

BRS seeks judicial probe into 22-A irregularities

Hyderabad: BRS working president K. T. Rama Rao on Tuesday demanded a judicial inquiry into the alleged irregularities in the 22-A prohibited lands list. He accused the Congress government of including private properties in the list to harass people and allegedly extract commissions of 30 per cent of the property value.Telangana Tourism GuideHe demanded that colonies, apartments and houses purchased with people's hard-earned money, if wrongly included in the prohibited list, be removed unconditionally and that the government apologise to the affected owners.



New Delhi, SEpt 15

Starting October 15, merchant payments made through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) above Rs 2,000 will attract a merchant discount rate (MDR) of 0.4 per cent, the National Payments Corporation of India

HYDRAA tackles waterlogging after heavy rain in Secunderabad

Hyderabad: Heavy rain lashed parts of Secunderabad on Sunday night, inundating roads and low-lying areas, as HYDRAA teams cleared drains and pumped out floodwater to prevent water stagnation.

Begumpet, Chikoti Gardens, Bible House, Oliphanta Bridge, Alugadda Bavi Bridge and Lalaguda were inundated, according to a press release issued on Monday.

Install Solar Panels

Floodwater overflowed onto roads in Prakash Nagar and Chikoti Gardens, while water accumulated near Shyamal Building Ganesh Temple. DRF teams removed garbage obstructing water flow at some locations and deployed pumps elsewhere, ensuring that no water remained stagnant by 8 am.

UPI transactions above Rs 2,000 to attract 0.4% charge

(NPCI) announced on Tuesday.

UPI will continue to be free for person-to-person (P2P) transactions, as will person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions of up to Rs 2,000, which make up for more than 95 per cent of total volume of UPI merchant transactions.

The government said a nominal MDR of 0.4 per cent would be levied on person-to-merchant UPI merchant transactions above Rs 2,000. For payments worth Rs 75,000 and above, the MDR will be capped at Rs 300 per transaction.

To counter criticism from the Opposition over the move, the government said the UPI MDR was structured significantly lower than fees charged on traditional card-based payments.

“Standard credit card MDRs typically range from 1.5 per cent to 2.5 per cent per transaction, while debit card MDRs are capped at 0.9 per cent. By setting the UPI MDR at 0.4 per cent on transactions above Rs 2,000 and capping it at Rs 300 for high-value purchases, UPI remains the most affordable digital payment acceptance mechanism for merchants,” the government said, adding that the lower MDR would help businesses reduce payment processing costs while continuing to accept digital payments.

Explaining the rationale for introducing MDR, the government said the UPI now processed billions of transactions every month and required sustained investment in infrastructure, cybersecurity, innovation, resilience and customer support.

“The MDR is neither a tax nor a charge collected by the government or the NPCI. It is distributed among participants in the payments ecosystem, including banks and payment application providers, to support the operation and continued expansion of the UPI ecosystem,” the Finance Ministry said.

The move effectively ends the zero-MDR regime that has been in place since 2020. Banks and financial institutions had flagging the system as financially unsustainable.

The government said three categories would remain exempt from MDR -- person-to-person transactions, merchant payments of up to Rs 2,000, and payments received by small merchants.

“Small merchants, including street vendors receiving up to Rs 1 lakh per month through UPI QR codes under the P2PM category, will continue to enjoy zero MDR on all transactions. This provision will protect street vendors, neighbourhood shops and other small businesses from additional payment costs,” the ministry said.

6 states ink Kishau agreement; Centre to bear 90% project cost

New Delhi, Sept 15

After years of dispute on issues related to cost-sharing and water allocation, a memorandum of agreement for the Kishau Multipurpose Project was signed on Tuesday between the chief ministers of Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Delhi and Haryana in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Jai Shakti Minister CR Patil.

Himachal Pradesh, which is one of the two states (the other being Uttarakhand) where the proposed dam and reservoir will come up, claimed that its key concern regarding the sharing of the financial burden of the project had been resolved.

It had long argued that as an upstream state bearing the direct impact of the proposed dam, it should not be made to shoulder a disproportionate financial burden when much of the water would benefit downstream states.

As per the terms of the agreement, the Centre will bear 90 per cent of the cost of the project, while the remaining 10 per cent will be borne by the participating states in accordance with the 1994 agreement.



Regarding the Kishau Multipurpose Project, Shah said an agreement reached on May 12, 1994, required separate agreements to be signed for each storage project coming up in the basin. Without that arrangement, this would not have been possible.

Tardy Babus Cost Telangana Rs 4k-Cr Land

Hyderabad, Sept 15

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed the Telangana government's appeal regarding a claim over 40 acres of prime land in Survey No.s 1 and 2 of Lothkunta in Medchal-Malkajgiri district.

The offices of both the Medchal-Malkajgiri collector and the Advocate-General were to be squarely blamed for the government losing land, said to be worth at least `4,000 crore, to the private builder Shanta Sriram Constructions Pvt. Ltd, as the dismissal of the appeal was based on a simple technical flaw — delay in filing the special leave petition (SLP) in the Supreme Court.

The ground for dismissal was the delay of 219 days in filing the appeal after a division bench of the Telangana High Court issued orders in favour of Shanta Sriram, which is also a litigant over government land in Banjara Hills. The state should have mandatorily filed the appeal in the apex court within 90 days of the High Court order.

Calling it a “callous” approach, sources told Deccan Chronicle that the action of the two government functionaries in responsible positions came as a blow to Chief



Minister A. Revanth Reddy's efforts to protect valuable government land. Recently, when the High Court threatened to get HYDRAA chief A.V. Ranganath arrested by the military and wanted the state government to transfer him over the same land, the Chief Minister came out openly in support of protecting the land worth `4,000 crore in Lothkunta and HYDRAA's actions in this regard.

NDA allies rally behind Shah's UCC 2029 push

New Delhi, Setp 16

Key allies of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), including the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and the Shiv Sena, on Tuesday extended support to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement that the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) would be implemented in all 21 NDA-ruled states by 2029.

The Janata Dal (United), another crucial NDA partner, said it would examine the proposed legislation and would not oppose it “without any reason”. The BJP-led NDA government relies on the support of its allies as the BJP itself does not have a majority in the Lok Sabha.

The alliance includes the ruling TDP in Andhra Pradesh, Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and JD(U) in Bihar.

TDP's Andhra Pradesh president P Srinivasa Rao said the party would stand by Shah's position on the issue.

“Yes, I have seen our Home Minister's statement on UCC and as NDA partners we are bound to go by his statement,” Rao said.

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary of the JD(U) said the party would study the proposed Uniform Civil Code legislation and would not oppose it if its provisions were found to be acceptable. He said there was no need to rush the matter and added that JD(U) national working



president Sanjay Kumar Jha would discuss the issue with the Union Home Minister. “If we find there is nothing objectionable, why shall we oppose it without any reason? And if there are points of concern, these will be conveyed to the Union Home Minister,” Chaudhary said.

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Shiv Sena president Eknath Shinde also backed Shah's remarks, saying that party founder Bal Thackeray had envisioned a common civil law for all citizens.



No Attack on KTR's Aides Inside Saifabad PS, CCTV Footage Proves: DCP Shilpavalli

Hyderabad:Saifabad police on Tuesday clarified that no attack had taken place on the associates of BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao. “We have examined the CCTV camera footage at the police station and no incident related to the attack was seen,” said Khairatabad DCP K. Shilpavalli.

Speaking to the media, Shilpavalli said that Rama Rao's personal assistant Mahender Reddy and public relations officer Mahesh were called to the police station on Monday as part of an investigation into the controversy at the Assembly gates last week. “At the same time, some local youths had come to the police station to seek permission for a DJ event at a Ganesh mandapam,” the DCP said.

“While they were talking to the Saifabad station house officer regarding the DJ permission, one of them recognised KTR's PRO.” Police said the pandal organisers had a separate issue with the PRO and they took that up with him in the police station premises. Police stepped in calmed tempers, an official said.

BRS leaders alleged that Rama Rao's associates had been attacked by what they claimed were “masked persons” who had entered the police station.

Case filed against Allu Arjun's father-in-law in Hyderabad

Gachibowli police have registered a case against actor Allu Arjun's father-in-law Kancharla Chandrasekhara Reddy and others following a complaint by the Mantri Cosmos Owners Association over alleged illegal entry, threats and assault of security personnel at the Nanakramguda premises

Hyderabad, SEpt 16

Gachibowli Police have registered a case against film actor Allu Arjun's father-in-law, Kancharla Chandrasekhara Reddy, and others in connection with an alleged illegal entry into the premises of Mantri Cosmos at Nanakramguda.

The Mantri Cosmos Owners Association lodged a complaint alleging that Chandrasekhara Reddy and others broke open the gates and entered the premises. They allegedly threatened and assaulted security personnel who tried to stop them.

The association submitted CCTV footage and photographs of the incident to the police as evidence and sought action against the suspects. Police have registered a case and launched an investigation into the incident.



Greetings on the Foundation Day of the All India Mahila Congress

“On the occasion of the Foundation Day of the All India Mahila Congress, Karnala Shailaja, Vice President of the Telangana Mahila Congress, extended her heartfelt greetings to all Mahila Congress leaders, members, workers and the entire Congress family across the country.”

Speaking on the occasion, she said: “The Mahila Congress is a powerful platform that has consistently worked for the political, social and economic empowerment of women. It has stood firmly for women's rights, safety, dignity and equal opportunities. I feel immensely proud to serve an organisation that represents the voices of women and promotes women's leadership from the grassroots to the national level.”

Under the dynamic leadership of Smt. Alka Lamba, National President of the All India Mahila Congress, the organisation has been raising a strong voice on issues affecting women throughout the country. In Telangana, under the able leadership of Smt. Errabelli Swarna, President of the Telangana Mahila Congress, we remain committed to supporting women and strengthening the Congress Party at the grassroots level.

“The Mahila Congress will continue its fight against violence, discrimination and injustice faced by women. We strongly demand the immediate implementation of 33 per cent reservation for women in legislative bodies. Our struggle will continue until women receive equal opportunities in education, healthcare, employment, economic independence and political representation.”

The progress of women is the foundation of national development. The ultimate mission of the Mahila Congress is to build an equal and inclusive society in which every woman can live with dignity, safety, freedom and confidence. Let us all move forward unitedly, following the guidance of the Congress leadership, to protect women's rights and achieve genuine empowerment.”

On this proud occasion, Karnala Shailaja conveyed her special greetings and best wishes to Smt. Alka Lamba, National President of the All India Mahila Congress; Smt. Errabelli Swarna, President of the Telangana Mahila Congress; and every Mahila Congress leader, office-bearer, member and worker across the nation.

“Karnala Shailaja Vice President, Telangana Mahila Congress

CHANGE OF NAME

SHAIK ABDUL QHAYUM S/O ABBAS ALI (Old Name) R/o Sanjay Nagar, Adilabad, Telangana have changed my name as **ABDUL QAYYUM S/O ABBAS ALI (New Name)** R/o H.No. 4-6-108/29, Sanjay Nagar, Dist: Adilabad, Telangana (New).

షేక్ అబ్దుల్ ఖయ్యూం స/o అబ్బాస్ అలీ (పాత పేరు) R/o సంజయ్ నగర్ అదిలాబాద్, తెలంగాణ గల పేరుని అబ్దుల్ ఖయ్యూం స/o అబ్బాస్ అలీ (కొత్త పేరు) ఇంటి నెంబర్ 4-6-108/29 సంజయ్ నగర్, అదిలాబాద్, తెలంగాణ గా మార్చబడింది.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Call for global pause on AI

The risks arising from the potential misuse of AI technologies are gaining greater attention not just from sociologists and policymakers but also from industry pioneers. The need for fair and balanced regulation is being felt across the world, particularly in countries which are at the forefront of AI research. The latest to offer words of caution and restraint is Dario Amodei, chief executive of Anthropic, a leading AI research company. Interestingly, Amodei's call for slowing down AI development till greater safety controls are put in place has found wide support from industry leaders. He rooted for independent auditors to check companies for safety standards and urged global cooperation in creating rules around AI development. Amodei, who co-founded Anthropic to focus on securely and carefully building AI,

says that while he believed the technology could bring many benefits, it was advancing at too rapid a pace for researchers to continue safely. The latest call for caution comes just a few days after one of the employees of Anthropic quit over concerns about the safety of the technology. The appeal for a global pause from a leading AI executive follows months of escalating concerns across the technology industry as AI research and development has made significant strides at companies like Anthropic, the developer of the Claude chatbot, as well as OpenAI, the creator of ChatGPT, and Google's DeepMind. At the same time, concerns rose recently after leading AI labs discovered security breaches carried out by their own programmes without their knowledge. The crux of the warning from a growing number of AI researchers is that the software could spin out of human control if left unchecked and unregulated.

Grand Ganesh Puja Held at Chilkanagar Marrichettu Under MULAKALAPALLI RAJESH MUDURAJ'S LEADERSHIP



“““CHILKANAGAR, SEPTEMBER 15 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Special puja was performed for the 16-foot-tall Lord Ganesha idol installed by the Navayug Youth Association at Marrichettu in Chilkanagar Division as part of the Ganesh Navratri celebrations. Idol donor and former Chilkanagar Division Congress Party president Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj, along with his family members, performed the rituals on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, Rajesh Mudiraj said he prayed for Lord Vigneshwara's blessings to remove obstacles from the lives of the people of Chilkanagar Division and bring happiness and prosperity to every family. He wished that all devotees celebrate the Ganesh Navratri festivities with devotion and grandeur. "Members of the Navayug Youth Association, devotees and local residents participated in the programme.

'Mooshak on Wheels' Hits Hyderabad Streets



Hyderabad, September 15 (Indian Chronicle) : Rapido's food delivery app 'Ownly' has announced the launch of its 'Mooshak on Wheels: Bappa's Delivery Partner' campaign as part of the Vinayaka Chavithi celebrations. The company said a branded van featuring a giant Mooshak idol will travel across major Ganesh pandals, residential colonies and busy areas of Hyderabad from September 14 to 25. The vehicle will cover Balapur, Old City, Nagole, Secunderabad, Hitech City, Madhapur and Kukatpally, mainly between 2 pm and 9 pm. The representatives said the campaign presents Lord Ganesha's trusted companion, Mooshak, as a modern delivery partner while becoming part of the festive spirit across the city.

House-to-House Fever Survey Conducted in Ghatjanagaon



"Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.16. "Wankidi: As part of the RFS programme, a house-to-house fever survey was conducted on Tuesday in Ghatjanagaon village under Khiridi Sub-Cen-

tre, PHC Wankidi. During the survey, health staff visited households and created awareness among the community on patient safety and the safe use of medicines. People were advised to take medicines only as prescribed by qualified medical professionals. Awareness was also created on the importance of screening eligible individuals for non-communicable diseases (NCDS) such as diabetes and hypertension. "As the monsoon season increases the risk of mosquito-borne diseases, villagers were advised to prevent mosquito breeding by avoiding stagnant water, maintaining clean surroundings and following proper personal hygiene. Later, a medical camp was organized in the village, where 53 patients were examined. Blood samples were collected from two suspected fever cases and sent for further investigation. HEO Ravidas, ANM Vimala, and AWT Meena participated in the programme.

Singapore Gives Priority to Primary Education



"Peddapalli District, September 15 (Indian Chronicle): "A government-organised Explore Visit is being undertaken in Singapore from September 12 to 19 to study the education system and policies followed in the country. As part of the visit, the delegation visited the National Institute of Education (NIE) in Singapore and is studying various aspects of

the country's education system. "The delegation observed that Singapore gives high priority to primary education and allocates around 12 per cent of its budget to education. Primary education is compulsory, with students undergoing six years of primary schooling. "The Singapore education system follows a 6+4+2 structure. Students undergo six years of primary education, followed by secondary education and post-secondary education."

At the end of primary education, students appear for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE). Based on their performance and academic assessment, students are guided into different educational pathways for their higher studies. "The delegation also studied Singapore's emphasis on critical thinking, analytical skills and practical learning. The education system focuses not only on academic knowledge but also on developing students' ability to think independently, analyse situations and solve problems. "The visit is aimed at understanding Singapore's successful education practices and exploring ways to adopt suitable approaches to improve the quality of education in India.

UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Urges Funds for Development of Crematoriums in Uppal Constituency

““UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 15 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy urged State Minister for IT, Electronics and Communications, Industries, Commerce and Legislative Affairs Duddilla Sridhar Babu to sanction the necessary funds for developing crematoriums and burial grounds in the Uppal constituency with modern facilities. The MLA submitted a representation to the minister in this regard. Speaking on the occasion, Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that Uppal is a densely populated urban constituency with several old and new residential colonies. He pointed out that many crematoriums and burial grounds in the constituency were established several years ago and are now in poor condition due to inadequate maintenance. He said families who lose their loved ones are facing difficulties in conducting last rites, with the problem placing an additional burden on poor and middle-class families. "----- Priority to Basic Infrastructure" The MLA said there is an urgent need to provide basic infrastructure at crematoriums, including compound walls, main entrance gates, CC roads, internal pathways, shelters and waiting halls for family members, drinking water, toilets, electricity and lighting. He also emphasized the need for modern electric and gas-based cremation facilities, modernization of cremation platforms, greenery, cleanliness and sanitation facilities. Bandari Lakshma Reddy urged the government to consider provid-



ing modern amenities along with essential facilities at crematoriums as part of its responsibility to ensure dignified last rites for every individual. He appealed to Minister Sridhar Babu to sanction a special grant for the development and modernization of crematoriums in the Uppal constituency and extend support for the construction of compound walls, shelters, modern cremation facilities, water supply, electricity and lighting. The MLA requested the minister to respond positively to this important public issue and sanction the funds at the earliest.

Smart Ration Cards Distributed in Bambara Gram Panchayat“



"Welfare schemes aimed at benefiting every eligible family: Sarpanch Bendare Krishnaji" "Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.16. "Wankidi: The distribution of Smart Ration Cards was held at Bambara Gram Panchayat in Wankidi Mandal of Komaram Bheem Asifabad district on Tuesday. The programme was conducted under the leadership of Gram Panchayat Sarpanch Bendare

Krishnaji. GPO Jade Vasanth brought the Smart Ration Cards to the village, following which Sarpanch Bendare Krishnaji personally handed over the cards to the eligible beneficiaries. "Speaking on the occasion, Sarpanch Bendare Krishnaji said that the Congress government is committed to the welfare of the people and is taking steps to ensure that ration cards reach every eligible family. He said the government's fine rice scheme is being implemented more effectively through the ration card system, providing quality rice to poor and deserving families. "He urged beneficiaries not to sell the fine rice supplied by the government under any circumstances and advised them to make proper use of the welfare benefits being provided to them. "He further stated that the Gram Panchayat would extend all necessary support to ensure that government welfare schemes reach every eligible family in the village. Deputy Sarpanch Jade Santosh, Ward Member Bhuri Salakka, Gram Panchayat Secretary Durgam Dharmayya, Ration Dealer Raheed Pasha, JPO Jade Vasanth and others were present at the programme.

Grand Ganesh Chaturthi Navratri Celebrations at Uppal Bhagayath HMDA Layout“

Massive Lord Shiva Idol and Beautifully Decorated Ganesh Mandapam Attract Devotees "UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 15 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Ganesh Chaturthi Navratri celebrations, organised by the Uppal Bhagayath Welfare Association, began on a grand note on the first day at the Uppal Bhagayath HMDA Layout. The beautifully decorated Ganesh mandapam and the massive Lord Shiva idol installed at the venue have been attracting devotees. "Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the celebrations as the chief guest on the opening day and performed special puja to Lord Ganesha. He later received teertha prasadam and expressed his wish that the blessings of Lord Vighneshwara remain with everyone. "The MLA congratulated the Uppal Bhagayath Ganesh Utsav Committee members for organising the Ganesh Navratri celebrations in a grand manner. Members of the Uppal Bhagayath Welfare Association, residents of Bhagayath, women, Ganesh Utsav Committee members and local BRS party leaders, among others, participated in the programme.



‘Feel My Love’ Special Poster Released on the Occasion of Vinayaka Chavithi; Promotional Events to be Held Across Telugu States Soon



"Sri Lakshmi Jyothi Creations presents the feel-good romantic emotional entertainer 'Feel My Love', produced by A.N. Balaji. The film stars Adithya Bhaskar, Ayra, Ammu Abhirami, Madhusudhan Rao, Rajayyaappa, Nobel James and Priyanka in key roles. Written and directed by Hari Prakash M, the film promises a refreshing blend of romance, comedy and emotions with content aimed at today's youth. "The title poster of the film, released earlier, received a positive response from audiences. Now, on the auspicious occasion of Vinayaka Chavithi, the makers have unveiled a special poster featuring the principal characters from the film. "The film's audio will be released grandly soon. Following the audio launch, the team is planning to conduct promotional events on a large scale across both Telugu states. "Shot across the beautiful locations of Chennai, Puducherry, Munnar and Kodaikanal, the film's picturesque visuals and scenic locations are expected to be among its major attractions. "M.S. Satish is handling the cinematography, while Raja Ravivarma S and Balasubrahmanyam G are composing the music. Ajay Manoj is the editor. "Feel My Love' is set for a Pan-India release in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi languages. The makers will announce the film's release date soon. "Cast: Adithya Bhaskar, Ayra, Ammu Abhirami, Madhusudhan Rao, Rajayyaappa, Nobel James, Priyanka and others "Technical Crew: "Banner: Sri Lakshmi Jyothi Creations "Producer: A.N. Balaji "Writer & Director: Hari Prakash M "Music Directors: Raja Ravivarma S, Balasubrahmanyam G "Cinematographer: M.S. Satish "Editor: Ajay Manoj "PRO: Sai Satish

Funds Sought for Development of Unified Chilkanagar Division“



--BANNALA PRAVEEN MUDURAJ Appeals to Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta Along with MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy "UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 15 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, along with Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, appealed to Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta to allocate funds for development works in Beerappagadda and Chilkanagar areas of the unified Chilkanagar Division. They submitted a representation to the Zonal Commissioner at her office on Tuesday.

"Bannala Praveen Mudiraj requested funds for the construction of CC roads in several locations, including Sairam Nagar Colony, Indira Nagar Colony, the main road near Prashanth Nagar Community Hall, the road from the Shiva Temple in Bank Colony towards Sairam Nagar Colony, the streets opposite Chilkanagar Bodrai, and Road No. 3 in Kummurikunta."

He also requested that the tender process for already sanctioned works be completed without further delay and that CC road construction works be taken up immediately. "Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta responded positively to the requests. She directed SC Ramesh Babu to immediately invite tenders for the sanctioned works. She further instructed officials to prepare new proposals and sanction funds for CC road construction in areas where box drain construction has been completed. "The Zonal Commissioner also directed officials to expedite the tender process for new CC road works and take necessary steps to commence construction at the earliest.

District Roller Skating Championships from October 24



“Three-day event to be held at Saroornagar Stadium”“Hyderabad, September 15 : The executive committee meeting of the Rangareddy District Roller Skating

Association was held on Sunday at Saroornagar Stadium. The meeting, chaired by the association's General Secretary G. Satya, discussed district and state-level competitions, training for athletes, and the development of roller skating. “The Rangareddy District Roller Skating Championships–2026 will be held on October 24, 25 and 26. Competitions will be conducted in speed and artistic categories. The dates and venues for Roller Hockey, Inline Hockey and other events will be announced shortly, the association said.”“The executive committee also discussed preparing district athletes for the upcoming 13th State Roller Skating Championships, identifying talented players, and providing them with better training and competitive opportunities. It was decided to work in coordination with athletes, coaches and parents to further develop roller skating in the district.”“General Secretary G. Satya, Treasurer V. Srinu, Vice-Presidents T. Nagaraju and E. Srisaillam, Joint Secretaries Ravikumar and B. Naresh, executive members M. Srikanth, B. Venkatesh, P. Srikanth, Sai Teja and others attended the meeting.

Central BJP Government Acting Unfairly Towards BCs

“Police Foil Attempt to Burn Effigy of Central Government – BC Leaders Prevented”“Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.16. “Asifabad: Protesting against the alleged stand of the BJP-led Central Government on the BC caste census, members of the BC Welfare Association attempted to burn an effigy of the BJP in Komaram Bheem Asifabad district headquarters on Tuesday. However, the police intervened and prevented the protestors from carrying out the effigy-burning programme. Speaking on the occasion, BC Welfare Association District President Rupnar Ramesh alleged that although the Central Government announced on May 1, 2025, that a BC caste census would be conducted as part of the nationwide census, it was now failing to conduct the exercise in a scientific manner, thereby causing injustice to BC communities. He demanded that OBC families be comprehensively enumerated, a separate BC column be created in the census, and a unique code be assigned to every caste. He alleged that the BJP's decision to boycott the State Assembly when a resolution seeking a separate BC column was introduced was evidence of the party's attitude towards BCs.”“Rupnar Ramesh said that their fight for the rights of BCs would not stop even if the



police obstructed their protests. He warned that the agitation would be intensified until the Central Government responds positively and conducts the BC caste census scientifically. BC Youth Association District President Avidapu Pranay, BC Students' Association District President Lobade Lahu Kumar, BC Welfare Association Asifabad Mandal President Sai Krishna, along with leaders Asad, Jayaraj, Venkanna, Mubeen and other activists participated in the programme.”

PARAMESWAR REDDY Strives to Resolve Public Grievances“



Takes up colony issues with officials over phone and initiates immediate action for solutions”“UPPAL, September 15 (Indian Chronicle): Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy met people from various parts of the constituency at his residence in Uppal and received their grievances and

representations. “Residents of several colonies brought to his notice issues including drinking water supply, internal CC roads and drainage construction. Responding to their concerns, Parameswar Reddy spoke to the concerned officials over the phone and initiated steps for their immediate resolution. He assured the residents that he would take up other issues with the government and make every effort to resolve them.”“Meanwhile, newly elected Old Ramanthapur Chinna Jenda Welfare Association president Boddupalli Santosh Kumar, along with executive committee members Satish Kumar, Alladi Ramu Yadav, Shambhu Lingam, Ranjith Reddy and others, paid a courtesy visit to Parameswar Reddy. He congratulated the new committee members and advised them to work for the development of Old Ramanthapur. “Parameswar Reddy stated that he would always remain accessible to the public by directly understanding their problems and working towards their resolution. Welfare association members from various colonies, Congress party leaders and activists participated in the programme.

Meeting Organises

“On Monday a meeting of the Executive body of the CPI (Communist party of India) unit West Champaran was organised at party office Balram Bhavan , Bettiah in which several members of the Executive body participated and discussed the political and social status of the country as well as attacked the policy of the BJP government. In this meeting they also expressed their happiness of the Delhi rally of the Party. As the several leaders of UP were made house arrest still several party workers from UP participated in this rally.” As the state observer of the Party Vijay Shanker Singh said that the rising trend of youths, labourers, teachers and women interest “ communist thought proved the fact that the coming period of the country would under the control of the people of communist thought. He also showed his announce on rising trend of the

prices of essential commodities. The sky rocketing prices have broken the backbone of the poor and middle class families. The farmers are under the pressure of loan but the government only helps corporate families in this country which proves the apathetic attitude of the government towards the peasants of the country.. As the party would celebrate Gandhi Jayanti (2nd Oct) as social harmony day and on 7th Oct Kranti Divas would be celebrated and on this day the youths of the party would take an oath regards safety and security of the youths and students of the country. As on 1st Dec to 3rd Dec the party would organise a program to ' Jail Bhao Abhiyan' in front of every collectorate of the state.” Others who were presented in the meeting as the District Secretary West Champaran-OM Prakash Kranti, Kedar Chaudhary etc.”

Learners Academy Holds 24th Investiture Ceremony“



“Hyderabad, September 15 (Indian Chronicle) : Learners Academy conducted its 24th Investiture Ceremony at Lal Bahadur Indoor Stadium in Hyderabad with grandeur. More than 1,500 students, parents and staff members attended the event. The newly appointed student leadership team was presented with badges and administered the leadership oath. The march-past, flag formations, skating and karate demonstrations were among the highlights of the ceremony. The chief guest, Prof.(Dr.) V. Balakista Reddy, Chairman of the Telangana State Council of Higher Education, advised students to pursue higher goals and develop a strong sense of responsibility and leadership. Dr. Raj Narayan Mudiraj, State President of the Telangana Intellectuals Forum; Dr. Mohammed Akhtar Ali, Associate Pro-

fessor at Osmania University; Dr. Sheikh Yasar Aman, Secretary of London Academy; and Sayeed Sophia, Board of Director, also participated and addressed the gathering. Learners Academy stated that for the past 24 years, it has been focusing not only on quality education but also on sports, leadership and the overall development of students. The academy is continuing its expansion with smart classrooms and a new school, it said.

Begumpet cab driver murder: Maharashtra gang held for allegedly stealing cab

Hyderabad: The police have solved the murder case of Rajshekar (35), a cab driver from Begumpet, who was found dead at Rudraram in Patancheru.

The investigation revealed that a four-member gang from Maharashtra allegedly planned the murder to steal his cab. Rajshekar, who was working as a cab driver and providing transportation services to employees of a software company, had gone missing after taking passengers in his vehicle.

DIG inspects Karimnagar Town ACP office, Reviews pending cases, CCTNS functioning and law-and-order situation; directs police to ensure peaceful Ganesh festivities.



Karimnagar September 15, Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): Rajanna Zone-III Deputy Inspector General

(DIG) and Cyberabad Joint Commissioner of Police Sunpreet Singh, IPS, along with Karimnagar Police Commissioner Gaush Alam, IPS, inspected the office of the Karimnagar Town Assistant Commissioner of Police on Tuesday.

During the inspection, the senior officers reviewed crime records, pending cases, the functioning of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), and the law-and-order situation in the division. The officers directed the police personnel to expedite the disposal of pending cases and remain accessible to the public. They stressed the need to ensure speedy justice to victims and improve the effectiveness of policing at the field level. With Ganesh Chaturthi festivities approaching, the senior officers directed the officials to make adequate security arrangements and take preventive measures to ensure that the celebrations were conducted peacefully and without any untoward incidents.

The visiting officers were accorded a formal welcome by the police personnel and received a guard of honour. Karimnagar Town ACP Venkataswamy, Town Inspectors Ramachander Rao, Tirumal and Pullaiah, besides other police officers and personnel of the division, participated in the inspection.

Make TAGS 4th State Conference a Grand Success



“Appeal by District Vice-President of the State Conference Invitation Committee Godiselu Karthik”“Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.16. “Wankidi: Telangana Adivasi Girijana Sangham (TAGS) State Conference Invitation Committee District Vice-President Godiselu Karthik appealed to all Adivasis to make the 4th State Conference of TAGS a grand success. The conference will be held from October 1 to 4 in Asifabad town, Komaram Bheem Asifabad district. On this occasion, TAGS conference pamphlets were released at Rajulaguda village in Wankidi Mandal. “Speaking on the occasion, Godiselu Karthik said that the district was named after the legendary tribal leader

Komaram Bheem, who fought for Adivasi rights with the slogan “Jal, Jangal, Zameen.” He said it was significant that the fourth state conference of Telangana Adivasi Girijana Sangham, an organisation working for the rights and welfare of Adivasis, was being conducted in the district. He called upon all Adivasis from across the district to attend the state conference in large numbers and make it a grand success. He said that the conference would discuss various issues concerning Adivasis and chalk out a future course of action for safeguarding their rights. DYFI Mandal Secretary Durgam Nikhil, Adivasi youth Suryya, Suresh, Shekhar, Nagu, Chitru, Ankush, Manohar, Nilvantharao and others participated in the programme.

KLH Students Win First Prize at Global CodeVerse

“Hyderabad, September 15 (Indian Chronicle) : The 'HackHers' team from KLH Aziznagar secured the first prize in the Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning category at the national-level 24-hour mega hackathon 'Global CodeVerse 2026' and received a cash prize of Rs. 15,000, KL Deemed to be University Vice-President Engineer Koneru Lakshman Havish said in a statement on Tuesday. Speaking along with KLH Aziznagar Principal Dr. A. Ramakrishna, he said the award was presented for 'Krishi-Nethra', an AI-based crop health and risk alert platform developed with Telugu voice support by B.Tech CSE second-year students Yedla Akshaya and Tirunagari Varsha. The platform helps farmers identify potential crop-related risks at an early stage and provides recommendations on appropriate preventive and corrective measures, he said.



Smart Ration Cards Distributed in Khamana



Efforts underway to ensure welfare schemes reach every eligible family: Sarpanch Gedam Sunitha”“Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.16. “Wankidi: A Smart Ration Card distribution programme was organised at Khamana Gram Panchayat in Wankidi Mandal of Komaram Bheem Asifabad district. The programme was conducted under the leadership of Gram Panchayat Sarpanch Gedam Sunitha and Deputy Sarpanch Lahu Kumar. Smart Ration Cards were distributed to eligible beneficiaries during the programme. “Speaking on the occasion, Sarpanch Gedam Sunitha said the Gram Panchayat would extend all necessary support to ensure that government welfare schemes reach every eligible family. She urged beneficiaries to make proper use of the ration cards and avail themselves of the benefits provided by the government. She said that elected representatives and officials were working in coordination to ensure that government welfare schemes are delivered transparently to eligible beneficiaries. Families who are eligible but have not yet received ration cards were advised to approach the concerned officials and get their details enrolled. Deputy Sarpanch Lahu Kumar said the distribution of Smart Ration Cards would make it easier for eligible

families to access ration supplies and other welfare benefits provided by the government. He appealed to villagers to make effective use of the welfare schemes. “Village Secretary Vilas, GPO Rajeshwar, Karobar Ashok, Gram Panchayat staff, beneficiaries and local residents participated in the programme. Beneficiaries who received the Smart Ration Cards expressed their happiness over the initiative.

MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy Participates in Ganesh Puja at Uppal Zonal Office“

“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 15 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy participated in a special Ganesh Puja organized at the Uppal Zonal Office on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi and offered prayers to Lord Ganesh. “Along with Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, the MLA performed the puja with devotion and prayed for the happiness, prosperity, good health and well-being of all people with the blessings of Lord Vighneshwara. “MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy urged people to celebrate the Ganesh Navaratri festivities with devotion and in a peaceful atmosphere. He also wished for the continued development of Uppal constituency and peace and prosperity for all with the blessings of Lord Ganesh. “BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, zonal office officials and staff, among others, participated in the programme.”

Man impersonates ‘Air Force Squadron Leader’, cheats woman of Rs 1.95 lakh



GNS News Agency, Sept 15

A 33-year-old man was on Friday (September 11) arrested by the Rajkot City Police for allegedly impersonating a Squadron Leader in the Suryakiran Aerobatics Team (SKAT) of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and cheating a woman of Rs 1.95 lakh with the false promise of a job.The case followed the first “e-Zero FIR” that was transferred to Rajkot City Police since the initiative was launched in late August. Under this initiative of the Gujarat Police, a complaint can be directly filed by calling the 1930 Cyber helpline, after which it is first filed as a Zero FIR and then transferred to the relevant police station.

In this case, the complainant, who is in her mid-twenties and originally from Rajkot, is currently working in Gandhinagar. The woman filed the complaint on September 4. The woman had got in touch with the accused, Prateek

Bharadwaj, through his Instagram profile wherein his profile photo is a selfie wearing what appears to the untrained eye as a uniform of the Indian Air Force, police said.cheat Instagram profile screenshot of the alleged fraud.“Prateek Bharadwaj became friends with this woman who approached him after seeing his Instagram profile and believing him to be in the Air Force. He told her he was posted at Bidar Air Force Base in Karnataka,” the police said in a statement.“He then cheated her of Rs 1.95 lakh with the promise of getting her a job in the IAF,” the statement said.

Bharadwaj actually works at a travel agency in Rajkot, ACP (West) R S Bariya said, adding that the accused had put up several videos of SKAT on his Instagram handle, allegedly to cheat people. The officer added that Bharadwaj has two earlier FIRs filed against him under Gujarat’s Prohibition Act.There are several videos on the purported Instagram handle, mostly of Squadron 52 (SKAT), including those on its 30th raising day on May 26, 2026. There are also videos from the Independence Day and Republic Day celebrations, as well as of performances at various airshows. The posts, purportedly made by Bharadwaj, are from February 2025 onwards.Speaking to The Indian Express, Inspector K K Gohil of the Gandhigram-2 (University) police station said, “It primarily appears that he may have cheated someone for the first time because he had made no attempts to hide his real identity or mobile number while cheating the complainant, who aspired to join the Air Force.”Further investigation in this case and whether there have been other purported victims, is currently underway police said.

Kolkata’s Eden Gardens set for grand Durga Puja opening with PM Modi

Bengal is set to witness a new-style inauguration of Durga Puja festivities this year, with a grand inauguration ceremony planned at Kolkata’s Eden Gardens on the day of Mahalaya, October 10, which marks the start of 15-day-long ‘Devi Paksha’.During the previous Mamata regime, Durga Puja programmes were held on Red Road after the festival.

For the first time, the event is likely to be attended by a prime minister, as Chief Minister Suvenud Adhikari has announced that Narendra Modi may personally perform the ritual of opening the eyes of the Durga Ma idol at Eden Gardens.“We will have the biggest Durga Puja event on Mahalaya in Eden Gardens. This will be the beginning of the pujas,” CM Adhikari said at a Durga Puja preparatory meeting in Kolkata.The event may also feature performances by playback singers Kumar Sanu, Shreya Ghoshal, Abhijit Bhattacharya, Monali Thakur, and Madhusree Bhattacharya.State administration sources said the West Bengal Sports Department has sent a letter to the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) seeking to reserve the booking of Eden Gardens for 21 days from September 25.The letter stated, “Eden Gardens is required to be booked and made available for organising a series of cultural and celebratory programmes in connection with proposed Durga Puja Celebrations, 2026, including a grand cultural programme, for the period from 25th September to 15th October, 2026, including necessary preparatory and dismantling arrangements.”“This is the first time such an event will take place here. This is the first time the PM will come to Eden Gardens for a cultural event,” CAB president and former Team India captain Sourav Ganguly told

Apart from the mega inauguration event, various programmes will be organised between September 25 and October 15.According to sources, when Chief Minister Suvenud Adhikari enters Eden Garden with the Prime Minister, the surroundings will resound with the “ululation” of 1,000 women, and 10,000 Dhak (Bengali traditional drums)



will be played. During the stadium procession, Shreya Ghoshal will sing a puja song.Contrary to previous years, Red Road, which hosts post-Durga Puja programmes, will set the stage for a road show before the start of the festivities. Red Road will be decorated with lights for the puja procession, which will feature 23 different forms of dance from 23 districts, showcasing Bengal’s cultural heritage.

The event will feature performances ranging from the Tamang Selo of Darjeeling to the Lepcha dance of Kalimpong, as well as the Rajbanshi folk dances of Jalpaiguri, North Dinajpur, and South Dinajpur. In addition, there will be Gambhira from Malda, Baul from Birbhum, Raibeshi from East Burdwan, Santali dance from West Burdwan, Gaudiya Vaishnava dance from Nadia, and Chhau from Bankura and Purulia. There will also be Santali dance from Jhargram, Patua songs from East Midnapore, Ramprasadi from Hooghly, folk dance from Howrah, and Banbibi Pala from North 24 Parganas, along with various performances from all districts.PM Modi and CM Adhikari will also virtually inaugurate 10,000 Durga Puja inaugurations across different parts of the state from Edens. The event will also include a state-of-the-art 3D projection mapping show on the theme ‘Ma Aschen-Uma Story’. Drone shows and fireworks will also be organised at the event.

Man impersonates ‘Air Force Squadron Leader’, cheats woman of Rs 1.95 lakh



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In this case, the complainant, who is in her mid-twenties and originally from Rajkot, is currently working in Gandhinagar. The woman filed the complaint on September 4.The woman had got in touch with the accused, Prateek Bharadwaj, through his Instagram profile wherein his profile photo is a selfie wearing what appears to the untrained eye as a uniform of the Indian Air Force, police said.cheat Instagram profile screenshot of the alleged fraud.“Prateek Bharadwaj became friends with this woman who approached him after seeing his Instagram profile and believing him to be in the Air Force. He told her he was posted at Bidar Air Force Base in Karnataka,” the police said in a statement.“He then cheated her of Rs 1.95 lakh with the promise of getting her a job in the IAF,” the statement said.Bidar AFB is indeed home to Squadron 52, also known as SKAT.

Bharadwaj actually works at a travel agency in Rajkot, ACP (West) R S Bariya said, adding that the accused had put up several videos of SKAT on his Instagram handle, allegedly to cheat people. The officer added that Bharadwaj has two earlier FIRs filed against him under Gujarat’s Prohibition Act.There are several videos on the purported Instagram handle, mostly of Squadron 52 (SKAT), includ-

ing those on its 30th raising day on May 26, 2026. There are also videos from the Independence Day and Republic Day celebrations, as well as of performances at various airshows. The posts, purportedly made by Bharadwaj, are from February 2025 onwards.

Dancer arrested in sexual harassment case



Hyderabad: A dancer who had earlier emerged as the winner of a Telugu dance reality show has been arrested in connection with a sexual harassment case registered at Miyapur Police Station.

According to police, a young woman approached the Miyapur police on September 9 and lodged a complaint against the suspect, Raju. She allegedly accused him of sexually harassing her by promising to help her secure opportunities in the film industry.Based on the complaint, Miyapur police registered a case and took up investigation. During the course of the investigation, police arrested Raju and produced him before the court. The court subsequently remanded him to judicial custody.

The case reportedly remained confidential for several days, with police not disclosing details of the complaint or the arrest immediately. Further investigation is underway to establish the circumstances surrounding the allegations.Police are expected to examine the complainant’s statement and other relevant evidence as part of the investigation.

Combining diet, exercise offers most sustained weight loss: NIN study



GNS News Agency, Sept 15

Hyderabad: Combining dietary intervention with physical activity provides the greatest sustained reduction in body weight, an evidence-based study by Hyderabad-based National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN) said.The study, published in the international research journal Obesity Pil-lars, is based on an umbrella review which brought together

evidence from 112 systematic reviews and meta-analyses, covering 2,332 unique randomised controlled trials and 5,07,460 participant-observations from more than 50 countries.

Led by NIN researchers Dr Mahesh Kumar Mummasi and Dr Samarasimha Reddy, it compared dietary, physical activity, lifestyle and combined interventions among adults with overweight or obesity. The review found combining diet and physical activity resulted in the greatest improvements in some glycaemic outcomes. Beyond 12 months, this combination was associated with reductions in fasting blood glucose and insulin resistance.Physical activity also produced the largest reduction in systolic blood pressure of about 6.10 mmHg at 6-12 months. Intermittent fasting showed the largest reduction in diastolic blood pressure in the short term, and reduced weight up to 12 months, though this effect was not sustained beyond 12 months. Dr Bharati Kulkarni, Director, ICMR-NIN, said, “The findings reinforce the importance of an integrated approach to obesity management. Healthy dietary practices, regular physical activity and behavioural support each have a role, but their combination can provide broader and more sustained benefits.”

Mayawati’s ‘final call’: No political role for nephews Akash, Ishan in BSP

The “family issues” within the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) show no signs of ending, with party president Mayawati on Saturday announcing her “antim faisla (final decision)” that neither of her two nephews, Akash Anand and Ishan Anand, will engage in politics by holding any party position.However, she said their father and her younger brother, Anand Kumar, could seek the help of his only daughter, Kumari Deepika Anand, and, if required, entrust her with his party responsibilities in the future.The announcement comes days after Mayawati removed Akash from party responsibilities and appointed Ishan as the party’s chief sector coordinator.

In a post in Hindi on X, Mayawati said on Saturday that because she was unmarried, she was forced to keep Anand Kumar with her to take care of her and carry out important party responsibilities under her supervision.“...but if his family members also take advantage of this, then it will not be in the interest of the party and the movement. Therefore, today this is my final decision and pledge that none of his sons, in particular, will be given the opportunity to engage in politics by holding any position, big or small, within the BSP,” Mayawati said and added that if Kumar needs another member to assist her (Mayawati), he can seek the help of Kumari Deepika Anand, who is currently studying law. Based on her honesty, loyalty and efficiency, he may entrust her with his own responsibilities in the party, she added.

She clarified again that Kumar will not entrust this responsibility to his two sons, nor to any of their young children in the future. “Furthermore, if his daughter is not willing, he may, with the party’s consensus, hand over this responsibility to another missionary worker of the party from the Dalit community,” Mayawati added.She further said that



just as party founder Kanshi Ram stood firmly against “nepotism”, as his disciple, she too was firmly committed to it and had demonstrated that as well. “If I weren’t a girl, I wouldn’t have kept any of my brothers and sisters with me, just like Kanshi Ram ji. But because I am a girl, I have been forced to keep my youngest brother, Shri Anand Kumar, with me to ensure my safety, and to continue moving forward in the party with full respect and dignity without hassles. And now that his children are grown and married, I am also facing a lot of difficulties. However, I will not allow any harm to the party by not falling into any kind of attachment.”

After giving three other members of her family key positions in the party and paving the way for another member, Mayawati said, “Similarly, in the party organisation and even in the future when the government is formed, no matter who it is, only that one person concerned will be given a chance, but under his cover no other member of his family will be given any benefit etc., so that the BSP remains free from nepotism.”

In dry Gujarat, ambulance is caught ferrying booze, not patients

In all, police recovered 672 flasks, each of 180 ml capacity, of McDowell’s No. 1 Original Reserve Whisky worth Rs 1.35 lakh, and 1,296 flasks, also of 180 ml capacity, of Blender’s Pride Reserve Whisky worth Rs 2.21 lakh. In all, police recovered 672 flasks, each of 180 ml capacity, of McDowell’s No. 1 Original Reserve Whisky worth Rs 1.35 lakh, and 1,296 flasks, also of 180 ml capacity, of Blender’s Pride Reserve Whisky worth Rs 2.21 lakh.

The Gujarat Police on Friday (September 11) stopped an ambulance on the Bhavnagar-Rajkot highway that passes through Babara taluka of Amreli district.While the type of vehicle and its speed suggested it was transporting a patient, it turned out to be ferrying an altogether different kind of cargo: 1,968 bottles of illegal Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) stuffed inside a hidden cabinet.

The Amreli Police had been tipped off that a vehicle was transporting illegal IMFL across state lines, between Madhya Pradesh and Rajkot in Gujarat, and would pass through their district. IMFL is the official term used to describe Western-style hard spirits manufactured in India.Based on the information they received, the police set up a watch on the highway. And sure enough, on Friday evening, they spotted the ambulance rolling up. The vehicle was flagged down, and the driver was asked to open the back of the vehicle. However, when the police inspected it, everything seemed in order. But then they decided to check the medical cabinet in the vehicle in which equipment is stored.

After police had used screwdrivers to unscrew the top of the cabinet, they found what they were looking for – an empty space filled choc-a-block with bottles of liquor. In all, police recovered 672 flasks, each of 180 ml capacity, of McDowell’s No. 1 Original Reserve Whisky worth Rs 1.35 lakh, and 1,296 flasks, also of 180 ml capacity, of Blender’s Pride Reserve Whisky worth Rs 2.21 lakh.All of the liquor,



along with the ambulance, were seized by the police. The driver of the vehicle, whom police identified as 34-year-old Sagar alias Lalo Kamlesh Gohel, a resident of Gondal, was booked under the Prohibition Act and placed under arrest.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Inspector R R Parmar of Babara police station said that Gohel was not only the driver but also the owner of the ambulance that was being used for bootlegging. Inspector Parmar said that this was Gohel’s second trip smuggling IMFL from Madhya Pradesh to Gujarat.“Gohel said he had purchased the ambulance from another person, who had, in turn, purchased it from a hospital in Surat. We are checking the registration records as part of further investigation,” Parmar said.The Gujarat Prohibition Act, 1949, regulates the manufacturing, sale, possession, and consumption of alcohol and related intoxicants within the state of Gujarat. Under Section 65 of the Act, anyone who “imports or exports any intoxicant”, “bottles liquor”, or “possesses, transports, sells or buys” any intoxicant, “shall, on conviction, be punished...with imprisonment for a term which may extend to ten years and with fine which may extend to five lakh rupees”.

Yadav community to perform unique ritual at Komuravelly temple for KCR’s well-being

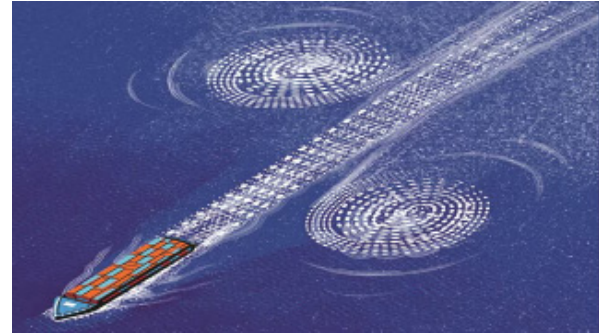
Siddipet: Yadav community people will perform a unique ritual praying for the well-being of former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao at Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple Komuravelly on Sunday.

Speaking to news reporters at Vemulwada Kaman in Siddipet on Saturday, Yadav community leader Pochaboyina Srihari Yadav said that they would draw multiple pedda patnams, a unique ritual, being performed on the premises of the Komuravelly temple on Sunday morning during which over 100 Yadavs would sit on them.He said that they would pray that Rao would live for 100 years. Srihari said that they had performed a similar ritual by undertaking a padayatra from Siddipet town some eight years ago. He said Rao was able to accomplish much of what he had envisioned for Telangana following their prayers.Srihari called upon the Yadav community people to participate in the proposed ritual in large numbers on Sunday, to make it a grand success. Yadav leaders Mailla Ilaiha Yadav, Nune



Kumar Yadav, Gandham Raju Yadav and others were present.

Trump’s America First, an opening for Indian farms



Trump's America First, an opening for Indian farmsIndia's agricultural trade can grow in an increasingly reciprocal global market if we negotiate smartly and prioritise our investments that make agriculture more competitive rather than leaning towards heavy subsidies as in the case of fertilisers and free power. (Illustration by CR Sasikumar)

US President Donald Trump's latest push for "reciprocal tariffs" is aimed at reducing trade deficits and aligns with his broader "America First" policy. In 2024, the US trade deficit had surged to \$918.4 billion, from \$784.9 billion in 2023. The largest deficit was recorded with China at \$295.4 billion, while India accounted for only \$45.7 billion. Trump has, however, frequently criticised India's high tariffs and trade barriers on American goods, referring to India as the "tariff king". During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent US visit, Trump reiterated that India would not be exempt from these proposed tariffs, which are designed to match the import tariffs that other countries impose on US goods. We don't know yet whether these reciprocal tariffs will be on all goods or sector by sector or commodity by commodity. But it is better to prepare for the worst, and hope for the best. According to WTO data, India imposes significantly higher tariffs than the US, with a simple average rate of 17 percent on all goods, compared to about 3.3 percent imposed by the US (see graphics). The trade-weighted tariffs further highlight this gap — 12 per cent in India vs. 2.2 per cent in the US. However, the most striking difference is in the agriculture sector, where India's tariffs are notably higher — the simple average tariff being 39 per cent, and trade-weighted average being 65 per cent. In comparison, the US maintains relatively low agricultural tariffs with a simple average of 5 per cent and a trade-weighted rate of 4 per cent. Given this stark tariff disparity in agri-products, the proposed reciprocal tariffs could have a substantial impact on India's agricultural exports to the US — its largest trading partner. The US is India's largest agri-export market, giving a trade surplus of \$3.46 billion in 2023-24. Key Indian exports include shrimp, basmati rice, processed foods, and honey, while the US exports to India include almonds, cotton, ethanol, and soybean oil. If Trump's tariff threats materialise, Indian agri-exports — especially duty-free items like shrimp — could become uncompetitive, while imports from the US may rise. This could shrink or even erase India's agri-trade surplus with the US. Thus, cool headed negotiations are important for India to maximise its gains by asking for market access of a number of agri-commodities where India has comparative advantage, and lowering duties on others where US may like to export to

What Bengaluru’s flex banners say about who we are

Ravikumar Kashi says that his interest in flex banners began around 2007 when he began photographing them for a series of his artworks and to use as material for an art appreciation course he teaches at the RV College of Architecture, Bengaluru. "For the course, I introduce them to the fundamentals of art language," he explains, pointing out that things like size, scale, proportion, shape, position, association, framing, and proximity play a significant role in our perception of any image, whether a flex board or an art object. "I was using these images as part of a classroom exercise to show how the visual language we were discussing in class could also be seen on the street," says Kashi, who recently delivered a talk titled Bangalore/ Bengaluru Changes at the Alliance Literary Festival, Bengaluru.

Kashi started this photography journey using a digital camera that he would lug around with him. "If I see something, I take a picture and document it," he says. "It was all in one big folder. Nowadays, I have started putting it in different sub-folders, but it is still not properly segregated." He admits that back when he started, "it wasn't very planned. I had no clear idea why I was doing it, but I knew in my gut that these are important because I have studied the history of visual culture a little." A few years down the line, however, the project's raison d'être became much more evident. "All I am doing now is collecting, but as I do so, more and more, I realise the value of it," says Kashi, who has shot between 7000-8000 images so far and intends to keep doing so. He thinks of this exercise as living documentation of sorts. "Flex banners, which usually vanish in a few days, are something in flux. Unless you document it day in and day out, it is not going to be there," says Kashi, who went on to publish Flexing Muscles (2019), a bilingual series of essays linking these banners to the city's constantly evolving socio-cultural and political landscapes. In the first essay of Flexing Muscles, Kashi talks about how senes, "armies to safeguard Kannada land, language and culture" using flex banners to communicate their power and position. In the first essay of Flexing Muscles, Kashi talks about how senes, "armies to safeguard Kannada land, language and culture" using flex banners to communicate their power and position. | Photo Credit: Ravikumar KashiFlex banners, and by that same logic, posters, cutouts, statues, and vehicle images, have become a way to assert various identities, believes Kashi. "People are continuously communicating who they are and what they want, and then, because they can't find a voice in other ways, they use this medium of public visual culture to say something." In the first essay of Flexing Muscles, Kashi talks about how senes, "armies to safeguard Kannada land, language and culture" using flex banners to communicate their power and position. "It becomes a tool through which they announce and represent themselves," he says, tracing the evolution of linguistic identity politics in the city. There is a stark difference between what Bengaluru is today, "with its high-rise buildings, congested roads and saturated visual stimuli," and what it used to be: a laid-back pensioners paradise with excellent weather. But soon, the IT revolution started in the city, with Texas Instruments being the first to set up shop back in the mid-1980s. While the changing weather and the traffic were the most apparent manifestations of the city's transformation, writes Kashi, the cultural demographic and languages used in the city also underwent a tremendous

India. US interests are exporting whiskey, which attracts 150 per cent duty in India, walnuts and chicken legs attracting 100 per cent duty, skimmed milk powder (SMP) attracting 60 per cent duty, wheat, soyabean, and maize, which attract 40 per cent, 45 per cent, and 50 per cent import duty in India, besides non-tariff barriers of GM crops in India. While India has adopted Bt cotton, and its by-products such as GM cotton seed oil and cotton seed oil cake, which is used as feed, it continues to ban GM soy and maize, despite growing domestic demand for high-protein animal feed and ethanol production. This restrictive trade policy has frustrated the US, which remains a global leader in GM crop production with high yields. The challenge for India is to strike a balance between protecting its farmers and keeping its most lucrative export market open. India and the US are already holding discussions for a broader trade agreement with the ambitious "Mission 500" which aims to boost bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030. There is much scope for increasing India's agri-exports to the US, provided India gets market access. Food preparations, butter, bovine meat cuts, all attract more than 20 per cent import duty in the US. These can be negotiated to lower levels provided India is also ready to lower its import duties. Our analysis shows that Indian agriculture is quite competitive and its exports can increase provided export policy remains open. Many fruits and vegetables ranging from bananas to okra have export potential. But it will require streamlining their export value chains. India has been open to selective concessions. For instance, in Washington apples (from 50 per cent to 15 per cent). A phased tariff reduction in food preparations (currently at 150 per cent), walnuts (100 per cent), cut chicken legs (100 per cent), and dairy products such as cheese and skimmed milk powder (30–60 per cent) should be implemented, particularly as US is keen on pushing these to Indian markets. While tariffs on commodities like walnuts, cranberries, and blueberries can be reduced immediately, products where domestic producers remain competitive, such as poultry (cut chicken legs), should undergo gradual tariff reductions. Most readTariff concessions are like a band aid in the short-term. In the medium to long term, we need to set our house in order. First, R&D investments is one major action. Currently, central and state agricultural investments together remain below 0.5 per cent of agri-GDP, far lower than global comparisons. India must invest at least 1 per cent of its agri-GDP in R&D, ensuring that exports remain competitive rather than dependent on trade protection. Second, India must modernise its agri-value chains including expanding cold storage capacity, upgrading logistics infrastructure, and ensuring better quality certification and traceability. Key production clusters must be developed to agri-export hubs with the help of APEDA to boost India's agri-export potential in high-value horticultural commodities (banana, mango and mango pulp, pomegranates in markets like Russia, Korea, Japan, Australia). India's agricultural trade can grow in an increasingly reciprocal global market if we negotiate smartly and prioritise our investments that make agriculture more competitive rather than leaning towards heavy subsidies as in the case of fertilisers and free power. Trump's tariff threats should be a wake-up call for India's agricultural policymakers. If handled wisely, it could be an opportunity to transition from tariff-heavy trade protectionism to a more resilient, productivity-driven export strategy — one that ensures long-term gains for Indian farmers and exporters alike.

change. "The non-Kannada speaking population living in Bangalore increased sharply, leaving Kannadigas feeling marginalised in their own land," he writes, adding that this, in turn, led to the rise of pro-Kannada groups that were trying to find ways to remedy the situation. One of the most ubiquitous sights in Bengaluru's visual landscape continues to be the visage of Kannada actor Dr. Rajkumar, who "became the face of the Gokak movement, which was an agitation to install Kannada as an official language. Because of that, he became associated with Kannada culture and language in a big way, says Kashi. One of the most ubiquitous sights in Bengaluru's visual landscape continues to be the visage of Kannada actor Dr. Rajkumar, who "became the face of the Gokak movement, which was an agitation to install Kannada as an official language. Because of that, he became associated with Kannada culture and language in a big way, says Kashi. | Photo Credit: Ravikumar KashiAt the recent talk, Kashi shared samples of some of these images, shot over the last 15 years, and expanded on their meanings. "These things give you all kinds of subtle messages. They are nice things to observe and document because you can read so much into it." For instance, one of the most ubiquitous sights in Bengaluru's visual landscape continues to be the visage of Kannada actor Dr. Rajkumar, who "became the face of the Gokak movement, which was an agitation to install Kannada as an official language. Because of that, he became associated with Kannada culture and language in a big way," he says. "He never did any other language movie at all. So that became an extension of his personality." In a similar vein, a photo of a red-and-yellow Kannada flag propped on a large wall with a similarly coloured background on which are painted Kannada film heroes "is an assertion of Kannada identity in a public space" as are the many images of the Chalukyan emperor, Pulikeshi and freedom-fighter Sangolli Rayanna that have cropped up in the city in the last few years. Many of these visuals are also being used to communicate dominance. In my area now, the Congress MLA has won the seat. So the BJP MLA cannot put up his banner anywhere, everywhere. He is confined to his area," explains Kashi. "So, it is a way of marking the territory," he says. Placement is another way of communicating importance. Mahatma Gandhi's image, for example, will invariably have him in the centre, surrounded by other freedom fighters. "You will never put Gandhi on the edge and someone else in the centre. Who stands in the centre shows the power influences in that group." Kashi also discusses the significance of the use of specific colours, the locations in which these banners are placed, and how gender plays out in these banners and posters. "Most of the time, women are placed at the bottom," he says. But, if parties are trying to get more women voters, the placement may change. "The lady candidate could be in the centre, with men protecting her," he says. "This reflects how much representation we have in the political arena for women candidates." Personalising vehiclesKashi also highlights the phenomenon of people trying to personalise their vehicles with images such as those of tigers, lions or Rudra Hanuman, "further asserting masculinity" and the city's statue culture. "Last year, with two of my colleagues, Salila Vanka and Madhuri Rao, both architects, we documented more than 800 statues in the city," he says, recounting some of the data garnered from this exercise.

The student and the three language debate



First, it is the child who goes to a public (government) school, and no one else, who should be at the very centre of this debate. Students in public schools form about 55% of the school enrolment in Tamil Nadu. Children in private schools (largely from the upper class) increasingly rely on supplemental learning beyond school hours, i.e., coaching or tuition classes, which a public school student cannot afford. The critical question is this: is learning three (instead of two) languages essential to enable a child from a public school to compete with other more privileged candidates in the job market and become a productive, value-adding citizen? Second, while the National Education Policy (NEP) is path-breaking on many accounts, there are a few provisions that ignore the ground realities of public education in India, especially at the primary and secondary levels. The three language formula is one such issue. A problematic hypothesisThe NEP declares that the compulsory learning of three languages is intended to improve the cognitive ability of students, enable mobility for employment and promote national integration. This very hypothesis is a problematic one. Language is a necessary tool for acquiring knowledge and for communication. However, with the breathtaking progress in technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence, language proficiency itself will gradually lose its significance as a tool for knowledge acquisition. You could post your query in any language, in say Google Gemini (even children in a public school will hopefully soon have access either through a smart classroom or a smartphone), and get an answer instantly. In the years ahead, this access will only get cheaper and better. There is of course indisputable evidence linking language skills with cognitive abilities, but none which establishes that proficiency in more languages will proportionately improve cognitive abilities. In fact, research suggests quite the contrary — that a strong foundation in a child's mother tongue is essential before introducing additional language(s). A third language will certainly enable better communication with the community that speaks that language. But that is a choice that most adults make as a part of the profession they choose. Tamil 'thambis' quickly learn Hindi when they join the Indian Army and thrive famously. Tamilian salesmen speak flawless Marathi when they sell their wares in Maharashtra. Third, the state of primary education is pathetic, nationally and in Tamil Nadu, as highlighted in the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Survey 2024. Despite some good initiatives in recent times, 88% of class three students in Tamil Nadu still lack basic literacy proficiency. The challenge is even greater with the second language, English. Many top-scoring students, even from English-medium public schools, struggle to adapt when transitioning to English-medium instruction in college, particularly in professional courses, because in the school, they are taught in Tamil, not in English. The response to the shocking state of quality in primary (and carried forward to secondary and higher secondary) education is to massively improve teaching quality and learning outcomes, and not to add one more language. There is a finite time available at

school to 'cover' all subjects. With acquisition of knowledge getting easier and quicker through technology, education should increasingly focus on developing attributes such as curiosity, critical thinking and creativity, which are critical to success in the 21st century. There is a need to provide more time and space in the curriculum for inculcating these traits, rather than thrusting a third language. Within this finite time, it is important to enable deeper learning than wider learning. Fourth, it is not clear how public schools would be able to find adequate and competent teachers for a third language, even assuming that every parent chooses Hindi and not a variety of other languages. There is every reason to fear the quality of teachers leading to inferior learning. Despite Tamil Nadu having one of the highest per-child education budgets in the country, 80%-90% of the budget is spent on teacher salaries, while infrastructure suffers. The cost of having third language teachers could eat into the funds available for infrastructure. Language is a great anchor of cultural values. National unity is indeed a foundational value, and the Constitution provides for the propagation of Hindi. While a common language is desirable, it would be at the tail end of cultural initiatives to promote unity. A spirit of respect for other cultures and a shared sense of history should be an integral part of learning. A third language is neither the only nor a superior way to inculcate these values. That said, education should lead to a choice of gainful employment opportunities. So long as opportunities for public school students are available within the State, either from government, private enterprise or self employment (the case thus far), the need for a third language may not be critical. However, the system outcomes must facilitate wider choices for students from Tamil Nadu to compete for the best educational and employment opportunities, nationally and even globally.

So long as English continues to be an official language in examinations for central services, the defence services and the judiciary, students from Tamil Nadu should be able to compete at a national level, as they have done successfully for several decades. Better teaching/learning of English would improve their competitiveness in the world, which is increasingly looking for English-literate service providers. The politics and the studentSo, what is the way forward? There are two dimensions to this problem: politico-cultural and child development. The right or wrong of the ruling party's politics on the issue is not the subject of this article. But it is important to acknowledge, from a child development perspective, that it is a two-front political battle, i.e., one, stopping Hindi 'imposition' on the State; and two, fighting to retain the robust status of English nationally. The second is a more challenging task. The State's politics may not harm the future of students, as long as English continues as an official language at the Centre with equal force and usage. However, if, nationally the landscape is likely to change with Hindi progressively replacing English (in spirit even if not in letter because of constitutional safeguards), the State's politics should factor this reality and seriously consider insulating the child's development from the crossfire of political battles. Here is a possible approach that has the interests of the child in mind. Since there is no academic merit in thrusting a third language on the child, particularly at the primary level, Hindi could be offered, as an option as a third language from middle public school. This could be started in schools in the district headquarters and progressively expanded to other schools, depending on demand, which, in turn, will depend on the momentum of Hindi replacing English at the national level. A rigid political position could result in a generation of students that is handicapped to compete nationally. This issue should be a debate and a discussion, and not a war that destroys the future of the young.

Ahmedabad first urban centre of focus on climate budget

Titled "sustainable and climate budget", the chapter has earmarked over a third of AMC's total budget of 15,502 crore — ₹5,619.58 crore — for climate action. This outlay will be used to implement a net-zero climate resilient city action plan in line with India's net zero target of 2070, officials said. The development raises the question of whether the country's other metro cities need to plan similar proposals — the recent ₹17,000 crore budget presented by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on February 13 does not have a mention of any dedicated climate component or singular projects. Experts have noted that India's cities, although severely impacted by the climate crisis, have been slow to institutionalise climate change and sustainability in the urban development budget. Cities such as Mumbai, Coimbatore, and Udaipur initially started climate tagging their city budgets and largely cities took up climate action projects as pilots with non-government funding. In fact, Mumbai allocated around 33% of its capital expenditure for the 2024-25 fiscal in climate-action related projects such as dumpsite restoration, installation of solar panels. However, unlike in Ahmedabad, the Mumbai civic body unveiled the climate budget on world environment day (June 5), to list out "climate relevant" projects planned in the original budget presented in February. Ahmedabad's plan for 2070, which was prepared in March 2024, estimates a requirement of ₹9,500 crore per year to achieve the net-zero target. AMC is targeting energy savings and renewable energy generation of 310 million units by 2027-28 and mitigating 338,536 tonne carbon dioxide emissions as a result of the actions planned in the budget for the fiscal 2025-26. In addition, AMC will work to attract corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate environmental responsibility (CER) funding, officials said. AMC's climate budgeting exercise and the 2070 action plan was supported by the non-profit ICLEI and was funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in line with Ahmedabad's climate pledge at COP26, held in Glasgow in November 2021. In 2023, Ahmedabad became the first city in India to achieve eight out of nine badges from Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM, a global alliance of over 12,500 local governments spanning 144 countries). Thirty Indian cities across population sizes and geographical profiles such as Mumbai, Leh and Coimbatore are part of GCoM. "Ahmedabad's leadership in sustainability and climate is commendable as it is laying down benchmarks for other cities in the global south," Emani Kumar, executive director ICLEI South Asia, said. Experts said the Ahmedabad Climate Resilient City Action Plan (the 2070 plan) maps the existing details of road networks, streetlights, public transport, water supply, sewage network, and solid waste management facilities to identify gaps and augment capacity to cater to future demand. In contrast, most Indian cities — including the million-plus ones — are failing to even institutionalise their master plans and are building large-scale infrastructure projects without thorough planning, leading to the civic mess that is common in Indian cities. Notably,



Delhi's master plan is due to be notified by the Union ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA) for more than three years now. The situation is no different in smaller cities, with the government stating that only 219 out of the 500 cities with more than 100,000 population (as per 2011 census) have their master plans notified, as part of a Rajya Sabha reply in December 2024. A wider study by non-profit Janaargaha in 2023 had found 39% of capital cities in India lack an active master plan. Tathagata Chatterji, professor of urban governance at Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar, observed that lack of holistic planning has led some Indian cities to be disproportionately overburdened and deficient in infrastructure. In the absence of planning, he said, infrastructure provisioning in Indian cities is mostly reactive than proactive, leading to poor decisions such as building more flyovers to reduce traffic congestion, instead of improving public transit systems. He said that civic infrastructure provisioning in Indian cities mostly addresses yesterday's challenges as a result of infrastructure planning being fragmented under multiple agencies and financed through different programmes without a long-term integrated vision. To illustrate — Chennai can currently supply 1,040 million litres of per day (mld) of water, but the demand is in the range of 1,720 mld. Hydrologist Sakthivel Beemaraaj, working with several city water authorities in India, said this shortfall of around 700 mld is used by tapping into groundwater, which is unsustainable for long-term as groundwater is harder to recharge. Similarly, the city produces around 1,500 mld of sewage, with only 600 mld of it getting treated and the rest polluting groundwater, surface water and the sea. Similarly, Beemaraaj said the shortfall for a smaller city such as Guwahati is also pronounced, where the growth rate is expected to be much higher in the coming decades when compared with mature cities. According to a 2023 North Eastern Regional Institute of Water and Land Management study, the effective water supply is 56.63 mld compared to the demand of 229 mld. Ironically, the city situated on the banks of the Brahmaputra — one of the largest freshwater reserves in the world cannot service 70% of its residents with piped water. Looking ahead, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) — Mumbai's civic body — has planned to budget its climate programmes in close coordination with Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport (BEST), Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA).

Shashi Tharoor | The outsider within



Literature has often been Shashi Tharoor’s calling card, at times even more than his politics, but words have also been his Achilles heel in politics, right from the “cattle class” and “holy cows” comments in 2009. Misinterpreted or otherwise, the four-time Lok Sabha MP’s utterances and writings have frequently landed him in trouble, inviting the displeasure of the higher-ups in the Congress as well as fellow leaders in its Kerala unit. The latest instance came last week when, in a newspaper interview, he purportedly underscored the absence of a leader in Kerala’s Congress unit and also spoke about other “options”, including speaking tours and books, if the Congress did not require his services. Though Mr. Tharoor later accused the newspaper of putting a fake spin on the Malayalam podcast to make it seem as if he was exploring political options, the damage was already done, partly due to the history of his run-ins with the State leadership of the party. The impression that he was making a pitch for a leadership role ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections did not help matters either.

The controversy came close on the heels of another one. Earlier in February, he said U.S. President Donald Trump’s invitation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi was a “significant development” for the country. The next day, in an article, he praised the transformation of Kerala’s industrial ecosystem driven by the “staggering growth” in the start-up sector. He also praised the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government’s Year of Enterprises initiative, the State’s “success” in establishing close to 3 lakh MSMEs since 2022 as

well as its topping of the Ease of doing business rankings.Mr. Tharoor’s article, published right ahead of the State government’s Invest Kerala Global Summit, came in handy for the ruling LDF, which used it to counter the Congress’s dim view of the State’s investment climate.The State Congress leaders, who were not obviously happy at the comments, scrambled to counter his views, with the Congress’s Kerala mouthpiece Veeekshanam also levelling some oblique criticism in an editorial. The issue died down only after Mr. Tharoor had a one-to-one meeting with Rahul Gandhi.Mr. Tharoor waded into politics in 2009, carrying with him the glory of a flourishing literary career and a long stint with the UN, which ended in an unsuccessful bid to the UN Secretary-General post. But, right from his early days, he had an “outsider” tag stuck to him, used openly by the opposing parties and more privately by his fellow party members.Yet, he made up for the challenges he faced, including the not-so-friendly local party leadership, with his personal charisma. For four consecutive terms, he has held on to the Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha seat, which before his arrival used to alternate between the Congress and the Left. But, since 2014, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been giving him a close fight, with the 2024 win by a slender margin of 16,077 votes. The outsider tag still follows him, as even local Congress members are not so happy about his prolonged absence from the constituency.Of late, Mr. Tharoor has begun priming himself for alternative and more ambitious roles. With opinions often at variance with the leadership, he has in recent years consistently played the role of the disruptor within the party, first as one of the 23 Congress leaders (G-23) who sought reforms within the party, which culminated in his making an unsuccessful bid to the party leadership post in 2022.His current manoeuvres in Kerala closely resemble his actions at the national level in recent years. Coming a year ahead of a crucial Assembly election, in which the Congress is attempting a comeback after being kept away from power for an unprecedented two terms, his purported comments on the leadership attain added significance.Though Mr. Tharoor’s intentions are barely concealed, it is not going to be an easy ride to the top for someone who has ruffled so many feathers within his own party.

Can RBI’s proposal to waive foreclosure charges help micro and small industries? | Explained



The story so far: On February 21, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) floated a consultation paper seeking to waive foreclosure charges, and prepayment penalties, on loans taken by micro and small enterprises (MSEs). At present, banks and non-banking financial institutions (NBFCs) cannot levy the same on any term loan at floating rates of an individual borrower. The proposals thus extend these provisions to MSEs for business purposes emphasising the “paramount importance” of “easy and affordable” financing for them. Comments to the proposed measures are solicited until March 21.

What all has RBI proposed?

RBI has proposed that banks and NBFCs must not levy foreclosure charges or prepayment penalties on loans taken at floating rates by MSEs for business purposes. At present, the provision only exists for loans taken by individuals for purposes other than business. The proposed regulation thus extends the purview of the guideline. This shall apply to all MSE borrowing up to ₹7.5 crore barring an exception for Tier 1 and Tier 2 Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks and base layer NBFCs, that is, those with asset sizes of below ₹1,000 crore. The apex banking regulator also underlines that banks and NBFCs cannot stipulate any minimum lock-in period for the proposed guidelines to become applicable. Furthermore, it underlines that regulated entities cannot levy any retrospective charges which were waived off earlier and/or not disclosed in advance to the borrowers. As for loans with dual rates (that is, fixed and floating rates), the guidelines – which specifically apply to those for floating rates, shall become applicable only if the loan adheres to a floating rate when prepayment or foreclosure is opted for. The primary objective of the proposed measures is to provide for easy and affordable financing to MSMEs. RBI observed in their supervisory review about the existence of “divergent practices” in sanction of loans to MSMEs. These, it observed, led to customer grievances and disputes. Significantly, the regulator noted banks and NBFCs included restrictive clauses in loan agreements that restrained MSE borrowers from switching to an alternate lender.

Do moving loans for MSMEs ease with the proposed measures?

Vivek Iyer, Partner and Financial Services Risk Leader at consulting firm Grant Thornton Bharat told The Hindu that the waiver would bring more borrowers into the formal system (of credit). He added that regulatory clarity would be important to first time borrowers in this segment, as it “miti-

gates the risk of hidden charges and offers better ability for MSMEs to plan their cash flows and incentivises borrowers to repay.” Validating this, M. Karthikeyan, President at the Coimbatore District Small Industries Association (CODISSIA) said 3-5% of their affiliated units seek foreclosures. He explained that an small and medium enterprise (SME) opts for foreclosure to move to another bank because they face issues in availing additional loans from the same bank. “Some say that when a loan is sanctioned, the foreclosure charges are considered and hence, this cannot be followed for existing loan accounts. Each bank has its own set of rules,” stated Mr. Karthikeyan.Mithun Ramdass, President at the Southern Indian Engineering Manufacturers Association (SIEMA), said switching loans has been a “nightmare” because of the foreclosure charges and inordinate delays in processing papers. “The RBI should put in place a time limit for processing and terminating loans or moving it to another bank by MSME owners,” Mr. Ramdass suggested.

Does it free up more money for MSEs?

The proposed measures are meant to help small businesses to clear their debts without penalties. Banks also seek penalties as compensation for loss in interest payments on early exits. While an early exit from loan obligations helps ease the debt stress of MSMEs. NBFC IIFL Finance said in a blogpost (Dec 2024) that the waiver on foreclosure would be “extremely beneficial” to MSMEs and their working capital loans as it is commonplace to pay before the date. J. James, president, Tamil Nadu Association of Cottage and Tiny Enterprises (TNAECTE), says that about a quarter of micro or cottage units are unable to avail a loan because banks insist on collateral. “When most of the micro units operate in rented building, they are unable to pledge property documents. Banks should lend more to micro units without asking for collateral,” he stated.

What does this mean for banks and NBFCs?

According to Adhil Shetty, CEO, BankBazaar.com, what is good for the consumer would in turn be good for the industry. “Foreclosure charges had been waived off retail loans in the past, and this was welcomed by consumers. Now this benefit may be extended to SME loans,” he said. But according to an IIFL Capital report, the proposed measures could reduce profitability of retail products such as loan against property (LAP), small and medium enterprises’ loans (SME) and business loans. IIFL Capital argues that this would be due to a potential increase in competition. It says that the small businesses segments constitute about 5% to 25% of assets under management for NBFCs and housing financial companies (HFC). It holds that NBFCs with lower cost of funds, that is, the cost incurred by the lender to borrow in the interbank market - and backed by a strong parent entity- could be partially offset by raising the share of more granular and higher yielding customers when loans (via balance transfer) are moved to them from smaller peers. Additionally, the financial services company expects that over the medium term, this would also increase competitiveness in the fixed rate non-housing loan (NHL) segment of affordable housing financial companies (AHFCs) though they have not been covered in the circular. This would be as large NBFCs seek to compete on rates.

The United States has made a bold move in the global artificial intelligence (AI) race with its new federal AI infrastructure policy. What appears to be a domestic initiative to establish AI data centres across federal lands, is actually a well-thought-out strategy to maintain America’s technological supremacy in this field. Other countries have also developed their own AI infrastructure strategies to face this competition. India faces resource constraints. The challenge for India, therefore, lies in adopting a strategy which will work without the deep financial reserves of the U.S. or China.AI can be considered to be a technology in the mould of general purpose technologies (GPTs) that Jeffrey Ding has described in his GPT Diffusion Theory. It has a pervasive impact on different sectors, and requires a comprehensive infrastructure, including skill infrastructure, to thrive and diffuse.The U.S. policy aims at national security and AI leadership at its core. This is not just about building data centres. It is about building enough infrastructure domestically to ensure that research and development in this field can progress without any impediments. It can help strengthen America’s position as the global AI gatekeeper, if it can control the compute or resources layer of the AI technology stack. However, does not this raise important questions about the future of technological cooperation in an interconnected world? This throws to the wind the traditional concepts of market forces and comparative advantages which should be driving the allocation of resources globally. Are these to be superseded by national security concerns?

The answer is not straightforward. Techno-nationalism is here to stay, where a country’s worth is decided by its technological prowess. The U.S. has already imposed restrictions on the export of high-end AI chips to China. This highlights the geopolitical dimensions of AI infrastructure development.The world will see a lot of this competitive onupmanship in the garb of narratives of self-sufficiency and technological leadership. It would be better for nations to do a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of such decisions to be able to harmonise national interests with global partnerships.China also has invested heavily in domestic AI chip manufacturing and government-backed AI research. Companies such as Huawei and the Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation (SMIC) are at the forefront of developing indigenous alternatives to Nvidia’s AI chips, ensuring that China is not entirely dependent on western technology. A lot of this is driven by creative insecurity brought on by the tech and trade wars unleashed by the U.S. In addition, China, too, has aggressively been expanding its data centre networks, integrating AI computing with its broader push for digital infrastructure dominance under the Belt and Road Initiative. These are different models of doing the same thing — establishing AI supremacy. Unlike the U.S., which is leveraging public-private partnerships, China’s model is deeply state-driven, with massive subsidies and policy support ensuring rapid progress. One could argue that both are market distorting interventions.The European Union is also taking AI infrastructure seriously but with a focus on ethics, regulation, and sustainability. They have been investing in sovereign cloud infrastructure to reduce reliance on foreign multi-national companies. Additionally, it is actively promoting open-source AI models. The aim is to keep AI development transparent and accessible to smaller businesses and researchers.

The issue of sustainabilityThe U.S. has also dabbled with such an approach. Consider this policy’s environmental stance. There is a commitment to power next-generation data centres with clean energy. This is not how traditional infrastructure development happens. However, the Trump administration’s track record on climate issues has not been great. It has withdrawn from the Paris Agreement, among other such reckless actions. Hence, this policy’s environmental stance may indeed change in the future, and needs to be taken with a huge pinch of salt. Recent studies indicate that energy consumption for running AI infrastructure will most likely rise exponentially. Innovations such as the DeepSeek model, which showcased a lot of efficiency improvements, do give a lot of hope that this may not be the case entirely. However, it would be prudent to err on the side of caution, and consider sustainability options.

The U.S. policy also explicitly addresses community interests and worker benefits. It acknowledges that technological advancement must not disregard broader societal interests. If this approach could create new tech hubs beyond Silicon Valley, it could potentially help in spreading the benefits of the AI revolution more equitably across the country. However, the Trump administration did also recently rescind a previous executive order which mandated a bunch of disclosures on AI developers to share the results of safety tests with the U.S. government. The balance



between innovation and safety regulation is tough to achieve.What India must doFor countries such as India, these diverse approaches offer valuable lessons. The model of utilising government lands for AI infrastructure development through public-private partnerships, by leasing out federal lands, could be particularly relevant, instead of, say, government procuring GPUs. India cannot afford to match the U.S. or China in sheer financial might. It needs to adopt a strategic, targeted and collaborative approach to AI infrastructure development, which leverages its strengths.One of India’s biggest strengths is its vast talent pool in AI and software development. India does not yet have a robust AI hardware industry. However, it is already a major hub for cloud computing services, and software engineering. The presence of global AI firms in India, combined with domestic giants such as TCS and Infosys investing in AI, could provide a foundation that can be leveraged. However, for this potential to be realised, India needs to develop the necessary computing infrastructure to support AI innovation at scale.A major challenge is India not having high-end AI chips and large-scale computing power. India could partner with U.S. and European firms to establish joint AI computing hubs in India. It helps India to participate in the global AI economy without needing to invest billions in semiconductor fabs.The next important factor is India’s energy constraints. AI data centres require a huge amount of power. India, at its level of economic development, has to make hard choices between expanding energy access for industrial growth and dedicating power to AI computing. A viable path forward is to integrate AI data centres with renewable energy projects, balancing both imperatives, and creating a sustainable AI growth model.Given India’s resource constraints, India should prioritise a few key AI hubs that combine computing power, talent, and industry partnerships, rather than attempting a nationwide rollout. The government’s IndiaAI Mission has got this part right, as it already recognises the need for national AI supercomputing resources. But this initiative must be expanded with stronger incentives for private sector participation. Creating AI-specialised free trade zones with relaxed regulations on AI chip imports and software exports could also help position India as a competitive AI hub.AI infrastructure is the key factor in the global race for AI supremacy. Play to one’s strengths.

India rapidly evolving into global tech hub: Jyotiraditya Scindia

New Delhi: India is rapidly evolving into a global technology hub, and the country’s participation at the Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025 is vital for accelerating innovation, said Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia on Saturday. Scindia is expected to represent India at the MWC 2025 — one of the world’s largest and most influential technology and telecommunications events — scheduled from March 3-6, in Spain’s Barcelona. The Minister will also unveil the curtain raiser of India Mobile Congress 2025 and inaugurate the ‘Bharat Pavilion’ at the MWC.”India is rapidly evolving into a global technology hub, and our engagement with international partners at events like the Mobile World Congress is vital for accelerating innovation and strengthening digital infrastructure.” Scindia said.The India Mobile Congress is a platform that will highlight the country’s innovation ecosystem, and leading telecom companies and innovators will showcase their cutting-edge advancements and sustainable solutions. The Bharat Pavilion will feature 38 Indian telecom equipment manufacturers showcasing their state-of-the-art products, both hardware and software.

Multiple bullies at work, out to create a ‘multipolar world’

Why has U.S. President Donald Trump thrown a public tantrum and refused to deal with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy? It is time to remember what is at stake for Ukraine. Who better to tell it like it is than John Mearsheimer, Realist advocate of a multipolar world order, who has consistently accused the U.S.-led West of provoking Russia to war.Exactly a week after Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Mearsheimer explained in a media interview that any peace deal with Mr. Putin would require Ukraine to give up not just some territory or hopes of North Atlantic Treaty Organization membership. It would be nothing short of its democracy. He told an interviewer that Mr. Putin “wants to install in Kyiv a pro-Russian government, a government that is attuned to Moscow’s interests....”A Ukraine that was a liberal democracy, he said, was “from a Russian perspective...an existential threat.”But would it not be imperialism, asked the interviewer, to tell Ukrainians that they cannot be a liberal democracy? Mearsheimer replied, “It’s not imperialism; this is great-power politics. When you’re a country like Ukraine and you live next door to a great power like Russia, you have to pay careful attention to what the Russians think, because if you take a stick and you poke them in the eye, they’re going to retaliate.”Democracy is not realistic’Democracy simply is not realistic in a multipolar world, said Mearsheimer. “In an ideal world, it would be wonderful if the Ukrainians were free to choose their own political system and to choose their own foreign policy. But in the real world, that is not feasible.”Today, Mr. Trump is eager to give Mr. Putin the regime change he wants. He calls Mr. Zelenskyy a “dictator”with a “4% approval rating,” and has suggested more than once that peace is possible only if Mr. Zelenskyy steps down.What kind of Ukraine do Mr. Putin and Mr. Trump want? Look at the other nations that “live next door to a great power like Russia,” and the answer is clear. Democratic protests in Belarus and Kazakhstan have been brutally suppressed with the help of the Russian military. Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko declares, “It’s better to have a dictatorship like in Belarus than a democracy like Ukraine.” The Ukrainians obviously disagree.It should be remembered that far from instigating Mr. Zelenskyy to stay and fight, former U.S. President Joe Biden had done all he could to force him to flee, hoping that it would appease Mr. Putin and avert a prolonged war.In January 2022, Mr. Biden had declared that NATO would be divided in case of a “minor incursion”, and Zelenskyy had to “remind the great powers that there are no minor incursions and small nations” Mr. Biden had evacuated the U.S. embassy from Kyiv and said, days before the Russian invasion, that “it may be the wise choice for President Zelenskyy to leave Ukraine”. After the invasion, Mr. Zelenskyy had to again tell the U.S. that he was looking for ammunition, and not a ride.Ukraine is not the only country where Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin want a regime in their own image. U.S Vice President J.D. Vance and Mr. Trump’s oligarch aide Elon Musk urged Germans to vote for the far-right anti-immigrant AfD. Mr. Vance told the European Union (EU) in Munich that Mr. Trump wanted to liberate European people from their “internal threat” — immigrants and the liberal democratic leadership that let them into Europe.For the past decade, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has declared making his country an “illiberal democracy” as his goal, and to turn the EU into an illiberal project. Since then, Mr. Putin has put his weight behind that project in every way. And Mr. Vance made it clear that Mr. Trump, “the new sheriff in town”, wants the same: an EU aligned with Chris-



A growing illiberal international project is posing the biggest threat to democracy, people and peace in the world

tian values, not universal human rights and democratic standards; an EU where member-nations will face no censure for passing Putin-style laws banning “gay propaganda”.Mr. Orbán has the distinction of refusing to honour the International Criminal Court’s warrants issued against Mr. Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Mr. Trump and Mr. Netanyahu voted for Mr. Putin in the United Nations. Mr. Trump treats Gaza and Ukraine as pieces of real estate at the mercy of the genocidal bully next door. Mr. Trump has branded ethnic cleansing in Gaza with his name, turning it into an obscene AI-generated Nero’s Feast. He turned peace talks in the Oval Office into reality TV where the most powerful man in the world and his henchmen and media bully an elected leader of an invaded and occupied nation.The national bullies are acting in concert to create a “multipolar world” — a world safe for all bullies and bigots. It is high time we stopped imagining that multiple bullies make the playground safer, and that “multipolar” non-western tyrants are the lesser evil “regardless of the internal character” of the regimes involved.U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has declared support for a multipolar world. Mr Putin has always insisted that there are “two Wests”, and that his quarrel is with the West of universal democratic principles and rules; an illiberal U.S., United Kingdom and EU are welcome to the multipolar world.It is better late than never!t is the growing assertion of an illiberal international project (led by Mr. Trump, Mr. Putin, Mr. Netanyahu, and China’s Xi Jinping, and including Narendra Modi, Mr. Orban and European fascists) that poses the greatest threat to democracy, people, peace, and the planet today.To insist that the rise of this new illiberal international is just the West versus the Rest “business as usual” is moral bankruptcy and suicidal folly — exactly as it is to quibble over the semantics of Mr. Modi’s project of an illiberal Hindu-only India.It is better late than never to take on the illiberal international and defend universalist human rights, democratic solidarity. A good start would be for Indians defending democracy to show solidarity with Ukraine defending itself from the Putin-Trump tyranny.

Lymphatic walking: Can it really reduce puffiness and bloating?



: Lymphatic walking is a wellness term for gentle, rhythmic walking that may support normal lymph flow through muscle movement, breathing and changes in tissue pressure. Lymphatic walking is a wellness term for gentle, rhythmic walking that may support normal lymph flow through muscle movement, breathing and changes in tissue pressure. In an age where almost every aspect of fitness is being reinvented, renamed and repackaged, it is refreshing to return to something humanity has always known: walking.

Before gyms, fitness trackers and structured exercise programmes, movement was woven into the fabric of living. Today, that familiar act has acquired a new name — “lymphatic walking”— and gained traction largely because of claims that gentle, rhythmic movement can help reduce the puffiness and bloating associated with fluid retention, prolonged sitting, travel or simply waking up feeling swollen. “Lymphatic walking” is not a formally defined medical exercise protocol. It is a wellness term generally used to describe gentle, rhythmic walking in which muscular activity, joint movement and breathing may support the normal transport of lymph. The lymphatic system does help return excess fluid from tissues to the bloodstream, and movement can contribute to this process. That provides a physiological basis for the trend.

What the lymphatic system actually doesThe lymphatic system is an intricate network of vessels, lymph nodes and lymphoid tissues that works alongside the cardiovascular and immune systems. One of its fundamental tasks is maintaining fluid balance. Blood continuously filters fluid into the tissues surrounding cells; much of that fluid returns directly to the bloodstream, while the lymphatic system collects the remainder, including proteins and other larger molecules that cannot readily re-enter blood capillaries. This fluid becomes lymph and is eventually returned to the venous circulation. The system also has an important immunological role. Lymph carries antigens, immune cells and other material from tissues towards lymph nodes, where immune cells can detect and respond to potential threats. In this sense, the lymphatic system is not simply a drainage network. It is also part of the body’s surveillance system.

Why walking helps in lymphatic functionLymphatic collecting vessels contain smooth muscle and can contract rhythmically on their own. Their valves help prevent backward flow and allow lymph to move progressively towards the larger lymphatic ducts and, ultimately, back into the bloodstream. Respiration, arterial pulsations, changes in tis-

sue pressure and skeletal-muscle contractions provide additional forces that influence lymph movement. Walking matters because it brings several of these mechanisms together. With every step, muscles contract and relax around tissues containing blood and lymphatic vessels. This produces changing pressure that can assist the movement of fluid. The repeated movement of the ankles and legs is particularly relevant because skeletal-muscle activity can contribute to lymph transport as well as venous return. Research shows that lymph flow can increase with skeletal-muscle activity, although the relationship is more complex than the simple idea of a “lymph pump” suggests. The lymphatic vessels themselves remain active participants in the process. Walking provides repeated muscular activity, rhythmic breathing and changes in tissue pressure that support normal circulation and fluid movement. It also offers the much broader physiological benefits of regular physical activity.

What about puffiness?Perhaps the most visible appeal of lymphatic walking is its promise of looking — and feeling — less puffy. The trend has gained traction partly because people associate gentle movement with a fresher face, lighter limbs and a reduction in swelling that can follow sleep, long periods of sitting, travel or a salty meal. There is a physiological basis for some of this: lymphatic circulation helps return excess fluid from tissues to the bloodstream, and movement can assist that process. But the leap from this basic physiology to the claim that a particular walking technique can “drain” the body or rapidly debloat it is not supported by clinical evidence. Any reduction in ordinary, temporary puffiness is more appropriately understood as a change in fluid distribution than as a detoxification effect.

Where breathing comes inBreathing contributes another layer. The diaphragm is a major muscle of respiration, and each breath changes pressure within the chest and abdomen. These pressure fluctuations interact with the large veins and lymphatic channels passing through the thoracic and abdominal regions and can influence the return of fluid towards the central circulation. This is one reason relaxed, diaphragmatic breathing naturally complements gentle movement. Exercise is often framed in the language of intensity: push harder, go faster, burn more, achieve more. Yet physiology does not operate according to motivational slogans. The body is constantly adjusting blood flow, pressure, fluid distribution, temperature, breathing and energy expenditure in response to movement and rest. A comfortable walk respects that complexity.

How much is enough?Ten to twenty minutes can be a simple starting point, particularly for someone who spends long periods sitting. A few minutes of walking between sedentary periods may be useful; a longer morning walk may provide a more substantial cardiovascular stimulus. The appropriate pace depends on the purpose. A gentle walk is not equivalent to brisk aerobic exercise, and it should not be marketed as such. But gentle movement still has value. The lymphatic system is quietly working all the time. Walking simply gives the body another opportunity to move, breathe and regulate itself.



For eight years, a 34-year-old woman had been trying to become a mother. Married for 11 years, she had already experienced two miscarriages. By the time she reached a fertility care centre, several pieces of a complicated puzzle had emerged: obesity, a low ovarian reserve, meaning fewer eggs were available than expected for her age, and an untreated thyroid condition called hypothyroidism, in which the body does not produce enough thyroid hormone, affecting metabolism. Then another finding changed the conversation. Her random blood sugar was 224 mg/dL and her HbA1c (average blood sugar count of three months) was 7.1%, consistent with previously undiagnosed Type 2 diabetes. Her 38-year-old husband also had a fertility problem, with a low sperm count and a higher proportion of abnormally shaped sperm.

The couple’s case therefore involved several factors affecting their chances of having a baby, rather than a single cause of infertility. This is where IVF (in vitro fertilisation) can play an important role. IVF is a fertility treatment in which an egg and sperm are brought together in a laboratory to create an embryo, which is then placed in the uterus. In complex cases, it can give doctors greater control over the timing of treatment and allow different fertility challenges to be addressed together. For this couple, however, IVF was not a treatment for diabetes. The priority was first to assess and improve her overall health, including her blood sugar and thyroid function, while also determining the most appropriate fertility approach.

How diabetes affects fertilityDiabetes does not automatically cause infertility. However, insulin resistance and associated hormonal disturbances can affect reproductive function in some women, particularly when conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) or irregular ovulation are also present. Obesity and metabolic dysfunction can add further challenges. A woman with diabetes may conceive normally, but poorly controlled blood glucose around conception can increase the risk of pregnancy complications. This is why diabetes management should ideally begin before pregnancy rather than after a positive test. Diabetes is therefore best understood as one potential piece of the fertility puzzle. Hypothyroidism can affect metabolism, weight and lipid levels, while insulin resistance and obesity are important contributors to type 2 diabetes. Thyroid dysfunction can also affect menstrual and reproductive function, making its diagnosis and treatment important before pregnancy.

How to plan your pregnancy?Current guidance recommends that women with diabetes planning pregnancy aim for an HbA1c below 6.5%, when this can be achieved safely without problematic hypoglycaemia. Better glucose control before conception helps reduce pregnancy risks. This is particularly important because early foetal development begins before many women know they are pregnant. For the woman in our case, preconception assessment became an important part of fertility treatment. Her diabetes, thyroid function, medications and weight-related risks were reviewed, and glucose-lowering treatment was individualised under endocrinology supervision. How IVF can be an enablerThe couple’s fertility journey also illustrates an important misconception: IVF does not cure diabetes. Its role is to provide a structured pathway to conception while allowing fertility and medical teams to coordinate treatment around the patient’s overall

health. The first attempt to stimulate her ovaries did not produce enough eggs, so the treatment was stopped. Because she had a low ovarian reserve, the couple was then counselled about using donor eggs for IVF. Her husband’s low sperm count and abnormal sperm shape also meant that ICSI (Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection), a technique in which a single sperm is directly injected into an egg to help fertilisation, was used. The treatment resulted in three good-quality embryos. Two were later placed in her uterus after her body was medically prepared for pregnancy. The couple was counselled beforehand about the additional risks associated with a twin pregnancy.

Her HbA1c improved from 7.1% at diagnosis to 6.8% around the time pregnancy was confirmed and 6.3% at six weeks. These values reflected improving glucose control, but also underlined why optimisation should ideally begin before conception rather than after pregnancy has started.

Diabetes affects more than pregnancy—and may matter for men tooThe diabetes-fertility conversation often focuses on women because of the well-established risks associated with diabetes during pregnancy. But male reproductive health deserves attention as well. Research suggests that diabetes and chronic hyperglycaemia may affect sperm quality and reproductive function through mechanisms including oxidative stress, hormonal disturbances and impaired sperm function. That is why fertility assessment should be couple-centred. The woman’s pregnancy required continued vigilance. The focus shifted from preconception optimisation to protecting both mother and babies. The twin pregnancy was managed through multidisciplinary antenatal care, including intensive glycaemic monitoring, a procedure to help prevent early delivery, along with regular scans to monitor the babies’ growth and health. The pregnancy reached 37 weeks, when an elective caesarean delivery resulted in two healthy babies. For someone with diabetes who is considering pregnancy, preparation should go beyond checking whether conception is possible. Preconception care may include reviewing HbA1c and glucose patterns, medications, thyroid function, blood pressure, kidney and retinal health, nutrition and weight-related risks. Both partners should be evaluated when conception is delayed. Diabetes does not automatically close the door to parenthood. Nor should every fertility problem in a person with diabetes be attributed to blood sugar. But diabetes does make planning more important.

Actor Rashmika Mandanna modifies plank workout: Why this builds your core strength



Actor Rashmika Mandanna has shown how a simple plank can be made more challenging with controlled movement. In a workout video shared on her birthday, she performed a plank with her elbows resting on a workout ball, slowly moving back and forth while maintaining her balance. The unstable surface adds an extra challenge, requiring greater control and stability through the core rather than relying on speed or momentum. When it comes to core workouts, you don’t always need complicated exercises or long routines. The humble plank can do a lot of the work. Add controlled movements to it, and you have a simple but effective way to challenge your core.

Planks involve lying face-down, then lifting your body onto your forearms and toes, keeping your body in a straight line. “Controlled plank variations are plank exercises in which you add a movement — such as lifting an arm, raising a leg, tapping the opposite shoulder or bringing a knee forward — while keeping the rest of your body as steady as possible. The focus isn’t on speed. It’s on stability, precision and control,” says fitness expert Dr Mickey Mehta.

So, what exactly is a controlled plank variation?A traditional plank involves holding your body in a strong, stable position. A controlled variation takes that position a step further by introducing movement. “For instance, during a plank shoulder tap, you lift one hand and touch the opposite shoulder before switching sides. Your arms are moving, but your torso should remain as stable as possible,” adds Dr Mehta. Other examples include plank leg raises, shoulder taps, low knee-to-elbow movements, alternating arm reaches, side plank with leg lifts and slow plank walks. What makes these exercises “controlled” is the way they are performed. The movement is slow and deliberate rather than fast or jerky.

How do they work the core?

Living with Type 1 diabetes since age 7, he overcame limits to become a cyclist

During a recent visit to India, Dacal met Dr V Mohan, founder-chairman of Dr Mohan’s Diabetes Specialities Centre, and spoke about the realities of living with the condition. During a recent visit to India, Dacal met Dr V Mohan, founder-chairman of Dr Mohan’s Diabetes Specialities Centre, and spoke about the realities of living with the condition. When Brais Dacal was seven, he was told that his life would have to be different. Diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at that age, the Spanish cyclist remembers being advised to lead an easy life and avoid pushing himself too hard. For a child with dreams of sport, it could easily have become a sentence of limitation.

Instead, Dacal chose to test those limits. Years later, he would go on to become a professional cyclist, spending five seasons with Team Novo Nordisk, a team whose riders all live with diabetes. Although he no longer races professionally, Dacal remains one of the team’s prominent ambassadors, travelling to speak about his experiences of competing at the highest level while managing Type 1 diabetes. “I have always believed that I should own my diabetes, rather than let it own me,” Dacal says. “Living with Type 1 diabetes has added an extra layer of discipline, anticipation and courage to my cycling career and to life in general.” During a recent visit to India, Dacal met Dr V Mohan, founder-chairman of Dr Mohan’s Diabetes Specialities Centre, and spoke about the realities of living with the condition. For him, the message to children with Type 1 diabetes is straightforward: a diagnosis should not mean giving up on their ambitions. He encouraged them to continue pursuing their dreams — and, in his words, to strive to become champions.

For Dr Mohan, that message is particularly powerful because children often need to see possibilities rather than simply hear about them. “We have several children who are living with Type 1 diabetes and have excelled in their fields,” he says. “Hence, those living with the condition are often able to relate more closely to others who have undergone similar symptoms, challenges and emotions.” That is where peer support becomes important, he says. Sharing experiences with others who understand the daily demands of the condition can provide reassurance and a sense of belonging, while reminding people with diabetes that they are not alone. For Dacal, however, managing diabetes has never been about simply overcoming a medical condition. It has been about learning to live with it — and planning for it — without allowing it to take over. Professional cycling is demanding even for a healthy athlete. For someone living with Type 1 diabetes, a long, steady ride does not place the same demands on the body as a short, intense effort. Insulin requirements, food intake and blood glucose levels have to be considered before the cyclist even gets on the bike. “For example, long and steady rides will require different insulin and food intake than short and intense rides,” Dacal says.

His approach is methodical. He follows his doctor’s advice, trains, records his blood sugar levels and keeps track of what he has done. Then he studies the results and adjusts. “I keep learning through trial and error,” he says. Preparation extends to what he carries on the bike. Extra food is essential to maintain carbohydrate intake during exercise and to deal with possible hypoglycaemia or low blood sugar levels. Insulin has to be available in case of hyperglycaemia or high blood sugar level. “The most important thing is to be prepared for anything that can happen,” he says. The same philosophy applies when he travels. Different countries mean different foods, schedules and temperatures — variables that can complicate diabetes management. “Again, it is about planning ahead and prevention,” Dacal says. “You need to learn about the foods you will find, plan your trips and always have a Plan B.” His version of a Plan B is deliberately generous. “I carry enough supplies to cover a couple of end-of-the-world situations,” he says.

Dacal’s years as a professional cyclist also taught him that elite sport cannot be separated from health. “An unhealthy athlete will never be a good athlete,” he says. While managing Type 1 diabetes is only one part of the equation, eating well, recovering properly, avoiding illness and monitoring the body are equally important. The difference at the

Your core has an important job beyond simply helping you perform abdominal exercises. It helps stabilise your trunk and keeps your body balanced when you move. Controlled plank variations put that function to work. “When you lift one arm or leg, your body naturally wants to shift, rotate or lose balance. Your core muscles have to engage to keep your torso steady. In other words, your limbs move while your core works to keep the body under control,” says Dr Mehta. This makes plank variations useful for developing core stability and body control. One of the key benefits of plank variations is that they teach the core to resist unnecessary movement. For example, when you perform a shoulder tap, your hips may want to swing from side to side. Keeping them steady requires your abdominal and surrounding muscles to work harder. Similarly, lifting one leg challenges your body to maintain a stable pelvis instead of allowing it to rotate.

They involve more than just the absAlthough you may feel the exercise primarily in your abdominal area, a well-performed plank involves several muscle groups working together. “The shoulders, arms, back, hips and legs all contribute to maintaining the position. That’s why controlled plank exercises can feel surprisingly demanding even though they don’t involve large movements,” says Dr Mehta.

Why slow and controlled is betterThe temptation with many exercises is to move quickly and count repetitions. With plank variations, rushing can make it easier to lose proper form. “A slower pace gives you more time to maintain your posture and control each movement. Instead of thinking about how many repetitions you can complete, focus on body control and stability,” explains the expert. He advises a simple discipline. Keep your abdomen gently braced, maintain a stable torso and avoid allowing your lower back to sag. When moving an arm or leg, try to prevent the rest of your body from following the movement unnecessarily. And remember to breathe. If a particular variation causes you to lose control, switch to an easier version. You can always progress as your strength and stability improve.

You don’t need a complicated routineControlled plank variations can easily fit into a short workout. “You could choose two or three variations and perform them for a manageable number of repetitions or brief holds. Rest between exercises and focus on maintaining good technique. Beginners can make the exercises easier by supporting the knees or using an elevated surface. More experienced exercisers can gradually increase the challenge by using longer holds or more demanding variations,” says Dr Mehta.



professional level is that pushing the body to its limits is deliberate. Training loads, weight loss and harder efforts are not left to chance. They are planned with coaches and medical professionals. “If we need to lose weight, we plan it along with the medical staff and the coaches. If we need to go harder, again, we plan it well. We don’t do random,” he says.

Knowing when to stopFor all the emphasis on pushing boundaries, Dacal is equally clear about the importance of knowing when to rest. “Working more does not translate into results if you are not effective and efficient, or if you do not take enough rest,” he says. For an athlete managing Type 1 diabetes, listening to the body becomes even more critical. Today, Dacal’s career has moved beyond racing. As the general manager of a large sports organisation, he spends much of his time travelling, managing people and juggling different responsibilities. His days are no longer structured entirely around training but the principles remain familiar: plan ahead, stay flexible and pay attention to what the body is saying. Dacal’s visit to India also gave him an opportunity to reflect on the future of cycling in the country. He sees enormous potential in India’s growing interest in professional cycling and hopes the sport will become increasingly visible on the international stage. “Without health, there is nothing you can do to perform, no matter what the discipline,” he says.

KTR invited to attend Dubai Bathukamma celebrations on October 11

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao has been invited to attend Bathukamma celebrations in Dubai on October 11, organised by the Gulf Telangana Forum (GTF) and Emirates Telangana Cultural Association (ETCA). A delegation led by GTF founder and president Akula Surender met Rama Rao here on Sunday and handed over the invitation, urging him to join Telangana women and expatriate families in the celebrations. The organisers said the annual event was aimed at preserving Telangana’s cultural traditions among the diaspora and strengthening their connection with their roots. Women, youth, children and families from the Telangana community are expected to participate in large numbers.



GTF will organise its Bathukamma celebrations from 5 pm to 7.30 pm on October 11, followed by an ETCA event from 8 pm to 10 pm. BRS NRI global coordinator Mahesh Bigala said the party working president responded positively to participate in both programmes. A special promotional pamphlet for the celebrations was also unveiled in this regard. The organisers said the celebrations will feature women in traditional attire arranging Bathukammas and singing folk songs. The programme is also being designed to showcase Telangana’s culture, folk arts and traditions to younger generations.

BRICS nations eye cross-border payments, local currency trade and investment

“Pragmatic” and “efficient” solutions to make payments across borders are being discussed by the BRICS nations, with a joint statement issued by the finance ministers and central bank chiefs of the bloc also calling for the promotion of their local currencies to settle trade and make investments.Separately, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal also called on the BRICS member and partner countries to link payment systems and trade in each other’s currencies. Speaking at the opening session of BRICS Business Forum, Goyal noted there is “immense potential to deepen cooperation” and that trade amongst partners should be deep and resilient with diversified supply chains. He added that trade should not be an impediment to growth and the well-being of each member state.

“...we acknowledge the work done to study the cross-border interoperability of payment and messaging channels, and the discussions on promoting trade settlements and investments using BRICS local currencies, while respecting national priorities and acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all approach,” the joint statement, issued on Friday ahead of the two-day BRICS Leaders’ Summit in New Delhi that starts Saturday.“We encourage the BPTF to continue discussions, building on the ongoing work, to facilitate practical solutions for cross-border payments among BRICS countries, which are fast, low-cost, more accessible, efficient, transparent, and safe,” the statement added.

The BPTF refers to the BRICS Payment Task Force. The joint statement has been issued after the finance ministers and central bank governors of the BRICS countries met in Jaipur on August 12-13 and in Mumbai on Thursday.The comments come after Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra said in August that BRICS members are discussing linking their fast payment systems and Central ?Bank Digital Currencies. Malhotra had said there is a lot of scope to reduce costs in making international payments.The focus on pushing local currencies and coming together to link retail payment systems – UPI is used around 10 countries – comes amid protracted talks between India and the US over their trade deal. This has also attracted the ire of the US, with President Donald Trump having threatened to impose 10% and even 100% additional tariff on the members of the bloc.Trump views the grouping of the major emerging market economies as having been set up to “degenerate” and “destroy” the dollar “so that another country can take over and be the standard”.“...if we lost the world standard dollar, that would be like losing a war, a major world war. We would not be the same country any longer. We are not going to let that happen... The dollar is king. We are going to keep it that way,” Trump had said in July last year.

BRICS countries, meanwhile, have repeated on sev-



eral occasions that they are not trying to replace the US dollar as a medium of exchange and only want to offer a “viable alternative that will aid the market in its perpetual mission for efficiency” and foster greater prosperity, promoting universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalisation.The US dollar is the most dominant currency in the world for payment, trade, and investment. As such, central banks around the world hold much of their foreign exchange reserves in assets denominated in the US currency. However, diversification towards other assets such as gold gathered steam in the wake of Ukraine being invaded in early 2022 and the US freezing Russia’s dollar assets.In mid-2022, the RBI announced a framework to settle trade in the rupee. As per latest available data, 8.14% of India’s imports – amounting to Rs 1.58 lakh crore – were settled in rupees in the first three months of 2026-27. This is more than six times the Rs 25,402 crore of imports settled in rupees in April-June 2025. According to experts, the sharp jump in the use of rupees to pay for India’s imports has been to settle purchases of Russian oil.Other BRICS nations also have been pushing their own currencies, such as China and the yuan. But critics have pointed at the minute share of the yuan in global payments.

Data from Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) – the dominant messaging network which is used to initiate international payments – shows the yuan had a share of only 3.1% in global payments in July. The US, on the other hand, was on top with 50.99% of the share. Other metrics put the dollar’s share in global forex volumes north of 80%.According to Zhang Ming, Deputy Director of the Institute of World Economics and Politics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Deputy Director of the National Institution for Finance and Development, China is pursuing a different model to internationalise the yuan. Writing in a column in June, Ming said the world’s second largest economy is supplying its currency to the rest of the world through financial account outflows, while allowing it to return to the country through current account surpluses.

Coforge Chairman OP Bhatt got lowest rating, report not disclosed to Board

Coforge Ltd on Friday said OP Bhatt, who resigned as Chairman of the company earlier this week, received the lowest rating in the Board evaluation process. The finding was neither disclosed nor discussed with the Nomination and Remuneration Committee (NRC) or the Board by the NRC Chairperson or the Chairman of the Board.The internal auditor also observed that the manner in which the evaluation findings were presented by the Chairman of the Board and the NRC Chair to the NRC and the Board, without sharing copies of the reports, did not cover all relevant aspects and findings, the company said in a filing.

Bhatt was the former Chairman of State Bank of India.“The relevant reports were available to the NRC Chair and the Chairman of the Board alone but were not made available to other members of the Board, including the independent directors, at the instruction of the Chairman of the Board,” the company said.The NRC is responsible for matters such as recommending the appointment and removal of directors and senior management, evaluating directors’ performance, recommending directors’ remuneration, and developing criteria for the qualifications and independence of directors.It is relevant to note that the observations of the internal auditor relate to the manner in which the reports and the findings arising from the Board Evaluation exercise were circulated, presented and discussed before the NRC and the Board by the NRC Chair and the Chairman of the Board, Coforge said.Gurugram-registered Coforge, an AI-native engineering services leader operating in 33 countries, announced on September 9 that OP Bhatt had resigned as its non-executive independent director and Chairman, effective immediately.The company said there was “no other material reason” for his resignation apart from the reason contained in his resignation email dated September 8.Bhatt’s resignation came after an internal audit review of the company’s Board evaluation exercise and the resulting Board evaluation report (BER). The review was part of Coforge’s internal audit plan for the second quarter.

“The evaluation of the performance of the Board, its committees and individual directors is an annual corporate governance requirement under the Companies Act, 2013



and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015,” it said.Accordingly, the company conducted the Board evaluation exercise for FY25-26, as required under applicable regulations and rules, Coforge said. The evaluation process provides a basis for assessing the effectiveness with which the Board, its committees and individual directors discharge their respective roles and responsibilities, it said.“The Board evaluation process is entirely distinct from the company’s financial reporting and audit processes. The matters relating to the evaluation of Board members do not concern the company’s financial statements, accounting policies, revenue or profitability has no bearing on the company’s financial or operational performance or its business and growth outlook,” Coforge said.In Q2FY27, the internal audit plan included two areas for review: “Hire-to-Retire” and “Accuracy and Completeness of Board reporting (BR)”, it said.

“Accordingly, as part of the scope of this review, the internal auditor also considered reports in connection with the Board evaluation process, and the process relating to the sharing and presentation of such reports to the Board and the NRC.”“The inclusion of the reports within the scope of the internal audit was therefore in the context of reviewing the relevant governance processes and should not be construed as an audit or review of the company’s financial statements or financial reporting,” it said.

Zomato adds Rs 5-Rs 20 fee for cash-on-delivery orders

New Delhi: Eternal-backed food delivery platform Zomato has begun charging customers an additional fee of Rs 5 to Rs 20 for choosing cash on delivery (COD), as the company seeks to monetise payment methods amid intensifying competition.The ‘pay on delivery fee’ shown separately in the app’s bill summary appears to be levied on orders where customers opt to pay in cash upon delivery.

In addition, app screenshots showed the charge commonly at Rs 5, though in some cases users were billed Rs 7 or as much as Rs 20, according to multiple reports.The fee is separate from Zomato’s platform fee, restaurant packaging charges and GST, while customers who pay online are not charged the COD fee.Zomato processes an estimated 2.3-2.5 million food orders a day even as new players step up their presence, with Rapido’s Ownly gaining traction and Flipkart piloting its Eat In food-delivery offering.

Zomato’s main competitor, Swiggy, has not introduced a similar fee so far, but it remains to be seen whether the company plans to follow suit.Food-delivery platforms introduced platform fees in 2023, with Swiggy starting with a Rs 2 charge and Zomato later following suit. Zomato raised its fee to Rs 14.99 per order earlier this year from Rs 12.50,



with GST charged separately, and at current order volumes, even small hikes can translate into hundreds of crores in annualised revenue.Zomato laid off around 250 employees in its latest round of workforce restructuring, a report said in August. The job cuts followed a review of the company’s customer delight operating model and organisational requirements.As part of the restructuring, Zomato decided to discontinue its Customer Delight operations in Hyderabad and consolidate its remaining in-house operations at a single location in Gurgaon.

RBI should hike rates by 50 bps by December, says SBI Research

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) should implement a 25 basis-point rate hike by October, followed by another 25 bps in December, as rising global oil and commodity prices and early signs of inflation generalisation warrant pre-emptive action, a new report has said.The report from SBI Research said its call is “agnostic” to the August CPI print, which it expects around 4.8-4.9 per cent, but warned that if oil remains elevated, consumer inflation for October and November could move toward 6.5 per cent or higher.

Crude recently crossed the \$100 a barrel mark amid heightened geopolitical uncertainties, said the prices could reach \$123/bbl at the over the next 15 days, the report said.It flagged growing pass-through risks from producer to consumer prices in sectors such as crude petroleum and natural gas, beverages, pharmaceuticals and electronics as “CPI inflation is showing incipient signs of generalisation.”Collectively, these factors strengthen the case for a tightening totalling 50 bps, the report added.On liquidity, the report said the recent mobilised funds as largely matching the banking system’s funding gap.“This implies that the current spike will have a natural drawdown given the strong demand for credit supported by equally strong Q1 FY27 GDP growth figures,” the report said.The system



liquidity will level out by the end of FY27 if the anticipated credit demand is met, it added.The report predicted that 10-year benchmark Indian yields yields should move up towards 7.15 per cent or even higher tracking multiple cues.“We estimate the liquidity to steadily taper through the remaining part of FY27 and it ideally should stand at Rs 6 lakh crore by March 2027,” the report said.Further, globally, yields are inching past decadal highs. A notable off-shoot is the vaulting US yields, 10 year within striking distance of 5 per cent now while 30 year has pulled back towards 5.40 per cent.

BRICS finance ministers, central bank chiefs flag concerns on unilateral tariffs

Flagging “serious concerns” about the unilateral imposition of tariffs and non-tariff measures, BRICS finance ministers and central bank governors (FMCBG) in a joint statement said that such measures distort trade and are inconsistent with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules.Highlighting the growing share of emerging markets and developing economies (EMDEs) in global output and growth, the BRICS FMCBG also called for a merit-based, inclusive and transparent selection process that would increase regional diversity and representation of EMDEs in the leadership of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Noting that the global economy is facing significant headwinds, the FMCBG said risks to the global economic outlook remain elevated, reflecting persistent geopolitical tensions, trade fragmentation and protectionism, policy uncertainty, fiscal and inflationary pressures, growing debt and financial vulnerabilities.

“We continue to have serious concerns with the unilateral imposition of trade and finance-related actions, including the raising of tariffs and non-tariff measures, which distort trade and are inconsistent with WTO rules. These pressures weigh most heavily on EMDEs. BRICS economies, however, have demonstrated resilience and continue to make a significant contribution to a stable, strong, sustainable, inclusive and balanced global growth,” the joint statement released late Thursday said.The Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of the BRICS countries had met in Jaipur on August 12-13 and in Mumbai on September 10 under the theme “Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability”.India is hosting the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi on September 12-13. BRICS is an informal grouping of 11 major emerging markets and developing countries: Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates.Under the BRICS theme for this year, the FMCBG statement said they seek to “strengthen collective capacities, promote innovation, and advance sustainable development and resilience in the face of evolving global challenges”.On the reforms required for global economic governance, the FMCBG said they will continue to strengthen coordination among BRICS members to make international financial institutions more repre-



sentative, transparent and accountable.

“We reiterate the urgent need to reform the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWI) to make them more agile, effective, credible, inclusive, fit for purpose, unbiased, accountable, and representative, to enhance their legitimacy. BWI governance structure should be reformed to reflect the transformation of the global economy since their establishment. The voice and representation of EMDEs in the BWI must reflect their relative position in the global economy. We also reiterate our call for improved management procedures, including through a merit-based, inclusive and transparent selection process that would increase regional diversity and representation of EMDEs in the leadership of the IMF and the World Bank,” the statement said.Stating that quota realignment should reflect countries’ relative positions in the global economy, the FMCBG statement said there should be an increase in the quota and voting shares of EMDEs and it should not come at the expense of developing countries.It said this should be done while ensuring that a new, simple and transparent quota formula protects the quota shares of the poorest members and guides, but does not constrain, access to Fund resources.The BRICS FMCBG also said that any voluntary financial contributions should not influence quota allocation, governance representation and voting power in multilateral development institutions.“In line with the Lima Principles, we reaffirm that BRICS countries should continue to advocate for the increased voice and representation of developing countries, underpinned by a shareholding realignment that corrects their historic underrepresentation,” it said.

AI a double edge sword, capable of even influencing electoral outcomes: FM Sitharaman

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday termed artificial intelligence (AI) a double-edged sword, flagging the risks posed by emerging technologies such as agentic AI, tokenisation and quantum computing. AI also has the potential to influence electoral outcomes in some cases, she said.“The model that I’m referring to, I’m not naming it, is fully capable of influencing the opinion on the ground without people even sensing that they are being influenced. To the extent that me, being a minister, being in politics, I’m clearly seeing it capable of influencing elections,” Sitharaman said at the Global Fintech Fest here.

Her comments came in the wake of reports that a researcher who had worked at both Anthropic and OpenAI had raised concerns about major AI companies focusing more on competing with rivals than developing the technology responsibly.“He stated publicly that commercial frontier labs are racing, and I’m quoting him, racing straight to self-improving super-intelligence and gambling with our lives,” she said.Despite benefits such as greater speed and efficiency, AI also poses significant risks. “Speed works both ways. When decisions and transactions become instantaneous, software errors, fraud, and market shocks can spread at the same rapid pace, naturally. AI acts as a double-edged sword: it helps us spot fraud faster, but it also allows attackers to automate larger, more sophisticated cyberattacks,” Sitharaman said.“Furthermore, the rise of quantum computing means our traditional security and encryption systems must be upgraded before current defences become obsolete,” she added.

Sitharaman called for a lighter regulatory approach for the fintech sector to address emerging risks without stifling innovation. She welcomed the Reserve Bank of India’s move to recognise the Unified Fintech Forum as a self-regulatory organisation for the industry.“I’m therefore glad that just yesterday, September 10, the Reserve Bank of India recognised the Unified Fintech Forum as another self-regulatory organisation for the fintech sector under the SRO-FT framework,” she said.The SRO-FT refers to the Framework for Recognising Self-Regulatory Organisation(s) for the fintech sector.Sitharaman said the challenge for policymakers in the wake of emerging technologies was to “build systems that are fast yet accountable, autonomous yet reversible when mistakes occur, and innovative without diluting consumer trust.”“AI may assist judgment, but responsibility must remain human and institutional. The more serious the consequence of a decision, the stronger the requirement for review, explanation and appeal,” she said.While allowing some room for innovation, Sitharaman stressed that regulators must remain aware of their respective responsibilities. No activity should escape appropriate



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday termed artificial intelligence (AI) a double-edged sword, flagging the risks posed by emerging technologies such as agentic AI, tokenisation and quantum computing. AI also has the potential to influence electoral outcomes in some cases, she said.

oversight simply because “it sits at the boundary between sectors or is delivered through a technology platform rather than a conventional financial institution.”Younger population driving innovation

Sitharaman also lauded the role of India’s younger population in adopting emerging technologies and driving innovation.“This generation is not waiting for legacy yardsticks to validate their productivity. They are already writing tomorrow’s code, building enduring enterprises, and proving that India’s greatest demographic advantage is an active, unstoppable reality,” she said.She added that the country is “experiencing its demographic dividend in real time” and has made significant progress towards building the world’s most powerful digital public infrastructure.Sitharaman also welcomed the tokenisation pilot launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Thursday and urged the regulator to take the initiative further.“In this entire framework, the monetary settlement was possible due to the presence of the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). It also shows the synergy between the two regulators, RBI and SEBI,” she said“I urge the Reserve Bank of India to further advance and also develop what it has initiated through both the wholesale and retail CBDC pilots. Sensing the momentum in this bond and across global markets, the Reserve Bank of India needs to continue to sharpen its capabilities with the digital rupee,” she added.

India storm into Junior Women's Asia Cup final with 5-1 win over South Korea



GNS News Agency, Sept 15

Moqi: Defending champions India stormed into the final of the AHF Junior Women's Asia Cup 2026 with a commanding 5-1 win over South Korea in the first semifinal here on Saturday, with drag-flick specialist Supriya scoring a hat-trick from penalty corners. India, who remain on course to retain their title, took control after a cautious opening and steadily turned their dominance into goals. They will meet the winner of the second semifinal between hosts China and Japan in the title clash.

The opening quarter was closely contested as both sides were reluctant to commit too many players forward. India, however, gradually found their rhythm and broke the deadlock in the 13th minute when Madhu Sidar completed a well-worked attacking move to put the defending champions ahead. India stepped up the pressure in the second quar-

ter and began making frequent entries into the Korean circle. Their persistence earned them a penalty corner in the 17th minute, and Supriya made full use of the opportunity, firing a precise drag-flick past the Korean defence to double the lead. South Korea struggled to contain India's attacking movement as the holders continued to dictate possession and territory. India struck again in the 21st minute when a well-executed aerial ball into the Korean 23-metre area set up a dangerous attack. The resulting cross found Sukhveer Kaur, who finished clinically to make it 3-0. South Korea managed to create a few openings before the interval, but India's defence held firm to carry a three-goal advantage into half-time.

The Indian side resumed with the same attacking intent and soon extended its lead. Another penalty corner in the 33rd minute gave Supriya another chance to unleash her drag-flick, and she made no mistake, scoring her second of the match to make it 4-0. South Korea finally found a way through in the 41st minute when Yuri Jeong converted from a set-piece, reducing the deficit to 4-1 and giving the Koreans a brief opening. India, though, refused to let the momentum shift. They tightened up defensively while continuing to threaten on the counter and through set-pieces. Their persistence produced another penalty corner in the 56th minute, and Supriya once again proved decisive. The drag-flick specialist found the target for the third time to complete her hat-trick and put the result beyond doubt. With the 5-1 victory, India advanced to the final in emphatic fashion and kept their title defence firmly on track. They will now await the result of the China-Japan semifinal before turning their attention to the summit clash.

Smriti Mandhana should play her natural game in Asia Cup final, says Vivek Razdan

GNS News Agency, Sept 15

New Delhi: Former India men's cricketer Vivek Razdan said vice-captain Smriti Mandhana must anchor the innings and play to her natural strengths rather than try to emulate the high-risk aggression of her opening partner, Shafali Verma, in the upcoming Women's Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka. Seven-time champions India enter Sunday's final at the Dubai International Stadium as favourites to win the title, though they lost to Sri Lanka in the 2024 edition final in Dambulla. Razdan warned against taking defending champions Sri Lanka lightly following their hard-fought victory over Pakistan in the semifinal on Friday.

"The Indian team is a very strong team. But you can't underestimate Sri Lanka, especially the way they played against Pakistan. After being 33/4, they chased down the required target. Despite Athapaththu being out early, you can see how much batting depth the team has," Razdan told IANS in a virtual interaction organised by Sony Sports Network. Geographic Reference He also commended the recent form of India's bowling attack, noting key contributions from Sree Charani, Shafali Verma, Prema Rawat and Deepti Sharma, with the spinners taking 26 wickets in all. But Razdan highlighted that Smriti must play her own game rather than replicate Shafali's approach. So far, Shafali (168 runs) and Smriti (154 runs) have done the bulk of the scoring, with the rest of the batting order misfiring.

The Indian team bowling line-up is very strong. You can talk about N Sree Charani, Shafali, or Deepti. All of them have been very strong in these games. But there is one



thing that needs to be worked on — how do you bat in the powerplay?" In the last game, Shafali scored a fifty against Bangladesh, but she survived three dropped catches and one run-out chance. Regarding Smriti Mandhana, it is very important for her to play for a long time. I don't know why, but I feel that Smriti sometimes tries to be Shafali. That's not her game." Razdan signed off by saying that establishing a solid platform without losing early wickets would allow India's middle and lower order to finish strongly and set an insurmountable target for Sri Lanka on Dubai's slow pitches. "If you can play the powerplay without losing a wicket, you will be able to post a big score because all of this depends on the top four. We have some batters who can help you at the back end. But if you want to win the match and the final, I will have a special eye on someone to do it, and it will be Smriti Mandhana."

India begins Afghanistan T20I series with eye on Asian Games

GNS News Agency, Sept 15

New Delhi: India will begin their three-match T20I series against Afghanistan with the opening match at Arun Jaitley Stadium on Sunday, as both sides look to fine-tune their preparations for the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya. Afghanistan is serving as the host for the whole series. The remaining two matches will also be played in the same venue. India will enter the opening game with a strong record against Afghanistan in the shortest format. The two teams have faced each other nine times, with India winning eight matches, while one game ended without a result. The Indian side will be keen to begin the series on a positive note after an inconsistent start to the new T20 cycle. The team suffered defeats against Ireland and England and will now look to build momentum against a strong Afghanistan outfit.

India have a mix of experienced players and young talent in the squad. Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson and Jasprit Bumrah are among the key names, while 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is also expected to attract attention after making his international debut during India's recent tour of England. Afghanistan, led by Ibrahim Zadran, have several proven match-winners in their ranks. Rashid Khan, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Mohammad Nabi bring considerable international experience to the side. The first T20I will also give both teams a chance to assess their combinations ahead of the Asian



Games. Where to watch: The match will be shown live on Sony Sports Ten 3, 4 and 5 SD and HD channels on TV. Live-streaming will be available on the FanCode app and website. India: Shreyas Iyer (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Sanju Samson (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Tilak Varma (vice-captain), Shivam Dube, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, and Yash Thakur. Afghanistan: Ibrahim Zadran (captain), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Noor Rahman (wk), Sediqullah Atal, Darwish Rasooli, Azmatullah Omarzai, Gulbadin Naib, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Nangyal Kharoti, Noor Ahmad, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Fazal Haq Farooqi, Abdullah Ahmadzai and Naveen-ul-Haq.

Qatar Telugu community honours boxing champion Nikhat Zareen

GNS News Agency, Sept 15

Dubai: The Telugu NRI community in Qatar recently felicitated Boxing Queen Nikhat Zareen for her stellar performances at the global level. The daughter of a former Gulf NRI and a two-time world champion, Zareen is currently in Qatar with her family while recovering from successful knee surgery. Nikhat Zareen's journey is an inspiration to lakhs of people in India and beyond, said Indian Ambassador Dr K. Sirkar Reddy, who was the chief guest at the function organised by the Qatar Premier League and Telugu Sports Association. Send Money Overseas Hailing Zareen's determination, the Ambassador said she continues to be a role model for young athletes worldwide.

"I am overwhelmed by the joy and admiration received from the Telugu community in Qatar," said Zareen. "I feel at home in Qatar," she added. Prominent Indian community leaders E.P. Abdul Rahman (ISC), AP Manikantan (ICC), Shahnavas Bava (ICBF), Taha Mohammed (IBPC), Sridhar Abbagani (TSA) and Siraj Ansari (QPL), along with senior leaders K.S. Prasad and K. Kirshna Kumar, also spoke at the event.



Two-time world boxing champion Nikhat Zareen was felicitated by the Telugu NRI community in Qatar for her international achievements. Currently in Qatar with her family while recovering from knee surgery, Zareen said she felt at home in the country

'We'd bite his hand off': After India snub, Kuldeep gets high praise from County stint



Kuldeep Yadav was abruptly left out of India's Test side against Sri Lanka after an indifferent start to the series in Galle last month. The left-arm wrist-spinner picked up only one wicket in India's victory in the first Test and was subsequently dropped for the next match in Colombo. Having featured in a handful of 50-over games with English county side Yorkshire before the series, Kuldeep opted to return to England after the snub to revive his First-Class credentials. The 31-year-old was also left out of India's T20I squad for the Afghanistan tour, starting Sunday, and the Asian Games later this month. In his first game back with the record County Championship holders last week, Kuldeep was a mere spectator. He scored 17 and 1 in two innings but did not get a chance to bowl. Spin mastery from Kuldeep Yadav pic.twitter.com/r9A40BEC60At Headingley this week, however, Kuldeep

reignited his status as a red-ball bowler, recording his maiden First-Class 10-wicket match haul and career-best innings figures of 6 for 50 in Yorkshire's innings win over Essex.

Kuldeep's booming drift and turn was full on display during the match, earning high praise from Yorkshire coach Anthony McGrath. "You could see how much he spins it and his control of spin was just sensational," McGrath told the Yorkshire Post. "If you looked at how he put his overs together — over the wicket, round the wicket... he was setting the batters up. Bite his hand off to re-sign McGrath insisted that Yorkshire were keen to see the India spinner return next season. Kuldeep has one game left in his current deal, having signed up for One-Day Cup and three County Championship matches. "Yeah, we'd bite his hand off, wouldn't we?" McGrath said. "He's an amazing character and his passion for the game... he just loves bowling. "We've been fortunate now for the last year and a bit. The overseas we've had have all enjoyed it, and they've all said that when they can, they would like to come back. "Someone of Kuldeep's mentality and skill-set speaks for itself. He's also batted very well and got some crucial runs. So, if he can come back at some point, of course we'd make that work," added McGrath. Across seven matches, Kuldeep has taken 19 wickets, averaging 17.31. "He was watching on the stream when he wasn't here." "He wanted to put in a real performance this week and he certainly did that with a ten-fer to help win us the game," said McGrath.

Meet Razaullah, 21, the Pakistan debutant who stunned England with record sixes

In the final batting innings of a tumultuous English Test tour, Pakistan got their act together. A dreadful pattern was being written from start to finish, beginning with Azan Awaiz's duck off the first delivery of the series at Headingley three weeks ago. Two losses and a massive mid-series overhaul involving seven players and two coaches had not brought immediate impact in the third Test, which began at Edgbaston on Wednesday. Babar Azam's side folded for a sub-200 total for the fifth successive innings on the opening day. With England piling on 453 in the first innings, Pakistan fell 320 runs behind. The writing was on the wall. Or so it seemed until a plucky 21-year-old stood up and stood tall, earning a standing ovation from the Birmingham crowd before stumps on Friday. Flown in on quick notice after the axing of seven men post the Lord's Test defeat, Razaullah Mashwani was thrown in straightaway for his international debut. An outright quick, Razaullah held promise with the ball, but had profligacy for company. He dismissed England captain Joe Root leg-before with a 143-kph off his fourth delivery in Test cricket, but leaked 148 runs for his next three wickets — an economy of 6.43 reading among the worst ever for a pacer in an innings.

Even at 312 for seven, Pakistan ran the danger of an innings defeat, but Razaullah still had chance to make amends. In the next 117 minutes at the crease, the youngster from Mardan, Peshawar, stifled the English pace attack with brute force. Gus Atkinson was sent packing with three consecutive sixes. Even the fiery Jofra Archer could not escape the long handle, walloped for three sixes in the 88th over as Pakistan hurtled past 400.

'Enjoyed the standing ovation' Clubbing nine sixes al-



together, Razaullah equalled the Test cricket record for most sixes in an innings on debut. He joined New Zealand's Tim Southee, another effective lower-order bat who eventually racked up 97 maximums in his career. While he fell short of what would have been an enthralling hundred, on 81, Razaullah ensured there was no meek surrender this time. Starting the fourth day, England will require 130 runs for a series sweep. The knock may have stupefied English fans, but Razaullah was no novice with the bat. Among his eight First-Class caps since debut in November 2025, stands a special hundred for Peshawar while opening the innings. "I was being selective with which balls to slog, but they all seemed within range," he said casually. "I wanted to take it as deep as possible. I wasn't scared of pace. I wanted to punish the balls from Archer that landed on a hard length. There's nothing to be scared of when you're playing for your country. I was just enjoying myself."

Rybakina targets aggressive approach against Sabalenka in US Open final

New Delhi: Elena Rybakina said she will look to stay aggressive and control the rallies rather than allow Aryna Sabalenka to dictate play when the two meet in the US Open women's singles final at Arthur Ashe Stadium on Sunday. Rybakina, who came from a set down to beat Coco Gauff 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 in the semifinal, knows she faces another stern test against defending champion Sabalenka, who defeated Jessica Pegula 7-5, 6-2 to reach her fourth consecutive US Open final. "We know each other pretty well and have played so many times against each other. Yeah, just try to stay aggressive in important moments, not wait for her to dictate the point, and try to stay on top of the rallies," Rybakina told Jio Hotstar.

The final will be the 18th meeting between the two, with Sabalenka holding a 10-7 advantage in their head-to-head record. Rybakina, however, has already beaten her rival in a Grand Slam final this year, winning the Australian Open title in January. Rybakina's run to the final has been particularly impressive given the doubts surrounding her participation before the tournament. She revealed that she was unsure whether she would be able to compete due to a foot problem and that she needed time to feel comfortable on court. "I wasn't 100 per cent sure if I was going to be able to even play this tournament. In the first few matches, I was thinking about my foot and how it was actually going to react. I was not that comfortable playing the first few matches," she said. "Then, slowly, my focus moved towards what I was doing wrong on the court and what I needed to improve. So yeah, slowly I found my way; there were also some very difficult opponents and great matches. I feel like something is definitely going my way, and I hope that on finals day, I can do my best and that it also brings me success," she added.



Rybakina has had to dig deep physically during her run, playing back-to-back three-set matches in the quarterfinal and semifinal. She admitted there were moments when she felt the physical strain but said she kept convincing herself that she had enough energy to continue fighting. "During the match, I was telling myself that I had not been practising for a week before the tournament. I was convincing myself that I wasn't tired and that I could still push, so yeah, honestly, I was just fighting for every point because both matches were very close," she said. Her serve will also be an important weapon against Sabalenka, with Rybakina stressing that a strong serving performance can give her a significant advantage. "There were some moments where I did not have enough energy and push from the legs on my serve. No matter who's on the other side, if my serve is working, it's already a big plus in my game and a big advantage. So yeah, I was just pushing myself mentally and physically."

India, Sri Lanka eye Asia Cup glory in contrasting title rematch

Dubai: An unbeaten campaign has taken India and Sri Lanka to the final of the 2026 Women's T20 Asia Cup, but the two sides arrive at Sunday's summit clash with contrasting memories of their previous meeting in a title decider. India, the most successful team in the tournament's history with seven titles, will once again shoulder the weight of expectation. Yet Sri Lanka will take confidence from their eight-wicket victory over India in the 2024 final at Dambulla, a result that remains a reminder of their ability to deliver when the stakes are highest. For India, much of the attention will centre on Shafali Verma, whose consistency has been one of the defining features of their campaign. She has accumulated 168 runs, including two half-centuries, and currently sits at the top of the tournament's run-scoring charts. While India's batters have struggled to consistently dominate on slow surfaces, Shafali has found ways to score without allowing the conditions to dictate her approach. Smriti

Mandhana has also made a significant contribution with 154 runs, although her tournament has included both a century and two single-digit scores. India will want their middle order to provide greater support, particularly after several batters have failed to turn promising starts into substantial contributions. With the ball, Deepti Sharma has been central to India's campaign. The senior all-rounder has claimed 11 wickets, matching Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu for the tournament lead. Deepti has also added useful runs, with her six-ball 13 against Bangladesh in the semifinal helping India push their score towards 150. The presence of Shree Charani and Prema Rawat has given India further options in the spin department, an area that could prove decisive on a surface where stroke-making has not always been straightforward. Sri Lanka, meanwhile, have demonstrated that they are capable of absorbing pressure and finding a way out of difficult situations.

Amyra Dastur nearly missed out on ‘Chumbak’ because her former manager didn’t tell her about audition



Mumbai: Actress Amyra Dastur, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming streaming series ‘Chumbak’, has revealed that her part in the show almost slipped out of her hands courtesy her former manager. The actress spoke with IANS during the promotions of the show along with Arjun Bijlani, Helly Shah, Delnaaz Irani and Anant Joshi in the BKC area of Mumbai.

When asked how she was approached for the part, she said, “So mine is actually a very funny story because my former manager didn’t tell me about this audition. Then I got to know that the casting process is underway for this part, and being a Parsi, I felt that I would be the perfect fit for

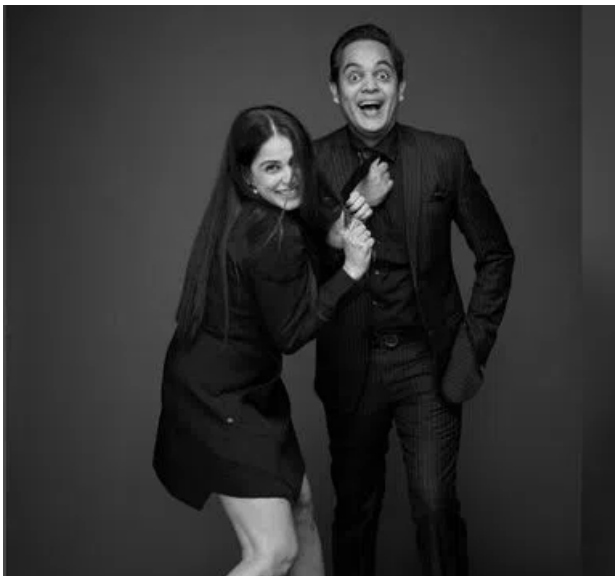
the part because the show features the premise of the Parsi community”. She told IANS, “I remember, I messaged Jogi sir myself, our casting director and I said, ‘I heard you’re auditioning for a series and it’s a Parsi character. So, why haven’t you called me?’ And he said, ‘We had already reached out to you but then you only said no’. I was like, ‘Oh no, I’ll come and audition’. And yeah, I auditioned for him, luckily it worked out and even the makers told me that he thought I wasn’t interested in the project”. “And I was like, no, that’s not the case. So yeah, I think I auditioned twice and then I got the call”, she added.

Earlier, the actress had shared her experience of drawing from comedy veterans in the show, as she earlier told IANS, “See, at the end of the day, I feel acting is acting. You need good actors around you, because it’s also based on their reactions to your acting”. “So, when you have such amazing veterans, when you have such amazing people around you, I think you automatically just level up, or at least you push yourself to level up. Comedy is something I’ve always wanted to do, and I’m really glad I got a chance to do it, and also to do it in my culture, because like I said, I’m full Parsi, and it’s so nice to represent that, because there are very few characters like this that come. And I remember the maker of the show narrated everything to me, I was like, ‘Okay, I really relate to this character, because it’s just so much fun””, she added.

Genelia Deshmukh celebrates brother Nigel’s birthday with heartfelt post

Mumbai Actress Genelia Deshmukh wished her “best brother in the entire world”, Nigel D’Souza, on his birthday with a heartfelt post on social media. On Saturday, Genelia took to her official Instagram handle and shared a couple of black-and-white family photos featuring husband Riteish Deshmukh, their sons Riaan and Rahyl, and her parents. Genelia further wrote an emotional birthday note expressing her love for her brother.

The ‘Masti’ actress penned, “Best Brother in the entire world. I Love you very much Nigu Pigu – I truly believe I’m blessed to be your sister. I feel like you are that loyalist who will always stand up for his people, his friends, his family and that is a quality that is just so rare to find (sic).” “I promise you – I will always be there for you even on days you don’t need me. Happy Birthday @nigeldsouza12,” she further added. Genelia recently uploaded a few glimpses of her Raksha Bandhan celebrations with her brother on social media. The ‘Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na’ actress was seen lovingly tying a Rakhi. Following this, the sibling duo was seen hilariously fighting over an envelope, which Genelia admitted was an annual affair. Her post read, “The Annual Fight. The elder sister has to always be the one gifting and pampering, it cannot be the other way around – It’s not allowed. But this time Nigu Pigu took the help of the chota gang and I lost hands down. Happy Raksha Bandhan Nigu Pigu. I will always always have your back.” Professionally,



Genelia will be seen playing a crucial role in Ram Gopal Varma’s ‘Police Station Mein Bhoot’, with Manoj Bajpayee as the lead. The project will mark Genelia’s first on-screen collaboration with Manoj. Over and above this, Genelia will also be seen playing an important role in Emraan Hashmi’s ‘Gunmaaster G9’.

Mithun Chakraborty’s 1.5 acre bungalow has separate cottages for every family member

Mithun Chakraborty, who started his life as an actor with limited means is now one of the icons of his generation. Despite winning a National Award for his first film, the actor once had to request an interviewer to feed him. He has often spoken about the days when he would sleep on the streets and clean an office in exchange for access to its washroom, even after he started working in the movies. Today, he owns multiple properties across India, including his sprawling Madh Island bungalow, spread across nearly 1.5 acres (around 65,000 sq ft).

The property is far from a conventional bungalow. It has separate cottages for different family members, is home to 22 pets, and now also houses a full-fledged in-house studio where his sons shoot films and create different sets. Mithun has even named the bungalow after his eldest son, Mimoh Chakraborty. Sharing the story behind the property, Namashi Chakraborty, Mithun’s younger son, told Pinkvilla, “My parents bought this house in 1985, a few months after my elder brother Mimoh was born.” A few years later, the family shifted their base to Ooty and stayed there until 2007. They returned to Mumbai and began living full-time at the Madh Island bungalow. Until then, the property had primarily been used as a holiday home, after which it was renovated into a full-time family residence. The sprawling property is surrounded by lush greenery and has enough space for the family’s 22 dogs. “Dad loves gardening. He often keeps himself busy doing that,” Namashi said while giving a tour of the home.

Interestingly, the house tour began with what Namashi described as Mithun’s first home in Mumbai – a yellow Volkswagen Beetle. “When dad came to Mumbai, he didn’t have a house to live. He spent 15 days of his life in this yellow Beetle. This was his first house. Now, it is not in a condition to be driven, yet dad spends a lot of money in its management,” Namashi revealed. He, however, didn’t mention how Mithun had access to this car during his initial days.

The bungalow has also witnessed several star-studded Diwali parties over the years, with actors such as Dharmendra and Jeetendra among the guests. The courtyard would be transformed into a party space for the celebrations. However, the most distinctive feature of the property is its layout. Instead of having everyone under one roof, the bungalow has multiple cottages, each serving a different purpose. A cottage is turned into a fully equipped gym. A cottage is turned into a fully equipped gym. There are different cottages for different family members. Both my father and grandfather believed that every kid should have their own space,” Namashi explained. One cottage has been converted into a gym, another is reserved for guests, while the cottage opposite the guest accommodation is where Mithun and his wife stay when they are in Mumbai. Another cottage has been converted into an office.

“Dad mostly stays in Kolkata”, revealed Namashi. Speaking about the office, Namashi said, “All the film-related talks as well as script discussions happen in this

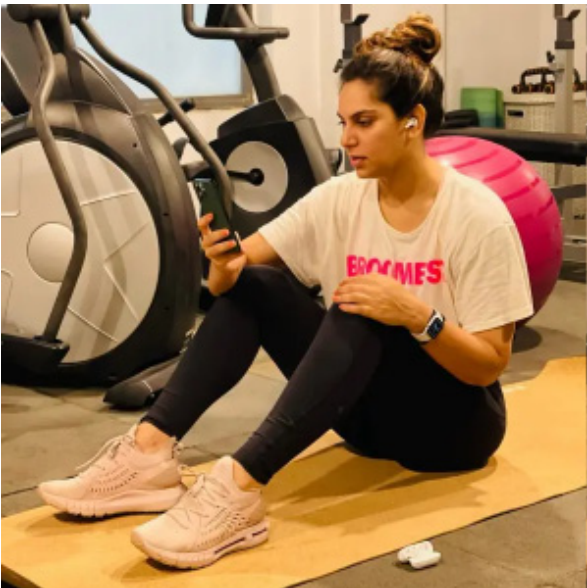


The property is far from a conventional bungalow. It has separate cottages for different family members, is home to 22 pets, and now also houses a full-fledged in-house studio where his sons shoot films and create different sets. Mithun has even named the bungalow after his eldest son, Mimoh Chakraborty.

office.” Different cottages for different family member Different cottages for different family member. (Photo: Pinkvilla/YouTube) The office also doubles up as a showcase of Mithun’s illustrious career. One wall is dedicated to his accolades, along with fan-made paintings and sketches of the actor. Another features photographs of Mithun with several prominent personalities and actors from important moments in his life, including Kannada legend Rajkumar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bal Thackeray. It also features a photograph of the moment Mithun received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award.

The office area is decorated with Mithun’s awards. (Photo: Pinkvilla/YouTube) The office area is decorated with Mithun’s awards. The space further displays several of the awards Mithun has won over the years, including photographs from the three different National Awards he has received. Moving through the property, Namashi revealed that one section has now been transformed into a professional studio called Myrmd Bungalow, which is available for bookings for film shoots as well as weddings. The office area is decorated with Mithun’s awards. (Photo: Pinkvilla/YouTube) The wall of fame with Mithun’s pictures with important personalities. (Photo: Pinkvilla/YouTube) Located just two minutes away from the family’s residence, the space was once a completely private area where outsiders were not allowed. Space converted into a studio Space converted into a studio. (Photo: Pinkvilla/YouTube) Despite the grandeur of the property, family conversations at the dinner table remain surprisingly simple. When asked what the family usually discusses over dinner, Namashi replied, “Food.” He elaborated, “My father is a great cook. His chicken biryani is the best. And we are all crazy foodies. So we are mostly intensely discussing food and not films.” The bungalow also has a special room where Mithun and his sons conduct film narrations and discuss projects.

Upasana Kamineni was 95 kg at 18, was trolled when she married Ram Charan: ‘Tried every diet’



Upasana Kamineni Konidela is one of the leading Indian entrepreneurs and the heir to Rs 77,000 crore Apollo Empire. But long before she became a successful businesswoman and married superstar Ram Charan, Upasana struggled with her body image. At 18, she weighed 95 kg and while studying abroad, she turned to food as a coping mechanism for homesickness, a habit that eventually took a toll on her health. Despite having access to the best of everything, Upasana has spoken about how she struggled to help herself. Speaking to Femina in 2017, Upasana recalled, “I suffered from what I call ‘chubbiness’—childhood obesity. I was huge as a child growing up in America! When I moved to London, I decided I had to complete a full round of Hyde Park, and also finish the London Marathon. In the bargain I wrecked my knees. So, the will was there but I wasn’t doing it right.” Recalling the time when she weighed 95 kg, Upasana said she experimented with several approaches before figuring out what worked for her body. Upasana Kamineni Upasana Kamineni. (Photo: Instagram) “I was 95 kg, so I decided to cut carbs completely. That didn’t work. So I cut out rice and wheat, and ate oats instead, and that worked so well for me. Then I added a bit of high protein. I walked to college instead of using my car, or a cab or the Tube. I believe if you do 10,000 steps a day and eat only when your body tells you, you’re set for life,” she said. She added, “You’re the only person who knows what’s good for your body. Trust me, I have tried every diet, every celeb dietitian, and my body is still the best judge of what it needs. I cheat a bit, of course, but I know how to balance it out. As for exercise, I did everything from yoga to weights to running, but I realised the weight stayed on because of what was going into my mouth. So, if I controlled that, and did my 10,000 steps a day, it worked.”

Overeating became her coping mechanism For Upasana, however, the turning point was not merely about diets or exercise. In another interview with iDream, she revealed that her weight gain was closely linked to homesickness while she was living in America. “I was a very happy person, I didn’t have stress, but I had different sort of stress. I was in America when I was my fattest. I put on that weight because I couldn’t control myself. I was eating so much because I was missing my family but then I overcame it because it was in the mind. It’s not stress. I was an 18-19 year old,” she said. When Upasana was body-shamed at the time of her wedding with Ram Charan Her weight became a subject of public scrutiny even after her marriage to Ram Charan in 2012.

“I got a lot of flak in the beginning, and some fans were very mean. They spoke about me not being good enough for him. I was hurt, of course, since I wasn’t exposed to anything like this before. But then I became tough and thick-skinned; it made me stronger,” she told Femina. Speaking to iDream, Upasana later recalled how she chose not to let comments about her appearance define her. Upasana Kamineni Upasana Kamineni has once shared a before/after photo post losing 14 kilos. (Photo: Instagram)

“Even when I got married, a lot of people said: ‘Oh look, she is chubby.’ I cared two hoots. Yes, it was a bit hurtful but then that’s their opinion. And it is about what I am and what I believe in and the people that love me and are around me... now their opinion matters to me. If my loved ones feel that I need to change something, I will go to the T to make sure it is done,” she said. When asked whether people’s opinions affected her, Upasana maintained that she had learned to separate outside criticism from her own sense of self. “I am a very strong person and if you will see, I will never let anything shake me because those are my values and that’s what I was made out of. Things do affect me but I am strong enough to actually cut it off. I know how to deal with it now,” she said. Upasana Kamineni is an insomniac Her approach to wellness has also extended beyond weight loss and fitness. Upasana has spoken openly about being an insomniac and struggling to sleep for more than four hours a night, a problem that inspired her interest in opening a sleep clinic.

“All this is very important. We have to be ready for the new age. Year by year, you are seeing new things in health care. All because of our lifestyle. So many new things are coming up. In fact, I am starting a sleep clinic already because sleep is becoming a problem for a lot of people. I am an insomniac. It is crazy,” she said. Explaining her own struggle with sleep, she added, “I really love to sleep and I need to sleep but both my mom and I cannot sleep for more than four hours a day. I get tired. That’s why I have made lifestyle changes. I know what needs to be done but I don’t do it. I am like everybody else.” Despite having access to some of the best dietitians, nutritionists, supplements and fitness experts, Upasana believes that lasting change ultimately has to come from within. “I have worked with the best of dietitians, nutritionists, and had best of everything. Best supplements. I was in America, and London but then I took it upon myself. I realised that lifestyle change is all in the mind. It is no more about dietitians and fitness experts, but about mindful wellness,” she said. Upasana and Ram Charan have turned to spirituality and mindfulness Upasana has also explored spirituality and mindfulness alongside her husband. She revealed that the couple has attended courses and follows spiritual teachers as part of their efforts to strengthen their minds and bodies. “Charan and I went for Deepak Chopra’s course. Charan and I love listening to Jaggi Vasudev. We follow a lot of these things, and read a lot of books on this. It is nice for us and we are implementing these things for strong mind,” she said.

Being married to one of India’s biggest film stars has also influenced their approach to fitness. Upasana revealed that she and Ram Charan often experiment with wellness routines together. “As an actor, he needs to stay fit, so I am updated on all the fitness trends. We even go on diets together. I love being married to him. He’s the best companion, we went vegan together earlier this year, we work out together, and attend spiritual programmes as well,” she said. Upasana and Ram Charan have been married since 2012. They are parents to 3-year-old daughter Klin Kaara, and twins Shivram and Anveera Devi, who were born in January 2026.

Solomon Pappaiah dies at 90, Tamil scholar rejected 200 films after Sivaji success

Solomon Pappaiah, the legendary Tamil scholar, orator, actor and television personality who transformed the centuries-old art of Pattimandram from an academic exercise into a living-room tradition for millions of Tamil-speaking people, died at a private hospital in Madurai at the age of 90 on Friday. Shortly before his health deteriorated, he had recorded a special Vinayagar Chaturthi debate programme scheduled to air on Monday. On Saturday, the veteran was laid to rest with state honours. Rajinikanth, shared on X, tweeted, “I pray to the divine that the soul of the great Tamil luminary, Professor Solomon Pappaiah, who elevated the literary forum from the realm of the educated to the common folk in a populist manner, attains peace.”

Solomon Pappaiah never pursued an acting career. Cinema came to him because his face, his voice and his public persona were too large to ignore. His distinctive voice, expressive face and enormous public popularity caught the attention of film directors who saw in him something that professional actors could not provide: instant trust from the audience. His entry into films began with a cameo in Mappillai, followed by a role in Pudhu Varusham. But it was director S Shankar who saw something in the scholar that other filmmakers had not thought to use.

Shankar cast Pappaiah in three of his films. The first was Mudhalvan (1999), the political action drama starring Arjun Sarja, where Pappaiah appeared in a small but notable role. The second was Boys (2003), Shankar’s coming-of-age drama, where Pappaiah played a magistrate. He also appeared in Yes Madam (2003) in the same year. Both the Shankar roles were brief but memorable enough to establish him as a recognisable face beyond the Pattimandram stage.

The third Shankar film changed everything. In Sivaji: The Boss (2007), starring Rajinikanth, Pappaiah played Thondaiman, a wealthy father who invites Sivaji (Rajinikanth) to his home for a bride-seeing ceremony for his two daughters, Angavai and Sangavai. The comedic timing between Pappaiah and Rajinikanth became one of the defining highlights of the film. The humorous dialogue exchange, the back-and-forth between the scholarly orator and the superstar, left a lasting mark on Tamil pop culture and introduced Pappaiah to a global cinematic audience for the first time. In the wake of Sivaji’s success, Pappaiah reportedly received over 200 film offers. He turned down every single one. The reason? First, he wanted to remain grounded in his true calling: Tamil literature and the Pattimandram stage. Second, and more revealingly, he expressed deep remorse about the Angavai-Sangavai sequence itself. According to Deccan Chronicle, the scene featured a heavy amount of colourism and body shaming directed at the two characters. Pappaiah felt the comedy had crossed a line by insulting Angavai and Sangavai, names rooted in classical Tamil



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history, names that belonged to the Chola dynasty and carried cultural weight that a comedy sequence had no right to trivialise. He regretted his involvement in a scene that used historical Tamil names for cheap laughs and resolved not to participate in films again. In 2000, the Tamil Nadu government honoured him with the Kalaimamani award for his contributions to Tamil literature and public discourse. In 2021, at the age of 85, he received the Padma Shri, India’s fourth-highest civilian honour, for his contributions to Literature and Education. The award was widely seen as overdue recognition for a man who had spent six decades in service of the Tamil language.