4 million barrels per day, according to ship-tracking firm Kpler.The U.S. renewed its blockade of Iran's ships and ports on July 13 ?in an attempt to cut off oil sales as a deal to halt their war broke down, throttlingIranian ?exports.

There have been no visible crossings of the Strait of Hormuz since then, according to ?Kpler data, although many vessels turn off their location transponders, making them difficult to track.Shipments fell to 785,000 ?barrels per day in June, the lowest since February 2023 and probably rose in July to 823,000 bpd, but ?the intake so far in August has dropped to 534,000 bpd, provisional Kpler data showed.

WHO ARE THE CHINESE BUYERS?

Chinese independent refiners have been the main Iranian crude buyers, attracted by what has typically been a steep discount to mainstream barrels.A drone view shows a Chinese-flagged oil tanker moored at an oil terminal at Tsing Yi port in Hong Kong, China March 19, 2026. REUTERS/Joyce Zhou Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab

China's big state refiners have ?shunned Iranian oil since 2019, when the U.S. reimposed sanctions on Tehran, and China's official customs data does ?not show any purchases of Iranian crude.Iranian oil delivered to China has long been branded as Malaysian, and more recently Indonesian, ?and is ?settled in Chinese currency, trading in a tight loop involving a chain of difficult-to-track intermediaries, refinery sources and traders involved in the business have said.

HAVE PREVIOUS U.S. SANCTIONS BEEN EFFECTIVE?Washington has intensified its efforts to clamp down on Chinese purchases of Iranian oil since President Donald Trump returned to the White House early last year, imposing sanctions on ?mostly smaller Chinese refiners ?and other participants in the ?supply chain, which have in some cases proven disruptive.The U.S. Treasury Department has also warned two larger Chinese banks they could face secondary sanctions if Iranian funds were found ?moving through their systems, but has stopped short of designating them.In April, Washington ?imposed sanctions on Hengli ?Petrochemical (Dalian) refinery, along with about 40 shipping firms and vessels, accusing Hengli of buying billions of dollars worth of Iranian oil, escalating its efforts to curb Tehran's oil revenue. Hengli has denied buying Iranian oil.However, sanctions themselves have done ?little to ?slow overall flows of Iranian oil into China.China's Iranian oil imports ?stood at 1.24 million and 1.58 million bpd in January and February, respectively, Kpler data showed.China, which has said it rejects ?unilateral sanctions, has called for a resolution through diplomatic and political means.

Tata Power commissions 190.5 MW FDRE project in Rajasthan

New Delhi: Tata Power Renewable Energy on Monday said that it has commissioned a 190.5 MW firm and dispatchable renewable energy (FDRE) project at Kalasar, Bikaner, in Rajasthan.This is part of a bigger 460 MW FDRE project, a company statement said. FDRE is green power paired with energy storage to ensure on-demand electricity delivery.The project marks another significant milestone in India's clean energy journey by integrating large-scale solar generation with advanced energy storage and grid support technologies to deliver reliable, dispatchable renewable power, it stated.

Set the guardrails for AI use in courtrooms

In July this year, the Kerala High Court published a set of guidelines for Artificial Intelligence (AI) use by the district judiciary ("Policy Regarding Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in District Judiciary"). As the first policy in the country directly addressing AI use in judicial processes and setting out strict safeguards, it is timely. AI tools, from document translation to defect identification in filings, are expected to improve speed and efficiency, which are attractive incentives for a court system which has five crore pending cases.There are issues

But seemingly innocuous tasks such as AI-enabled translations and transcription are not without risks. For example, a Supreme Court of India judge reported the translation of 'leave granted' into 'chhutti sweekaar (holiday approved') in Hindi. In the case of Noel Anthony Clarke vs Guardian News & Media Ltd. (2025) EWHC 550 (KB), an AI-transcription tool repeatedly transcribed the claimant's name, "Noel", as "no". OpenAI's Whisper, an AI-powered speech recognition system, was reported to occasionally make up or "hallucinate" entire phrases and sentences, especially when people spoke with longer pauses between their words.Search engine bias in AI-enabled legal research could nudge users toward results influenced by user patterns, potentially 'invisibilising' relevant precedents. A study published in the Journal of Empirical Legal Studies found that legal Large Language Models (LLM) can make up case laws and cite incorrect sources to substantiate claims.At a more structural level, AI risks reducing adjudication into rule-based inferences, overlooking the combination of human judgment, specific context, and relevance of precedents that impact judicial decision-making.

Some market tools are currently being used in courts on a non-commercial test basis, such as transcription of oral arguments and witness depositions. Without specified time-frames, success parameters, or framework for access, storage, and use of non-public, sensitive or personal data, such pilots warrant careful consideration. AI tools offered to courts on a test basis risk creating dependencies without clear pathways to sustainable adoption. Moreover, new technological paradigms demand essential infrastructure such as reliable Internet connectivity and hardware.

A quick analysis of publicly available tenders for AI services across courts shows that even if adoption is cautious, courts are not necessarily designing risk management frameworks to address ethical and legal risks. While human checks and balances, such as manual vetting of AI-translated judgements by retired judges, advocates and translators are in place, AI systems learn from available data, with a possibility of error as they encounter new information in new contexts. Scholars note that hallucinations in LLMs are a feature, and not a bug, requiring human oversight and careful adoption in high-risk scenarios.As courts increasingly integrate AI use in their daily work, the combination of AI's ethical risks and the complexity of the legal system require effective guardrails to mitigate risks. Since the majority of court procedures remain paper-based, any transition to advance AI deployment must not further debilitate an already imperfect system.First, there is a need for critical AI literacy among judges, court staff and lawyers. In addition to capacity building to use AI tools, programmes are also required to understand the limitations of the systems deployed. Judicial academies and bar associations, in collaboration with AI governance experts, are well placed to facilitate such capacity building.

Second, guidelines are needed to shape individual use of generative AI for research and judgment writing. If AI is used in the adjudication process, litigants must have a right to be informed. Similarly, litigants and lawyers have a right to know if AI is being used in certain courtrooms. Given the potential for errors arising from AI use, courts should examine whether litigants may be permitted to opt-out of pilots or fully-deployed AI if they have any concerns about safeguards or human oversight.Third, courts need to adopt standardised procurement guidelines to support the evaluation of a proposed AI system's reliability and suitability for the task at hand. Pre-procurement steps will also help courts diagnose the exact problem and whether AI is the best solution. Procurement frameworks can guide assessment of technical criteria around explainability, data management and risk mitigation.These frameworks will enable decision-makers to monitor vendor compliance and performance, which may be beyond the routine expertise of judges and the registry.The Vision Document for Phase III of the eCourts Project (e-Committee, Supreme Court of India) acknowledges the need to create technology offices to guide courts in assessing, selecting, and overseeing the implementation of complex digital solutions, including infrastructure and software. Such scaffolding to aid and assist decision-making on AI use and adoption is one way to overcome gaps in technical expertise. Dedicated specialists can give courts clearer guidance in adopting AI tools as part of comprehensive planning.As courts inch towards AI adoption, it is important not to lose sight of the ultimate purpose of AI in the system — to serve the ends of justice. In this rapidly evolving technological landscape, clear guidelines on the use and the adoption of AI in courts are essential to ensure that the drive for an efficient court system does not eclipse the nuanced reasoning and human decision-making that is at the heart of the adjudicatory process.

What is the new Bill to remove PM, CM and Ministers? | Explained

The story so far: The Union government has introduced the 130th Constitutional Amendment Bill, under which a Minister will be removed from office if they are arrested and detained for 30 days in relation to a criminal offence.

What does the Bill say?

The Bill seeks to amend Articles 75 and 164 of the Constitution that deal with the Council of Ministers at the Union and State level. It provides that a Minister, who has been arrested and detained for 30 consecutive days in relation to an allegation of committing an offence, which is punishable with imprisonment of at least five years, shall be removed from his/her office. They would be removed on the advice tendered by the Prime Minister/Chief Minister (PM/CM). If the PM/CM does not tender such advice, the Minister concerned shall automatically cease to hold office from the 31st day. If the PM/CM is arrested and taken into custody for 30 consecutive days, he/she shall tender his/her resignation on the 31st day. However, the PM, CM, or Minister can be subsequently appointed on being released from custody. It also seeks to amend Article 239AA with similar provisions for the National Capital Territory of Delhi. These amendments to the Constitution would require a two-thirds majority in both houses of Parliament for its passage. Similar amendments have been proposed to parliamentary laws that govern the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Puducherry. These Bills have been referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for scrutiny.

What are the existing laws?

The Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act) provides that any person who is convicted in a criminal case and sentenced to not less than two years in jail, shall be disqualified from being a member of Parliament or State legislature for the period of their sentence and six years thereafter. Section 8(4) of the RP Act provided that with respect to a sitting member of Parliament or State legislature, such disqualification shall not take effect if an appeal is filed against such conviction. However, the Supreme Court in Lily Thomas (2013) struck down this clause as unconstitutional. It must be noted that the existing law only provides for disqualification for being a member of Parliament or State Legislature and not for being a minister.In 2016, the Election Commission had recommended that the RP Act be amended to provide that persons against whom charges are framed by a competent court for an offence that is punishable with imprisonment of at least five years be barred from contesting elections.

What are the issues?

Firstly, it will result in elected representatives losing their position by mere police action even before the start of a trial. Secondly, it undermines the principles of parliamentary democracy where the elected PM, CM enjoys the power to choose their cabinet. Finally, it gives the Centre disproportionate power to initiate vindictive action against ministers in opposition-ruled States.

What should be done?

Criminalisation of politics is a malaise plaguing our democratic system. However, the issues surrounding the Bill need careful consideration.Moreover, the Bill seems to try to address the effect than the cause. Reports by the Association of Democratic Reforms states that 46% of MPs and 45% of MLAs have criminal cases against them. It added that the chances of winning for a candidate with a criminal background was 15.4% as against just 4.4% for a candidate with a clean background. An appropriate step then would be to not field candidates who have criminal records. Parties should instil this self-discipline rather than provide tickets to tainted candidates on the ground of 'winnability'.

How women migrant electors are disenfranchised in the Bihar SIR process | Explained

The enumeration phase of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar has excluded around 65 lakh electors from the draft electoral roll published on August 1, 2025.

What did data show?

The aggregated data published by the Election Commission of India (EC) revealed permanent migration as the predominant cause for the deletion of names from the electoral roll as on June 24, 2025, which was the base roll for the SIR exercise. Out of the 65 lakh total deletions, over 55% entries were categorised as permanently shifted or untraceable, around 34% as deceased, and only 10.8% as multiple enrolments (Table 1). The publication of separate Assembly Constituency (AC)–wise lists of excluded or deleted electors, as directed by the Supreme Court, has made granular data analysis possible. The Hindu's Data Point analysis based on the top nine ACs in Bihar with the most deletions has revealed that 56% of the 4.73 lakh aggregate deletions in these ACs were female electors. Out of the 2.68 lakh female electors excluded from these nine ACs, 46% were deleted for having permanently shifted, 27% for being untraceable, 20% as deceased and only 6% as multiple enrolments. 66% of the 1.23 lakh female electors deleted for having permanently shifted were in the 18 to 39 years age cohort (Table 2).

What does the mass deletion of female migrant voters imply?

The disproportionate deletion of 'permanently shifted' female electors in the 18–39 age group points to the en masse exclusion of married women, given that Census data shows marriage to be the predominant cause of female migration — not only in Bihar but across India. 85.7% of female migrants in Bihar migrated due to marriage, as per latest available Census data (2011). These findings

The Election Commission which has highlighted the 'frequent migration of population from one place to another' as a justification for the 'intensive verification drive' fails to mention marriage, which is the most common ground for female migration in India

not only establish a built-in exclusionary bias against migrants in the very design of the Bihar SIR 2025 process, but also a gender bias against female migrant electors, particularly young married women.The eligibility criteria of a person to be registered in the electoral roll of a specific constituency is that they need to be "ordinarily resident" in said constituency as provided in the Representation of the People Act, 1950. However, the concept of "ordinary residence" has not been clearly defined anywhere in the statutes, leaving ample scope for arbitrary or erroneous deletions. The process followed under Bihar SIR, involving submission of a filled up enumeration form by existing electors within a 30 days window, has further added a new extra-legal criterion which is hostile towards migrants in general and migrant women in particular.Can such deletion lead to disenfranchisement?It is notable that the EC's SIR order dated June 24, which highlights "frequent migration of population from one place to another on account of education, livelihood and other reasons" as a justification for the supposed "intensive verification drive to verify each person before enrolment as an elector" fails to even mention marriage, which is the most common ground for female migration in India. EC's SIR data clearly reveals that deletions on account of multiple enrolments are far less than the number of deletions on account of migration. Such deletions of permanently shifted electors, without at least ensuring their enrolment in their current place of residence amounts to disenfranchisement.The EC's Manual on Electoral Rolls (March 2023, Document 10, Edition 2) states in Chapter 8 that, "Section 20 (7) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 provides that the Electoral Registration Officer shall determine a question as to where a person is ordinary resident at any relevant time, with reference to all facts and to such rules as may be made by the Central Government in consultation with the Election Commission. The Central Government and the Election Commission have not made any rule on this subject till date."The decision of the Election Commission of India to initiate the SIR process in Bihar — a State with the highest inter-State out-migration rate in India as well as a high level of intra-State migration — without first addressing the legal and procedural ambiguities surrounding the status of migrant electors, especially those migrating because of marriage, has led to the en masse exclusion and disenfranchisement of migrant electors. The EC's unwarranted obsession with "foreign illegal migrants" and citizenship determination has deflected it from addressing more relevant and critical issues.What is the way forward?While resolving the larger question of how to legally determine "ordinary residence" for migrant electors in general and marriage-driven migration in particular may take some time, immediate steps are required to prevent the unjust en masse exclusion of migrant electors in Bihar. The EC's latest status update issued on August 21 reports that only 70,895 claims and objections and 2.28 lakh Form 6 applications (addition of new electors) have been filed till date. At this rate, a large bulk of 36 lakh electors deleted as permanently shifted or untraceable would remain excluded in the final electoral roll.Extending the deadline for filing claims and objections by another 30 days, initiating a process of re-verification of the permanently shifted and untraceable categories, and ensuring mandatory re-enrolment of deleted migrant electors in their current constituency of residence may provide some relief. As far as female migrants are concerned, the decision to retain her name in the electoral roll of her natal household or be transferred to her marital household should rest with the female elector herself. It should not be imposed by the EC.

Forest rights of tribal people were not settled for Nicobar project: council

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration made a false representation to the Centre claiming that rights of the tribal people under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, had been "identified and settled", which eventually led to forest clearances being granted for the ?72,000-crore mega infrastructure project on the Great Nicobar Islands, the Tribal Council of Little Nicobar and Great Nicobar has said in a complaint to the Minister of Tribal Affairs, Jual Oram.The proposed Great Nicobar Island Project will include a transhipment port, an airport, a power plant, and a township. Local tribespeople had raised several concerns, including the diversion of nearly 13,075 hectares of forest land for the project and its impact on vulnerable groups.Earlier this year, the Minister said their concerns are "being examined", without going into details of which aspect was specifically being looked at.Certificate issued

"In the last two months, we have found that the administration in A&NI issued a certificate in 2022 saying the FRA rights were identified and settled and that the consent for diversion of forest land was taken only after this," a member of the Tribal Council told The Hindu on Friday. The council is the key representative body of the Nicobarese people on the islands, and has been regularly interacting with the administration.The council, in a letter to Mr. Oram dated July 21, clarified that it had not given its consent for the project. "We write to you to inform that the process of settlement of forest rights under the FRA has not even been initiated. Therefore, there is no question of forest rights being settled." The council said it had recently been made aware of an August 2022 "certificate", issued by the Deputy Commissioner of Nicobar District that claimed the opposite, and was thus seeking the Minister's intervention.According to this forest diversion certificate under FRA that was issued on August 18, 2022, a copy of which was seen by The Hindu, the administration specifically claimed: "The complete process for identification and settlement of rights under the FRA has been carried out for the entire protected forest area of 121.87 sq. km and deemed forest of 8.8 sq. km falling under project of holistic development of Great Nicobar Islands."However, as reported by The Hindu earlier, the administration in A&NI has maintained before the Tribal Affairs Ministry in its monthly FRA progress reports that it need not implement the law on the islands as the forests there are already protected under the Protection of Aboriginal Tribes Act of 1956 (PAT56).

While the PAT56 gives the administrator of the islands full authority to divert forest land, the FRA requires such diversion to be made only after rights are first settled and then consent is taken from the Gram Sabhas concerned. It was not clear whether diversion of forest land for the project was made under the FRA or PAT56.

The infrastructure project on the island has been mired in controversy since it received preliminary clearances in 2022. Soon after the project was said to have secured the consent of local tribespeople, the Tribal Council of Little and Great Nicobar withdrew the consent it was said to have granted. The National Green Tribunal, and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes had also subsequently flagged concerns over alleged violation consent procedures and the environmental impact of the project.The Union Government has maintained that due process was followed in the forest clearances for the project. In the paperwork for the clearances seen by The Hindu, the administration called a special Gram Sabha meeting on August 12, 2022, for villagers of Laxminagar, Gandhi Nagar, and Campbell Bay panchayats, which passed a resolution consenting to the diversion of forest land.

Further, three days later, the Sub-Divisional Level Committee convened a meeting where a no-objection certificate (NOC) was obtained on behalf of the Shompen tribespeople, who were represented through the administration's Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS).In its letter, the Tribal Council went on to say, "The Gram Sabha that is said to have given consent for forest diversion did not involve the Nicobarese of Great Nicobar whose ancestral villages of Chingenh, In Haeng Loi, Pulo Baha, Kokeon, Pulo Pakka, and others will be affected by the proposed project."The council also said the consent of the Shompen, classified as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group, cannot be obtained through an officer of the AAJVS.'Exploring other options'The member who spoke to The Hindu on condition of anonymity said, "We are hoping and waiting for the Minister to reply to our complaint. If it does not come we will see what other options are available to us." The member said the council's complaint was marked delivered by the post office on July 30, adding that it had also sent an email to Mr. Oram's office about it but was yet to receive a response or acknowledgement.Multiple attempts to reach the Office of the Minister, and senior officials of the Ministry have not yet elicited a response.In their letter to the Minister of Tribal Affairs, the Tribal Council has further said that multiple representations were made to the authorities concerned about the council withdrawing its consent but to no avail.In requesting for the Minister's intervention to protect the "rights, tradition, culture, and forests" of the Nicobarese and Shompen, the council stated that "we don't want the proposed project" to be anywhere in Tribal reserve area or areas the Shompen use.

Severe shortage of Rabies Immunoglobulin in Telangana, says study

Hyderabad: There is a severe shortage of Rabies Immunoglobulin (RIG), the life-saving injection that must be administered to dog-bite victims with serious injuries such as broken skin and bleeding wounds, according to a countrywide survey on RIG availability that also covered government hospitals in Telangana.Published in The Lancet (July 2025), the nationwide study revealed that only 1.8 percent of Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) — including those in Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medak and Nalgonda — had stocks of RIG injections.The study highlighted that victims of severe dog bites (Category III), who require both the Anti-Rabies Vaccine and RIG to survive, will not receive complete treatment at the nearest UPHC.Findings from Telangana were consistent with the national trend, pointing to a critical gap in the public healthcare system. However, the study also noted that 80 percent of government healthcare facilities had adequate stocks of rabies vaccine.RIG availability was concentrated in higher-level facilities, with medical colleges or teaching hospitals reporting the highest stock levels at 69.2 percent, followed by secondary care facilities such as district hospitals at 47.9 percent."The disparity creates a logistical nightmare for patients and families, who are forced to travel long distances in search of the medication, all while the life-threatening rabies virus has more time to spread," a senior government doctor, speaking on condition of anonymity, said.Senior doctors advised that dog-bite victims with severe injuries should visit private hospitals and insist on RIG rather than relying on government primary health centres, which are unlikely to stock the injection.When should RIG be administered?* When skin is broken and bleeding after an animal bite* If a dog licks the broken skin* When saliva of a rabid animal comes in contact with eyes, nose and mouth* RIG can be administered for any bite by a wild animal like bat, fox etcData points:* Only 1.8 per cent of UPHCs in Telangana and across the country have stocks of RIG*69 per cent of teaching hospitals maintain RIG stocks* Stocks of Anti-Rabies Vaccine is well stocked in all healthcare facilities* ARV must be given to all kinds of dog bites (minor scratch/severe deep bites)

Eight States with international borders, 0.13% of exports

When U.S. President Donald Trump signed off on an additional 25% tariffs on imports from India in August 2025, citing trade deficits, the buying of Russian crude, and retaliatory precedent, New Delhi responded with its usual posture — of measured language, closed-door diplomacy and no public retaliation. The choreography was familiar. Washington struck, India absorbed. Official narratives framed it as another episode in bilateral turbulence. But these tariffs cut along fault lines that run inside the country, not just between two capitals. What they expose is not just a trade imbalance but also a deeper spatial imbalance that New Delhi has long refused to reckon with.India's export economy is heavily centralised. The four States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka account for more than 70% of all merchandise exports. For Gujarat alone, it is over 33%. This concentration is no accident. There has been an alignment of infrastructure, incentives, and political continuity in these zones for decades. Meanwhile, India's most populous States, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh, remain on the margins, with barely 5% of the country's outbound trade between them.A marginalisation of the northeast

Then there is the northeast, whose place in India's export economy is marginal by design. Eight States, with over 5,400 kilometres of international borders, account for just 0.13% of national exports. There is no operational trade corridor linking them to foreign markets. And, no logistical infrastructure to support volume or role in shaping policy. Instead, what exists is a security apparatus calibrated for counterinsurgency and surveillance. Trade has never been part of the mandate.The northeast remains structurally unrepresented in the institutions that shape India's economic future. Not a single member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council hails from the region. The Board of Trade, tasked with steering India's export strategy, has no substantive voice from Mizoram, Tripura, or Arunachal Pradesh. Schemes such as Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) and the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) are rolled out with fanfare in industrial belts stretching from Gujarat to Tamil Nadu. But the hills and the valleys of the northeast are left to navigate global markets without infrastructure, without logistics, and without institutional leverage. This is not mere bureaucratic oversight. It is a cold calculation that the region can be symbolically embraced, yet economically orphaned. As recently as 2024, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade's strategic export plan had 87 pages without a single section on the northeast's corridors. The omission was not protested. It was simply assumed.In Assam, the tea economy is fraying. Prices stagnate, labour shortages persist, and estates are stretched thin. A 25% tariff hike in key western markets threatens to push margins below viability. "We're holding on with fingertips," said a Dibrugarh planter who oversees over 500 workers. "If the US [United States] and EU [European Union] buyers cut orders, we'll have to start scaling back operations immediately."

The region accounts for more than half of India's total tea output, but almost none of the high-value packaging or branding. The bulk is still CTC-grade, sold in auctions, exposed to every market swing. Buyers are in reassessment mode and cost-cutting has begun in the Upper Assam belt and the Dooars. Wages are flatlining. Inputs are thinning. The next to go will be jobs.At Numaligarh, the refinery runs like a nervous artery through Assam's energy spine. Most of its crude still comes from Oil India and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited fields nearby, but that is changing. The expansion to nine million metric tonnes per annum means that it must look outward toward Paradip, and, increasingly, toward discounted Russian cargoes.That is where the risk brews. Washington's tariff play, framed partly as a response to India's Russian alignment, casts a long shadow here. If the next round of sanctions hardens or shipping lanes tighten, it will not show up in Mumbai's balance sheets. It will be Golaghat that will shudder.A silent border with Myanmar, ASEANSince the 2021 coup in Naypyidaw, trade across the India-Myanmar frontier has thinned. Highways once envisioned as arteries of regional integration now vanish into checkpoints, chokepoints, and bureaucratic fog. Once porous and alive with exchange, the border now speaks in silence.India's two principal gateways to Myanmar, Zokhawthar in Mizoram and Moreh in Manipur, have withered into skeletal outposts. Once central to Act East dreams, they now function more as securitised bottlenecks than trade hubs. Infrastructure remains performative — roads exist on paper, customs offices are understaffed, and cold-chain facilities are nowhere to be found. The scrapping of the Free Movement Regime in 2024 was the final blow, severing not just trade but also kinship, daily life and the interwoven economies of the hills.Surveillance replaced commerce. These are no longer corridors of trade but containment grids, structured by counterinsurgency logic rather than market demand. Where goods do not move, troops do. And as infrastructure decays, these towns slide from economic relevance into strategic emptiness, mapped not for connectivity but for control. The border is open only to the idea of closure.The northeast was once mapped as India's strategic region, a bridge to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The bridge never left the drawing board. In policy circles, trade resilience now means shifting from one product category to another, electronics to semiconductors, textiles to pharma. Geography is not a part of the equation. The assumption is fixed — trade flows through the same corridors that served colonial ports and post-Independence industrial clusters. The northeast remains outside that frame, not by oversight, but by design.Asia's moves, India's inertia

As China consolidates its grip over northern Myanmar through infrastructure investments, militia alliances and a growing intelligence footprint, India continues to squander its own flanks. The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, which begins at Moreh, now vanishes into the jungle. Surveillance, not commerce, defines India's frontier stance. Where goods do not cross, border forces do. And when movement is reduced to patrols, borderlands do not stay still; they drift toward disorder.What is required is not reinvention but basic state function. Trade runs on roads, not rhetoric. It moves through warehouses, not white papers. In the northeast, those arteries are missing. Infrastructure is sporadic, and policy presence is thinner still. New Delhi may ink a free trade agreement with London and issue joint statements in Washington, but the substance of those agreements rarely crosses the Siliguri Corridor. The northeast remains unintegrated in both design and delivery. India effectively negotiates global trade while ignoring the geographies that could anchor it.

By treating Mr. Trump's tariffs as a passing irritant, India sidesteps the deeper structural fault — its trade economy is spatially lopsided. A flood in Gujarat or a labour strike in Tamil Nadu is enough to choke the national pipeline. That is not dispersion, it is dependence. The global chessboard has shifted. Supply chains are in motion. China is repositioning capital. Southeast Asia is building alternative corridors. India claims a role in the Indo-Pacific equation, but its export architecture still rests on a few coastal enclaves. Strategic talk rings hollow when the eastern frontier remains disconnected from the commerce map.A state cannot claim regional heft while its eastern flank remains economically brittle. The northeast has never asked for slogans. It requires the minimum grammar of statecraft: roads that reach markets, policies that recognise geography, and governance that sees beyond electoral math. For decades, the region has been told to wait through insurgencies, ceasefires, and empty policy acronyms. But the world is moving. Trade disruptions are more frequent. Corridors are shifting. And delay now resembles design.No single tariff will break India, but repeated regional omissions erode the idea of a cohesive economy. This is not a call for retaliation. It is a demand to reframe resilience, not as a concentration of strength, but as the ability to absorb shocks from every part of the map. Until then, the blind spot stays intact.

The megalithic dolmens of Kodaikanal dating back to 5,000 years

In the early 1910s, the road to Kodaikanal was a work in progress. Workers were widening the bridle path formed in 1878 to reach the star-shaped lake formed by the then Collector of Madurai, Sir Vere Henry Levinge, in 1863. For the British, the hills and their salubrious climate offered a respite from the wilting heat of the plains. The workers were toiling to complete a motorable road envisaged by Major G.C. Law. But for the earliest recorder of the dolmens of Kodaikanal, Father A. Anglade, it was a period of anxiety and suspense. The road was completed in 1914 and opened by 1916. But even before the road was laid, using the bridle path, a dirt road used by the Paliyar tribes, Jesuit priests had gone up the hills to found the Sacred Heart College at Shembaganur in 1895.

The first surveyThis seminary, a monastic place for meditation and rejuvenation of the spirit, also allowed Jesuit priests to indulge in their passion for biology and history. It was here — where the only sounds were the chirping of birds, the soft whisper of rain, or, on long nights, the loud buzz of cicadas carried by a cool breeze — that Reverend A. Anglade S.J. and Reverend L. V. Newton S.J. wrote The Dolmens of the Pulney Hills, a work later compiled in the 1928 edition of Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.

The work was seen as a pressing need by the Fathers. As it was said, "The destruction still goes on near the villages and along the roads. The best group of the dolmens of Machur near the Forest Bungalow at a sharp turn of the ghat road, and a little beyond the 18th milestone, was greatly damaged by the road-makers some years ago and use is being made of what remains to repair walls and culverts whenever there is need, which is rather often."Along with the Paliyar men, Father Anglade, also a well-known botanist, and Father Newton may have traversed the dips and hollows of the hills, recording the dolmens and the rich flora and fauna of this unique region. Struck by the numerous dolmens scattered in these crevices and a pattern, they started the first survey of the dolmens in the hills.The dolmens, which are megalithic structures, could be dated to beyond 5,000 years. Father Anglade writes, "From the present site and position of the dolmens and from the rough materials seen close by...it is comparatively easy to form an idea of the process of construction. Neither on the stones used for the wall nor on the slabs of the chambers is there any mark of cutting or dressing with any instrument."He imagines that maybe the chief of the tribe chose a particular spot to build the dolmens and the number of chambers was determined according to the number of slabs available in the immediate vicinity with the size depending on the actual dimensions of the slabs. The builders would have been entirely dependent on the natural quarries nearby. As a result, in Kodaikanal, most of the dolmens are invariably erected on rocky ridges or slopes or immediately below a large expanse of rock. Even today, at some of the sites, one can see slabs of various dimensions lying detached from the surface of the rock owing to the vagaries of nature.Another interesting observation made by these early archaeologists was that the large cap-stone that was placed on top of the four vertical slabs had a gentle slope. This led rainwater to flow away from the dolmens. The dolmens also had an opening at the lower end to prevent rainwater from accumulating in the chambers.A research paper written by R. N. Kumaran and M. Saranya, '(Pre) Iron Age Burials of Thandikudi, Tamil Nadu', in 2015 says Thandikudi was well connected by major traditional trade routes. "One of the trade routes that connects Musiri on the West Coast and Madurai in the hinterland passes through Pollachi, Palani, Dindgul, and Madurai. The villages — Palamalai, Perumalmalai, Machhur, Pannaikadu, Thandikudi and Kadavumalai — were on this trade route," the paper says. And the early records of dolmens, cists, urns, and cairn-circles are found on this route. This showcases the density of the population that had resided in these hills so many centuries before the early Pandya period when the trade routes had been established.In another work, Archaeological Investigations at Thandikudi, by K. Rajan, N. Athiyaman, VP Yatees Kumar, and M. Saranya in 2008, it is said the terrain may have played a great role for the early inhabitants of the region. "Nearly 90% of the archaeological sites of this region fall within the range of 4000-5000 feet above mean sea level. This altitude provides a congenial environment for the growth of forest products like pepper and cardamom," the article says. For the forest-gatherers of the bygone days, this may have been one of the reasons to inhabit tracts in this altitude.In 2004, the first phase of excavation was done in the burial site that occupies about 40 hectares on the right bank of the Marudanadhi. It extends along the right bank, starting from the Forest Bungalow on the west to Bommakadu on the east.From artefacts such as black and red ware and beads of carnelian that have been excavated from some of these megalithic structures, the archaeologists infer that the pre-Iron Age graves may have been located at the highest point of the burial complex that would have been just opposite the habitation mound on the other bank.Dolmens, a type of megalithic tomb, at Pethuparai on Kodaikanal hill in Tamil Nadu

And as the burial complex grew over the years, the graves moved progressively away from the habitation. The explorations by the Jesuit Fathers and the subsequent excavations carried out in the pepper and cardamom plantations in the lower Palani hills reveal continuous occupation from the pre-Iron Age to the present day.At Pethuparai near Perumal Malai, one can see on a gently sloping ridge, dolmens that have been fenced by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). At Thandikudi, the dolmens are vanishing, and some have slowly disappeared under thick vegetation. It may have been a premonition of Father Anglade when he writes in his work, "Out of the three groups near Neutral Saddle, at the foot of Perumal Malai, the smallest one was completely destroyed...and another greatly damaged in May 1925. If such destruction can take place in our days and under our eyes, it needs no special gift of prophecy to foresee that before long not a single stone along the public road and within the reach of contractors and their coolies will escape their ravages."Lobbo Christian, who works at Sacred Heart College digitising the numerous old records, fears that the prophecy may come true as only less than 50% of the dolmens, recorded by the Jesuit Fathers, can be seen precariously standing in these hills, revealing the crucial role this region played in the ancient history of Tamil Nadu.

Kodavas confused over how to record religious identity in socio-economic survey in Karnataka

The Kodava community appears to be in a dilemma over how to record their identity in the ongoing Social and Educational Survey being conducted by the government of Karnataka. At the heart of the debate is whether Kodavas should be registered as followers of the Hindu religion or as adherents of a separate 'Kodava' faith."We will not be evaluating on the basis of religion, and information is being sought under a broader category"Madhusudan NaikChairperson, Karnataka Backward Classes Commission

A section of community leaders have been urging Kodavas to declare 'Kodava' in the caste, language, and religion columns, while another section has been appealing to people to continue identifying themselves as 'Hindu' in religion column."This survey could help establish a record for the future, especially when the Central Government carries out its census. We are encouraging people to document their identity as Kodava, but it is entirely voluntary"Paradanda Subramani KaverappaPresident, Akhila Kodava SamajaParadanda Subramani Kaverappa, president of the Akhila Kodava Samaja, maintained that the community should be recorded as 'Kodava' across all three categories."Before the 1941 census, Kodavas were classified as a rare and distinct tribal group. Kodavas do not follow caste divisions, sects, or a formalised religion," he argued.The small population of Kodavas, which has been shrinking in recent decades, risks losing its unique cultural essence if subsumed within larger communities, he added.

Mr. Kaverappa acknowledged that there are differing viewpoints within the community. A recent meeting convened by the Samaja failed to arrive at a consensus. He said that the choice ultimately rests with individuals."There is no compulsion. Each family can decide for themselves. This survey is only meant to reflect the current social and economic situation of communities to the government," Mr. Kaverappa said.He clarified that documenting Kodavas under a separate religion would not alter existing practices. "Even if people mention Kodava as their religion, traditional rituals, temple worship, and the influence of Hindu practices will continue as they always have. Our customs have drawn inspiration from Hinduism for generations," he explained.Mr Kaverappa highlighted concerns among Kodava youth regarding shrinking opportunities. He said recognising Kodava as a distinct category could eventually open doors to benefits, such as reservations."This survey

could also help establish a record for the future, especially when the Central Government carries out its census. We are encouraging people to document their identity as Kodava, but it is entirely voluntary," he addedDebate over identityOn the other side of the debate, several leaders from the community have been appealing to Kodavas to continue identifying with Hinduism."Our culture reflects Hindu traditions, be it the worship of Naga and Aiyappa deities in our homes and villages, or the celebration of festivals like Tula Sankramana and Puthari, which follow Hindu customs," said A. Manu Muthappa, former president of the Napoklu Kodava Samaja.Some Kodava families have been holding discussions in their ainmane (ancestral homes) on how the religion column should be filled in during the survey.Mohan Devaiah, a resident of Ponnampet, said, "I have come across several videos from different clans where meetings were convened, and decisions were taken to either mark Hindu or Kodava under the religion category.Recognition of Kodava communityThe Codava National Council (CNC) has launched a campaign urging Kodavas to declare their identity solely as 'Kodava' in all three columns. CNC president Nandineravanda U. Nachappa said, "This is about cultural survival and legal recognition. Only when the government documents us as Kodava across all categories can we preserve our uniqueness."Karnataka Backward Classes Commission Chairperson Madhusudan Naik has said that there is not much significance for the religion column in the enumeration in the current survey since religion does not come under the purview of the commission. "We will not be evaluating on the basis of religion, and information is being sought under a broader category," he had said.

Why India's urban definition is failing its growing towns

Registrar General of India (RGI) and Census Commissioner Mrityunjay Kumar Narayan in a letter dated August 14 to the States' Directorates of Census Operations (DCO) said, "It is proposed to retain the same definition for urban areas for Census 2027 as this will ensure comparability with the previous Census and provide the basis for analysis of urbanisation trends in the country."In the 2011 Census, an urban unit was defined as either a statutory town or a census town. Statutory towns are areas that are formally notified as urban by the State government. They have urban local bodies like municipal corporations, municipal councils and nagar panchayats. All other places that satisfied the following criteria -- a minimum population of 5,000, at least 75% of the male main working population engaged in non-agricultural activities, and a population density of at least 400 persons per sq. km -- are classified as census towns. The census towns remain administratively rural, but they function like urban areas.

What are the limitations?

In India, urban local bodies are more autonomous and have more freedom and control over their finances, while Panchayati Raj institutions are limited to implementing centrally designed welfare schemes. Hence, urban status, if granted to a settlement, would imply development of the area.The current definition of urban and rural areas is a binary that ignores the complex and evolving nature of the settlements in India. It fails to take into account the settlements that fall in the spectrum between rural and urban. Rapid urbanisation is transforming many villages into towns both in function and form, yet these areas often lack formal recognition and remain under rural governance. As a result, settlements such as census towns and peri-urban regions -- despite having dense populations, non-agricultural livelihoods, and urban lifestyles -- remain excluded from urban governance structures and infrastructure provision, leading to gaps in planning, services, and resource allocation.The gap between functional urbanisation and formal recognition is particularly evident in the case of census towns in West Bengal. Data from the 2001 and 2011 Censuses show that a significant number of settlements classified as census towns in 2001 continued to be governed by rural local bodies even a decade later. West Bengal experienced the highest increase in the number of census towns, with 526 new census towns identified in 2011. However, 251 settlements that had already been classified as census towns in 2001 saw no change in governance status by 2011. They remained outside the municipal system and under rural governance frameworks. This situation highlights how many areas meeting the demographic and economic criteria for urban classification are not being 'municipalised'— that is, not being converted into statutory towns with elected urban local bodies. The West Bengal case underscores how the current approach to urban classification lags behind on the ground realities, leaving many urbanised settlements stuck in a rural governance structure that is ill-equipped to manage urban-level infrastructure, services, and planning needs.

What are the implications?

As India prepares for its next Census, it is crucial to revisit and revise the definition of what qualifies as "urban." A 2019 research paper titled "Missing millions: undercounting urbanisation in India", published in the journal Population and Environment, stresses the importance of population size and density in defining what is 'urban. ' The study shows that relying solely on a narrow framework — such as a population size above 5,000 and the percentage of non-agricultural workers — can result in a substantial undercount of urban populations. It experimented with different density thresholds (for example, 400 people/km², 1,000 people/km²) to test how many settlements would qualify as urban under each threshold. The study says that depending on the density cut-off used, the percentage of people living in urban areas in 2011 could be anywhere between 35% and 57%, far higher than the official Census estimate of 31%.Many settlements that appear rural on paper actually form part of larger, informal urban clusters that lack any recognition under current Census methods, simply because they fall outside municipal limits or are divided across administrative units.

The 75% male workforce rule is outdated; small towns may not meet this threshold, yet show clear urban traits. Industries, service jobs, and gig economy work are spreading into villages and semi-urban areas, blurring rural–urban distinctions.

The rule also fails to take into account those who engage in both agricultural and non-agricultural work, often seasonally or concurrently. Many people in semi-rural and transitional areas commute daily or seasonally to nearby towns or cities for work, while still maintaining ties to agriculture, either through land ownership or seasonal farming. The expansion of app-based and gig economy jobs into smaller towns and semi-urban or rural areas highlights how urban-type employment is no longer confined to traditionally urban centres. The 'male workforce' criterion is also problematic, as it ignores the women's informal or unpaid work.Hence, retaining the outdated definition of 'urban' in the 2027 Census risks misclassifying millions, undercounting urbanised areas, and excluding rapidly growing settlements from appropriate governance and services. A rigid, binary framework no longer reflects India's evolving settlement patterns — and failing to revise it will only widen existing gaps in planning, infrastructure, and inclusion.

How does plastic pollution affect health? | Explained

The story so far: Around 180 countries have failed to find consensus on an internationally binding legal agreement that sought to restrict plastic pollution. Talks in Geneva remained deadlocked on the issue late this week. While there is already a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)-backed resolution on the need for such a move, only a binding agreement will actually force countries to take concrete action. However, countries are divided on several questions: should they address plastic waste alone or include plastic production?; should developing countries be funded by developed countries for the purpose? The key point of contention is the role of plastics in health.

What are the challenges from plastic?

No material symbolises the global, industrialised, consumption-based economy like plastic. The chemical constituents of plastics are polymers, and they can be natural — like cellulose, lignin, and are the basis of nearly everything in nature — or made in labs. Polymers derived from fossil fuel and then shaped into objects are in general called 'plastic.' As a derivative of crude oil, it has the ability to be moulded into a nearly infinite variety of objects, from critical things, including aircraft and medical equipment, to cosmetic items such as tinsel, baubles and packaging. Add to that its low cost of production relative to materials such as glass and aluminium. The ubiquity of plastics and the fact that it is cheap has led to it being the prime source of litter and a symbol of the collapse of waste management systems.However, plastic's flexibility also implies its persistence. Plastics are mixtures of various types that include monomers, polymers, and chemical additives. There are more than 16,000 chemicals potentially used or present in plastic materials and products. There is little or no information about the potential impact on human health or the environment by over 10,000 of these chemicals. A report last year in the journal Nature concluded that more than 4,000 chemicals of concern can be present in each major plastic type, such as PVC, polyurethanes, PET, polyethylene and others. Given that most of these are synthetic and non-biodegradable, public opinion has generally focussed on recycling or waste management. Over the years, however, there has been a body of scientific investigation into how these chemicals — that are indestructible — may make their way into living organisms in rivers, oceans, land and ultimately inside people.

What is evidence that plastic harms health?

Ethylene, propylene, styrene and their derivatives are commonly used to make plastic. Ethylene derivatives such as polypropene (PP), low-density polyethylene (LDPE), linear low-density polyethylene (LLDPE), high-density polyethylene (HDPE) and polyethylene terephthalate (PET) comprise the largest portion of downstream petrochemicals used to make plastic packaging. However, manufacturing them requires a range of other chemicals, several of which are monomers (the building blocks of polymers). These include bisphenols, phthalates, polychlorinated-biphenyls (PCB), polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), and per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). They are used to produce food containers, drink bottles, teething toys, polyester, intravenous bags, cosmetics, paints, electronic components, adhesives and sealants.For years, there have been a bulk of studies where medical researchers have investigated if exposure to these chemicals, via the products used, is having a discernible impact on health. Earlier this month, Boston College in the U.S. and Australia's Minderoo Foundation launched a dashboard that compiled such evidence. There are around 1,100 primary studies involving about 1.1 million individuals that have linked changes in thyroid function, hypertension, kidney and testicular cancer, and gestational diabetes to exposure to these chemicals. The vast proportion of these individuals studied are in the developed world. Nearly, all of these studies are "associative", in the sense that the measured disease outcome could be a result of exposure to the chemicals as well as a range of other factors, and it is not always possible to tease apart individual effects.The true "gold standard" of exposure is a "longitudinal study", where a fixed group of people are tracked over a long time to discern the effects of chemical exposure, but this is time consuming. There are studies underway, said Dr. Sarah Paul, neuroscientist and head of Plastics and Human Health, Minderoo, to evaluate if a group of people who were consciously less exposed to certain plastics would have improved health outcomes.

What about microplastics?

Microplastics are plastics smaller than five millimetres and can refer to the constituent elements of a variety of additives or plastic products. Given that technology available to detect them is relatively recent, they have over the years been found in blood, breast milk, placenta and bone marrow. While their exact impact on human health is unclear, they too are implicated in a wide range of disorders.

What is India doing about plastic?

There is a ban on the production and use of single-use plastics in nearly 20 States. These are the category of plastic goods that are the least re-usable and difficult to recycle. Given that they constitute a waste management problem, India has a range of administrative process meant to push companies towards ensuring that a proportion of plastic that is used are collected back. However, this has had limited effect. India doesn't yet recognise the impact of plastics and chemicals on health.In international negotiations on the global plastics treaty, India and other countries have expressed reservations on including discussions on health in the plastic treaty and said that these are matters to be taken up at the World Health Organization. Thus, plastics is primarily a waste management problem, as far as India is concerned.

The man who serves the dead at Chennai Central

Amidst the hustle and bustle at Chennai's MGR Central Railway Station, a man in his 50s sits quietly, absorbed in his phone. On this humid afternoon, he is wearing a yellow T-shirt and khaki shorts, a sandalwood tilak smeared across his forehead, with kumkum at the centre. Behind this unassuming exterior lies a lifetime of confronting the unimaginable.N. Selvaraj, known to all at Central railway station as "Central Body Murugan", has been retrieving bodies from the railway tracks for 36 years. For more than three decades, this station has been his place of work, his refuge, and in many ways, his home. His job is as grim as it is underappreciated, demanding a fortitude most would recoil from. Yet Murugan speaks of it with quiet pride, regarding it as his solemn duty.

"I ran away from home when I was 15," he recalls. "I have been here ever since." Drawn into the company of older men who performed this daunting task, Murugan gradually became part of a world where death was a constant companion. His earliest days were far from easy. "The body parts would be scattered, I would not even feel like going near it," he admits. Senior hands advised him to drink before attending to a body, a habit he took up to dull his senses.Back then, the pay was meagre. "In total, they paid ?8, and four of us would work together, so we shared the money," he says. The work was relentless, often with no rest between calls. Over the years, the payment structure changed, and the responsibility for paying him shifted from railway officials to the police. "Inspector James helped increase our pay from ?100 to ?500 for unknown bodies and ?250 for known ones," Murugan recalls. Even today, the amount is inconsistent, and his monthly earnings hover between ?5,000 and ?6,000.The job includes lifting mangled remains, sometimes reassembling and stitching the limbs, and in one instance, placing brain matter back into a skull.

In 2014, Murugan's role became particularly visible. A bomb blast in the Guwahati-Bangalore Kaziranga Express, stationed on platform 9, shook Chennai Central, killing one person and injuring several others. Murugan was among the first to respond, retrieving the body and helping the injured. For this, he was awarded ?1,800 from the railway department.This act of service brought him to the attention of political leaders. The now Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments P.K. Sekar Babu, and MP Dayanidhi Maran introduced him to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in 2019. He was then assured a permanent job and a steady salary.N. Selvaraj being felicitated by now Chief Minister M.K Stalin in 2019 for his service during the 2014 Chennai Central bomb blast.N. Selvaraj being felicitated by now Chief Minister M.K Stalin in 2019 for his service during the 2014 Chennai Central bomb blast. | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

Murugan says he waited for that promise to materialise. "Now, I have given up hope that it would ever come true," he says.A railway official who has known Murugan for years says: "Murugan has been working here for many years. Nobody knows him outside of this railway station, but he is a person who truly deserves everything. Nobody can do what he does for a living. He has grown up here."The official explains that while Murugan is not an official porter, he sometimes carries luggage. His main work, however, is retrieving bodies, for which there is no official record. "The police receive ?5,000 from the railway for shroud cloth and body bags, and from this, they give Murugan a portion. Labour cost is never included. The sad thing is there is no official record that he has served Chennai Central for 36 years doing the unthinkable."The certificate he received for his service during the 2014 bomb blast The certificate he received for his service during the 2014 bomb blast | Photo Credit: Special ArrangementThis absence of documentation means no benefits, no pension, and no security for his family should anything happen to him. "People who do normal work get job benefits. But for us, if we lose our life, there no one to take care of our family," Murugan says.Today, Murugan cannot work as before. A recent accident left him with a shoulder injury. When the police call him after a fatal accident or suicide, he now rings a few younger men he has trained over the years. If they cannot bring themselves to approach the body, Murugan steps in himself.The crowds at Chennai Central may not even notice him, but Murugan remains a constant presence there, carrying the weight of the dead so that the living may move on.

Jeremy Corbyn | The British Left's second act

In late July 2025, Jeremy Corbyn announced the formation of a new left-wing political party alongside former Labour MP Zarah Sultana, marking a new chapter for one of Britain's unique political figures in the past decade. Operating under the provisional name 'Your Party', this venture represents Mr. Corbyn's boldest move since his expulsion, last year, from the Labour Party he once led. Mr. Corbyn is also part of the Independent Alliance, a parliamentary grouping of six independent MPs consisting of five Muslims — including Ms. Sultana as the sole woman — who have positioned themselves as vocal critics of the current Labour government's policies on everything from welfare cuts to arms sales to Israel.The announcement has already generated strong grassroots enthusiasm, according to Mr. Corbyn, with over 6,50,000 people signing up for membership in the party's first weeks — a figure that suggests a significant appetite for an alternative to current Prime Minister Keir Starmer's Labour. This surge of support recalls the unexpected momentum that first propelled Mr. Corbyn to the Labour leadership nearly a decade ago.

In 2015, Mr. Corbyn's successful bid for the Labour leadership caught the political establishment completely off guard. As Andrew Murray, one of Mr. Corbyn's key advisers, reflected in a recent interview in Jacobin magazine, the victory was "totally unexpected" and driven by "exasperation within the Labour membership with the legacy of New Labour". While his rivals offered tepid continuations of the (Tony) Blair-(Gordon) Brown era, Mr. Corbyn represented something genuinely different: authentic opposition to neoliberalism, a commitment to mass movement politics rather than pure parliamentary politics, and an uncompromising anti-imperialist foreign policy stance.This combination was remarkable in the context of European social democracy. Unlike left-wing movements in Spain, Germany, or France that emerged from communist traditions or as entirely new formations, Mr. Corbyn accomplished something unique in European politics: he captured the leadership of a major, mainstream, social democratic party from a position of fundamental opposition to its decades-long trajectory toward centrism. In some ways, his rise was similar to that of Bernie Sanders in the Democratic Party in the U.S. at a similar time. His programmatic positions included renationalisation of utilities, massive public investment, and wealth redistribution — policies that were always characterised as "Old Labour" and hadn't been seriously proposed by Labour leadership in decades, except by popular but sidelined leaders like Tony Benn.The 2017 general election validated this approach. Against all expectations, Mr. Corbyn led Labour to its biggest vote swing since 1945, securing 40% of the vote — a performance matched by only two other Labour campaigns since 1970, under Mr. Blair.However, Mr. Corbyn's functioning as Labour leader was constantly undermined by fierce resistance from within his own party. Mr. Murray estimates that at least 80% of Labour MPs opposed Mr. Corbyn "with different degrees of vehemence and for different reasons". This internal hostility created what Mr. Murray describes as feeling "like an encampment in the middle of enemy fire the whole time, coming from your own side". This was also exacerbated by a hostile media that lampooned or mischaracterised many of his positions ruthlessly. The opposition intensified around Mr. Corbyn's foreign policy positions, particularly his solidarity with Palestinian rights and criticism of Israeli policies, honed over decades as a Labour back-bencher and peace activist. This anti-imperialist stance proved especially threatening to the Labour establishment, which as Mr. Murray notes, was willing to tolerate domestic policy changes such as nationalising water companies but "if a government was going to compromise nuclear weapons or NATO or even support for Israel, those would be red lines".This foreign policy stance became a focal point of opposition, with allegations of anti-Semitism within the Labour Party being used to attack his leadership. While Mr. Murray acknowledges there were genuine issues that needed addressing, he and others have argued that the controversy was inflated into a smear campaign with the aim of discrediting Mr. Corbyn's critique of Israeli policies. The accusations created a "moral damage" that paralysed Mr. Corbyn's leadership and drained energy from his team, even if they weren't the primary factor in his eventual electoral defeat.

The issue that ultimately proved fatal to Mr. Corbyn's leadership was Brexit. Initially, he managed to straddle Britain's fundamental political divide by promising to "respect the referendum result" in 2016 while delivering a different Brexit than the Tories. This position helped maintain support amongst traditional Labour voters in working-class constituencies who had voted Leave, while not completely alienating Remain supporters. However, mounting pressure from a newly energised pro-EU movement and overwhelming Remain sentiment among Labour members forced him into an increasingly untenable position. By 2019, Labour had committed to a second referendum — a stance that proved electorally catastrophic. As Mr. Murray predicted, this position cost Labour dozens of seats in traditional working-class strongholds and failed to deliver equivalent gains in Remain-supporting areas.The Brexit debate starkly exposed the deep division within Labour's electoral coalition, pitting its liberal and urban supporters against the party's traditional working class constituency in seats that voted to leave the EU. This split mirrors similar divisions affecting left-wing parties across the developed world, where globalisation has created divergent interests between different segments of the progressive coalition, particularly seen in the Democratic Party in the U.S. with the rise of Donald Trump's populism.Following Labour's 2019 defeat, Mr. Starmer systematically dismantled Mr. Corbyn's legacy within the party. Mr. Corbyn was suspended and eventually expelled, while many of his allies were marginalised or forced out. Mr. Starmer's centrist approach proved electorally successful in 2024, delivering Labour its largest parliamentary majority in decades.However, this victory hid a glaring statistic — Labour actually received fewer votes than Mr. Corbyn had achieved in his 2019 defeat, winning primarily due to the collapse of Conservative support and vote-splitting on the Right between the Tories and Reform UK.

What are the challenges confronting the EC? | Explained

The story so far: At a press conference on August 7, Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi accused the Election Commission (EC) of massive electoral roll manipulations in Mahadevapura Assembly constituency in Karnataka. Mr. Gandhi's presser capped a series of allegations of deliberate voter roll discrepancies by the EC beginning with the Maharashtra Assembly polls. This, coupled with the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, which is under judicial scrutiny, has put the poll body in the eye of a storm.

What is the mandate of the EC?

The Election Commission of India is a permanent constitutional body. The Constitution has vested in the EC the superintendence, direction and control of the entire process for conduct of elections to Parliament and the legislature of every State, and to the offices of President and Vice-President of India. Originally, the commission only had a Chief Election Commissioner (CEC). It was expanded to include two Election Commissioners (ECs).

Why has there been a controversy about the appointment process?

Parliament passed a new law governing appointments to the EC, namely the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023. In accordance with the new law, the ECs are selected by a three-member selection committee, comprising the Prime Minister, a Union Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. The Opposition had objected to this, saying the committee gave little room for dissent as the Prime Minister and the Union Minister are part of the government and could rule 2:1 in favour of their candidate.

Why is the EC's role in the spotlight?

Last year, the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance had alleged that lakhs of new voters had been added to Maharashtra's electoral rolls in the time period between the Lok Sabha polls in May and the Assembly elections in October. The Congress had made the same allegations about Haryana, and later the Aam Aadmi Party alleged that voter rolls were tweaked in Delhi before Assembly polls. Even as the EC was grappling with these claims, CEC Gyanesh Kumar announced the SIR in Bihar which aims at cleaning up electoral rolls. The EC said the SIR exercise will be carried out across the country.At his press conference, Mr. Gandhi alleged large-scale discrepancies in the Mahadevapura Assembly segment under the Bangalore Central Lok Sabha constituency in Karnataka which he claimed helped the BJP win the seat. Mr. Gandhi said his party had carried out an investigation which spanned over six months before reaching this conclusion. He claimed that the voter list had manipulated entries, including duplicate voters, invalid addresses, and bulk registrations of votes at single locations. Following this, Mr. Gandhi reiterated his demand for machine readable voter rolls to be provided to all political parties for proper verification. The EC stated it has not been providing machine readable or "text-searchable" voter lists for concerns over cyber-security. The Supreme Court (SC) had upheld it in a petition filed by former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath in 2018.When was a revision announced in Bihar?On June 24, the EC ordered a SIR of electoral rolls in Bihar, barely five months before the Assembly elections. As per the SIR orders, every voter in Bihar who had not been listed in the 2003 voter rolls would have to submit documents proving their date and place of birth to determine whether they were Indian citizens. Those born after 1987 would also have to submit proof of their parents' date and place of birth.However, after the completion of the first phase of the SIR exercise, the EC released a draft electoral roll on August 1, which saw a drop in the number of voters in Bihar by 65 lakh. There were 7.89 crore voters registered in the 2025 electoral list before the SIR exercise; after the recount, it slid to 7.24 crore electors. The EC said that most of these 65 lakh "missing" voters have died; are registered in two locations; have migrated out of Bihar; or are untraceable. Civil society organisations, Opposition parties as well as NGOs approached the Supreme Court challenging the SIR process.

What has the SC directed EC to do?

In an interim order on August 14, the Supreme Court directed the EC to publish an enumerated, booth-wise list of the 65 lakh electors not included in the draft roll. A Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi instructed the EC to provide reasons for the deletion — death, migration, untraceability, duplicate registrations — against each name. The court also asked EC to accept Aadhaar as proof of identity for an elector to include his or her name in the rolls."That it has taken the Supreme Court to nudge the EC towards following basic norms of natural justice and fairness in the Bihar SIR exercise reflects poorly on an organisation which takes pride in collecting and counting every last vote. While errors can creep into voter lists over time, the answer to that is not mass disenfranchisement as the EC is attempting," said Alok Kumar Prasanna, Advocate and Co-Founder of Vidhi Centre for Public Policy.

What about migrant voters?

Migrant voters still have to return to the place where they are on the rolls to vote. This is a huge cost and depresses turnout, notes Mr. Prasanna. "There is no simple solution to this currently. The solution will have to be cheap, secure and transparent to work. Solutions which work in richer societies and for richer migrants will not work for poor migrants from States like Bihar," he added.

What has been the political fallout?

After Mr. Gandhi's press conference, the Opposition upped the ante and tried to hold a march from Parliament to the Election Commission headquarters. They courted arrest when stopped. The ongoing monsoon session of Parliament has also been virtually paralysed over demands for a discussion on the Bihar SIR. The government has, however, not conceded to the Opposition's demand. The issue has brought Opposition parties together and protests are likely to continue when Parliament reconvenes on August 18.

Catholic priest's presence at RSS event in Pala raises eyebrows

At a time when the Catholic Church in Kerala has been voicing concern over attacks on Christians in central and northern States of India, the participation of a priest from the Pala diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church at an event of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has raised a few eyebrows.

Father George Nellikunnu Cherivu Purayidom, director of Care Homes project under the Pala diocese and Deepika Friends Club, presided over Shankholi 2025, a student summit jointly organised by the Poonjar, Meenachil and Ramapuram units of the RSS on Friday (August 15).

Addressing the gathering, Father Purayidom said that it was the generation inspired by India's spiritual heritage and the freedom struggle that went on to shape modern India. Today's younger generation must strive to project the nation's glory on the world stage, making effective use of organisation and technology.

Notion of easy access to Gulf energy hit; India must chase 'every drop' of oil & gas, ramp up strategic reserves: ONGC head

The West Asia war and the halt in vessel movements through the critical chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz have put a question mark on certain long-held assumptions in the energy sector, like the reliability of Gulf energy for India, and the country must act to quickly diversify its energy sources, meaningfully expand strategic oil and gas reserves, and chase "each and every drop of oil, gas, and coal" that can be produced domestically, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Chairman and CEO Arun Kumar Singh said on Friday. Government-owned ONGC is India's largest producer of crude oil and natural gas."I now firmly believe that thinking that the Middle East is nearest to us, and therefore (we have access to) all their resources, I think that assumption should be taken with a pinch of salt," Singh said at an industry event in the Capital. He also opined that this war may not be just a temporary phenomenon, but a lingering disturbance that could rear its head every now and then due to permanent ideological and internal divisions in the region, which itself is a long-term threat to supply stability.

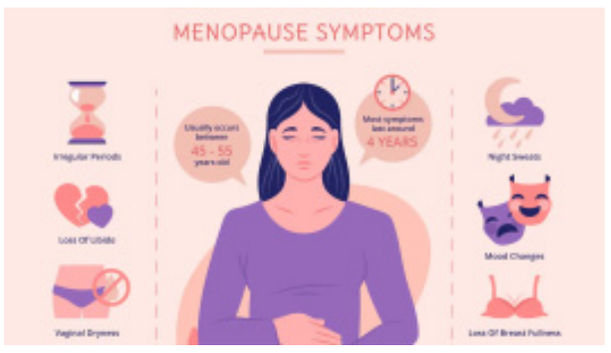
The effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz by Iran, now in its second month, has led to the worst energy supply crisis in decades. About a fifth of global oil and gas flows transit through the critical maritime chokepoint that connects the Persian Gulf with the Arabian Sea. Much of these oil and gas volumes go to Asian economies, including India.The country depends on imports to meet over 88% of its crude oil needs, 40% of which depend on the Strait of Hormuz. As for natural gas, India's import dependency is about 50%, and 55-60% of India's liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports come via the Strait. In the case of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), India's reliance on imports is 60%, and a whopping 90% of those come through the critical waterway. The supply disruption forced reduction in natural gas and LPG supplies to certain industries in India as the government was forced to prioritise the requirements of households and priority sectors.

According to Singh, so far, the global energy sector functioned on the assumption that globalisation will increase, but that hypothesis is now threatened and challenged. As the world gets more and more "deglobalised", there are bound to be more problems at hand for energy importers like India, he said, adding that no one ever believed that there would come a day when the Strait of Hormuz would be closed. "Had that been the case, nobody would have invested so much in countries like Qatar," the ONGC Chairman said.He said that there is a fundamental "paradigm shift" where the world is moving away from the globalised order of the last 30 years, suggesting that the "orderly" world under a single superpower is over, which may lead to a "war of supremacy" with multiple competing powers.His concerns also centred on the physical vulnerability of energy infrastructure, particularly in West Asia. He noted that with precision weapons, modern warfare or sabotage does not require destroying an entire refinery; rather, just targeting the crude distillation unit (CDU) will disable the refinery for years. The West Asia war saw multiple precision attacks on energy infrastructure in the region with low-cost drones and missiles. This vulnerability is compounded by a shift in global dynamics where countries no longer want to share physical oil in joint projects with other countries, and instead insist that the partners take their share in the form of dividends.

"We should chase wherever oil or gas is in our country at any cost, because in a crisis nobody (will help)," Singh said, adding that while India oil and gas exploration is being pursued intently, more needs to be done, particularly in deep water areas. Amid growing domestic demand for petroleum fuels and products and stagnant domestic oil output, the country's reliance on imported crude has been touching new highs with each passing year. He described domestic exploration and production of oil and gas as an "existential necessity".Singh also said that the disruption caused by the West Asia war also led to unprecedented volatility in fuel prices. For instance, cracks or margins on diesel surged to such highs that they overtook the price of crude oil itself. "But now we should be prepared to see more of these things. We must do whatever the country needs to protect its energy sovereignty," he said.

The ONGC head emphasised that addressing energy storage is a critical priority that must be pursued "whatever it takes". Drawing a comparison to Japan, which lacks its own energy resources but successfully mitigated this weakness through large strategic reserves, he said that India must have large strategic reserves of not just oil, but also natural gas, to effectively mitigate future global energy crises. Saying that there has been a lot of positive movement on this front in recent weeks, Singh expressed hope that the government will announce "something big" on this front.India's strategic petroleum reserves (SPRs), which have a capacity to store 5.33 million tonnes of crude oil, and were holding 3.37 million tonnes of oil, or just about two-thirds of their total storage capacity, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) informed the Rajya Sabha on March 23. At full capacity, the SPRs—spread across three locations in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka—cover around 9.5 days of India's crude oil supplies. The current total national capacity for storage of crude oil and petroleum products is 74 days, including commercial stocks with refiners.The International Energy Agency (IEA) recommends that countries should hold oil stocks equivalent to at least 90 days of their net oil imports. IEA members are obligated to maintain these levels of reserves; India is not a full member of the grouping but an associate member. This 90-day reserve holding can include strategic reserves as well as commercial inventories.

'I'm in my mid-30s and worried I'm hitting perimenopause': Can it really start this early?



"I am in my mid-30s and worried I am hitting peri-menopause. Has anyone experienced perimenopause in their 30s?" The question, posted by a user on Quora, reflects a growing concern among many women navigating unexplained hormonal symptoms earlier than expected.Perimenopause, the transitional phase before menopause, is typically associated with women in their 40s. However, doctors say that in some cases, hormonal fluctuations can begin earlier, which may lead to confusion about whether symptoms are related to perimenopause or other health issues.

According to Dr Gandhali Deorukhkar, Gynaecologist-Obstetrician associated with several leading hospitals in Mumbai, while early symptoms are possible, they are not always caused by perimenopause. "Perimenopause generally begins in the early to mid-40s," says Dr Deorukhkar. "However, some women may notice hormonal fluctuations in their late 30s. In rare situations, symptoms can appear even earlier.""These early signs are often mistaken for stress, lifestyle changes, thyroid problems, anxiety, or sleep disturbances," Dr Deorukhkar explains. "Because of this overlap, women may not immediately associate their symptoms with hormonal changes.""If symptoms continue for several months or begin affecting daily life, it is important to consult a healthcare professional for proper evaluation," she adds."The earliest symptoms are often subtle," says Dr Deorukhkar. "Women may notice irregular menstrual cycles, changes in menstrual flow, mood swings, fatigue, or sleep disturbances.""These symptoms occur because hormone levels begin to fluctuate during the perimenopausal transition," Dr Deorukhkar explains. However, she emphasises that experiencing one or two of these symptoms does not necessarily mean perimenopause has started.How doctors evaluate early perimenopause"Diagnosis typically starts with reviewing the patient's medical history, menstrual cycle patterns, and symptoms," says Dr Deorukhkar."In some cases, additional tests may be done to rule out other conditions such as thyroid disorders or polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), which can produce similar symptoms," she explains.Since hormone levels can fluctuate significantly during this stage, diagnosis often involves evaluating symptoms alongside laboratory tests rather than relying on a single result, she adds.

Bryan Johnson's 14% hack: Experts reveal if frequent squats are more effective than a 30-minute walk

Bryan Johnson believes 10 squats every 45 minutes is a far better health hack than taking a simple 30-minute walk around the block. "For blood sugar control after every meal, doing 10 squats every 45 minutes beats a 30-minute walk by 14%," he claimed in his latest Instagram post. But do doctors agree? Indianexpress.com reached out to health experts and found out.Dr Manisha Arora, director of internal medicine at CK Birla Hospital, Delhi, explained that while walking has myriad benefits for cardiovascular health and reducing the risk of chronic diseases, interrupting prolonged sitting with short bursts of activity, such as 10 squats every 45 minutes, can be extremely beneficial for health.

Walk vs Squat: Which is more effective?

According to her, even brief activity can help mitigate the adverse effects of sedentary behaviour, particularly on glucose metabolism. "These days, the conversation is not only about how active you are, but also about how long you remain sedentary," said Dr Arora. In other words, prolonged sitting without movement is a risk factor, regardless of your overall activity level.Squats are a form of resistance exercise that helps activate large muscle groups in the lower body, which are key to glucose metabolism. Incorporating regular movement breaks, such as squats, throughout the day can support better blood sugar control.bryan johnson on squats vs walking According to medical experts, a combination of both works the best. (Source: Instagram/@bryanjohnson_)"If you want even more effective results, combining these movement breaks with regular walking or any other form of aerobic exercise can yield powerful benefits, especially in managing blood glucose levels," said Dr Arora. However, emerging evidence points toward squats being an effective option for blood sugar control. "The effectiveness of squats versus walking can also vary depending on individual factors such as overall fitness, diet, health status, and lifestyle," she added.Dr Anup Khatri, senior consultant, orthopedics, Gleneagles Hospital, Parel, Mumbai, added that prolonged sitting may also lead to sciatica, muscle atrophy, knee pain, type 2 diabetes, and carpal tunnel syndrome. "This is why it is important to take frequent breaks and incorporate activities like walking or squatting to interrupt prolonged sitting," Dr Khatri told indianexpress.com.Nevertheless, Dr Arora did not ask to choose over the other. Instead, she said that both methods have their benefits, and the best approach is a combination of both. A 30-minute daily walk plus short activity breaks like squats. For people with diabetes or at risk, this approach helps maintain steady glucose levels and supports cardiovascular and muscular health. Always consult your doctor before starting a new routine," she pointed out.

Equity mutual fund inflows hit 8-month high

Equity mutual fund, Equity mutual fund inflows, Equity mutual fund inflows 8 month high, Association of Mutual Funds in India, west asia war, Iran war, Israel-US-Iran war, Iran conflict, Strait of Hormuz, Strait of Hormuz shut, west asia conflict, iran and israel war, iran and israel, us israel war, war in iran, iran us, us israel iran, us israel, us iran war, iran us war, us war, israel news, israel iran war news, war news, israel iran news, israel war news, iran war news, war on iran, iran israel war today, war in iran and israel, iran attack israel, israel iran, israel us attack iran, attack on iran, iran attack on us, us and iran, us attack in iran, did iran attack us, us to attack iran, us and israel, us and israel attack iran, us attack iran today, us iran news, iran us news, us news, iran attack news, iran attack today, Khamenei newsInvestors are now cyclically shifting to equity ETFs, said Kunal Rambhia, fund manager and trading strategist at The Streets.

Net inflows into equity-focused mutual funds rose 56% month-on-month to Rs 40,450 crore in March, the highest level since July 2025, data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed.However, debt-focused funds saw an outflow of Rs 2.95 lakh crore during the month. Overall, the mutual funds industry saw net outflows of Rs 2.40 lakh crore, compared to inflows of Rs 94,530 crore last month.The contribution of systematic investment plans (SIPs) in mutual fund flows touched a record high of Rs 32,087 crore in March, compared to Rs 29,845 crore in February.

Notably, February was a shorter month, which likely affected the numbers. Flexi-cap funds were the biggest contributor among equity funds, with inflows jumping 45% to Rs 10,054 crore. Mid- and small-cap funds saw inflows rise 51% and 61%, respectively, to Rs 6,063 crore and Rs 6,263.56 crore. All other categories, except sectoral/thematic funds, also saw inflow growth during the month. Overall, the average assets under management (AUM) of equity mutual funds fell to below Rs 32 lakh crore from Rs 35.6 lakh crore the previous month due to the sharp correction in the equity markets during that time.

In March, the benchmark Sensex index fell by over 11% as the conflict in West Asia and the resultant high crude oil prices soured investor sentiment. "While the headline numbers for March 2026, a net outflow of Rs 2,39,910 crore and AUM declining…may spook investors, both are misleading in isolation. The AUM decline is a mark-to-market story driven by a sharp equity market correction during the month, not a confidence story. The net outflow is almost entirely driven by debt fund redemptions, which is a well-established quarter-end phenomenon in March," said Nitin Agrawal, CEO of mutual funds at InCred Money. "Flexi Cap gains the spotlight as the top segment for inflows, reinforcing the importance of diversification across market caps when volatility is elevated. Mid Cap and Small Cap also witnessed sharp acceleration despite meaningful drawdowns, signalling that value buying opportunities are emerging in these segments," said Agrawal.Flows into gold and silver exchange-traded funds (ETFs) remained lukewarm after record highs in January, when they had stolen the spotlight from equity funds. Gold ETFs saw inflows of Rs 2,266 crore in March, down from Rs 5,255 crore in February and the peak of Rs 24,040 crore in January. Outflows in silver ETFs declined to Rs 684 crore from Rs 826 crore a month ago.However, flows into other ETFs quadrupled to Rs 19,802 crore. Index funds saw inflows nearly tripling to Rs 8,169 crore. Investors are now cyclically shifting to equity ETFs, said Kunal Rambhia, fund manager and trading strategist at The Streets.

Gold rises 1.65 pc in a week amid safe-haven demand, weaker US dollar

New Delhi: Gold prices rose 1.65 per cent during the week extending gains for their consecutive week, amid safe haven buying and weakened US dollar over easing inflation fears and the start of the US-Iran ceasefire negotiations.On Friday, MCX gold June futures added 0.02 per cent while MCX silver May futures inched up 0.01 per cent. Currently gold futures stand at Rs 1,52,690, while silver futures at Rs 2,43,300 per kg.The price of 10 grams of 24-carat gold was at Rs 1,50,327 on Friday up from Rs 1,47,891 seen on Monday market opening, according to data published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA).Analysts noted that COMEX gold ended at $4,787.40 per troy ounce, up 3 per cent on a weekly basis, however a major resistance in ahead of $5,000, after which they predicted a strong bull run.Market participants said the dollar came under pressure after the US-Iran truce, as traders reassessed the outlook for US interest rates.Falling crude oil prices after the de-escalation fuelled hopes of lower inflation and renewed speculation about US Federal Reserve rate cuts in the medium term.The commodities market navigated the week on a cautiously balanced note, with sentiment shaped by stabilising price action and continued macro uncertainty, a market participant said, adding that precious metals showed early signs of stability following recent volatility.Meanwhile, currency movements—particularly in the USD/INR pair—are likely to remain a key driver, with recent rupee strength offering some cushion to domestic commodity prices, he added.Any reversal in the currency trend, driven by shifts in global risk sentiment or renewed dollar strength, could influence the next phase of price action.The MCX Gold prices are holding above the key support band of Rs 1,48,000 to Rs 1,46,000, while the immediate resistance is placed around the Rs 1,54,000 to Rs 1,55,000 zone, he added.

'Raat ko neend nahi aati thi': Rubina Dilaik reveals reasons she quit alcohol for good

Frequently used to ease social settings, alcohol affects the body in ways that vary by individual. Not every metabolism is equally equipped to manage the physiological strain of regular consumption. During a recent conversation with Dr Geetanjali Saxena, Rubina Dilaik opened up about why she decided to quit alcohol for good."I used to enjoy the high, but my mood, my health and my mental awareness were so much affected. I completely gave up drinking. Teen din tak I used to have a bad headache, raat ko neend nahi aati thi (For 3 days, I used to have a bad headache, I could not sleep at night)," she admitted on her podcast Kisine Bataya Nahi.

Dr Shuchin Bajaj, founder-director of Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals, factors such as personal health, individual circumstances, and potential family history of alcohol-related problems should be considered if you're a regular drinker."If someone is experiencing negative effects on their physical or mental health, relationships, or overall well-being due to alcohol, they may want to consider giving it up or seeking professional advice," he said, adding that in such a situation, contemplating leaving alcohol permanently is imperative.

Dr Shrey Srivastav, MD, Internal Medicine and Assistant Professor at the Department of Internal Medicine, Sharda Hospital, Greater Noida, explained that alcohol suppresses a person's REM sleep (Rapid Eye Movement sleep), and once you stop drinking it, in the first week itself, you will start experiencing mental clarity and better sleep. This will also reduce your anxiety and enhance your overall mood. Those struggling to lose weight may also experience a breakthrough after quitting alcohol, as it contributes to excessive calorie intake.According to Dr Bajaj, some individuals may experience psychological benefits such as a sense of achievement, increased self-control, and a fresh perspective on their relationship with alcohol. He added that taking a break from alcohol can offer an opportunity for individuals to reflect on their drinking habits, reevaluate their relationship with alcohol, and potentially make long-term positive changes."Alcohol consumption is a known risk factor for various cancers, including head and neck cancers, oesophageal cancer, liver cancer, colorectal cancer and even breast cancer. Giving it up can reduce the risk of developing certain types of cancers," he continued.

Dr Sharad Malhotra, Senior Consultant and Director of Gastroenterology at Aakash Healthcare, explained that chronic alcohol exposure alters the reward circuits of the brain, making natural pleasures less rewarding and increasing cravings for alcohol. After quitting, the brain must recalibrate."In the early months, people may experience cravings, anxiety, or mood fluctuations, a phase often referred to as post-acute withdrawal. But with long-term sobriety, the brain gradually readjusts. and over time, dopamine pathways become more responsive to natural rewards such as exercise, social interaction, and achievement," elaborated Dr Malhotra. As neural circuits stabilise, cravings usually decline, and emotional regulation improves.

Ravi Babu's action drama Razor set for worldwide release

Hyderabad: The makers of actor-director Ravi Babu's upcoming grim, action drama 'Razor' have now announced that the film will hit screens worldwide on May 8 this year.The makers of the film have disclosed that they chose May 8 as the release date as it coincides with the birth anniversary of Ravi Babu's father, the late Chalapathi Rao.

The film, which is being presented by Suresh Babu under Suresh Productions, has been produced by Flying Frogs.It may be recalled that the film's makers had only recently announced the wrapping up of the film's shooting. To announce the wrapping up of filming, the makers had unveiled a poster along with a special glimpse video.

In the video that was released, Ravi Babu appears in a brutal, violent avatar, killing a villain with a car engine valve cover- establishing the film's raw and savage tone. The teaser features some really violent scenes that include decapitation. The film has a tagline that reads "Justice will be brutal."'Razor' not only features Ravi Babu in the lead, it is also being directed by him.

The storyline promises to be a first-of-its-kind attempt in Telugu cinema. For the unaware, Ravi Babu, who has always carved his own path in Telugu cinema, constantly reinventing himself as a filmmaker, technician, and actor, is known for his offbeat ideas and fearless experimentation.His upcoming film 'Razor' marks a sharp shift from the light-hearted tone of his previous film 'Enuguthondam Ghatikachalam'. 'Razor' appears to be set in a world of tension, violence, and psychological intensity.

On the technical front, the film has cinematography by Madhavaneni and music by SS Rajesh. Action sequences for the film have been choreographed by Satish Poloju.

It may be recalled that the makers had earlier unveiled a title glimpse, which drew a terrific response, especially from thriller lovers.Sources close to the unit of the film say that post-production work is progressing at a brisk pace.

Japan prepares ground for T20 with India, Sri Lanka pitches in, and sponsors line up

In January this year, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Japanese counterpart, Toshimitsu Motegi, exchanged cricketing gifts. Motegi's gift was the Japan cricket team's pink jersey, while Jaishankar handed him a bat autographed by Indian cricketers.That proved to be a harbinger of sorts. The two countries are now set to play their first bilateral match at the Sano International Cricket Ground, about 100 kilometres from Tokyo, on September 22. Team India led by Shreyas Iyer will face the Japan team captained by Kendel Kadowaki-Fleming in the T20 International.

The match is part of the celebrations to mark 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Following a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in July, the two sides had announced 2027 as the 'India-Japan Year of Shared Horizons' to mark the milestone.

"Suddenly, this wasn't just us wanting to attract a full member (of the International Cricket Council) to inspire a new audience — it became a key event in the 75th anniversary celebration of friendship between the two countries. We were suddenly able to get the support of both governments in talking to our Indian counterparts," Japan Cricket Association (JCA) CEO Naoki Alex Miyaji told The Indian Express. Japan is an associate member of the ICC.For a baseball-obsessed country trying to take cricket to the masses, the T20 International, ahead of the cricket matches at the Asian Games, has come as a shot in the arm. Sponsor and spectator interest has been high, according to Miyaji, with Suzuki coming on board as title sponsor."Of course, you cannot talk about 75 years of friendship between India and Japan without talking about Suzuki. We also approached MUFG, the biggest bank in Japan, State Bank of India, and TCS, none of whom were JCA partners. We had really good responses," Miyaji said.While a chunk of the JCA budget is being invested in the India-Japan match, Miyaji pointed to long-term benefits. "Our annual budget is somewhere between 200 and 300 million yen. This match is costing us about 100 million yen. The BCCI has supported this event. But more than the money, it is about bringing new audiences, giving everyone an opportunity to see the impact a match can have, and also showcase what the Japan team can do," Miyaji said.

Anticipating a large crowd, the Sano cricket ground's capacity has been increased from 500 to 2,000. "We put tickets on sale about two weeks before the event… even before we were able to send out the emails announcing the sale, the tickets started going," Miyaji said.Not wanting to risk the quality of the cricket pitch, the JCA reached out to Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) for assistance. SLC sent their groundsmen and clay for the pitches, not only for the ground in Sano but also for the stadium in Nisshin City, Aichi Prefecture, where the Asian Games matches will be played."We were going to re-lay the Sano International Cricket Ground anyway, but we brought that plan forward and decided to lay pitches in Aichi at the same time. Same clay, same pitches, so teams at the Asian Games can train in Sano too," Miyaji said.

A regular at the ICC Under-19 World Cups, the Japan team narrowly missed out on making it to the T20 World Cup hosted by India earlier this year.But Japan's cricketing landscape is widening beyond Sano, which is the hub of cricket in the country. JCA's City of Cricket programme aims to develop the sport, including in schools, in hubs outside Tokyo. It started in Sano, over a decade ago, and now covers Watari, 300-350 kilometres north of Tokyo, Kaizuka in Osaka, and Nisshin."We're also working in Hamamatsu, the home of Suzuki's headquarters," Miyaji said. JCA has introduced cricket as a subject in some schools.The Chennai-born Sabaorish Ravichandran, who plays as an all-rounder for Japan, has seen the game grow during his decade-long stay there. "In Japan, everyone has a day job. Nobody gets paid to play. But on the weekends, you will see hundreds heading to Sano to play cricket. There are a couple of them who even take the bullet train to travel to play. Players like Makoto Taniyama and Wataru Miyauchi, who came through the school cricket system, moved cities just to play cricket," he said.JCA is also asking its players to learn the game's terminology in Japanese, so that it isn't viewed as a foreign sport. "We've been developing the Japan way. We do want to be distinctly Japanese in the way that we do things in cricket, on and off the field," said Kadowaki-Fleming.He added that baseball is also being tapped for cricketing talent. "I want cricket to be a genuine option for baseball players in schools. Once that happens, cricket will have its own Shohei Ohtani (baseball superstar) in a few years," he said.

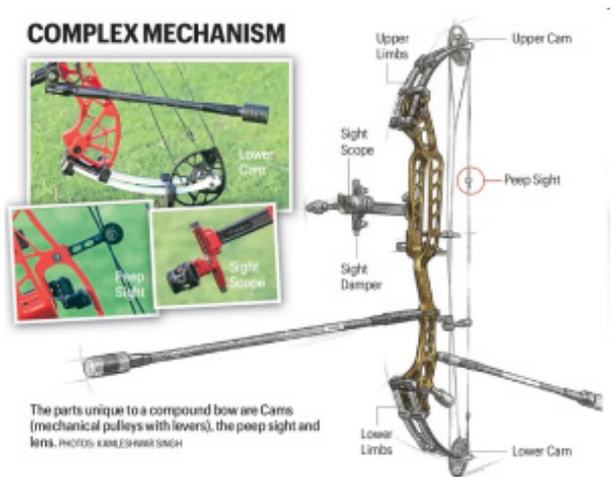
'We are hasty in judging him': Former India players back Samson after 57 vs AFG

Sanju Samson turned up with his fastest T20I half-century despite a rough start against Afghanistan in the second T20I in Delhi on Tuesday, leading India to a comfortable series victory.Recovering from his poor start to the series, scoring 10 runs in the series opener, Samson registered 57 off 22 balls with seven fours and four sixes. The Kerala wicket-keeper, who had a dream T20 World Cup turnaround, led India to the title with three consecutive half-centuries in the knockout stages.Samson's T20I form went downhill during the tour to Ireland and England, scoring 33 runs in four innings. The Kerala wicket-keeper was subsequently dropped from the XI, paving the way for the inclusion of teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. The 15-year-old southpaw had a quiet England tour with scores of 13, 14 and 15, but later went on a rampage during the three-match series in Zimbabwe, a tour Samson was not a part of.Breaking a rut of four innings without a substantial score, Samson received backing from former India seamer Mohit Sharma who said that the 31-year-old is judged prematurely."Sanju batted brilliantly. I often feel that we are a little hasty in judging him. The way he batted has probably put an end to the debate," Sharma told Cricbuzz.Former India batter Mohammed Kaif added that Samson's spot will be undisputable if he attains consistency."The biggest thing that came out of all this is Sanju Samson scoring runs, because we have given him opportunities.

Why do we keep talking about Vaibhav Sooryavanshi? That's because Sanju Samson has been dismissed without even scoring 10 runs, many times. He has been out for 0, 2, 5 or 6 runs, and his form after the World Cup has not been that good," he said."Everyone knows the kind of potential and skill Samson has, and there is no better player against spin than him. He knows how to hit Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi for sixes, everyone knows about his dominance against spin. I think his problem is scoring consistently.If he does that, no harm will ever come to him. No one will ever raise a question again. Vaibhav Suryavanshi is a great talent, but he will remain benched. The 3-4 poor knocks that follow after a big score like a 100, that is where Samson needs to work on. So, I think today's innings will relieve some pressure," Kaif added.

Why tuning is the most important aspect of Compound Archery

They make it easier for the archer than a more complex Recurve bow. Simultaneously, this factor has kept Compound Archery away out of the Olympics until its inclusion for Los Angeles. Because the bow was considered too simplistic, and far too enabling to test absolute string-drawing and precision-aiming skill. It was being too helpful.But with its inclusion as a solitary mixed-team event, the focus is on what sets apart the top archers in Compound, from the rest in an event that still makes demands on tiny detailing.The force required to draw a Recurve bow using fingers is almost always in excess of 60 pounds. The compound bow has inbuilt mechanized pulleys so the maximum draw weight, has a ceiling of 60 pounds. This peak force required at full draw is 60-75% percent less than Recurve. Compound archers aim with far less strain.



The bow design, which sees use of a levering system of pulleys and cables, thence relies more on its own stretched limbs than the archer's massive shoulder / back power.The Compound bow uses a system of pulleys and cables making shooting faster and more accurate than a Recurve bow. (Express Photo by Kamleshwar Singh) The Compound bow uses a system of pulleys and cables making shooting faster and more accurate than a Recurve bow. (Express Photo by Kamleshwar Singh)The arrows are clipped on the bow string against a nocking point. Being inside the D-Loop, a short arc of material is connected to the release aid. Sitting on top of the arrow rest, a mechanism added for the first time in 1995, the archer doesn't need to touch the arrow with their fingers. It's like a gun on a tripod.Coach Sanjeeva Singh who brought Compound bows to India back in 2003, says the wheeled bow is all about tuning, draw lengths and archer position. "The position of peep sight changes based on draw length, bido and head positions of archer, as the stiffness of the (bow) limbs. The draw length and position changes due to the mechanical release. It took me a year to learn and our efforts paid off when Paltan Hansda won the junior world title in 2006," adds Singh.Worlds silver medallist Jyothi Surekha Vennam, who won three gold medals in last Asian Games, uses a bow with a draw length of 27.5 inches while her Asian games team-mate Prithika Pradeep's bow is 25 inches. Vennam has a poundage of 55 pounds before the mechanical stop triggers the release aid."While mechanical cams are the same, we have to adjust the bow limbs as per the poundage. The draw length once set, does not change and the string will stop at the set length. Then we also have to adjust the long stabiliser as well as the short Vibration Reduction System (VRS) stabiliser with the weights and dampers attached. When the arrow is drawn, the stabiliser absorbs the force as well as brings weight control and balance so that the bow does not fall too much," says national coach Jiwanjot Singh Teja.

With the mechanical system, the archers are able to shoot arrows in excess of 300kph. Recurve? Capped at around 200kph.The bows of Vennam as well as world bronze medallist Rishabh Yadav apart from former world number one Sara Lopez only differ in poundage and the draw length. Teja also talks about more accuracy brought by new materials. "Earlier the bows were made of glass fibre but now bows are made of carbon fibre and other materials. An archer like Rishabh or Jyothi uses Hoyt Concept X with just the difference being the poundage and the size," adds Teja.The recurve bow sees archers using their back, shoulder and arm muscles more with archers relying more on technique as well as release through fingers. Teja also outlines one major difference. "In recurve, one needs to have almost perfect body alignment where one's shoulders, arms and spine form the letter T. In Compound, that's not the case. We can adjust with the tuning and other aspects of the bow," he explains.The Compound bow has an interesting history in India. Back in the 2003 World Archery Championships in USA, the then former national recurve champion Sanjeeva Singh saw compound bows for the first time. Singh immediately bought four of those.

The bow was invented in the USA in 1960's, only as a more mechanically efficient equipment than Recurve, to carry back home. With India having won 16 medals in compound archery in Asian Games history, Singh, who started training compound archers in 2004, remembers how the bow fascinated him.At that time, short height archers would struggle with recurve bows. When I saw the compound bow, I was intrigued by the more mechanical efficient bow," he recalls. In 2004, John Dudley, a leading name in compound archery, was invited to conduct workshops here and as Singh learnt tuning as well as the complications of the mechanical system. "Things like adjusting the tuning of the arrowhead as well as the spine of the arrows, which are more stiffer as compared to recurve arrows, were taught," Singh recalls.

Yuvraj Singh warns India before World Cup year: 'Don't make massive changes'

EMS News Agency, Sept 20

India are set to begin their 2026-27 home season officially from September 27, starting with three ODIs against the West Indies, a year out from the 2027 World Cup in Africa.Rumours and speculation have been rife regarding the spots of batting stalwarts Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the side leading up to the quadrennial event, with the former facing the heat more often between recent series. As preparations heat up for Shubman Gill's men, former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh has sounded a warning to the team management, urging them not to make huge changes to the composition over the next 13 months.

"They need to focus on building the same team to play in a year's time, because you don't want to make big changes at the last moment," the 2011 ODI World Cup winner told Cricinfo. "Whoever your players are, whether they are 16 or 20, it's important that everybody gets game time because obviously now there's more T20s and less 50-over cricket. Whatever matches there are, it's important that players get enough game time to prepare for the World Cup.Yuvraj, who was the Player of the Series during the 2011 World Cup edition, noted how India have faltered when they have made conspicuous transitions before World Cup events."Every time India have faltered is when they've made some massive changes at the last moment or in the tournament. So I think it's important that we stick to a team that we believe can lift the 2027 World Cup and stick by those guys whether they fail or succeed till that moment. Belief in the squad is very important," Yuvraj said.After returning scores of 26 and 10 in the first two ODIs in England in July, Rohit slammed his detractors with a score of 137 in the final match at Lord's, albeit in a losing cause. Rohit will be 40 by the next iteration of the World Cup in Africa in October 2027, while Kohli will turn 39 during the event. Yuvraj added that consistency in players had powered India to four finals across white-ball formats since 2023.India won the T20 World Cups in 2024 and 2026, while clinching the Champions Trophy title last year and finished runners-up at the previous World Cup in 2023."That's something that we have also done in the last two T20 World Cups," Yuvraj said. "We also played the 50-over World Cup final [in 2023]. So we have had a lot of consistency in white-ball cricket. And that's what they need to do as well to think of first qualifying for the semis and then going on to play in the last two [knockout matches]. I think that's a long way ahead. Focus should be to get a squad ready which is together and ready to fight in any situation," said Yuvraj.

Ganges Grandmasters win maiden Global Chess League title

EMS News Agency, Sept 20

Hyderabad: Ian Nepomniachtchi pounced on a positional error by world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen to help Ganges Grandmasters upset defending champions Alpine APL Pipers and clinch their maiden Global Chess League (GCL) title, a joint initiative of Tech Mahindra and FIDE, in Bengaluru.The Grandmasters won the two-leg final 7-5, having drawn the opening leg 3-3 with the white pieces, to etch their name on the trophy, while FYERS American Gambits bagged third place by beating CheQ Mumba Masters 7.5-4.5 in a two-leg playoff.

Season 4 of the Global Chess League witnessed one of the closest league stages in the history of the competition, with all six teams staying in contention for the top four spots until the eighth round. The finalists were decided only after the last match was played on Saturday evening.The Pipers made it through to the final only after the Mumba Masters defeated the Gambits in the last league game, but could not find a way past the Ganges Grandmasters, who had topped the league stage on better game points.

Unlike the group stage, where a win with black fetched four points against three for white, a win in the knockout matches was worth just one point, irrespective of colour. This meant that winning more games than the opponent was the key.With the first leg ending 3-3, the Pipers would have fancied their chances with the white pieces, and it looked like they would have a chance to retain the crown with Carlsen looking good for a win on the icon board.But the Norwegian made a positional error while going for the kill on move 28, and Nepomniachtchi did not give his opponent any chance to recover.

Stavroula Tsolakidou then defeated Koneru Humpy to put the result beyond doubt.In the first match of the final,

Ganges Grandmasters grabbed an early advantage as Levon Aronian controlled the match against Anish Giri from the start, and the Dutchman ran out of time after 49 moves. The Pipers' dugout would have wondered if they were wrong in opting for the black pieces after winning the toss.With all other boards ending in draws, Volodar Murzin had to win for the Pipers to draw the match, and the former world rapid chess champion delivered under pressure, forcing Luke Leon Mendonca to resign after 49 moves to tie the score at 3-3.

"I have to admit that I got insanely unlucky as I prepared for this game with black and I had not thought of the line and I was in trouble. But then I had just one idea left and I was hoping that he blunders and he did and I got lucky," said Nepomniachtchi, who also received the Player of the Match award."It's also a special feeling to win the title given the support we got here and the team spirit we built," he added.Tsolakidou was named the Player of the Tournament for scoring a total of 21.5 points, including six wins and three draws in 12 games. She received a Jawa bike as a prize.D. Harika of the Mumba Masters was the only player not to lose a game in the entire tournament. She scored 18.5 points from 12 matches, including four wins and eight draws.

Football's loss, hockey's gain: How Bichu Devi became custodian of Indian fortunes

As Bichu Devi Kharibam stretched to her left for a last-gasp save against England in the Women's Hockey World Cup and kept India alive in the competition, veteran Savita Punia jumped like an excited kid in the dugout.

The reel went viral on social media platforms with many Indian fans discovering Bichu's shot-saving prowess for the first time. However, according to Savita, this was just one of the many big moments Bichu is likely to enjoy in her career."She has been my understudy for three years and I can tell you she is one of the best goalkeepers around," Savita told The Indian Express. "Whenever we are playing, Bichu pushes me to the limit and I try to do the same. Our bond off the field helps us get better on it knowing that we have got each other's back."

Talking about that viral moment that took India to the second round of the World Cup, Bichu said, "The communication between me and Savitadi is like telepathy. As it was the last quarter, I was nervous and constantly looking at her. She asked me to calm down with her hand gestures. Once that assurance came, I just did what I had to do."

Savita, the 36-year-old goalkeeper from Haryana who is in the autumn of her career, can speak for hours about her bond with the 25-year-old Manipuri, who can duly return the favour.

Timely upgradesIf someone had asked a younger Bichu where she wants to be in 2026, she would have happily said it was the Indian women's football team. But as fate would have it, there were no vacancies by the time she made it to a local training academy. After crying her eyes out, she took her father's suggestion and picked up hockey.Bichu's career has gone through several phases, and she has had to update herself regularly to get to where she is right now.Bichu started as a forward before P Nilakomol Singh, the understudy to goalkeeper Romeo James at the 1984 Olympics and one of the earliest Manipuri Olympians, asked her to switch roles after looking at her frame.Savita (L), the 36-year-old goalkeeper who is in the autumn of her career, can speak for hours about her bond with the 25-year-old Bichu Devi. (Hockey India) Savita (L), the 36-year-old goalkeeper who is in the autumn of her career, can speak for hours about her bond with the 25-year-old Bichu Devi. (Hockey India)"I barely knew anything about hockey. When I switched, I was a striker but Nilakomol sir asked me to become a goalkeeper. I had no idea what I would do," Bichu recalls.In 2015, Bichu shifted to the Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy to take her game to the next level. While she honed her goalkeeping skills, she also had to brush up on her Hindi."Trust me, learning Hindi seemed more difficult than goalkeeping at that time. But it was needed for me to understand the coaches better and communicate with my teammates. I learnt Hindi by watching TV news channels," said Bichu.However, all the minutes spent in front of the TV and the hours spent under the goalpost paid off when she made her senior India debut in 2022. But she was largely an understudy to Savita, one of the best goalkeepers in the world.Aggressive to patientBichu has had a lot of waiting to do in her career.Be it her transition from the juniors after the Youth Olympics medal in 2018 or the time it took for her to be a regular in the senior team. But the wait has shaped her personality to the point that she faces the best in the world without flinching.

"Any goalkeeper has to be patient. There is nothing a goalkeeper can do apart from waiting for the ball to arrive. I have played games where the ball didn't even come into my circle. So those kinds of matches teach you patience and also keep you alert," explained Bichu.However, she was not always this patient. When Bichu started in the sport, she was an aggressive player."It can be both good and bad but I had a lot of aggression in my early days," she recalls.Savita and former coach Janneke Schopman played an important role in shaping the patient version of Bichu. "

Aditya Chopra 'was chasing drones' at his secret 13-guest wedding with Rani Mukerji

Aditya Chopra "kept chasing drones away" at wedding with Rani Mukerji, says Sabyasachi Mukherjee.Aditya Chopra "kept chasing drones away" at wedding with Rani Mukerji, says Sabyasachi Mukherjee.Actor Rani Mukerji and filmmaker Aditya Chopra pulled off a heist when they managed to get keep their high-profile wedding very low-profile. The couple, who had kept their romance a hush-hush affair, tied the knot on April 21, 2014 in Italy. "We are happy to announce that Mr. Aditya Chopra and Ms. Rani Mukherji got married last night on 21st April in Italy. The wedding was a very small intimate affair with very close family and friends," said a statement by Aditya's production house Yash Raj Films at the time.

Sabyasachi on Rani, Aditya's secret weddingOne of the highlights of the secret wedding was Rani becoming the first official Sabyasachi bride. Sabyasachi Mukherjee recently opened up on his experience of doing Rani's lehenga at her secret Italy wedding. "When she did a secret wedding with 15 people, I think only 13 people were allowed, and Adi was chasing drones," he said, as Rani, standing next to him, laughed out loud. Earlier, he'd revealed Rani gave him only one week to get the outfit ready.

Sabyasachi had often made an exception for Rani Mukerji, including her being the only Indian actor he still customizes outfits for. "I don't do custom for Bollywood. But I did a custom sari for her. Because I don't think Rani is Bollywood. She's family," he said in an Instagram Reel shared by Diet Sabya. In fact, the last time Sabyasachi did styling for a Bollywood film was also for Rani in Varun V Sharma's 2021 crime comedy Bunty Aur Babli 2.

Only a handful of guests were invited to the secret wedding of Rani and Chopra, including filmmaker Karan Johar. He was an assistant of Chopra on the latter's directorial debut, 1995 seminal romantic comedy Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge. Johar has also directed Rani in his directorial debut, 1998 hit rom-com Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, 2001 blockbuster family drama Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham, and 2006 cult romantic drama Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna."If the wedding information leaks, it will only be because of you. Because others don't know anyone else, and you're the only access to the outside world. Remember, if any trickle of information leaks, it will be your fault," Chopra told Johar at the time. "I will never forget how stressed I was because 2 States was releasing, and everyone thought I was being insensitive to the film by leaving on the release day," recalled Johar in a chat with Rani at Yash Raj Studios earlier this year. Johar confessed he even lied to his mother Hiroo Yash Johar about the wedding.Rani has also not shared the wedding pictures in public in the past 12 years. They became parents to daughter Adira in 2015. While she admitted last year that releasing them on their 25th wedding anniversary is a "very good idea", she fears Chopra would never want to release the photos. "My husband is a very private person and he wanted the wedding to be very private," the actor told ANI.

Vijay Deverakonda, Rashmika Mandanna-starrer Ranabaali completes BGM for first half

Hyderabad: The makers of director Rahul Sankrityan's eagerly awaited period film, 'Ranabaali', featuring actors Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna in the lead, have now disclosed that the background music (BGM) for the first half of the film has already been completed and that the film will be ready well ahead of its release date of October 16 this year.The makers, using the official handle of the film, wrote, "#Ranabaali is arriving in theatres on October 16th, 2026. The post-production work is progressing smoothly, with the film set to be wrapped well in advance of the announced release date."They went on to say, "The BGM work for the first half has already been completed, and everything is right on track for the grand release this Dussehra. Get ready to witness a spectacular cinematic experience on the big screen. #RanabaaliOnOct16th."Just a couple of days ago, director Rahul Sankrityan had disclosed that he gave Rashmika Mandanna's character in the film his mother's name.Taking to his X timeline to announce the news that the actress had completed shooting for her portions in the film, director Rahul Sankrityan had said, "While writing #Ranabaali, I found myself walking down memory lanes for every little detail of its world. And when I sat down to write my female protagonist, I began with something deeply personal, I gave her my mother's name. Jayamma."

The writer and director of the film had gone on to add, "Through every emotion she goes through, I took utmost care to make sure she remains a woman who could inspire the women of today, even though she belongs to another time."Stating that the unit "adorned her world with beautiful silks and cottons, zari and vintage colours, antique gold and all the warmth of a time gone by", the director said and went on to describe Rashmika's character in the film."She is the love in Ranabaali's heart. The spirit in his soul. The grit in his spine. And the sweetness in his madness," he had explained."Then came @iamRashmika. She didn't just make Jayamma real. She made her eternal for all of us. You all will witness this on 16th October. We will always love you. And now, we already miss you, Jayamma. That's a wrap on that intoxicating smile. #Ranabaali #Jayamma @MythriOfficial @RanabaaliFilm @TheDeverakonda," he wrote.For the unaware, Vijay Deverakonda essays the role of Ranabaali, while Rashmika Mandanna plays his wife Jayamma in the film. Arnold Vosloo, best known for his work in 'The Mummy', plays the antagonist Sir Theodore Hector.'Ranabaali' is being produced on a grand scale by Naveen Yerneni and Y Ravi Shankar, with T-Series presenting the film. The movie is set against a British-era backdrop and is being made as a period action drama. Set in the 19th century, the film is based on real historical events that took place between 1854 and 1878, and is being mounted as a massive pan-India project.Sources claim 'Ranabaali' is inspired by real incidents from the 1850s that never found space in mainstream history books. They say it will be based on real incidents in the time period of 1850-1900 and that the film will look to showcase incidents that the British misrepresented in history.Sources have also pointed out that Ranabaali will not be a biopic, and not a textbook retelling but will be a cinematic reconstruction of an era built from multiple real accounts, oral histories, and suppressed records.After 'Geetha Govindam' and 'Dear Comrade', 'Ranabaali' will be the third film in which Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda will be seen appearing together as a pair.

Neem Karoli Baba set to enter Rs 300 cr club; posts 12740% return

Hanuman Ansh box office collection day 40: Vishal Chaturvedi's devotional drama Hanuman Ansh, featuring Shobhinaw Satyaa as spiritual guru Neem Karoli Baba, is all set to cross yet another milestone at the worldwide box office. The film, which has already raked in Rs 291.40 crore globally within 40 days, needs less than Rs 9 crore to enter the Rs 300 crore club. It has earned Rs 272.90 crore gross and Rs 231.13 crore in India.

Hanuman Ansh box office collection week 6On its sixth Tuesday (day 40), Hanuman Ansh added another Rs 10 crore to its domestic box office collection and Rs 2 crore to its overseas earnings, taking its total overseas earnings to Rs 18.50 crore, since its international release this past Friday on September 11. The film saw no change in India collection compared to its sixth Monday (day 39), when it also earned Rs 10 crore. The number of shows also remained around 9,100.

Hanuman Ansh made history this past weekend when it scored the highest grossing sixth weekend for any Indian film ever. It amassed Rs 51.50 crore at the domestic box office across the three days — Rs 22.50 crore on its sixth Sunday (day 38), Rs 18.50 crore on its sixth Saturday (day 37), and Rs 10.50 crore on its sixth Friday (day 36), as per Sacnilk.Though Hanuman Ansh did face some fresh competition from the new Hindi release — Priyadarshan's crime thriller Haiwaan, starring Saif Ali Khan and Akshay Kumar — it crushed its competition by taking over 1400 new screens on Monday. Compared to Hanuman Ansh's Rs 10 crore earnings on Monday and Tuesday each, Haiwaan has managed to earn only Rs 70 lakh each on both days.Hanuman Ansh is also dominating the holdover release — Gurmeet Singh's crime thriller Mirzapur: The Movie, starring Ali Fazal — which earned Rs 5.50 crore on both its second Monday and Tuesday, almost half of what Hanuman Ansh minted on its sixth Monday and Tuesday respectively. On September 18, Hanuman Ansh will face new competition from Meghna Gulzar's police procedural Daayra, starring Kareena Kapoor and Prithviraj Sukumaran, and Kunal Kemmu's spy comedy Vibe, starring him and Preity Zinta.Hanuman Ansh has become the first-ever Indian film to cross Rs 100 crore at the domestic box office despite opening at less than Rs 1 crore. The film managed to earn only Rs 10 lakh on its opening day last month on August 7. With just 25 screens across India at its disposal, it could collect only Rs 1.08 crore in the opening week and slipped down to Rs 40 lakh in week 2.However, the third week saw an upsurge, which led to Hanuman Ansh outlasting even the tentpole Independence Day releases — Rajkumar Santoshi's Partition drama Batwara 1947, starring Sunny Deol, and Nitin Kakkar's romantic thriller Awarapan 2, starring Emraan Hashmi — which released a week after it opened at the domestic box office.Hanuman Ansh finally crossed the Rs 1 crore daily mark on its third Sunday, earning Rs 2.50 crore. Its collections then grew to Rs 10.40 crore in week 3, Rs 61 crore in week 4, and Rs 90.20 crore in week 5. It has already earned Rs 68 crore in its sixth week, with two more days yet to go.This extraordinary trajectory has allowed the film to surpass Aditya Dhar's 2025 spy thriller Dhurandhar, starring Ranveer Singh, in terms of its box-office-to-budget multiple. Made on a modest budget of almost Rs 2 crore, Hanuman Ansh has already earned over 145 times its budget at the worldwide box office. It has returned almost 12740% return on investment.

Nivin Pauly film earns Rs 310 cr, biggest Malayalam hit ever

Bethlehem Kudumba Unit box office collection day 26: Nivin Pauly and Mamitha Baiju's romantic comedy Bethlehem Kudumba Unit may have already rewritten the Malayalam box-office record, but the film is showing no signs of slowing down. After surpassing Lokah Chapter 1: Chandra to become the highest-grossing Malayalam film worldwide, the romantic comedy continues to hold audiences in theatres in its fourth week. On September 15, the film added Rs 1.40 crore to its India collection, taking its domestic total to Rs 175.05 crore gross, while its worldwide gross climbed to Rs 310.55 crore.According to Sacnilk, Bethlehem Kudumba Unit collected Rs 1.40 crore nett in India on Day 26 from 1,412 shows. The film's India nett currently stands at Rs 149.90 crore, while its overseas collection has reached Rs 135.50 crore.

Bethlehem Kudumba Unit Day 26 box office collectionThe fourth Tuesday brought in Rs 1.40 crore for Bethlehem Kudumba Unit, a 33.3% drop from the previous day's Rs 2.10 crore. The film continued to draw audiences across more than 1,400 shows.The fourth weekend had begun on a stronger note. On Friday, September 11, the film earned Rs 2.50 crore from 1,420 shows, with overall occupancy at 35.7%. Saturday saw the collection rise to Rs 3.85 crore from 1,460 shows, while occupancy increased to 54.8%.The film recorded its strongest collection of the fourth weekend on Sunday, earning Rs 4.60 crore from 1,501 shows at 63% occupancy. On Monday, September 14, it collected Rs 2.10 crore from 1,425 shows, with occupancy at 32.6%.

On Tuesday, the film's occupancy fell to 24.7% across 1,412 shows, resulting in the Rs 1.40 crore India net collection.The Girish A. D.-directed film opened strongly and maintained its momentum through the first three weeks. Bethlehem Kudumba Unit collected Rs 52.30 crore in its first week, followed by Rs 49.85 crore in the second week and another Rs 33.30 crore in its third week.The latest Day 26 figures have pushed the film's India net collection to Rs 149.90 crore.The Malayalam version remains the biggest contributor to the film's domestic earnings. It earned Rs 1.25 crore from 1,257 shows on Day 26, recording 24% occupancy, and has collected Rs 143.25 crore so far.The Telugu version added Rs 10 lakh from 85 shows at 27% occupancy, taking its total to Rs 3.52 crore. The Tamil version contributed Rs 5 lakh from 70 shows at 34% occupancy, taking its overall collection to Rs 3.13 crore.Bethlehem Kudumba Unit overtakes LokahBethlehem Kudumba Unit made Malayalam cinema box-office history on its 24th day when it overtook Lokah Chapter 1: Chandra. The Nivin Pauly-Mamitha Baiju film had reached a worldwide gross of Rs 304.95 crore at that point, moving ahead of Lokah's lifetime gross of Rs 301.41 crore.

Lokah Chapter 1: Chandra, directed by Dominic Arun, starred Kalyani Priyadarshan in the title role alongside Naslen, Sandy Master, Arun Kurian and Chandu Salimkumar. The film also featured Tovino Thomas, Dulquer Salmaan and other prominent actors in supporting and cameo appearances.Top five highest-grossing Malayalam filmsWhile Bethlehem Kudumba Unit currently occupies the top spot among the highest-grossing Malayalam films, Lokah Chapter 1: Chandra follows with a reported worldwide collection of Rs 301.41 crore.L2: Empuraan, starring Mohanlal and Prithviraj Sukumaran in the lead roles, is next with a reported worldwide collection of around Rs 262 crore. The film also features Tovino Thomas, Manju Warrier, Indrajith Sukumaran and several other actors, with Prithviraj Sukumaran directing the sequel.Vaazha II: Biopic of a Billion Bros is among the other major Malayalam blockbusters, with a reported worldwide collection of around Rs 235 crore. The coming-of-age comedy-drama stars Hashir H., Alan Bin Siraj, Ajin Joy and Vinayak V., with Vijay Babu, Aju Varghese and other actors in supporting roles.Rounding out the top five is Thudarum, which has reportedly earned around Rs 232 crore worldwide. The film stars Mohanlal and Shobana in the lead, with Bharathiraja, Prakash Varma and Maniyanpilla Raju among the other members of the cast.

Nivin Pauly's biggest hitMade on a reported budget of Rs 25 crore, Bethlehem Kudumba Unit has emerged as the biggest hit of Nivin Pauly's career. The actor has credited the film's success largely to its appeal among family audiences.Speaking to Variety India, Nivin said, "This is my biggest hit so far. All credit goes to the team, especially director Girish AD. It was a wonderful script. The age-gap romance, the packaging, the humour… everything landed. Family audiences are the backbone of Indian cinema, in any language. If families like a film, ticket sales soar. Theatres are happy too – concession sales boom."Directed by Girish A. D., Bethlehem Kudumba Unit revolves around Ashley, a young woman, and Justin, her older neighbour, and explores their age-gap romance through a mix of humour, emotion and family drama.The film also features Sangeeth Prathap, Suresh Krishna, Vinay Forrt, Roshan Shanavas and Shyam Mohan in key roles. It is produced by Dileesh Pothan, Fahadh Faasil and Syam Pushkaran under the Bhavana Studios banner, with music by Vishnu Vijay, cinematography by Ajmal Sabu and editing by Akash Joseph Varghese.

Jackie Shroff wishes Baahubali's Sivagami Devi aka Ramya Krishnan on 56th birthday

Mumbai: Bollywood star Jackie Shroff extended birthday wishes to actress Ramya Krishnan on her 56th birthday on Tuesday.Born on September 15, 1970, in Chennai, Ramya turned 56 on September 15, 2026.Jackie shared a birthday tribute for the actress on his social media account, where the post features two pictures of Ramya, one in which she is seen dressed in a red saree with statement earrings, while the other shows her in an elegant black saree.Alongside the pictures, Jackie Shroff added a simple graphic that read "Happiness Always!"

For the uninitiated, the two actors have, in fact, shared screen space in the 1997 Hindi action film Shapath. Directed by Rajiv Babbar, the film featured Mithun Chakraborty, Jackie Shroff and Ramya Krishnan in prominent roles. The actor played Inspector Kishan, while Ramya was credited as Ramya Krishna and played Kavita D Kallu.Talking about Ramya Krishnan's career in the entertainment industry, she has built a career spanning nearly four decades, predominantly working in the South Indian film industries. She has acted in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam cinema, apart from her work in Hindi films.

She began her acting career as a teenager and went on to establish herself as one of the prominent actresses of Telugu and Tamil cinema.Her Tamil filmography features many memorable performances, but her portrayal of Neelambari in Rajinikanth-starrer Padayappa remains one of the defining roles of her career.She also showcased her versatility in films such as Kamal Haasan's Panchatanthiram and the critically acclaimed Super Deluxe.While Ramya had already established herself as a major name in South Indian cinema, her career reached another level of national recognition with SS Rajamouli's Baahubali: The Beginning and Baahubali 2: The Conclusion.As Sivagami Devi, the powerful matriarch of the Mahishmati kingdom,

Ramya delivered a powerful performance that became one of the most celebrated aspects of the franchise.Ramya also explored Hindi cinema, although her career remained primarily rooted in the South. Her Hindi debut was Dayavan in 1988, after which she appeared in films including Khal Nayak, Parampara, Criminal, Chaahat, Banarasi Babu, Loha, Shapath, Wajood and Bade Miyan Chote Miyan.After a break from Bollywood, she eventually returned to Hindi cinema with Liger in 2022, in which she played Vijay Deverakonda's mother, followed by her appearance in the 2025 Hindi film Jaat.

Anupama Parameswaran reflects on life, says 'every moment counts'

Chennai: Underlining the fact that life was short and that every moment counted, actress Anupama Parameswaran on Tuesday said that if there was one thing she had now come to understand, it was that "Today is really all we have."Taking to her Instagram page to post a reel, the actress wrote, " Not just a reel, an archive of memories."She further went on to add, "Life is full of surprises, and with them come lessons. Some beautiful, some difficult, all leaving something behind. But if there's one thing I've come to understand, it's that life is short. Every moment counts. Every memory matters. And today is really all we have."It may be recalled that Anupama had put out a cryptic post in July this year that came under the spotlight.In it, Anupama had said that peace had found her and that she no longer needed to take any more permissions or be in fear.Taking to her Instagram page to pen the rather cryptic post that gave the impression that she was finally free from something that had been imprisoning her, the actress wrote, Sometimes, you have to let go of the dead ends to finally find your peace. And today, peace found me."She had further said, "From today, I choose my voice. I choose my life. No more permissions. No more fear. Just me, finding my way back to myself and falling in love with the life I almost forgot was mine. And there's something I've wanted to say for a very long time…Something I wasn't allowed to say for far too long. I love you all."She wrote, "Thank you for standing by me, believing in me, and filling my life with so much love. If I haven't said it enough before, please know that I have always felt it. Every message, every prayer, every ounce of kindness reached me when I needed it the most. Thank you, Universe, for leading me back to myself."Anupama concluded the post saying, "Here's to healing. Here's to freedom. Here's to choosing myself. And here's to a life that is finally, completely, unapologetically my own."On the work front, Anupama next has director Sampath Nandi's explosive action drama 'Bhogi' coming up for release.

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